

COLUMNS

## 6 actionable content strategy ideas during challenging times

April 27, 2020



*Rohit Arora is business director and head of content strategy at Liwa Content Driven*

By **Rohit Arora**

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Challenging times are opportunity disguised as problems and brands must act fast. Brands need to be as useful as possible by combining purpose + practicality + creativity.

But should one even spend on marketing communication? Many marketers put a complete freeze on their marketing communication budgets. It is not the most prudent strategy.

This is the time to show you care and be more useful. Depending on your category and brand stature, there could be little forgiveness for inaction and under-reacting.

If your competitors are not spending, it is a bonus. You spend lesser on media buying and get a greater share of voice hence share of mind, and eventually share of wallet.

What you really need is recalibration of your marketing content messages. This does not mean that you go on a spending spree either. Limit your marketing spends to a reasonable level. Importantly, make it count.

Here are some insights and ideas that can help:

All brands are likely to be put on test on if they are living up to their purpose. We need to ask ourselves: How we can bring to life our brand purpose, promise and essence? Be an ally to your consumers, "prove" that you care, "demonstrate" empathy. Reinforcing an emotional connection is vital.

Example: Remember the Pepsi Refresh campaign? Instead of spending on Super Bowl ads, the beverage giant awarded \$20 million in grants to individuals, businesses and nonprofits that promote a new idea that has a positive impact. This led to months of user-generated content, on top of Pepsi's own. And, of course loads of earned PR.

Most people are likely to get extremely careful of their spending. While the obvious answer is to focus on rational attributes and demonstrate better value, be extremely careful of your brand voice. Be genuine. "We're-in-this-together" and that is the approach and tonality you must have.

Examples:

If you are an automobile brand, do talk about better mileage, practical and hard-working features. But do it with empathy. In the past, brands in this category have also spoken about buy-backs, extend warranty and services.

If you are in the service industry like a bank, you could focus on your contactless feature, cash-back cards and other savings schemes. But do it with the sense of help. Pepper it with regular practical tips on social, waive off charges. Remember, purpose before profit.

Also, this is not the time for one-upmanship against your competitors. Help them instead and people will remember you for that.

If you run a loyalty program, remind people to benefit from them. Open your hearts and wallet a bit. Share notifications of your offers, but also connect emotionally. For instance, food brands can communicate that families who eat together, stay together.

More people are likely to DIY, wherever they can. We know that people tend to YouTube and Google for this type of content all the time. Support them with practical advice in the formats they prefer videos and infographics.

Examples:

If you are a fitness center, you can give tips on home exercises or perhaps do it virtually. Today there so many video and virtual tools at our disposal.

If you are a food brand, you could give easy, practical recipes for different type of consumer segments, from new-to-cooking to an expert.

Similarly, how to assemble furniture or fix things in your category or troubleshoot any issue.

Consumers are generally appreciative of feel good or entertaining content during these times. Now more than ever, brands need to harness the mindset of a publisher and create cultural value by either entertaining them or inspiring them. Even minor light-hearted and entertainment can also go a long way, provided you are thoughtful with tonality and are true to your brand.

Examples:

Inspiring content in the form of thematic hero content insight-driven or evocative, relevant to your category and mindsets.

Web-series or daily and weekly episodes hub content in YouTube terminology can also be effective, e.g. such as the fitness center or recipe examples discussed earlier. Make it lighthearted, conversational and entertaining.

Even those who are digitally savvy may need help to adapt to your digital platform. Today, many organizations are digitally transformed, and they have made huge investments in it. But what is the point if only limited people use the new features? Both YouTube and Google advocate help content in the form of how-to videos.

Examples:

How to pay your utility bills online using the app or computer

How to do various banking services, if you are a bank

How to make the best use of the electrical appliance or your online freelance platform

How to install, troubleshoot, participate in a competition or claim a price

Internal communication your employees look to you to provide clear and consistent messaging regarding not only the day-to-day, but also what's coming next. Company leadership and internal communications officers have a great responsibility. Your employees can be your biggest source of advocacy and influencers. Treat them right and provide them with guidance, and they will share the love with friends and family, and on social media and beyond, strengthening brand reputation organically.

Examples of the content you can generate:

Regular words of assurance and periodic updates from the top management with authority, humanity and clarity

Tips, advice and regular encouragement

OF COURSE, one size does not fit all, so you need to brainstorm on what is right for your brand, your category and

most importantly, your customers.

And remember, as automaker Henry Ford said: "A man who stops advertising to save money is like a man who stops the clock to save time."

*Rohit Arora is business director and head of content strategy at [Liwa Content Driven](#), Dubai, UAE. Reach him at [rohit@liwa.tv](mailto:rohit@liwa.tv).*

---

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.