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# HOW MANUFACTURERS *can* BUILD RESILIENT SALES OPERATIONS THROUGH CRISIS *and* RECOVERY

Best Practices for Effective Engagement  
in a Digital-first World



# INTRODUCTION

We are in the midst of an unprecedented crisis that is causing serious economic hardships across the globe. Things are changing quickly, and there's an urgent need for manufacturers to build a resilient response to the crisis.

Decisions you make now will help you preserve options, and even open new doors, so you can act quickly and with more confidence when the time is right.

This guide offers steps you can take to increase your organization's ability to rapidly sense and respond to shifts in the landscape. Consider it a roadmap to help you stabilize your company, get back to work, and eventually – when we emerge from this crisis – grow your business.

## **USE THIS GUIDE AS YOUR ROADMAP TO RAPID RECOVERY:**

How do you create stability?

How do you get your employees back to work?

How will you grow the business?



# THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IS EVOLVING

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a tidal wave of change that was already brewing in the industry. Disruption is creating far-reaching and long-lasting impact, and manufacturers must adapt to the demands of this “new normal.”



## **PRODUCT SUPPLY AND DEMAND IS DISRUPTED.**

As the pandemic has spread over the last several months, it has disrupted supply chains for products and components globally. It's increasingly difficult to understand the demand picture and respond to supply shortfalls, while ensuring you have right-sized operations and staffing levels for the current environment.

## **THE CHANGING WORKFORCE IS NEWLY REMOTE.**

Manufacturers were already feeling the pressure of needing to leverage new technologies to attract and retain a quality workforce. Now, as entire workforces have shifted to remote working models, it's become imperative to have the right tools to share information and collaborate with colleagues in real-time.

## **CUSTOMERS HAVE HIGHER EXPECTATIONS.**

Buyers expect transparency and personalized engagement. In a connected world, every single interaction with your company matters – whether it's with their sales rep or a dealer or distributor. To create a consistent, cohesive brand experience, anyone engaging your customer must work off of the same information.

## **GLOBAL PLAYERS ARE DISRUPTING CHANNELS AND SALES MODELS.**

Manufacturers have been facing fierce global competition, as innovative companies use technology to introduce new products, services, and strategies. Now, survival depends on selling through digital channels.

**66%** of sales reps' time is spent on non-selling activities

~70% of that is spent manually looking for, validating, and formatting data across multiple systems<sup>1</sup>

### **MANUAL PROCESSES INTERRUPT SELLING TIME.**

Reps need to spend their time connecting with customers, not bogged down with inefficient processes.

### **REPS LACK A 360-DEGREE CUSTOMER VIEW.**

Reps need visibility across teams and data systems to get a deep understanding of their customers' needs, respond quickly, and build long-term value.



# PRIORITIES FOR THE PATH AHEAD

As you navigate your response to the crisis, it's valuable to take a structured approach to the decisions you need to make, and when. The path forward includes three stages:

## STAGE 1

### STABILIZE YOUR COMPANY

Mitigate short-term risks and stabilize operations during rapid, unexpected change.

## STAGE 2

### SHIFT BACK TO WORK

Plan and orchestrate the return to the workplace, with a focus on enabling remote work and effectively communicating with customers.

## STAGE 3

### GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Accelerate change to grow as a more digital, agile company post-crisis and into the future.



## TO ACHIEVE THOSE BUSINESS PRIORITIES, MANUFACTURERS NEED TO FOCUS ON THREE AREAS:



### Build digital agility and sell from anywhere

Prepare for recovery and lay the foundation for future innovation and ecosystem engagement. Business continuity and growth depends on your ability to empower your workforce to make proactive business decisions and quickly adjust to changing circumstances while working from home.



### Connect your teams, engage your customers

Empower remote employees with connected tools and processes that will streamline mission-critical operations and help them move faster and engage better with each other and their customers.



### Reimagine and optimize your organization

Extend existing investments and deepen your commitment to improve the employee, customer, and distributor experience. The shift to digital is now imperative, and will advance the shift from transactional sales to strategic relationships that deliver long-term value.

# REIMAGINE AND OPTIMIZE YOUR ORGANIZATION TO NAVIGATE CRISIS AND RECOVERY

To gain a competitive edge, manufacturers must focus on transforming CRM processes to drive resilience throughout each stage of response and recovery. Reimagine how you build digital agility, connect your teams, and engage your ecosystem in order to decrease operating risk, improve productivity, and build stronger strategic relationships.



STAGE 1

STAGE 2

STAGE 3

## STAGE 1

### STABILIZE YOUR COMPANY

In this stage, focus on employee health and safety, financial stability, and operational decisions. The goal is to manage the crisis as quickly as you can.

Keep in mind that different businesses, business units, and geographies will be operating at different paces and these stages will be somewhat fluid as the environment continues to shift.







## BUILD DIGITAL AGILITY

Create a stabilization plan to drive quick decision making around changing priorities.

- Extend visibility of real-time CRM data, constant communication, and real-time collaboration across functional groups
- Align around key resources and priorities in one centralized place that's easily accessible to all team members
- Drive accountability and ownership around key tasks and action items

Establish a company-wide data culture for effective communication and collaboration.

- Provide the real-time CRM visibility and insights managers need to effectively support their teams and ensure business continuity
- Give employees at home the same access to make better, faster, data-driven decisions in support of their customers
- Empower employees across the organization – whether they are CRM users or not – with a single source of truth where they can access the latest customer data



## CONNECT YOUR TEAMS

Empower remote employee productivity and collaboration with digital tools and streamlined processes

- Enable real-time collaboration and communication around live CRM data
- Ensure remote connectivity with seamless mobile and offline access
- Automate manual sales processes (e.g. data entry, content creation) to improve efficiency and accuracy
- Standardize best practices and guidance within customizable resources in CRM

### CHECKLIST:

Best-in-class digital collaboration tools that drive success

- ☑ Real-time co-creation, editing, and collaboration
- ☑ Built-in chat functionality
- ☑ Real-time collaboration around live CRM data, reports, and dashboards
- ☑ Internal and external document sharing and permissions
- ☑ Mobile and offline access



## ENGAGE YOUR ECOSYSTEM

Rapidly engage priority customers and reduce friction in existing deal cycles by maintaining a real-time, 360-degree view of all your key accounts.

- Centralize all account data and knowledge within your single source of truth in CRM
- Have full visibility into an account's relationship history, operations, and live CRM data
- Collaborate around live data and insights in real-time to ensure timely customer engagement

Optimize digital engagement channels for accessible, collaborative interactions with distributors.

- Replace face-to-face interactions with digital engagements and virtual collaboration
- Use real-time collaboration tools to expedite communication and stay in sync on fast-moving plans
- Align around key work streams and priorities in one centralized place that's easily accessible by all members of the extended team

## MANUFACTURER CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT



3M is playing an important role in the fight against COVID-19, supplying masks and respirators to healthcare providers and organizations in other critical sectors such as energy and food production. The company recognizes the importance of transparent communication and the power of technology to connect employees around the globe. Since the outbreak, it's had to rethink business planning and operations between sales teams and their distributors. This includes:

- Improving collaboration and communication between teams and external distributors
- Standardizing global sales processes to ensure visibility into the current and future health of the business
- Streamlining operational sales processes so reps can focus on customer needs
- Quickly shifting resources across its many distribution partners and manufacturing centers to optimize production
- Keeping external partners updated on internal accounts to overcome remote collaboration challenges

[Learn more about how 3M is managing sales teams from home.](#)

STAGE 1

STAGE 2

STAGE 3

## STAGE 2

### SHIFT BACK TO WORK

In this stage, focus on resuming operations while protecting employees, customers, and distributors. This includes planning how you will get employees back into workplaces safely, and effectively addressing shifting business priorities and needs.





## BUILD DIGITAL AGILITY

Orchestrate the return to work by building a “Back to Work” plan.

- Work collaboratively in real-time to define mobilization, logistics, and support plans
- Centralize feedback and decision-making within a single source of truth
- Leverage live data/dashboards, reports, and real-time collaboration in context
- Address questions and augment insights through multiple feedback loops



## CONNECT YOUR TEAMS

Establish centralized information hubs within a single source of truth to support employees as they return to the workplace.

- Cascade the Back to Work plan
- Communicate expectations around new health attestation, workplace policies, etc.
- Include on-boarding and training resources around new ways of working and selling
- Ensure a timely, consistent cadence of updates and employee feedback



## ENGAGE YOUR ECOSYSTEM

Maintain open lines of communication with distributors and customers.

- Communicate new back-to-work updates and policies that affect distribution operations
- Realign around changing priorities and customer offerings with distributors in real-time
- Empower divisions across your ecosystem to remain consistent with HQ

## HOW ONE GLOBAL MANUFACTURER IS GETTING BACK TO WORK

In response to the crisis, a leading multinational auto manufacturer was able to quickly enable a new communication platform for their truck manufacturing plant employees, spanning nine locations across two continents.

They used Quip to implement a company-wide information hub including “welcome back” content, a letter from leadership, on-boarding resources, and communication around new workforce policies. Employees were able to easily navigate to regional information hubs created for their specific plant location, which included local news, updates, policies, and resources.

They will continue to expand the communications platform, ensuring over 13,000 employees in their plant production and distribution centers have access to critical on-boarding resources and technical support.



STAGE 1

STAGE 2

STAGE 3

## STAGE 3

### GROW YOUR BUSINESS

In this stage, focus on how to get your organization into growth mode. What have you learned in the first two phases that you will need to scale and accelerate? How will you emerge and grow to become a more digital, agile company post-crisis?





## BUILD DIGITAL AGILITY

Continuously monitor changing conditions and respond with agility.

- Define and implement “next normal KPIs” around the customer lifecycle experience
- Audit and optimize the customer and distributor experience for simplicity and speed
- Harness digital technologies to refine core sales processes and new ways of working



## CONNECT YOUR TEAMS

Re-engage your workforce by creating a personalized and digital work environment that helps supercharge productivity.

- Enable employees to work from anywhere, on any device
- Provide access to education and up-skilling around must-have skills
- Integrate and automate processes across front-, middle-, and back-offices
- Encourage ongoing feedback to promote transparency and rapid innovation







## ENGAGE YOUR ECOSYSTEM

Enable the full power of your company and ecosystem to retain and grow business.

- Connect your digital touchpoints across your entire ecosystem to build resilience
- Leverage live CRM data to build strategic account strategies that help reps nurture existing customer relationships, identify white space opportunities, and drive sales
- Extend real-time data, insights, and 360-degree visibility to your broader ecosystem, enabling distributors to optimize their business with you

## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS HAVE CHANGED— FOR GOOD.

Employees are collaborating in new ways and now expect a personalized and digital experience to work, whether they are in an office or at home. Attract and retain your employees by ensuring they:

-  Work from anywhere
-  Develop and grow with continual reskilling and up-skilling
-  Can focus on high-value activities because routine tasks are automated
-  Know their feedback is valued

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**REIMAGINE HOW YOU ENGAGE WITH TEAMS  
AND CUSTOMERS THROUGH EACH STAGE OF  
RESPONSE AND RECOVERY WITH QUIP.**

**LEARN MORE**

