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Digital Marketing for Small Businesses During COVID-19 and Beyond

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DIGITAL MARKETING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND

by

Emily Lenore Guyer

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science in Digital Marketing
at
Lindenwood University

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A Project Report Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Arts, Media, and Communication
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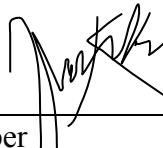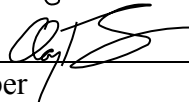
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Introduction

The directed project has two parts: the Prospectus for AMC 60000 Thesis/Directed Project I, and the website https://eguyer123.wixsite.com/directedproject2 for AMC 61000 Thesis/Directed Project II. The website takes this information and puts it into resources, namely infographics and videos. My goal is to help small businesses, whether they are established and transitioning from traditional to digital marketing, or brand new and are starting their marketing strategies from scratch. Throughout this project, they'll learn the importance of navigating social media marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization, and digital marketing through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Literature Review

Bauman, Antonina A. "How do Entrepreneurs use Social Media?" *Journal of Marketing*

    Development and Competitiveness, vol. 14, no. 2, 2020, pp. 40-48. *ProQuest*,

    https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/how-do-entrepreneurs-use-social-

    media/docview/2432563124/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 25 Jan. 2021.

    Social media for business growth is very important. It's an affordable way to spread

    information to others. However, many entrepreneurs struggle to efficiently use social

    media platforms. This academic journal looks into how small businesses are using social

    media.

Baye, Michael R. et al. "Search Engine Optimization: What Drives Organic Traffic to Retail

    Sites?" *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy*, vol. 25, no. 1, Spring 2016, pp.

    6–31. *EBSCOhost*, https://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=7&sid=708c3a79-

    ff6d-470b-b9e4-f54b9869dc92%40sdc-v-

sessmgr03&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBlPXNzbyZzaXRlPWVob3N0LWxpdmU%3d#.

Accessed 12 September 2020.

A strength of SEO is more consumer trust and brand awareness. Most users click on links on the first SERPs. They trust that websites in these top positions are authorities in the industry. Researchers studied "the organic clicks that 759 retail sites received from more than 12,000 search terms" to understand what drives organic clicks. Where websites rank on the results page is important for driving organic clicks, and a threat of SEO is how popular keywords are competitive and cost money to rank well (Baye et al).

Bekirogullari, Zafer, and Roslind X. Thambusamy. "Virtual Leadership in Small Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Possibilities." *The European Journal of Social & Behavioural Sciences*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2020, pp. 3214-3224. *ProQuest*, https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/virtual-leadership-small-businesses-during-covid/docview/2444524387/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 31 Jan. 2021. COVID-19 has brought new challenges to businesses of all sizes. People are being forced to work from home to prevent the virus from spreading, and businesses must now be managed virtually. This is challenging for those who are unfamiliar with technology and have fewer resources. Small businesses can no longer decide whether or not to go virtual, but on how to best optimize their virtual leadership.

Bolos, Cheristena, et al. "Conceptual Models on the Effectiveness of E-Marketing Strategies in Engaging Consumers." *Journal of International Technology and Information Management,* vol. 25, no. 4, 2016. *Gale OneFile,* https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A500072718/CDB?u=sain20269&sid=CDB&xid=47a44e53. Accessed 9 Feb. 2020.

Effective marketing is important for business success, and e-marketing has advantages over brick-and-mortar stores. Branding must be consistent among various platforms. This article covers 1) how to attract customers with the 4 P's of marketing, websites, search engine optimization, email marketing, and customer reviews, and 2) how to measure the effectiveness of marketing strategies with data mining, keyword research, and Google Analytics.

Bozdag, Engin, and Jeroen van den Hoven. "Breaking the Filter Bubble: Democracy and Design." *Ethics and Information Technology,* vol. 17, no. 4, 2015, pp. 249-265. *ProQuest,* https://search.proquest.com/businesspremium/docview/1759088950/3D5D902384342F3PQ/1?accountid=12104. Accessed 19 Apr. 2020.

Filter bubbles are an algorithm used search engines and social media platforms to decrease information density. This can prevent users from seeing contrasting viewpoints, even for moral or political issues. Users, unaware of different opinions, are unable to make a reasonable decision and can only focus on a certain group of beliefs. Microsoft's search engine Bing conducted a study to look at how Republicans and Democrats find information.

Chaney, Paul et al. "What are Consumers Saying about Your Business? A Primer on Monitoring Tools." *Journal of Marketing Perspectives*, vol. 1, 2016, pp. 70-84. *ProQuest*, https://search.proquest.com/docview/1872111001?accountid=12104. Accessed 20 Sept. 2020.

This article focuses on customer reviews and provides suggestions as to how businesses can respond. It mentions the platforms Hootsuite, Yelp, and Google My Business. Tips to

respond to reviews include: respond promptly, be polite, request the review website

remove defamatory reviews, understand how review websites work, take negative

reviews seriously, and encourage customer reviews. A strength of SEO is local SEO

tools, such as Google My Business, that improve localized traffic.

Cho, Soyoen, and Jisu Huh. "Content Analysis of Corporate Blogs as a Relationship

Management Tool." *Corporate Communications*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2010, pp. 30-48.

ProQuest, https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/content-analysis-corporate-

blogs-as-relationship/docview/214181719/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 12 Feb.

2021.

Small businesses can use blogs for marketing and search engine optimization. This

effective communication tool allows small businesses to share information about their

products, services, and company, and to build a relationship with their audience.

Researchers looked at different companies and their blogs to find their key

characteristics.

Clay, Bruce. "Search Engine Optimization All-in-One For Dummies." 3rd ed., *For Dummies,*

2015. *Safari by O'Reilly,* https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/search-engine-

optimization/9781118921753/. Accessed 9 Feb. 2020.

This book on SEO covers how search engines work, keyword strategy, competitive

positioning, SEO web design, creating content, linking, and analyzing results. Everyone

looks at the first listing on the first page, so this is the spot companies want. More topics

are how people use search engines, internet cookies, and leave positive and negative

customer reviews.

Consoli, Domenico. "The Use of Social Media and E-Commerce: A Winning Strategy for Small

   Businesses." *North Economic Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2017, pp. 109-119. *ProQuest*,

   https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/use-social-media-e-commerce-winning-

   strategy/docview/2127355515/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 12 Feb. 2021.

   Small businesses should utilize social media and e-commerce platforms to promote their

   products and services. By utilizing blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and

   more, small businesses will be able to better understand and communicate with their

   customers. 48 companies were studied on the use of their social media accounts and

   ecommerce platforms.

Enge, Eric et al. "The Art of SEO: Mastering Search Engine Optimization." 3rd ed., *O'Reilly*

   Media, Inc., 2015. *Safari by O'Reilly,* https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/the-art-

   of/9781491903629/. Accessed 9 Feb. 2020.

   This book on search engine optimization covers search engine basics, customizing and

   implementing an SEO strategy, conducting keyword research, developing a website that

   is SEO friendly, and tracking results. It also talks about relating to content marketing and

   social media marketing, and being optimized for mobile, local search, and blog search.

   To gain a wider audience, publishers can share links to blog posts on social media.

Evans, Michael P. "Analysing Google Rankings through Search Engine Optimization

   Data." *Internet Research*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2007, pp. 21. *ProQuest*,

   https://search.proquest.com/docview/219872407?accountid=12104. Accessed 20 Sept.

   2020.

   A study was conducted to see which techniques are used to rank well on the SERPs. To

   do so, 50 web pages were created for an SEO competition, and all of them were highly

optimized. The results showed that an opportunity of SEO is having more quality content over quantity.

Fogel, Joshua, and Samson Zachariah. "Intentions to use the Yelp Review Website and Purchase Behavior After Reading Reviews." *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research,* vol. 12, no. 1, 2017, pp. 53-67. *ProQuest,* https://search.proquest.com/businesspremium/docview/1866020689/fulltext/3885501608 594595PQ/2?accountid=12104. Accessed 11 Apr. 2020.

Researchers conducted a study to look at the level of trust associated with using Yelp and the products and services reviewed. The results showed that increased brand trust and number of reviews were associated with increased use of the product or service. Companies managers should claim their page on Yelp so they can reply to negative reviews as a way to build trust.

Ge, Suqin, and Yu Zhou. "Social Distancing, Labor Market Outcomes, and Job Characteristics in the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Frontiers of Economics in China*, vol. 15, no. 4, 2020, pp. 478-520. *ProQuest*, https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/social-distancing-labor-market-outcomes-job/docview/2480006785/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 25 Jan. 2021.

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on January 21, 2020, "and all states had positive cases by mid-March." Business closures meant that only essential businesses were allowed to be open. This study looks at the labor market in regards to social distancing policies during the pandemic. The results listed the job titles that can easily work from home and amount of time that people work from home.

Giunta, Catherine. "Digital Marketing Platform Tools, Generation Z, and Cultural

    Considerations." *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, vol. 14, no. 2,

    2020, pp. 63-75. *ProQuest*, https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/digital-

    marketing-platform-tools-generation-z/docview/2432563305/se-2?accountid=12104.

    Accessed 28 Jan. 2021.

    It's important to know how to market to people of all generations, including the digital

    natives of Gen Z. This academic journal shares what makes Gen Z different. They want

    brands to align with greater social needs and donate and volunteer towards these causes,

    and to do the right thing not just because it'll make the brand look good. Questionnaires

    were sent out to students in business courses and 165 students participated in this

    quantitative study.

Glatz, Mathias et al. "Finding Reliable Information on the Web Should and Can Still Be

    Improved." *CIT Journal of Computing and Information Technology*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2018,

    p. 1+. *Gale OneFile*,

    https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A550301336/CDB?u=sain20269&sid=CDB&xid=ca1448f

    d. Accessed 12 Sept. 2020.

    Finding reliable information has improved with the use of Google's Knowledge Graph

    Card. This is a threat of SEO as it shows results immediately. It gathers knowledge about

    a topic from different sources, like Wikipedia, and puts them into one place on the first

    SERP. For alternative information, it has a section called 'People also search for.'

Knowles, Jonathan, et al. "Growth Opportunities for Brands during the COVID-19 Crisis." *MIT

    Sloan Management Review*, vol. 61, no. 4, 2020, pp. 1-5. *ProQuest*,

https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/growth-opportunities-brands-during-covid-19/docview/2414423835/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 28 Jan. 2021.

COVID-19 has impacted brands and consumers in a massive way. Consumers were forced to change their purchasing behavior due to shifts in demand. Small businesses have a new opportunity to compete against well established brands. A national survey was sent out mid-March 2020. The results showed how many respondents made purchases from brands new to them and why. The academic journal ends by saying how small brands should respond.

Lewnes, Ann, and Kevin L. Keller. "10 Principles of Modern Marketing." *MIT Sloan Management Review*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2019, pp. 1-10. *ProQuest*, https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/10-principles-modern-marketing/docview/2227405609/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 31 Jan. 2021.

Marketers must adopt best practices and refine their classic approach to be successful in digital marketing. Technology has given companies new ways to connect with customers and provide them with new experiences, and gather data on the impact of their marketing strategy.

Lovato, Silvia B., and Anne Marie Piper. "Young Children and Voice Search: What We Know From Human-Computer Interaction Research." *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2019. *Gale OneFile*, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A570624653/PPCM?u=sain20269&sid=PPCM&xid=a1246f2a. Accessed 20 Sept. 2020.

An opportunity of SEO is voice search, which is commonly integrated into the features of "traditional computers, connected home speakers, and mobile devices." People can ask a

question via voice search instead of manually opening up a search engine and typing the

question in the search bar. Children are growing up with voice search, and touch screens

use intuitive gestures like pointing and swiping to operate (Lovato and Piper).

Luh, Cheng-Jye, Sheng-An Yang, and Ting-Li D. Huang. "Estimating Google's Search Engine

Ranking Function from a Search Engine Optimization Perspective." *Online Information*

Review, vol. 40, no. 2, 2016, pp. 239-255. *ProQuest*,

https://search.proquest.com/docview/1776786007?accountid=12104. Accessed 20 Sept.

2020.

A weakness of SEO is that Google constantly updates their algorithm, so companies need

to be on the lookout for updates. Of the 200+ factors Google uses in its ranking

algorithm, most are kept a secret. It's difficult for companies to figure "out the extent of

change or what factors were weighted differently after a major Google algorithm update"

(Luh et al).

Moreno, Lourdes, and Paloma Martinez. "Overlapping Factors in Search Engine Optimization

and Web Accessibility." *Online Information Review*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2013, pp. 564.

ProQuest, https://search.proquest.com/docview/1425398162?accountid=12104. Accessed

20 Sept. 2020.

This academic journal gives a detailed background of SEO and web accessibility, or how

people access the web. There is the digital divide, in which certain groups of people don't

have equal access to technology. Lastly, it lists guidelines for web professionals. An

opportunity of SEO is that emphasis should be placed on quality content over quantity.

It's better to have quality pieces of content and keep them updated over time.

Omolloh, Appolloh H., and Teresa Lao. "A Case Study on Social Media as an Effective

      Management Tool." *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2020,

      pp. 9-40. *ProQuest*, https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/case-study-on-social-

      media-as-effective/docview/2454441779/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 25 Jan. 2021.

      Many small business owners are not proficient in using social media platforms to

      promote their business. In a study, 23 marketing leaders were asked about the effective

      use of social media as a management tool. They had "increased awareness about their

      business, valuable customer feedback, new customers, and customer retention," and

      experienced negative responses, a lack of control, and difficulty in targeting their

      audience correctly. These negatives are growing pains of running a small business, and

      social media for businesses is here to stay (Omolloh and Lao).

Ritz, Wendy, Marco Wolf, and Shaun McQuitty. "Digital Marketing Adoption and Success for

      Small Businesses: An International Journal." *Journal of Research in Interactive

      Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2019, pp. 179-203. *ProQuest*,

      https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/digital-marketing-adoption-success-

      small/docview/2235665001/se-2?accountid=12104. Accessed 25 Jan. 2021.

      This academic journal lists the differences between how large businesses and small

      business use digital marketing practices. Large businesses can outsource their SEO

      projects and social media marketing campaigns, but small business owners develop and

      evolve social media marketing on their own. Many small businesses do not have a

      website, and this is largely due to the company budget. Small businesses would benefit

      from developing digital marketing strategies.

Schwalbe, Carol B. "Leveraging the Digital Media Habits of the Millennials: Strategies for

Teaching Journalism Courses." *Southwestern Mass Communication Journal,* vol. 25, no.

1, Sept. 2009, pp. 53–68. *EBSCOhost,*

search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=ufh&AN=48655657&

site=ehost-live. Accessed 28 Jan. 2021.

Millennials are digital natives because they grew up with digital tools, such as computers,

cell phones, e-mail, blogs, social media platforms, and the Internet. To identify their

digital media habits, 1,656 students at a university were surveyed in 2007. They use their

devices to connect with one another, be entertained, and gain knowledge. These tools

allow them to easily access news and information when they want it. Millennials consider

this social connectedness important to their everyday lives.

Sinclair, John. "Advertising and Media in the Age of the Algorithm." *International journal of

communication [Online]*, 2016, p. 3522+. *Gale OneFile*,

https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A491909933/PPCM?u=sain20269&sid=PPCM&xid=e07b

d71b. Accessed 20 Sept. 2020.

A weakness of SEO is that Google constantly updates their algorithm, so companies need

to be on the lookout for updates. Our technology has come a long way. Now, complex

algorithms can transform data in milliseconds "into predictive targeting and bid pricing"

(Sinclair).

Valentin, E. K. "SWOT Analysis from a Resource-Based View." *Journal of Marketing Theory

and Practice*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2001, pp. 54-69. *ProQuest*,

https://search.proquest.com/docview/212164985?accountid=12104. Accessed 20 Sept.

2020.

This academic journal provides an extensive overview of a SWOT analysis, an acronym

which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A SWOT analysis is a

business strategy that identifies and assesses these four aspects of a business.

Vel, K. P., et al. "Data, Technology & Social Media: Their Invasive Role in Contemporary

Marketing." *REMark,* vol. 14, no. 4, 2015, pp. 421. *ProQuest,*

https://search.proquest.com/businesspremium/docview/1769636782/F8180E083AD64B3

8PQ/12?accountid=12104. Accessed 2 Mar. 2020.

It's important to keep up with trends for marketing strategies. This study presents 14

trends, including social media marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization,

wearable gadgets, and mobile payments. With SEO, those who don't find what they're

looking for on the first page of results prefer to search for a similar term than go to the

second page of results. Google has "over 78% of search queries numbering over 1.2

trillion searches a year," making it the most popular search engine (Vel et al).

Voelker, Troy, Doug Steel, and Elsa Shervin. "Internet Presence as a Small Business Capability:

The Case of Mobile Optimization." *Journal of Small Business Strategy*, vol. 27, no. 2,

2017, pp. 90-103. *ProQuest*,

https://search.proquest.com/docview/1940280732?accountid=12104. Accessed 12 Sept.

2020.

To provide customers with a smooth experience, make sure the website works properly

on small screens. Google uses mobile optimization as an indicator that this website is a

relevant resource, so it's important that businesses of all sizes have mobile-friendly

websites. A study of 376 small and mid-sized enterprises was conducted to see if their

websites were optimized for mobile.

Whitman, Michael E. et al. "A Study of User Attitudes Toward Persistent Cookies." *The Journal*

   of Computer Information Systems, vol. 41, no. 3, 2001, pp. 1-7. *ProQuest,*

   https://search.proquest.com/businesspremium/docview/232574708/1F67FE9389DC4F71

   PQ/1?accountid=12104. Accessed 19 Apr. 2020.

   Internet cookies track passwords, the pages visited, and when the pages were last visited.

   Researchers conducted a study to see if users are aware that internet cookies collect data,

   if cookies are viewed as an invasion of privacy, and if their awareness or attitudes of

   cookies influences how they use the internet.

Ziakis, Christos, et al. "Important Factors for Improving Google Search Rank." *Future Internet,*

   vol. 11, no. 2, 2019. *ProQuest,*

   https://search.proquest.com/businesspremium/docview/2429995643/CC7BA293561C4E1

   CPQ/2?accountid=12104. Accessed 2 Feb. 2020.

   Company websites should ideally appear on the first page of search results, and in the

   first three slots. The click through rates for the top three listings are 30%, 16%, and 10%,

   respectively. After the first page, the click through rate is under 2%. A lot of factors go

   into a website being created: the page size and loading time, keywords, alt text, content,

   length of content, internal linking, backlinks, website structure, social media support,

   domain age, responsive layout, bounce rate, and time on the website. Keywords are

   placed in headings, text, URLs, and meta description tags, which are the short website

   descriptions listed on the SERPs. The content of the website must also be relevant.

Zimmerman, Jan and Deborah Ng. "Social Media Marketing All-in-One for Dummies." 3rd

   Edition, *For Dummies,* 2015. *Safari by O'Reilly,*

https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/social-media-marketing/9781118951354/.

Accessed 9 Feb. 2020.

This book on search engine marketing covers the pros and cons of social media,

developing a social media marketing plan, understanding B2C and B2B market research,

managing a social media schedule, leveraging SEO for social media, incorporating

content marketing and blogs, and measuring the success of each content strategy. Social

media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Methodology

Postmodernism gained ground in the 1980s and was a departure from modernism, in

which people applied logic to create solutions to society's problems. French theorist Jean

Baudrillard entered the field of postmodernism with his 1981 book *Simulations*. His view, 'the

loss of the real,' is how contemporary life has been influenced by TV, film, and advertising

images, resulting in a loss of distinction between reality and what's imagined (Barry 87-89).

Baudrillard said that media is central to our everyday lives; "they define and dominate

our broader cultural relations, values, experience, and understandings of the world. Even in those

rare moments when we are not 'tuned in,' our thoughts and activities are defined in relation

to…previous media experiences" (Hodkinson 268). Theorists believe a real society, cultural

identity, or truth about the world cannot be envisioned past these images and representations

(Hodkinson 268).

Sherry Turkle added to the discussion of media and reality. The way we live – how we

interact with our family and relationships, have interests and hobbies, and behave in general – is

"developed in relation to past and present media representations" in novels, TV shows including

reality TV, films, ads, and more (Hodkinson 269). We create our own media by taking pictures

and videos with digital cameras and uploading them to social media platforms. "One

consequence of this is that the boundaries between private and public can become blurred, with

more and more details of our intimate lies shared with diverse and, sometimes, unpredictable

audiences." These environments are increasingly becoming commercialized. As we interact with

others, what we say, like, and share is recorded. This data is used to target us more effectively

with commercial messages. Media, therefore, is integrated into our everyday lives, dominating

our values and our understanding of how we fit into the world (Hodkinson 269).

To note separately, social media is used regularly. We can post different aspects of

ourselves across different platforms, such as our achievements on one platform and events we

attend on another. "Such variation of self-performance, according to context and audiences,

however, is far from unusual" (Hodkinson 277).

Postmodernism is the best fit for this directed project. Media is central to our everyday

lives, we create and upload our own media, and different platforms have different audiences.

Small businesses should have a social media presence and a business website to promote their

brand, products, and services, and communicate with their audience.

Results / Discussion of Results

I.   **COVID-19**

Due to COVID-19, consumers and brands have a new reality. Knowles, et al. sent out a

survey nationwide to 1,233 adults in late March 2020, two weeks after the stay-at-home orders

went into effect. Consumers answered questions about their shopping activities prior to the

pandemic, store choices, when they shop, and about new brands and why they'd select them. The

results show "broad shifts in consumer behavior," including shopping in-person or online, the

type of products purchased – such as healthcare and cleaning products, shopping less and buying

more at each shopping trip, "stocking up on nonperishables and hard-to-find items [and]

increased readiness to try direct-to-consumer offerings or to ship online at stores that offer home

delivery" (Knowles, et al). Meanwhile, "shifts in consumer mindset and attitudes" includes a

focus on category availability and benefits over brand preference, more intertest in brands that

have parent companies with pro-social behaviors and functional products, "loss of interest in

status-driven purchases," and interest in how the brand employees are treated (Knowles, et al).

54% bought from brands new to them, and these took up over 30% of shopping carts.

"The most frequently cited reasons for purchasing from a new brand included favorite brand was

out of stock (32%) and willingness to try new brands (32%). The product category with the

highest trial rate for new brands was packaged goods and beverages (24%), followed by

household care products (20%), fresh and organic foods (13%), and personal care products

(13%)." Within these categories, major brands included "Procter & Gamble…Kraft Heinz,

PepsiCo, and ColgatePalmolive." Consumers must consider alternatives while there are product

shortages and look more closely at product features while specific items are in more demand.

(Knowles, et al).

At the end of this paper, it discusses how small businesses should respond. 1) Use the 4

P's of marketing, which are "product, price, promotion, and place." While this is a fundamental

component of marketing, reviewing these will give small businesses a more fresh and broad

approach. 2) Remain "relevant to customers' concerns about safety" and security, and offer them

assurance. 3) Offer nonmedical face masks to meet with the current consumer needs. 4) Provide

contactless services. Speak to customers over the phone, require appointments, and offer

curbside pickup. 5) Online, use keywords that will be used by consumers to search for products.

"This could ensure that their products will rank higher in the search results of consumers who

have no strong brand preference in the category." 6) Think about using an omnichannel perspective. 7) Think of the value consumers need, and not just the price they will pay to acquire these products. At this time, people "are experiencing severe financial uncertainty and will likely continue to do so for the foreseeable future. This new economic environment will likely be problematic for many leading brands, whose cost structures rely on their ability to command a price premium. Simply put, buying name brands has lost some of its appeal" (Knowles, et al).

To determine the job characteristics during COVID-19, Suqin Ge and Yu Zhou used two factors: the physical proximity measure HPP and the work-from-home measure WFH. Occupations with the highest HHP are medical professionals, hairdressers, and flight attendants, to name a few. Those with the lowest HPP include lawyers, writers, and computer scientists. The WFH index has larger variations. For example, while 1.81% of lawyers and 83.90% of childcare workers do not have a college degree, their WFH index is the same. Marketing and sales managers are listed as one of the top 20 WFH occupations. Their demographics are 47.33% female, 3.74% black, 29.13% without a college degree, 70.19% below 50, and 10.53% immigrant [**Appendix 1]** (Ge and Zhou).

A second part of their study analyzed information from SafeGraph, which compiles anonymous user data from over 20 million smartphones. This shows the "(a) percent of devices at home, (b) percent of devices full-time at work, (c) percent of devices part-time at work, and (d) percent of unemployment." After the national emergency was declared on March 13, the percent of devices at home and the unemployment rate increased drastically, and the percent of devices full-time or part-time at work dropped significantly **[Appendix 2]** (Ge and Zhou).

The third part of their study looked at data from the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at John Hopkins University. 27.78% of devices stayed at home all day;

5.4% of devices stayed in one location from 8am-6pm, indicating full-time work; and 9.11% of devices stayed in one location for 3-6 hours, indicating part-time work. The median household income is $51,840; health insurance coverage is 89.22%; and high-speed Internet coverage is 58.97% **[Appendix 3]** (Ge and Zhou).

Small businesses have the new challenge of leading their organizations virtually, and many may not have the resources large corporations do to allow employees to work remotely effectively. Bekirogullari Zafer and Roslind Thambusamy discussed how to be a successful business leader while leading teams virtually. Computers and Internet connectivity are necessary for team members to virtually coordinate and communicate with one another to achieve objectives (Bekirogullari and Thambusamy).

Small businesses may actually accelerate during this pandemic as they are forced to adopt technology new to them. This is true even for mom-and-pop stores. While these owners may feel uncomfortable and want to reject virtual communication, face-to-face communication has now moved online, and social media will still allow them to incorporate their personal touch at a distance (Bekirogullari and Thambusamy).

There are several challenges to virtual leadership, one of which includes being out of your comfort zone. This is especially true for those who are not digital natives. This makes "it harder for some to open up, connect, trust, and communicate with others virtually." They're used to communicating face-to-face, and have the challenge of maintaining the same authenticity online. Another challenge is learning new technological skills. This is unavoidable as it ensures that businesses will continue to survive (Bekirogullari and Thambusamy).

To overcome these challenges, virtual leaders need to list their objectives and agenda, and have a baseline of how much time to spend on each task. Virtual leaders will also need to

spend more time with team members and provide them with opportunities to receive feedback. Additionally, virtual leaders must understand that, while younger generations are digital natives, older generations may feel uncomfortable communicating online and may not understand the basic functions of online platforms. To make the older generations more comfortable, virtual leaders must be sensitive and use their preferred working and communication conditions when possible (Bekirogullari and Thambusamy).

I.   **Millennials and Gen Z**

It's important for small businesses to know how to connect with Millennials and Gen Z, whether they work at or buy from the business. Schwalbe states Millennials are the first digital natives, or people who grew up using digital media; this is the opposite of digital immigrants. Millennials grew up with personal computers, cell phones, and the World Wide Web, and college students carry their laptops, cell phones, and tiny headphones to class. They consider this technology to be extensions of themselves. In fact, this "connectivity and collaboration has altered the way we interact, conduct business, and relate to people globally" (Schwalbe).

A survey of 1,656 students was conducted at a university in 2007. The results show that college students recognize social networks and online communities as the places to hang out and connect with peers. They're always connected and share their own photos, videos, and blog posts. This media even makes it easier to access news and entertainment when they want it (Schwalbe).

From 2017 to 2019, Giunta conducted a study on Gen Z. Questionnaires were sent out to 165 students in business courses. It shows that most Gen Z believe they are easily adaptable, tolerate of diverse cultures, feel connected to many people, are connected to many through social

media, that truthfulness and trust is very important to have in others, and that apps do not

influence their purchasing process. (Giunta)

II.   Social Media

Antonina Bauman looked into how small businesses use social media. To do so, "over the

period of four months, social media activities of these 36 small businesses were tracked on a

weekly basis" in Excel. The results showed that not all of them remained active. 7 companies

(19.4%) did not post or have a change in followers, but the other 29 companies communicated

with their audience and their number of followers increased (Bauman).

Social media platforms used were Facebook (97.2%, or 35 companies), Twitter (83.3%,

or 30), Instagram (41.6%, or 15), YouTube (13.9%, or 5), Pinterest (13.9%, or 5), LinkedIn

(8.3%, or 3), Google+ (2.8%, or 1) and Etsy (2.8%, or 1). When posting, they focused on

creating awareness for products and increasing sales. That's not enough; another goal must be to

have customer relations based on loyalty and trust. "Small businesses have to show interest in

their customers by responding to posts and asking for feedback, and then acting upon that

feedback" (Bauman).

Social media, essential for a marketing strategy in communicating with customers, is an

affordable way to share information, which is great for businesses with fewer finances.

Additionally, "social networks allow companies to communicate with customers in a personal

way, develop company's reputation and create a particular image." The benefits of using social

media include reaching different demographics, talking with customers individually and

responding quickly to their messages, and saving money that would have been spent on

advertising campaigns by telling customers on social media posts to engage in their events and

activities. Small businesses may run into problems, such as privacy and security, sharing

negative and meaningless posts, and misusing technology. While social media platforms are free, it takes time to learn how to use them efficiently (Bauman).

Domenico Consoli researched how small businesses should utilize social media and e-commerce platforms to promote their products and services. "Social media are important to collect customer opinions for improving products/services, customer satisfaction and for the reinforcement of the customer loyalty. Customers' feedback can determine the success or the failure of a company." The results show that small businesses understand the potential of social media and its necessity, but are not aware of how to use them properly (Consoli).

To be competitive, small businesses "must have a website well-designed that optimally integrates an ecommerce section and social media…Colors should be eye-catching and photos must be high-definition designed to capture customers' attention. The websites' navigation should be fast. If the loading of a multimedia image is very slow the user quickly changes the visit of the current website" (Consoli).

Appolloh Omolloh and Teresa Lao set out to answer how social media can "be used as an effective management tool for small businesses." They found several themes: communication (11 participants), "increased sales, revenue, or profit" (8), inexpensive advertising (5), marketing and promotion (7), increased business awareness (4), product updates (3), the importance of posting carefully (6), and paying close attention to feedback (6). To engage in selfless behavior, small businesses should support their communities. "By using social media to help them be a good neighbor in the community, businesses demonstrate to actual and potential customers that they are not focused only on gaining sales and revenue." Through sincere action, they can build goodwill and their reputation (Omolloh and Lao).

Marketers have realized that there are different personalities for each social media platform. "Every platform has its own audience. And each audience has their own expectations for the things they want to see on the platform – that can affect how well your social media posts perform." A basic guide to follow is that 1) Facebook should have live videos, videos in general, and blog posts and curated content, 2) Instagram should have high-resolution photos, images with quotes, and Instagram Stories, 3) Twitter should have posts on the news, blog posts, and the loop of moving images known as GIFs, and 4) LinkedIn should have posts on professional content, job postings and their job descriptions, and news about companies (Lua).

On Facebook, videos have more engagement than links or images. It's recommended to make videos that are how-to guides or summarize the main ideas from blog posts. There are several ways marketers can use Instagram Stories, which disappear after 24 hours. This includes sharing how-to tutorials, promoting blog posts, announcing offers and promotions, offering coupons and giveaways, introducing a guest to take over Stories for the day, and sharing company news and updates. People commonly use Twitter to stay up-to-date with the news, so use this platform to share news about a company and their products and industry. Lastly, by having a company profile page on LinkedIn, people will be able to learn more about a company's culture and job openings, and read posts about employee achievements and experiences. **[Appendix 5]** (Lua).

When setting up a LinkedIn page, make sure to include all information as this leads to "30% more weekly views." Complete the Company Overview, include a logo and header image, business address, and website URL, and list the company's headquarters, company size, and industry. In addition to interacting with followers and audience members with content marketing,

this platform allows companies to post jobs, and those who do "report a 40% higher rating on quality candidates." The right talent will help your small business grow (Lessard).

III.   **Content Marketing**

Content can be on websites or social media platforms. Content marketing is the act of developing and promoting sharable content across different channels to increase business visibility. "The most valuable content is usually highly relevant to what you do, solves problems for others or stirs emotions, and is often noncommercial in nature." To relate to the previous section, a publisher that has content on their blog could share the website link on social media. By doing so, more people would read the blog articles, and the blog would gain more subscribers. Social media platforms also benefit from link sharing; they would see a rise in the number of followers. Sharing high quality and relevant content to the audience is essential for a content marketing strategy (Enge et al).

Soyoen Cho and Jisu Huh conducted a study by looking at the 22 corporate blogs in 2008 to determine the key characteristics of blogs. Their results found that these key characteristics are positivity, openness, and social networking. Small businesses should have blogs that provide a positive, user-friendly experience for visitors, and offer multi-media, such as video links (25 blogs), podcasts (3), and animations (1). These blogs should have open, two-way communication; this is established by having a comment section (49). However, some erase comments, as indicated by their policy statement (22). In terms of social networking, the most common hyperlink was to the company website (25 blogs), "followed by other industry-related web sites (53 percent). The results suggest that, although the majority of corporate blogs seem to have features that facilitate social networking, most corporate blogs were connected rather internally to their own official web site" (Cho and Huh).

IV.   **Search Engine Optimization**

Small businesses benefit from using search engine optimization. SEO has organic

rankings, which are free, so you don't need to pay for ads. With SEO, it's important to

incorporate keywords. Nearly 80% of users ignore paid ads in search results, and search is the #1

driver of traffic to content sites. Compared to paid links, "organic content found via search

engines is more likely to be clicked on and trusted by audiences, more effective for local

searches, and can grow your online presence for longer" (McGinley)

Local SEO tools improve localized traffic. Google My Business is more than just a

business listing. Customers can reach businesses by calling their phone number, sending a

message, or leaving a review. Uploading photos and offers to a Google My Business listing will

show the business is unique and persuade customers to choose them. Privately, businesses can

see how customers engage with their profile and see the "clicks, calls, bookings, [and] follows"

(Overview). To learn more about Google and their products through training and gain

certifications, small businesses can visit their Google Skillshop website (Google My Business).

SEO leads to more consumer trust and brand awareness. Most users click on links on the

first SERPs, because they trust that websites in these top positions are authorities in the industry.

To understand what drives organic clicks, Michael R. Baye, Babur De Los Santos, and Matthijs

R. Wildenbeest conducted a study of 750 retail sites across 12,000 search terms. Their results

showed "that a retailer's rank on a results page is an important driver of its organic clicks," and

retailers not on the first five SERPs have 90% less organic clicks (Baye et al).

There are two common SEO strategies that companies can use to rank higher organically:

modify the website to rank higher "for a given search term" and improve "site quality and brand

awareness…consumers tend to click retailers that are more recognized, trusted, have reputations

for providing value…service…and so on." Rank-building and brand-building work together. Let's consider when people search for the phrase 'tennis shoes.' Those who don't recognize any retailers listed will likely not click on any links. If these retailers invested in brand awareness for their sites, they would receive additional clicks (Baye et al).

Having a mobile-friendly website improves the user experience. A study of 376 small and mid-sized enterprises was conducted to see if their websites were optimized for mobile. Tony Voelker, Doug Steel, and Else Shervin found that that "just under 50% of SME websites sampled were mobile optimized." In 2015, Google announced they would start using "mobile optimization as one of its indicators of website relevance." Consumers look online via their mobile devices for information, and Google says that "more searches are initiated on mobile phones than desktop computers." Businesses should, therefore, make a mobile-friendly version of their website to reach these consumers. The website "must work properly on a small screen" so that consumers have a smooth experience (Voelker).

Social monitoring tools make it easy to monitor searches, and they are inexpensive or free to use. Two of the most popular services are Google Alerts and Google Trends. By signing up for Google Alerts, notifications on search terms are sent to an email address. The results originate from "news articles, websites, blogs, video, and Google books and forums." Google Trends, on the other hand, looks at how search terms develop over time, and this is helpful when conducting market research. It shows when search terms are gaining or losing popularity on Google. This is important data not only for the latest search terms, but any that come to mind. Search terms can even be specified by the location worldwide or by the time frame from 2004 onwards (Zimmerman and Ng).

Beth Thouin, VP of Digital Marketing at Web.com, appeared on The Small Business Radio Show. Host Barry Moltz said, "'Of the 30 million businesses in the US, only 64% of them have websites. How can that be?...Why is it so important to [have a website]?'" Thouin replied, "'70 to 80% of people will research a company online before visiting a small business…90% of all purchases start with online searches…[and] 75% of consumers will judge a company's credibility based on their website's look.'" She added that small businesses can be all online or also have a brick-and-mortar store. Having a website is important for three main reasons. It gives people access to the company, making it convenient to contact an employee or make a purchase. It's a way for the business to make a connection with people; the website is the first impression and the company's brand. Lastly, it allows for repeat business. Capture names, phone numbers, and emails to get in touch with past customers (Gilcrest).

V.   **Digital Marketing**

Wendy Ritz, Marco Wolf, and Shaun McQuitty researched digital marketing practices for small businesses. There were 250 respondents to the questionnaire, and they responded as to what forms of digital marketing they use: a Facebook page (72.4%, or 181 respondents), website (61.6%, or 154), email (42.4%, or 106), other social media (33.2%, or 83), Twitter (31.6%, or 79), SEO (31.6%, or 79), blog content (30%, or 75), review analytics (26.4%, or 66), e-commerce site (22.4%, or 56), mobile website (20.8%, or 52), and/or a YouTube channel (14%, or 35). **[Appendix 4].** (Ritz et al).

Since small businesses usually have more financial constraints, they prefer to handle the digital marketing themselves rather than outsource it. That way, company money can be used for other projects. A website also allows for two-way communication. To measure "the effectiveness of digital marketing," small business owners and managers can look at customer reviews and use

Google Analytics. If small businesses have the resources, they could work with third party digital marketing firms that offer cost effective tools and packages, as well as certifications for learning and tutorials for developing creativity (Ritz et al).

Ann Lewnes and Kevin Keller shared seven approaches that small business marketers can use to be successful in digital marketing: 1) Use different platforms for marketing, such as Adobe, Buffer, and MailChimp. They take great care to educate marketers on how to use their platforms. 2) Understand what consumers want "by asking for continuous feedback, listening to it, and cocreating with them." 3) Connect with customers in-person as well as online. It's still important to meet customers face-to-face at in-person events and venues, as online dashboards alone cannot provide the same in-depth conversations with engages customers. 4) Be creative. 5) Collaborate with other businesses. 6) Make a positive impact on the community and the world. 7) New aspects of marketing leadership include the phrases: "Be the customer's biggest champion…Create meaningful experiences that foster long-lasting customer relationships… Drive business by bringing together design and intelligence." (Lewnes and Keller)

Businesses can generate leads, which converts into revenue, by hosting webinars. COVID-19 has forced in-person conferences to be held virtually with cost-saving benefits. Beforehand, design the agenda, promote the event, and have attendees register through email and send them branded mementos. During the event, have a clear call to action, and keep the audience engaged with live Q&A sessions, polls, and chat boxes. Afterwards, ask for feedback to improve future events, and send follow-up emails with session recordings, additional resources, and email newsletters. (The Guide to Hosting Digital Events)

Conclusion

For small businesses to survive and advance in 2021 and beyond, they must know how to respond to being in a pandemic, connect with Millennials and Gen Z, and utilize digital marketing, which encompasses social media marketing, content marketing, and search engine optimization. Face-to-face communication and in-person conferences have moved online. By following these tips, small businesses new and established can better reach and connect with their audience, thereby gaining leads and sales.

Appendix

Appendix 1 (Ge and Zhou)

Table 2 Examples of Top and Bottom Occupations by Work-from-Home (WFH) Capacity

Occupation discription	WFH index	Female (%)	Black (%)	Non-college (%)	Below 50 (%)	Immigrant (%)
Top 20 work-from-home occupations:						
Managers, all other	1.00	35.75	5.60	42.75	57.81	12.80
Elementary and middle school teachers	1.00	79.14	6.93	5.27	67.74	6.49
Secretaries and administrative assistants	1.00	95.11	7.25	78.14	51.24	7.90
Accountants and auditors	1.00	61.69	6.59	21.07	60.79	15.83
Postsecondary teachers	1.00	49.70	7.44	9.80	59.29	21.22
Computer scientists	1.00	29.64	5.30	36.31	73.19	17.73
Sales representatives	1.00	27.15	3.09	52.49	58.02	9.05
First-line supervisors of office workers	1.00	62.08	9.51	64.92	58.11	10.31
Bookkeeping and accounting clerks	1.00	88.04	10.36	80.25	47.38	10.12
Office clerks, general	1.00	82.26	6.01	79.42	60.34	11.25
Chief executives	1.00	25.02	2.74	31.21	41.86	12.60
Childcare workers	1.00	93.69	3.54	83.91	70.23	17.77
Lawyers	1.00	36.50	4.19	1.81	55.37	6.56
Software developers	1.00	20.18	12.49	16.49	76.77	35.72
Financial managers	1.00	54.08	10.83	37.16	63.43	13.38
Teacher assistants	1.00	89.58	6.18	75.88	59.80	12.77
Marketing and sales managers	1.00	47.33	3.74	29.18	70.19	10.53
Human resources workers	1.00	69.87	11.20	41.03	68.98	8.70
Other teachers and instructors	1.00	61.83	8.37	48.50	66.65	11.28
Management analysts	1.00	42.39	5.52	22.32	56.89	14.76
Average	1.00	59.79	6.72	41.86	60.51	12.57
Bottom 20 work-from-home occupations:						
Electrical power-line installers	0.00	1.11	4.87	94.39	71.95	4.23
Boilermakers	0.00	3.01	6.94	97.70	61.98	7.84
Heating and air conditioning mechanics	0.08	1.21	5.04	95.01	68.55	12.74
Firefighters	0.08	4.64	5.76	79.11	83.36	2.72

(To be continued)

(Continued)

Occupation discription	WFH index	Female (%)	Black (%)	Non-college (%)	Below 50 (%)	Immigrant (%)
Structural iron and steel workers	0.08	2.37	5.23	95.94	72.79	12.47
Millwrights	0.08	1.92	2.84	96.12	54.51	3.40
Derrick and rotary drill operators	0.08	2.13	4.54	92.83	83.39	8.24
Production workers, all other	0.17	28.12	12.65	93.59	65.37	18.46
Pipelayers, plumbers, and pipefitters	0.17	1.50	5.45	95.20	68.04	13.79
Industrial machinery mechanics	0.17	3.16	5.51	94.13	55.11	11.20
Vehicle and mobile equipment mechanics	0.17	1.14	3.34	96.33	63.34	8.47
First-line supervisors of fire fighters	0.17	17.19	11.84	67.86	57.60	5.22
Automotive watercraft service attendants	0.17	16.83	9.67	94.29	79.05	12.58
Pest control workers	0.17	5.33	7.56	89.01	65.92	8.20
Glaziers	0.17	2.18	3.40	95.53	71.44	13.98
Sailors and marine oilers	0.17	8.62	3.69	86.76	77.14	8.36
Earth drillers, except oil and gas	0.17	1.35	9.54	95.11	73.36	6.58
Paving and surfacing equipment operators	0.17	2.93	14.95	97.42	67.47	8.74
Rail-track laying equipment operators	0.25	1.60	7.02	95.99	68.14	9.49
Grounds maintenance workers	0.25	6.91	5.53	92.13	68.36	27.43
Average	0.17	10.57	7.40	92.12	67.25	16.12
All occupations	0.78	48.05	8.95	64.71	64.29	14.76

Data source: The WFH index is constructed using occupation attributes from O*NET and employment from OES. Worker characteristics within each occupation are based on data from the 2014–2018 five-year pooled ACS.

Table 3 Examples of Top and Bottom Occupations by Physical Proximity (HPP)

Occupation discription	HPP index	Female (%)	Black (%)	Non-college (%)	Below 50 (%)	Immigrant (%)
Top 20 occupations in physical proximity:						
Physical therapists	1.00	70.12	3.04	5.98	75.17	13.56
Dental hygienists	1.00	95.99	2.70	64.53	67.63	8.27
Dentists	0.99	28.73	2.71	0.14	48.77	21.19
Dancers and choreographers	0.99	79.64	12.11	74.39	94.11	11.98
Dental assistants	0.99	94.78	5.87	90.32	78.30	15.58
Radiation therapists	0.98	69.60	4.93	50.52	67.40	8.50
Emergency medical technicians	0.96	31.03	5.54	82.13	84.85	4.62
Chiropractors	0.96	29.65	1.41	3.33	59.67	8.42
Flight attendants	0.95	73.70	14.48	65.75	53.55	14.87

(To be continued)

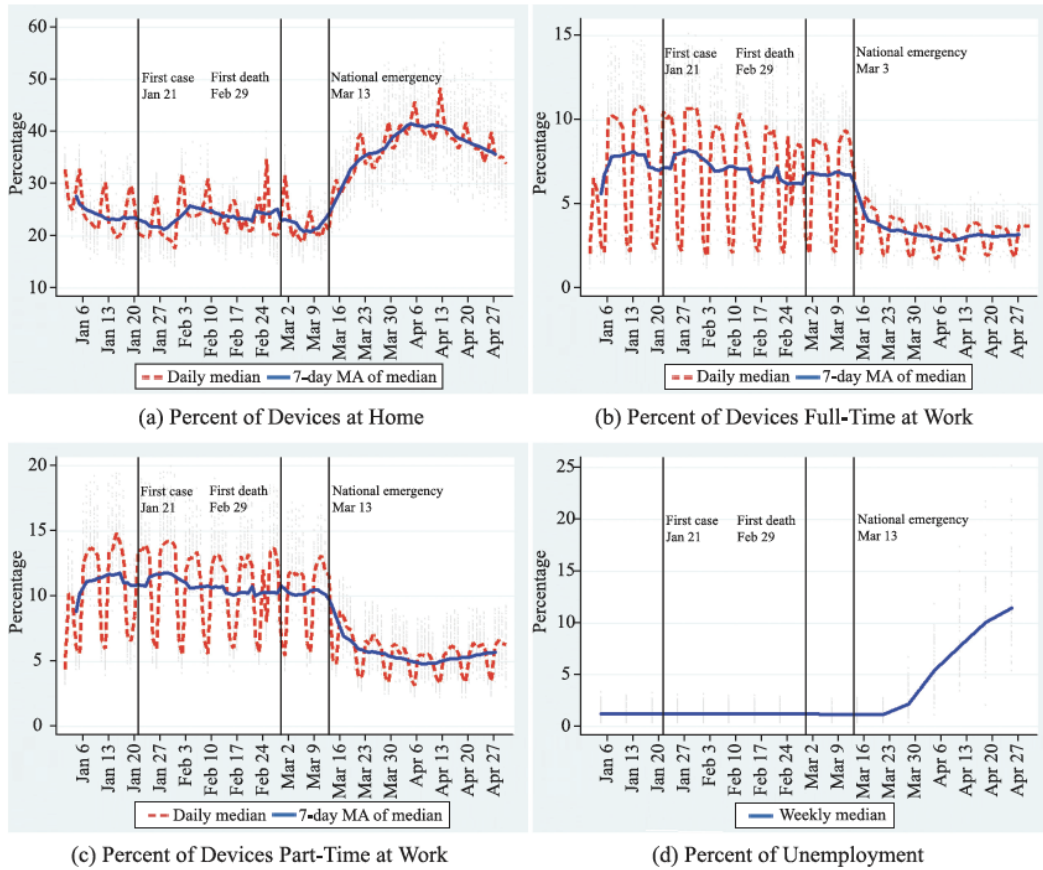| Occupation discription	HPP index	Female (%)	Black (%)	Non-college (%)	Below 50 (%)	Immigrant (%)
First-line supervisors of food servers	0.95	58.97	11.78	86.72	75.42	14.12
Actors	0.94	38.92	6.76	29.16	74.54	10.94
Barbers	0.94	24.42	24.04	95.22	59.72	19.20
Podiatrists	0.94	25.66	0.85	0.44	46.49	9.98
Physical therapist assistants and aides	0.94	72.26	5.30	73.55	76.09	8.54
Miscellaneous health technicians	0.93	64.24	15.78	67.11	65.61	15.46
Respiratory therapists	0.92	64.71	10.51	70.61	62.21	12.63
Exercise physiologists	0.92	80.46	8.15	15.27	71.06	10.06
Hairdressers and cosmetologists	0.91	91.70	8.44	94.55	66.83	15.13
Miscellaneous personal appearance workers	0.91	86.07	2.98	89.34	76.82	61.38
Veterinarians	0.89	58.04	1.26	0.16	61.01	6.93
Average	0.94	69.90	7.63	66.17	70.06	16.87
Bottom 20 occupations in physical proximity:						
Logging workers	0.00	2.53	5.62	95.42	63.29	4.79
Petroleum engineers	0.17	11.86	3.33	18.24	72.01	18.73
Economists	0.17	31.06	4.17	0.53	66.39	28.24
Refuse and recyclable material collectors	0.17	10.58	15.88	95.66	65.53	16.75
Writers and authors	0.18	59.98	3.83	17.84	59.99	7.03
Computer and information scientists	0.20	29.64	7.44	36.31	73.19	17.73
Industrial truck and tractor operators	0.21	7.55	18.37	96.95	68.09	17.02
Lawyers	0.22	36.50	4.19	1.81	55.37	6.56
Food processing machine operators	0.22	32.34	8.13	88.72	69.79	16.48
Pressers, textile, garment workers	0.23	65.57	16.28	96.33	60.96	41.30
Actuaries	0.23	33.92	1.74	2.61	78.00	19.38
Miscellaneous agricultural workers	0.23	21.12	2.66	93.77	72.76	39.14
Sales engineers	0.23	7.21	1.93	30.29	62.56	12.96
Personal financial advisors	0.24	30.24	4.20	19.20	60.78	10.20
Meter readers, utilities	0.24	15.55	12.24	91.02	64.82	5.17
Payroll and timekeeping clerks	0.25	88.64	8.66	77.59	54.73	8.78
Pumping station operators	0.26	3.91	5.45	91.43	61.74	4.86
Statisticians	0.27	46.70	4.95	7.82	75.42	25.64
Computer programmers	0.27	21.97	3.56	28.75	66.05	24.27
Paralegals and legal assistants	0.28	85.01	7.27	54.86	63.61	9.60
Average	0.22	33.25	6.50	55.83	44.17	17.17
All occupations	0.55	48.05	8.95	64.71	64.29	14.76

Appendix 2 (Ge and Zhou)

Figure 1 Changes in Social Distancing and Work Behavior, January–April 2020

Note: Percentages of devices at home, full-time at work, and part-time at work are calculated based on daily data provided by SafeGraph. Unemployment insurance data come from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Appendix 3 (Ge and Zhou)

Table 4 Summary Statistics of Main Variables

	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	No. of obs.
COVID-19 reported cases	64.60	1,337.94	0	167,478	380,074
Job characteristics					
Work-from-home (WFH) index	0.74	0.03	0.68	0.92	3,142
High physical proximity (HPP) index	0.56	0.01	0.45	0.60	3,142
Social distancing, work and unemployment					
Percent of devices stay at home	27.78	7.96	1.12	82.76	380,074
Percent of devices full-time at work	5.40	3.50	0.48	35.71	380,074
Percent of devices part-time at work	9.11	4.19	0.66	56.06	380,074
Unemployment rate (% weekly, by state)	3.34	4.07	0.37	25.20	867
Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics					
Percent of male	49.96	1.29	46.57	55.07	3,142
Percent of black	9.11	13.16	0.19	70.70	3,142
Percent of Asian	2.01	6.27	0.01	73.17	3,142
Percent of Hispanic	9.93	13.42	0.57	95.61	3,142
Percent above age 60	24.14	4.05	10.52	52.98	3,142
Percent college degree or higher	22.41	8.35	9.10	77.44	3,142
Percent of immigrants	5.12	5.24	0.39	53.26	3,142
Household income (1,000 dollars)	51.84	12.54	27.97	154.12	3,142
Population density (1,000/square mile)	0.27	1.79	0.00	71.34	3,142
Health insurance coverage (%)	89.22	4.92	69.16	98.04	3,142
High speed Internet coverage (%)	58.97	11.29	23.26	92.19	3,142
Vote for Republican (%)	63.26	15.69	4.09	96.03	3,114
COVID case density (/1,000 persons)	0.25	1.33	0	102.83	380,074

Appendix 4 (Ritz et al)

Digital marketing activity	No. participating (N = 250)	% using
Facebook page	181	72.4
Website	154	61.6
Email	106	42.4
Other social media	83	33.2
Twitter	79	31.6
SEO	79	31.6
Blog content	75	30.0
Review analytics	66	26.4
e-commerce site	56	22.4
Mobile website	52	20.8
YouTube channel	35	14.0

Table II.
Respondent
participation in
digital marketing
activities

Appendix 5 (Lua)

THINGS TO POST ON LINKEDIN

Jobs & career info   Company news   Professional content

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