



CONSTRUCTION
MARKETING
EXPERTS

POST COVID RECOVERY GUIDE

Your Five Minute Guide to Using Marketing to
Boost Business Performance in the Post-COVID Recovery



Boost your business

A well-worn business mantra tells us that ‘when we fail to plan, we plan to fail’, but none of us were able to plan for a pandemic that caused construction sites to pause, projects to be put on hold and supply chains to falter.

And as the situation has evolved, uncertainty has continued, with false dawns and vacillating initiatives and restrictions. Construction sector businesses have also had to cope with a wide array of challenges, from supply chain challenges and price volatility, to staff absences and skill shortages.

We still don’t know how long the pandemic and its multi-faceted impacts will be with us, but it has become very clear that communication is a key element of managing customer expectations, gaining a competitive edge, and keeping staff, customers and supply chain partners on board.

At the height of the COVID crisis, when firefighting to survive was the only priority, marketing took a back seat for many. Now that the focus has shifted to economic recovery and growth marketing is the essential tool for differentiating, engaging customers and generating sales opportunities.

Read our Five-Minute Guide to find out how you can use marketing effectively to boost business performance during the COVID recovery, setting your business apart from others in your sector.

Preparing a Toolkit for the Road to Recovery

At CME, we're working with clients to develop tailored strategies for tackling the communications challenges construction sector businesses face in 2022: including continued uncertainty, staff and supply chain issues and a changed property market.

The specifics of each plan consider the individual impacts of the pandemic for each client within the context of their market, along with their resources and their future goals.

The same plans won't work for everyone, but there is valuable guidance we can offer that can be applied to a wide array of businesses. We've compiled it in this Five-Minute Guide to help you manage communications effectively during these challenging times.

In the months ahead, clear communication delivered through appropriate channels will play a critical role in your commercial resilience, the motivation of your team and the reputation of your brand.

This Five-Minute Guide to Marketing to Boost Business Performance in the post-COVID recovery:

- Outline the role of communications as a commercial and operational priority
- Provide tips on communicating with employees
- Offer guidance on effective communication with customers
- Detail considerations for communicating with supply chains
- Explore ways to differentiate your company to help you stay ahead of the competition



Why are communications key?

At a time when you've got to figure out how to keep employees motivated and safe, manage disruptive supply chains, handle price rises and cope with the financial impacts of the past two years, writing a press release is probably the last thing on your mind. We don't blame you; it wouldn't be top of our list of priorities either.

Uncertainty and change remain key characteristics of the construction marketplace across all aspects of the sector. Your stakeholders – customers, prospects, suppliers, employees and influencers in your marketplace - are looking for clarity and for reassurance that you have a deliverable plan in place. The messages you need to communicate to each of those

groups will be different, but there has never been a more critical time to underpin confidence in your business with timely and targeted communications.

For many companies, communications have been pushed down the priority list because of the huge operational and commercial challenges they've faced over the past two years. However, communications should not be seen as an added burden during these difficult times, but as a tool to help address the business challenges and maximise the potential of the post COVID-19 recovery.

Effective communications now can help you:

- Maximise confidence in your business across the upstream and downstream delivery chain
- Address key areas of concern, such as supply chain challenges, skills and rising costs
- Motivate your team
- Differentiate your brand
- Bring clarity to operational changes
- Maximise the opportunity of any diversification
- Minimise the commercial impact of any negative changes
- Leverage trust in your brand and build brand equity
- Evidence sound commercial thinking and customer-focused agility

Communicating with Your Team

Regardless of how big or small your company is, your team is critical to your future success.

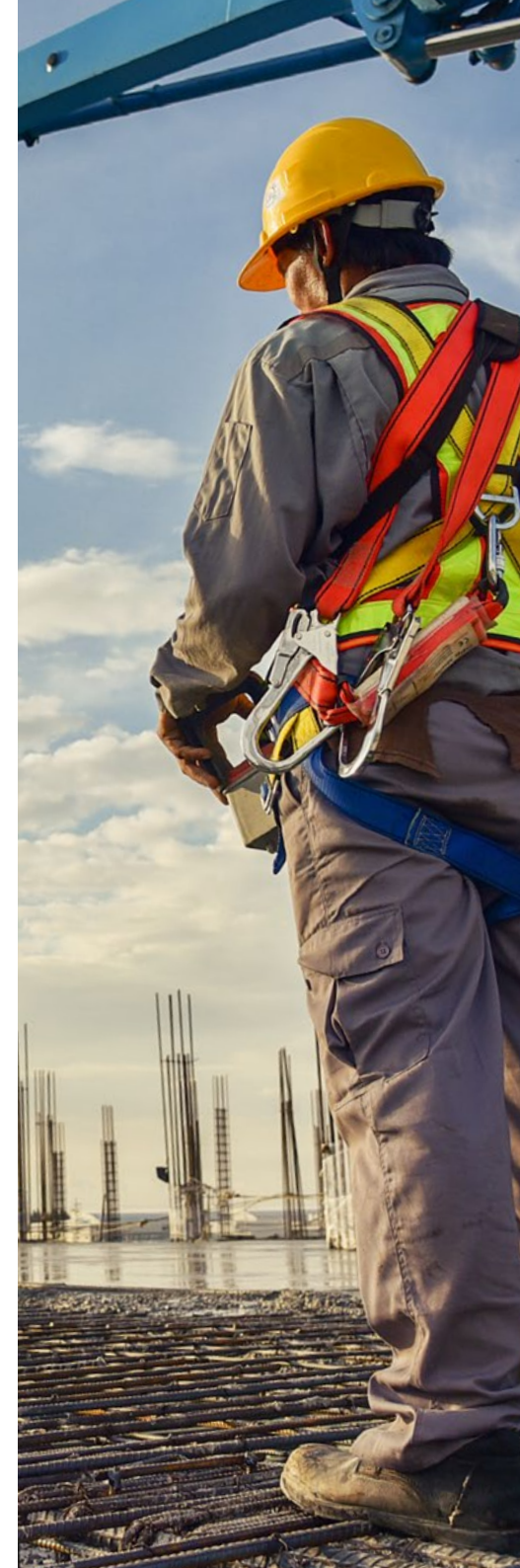
The combined impact of the pandemic and Brexit means that the skills 'gap' the construction sector faced before COVID, has become a skills crisis that is affecting recruitment, retention, wages and operational planning.

Marketing plays an essential role in both recruitment and retention, because it enables you to develop and promote your employer brand to attract candidates and boost the morale of your team. Communicating with your team will ensure they feel valued and motivated, encouraging them to stay with you and be more productive. Getting work done well and efficiently will help you use resource effectively and deliver value to customers.

This not only pays dividends for you operationally but is reputation in the bank for your company that will help you attract quality candidates for vacant roles and generate opportunities through repeat business and referrals.

Ideas of steps you can take to communicate with your team include:

- Regular emails about business milestones, staff achievements and company plans
- Calls to staff working from home using video conferencing apps such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams
- Sharing of customer communications so that the team knows what you're saying to customers
- Sharing of customer feedback to inspire and motivate employees
- Employee rewards and awards schemes
- A staff suggestion box email address, with any suggestions that are implemented being shared back to the team



Communicating with Customers

The COVID-19 crisis has affected companies in many ways and an important success factor in your marketing activity is to look beyond how your business has been affected and consider how the uncertainty has impacted your customers and prospects.

Identifying customers' 'pain points' and using marketing to demonstrate that your company is the partner that can help them overcome the challenges they face is a great way to add value to business relationships. At CME, we can help you segment your customers and identify the pain points affecting each group. We can also help you tailor messages and activities with a customer journey approach that ensures every existing and potential relationship is nurtured in a way that is targeted, relevant and memorable.

Ideas of steps you can take to communicate with your customers include:

- Making sure company and personal LinkedIn profiles are up-to-date and reaching out to connect with customers online
- Posting content and updates on LinkedIn and any other social media channels you may use
- Posting curated content on LinkedIn from other sources, which your customers might find useful
- Investing in e-marketing with tailored offers and messaging
- Developing collateral such as case studies and website content that will remind customers of what you do and why they should work with you
- Creating content that demonstrates your understanding of your customers' pain points and discusses the solutions you can offer to help them





Communicating with the Supply Chain

Supply chain challenges have been one of the most significant issues to arise for construction sector businesses following the pandemic. The cost and availability of shipping, unprecedented price increases across a variety of materials, post-Brexit import costs and delays, and issues with reliability and delivery have affected every layer of the deliver chain.

It has always been vital to work in partnership with suppliers, but effective communication and relationship building have never been more important. Your suppliers are prioritising the companies that are easy to work with, so it's important to build trust during these uncertain times.

Maintaining a positive dialogue with suppliers has the potential to create advocates for your

company, as well as securing priority status that could help prevent delays and aid accurate planning. This, in turn, will make it easier to manage expectations and deliver on promises with your upstream delivery chain partners.

Ideas of steps you can take to communicate with your supply chain partners include:

- Email updates on delivery, payment terms and working hours etc
- Meetings to discuss your requirements and future plans
- Newsletters to keep them up to date with what's happening with your business

Your Marketing Check List

Every business is different so your marketing strategy and communications plan should be tailored to your specific situation and future goals.

There are a few key points, however, that every business should implement to ensure you boost business performance and engage effectively with all stakeholders that could affect your success potential.

- Prepare your message – what does each stakeholder group need to know?
- Plan your approach – which channels will you use to communicate and how often?
- Be flexible – things are changing all the time. You can control some of that change, but some will be reactive so you may need to adjust your plans and your communications as the situation continues to unfold
- Invest in staff morale – without a motivated and productive team, you will struggle to reach your goals. Take them with you by keeping them informed and making them feel valued
- Look ahead - keep a vision of where things are going and how the company is adapting to change and moving with the times. Stay informed and use market intelligence to show your customers that you're ahead of the game
- Create compelling content – by sharing content on LinkedIn, via blogs and with email campaigns you can remain front of mind and demonstrate how you're responding to current market conditions
- Extend your networks – the lockdowns created an opportunity for digital transformation, and you can continue to use tools like LinkedIn, Zoom and Microsoft teams to their full advantage alongside face-to-face meetings and other marketing channels



How can CME help you boost your
business performance with marketing?

Our Business Boost package for 2022

At CME, we offer an end-to-end marketing service, from market research and strategy development, through to implementation of tactical marketing activity including branding, websites, PR, social media, sales collateral, and e-marketing. Our team are all specialists in marketing for the construction sector and understand the construction industry, as well as the best ways to leverage smart thinking and marketing experience for your audiences.

Whether you are ready for a full strategy and retained service, or just want to dip your toe in the water to see what a targeted, professional marketing services can deliver for your business, we're here to help.



BUSINESS BOOST PACKAGE

Powered by



Our range of services includes:

Social Media

We can curate and publish posts for your social media channels and actively engage with followers to keep your company involved in conversations and top of mind.

Trade Media PR

We can monitor the trade media for opportunities for your business to prepare and submit opinion led articles, ensuring you maintain brand exposure throughout this critical time.

Content Marketing

We can write blog articles, news stories, case studies, and downloadable reports like this one, which are great ways to keep your brand visible and can be sent directly or published via social channels.

Direct Marketing

We can help you prepare creative direct marketing campaigns to new audiences, as both traditional DM campaigns and digital communications.

Websites

Whether you need a complete a website overhaul or just a re-fresh of content we can do the design, build and content for you.

Brochures

Digital and hard copy brochures are still important for brand building. Your sales team will need to be more active than ever. Having a digital brochure to shoot across to an enquiry is a nice touchpoint in relationship building.

Design

From infographics to share on social media, to presentation templates to give you a professional edge when meeting new customers, our design team can help.

We have also designed starter package to help you kickstart your marketing in 2022 with an affordable programme of activity delivered against agreed KPIs.

Our 2022 Business Boost package includes:

- A lead magnet to aid data capture and attract traffic to your website
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- A suite of social media posts to promote the lead magnet and what's happening with your business now
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- A blog that evidences the knowledge in your business
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- An infographic that can be used to highlight a key aspect of your business for use on your website, on social media and in presentations

To find out more about how we can mobilise quickly to work with you on a project-by-project, or retained, basis, please get in touch with Sarah Reay on:

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