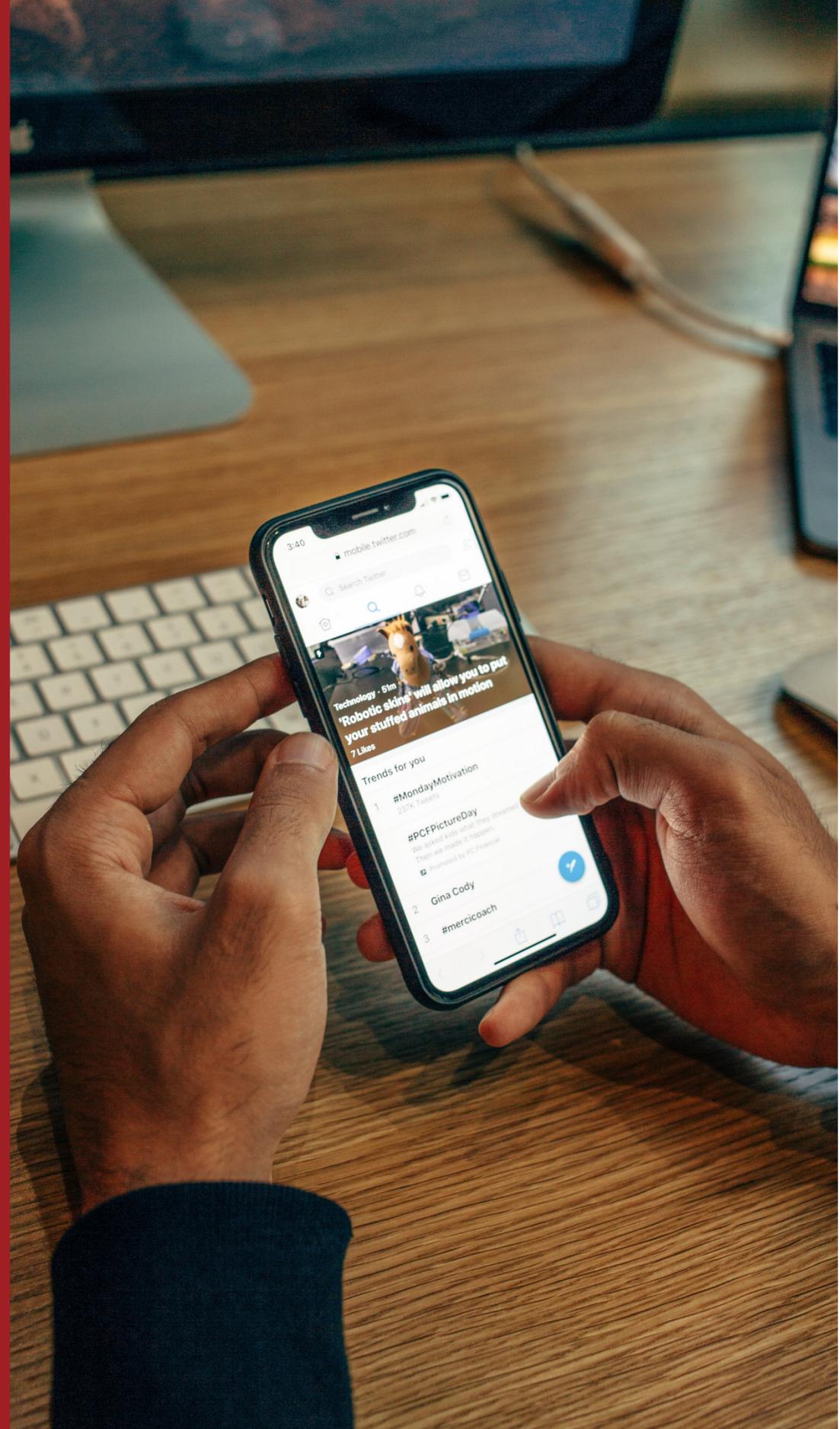


# *10 Tips to Nuance Your Communications*

Practical  
Guidance in the  
Midst of COVID-19



# ***#1 Check Scheduled Content and Ads***

If you're following communications best-practices, chances are you have at least some content scheduled ahead of time. Now take some time to review all of your scheduled content. Don't forget any ads you may have running!

Remove any material that will seem tone-deaf or unhelpful in the current circumstances. Some content will still be timely, but may simply require a couple of tweaks.



# *Platform Checklist*



Facebook



LinkedIn



Instagram



Twitter



Snapchat



TikTok



Email Automations



Email Campaigns

# *#2 Update Your Website*

If you've put together a statement about the crisis (and most organizations have), be sure it's not email-only. Post it on your website so it's easy to find. In some instances, it may be appropriate to create an entirely new page about the crisis or even an **FAQ page** and add it to your homepage navigation.

Take a **quick scan** of your homepage. Is anything so clearly "pre-corona" it's uncomfortable? Be thoughtful about what you're highlighting and how it presents in the present moment.

Updating your website promptly assures your audience that you're **aware and responsive**. As your team adapts to kids at home and responds to the crisis, an updated website can curtail a flood of personal emails and questions.

# #3 *Stay Consistent*



Not sure what to say just yet? Going silent on your typical channels might feel safe and appealing. Unfortunately, it too often allows your audience to fill in the gaps. They may assume that you're unprepared or not taking the situation seriously or simply panicking about finances.

Your people need more stability than ever when a crisis hits. If you're not ready to make strong declarations, consider some supportive, community-building content that acknowledges the crisis without making major statements just yet. Keeping your consistent communications rhythm helps create a sense of normalcy and assures your followers that you're active and engaged.

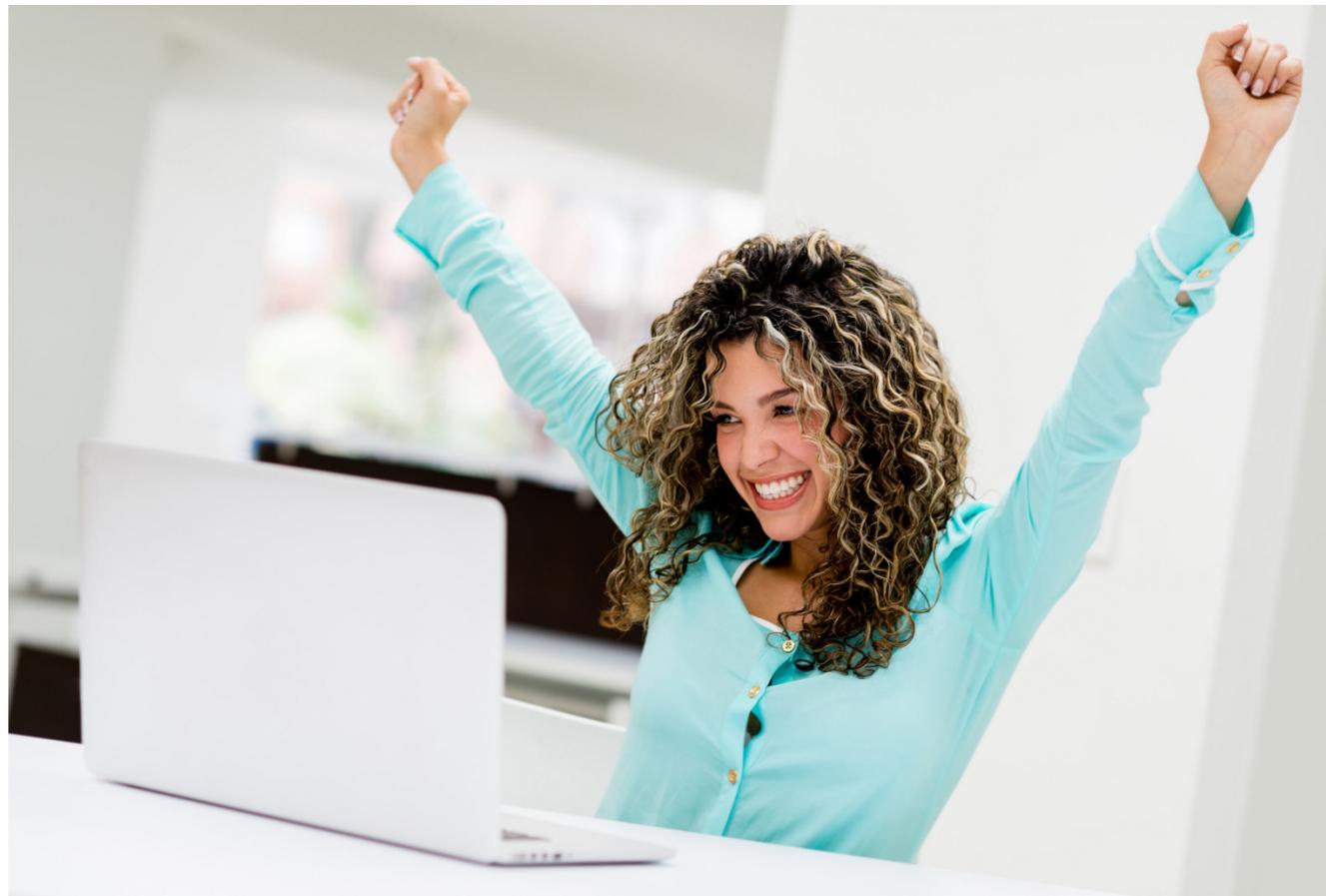
***Tip: Be sure your photos and videos don't suggest you're not taking social distancing seriously.***



***Public locations or groups of people should be avoided in real life and in online content right now.***

***Highlighting a past event or gathering? Be sure to note that in the post.***

# *#4 Nuance Good News, But Share It!*



Not everything is bad news right now, and maybe your organization has some fun or exciting details to report. There may be a temptation to downplay or skip over these announcements. But don't!

People are craving some hope and light right now and will relish the opportunity to celebrate with you. Still, you want to be thoughtful about how you nuance your message.

# Examples

*Couch your good news in the reality of the moment.*



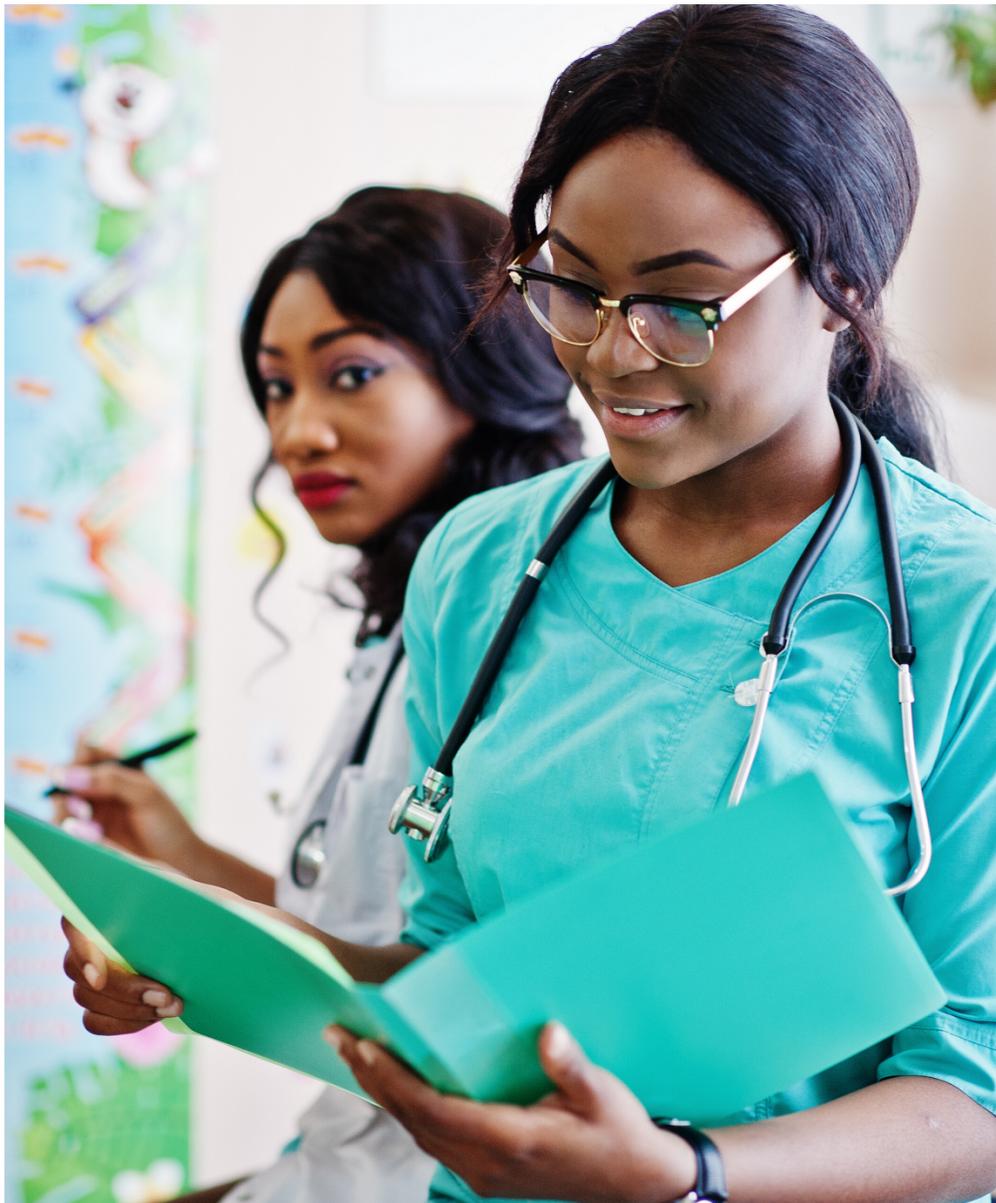
One of our job training students just started a new job coding software for a local company. He didn't expect to jump in remotely, but we're celebrating his family having more job stability right now!

*Acknowledge the tension head-on.*



I know hearts are heavy throughout the country right now and it may feel strange to celebrate, but your campaign gifts allowed us to close on our new building this week. We're celebrating social-distance style, and we invite you to join us!

# *#5 Highlight Heroes*



Mister Rogers famously suggested that in times of emergency, children should look to see where the helpers are. Adults are the same. Even in the midst of terrible events, countless people jump forward to help.

Highlight these people. Tell people about the contributions of your partners, neighbors, staff, or organization in the midst of, or in spite of, the crisis. In doing so, you're demonstrating that there's hope.

# *#6 Equip Your Audience to Help*

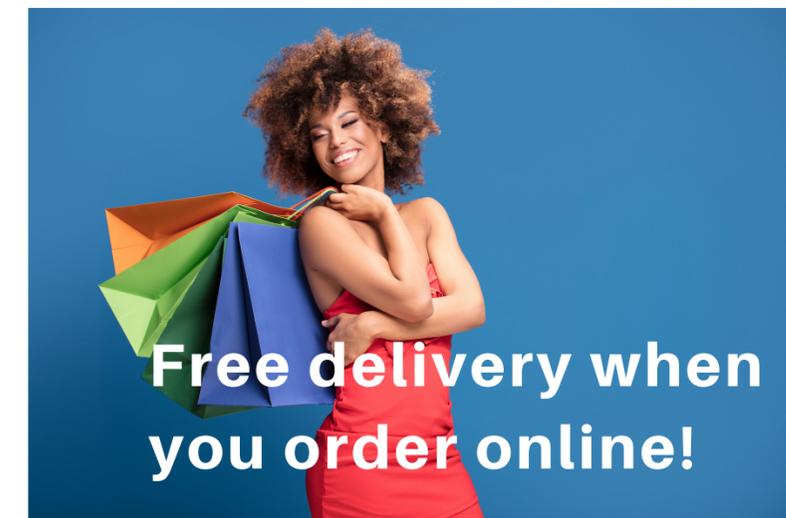
Give your community a **sense of hope** by telling them how they can help you! People are looking for tangible ways they can **support those in crisis**. If your organization offers direct service, consider ways your audience can help.

Sending notes to seniors staying in place. Buying grocery gift cards for families losing work. Offering virtual reading tutoring to kids out of school.

When a crisis strikes, people often feel frozen and confused. As you tell them how you're moving, it can **deactivate the paralysis**. You can also invite them to support your organization in clear, relevant ways.

# #7 Consider Offers Carefully

Our inboxes and social media feeds are swarmed with offers right now.



Your organization may also have offers: books, t-shirts, coffee mugs, resources, jewelry, and more. Be thoughtful in both the timing and messaging of any offers you may decide to promote. You don't want to be seen trying to capitalize on a crisis. Consider what you have that could be genuinely helpful to your audience right now. Then, craft an invitation that's sensitive to the moment and puts your followers' needs above your organization's.

# #8 *Mix-Up Your Mediums*



How do you typically communicate with your major stakeholders? Many of us are used to email for connecting with our biggest champions. These individuals care deeply about your work and chances are, you've been cultivating significant connections with them for months, or even years.

Crises are opportunities to turn the tables: take some time to extend care to them. In doing so, feel free to branch out from your typical channels. Send a quick text to 10 key partners letting them know you're thinking of them. Send a personal email to donors offering a quick conversation. Drop a note in the mail.

Times of uncertainty can make people feel alone. Your communications can mean a great deal to those who've invested in you over the years.

# #9 Watch the Data

We're living in uncharted waters and there's no cookie-cutter communication plan that you can move to execute immediately. Instead, stay hyper-focused on your data to track what's resonating with your people.

Now's the time to embrace flexibility and attentiveness. Use your usual metrics to guide your content. Do more of what's working, and reduce what seems to miss the mark. Your audience's behavior may change in ways you didn't expect as we all navigate this changing season.



# *#10 Focus on Authentic, Honest Connections*

One of the most beautiful aspects of digital communications right now is how it is **keeping us connected** in the midst of social distancing. Show us as your authentic self and organization.

Avoid the temptation to make things seem better or worse than they are. Even as you focus on hope, ways to help, and relationships, don't lose sight of reality.

It's okay to admit when an emergency is affecting your organization. Invite people to share what's hard for them when appropriate.

**These moments of honesty will build up your organizational credibility for the long haul.**

# Ruby Brick

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## digital communication

Ruby Brick is a digital communications agency that collaborates with organizations to amplify your message and deepen digital relationships.

We specialize in:

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