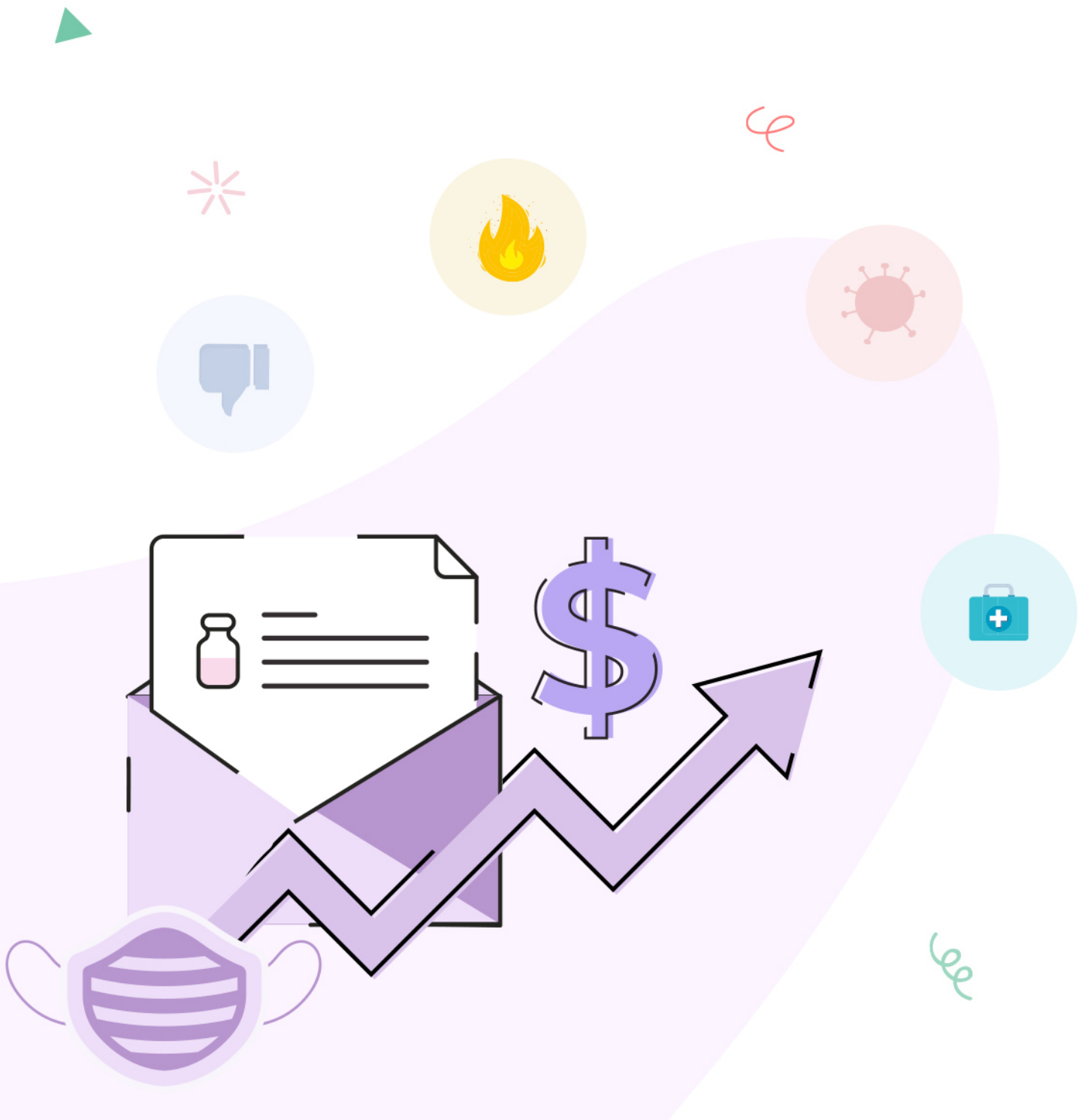


Best practice guide on **crisis email marketing**





Best practice guide on crisis email marketing

As the world is dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become essential for everyone to learn to cope with this long-standing crisis. If there's anything we can learn from this is that a crisis can occur unexpectedly and we must be prepared to deal with it.

This applies to any type of crisis. A crisis can be caused by natural disasters, or a financial crisis causing market crashes which can affect the business of all related products or companies. Since a crisis by definition can occur anytime, it is crucial to adapt and regulate marketing to keep your business afloat.

When a crisis that effects in-person marketing or in-person sales, companies need to rely on online marketing more than usual. Email marketing is an important part of online marketing and a much more important communication channel in times of uncertainty. In a time of crisis, email marketing can be quite a tricky situation. You have to be sensitive about the crisis happening but, at the same time, promote your products with some hope and enthusiasm.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've gathered a few tips and best practices that will help your email marketing sail smoothly over the waves of the next inevitable crisis or just general tough times.

Table of contents

Send an exclusive email addressing the crisis.....	01
Rethink email content.....	02
Realign further emails and their frequency.....	03
Include note about the existing condition.....	04
Communicate your contingency plan.....	04
Make it interactive.....	05
Maintain a support channel to attend to customers.....	06
Offer discounts, gift cards, and coupons to lift their spirits.....	07
Make contributions and inform your subscribers.....	07
Conclusion: Plan and adapt.....	08

Send an exclusive email addressing the crisis

During the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone's inboxes were flooded with emails from different organizations addressing their response to the crisis and quelling fears and concerns from their audience.

Addressing a crisis is critical, but you have to be sure you can make it sensitive, precise, and for the right purpose. Sending an email regarding a crisis without a clear intent for the reader and a goal in mind for your business can be useless and might make some readers unsubscribe from your content.

Here are some of the acceptable reasons to send out an email addressing a crisis:

- You run a business where you meet customers in person frequently or you run a brick and mortar establishment with regular clientele and you need to change or suspend physical meetings and offer possible alternatives to keep services going.
- Informing your audience about a major impact on your service or product due to the crisis. For instance, air ticket booking services informing customers about canceled flights or courier companies discussing shipping delays would be valid.
- Your company has been helping the local community and you would like to share that with readers. Similarly, your company wants to offer some relief to subscribers by giving out discounts and offers on products.

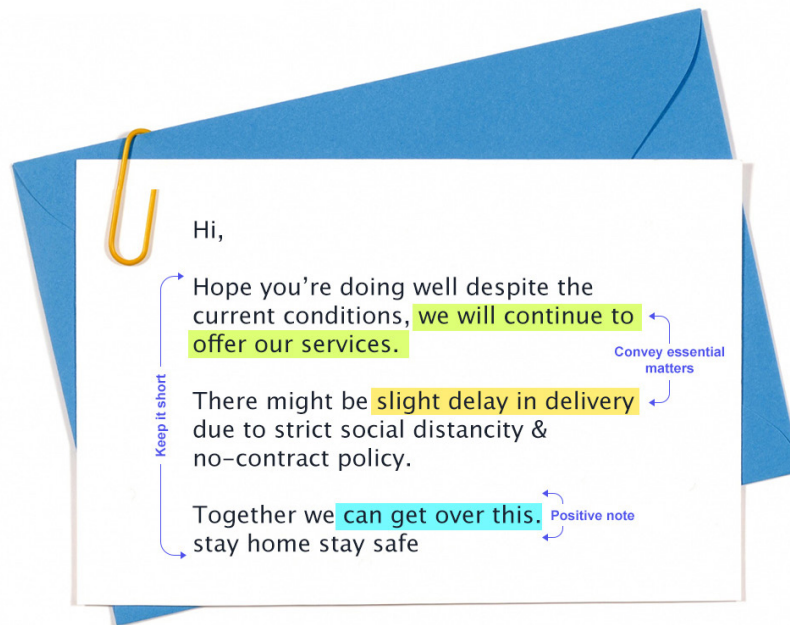
Rethink email content

Content is always the most important part of email marketing. In times of crisis, it is essential to examine every word of the email before sending it out. Insensitive or self-centred content may cost you your customers and your company's reputation. Below are a few things to look into before you send an email during tough times.

Convey essential matters: Ensure to cover all important points in your email. Be sure to mention relevant points related to the crisis, like delays, exclusive support systems, supply issues, and so on. Depending on the type of crisis in question, your subscribers might not be interested in rushing to buy a product or service. So, if you're marketing a product or service, do it gently without it seeming like you're ignoring the trouble just to push your business. Highlight the important points of the product in your subject line as well as content but do it in a way that it relates to the current troubles so that it'd be easy for your subscribers to skim the content and so it doesn't feel like a sales pitch.

Maintain a positive note: While not every crisis will be as dire as the Covid-19 pandemic, there will inevitably be troubling times where a positive outlook might be hard to portray. If you can't help or contribute anything to your audience in the time of crisis, do not choose to send out negative or panic-inducing content in your email. Keep a positive tone in all your emails to lighten the spirits of your subscribers as necessary.

Keep it short: Whatever content you are trying to put across to your subscribers, keep it short. Long content is hard to get through and it dilutes the importance of the point you're trying to convey. Shorter content is easy to read and delivers your point without taking up your subscribers' time.



Realign future emails and their frequency

You might have a whole series of marketing emails planned for the year. Unfortunately, in the wake of a crisis, you have to tone down the frequency a little. You have to keep an eye on the automated emails you've set, pause all of them, and realign the content, timing, and frequency to better suit the current circumstances.

Include a note about the existing conditions

You can include a note with information about the current condition of your company, locality, or country in your emails. Include any vital information you feel is relevant to your subscribers or can help them in a note. If you're including general information about the locality or country, be cautious about the accuracy of the information.



Communicate your contingency plan

If there is a major change in your plans or if you have a valid strategy as to how you and your company are dealing with trouble, communicate it to your subscribers. Letting them know about your contingency plan breeds trust and can create a sense of relief if they have a dependency on your product or service. This might also help them plan their strategy in case there are customers who have complete dependency on your business.

Make it interactive

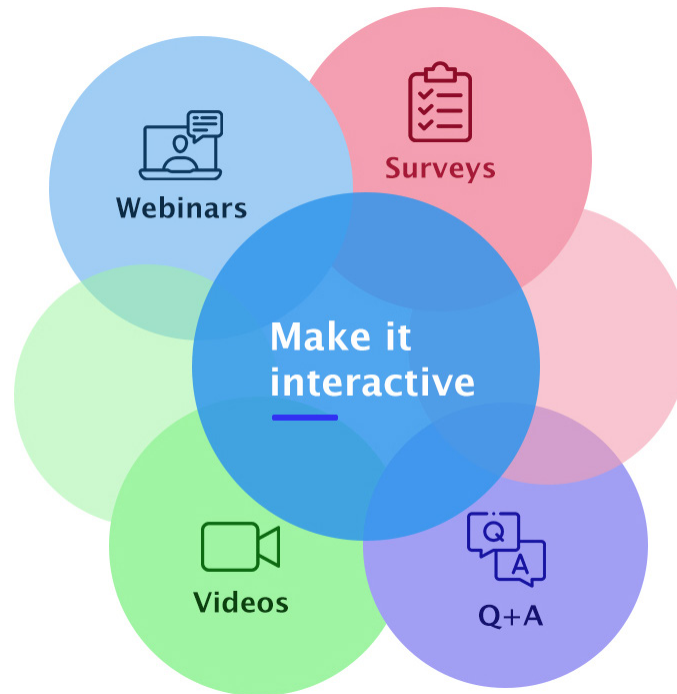
In times of crisis, when we feel all alone, a little direct interaction helps put things in perspective. By interacting with your audience, you can also tap into their requirements and cater to them. A happy customer leads to a profitable business.

Embed surveys: Include surveys in your email campaigns. It can be generic about current situations or something related to your product. One of the examples can be to take a survey of which products the subscriber needs in the time of crisis and then focusing on producing and delivering more of that product.

Conduct Q & A sessions: Hold question and answer sessions with your subscribers. Answer their queries thoughtfully and effectively. Encourage them to ask more questions. Reach out through social media announcing the session and conduct a few sessions in one of the social medium platforms for maximum awareness and participation.

Upload videos: Sending videos can be a form of interaction and engagement. Rather than going through multiple paragraphs of text, a video conveys information to them quicker and helps them feel connected to you on a more personal level. Include video links in your email campaigns to make it more interesting for your subscribers.

Create webinars: Conduct more webinars and address your audience while teaching or telling them something. Webinars are essential to learn the pulse of your audience and deliver information in a way they can understand. Moreover, have a question and answer session towards the end of the webinar to clear doubts and concerns of your audience.



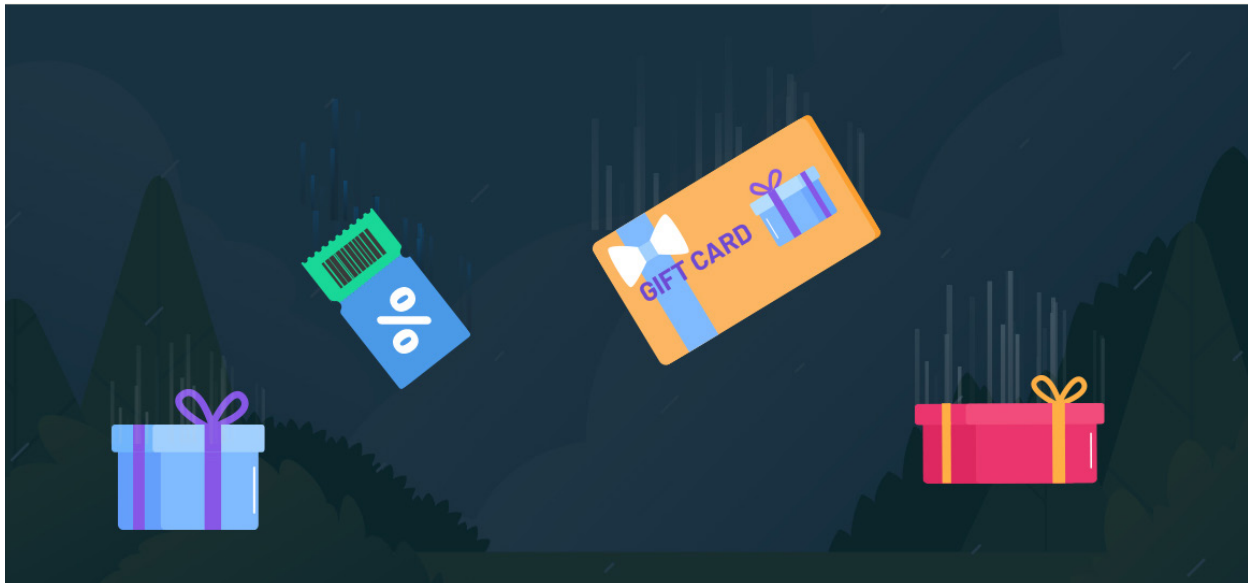
Maintain a support channel to attend to customers

In times of crisis, there are many changes going on to manage and handle business, which is tough not only for you but also your customers as everyone adapts to new ways. Keep an exclusive support channel to help customers learn and adjust to any required business changes.

For example, during the Covid pandemic, many businesses had to adapt to work-from-home cultures for safety. In such cases, inform your customers of your modified mode(s) of communication and help them reach you. If you are facing troubles that require you to use online meeting tools and other necessary services, provide your customers with full support and assistance to use those services.

Offer discounts, gift cards, and coupons to lift their spirits

When there is uncertainty and fear in the air, help your customers by giving out generous offers, gift cards, and coupons to lift their spirits. Some of them might be financially impacted due to the crisis at hand; any offers or help extended by you might be a small help to them. Offering these deals might help retain your customer base and reduce drop-outs due to financial reasons, too.



Make contributions and inform your subscribers

Ensure to contribute to your community with whatever you can if the circumstances call for that and your means allow you to do so. You can extend financial support or offer free services to your community.

Let your subscribers know about your contributions and inform them that they're also a part of those contributions. Along with spreading positive vibes, it also encourages your customers to contribute to their community in times of crisis.

Conclusion: Plan and adapt

As with any crisis, current developments can quickly become outdated. More vso, every hard time won't be the size of a pandemic; be ready to adapt and plan depending on the circumstances. It is important to keep your business up and running and also keep your employees and customers safe and healthy. Set up contingency plans to keep communication open to help your business continue through any crisis.



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