

**CLOUD
RAKER**

ALTAVIA GROUP

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THE COVID ERA

7 things that brands can do right now

WELCOME TO THE NEW NORMAL

#BusinessUnusual in the COVID-19 Era

COVID-19 has totally disrupted our world. The global economy is at a near standstill. Healthcare systems are under siege. Fear and dread are as widespread as the virus. Yet there has also been an upwelling of collective spirit. Altruism is on the rise.

Before the virus, marketers were pondering issues like “How to Shift Back to Brand-building after a Period of Overinvesting in Data.” Suddenly, there’s an entirely new playbook on the table.

The good news? A consensus is already emerging about how brands should act in these troubled times. Since it’s based on a “we-first” mentality, CloudRaker offers this briefing as our gift to you.



50%

PERCENTAGE OF THE PLANET UNDER LOCKDOWN

2.7 TRILLION

PROJECTED ECONOMIC LOSS DUE TO COVID-19

74%

**PERCENTAGE OF MEDIA BUYERS WHO BELIEVE
THE PANDEMIC WILL HAVE A WORSE EFFECT
THAN THE 2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS**

Current situation: dire or worse

As COVID-19 advances, virtually every country on earth is shutting down, self-isolating and imposing strict controls on citizens to flatten the curve. In Canada, as spring arrives, our leaders are scrambling to secure vital protective gear for our healthcare workers and provide relief to the unemployed. Do brands really have a role to play at a time like this? It turns out: yes.

Take action. Supply information. Provide support.

Brands have power. And all over the world, leading brands are using that power to speak up and act out for social good. The risk is that they will appear opportunistic. But maybe the greatest risk is doing nothing at all.

As one of our clients put it, customers have long memories, and “how we act now will give us permission to play a part in the recovery.”

So: what can brands do now?

What brands can do

#1 DON'T GO DARK

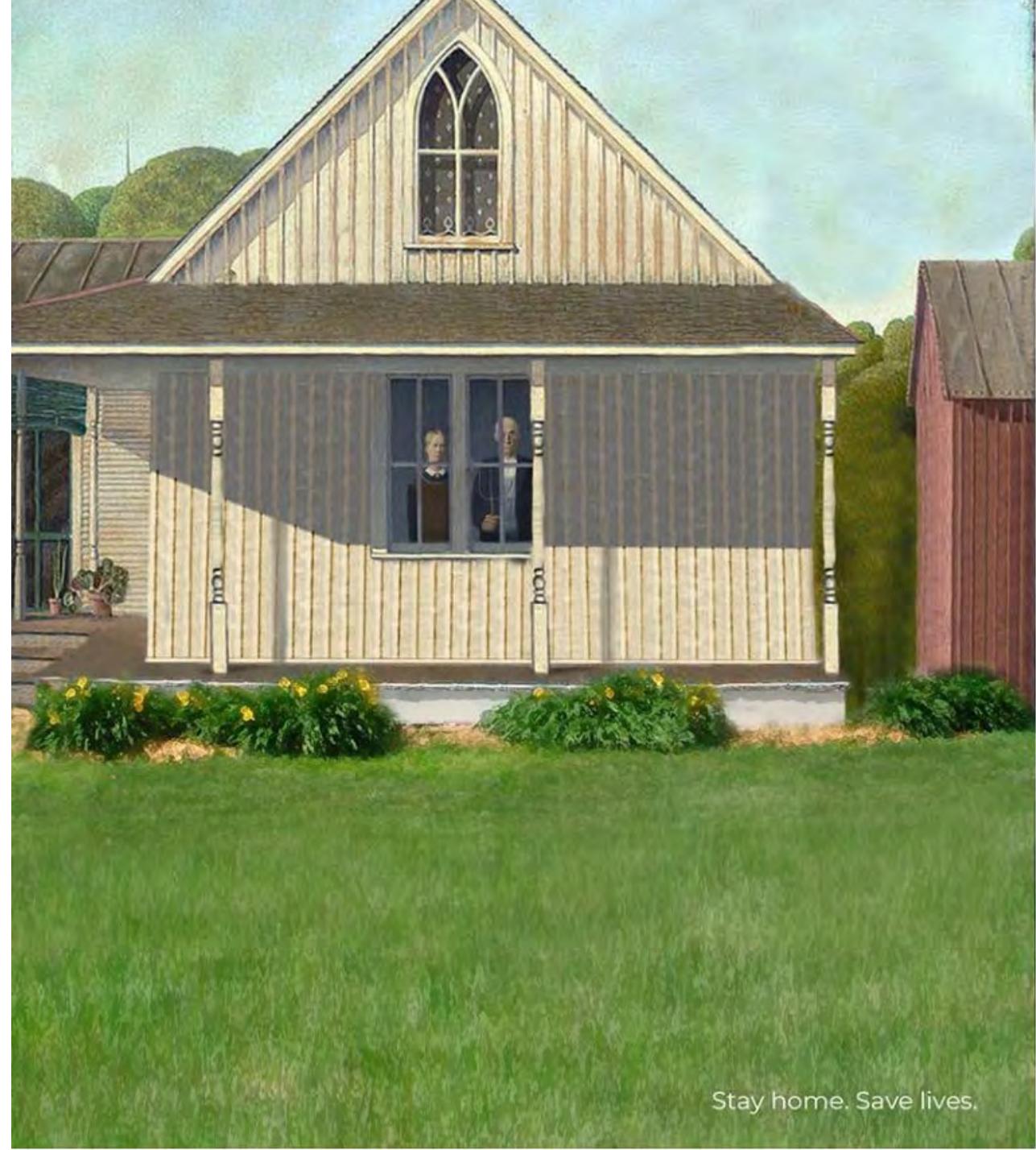
Nowhere to hide

Many brands have been considering going dark until the crisis passes - and some will have no choice. But although going dark will save you money, one expert at Kantar estimates that a six-month absence from TV (for example) could cost a brand as much as a 39% drop in awareness.

According to one study of international markets, 70% of consumers said that if a brand plays no role during this crisis – and doesn't even try to help – they'll be inclined not to use that brand again.

For all but the most hard-hit of brands, that means it's critical to do what you can with the resources you have.

Source: Kantar Covid 19 Barometer of Consumer Attitudes, Ad Age Remotely with Richard Edelman.



Stay home. Save lives.

What brands can do

#2 SKIP THE BANDWAGON

Rather, choose your moment

We've all been bombarded with emails over the past month from the brands we subscribe to. At first, it was charming to receive a heartfelt note from the CEO. But it didn't have the same effect when it was note number 25.

Don't succumb to the temptation to make gestures to score brownie points. This is a time to rely on creativity and ingenuity to craft marketing efforts that stand out, not blend in.

Once you know how you can contribute, you can choose the right moment to communicate what you want to say.



GUINNESS

STAY AT HOME

#3 FIND YOUR PURPOSE

Hint: it was there all along

Nike is [empowering athletes](#) to share their home workouts. Ikea is telling people working from home to "[Make home count.](#)" Tesla and Ford are making ventilators, but manufacturing excellence is already deep in their DNA.

What's your brand's story? Whatever you want to do, it needs to align with your core values and your mission - or consumers may not get where it's coming from.

When the BBC decided to make public service messages to encourage people to stay home, they used [classic BBC TV shows](#).

There has to be a will, but also a fit.

IF YOU EVER
DREAMED OF
PLAYING FOR
MILLIONS AROUND
THE WORLD,

NOW IS
YOUR CHANCE.

Play inside, play for the world.



#4 BE USEFUL

Solutions vs. sales

New data from the World Federation of Advertisers reveals that 81% of multinationals are putting planned ad campaigns on hold. What are they and others replacing them with? Initiatives to help their employees, their customers, frontline healthcare workers or others in concrete ways.

What can your brand do to be more useful? Sunwing [offered free seats](#) on its planes to Canadians stranded abroad. [Loblaws](#) and other retailers have hiked the pay of its employees. [American retailers](#) and Canadian companies like [Knix](#) are using their production pipelines to produce medical masks and gowns.

But it doesn't have to be spectacular to resonate. Skateboard shop DIME Mtl is giving away free soap with every order to encourage people to wash their hands. Since their customers are mostly young people who may think they're less susceptible to the virus, that's helpful.

At a time like this, it's less about storytelling than "story-doing." Investing in meaningful actions is a way to get involved.



What brands can do

#5 KEEP IT SIMPLE

It's not just a pandemic - it's an infodemic

People's mental inboxes are flooded right now. With news, government and social media sources clamouring for our attention, it's no wonder the WHO has coined the term "infodemic" to describe the cognitive overload.

Less is more right now. Coca-cola showed the power of a few well-chosen words when used to make a crucial point. Others have said what they want to say in a single email, press release or Twitter post.

When so much information is circulating, it's an act of kindness to be brief.



What brands can do

#6 MAKE IT HUMAN

Talk to people as people

We are all human beings dealing with similar challenges right now, running the gamut all the way from profound loss to taking a conference call in a closet to escape the kids. Beginning with that is a sure way to find common ground.

Not only because of production challenges, homemade is ruling the day. Burger King France showed people how to make a Whopper out of ordinary grocery items. [Jack Daniel's](#) created a spot made of extraordinarily ordinary moments while somehow turning it into a homage to the resilience of the human spirit.

Starting with empathy can take you a long way.



What brands can do

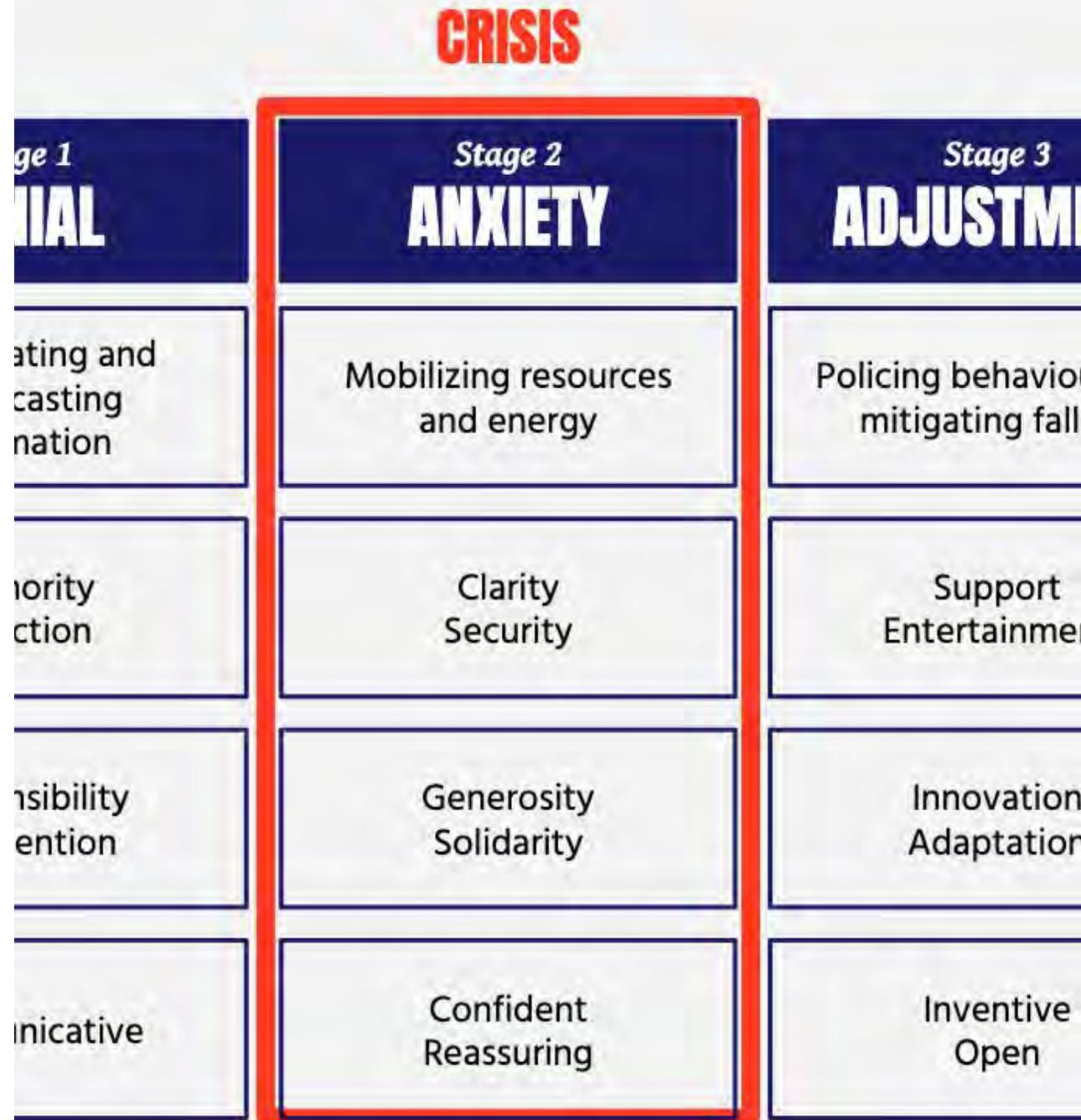
#7 PLAN TO EVOLVE

The recovery is only the final stage

According to one theory, we are merely at Stage 2 of a five-part journey. At a time when anxiety is the dominant emotion, consumers need clarity and security, and want to see brands show generosity and solidarity. But if people grow more confident and reassured, this response won't stay fixed.

Brands need to evolve as the crisis evolves. There may be a time when people want more distraction than support. Later, they will want to be accompanied on their recovery.

The only solution (ironically enough) is to keep calm and remain vigilant.



PANDEMIC RESPONSE

As the crisis comes and (eventually) goes, different emotional needs will require different brand responses.

| | CRISIS | | | | POST-CRISIS |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | Stage 1 DENIAL | Stage 2 ANXIETY | Stage 3 ADJUSTMENT | Stage 4 REEVALUATE | Stage 5 NEW NORMAL |
| SOCIETAL RESPONSE | Investigating and broadcasting information | Mobilizing resources and energy | Policing behaviour and mitigating fallout | Identifying and applying long-term measures | Assimilation of new and old behaviours |
| EMOTIONAL NEED | Authority Direction | Clarity Security | Support Entertainment | Reflection Recovery | |
| BRAND RESPONSES | Responsibility Intervention | Generosity Solidarity | Innovation Adaptation | Hope Regeneration | |
| LEADERSHIP STYLE | Communicative | Confident Reassuring | Inventive Open | Decisive Strategic | |



#çavabienaller
if we order in

LET'S ZOOM

Like you, we want to help

Since the COVID-19 crisis began, CloudRaker has been 100% engaged in trying to help our clients make a difference. In addition:

- As soon as the crisis hit, we closed our offices to protect our employees, and shared out WFH guidelines on our website so any company could access them
- To help fight COVID-19 spread, we created an app to train people not to touch their faces: [stopfacetouching](#)
- To support small businesses, in only 2 days, we created an online listings app where consumers can find stores and restaurants that are still open: [mainstreet.app](#)

We'd love to help you plot a way forward in these challenging times - and are ready to chat virtually whenever you're ready. Just contact us at

clients@cloudraker.com

MEANINGFUL COMMERCE™

THANKS