

Response to COVID-19 for Restaurant Advertisers



The outbreak of COVID-19 has severely affected food establishments everywhere, causing delivery and inventory challenges in addition to reduced foot traffic and revenue from customers. In some areas, non-essential local businesses have even been encouraged or legally required to temporarily shut down their physical locations.

Facebook is committed to supporting the authorities responding to this public health emergency and sharing guidance with

businesses during this challenging time. Given the impact this crisis is having on the food and beverage industry, we've launched a focused effort to provide guidance to restaurants who may be struggling. In this guide, you'll find resources and recommendations to help you stay in touch with your customers, share important updates, and—in whatever way possible—to keep doing business during these rapidly changing circumstances.

01 Help keep yourself safe and informed

Stay up to date on the situation by monitoring official sources like the [WHO](#), [CDC](#) and your [local government health department](#). State and local policies are changing rapidly, and it's important to stay up to date on the latest restaurant policies and relief efforts so you can adapt your restaurant and keep your employees and customers informed.

For example, the [California Department of Public Health](#), as of March 16th, 2020, stated:

“California public health officials have directed bars, night clubs, breweries and wine tasting rooms to close. Restaurants should focus on food delivery and takeout while maximizing social distancing for those who are inside their restaurant.”¹

¹ California Department of Public Health, March 17th, 2020



02 Take care of your employees



Make sure your employees have the latest [business guidance from the CDC](#) containing precautions they should be taking to help keep themselves and others safe in the workplace. In the event that your business is shut down, or if you have to scale back work hours or you're forced to scale back on staffing, you can still provide valuable information to your employees to help them stay afloat in these tough times. Some states, including [California](#), [Washington](#), [Colorado](#), [Alabama](#), [Kentucky](#), [New York](#) and many others are providing access to unemployment benefits to workers affected by COVID-19.

03 Transparency



Be proactive in informing your customers about the measures your business is taking to help ensure their health and safety. Provide clear and updated communication around operations to your customers around hours of operation, delivery, drive-thru or additional ways to purchase food, and updated safety measures.

Consider posting real-time updates to your business's Facebook page or leveraging the questions sticker in Facebook and Instagram Stories to source and respond

to consumer questions. You can also direct your customers to use Messenger as another resource for information. Or take advantage of a new feature on Pages where businesses can indicate if they have temporary service changes, i.e., if your location is temporarily closed or if you're switching delivery options.

You can also find general guidelines from the CDC on cleaning and disinfecting your business location [here](#).

04 Reimagine your marketing strategy

People are relying heavily on digital channels for news, entertainment and connection. Given consumers' desire to have some sense of normalcy and routine, a brand might consider base brand-building messaging during this time, helping to maintain top of mind awareness.

The way your brand deals with this situation now, in the short term, may influence how people see you in the future. In times of uncertainty, consumers still expect businesses to act as responsible members of the community. Develop and share messaging for how your brand is helping the community rebuild in real ways. Create continuity by reaching consumers where they are, like people turning to Facebook Watch for uplifting videos and new shows to stay busy.

You can also provide personalized, positive experiences for people. If developing offers, they should be relevant to the current climate in order to delight

customers and grow the connection they feel to your business. Use your best judgement as a marketer on this, as even well-intended discounts can be seen as opportunistic.

In terms of channel strategy, consider channels with broad-based reach, and as the current situation can change quickly, consider media vehicles that offer agility and flexibility versus investment in non-cancelable media.

Continue to implement Facebook best practices and utilize machine learning to optimize strategies in this ever-changing landscape of shifting consumer behavior.



05 Navigating order ahead or delivery

When considering your take-out and delivery options, check with a reputable news source or your local government website to make sure either service doesn't conflict with any new restrictions placed on businesses in your area. And of course, make sure to follow all precautions necessary to help make sure delivery can be done safely, without increasing the risk of spreading the infection to your customers.

Do your customers know you are offering order ahead, pick up or delivery?

- If order ahead or delivery aren't capabilities you've put much messaging behind before, consumers may not be aware you offer it. Simple messaging can build awareness while driving some immediate orders.
- App Install messaging can be considered for increasing usage of app-based order ahead functionality and traffic-based campaigns can be an option to drive people to your website for order ahead or delivery.
- If you are considering partnering with an aggregator to power delivery, ask your Facebook team about the Delivery Partner Program.

Where is the path to purchase most seamless for your customers?

- Perhaps you are still refining your app so point consumers to your website instead. Ultimately you want to direct consumers to your most frictionless experience to ensure you drive that order.
- If your business's physical location is still open, try taking payments virtually using relevant services. These measures can help reduce unnecessary physical interaction, allowing customers to pay with mobile services from their home or car instead of handing cash or credit cards to your staff.

You do not need to rethink your entire creative approach. The beautiful food imagery that drives customers into stores can be repurposed for order ahead or delivery.

06 Gift cards or credits

If your restaurant or bar must close temporarily, consider offering customers deals on gift cards or future credits if they're able to support you during these challenging times. Post your offer on your feeds to let customers know you'll be back to business as usual as soon as possible, but in the meantime, they can support you through these tough times and get a discount on their next visit.

07 Social good

Whether your restaurant supports an organization in need of help during this time or you are looking to communicate how your organization is supporting your community, we've got you covered.

Educate and engage your community about your cause and update them on your organization. Find and connect with new supporters who share your passion. Inspire people to take action by spreading the word. Consider fundraising directly, boosting a donation page or post, utilizing donation stickers in Facebook and in Instagram Stories that can link to a cause or going [Live](#) on Facebook while raising donations.

For more help, visit our Business Resource Hub: [Learn More](#)