

Small businesses can still thrive amid the pandemic

 By [Nthabiseng Dube](#)

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These are unprecedented times for a lot of small businesses which do not have corporations operating on a larger scale, nor the advisors to help with some kind of a plan to move forward in this rocky economic climate as far as the Coronavirus pandemic is concerned. Irrespective of one's views about it, the economic downtime caused by this pandemic should be a provocation to take a second look at how to keep business thriving during this time.



Photo by [Anna Shvets](#) from [Pexels](#).

It is unfortunate that the spread of the virus is picking up speed, thus putting more pressure on the economy, with more than 270 000 confirmed cases to-date and at least 4000 confirmed deaths in South Africa. The numbers indicating the loss of life as a result of this pandemic alone is astounding, forcing the government to put sterner regulations in place.

Adjusting to the new normal

The economic damage caused by the pandemic varies. A lot of businesses have changed their routines and revenues have been greatly impacted. Businesses are closing down due to lost revenue, human capital is also depleted due to infection, loss of life and the loss of skilled workers. The scale of the catastrophes makes it impossibly difficult to cope and recover in the aftermath. It is clear that we need a long-term solution to remain operational, protect clients and employees and keep the bottom line strong.

As we adjust to the new normal, so should our organisations. Although digital marketing has always been the epitome of success in most companies, it has never been more important in running a business than it is now. Engaging with customers digitally, meaning reaching out proactively and also responding to the influx of messages and inbound calls has been a routine and a very effective method for most corporations.



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Since the lockdown regulations have been implemented, more people have been home using their leisure time connecting

to the outside world and engaging with content online. Having an online presence can act as a reassurance that your business will either continue to thrive or if it should close operations due to the pandemic.

Building a clientele online

It is best to invest in building a clientele online. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook can help your marketing team reach out to existing and potential clients, address their needs and develop your brand message without sounding selfish and disregarding the recent ordeal.

Online has been the most operative method, now with regulations put in place keeping us separated. However, it is important as a business owner to seek expert advice as far as social media is concerned. You need to be warned though, social media users are the most opinionated and you don't want to be accused of promoting your brand even in the midst of a crisis. So, relate your social media content to real-time context.



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Just as we have seen with past crises, such as the 2011 Tsunami and earthquake that struck Japan and had a negative impact on the economy. Businessowners have around the world reached out through social media to lend a helping hand to the victims of the disaster.

Don't be left off the virtual train

Think about projects that have been implemented during the lockdown alone to help people deal with the situation, such as the Lockdown House Party organised by popular South African DJ, DJ Shimza. This specific project has created a platform for many artists in the music industry, DJs in particular, to work during the lockdown because regulations that prevent social gathering and celebrations have resulted in loss of income for many in the industry.

Music lovers around the world look forward to the weekend to enjoy the Lockdown House Party in the comfort of their own homes, which played huge a role in easing the fear they have regarding the pandemic. As a businessman and music producer, Shimza used this time to do more humanitarian work, which earns him respect as far as his industry is concerned.

These days online presence and engagement have become important for businesses to not only survive but thrive as well. You cannot afford to be left off the virtual train, even churches are more visible online!

Stay focused and stay safe

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