

BEYOND **THE CURVE**

A TOOLKIT FOR REOPENING YOUR COMMUNITY

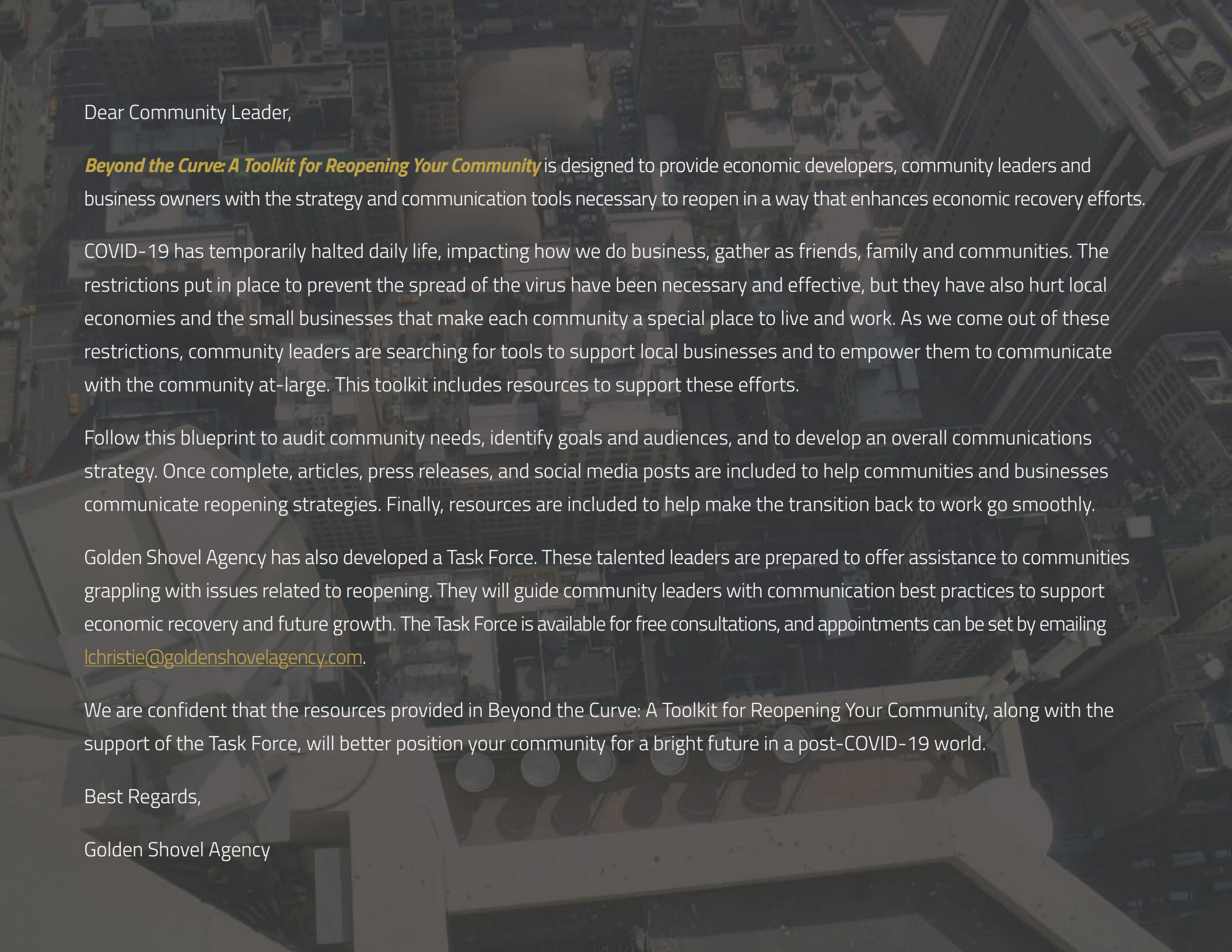


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	3
Create a Blueprint.....	4
Introductory Letter.....	5
Community/Business Needs Survey	6-8
Communications Plan.....	9-21
Audit.....	9
Community Marketing Audit.....	10
Goals.....	10
Audience.....	11
Write, Write, Write	12
Create a Timeline	13-16
Measure Results	17-20
Rating Template	21
Content Features	22-42
Press Releases	43-53
Social Media	54-55
Image Gallery	56-60
Contact the Task Force	61-62





Dear Community Leader,

Beyond the Curve: A Toolkit for Reopening Your Community is designed to provide economic developers, community leaders and business owners with the strategy and communication tools necessary to reopen in a way that enhances economic recovery efforts.

COVID-19 has temporarily halted daily life, impacting how we do business, gather as friends, family and communities. The restrictions put in place to prevent the spread of the virus have been necessary and effective, but they have also hurt local economies and the small businesses that make each community a special place to live and work. As we come out of these restrictions, community leaders are searching for tools to support local businesses and to empower them to communicate with the community at-large. This toolkit includes resources to support these efforts.

Follow this blueprint to audit community needs, identify goals and audiences, and to develop an overall communications strategy. Once complete, articles, press releases, and social media posts are included to help communities and businesses communicate reopening strategies. Finally, resources are included to help make the transition back to work go smoothly.

Golden Shovel Agency has also developed a Task Force. These talented leaders are prepared to offer assistance to communities grappling with issues related to reopening. They will guide community leaders with communication best practices to support economic recovery and future growth. The Task Force is available for free consultations, and appointments can be set by emailing christie@goldenshovelagency.com.

We are confident that the resources provided in *Beyond the Curve: A Toolkit for Reopening Your Community*, along with the support of the Task Force, will better position your community for a bright future in a post-COVID-19 world.

Best Regards,

Golden Shovel Agency

CREATING A BLUEPRINT

When you take time to research, you create a blueprint for the necessary course of action. The COVID-19 crisis has created a situation where communities and businesses must coordinate efforts to fully open and gain the confidence of consumers.

The first step of the reopening process should be a questionnaire asking businesses for the assistance they need. Don't assume you know what they need from social media or casual conversations. Entrepreneurs and business owners are independent individuals who like to solve problems and they may not be comfortable showing their fears and vulnerabilities. The one constant in this crisis is that the uncertainty is overwhelming.

Here are our recommended steps for helping your community reopen:



INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Your Organization Name

Address

City, State Zip

Date

Re: Preparing to Reopen

Dear Business Owners and Community Members:

The COVID-19 crisis continues to stress our families, businesses, and community. In our lifetimes, this unprecedented event will define the next generations. More importantly, the next steps we take will be the most critical steps and will test our resolve and resiliency. We need to be thoughtful, deliberate, and to make sure we consider the safety of those most at risk by the COVID-19 virus. But, we also must prepare our community to live with the virus and to reopen.

At [organization] we have prepared a toolkit full of checklists, press releases, and communication tools so that you can begin the steps of reopening and building consumer confidence and trust.

This toolkit is designed to save you time and money during the planning process so you can focus on effectively serving your customers. As our economy comes back online, people will be reaching out for the products and services that have been missing in their lives.

In the coming days and weeks, we will be reaching out to you with a survey to understand your current situation and to evaluate future needs. After this survey, we will publish communications and social media posts to highlight efforts from local businesses to help customers safely connect to your business.

Communication is critical in these challenging times, and it is important to educate consumers that there are safe ways to shop and continue to fulfill their needs.

As you know, business is still about relationships and serving the needs of your customers. Keep their safety and needs in focus, and you will be rewarded with customers who trust you and talk about your business.

These next steps won't be easy, being an entrepreneur has never been easy, but with planning and patience we can get on the road to recovery that leads to success.

Sincerely,

[insert name/title]

COMMUNITY/BUSINESS NEEDS SURVEY

Please use this survey or modify to fit your community needs. The survey can be printed on your community letterhead or create an online survey using Google Forms (<https://www.google.com/forms/about/>).

The purpose of the survey is to gather information from business owners and to measure the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on businesses. By gathering the data, you will be able to gauge the needs and progress of community businesses. It is recommended to send the survey out to business owners periodically to measure the changes in conditions and perceptions.

Directions: Please complete the following survey and return the answers to *[email address]*. Your responses will be kept confidential and only used for the purpose of gauging the current business climate. Please provide any detailed information at the end of this questionnaire to direct us on other needs you may have. Thank you for your responses.

1. *Please provide the following information:*

Business Name

Business Address

Email Address

2. *Please select business type and check all that apply:*

☐ Restaurant or Bar

☐ Retail

☐ Professional Services

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Groceries

(add more as needed)

3. *Describe the current status of your business:*

☐ Fully Operational

☐ Temporarily Closed

☐ Permanently Closed

☐ Limited Operating Conditions

(please specify (online, take out, or other)

4. *What is the exact number of employees you had before March 1, 2020?*

5. *How many employees do you have now?*

6. *Please specific number of employee positions that fall under each category since March 1, 2020:*

☐ Employees Eliminated

☐ Employees Furloughed or Temporarily Laid Off

☐ Employees Reduced Hours

7. *Before March 1, 2020, please indicate what your plans were for employees:*

☐ Hiring

☐ No change

☐ Reducing

8. *After March 1, 2020, please indicate your plans for employees:*

☐ Hiring

☐ No change

☐ Reducing

9. *Have you applied for loans or grants?*

10. *If you applied for loans or grants, were you successful in obtaining funds?*

11. *If you were successful, what amount were you approved for?*

COMMUNITY/BUSINESS NEEDS SURVEY

12. *How much has the COVID-19 crisis impacted your revenue since March 1, 2020?*

- ☐ No change
- ☐ Increase in revenue
- ☐ Decrease 1-25%
- ☐ Decrease 26-50%
- ☐ Decrease 51-75%
- ☐ Decrease 76-100%

13. *How would you rate your optimism for recovery by July 1, 2020?*

- ☐ Very optimistic
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not very optimistic

14. *If the current restrictions are lifted by June 1, 2020, how long do you believe recovery will take for your business:*

- ☐ 1-3 months
- ☐ 4-6 months
- ☐ 7-9 months
- ☐ 10-12 months
- ☐ No recovery expected

15. *What communication will be helpful to your business:*

- ☐ Press Releases
- ☐ Social Media Posts
- ☐ Radio Ads
- ☐ Print Ads
- ☐ Blog articles

SURVEY



COMMUNITY/BUSINESS NEEDS SURVEY

Instructions After the Completion of the Survey

Once you have received the survey responses, tabulate the results into a spreadsheet and prepare a report. Segment the survey results by business type and publish a report. It is advisable to send the report to the respondents, so they know how they compare to other businesses and to publish on your website.

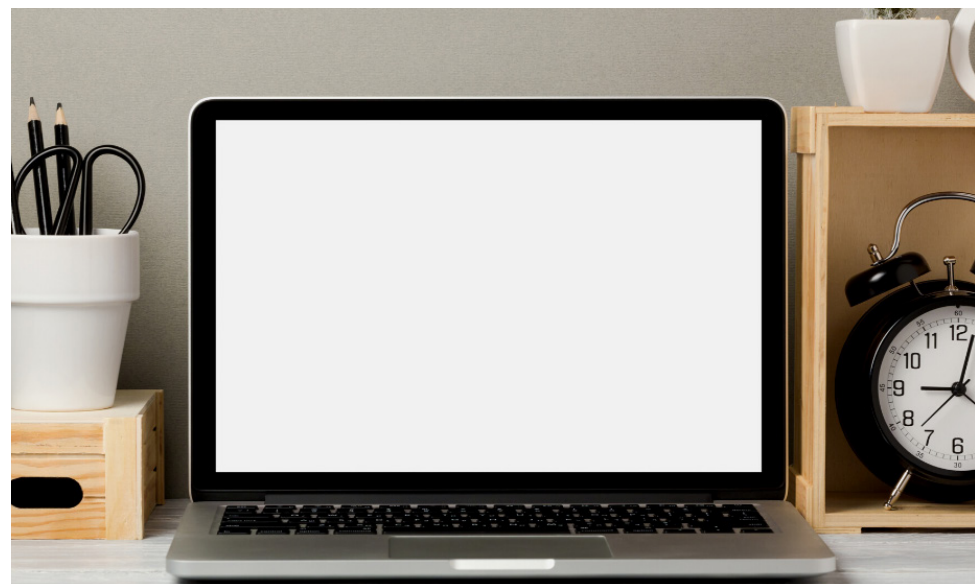
Every 3-4 weeks, ask the respondents to complete the survey again. Your goal is to understand the changes occurring in your community.

For example, look for the following trends:

1. What is the status of your businesses? Are they operational?
Closing or planning on closing?
2. Are businesses successfully getting loans and financial assistance?
3. Is the financial assistance helping them survive? For how long?
4. How much has COVID-19 hurt revenues and how long to recover lost revenue?
5. How is the business optimism?
6. How long will businesses need to recover?

By understanding these few trends, you will be able to seek additional information and inform elected leaders about the state of your community. With the current situation, there is a lot of information and there are gaps in how serious the economic situation may be.

Sharing this survey information will allow you to effectively and honestly communicate with the business owners, elected officials and consumers.



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Audit

An audit is a comprehensive evaluation of an organization's ability to effectively communicate with its key audiences. An audit typically aims to

- Assess communications related to attracting key audiences and/or new customers
- Analyze the competitive landscape
- Research and develop audience personas (i.e. your key targets)
- Identify strategies, tactics and messaging tailored to personas
- Help determine clear-cut communications goals and metrics for success
- Recommend a strategic path forward

Use the following table to identify areas of your communication that you currently need to Start doing, Stop doing, or Continue doing

START <i>(i.e. Post helpful information on Facebook 3X a week)</i>	STOP <i>(i.e. Posting information that invites pessimistic comments... success stories)</i>	CONTINUE <i>(i.e. engaging business owners and community members)</i>

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Community Marketing Audit

Identify the challenge:

1. What is the biggest economic development problem your community is facing?
2. Why do businesses, prospective workers, or current businesses need to reach out to you?
3. What can you solve for businesses and workers?

Goals

Start with “Why”? State your purpose for communication.

Example: Our organization desires to reach more remote workers and entrepreneurs who may be relocating after the COVID-19 crisis. This will be measured by achieving the following results:

1. Increase website traffic to related content
2. Increase Facebook followers
3. Increase Facebook shares from local evangelists.

What are other communities doing well?

What are other communities doing poorly?

Write Three S.M.A.R.T Communication Goals:

- **Specific:** Produce two success stories and blog posts promoting remote worker attraction to our community.
- **Measureable:** Each content piece will receive 10 shares, 25 likes, and 100 PV's.
- **Attainable:** The content pieces will be 750 words with relevant keywords written by X.
- **Relevant:** These content pieces will apply to the June-August period.
- **Time-Specific:**
 - Week 1: Idea Generation
 - Week 2: Interview and write drafts
 - Week 3: Refine and publish on schedule

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Effective Messaging for Your Target Audience

Examine the diagram on this page and think about how to craft your message to your target audience (hint: aim for the sweet spot in the middle).

Your audience is more likely to engage if you use the words they use and answer the questions they may have.

#1 Audience: Specifically, identify the audience you wish to reach. Don't pick more than three targeted audiences.

#2 Engage and Inspire Your Audience: You want the audience to take some action and to remember your organization or community.

#3 Craft Your Message: As specifically as you can, formulate your core message and pick keywords to use. The goal is to pick a message that is memorable. In that message, choosing the right keywords improves your reception and search engine results. Try to answer these questions when you craft your message:

- a. How does the target audience view themselves and what questions do they have?
- b. What is important to your target audience?
- c. What action do you want them to take?
- d. Why should they take this action?
- e. Why should you be giving them advice?
- f. How should you be perceived after messaging?



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Write, Write, Write

At this point, you should have communication goals, targeted audiences identified, and specific messaging ideas in place. Now bring it all together with some powerful content. Start writing content pieces that communicate your plan.

- Create blog posts or success stories of 750-1,000 words.
- Create six social media posts related to the content pieces.
- Make sure there are attention-getting headlines and images.
- Promote and have others comment and share.



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Create a Timeline

Week 1

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	LATE AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Week 2

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	LATE AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Week 3

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	LATE AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Week 4

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	LATE AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Measure Results

For each content piece measure the following: Pageviews (PV's), Likes, Shares, and Comments. Messages that receive positive results should be repeated; messages that aren't viewed should be discarded or changed.

Content: Title

	PV'S	LIKES	SHARES	COMMENTS
Website				
Facebook				
LinkedIn				
Twitter				



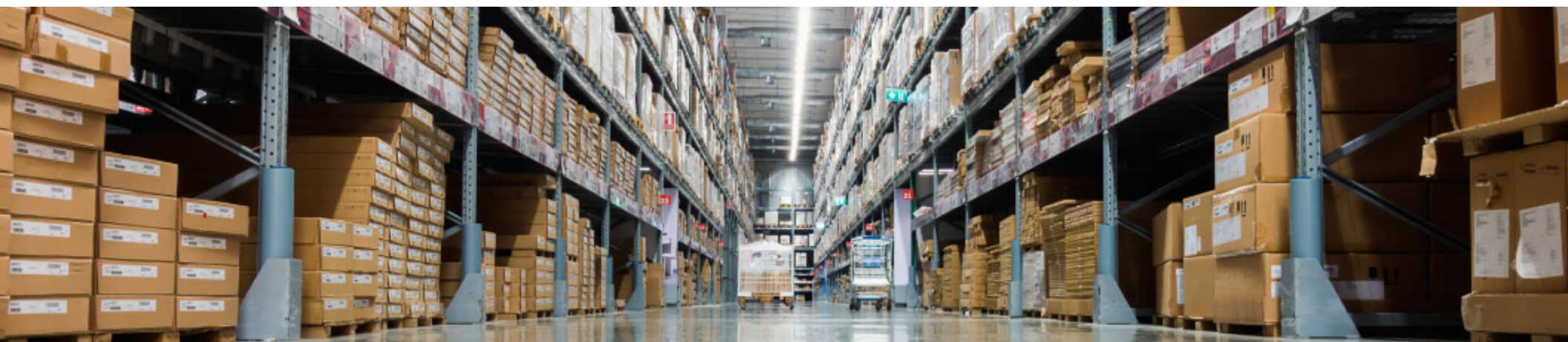
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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Content: Title

	PV'S	LIKES	SHARES	COMMENTS
Website				
Facebook				
LinkedIn				
Twitter				



OPENING
SOON

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Rating Template

Have members of your team or board complete the following rubric and measure the organization's response.

	RESPONSE	FOLLOW-UP	NEXT STEPS
Did we respond quickly?			
Did we address the basic information needs for internal and/or external stakeholders?			
Did we respond with humanity and care, showing empathy for people impacted by the crisis?			
When known, did we clearly explain what happened, what is happening, and what will happen next?			
If applicable, did we as an organization own our mistake(s)?			

CONTENT **FEATURES**



ARTICLE #1: COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Communities across the country have responded to the COVID-19 crisis by implementing various stages of stay-at-home practices and shutdowns of nonessential businesses. While those practices seem to have directionally reduced the feared spikes, they leave less money for local governments to pay for expected services such as public safety, trash collection, road work, and other programs. Now, governments seek how to maintain those services in their upcoming fiscal year budgets in the face of less revenue and more expenses.

Increased Local Expenses

The COVID-19 crisis has led to an increase in unexpected expenses for local governments across the nation as they bear the brunt of responding to daily events. Hazard pay for emergency responders and police, purchases of personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical equipment like ventilators and treating or testing COVID-19 patients were all unexpected budget requirements. The extent to which local governments have been affected varies widely by location.

Largest Concern is Decreasing Revenues

The other side of financial strain for local governments is decreasing revenues as businesses close and employees lose jobs while adhering to COVID-19 response requirements. The most significant concern for many local governments is the loss of tax revenue. And that concern is quite significant, as according to the Tax Policy Center, city and county governments received approximately 40% of their revenue in 2016 from taxes.

23

SNIPPET (Google Search)

Local governments turn to planning for life with COVID-19

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The various stages of stay-at-home practices and shutdowns of nonessential businesses implemented by local communities in response to COVID-19 leave less money for local governments to pay for expected services.

Local governments are busy understanding how to maintain their provided services for the upcoming fiscal year in the face of less revenue and more expenses.

Local city and county government officials look to replace lost revenues due to the COVID-19 crisis with options like dipping into reserve funds, redirecting previously approved projects, service cuts, layoffs, pay cuts and possible state or federal assistance.

As local government officials analyze how their COVID-19 response plans impact their budgets, they will balance needs, wants and affordability.

ARTICLE #1: COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CON.)

As states begin to open businesses again, the amount of revenue local governments will see soon is largely unknown at this time. For example, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds signed a new proclamation on April 27 to continue the State Public Health Emergency Declaration through May 27. It loosens social distancing measures in 77 Iowa counties, permitting retail establishments like restaurants, fitness centers, malls, libraries and race tracks to reopen in a limited fashion as long as they have public health measures in place. Local governments hope the return toward a more normal pattern of life will provide some relief, but it really is too early to tell the extent of the impact.

Uncertain Budgeting

As local and county governments add budgeting for the next fiscal year to their focus on the immediate COVID-19 crisis response, officials will take a calculated approach to replace lost revenues. Options such as dipping into reserve funds, redirecting funds assigned to maintenance projects or capital improvements, service cuts, layoffs, pay cuts and possible state or federal assistance are all part of the decision-making process.

The 2016 Tax Policy Center report indicated local governments got 32% of their general revenue from state government transfers. And if states are receiving less revenue from areas like property and income taxes, they may not be able to provide for local governments at regularly-sustained levels.

Any assistance from the federal government for local governments is still in limbo. The National League of Cities, United States Conference of Mayors and National Association of Counties has supported the federal government including \$250 billion in dedicated funding for all local governments. But federal government officials are still debating the best way to proceed in assisting local governments.

Many counties and cities find themselves fortunate to have already begun seeking alternative revenue sources in their budgeting process prior to the COVID-19 presence. Taking everything in total will be critical as they balance wants, needs, and affordability in determining services they can provide.

ARTICLE #2: DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYEES HEADING BACK TO WORK

The COVID-19 pandemic has swept across the country, bringing unprecedented changes with it. Employees and employers are working together to determine how to best protect everyone's health as they get businesses back on track. Naturally, questions abound for the employees in a wide range of industries who must now adapt to new workplace practices. who must go to work to provide for their families.

So the question is, for those who must go to their places of employment, what can they do to protect themselves, their families and others?

Workplace Environment

Every employee should expect their employer to attempt to lead the effort to provide a safe work environment. But working together with a proactive attitude and methodology toward enhancing workplace safety is critical. A good starting point is [guidelines](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for businesses to clean their workplace.

Additionally, employee participation in the development of new protocols for their workplace will result in effective, sustainable procedures. Finding unique methods to rotate shifts or tasks within shifts to match those procedures should be implemented immediately. Being knowledgeable about and working to protect the areas where employees come into contact with others is critical. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the U.S. Department of Labor have guidelines for preparing workplaces [here](#).

Every employee should take control of their own personal safety by following proper hygiene practices. The CDC indicates [healthy habits](#) are the best protection individuals can take. Cleaning hands, maintaining social distancing, reducing opportunities for contact with others and following the protection offered by their business are all increasingly important.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

*How Employees Can Stay Protected
Heading Back to Work*

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

*Read how employees can stay safe as they return
to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*The CDC is a good starting point with guidelines
for businesses to clean their workplace.*

*Workers are protected by employment laws,
including laws that allow them to collect
unemployment during the COVID-19
pandemic. Read more here.*

*Working together will be crucial to determine
how to best protect everyone's health while
attaining efficient business operations.*

ARTICLE #2: DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYEES HEADING BACK TO WORK (CON.)

Every employee should expect their company to follow these guidelines to make the workplace as safe as possible, working with their employers to do so. If an employee believes their employer is not attempting to follow these guidelines or if an employee has experienced retaliation or fears such actions, the employee should contact their state OSHA [department](#).

Home Environment

There is much an employee can do at home to stay healthy and able to work. Wash hands, cover coughs or sneezes and clean frequently are all standard practices, along with other CDC [guidelines](#). Individuals can also attempt to maintain a strong immunity, including managing stress. Numerous research studies have provided links between high levels of stress in individuals and illnesses. One reason may be stress can lead to neglect of other healthy habits, such as proper diets, exercise and sleep patterns. Eating too much processed or fried food will weaken the immune system and lead to inflammation. Exercising every day ensures proper antibody production and circulation, and lowering stress hormones. Doing so is always relative to a normal exercise level. For a person who doesn't exercise much normally, attempting a five-mile run may be worse for the immune system than a brisk 30-minute walk. Finally, a good night's rest is critical to allowing the body to maintain a healthy immune system. According to the Mayo Clinic, persons who do not get enough quality sleep are more likely to get sick after being exposed to a virus and take longer to recover. A typical adult should get between seven and eight hours of sleep nightly.

As businesses reopen, finding child care may be the most difficult challenge for many workers returning to their places of employment. Child care providers are balancing the ability to offer their services with limiting the spread of the virus. [Child Care Aware](#) is a national organization designed to provide assistance for those without options.

Getting to and from work presents significant challenges now as well. In general, treating a car like the home is advisable. Clean commonly used areas with sanitizing wipes or soap and water both before and after going to work. If public transportation is necessary, limit points of contact by avoiding touching anything and wearing disposable gloves. Keep hands and fingers away from the face and wash or sanitize hands as soon as possible.

ARTICLE #2: DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYEES HEADING BACK TO WORK (CON.)

Financial Protection

Once an employee is notified their workplace will be reopening, the employee must do so if able or eligibility for unemployment benefits may be threatened. However, the Americans with Disabilities Act and various states' human rights acts protect employees from discrimination on the basis of disability, including those involving the risk of contracting COVID-19. Workers have the right to request reasonable accommodations from their employer from businesses to allow them to continue working while maintaining their safety and health or that of a family member. Examples of reasonable accommodations include working from home, paid sick leave, staggered work schedules and changing workstations to allow social distancing. If the business is unable to provide a reasonable accommodation, an employee may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. The U.S. Department of Labor also provides protection for employees in terms of unemployment insurance. States have been given more flexibility to administer unemployment to those impacted by COVID-19.

Virus Symptoms

As businesses reopen, the chances of employees contracting the virus still exist. Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should quarantine themselves or seek medical attention, based on their level of severity. Many employers provide sick leave options, but for those that do not, the U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division is an appropriate resource on the path to providing sick leave. The Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires many employers to provide expanded family and medical leave for reasons related to COVID-19, with related information [here](#).

Transitioning to new workplace practices will be a significant change for employees and employers alike. Working together will be crucial to determine how to best protect everyone's health while attaining efficient business operations. The aforementioned items provide a good reference for resources that will help guide everyone back toward the lifestyle they had prior to the COVID-19 crisis.

ARTICLE #3: DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYERS OPENING FACILITIES DURING COVID-19

After intense reaction to COVID-19, employers across the country are beginning to reopen their business or consider doing so. One of the most significant questions arising is how to resume operations while protecting employees and customers. Simply opening the doors or restarting manufacturing equipment is not enough. Every business should act now to adapt their operations through new policies and expectations to protect against workplace exposure. Thankfully, significant resources exist for employers to thoughtfully lead the process of opening their businesses again.

Understanding each business's ability to reopen will generally be driven by state and local governments. The U.S Chamber of Commerce website provides [updates](#) on the status of each state. Current guidance for businesses and employers on what parameters should be met to reopen from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) can be found [here](#).

Create a Safe Workplace Prior to Opening

A business should prepare the workplace to be a safe environment prior to opening. To do so, a proactive attitude toward developing an acceptable methodology to enhance workplace safety is essential. The establishment of a **COVID-19 Response Team** at your business will improve the ability to not only prepare a safe work environment prior to opening, but maintain ongoing safe conditions. Assigning responsibilities for an overall leader, hygiene, communication, procedural and employee support functions are several possible roles. The **Response Team Leader** can manage the team while ensuring those involved have the resources needed.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

How to Protect Your Workplace and Employees as You Open Your Business

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Read here about what employers can do to create safe workplaces as they begin to reopen their business.

Every business should act now to adapt their operations through new policies and expectations to protect against workplace exposure.

Read here about the significant resources that exist for employers to thoughtfully lead the process of opening their businesses again.

A comprehensive plan and dedicated team can help maintain a safe workplace environment to protect employees and customers while keeping a business operational.

ARTICLE #3: DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYERS OPENING FACILITIES DURING COVID-19 (CON.)

A **Hygiene Leader** would be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the work environment. Sanitizing the physical business location is critical to limiting the spread of the virus. Personnel, materials and supplies will be necessary to maintain the safe workplace environment. The Hygiene Leader can develop a schedule for specific employees to clean and disinfect workplace areas, while ensuring the necessary PPE, such as face masks, face shields, gloves and other protective apparel, are easily available to those employees. Supplies of soap, hand sanitizer of at least 60% alcohol and disposable towelling should be placed throughout the workplace. Special attention should be placed on the areas and items most consistently used and visited, such as computers, electronics, workstations, restrooms and entrances/exits. The EPA has criteria for [disinfectants](#) that are appropriate for combating COVID-19. Air filters in HVAC systems should be changed out or replaced with those more adapted to reducing risk from the virus. Extensive directions for preparing safe workplaces can be found at the [U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA](#) or the [CDC](#).

Maintaining a Safe Workplace After Opening

In order to open, many businesses are being required by their state governments to create a COVID-19 response plan, including how they plan to maintain a safe workplace environment, educating employees and informing customers and clients. A **Procedural Leader** would be responsible for creating training materials for expectations regarding social distancing, PPE usage and employee hygiene while documenting that plan. Significant changes will be required to the physical workplace environment, employee scheduling and customer interface. Arranging desks and activity stations, adapting task requirements to minimize worker contact and implementing non-contact methods to deal with customers all are necessary. The CDC has ample information on how individuals can protect themselves [here](#).

Communication within the business and to external customers is critical to keeping a safe work environment and continuing operations. A **Communication Leader** would be responsible for communicating new protocol for workplace changes, social distancing, hygiene and cleaning to internal and external persons. Posting signage throughout the workplace and at customer interfaces is critical to notify individuals of new requirements. The CDC offers signs and posters in a wide range of languages [here](#).

ARTICLE #3: DIRECTION FOR EMPLOYERS OPENING FACILITIES DURING COVID-19 (CON.)

Providing consistent updates to keep employees knowledgeable of what is expected of them is critical. Many employees may be unsure if they should stay home from work if they develop COVID-19 symptoms and any repercussions if they do so. Employers should encourage those at high risk, those persons above age 60 and with pre-existing medical conditions, to stay home and work-from-home if possible. And employers should require those who are sick to stay home. The Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires certain employers to provide employees with expanded family and medical leave for COVID-19 reasons. Visit the U.S. Department of Labor [website](#) for the pertinent information.

Reaction to an Operating Workplace

As a business becomes operational, employees will face a number of variables that will cause new questions to arise frequently. An **Employee Resource Leader** would manage protocols to react to events as they unfold. This position would also be the contact point to assist employees with possible exposures or have a confirmed positive test for the virus. [Guidance](#) from the U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division can assist employers if an employee must leave work because they are sick or to care for a family member for COVID-19 reasons. The CDC provides [back-to-work direction](#) on when employees could first consider returning to the workplace.

In general, business owners and employees are equally eager to get back to work. A comprehensive, thoughtful plan and a dedicated team can help maintain a safe workplace environment to protect employees and customers while keeping a business operational.

ARTICLE #4: SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented change to the United States. Individuals and businesses alike are facing uncertainty unlike anything experienced in recent times. Lost income and health concerns coupled with the absence of social structures typically provided by extended family, friends and other relationships have given rise to high levels of stress and anxiety. Now, more than ever, the availability and accessibility of social services and assistance is critical to weathering this storm physically and mentally.

Employment Assistance

For many, simply having steady employment is the most important source of calm and reassurance needed for daily living. Those looking for employment should turn to their local job service providers like economic development authorities and local chambers of commerce for assistance. Organizations such as [LinkedIn](#), [Indeed.com](#), [Career Builder](#), [Idealist](#) and [Glassdoor.com](#) are helpful as well.

Financial Assistance

Finding employment has never been more challenging, however, but thankfully, significant assistance exists for individuals during the COVID-19 crisis. The Federal CARES Act provides unemployment benefits programs, such as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) to cover people who do not qualify for regular unemployment, such as self-employed people and independent contractors. Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) is an extension of regular unemployment benefits of up to 13 weeks. And the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) provides an extra \$600 per week for most on regular unemployment or PUA. Those unable to find a job can consult [careeronestop](#) to determine what unemployment benefits are available in their state. And the [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families](#) program can help provide financial assistance and related support.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

Support for Businesses and Individuals during the COVID-19 Pandemic

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Read here about support for individuals and businesses facing uncertainty unlike anything experienced in recent times.

More than ever, the availability and accessibility of social services and assistance is critical to weathering the COVID-19 crisis both physically and mentally.

Lost income, health concerns and the absence of social structures typically provided by extended family, friends and other relationships have given rise to high levels of stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 crisis.

Effective social support will help each individual and business to lean on the power of all to maintain their well-being through the COVID-19 crisis.

ARTICLE #4: SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (CON.)

Housing

Facing an inability to pay upcoming mortgage or utility payments is another source of stress. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides resources for homeowners and renters [here](#). Specifically in response to the COVID-19 crisis, many borrowers are eligible to stop paying their monthly mortgage for six months or at least reduce the payment. Additional financing [assistance](#) options provided by the Federal Housing Finance Agency are also available. The number of persons facing homelessness has increased during this crisis. For those facing such a stressful situation, read about [resources](#) here. Regarding utility payments, the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#) helps provide low-income families with heating and cooling energy costs.

Food Resources

The ability to provide proper food and nutrition has become an issue for a greater number of people during the past few months as well. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service provides many options for families to find the [food](#) they need. The [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) traditionally serves millions of people annually, ensuring that they and their families have access to nutritious food options and the program has increased its efforts during the COVID-19 crisis.

Health Care Coverage

Losing health care insurance during the pandemic is a source of high anxiety. Employees who have lost their job or been furloughed can turn to the [COBRA Continuation Coverage](#) as a source for maintaining critical health care. Medicare and Medicaid may also provide options for certain individuals. [Medicare](#) provides health insurance for people 65 and older while [Medicaid](#) provides insurance to low-income individuals, families and children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Beyond those resources, use the [benefits.gov](#) website to determine if there are other programs to fit your needs.

Mental Health

Finding ways to cope with all of the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic are important for all persons, regardless of situations prior to this crisis. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [website](#) offers excellent opportunities to seek out treatment, while the Mental Health America [website](#) provides information and resources covering a wide range of needs.

ARTICLE #4: SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (CON.)

Domestic Abuse

Unfortunately, difficult, trying times can lead to more domestic abuse. The National Domestic Violence Hotline, at www.thehotline.org, is available 24/7 with highly trained experts to speak confidentially with anyone experiencing or witnessing domestic violence. It also provides support to persons concerned about a friend or family member.

Child Care

As businesses reopen, finding child care may be the most difficult challenge for many workers returning to their places of employment. Child care providers are balancing the ability to offer their services with limiting the spread of the virus. For those without other options, [Child Care Aware](#) is a national organization designed to provide assistance. And if your children become sick, the Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) exists to require many employers to provide employees with expanded family and medical leave for reasons related to COVID-19. Information for employers and workers to follow when responding to those reasons related to COVID-19, can be found [here](#).

Together We Survive

In such trying times, the success of all depends on everyone banding together through kindness, understanding and empathy. By doing so, each individual, whether as an employer or employee, worker or family member, business owner or service provider, will be able to lean on the power of everyone to maintain their well-being through this crisis.

ARTICLE #5: HOW TO ADAPT YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW PRODUCT DEMAND DURING COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed many businesses to attempt to transition their capabilities to new product and service markets. As companies both large and small seek to reopen, one key to their success will be how quickly they can find new markets and how efficiently they can change their production capabilities to meet the demand of new customers.

Finding the Demand

Matching potential new markets to products and services your business can provide will require a high degree of communication and understanding your current capabilities. Staying connected with customers is of utmost importance now more than ever. An immediate market quickly arising in the post-COVID-19 arena is consumer medical products, such as masks, gloves and other PPE. Kearney, a global management consulting firm has forecasted a [model](#) for the shortfall for such products. Their analysis indicates a 1,600% increase in daily demand for basic medical consumables such as respirator masks, gowns, visors, and swabs. The fact this will occur with significantly disrupted supply chains may provide opportunities for other manufacturers to fill those gaps.

Beyond the medical field, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a good source for locating [product demand trends](#) in your area. Whether a business was able to maintain product or had to close and is now in the process of reopening, meeting those trends likely requires altering the way they operate. And those alterations may require changes to both the supply chain and the customer resource management environment. Fast and thoughtful decision-making will be required to repurpose a business.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

How to Adapt Your Business to New Product Demand

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Read how businesses can attempt to transition their capabilities to new products and services in the post-COVID-19 markets.

Matching potential new markets to products and services a business can provide will require a high degree of customer communication while understanding your current capabilities.

Keeping your business operating with new products and services will certainly involve quick and unique thinking, but may require expediting a normal business plan.

Communicating with current customers and adapting a business to meet their needs will help build on old markets but may also show the way to developing new product demand.

ARTICLE #5: HOW TO ADAPT YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW PRODUCT DEMAND DURING COVID-19 (CON.)

How to Repurpose

Keeping your business operating with new products and services will certainly involve quick and unique thinking, but may require expediting a normal business plan. Once a market analysis delivers possible products or services in demand, a sequential process involving product development, supply chain availability, production trials and production capability is generally utilized over an extended period of time to match product requirements with business capabilities. Those steps may need to be run simultaneously to a greater degree to not only keep employees at work and equipment operating, but beat other potential providers to the market. The organization of a streamlined team to manage the repurposing process will be critical in the product development to eliminate the possibility of costly rework situations.

Examples

When seeking new products and services to match your businesses capabilities, nothing helps more than reviewing other success stories. Trophies Plus is an Iowa business successfully [transitioning](#) to medical supply products, while Newman Signs in North Dakota has applied its acrylic cutting capabilities to [barriers](#) for businesses with customer interfaces. Another good source is ShareAmerica, the U.S. Department of State's platform for communicating American foreign policy worldwide and its website has [examples](#) of businesses changing production to meet demand during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whether a business is reopening or preparing to do so, now is the time to determine what the marketplace looks like. Communicating with current customers and adapting a business to meet their needs will help build on old markets but may also show the way to developing new product demand.

ARTICLE #6: LOCAL COMPANY “TROPHIES PLUS, INC.” COVID-19 EQUALS NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

This article originally appeared on carrollareadev.com website.

Trophies Plus, Inc., has historically made awards and signs for high schools and youth organizations around the Midwest. But as the COVID-19 crisis spread to rural Iowa, the company has learned to lean on the “Plus” side of its name.

“We’ve had to turn to markets we were not involved in prior to this crisis,” said Jim Jensen, owner of Trophies Plus. “None of them are very profitable right now, but it allows me to keep my people employed and busy until things start moving again.”

Trophies Plus, of Carroll County, specializes in creating custom branded awards and promotional products for over 400 high schools nationally, including 200 in Iowa alone. It also provides custom awards to national sporting and academic events and corporations, like the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union, Iowa Games, the United States Academic Decathlon, WNIT Basketball and Volleyball, the United States Chess Federation and AAU Wrestling.

Reaction to COVID-19

But the demand for those products has dwindled as schools and organizations cancel their typical springtime activities. So Trophies Plus has turned to alternative products to keep their business active.

“To start, we changed our chenille department that makes letterman jackets over and started sewing masks and hospital gowns for local nursing homes and hospitals,” said Jensen. “And we put our lasers to use by cutting out plastic to help make face shields.”

The company also began making personalized signs for order to thank community essential workers or recognize graduating high school seniors. Trophies Plus charges \$25 per sign but donates \$15 per sign to a food bank or charity in the community the sign went to. So far they have over 100 signs in Carroll, Sac, Calhoun and Audubon Counties and have shipped signs to other communities all over the Midwest.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

Carroll County company learns to lean on the “Plus” side of its name during the COVID-19 crisis.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Have you heard about the company that learned to lean on the “Plus” side of its name during the COVID-19 crisis? Read about Trophies Plus here.

Learn how one rural Iowa company had to turn to new markets in response to the COVID-19 crisis here.

In response to COVID-19, Trophies Plus has started sewing masks and hospital gowns for local nursing homes and hospitals and put their lasers to use by cutting out plastic to make face shields.

Learn more about how the owner of Trophies Plus doesn’t know exactly what the future holds for the company, but he is sure it will be there at the end of COVID-19.

ARTICLE #6: LOCAL COMPANY “TROPHIES PLUS, INC.” COVID-19 EQUALS NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES (CON.)

Original COVID-19 Impact

The change in production was necessitated by the fact the company has experienced over \$800,000 in cancellations so far, as schools and sporting events were cancelled, with no need for the event awards. And Jensen said this could impact Trophies Plus over more than just this year, with the possibility of an additional \$350,000 loss.

“We expect track to be completely cancelled for most of the country, but we had already delivered the majority of Iowa track items in January,” said Jensen. “If they don’t need them now, they will most likely use them next year, which means they won’t order next year.”

Another large source of their income is the senior awards, academic awards and those for clubs like speech and drama typically handed out at graduation ceremonies. But a few schools have called saying they plan to do a virtual graduation.

“We will roll with the punches, but either way, I have to assume there won’t be the volume we are used to,” said Jensen.

Help of a small community

The change in production would not have been possible alone. While the company did receive funding through the Payroll Protection Program (PPP), Jensen said he is not sure that would have been possible without the help of their local bank.

“I have to say one of the largest benefits was working with my local bank, because Ryan Milligan and his team at Commercial Savings Bank in Carroll were completely on the ball with all of the programs available to their partners,” he said. “They care about their customers and want us to survive, which is a lot different than national banks where you are just a number.”

Jensen said he is hearing horror stories from industry colleagues in larger cities where their banks have not submitted their applications for the stimulus package and are even having issues getting answers from their banks. In contrast, the Carroll Area Development Corporation, local bank and many local agencies and government offices have been emailing and updating information on options and availability of help since this began.

“Having that support group, along with other business leaders, has helped us realize that everyone is dealing with the same worries,” said Jensen.

ARTICLE #6: LOCAL COMPANY “TROPHIES PLUS, INC.” COVID-19 EQUALS NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES (CON.)

Uncertain Future

Those worries are sure to extend into the summer months as areas attempt to move back to historical business and life patterns. But Jensen said he is not sure what that “normal” will look like. He is hopeful regular business will pick up but he also sees an opportunity to focus on new markets. The company has been working with an advertising firm to start to figure out what the new Trophies Plus will look like, and will be aggressively marketing starting in a couple weeks.

“I believe we have created some new customers within the healthcare industry, based on our help with gowns, masks and face shields,” said Jensen. “I don’t know exactly what the future holds for us at Trophies Plus, but I’m sure we will be here at the end of this.”



ARTICLE #7: NEWMAN SIGNS LITERALLY RAISING BARRIERS TO FIGHT COVID-19

This article originally appeared on growingjamestown.com website.

Newman Signs typically manufactures and distributes signs for a wide range of traffic, urban and outdoor advertising. As the demand for billboards, window decals, vehicle graphics, art canvas, banners, posters and other specialty signs dried up with COVID-19 uncertainties, the company has repurposed their manufacturing capabilities to produce acrylic barriers for a wide range of businesses. The company has learned literally raising barriers to combat the virus has been in great demand. So great, in fact, that the raw material may not last much longer.

"Those with a need for this type of product for their business need to order soon," said Ramone Gumke, operations manager at Newman Signs. "In about three weeks, we and similar manufacturers will be out of the raw acrylic."

COVID-19 Impact and Reaction

As a division of Newman Signs in Jamestown, North Dakota, Newman Print is a commercial printing business. In a normal year, their peak production season typically begins in March, but that has definitely taken a detour this year. In reaction to the COVID-19 crisis, Newman has repurposed their acrylic cutting equipment to supply barriers for businesses having customer interfaces. They've been able to produce free-standing clear acrylic sheets that can be set up in business environments to provide a barrier between employees and customers. The sheets can be easily taken down or moved around. And "business has been quite hectic," said Gumke.

"Now that states like North Dakota are beginning to open back up, businesses are in a mad scramble to prepare to open," he said. "Everyone with the manufacturing capability is trying to produce these products."

Demand has been so high that the supply of uncut raw sheets of acrylic is now backordered to as much as 120 days. Newman has taken orders from across the country from customers such as the U.S. Postal Service, Sanford Health and doctor offices.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

Newman Signs is literally raising barriers to fight COVID-19.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Have you heard about the Jamestown company raising barriers to fight COVID-19? Read about Newman Signs here.

Newman Signs has repurposed their manufacturing capabilities to produce acrylic barriers to help a wide range of companies get back to business.

Newman Signs is able to produce free-standing clear acrylic sheets that can be set up in business environments to provide a barrier between employees and customers. As those businesses respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

Newman Signs hopes business will get back to normal once business reopen this summer because their customers will have a big need for advertising.

ARTICLE #7: NEWMAN SIGNS LITERALLY RAISING BARRIERS TO FIGHT COVID-19 (CON.)

“It seems like every order this week has been a different dentist or orthodontist office,” said Gumke. “With the supply dwindling, if they don’t get their orders in soon, they will have to wait quite a while.”

Jamestown and JSDC Help

Newman has been located in Jamestown 60 years, where it has benefitted from a central location both within the state and the country. But the company knows it has been extremely fortunate with the available workforce found in the city. Gumke said without the Jamestown/Stutsman Development Corporation (JSDC), the community would not continue to grow and Newman would not have access to that high quality workforce.

“The JSDC has been a great partner, bringing in complementary businesses to keep the community vibrant,” he said.

While the company leans on its acrylic capabilities as a way to get through the current crisis, Gumke expects their regular print business to come back. Once businesses and individuals are more financially secure, they’re going to need to play catch-up with their advertising to maximize their sales and profits, he said.

“With all our different product divisions hosting customers with a big need for advertising, I expect business to be busier than a normal year,” said Gumke.



ARTICLE #8: HELP US TO GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK FOLLOWING COVID-19

Over 36 million Americans filed for unemployment in the wake of COVID-19. The Cares Act and Paycheck Protection Program have offered some temporary assistance, but the focus needs to be on economic recovery post-COVID-19 and getting people back to work. We understand that we have an important role to play in helping businesses and workers to make the transition from temporary joblessness to productive employment and are ready to help.

We are Thinking Strategically

Getting people back to work will be a process that could take months, a year or more. As such, we are considering initiatives with the longview in mind. We invite business leaders to work with us to help in the creation of these strategic plans. Knowing that, here are some things to consider:

#1 Do you have any immediate hiring needs?

If you were hiring before COVID-19, can those positions still be filled? We can provide advertising and recruiting assistance to help get businesses the talent then need and community members back to work.

#2 Do you have technology and remote work needs?

Let us know if there are technology needs, such as at-home internet and laptops, that if fulfilled would make it possible to get employees back to work on a remote basis. We will help however possible.

#3 Do you have a plan for reopening?

What support is necessary to reopen? What plans and policies do you have in place? We can help to create them and assist by providing hiring or training support as needed.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

Focusing needs on economic recovery post-COVID-19 and getting people back to work.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Economic Development Agency Name% is providing support to businesses who have technology needs as they bring employees back to work remotely.

Businesses should contact %Economic Development Agency Name% regarding their hiring needs and what they will require to get employees back to work.

ARTICLE #8: HELP US TO GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK FOLLOWING COVID-19 (CON.)

#4 We are providing policy and guidelines support

Policies and guidelines are constantly influx in regards to what constitutes healthy working conditions. These guidelines are changing as we move through the stages of reopening. We are providing assistance by breaking down the guidelines into easy to understand hand-outs and informational pieces.

Contact Us for Support

We are here to provide help and support now and as your business reopens. Contact us today to discover how we can make the process easier.



PRESS **RELEASES**



PRESS RELEASE: %EDCNAME% OFFERS FREE COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT TO BUSINESSES REOPENING AFTER COVID-19

City, State, Date, 2020 – %EDC Name% is offering free communications support and tools for businesses who are reopening as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. COVID-19 has forced many businesses to either close temporarily or change how they do business and serve customers. To ensure that customers and the community at-large understand when and how businesses are reopening, the EDC is making available a variety of communications tools that includes press releases and social media posts and graphics.

%EDC Name% has a mission to support local businesses and does so through the implementation of programs, meeting with business owners, and providing individualized assistance and recommendations based on specific business needs. Providing communications support during this time is one additional way %EDC Name% is helping businesses to reopen and recover as the community enters various stages of reopening following COVID-19 restrictions.

Businesses are invited to contact %Representative Name and Title% at <https://www.thehotline.org/> by emailing %email address% or calling %phone number%. %EconomicDevelopmentOrganization/CityDepartment% is available to help businesses with communications needs, to navigate reopening guidelines and to answer questions during the hours of %hours% %days%. "The businesses in our community provide jobs and a high quality of life. Our goal is to provide assistance and support to promote their recovery as we recover from the restrictions put in place during COVID-19," said %Economic Developer Name and Title%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%EDC Name% is offering free communications support and tools for businesses who are reopening as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Businesses should contact %EDC Name% for FREE tools that can help them to communicate reopening guidelines and safety measures with customers.

%EDC Name% has made free press releases available to local businesses looking to communicate their reopening plans and policies with the general public. Contact us for more information.

About %Economic Development Agency%
Insert 'About Us' from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %RETAIL BUSINESS% OPENS FOR CUSTOMERS FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Business Name% is now open to serve customers during the hours of %hours% %Days%. With COVID-19 restrictions lifted, they are now able to serve an unlimited number of customers at any given time. The business is a staple in %City% and known for its %popular items%. Community members have supported the business throughout the years and are looking forward to them reopening fully.

Insert quote from the business. Example, “We appreciate all of the support the community has provided us and look forward to serving all of our customers in the ways they are accustomed to. We can’t wait to see everyone!”

%Business Name% has been following health and safety guidelines to ensure that customers and employees remain safe as we move towards life beyond COVID-19. This included limiting the number of customers that could enter the building at any one time and ensuring that customers remain six feet apart when checking out. Now that social distancing is no longer required, they will be open for business as usual while still following the strong sanitization policies they had put in place.

“We appreciate %Business Name% opening up to serve customers. They are a valuable part of our community and we appreciate their efforts to open safely and provide community members with the opportunity to purchase the products they love while enjoying time with their family and friends,” said %EDC Representative%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Business Name% is open for business and serving customers in %City%.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Business Name% is now open for shoppers and following safe social distancing guidelines. Click for their hours and what they are doing to keep customers and employees safe.

Help us to congratulate %Business Name% on re-opening for in-person shopping post-COVID-19. See how they are doing so while keeping employees and customers safe.

About %Business Name%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMMUNITYNAME% ENTERS STAGE 1 OF REOPENING FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Community Name% entered/will enter Stage 1 of reopening on %Date%. The community is taking a staged approach to reopening to ensure that COVID-19 remains contained and that opening up does not cause the virus to spread further. As such, certain social distancing measures are necessary and we urge community members to closely follow the guidelines.

Business types open during Stage 1 include:

- Insert business list
- Stage 1 reopening guidelines include:
- Insert bullet points of guidelines

%EconomicDevelopmentOrganization/CityDepartment% is available to help businesses to navigate these guidelines and to answer questions during the hours of %hours% %days%. The businesses in our community provide jobs and a high quality of life. Our goal is to provide assistance and support to promote their recovery as we come out of COVID-19 restrictions.

Insert quote from economic developer. Example, "We appreciate the hard work of businesses and community members in following the guidelines necessary to ensure that we reopen safely and steadily. We are here to provide ongoing support and will continue to communicate guideline changes as they are released by the governor's office."

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Community Name% entered Stage 1 of reopening on %Date%. Read for information on guidelines.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Community Name% entered Stage 1 of reopening on %Date%. Read for information on guidelines.

Community Members! We have entered Stage 1 of reopening where many of your favorite activities and businesses will be open, but following safety guidelines. Read to learn more.

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMMUNITYNAME% ENTERS STAGE 2 OF REOPENING FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Community Name% entered/will enter Stage 2 of reopening on %Date%. “Stage 1 of reopening went smoothly thanks to the businesses and community members who were dedicated to public safety,” said %EDC Director/Mayor%. The community is taking a staged approach to reopening to ensure that COVID-19 remains contained and that opening up does not cause the virus to spread further. As such, certain social distancing measures are necessary and we urge community members to closely follow the guidelines as we enter Stage 2.

Business types open during Stage 2 include:

- Insert business list
- Stage 2 reopening guidelines include:
- Insert bullet points of guidelines

%EconomicDevelopmentOrganization/CityDepartment% is available to help businesses to navigate these guidelines and to answer questions during the hours of %hours% %days%. The businesses in our community provide jobs and a high quality of life. Our goal is to provide assistance and support to promote their recovery as we come out of COVID-19 restrictions.

Insert quote from economic developer. Example, “We appreciate the hard work of businesses and community members in following the guidelines necessary to ensure that we reopen safely and steadily. We are here to provide ongoing support and will continue to communicate guideline changes as they are released by the governor’s office.”

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Community Name% entered Stage 2 of reopening on %Date%. Read for information on guidelines.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Community Name% entered Stage 2 of reopening on %Date%. Read for information on guidelines.

Community Members! We have entered Stage 2 of reopening where many of your favorite activities and businesses will be open, but following safety guidelines. Read to learn more.

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMMUNITYNAME% ENTERS STAGE 3 OF REOPENING FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Community Name% entered/will enter Stage 3 of reopening on %Date%. “Stage 1 and 2 of reopening went smoothly thanks to the businesses and community members who were dedicated to public safety,” said %EDC Director/Mayor%. The community has taken a staged approach to reopening to ensure that COVID-19 remains contained and that opening up did not cause the virus to spread further. As such, certain social distancing measures were necessary and have allowed us to enter Stage 3.

Business types open during Stage 3 include:

- Insert business list
- Stage 3 reopening guidelines include:
- Insert bullet points of guidelines

%EconomicDevelopmentOrganization/CityDepartment% is available to help businesses to navigate these guidelines and to answer questions during the hours of %hours% %days%. The businesses in our community provide jobs and a high quality of life. Our goal is to provide assistance and support to promote their recovery as we recover from the restrictions put in place during COVID-19.

Insert quote from economic developer. Example, “We appreciate the hard work of businesses and community members in following the guidelines necessary to ensure that we reopen safely and steadily. We are here to provide ongoing support and will continue to communicate guideline changes as they are released by the governor’s office.”

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Community Name% entered Stage 3 of reopening on %Date%. Read for information on guidelines.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Community Name% entered Stage 3 of reopening on %Date%. Read for information on guidelines.

Community Members! We have entered Stage 3 of reopening where many of your favorite activities and businesses will be open, but following safety guidelines. Read to learn more.

*About %Economic Development Agency%
Insert ‘About Us’ from the website*

PRESS RELEASE: %MANUFACTURING COMPANY% OPENS BUSINESS WHILE FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Business Name% is now open for operations %Days%. While operations were temporarily disrupted due to COVID-19, they have been preparing to resume shifts and get employees back to work. The business is a staple in %City%, employing residents and manufacturing %product name%. They have been a strong supporter of this community and everyone is looking forward to them reopening.

Insert quote from the business. Example, “We appreciate all of the support the community has provided us and look forward to getting back to business. We can’t wait to see all of our incredible employees!”

%Business Name% is following health and safety guidelines to ensure that employees remain safe as we move towards life beyond COVID-19. This includes limiting the number of employees that work in a given area at any one time, and ensuring that people remain six feet apart when on breaks. These policies are in place to allow employees to return to work while practicing safe social distancing. The facility is also being sanitized throughout the day and employees are engaging in constant hand washing and hand sanitizing.

“We appreciate %Business Name% opening up and bringing their employees back to work while following safe social distancing practices. They are a valuable part of our community and we appreciate their efforts to open safely while supporting their many local employees” said %EDC Representative%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Business Name% has resumed operations in %City%.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Business Name% has resumed operations and brought employees back to work. They are doing so while following safe social distancing guidelines. Click for their hours and what they are doing to keep customers and employees safe.

Help us to congratulate %Business Name% on resuming work and bringing employees back following COVID-19. See how they are doing so while keeping employees and customers safe.

About %Business Name%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMPANY NAME% OPENS BUSINESS WHILE FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Business Name% is now open for operations %Days%. While business operations were temporarily disrupted due to COVID-19, with some employees working from home, they have been preparing to open to customers and get their employees back to work. The business is a staple in %City%, employing residents and %list their service or product for example “keeping teeth health” or “providing valuable legal services”%. They have been a strong supporter of this community and everyone is looking forward to them reopening.

Insert quote from the business. Example, “We appreciate all of the support the community has provided us and look forward to getting back to business. We can’t wait to see all of our incredible employees and begin serving customers again!”

%Business Name% is following health and safety guidelines to ensure that employees and customers remain safe as we move towards life beyond COVID-19. This includes limiting the number of employees that work in a given area at any one time, ensuring that employees remain six feet apart when on breaks, and scheduling appointments so that customers have limited interactions with one another. These policies are in place to allow customers to be served and employees to return to work while practicing safe social distancing. The office is also being sanitized throughout the day and employees are engaging in constant hand washing and hand sanitizing.

“We appreciate %Business Name% opening up, serving customers, and bringing their employees back to work while following safe social distancing practices. They are a valuable part of our community and we appreciate their efforts to open safely while continuing to serve the community and their customers” said %EDC Representative%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Business Name% is open for business in %City%.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Business Name% is now open and following safe social distancing guidelines. Click for their hours and what they are doing to keep customers and employees safe.

Help us to congratulate %Business Name% on re-opening their doors post-COVID-19. See how they are doing so while keeping employees and customers safe.

About %Business Name%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMPANYNAME% OPENS RESTAURANT FOR DINE-IN FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Restaurant Name% is now open for dine-in during the hours of %hours% %Days%. The restaurant is a staple in %City% and known for its %favorite food item%. Community members have supported the business by ordering takeout during COVID-19 restrictions and are looking forward to the restaurant reopening for dine-in service.

Insert quote from the business. Example, “We appreciate all of the support the community has provided us and look forward to serving customers through dine-in service. We can’t wait to see everyone!”

%Restaurant Name% is following health and safety guidelines to ensure that customers and employees remain safe as we move towards life beyond COVID-19. This includes seating customers six feet apart to ensure that families can enjoy a meal out while practicing safe social distancing. Tables and chairs are also being sanitized between guests and employees are engaging in constant hand washing and hand sanitizing.

“We appreciate %Business Name% opening up for dine-in service while following safe social distancing practices. They are a valuable part of our community and we appreciate their efforts to open safely and provide community members with the opportunity to enjoy time with their family and friends,” said %EDC Representative%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Restaurant Name% is open for dine-in service in %City%.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%RestaurantName% is now open for dine-in service and following safe social distancing guidelines. Click for their hours and what they are doing to keep customers and employees safe.

Help us to congratulate %Restaurant Name% on re-opening for dine-in service post-COVID-19. See how they are doing so while keeping employees and customers safe.

About %Restaurant Name%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMPANYNAME% OPENS RESTAURANT FOR DINE-IN AT FULL CAPACITY

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Restaurant Name% is now open for dine-in during the hours of %hours% %Days%. Now that COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, the restaurant is open at full capacity and eager to serve customers looking to spend time with family and celebrate special occasions. The restaurant is a staple in %City% and known for its %favorite food item%. Community members have supported the business by ordering takeout during COVID-19 restrictions and visiting the restaurant for dine-in service when it was open for limited capacity seating.

Insert quote from the business. Example, "We appreciate all of the support the community has provided us and look forward to serving all of our faithful customers. We can't wait to see everyone and for the restaurant to be open for all of life's celebrations!"

%Restaurant Name% has following health and safety guidelines to ensure that customers and employees remain safe as we move towards life beyond COVID-19. Now that restrictions have lifted, they will be serving an unlimited number of customers while still following the important sanitization processes that were previously implemented.

"We appreciate %Business Name% opening up for full capacity dining and will do our best to support their efforts. They are a valuable part of our community and we appreciate their efforts to open safely and provide community members with the opportunity to enjoy time with their family and friends," said %EDC Representative%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Restaurant Name% is open for dine-in service in %City%.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%RestaurantName% is now open for dine-in service and following safe social distancing guidelines. Click for their hours and what they are doing to keep customers and employees safe.

Help us to congratulate %Restaurant Name% on re-opening for dine-in service post-COVID-19. See how they are doing so while keeping employees and customers safe.

About %Restaurant Name%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert 'About Us' from the website

PRESS RELEASE: %COMPANYNAME% OPENS BUSINESS FOR CUSTOMERS FOLLOWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

City, State, Date, 2020 – %Business Name% is now open to serve customers during the hours of %hours% %Days%. The business is a staple in %City% and known for its %popular items%. Community members have supported the business throughout the years and are looking forward to them reopening.

Insert quote from the business. Example, “We appreciate all of the support the community has provided us and look forward to serving customers. We can’t wait to see everyone!”

%Business Name% is following health and safety guidelines to ensure that customers and employees remain safe as we move towards life beyond COVID-19. This includes limiting the number of customers that can enter the building at any one time and ensuring that customers remain six feet apart when checking out. These policies are in place to allow customers to enjoy their shopping experience while practicing safe social distancing. Counters are also being sanitized throughout the day and employees are engaging in constant hand washing and hand sanitizing.

“We appreciate %Business Name% opening up to serve customers while following safe social distancing practices. They are a valuable part of our community and we appreciate their efforts to open safely and provide community members with the opportunity to purchase the products they love while enjoy time with their family and friends,” said %EDC Representative%.

SNIPPET (Google Search)

%Business Name% is open for business and serving customers in %City%.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

%Business Name% is now open for shoppers and following safe social distancing guidelines. Click for their hours and what they are doing to keep customers and employees safe.

Help us to congratulate %Business Name% on re-opening for in-person shopping post-COVID-19. See how they are doing so while keeping employees and customers safe.

About %Business Name%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

About %Economic Development Agency%

Insert ‘About Us’ from the website

SOCIAL **MEDIA**



SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The SBA resumed accepting Paycheck Protection Program applications from participating lenders on April 27. To find out which businesses can protect employee wages by applying for the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) loan, go to [Paycheck Protection](#).

Image: 31

Did you know the [SBA@SBAgov](#) is hiring temporary employees to assist with disaster relief efforts? To find out if there are jobs to meet your needs, go to [SBA Disaster Response Jobs](#).

Image: 29

Did you know only certain lenders are able to administer loans as part of the [SBA@SBAgov](#) Paycheck Protection Program? Use the SBA's search tool to find an approved [lender](#).

Image: 31

[SBA@SBAgov](#) is accepting new Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and Advance applications on a limited basis only to U.S. agricultural businesses. To learn more about eligibility and apply, [click here](#).

Image: 32

The Federal CARES Act provides unemployment benefits programs, such as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Find the benefits available with your state's specific program [here](#).

Image: 32

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has issued a step-by-step guide for small businesses and self-employed individuals to apply for loans. Read the guide [here](#).

Image: 28

Worried that you haven't filed your taxes yet? Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the IRS has [extended](#) the filing deadline to July 15. Most state departments of revenues have matched the [deadline](#) for state returns.

Image: None

What PPE should I wear as businesses reopen? Keeping up with accurate recommendations can appear daunting. Read the latest recommendations by [@OSHA_DOL](#) at [here](#).

Image: 27

The CARES Act originally established a \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund for small governments. Go to the U.S. Department of Treasury website to learn if there are any new updates on [assistance](#) for state, local and tribal governments.

Image: 26

Everyone wants to open their business as soon as possible after the initial COVID-19 response. Review the CDC [guidance](#) on how to get your business going again and start down the road of economic recovery!

Image: 25

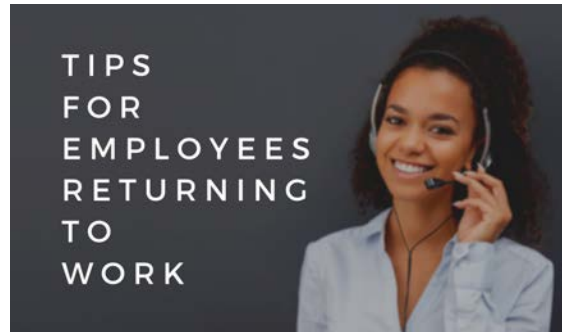
IMAGE **GALLERY**



SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGES



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9

SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGES



10



11

PROTECTING
YOUR
EMPLOYEES

HOW-TO GUIDE FOR

Salons



12



13



14



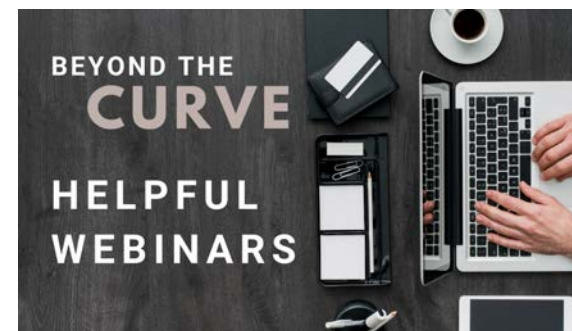
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SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGES



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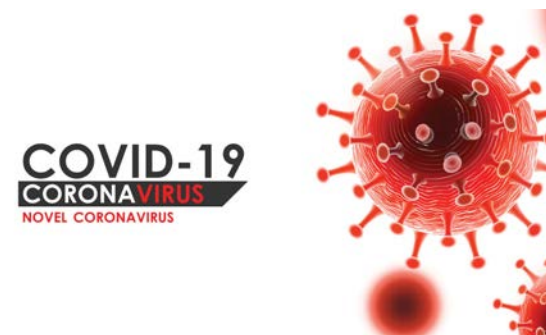
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31



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33



34



35



36

TEAMWORK



GOLDEN SHOVEL TASK FORCE



Amanda Jenkins

GateKeeper Representative ■ 530.227.2223 ■ ajenkins@goldenshovelagency.com

As a Gatekeeper Client Manager for Golden Shovel Agency, Amanda Jenkins works directly with economic development leaders in communities across the country. Her educational background and experience includes marketing, media and project management. Amanda's Golden Shovel clients benefit from her most recent experience managing an economic development organization in rural California, which gives her a unique understanding of her client's hurdles and successes.



Warren Westcott

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As the National Sales Manager for Golden Shovel Agency, Warren Westcott works closely with economic development leaders from coast to coast each day. His 30+ years of work experience in higher education, digital media communications, emergency management, and economic development allow him to assess community challenges in a unique way. He is a focused listener for the leaders and their communities during this COVID-19 time of crisis. Through in-depth FactFinder sessions, he and his colleagues can then pin-point sound communication strategies for the uncertain road ahead. Our most successful strategies are those that are persuasive, compelling, and measurable.



Chuck Friedbauer

Lead Copywriter ■ 952.237.1139 ■ cfriedbauer@goldenshovelagency.com

As a copywriter for Golden Shovel Agency Chuck Friedbauer tells stories about local communities, businesses and the people that make their corner of the world special. His Golden Shovel clients benefit from his 13 years of experience as a journalist and content writer. Chuck's educational background is in chemical engineering and he loves to combine his technical knowledge with the inspiring stories of economic success in communities across the country.



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