

To our industry friends:

First and foremost, we hope that you, your team and families are healthy and safe!

We can relate to how trying these past few months have been. Like you, we have looked to reduce costs, streamline workflows, reimagine services, redefine how we connect, and convert our entire company into a remote workforce. The question of what our “new normal” will look like now lingers in our thoughts and we are eager to discover how it will ultimately reflect in the travel category.

What we do know is that during other transformative times in recent history—from Sept 11 to the Great Recession—our industry has routinely led the charge out of tough times to shine the light on a brighter world. So many of you want to move forward, armed with trusted information and research to guide business decisions. To that end, our editorial teams have pushed more than ever to deliver every bit of understanding and good news on what the future holds for our industry.

We also have a team to help you take the important first steps in recovery. Our travel brand credibility and domain expertise have been augmented in recent years by our Studio 90 marketing services business that delivers successful brand engagement strategies with performance-based, data-driven solutions.



With more than 60 years of brand and business leadership, we have weathered storms with you in the past and have the experience to help our travel partners through the recovery process. In this spirit, we put together 7 marketing tips for this moment to help you move towards a prosperous future, articulate your new story and reestablish relationships coming out of this crisis. We hope this inspires you with a framework of “how” to move forward and where to invest your limited time and resources:



1. Reassess Brand Positioning

Determine whether your brand positioning aligns or needs adjusting for a post-pandemic world. What are the key pillars you want to get across the next 3-6 months? How will these messages play out across various marketing, event, PR and content activities?



2. Evaluate Audience Perception

Understanding how your target audiences perceive your category’s and your organization’s response to Covid-19 is key to creating on-point messaging and reconnecting with customers. What are buyer perceptions about returning to travel? What do they need to hear?



3. Create Post-Covid Messaging & Content

As customers wade cautiously back into the travel pool, they want to hear how your brand has responded to global events and prepared for the future. Get executives involved to showcase their leadership. Develop post-Covid content now to come out of the pandemic ahead. Engage buyers with new course work in your education programs.



4. Focus on New Media/Audience Channels

As before the pandemic, our industry has seen meteoric rises in the use of video, podcasts, social, native and content marketing. If you are doing this, keep going. If not, this is a good chance to leverage shifts from events and advertisings to create and leverage new media.



5. Spring Clean Your Data

Leverage the downturn in marketing to evaluate the accuracy and quality of your database. Append 3rd party data to round out your target customer profiles so that you are better prepared to connect with customers and prospects.



6. Plan for Contingencies

No one quite knows what our industry and world will look like in 6 or 12 months. Still, each organization will be charged with creating a recommended path forward to drive brand awareness, market education and revenue growth. As you develop quarterly and annual marketing plans, have Plan A and B options in mind so that you can pivot quickly as the situation demands, know what you will cut, what you retain and where you can even invest in strategic opportunities should budget become available.



7. Take the Long View

To be sure, immediate business needs will require action, but looking out a year from now will be critical to finding the best path forward. Knowing what we know today, where do we want to be in 1,2,3 years? Continually reevaluate and pivot as needed but keep calm and carry on in the direction where you want to end up.

In relation to these areas of focus, Northstar is seeing huge upticks in interest of some of our key products, such as:

- Virtual events
- Webinars
- Video chats
- Custom and branded research
- Thought leadership and native content
- Podcasts
- Videos
- Database matching
- Education platforms
- Social media marketing (including live streaming)

Market performance of many of these products has never been higher!

As always, we are ready and available to hop on a call to talk through your approach and help you chart a strong course forward. Please contact your Northstar sales representative for more information.

All the best and stay safe,

The Northstar team