

# **TOURISM & HOSPITALITY**

## **Pandemic Action Guide**

TAKE ACTION.  
GENERATE SOLUTIONS.  
PROTECT YOUR BOOK  
OF BUSINESS.

**KEVIN!**  
*MAKES*  
**SENSE**

**MEDIA**



**If you're feeling overwhelmed and unsure of what actions to take during this time, use this guide to get you started. Here's what we'll cover:**

**Keeping safe**

- Protecting yourself
- Protecting your customers

**Assessing and generating solutions**

- Identifying short-term modifications
- Starting to think long term

**Adapting and overcoming**

- Converting to digital solutions
- Putting a plan into action

**Staying in contact**

- Updating your communication channels
- Reaching out to customers and partners

**Marketing during this time**

- Being sensitive and respectful
- Gauging the appropriate path

**Planning for the future**

- Thinking ahead
- Using what you've learned



The COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic is changing the way we all do business. There is much we still don't know about how this situation will play out.

With social distancing, self-quarantines, stay-at-home orders, and travel bans around the globe, virtually no one is going anywhere.

As this unprecedented crisis continues to evolve, many travel and tourism industry professionals are wondering how to minimize losses, and what steps they can take to protect their businesses.

Small business owners and entrepreneurs are some of the most resourceful and resilient people we know. And now's the time to lean into that resourcefulness, make a plan, and get to work. If you're feeling overwhelmed and unsure of what actions to take, this guide will serve as a good starting point.

Let's take a look at some ways that you can take stock of the situation, generate solutions, and take action to protect your travel or tourism-based business.

As you know, things are developing rapidly. Remain flexible to make changes on the fly.



# Safety First

Your first priority is to make sure that your family, staff, and especially yourself, are safe and safeguarded, to the best of your ability.

Next, make sure that you're doing everything you can to safeguard your clients.

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Implement [CDC-recommended precautions](#) in your business as soon as possible. Among the most important recommendations are:

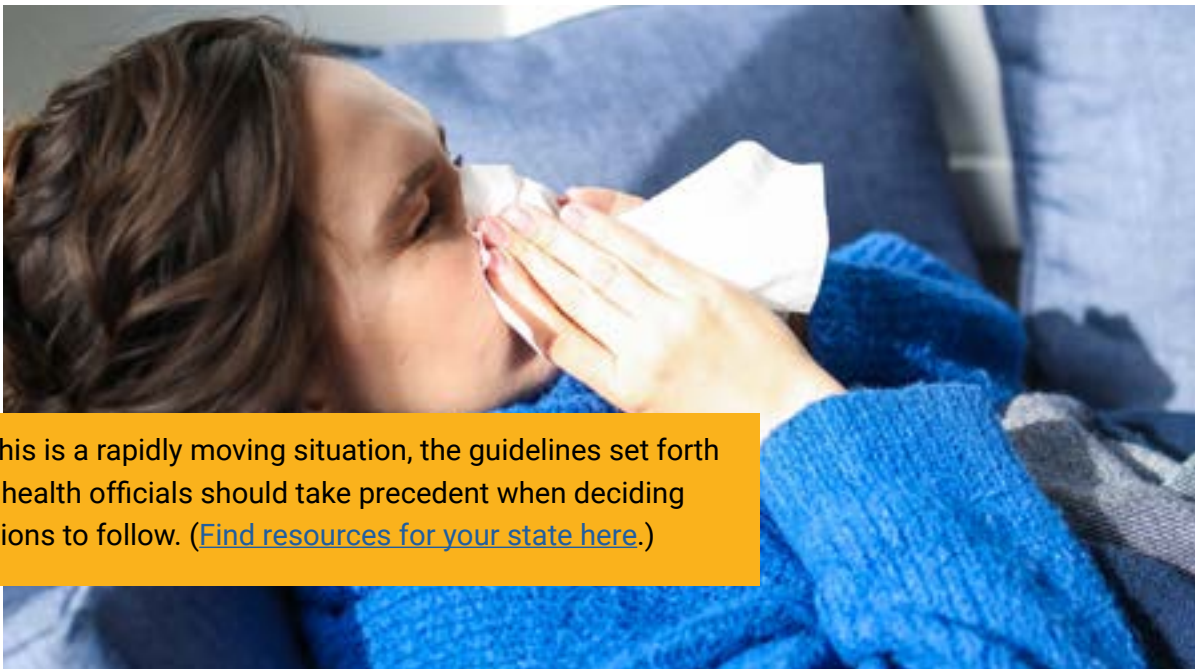


- Actively encourage employees, especially those who are sick, to stay home.
- Implement systems that allow them to work from home if possible.
- Emphasize the importance of cough and sneeze etiquette as well as hand hygiene within your business.
- Perform routine, thorough environmental cleaning.

You can also review OSHA's [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#).

Once you've done what you can for everyone's health and safety, it's time to figure out how this situation may affect your business.

It's likely you're already feeling the impact. In any emergency, large or small, you'll often have to assess and reassess to generate solutions because things are always changing.



**Note:** Since this is a rapidly moving situation, the guidelines set forth by your local health officials should take precedent when deciding what precautions to follow. ([Find resources for your state here.](#))

# Assess and generate solutions

Since there are a lot of unknowns, it's important to think about various possibilities and what you can do to adapt to them. The problems you face will vary depending on the nature of your business – whether you're a hotel manager, a travel advisor, tour operator, bed and breakfast, or other travel and tourism professional – your solutions will vary. The primary concerns that we hear travel and tourism professionals struggle with during this crisis are a decrease in bookings and an increase in cancellations.

Needless to say, the sharp decline in travel has changed the way the travel and tourism industries are doing business at this time, and there's a good chance that the changes made now could influence both industries in the future.

It's important to look at the struggles you're experiencing directly and to make a plan based on what you're able to do now, as well as what you might be able to do later on. Below are some examples of things you should consider.

You may want to write things down as you think through these questions and your answers. It'll help you formulate your action plan.

While a lot of other small businesses have the option to start thinking about how they're going to operate, the travel and tourism industries don't have that luxury. The very first thing you need to think about is:

## Will you or can you keep your doors open to the public?

- For some of you, this may not be a choice due to government regulations (i.e. hotels and bed and breakfasts).
- For others, it may be about keeping yourself and your staff safe and healthy. If you have the option, think about having your staff work from home.

Once that question is settled, it's time to get into the meat of your operations.

## If you're closing your doors to the public, are there other ways you can still do business?

- Are you willing to book tours, make reservations, or sell tickets for dates that are to be determined at a later time?  
Can you offer discounts to anyone willing to book a tour, reserve a room, or buy a ticket with a future date? If so, how far in advance can you schedule them? Will you offer refunds or credits if travel restrictions are still in place when the 'future' arrives?

## What can you do to help support your current customers, clients, and guests?

- Think about reaching out to them proactively with your assessment of travel and tourism during this situation, your recommendations on how to proceed (even if it's just to hang tight until more is known about this crisis), and any other must-know advice they could use.

## How will you respond to inquiries from potential customers, clients, and guests during this time?

- Consider formulating a response ahead of time that you can copy and paste into an email that lays out what you currently know about travel and tourism options. This includes current travel options and making future travel plans once the crisis is over and travel restrictions have all been lifted.
- Make sure to have a clear policy for bookings and cancellations during this time. It's very possible you'll want to implement special guidelines in response to this situation that are different than your normal everyday policies.

## What if you get sick?

- If possible, designate someone else to be in charge of your day-to-day operations.

## What will it look like to temporarily pause operations?

- How will you communicate it with your clients, your staff, and your community?

Once you've answered those questions, you can start thinking about options for moving forward beyond the immediate.

## Is the "temporary" plan you put into place sustainable? If so, for how long?

- If not, are there things you can do to adjust your plan so it will be sustainable?

## What if this lasts several weeks or months?

- How this would affect your family, as well as your staff, customers and their families – can you help them in some way?

## Are there any other resources available to you?

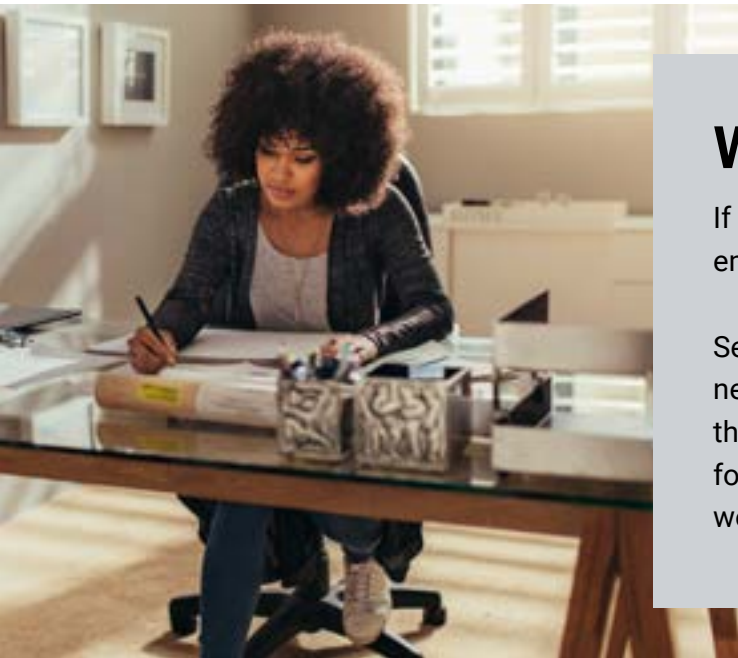
We've compiled a list of resources for you.

[Resources for Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#)



# Adapt and overcome

Your “business as usual” may no longer exist, at least for the time being. You’ll need to adapt to get through these trying times. Some things to consider:



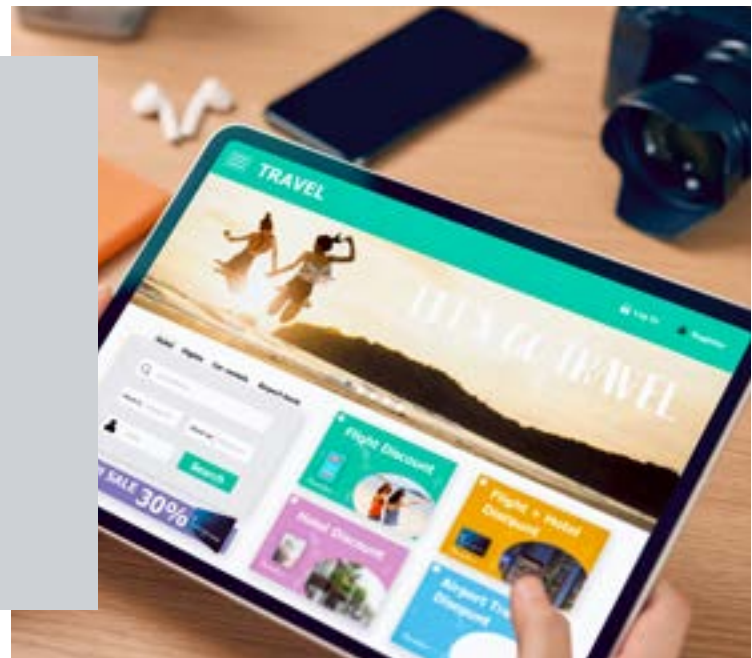
## Working from home

If you can, set up work from home options for yourself and your employees, if you have any.

Set up a workstation that can stay in place for as long as you need it. Create a space where everyone in the family knows that if you’re in it, you’re working. This can help you to stay focused when you’re working and set up boundaries between working and hanging out at home.

## Building your brand online and with video.

At Kevin Makes Sense Media we have tools with partners like Constant Contact that make it easy to promote your property and your events online. It is more important than ever to share information and updates not only on your website, but on social media and via video, (if you're not already).



# Stay in contact

When you're constantly having to make changes to adapt to an ever-changing situation, it's imperative that you let your clients know what you're doing and when.

Keep them aware of any changes to day-to-day operations.

Be sure to include details your clients should know about, like your availability, the options available to them, and any precautions you're taking regarding the virus.

Consider the following tips to communicate the above information with your clients:



- Update your website.**
- Email your customers.**
- Post to social channels and pin those posts to the top of your feed if possible.**
- Update your details on your Google My Business profile and any other sites where you have a listing.**
- If you have a physical location, think about hanging signage in your windows and around the store.**

It's also a good idea to review any communications you already had scheduled for their appropriateness and relevance based on the current state of affairs.

*"During this difficult time it is imperative that you are proactive in engaging your guests and client base."*

- Kevin Neff





# Marketing during this time

Letting people know about the changes you've made is a great place to start. Use the channels mentioned above to communicate on a consistent basis. Of course, consider your unique situation and the type of business you operate to gauge the most appropriate path forward.



## Keep up

Make sure to keep all of your sites up to date. This means regular updates on industry changes, discounts, and government regulations on your website, social media accounts, review sites, and business listings.

## Looking forward

The travel and tourism industries are all about looking forward. So, apply that 'look forward' mentality now.

There are things you can do during this time to help your business when things start to return to normal.

Think about changing up your marketing to include thoughts of looking forward to the time after the crisis is over. Where would people like to go? What would they like to do? Many people will be revisiting their bucket list when this situation passes and will think about how they can take trips they've been putting off due to cost or other restrictions. Encourage people to book those future trips now and think about offering discounts if they pay in advance (make sure to add in allowances for rescheduling, or changes in reservations).

## Be social (but at a distance)

Social media is blowing up right now, so use it to your advantage. Post images of your destination on Instagram, post a video tour on YouTube, share a customer story on your website, or satisfied customer comments on Twitter.

Whatever it is that you decide to put out there during this crisis, make sure that your content is sensitive to the current situation — with a positive attitude toward a bright future of safe travels and joy-filled occasions.

# Plan for the future

Eventually, you'll need to transition back to business as usual. It's important to plan ahead. So, start making plans for what comes after the emergency.

Review the changes you've made and what you've learned, then think about how you can use that information to move forward.

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## What can stay?

Look for things worth making a permanent part of your business.



- Did your new hours of operation work better than the old hours?
- Were you able to make headway building your personal brand?
- Did you discover some advantages to your work from home policy?
- Were people interested in the content and messages you produced about your industry?
- Did you come up with some industry innovations that worked surprisingly well?

If so, don't stop just because the emergency is over. Keep them going and see if they're a good addition to your business long term.

## What comes next?



- Do you need to check on the status of others in your industry in order to get your own affairs back in order and running smoothly?
- If you've paused operations, what will it take to start back up?
- How will you recall your staff? Will it be in stages or all at once?

These are trying times with many unknowns. By doing your best to stay safe, review your options, and make a plan you'll better position yourself to come out on the other side.



# Remember, you are not alone

We are here to help.



You got this. You got us.

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