

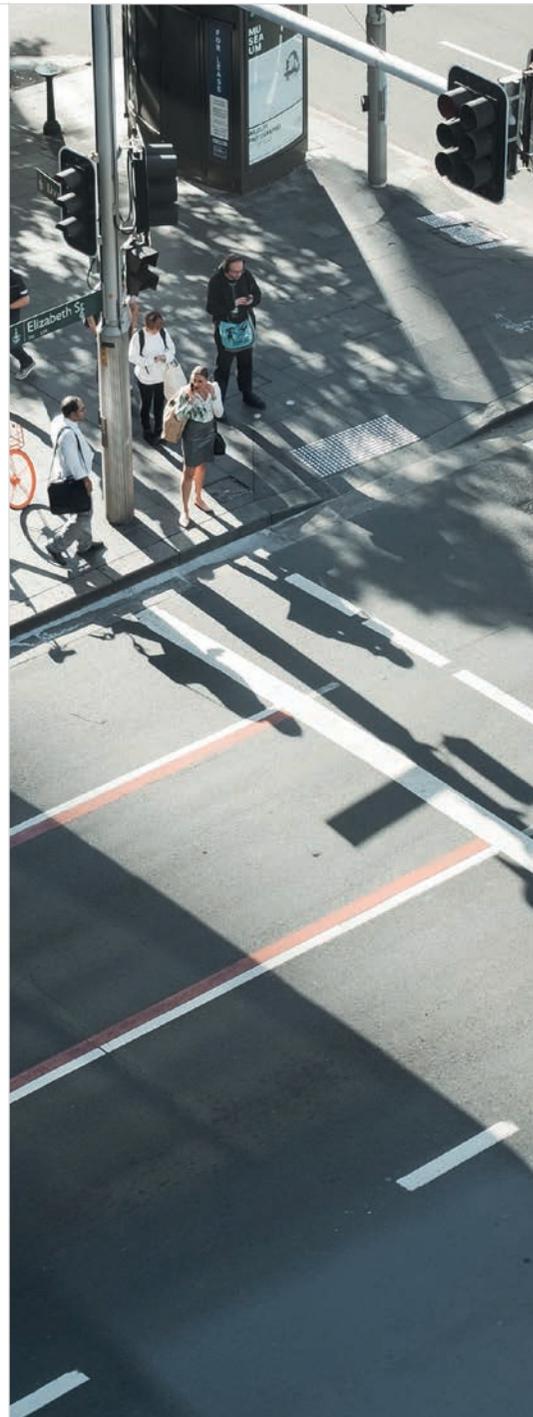
# back on track & embrace the future

—————> a map to success

The current crisis brings challenges for brand strategists. We see brands that are encountering problems as they hold their focus on the negative, close their eyes and let fear prevent them from communicating. We even see companies that have suspended all communications with their teams and customers, even though this is clearly a time for social engagement with all stakeholders. Why is it that lovemarks and superbrands are excelling and their messages of solidarity achieving such outstanding results? It is because, like crowds lining the course of a marathon, they are standing on the sidelines cheering everyone along.

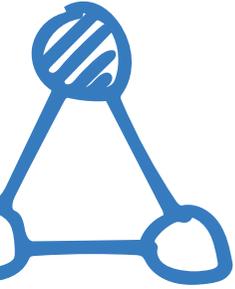
Working from our love of brands, we have created a hands-on plan that will help you get your brand back on track. It is an approach that will give you the tools you need to get to work and set the right priorities. We are excited to help you prepare for a new future.

Now, more than ever, the motto is **'be prepared'**.



# A map to success

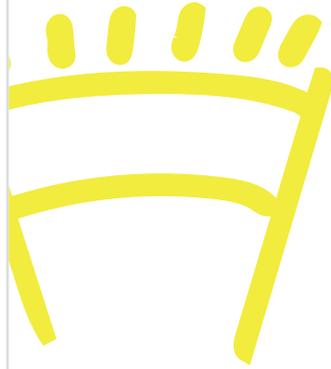
'The new normal' global approach



## check-up

The 'check-up' is the starting point for everything. Take charge and organize everything that makes up your brand. Create an appropriate multidisciplinary team that includes people from R&D, finance, marketing, sales and other relevant areas. Compile reports based on recent data so that you can make accurate analyses rapidly and draw the right conclusions.

Take plenty of time for this, because these actions will lay an important foundation for the future. This is the ideal time to call on the expertise of comma, brand strategists and our focus on positioning. These steps are essential for customer retention and for the next phases of the process.



## inspire

Next, inspire all stakeholders. And do not forget a single group, because these days people are much more likely to lose their motivation or become disenchanted. As a leader, it is important that you provide an example and give off the right vibe. If you find this difficult, I will be happy to refer you to the human strategists.

Apart from all of this, your staff also play a major roll. They are your brand ambassadors and promote the right message every single day. Then there are all of the other stakeholders: active customers and recent customers, first-time buyers and repeat buyers, prospects, suppliers, neighbourhood residents, trade publications, the government and more. Your story needs to both inspire them and ramp up their motivation.



## experience stories together

Once we have done all this, we will be ready to experience stories together: in other words, to start storytelling. This is not a time for sales pitches, but for real stories. We must demonstrate our solidarity with the rest of society, with our hearts in the right place. This means using the right tone of voice and a specific means of communication for each target group. For one this may be a message on social media, for another a YouTube film and for yet another an e-mail message or a formal letter. The point is to determine the most effective channel. To communicate – but taking care not to be too effusive, since that can tarnish a reputation rather than boosting it.

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All of this means taking a pro-active approach with an engaged team and customers and via relevant channels of communication. And continuously seeking out social engagement. This will enable you to evolve, so that you can repeat the process of applying the check-up and continuing to grow and learn.

# How should you start working on your personal ‘back on track & embrace the future’ plan?

## We have created a helpful guideline.

The best way to start is by considering the following questions.

- **Why is the crisis having such an impact (part of which may be positive) on my business and my brand?** For example, is it due to the type of business, customer or channel, or is it something else?
- **Could we have responded differently if, at a much earlier stage, we had taken steps to mitigate the impact of a potential crisis?** For example, by looking at different kinds of customers, different markets, different communication mediums and channels, or by calling in the help of partners or doing a bit more ourselves?
- **What suddenly started working well during lockdown? Did that require any specific action? How can we keep that going as we move forward?**
- **With regard to personnel, did we make the right choices and communicate adequately?**
- **How are our competitors responding?**
- **How are our customers faring? How hard have they been hit by the crisis? What have we learned during the crisis that could be of help to them?**



Besides these questions, you can also base your response on the turnover that you still have, compared to what you normally would have expected. This is the best measure by which to define a specific plan of action for your business. One of the first questions to ask yourself is:

“  
How can I get started if I don't even know when I can reopen my company, organization or store?”

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This is a legitimate and understandable question. But remember: now is the best time to prepare for when things eventually get going again. And this requires a proactive approach, since a brand has to recover after customers have lost sight of it. **Use the time as efficiently as possible to prepare. Remain constantly involved and flexible and ensure that you stay fit and alert.**

- Monitor your brand, your market segment and your market sensitivity
- Carry out a major positioning rethink
- Revamp your business model canvas
- Determine your business strategy
- Determine your specific communication style
- Ensure you are ‘mean and lean’
- In a positive way, make sure your message promotes unity

# We have prepared four scenarios for restarting based on turnover

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## 0 %

### comeback

- Start over from scratch
- Think strategically based on your positioning and business model canvas
- Work towards short-term measurable results and planning

## 25 %

### zoom

- About 25% of normal turnover, which is an ideal opportunity to zoom in on where this share comes from
- Examine your business model canvas and adjust your positioning
- There are probably new opportunities out there, and you could adapt your communication plan to appeal to them as well as to your traditional target groups

## 50 %

### boost

- About 50% of normal turnover, which opens up even more opportunities. Make sure your digital strategy is ready so you can place a short-term focus here in addition to the communication plan that you already had in place

## +75 %

### growth

- If you are currently able to generate 75% of your usual turnover, then you can certainly aim for growth. It is extremely useful to take a good look at your product or marketing strategy to find out where the winners are
- From here, develop a strong digital strategy with a short-term communication focus that will enable you to work towards rapid, measurable results



# Now is the time to start

**If you want to take charge of these issues, now is the time to start. Do not delay. Instead, start preparing. Additionally, make sure you have an efficient dashboard that will enable you to measure your progress using clear KPIs and good, simple reporting. And also make sure to discuss your findings in digital meetings or talks with marketing experts.**

**We will be happy to guide you through this process. For every scenario, we have a road map ready and we are eager to demonstrate our solidarity. Our daily work is to support our customers as they proceed through digital transformations and to show them how they can adopt agile working methods. Moreover, customers who use these services are entitled to subsidies through the SME wallet (KMO-portefeuille).**

I look forward helping you.

Greetje Demuelenaere,  
founder comma, brand strategist

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## organize and evolve

build the right team: multidisciplinary work with the right data



## motivate all stakeholders

yourself  
team  
customers  
suppliers  
...



## communicate no overload

support  
no focus on sales  
correct tone of voice  
most efficient channel



linger in negativity

no communication out of fear

close the eyes

pause button

budget cut

no communication to team

turnover today vs. target	0%	25%	50%	+75%
scenario	comeback	zoom	boost	growth

### 3

main to do's

- ✓ relaunch communication plan
- ✓ OTS
- ✓ focus conversion

- ✓ target group change
- ✓ check business strategy & opportunity
- ✓ relaunch communication plan

- ✓ target group change
- ✓ check business strategy & opportunity
- ✓ digital strategy communication focus

- ✓ product/market analysis
- ✓ target group change
- ✓ digital strategy communication focus

## prepare yourself now

