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**KEY WAYS TO
HELP YOUR
SALON
SURVIVE A
PANDEMIC**



COVID-19 has taken the world by storm. Financial markets have plummeted and unemployment rates have soared as some of the world's largest industries have been brought to their knees. Experts are predicting a deep recession in the coming months which could put many businesses, large and small, at risk of going completely bust.

It's difficult to think business when your phone pings every day with yet another rise in infections and fatalities from coronavirus. It's an unprecedented time of fear and uncertainty. Still, as a savvy salon owner you can leverage this downtime to review your marketing strategy and come up with creative solutions that will ensure your salon is ready to hit the ground running as soon as possible.

Here are 5 things you can do right now to take advantage of the quieter period and safeguard the future of your business.

1 - BRUSH UP ON YOUR MARKETING PLAN

Consider setting aside some time to review or put together a marketing plan for the year ahead if you haven't done so already. A marketing plan is a vital tool that could take your business to the next level.

Take the time to understand your cash flow and establish how much you can afford to set aside for marketing.

Explore what types of marketing exist, free and paid.

Check out your competition to see what marketing they have undertaken.

Source a calendar of key dates throughout the year such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter and so on. Look at ways to create offers and packages or marketing campaigns surrounding those key spending dates.

The typical elements that are seen in marketing plans are:

- An overview of your marketing and advertising goals
- A description of your current marketing position
- A timeline for the tasks within your strategy to be complete
- Key Performance indicator you will be tracking
- A description of your target market & customer needs



2 - CREATE OR REDEFINE YOUR BUYER PERSONA

Not all salons have the same clientele or provide the same experience. Therefore, a smart way to begin to understand your clients' needs is to create buyer personas. What are these, you might ask?

A customer persona is a fictional representation of the key traits of a large section of your audience. Philosophers such as Plato and Jung have created Archetypes that explore this concept further, but for now let's keep it simple.

To come up with your buyer persona try answering these questions in as much detail as possible:

Where do your clients live?

What's their daily routine?

What age are they?

How do they view themselves?

What do they do?

What are their challenges?

What do they like/dislike?

How do they make a buying decisions?

Remember that you can have more than one buyer persona, so don't worry about cramming everything into one. Buyer personas will not only help you when making your marketing plan, but will also help guide you in the right direction when creating adverts and other marketing material.

If you've already created buyer personas, these may need updating. Some of your clients will carry on as normal and begin to spend quickly, especially beauty-conscious clients who haven't had the opportunity to keep up their beauty routine over the past few weeks. However, be aware that many will be more conscious of spending their money as the pandemic has made them worried about their future.

Be prepared that such a big change in society will change how clients feel about beauty services and how they respond to your messaging.

People will come out of the crisis very cost-conscious. Therefore, phrases like "an excellent opportunity to get pampered with your girlfriends" may no longer resonate with your audience who is worried about their future. Instead, a line like "our affordable spa treatments are the perfect escape from everyday life" might have a better chance of grabbing people's attention.

People will be mentally and emotionally depleted. Millions of people will be coming out of weeks, if not months, of isolation. This will take its toll on people's mental health and people will be eager to feel better and get back to their normal life. This is a chance for salons to turn an unfortunate situation into something good. Why not update your messaging to attract this eagerness for normalcy through phrases like "make a stunning comeback to the office with a fresh new look" or "freshen up your look with our new gel nail polish palette."



3 - WORK ON YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

People's routines and old habits have been disrupted by the need to isolate and stay at home. Now, even more than ever, people are spending time online, either shopping or consuming content through social media, blogs and videos. This is an excellent opportunity for businesses that are less active during the pandemic to revamp their online presence and go after their target audience.

Have a look at your SEO and see what keywords and long-tail keywords you use to attract people to your website. Are any of them obsolete or no longer relevant? Think again about your new buying personas and what words they'd use to look for your services. If you are unsure where to start, you can try [Google Trends](#) to see how popular your search terms are before you add them to your website. Another useful tool is [Surfer](#) which gives you analytics on any terms you enter into Google.

If your salon is known for its great nail work or you have something else that's worth shouting about, now is the time. Either hire a content specialist or take the time yourself to write quality content that will add value to your readers. Tips and tricks on how to do your hair or upkeep your nails at home will be of value during the pandemic, so focus on offering insights beyond your own services as well. And who knows, it might be that in a few months' time some of these readers drop by your salon.

Some key tasks at a glance:

Update your website content

Improve your SEO

Update your marketing materials

Create a social media strategy

Draft ideas for any future video content

4 - EXPLORE NEW MARKETING METHODS

The truth of the matter is that people's need for haircuts and beauty treatments won't go away. People will still want to have balayage, facial treatments and polished nails. However, these might drop on their list of priorities depending on how affordable they are. One great risk that looms over the global economy is a drop in people's overall purchasing power. Despite the government's initiatives and financial reliefs, millions of people have already lost their jobs in the U.S. and Trading Economics forecasts that by July 2020 UK's unemployment rate will jump from 3.8% to 7.1%. Many industries will come out bruised.



Winning new customers is difficult in the best of times, let alone during a pandemic. Think about businesses that you can partner with to put your name out there. One great way to attract new clients is by partnering with Little Boutique Card a luxury salon discount club. Our partnership program for salons and barbershops is designed to be forever free for salons, with no upfront setup costs nor further charges down the line. Customers themselves purchase our membership card for a small fee each year, and in turn they get access to your services at a discounted rate. You have full freedom to decide what services to put on offer and even what days the offer is valid for, so you maintain full control over your prices throughout your journey with us. The end profit margin after any discount is fully yours to keep.

To find out more or sign up visit:

<https://www.littleboutiquecard.com/salon-opportunities>

5 - REACH OUT TO EXISTING CLIENTS

Finally, don't forget to reach out to your existing clients when the time has come to open your doors to business once again. Existing clients are easier to win than attracting new ones. Not only are these people more likely to make repeat purchase, but they are also qualified leads you know required your services in the past.

Make sure you implement more than just one outbound strategy, as only one email inviting your clients back to your salon might not do the trick. Perhaps your first email could be sent now, asking clients if they would like to be added to a waiting list to be contacted by phone as soon as your salon is aware of an opening date. Then on the lead up to opening, you could issue another email confirming your salon opening and "Some of the great new beauty trends" that await them. Remember to add your call to action "Book Now" button. Your second email could discuss "Is your hair ready to be seen in public?" and each consecutive email thereafter could discuss the countdown to looking and feeling great again.

Email may already be built into your salon software but if not, Mailchimp is an excellent tool that is free of charge for emails of up to 2,000 contacts a month.

You will likely have most of your clients phone number so, don't shy away from giving them a call. Especially your high-value regular clients. Calls might be daunting, but they are by far the best way to build rapport, show that you care and leave a lasting impression. You could create a list of your 100 most valuable clients and start contacting them personally to arrange their next appointment as soon as you know the salon opening date. Why not take this a step further and arrange face-time consultations to best prepare for your time back in the salon.



The reality is that tough times lay ahead for most businesses, regardless of their size. However, with a little bit of ingenuity this crisis can be turned into an opportunity. Salons, in particular, are well placed to help people with the aftermath of the pandemic by offering them a vision of a better, more beautiful tomorrow. So, roll up your sleeves and get to work.



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