

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MEDIA/MARKETING AND COVID-19

**Q: How do we spread the word that our business, school or church is open and taking safety precautions?**

A: You can spread the word in all the traditional ways: advertising, flyers, open houses, social media. Let your local Chamber of Commerce know as well.

In addition, consider sending out a Press Release or holding a Press Conference. A Press Conference actually makes your job easier by having to share your news once, rather than conducting separate interviews with each reporter. A Press Conference can be done via Zoom, but showing the media the precautions you are taking might be helpful as well. This is a good opportunity to share modified hours, mask expectations, etc.

**Q: Can I share that I've consulted with Lakeland Regional Health for a safe reopening?**

A: If you've used our experts and materials as a foundation for reopening your business, school or organization, you are more than welcome to mention that you've consulted with Lakeland Regional Health for COVID-Safe practices.

**Q: What if we have a COVID-19 outbreak at our business? Do I alert the media?**

A: When alerting the media and community that you have a public health outbreak at your business, a number of factors must be considered:

- Have customers been exposed to the virus/disease?
- Will you be violating the privacy of your employees by making an announcement?
- Is transparency a trait that your customers, employees and colleagues value in your business?
- What are state and local regulations regarding reporting cases and are these reports public record?

By and large, transparency, empathy and compassion are paramount. Your decision will be a balance between your desire for privacy and the need to be fair and honest. Consumers tend to favor brands that have been forthright.

**Q: What if a news reporter contacts us and we don't want to speak to them?**

A: Earning favorable publicity from the media is great, particularly because it is free. However, sometimes the media has questions that can put your business or organization in a negative light. If you are not comfortable with answering questions, it is OK to let the reporter know that you need more time or would prefer not to participate in an interview. The resulting story may note that you would not comment for the story or the reporter may not mention you in the article.

**Q: How do I market my business with all of the restrictions in place?**

A: Think of all the innovative ways to reach your customers, students and members now. More people are on Zoom, using Instacart and shopping online than ever before. Innovate when trying to connect with your customers, patients, students and congregants. For instance, hold a Virtual Tasting or Meetup or Choir Rehearsal. The community is looking for ways to connect and make a difference. Your business and organization can be a proactive partner in keeping our community safe and making it better. Use your owned media and channels, such as social media accounts, to foster a sense of community.