



**A “LIGHTS-ON” TOOLKIT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES  
ON HOW TO COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE WITH  
CUSTOMERS DURING COVID-19**

**LIGHTS ON**

# READY TO GET STARTED?

This next section walks you through eight scenarios presenting the types of changes that you might make that will affect your customers. We cover businesses ranging from restaurants to nail salons. Regardless of whether your business is represented, you're likely to encounter similar scenarios.

Responsiveness | Services | Vibe | Cleanliness | Masks | Point-of-sale | Employees | Customers



Questions to help you decide whether you need to communicate these changes before they visit.



“Must do” changes you should communicate proactively.



Ideas and case studies for how to communicate clearly, have fun, be different, and engage your customers.

# WHAT'S DIFFERENT? MASKS

Mask-wearing is a contentious issue. And it has become politicized. The simplest way to avoid getting tangled up in the issue is to be straightforward, transparent and consistent about your mask policy. Communicating this proactively via all your social media platforms and outside your store is key.

 Use the “Move from ME to WE” concept. Masks protect the “we” not just the “me”. “We” are the employees who must be in the store and customers with health conditions or other family members who don’t have a choice but to wear masks.

 Post your policy to social media and ask your loyal customers to share how safe they felt when other patrons were doing so.



<<the old>>  
**pre-COVID-19  
customer  
experience**



<<the new>>  
**“Lights-on”  
experience  
(changes)**



<<the effect>>  
**potential areas  
of confusion,  
disappointment,  
or unsafe  
behavior**

<<your solution>>  
**what to  
communicate in  
advance to create  
safe, happy  
customers**



## WHAT'S DIFFERENT? MASKS, CONTINUED



*Creating your mask policy is not enough. You must also have a **plan for what you'll do if customers don't or won't wear masks** (and you'll need to post it and communicate it to your employees).*

*For example, if they forget, have an employee on hand to offer them one. If they don't want one, offer them a **convenient alternative** to in-store purchase if possible (e.g., curbside pick-up).*



*Great example of a social media graphic that moves customers from "ME" to "WE". Notice how the policy offers mask-opposed customers a friendly alternative.*



TOP STORY

### Tidal Creek Food Co-Op to start enforcing mask policy Monday



Tidal Creek will start enforcing a mask policy. (Source: Tidal Creek)



May 10, 2020 at 2:13 PM EDT - Updated May 10 at 2:13 PM



WILMINGTON, N.C. (WECT) - Tidal Creek Food Co-Op has notified customers that it will start enforcing a "No Mask, No Entry" policy this coming Monday.



The Centers for Disease Control has recommended the use of face coverings for citizens while out in public during the coronavirus pandemic. While many stores use the guidance strictly as a suggestion, some retailers have started requiring the masks.

The managers at Tidal Creek said Sunday the majority of its owners have stated they would prefer everyone wear masks inside the store as the "safest course." They say that if you prefer not to wear a mask, you can take advantage of the curbside pickup option and they will work to make accommodations for you in that regard.



## WHAT'S DIFFERENT? **MASKS, CONTINUED**



***Monitor your social media channels** and use them to respond to customer issues (because that's where customers will post). Use social media to get customers to help spread support of your mask policy.*



*Post **large signs** outside your entrance noting the requirement.*



***BYOM:** Offer customers friendly incentives, similar to BYOB (bring your own bag) by rewarding them with a BYOM (Bring Your Own Mask) discount at point-of-sale. Post this frequently online.*



*Have **fun** with your customers. Post selfies of customers with masks. Have a “mask of the week” contest with a free voucher or discount as a reward (and post to social media with a fun hashtag).*



*Have a mask “host” nicely **offer disposable masks** outside to those who don't bring them. If you're a restaurant or offer a service where taking masks off occasionally is required, outline the policy beforehand to customers so that they know what to expect.*





Factor3 Digital is a small but mighty digital and design agency in Arlington, Virginia. We specialize in helping clients understand how to create content that is clear and easy to understand.

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Please note that this toolkit is NOT intended to offer legal advice or health advice. It is solely intended to help explain how businesses can use digital communication to communicate their priorities to customers. All examples and case studies in this guide are intended only to illustrate how to engage digitally and are not endorsements of any particular legal, workplace or health/occupational safety policy. If you're worried about that sort of thing, contact a real professional in that field, not a digital strategist.