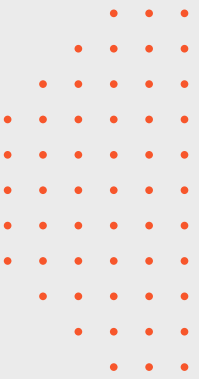
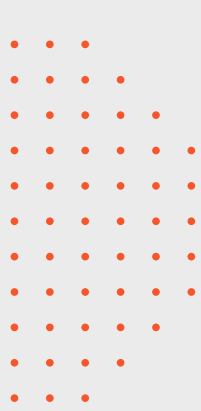


COMMUNICATION FOR SMES

COMMUNICATING IN A NEW REALITY





01

**A CONTEXT OF
CHALLENGES**

WHERE WERE WE? THE SITUATION OF THE PORTUGUESE ECONOMY PRE-COVID-19.

The last four years are marked by significant job creation, an increase in investment, a balanced budget for the Public Administrations, alongside a major investment effort in the capacity and professionals of public services, and a positive external balance.

This evolution occurs alongside a major effort to reduce the debt of the State, companies, and households, in a context of international uncertainty that has limited the growth of Portugal's main trading partners, confirming solid foundations for future economic growth.

Global economic outlooks for June 2020 point to the immediate and short-term results of the pandemic's impact and the long-term damage this context has caused to growth prospects: the deepest global recession in decades, reduced investments, erosion of human capital, and the fragmentation of global trade and supply links.

WHERE ARE WE? THE NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE SME ECOSYSTEM

The SARS-COV-2 pandemic, declared in 2020, highlighted that the world we live in today can be described by the acronym VUCA(H), considering the traits that best characterize it, namely: volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, and hyperconnectivity.

Companies were surprised by a scenario that few, if any, had considered in their strategic planning. This event forced nations, markets, organizations, families, and individuals to unexpectedly and suddenly slow down and rethink their purpose.





02

**HOW TO TELL
RELEVANT STORIES
WITH PURPOSE?**

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING?

1. Branding is the foundation of all marketing efforts...
2. A connection with the audience that shares the same values and creates the conditions for a long-term sustainable relationship...
3. From a business perspective, it is "the security of future results."

Because nowadays the audience seeks experiences and not just services or products that fulfil their functionality, branding helps define the "promise and the delivery of an experience."

A strong brand is a valuable brand. It fosters loyalty and creates a desire for recommendation. A loyal audience means a greater capacity to achieve the proposed mission.

WHAT IS A BRAND? IT IS NOT WHAT WE DEFINE. IT IS WHAT THEY FEEL IT IS. WHAT THEY SAY IT IS.

Brands are defined by individuals/people, not by organizations or markets. People are emotional and intuitive beings. We are always talking about RELATIONSHIPS!

A brand is a mix of attributes, both tangible and intangible, symbolized by a trademark that, when managed effectively, creates VALUE and influences decisions.

A brand is not a logo, a brand is not a product.

A brand is what evokes emotions in us.

In other words... It's not what "we" say it is... It's what "they" feel and say it is!

- The brand enables recognition: It is through the brand that an organization obtains recognition and becomes known in the market.
- Branding leverages commercial value: A strongly established brand can increase the value of the organization and become an increased investment factor.
- Branding generates new customers: strong brands generally mean that there is a positive impression of the organization with the public and enhances the reliability generated by recognition.
- Improves pride and satisfaction among employees and partners.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POSITIONING AND DIFFERENTIATION?

One cannot tell a story without talking about differentiation and positioning.

Positioning: It is about focusing on a single idea – or just one word – that defines the organization in the minds of consumers.

Differentiation: Creation or demonstration of unique characteristics in a company's products or brands, compared to its competitors

"They"...

Have too many options and little time.

They tend to highlight and notice only what is different or adds value.

Most people realize that the OFFER has similar qualities and attributes. It is the relationship ("difference") that leads to the choice.

To POSITION and DIFFERENTIATE, it is necessary to answer the following questions in a simple way:

- Who or what is XPTO?
- What does XPTO do?
- Why is it relevant to "them"?

WHAT'S YOUR STORY? TELLING AN ATTRACTIVE, EXCITING, AND CONVINCING STORY.

Telling a compelling, exciting and compelling story will be as important today as it has ever been.

A good and **well-told story continues to make a difference.**

The only immutable truth is that the story behind organizations, industries and sectors is decisive. This is the instigator for change, the record of progress and the difference between participating and actually running to win



HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY?

1. Know your audience.

Who wants to hear your story? Who will benefit from and respond to it? To create a compelling story, you need to understand your audience and who will be able to respond to it.

2. Define your main message.

Regardless of the size of your story, whether it's one page or twenty, lasting ten minutes or sixty, it should have a central message. Like the foundation of a house, this should be established before moving forward.

3. Decide what type of story you are telling.

Not all stories are the same. To determine what type of story you're telling, figure out how you want your audience to feel or react as they engage with it.

4. Establish your call to action.

Your objective and call to action (CTA) are similar, but your CTA sets the action you want your audience to take after hearing your message.

5. Choose the medium to tell it.

Stories can take various forms. Some stories are read, some are viewed, and others are heard. The chosen medium depends on the type of story and the available resources, such as time, capital, or team.

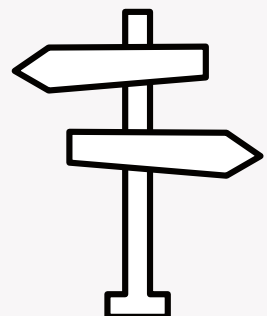
6. Share your story.

Don't forget to share and promote your story! Just like with any other content, creating it is only half the battle – sharing it is the other half.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR SCRIPT?

In summary, and as a final note for telling your story, you should be able to answer some questions:

1. What is the value that motivates the brand?
2. What are your corporate values?
3. What are your beliefs about the sector?
4. If you could be the best in one aspect of your activity, which would you choose?
5. What makes your organization great?
6. Where do you expect to see your organization in 5 years?
7. If you had to describe your organization in one word, what would it be? Why?
8. How would you like your organization to be known?
9. What problem does your solution address?





03

**HOW TO ATTRACT THE
ATTENTION OF
JOURNALISTS AND
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS?**

WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF SEGMENTATION?

Just as it is important for your audience to know your brand and what it represents, it is equally important that, when **communicating with a specific audience**, you understand the specifics of who is listening, their concerns and interests, and what drives their decision-making. Only then will it be possible to create a targeted and effective communication strategy.

1. Identify communication opportunities.

Segmentation allows you to identify opportunities for dissemination, adjusting communication actions to the media agenda at a given time and the topics that stand out in it.

2. Plan communication.

Organizations can develop campaigns based on a clearer understanding of the effort required to reach a specific audience segment and the response they can expect.

3. Select channels.

Segmenting the audience helps select dissemination channels more intelligently and allocate resources for an effective strategy in each of them.

4. Define timing.

Understanding the audience makes it possible to define the timing of promotional efforts, emphasizing certain actions when it is likely to get an increased response.

5. Optimize resources.

By adapting the marketing plan to audience segments, it becomes possible to manage available resources more effectively, whether they are material or voluntary resources, avoiding their dispersion in a broader but less efficient action.



HOW TO IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

Audience segmentation allows dividing a market into smaller, more defined categories, grouping the audience into segments that share similar characteristics, such as demographic profiles, interests, needs, or location.

Segmentation makes it easier to focus marketing efforts and resources on reaching the most valuable audiences and achieving the proposed business goals.

Internal stakeholders

These are usually members of the organization.

- Employees
- Management

Primary stakeholders

These are those who have an economic or contractual relationship with the organization.

- Shareholders
- Customers
- Distributors
- Suppliers
- Investors
- Resellers

External stakeholders

These are those who are not directly linked to the organization. However, they will have an interest in the organization's activities or may be impacted by its activities.

- General community
- Local civic groups
- Lobbies
- Media
- Professional associations
- Public sector



HOW TO ENHANCE YOUR MEDIA COVERAGE?

1. **Visibility and reputation for the brand**
2. **Fundraising**
3. **Fostering interest from partners**
4. **Building the team – management, staff, and volunteers**

HOW TO COMMUNICATE THROUGH THE MEDIA?

The media outlets emerge as the ideal platforms for disseminating information in an amplified way, reaching a wide range of audiences. Creating communication actions targeted at the media helps strengthen the relevance of the intervention being made and the sharing of knowledge around it.

In addition to the ability to create a message that **captures the interest** of its recipients, the success of a Media Relations strategy notably depends on choosing the right recipients and how it is disseminated.

1. Define a Media Agenda.

Let's start by thinking about what topics related to the organization's activity might be relevant for the media. The first step (and the biggest challenge) is finding a topic worthy of being shared in this context. For new projects, this could be your launch, information related to fundraising, an important milestone in the organization's history, a major event to be held, or a new support campaign, etc.

2. Contact individual journalists.

It is also possible to identify and work with specific journalists to promote the story you must tell. This strategy can work particularly well if the goal is a more in-depth piece, such as an interview, or if we want to establish regular contact with journalists who might cover future brand announcements.



HOW TO COMMUNICATE THROUGH THE MEDIA?

3. Associate with current stories.

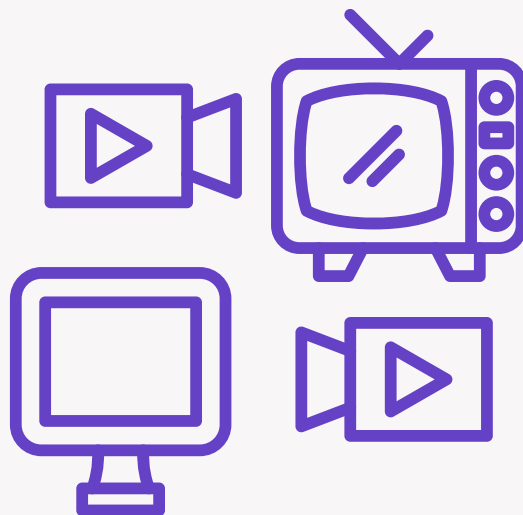
It's a risky move, but it can help generate additional attention for your brand. There are several ways to associate with a trending news story in the media, but they all share a common purpose: to take advantage of the popularity of an existing story for your own benefit. For example, you can share your organization's perspective on a certain topic or take actions aligned with or against a mentioned initiative. This type of positioning can ensure a space in the ongoing discussion.

4. Participate in high-visibility initiatives.

Keep an eye on initiatives that attract media attention and involve your organization in them. For example, you can join a webinar as a speaker in your area of expertise or look for opportunities to integrate your team into a pre-existing campaign.

5. Invest in a content strategy.

Many journalists and publications look at social media as a source of material and inspiration. You are more likely to stand out if you regularly publish content as part of a content marketing strategy and approach influencers and industry professionals to increase your follower base. This can be the springboard to securing a comment space, establishing your organization as a credible and relevant source.





04

**HOW TO COMMUNICATE
IN THE POST-PANDEMIC
PERIOD?**

THE INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Dealing with the shock caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has focused, in the short term, on canceling promotional campaigns and on communication efforts to manage the crisis. After these initial measures, strategies were directed at supporting the public during the lockdown period, with new actions aimed at being present and visible, informing about any changes in service and determining new service protocols and evaluating future actions.

WHAT ACTIONS TO TAKE IN THE POST-COVID-19 PERIOD?

1. Monitor the context.

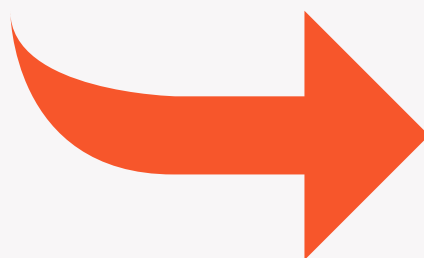
In a context of uncertainty such as this, data analysis is the perfect tool for detecting new business dynamics caused by this new situation. It is important to explore what is happening inside and outside the organization with the help of monitoring platforms.

These should include, on the one hand, the main KPIs associated with the business developed. On the other hand, it is advisable to establish a precise reference to monitor how the competition is responding and how the crisis is affecting the brand's positioning in its market. This information will help to anticipate possible new scenarios and to proactively prepare the response to the challenges that will arise in the sector during the post-COVID-19 period.

2. Analysing audience behaviour.

The big question facing many brands is how their audience will behave in this “new normal”. Any action must be planned with extreme care, as even the countries and sectors that are most advanced in this response process are still in the early stages of recovery. This is therefore a crucial time to reassess the brand's customer and user base and consider reaching new audience segments.

In many cases, this crisis is radically changing the perception of brands. According to the Edelman Trust Barometer 2020 global report, 65% of the public believe that the response to the pandemic will be a key factor when selecting a particular brand's offering. Similarly, one in three customers is already punishing brands that have disappointed them with their response to this situation, either by remaining silent or by using inappropriate messages in light of the current context.



WHAT ACTIONS TO TAKE IN THE POST-COVID-19 PERIOD?

3. Formulate new messages.

Brands must focus on creating useful content for their audience, adapting their message to the new reality through multiple formats: blog posts, social media profiles, video content, etc. In fact, a new focus on the types of images used on social media has been detected. A study conducted by Pattern89 analyzed the activity of 1,100 brands on social media platforms and concluded that there are 27% fewer photos and videos showing physical proximity between individuals.

4. Rethinking channels.

The changing habits of the public have revolutionised the marketing strategies planned for this year. According to a study carried out by GlobalWebIndex, during the lockdown period, the activities on which the public spent the most time were news, generally using a smart TV (67%), watching audiovisual content through streaming platforms (45%) and, of course, the use of social media (45%).

This is the time to readjust budgets, calculate estimates and plan the implementation of communication actions, with online advertising playing an essential role in reactivating sales after COVID-19.

5. Segmenting the offer.

The impact of COVID-19 has led to an increase in demand in certain sectors in a very selective manner. Consequently, marketing strategies must be based on the segmentation and personalization of specific product lines and services.

This will have a direct impact on the configuration of communication with the public: it is necessary to adapt it to reinforce the most popular segments of the offer and offer the best possible shopping experience. In addition, if it is impossible or more difficult to have direct contact with the products or the physical sales space, the information provided becomes more important than ever to boost sales and obtain increased visibility and better positioning in the market.

6. Strengthen omnichannel strategies.


Marketing strategies need to address the reopening of physical spaces. There are many factors that come into play here and that we must take into account: updated information on Google, a communication plan on the hygiene and safety measures adopted, improving the use of omnichannel and planning campaigns to migrate online platforms to stores and retail spaces.





How to get in touch?

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