



# Telling Your Story in Turbulent Times

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How to Form a Connection  
With the People That Matter –  
Your Customers

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# Introduction

In challenging times, the world tends to stop and rethink its values — on a personal and professional level. And rightly so; you want people to focus on health, family and staying safe.

However, brand impressions — positive and negative — are often made in times of duress. That leaves marketers to strike a delicate balance. How do you keep your brand top of mind, but also be sensitive to what individuals are going through? By thoughtfully telling your brand story.

Storytelling is in our DNA. The human brain is hardwired to find patterns — be it in faces, shapes or music — so much so that we'll actually imagine patterns when they're not there. Our need to identify narratives explains the value of storytelling.

Reminding consumers of your mission, emphasizing your social impact and highlighting your employees helps establish a narrative beyond profit margins. Research shows this will benefit your business — **86 percent of consumers want companies to get involved in social action, and doing so drives 64 percent of them to purchase something from the company.** Refocusing your messaging and how you interact with customers will help you stay relevant among your target audience in the midst of turbulent times.

In this guide, we'll discuss a few of the most impactful ways you can tell your brand story during a period of uncertainty, break down examples and offer tips for success. Leverage the information here to reposition yourself among customers and get back to the heart of your brand.

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## SECTION I

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# Why Storytelling Matters

When things are volatile, there is typically little you can control, but one thing you can is your company's story. Investing in storytelling not only gives you a sense of normalcy but also offers your business a chance to get back on top.

With audience engagement and revenue traditionally down when times are tough, your company needs to find ways to get your bottom line back on track. Storytelling can help you do that.

## SECTION I

Storytelling has been around since the dawn of civilization and our brains are actually hardwired to connect with stories. It's the most natural way to build a deeper connection with an audience; something that every company is fighting for when tough times hit.

With every company facing this challenge, the competition to stand out is at an all time high. By leading with storytelling you're much more likely to connect with your audience and be remembered. In fact it's been proven that stories are 22 times more memorable than facts — something to keep in mind as you pivot your brand during times of uncertainty.

You also can drive revenue with storytelling. Studies show that people buy with emotion, which a great story can evoke in an audience. Stories that resonate with an audience have also been proven to drive more sales — 55 percent of consumers are more likely to buy something from a brand with a great story.

Stories also resonate with your people internally; 67 percent of employees want to work for a company with a mission they believe in more than they want a higher paying salary.



# 55%

OF CONSUMERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BUY  
FROM A BRAND WITH A GREAT STORY.

## SECTION I

Bryan Eisenberg, a professional marketing speaker says it best: “Facts tell, but stories sell.” But remember you aren't always trying to sell a product. That's why you have a vision, mission and values. Stories help your customers, prospects, employees and candidates understand who you are at the core.

***“Facts tell,  
but stories sell.”***

**- Bryan Eisenberg**

When your company is up against challenges, storytelling is the investment you need and we're here to help you tell your brand's story in the best light. Keep reading to find proven strategies for how to tell your story and tips to share it successfully. It's the ultimate storytelling guide in uncertain times.

## SECTION II

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# 4 Ways to Tell Your Brand Story

When the world is on edge, priorities shift and so should your company's story. The messaging that was working for your business prior to a critical situation will no longer be accepted in uncertain times. You must find a new way to tell your story. To help, we've laid out four proven ways to successfully tell your brand story during turbulent times.

# Tell Your Story Through Your People

Who better to tell your story than the ones who live it every day, especially in times of uncertainty. The best representation of your brand is your people. In the midst of turmoil, it's your employees on the front lines who are impacted the most. They feel the pain quickly and are the first to pivot.

Employees have first-hand knowledge of how your company responds to turbulence and the implications it has not only for themselves but the customers they interact with daily. Allowing your people to tell your brand story builds a more authentic connection with customers and helps get your message in front of more people.

## Create Trust With Customers

Having employees tell your company story gives you the chance to build trust with customers. A majority of people, 92 percent, in fact, trust product recommendations from peers more than company advertisements. The experiences your employees go through during tough times are much more relatable to customers than what your business is facing.

People want to hear from others who can empathize with what they're going through during a period of uncertainty. Allowing your employees to share your company message will do just that.

## Get in Front of a Bigger Audience

Not only do customers better relate to your employees, but they also pay more attention to what they have to say. If you want to amplify your company story to the masses, empower your employees to distribute your message.

Why? Messaging that is shared by employees receives 561 percent more impressions than when a company sends it. Content also gets shared 24 times more when distributed by employees.

The result of employees telling your company story is much wider and more impactful than what your company could ever do on its own. Employees are not only your biggest asset on the front lines during turbulent times but they are also pivotal in keeping your brand top of mind with customers.

# 24X

CONTENT GETS SHARED 24 TIMES MORE  
WHEN DISTRIBUTED BY EMPLOYEES.

# Employee Storytelling Examples

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Telling your brand story through your people doesn't have to be a big to-do.

Let's review how three real companies have successfully leveraged their employees in their marketing efforts.

# How Tech Companies Are Staying Connected While Apart

This article details how three companies tackle the challenge of staying connected with their teams while working remote. Insights into how they've started to overcome this challenge during COVID-19 come directly from the employees who were impacted the most; those in charge of company culture. The interviewees discuss how at first working from home took a hit on their culture and the fun things they do around the office, but unique solutions have helped them overcome that. Instead, they've realized an even better connection is being built with one another while being remote.

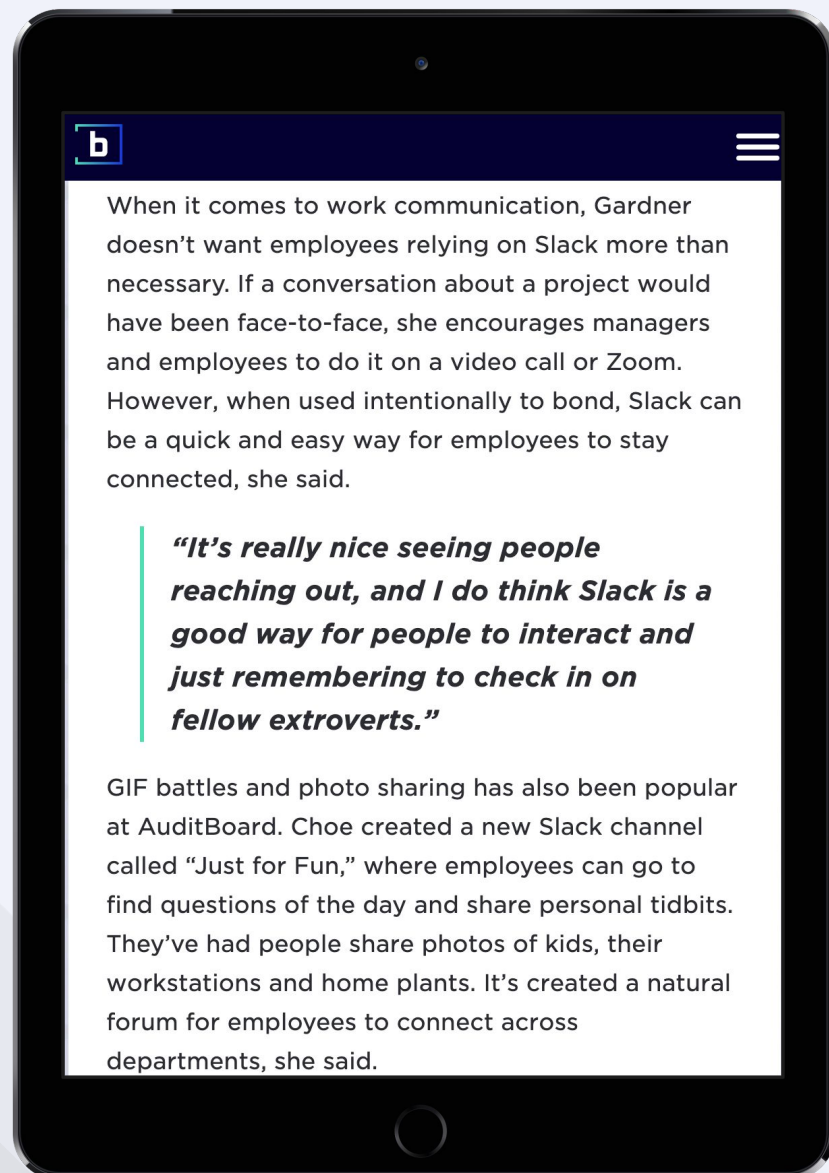
[Click here to read the full article.](#)

## Why It Works

Many people face a similar feeling of isolation during COVID-19.

Allowing the employees in charge of your culture to share specific tactics for overcoming this challenge will **build a connection with your customers who are looking for these same solutions.**

It not only puts your brand in a positive light but positions you as a source of value for people during their time of need.



When it comes to work communication, Gardner doesn't want employees relying on Slack more than necessary. If a conversation about a project would have been face-to-face, she encourages managers and employees to do it on a video call or Zoom. However, when used intentionally to bond, Slack can be a quick and easy way for employees to stay connected, she said.

***"It's really nice seeing people reaching out, and I do think Slack is a good way for people to interact and just remembering to check in on fellow extroverts."***

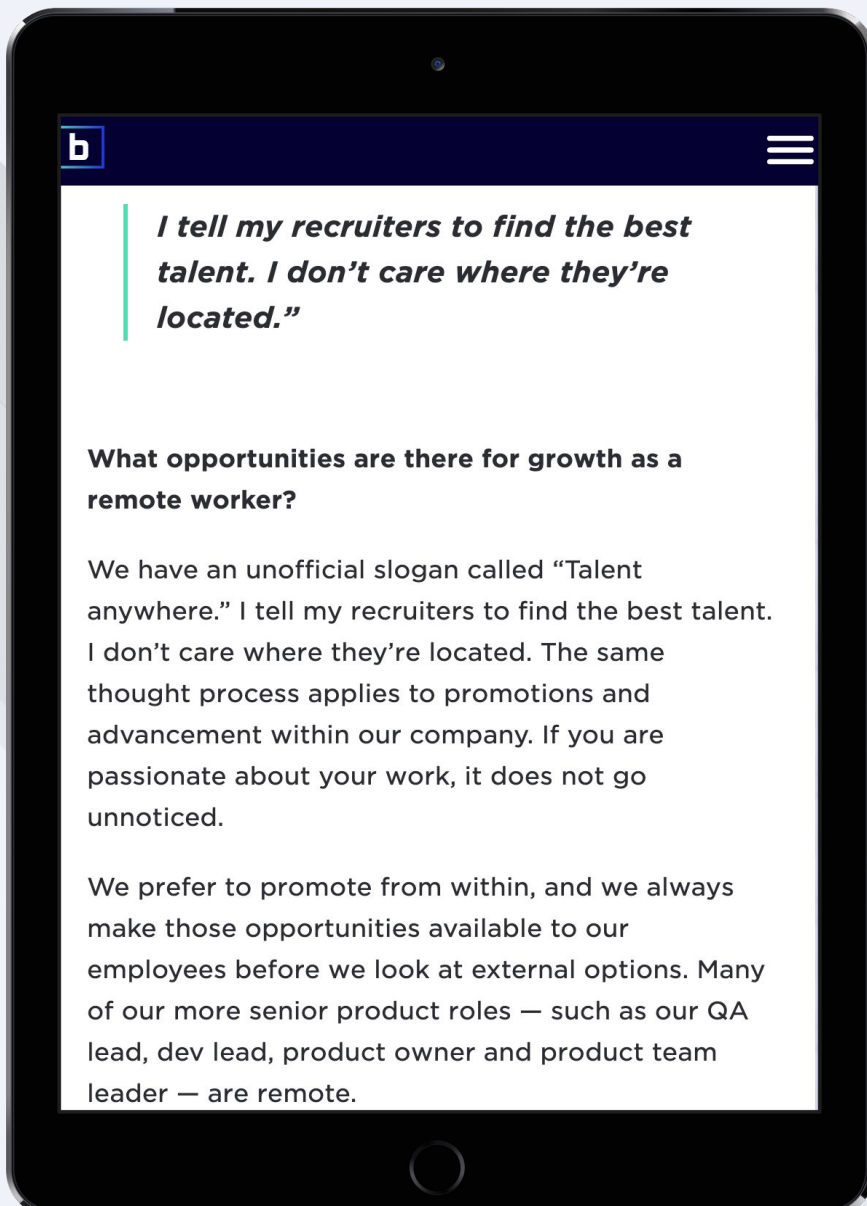
GIF battles and photo sharing has also been popular at AuditBoard. Choe created a new Slack channel called "Just for Fun," where employees can go to find questions of the day and share personal tidbits. They've had people share photos of kids, their workstations and home plants. It's created a natural forum for employees to connect across departments, she said.

## EXAMPLE 2

# How Paylocity Gives Remote Employees a Seat at the Table

With 60 percent of its workforce remote even when the world isn't facing a pandemic, Paylocity shares the perspective of four employees on how working remotely doesn't slow them down in this article. The interviewees emphasize the positive impact of investing in all employees no matter where they're located.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)



## Why It Works

Sharing perspectives of four employees across multiple departments shows your brand invests in all employees, not just a few. It provides the potential of a deeper connection to be built with readers. **Consumers will appreciate hearing more than one side of the story and relish in your efforts to positively impact your employees' wellbeing.**

### EXAMPLE 3

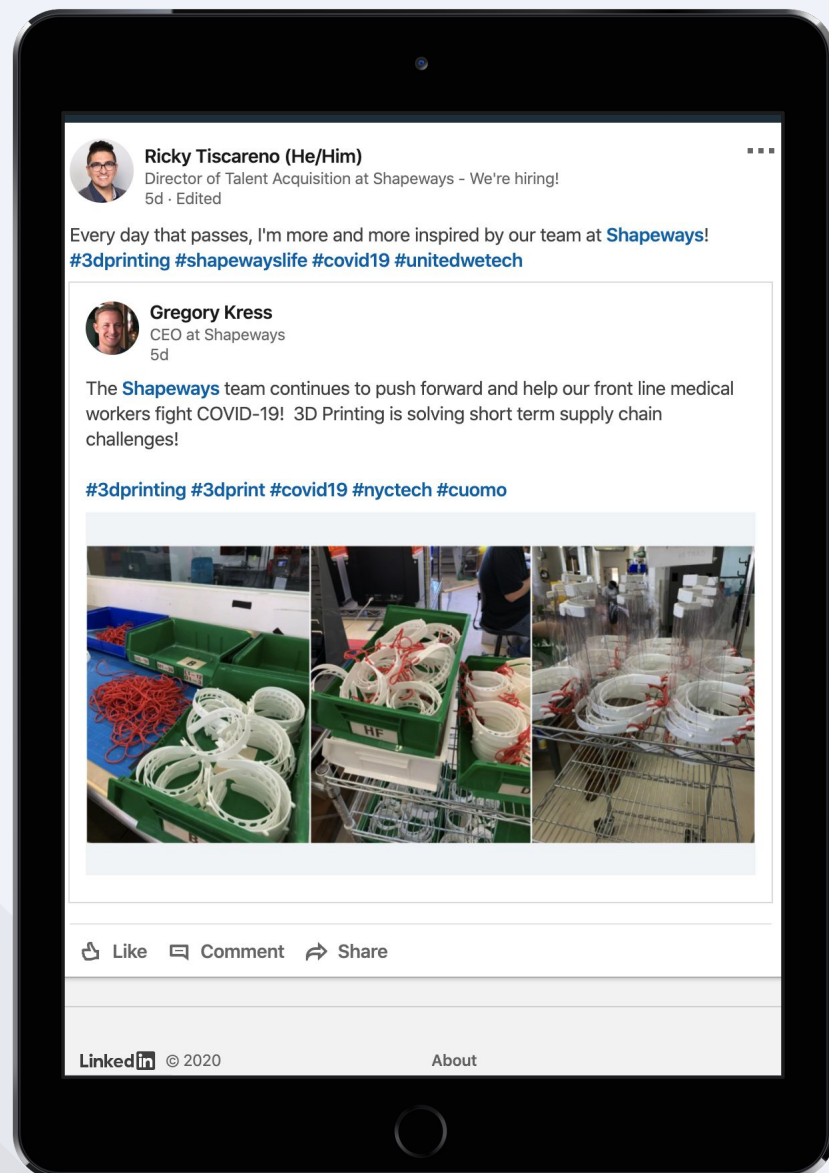
# How Shapeways is Making a Difference to Fight COVID-19

The company Shapeways is using its 3D-printing technology as a way to fill the gaps in the supply chain for medical supplies during COVID-19. Its CEO first shared the news on LinkedIn with images of the supplies they produced and was then amplified by other employees throughout the company.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

## Why It Works

Employees can add their own personality, thoughts and feelings when they are the ones sharing your story. This post by Ricky Tiscareno is a great example of that. He was able to emphasize how inspired he is by the work his company is doing in the fight against COVID-19. The story is much more **compelling and authentic when heard from an individual rather than a business itself.** People will understand your company is truly trying to help matters, not just turn a profit.



# Tell Your Story Not Through Your Services, But How You Serve

Faced with challenges, people tend to think about what matters most. Your audience isn't paying attention to you, what they care about is helping the community. Your company should embrace this same mindset when sharing its story.

It's time to get back to your roots. Double down on what your company cares about. Focus on your mission, core values and company culture. The foundation of what makes your company valuable to the industry and community you're in is something that customers will relate to, especially in a time of need. Sharing this story will humanize your brand and better position you as a good corporate citizen. It's also a smart investment...

## Purpose Pays Off

Companies that stand for something profit the most. A majority of consumers (86 percent) purchase goods and services from companies that are purpose-driven. Having a great product or service is no longer enough to make money. You must also invest in a greater purpose. Doing so helps the cause you choose to support and improves your bottom line.

## Values Speak Volumes

You have a much better chance of increasing profits by focusing your company story on the values you care about most as an organization. As many as 72 percent of US consumers look to buy from companies that align with their personal values. Using your core values during uncertain times will foster the connection you need with customers to keep your business on track.

## Company Culture's Impact on Trust

When times get tough, how you treat your employees is instrumental in not only retaining your workforce but how customers perceive your brand. 45 percent of consumers consider how a company treats its employees when making a buying decision, and this discussion point has been found to be the most influential way to build trust with consumers, which is something you can't afford to lose.

Putting your sales hat to the side in uncertain times can be difficult, but the impact of doing so will be felt long after things get back to normal. Telling a story that focuses on how your company can serve the greater good is something you can use even after you've weathered the storm. It's a great reminder that a hard sell isn't always the answer.

# Examples of Mission-Driven Storytelling

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How three tech companies keep their mission at the center of their brand stories.

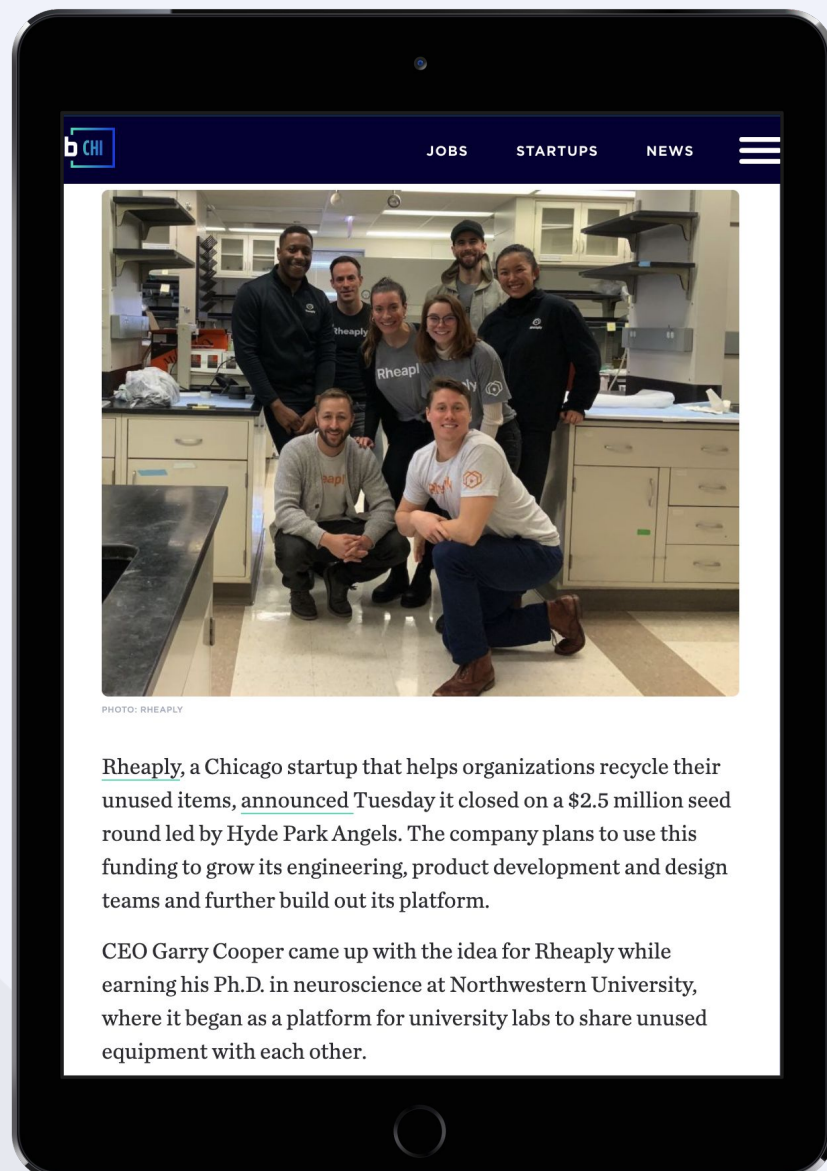
## EXAMPLE 1

# Rheaply Raises \$2.5M to Help Businesses Recycle Unused Items

While this article focuses on good news, it **shows that any story you tell can be rooted in the foundation of your company.** Rheaply first came about when its founder had the idea of sharing lab equipment with other universities.

Since then, the company has found ways to help many industries save costs and be more sustainable. When announcing its latest round of funding, Rheaply made sure its mission was front and center.

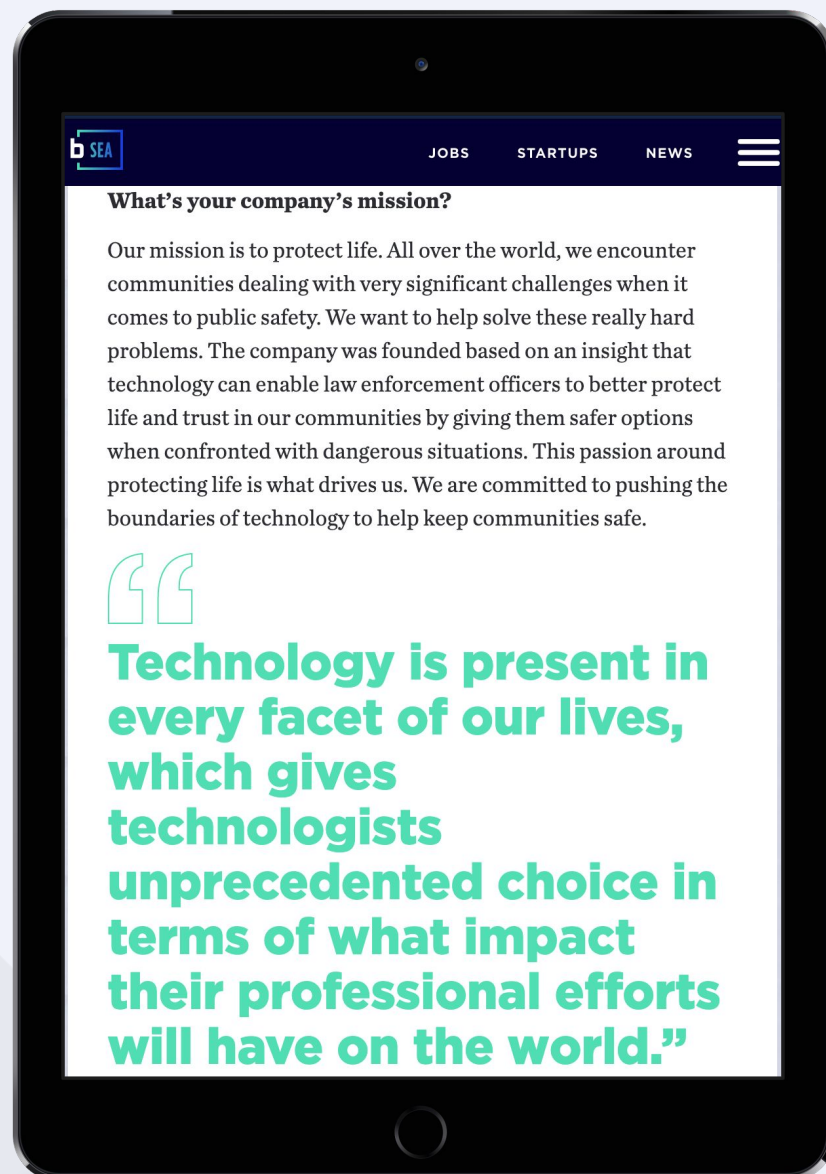
[Click here to read the full article.](#)



# Mission Driven: How Culture Fuels Purpose at 5 Seattle Tech Companies

Living out your mission as a company is important during good times and bad. Leaders from five Seattle-based tech companies discuss **how they make sure their values are shown through everything they do** in this article. The article represents how you can tell your company story while also emphasizing the core values your organization follows.

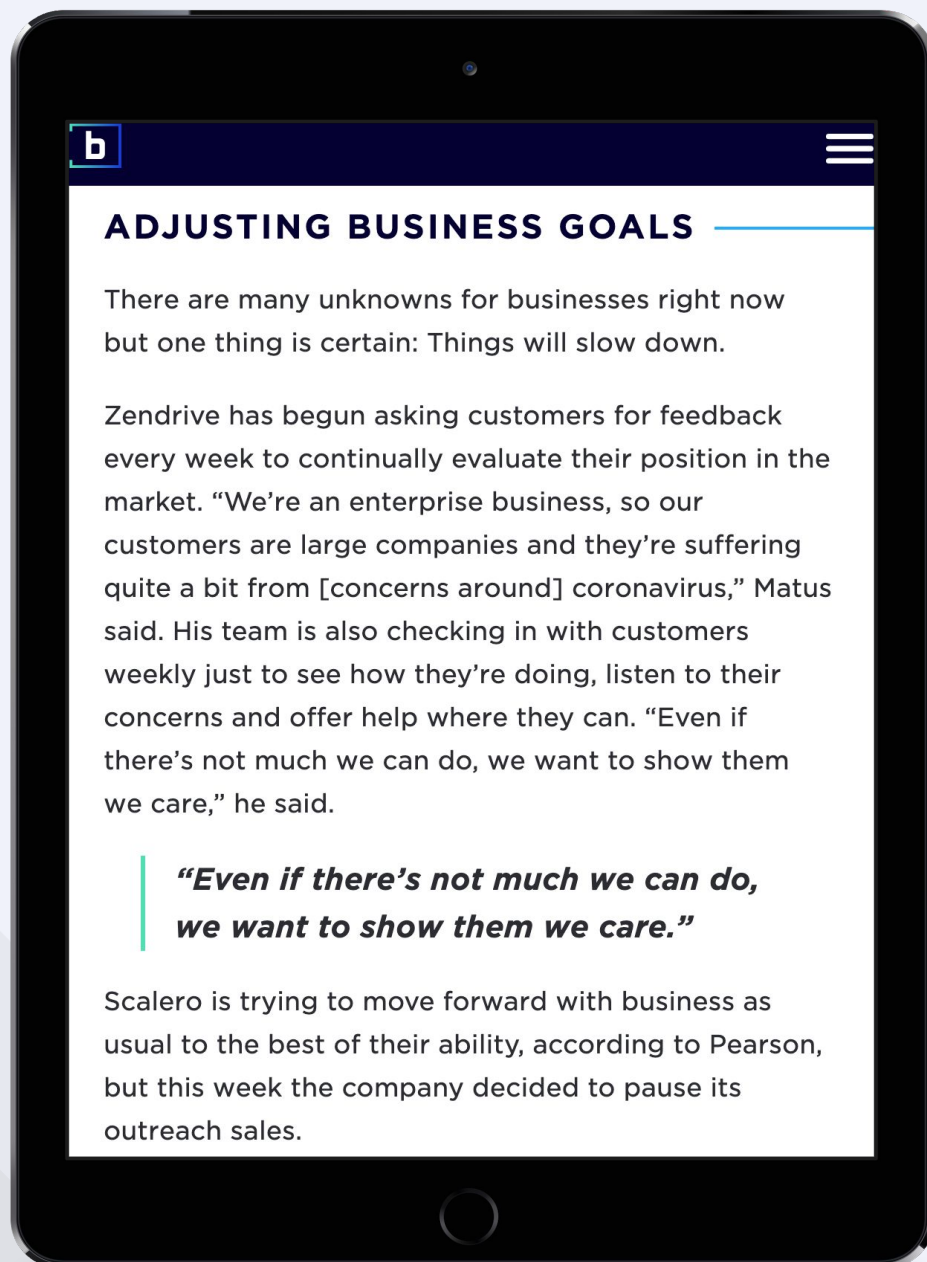
[Click here to read the full article.](#)



# Running a Tech Company in Uncertain Times

You can't live out your mission and values without a workforce. This article describes how leaders of San Francisco tech companies are working to keep their employees safe and supported during COVID-19. It's a great example of how you should be thinking about telling your own brand story in uncertain times.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)



## ADJUSTING BUSINESS GOALS

There are many unknowns for businesses right now but one thing is certain: Things will slow down.

Zendrive has begun asking customers for feedback every week to continually evaluate their position in the market. "We're an enterprise business, so our customers are large companies and they're suffering quite a bit from [concerns around] coronavirus," Matus said. His team is also checking in with customers weekly just to see how they're doing, listen to their concerns and offer help where they can. "Even if there's not much we can do, we want to show them we care," he said.

***"Even if there's not much we can do, we want to show them we care."***

Scalero is trying to move forward with business as usual to the best of their ability, according to Pearson, but this week the company decided to pause its outreach sales.

# Tell Your Story Through Your Actions

As the saying goes, actions speak louder than words. In times of change, every company is looking for ways to keep its brand top of mind. With this comes lots of noise from every angle. People will be looking at the brands who are doing more than just talking, but taking action.

Remember, the last thing on people's minds during a disruptive period is your brand. They are focused on how their communities, livelihood and those they care about most have been impacted by the situation. **If your company takes an action to alleviate the worry and concerns of customers, your story will immediately stand out against the rest.** It will positively interject your brand into the conversations people care about in that moment.

## You Can Have the Best of Both Worlds

The general public understands that profits will always be top of mind for businesses, but they also feel companies can still make a difference. Survey results show 73 percent of people feel companies can find ways to positively impact their community while also increasing revenue. And they're right; actions are good investments. Don't believe us? Keep reading.

# Taking Action is the Right Investment

Doing good doesn't always mean more costs. In fact, companies who invest in positively impacting quality of life perform 120 percent better than the stock market. So, not only do actions speak louder than words, but they move the needle on revenue as well.

Telling your story through actions is well worth the effort and finding ways to make an immediate impact on the situation at hand that also strategically positions your business is possible. It doesn't have to be a national effort either; helping the local community is just as impactful. And if you find yourself struggling to take action on your own, seek out other companies to partner with that can help you make a difference in the lives of those affected most in turbulent times.

# 120%

COMPANIES WHO INVEST IN POSITIVELY  
IMPACTING QUALITY OF LIFE PERFORM 120  
PERCENT BETTER THAN THE STOCK MARKET.

# Action Storytelling Examples

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Now, let's look at a few examples of how companies have stepped up to the plate in times of trouble while keeping their brand story in mind.

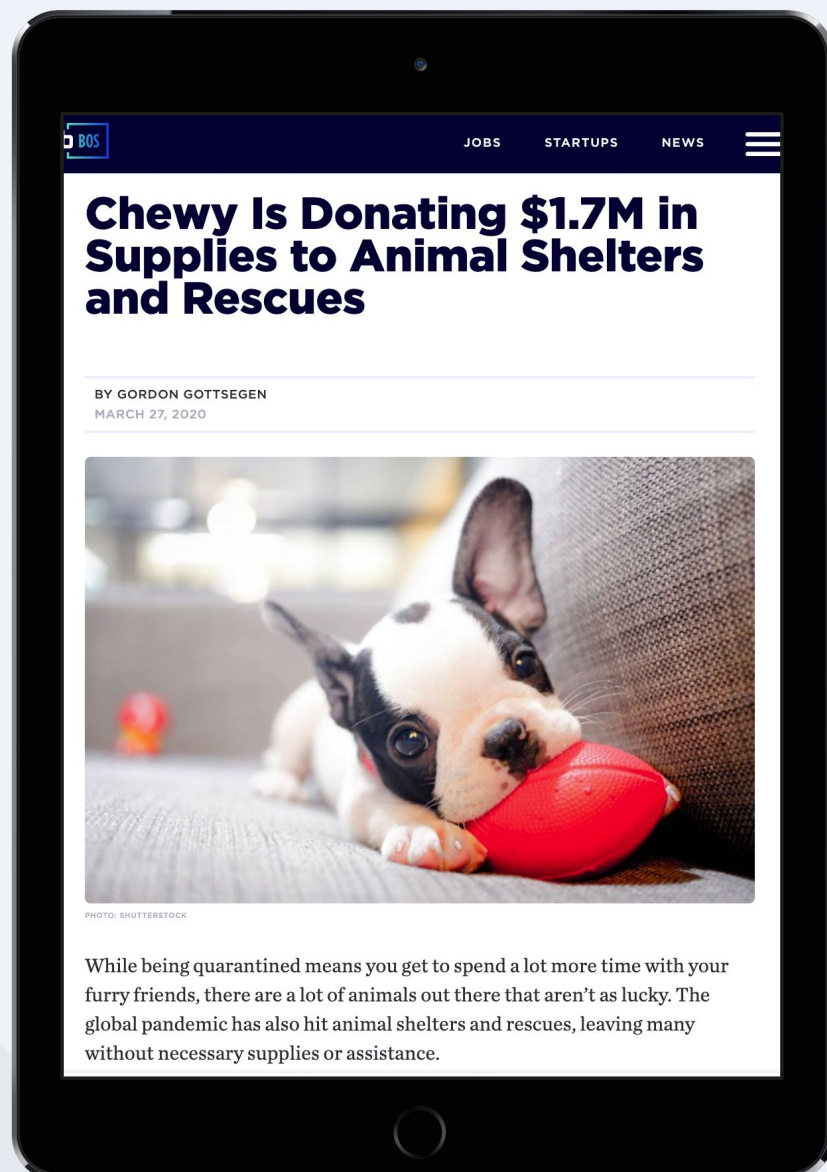
## EXAMPLE 1

# Chewy Makes a Donation to Animal Shelters

Since the start of the global COVID-19 crisis, animal shelters have been hit hard. People are forced to stay home which means less donations and adoptions, leaving shelters concerned about keeping animals safe.

Chewy, a popular e-commerce pet store, is in a much better place during the uncertain time given many people succumbed to shopping for their pets online. They've taken action by partnering with GreaterGood.org to donate more than \$1.7 million in pet products to animal shelters. They found a way to make a difference while also investing in who they care about most — pets.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)



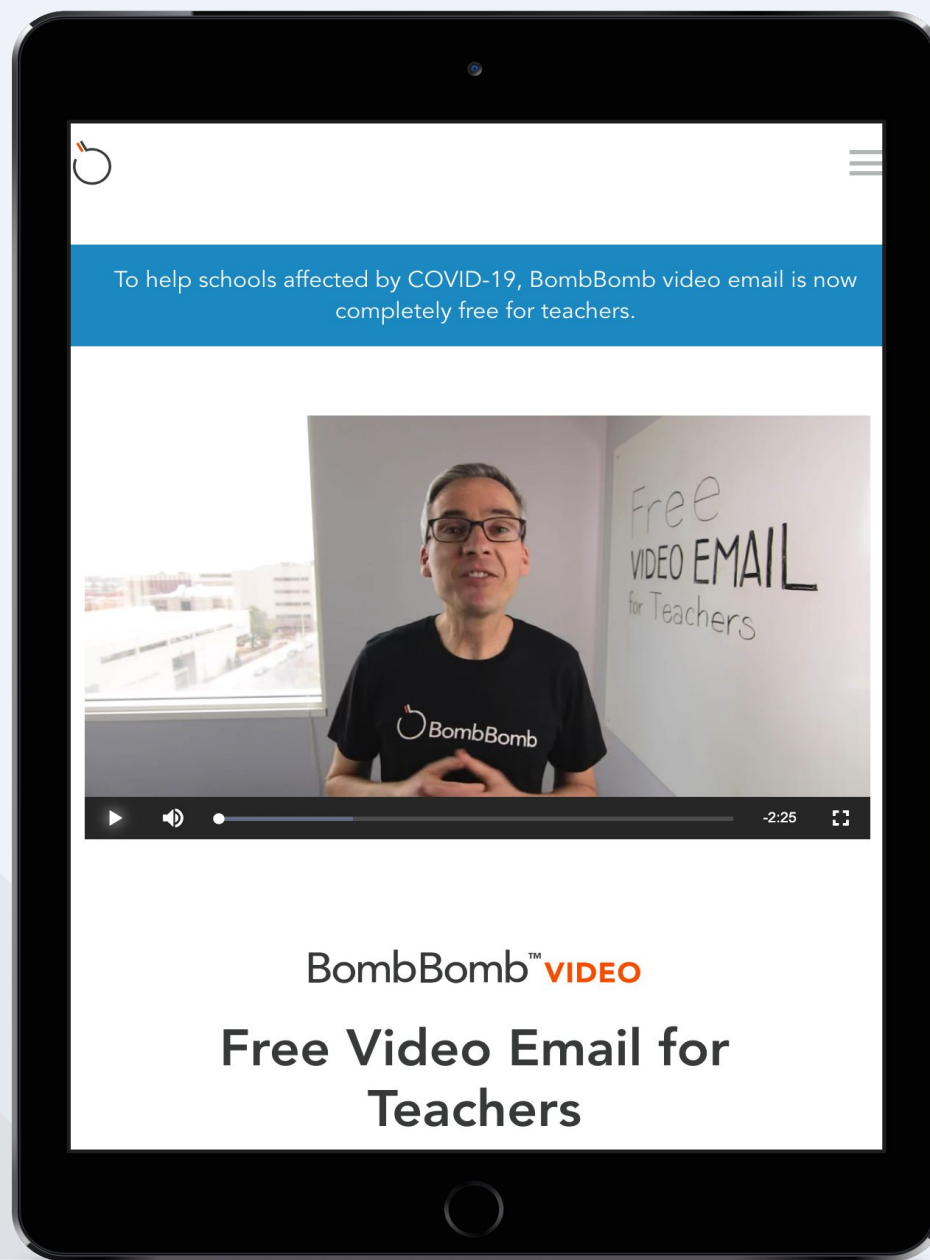
## EXAMPLE 2

# BombBomb Offers Its Software for Free

BombBomb is a great example of a company using its existing services to directly impact a community in need during COVID-19 – teachers. Schools were quickly forced to pivot to remote lessons, leaving many teachers disconnected from their students.

BombBomb immediately recognized the challenge the education world was about to face and stepped in by offering their software to teachers for free.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

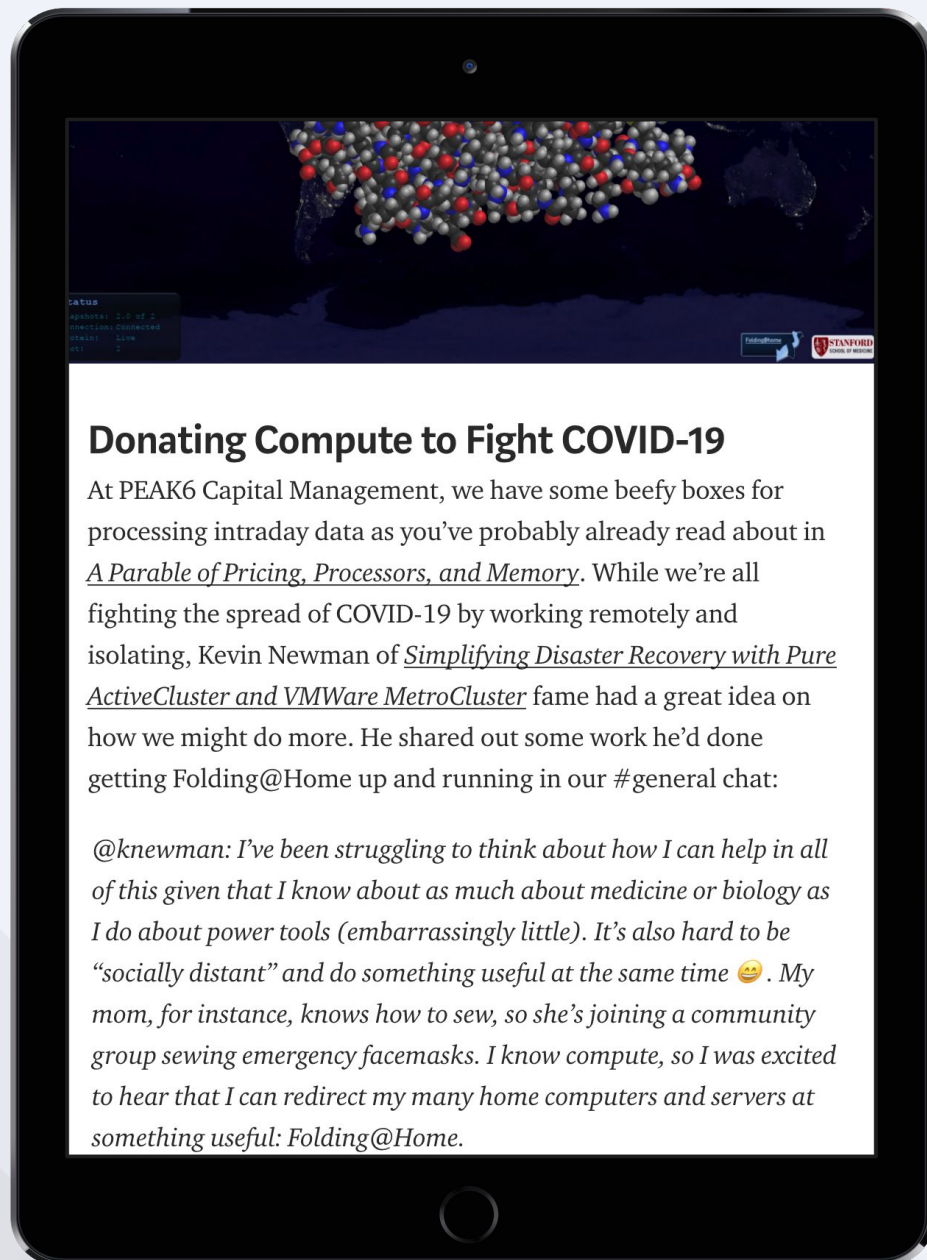


# Peak6 Investments Puts Its Skills Into Action

Knowledge is another powerful tool in times of uncertainty. Peak6 Investments' engineering team knew it had the skills to make a difference while COVID-19 develops, and they've sprung into action to help.

Using the work they've done previously to interpret data for the financial world, the team is using similar tactics to fight against the spread of the disease.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



# Tell Your Story Through the Right Platforms

As the world shifts in times of uncertainty, so will people's behavior. The platforms you've been promoting your message on may no longer make an impact. You must adapt quickly to keep your brand story in front of customers.

Understanding which platforms people flock to during difficult times will be influential in making sure your story is heard. You must identify which platforms you should continue investing in and pull back on less impactful ones immediately. Then, begin seeking out the platforms you've yet to tap into that will be highly trafficked during this period.

Now is not the time to lean on old habits but to start interacting with your audience in new ways. If there are certain parts of the country or world that impact your business the most, hone in on the platforms that will reach those consumers. Get creative. There are plenty of free platforms available to you if budgets are tight. In times of uncertainty, it's more important than ever to make sure you're sharing on the right platforms.

# The Platforms Impacted the Most by COVID-19

COVID-19 has forced a majority of people around the globe to stay home, which is heavily impacting how people engage with brands. Here's how just a few platforms are already being affected.

## Streaming Video

The number of people accessing streaming video platforms like Netflix and Amazon grew 12 percent between March 12 and March 19, 2020, according to user network data from Verizon. This should come as no surprise given 20-plus states in the US announced shelter-in-place orders around this time. If you have room in your budget, you may want to consider allocating funds for this kind of ad spend as it has the potential to quickly share your story with consumers around the world.

## Online Gaming

Data from Verizon over this same time period showed online gaming traffic increased an outstanding 75 percent week over week. While it's likely not a traditional method for reaching your ideal customer, it may be a promising channel for sharing your message during this period of uncertainty.

## Social Media

Interesting enough, the Verizon data also showed that social media usage remained stagnant week over week. While many would have predicted growth on social media channels, the data doesn't always fit the hypothesis. All the more reason you should stay abreast of data-driven trends during times of uncertainty and not just make assumptions about how people will react.



*Stay abreast of **data-driven trends** during times of uncertainty; don't make assumptions about how people will react.*

## Video Conferencing

Another unique platform to pique in the midst of COVID-19 is video conferencing platforms. With many forced to stay home, the rise of remote work has exploded and the use of video conferencing platforms is booming.

In fact, the global video conferencing market saw a significant spike during March, 2020, alone. Throughout the month, 62 million downloads of video conferencing applications — across smart devices — were recorded.

### SECTION III

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# 5 Things To Remember When Telling Your Brand Story

By now you should be familiar with four proven ways to tell your brand story in turbulent times. However, the fact remains that, if you're reading this, you're up against serious obstacles. To help you take action faster and yield better outcomes, we've compiled a list of key directives to keep top of mind as you craft your story.

# 1. Be Transparent and Proactive

Transparency is of the utmost importance in uncertain times. Misleading your customers will turn them away and earn you the reputation of a dishonest, money-hungry brand. Remember, your target audience is well-informed; they'll be quick to spot an attempt to sweep anything under the rug. Instead, be proactive and attack anxieties head on.

## Drive Brand Loyalty

**85%**

of consumers would be brand-loyal if a company prioritized transparency.

If the current situation magnifies a specific pain point regarding your brand or product offerings, address it and use it as an opportunity to engage your client base; 85 percent of consumers would remain brand-loyal during a crisis if the company had a track record of honesty.

Additionally, more than half of consumers (56 percent) would be life-long customers if a brand prioritized full transparency. Avoid shying away from the tough conversations and you'll stand out among the noise as a brand worthy of its customers' trust.

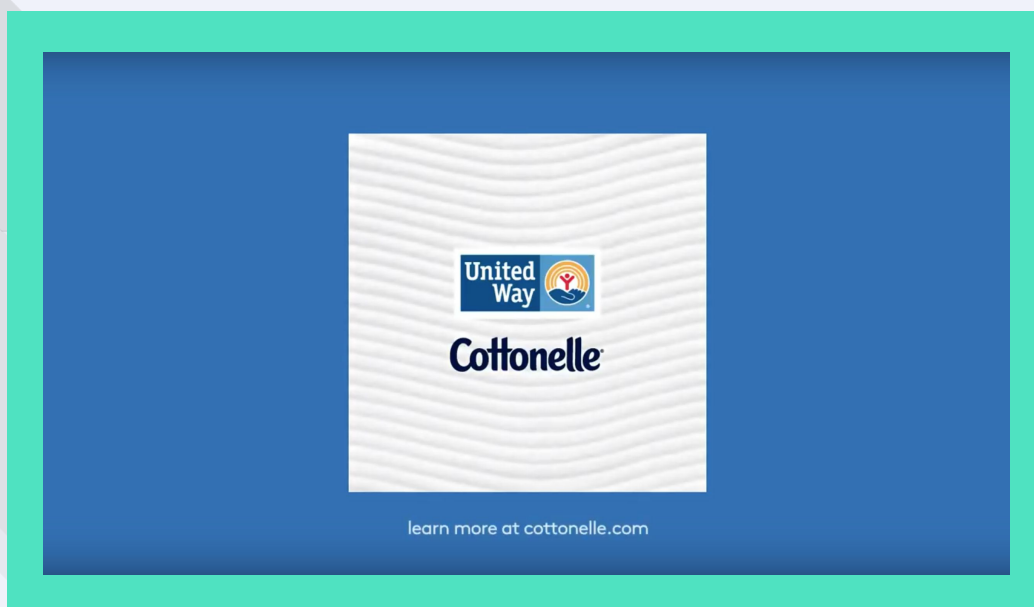
Encourage your customers to be open with you by asking what would be most helpful as they adapt to the changing times. Then, prioritize finding a solution, whether that's additional resources or a grace period on payments. The best way to stay relevant among your customer base is to meet them where they are with what they need.

## How It's Been Done

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 toilet paper shortage, Cottonelle addressed its customers' concerns head on in a timely ["#ShareASquare" campaign](#). The toilet paper brand is partnering with United Way to alleviate anxieties and encourage random acts of kindness. In an [ad announcing the partnership](#), Cottonelle had this to say: "As one of the world's largest producers of toilet paper, we assure you there will be enough to go around."

Cottonelle is donating \$1 million and 1 million rolls of toilet paper to United Way Worldwide's COVID-19 Community Response and Recovery Fund. Rather than continuing with business as usual, the brand is choosing to prioritize honesty, confront challenges directly and cultivate not only an image, but a community of goodwill.

[Watch the ad.](#)



The best way to stay relevant among your customer base is to *meet them where they are with what they need.*

## 2. Be a Part of the Conversation; Don't Try to Control it

Chances are, you're not your customers' top priority when disaster strikes. Attempting to shift the conversation back toward your product offerings will only aggravate consumers. However, going radio silent doesn't bode well for business, either. The key is finding a way to do business in a respectful, unobtrusive manner.

How? By being a voice of comfort amidst the chaos. News channels and media outlets will be flooded with updates as the situation unfolds; don't add to the noise with a shameless sales plug. Politely and briefly join in on the conversation to remind customers that you're there for them.

***Be a voice of comfort amidst the chaos.***

If possible, speak to how your brand is striving to make a positive impact while being mindful that imposed restrictions may make it impossible for consumers to make use of your offerings. If you're unable to offer them a service, take a step back; there's no use marketing to an audience that's unavailable. When you do speak up, keep your messaging focused on the members of your community who need assistance during this difficult time.

## How It's Been Done

The rapid spread of COVID-19 has made people wary of who they come into contact with and Burger King — like all businesses in the food industry — has taken a hit. Still, the fast-food chain recognizes that affordably-priced burgers are not a primary issue during a global pandemic. The company released a 15-second spot to reassure customers that they are taking steps to protect their safety.

Rather than trying to egregiously reroute the conversation with a flashy, self-promoting ad, Burger King kept it simple and on message. The spot explains new safety measures and protocols instead of menu items or promotions. The opening and closing lines say it all: “We know you might not be thinking of Burger King right now, but we’re thinking about you,” and “Let us take care of you, while you take care of yourself.”

[Watch the ad.](#)



## 3. Be Resourceful and Authentic

During periods of economic uncertainty, budgets and bandwidth are likely to shrink. As a result, you may no longer have the resources to produce professional-grade content and collateral. However, your image, like your messaging, should be honest and authentic.

Make due with what you have and be comfortable with an unpolished final product. (Note: Keep in mind that unpolished is not the same as unprofessional; typos and glaring errors are never appropriate.)

Consumers appreciate candor and want to know that they're not alone in any situation. In fact, 86 percent consider authenticity when determining which brands to support. Give them a peek into the current state of how your business and employees are adjusting. If your budget becomes a limitation, **leverage the resources at your disposal, starting with your people.**

Use a smartphone and free editing software to share images of your team members working through challenges, and lean on them to create content with a unified narrative. Authenticity is the difference between good and great brands in turbulent times.

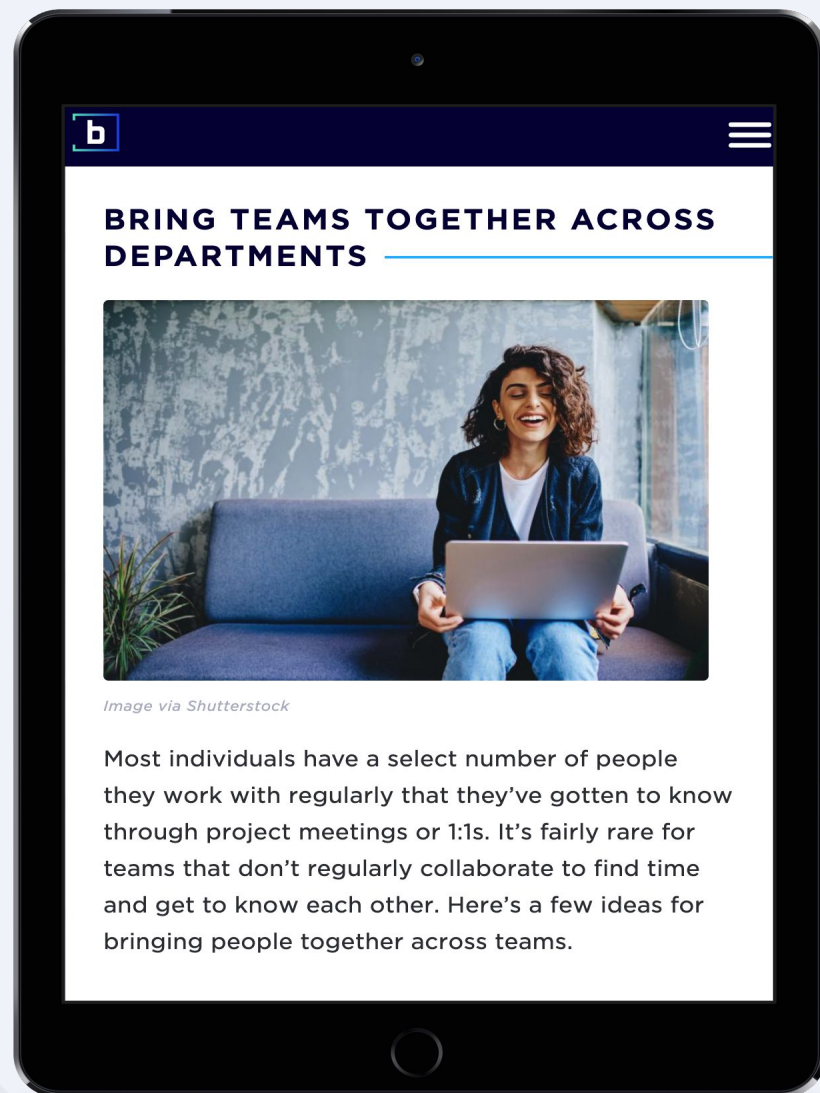
## How It's Been Done

In business, people are the most important asset, and the same goes for telling your brand story. Now that COVID-19 has forced the working world to shift remotely, businesses are struggling to maintain a strong presence both in the lives of their customers and their employees. However, bridging the gap between internal and external efforts helps cultivate an authentic narrative that puts people at the heart of your brand story.

To help our partners adjust, we leveraged our own people to share their stories of togetherness — the ways in which they're staying connected while working remotely. The [resulting article](#) helps share our mission of uniting the tech community, even in the face of unimaginable obstacles.

The piece reads as informed and legitimate because it came from a place of truth; using the resources at our disposal helped establish an authentic brand story.

[Click to read the full article.](#)



**86 percent of  
consumers** consider  
authenticity when  
determining which  
brands to support.

## 4. Be Willing to Add Some Levity

In times ruled by fear and anxiety, a little lightheartedness goes a long way. People are looking for a bright spot and will appreciate the breath of fresh air it offers. When appropriate and applicable, don't be afraid to infuse a little humor.

Doing so provides a glimpse of your company culture and offers a much-needed respite from the challenges at hand. And there's a reason behind that — laughter has been linked to tangible short- and long-term benefits including alleviating stress responses and improving immune system strength.

***When appropriate and applicable,  
don't be afraid to infuse a little humor.***

As ever, your messaging should remain hyper-relevant to the situation. For example, with employees being forced to work remotely, a retail company could make light of how shirt sales are skyrocketing while pants sales are dipping; with only torsos visible on video conferences, pajama bottoms and sweatpants are perfectly acceptable work-from-home attire.

## How It's Been Done

Buffalo Wild Wings — a popular destination for sports fans to catch the action live — found a way to entertain and engage customers without overstepping. In a [brief 30-second ad](#), the brand compiled home videos of “indoor athletes,” ordinary people practicing golf, hockey, soccer and basketball at home due to COVID-19 social-distancing ordinances.

The series of user-generated content set to upbeat background music breaks the mold of standard corporate responses and maintains Buffalo Wild Wings’ reputation of being an entertainment destination. With the cancellation of professional sports games and leagues since the start of the pandemic, Buffalo Wild Wings was impacted even before forced restaurant closures occurred. The single line of messaging in the ad acknowledges the severity of the situation, establishes a community among customers and refrains from the aggressive sell: “Even when sports aren’t on, sports live on.”

[Watch the ad.](#)



@hockey\_torataro

Japan

## 5. Be People-Focused and Leverage Your Leaders

Leverage your leaders during tough times. When the ship is headed toward uncharted waters, people want to hear from the captain. Unlike sales people, senior members of your board and C-suite aren't solely focused on meeting quota; they're concerned with the long-term health of your business and its relationship with the surrounding community. A formal message from your CEO will go a lot further in winning over the hearts and loyalty of your customer base than another follow-up from an account manager.

### CEO Visibility

**79%**

of consumers say  
CEO visibility is  
very important.

Involving members of your leadership team in the broader conversation will position your brand as a well-informed thought leader, which consumers will internalize as a mark of trustworthiness.

At all times, consumers want to hear from leaders of the brands they trust — 79 percent say CEO visibility is very important, and they want leaders to share the company's mission and vision. Connect your brand's purpose to how you're responding to the situation, both internally with employees and with your customers.

Still, be mindful of the fact that leaders can emerge from unexpected places during challenging times. When addressing your customers and the general public, put members of the C-suite or leadership team on the frontlines, but keep communication channels open across the organization.

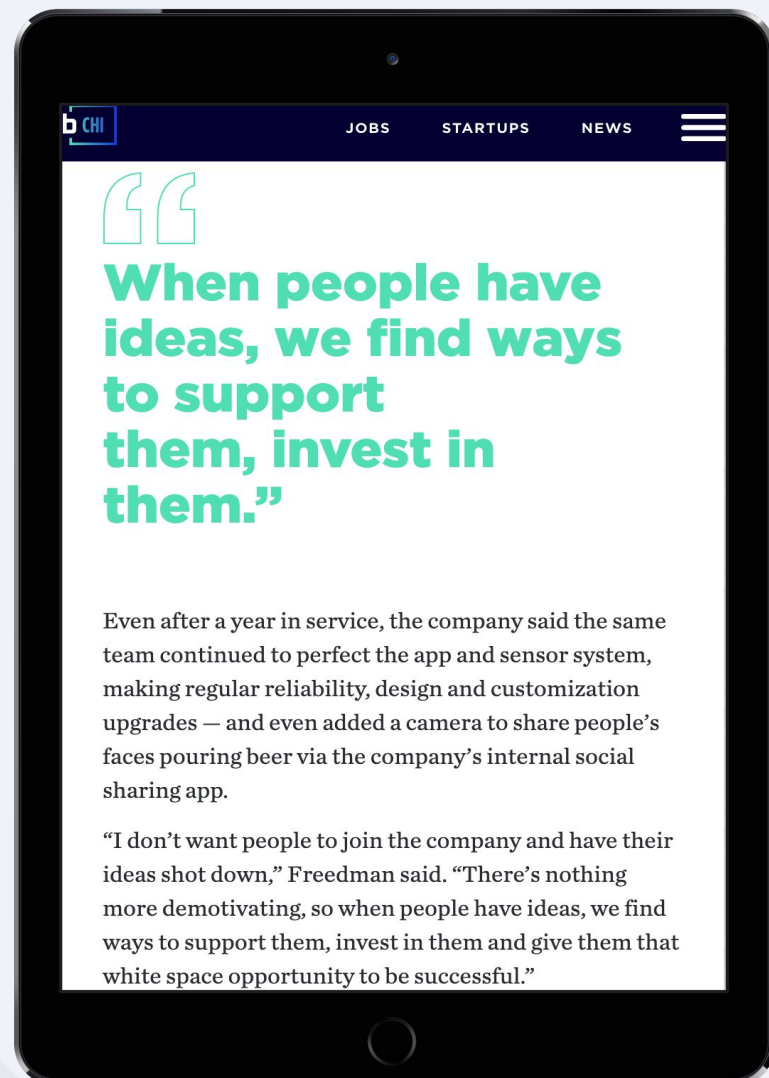
## How It's Been Done

Any time a member of the C-suite is speaking on behalf of the company, ensure their message is closely tied to your mission statement. Rightpoint CEO and Co-Founder Ross Freedman recently spoke about the company's growth and success, and kept his people as the focal point: "We knew back then that if we were going to build a company with a great culture, then we needed someone to be constantly looking at everything through a people lens."

Especially in times of uncertainty, empathy is a driving force behind a business's success, so focus on the people closest to you.

Studies show that community outreach and social responsibility translate into increased customer loyalty and reduced reputational risk during crises. Leverage members of your leadership team to highlight your passion for your people and concern for the community.

[Click to read the full article.](#)



## CONCLUSION

# Key Takeaways

In times of trouble, your brand story should be the source of truth. Consumers care about what you stand for more than what you have to offer. To continue to thrive despite the uncertainty of what the future holds, lean into your mission statement and remember to **ACT...**

# Key Takeaways

## **Always be authentic.**

Authenticity is the name of the game. Be transparent with customers — they're well-informed and expect the truth from brands they support. Tackle challenges head on and keep your client base in the loop regarding your response to the situation. Above all, stay true to your brand.

## **Contribute, don't control.**

Avoid making a difficult situation worse by simply adding to the noise. Know your limitations as a service provider — if you're unable to offer tangible support to ease your customers' burden, remind them you're there to help when needed, then pull back. There's no use marketing to an audience that's unavailable.

## **Tap into your people.**

Your employees are your most important asset and the best channel through which to tell your story. From your most recent hires to your senior leaders, leverage your people during times of uncertainty. Lean on C-suite members for formal client communication and turn to your employees to further spread your story.

It's important to keep in mind that the world will eventually return to normal. In the meantime, focus on being part of the solution, a force for good and a brand built on goodwill.

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