



BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAYBOOK

The reinvention of normal.

Lessons on adapting and advancing your business during a pandemic.

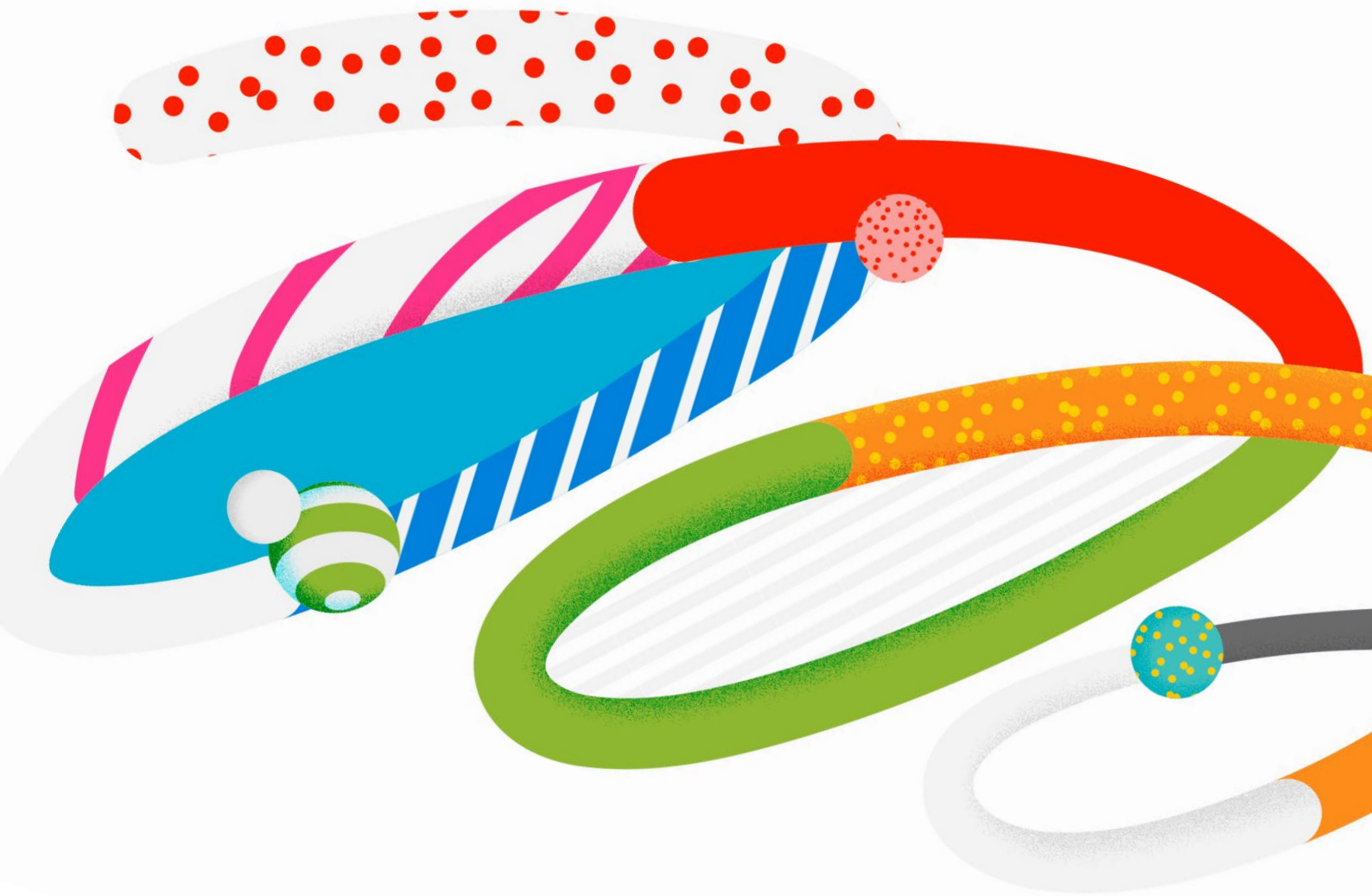


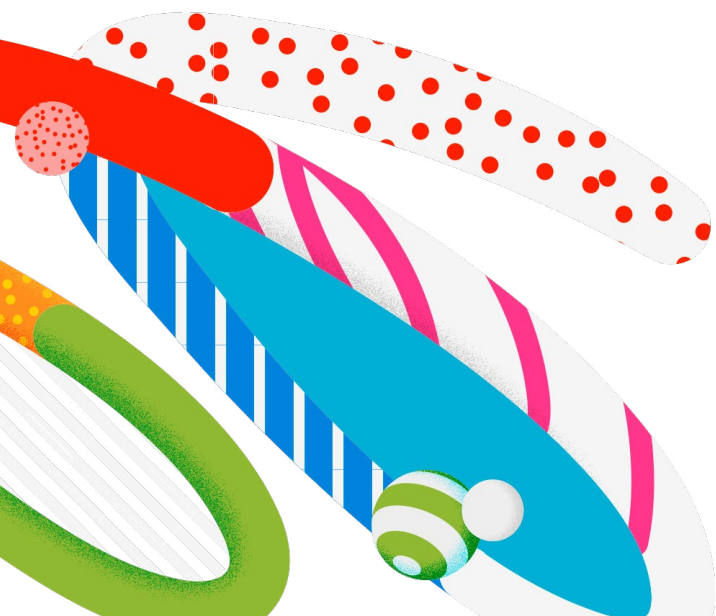
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When COVID-19 required people all over the world to stay home, Jimmy Fallon found himself telling jokes to an empty room. After filming once without an audience, nothing felt right and *The Tonight Show* crew felt anxious. So, in just 24 hours, Jimmy completely reinvented the show by bringing it home to his living room. Or more accurately, to his entire house. Giant slide, family, dog and all. *The Tonight Show: At Home Edition* is now being streamed online, supplying plenty of comic relief — something we need almost as much as toilet paper.

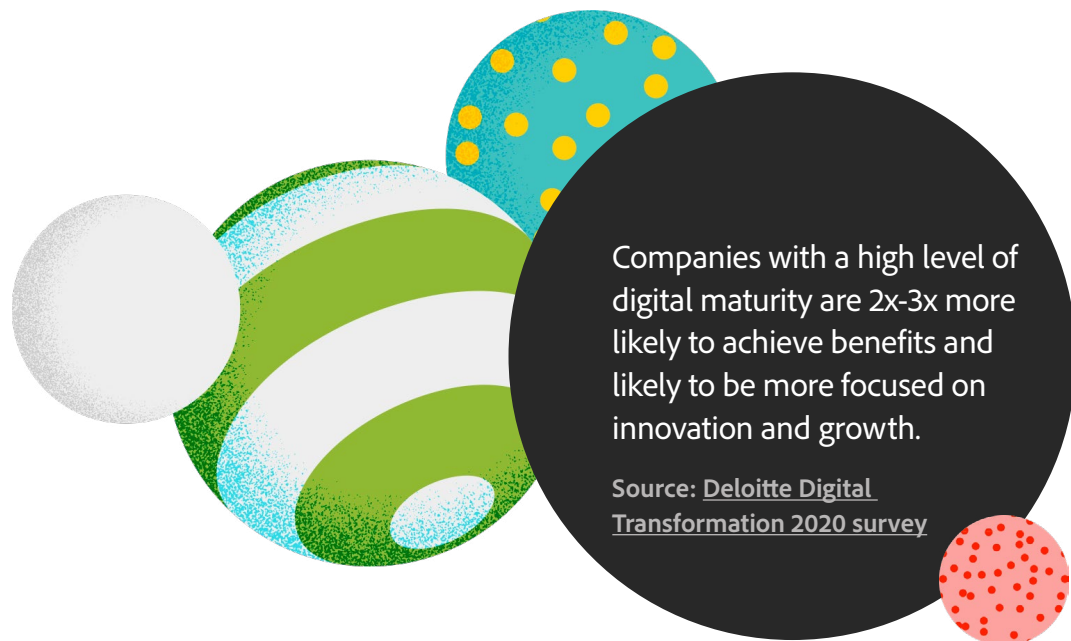
Students at Thunderbird Global School of Management in the U.S. had to make a big pivot, too. Like all 2020 graduates, they were facing graduation day without any of the normal pomp and circumstance. So, drawing upon creativity and the school's mission to lead the fourth Industrial Revolution, they brought robots to the rescue. Students provided a photo or video of themselves in cap and gown, and then using the arrow keys on their computer, remotely navigated tablet-equipped robots to virtually walk across the stage. They were able to receive their diplomas and have their photos taken with the dean in a completely reinvented rite of passage.

Here at Adobe, we've also had to adapt to COVID-19 challenges, from reinventing our annual 20,000-person Adobe Summit to be an online event, to rethinking all our messaging and how we connect with our customers and employees.



These are just a few examples of how organisations across the globe are adapting during this time of stay-at-home orders and social distancing. Some are cutting staff and operations. Some have moved to more online sales and virtual work, while others still are completely reimagining what's possible.

In the midst of the uncertainty caused by COVID-19, one thing has become crystal clear: Digital transformation is more important than ever before. Companies with strong digital maturity are better positioned to act swiftly and decisively, and to innovate and adapt to solve this and future challenges.



Successes, challenges and lessons learned

Digital transformation is foundational to all we do at Adobe, but adapting to life in a pandemic added a whole new set of challenges. During the past few months, we've had to be extremely nimble and make changes across our organisation like everyone else. And like everyone else, we've learned some valuable lessons along the way.

By sharing our experiences and what we've learned so far — successes, hiccups, and all — along with other real-world examples of what businesses are doing, we hope to give you some ideas that will help you with your own journey in this new normal.

These aren't best practices because, let's be real, we're all learning as we go. But we hope that these six lessons learned can help you understand ways to make your business more nimble and adaptable.

Lesson #1

Real-time customer insights are more essential than ever.

Your customers are living in a different world than they were just a short time ago. We all are. With so many people staying at home, their needs and behaviours with your business have likely changed. And your strategy needs to change with them. That's why it's more important than ever to understand their behaviours in real time.

Here at Adobe, real-time, data-driven insights are part of our DNA. So, when the coronavirus started changing our daily lives, we were able to dig into our data, gain insights from our customer relationships and pivot as quickly as possible.

Going into 2020, we had a product-centric strategy. But when we started closing offices in Asia and Europe, and shelter-in-place orders went into effect, we flipped our strategy to focus on what our customers needed most during this time. Our industry strategy team discovered that customers needed solutions that solved for business continuity and resilience. Yet, what one industry was facing was 180 degrees different than another.

We tapped the expertise of our industry strategy team and their deep understanding of the pressures, challenges and impact of the pandemic in any given industry. They helped us reframe our messaging around how to drive business continuity so companies can successfully emerge from the pandemic.



"Although the challenges and severity of disruption were very different across industries, we were able to rapidly identify patterns for how leading companies were pivoting digital strategies to serve their customers," says Christopher Parkin, senior director of strategy and marketing at Adobe. "We also recognised that there were genuine and empathetic ways that Adobe could help our customers pivot to new demands while preparing for the future."



We were fortunate that our team had strong relationships, a deep understanding of their customers and knew what was happening due to COVID-19 in different cities and states. This, coupled with real-time data and insights, was key to our ability to help in an empathic and relevant way."

Marissa Dacay

Senior Director, Global Enterprise Marketing
Adobe

Of course, not every business has a high-touch field marketing team. Many have customers who come to them through brick-and-mortar, websites, apps, call centres and in-person events. This is where real-time data is even more essential. The more detailed and up-to-the minute your customer profile is, the more you can understand which pages are seeing increased traffic, what apps would be most helpful, what they're buying and what they're not. Then you can provide content, products or services that are truly helpful in the midst of a pandemic.

At Adobe, we count on our data-driven operating model to provide granular insights into customer behaviours at each stage of the journey. The coronavirus has highlighted just how important that is. These insights allowed us to immediately identify opportunities and challenges, and pivot quickly to develop highly relevant customer-centric experiences.

The same holds true for NASCAR. With people unable to attend live races, NASCAR had to rethink their business model to maintain some kind of continuity. They realised with more people at home and spending time on their computers, pivoting to e-sports was an ideal option. On March 22, the first-ever eNASCAR Pro Invitational Series race was broadcast on FOX Sports. Millions tuned in, many who weren't normal patrons of the racetrack. Fortunately, NASCAR had been building a robust digital foundation and was able to identify who these new fans were. "This foundation is going to help us get smart about these new audiences brought in via e-sports and figure out the best way to engage them moving forward," says Tim Clark, NASCAR chief digital officer. Both online and on-track.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Remember that behaviours have changed from a few months ago and real-time data is more important than ever.
- Ask yourself if you have the infrastructure in place to gain these insights, and if not, look at investing in one.
- Use your data and/or sales team to identify new behaviours, challenges and opportunities.
- Focus on new ways to add value right now.
- Understand how the coronavirus has impacted different industries and regions.





Lesson #2

Agility is key when pivoting your communications in a pandemic.

Once you understand how the coronavirus is impacting your customers, use this insight to adjust your communications. Agility is absolutely essential. A strong digital foundation allows you to pivot and scale quickly, and keep evolving as the situation changes to support the needs of employees, customers and communities.

As soon as the COVID-19 situation intensified in Asia and started spreading globally, we activated our crisis response team. Like many companies, our first priority was and has always been to protect the health and safety of our employees and their families first, as well as our customers and the communities where we live and work. We made the important decision to start closing offices around the world and support our employees as they quickly shifted to working from home.

Stacy Martinet, VP of marketing strategy and communications, gathered her team to collaborate on crisis management best practices and monitor employee sentiment, to inform our forward-looking response plan. The group consulted daily with our COVID-19 committee and engaged an external agency for real-time market and industry updates. Regular consultation with internal and external stakeholders was critical as key messaging was evolving at a fast rate.

We also reached out to several customers to gain perspective on what was happening in each industry, so we could arm our teams with helpful and relevant information.

We focused our communications strategy around key themes, transparency, clarity and empathy. These themes were not new to meet the moment — they've always been a part of Adobe's culture — but when faced with a global pandemic, it's really all about that.

As our key messaging was developed, it was cascaded to employees, customers and our community across multiple platforms, engaging Adobe leadership and collaborating with key stakeholders across the company. We did this by leveraging existing platforms and creating new channels. For employees, we redesigned pages on Inside Adobe, our company-wide intranet, to prioritise COVID-19 updates, launched dedicated Slack channels and held regular employee meetings and town halls.

To connect our internal efforts with our customers, we launched our Honor Heroes campaign, galvanising the creative community to create emotional personal tributes to friends and relatives on the frontline. We launched programmes to engage our community to #StayInStayInspired, from Adobe Fresco-enabled Colouring books to a partnership with Time for Kids — Draw with Us! to help engage thousands of kids who were schooling from home. And we quickly created a comprehensive COVID-19 section on Adobe.com to ensure our customers had the support and resources they needed to navigate this challenging time.

We also piloted a “Digital Emergency Preparedness” theme in a webinar with the American Marketing Association. The response was extremely positive, so we adapted it for the different industries. It was well received there too because it provided an in-depth view of how others in their industry were responding to COVID. And it engendered a sense of community.

Martinet says having a robust digital foundation gave us the agility to create, personalise and deliver new messaging as fast as we did, and the ability to monitor and measure sentiment to inform the next steps. But she also credits stakeholder trust, an expert team, great collaboration and a strong connection to their communities and customers.



Nothing is more authentic than being transparent and empathetic.”

Stacy Martinet

VP of Marketing Strategy and Communications
Adobe

Other businesses understand that too. India’s 1mg provides a marketplace for medicines and medical services, and was one of the first companies to clarify confusion about COVID-19 online. The company has always focused its communications on trusted relationships. Since the pandemic began, they’ve seen many of their users reach out to them seeking a single, reliable source of information. With around 14 million active online users per month, they were able to quickly send emails at scale, which nearly doubled their engagement on customer platforms. “This has been the key motivation behind our COVID-19 strategy,” says Prateek Verma, leader of product, design and marketing at 1mg.

Delta Air Lines is another example. They started sending weekly emails from their CEO, Ed Bastian, titled “Updates from Ed” about what they’re doing to protect customers’ well-being, how they’re dealing with cancelled travel plans and how they’re helping those on the front line.

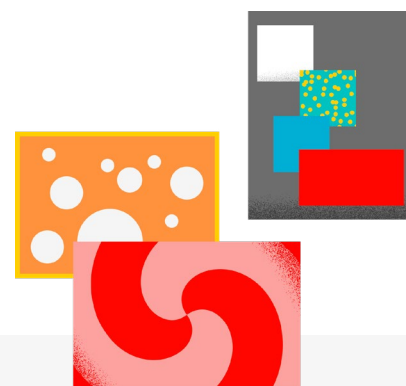
Equally important during this time is letting your employees know how you are supporting them. Send regular communications and establish two-way channels to ensure they stay connected and informed. DXT Technologies created an Employee Health and Communication Crisis app for employees to check in about their health, get help, get information about COVID-19 and receive alerts about important company news. At Adobe, we all receive a weekly communication titled “Take 5 with Adobe.” These cover COVID-19 updates, how to stay connected to our teams, how to get help and ways Adobe is supporting the community — such as our #HonorHeroes campaign that was featured on Jimmy Kimmel Live.

With Inside Adobe, we’ve managed content for more than 50 locations in one site while personalising the experience, so that employees are exposed to the most important and relevant information for them.

The OneWalmart intranet has become a daily habit for many Walmart employees. With more than 1 million unique visitors every month, it’s become a destination not only for things like work schedules and benefits, but also to showcase employee stories, resources for community impact work and more. When done right, an intranet becomes more than just a storehouse for documents and PowerPoints. It provides a sense of stability and ensures that in both good times and bad, employees always feel informed, engaged and looked after.

Collaboration is also essential. While we’ve probably all become adept at using video conferencing tools in the past few months, there are many other ways to encourage collaboration — such as empowering your teams with digital tools like pdfs, digital forms, e-signatures and asset sharing. As Martinet explains, “Digital is foundational. Employees are number one. Customers matter more than ever. Those are what business leaders should be thinking about right now.”

And lastly, don’t forget we’re all having to face these challenges in our own ways. “I’ve seen a level of bravery that I don’t think people knew they had,” says Martinet. “For people around the world to cope with this pandemic, get up and face the world from their personal space — a bravery has emerged that is truly inspiring.”



KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Invest in a robust digital foundation to increase your ability to quickly pivot messaging.
- Involve leadership and key stakeholders in developing a strategic COVID-19 communications plan.
- Be authentic, helpful and relevant to the pandemic in all your messaging.
- Let your customers and communities know how you can help when they need it most.
- Use collaboration tools and two-way channels to keep your employees connected and informed when working remotely or furloughed.



Lesson #3

People need human connection, especially right now.

As humans, we crave connection. Yet with so many of us isolated at home, we miss the sense of community we had with our workplace.

The Adobe field marketing team learned that all too quickly. They normally do 300 in-person, one-to-one account-based marketing events a quarter. So, with COVID-19, they had to figure out how to keep that community alive. That meant reinventing their high-touch, VIP-centric and often celebrity-driven events. Overnight.

The team's number one priority was to show customers they genuinely cared about how they were doing. Empathy was key — this was not a time to be salesy. So, using direct mail and AI technology, they created a targeted wellness campaign for marketers that included a gift that they could claim, trade for a different one or donate.

Next, they looked for ways to connect without meeting in person. Working with event agencies, they reinvented their local happy hours into experiences customers could enjoy from the comfort of their own homes. They also did cooking-experience gatherings, sending ingredients for a cooking class to the audience so they could all be cooking and socialising together online.

But soon they realised a lot of things were out of their control. Not everyone was on the same stay-at-home orders, vendors were closing down and some people weren't comfortable receiving packages. So the team pivoted again, sending out Instacart gift certificates and an ingredient list.



It's essential to stay connected to your community. And you can do that in number of ways. But no matter how you do it, show you genuinely care about them as a person."

Caroline Hull

Director of Commercial Field & Partner Marketing Communications
Adobe

We also discovered some unexpected benefits from having to adapt. For example, by doing these events virtually, we could expand the size and scope, making them more accessible.

There are many ways you can build community in a time of social distancing. Focus on educational content that will really help your customers. Offer more value-added services. Bring critical innovation to those in need. Foster fellowship through global community support, like the Adobe #HonorHeroes campaign, which invited artists from all over the world to submit artwork of local COVID heroes. Find ways for your employees to help in your community. And encourage your employees to care for themselves and their families. Not only is this essential for their well-being, it helps them care more authentically for your customers. The Adobe global marketing team was given a "guilt-free day off" — a much-needed respite after working harder than ever to adapt during the pandemic.

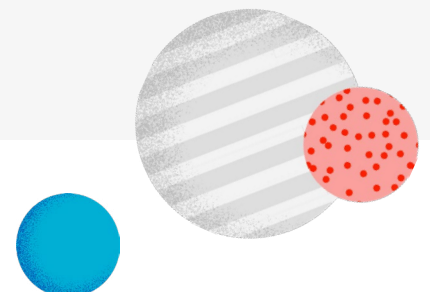
To foster connections in their community, Vitamix turned to food's ability to bring people together. With millions of people now cooking more, they put more emphasis on engaging current and potential blender owners with new recipes, healthy eating alternatives and ways to have fun. They're doing cooking demonstrations, offering tips and tricks, even sharing how to make the best use of limited trips to the grocery store. And they're awarding loyalty points every time someone engages with their content.

To help parents working from home, Disney+ released *Frozen 2* three months early. To keep audiences and donors engaged, New York's Public Theater and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., have asked professional playwrights to create short dramas for people to perform at home. And The Berlin Philharmonic had a Facebook contest where winners were treated to a one-on-one performance in the empty Berlin airport.

With creative thinking, the possibilities are endless. At the end of the day, you'll be remembered for how you genuinely cared about your employees and customers. And for the experiences you share together.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Create ways to show your customers and employees you genuinely care about them.
- Use event companies, direct mail and online collaboration platforms to strengthen human connection.
- Offer more value-added services and educational content that will help during this time.
- Foster fellowship through community support.
- Do what you do best as marketers — be wildly creative.





Lesson #4

New ways of working can have lasting benefits.

Before COVID-19 the majority of business was done in person — from closing deals to dining out. The digital experience, while important to the customer journey, was often a companion to the in-person experience — not the main event.

Oh, how times have changed. Now, in a time when face-to-face transactions can't happen, we have concrete evidence that the digital experience has become absolutely essential.

Companies with a digital foundation in place have been able to move quickly to new ways of working. But even those that weren't as prepared are finding ways to adapt — some temporarily, while some will make their new ways permanent.

Families all across the globe are reeling from the challenges of schools closing down. And it's not just families with younger students. In the U.S., students at the Tyler School of Art and Architecture at Temple University were suddenly cut off from many of the design tools and resources they had on campus. While they were very accustomed to using digital tools, many felt they also needed the physical tools on campus. But they soon discovered just how much they could do online and how the digital tools fed their creativity. "Having this experience and learning, along with our students, about how powerful Adobe Dimension and Adobe Stock can be, we have finally found a silver lining to moving our classes online this spring semester," says Abby Guido, assistant professor of graphic and interactive design at Temple University.

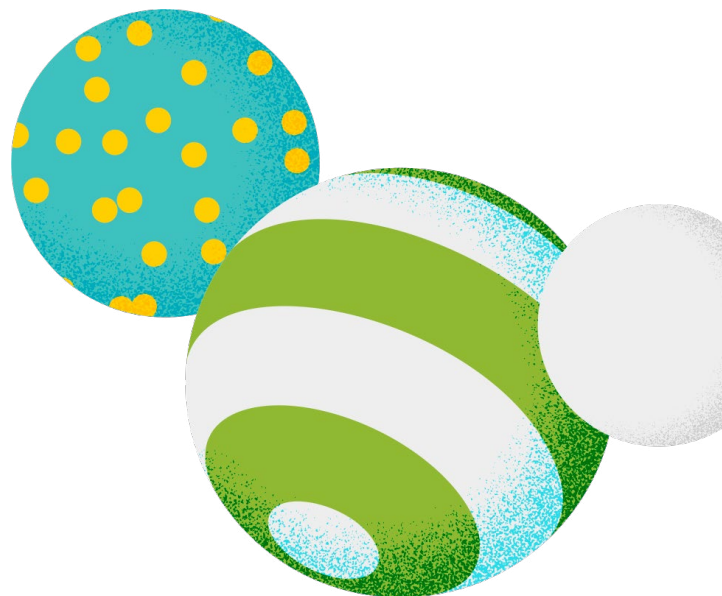
The NSW Department of Education found that digital preparedness repeatedly pays off. During the Australian bush fires, they were able to push content to their 2,200 school websites and 1,400 Facebook pages notifying families about school closures. They used the same notification system for COVID-19.

Even as a digital transformation company, we've had to make our own big shifts. When faced with the realities of social distancing and shelter-in-place orders, we had to figure out how to move our Adobe Summit online — yet give our customers everything they love about a live experience, such as Q&A sessions and the networking and face time with speakers, peers, evangelists and experts.

In a mere three weeks, we dug in, looked at potential new technologies to use and worked very long hours to transition this huge, in-person live event in Las Vegas to be entirely virtual with numerous keynote presentations and 100+ breakout sessions. All of which were filmed from the presenter's living rooms. But like all things done in a short amount of time, we ran into challenges.

"We quickly realised that producing the same high-quality videos we always do would be impossible, given the current situation," said Sergio Claudio, senior director of adobe.com enterprise. "And doing them live added all kinds of risks, like interruptions or running too long." So, we pivoted to pre-recorded videos, which we could edit. There was also another benefit to pre-recording the videos — we could translate them into other languages, including Japanese, French and German. For questions and chat, we used a combination of a live handoff and AI.

We also had to consider how people would consume the content. We determined flexibility was key. Rather than long presentations, we created shorter videos they could watch at their convenience, with chapters so they could jump to the content they needed most.





Think of the digital experience as the main event, not an add-on, and make it as rich as the in-person experiences they've come to expect from you."

Sergio Claudio

Senior Director of Adobe.com Enterprise
Adobe

We learned a lot in the process. By making the presentations virtual and free to everyone, the event was instantly more accessible to more people. Yet we also learned that people want live presentations and interactivity. So, we're looking at a hybrid approach for our next event.

Whatever type of evolution you're making, it has to happen quickly — so streamline workflows wherever you can. With COVID-19 keeping so many people at home, audio streaming service TuneIn found a way to deliver a personalised digital radio experience when people needed it most. TuneIn's workforce was also working at home, so they had to adapt their workflows as well as the experiences they were delivering. Fortunately, they had moved to Adobe XD a year ago and already were designing voice prototypes, wireframing and collaborating with each other in-app. "We have the ability to share everything in the cloud and we have the ability to push our new designs to everybody as a team. That's been a big advantage for us right now," says Hongwei Huang, senior product designer at TuneIn.

Whether you're moving to virtual events, supporting a workforce working remotely or reinventing how you do business in a crisis, it's about building relationships for both employees and customers. And creating long-term value for your efforts.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Think digital first by making the digital experience the main event, not an add-on.
- Invest in digital tools that will ease the transition to new ways of working.
- Consider how your content will be consumed in times of remote working and more distraction.
- Streamline your workflows to enable collaboration and quick action.
- Be forward thinking — changes you make now will have lasting value.



Lesson #5

You have to reexamine everything, from your strategies to your structure.

Huge changes in demand have caused organisations everywhere to take a hard look at their operations and strategies. They're figuring out how to handle late-stage pipeline gaps or large surges in demand. How to adjust to new fulfilment models. How to find new revenue sources. And how to empower their people to do business remotely.

With many banks suspending in-person visits during lockdown, they've been forced to rethink how they support customers through digital channels. For [TSB Bank](#) in the U.K., the coronavirus pandemic accelerated its vision of serving its personal and business banking customers online. As part of TSB Bank's 2022 strategic plan, it released 18 forms online and managed over 80,000 customers interactions in just eight weeks, using Adobe Sign. This would have otherwise equated to as many as 15,000 in-branch, face-to-face visits. They've shown thousands of customers how easy it is to access services digitally, giving them peace of mind, whilst staying safe at home.

Many businesses have had to reexamine their go-to-market models, to find new sources of revenue or to rethink in-store shopping. Before the pandemic, a [Digital Commerce 360](#) report shows Q4 2019 online sales accounted for just 17.8 percent of all retail sales. But new data from [Adobe Digital Economy Index](#) shows U.S. e-commerce jumped 49 percent in April 2020, compared to the baseline period in early March before shelter-in-place restrictions went into effect.



In order to stay relevant, businesses large and small have to consider moving online or bridging the gap between physical and online strategies, like shifting their primary model to online ordering, pavement pickup and home delivery. (The Adobe Digital Economy index showed a 208 percent year-over-year surge in buy-online, pickup-in-store orders in April.) Some boutique owners are even creating their own shopping channels on Facebook Live or offering personalised virtual shopping via Facebook or Skype.



We all have to look at how we're set up as an organisation and whether our people have the skill sets needed. No business should expect to go back to their old ways of working."



Marissa Dacay

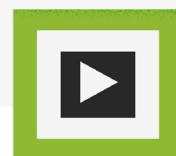
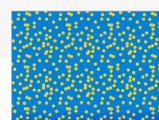
Senior Director, Global Enterprise Marketing Adobe

Even though Adobe solutions are digital, we still had to shift strategy to meet customers' most urgent needs. Our field team reached out to our accounts to learn how the virus had impacted them and what they needed most. And we did a customer survey that has provided valuable information for planning and creating actionable plans to guide our customers as they navigate new challenges.

With remote business now a huge priority, we discovered that digital forms and e-signatures were in much higher demand. Also, with schools closing down, we realised students needed access to their digital tools. So, we started offering free, personal, in-home access to Creative Cloud instead of classroom licences. And with businesses adjusting to working from home, we extended the duration of our free trials for e-signatures and free PDF services.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Look at how your business is set up and if it's agile enough for this new reality.
- Explore new sources of revenue and re-examine your supply chain tactics.
- Rethink your in-store and online ordering, and how to bridge the two.
- Tap the power of digital tools to continue doing business remotely.
- Discover your customers' greatest needs and find ways to meet them.





If you aren't digitally strong, invest in digital transformation now because it's the future. If you are digitally strong, accelerate it."



Mari Cross

VP of Customer Success of the Americas
Adobe

Online forums have always been a way for people to connect with peers around the world, and right now, we really need those connections. To make Adobe Experience League even more helpful during COVID-19, we curated sets of our most popular video tutorials, so it was easier to find answers quickly. We posted a CXM playbook to help businesses through digital transformation. And we added Italian and Chinese to our list of supported languages — two areas deeply affected by the pandemic.

Furthermore, with our Adobe Summit presentations now online, we've added a wealth of new self-service resources on our website. "Posting all those videos created so much content to help with what our customers are experiencing," said Mari Cross, VP of customer success of the Americas at Adobe. "And it created an appetite for peer-to-peer conversations. Everyone is so interested in how others are handling COVID and we've been able to pair companies together to exchange ideas."

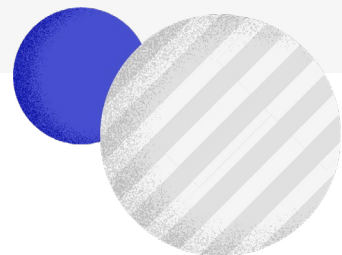
If you haven't already, now is the time to increase your online and mobile adoption, and to provide self-service ways for customers to get the information and products they need — especially when they can't connect with you in person or when your call centres are being overwhelmed. Cloud solutions that allow you to manage content, create web pages, target your audiences and swiftly ramp up to meet spikes in traffic will allow you to pivot more quickly to meet changing demands.

If your business was already digitally strong, this time is an opportunity to accelerate your digital presence and capabilities. It may be to meet increased demand. To quickly launch a new COVID response web page. Or if your traffic has dropped due to the pandemic, to start looking at how to maximise the tech solutions you have, so that when customers do come back, you have the ability to discover who they are. It's also a great time to train your team on new technologies and how to maintain your digital presence. Digitising your customer experiences will be key to not just riding out the pandemic, but being prepared for the future.



KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Be prepared for these changes to last, and if you haven't already, start your digital transformation.
- Make sure you have a strong online presence that is tailored for mobile devices.
- Create robust online forums for people to learn, connect and exchange ideas.
- Use cloud solutions to create or adapt websites, manage content and meet spikes in traffic.
- If you're already digitally strong, use this as a catalyst to accelerate your capabilities.



COVID-19 has ushered in a new era.



I believe the pandemic is actually empowering people in how they work and accomplish things. We're not going back. The digital revolution is here. This is the beginning of whatever chapter is next, and whatever people learn now will serve them well for this next era."



Stacy Martinet

VP of Marketing Strategy and Communications
Adobe

The past few months have been incredibly challenging. Yet despite it all, we've seen some great things happening. Just ask John Krasinski. His *Some Good News* (SGN) series on YouTube has helped the world see all the positive things going on amidst the chaos. And talk about being nimble. He first approached production studios LEROI and Senior Post on a Friday, and the first episode went live that Sunday.

Thanks to SGN, the world has witnessed a digital prom for graduating seniors, a virtual wedding of two die-hard fans of *The Office* and an online performance by the original cast of *Hamilton* for a young girl whose tickets were cancelled. Josh Senior, founder and CEO of LEROI and Senior Post, says he doesn't know what content production will look like in the future. But making content that brings people joy is enough for now.

"How you show up in a time of crisis has a lasting effect on how people view you when we come out it," says Dacay. "Focus on being a partner, caring for your customers and being whatever they need you to be right now."

We will get through this pandemic. Many businesses will be permanently changed — and some for the better. The changes you make now will strengthen your business and help you emerge more prepared for whatever the future brings.

Explore other resources on adapting and building business continuity.

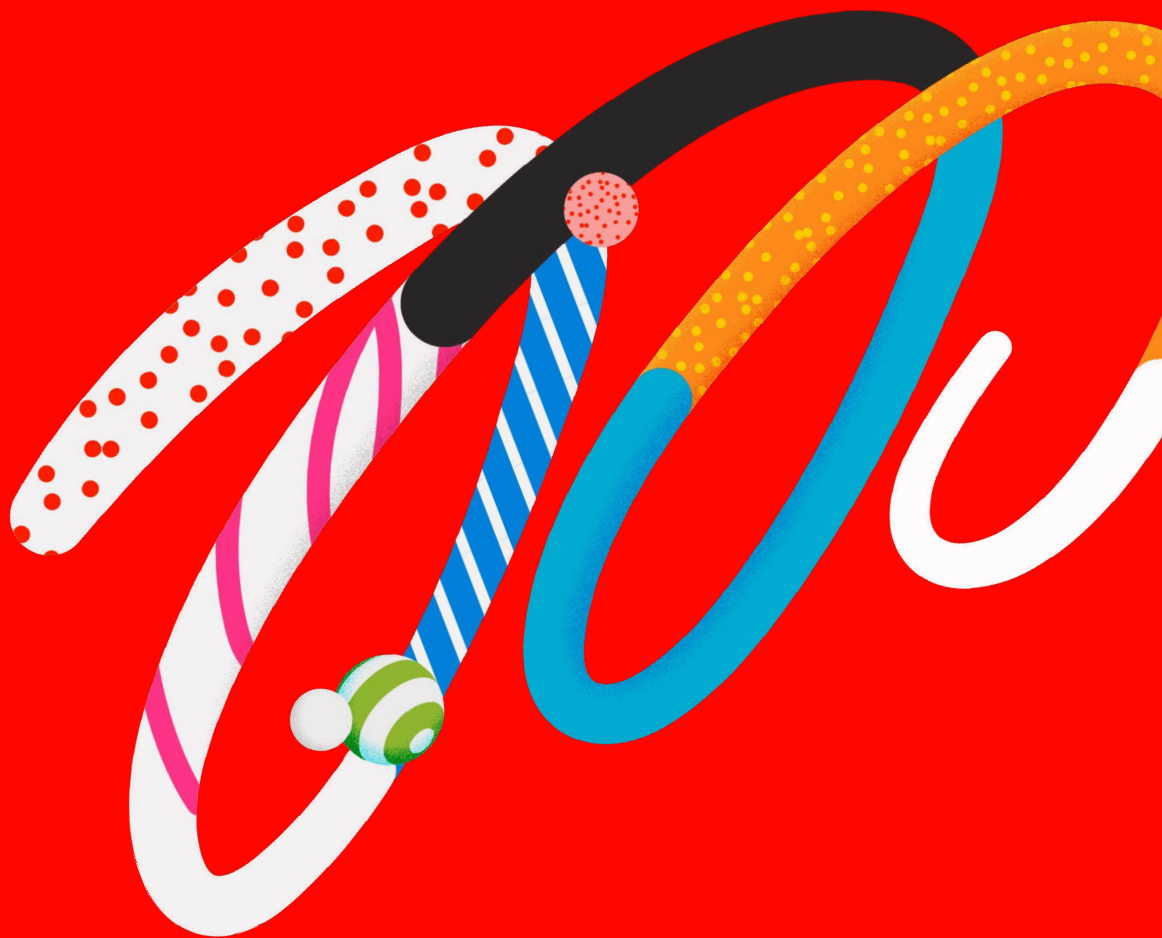
- Learn more about the future of data marketing practices and how you can unleash the power of data in [The New Data Deal](#).
- Learn how creating a culture of human ingenuity gives purpose to data intelligence, helps transform your team and elevates customer experiences. Read [The Future Of Marketing Is Creative](#).
- Let Adobe help you build a customer experience management strategy tailored to your business. Access our [CXM Playbook](#) online tool.

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