



# Maintaining brand authenticity in the time of COVID-19

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In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, brands are having to reassess their core values and quickly adapt to their customers and clients who have suddenly been thrust into homebound living.

With everyone isolated at home right now baking bread, binge-watching Tiger King, playing Animal Crossing, and lamenting how March felt like an epoch that spanned years, there is an incredible well of opportunity for your brand to make and maintain a connection with your customers or clients.

Social distancing and being self-quarantined has left people yearning for other human interaction, and, as I am sure you are well aware yourself, everyone has been spending a vast amount of time scrolling endlessly through their Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook feeds as it may be their only connection to the outside world.

As a brand and an entity, what could you be communicating with these people at home who are looking for places to focus their attention?

- Do you have something positive to say?
- Would simply being present be the thing your audience needs right now?
- How should you communicate to the world while being comforting, engaging and compassionate?

Let's take a look at how to ensure that you are maintaining brand authenticity during this COVID crisis.



## How to find your authentic self

Understandably, during this pandemic, there is no shortage of upsetting news flying at everyone from all directions. Would it benefit your brand right now to be proactive and help create a small slice of happiness for someone? How can you go about becoming the silver lining in the dark cloud?

Maybe now is a perfect time to refresh yourself with your brand's values and to take inventory on which of those values you hold dearest. Once you've established your values, those never-changing principles of your brand, perhaps the next step might be to go the extra mile and figure out how these values are relevant, engaging, and working at this moment and the immediate moments to come.

What does your audience care about and will they embrace what you have to say? How can you foster this kind of connectivity that only your brand can deliver to capture your audience's imagination and attention?

Conversely, now might be a perfect time to take inventory and identify what you do NOT want your brand to be.

The poet/author Charles Bukowski once noted, "What matters most is how well you walk through the fire." People will likely remember how your brand was able to provide comfort and cheer by brightening up their emails or feeds during this crisis.

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## How to create an authentic plan of action

In a powerful display of harnessing its brand power, Nike recently changed its slogan to, “Play Inside, Play for the World” which encouraged and promoted social distancing.

Burger King stuck to its values and understood that stressed-out people might want comfort food that is no longer readily available, so they presented everyone online with the “Quarantine Burger.” Using basic home ingredients, people can now create a reasonable facsimile to BK’s “Whopper” and no doubt, once this is over, they will want to head to the nearest chain and indulge in the real thing.

**IF YOU EVER DREAMED OF PLAYING  
FOR MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD,  
NOW IS YOUR CHANCE.**

Play inside, play for the world.



Source: adweek.com



Brands everywhere are rising to the moment. How can you engage your audience by being constructively distracting? While at first, it may seem like the options to do so are minimal, you might be pleasantly surprised to find that developing new ways to communicate can be limitless. Here are some considerations to get the ball rolling:

- 01** Generate leads: e-book downloads, engaging quizzes, exclusive invitations to participate in real-world experiences that may be offered in the future, etc.
- 02** Create Spotify playlists and provide a link via social media or email. (You have impeccable taste, don't be afraid to share them with all those beautiful people out there!)
- 03** Create a game with your products or your store. Can you recreate your favorite movie scenes in your living room with common items around the house to entertain your audience?
- 04** Create a quarantine related hashtag or meme centered around your brand. Staying home has been proving to be a rather insta-worthy occasion for people; what if they were gushing about how your brand has been there for them and helping them get through these hard times?
- 05** Come up with some self-quarantined TikTok content. Solo dance parties and challenges have been providing people with an endless supply of entertainment.
- 06** Offer some simple acts of kindness. Some of us can't donate millions towards small businesses, but perhaps you can offer a meal from someone's favorite restaurant (provided they're still delivering), or some art, or good cheer in general?

**Acts of kindness are always inspiring and providing fun things to lighten the mood will always be a welcome reprieve from current events.**



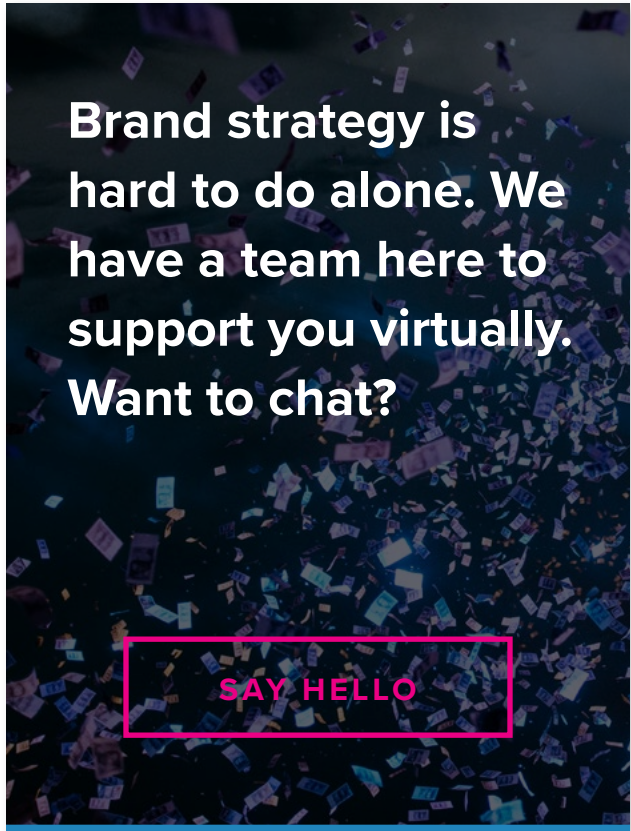
## How to stay authentic during the ups and downs

Authenticity is more important than ever right now. The fact that we are ALL alone and in this together is granting us new perspectives. We can get in touch with our feelings of isolation and our desire to be comforted and have our anxieties soothed and from there we can channel those emotions into ways we go about sharing our products and services with the world.

We challenge you to keep thinking about what you can offer people right now. How can your brand provide value and comfort? What can you provide to your community that nobody else can?

Laugh about it all you want, but the adult site Pornhub has started offering free premium service to all the quarantined people out there as a means to pass the time under lockdown. Just like that, they were able to raise brand awareness considerably while offering people a free (ahem) comforting giveaway.

Just remember to stay authentic to your core values. Your products and service can and will change, but your values should be the bedrock to your organization. Live them. Empathy is key right now. Be inspiring, be generous, be compassionate, and don't stop creating amazing brand experiences.



**Brand strategy is  
hard to do alone. We  
have a team here to  
support you virtually.  
Want to chat?**

**SAY HELLO**





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