

Communicating Post-Coronavirus Plans To Reopen Businesses, Nonprofits

Find useful tips for business owners on how to communicate plans to reopen.

WOODLAND PARK, COLORADO, UNITED STATES, April 13, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Michael B. Perini, President & CEO, [Perini & Associates](#) - a full-service public relations and marketing firm - offers advice for business owners on how to communicate plans to reopen.

“First, I just want to say we are so sorry for everyone who has been ill and/or had a loved one die due to COVID-19,” Perini said.

He continues to see businesses and nonprofits of nearly every size staying connected with customers in some way. “Many have taken to email, social media and in-store signage to communicate clearly with audiences about what and how they are doing during COVID-19.”



Perini provides advice to business owners on how to communicate plans to reopen.

However, as federal, state and local government officials show data of the “flattening” of the virus outbreak curve across America, business owners and nonprofit executive directors are beginning to have hope that they will be able to open soon.

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Creating a message of good will as you reopen is good business, but also shows a personal connection with customers and supporters during a time of crisis.”

Michael Perini, ABC, President & CEO

As a result of this positive development, plans to successfully reopen depend heavily on the communications strategy developed and activities implemented, according to Perini.

Lessons learned by Perini from past experience as a senior public relations practitioner during the September 11 attacks, Hurricane Katrina and other crisis situations has taught him critical lessons for communicating to employees, stakeholders, news media and the public.

“I recognize this is a historic time with the Coronavirus impacting all plans for businesses, nonprofits and organizations. However, for those that will reopen, the need for accurate, brief and clear messaging cannot be overstated.

About 20% of small businesses fail, even in the best of economic times, in their first year. And,

about 50% of small businesses fail in their fifth year, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“You add the fact that lack of marketing and/or communicating with customers is often cited as a “Top 5 Reason” for failure, and you can see why I believe leveraging well-thought out communications strategies and practices is vital,” Perini said.

Using the firm’s expertise to help communicate during a crisis is not about commercial advantage or profit, Perini said. “It is about doing the right thing for our country and showing our company’s true values and citizenship.”

“There is a need to provide hopeful and caring messages in dialogues with employees, customers and the public,” Perini said. “Always be truthful. However, tone is key as you continue to respond to the crisis situation.”

Here is a list of reminders when communicating during a crisis:

- Times of crisis can be confusing and frightening, resulting in an amplification of speculation, conspiracy theories, and fiction.

Owners should use only OFFICIAL sources – federal, state, county and city -- for facts and information. You can start with going to the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Their website is www.cdc.gov. Also, each state has an official website to get resources, updates and safety guidelines. “Ours in [Colorado](http://www.covid19.colorado.gov): <http://www.covid19.colorado.gov>,” Perini said.

- Remember: Rumors and misinformation will continue to increase as the length of this unprecedented circumstance continues.

So, with this in mind, Perini recommends preparing NOW with strategies and promotional tools to let customers know what you will be doing to reopen your business and or nonprofit. Here are tips that Perini recommends that can be adopted in rebuilding public confidence and support for reopening:

1. Send an email to your employees and customers and post signage in your business letting



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them know when you plan to reopen and what you will be doing to protect their health when they visit again.

2. Your customers are already on social media, but these days, they are likely checking in much more frequently to get the latest updates on the virus. It will be helpful to increase your posting frequency as you get closer to reopening to ensure that your updates are showing up in their news feeds.
3. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce suggests, and Perini agrees that, if you operate a service-based business like a restaurant or a salon, you may want to consider offering online sales of gift certificates that would be available during the first 30-60 days of when you are back in business.
4. You may already offer phone and email support to your customers, but now is the time to begin developing "We are Open" messages that will increase your number of customers — no matter where they are. One easy tool is to simply update your voicemail message with details about your opening.
5. Use GEO-Fencing and text messaging – tools that allow folks you know or who are travelling in close proximity of your business to learn that you are open.
6. Contact a Public Relations firm to prepare and distribute a press release announcing details of your opening so that the news media can report this to their readers, listeners and viewers.
7. Also, develop a 15 or 30 second advertising spot for your local radio station to further communicate your decision to open.
8. Print flyers and banners to distribute across your community.
9. Have an employee stand out in front of your store-front with a sign indicating that you are again open.
10. Produce a short video to make a personal connection with your customers or supporters to explain to your audience that you are open and what ground rules you have put in place for a safe experience.

Finally, Perini like others, believes that "this health and economic disaster" will be over soon.

"Remaining friendly in your tone when using any or all of these recommendations will emphasize your commitment to the community and demonstrate a sense of comradery," Perini said.

"Remember, everyone is going through this national crisis in his or her own way. Creating a message of good will as you reopen is good business, but also shows a personal connection with customers and supporters during a time of crisis," Perini said.

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ABOUT PERINI & ASSOCIATES: Perini & Associates is a full-service public relations and marketing firm with more than 30-related communications practices and services to provide clients. The firm is "open" — using CDC social distance practices — and stands ready to assist with advice and counsel on how to communicate to employees, customers and the public.

Michael Perini holds an ABC accreditation from the International Association of Business Communicators and has more than 30 years of public relations experience at local, regional, national and international levels. He is also a retired USAF Colonel.

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