

ARE YOU READY? EVOLVE, LAUNCH, ADAPT (DOWNTOWN TAURANGA)

9.30am, Friday 24 April 2020

Here are our notes from Downtown Tauranga's webinar 'Are you ready? Evolve, launch, adapt' which includes great suggestions for businesses as they prepare to move down the alert levels.

Speakers:

- Sally Cooke, Downtown Tauranga / Tuskany Agency
 - Pascale Hyboud-Peron, Venture Centre
 - Craig Williams, financial advisor
 - Millie Hewitt, Downtown Tauranga
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Sally Cooke, Downtown Tauranga / Tuskany Agency

- Instead of the usual 'evolve, adapt, launch', these uncertain times call for an 'evolve, launch, adapt' strategy. Rapid pivoting will be required on an ongoing basis as we evolve during this time of constant change.
 - For the businesses opening on Tuesday next week, you will do things very differently. Make changes, go again, adjust and go again to find out what works. It is okay not to have all the answers now. This is a time of evolution – move, evolve and adapt.
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Sally Cooke, Downtown Tauranga / Tuskany Agency (cont.)

- You also don't know how your customers are going to respond. What are their needs and how will they behave? What health & safety measures will they be comfortable/uncomfortable with? We will all be living a new 'normal'.
- Communication is key – what products/services will you be offering, are there products/services that your customers might want that you are not providing but could, what health & hygiene measures do you have in place to make them feel safe. The last one is key because you don't know what impact health & hygiene will have on consumer habits.
- This is a complete reset with 'a green lining'. Be ambitious and work out how you can thrive in an environment which is environmentally sound, socially sound and economically sound.
- We are entering a period of disruption – businesses will be disrupting the market with their offerings. You need to reconnect with your customers, so they remember you. The digital space is the right place to do this.

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Sally Cooke, Downtown Tauranga / Tuskany Agency (cont.)

- In the digital space you will need to redesign your value proposition to the customer. What are all the things you could supply to them that they have missed during lockdown? Redesign the value you provide, don't take this for granted – customers are the reason that you are there. How can you add to their experience?
- Rebuild as you go – be authentic, only put out a few product lines to start, use digital to test before you go to market to save wastage (ie food businesses). An example is saying that a certain food item will only be available on Fridays and that customers need to put their order in on Thursday – bake to order.
- There are lots of things we can't control, so only focus on the things you can control. Make sure your health & safety approach gives customers security, update your packaging to reflect this.
- Think of new ways to operate while in restricted conditions, e.g. a restaurant started curating and delivering wine packages with tasting notes.

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Sally Cooke, Downtown Tauranga / Tuskany Agency (cont.)

- Cashflow is the most important thing, so you need to keep your brand in front of current and potential customers, e.g. have virtual browsing if your shop can't open to the public, or a personal shopping service. E.g. a restaurant packages up food and 'delivers' it via a local grocery store.
 - Click and collect, free delivery and how to manage social distancing challenges are all things businesses will need to consider.
 - A key opportunity is to use digital media to ask your customers what they want. Is it the same as what you think they want?
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Craig Williams, financial expertise

- Some of the things businesses need to change will be small tweaks – how they engage with customers, how they make transactions, how they manage their supply chain and how they access resources.
 - There is a strong drive around supporting local and community.
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Craig Williams, financial expertise (cont.)

- Be open to receiving feedback, accept that things will have to change, get clarity around the objectives of your organisation and prioritise the most important things. Is this reducing your cost base or recruitment?
 - What is your digital maturity? Identify quick wins, i.e. cashflow – how to you get more money in the door?
 - Is there an opportunity to create a new product, e.g. the wooden suitcase manufacturer that became a manufacturer of desks for home offices?
 - Develop a customised action plan – what are the steps, assess the impact as you go. Think about collaborative opportunities, even with businesses that you previously viewed as competitors.
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Pascale Hyboud-Peron, Venture Centre

- Take time to look outside your business and look at the landscape. What is happening next door? How can we work together to create something innovative and new?

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Pascale Hyboud-Peron, Venture Centre (cont.)

- Do you have an email list or a social media network where you can communicate with your customers that you are ready to do business post-lockdown and what that might look like? Is your website up to date in terms of what and how you can deliver?
- Don't think you have to do it all on your own – there are many people you can work with, e.g. a delivery business, a marketing or social media company. Focus on the high-level elements. If your door is not physically open, how can you attract customers?
- What does digital look like across your whole business – this is the entrepreneurial mind-set.
- You are not on your own – there are many people/service that will be able to support you during this time, although many are also navigating the 'new normal'.
- There is a cost to what you decide to invest in. Digital can be expensive but learning how to maximise the outcomes from a Facebook page is not. Think about sending personalised emails to your customers letting them know how they can find you, speak to you and order from you.
- Share good news stories so others can learn from your experiences.

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PoweringOn Programme

- This is a FREE digital assessment programme funded by Tauranga City Council and Western Bay District Council via Priority One and delivered by Venture Centre.
- It includes a digital assessment, digital navigator clinics and digital & entrepreneurial workshops with people that can help you on your digital journey. It starts with a questionnaire so you /PoweringOn can gauge where you are on your journey.
- The programme looks at everything you have and how it is put together and then they work on making your business as efficient as possible.
- Craig Williams runs a FREE digital navigator panel session every Thursday.
- At the end of the programme there is an assessment of your digital/entrepreneurial position via an online workshop taking up to 60 minutes.
- There are lots of people that are ready to help, and this is a good time to upskill. PoweringOn runs succinct workshops that provide practical advice for your business.
- Email poweringon@venturecentre.co.nz

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General

- Collaboration has a new meaning in these times. Who else can you talk to? It might be a competitor who is experiencing similar things to you and who can provide some reciprocal guidance or someone who is in the same business – either in your own area or elsewhere in New Zealand/internationally.
- Share insights, swap stories, give and receive feedback. You will get energy and bulk up your reserves from knowing you are not doing this alone.
- Try, try, try again – over and over and you will learn lessons and find success.
- Venture Centre also run entrepreneurial workshops which focus on testing ideas fast and failing fast and trying again – efficient use of time and resources.
- Downtown Tauranga has seen opportunities to host bespoke webinars, for example digital retail and digital hospitality.
- Things that people thought were working well included Zoom connections, social media connections and the opportunity to support local business.
- The thing that people were most fearful of was that people won't come back to their product/service.
- Now is the time to touch base with your loyal customers and ask them what they need from you.

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General (cont.)

- New tagline for Downtown Tauranga: “My business depends on you.”
- Initiatives are cropping up to make it easier to connect with customers and strengthen the ‘support local’ call – sosafe and wearlocal to name a couple.
- Downtown Tauranga website will list those businesses that are essential services as well as those able to open under alert level 3 conditions and how they will be conducting their business. Visit downtowntauranga.co.nz.