

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought new challenges to every business, including Adobe. We're sharing the lessons we've learned in this six-part series.

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 home, their needs and behaviors 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 behaviors 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 recognized 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 empathetic 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 centers, 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 behaviors 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 realized 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 behaviors 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 behaviors, challenges, and opportunities.
- Focus on new ways to add value right now.
- Understand how the coronavirus has impacted different industries and regions.

[Explore](#) the whole playbook.



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