



# SMALL BUSINESS SURVIVAL GUIDE



A CARE PACKAGE  
RESOURCE FOR YOUR BIZ

BY JENNA KUTCHER

## *This season brings a lot of uncertainty,*

You feel it, I feel it... Things are shifting, and rapidly.

With what is happening in the world, it's natural to feel unease and question what steps you can be taking today to help you survive this season.

Let me tell you, I have never been forced to stare my privilege in the face so fully until all of this started unfolding. I am so grateful to have a digital business, a remote team, a nest egg to lean on... I have so much, I've worked so hard, and so now is our season to purposely get resources into your hands to help.

While I know this season can be so hard and scary and there are many unknowns, I want to try to equip you with ideas and tools that can help you take action and know that you're working on protecting what you've built.

We all know entrepreneurship brings about many highs and lows, but when an unexpected hit comes (the first for most of us who weren't in business during the last crash!), it can leave us wondering what we should be doing, how we can survive, and if there are ways to perhaps even thrive during this time.

My brain hasn't stopped swimming as I think of every type of business and the frustration and fear that many are feeling, and so I wanted to get my thoughts out here in a space that will hopefully encourage you and give you steps to take to know that you can move forward while it's tempting to be idle.

I've walked through many waiting seasons in my personal and business life, and I can tell you that "time" is the resource that can help you pivot, grow, and expand. So while I hate the circumstance, my prayer is that with this additional time you have, you will have the space to breathe and dream again.

Rooting for you,  
*Jenna*

# *Tips for Any Entrepreneur*

## **SEEK COMMUNITY**

Whenever seasons of unknown hit, it's easy to feel alone, overwhelmed, and isolated. It's important to find safe spaces to connect, vent, ask questions, and plan. Find an online community of other entrepreneurs to connect with, whether it's forming a Slack group with people you already know, joining a Facebook group of likeminded people, or creating a weekly connection Zoom meeting with other entrepreneurs.

## **STAY VISIBLE**

It's natural to want to shrink away when things get hard, but it's so important you stay visible and lead conversations in your community. Continue to share, post content, let people in behind-the-scenes. Your presence online matters and will help fuel your business when things pick up again. Don't shy away, but instead share how you're finding perspective, offering service and assistance to others, or working through the challenges inevitable to come during this time. That vulnerability is the thing that will connect us all right now when things are unpredictable.

## **UPDATE ALL THE THINGS**

So many entrepreneurs are so busy doing "the thing," that main service or product that your business revolves around, that they never get to update all the other, less "important" things in their business that can be detrimental to their success. Use this quieter period of time to update your website, your CRM, your contracts, your email templates, your copy... all the things. There are so many valuable places your time can go to prepare you for when things get busy again.

## **BUILD WORKFLOWS**

A lot of times, we're surviving on plans we've piecemealed together along the way. What if you created "SOPs" or standard operating procedures, aka simple workflows for you (or a team) to follow to execute and give each and every client and customer a great experience. They can be simple to start, so don't feel like you have to set up a workflow for every process. Just start with one.

## *Tips for What to Post Online During This Time:*

It can feel weird showing up on social media in a time where people are going through extreme anxiety, devastation, illness, and massive change. But amid the chaos, small businesses like yours still need fuel to run, and that takes awareness and intention from you as much as your people.

Which means it's your responsibility to keep them in the loop regarding what you need in order to continue serving them well. How do we do that? By keeping your audience informed with real-time updates and asks on social media.

### HERE ARE SOME IDEAS FOR WHAT TO POST:

- **An honest update:** how your business is doing, how your products/services are going to be available to clients and customers, what your plan is for the time being, how you commit to showing up for your audience in this season. Don't be afraid to show behind-the-scenes and let people in. Humans are looking for connection in this isolation, so keeping it real will likely serve you well.
- **Ask for support:** how can your people who have the means to help offer a hand? Do you have gift cards available? Do you have specific products or services that would be especially helpful during this time? Don't be afraid to ask for what you need. That's what will keep the people who care about your business informed and aware of what to do. Give action items for those waiting and willing to help!
- **Encouragement & free value:** how are you handling this shake-up? What takeaways or perspective shifts are you experiencing? Are you realizing things that would be valuable to share, or do you have tips for others going through anxiety or fear? Giving away value will endear your people to you more strongly and continue building a strong foundation of realness and trust.

*Still stuck and unsure of what to post? Most people are craving normalcy right now. Here is a page out of my book to inspire daily posts where you can pull from the archives and focus on your storytelling to build that connection with your audience.*

# One Month of Social Media Posts

## INSPIRATION

ONE POST PER DAY, MONDAY - FRIDAY

<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>
Share the space you work in and what inspires you about it.	Post a photo of a family member or pet and introduce them to your tribe!	Publish a photo of a trip you've been on and share an experience.	Share a photo of your recent work and tell us the story behind it.	Post a photo of yourself and tell us three things we might not know about you!
Post a photo of the last book you read and tell us why you loved it!	Share a photo of the city/town you live in and tell us why you live there.	Publish a photo of your newest purchase and share why you bought it!	Share a photo of your work and caption it with kind words from a recent client.	Post a photo of you and tell us why you do what you do!
Post a photo of the best gift you've ever gotten and tell us about it.	Style a few things on your desk and talk about what you're working on.	Share a photo from a past project and give followers a tip they can apply.	Post a photo of something that is currently inspiring your work this week.	Share a photo of you with people you love and let us in to that moment.
Take a photo of your favorite space in your home and share why you love it!	Post a photo of your child(ren) or family pet and tell us a story about them.	Go on a walk and snap a photo of something that jumps out at you!	Show us your all time favorite piece of work and tell us about it.	Share a photo of you doing your job and tell us what your everyday looks like.

## *Templates to Help Your Communication:*

A lot of times we wish we had a Public Relations team waiting in the wings to help us word things and get the right message out into the world. I wanted to provide basic templates to help you with your responses both via email and on social media.

### **REACH OUT TO CLIENTS:**

Hi NAME,

I wanted to reach out to you to check on how you're doing. I know with the news and daily changes surrounding the coronavirus, you've likely got a lot on your mind. I wanted to ease the worry and be proactive about answering any questions you might have.

I also wanted to ensure that you have confidence I will do whatever I can on my end to make sure your (event name/type) will be a smashing success, whether that is modifying it to meet your needs or rescheduling it if you'd like to postpone.

Wanted to let you know that I am here and a resource to help! You are a priority.

Let me know the best way to communicate with you in this season and how you'd like to connect so we, together, can determine our best next steps as a team.

Warmly,

NAME

### **POST TO SOCIAL MEDIA:**

As a small business owner, it's no surprise that the happenings of this world will deeply impact my ability to (share how your business serves the world.) This time can be devastating to many small business owners. (Share how you are personally impacted by the shut down.)

Many of you have asked and the best way to support us through this period is by (share how others can tangibly support your business.)

In this difficult time, it's hard to know what to share here on these channels and what is appropriate. Do you still want to hear about (your product/service)? Or is there something else you'd like us to share about? Feel free to let me know. Please take care of yourself and your loved ones in this time.

## *Service Based Businesses*

Remember that I was a wedding photographer for years upon years? I'm still a part of many online photography communities, and I've been watching to see what will unfold for service-based businesses. While things are uncertain for the time being, they will likely pick up again, and when they do, you will likely get very busy. Many people will be needing your service in a short amount of time, so prepare for the flood gates to open by doing these things right now.

- Update your website and offers. So many service based businesses get so caught up doing their service that their website is not up to date or reflecting their brand.
- Review your legal contracts and ensure that they will protect you and your business in the future. Research, seek counsel, and get your contracts set.
- Reach out to clients to provide information, education, and insight. They have a lot of questions, try to answer them and position yourself as an expert in your field.
- Create the structure and systems necessary for you to be able to manage the workload for when it gets busy again. What can you prepare for the busy time?
- Update or create workflows to help you deliver exceptional client experiences. What can you create a "standard operating procedure" around?
- Work on client experience: pricing guides, email templates, delivery methods to create streamlined and epic experiences for each and every client.
- Publish content that will be helpful for your ideal clients in this season. What questions do they have? What are they googling? Create that and publish.
- Partner with other service providers in your local industry to create a referral network for when your service is back in demand so you can share the work!

## *Product Based Businesses*

Let's dive into proactive things that you can be doing as a product-based business. This can be a hard time when you can't rely on regular foot traffic to drive your sales. I first want to say that I acknowledge how scary this can be and want to offer some ideas to hopefully keep cash flow coming in while interactions are being limited.

- If your products aren't available online, let this be your first priority. Create a pop-up shop or even a curated look at your best sellers available online.
- Create a way for people to purchase gift cards to be used in the future. Make sure gift cards are an option that is easily available and a simple purchase to make.
- Take time to run your data and numbers. Which products are your biggest needle movers? Push those. Which ones are hard to move? Information is power.
- Reach out to your customer database to keep them in the know and to let them know how they can best support you.
- Stay active on social media. People may be making limited purchasing decisions but are more active online and potentially saving items for future purchases.
- Educate people on your product. Use this time to create resources about what you sell and help people imagine themselves being a customer or recipient.
- Up your Pinterest game! It's one of the BEST free traffic drivers out there for products. Keep in mind that Pinterest isn't social media; it's a search engine!
- Start or grow your email list. If you don't have a list of your customers that you can quickly communicate with, this is your time to shine! Focus on this list!
- Work on your on-boarding email sequence for your product. What happens after a client purchases? Refine this to keep clients coming back for more in the future!



## *Online Based Businesses*

I have never looked my privilege of running an online company so square in the eye until this all started shaking out and social distancing threatened millions from being able to punch a time clock and collect a paycheck. If you run an online business, I bet you are feeling immense gratitude right now, but that also doesn't mean we can be stagnant. Here's what I'd recommend doing right now.

- Serve, serve, and serve some more. This is your moment to become a resource. How can you show up for a community that likely needs you right now?
- Let people behind the scenes. For a lot of us, working from home is an everyday occurrence. Share your reality, tips, and tricks to help others feel less alone.
- Educate on what you do, why you do it, and what you're passionate about. A lot of people are seeking information and distraction online right now.
- Refine and hone your skills. If you have time to brush up on your knowledge or expertise with online learning, now is a great time.
- Revisit old content that can still serve your audience. Pull from the archives to re-share content that is still pertinent and applicable to stand as a resource.
- Refresh your online presence. Is your brand up to date? Your information current? Are there areas to improve your copy/images/branding?
- Boost your visibility with more LIVE videos! Jump on Facebook LIVE or IG LIVE and teach something or answer people's biggest questions.
- Run your numbers to gain awareness on what product/s move the needle the most in your business so you can add gasoline to those offers when things pick up.
- Help paint the picture and remove the mystery of remote work or online work so others can begin to see the possibility for themselves.

## *How to Support Other Small Business Owners*

With seasons of unknown, there's inevitable worry about what's to come. One thing I love about small business owners is the love and respect for others on this quest. So many of us are wondering how we can rally around others on parallel paths to ours and how we can all come out of this together.

If you have the means, time, or energy, showing up for your fellow business owners, even in small ways, can be mountain-moving in the long run. We aren't meant to fix everything, but we can move instrumentally in the littlest ways to help others make it through trying times. Here's what you can do to make a difference in coming months:

- **Simply checking in.** Your entrepreneur friends are likely nervous and with schools getting canceled, businesses requesting employees to work from home, and the markets moving in tremendous ways, mental health can be the first thing to take a hit. Call the entrepreneurs you know, ask how they're doing, and see if there's any way you can be there for them in this isolating time.
- **Featuring other small businesses on your channel.** How can you support virtually and celebrate others on this walk? Create a network of local businesses you can lift up, talk about, feature, or celebrate. Rally together as a community and leverage your audiences if it feels like a natural fit.
- **Buy gift cards.** The small businesses in your community, brick and mortars especially, are already taking a hit. Buying a gift card helps fund their expenses and can help to keep their financial state healthy until things bounce back. Think of services you get on a regular basis, restaurants you frequent, and shops you purchase from and if you can, purchase gift cards to be used in at a future date.
- **Donate.** Many non-profits survive on fundraising events and gatherings that have been canceled for the foreseeable future, and several small businesses will also experience a hit in this season. If you have the means, pick 1-5 companies or non-profits that are close to your heart and give what you can. When things slow down, showing up for one another in any way we can is what will keep us all moving forward.

## *A Few Words from Jenna:*

If I know one thing, it's that entrepreneurs are the most resilient human beings I know. While this crisis affects every single one of us, I believe in the grit and tenacity that comes with humans who are wildly passionate about what they do and who they serve.

I don't have a crystal ball but I do cling tightly to a belief that things WILL turn around and when they do, entrepreneurs will likely be in high-demand to fulfill the needs of a world that has been in waiting.

It's challenging to know how and where we should be spending our time but I want to encourage you to spend what you can building out systems that will support you when things pick up again and you find yourself in the busy-ness of being in business.

### **One of the best pieces of advice I've gotten in this season is:**

Don't be so busy falling in love with your product or service that you forget to fall in love with your customer. Get so obsessed with adding value that people can't help but become a fan for life.

The best way to increase your value in this downtime is by improving: improve your systems, improve your skill, improve your strategies... focus on ways you can tangibly improve and better yourself.

I know this is hard, I know we had no warning, I know it feels impossible. You are not alone, I'm cheering you on every step of the way.

You are in my heart and mind, you are who I think of when I create. The world needs what you have to offer. Continue the fight, continue the work that you've started, and continue to hold fast to the faith that you won't just survive but that you will someday soon THRIVE.

All my love,  
*Jenna*