Marketing advice

during COVID-19

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Why I made this

We are in the midst of a global pandemic and we are all trying to navigate very uncertain times. COVID-19 has caused disruption in almost every known industry. Both small and big businesses and foremost many people's lives are affected and shaken to the very core right now. It's not a situation to take lightly in any way. However, in disruption you can find possibilities and I've compiled a few actions within five key categories that I advise you to consider right now. With the hope that these will help you navigate how you can market, communicate and serve your customers and community during these very challenging times.

Now is the time to be creative, bold, authentic and to dare to both make a swift digital shift in everything from day to day operations. But also to fine-tune, craft authentic marketing and communication activities with heart and compassion.

The advice compiled here is created both from the perspective of what actions would I take right now if I was a CMO to:

- Get in control of marketing investments and follow up on returns
- Identify new possibilities for audience expansion for a low cost
- Save time and ensure I spend my time doing high impact activities and less administration
- Ensure I effectivise my marketing impact
- Ensure I am taking the right steps to be relevant, engaging and staying current when crafting communication

But also if I was the business owner or founder:

- How can I can I serve my customers and community with value
- How can I step up and act upon my core brand values

This is a compilation of some simple yet effective actions you can take right now. I hope you find something that can add value to your business..

Stay safe
❤️

Veronica

The right data is your foundation

Why:

With the right data and KPI's you can follow-up and make better decisions going forward. By gathering and following up on relevant data from your marketing activities you get more from your marketing investments than just new traffic or sales. You get valuable insights to finetune your marketing and business performance from.

- **Utilize UTM-tags**

To be able to measure the entire customer journey from initial activity to sales and quality of your customer acquisition activities. If you have a CRM system I highly recommend that you get a UTM-framework in place and implement this now. By doing so you get detailed insight into what activity, creative etc works on which audience and can start working with CAC, CLV and so forth. Making your marketing efforts ever so much more powerful.

The right data is your foundation

◯ Identify a few KPIs you should follow up on for your business

Just as the name suggests **K**ey **P**erformance **I**ndicators you should have just a few of these to be able to follow-up on.

For example, even though you may focus more on audience acquisition activities right now you need to be able to evaluate from the investment you make in media now, further down the line to ensure that you learn and evolve.

Here are a few suggestions and examples with the purpose of tying your marketing activities directly to performance. Remember less is more:

CAC - customer acquisition cost, what is the cost for acquiring the customer in the first place. Remember this is the cost for the customer, eg total marketing spend for a customer.
Total marketing spend/ total number of new customers = CAC

Returning visitors - to very specific and key pages on your website.

CPO - cost per order, what does it cost you to acquire that order in the first place - balance this with the marketing investment in the channel and specific activity.

CPL - cost per lead, if you have a lead-based conversion goal.
Total ad spend/total number of new leads = CPL
.

ROAS - return on ad spend. Can be tricky right now when we are in the midst of COVID-19 nevertheless this is a number you want to have absolute clarity on

If you operate an e-commerce business you want this clearly calculated taking into account any agency fees as well as excluding VAT for it to be 100% accurate.
Revenue / Cost = ROAS

CR - conversion rate. Key to track on both sales and lead generating activities.

CLV - customer lifetime value. Balance this with CAC.

New versus returning customers - how is your new customer acquisition rate versus returning customer rate look like?.

Customer churn rate - helps you to keep track of how many customers you loose.

Identify the possibilities with paid marketing

Why:

Right now while writing this rumour has it in the digital marketing sphere that ad prices are down with as much as 40%. This is an opportunity for you to grab market share from your competitors that are pausing any activities at the moment. The space is yours to focus on increasing audience acquisition at a lower cost.

- **Identify low hanging fruits**

Activate retargeting/remarketing from specific webpages with targeted ads. Utilize smart bidding. Identify what other ad functionality your are not using right now.

- **Target basket abandoners**

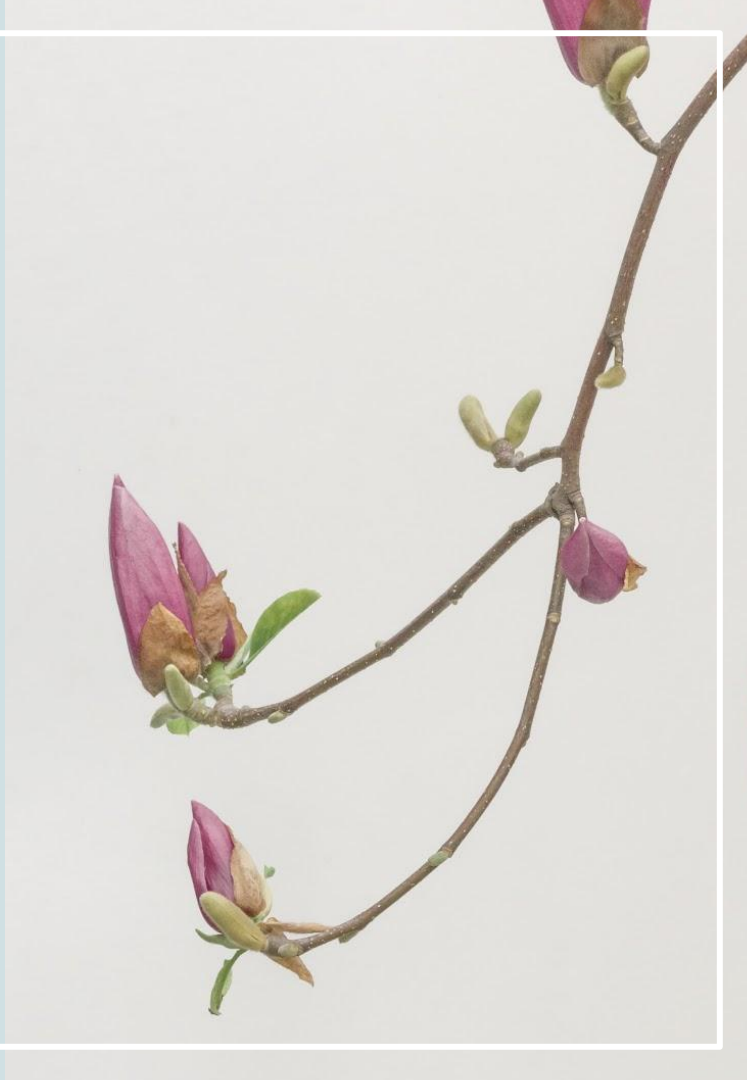
With ads mapped that talk to them based on what and where they abandoned their purchase.

- **Build audience lists**

Based on behaviour. What have the visitor done vs not done and what creative and relevant messaging can you target these with? Match target audience with behaviour.

- **Twins/look-alikes**

Let the various platforms build audience lists based on similarities towards the audiences you have. Better yet, use data to identify customers with high CLV and build off that to increase your audiences that have the same or similar attributes as them.



Identify repetitive tasks to automate

Why:

Reduce administration so you can focus your time on more high impact tasks going forward that will yield higher returns.

- **Use software plugins** - such as Rejoiner or similar to automate targeting of email communications towards people who abandoned baskets, or the conversion flow on your website.

- **Identify autoresponders** - now is the time to identify low hanging fruits in terms of automated emails to drive customer reviews, get customer feedback through surveys and other tasks that are repetitive and the communication fairly static.

Identify repetitive tasks to automate

- **Use HubSpot list building functionality** - if you have HubSpot you can activate the function that lets the software build lists automatically based on behaviour. So that you can utilize these lists in your marketing on various platforms. Instead of building this manually from a CRM database or similar.

- **Test responsive display ads** - before hiring a designer utilise the function with responsive display ads where Google Ads builds display ads with various assets that you upload. Use the insight from the best performing ads and create banners from these.

Craft authentic marketing & communication

Why:

Now is the time to reinforce and prove to your customers that you truly stand for your brand values. As well as joining in in the current online dialogues. Here are a few tips on what you should think about when crafting content and communication for your brand and business right now to ensure you are relevant and avoid risks of appearing tone deaf.

Craft authentic marketing & communication

◯ **Be mindful and stay current** - in your tone, messaging and choice of images. Don't try to start a new conversation or ignore the current global situation and challenges. Engage in current conversations, be authentic and reflect that in copy, tone and choice of imagery.

◯ **Images** - refrain from using group images right now.

◯ **Values** - now are the perfect time to stand by your brand values and use these in your communication to prove yourself and that you really stand for these values. How can you incorporate your brand values in your communication in a relevant way that resonates with your audience right now?

◯ **Focus on giving** - now is the time to offer what you can for free, give big and give from the heart. Try to be useful in the world (not saying that you are not) but be creative and think outside the box. Better yet, in this time of disruption throw away that box. The core question is "what can you give to people that will add value to their lives right now? And do it for free. Give big and with love.

◯ **Double down on communication with your online community** - on social media, in forums, any commenting functions you may have on various platforms. Engage authentically with your customers and strengthen the community you have around your brand and business with authenticity.

Quicker follow-up

Why:

To follow-up is key to both evaluate and evolve while working with digital marketing. With the amount of data available it’s easy to get lost in the rabbit hole of numbers, statistics and graphs. These four tips on how to streamline the measurement and follow-up part of digital marketing to make it swift, relevant and impactful.

Quicker follow-up

◯ **Ask the right questions from your data** - the more specific you are in your questions, the better you can use the data. Rather less than more. Simplify and be as specific as possible. What I mean by that is to specify what and why you want to find something out from all the data you have available. What is the purpose and how will you then use this insight? When you either perform an analysis or create a report.

◯ **Build automatic reports and dashboards** - these will save you time. Again, focus on highlighting only key metrics and performance indicators. Each report should have a clear purpose and you should know what actions to take after you have received this report.

Tools:

Google Analytics dashboards or reports - these can be set up fairly easy by someone that knows what they are doing. My advice is to make a specification of what you need, in what format and why. Then ask someone to create this for you.

Google Data Studio - this is another free tool, it offers more layout options than the Google Analytics dashboard/reports and you can include data from other sources than Google Analytics for a more thorough performance comparison.

◯ **Test** - before you launch do an A/B test to establish what the best version may be. Always test at least one thing and when you do ensure you know who you are testing on and why. When prices are so low you can afford to test your awareness activities. Be sure to start this habit now, if you have not already.

In closing a short note on planning ahead in uncertain times

Plan ahead and make a roadmap of three months at a time, but make the first four weeks your key focus. Adapt each upcoming month with previous months learnings and insights. As well as make adaption to the current market and world. By doing this you can both be flexible as well as implementing key learnings without being in a reactive mode. Which can in itself right now, in these uncertain times become a very stressful way of working. This approach offers you peace of mind and flexibility all in one.

Remember that there is a difference between reacting and acting with clarity and purpose.

Useful resources

DATA

Global web index COVID-19 research & market insights
https://www.globalwebindex.com/coronavirus

PODCASTS

How to serve & sell with heart in a Coronavirus economy
https://player.fm/series/the-marie-forleo-podcast/ep-343-how-to-sell-serve-with-heart-in-a-coronavirus-economy

How a small business can survive and thrive during the Coronavirus crisis:
https://play.acast.com/s/overnight-success/9ccd3e3b-421f-432f-81a3-ff6ec0851c2c

How to pivot business & life during the Coronavirus crisis:
https://play.acast.com/s/overnight-success/ea92129f-39e0-4759-9835-7f0051978f04

ARTICLES

Inside Google Marketing: 5 principles guiding our media teams in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak
https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-resources/covid-19-media-principles/

5 Digital Marketing Trends to Focus On During the COVID-19 Pandemic
https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/5-digital-marketing-trends-to-focus-on-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-infogr/575770/

Tips for Responsible and Smart Marketing During the COVID-19 Pandemic
https://www.inc.com/peter-roesler/tips-for-responsible-smart-marketing-during-covid-19-pandemic.html

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