Safe and Sound: How businesses can respond to the coronavirus

The recent outbreak of the novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, has impacted businesses all over the world. Facebook is committed to supporting the fight against coronavirus, and has launched a focused effort to provide help to businesses like yours.

In the guide below you’ll find resources and recommendations to help ensure you’re equipped with the right tools and are able to communicate in the right way with your customers.
Keep yourself safe and informed

Stay up to date on the situation by monitoring official sources like WHO and your local government health department. It’s important to stay informed of any developments so you can respond quickly to changes that may affect you or your business.
Highlight important announcements

To proactively inform and educate your customers, consider creating an announcement post on your website, Facebook Page or Instagram Business Profile. You can pin important announcements to the top of your Facebook Page for ease of viewing.

Your post might include information about the measures you're taking to make your premises and products safe, as well as your approach to handling customer queries during this period. You can convey such information across various communication channels, including eDM and push notifications.
03 Consider alternative channels

In case you should need to postpone or cancel any planned events as a result of the outbreak, you could consider using alternative channels for hosting or facilitating these events, while still keeping your customers engaged. For example, you could turn a physical workshop into an online webinar, or social media channels to organise live sessions. Learn more about hosting a Live session on Facebook or Instagram.
Respond to customer service queries

Equip your customer service team with guidelines and resources on how to best handle queries. Consider drafting template responses across eDM, Facebook Messenger, Instagram Direct and any other communication channel where your business has a presence.

It's vital to be responsive and to provide your customers with visibility and transparency during this period. Handling a high volume of inquiries whilst ensuring responses are timely and accurate is key. Learn more about managing Direct Messages on Instagram Direct, setting up your presence on Messenger and creating a WhatsApp Business profile.

Consider what information your customers will be seeking. For retail companies it may be about their orders; for events and travel businesses it may relate to cancellations; and for gyms, educational centres and other establishments that host groups, the information may be about refunds and membership pauses.
Provide clarity through FAQs

It’s a good idea to think about questions you’re likely to be asked and to prepare FAQ responses that provide as much visibility and reassurance as possible. We’ve compiled some common FAQs that may be applicable across industries:

Q: Can I cancel my order (e.g. travel tickets / educational programmes / gym memberships)?

A: Of course. As part of calibrated responses to the evolving situation, authorities are considering applying additional measures to reduce human-to-human interactions, such as cancelling mass gatherings, suspending schools, and paring down non-essential care services. In line with these efforts, we will cancel your order / reschedule or cancel your trip / pause your membership on request.

Q: Is it safe to receive a package from any area where COVID-19 has been reported?

A: Yes. The likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus that causes COVID-19 from a package that has been moved, travelled, and exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low. (Source: WHO Q&A on coronaviruses (COVID-19)).

While the road ahead may appear to be a long one, we believe that we will be able to overcome the difficulties by banding together, staying vigilant and showing up for each other. We would like to remind everyone to stay safe, take sensible precautions and protect yourselves first and foremost. We are with you for the long term and are committed to provide proactive, responsive and real-time support and develop new solutions as this complex situation continues to evolve.