COVID-19 has changed our daily lives. During this time, business leaders need to continue moving their businesses forward with planning and execution of plans to manage employees, cash flow, online sales, and more. The biggest mistake to avoid right now is standing still. Businesses need resources to adapt and create a new plan.

In an effort to help businesses survive and thrive during COVID-19, here are six strategies that can strengthen your business. Mississippi State University Extension faculty members provided an overview of these strategies using a Zoom conference call recently. You can find a link to the presentations below. Also, each faculty member provided valuable resource links that can help your business through COVID-19. Feel free to reach out to any or all of these specialists for more assistance.

The Zoom Webinar

If you want to watch each presentation listed below, please visit [http://extension.msstate.edu/six-strategies-strengthen-your-business-during-covid-19](http://extension.msstate.edu/six-strategies-strengthen-your-business-during-covid-19). What follows is a listing of each faculty member, the topic they presented, and resource links that can help your business during COVID-19.

- **Strategy 1: Create or Improve Your Business Website**
- **Strategy 2: Boosting Your Social Media Engagement**
- **Strategy 3: Turning Your Website into a Sales Machine**
- **Strategy 4: Adapting Business Strategies during COVID-19**
- **Strategy 5: How to Avoid Three Financial Mistakes during COVID-19**
- **Strategy 6: Small Business Administration Resources**

The COVID-19 Toolkit for Businesses

**Strategy 1: Create or Improve Your Business Website**

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**Resource Links**

- **Build a Website with Wix**
  https://mstate-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/pac47_msstate_edu/Ep_05t61rxdHuP4WlkFRmkBhDOInS5856-6FyH0VDGrAA?e=H9xVLR

- **Mobile Friendliness Test**
  https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly

- **Page Speed Test**
  https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/

- **Keyword Planner**
  https://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/

- **Search Engine Optimization Guide**
  https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7451184?hl=en

**Strategy 2: Boosting Your Social Media Engagement**

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**Resource Links**

- **5 Ways to Grow Your Local Foods Business with Facebook**
  http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/5-ways-grow-your-local-foods-business-facebook

- **Helpful Social Media Toolkit from the North Carolina Dept of Health and Human Services**

- **50 Must-Have Remote Working Tools and Apps**

- **Assistance with Ads**
  https://www.facebook.com/business/ads-guide
Crafting Creative Content
https://www.facebook.com/business/inspiration

MSU Extension COVID-19 Information
http://extension.msstate.edu/food-and-health/health/coronavirus

Strategy 3: Turning Your Website into a Sales Machine
James Barnes, PhD
Associate Professor and Extension Economist
Department of Agricultural Economics
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Resource Links
Schedule a Free Website Review
https://brickstoclicks.extension.msstate.edu/

How to Build a Website That Sells

3 Website Mistakes Your Business Should Avoid (Complete video)
https://brickstoclicks.extension.msstate.edu/videos

Free Tool to Pivot Your Marketing Message During Covid-19
https://www.mystorybrand.com/

Rachael Carter, PhD
Extension Economist
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Resource Links
NAICS Code Look Up
https://www.naics.com/search/

Disaster Loan Applications
https://www.sba.gov/page/disaster-loan-applications

Paycheck Protection Program
https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/paycheck-protection-program

Guide for Home-Based Business
http://srdc.msstate.edu/cashing/

Developing a Marketing Plan
http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/growing-your-brand-developing-marketing-plan-workbook

Rural Tourism Toolbox
https://gcd.extension.msstate.edu/educational-programs/community-development/tourism/rural-tourism-toolbox

Strategy 5: How to Avoid Three Financial Mistakes during COVID-19
Becky Smith, PhD, FFC®
Director, MSU Extension Center for Economic Education and Financial Literacy
State Family Financial Management Specialist
Assistant Extension Professor and Extension Economist
Department of Agricultural Economics
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Resource Links
Managing Personal Finances during COVID-19
http://extension.msstate.edu/content/managing-personal-finances-during-covid-19

Managing Stress and Anxiety

Protect Yourself Financially from Coronavirus

Learn about Investing
https://www.finra.org/investors#
https://www.saveandinvest.org/
https://www.smartaboutmoney.org/Courses/My-Retirement-Plan

Fee-Only Financial Advisors
https://www.napfa.org/find-an-advisor

National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC)
https://www.nfcc.org/about-us/

Strategy 6: Small Business Administration Resources for COVID-19
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Conclusion

COVID-19 will end at some point. The economy will recover at some point, too. In the meantime, businesses that continue moving forward will be the ones that prosper during and after COVID-19. Remember this: After the 2008 recession, many successful companies emerged. Here is a short list of some successful companies that launched after the 2008 recession (Conklin, 2020):

- WhatsApp
- Venmo
- Groupon
- Instagram
- Uber
- Pinterest
- Slack

Keep your business moving forward by adapting to the changing circumstances of COVID-19. Please contact the Extension faculty members listed here to help your business continue to move forward during this crisis.

References
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