

Putting People Before Profits

Making the Best of a Bad Situation



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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19! It has changed the way the world works. Hopefully only for now, most people in office jobs are working from home. Some businesses have gone through layoffs or furloughs, while some have temporarily closed their doors and others are facing even tougher times. With the economic concerns set aside, there is an even more painful reality that many are having to deal with, and that is the sickness or death of loved ones.

With the death toll from this crisis rising every day in countries around the world, the US is not alone in dealing with the death and tragedy of this infliction. Every one of us is affected in more ways than one. Considering that economic struggles usually subside, the pain of moving forward without a loved one is heart wrenching and life-altering.

In a country currently politically charged with disagreements on almost every topic, there is one we can all agree on: There are too many concerns to list of the effects this single virus is causing throughout the world. So let's clarify exactly what we are dealing with and why it's important to care.

Since there are too many concerns to list of the effects this single virus is causing, let's clarify what we are dealing with and why it's important to care.



WHAT AND WHY?

Is it really that important?



The unexpected pandemic

The coronavirus disease-2019 (hence, COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person usually through the tiny droplets expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, speaks or even just exhales. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), those tiny droplets are too heavy to hang in the air, so within six to ten feet they quickly drop to the floor or nearby surface. Once landed, that virus can persist from a few hours up to several days, depending on the surface and the environmental conditions.

Its danger lies in that it infects healthy cells by attaching to them and passing its bad DNA into those cells and corrupting the cell's healthy DNA. The now-corrupt DNA then replicates uncontrollably inside the cell until the cell basically explodes releasing all the corrupt replicated DNA back into the person's system to reattach to other healthy cells and begin the process again. And so the cycle multiplies usually causing mild cold- or flu-like symptoms in young healthy people, but can potentially cause death in older people and those with respiratory issues, such as asthma. They are at the highest risk.

One calming thing to know is that this virus does not actively "seek out" its next victim. It can't penetrate the skin, nor does it try; so it simply sits there waiting to be transported inside a living "host" organism where it thrives by attaching to healthy cells and wreaking its havoc. Even though it doesn't actively seek out a host by penetrating the skin, it's easily passed from one person to another just from breathing the same infected air. Therein lies the main reason for social distancing and why we should care about this virus.

And that is what is wreaking havoc on our society. As said above, it's causing some businesses to close, employees to work from home and in some cases, all this because of government mandates. Reports of when the U.S. is expected to peak keep changing; it was to peak around Easter and then start to decline, but today reports extended that to the end of April. That translates to at least another month of the new normal, which can completely ruin some companies. This is where the direct selling industry jumps into the picture.

DIRECT SELLING TO THE RESCUE

You have what they want; so be a source of healing.



The economy-proof system

Direct selling companies can help consumers get products they want and need without having to visit a retail store. Especially in situations like this, companies selling health and wellness products can be a boon to the health of the population.

Think of it like this: health and wellness direct selling companies are not just selling their products to those who want them; in this case, they are helping to keep the economy going as well as helping to keep the population healthy. Keeping their own business healthy is almost secondary at this point. Without a good economy and a healthy population, businesses of all kinds will fail, not just the health and wellness ones.

In an [Inc.com](#) article that came out on March 31, billionaire Mark Cuban and owner of the Dallas Mavericks basketball team, stressed that we should carefully consider the business risk of putting profits over people.¹ The business decisions we make now will directly affect the safety and potential health of not just employees, but also entire communities, and hence, more. Simply, by putting profits first, only the company might win. But by putting people first, everyone has the potential of winning.

And here's one way how that can work: Cuban said, "How companies respond to [this situation] is going to define their brand for decades." Developing a reputation as the company that prioritizes taking care of people over stakeholder demands will catapult that brand to be a brand of choice for a long time to come.

An old adage states that if you're not moving ahead, you're falling behind. So what can you do to keep your company moving in the right direction so when this situation clears up, your employees' and your company's health are all still intact?

The first thing you should do is make sure all your employees and their families are safe and taken care of. And I'm including in that all those who bring in the money, i.e., your field reps or sellers, as your employees. Take care of them the same way you take care of those in the next office.

Even though you probably haven't met them all, they have families and concerns about this situation the same way those you huddle with around the water cooler do. They've been affected by this virus situation too.

¹ <https://www.inc.com/betsy-mikel/billionaire-mark-cuban-just-gave-businesses-a-valuable-lesson-in-crisis-leadership.html>

Take advantage of the opportunity

For some, their first instinct might be to figure out how to sell more product during this time of crisis. Don't fall for that tactic. Don't only consider ways to sell more products, like free shipping promotions or BOGOs and the like. Although those can be good and helpful for your business, consider unconventional ways you can help people, not just sell products. Here's a perfect example I witnessed just last week.

The entire DirectScale staff has been working from home for the past couple of weeks. As one way to keep morale up and help employees and their families to know they are valued, appreciated and important to the company, the PeopleOps team split up the employee list and drove to each employee's home to deliver specially made caramel apples. What a great gesture that was! It was very appreciated. But that's not even half the story.

You see, when ordering the apples, the stressed store owner told the DirectScale team that they had about 500 apples that were ready to be delivered, but the orders had been canceled because of social distancing restrictions. The PeopleOps team again kicked into gear and made several phone calls to other businesses they knew were open and helped to sell the entire lot of the apple company's 500 orphaned apples—in a couple of days! Talk about helping out another business, the community and the economy in one fell swoop. That DirectScale team nailed it.

And you can too. Think of ways you can serve other businesses and help other people right now. Your service doesn't have to save the world from this pandemic, but you can make this situation a little easier to endure for someone else. Here are some simple ways you might help:

1. Help keep a company in business by being a customer, even if you might not need everything you buy.
2. Relieve some pressure for other vendors by maybe helping to sell their products or giving them leads to prospects.
3. Donate your time to help a struggling company or family.
4. Collect and donate medical items that are in need at your local health facility or hospital. (See How and what you can donate.)
5. Encourage your employees to find someone to help on company time.
6. Splurge a little bit to help your own employees and field reps know you care not just about them, but also about their families, their communities and their businesses.

The possibilities are endless in a time like this. Be creative and don't put your own restrictions or boundaries. But please, be careful and wise about how you are able to help without crossing others' boundaries.



USE DIRECTSCALE AS THE TOOL IT'S MEANT TO BE

You already have everything you need—and more.

The essentials

If we're to look at our new reality realistically, you can't just let anything happen what happens to the business; you have to do what you can to make the best of this bad situation and hopefully keep the business on top.

Everyday work has morphed into these work-from-home and socially-distancing phenomenons we're all dealing with now. Everything has changed, so you must change the way you're running your business too. You have to think about things differently.

Approach them from a different angle. As a launching point to think differently, when you're calm and thinking rationally, ask yourself these questions, and then answer them honestly:

1. What does my sales force need that I have never provided them?
2. What is the one area I should focus on during this hard time to make everyone's jobs easier and more effective?
3. What can I cut out of my normal duties right now to make more time for things that are more important to my field reps?
4. What can the corporate office do as a whole to make work life easier for everyone else in the company?
5. Have I asked my sales force what they want and what would help them in their efforts?

If you're being honest with yourself, the answers might surprise you. And now might be the perfect time to put those answers into action.

Social, social, social

Doug Lane, a principal of Lane Research, a firm that tracks publicly traded direct selling companies, mentioned one tactic direct selling companies can use to stay afloat. "No company is immune," he said, "but those that are more reliant on social media to execute business and have a higher degree of subscription sales in their business models are going to be relatively better off."²

It's been shown that during times like this people turn to social media to get the personal interaction most people crave. Give them what they ask for and what they'll want to share on social media.

One major benefit to DirectScale users is that the platform has powerful social media functionality built into it. Sellers can post directly to social media from within the platform and are able to share in several different ways.

Your corporate team should be providing multiple resources sellers can post on their social accounts. Be it flyers, videos, banners or any other type of media, each serves its purpose to help sell your products. Right now, your corporate creative team should be going overboard at building and providing those resources your entire field base needs right now. They should be using some of that work-from-home time to build, build, build. Give them free rein on creativity because that is often when some of their best work appears. But read on before you turn them loose.

Ask your sellers what they want and need

Before you unleash your creative team to build what you think your field reps want, it's definitely a good idea to ask those who will use those resources for their prioritized wish list. Hand that list over to your creative team and then turn them loose to build them starting at the top. But again, allow them creative license on how to fulfill that wishlist. You might offer some thoughts, but remember, if you want their best, let them give you their best. Things can always be edited or modified before they're loaded into DirectScale.

Then take the time to train, train, train

All that said, make sure your field reps know how to use all the resources you provide. Post the resources you've created for your sellers to the Documents repository in Web Office Admin and help your sellers understand how to use them. The built-in training functionality is the perfect place to educate your entire sales force about how those resources can and should be used and also how they will benefit from using them.

This new way we're approaching work is also an excellent time to dig deeper than you have in the past to not only learn about, but also implement the power of DirectScale into your business. You have access to the most powerful direct selling platform available to help your business grow in situations like this, so now is the time you should start using it if you aren't already.

To illustrate my point, I write about DirectScale and its amazing functionality every day I work—and I have for several months now. And to be honest, I still don't know everything this powerful platform can do for each of our clients. Everytime I am tasked to write about another aspect of it, I am amazed at what DirectScale can do and the power it holds that I still have not learned about yet. So I can guarantee that there is still a deeper and richer experience you can be providing to everyone using this platform.

Challenge yourself and challenge them to use more power of it every day. It will only help make your business more resilient.

You are in control

Another way you can help your own business and your own people is to use DirectScale's built-in features to stay in contact with your people. Use the features to create that free shipping promotion and schedule those dashboard banners to automatically show to specific audiences or markets for specific products or promotions. Build those extra resources your sellers can use right now to help spread the word on social media.

You can also use those tools to reach out looking for other opportunities to help people. Don't think you have all the answers. So enlist the help of others to find the right match for your company. Offer to serve another business in your world. And although your business is important, the point here is to put people first, not your profits. Help people right now how they need it, and they will return the favor in a way that promotes your bottom line in the future. It's called long-term loyalty.

Putting people first is the type of business decision that can go a long way in building the type of brand every business wants. And the effects of a simple business decision to put people first now during this global pandemic could be a key factor that keeps your profits coming in for a long time to come. You see, people do remember how a company treats them and how it makes them feel in a time of need. It's the entire essence of an elevated and superior customer experience. And that's one sermon DirectScale has been preaching for a long time—in word and by example.



GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

It's time to pony up for the community



How and what you can donate

Some medical facilities and hospitals are in need of various things to care for infected patients. The following are a few of the many items your company could donate to your local health facility to help someone and provide protection. Think how you would want others to donate if your loved one was who they were caring for in that facility.

- Dry, disposable wipes, preferably on a roll
- Eye protection including face shields and safety goggles
- Gloves, non-latex, all sizes in original carton
- Gowns, including surgical and isolation
- Disposable head and shoe covers
- Homemade masks (adult and child sizes)
- Masks, face protection, paper ear loop or tie in original carton (adult and child sizes)
- Unopened bottles of household cleaning products
- Unopened bottles of hand sanitizer
- Unopened wipes, bleach, alcohol or hydrogen peroxide
- Procedural masks
- Surgical masks
- N95 masks
- Tyvek coveralls
- Thermometers

If you are in a position of being able to donate to make someone's life more bearable, it's best to call your local health facility and ask what specific items they are most in need of and donate those first. Whatever you can contribute will help someone, and you know your efforts will be greatly appreciated.

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– Mark Cuban

About DirectScale, Inc.

Based in Lindon, Utah, DirectScale has been setting the standard for social and direct sales industry software platforms since 2013. DirectScale's powerful SaaS platform boasts fully configurable management tools that are vital to not only running, but to efficiently tracking and growing a business.

With its focus on providing an intuitive and impactful customer experience to both corporate clients and independent sellers, DirectScale has revolutionized the way direct selling businesses can be launched and managed.

The platform is fully extensible using open APIs and therefore able to meet the needs of corporate users and independent sellers. DirectScale is committed to helping both organizations and their distributors plan for and drive growth. Its vast experience in the direct sales and software industries have proven time and again that the company truly understands how to help clients succeed. To learn more or request a demo, visit directscale.com.

