

A close-up photograph of a mechanic's hands using a torque wrench on a car engine component. The mechanic's hands are weathered and wearing brown leather gloves. The torque wrench is silver and black, and is being used to tighten a bolt on a metal part of the engine. The background is blurred, showing other parts of the engine and the mechanic's arm.

Repair & Maintenance Services Action Plan



Constant Contact

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 employees and your customers

Assessing and generating solutions

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

Adapting and overcoming

- Converting to digital solutions when possible
- Putting a plan into action

Staying in contact

- Updating your communication channels
- Reaching out to customers

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.

Will you be able to continue the bigger jobs you're already booked for? What about smaller jobs and repairs that come through during the crisis? And for the projects you do continue, in addition to typical safety concerns, there's the added need to keep workers and customers safe from the spread of the virus.

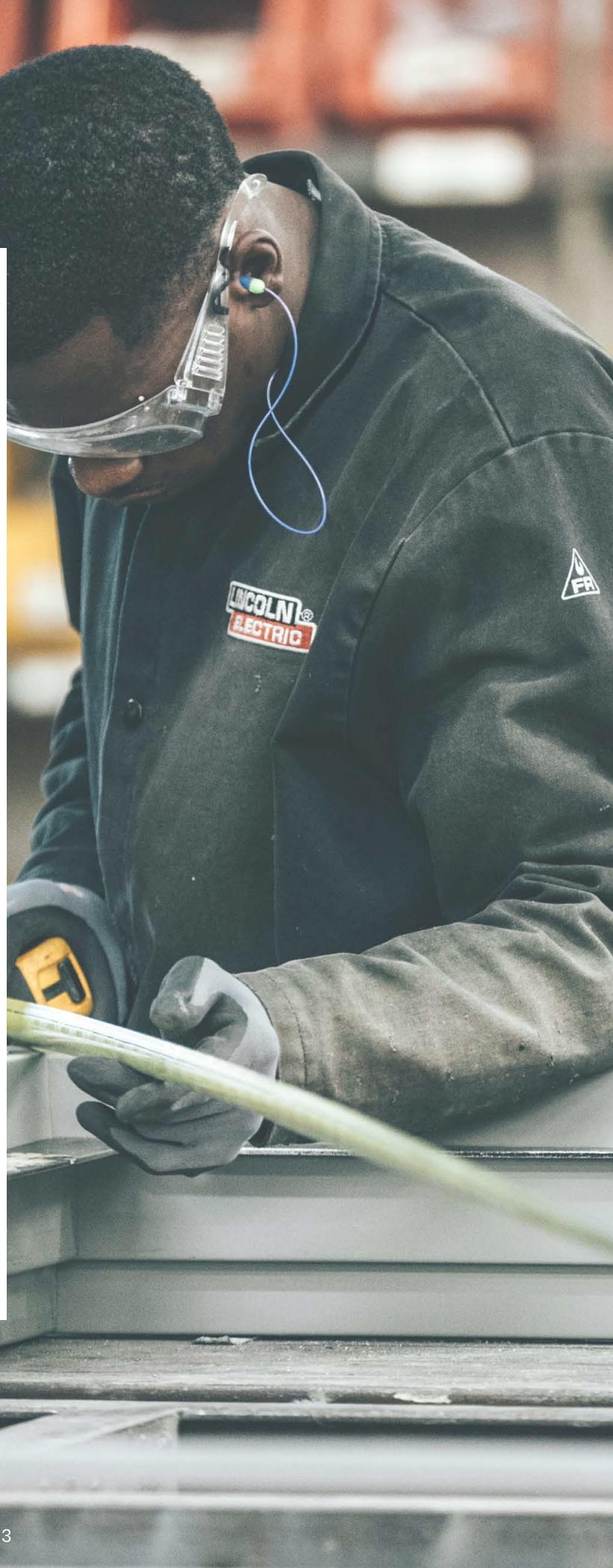
As this unprecedented crisis continues to evolve, many repair and auto maintenance professionals are wondering how to minimize losses, and what steps they can take to protect their businesses.

Small business owners 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 home and building 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 customers.

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

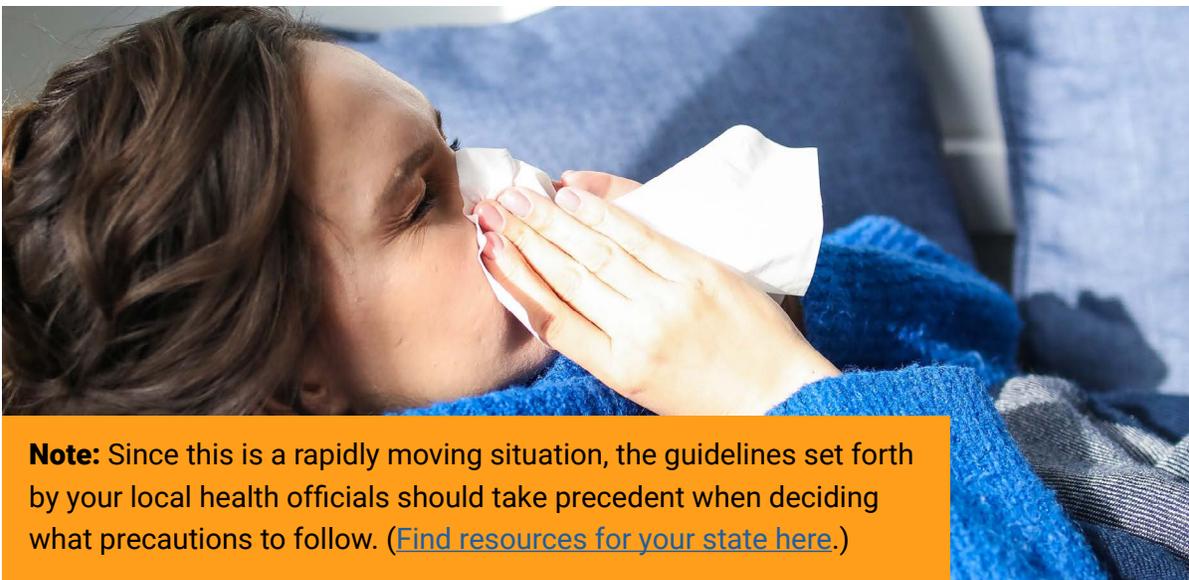


- Actively encourage employees, especially those who are sick, to stay home.**
- Emphasize the importance of cough and sneeze etiquette as well as hand hygiene within your business and on the job-site.**
- Perform routine, thorough environmental cleaning, especially on a job-site.**

You can review additional resources and responses specific to repair and auto maintenance on the official [Automotive Service Association 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: Since this is a rapidly moving situation, the guidelines set forth by your local health officials should take precedent when deciding what precautions to follow. ([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. The problems you face will vary depending on the nature of your business and what vehicles and machinery you typically service, and so your solutions will vary too. It's important to look at the questions directly and make a plan based on what you're able to do. Here are some examples of things you may need to 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 your hours or days that you provide services.
- Consider limiting services only to those that are absolutely essential.

What if you have a problem ordering parts and materials needed for a job?

- Check your supply channels to find out how long it will take to get materials in your area.
- Notify your customers of any delays in being able to finish a job.

What if you get sick?

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

What can you do to help your staff?

- Can you continue to pay them if they can't work?
- Do you have something you can give them to help them out?
- Are there new processes or procedures in place to make sure everyone in the workshop is safe?

What can you do to help your customers?

- Can you offer discounts so they can save money on services?
- Can you do service calls at different hours?
- Are you able to advise them on some basic auto maintenance procedures they can do themselves until they can come into your shop?

What can you do to help your community?

- Do you have supplies or materials, such as masks, that you can donate or can you donate your time to help hospitals and other essential community services?
- Do you have special skills and tools you can offer to help those in need?

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

What if you have to temporarily close or drastically limit your services?

- The U.S. federal government, and most states consider auto repair and maintenance to be an essential business, but you still might need to close depending on your supply situation, local customer demand, and other factors.
- Are there other tasks that you can accomplish in the meantime? Can you start booking jobs for the future, after this crisis has passed?

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 this would affect your family, as well as your staff 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 for the time being. You’ll need to adapt to get through these trying times. Some things to consider:

Selling your services online

If you haven’t been selling online, now’s your chance to start. Your Constant Contact account comes with tools that make it quick and easy to start selling online. You can create shoppable landing pages or a full website with an online store of all the home services you offer.



Providing no-contact services at your shop

Be sure to think through social distancing rules and keep your customers’ safety in mind. Let them know what measures you’re taking to keep them safe. See if you can allow customers to remain in their vehicle for quick inspections and services like oil changes. For services that require more time, try to offer contactless vehicle drop-off and pickup.

Moving on-site services online

There are plenty of ways for you to connect with clients or customers via phone or video call for an initial consultation or inspection. You may even consider a YouTube channel or video conferencing to share valuable information with motorists in need. For example, someone needing help with their car’s A/C could find step-by-step videos on your website or YouTube channel to do an initial diagnosis. You might even be able to use photos and videos to survey projects and provide cost estimates to potential new customers.



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 your customers aware of any changes to day-to-day operations.

Be sure to include details your customers should know about, like your hours, service availability, updated customer procedures for services, material limitations or availability, and any precautions you're taking regarding the virus.

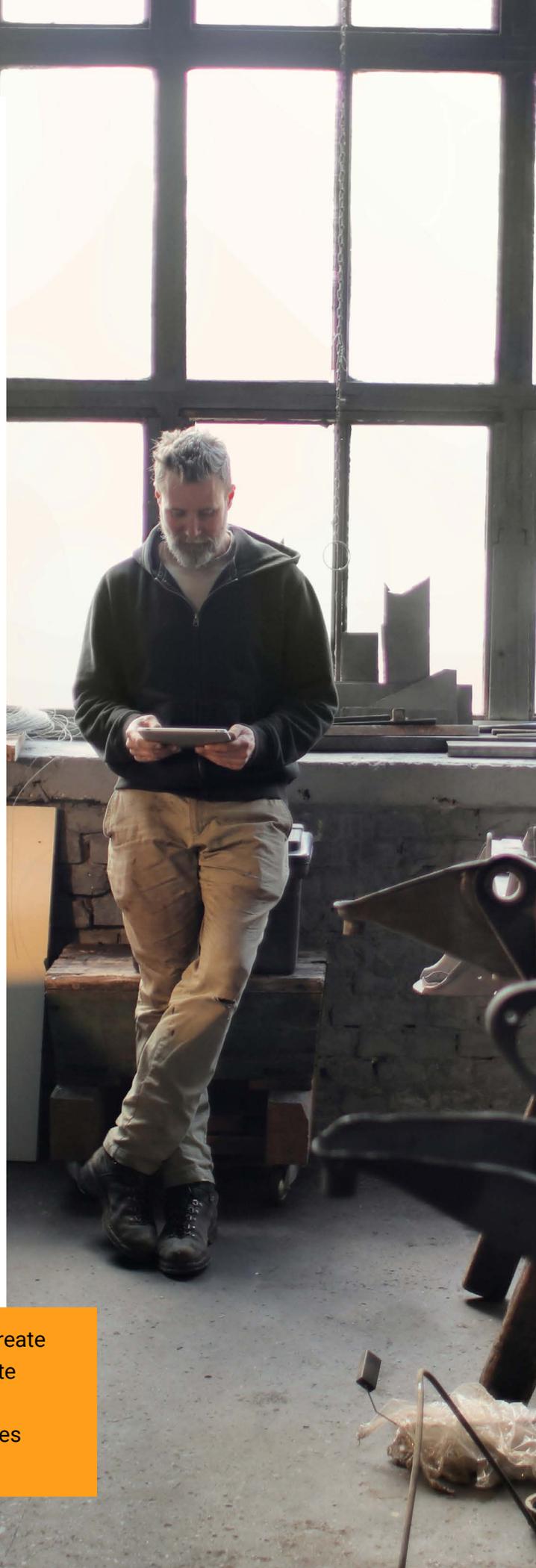
Consider the following tips to communicate the above information with your customers:



- 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 your Google My Business profile and any other sites where you have a listing.**
- Think about hanging signage in your windows and around your shop.**

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.

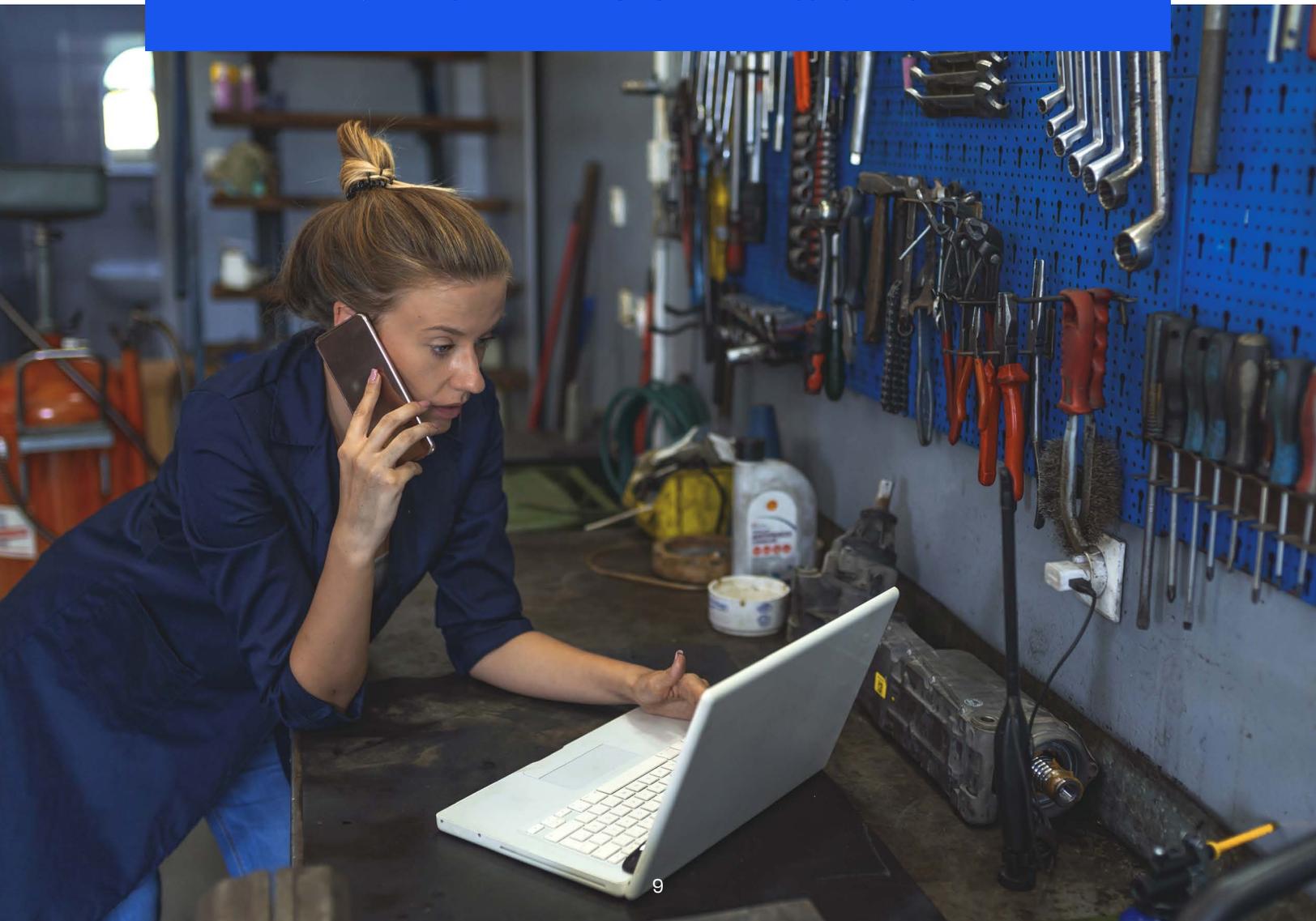
Remember, your Constant Contact account comes with tools to create a website, send email (including templates for you to communicate with your contacts about COVID-19 including tips on what to say), post to social media, and more. Need help? See our other resources for [Constant Contact Help and Support](#).





Marketing during this time

Yes, it's okay to market your business during this time. But you must be sensitive to the current situation and respectful of your audience and the situation they are also going through. 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 to gauge the most appropriate path forward.



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.

What can stay?

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



- Did your website and online communications get a greater response than you thought they would?**
- Did having reduced hours turn out to be a great thing for you and your employees?**
- Did online assessments work well for you and potential customers?**
- Did contactless services provide added convenience to customers that you'll want to continue?**

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?**
- If you've been closed, what do you need to do to reopen?**
- How will you recall your staff? Will it be in stages or all at once?**
- How will you update customers?**

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](#)

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

