

Communicators - It's time to do our jobs

 By [Kevin Welman](#)

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Covid-19 is going to have widespread and lasting effects on businesses across the spectrum, and across the world. Fact. As businesses shrink, jobs and salaries will be cut, putting even more pressure on consumers who've already whittled their budgets. Fact. The global spending cycle will contract. Businesses will struggle. Fact.



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As communicators, our industry will be as hard hit as any. Many local agencies, perfectly robust and viable businesses under normal circumstances, now have a limited lifespan. Even larger independent and global agencies with well-established revenue streams will start looking at ways to spend their pennies more wisely. As the communications industry its our job to convince our clients that not spending money on communicating right now is pound foolish. Not to safeguard our businesses, but to safeguard theirs.

When the world begins to feel more normal, albeit a new normal, consumers will probably do three things, which Robert Grace, head of strategy at M&C Saatchi Abel, recently outlined for *Financial Mail*.

To paraphrase: First, they'll go out and buy everything they've felt deprived of during lockdown. Then, they'll assimilate change on a more internal level, trying to 'pick up the pieces' as it were. And then, they'll aim their reduced household budgets at realigned priorities. This is when companies who've continued to communicate will benefit: Trusted and well-known brands will provide a fallback to things that are familiar and safe.

I don't mean go and splash millions on a sales-driven campaign... I mean, provide thoughtful, informed content in meaningful ways. Be a reliable source of facts. Talk to consumers and employees about their hopes and fears. Offer solutions. Keep the rod in the water because if they pack up their fishing rod now, they'll only be wondering why they're not catching anything later.

So if we, communicators, do our jobs properly now, by the time we've figured out our new normal we'll be able to talk about how there are enough fish in the sea for everyone, and not about the one, or many, that got away.

ABOUT KEVIN WELMAN

Kevin is a co-founder and director of ByDesign Communications, with over twenty years' experience in corporate communication strategy, media strategy, social media strategy and crisis counselling...

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