

153
SHARES

#FightBackCorona: Acclimatize, innovate and work on the basics: Ambika Sharma

MARKETING

MINUTES TO READ
APR 28, 2020

ADGULLY BUREAU
@adgully

News in the domain of Advertising, Marketing, Media and Business of Entertainment

RELATED ITEMS	AMBIKA SHARMA
PULP STRATEGY	FIGHT BACK CORONA



These are extraordinary times and we all are in uncharted territory. There is a lot of fear and negativity in all spheres due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. While the Corona Warriors are doing a tremendous job fighting from the frontlines, we at Adgully are embarking on an endeavour to highlight the positive developments during these challenging times.

Adgully is featuring a series of brief interactions with industry leaders in India and find out how they are keeping their spirits up as well as keeping their employees motivated, also how they are joining in the fight against the adverse impact of the global pandemic.

Ambika Sharma, Founder & MD, Pulp Strategy, writes about how the COVID-19 crisis and the nationwide lockdown has disrupted life as we have lived so far. She also stressed on brands reworking their marketing strategies to focus on long-term brand building within the limitations of the current climate, as well as shifting strategies to follow new media consumption patterns.

After 5 weeks of lockdown, life has turned on its head for almost everyone. Businesses, brands and consumers are having to quickly learn the new way to operate in the coming month and the months post.

Consumption patterns have been disrupted by the lockdown. Work from home and isolation has resulted in new online behavioral shifts are beginning to take shape. Some of these patterns are changing for the long term. Marketing has been disrupted and many organisations are taking a step back into a blackout few are seeing it as an opportunity to build trust in their brand values and an improved relationship with their consumers.

One thing is clear, those who acclimatise and innovate to make the best of a bad situation are the ones who will come out on top.

Don't get me wrong, it's not about opportunism, but a synergy between consumers who are locked down and starved for engagement and the brand that they love. Live sport is canceled, as are new movie releases, there are no parks, walks, parties, events – large and small – are cancelled. Work from home is adding to the isolation and cabin fever is setting in.

Isolation has resulted in increased day time viewing, consumption of video, content online, social media, online communities, like Facebook groups, ad costs on social media have dipped, DIY content is exploding as people move to hobbies to keep themselves engaged, OTT is booming, conferencing apps have seen increased usage. Increased engagement in online groups could make them even more significant, connective elements, and valued tools for support and assistance.

Brands should instead rework their marketing strategies to focus on long-term brand building within the limitations of the current climate, but they should also shift strategies to follow new media consumption patterns.

Content marketing becomes important, at the very least it needs to be around responsible messaging and educating your consumers. However, content marketing can become an effective way for you to remain in touch with your customers and increase pipeline generation while supporting customers emotionally.Focus on the awareness and consideration part of the funnel. People are obviously looking for support and a semblance ofnormalcy amid the pandemic, and they are turning to online communities for this purpose.

When you also consider the loss of social interaction, which was under normal circumstances covered your local hobby group, your sporting teams, even just running into friends down at the local restaurant. That loss of community connection has left a significant gap, at a time when people need to feel connected the most. At such a time brand marketing turning to meaningful community support will find long term value.This is the right time to rejuvenate the online community you support or even form a new one.

Digital events: Working towards reducing the cabin fever impact digital events can create a big dent in your consumer outreach initiatives. Consider virtual parties for your customers and employees. Your brand ambassador could host, a specially created Spotify list, a virtual pajama party. There are many possibilities where your brand values can converge with current consumer needs.

B2B community support: For B2B brands webinars, email marketing, chatbots and support groups are an effective measure to help SMB customers when every business is struggling to keep their head above water. There is no precedence to the situation we are facing, simple empathetic support with guidance on data security, WFH tools, access to information and in many cases future readiness, because when this is all over we must rally as businesses, teams, brands and a nation to get back on the economic track with a new understanding of the digital work stream dynamics.

Gamification: the longer the crisis lasts the more that people will need connections and engagement prolonged isolation could lead to significant interactive shifts, moving more and more of our community engagement into digital realms, and further altering how people communicate and engage. With supply chains disrupted and non-essential goods at a standstill brands can use this opportunity to not just engage but reward their consumers, gamification can play an important function in your marketing strategy.

Teach a skill: Brands have spent millions on “how to” and DIY content around product usage. This is a good time to build relevance and start an IG TV show for example, or get a CGM

stalled, sales at a standstill and marketing plans being re-calibrated – it has all come down to planning for the future. The loss of effort is substantial, but there is an opportunity. When we beat the virus – and beat we will, it's a matter of time – there will be a rush to reclaim our lives, people and brands alike.

Those who are better planned will gain with a faster, more relevant go-to market strategy, one which takes into account the consumer behaviour shifts during the COVID-19 lockdown. This is the time to work on the basics, get the SEO in order, revamp the brand website, get those landing pages optimised and live, sales tools and calculators for your sales teams, focus on community building, focus on the awareness and consideration part of the funnel.

There will be seasonality in most product cycles, which are going to be disrupted. In a best-case scenario, your Plan A should be ready for a quick go-to market. Humanise your marketing and plan with your partners and agencies. If partners, agencies and production companies are on the same page, much can be achieved from the safety of wherever they are.