



## **Instant Think Tank—Open Source Ideas for Businesses to Survive, and even Thrive in COVID-19 Times**

**April 2020**

One of the best things that has happened during the COVID-19 crisis is the way people have come together to help each other. In the business world, companies small and large are yearning for ideas, for a path forward from this worldwide shutdown.

What better way to help than to gather 25 strong thought leaders (representing a broad array of industries and possessing more than 500 years of collective experience) in order to build an open-source idea bank of ways to survive—and even thrive—as we come out of COVID-19 lockdown?

Welcome to the Instant Think Tank project.

# Instant Think Tank—Open Source Ideas for Businesses to Survive, and even Thrive in COVID-19 Times

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## The Instant Think Tank considered three essential questions:

- Adapt—What can be done now to survive?
- Evolve—What can be done in the near-term as businesses re-open to the public?
- Accelerate—What can be learned from this experience to emerge better and stronger in the future?

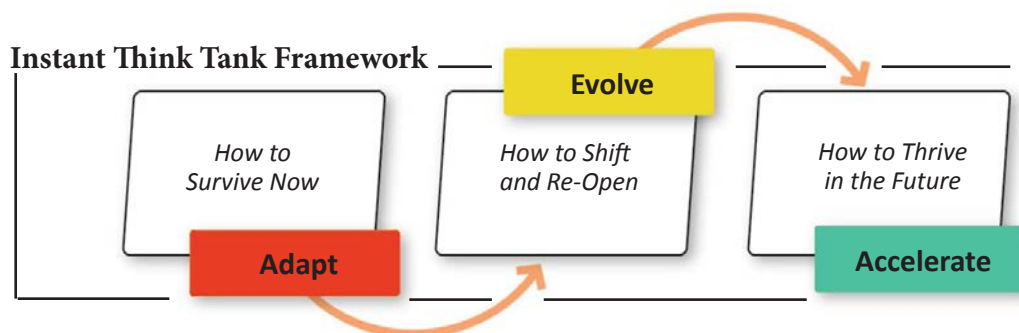
## We applied these essential questions to four industries:

- Restaurants
- Retail
- Hotels
- Office Work

The process involved ideation sessions moderated online. Each participant received a pre-work packet and was assigned to work on a business sector other than their own.

The result: More than 200 fresh ideas to apply or use as inspiration by small businesses, compiled in one document, available to anyone.

Of note, there has been no vetting or testing of these ideas. Surely, some will work and some may not; that's the nature of ideation. Everything is valid to consider because it's an idea. Each business that reads them will be in a position to know what works for them, and be able to adapt accordingly, or perhaps just use the list as inspiration for their own brainstorm.



## Contributors to the Instant Think Tank Include:

Name	Professional Role	Company/Industry	Experience
Dan Ahern	Director of Global Innovation and Design	Graphic Packaging International	30+
Cathy Allin	Executive	Decision Insight	20+
Iliana Alvarado	Director of Innovation	Evans Consulting	20+
Linda Brunzell	Executive	Consumer Goods Industry	20+
Chad Cornett	Co-Founder	ZQUARED LLC	10+
Lori Herman	Senior Management	Mondelēz International	20+
Jackie Holliday	VP Marketing / Management	Roush Enterprises	10+
Jon Knudson	Commercial Real Estate	Insight Gold	20+
Kim Leintz	Consultant/Manager	Weight Watchers International	20+
Carissa Luch	Marketing Research Leader	Consumer Packaged Goods	30+
Vince Mancuso <sup>4</sup>	Independent Consultant	Food and Beverage Industry	30+
Geoff Marko <sup>2</sup>	Principal	BrandHouse	30+
Regina Mayzum	Manager	Kimberly-Clark	20+
Benjamin Moll	Independent Consultant	Education and Strategy Industries	10+
Aura Nelson	Manager	Wolverine Worldwide Inc.	10+
Keith Robinson	Co-Founder	StratFix	40+
Tad Rzonca	Founder	V3Gate	20+
Sandi Straetker <sup>3</sup>	Principal/Owner	Priority Public Relations Ilc	30+
Kelley Styring <sup>1</sup>	Principal	InsightFarm Inc.	30+
Unnamed	Corporate Marketing	Financial Services Industry	20+
Michelle Walker	CEO and General Manager	Consumer Goods Industry	20+
Carrie Williams	Founder & Principal Strategist	Brand Lab, LLC	30+

1. Moderation & Reporting

2. Graphic Design & Illustration

3. Public Relations

4. Leadership Team Member

## Here are the Ideas:

### Restaurants - Adapt

In the Adapt phase, it's all about providing in-home experiences that capture the ambiance or experience of that particular Restaurant. Leveraging curbside pickup and delivery into more than "just takeout" helps brand the experience. And using technology to create some of the connection we feel when dining out adds uniqueness.

A selection of Ideas:

- Elevate the take home experience to help create ambiance. Special packaging, inserts describing the chef's thoughts about the meal, and even including a signature serving item that can become part of a collector's set, like a fork or napkin that's branded. Go beyond takeout and create an experience at home.
- Package signature sauces or dressings in takeout containers that can be carried out and used at home.
- Chef's webcam to watch the meal of the day being prepared. Let diners into the process.
- Become a curbside pickup bakery for fresh breads and desserts.
- Families sign up in advance for a pickup, once a week, and connect with other families via Zoom during the meal. The chef can kick off the call by introducing the inspiration for the meal and preparation tips.



Above: Chef's webcam to watch the meal-of-the-day being prepared.

## Restaurants – Evolve

In the Evolve phase, Instant Think Tank contributors thought about safety first—for workers and diners—and how this would meld with ambiance and the enjoyment of eating out. Most of the ideas centered on separation—by time or space. Some also felt strongly that eating at home would persist so takeout and delivery enhancements are key themes.

A selection of Ideas:

- Construct safe distance by limiting tables and spreading them out. Creating barriers between tables, almost like diner booths but with walls. And creating one-way traffic flow from the door to your table and out the back.
- Eliminate waiting for a table. One price meals paid in advance and by reservation only. Diners have a two-hour block of time to arrive and enjoy. Then the table is disinfected and reset for the next party. No walk-ins allowed.
- Servers will wear masks and gloves but they should be aesthetically designed to match the restaurant's theme. Similarly, paths from the kitchen to the tables must be one-way to avoid passing each other.
- Since table occupancy and turns will be much lower, encourage two-for-one orders—one meal you eat now and one packaged to take home. Also offer carryout meal kits with tomorrow's special you can prepare at home.
- Create subscription meal kits, you can pick up or have delivered that feature Restaurant meals.

## Restaurants – Accelerate

Many ideas for the future require planning that begins now. Many restaurants may need to be redesigned to allow the right flow and spacing long-term. Kitchens may need to move some steps in preparation offsite to limit the people in the kitchen. And ultimately, private dining or in-home chefs may emerge as a more broadscale industry.

A selection of Ideas:

- Use commissaries or separate space to remove prepping from the kitchen. Use this for chopping vegetables, preparing stocks and sauces.
- Create Sous Vide processes where dishes are built offsite in a larger, more spacious facility and a skeleton crew in the restaurant kitchen finishes and plates meals as they are served. This could be combined with prep kitchen idea above.
- Continue to build curbside pickup and meal kits. Keep these new ways of doing business strong and grow them. Consider a separate off-site kitchen to fulfill orders and manage flow.
- Provide catering services or deploy teams into private homes to prepare and serve meals.

## Hotels – Adapt

For Hotels in the Adapt phase, it's all about considering the assets a hotel may have and redeploying those assets to generate revenue, or in some cases, contribute to the community and build good will. Some of these ideas repurpose rooms or fitness centers. Other deploy cleaning and laundry services to alternative uses. Many of these ideas can be deployed right now to help hotels generate revenue and employ staff.

A selection of Ideas:

- Offer hotel rooms as safe, private dining rooms for local restaurant customers. Remove the beds and reset with dining tables and chairs, bringing restaurant ambiance into each room.
- Project a movie on the side of the building and use the parking lot as a drive-in movie theater. Offer a box meal from the hotel restaurant for in-car dining while you watch the film.

- Lease fitness centers to professional athletes or elite athletes as a safe, private gym.
- Open laundry service to the public. Those who would typically use a laundromat could receive safer service or anyone could wash large items in the hotel laundry they can't wash at home.
- Deploy cleaning teams to deep clean schools while closed, or temporary hospital locations while in use.



Hotel Parking Lot Drive-In Movie Night

## Hotels – Evolve

Hotels will continue to struggle even as other businesses reopen. Business travel will remain curtailed and leisure travel will be fraught with worry about how to stay safe. Other thoughts focused on how to use the wide-open space of ballrooms to meet community needs.

A selection of ideas:

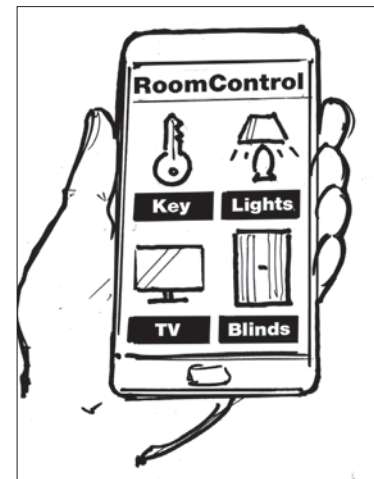
- Provide cues that each room is sanitized just for you. Perhaps a seal on the door that says “sanitized.” Items like the remote control are wrapped in plastic. Fewer things in the room and antiseptic wipes to touch up areas that concern you, the guest.
- Pre-check-in and keyless entry assure a smooth transition from the curb to your room. Elevators with occupancy limits and social distancing cues on the floor. Automated check-out.
- Use the ballrooms for social distancing summer camp or AA meetings. 20 people in a ballroom for 200 allows for distance and catering can assure everyone is fed a safe, healthy meal.

## Hotels – Accelerate

Thinking about how to operate a high-occupancy hotel in the future will depend on what we learn during the Adapt and Evolve phases. Ideas in this section centered on continued higher levels of cleanliness and “low touch” systems to protect guests. Then a separate line of thinking explored “staycations” and helping replace travel with experiences at local hotels.

A selection of ideas:

- Design a “touch-free” room where your cell phone is your personal room controller. The room key is on your device, the TV remote control is on your device, temperature control is on your device. It’s your alarm clock, your light switch, opens/closes curtains and shades. Anything that can be connected, should be.
- Fully automate hotel experience. Lobby door entry code, check in kiosk, vending machine for sheets and towels you put on the bed yourself. Never see a staff person during your stay.
- Create a staycation yoga retreat. You would have space in the room, workshops broadcast through the television, and fresh, healthy meals delivered via room service. Perhaps the cleaning crew deep cleans your home during your stay.
- Offer a language immersion staycation. Spanish lessons on the television augmented with telephone access room to room to practice conversing. Themed cuisine delivered to your room.



Touchless Hotel Room Control

## Retail – Adapt

Adapting to today's Retail challenge is about cleaning up and building out existing structures. Keeping customers and workers safe in ultra-clean environments is very important, but then how do we raise the ante on the pickup experience? And as online shopping skyrockets, how do brands present themselves and fulfill orders with excellence?

A selection of Ideas:

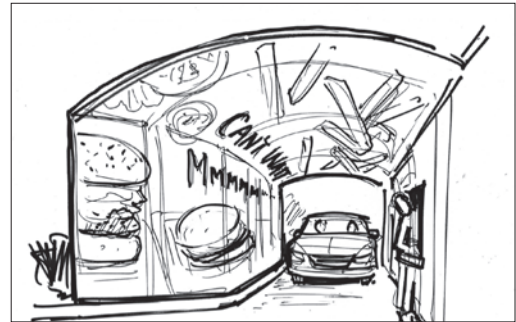
- Cue that you care about health and safety. When a retailer shows authentic caring for employees, this communicates caring for customers, too. Providing PPE and keeping people employed and fed are cues of this caring for customers. Shifting employees not doing essential work into visible cleaning roles connotes safety to customers.
- Enhance and expand e-commerce functionality. Connect online and through social media with consumers for brand engagement purposes but don't forget to make actual purchasing seamless and easy. For brick-and-mortar retailers, encourage curbside pickup to minimize foot traffic in the store.
- Establish one-way traffic patterns to minimize overlaps in aisles.
- Consider using UV light after hours to eliminate virus that may lie on surfaces.
- Offer free WIFI in the parking lot for customers waiting for pickup orders or for members of the community with limited access to study, work, etc. from their cars.

## Retail – Evolve

Evolving Retail has to do with finding ways to enhance the experience while retaining high safety and cleanliness standards.

A selection of Ideas:

- Deep SKU Rationalization. Notice which products are left behind during hoarding phases. Hawaiian Pizza and White Chocolate Chips may not have a place on the shelf going forward. Remove these items and leave empty space between groups of products on the shelves so customers can space themselves apart while shopping.
- Push subscriptions with limits to smooth out supply chain shortages. If consumers knew they'd get 12 rolls of toilet paper every month, hoarding could be eliminated and trips to the store minimized.
- Create an experiential pickup queue. Take people in their cars through a brand journey using technology—almost like a theme park ride. Allow drive-up to kiosks to sample products dispensed through the window.
- Build systems for aggregated pickup. So, customers can order food from the grocery, motor oil from an auto supply store, and a restaurant meal, all gathered in one location for pickup rather than driving all over town to get things done.



Experiential Drive-Thru Pickup Que

## Retail – Accelerate

How Retailers capture what has been learned, and apply it to the future after lockdown, is key to Acceleration in the future. What new preferences and habits have customers developed that change how they shop going forward? What enhancements have retailers put into place that are strong enough to keep as we move forward?

A selection of Ideas:

- Curate home delivery or concierge services at retail. Trusting retail brands to make selections on your behalf based on prior preferences or shopping habits. Combine with easy returns to build enduring two-way relationships with retailers.
- Extreme SKU reduction may lead to “showrooming.” An item is displayed and merchandised, ordered digitally, and picked up upon store exit or shipped to the home. The store environment is geared toward education, entertainment, and browsing rather than piling goods into carts. The store is spacious so people can continue to distance and fewer items to clean around cues a cleaner, safer environment.
- Retail will be an experience that comes to you—your home, your neighborhood—and not a place to go like a traditional store. This could be like a food truck, but with other types of merchandise or driverless vending. The route is programmed based on demand and pre-orders.
- Alternative ways to buy farm-fresh produce and meats directly from producers may emerge. Farms create co-ops and collaboratives, replacing farmer’s markets and supermarkets with single pay aggregation and one-stop pickup for a variety of fresh, local goods. Pull up, pop the trunk, and load up with fresh meat, veggies, fruit, and dairy goods in a one-stop shop.

### Office Work – Adapt

- Many office workers have quickly adapted to working at home but often under less than optimal conditions. Near-term adaptive ideas from the Instant Think Tank focused on making work-from-home productive and comfortable, as well as preserving corporation culture and collaboration.
- A selection of Ideas:
- Establish a C-Suite position—Chief Wellness Officer. This role would merge concerns for health and safety with mental health support and corporate culture protection. One specific role would be systematic check-ins with home-based workers who are balancing work, childcare, and fear—crucial in addition to functional, physical support.
- Ensure physical comfort for office workers at home. Many do not have ergonomically supportive furniture and lighting. Conference call and video conference audio is substandard due to differences in cameras, lighting, and microphones/headsets. Enhance productivity by solving for these physical constraints.
- Create ways of being social with each other. Virtual house parties, wellness check calling trees, and private social media pages should be leveraged to maintain personal connections. This will also help maintain corporate culture and help workers feel less isolated.
- Build plans for how workers will return to the office without fear. Engage workers now to understand their needs for the future. Allow self-evaluation that is respectful of mental health, fear, safety needs, and other personal impacts on the transition. Build the plan now so that workers can comfortably evolve with flexibility to fit their needs as well as the company’s timelines.

### Office Work – Evolve

As workers are asked to emerge from work-at-home isolation and rejoin the office environment, they will expect thoughtful plans to assure safety in general, and safe collaboration specifically. The process of planning must begin now, during the Adapt phase, so workers feel comfortable returning and get to participate in the process of deciding how and when to do so.

A selection of Ideas:

- Promote safe social distancing by allowing flexible in-office and at-home days. Closely monitor self-reported health status and assure workers they will receive paid time off if they are sick. Encourage work from home on those days when workers feel ill.

- Analyze which teams need to collaborate and how often. Use multi-level office buildings to separate teams by floors on the days they are in the office.
- Allow separate entrance and exit zones from buildings. Build queueing tents to allow the pace of entering the building to be separated over a period of time. Limit elevator capacity and mark the floors to allow workers to appropriately distance during the ride.
- Leverage larger rooms for meetings with fewer numbers of people than the room can hold. Space appropriately and then employ “sprint” tactics. How quickly can we get this meeting done? Consider removing chairs from meeting rooms to promote speed.

## Office Work – Accelerate

Ideas for accelerating office work in the future are grounded in architecture—of buildings and spaces, as well as the work flow itself. Office spaces should no longer be a sea of unrelated departments crammed together into large buildings. Work should no longer be judged by hours in the office or how over-scheduled workers are with meetings. Flexibility and meeting objectives will be the new measures.

A selection of Ideas:

- Shift expectations to a lean physical office presence. Flip expectations to favor more work-at-home days and fewer in-office days. The home office becomes a personal work space with proper equipment and ergonomic furnishing provided by the company. The office becomes a stripped-down space that can be diligently sanitized for safety and is a “parking space” to work occasionally versus the home away from home it has been in the past.
- Heightened needs for social distancing, will necessitate creating safe spaces where departments or groups can collaborate without exposure to others in the company. Then the team can assume higher risk of exposure (with higher levels of protection)—when intense collaboration is needed.
- Evaluate employee performance by measuring objectives accomplished versus hours behind a desk. Assure productivity and accountability with frequent milestones and deliverables. Create work plans that fuel motivation and help workers feel the power of their contributions.
- Rethink traditional presentations, due to substandard video chat quality, and consider “Ted-style” short videos to share ideas. This would elevate the medium to match the caliber of the ideas that can be hampered by video conference conditions.

*There are many more ideas available for consideration in the appendix: Instant Think Tank Complete Idea List.*

*Please contact Kelley Styring, InsightFarm Inc., for questions or comment. [Kelley.Styring@InsightFarm.com](mailto:Kelley.Styring@InsightFarm.com)*



**Instant Think Tank—Open Source Ideas for Businesses  
to Survive, and even Thrive in COVID-19 Times**

**Appendix-  
Complete Idea Bank**



## Instant Think Tank—Open Source Idea Bank



### Restaurant - Adapt

- Once a week meal for families. Sign up for a certain day of the week and restaurant will deliver a prepared meal.
- Delivery of special meal accompanied with something that gets you to a collector's set... a fork, a napkin, building to something. The ambiance of the restaurant at home.
- Online cooking schools. Learn how to actually cook the restaurant's cuisine.
- Virtual cooking experience. Call into Zoom, chef guides you through cooking something together but you're with other people doing it too. You can chat, cook a meal, and maybe also include wine tasting experiences.
- Mini liquor mart within restaurant location.
- Watch the meal of the day being prepared, learned how it was made, then it arrives at my door.
- Restaurant wine experts do a wine journey as they're talking with the chef and cooking a meal that is delivered to the home. Extend the experience and include the wine with the delivery.
- Watch a pastry chef make a dessert special. Order in advance and pick up or have delivered.
- Virtual dining experience—make the meal for several families or couples and deliver the same meal to everyone and have a virtual meal experience. Get together and zoom but share the meal and create conversation.
- Elevate the take-home dining experience with packaging and special touches, condiments, utensils, that bring the restaurant experience home.
- Takeout alcohol from restaurants. To protect that margin loss. Beer and wine, pre-mixed drinks, etc.
- Take home signature pizza kit. Here's our dough, our sauce, our cheese. Take and bake it at home.
- Restaurants can become take-out bakeries offering fresh baked bread daily and dessert of the day for pickup.
- Restaurant ingredients—like dressings. Signature items packaged and sold to take away.
- Limited menu item pickups from higher end restaurants—like gourmet burgers. Driven by taking care of immediate customers and their staff. Pivoting to delivery as we begin to Evolve.



### Restaurant - Evolve

- Restaurants will have very low capacity for diners to dine in. They should do more catering or home-based cooking now that people can get back together.
- Purchase a meal and get a second copy at a reduced price to take home, essentially doubling the turns for each table.
- Meal kits like Blue Apron. On a subscription basis you get a kit based on what the restaurant has to offer.
- Longer dining experiences like fine dining. An immersive experience with tastings etc. 2 - 3 hours experiences. Higher in cost but a richer experience.
- Diner booths, could you construct barriers to cut them off into private spaces and use more of them with safe separation.
- Specialize in takeout meals that a gluten-free or specially prepared for allergen concerns. Provide even safer dining to cue that the restaurant is safe for everyone.
- Make curbside pickup special as restaurants re-open. Create limited-supply conditions and require pre-ordering by a certain time/date to "be included." Make it special.
- Build systems and capacity now so that when things turn on, the waits are reasonable, you can get through on the phone, place orders, etc.
- Minimize the menu to minimize procurement issues. It's going to be hard to have a seafood restaurant given the shelf life in the freezer. What genius meals can you make with ingredients that will be easier to procure?

- Sous Vide... accelerate preparation because commissary prepped and delivered to the restaurant kitchen. You can order 10 lbs. of minced onions, everything is prepped. Staff not working on top of each other in the kitchen. Limit density. Cut staff in half to socially distance in the kitchen.
- Invest in restaurant design planning now that can be repurposed for the future. ADA design that is 36 inches now but will probably be twice that much in the future. Plan for the new way of doing things.
- Servers will have to wear masks. They should be branded or themed in some way to elevate the experience.



### **Restaurants - Accelerate**

- Deploying chefs or staff to homes to do more personalized experiences.
- Restaurants outsource or use commissary services to fulfill growth due to curbside or special dinner pre-ordered or meal kits become a bigger part of their businesses.
- People can't stand at the bar to wait for a table. What are the alternatives? Charging time for the table as opposed to the food so you know precisely when to arrive.
- Fix Prix paid in advance with table seatings every two hours. I already paid or it so that table sits empty. No more walkups.
- Duration of the time and positioning of seats at adjoining tables caused disease spread in china. It's not just how they're spaced but how the air moves. Ventilation systems need to be positive pressure to move air out of the space. Ceiling fans need to be turned off to stop air from moving.
- Flow into and out of the restaurant must be one direction exit must be located at the back so people don't cross paths. Restaurants staff may have to travel those same paths so they don't pass each other. Prescribed pathways designed to limit exposure.



### **Hotels - Adapt**

- Hotel catering department used feed healthcare workers who are fighting on the front lines.
- Offer the public larger item cleaning, bedspreads and stuff you'd normally take to a laundromat because you don't have a big enough machine at home.
- Offer the public laundry service. Replacing laundromats... if you're in a laundromat you're not social distancing.
- Hotels keeping restaurants open to feed employees they've laid off. How to keep talent engaged and not shifting as things open sooner versus later.
- Hotel rooms used to self-quarantine healthcare workers and other who suspect they may be infected, without having to bring the virus home with them.
- Hotel mini escape with timed entry and exit from your room to maintain social distancing.
- Serve as a pop-up hospital (space, cleaning service, meals) augmented by a stipend.
- Sports equipment—while Olympics are on pause competitive swimmers don't have access to pools. Other professional and elite athletes are looking for safe, private workout space. Open up pool or equipment to elite athletes who pay for usage.
- Deploy cleaning crews to the settings where they need more cleaning to happen. Hospital settings or care homes. Makeshift hospitals in alternative spaces, partner to do laundry and keep sick people and caregivers clean.
- Use hotels as Non-COVID hospitals or recovery centers for Non-COVID procedures.



### **Hotels - Evolve**

- Staycations. Two rooms for the price of one where kids are in a separate room.
- Minimize the things that I have to touch. When I get into my space it should feel like there's not a lot of clutter.

- Build elevator queueing systems, reservation systems, and in-elevator spacing systems to socially distance in an enclosed space.
- Combine getaway with cleaning. Local escape to hotel and while you're there they come to your house and do a deep clean.
- How could hotels partner with self-help gurus and self-improvement. Think of a themed retreat. Use the rooms and the chef and the TVs in the room. Yoga, meditation, live streaming classes and chefs deliver healthy meals. 2 - 3-day self-improvements.
- Learn Spanish or any new language. Go to the hotels and learn online. Then talk with people in other rooms by phone to practice as part of the class. Corresponding cuisine.
- Use the large hotel spaces to bring groups together for small workshops like self-help retreat or AA meetings with social distancing in the large spaces. 20 people in a room for 200.
- Offering summer camps for kids using ballrooms, pools, tennis courts, etc. Opening up like a community center.
- Hotel room reset as a private dining experience. Partner with local area restaurants to replicate the dining experience and have a meal.
- Staycation families go to the hotel and the concierge takes them on a tour of the area. Shows them the sights but with safe distancing and supervised security.
- Offer a stripped-down room for travelers who want reassurance that the room is super clean. Basically, a bed without any frills, pillows, throws, etc.
- Hotel could offer mini rooms set up for gym experiences, cleaned between uses, or private workouts



### **Hotels - Accelerate**

- Making hotels a place where rooms don't seem quite so transient. It feels like a lot of in and out -- used by more people than I like to think about. Are there things we could do to hotel rooms so people feel more at home. When I go there this was set up just for me. Something as simple as a personalized note.
- Make the room more like a dorm room where you have the key things that you need and you bring with you or have the sheets that are put on just in time, for you so you don't think they've been there all along.
- Provide cues of cleanliness and supplies to touch up the room yourself. Put a "sanitized for your protection" seal on the door. Give guests sanitizing wipes to clean the remote or anything else that makes them feel better or more in control.
- Get rid of extra bed coverings in hotels... stuff that doesn't get laundered. Anything that you can't know is clean. Throw pillows, throws, etc. Simplify embellishments.
- Use your cell phone. My room key is on here, remote control is on here, temperature control is on here. You don't have to deal with any of that stuff. It's your alarm clock, your light switch, opens/closes curtains and shades. When I walk by the light switch with geofencing I want my phone screen to turn into a light switch.
- Everything in the room should be individually wrapped in plastic like cups, etc. The iron. The ironing board.
- How can hotel rooms be more tailored... theme rooms. What if they could have each floor become a certain theme. You feel like you're escaping even more. Pairing with things offered in the restaurant. Italy themed rooms. Mardi Gras themed. Farm House themed. Offer choices.
- If you want to do a Spanish Immersion or Cooking class you go to a particular hotel and combine those elements. Being known for something in the long-term.
- Add on a tour, partner with a restaurant for a pre-themed, curated experience. Add values in ways that seem positive and personal.
- Take you for a safe run if you're not familiar with the neighborhood.
- WeWork model. People get overwhelmed with being at home so much and may need a different space. Refit the rooms as personal office space.

- Automating the full process from check in to the dining experience. Use of kiosks and robots to automate everything. No interaction with a person.



## Retail - Adapt

- Video streaming—bring what you are (as a brand) to people in their homes
- Online trial—making sure I can try products without risk; Not pay for it up front; free shipping; easy returns; ship back what you don't like; pay for what you keep. Warby Parker model. Overcome the obstacle of trying products before you buy.
- Brand purpose. Ensuring everything a brand or retailer is doing is done with the most genuine authentic purpose. What they're all about. Not misconstrued in any way that they're doing this for their own greater good; doing it for the world around them. Oreo—ensuring people have joyful moments at home right now. Need to be really mindful how it's coming across and that it's a good fit.
- Brand partnerships. And partnering with retailers. Talking about why these brands are coming together and elevating them at the same time.
- Reality as a consumer is, I'm learning what I really like and I don't need these other things. I'm distracted by them. Study what's left behind on the store shelves. White chocolate chips are the only chocolate chips on the shelf. What does this say about that SKU? The only popcorn was heavy movie theater popcorn. Look at the shelves right now and see what people really want.
- Use your own home mirror to enjoy visual merchandising. The aspect of entertainment, getting out the house that Target provides. Mirror—virtually try on clothes—none of these clothes have to be manufactured (until you buy it). Could be 3D printed. Change the system and capitalize on that. Changing the way, we experience things pre-purchase. Even when you buy off the rack it's not made for you. Consumers have been yelling for years about customization.
- Authenticity needs to be across the board including their employees. We care about our employees as much as we care about you but car dealerships are making people come in, unions are putting people to work, meat packing plants have outbreaks. Signal your company's values through your actions.
- SKU rationalization. Opportunity to say "here's your toilet paper, this is what you get... here's your tampon, here's what you get." Obliviate choice for the consumer and get that out there as fast as they can and meet the market needs.
- Rationing of toilet paper says the retailer is not part of the free-for-all— giving people guardrails for how to behave and what this says about the company.
- Moving people through a store. Prescribed traffic pattern so people don't walk past each other.
- Change the lighting to leverage UV for disinfecting purposes. So cleaning is an ongoing process or at night the lights go off and the UV lights go on.
- Vestibule areas where you have to stand back while someone else comes through, could this be a decontamination area using UV lights. Decontaminate the people coming in and out, thus providing a cue for safety. Graphic signs saying "don't be afraid."
- Farms moving online to DTC in collaboration with each other. Becoming a digital farmer's market.
- B2B supply chain is adapting to direct-to-consumer via e-commerce. E.g. Spaghetti sauce sold to restaurants through the supply chain can now be made available packaged online.
- Drive trial with generous return policies. Make consumers more confident when they "buy to try." (Costco model)
- Retailers need to optimize their digital experience. If not online, they need to get online, fast. If they are online, they need to best digital experience they can offer.
- Allowing consumers to pay for large items in smaller increments. Interest-free financing over time, like layaway or "Afterpay" —which is like layaway but you pay in installments after you buy.
- A give-back or a cause is important right now. Retailers could create credits consumers could earn by supporting causes.

- Parking lot space could be utilized to offer experiences. Merchandising, offers, sampling, drive-up coffee, etc. The queue could be a huge digital “flyer.”
- Can stores offer Free WIFI in their parking lot to under-served people. A place where teens can do homework in their cars.



## **Retail -- Evolve**

- Bring back selective SKUs based on consumer needs. Practical increase in variety based on true consumer need or want. It's almost a way to start over. If organizations move into it slowly and thoughtfully it's an improvement.
- What is the consumer experience at the drive-thru? We need new ways to deliver brand essence to consumers.
- Enhance online or e-commerce presence. People will continue the online shopping they're doing now but they'll expect a return to speedy delivery. So, fulfillment infrastructure needs to keep up with increased demand.
- Provide in-store cues that the store is clean, safe and provide comfort for shoppers and workers. The intersection of health and security. Signal that I'm safe and I'll feel secure.
- Brick n Mortar can limit the number of people in the stores, have PPE available and somehow branded, you come in and get assurance they are a safe environment.
- Branding and spending money on consumer connections. Rather than capital bolted to the earth to make toilet paper or cookies. Spend that money on consumer connections.
- If SKUs are rationalized this would open the door for virtual merchandising and other ways to elevate the consumer experience. This could include storytelling, VR, and other creativity there's not room for in the stores now.
- Is there a hybrid rather than just go through a drive-through at Walmart, can you get a pickup from Walmart, DSW, and Panera at the same time? One stop, an aggregated pickup point for pre-orders so we don't have to drive around and go in and out of all of these places. Collaborative pickup zones or collaborative delivery would be a good solution.
- Pop-In versus Pop-up. Someone who will come to you. Fine dining will have an item, per day, and deliver it to you. Different from takeout. Could be applied to clothes or housewares. The home is a safe environment for the shopping. Assure me I'm in a safe place and that may be my home.
- Automating subscriptions. Taking a look at what you sell and is there opportunity for subscription of any kind. Is there opportunity to learn how and when we buy or need to buy? Even our your personal, household supply chain.
- Give people the online experience they would demand in-store. AR - being able to see a shoe or outfit on your body. How can we touch, feel, try things on digitally—gauging fit and not have to try on clothes that have been tried on by other people?
- Social selling will be more and more important. Instagram and how to buy through there.
- Thinking about resale in a whole new way. Disposable income and re-evaluating what they have in their homes. Can brands certify legitimate resellers or think about how do they get into that space appropriately. (collaborate with ThredUp or RealReal.)
- Plussed-up Drive-up stores. Add windows for drive-up service.
- How can the drive-up queue be enhanced—reinventing the drive-up experience almost like a Disney ride? Can it be a branded journey you go through while waiting. Offers, advertising, other content that is entertaining?
- Evolve the subscription model. People are going to be apprehensive about going into stores and trying things on and touching things others have touched. Let brands curate for me what they think would be best and send items directly to me.
- Small companies, retailers need to enhance online direct-to-consumer presence. Augment this with retail brand-based websites to direct experiential content to consumers and enhance their

- knowledge/opinions of the retailer.
- Business should analyze what they've done to adapt and decide which aspects (particularly online) to carry forward into the post COVID-19 era and which to eliminate. The faster we shed what's not needed, the better.
- Order from multiple retailers with one payment system. Then pick up from one aggregated point or have fulfilled/delivered from one shipper. E.g. Order a stand mixer and cake-baking ingredients in one order but from different retailers. Delivered in one box to my home.
- Stores will start to open up the floor space. Provide lots of room, aisles are bigger, everything is bigger. As they restock their stores there will be more limited SKUs on the floor so things are more open.
- Visual cues like marks on the floor that help people stay separated.
- Parking lot sampling kiosks. Pull in and experience products during pickup and instant impulse add-ons.



### **Retail - Accelerate**

- Mobile retail comes to you based on demand. Retail will be an experience that comes to you and not a place. Like a food truck or driverless vending. The route is programmed based on demand and pre-orders.
- Showrooming. Having one of the items and tick it off on your list and pick it up on your way out. Don't pick it up. Don't touch it unless you're going to buy it.
- Redeploy the retail workforce as virtual assistants, fulfillment experts, and curators of engagement with brands at the retail level.
- Return of concierge service retail. Very private. Very selective. Possibly in-home. Niche, smaller players may be able to accel there but this could be deployed by larger retailers as well.
- Retailers and brands have to live their values. Social media will be the platform through which they'll be judged for how they handle this crisis. Consumers will hold companies accountable for their values.
- Participatory retail. Breaking down walls between consumers and retailers. Consumers are recognizing the retailers we care about. We'll see co-ops come back. Consumers can play a role at retail. Curating. Event planning. And think of it as their experience as well.
- Limited SKUs spread far apart to cue social distancing and a safer place to shop. Also cues cleaning—the less clutter, the more efficient and cleaner it may seem.
- Two types of merchants of the future: CSAs and local farmers you trust because you know them and it's an intimate experience to shop. And high-tech merchants who supply more commoditized items. Where does my product fit in this retailer array?
- Manufacturing plants where products are made become direct retailers.
- Can big companies convey their supply chain and connect to local suppliers and workforce. Where does the wheat come from that's in the cookies? Which farms supply the milk for cheese?
- Continue the reduced environmental footprint. Retailers can encourage manufacturers to help continue this trend.
- How to experience Farmer's Markets in multisensory virtually. Buy coffee based on smell online.
- Go back to multi-story shopping. Only go the level you need so you're not exposed to the entire store when you shop.
- QVC model. Log onto your site and you go through the products in your store. Features and things on sale. It's a way to see and interact with the products. More of a personal connection. A Podcast store type thing.
- Alternative currencies accepted. Bitcoin or barter. As it goes across businesses could there be tokens exchanged for goods. Connected to a budget app on my phone.
- Smaller retailers need to consider selling internationally, especially with online capabilities.



## Office Work - Adapt

- Shifting to support and encourage or give employees the flex to work where and how they will be most productive. Success in the future will put the work and productivity first and the means will be giving flexibility to that.
- Standardized “work at the office” days that are fewer than working remotely. How often do we need to come together physically? Otherwise let’s work in a way that allows the individual to be most productive and also more creative.
- Creating ways to be social with one another. After-hours digital get-togethers, like the Houseparty app. It has socializing games you can play together that offer a way to interact, play, and bond.
- Not every family can afford to ensure they have the equipment, headphones, laptops, etc. Companies can make sure they have what they need.
- Flexibility. Ability to Collaborate. Ability to Play. Figuring out ways to emphasize those three things and foster innovation and creativity is important.
- People who don’t have to report to an office are getting comfortable with how to do that... “business on the top, PJs on the bottom.” Go have coffee when we want. Go for a walk. How do we as employers help our staff be productive at home?
- People are taking calls from a closet. How do we ensure that our people have the right environment to work in? Ergonomic office space, furniture, desktops, etc. Partner with a design group to make sure your staff have the ergonomic abilities to function and be productive in their own way.
- To adapt now may require that all employees work in the cloud. Get the right software, training for everyone, negate the need for expensive overhead and could lead to a more successful, truly virtual company. Virtual companies could then train other companies to work virtually.
- I hear people saying they miss the camaraderie of an office. They miss the routines. A lot of people will want to go back to the office but there is fear. Will they be safe? Engage employees now to gauge what they want the workplace to be like and get ahead of that. Do research among employees to help you know what it’s going to take to make them feel safe in a work environment. Let them feel safe in that they’ve had a chance to have input to that.
- Encouraging departments to take the time to do zoom happy hours and house party sessions. At the end of the day take an hour and kick back. People are losing the camaraderie with their coworkers.
- We’re going to have to deal with employee isolation and feelings they have to deal with without face to face contact they’re used to. Counsel employees to reach out when they need that personal assistance and contact. Enhanced mental health services. Monthly meetings focused on self-motivation or self-actualization that has to be done in isolation.
- Motivation for independent workers. Motivation is often driven by deliverables which are driven by meetings where deliverables are delivered. We need to provide different mechanisms for self-motivation based on what the business needs right now, under these conditions.
- Your people and your culture are the most important thing. We are a family. We collaborate. We share. We emote with each other and lift each other. Nobody knows what’s going on in everyone’s lives right now. We have to create ways to build unity.
- Chief Wellness Officer. It’s bigger than the cultural check-ins. How do we operate from that cultural lens? This has been a quick, abrupt change. There’s stress associated with that, performance concerns, and other things going on around the house.
- Care packages to be delivered to homes. Reminding employees, they are cared for.
- Barriers to success on zoom calls is audio quality. A way to ensure that everyone has optimized audio.
- Mobilize physical plant teams at work who install furniture and fixtures in offices to evaluate and outfit home offices. Make sure people have their ergonomics and physical needs met so they’re comfortable and productive at home.



- Employee check-ins from a wellness perspective. Check in with employees to show a level of caring and help the company understand the ongoing wellness of employees and raise the productivity. Organized and routinized for consistency. So, people aren't left out.
- Set people up with better communication tools at home. Set people up with better chairs and technology. It helps morale too.
- Fear of going back to offices. Evaluation of each person's mental and physical capability to return to an office. Better understand risk levels and risk factors then adjust accordingly.
- Set standards for return to work based on liability and the potential effect on the company of work-related sickness.
- Employees will be asked to sign waivers of liability before returning to work in an office environment.



### Office Work - Evolve

- As people start to go back into the office, one of the simplest things is producing and designing face masks for people that have some tie to company equity. And have some fun. The company makes them available to signal to the employee they take responsibility for keeping them safe.
- New virtual only businesses will need training and processes as well as software, to be successful.
- Questioning practices that were the norm that we've been forced to do differently as we've been pressured to do things quickly right now. A number of processes have been streamlined or eliminated. We're pressure testing. Then, we can carry forward these changes that worked well.
- Starting now to work with companies on their culture and what they will be in the future. Conundrum. Folks want to be back collaborating but at the same time there is that fear. What is the sentiment of their people, what are the company's core values, how will that be interpreted to create the next office environment?
- Office design is going to completely explode. To fit the culture. How to bring the comforts of home/couch or work outside in the sunshine, how do you create that in the office if office is important to your business.
- Rent a hotel ballroom for small meetings and spread them out. 20 people in a room for 200 people so I have separation.
- Flexible days. Staggered work times so less pressure on the work space. To what degree do people need to be in the office at the same time?
- Make architectural changes in the environment. Make those changes so they signal both a fresh start and reinforce social distancing requirements. Being out in front of that with employee input would be powerful.
- What are the steps that need to be taken so people feel comfortable and safe coming back? Cues they are safe.
- We're going to have to find tolerance for allergies. Coughing is a signal of fear.
- Rotating schedule. There are certain parts of our business that don't need to be in person. I can imagine a much smaller physical location. Evolve our ability to 3D model in home so products can be reviewed in different locations. Materials libraries online.
- Technology to allow whiteboarding and collaboration.
- Leaner teams to tackle things. More focus and accountability. Nobody can just sit there on zoom and do/say nothing.
- Cautious. Definitely for the remainder of the year, everybody who can work from home should work from home. Give ourselves the next 8 months to study how it's going to impact how business will be done we can make more permanent decisions as we go into 2021.
- Build longer entryways to office buildings, perhaps involving tents outside, to allow employees to safely distance and queue for entry to office buildings.
- Take everybody's temperature before the enter the buildings.
- Need to get consensus. Listening, scoping, collectively talk about our comfort level. Then, break

the teams to stagger and let others come together in a safe way.

- If you're unwell, do not come in. This will be a mandate. Paid sick leave and home offices will accommodate and encourage the right behaviors.
- How can we work more efficiently? Sprinting. Treating blocks of time as though they were your last bit of time before going on vacation. Sprint mentality. Ensure that there is focus. If you're on a zoom call, your email shuts off. To maximize productivity, we need focus. Sprints or focused work would be shorter exposure to other people and minimize risk.
- Logistics of what people enjoy at work. Going to the café so you don't have to pack lunch. Adapt cafeteria model to a desk delivery model will minimize congregating in a café setting.
- Carry forward the idea of well-being. Integrate well-being by blocking periods of time for focused tasks. Incentivizing wellness behaviors—like mindfulness or nature walks.
- Offices will have to take a clinical, hospital approach. Antimicrobials on desks. Different filtering systems. Wear masks maybe in some offices. Redoing their entire office so it's spaced properly. Ways of cleaning offices, spacing people, and how we get things done without conference rooms.
- Space people out in elevators. Spots on the floor and you get on a spot. When they fill up, that's it.

### Office Work -- Accelerate

- Take a hard look at the business and brand purpose. Recognize what is essential and critical to employees and customers. What are essential services to those stakeholders?
- What did we do during this time as represented by our actions and does this become our new purpose? "Acts not Ads."
- Smaller, more intimate office clusters that allow reduced exposure to risk but also less noise, more privacy.
- Entrance and exits from office spaces. Providing safe ways to travel within the space from one department pod to another.
- Finding there are things we don't necessarily need to do. Like travel and face time with clients. Can we meet needs without as much face time in person? That's a huge relief in terms of travel expenses. The company can then redeploy to invest in health benefits and tech skillsets to develop among employees. High quality health benefits will be important to hold onto the right employees. Tech skills to help them work remote. Find processes and procedures that aren't as important and redeploying to other areas.
- Rethinking the telecommute. Making this the primary thing and going to the office is secondary.
- Heightened needs for social distancing, will necessitate creating safe spaces where departments or groups can collaborate without exposure to others in the company. Then the team can assume higher risk of exposure (with higher levels of protection)—limit regular interaction to a limited number of people. Within our homes we don't wear PPE but when we go out, we take precautions. Same thing in the office.
- More collaboration across companies. Wonderful to see companies in the same industry collaborating. A rising tide lifts all boats. If we as society can embrace that concepts, some creative ideas could come out of that.
- Protection against furlough as a way to attract and retain critical employees. 8 weeks of employment protection.
- Focus on accomplishing objectives than spending time behind a desk. Measurement that leads to privileges and benefits.
- Persuasion is enhanced by seeing faces and now we can see it on video. The big drawback to technology is largely been removed. So much of work is leading and getting people to follow. Showing that people can lead remotely through the use of video will relieve the fear that work can be done this way.
- Consulting opportunity. Coming up with the procedures. If flex schedule is the future, what is the template? What does that look like in order to roll it out quickly? Same thing with security.

China mandated temp checks, one-way entrance/exits, etc. clear sets of instructions. Thinking through what those needs are going to be and what those processes should be. We need rules to prevent chaos and to get the workloads done.

- More flexible. If you need to work from home or work better from home, do that. The inverse of work at home days. Come into the office 1–2 days a week.
- Make wellness and wellbeing a more integral part of business, every day.
- Rethinking the office space so we don't have individual desks. It's not "safe" like these are my germs. But if you're only coming in 2 days per week, we won't need that real estate. Having 1/3 of the desks and a nightly way to ensure those spaces are truly cleaned and safe.
- Un-bunch people. Now, we're bunched in these huge headquarters. There are departments within those floors that never interact. By department they're most likely going to separate those out even into different cities.
- Humanscale creates ergonomic furniture... creating in-home, adaptable, home office solutions. They come in and set it up but how can they ship it for home setup.
- Holograms could be the presentation of the future. People miss the physical presence of somebody. In the future we can look at holograms.
- Rethinking what presentations look like. Maybe we start thinking about more TED style filming of presentations because zoom is just not adequate for presentations. Recorded and a level of amplification instead of everybody being on a zoom call that's crashing. Driving up the quality of idea-sharing.
- App style of working. Each department will have their own app. Installed screen at home and walk in and the app is going to be up. That's what you're going to work through on that day. If you go to the office, it's there.