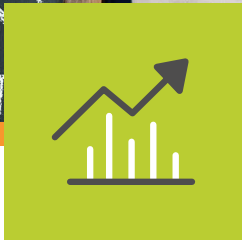


OPENING UP NEW JERSEY

Your business can win with the right marketing strategy



OPENING UP NEW JERSEY:

Your business can win with the right marketing strategy

Coming out of coronavirus isolation will be a gradual experience. Even as the Governor gives the ok for businesses to reopen, that doesn't mean they will in the traditional sense or that consumers will be willing to risk getting out with the same enthusiasm they displayed pre-pandemic. So, when will normal activities that occurred pre COVID-19 resume? A study conducted by [Advance Insights](#) shows New Jerseyans will return to beloved activities, but at a lesser rate than pre-pandemic. (Advance Insights, April 2020)

	 Dine in Crowded Restaurant/Bar <i>1+ Times/Week</i>	 Attend Concert/Sporting Event <i>1+ Times/Month</i>	 Travel Domestically on a Plane <i>3-4 Times/Year</i>
PRE-CRISIS	36%	18%	19%
POST-CRISIS	22%	12%	12%

Similarly, data collected by MediaPost that compares today's sentiments to post-9/11 and the recent Great Recession indicates we are likely to see a slow and gradual increase to normal activities. (Last, April 2020). In fact, among New Jerseyans with intent to purchase, the return to normal purchasing behavior will also be gradual based on the Advance Insights study.

NEW JERSEY INTENT TO PURCHASE*

	After Social Distancing is Lifted	After My Income Returns to Normal	Will Defer Spending as Long as I Can
> CLOTHING	29%	22%	22%
> APPLIANCES	14%	17%	46%
> TECHNOLOGY	18%	22%	44%



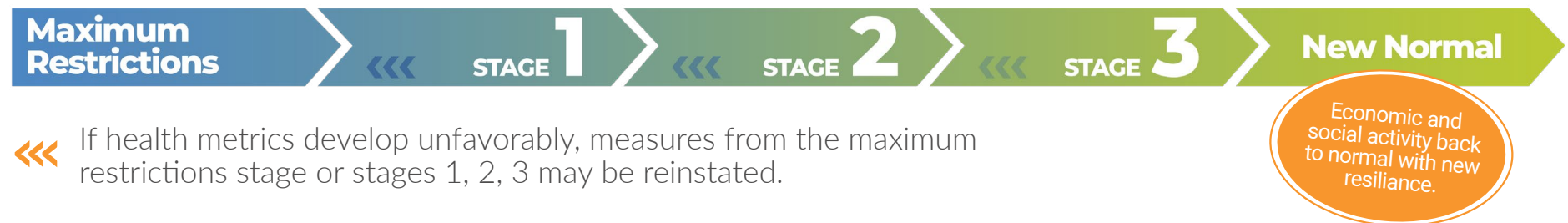
*Results are directional based on a sample of 151-263 depending upon the item. Data collected April 8 – 15, 2020

OPENING UP NEW JERSEY:

Your business can win with the right marketing strategy

The New Jersey Governor's office has outlined a multi-stage plan for reopening businesses, *The Road Back: Restoring Economic Health through Public Health* (State of NJ May 2020).

These steps will help state and local officials when reopening their economies, getting people back to work, and continuing to protect lives.



The following pages will provide an overview of New Jersey's phased plan and what businesses can do to stay connected to their client base throughout each stage as specified criteria are met. While the community, as a whole, moves through these stages, individual businesses or industries may be affected differently within each stage.



STAGE 0: Maximum Restrictions

MOSTLY STAYING AT HOME. ACTIVITY LIMITED TO CRUCIAL ACTIVITIES

Stay in Touch with Customers

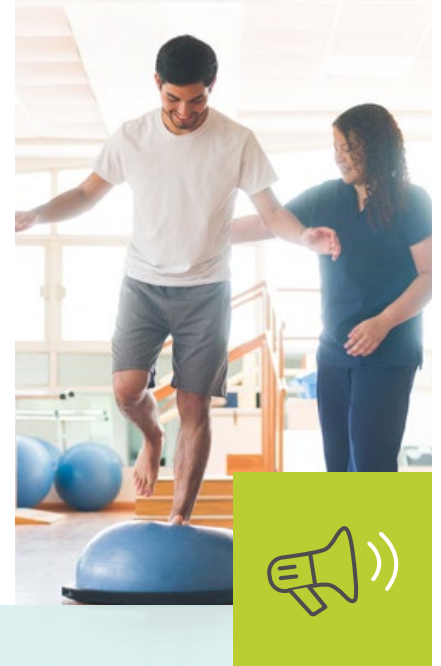
Since late March, New Jersey has observed maximum restrictions by adhering to strict stay-at-home orders with movement limited to crucial activities, such as grocery shopping. All businesses deemed “non-essential” by State government were forced to shut down. During this stage, NJ Advance Media advises that businesses should not stop marketing, but shift focus on re-engaging their customers with appropriate messaging. While some firms are announcing permanent closures, many have just paused or significantly reduced operations to delivery, e-commerce only or curbside services. Even in shut-down mode, businesses that stay engaged with customers will be the first to see them return to the business when the economy restart begins.

Don't Go Dark

Former Proctor and Gamble CMO and podcast host Jim Stengel advises businesses how to stay strong through a crisis:

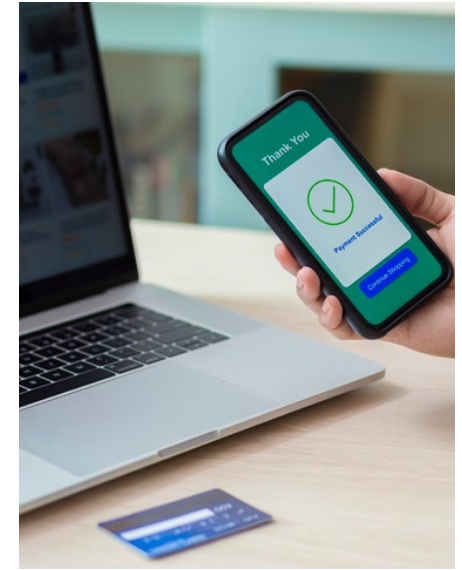
“To the extent you can within your business situation, it is time to keep the money going, obviously with a different voice. Pivot and adjust to be relevant now as behavior has really really shifted quickly.” (O’Reilly, 2020)

Cost effective marketing tactics to take advantage of right now are social media, email and content marketing. Tell stories about how your business is helping people in need, supporting local charities or going above and beyond to support your employees. Use blog posts coupled with organic and paid social media to reach your customers and increase your base. In an environment of always on COVID-19 news, the appetite for good news and positivity is huge – even from brands and businesses.



Plan and Prepare for What's Next

Business in the months after shutdown will look different. And customers will want assurances about your business environment. Even when your physical location opens up again, they may still want curbside pick-up options and online virtual tools that will help them minimize browsing time in-store. Stage 0 is a time to plan and build out these new services. It's never too late to investigate adding an e-commerce checkout system to minimize barriers to purchase for more vulnerable customer segments. Ask about options available from your point-of-sale (POS) vendor or easy-start services like Shopify.



As we discuss how to market through the reopening of the economy, it's important to remember that **some companies may remain in Stage 0 longer than other businesses, and there is potential for some businesses, and the community, to return to Stage 0 if there is a rebound in new cases.** State guidelines may be fluid and not specifically address every type of business and industry as state officials determine [what firms can open and at what stages.](#)

Whether you're a healthcare practice, a clothing store, a restaurant or a salon, you'll need to pay close, ongoing attention to what's permitted by state, county and municipality going forward.



STAGE 1: RESTRICTIONS RELAXED ON LOW-RISK ACTIVITIES IF APPROPRIATELY SAFEGUARDED

- Continue to TELEWORK whenever possible and feasible with business operations. Work that can be done at home should continue to be done at home.
- For businesses approved to open, RETURN TO WORK IN PHASES.
- Close COMMON AREAS where personnel and customers are likely to congregate and interact or enforce strict social distancing protocols.
- Minimize NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.
- Personnel who are members of a VULNERABLE POPULATION should stay home.
- All residents and businesses should follow state and federal safeguarding guidelines.



STAGE 1: PHASED-IN ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS* TO MEET CONSUMER NEEDS



HEALTHCARE - ELECTIVE SURGERIES

Can resume, as clinically appropriate, on an outpatient basis at facilities that adhere to CMS guidelines.



CLOSED

SCHOOLS & CAMPS

Closed

CHILDCARE

May open with capacity restrictions.



SENIOR LIVING FACILITIES & HOSPITALS

Visitors should be prohibited. Those who do interact with residents and patients must adhere to strict protocols regarding hygiene.



CLOSED

PERSONAL CARE & WELLNESS

Gyms, hair/nail/tanning salons, spas, tattoo parlors should remained closed



LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Beach, parks, golf, private tennis clubs, batting cages, horseback riding can operate with strict physical distancing protocols.



CLOSED

ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS

Performing arts & indoor movie theaters, sports venues, casinos, nightclubs, amusement parks - should remain closed.



RESTAURANTS & BARS

Drive throughs, delivery & takeout only.



ESSENTIAL RETAIL

can operate under required mitigation protocols.



NON-ESSENTIAL RETAIL

can operate with online or phone orders and curbside pick up only.

*Subject to change based on what the New Jersey State Government learns locally and globally.

STAGE 1: HOW YOUR MARKETING SHOULD SHIFT

As restrictions start to ease, you should ramp up your marketing as well. Don't default back to pre-pandemic messaging. Strategize with your marketing experts to understand what your customers need right now and what will motivate and engage them now. Digital display and content marketing distributed through social media will keep your brand in front of consumers.

- Are your doors open to the public at this phase? Let them know on social, your website, digital display and email. Update your business listing pages to show new open hours. Add a free listing to [NJ is Open](#).
- Showcase what you are doing differently to keep customers safe – curbside, e-commerce, cleaning policies and limitations on store capacity. Will you have shopping times reserved for at-risk segments?
- Make the buying experience as virtual as possible with short videos and product demos on social and your website.
- Earning the trust of your customers will be the most important factor to getting them back to your restaurant, medical practice, church or gym.
- Keep marketing messaging more about your brand than aggressive calls-to-action.
- Offer discounts and special financing offers for those who were significantly financially impacted by the pandemic. This can stimulate increased sales while helping out those in need.



STAGE 2: ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PERMITTED THAT CAN BE EASILY SAFEGUARDED

- Additional physical locations may open only if they adhere to safeguarding and modification guidelines.
- Work that can be done at home should continue to be done at home.

STAGE 2: PHASED-IN ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS* TO MEET CONSUMER NEEDS



HEALTHCARE - ELECTIVE PROCEDURES

Medical & Dental
Some in-person clinical labs



SCHOOLS CLOSED

K-12 & Higher Ed engaged in distance learning.

DAY CAMPS & CHILDCARE

May open with heightened health/safety protocols. Overnight camps remain closed.



LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Museums and libraries may be able to operate under moderate physical distancing protocols with limited capacity.



PERSONAL CARE & WELLNESS

Limited personal care.

Limited gym/fitness.



ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS

Remain closed. Drive-in movie theaters may operate.



RESTAURANTS & BARS

Outdoor dining. Bars continue takeout & delivery.



NON-ESSENTIAL RETAIL

Limited in-person retail.



SENIOR LIVING FACILITIES & HOSPITALS

Visitors prohibited. Those who do interact with residents and patients must adhere to strict protocols regarding hygiene.

*As of June 15, 2020. Subject to change based on what the New Jersey State Government learns locally and globally.

STAGE 2: HOW YOUR MARKETING SHOULD SHIFT

As time passes and COVID-19 doesn't rebound, consumers will regain confidence and venture out more than before. Customer safety will still be a concern and a priority. Therefore, stage 2 recommendations continue to focus ensuring safety, while providing incentives to shop.



Leverage email and social media to distribute your blogs, videos, product demos and expert advice while continuing brand awareness tactics.

Make it a priority to reinforce what you are doing to keep your space clean and safe for those who enter. If you were closed under Stage 1, prioritize “reopening” messages. Some consumers have pent-up demand and will be ready to shop and spend again on non-essential products, so don't hold back on marketing.

Stronger calls-to-action should be tested. Sales and discounts will be needed to pull in buyers on the fence about whether to start spending again on non-essentials. Continue to offer special programs, sweepstakes promotions, financing and discounts to furloughed and displaced workers. Stay plugged in and partnered with local charities. Customers will gravitate to businesses that are helping their communities get back on their feet.



STAGE 3: MOST ACTIVITIES ALLOWED WITH SIGNIFICANT SAFEGUARDED

- Critical in-office work.
- Work that can be done at home should continue to be done at home.

STAGE 3: PHASED-IN ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS* TO MEET CONSUMER NEEDS



RESTAURANTS

Expanded dining.



BARS

Can operate with limited capacity.



PERSONAL CARE

Expanded personal care.
Expanded gyms/fitness with capacity restrictions



ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Limited entertainment with safeguards.



SCHOOLS

K-12 & Higher Ed potential to operate in person with reduced capacity.



DAY CAMPS & CHILDCARE

Open for all with safeguards and modifications.



VISITING SENIOR LIVING FACILITIES & HOSPITALS

Should be prohibited. Those who do interact with residents and patients must adhere to strict protocols regarding hygiene.

*Subject to change based on what the New Jersey State Government learns locally and globally.

STAGE 3: HOW YOUR MARKETING SHOULD SHIFT

Staying Safe – Show the public you’re still focused on keeping them safe with the appropriate sanitation and physical distancing protocols. If your industry was at a complete halt due to COVID-19, you should implement the plan you made during Stage Zero.

Back to New Normal? – The economy may never return to a pre-corona virus normal. Firms have to stay close to their customers monitoring what they want and how they prefer to shop. Marketing must do more than advertise sales and push products. Messaging should also address the day-to-day realities of your customers’ lives. Solution-based messages such as “We’ll be here when you are ready” will resonate emotionally and strengthen brand affinity (MDRG, May 2020). Through social media, blogs, email and sponsored content, offer product demonstrations, how-to videos, and interactive content. Inviting and sharing customer generated content is a part of that too. Customers will gravitate to businesses that create community around their brands and listen to their clients.

Help Your Community – If your business has an appropriate service or product, you could offer buy one/give one special offers and partner with community organizations to help families in need. This promotion could work for restaurants, clothing/general merchandise stores, or even services. For inspiration from a wide range of New Jersey businesses, explore NJ.com’s [#TogetherNJ](#).



The Road Ahead

The global pandemic has changed our economy and consumer behavior in ways that we won't discover for some time. We know the recovery won't be sudden and will be faster in some areas than others even within our state. To be successful, your marketing strategy has to be adjusted based on a number of factors – but the most important will be consumer sentiment.

Consumers are hesitant but have a cautious optimism about returning to normalcy (MDRG, May 2020). Consumers will slowly return to traditional modes of commerce like visiting brick-and-mortar locations, but they may also continue to expect safeguards and conveniences as online ordering and curbside pickup.

As the economy moves forward, consider too, whether the crisis-mode innovations you developed to be more nimble and efficient, protect your workers, or serve your clients can or should become a hallmark or competitive advantage of your long-term operations.



NJ Advance Media can help you navigate what to do now.

Our team of marketing experts will collaborate with you to find the right plan for your business throughout each stage of the road back and beyond. We thrive on partnership and take a consultative approach to understanding your needs and finding the right solutions, the right audience and the right messaging to help your business grow.



[CONNECT WITH US: MARKETING@NJADVANCEMEDIA.COM](mailto:MARKETING@NJADVANCEMEDIA.COM)

WORKS CITED

Last, J. (2020, April 15). A Path Forward for Sports, Travel and Leisure Industries. Retrieved from Media Post: <https://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/350086/a-path-forward-for-sports-travel-leisure-industr.html>

State of New Jersey. (2020, May 19) COVID-19 Information Hub.

<https://faq.business.nj.gov/en/articles/3820777-does-my-business-need-to-be-closed>

<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/general-public/how-does-new-jersey-plan-to-lift-restrictions-what-does-a-responsible-and-strategic-restart-of-new-jerseys-economy-look-like>

Advance Insights. (2020, April 8 - 15). Purchase Plans, Behavior & Trust study. Respondents: 324 New Jersey adults.

MDRG. (2020, May 6). Tracking Consumer Behavior Amid COVID-19, Week 8 May 6 - 12, 2020. MDRG Inc. [https://](https://mcusercontent.com/09c322fa6f0a759abe31a3613/files/ebdb0579-7d99-40b8-af5e-5a13af75fd99/Covid_19_Consumer_Behavior_Tracker_Report_Wave_8.pdf)

mcusercontent.com/09c322fa6f0a759abe31a3613/files/ebdb0579-7d99-40b8-af5e-5a13af75fd99/Covid_19_Consumer_Behavior_Tracker_Report_Wave_8.pdf

MDRG. (2020, May). How to Resonate Better with Consumers During COVID-19: <https://www.mdrginc.com/sub-text/resonate-with-consumers-covid-19/>

O'Reilly, L. (2020, April 22). 'It is time to keep money going': Former P&G CMO Jim Stengel on marketing through a crisis.

Retrieved from Digiday: <https://digiday.com/marketing/it-is-time-to-keep-money-going-former-pg-cmo-jim-stengel-on-marketing-through-a-crisis/>

