



# Manufacturing Action Plan

If you're feeling overwhelmed and unsure of what actions to take during this time, use this guide to get you started. Here's what we'll cover:

**Keeping safe**

- Protecting yourself
- Protecting your clients

**Assessing and generating solutions**

- Identifying short-term modifications
- Starting to think long term

**Adapting and overcoming**

- Converting to digital solutions
- Putting a plan into action

**Staying in contact**

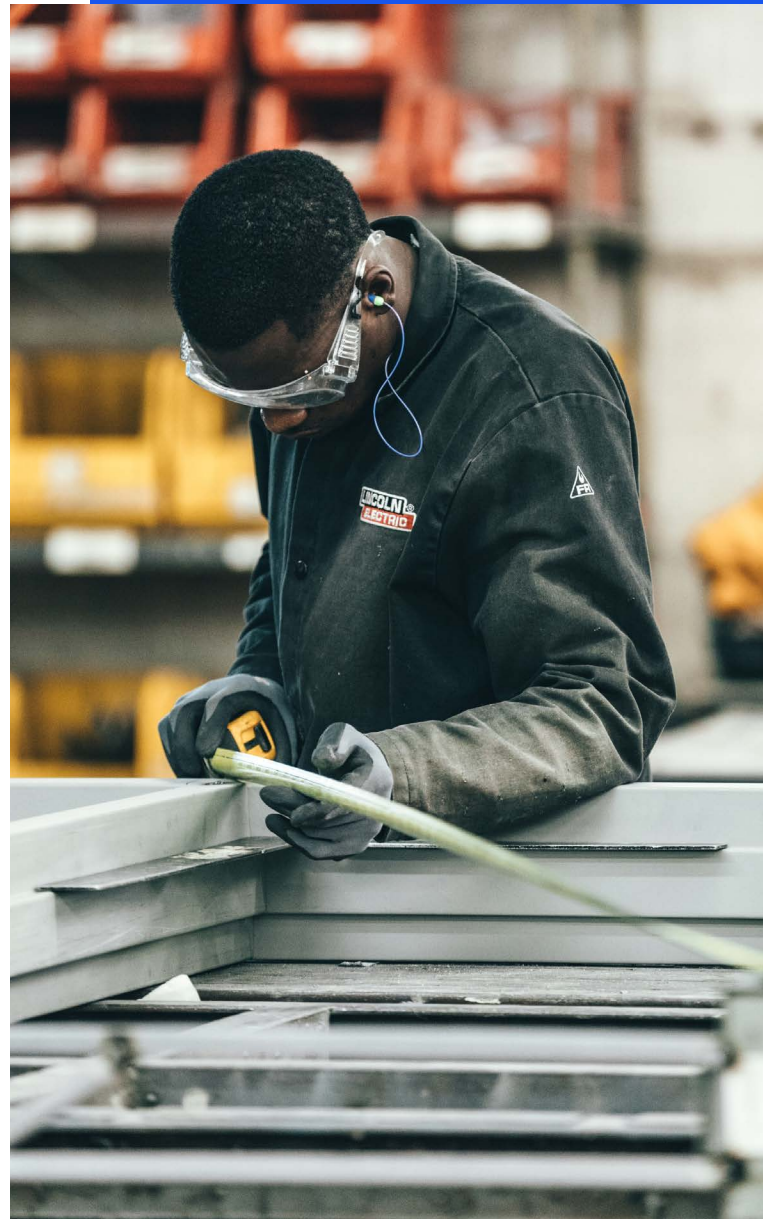
- Updating your communication channels
- Reaching out to clients

**Marketing during this time**

- Being sensitive and respectful
- Gauging the appropriate path

**Planning for the future**

- Thinking ahead
- Using what you've learned





The COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic is changing the way we all do business. There is much we still don't know about how this situation will play out.

Manufacturing businesses are facing many challenges, including changes to operations, possible supply chain disruptions, and for some, repurposing their facilities to help make much-needed supplies like gowns, masks, and parts for ventilators.

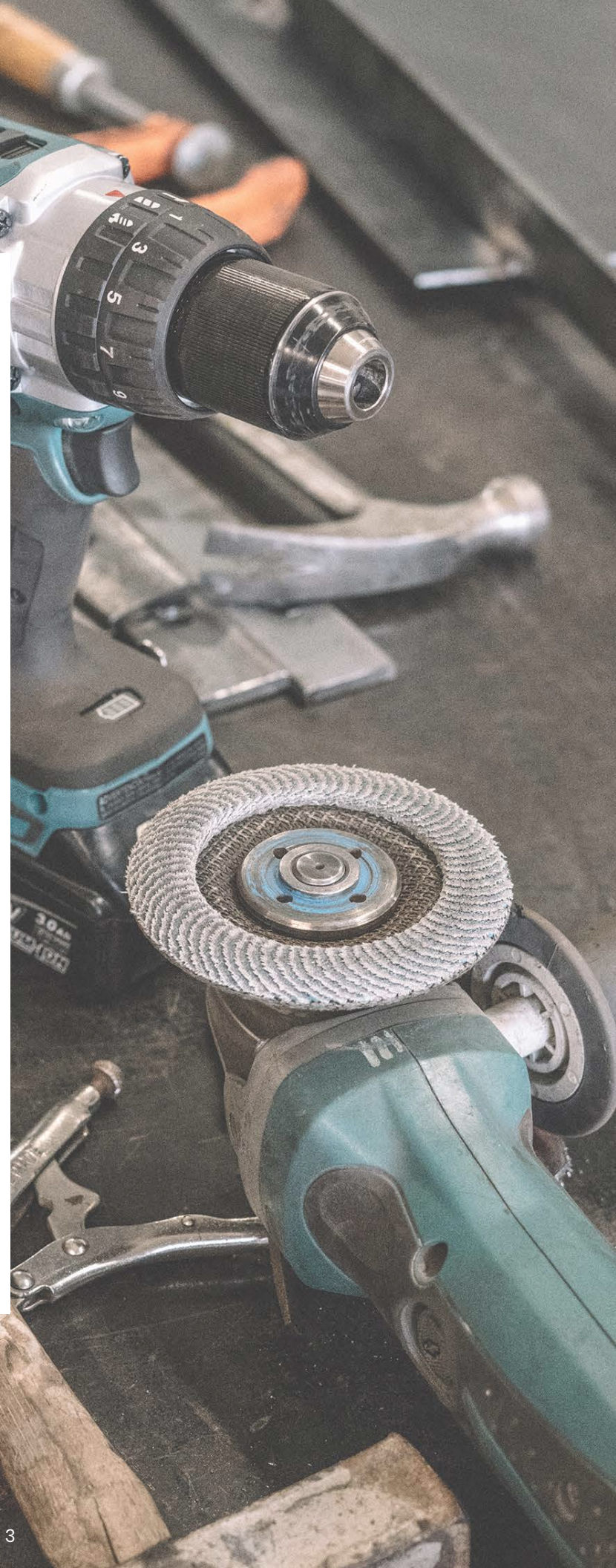
As this unprecedented crisis continues to evolve, many manufacturers are wondering how to minimize losses, and what steps they can take to protect their businesses.

Small business owners and entrepreneurs are some of the most resourceful and resilient people we know. And now's the time to lean into that resourcefulness, make a plan, and get to work. If you're feeling overwhelmed and unsure of what actions to take, this guide will serve as a good starting point.

Let's take a look at some ways that you can take stock of the situation, generate solutions, and take action to protect your manufacturing business.

As you know, things are developing rapidly. Remain flexible to make changes on the fly.

Remember, you've got us and can get [Constant Contact Help and Support](#) when you need it.





# Safety First

Your first priority is to make sure that your family, staff, and especially yourself, are safe and safeguarded, to the best of your ability.

Next, make sure that you're doing everything you can to safeguard your facilities and operations.

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Implement [CDC-recommended precautions](#) in your business as soon as possible. Among the most important recommendations are:



- ☐ **Actively encourage employees, especially those who are sick, to stay home.**
- ☐ **Emphasize the importance of cough and sneeze etiquette as well as hand hygiene within your facility.**
- ☐ **Perform routine, thorough environmental cleaning.**

You can view additional resources specific to the manufacturing industry on the [National Association of Manufacturers' website](#).

Once you've done what you can for everyone's health and safety, it's time to figure out how this situation may affect your business.

It's likely you're already feeling the impact. In any emergency, large or small, you'll often have to assess and reassess to generate solutions because things are always changing.



**Note:** See up to date information on state and local declarations and their impact on manufacturing operations and facilities. ([Find resources for your state here.](#))

# Assess and generate solutions

Since there are a lot of unknowns, it's important to think about various possibilities and what you can do to adapt to them. According to a survey conducted by the NAM (National Association of Manufacturers), 78.3% of manufacturers anticipate a financial impact due to COVID-19, 53.1% anticipate changes in how they operate, while 35.5% are facing supply chain disruptions.

These issues are already impacting so many manufacturing businesses, and it's likely that these changes will influence the industry in the future. It's important to look at these problems directly and to make a plan based on what you're able to do now, as well as what you might be able to do later on. Here are some examples of things you should consider.

You may want to write things down as you think through these questions and your answers. It'll help you formulate your action plan.

## What if you end up short on staff?

☐

Think about reducing hours or offering additional overtime incentives when it's safe to do so.

## What can you do to help your staff?

☐

Can you continue to pay them if they can't come in?

## How can you maintain a safe work environment?

☐

Are there new factory guidelines?

☐

Follow [CDC-recommended precautions](#).

## How can you help your staff adjust to changes in operations?

☐

What training do you need to provide?

☐

Are there new regulations?

## What if you get sick?

☐

If possible, designate someone else to be in charge of your daily operations.

## How will you respond to disruptions to the supply chain?

☐

Identify alternate suppliers that may be able to help fulfill the demand.

Are there ways you can support your current suppliers?

☐

Early payments on invoices or simply letting the supplier know if they need to pause during this time, you will still work with them when they're ready.

And at some point you may have to ask the bigger questions:

**What if you have to temporarily pause operations?**

- What will that look like? How will you communicate it?

**Is the “temporary” plan you put into place sustainable? If so, for how long?**

- If not, are there things you can do to adjust your plan so it will be sustainable?

**What if this lasts several months?**

- How would this affect your family, as well as your staff, community and their families — can you help them in some way?

**Are there any other resources available to you?**

We’ve compiled a list of resources for you.

[Resources for Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#)



# Adapt and overcome

Your “business as usual” may no longer exist, at least for the time being. You’ll need to adapt to get through these trying times. Some things to consider:



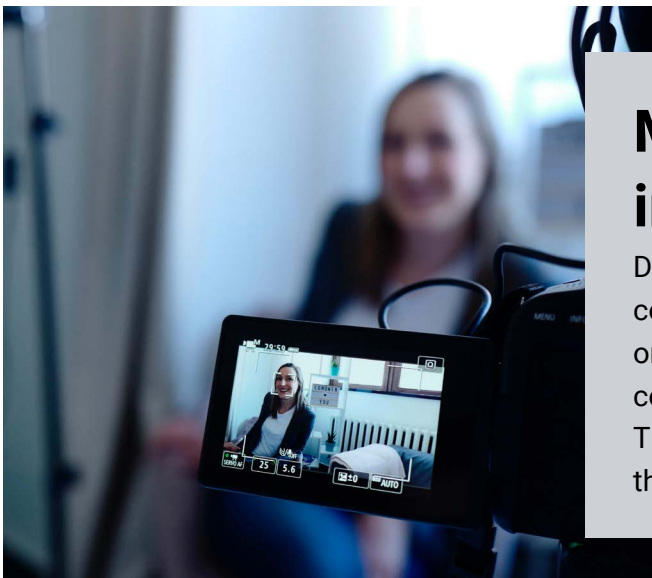
## Repurposing your facility

Many manufacturers are pivoting to help provide medical supplies or other materials needed to help aid in this crisis. Are there ways your business can help support the efforts to combat COVID-19? For example, Bacardi has shifted its distilleries to making ethanol needed to manufacture hand sanitizer.



## Building your brand online

Your Constant Contact account comes with tools that make it easy to start building your brand online. Many manufacturers are doing some incredible things right now to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Use this time to share how your business has made a positive impact during this time on your website and social channels.



## Moving tradeshows or in-person events online

Depending on the nature of your manufacturing business, you may consider using this as an opportunity to showcase new technologies or innovations your team is doing through online events. You may even consider a YouTube channel, video conferencing, or livestreaming. Think about offering a webinar or webcast for your staff or others in the industry to teach them new skills.



# Stay in contact

When you're constantly having to make changes to adapt to an ever-changing situation, it's imperative that you let your customers know what you're doing and when.

Keep them aware of any changes to day-to-day operations.

Be sure to include details your customers should know about, like your availability, delay in production, and any precautions you're taking regarding the virus.

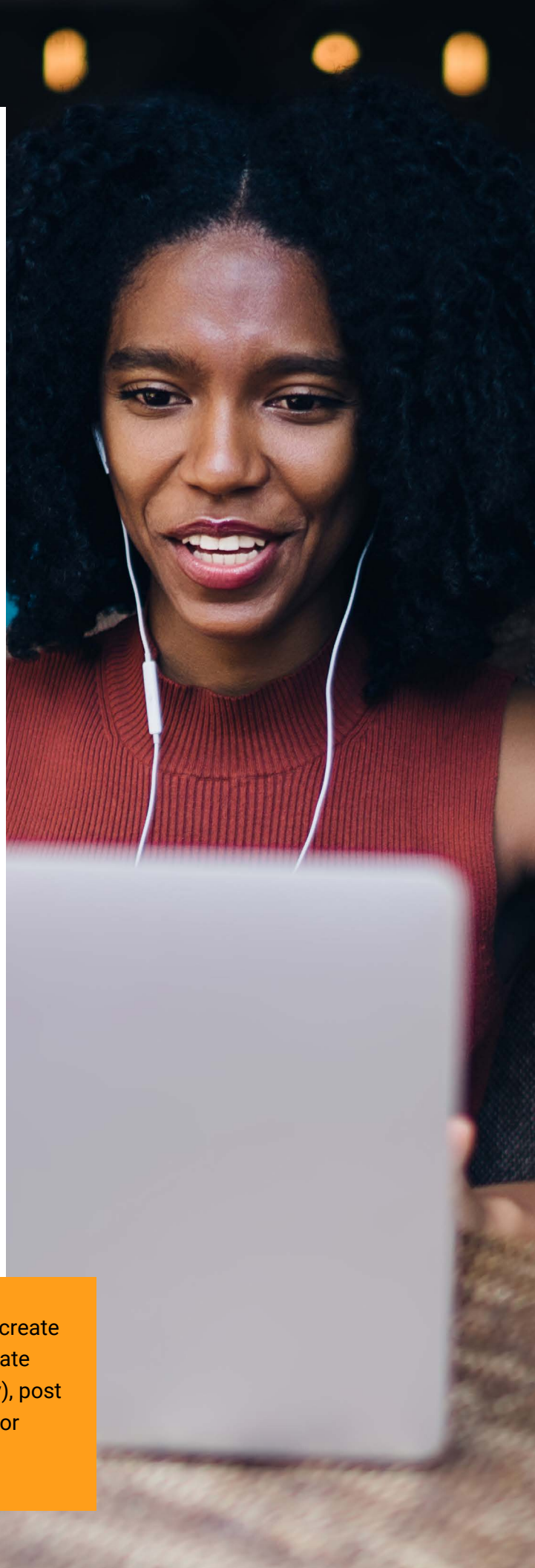
Consider the following tips to communicate the above information with your clients:



- ☐ **Update your website.**
- ☐ **Email your customers.**
- ☐ **Post to social channels and pin those posts to the top of your feed if possible.**
- ☐ **Update your details on any sites where you have a listing.**

It's also a good idea to review any communications you already had scheduled for their appropriateness and relevance based on the current state of affairs.

Remember, your Constant Contact account comes with tools to create a website, send email (including templates for you to communicate with your contacts about COVID-19 including tips on what to say), post to social media, and more. Need help? See our other resources for [Constant Contact Help and Support](#).





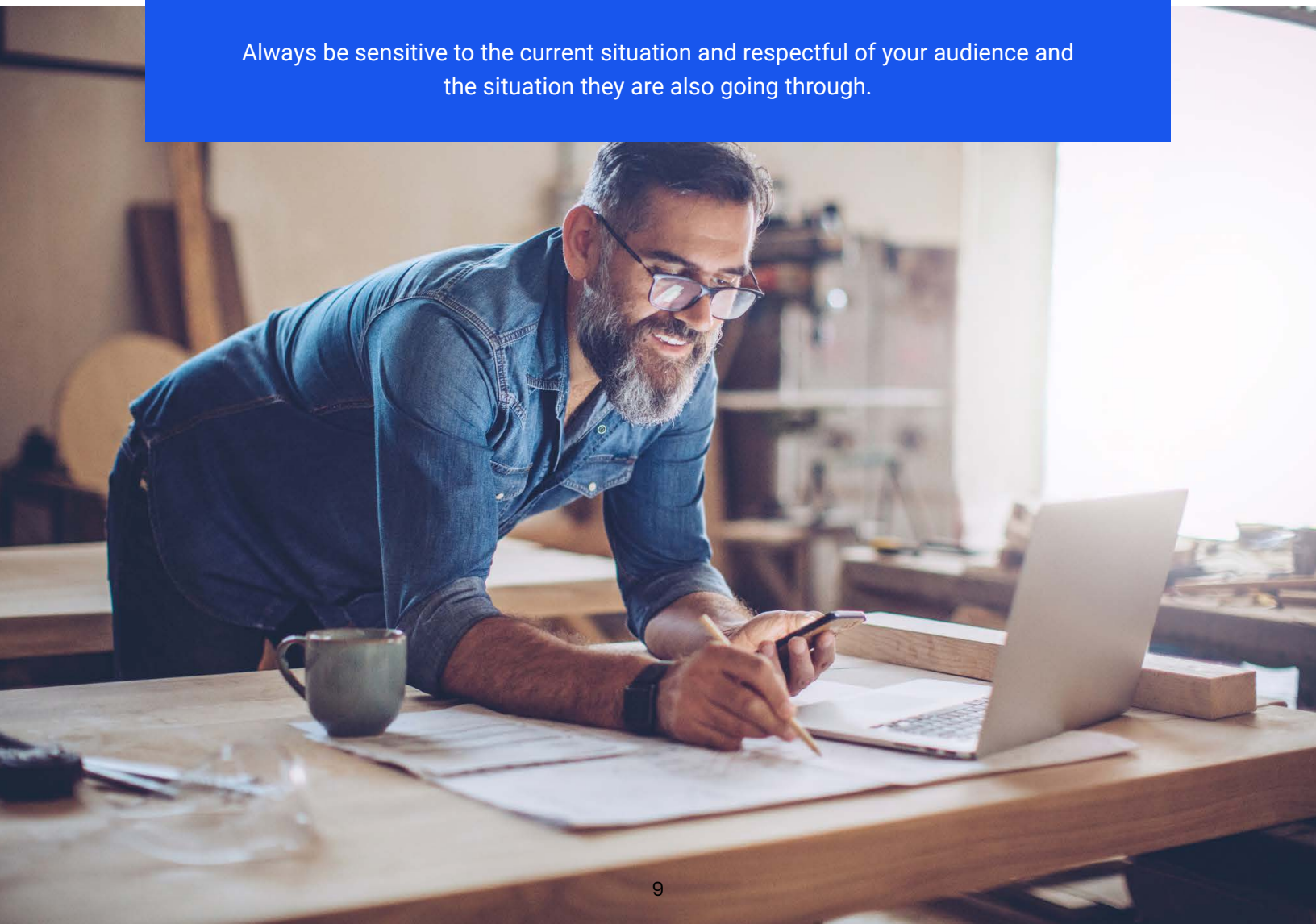


# Marketing during this time

Letting people know about the changes you've made is a great place to start. Use the channels mentioned above to communicate on a consistent basis. Of course, consider your unique situation and local market to gauge the most appropriate path forward.

If your manufacturing business has paused or reduced production, use this time to continue connecting with your customers and suppliers, build up a pool of valuable content that positions you as an expert, and build/refine your brand online so you are top of mind and the clear choice when your market is ready.

Always be sensitive to the current situation and respectful of your audience and the situation they are also going through.



# Plan for the future

Eventually, you'll need to transition back to business as usual. It's important to plan ahead. So, start making plans for what comes after the emergency.

Review the changes you've made and what you've learned, then think about how you can use that information to move forward.

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## What can stay?

Look for things worth making a permanent part of your business.



- ☐ **Did you try an online effort like a webinar or webcast that helped build the skill levels of your employees or others in the industry?**
- ☐ **Did you make headway building your brand?**
- ☐ **Were people interested in the content and messages you produced about your expertise in your particular niche?**
- ☐ **Can you continue to manufacture new products or build out the existing line that you offer to additional markets?**

If so, don't stop just because the emergency is over. Keep them going and see if they're a good addition to your business long term.

## What comes next?



- ☐ **Do you need to reach out to your suppliers and leads?**
- ☐ **If you've paused operations, what will it take to start back up?**
- ☐ **How will you recall your staff? Will it be in stages or all at once?**

These are trying times with many unknowns. By doing your best to stay safe, review your options, and make a plan you'll better position yourself to come out on the other side.



# Remember, you are not alone

Our marketing advisors are here to help.

- Connect with other small businesses in the [Community](#)
- See our other resources for [Constant Contact Help and Support](#)
- Read *The Download*, our [ultimate online marketing guide for manufacturers](#)

**You've got this. You've got us.**

