



## **FAQS: BRAND MARKETING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**



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# FAQS: BRAND MARKETING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Brand Trust and the Coronavirus Pandemic reveals the critical role brands are expected to play in the coronavirus crisis. Here, we answer frequently asked questions about how organisations should approach brand marketing communications during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **1. Should we be actively promoting our products/services?**

No. Our study shows that consumers expect brands to stop selling to them and start solving the unique challenges of life during a pandemic, first and foremost by protecting the wellbeing and financial security of employees and other stakeholders. There's also an expectation that brands will use their creativity and capability to make products specifically designed to help with pandemic-related challenges while many people want to see companies offering free or lower-priced goods to health workers, those at most risk from the virus and people whose jobs have been affected.

## **2. If we cannot actively promote our products/services, what can we do?**

As well as offering new products and services that specifically target pandemic-related life challenges, the study finds brands have an important role to play as communicators: first by acting as a reliable news source about the virus and the progress being made in fighting it; and, second, as educators offering instructional information about Covid-19 and how to protect against it. Given the physical barriers of nationwide lockdowns and social distancing, you should also consider using your owned channels like social media to meet consumers' desire to foster a sense of community while they are unable to gather in person.

## **3. What should the tone of our communications be right now?**

What people most want to see from brands at the moment is tangible and helpful action. Yet your tone is still important. Transparency, empathy and compassion are paramount. Our study reveals that the majority of the public want to understand exactly how organisations are supporting employees and customers while many say that simply hearing about how a brand they buy from is responding to the coronavirus is comforting and reassuring. Large swathes of people also want companies to show they care via public statements expressing empathy and support for those most affected by the pandemic.

## **4. Is humour appropriate at the moment?**

No. The vast majority of respondent in our study insist organisations should only talk about products in ways that show they are aware of the impact coronavirus crisis is having on people's lives. More than half also want brands to stop any advertising or marketing that is humorous or too light-hearted in tone.

## FAQS: BRAND MARKETING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC *cont*

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### **5. How important is it for our organisation to behave in the right way during this crisis?**

Extremely. The majority of people in our study told us that how well a company responds to the coronavirus crisis will have a huge impact on their likelihood of buying from it in future. Many, too, have started using a new brand because of the innovative or compassionate way it has behaved since the pandemic began. On the flipside, large numbers of people have already convinced others to stop using a brand that they felt was not responding appropriately. Put another way: the public wants organisations across all sectors to step up and act in the interests of employees, stakeholders and society as a whole. Those that do have an opportunity to create deeper, more meaningful relationships with their stakeholders while those that fail to do so risk causing lasting damage to their brand and reputation.