

CRISIS PLAYBOOK

IDEATION IN A PANDEMIC

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REBOOT

FOR

IT'S TIME TO FOCUS.

The social and economic repercussions of this pandemic are a severe challenge for all of us. It feels inappropriate to talk about business opportunities, but now is the time for action. Inaction will only make things worse.

In a way, these disruptive events are a gift, a chance to refocus, reboot, and ready yourself for a different future. Different consumer behavior. Different social norms. An entirely different "normal." But this future is rich with new products and services, new ways of marketing, and new methods of co-creation.

These are unprecedented times. **Let's use them to our full potential.**

THIS CRISIS REQUIRES A REBOOT.

PRODUCT / The Offering. Which value propositions are meaningful now. How do we refine ours.
PLACE / Customer Experience. How do we meet new and changing needs in digital space.
PRICE / E-commerce. How to convert, deal, and partner in times of price/liquidity pressures.
PROMOTION/ Communications. How to reach and stay close.

THREE STEPS TO REGAIN CONTROL.

01.

Know the challenge

Think clearly and act fast.

Turn toward the disruption. Examine and understand the transformations in consumer behavior, business, and marketing.

02.

Rewrite the playbook

A reboot is required.

Relaunch your marketing and sales as part of a designed crisis strategy. Optimize budgets, adjust tactics, and act with intention.

03.

Tap into superpowers

Bring smart people together.

Remote work opens up a gold mine of focused expertise. Acumium helps with virtual strategy sessions, remote growth hacker teams, and around-the-clock ideas.



THE POWER OF CHANGE.

SYSTEM RESET, COOL DOWN, BALCONY MUSIC, THIS IS HOW THE FUTURE GOES.

In the middle of the shutdown of civilization we walk through forests or parks, or over almost empty places. But this is not an apocalypse, it's a new beginning.

This is how it turns out. change begins as a changed pattern of expectations, of perceptions and world connections. Sometimes it is precisely the break with routines, with the familiar, that releases our sense of the future. The idea and certainty that everything could be completely different - even for the better.

Matthias Horx, The Post Corona World, 2020

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KNOW THE CHALLENGE

THINK CLEARLY AND ACT FAST

Turn toward the disruption. Examine and understand the transformations in consumer behavior, business, and marketing .

REBOOT

FOR

WHERE YOU SHOULD FOCUS.

01.
User Behavior

Listen closely and adapt quickly to the new ways people behave. This crisis is temporary, many of the behavioral changes will remain.

02.
Business Needs

Plan, reshape, and adjust tactics wisely while ruthlessly prioritizing, watching cash flow, and guarding business continuity.

03.
Crisis Marketing

Relearn how to reach people. The first observable trends are already showing us what works and how marketing will change during and after this crisis.



THE STAGES OF REINVENTION.

Phase 1.

Uncertainty

The threat is evident. We're drowning in information, but there are more questions than answers. The old ways of doing things no longer apply. We grapple with vulnerability and fear.

Next 30 days.

Phase 2.

Lock Down

We are restricted. We look for new ways to get what we need. We turn to digital and e-commerce, not only for products and supplies, but also experiences, interactions, and connection.

Two to six months.

Phase 3.

Rebound/Boom

The acute crisis is behind us. Life begins to reestablish normal routines. There is joy in newfound freedom. But normal looks different now. Those who remain have been replanted into new soil. We are primed to grow.

Six to 12 months.



PHASE 1. UNCERTAINTY

User behavior

Seek security and reassurance

We struggle to filter through information while establishing new routines around private and business life. Our social and economic options shift daily. Our brains perceive this as trauma. We look for comfort.

Business needs

Brace for impact and market constriction

Customer behavior changes radically. Protective behavior, disruption in supply chains, and new logistical challenges lead to a sharp drop in revenue in most industries. Those who don't mobilize quickly limit their options.

Crisis communication

Eliminate waste and get nimble

Weathering the sudden, steep drops in revenue requires quick adaptation to changes in user behavior. Underperforming marketing tactics give way to focus on growth hacking and leapfrogging tactics.



PHASE 2. LOCKDOWN

User Behavior

Cope and prioritize

Customer behavior changes radically. Protective behavior, disruption in supply chains, and new logistical challenges lead to a sharp drop in revenue in most industries. Those who don't mobilize quickly limit their options.

Business needs

Survive by adapting

Quick-acting and nimble organizations turn toward innovation and fast failure. As we embrace action over analysis, we help "flatten the curve" and stay solvent. Industries and providers not able to adapt to new user behaviors suffer. Some are quickly replaced by digital competitors.

Crisis communication

Experiment and learn

We get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Breaking rules and leaning hard into digital experiences and e-commerce is an advantage. Rapid deployment of lean innovations lets us test new ideas. We keep what works, scrap what doesn't. No more "that's how we've always done it."



PHASE 3. REBOUND / BOOM

User Behavior

We are reshaped

We greet the end of the crisis with joy in regained freedoms. After stressful restrictions and isolation, we renew social connections, but remain strongly oriented toward digital. It is crisis-based muscle memory that's now familiar, comfortable, and functional.

Business needs

Operational reboot

We operationalize and enhance tactics around those crisis innovations that have served us well. We have survived. Many other organizations cannot say the same. Experimentation and fast failure becomes core to our business.

Crisis communication

Capitalize on success

The innovations and growth hacking skunkworks deployed during lockdown are the foundation of our long-term growth strategy. We prioritize what proved successful, and make fundamental changes. We remain light on our feet.



THE NEW PLAYGROUND

LOCKDOWN IS THE ULTIMATE DIGITAL CATALYST.

Social distancing is an accelerant for digitization. People, hungry for new options to meet needs, connect, and feel safe, will speed adoption of good solutions, whether practical or innovative. Responsive businesses will introduce “minimum lovable” products and services at a faster pace than ever, and then iterate and refine. The loudest voice in the room will be that of your customers. Kindness and humanity will be a business advantage. E-commerce will become the default in many categories. Enhancements in conversational interfaces, chatbots, and voice assistants will change how we interact online.

PRODUCT, PLACE, PRICE AND PROMOTION. They're still here. They're just transformed.

AGILITY MEANS ADAPTING YOUR TACTICAL APPROACHES.

Shape capabilities to the crisis

Lean in to your core competencies and evaluate how they can support people through the lens of this crisis.

Craft post-crisis offerings

Think about life after this. How might you extend offerings to provide value in a future of changed customer behaviors and needs.

Think about emergent gaps

Your competition is likely to change dramatically. Some current competitors won't make it. Position yourself to fill those future gaps.

Be empathetic, kind, and human

Crisis crystallizes our humanness. In all interactions, be kind, genuine, and understanding. Be human. Speak plainly. Offer warmth and humor. Play the relationship long game.

Meet people where they are

Show how your products fit in new and crisis-related contexts that people can acutely identify with.

Inspire through content

People now have time to reflect. Offer inspirational and galvanizing content to help shape decisions, today and tomorrow.

E-commerce is the new default

Digital, direct sales will become the new go-to. E-commerce will emerge stronger from this storm. Ensure you're prepared, with a clearly defined customer journey.

Transact anywhere

Wherever the people are, there will be potential for digital sales. Consider how to shortcut traditional sales funnels and boost things like social commerce (e.g. Instagram ads).

Make digital purchases easy

Invest in click-to-call, natural language interfaces, and intuitive virtual shopping experiences. Shape relationships in context of social distancing and reduced brick and mortar offerings.

Offer generous free trials

As people experiment with new products and services, offer free trials long enough to allow habits to form. Stack the deck for being seen as kind, dependable, and comforting post-crisis.

Turn to bundles and packages

Appeal to people's sense of economy by creating bundles with flat fees or subscriptions. For added value, partner across industries for packages that address concrete needs.

Enable buy now, save later

Offer discounted bulk or longer-term purchasing now to appeal to the planners. Allow flexibility and reasonable opt-outs/cancellations.



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REWRITE THE PLAYBOOK

A REBOOT IS REQUIRED

Relaunch your marketing and sales as part of a designed crisis strategy. Optimize budgets, adjust tactics, and act with intention.

REBOOT

FOR

THE GREATEST DANGER IN A CRISIS IS TO KEEP YESTERDAY'S LOGIC.

Any description of a company and its troubles and successes is characterised by the kind of thinking that went into the seeing and analysis. If that same thinking is what creates the troubles and kills the opportunities, you will be sunk.

Many years ago Peter F. Drucker warned that the most dangerous thing in times of change is not the change itself, but to operate with yesterday's logic. Today, more than ever, we now increasingly hear the drum beat and sirens signalling that marketing of all types can no longer survive using recipes developed in the past.

Peter F. Drucker, 2017.

THE NEW WAY TO REBOOT.

Part 1.

Delete

Assess critically and trim aggressively. Inspect your current tactics and identify those that aren't making an impact or driving value. Get rid of everything that has only short-term lead generation prospects (e.g. media spending)

Next 30 days.

Part 2.

Alt

Rethink how Product, Place, Price, and Promotion are different now. Create new tactics to meet the current need, aligned closely with a consistent strategic North Star that's true to your business.

Two to six months.

Part 3.

Control

Keep your eyes on the horizon post-crisis. Stay attuned to what's changing. Be prepared for the new reality of user needs and market dynamics that will come next. Anticipate future scenarios and position yourself accordingly.

Six to 12 months.



DELETE TO FOCUS AND REINVEST.

First, assess your existing digital initiatives. How effective are they in the current emergency situation? How valid will they be after this crisis is over and the landscape is changed?

Second, quickly prioritize those digital initiatives based on their ability to impact the bottom line. How digital are they already? Can they be digitized? How do they contribute to cashflow or performance KPIs? Are you ready to support them from a technology perspective? How much effort and resources (staff, budget, development, marketing) will be necessary to maintain them?

Third, sort these initiatives into four categories.

High impact, low effort. That's a YES. Do these now.

High effort, high impact. That's a MAYBE for further discussion.

Low effort, low impact. Also a MAYBE, but low-hanging fruit can yield big dividends.

High effort, low impact. That's a NO.

Shut down any high effort / low impact, "NO" services immediately to open up resources for new, reimagined offerings that will more quickly and directly benefit your customers and your business.

ALT MINDSET TO DESIGN STABILIZING OFFERINGS.

Offering Product

QUICK FIXES

Identify and implement quick ways to boost cash flow. Consider special offers, add-ons, referral incentives. Introduce simple new products that meet needs.

E-commerce Price

RAPID PARTNERING

Quickly establish partnerships to fill gaps in e-commerce, communication, and content capabilities. Prioritize what will help you connect with customers.

Experience Place

DIGITAL TOUCHPOINTS

Add new, or enhance existing, digital touchpoints to maintain close touch with your customers and enable easy online interactions.

Communication Promotion

REASSURING PRESENCE

Promote new offerings in social media, search, and the web. Regularly create content to maintain awareness and engagement. Be plain-spoken, positive, and empathetic.



CONTROL AND PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE YOU WANT.

Know that you have the ability to shape this. You must take the wheel.

Companies that survive crises like this are proactive. They use the situation to rethink and reshape, paying attention, staying curious, and showing foresight for upcoming developments. They let go of status quo and think differently. And they emerge from disruptions ahead of their competition.

By observing trends and signals in changing user needs and priorities, as well as adjustments in market dynamics, we can consider future scenarios and understand their implications on our business.

This means we're in control. We are riding the wave, versus having it crash down on us. We can understand emerging value propositions and design products and services that position us for a solid future.

By thinking ahead, we ensure that, once the crisis passes and demand recovers, we will have the offerings ready to attract customers and propel us ahead of our competition.



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REBOOT

FOR

TAP INTO SUPERPOWERS

BRING SMART PEOPLE TOGETHER

Remote work opens up a gold mine of focused expertise. Acumium helps with virtual strategy sessions, remote growth hacker teams, and around-the-clock ideas.



REMOTE WORK IS A GOLD MINE OF COLLABORATION AND PRODUCTIVITY.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, Elizabethan theaters in London frequently closed for extended periods of time due to outbreaks of the bubonic plague. In his acclaimed work *The Year of Lear*, scholar James Shapiro notes that during one such outbreak in 1606, with theaters shut throughout London, William Shakespeare used his time to write three of the greatest plays in history. *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Antony & Cleopatra*.

The Atlantic, 2015

WE ALREADY KNOW HOW TO MAKE WORKING REMOTELY WORK FOR US (AND FOR YOU).

Acumium has been comfortable working remotely for years.

When the current crisis struck, we were up and running almost 100 percent remotely within 48 hours. We didn't miss a beat. Digital is our bread and butter. We're in our 19th year of leadership in digital strategy, design, technology, and transformation.

Digital work is in our DNA. We believe in informed experimentation and fast iterations. We build "minimum lovable products" and then improve them. We fail fast and learn quickly. The current way of distributed remote working is nothing new to us. All that's really changed is more meetings happen over web conference.

Even remote, we are a tight-knit team of experts who care deeply about doing great work. Our core principles remain unchanged. We are curious, genuine, analytical, creative, experimental, and empathetic.

We are Acumium. And we're here to help. Welcome to different.



FORWARD4FAMILIES

IN THE MIDDLE OF A PANDEMIC, DAN COSTELLO STARTED A NEW COMPANY.

Dan is the CEO of Acumium. When the pandemic hit, he recalled 9/11 and his feelings of powerlessness and frustration. He wanted to do things differently in this crisis. He was determined to make a difference.

And Forward4Families (F4F) was born.

Forward4Families is a new way to help people safely get food during the COVID-19 pandemic. It envisions accessible and efficient doorstep delivery for every community that is available to all, connecting business, people and families, helping drive local economies at a global scale.

It was created as a public/private partnership creating a logistical framework to centralize food options and provide no-contact delivery so we can keep our communities safe.

Work started in March. We built and launched the website in a weekend. There are now multiple local partners, representing food banks, farms, and local business. People in the community are signing up to participate. We expect to be operational in April.

LET US HELP.

Remote teams, in a remote economy, catalyzing real change.

As this crisis has developed, it has changed the rules. Now more than ever, Acumium recognizes we must tap into deep wellsprings of creative and bold ideas to tackle the challenges we all face. We have always been here to support businesses, but the shape of our support is adapting, too.

Introducing Reboot 2020

We want to use our digital expertise to galvanize our community, spark conversations and build personal connections. We are ready to put together the right strategic team to help you solve your problems. We'll roll up our sleeves with you and, through quick-turn discovery discussions, build a creative strategy that turns new ideas into actionable and sustainable change and innovation.

Option 1/Quick Start. We'll donate 2-3 hours to growth-hack with you and make recommendations on how to move forward.

Option 2/Growth Strategy. You'll get 4-5 hours with our expert team, at 50% of our normal rates.

Option 3/Catalyst Session. Dig into deeper strategy and more comprehensive analysis with 6-7 hours at discounted rates.

Option 4/Premium Discovery+Roadmapping. Contact us for an estimate, typically 16-24 hours.

Visit us at www.acumium.com/contact-us to get started



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**Matthias
Horx ,
The
Post
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2020**