



# **Bouncing back:** your guide to marketing, post-pandemic

Marketing

Worth talking  
about

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The page features two overlapping purple circles on the left side. The larger circle is in the foreground, and a smaller one is behind it, partially obscured. The text 'See the big picture' is written in a green, sans-serif font, with 'See' on the first line, 'the big' on the second, and 'picture' on the third.

# See the big picture

## New landscape, new you

As pandemic restrictions ease, businesses will look to adapt their marketing to survive and succeed in the new landscape:

- If the pandemic's had a negative impact on your business, you may need to focus on finding fresh ways to work and to promote new services and products.
- If you find opportunities in the new landscape, you'll want to supercharge your marketing strategies. After all, some say this is the greatest entrepreneurial moment in a generation.

Either way, the marketing landscape has changed and what you did before may not cut it now. To adapt well, you need to get your marketing approach right, and fast.

Showing you how to create an effective marketing strategy to suit the times is what this eBook's about.

## Strategy drives success

Businesses often search for the one silver bullet to propel their business into the stratosphere. Whether it's social media posts that go viral, press interest, a clutch of awards, or a website that ranks first in a Google search and has customers flocking.

*Sorry to break the bad news, but the truth is there simply isn't that one thing.*

Successful marketing depends on the careful execution of a well-considered, integrated marketing plan underpinned by great content, using the right mix of channels working in harmony and where each drives the other.

Crucial to consider in your marketing strategy for today are these pandemic-caused changes:

- Some marketing channels and tactics are less effective than before and some more
- More shopping and workspaces have gone online

- Many non-digital marketing channels – like face-to-face networking, events, exhibitions, much printed media and sponsorship – aren't generating results

All this means the strength and effectiveness of your online presence is more important than ever before.

**To improve your marketing, you'll need to plan, invest, create and persevere – but rewards are high. Done right, a well-executed, integrated marketing strategy can seriously elevate your business.**

# Grab and hold the attention

## Your need for great content

Great online content grabs people's attention. It drives them to share and is key to any marketing strategy. To succeed, each tactic in this guide relies on content that's current, relevant, creative and, above all, engaging.

A modern, varied content mix includes blogs, videos, infographics, webinars, downloads, guides, live feeds, podcasts and more.

## How to build your content strategy

### 1 Plan

A content strategy or plan will help you:

- Post content on a regular basis, enabling you to build up engagement over time
- Maintain focus on key ideas and consistent messages – which you can lose if creating content ad-hoc
- Share strategy team-wide so others can contribute

### 2 Define your theme

First, define an overall theme for your content and what you want your target audience to associate with your company and your brand. This should be the main focus for your content creation.

### 3 Define your aims

Now think about what you want your content to achieve and how it'll be shared. Do you want to:

- Increase awareness to a wider audience
- Drive more traffic to your website
- Produce more prospects by obtaining their contact info, perhaps in exchange for 'gated content' or requesting a demo
- Boost engagement on your social media channels by getting more likes and comments
- Obtain insight through feedback on your products or services.

**Great content will help you drive your marketing strategy, allowing you to supercharge the results you achieve in all areas.**

### 4 Your content options

#### Blog articles

Blog articles are generally opinion-led pieces authored by subject matter experts. Your blog is a great place to shout about how your products or services address a specific problem. Short, snappy 'how-to guides' and list-based content such as, 7 ways to increase leads using content, are easy to consume for your readers.

You can also use your company blog to communicate announcements, company updates, new hires, cultural activities like fundraisers, or a big client win.

#### Downloadable papers

If you have a technical product or service, you might want to consider creating a meatier piece of content people can download.

You can 'gate' this content to generate leads or use for social media ad campaigns.

#### Research papers and infographics

Making original insights available to prospective customers can be a great way to build credibility and demonstrate thought leadership. Better still, turning these insights into infographics is an effective and very sharable visual way to present your ideas.

## Case Studies

If you've worked for great clients, shout about it. Showcasing your work helps to build your credibility as a leader in your space. Case studies should be concise and cover what you did, who you did it for, and the value you brought to the client. Quantifiable measurements help to reinforce the value you added.

## 5 Ways to develop content

One way to come up with content is to brainstorm ideas. To start, make a list of topics that go well with your strategic theme and objectives.

You can also find inspiration in:

- Content being created and shared in your space, that's well received, and getting more popular. Google and social media channels such as LinkedIn and Twitter offer ways to do this.
- Important events in your industry or your customers' lives.
- Your search engine optimisation (SEO) status. If you need to improve your rankings for key search terms, why not create content specifically so?

## 6 Create a content calendar

To help you produce steady flows of on-brand material to feed your social and other channels, create content calendars. Enabling you to manage and keep everything on schedule, they'll show you at a glance what content needs producing, by whom and when.

**When creating content calendars, you'll need to factor in:**

- **How often you'll post new content**
- **Content formats – not all formats suit all audiences; so, for example you may want to re-present a white paper as a blog series, infographic or animated video**
- **How you'll measure results – as you produce and share more content you can see what works best**

# Create traffic

## Ways to drive traffic to your website.

### 1 Social media

In today's climate, businesses with a strong social media presence have an advantage over the competition. We've witnessed a huge flurry of activity in this channel as hundreds of thousands of enterprises use it to reach out to clients and prospects. For example, LinkedIn is enjoying record levels of engagement, having grown its membership to over 722 million.

However, social media marketing isn't an easy win. When it comes to getting a business return on this activity, it is not just a case of ticking the box. For your brand messages to be heard above the noise, the quality of your content and creativity of your approach will be key.

*If people love your content, they'll share it – further expanding its reach.*



There's a whole world of innovative ways to present content including video, podcasts, eBooks, and webinars, all of which can be promoted through social channels. Each has its own merits and attracts customers in different ways. Together these provide the social media fuel to engage your target audience.

**An effective social networking strategy shouldn't be ignored by businesses. Engaging in social media for business just got more important than ever before. Done well, it will serve to amplify your marketing efforts.**

Having a great website is one thing. But it's unlikely to deliver for you if it can't be found.

To increase traffic to your site, you want to get your site near the top of Google results pages. You can do this through paid search (PPC), and also by implementing focussed search engine optimisation (SEO).

## 2 Paid search

Here's why PPC advertising makes sense post pandemic:

- **Quick results** – paid search is relatively quick to set up and provides instant results. It'll put your website in front of your clients even if your website SEO is poor.
- **Controllable costs** – set your own budget with no long-term obligation. You can also pay as you go and switch off ads at any time.
- **Highly targeted** – you can tailor PPC advertising very precisely to your target audience. Target by geographic location, age demographics, and even times of day that most closely fit your ideal customer profile.
- **Only pay for clicks** – you only pay when someone actually clicks on your advertisement.
- **Measurable** – unlike offline advertising, you can see exactly how many people have clicked on your campaign.

### 3 Search-engine optimisation

SEO isn't easy to get right – some elements are best left to the professionals. We can't promise either that a few simple tweaks will send you to page one of Google.

However, here are five simple actions you can take to achieve a good improvement and a solid platform from which to build:

- **Update your Google My Business page** – ensure your Google page is up to date, and fully populated with address details, contact details, services, opening hours and images. Encourage customers to write and submit positive reviews.
- **Give your website a spring clean** – use a free online tool to perform an SEO scan. Fix broken links, update your information, and consider how you can make way for new and fresh content such as news, blogs and articles.
- **Secure your site with SSL** – in 2014, Google advised website owners to make their sites more secure by adding a security certificate or SSL (indicated by the prefix https at the start of a URL). Sites without this in place won't rank well on Google.

- **Create SEO-focussed content** – when it comes to SEO, regular content is king. Google loves sites that are up to date and regularly have fresh and relevant content.
- **Up your social media game** – link to social media accounts via your website. Engage often, including sharing useful and relevant content that links back to your website. Consider adding a social media feed to your site – but only if you intend to keep it current.

**Implementing these actions will certainly get you started and provide a platform to begin to improve your SEO. Good SEO, and in fact marketing in general, relies on consistency. Do remember to keep up the good work. It is all too easy to slip back to square one.**

## 4 Email

Once seen as a marketing dinosaur, email is making a comeback. It's ideal for keeping the conversation going with customers and prospects, so great for driving traffic to your site.

Email is:

- **Engaging** – deliver relevant, well-targeted content to people wherever they are, whatever their device. People can instantly access your web content and share it via social media and contact you via a simple click.
- **Cost effective** – reach any number of customers and prospects at a rate of pennies per message. If you're on a budget, it could be your ideal communication choice.
- **Measurable** – unlike other forms of communication, email is 100% measurable. You can count open, click-through and conversion rates. This data allows you to adjust and refine future campaigns to drive results.
- **Immediate** – reach customers in seconds. Great for last-minute offers and you see results fast.

- **Timely and personal** – to increase open rates, personalise your messages, say with each recipient's name, and send at the ideal time.
- **Easy** – with professional help it's easy to get started. A well-crafted email campaign can be created, tested and sent in a matter of days.

Remember, a bland and blanket approach just won't cut it. You need a clean, up-to-date database. You need to create personalised, visually interesting and highly targeted emails sent using a professional platform. To stand out from the inbox crowd, these should offer valuable, insightful, and relevant content.

**Make way for high quality, branded emails sent via a dedicated, fit for purpose, email marketing platform. Your messages will look good and make it to recipients' inboxes, not their junk folder.**

# Drive engagement

## Getting that extra click

Think of your website as the epicentre of everything your brand represents. All other marketing tactics exist to drive customers here so they can learn more about your business and the services it offers.

The longer a person spends on your site, and the more they interact with it, the more likely they are to use your service or buy from you.

So here are five tactics you can use to drive that engagement:

- **Quick wins** – when a visitor gets to your website, get them to make one extra click to see great proof points about your offer. For example, link them to a testimonial, video or your latest case study.
- **Gated content** – this is premium content people will be prepared to share their email address for in order to access, so you can generate new leads and extend the conversation beyond your website.
- **Request more information** – when your website can't meet all a visitor's needs, give them the chance of a personal interaction – for example, invite them to request a demo, book a consultation or 'Contact us'.
- **Keep in touch** – you can't rely on people coming back to your website over and over. So, once they're there, give them the chance keep up to date on your latest offers or new blog. Include 'Follow us' links to your social media channels and invite users to subscribe to your newsletter.
- **Live chat** – accessed via a pop-up box on your website, this function allows you to respond instantly to queries. Visitors get answers faster than if you were to call them back.

# Boost conversion

## Why good branding pays for itself

They say you never get a second chance at a first impression. Indeed, human beings process images 60,000 times faster than text. If you don't present your business well, people are unlikely to interact with your content.

Good, customer-focused design, easy website navigation, and a strong, visual, consistent brand help you convey your message. They make your business and its offer more credible, helping convert visitors into customers.

Invest in aesthetically pleasing and consistent design elements and you:

- **Enhance brand recognition** – making your content more appealing and easier for prospects and customers to associate with the goods and services you offer.
- **Demonstrate professionalism** – how you present yourself speaks volumes about the quality of your work.
- **Generate interest** – social platforms and online searches are busy places. People are scrolling endlessly and at lightning speed. Great design helps attract them to your content.
- **Set yourself apart from competitors** – businesses with professional branding look more credible and a cut above the rest.

It's understandable that when times are tough graphic design and branding might seem a good place to make cuts. Some businesses are even tempted to get members of staff to do a bit of DIY design. But make no mistake, perception is all, and good design always pays.

*Investing in good design helps you make the best first impression, gives you a competitive edge, and drives powerful marketing results.*

# Let's talk

## How we'll enhance your digital operation

Rapport Digital can plug into your business where and when you need help most. Whether you're looking to improve your messaging, create a new website, for someone to run your social media or even manage the whole marketing shebang.

To find out what we can do to help your business, get in touch.

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