



# How to Adjust Your Marketing and Messaging to Stand Out After Reopening

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## **SUMMARY**

Messaging surrounding reopening requires forethought and planning. Discover how you can reassure your customers about returning as your business reopens.

Even with a second surge of COVID cases across the U.S., many businesses continue to press reopening — albeit with more stringent safety measures and social distancing rules. In order to cut through the confusion and better connect with customers, it's likely these companies will need to change their marketing and messaging approach to signal they're open and ready for business in the new normal.

“It's important to spell out for potential customers what the new normal is going to look like when your business reopens. Marketing is the ideal vehicle for relaying that,” says Rene Langer, CEO of [PickHVAC](#), an HVAC repair company. Langer's company deals with contractors who perform on-site services for customers in their homes and businesses.

“We're currently taking steps to craft marketing messaging centered on making customers comfortable with once again bringing outsiders into their homes and offices,” says Langer.

## Top Priorities in Reopening Messaging

As your business reopens, communicating your sanitation and social distancing practices should be a cornerstone of your external messaging. These messages can be seamlessly incorporated into [your company's marketing plans](#) in a way that assuages customer uncertainty about returning to your place of business.

The best customer relationships are built on trust and positivity. Now more than ever, it's important that your marketing reinforce these themes.

—*Moira Vetter, CEO, Modo Modo Agency*

“It can't be overstated how much anxiety and fear the coronavirus pandemic has caused for consumers,” says Langer. “More than anything, though, it has left an information vacuum. Customers don't know what safe reopening looks like. That gives you an opportunity to present your business as a trustworthy, dependable voice.”

As Langer sees it, this is an ideal opportunity to earn brand loyalty.

“Marketing going forward requires a soft touch and a great deal of empathy,” he says. “By taking this as an opportunity to [reach out to your customers](#), your business has a unique chance to create a loyal following. What businesses do right now will be remembered for a long time to come.”

## A Need for Transparency and Empathy

Moving forward, marketing and messaging will require transparency. The more open and honest your company can be about how you're striving to make things as safe as possible, the more reassured your customers will be.

“Transparency is always valued, but especially in times of crisis,” says Emma Edwards, marketing manager of [Ecosa](#), a mattress and sleep solutions brand. “[Empathy is critical](#) in marketing during a crisis. Stepping out from behind slogans and letting the humanity behind the brand shine through will allow marketing messages to connect more deeply with your customers than ever before.”

By being open about how your operations have changed and what that means for your customers, your company can become the proverbial “port in the storm.”

“The best customer relationships are built on trust and positivity. Now more than ever, it’s important that your marketing reinforce these themes,” says Moira Vetter, CEO of [Modo Modo Agency](#), a marketing agency. “Be clear, state the obvious because what is obvious to you may not always be obvious to your customers and be positive.”

Edwards agrees. “The key is to inform and reassure, not instill fear and doubt or continue to remind people of the crisis.” This is your chance to point out the upsides, while maintaining safety precautions.

### **Accuracy and Connection Is as Vital as Ever**

With the the COVID-19 outbreak seemingly changing on a minute-by-minute basis, it’s important to stay up to date with current data. Your customers will feel reassured when they see you taking circumstances seriously and doing your best to stay on course as your business reopens.

“Spend time researching safety measures and guidelines and assure customers that your business is compliant,” says Mac Fadra, CEO of national joint pain management clinic [MAXiM ReGen](#). “Additionally, highlight with examples how your business has gone the extra mile when it comes to safety.”

There are tried-and-true marketing methods that will always remain the same. At the top of the list is connecting with your customers and using the information gathered to serve their needs.

“Talk with your customers to find out what they’re dealing with,” says Fadra. “This will help you understand their challenges and allow you to discover ways of repackaging your products and services in response to those insights.”

Mary Ann O’Brien, founder and CEO of branding and advertising agency [OBI Creative](#), agrees. She suggests adjusting your messaging in ways that connect with your customers in the here and now.

“Show that you’ve thought about what your customers are going through and offer products and services that can help them in real and meaningful ways now and moving forward,” says O’Brien. “As the situation unfolds and your customers experience change, your messaging needs to continue to evolve.”

## What Does Effective Reopening Messaging Look Like?

At marketing agency [Roar Media](#), CEO Jacques Hart and his team have been working with clients on reassuring ways they can introduce essential information about hygiene and social distancing.

“We’ve unfortunately seen what we consider some poor choices in regards to messaging,” he says. “This has included rambling messages, outpourings of emotion that cloud the messages and failure to maintain the brand’s [traditional tone](#) in an effort to project seriousness.”

Hart shares his suggestions for effective messaging that reassures customers and encourages them to return when your business reopens.

- Be clear. It’s important that your customers understand your messaging. Keep it as straightforward as possible. “These are distracting times,” says Hart. “Quickly get to the point.”
- Show empathy. “We’re all in this together and people respond to that,” he says. Show that you understand how difficult this time is on many levels.
- Maintain brand continuity. When appropriate, maintain your brand voice. “If your company has an irreverent brand, you may want to introduce that in your messaging, as long as it doesn’t overshadow the issue,” says Hart.
- Ensure an attractive presentation. Make your portrayal of information visually attractive. Include eye-catching images and video focusing on what will occur when your business reopens.
- Integrate your messaging across platforms. Ensure all messaging is consistent throughout your channels, including your website, social media, emails, [text marketing](#) and through your customer service team.