

GSM is here to offer guidance and support for marketing communications during times of uncertainty. During a crisis, your marketing communications' tone and messaging are critical to establishing trust and loyalty with your consumers.

Below are GSM's 10 Best Practices to communicating in a time of crisis:



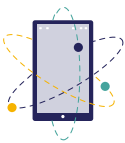
Acknowledge the situation – Even if you do not have any answers, it is best to acknowledge that you are aware of the situation. Being transparent is critical during a time of heightened confusion.



Arm your Army – Each employee is a spokesperson for the company online and offline. Develop simple and direct talking points for leadership to tell your customers, your employees, and the media, if needed.



Let customers know what you're doing to help them – During a crisis, your customers are going to have a lot of questions: Are you open? Do you have the products in-stock that I need? Are those products/services safe? What are you doing to mitigate risk? Keep your customers updated on what you're doing as a result of the crisis.



Be empathetic – When panic and confusion are at their highest, empathy is key to connecting and establishing trust with your customers. Keep in mind, it's a stressful time for everyone. Use these considerations to shape your messaging.



Stay in your lane – During a time of crisis, there's tons of information—and misinformation—circulating rapidly. Do your part by providing useful and valid information. Avoid speaking on things you aren't qualified to and stick to your company's area of expertise.



Evaluate scheduled and ongoing communications – Depending on the situation, some of your scheduled content and communications may come off as insensitive. Before stopping or cancelling any communications, check the tone and topic and make adjustments.



Stay informed – In a crisis, things happen fast and it's important to stay updated. This will help you adjust your marketing communications and offers to fall in line with what is needed or sensitive at the time.



Be available – In a world of constant connectivity, consumers expect your business to respond to questions around the clock. Make sure you're prepared to handle higher phone call & email volumes. Monitor your social media and use social listening to capture questions and concerns directed toward your company.



Be a leader – Communicate to consumers what you are doing to decrease risk and ensure the safety of customers, your staff, and your product/service offerings. Provide helpful resources and a detailed FAQ source about your company's crisis response.



Be positive & remain calm – A crisis of any type is unsettling. When appropriate, share uplifting or positive content to provide your customers with reassurance and a much-needed break from the stressful situation.