

COVID-19 AND YOUR BUSINESS

# DON'T FREAK OUT

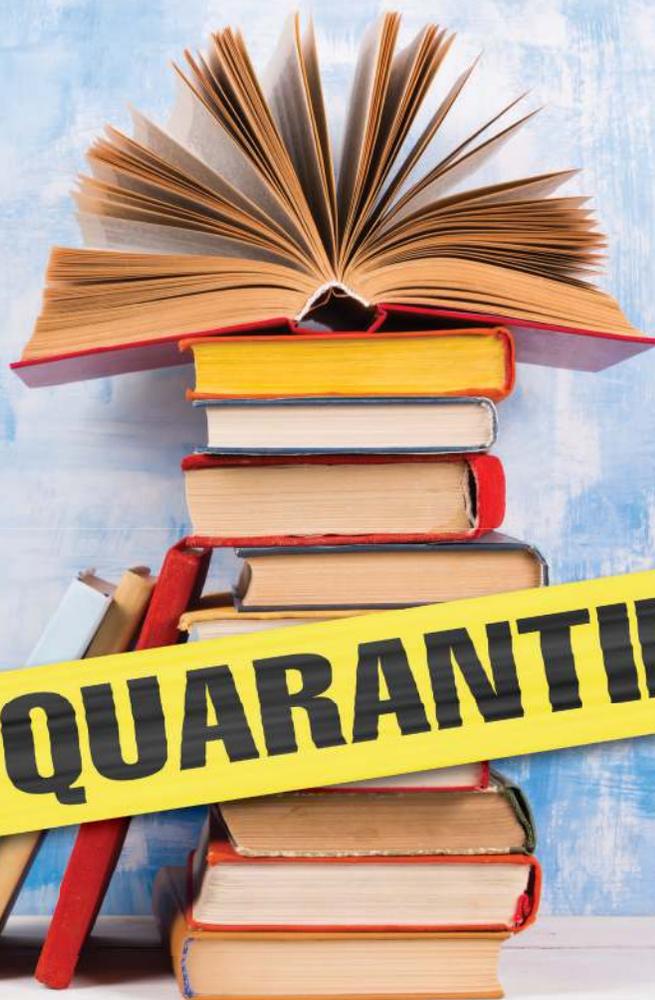


# GET FOCUSED

BY ELAINE ACKER



**You can't control what's happening in the world. But you can control how you react to it.** While others are overwhelmed with anxiety, you can turn this challenge into an opportunity to learn and grow and to position your business, association, or nonprofit for even bigger successes in the months ahead.



***Here are five things you can focus on during this global lull that will pay off when life returns to normal.***

1. READ
2. WRITE
3. UPDATE YOUR MARKETING PLAN
4. CREATE A SALES FUNNEL
5. LEARN A NEW SKILL



## READ

Settle in with that untouched stack of books and savor the time to read and reflect. You may just discover some “ah ha” moments, tips, and tricks that will change how you approach marketing, sales, or leadership. If you don’t know where to start, order *Marketing Made Simple*. It’s a brand new book by the dynamic StoryBrand duo, Don Miller and J.J. Peterson.

Need a few more ideas? Check out *Never Split the Difference*, by Chris Voss for some stellar tips on negotiation; read *Profit First* by Mike Michalowicz for insight into managing your finances; or maybe try *Traction: Get a Grip on your Business*, by Gino Wickman. I haven’t personally read that last one, but other StoryBrand Guides gave it rave reviews.



## WRITE

Open a spreadsheet and start jotting down content ideas. What are you good at? What opinions do you want to share? Then, get busy.

If you make a commitment to write every day for the next few weeks, I’m betting you can easily create valuable content for blogs, social media posts, lead-generators, and articles.

Why not set a goal of 52 pieces of content? That’s one a week for the next year. You’ll be ready to demonstrate your authority on your chosen subject and share your ideas for a full year to come.





## UPDATE YOUR MARKETING PLAN

How many times have you said, "I don't have time for marketing?" Now you do. A well-defined marketing plan is critical to achieving your business goals because it drives high-quality leads to your organization.

### Start by asking yourself a few questions:

- "Is my message clear and simple? Can people instantly understand what I do and what benefits we offer?"
- Am I using that super-clear message on my website? And do I also have a clear call to action, inviting people to take the next step in doing business with me?"
- Have I captured testimonials that demonstrate how I help solve my customers' or clients' problems?"
- Am I leveraging technology (such as email automation) to keep in touch with those who do business with me?"
- When was the last time I checked my website analytics? Look at your traffic. Find out what pages are working for you. Set goals for the next year.



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## CREATE A SALES FUNNEL

How you guide your customers on the journey from “I’m interested in what you do,” to “here, take my money,” is your sales funnel.

The simplest version is to create a PDF that offers genuine value for the reader and showcases your expertise. Then, offer it online via Facebook, LinkedIn, or Google ads. When people share their email with you in exchange for the PDF, they’ve taken the first step in the funnel. You’ll write emails to follow up with them regularly, continuing to offer genuine value, until they’re ready to do business with you. (You get brownie points for using email automation to simplify the sales funnel process.)

## LEARN A NEW SKILL

Whether you’re relying on YouTube or subscribing to a service like LinkedIn Learning (Lynda.com) or StoryBrand’s BusinessMadeSimpleUniversity.com, online learning makes it quick and easy to pick up new skills that can transform your business.



Here are some ideas. Do you want to start incorporating more videos into your social media posts? Learn to use your cell phone for basic video production and editing. Do you want to an easy way to create graphics? Check out Canva.com. Do you want to be able to manage content and update your own Wordpress website? Visit the Wordpress community and look through the (literally) hundreds of tutorials that make it easy to learn to manage your site.

***While it's important to stay up-to-date on the latest news about the coronavirus, COVID-19, it's not necessary to stay glued to the television all day every day. You'll drive yourself crazy and you'll waste a golden opportunity.***

***While travel is restricted and many in-person meetings and events are on hold, you can choose to let go of the things you can't control and give yourself the gift of time well spent. Focus on your professional growth, and look forward to new opportunities that no doubt wait just a few weeks ahead.***



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