

# STRATEGIC THINKING IN TIMES OF NEED

BairesDev's Guide to Help Companies  
Navigate the Coronavirus Crisis.



POWERED BY TECHNOLOGY

DRIVEN BY TALENT

# Understanding a New Era of Business Challenges

**COVID-19** is a simultaneous crisis in public health, a deceleration of economic activity, and a disruption to everyday life.

In a scenario where, according to [BBC News](#), more than a third of the global population is being placed on lockdown and more than 100 countries have imposed travel restrictions, **the economic results have proven to be catastrophic** with more than 30 million people filing for unemployment in the US alone.

**We are living in times with a lot of uncertainty.** One thing is certain: businesses are being pushed to define new ways to operate within their organizations, driving their digital transformation possibilities a step further.

At BairesDev, we have been leveraging the benefits of remote work for over a decade, using distributed teams as the basis of our operations. Working with globally distributed teams has allowed us to source a wider pool of worldwide talent, reducing risk, increasing business agility, and diversity among our teams. This has put us in a privileged position to confront today's scenario, as we can continue to operate and collaborate as usual.

We believe it is now more than ever our responsibility to support our clients as they navigate these unprecedented times, and this is why we have put together this guide with our **best practices to handle this ongoing crisis** based on our company's digitally native culture and values.

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*At BairesDev we are doing our utmost to ensure our employees' health and safety, and to minimize the impact on clients' projects. In 3 days, we transitioned 99% of our employees to work from home (WFH) across our 11 locations, and we will continue to follow all local health regulations in order to keep our team safe.*

*In this crisis, we've been extremely privileged in that we've always relied on smart working by having distributed teams of the Top 1% Talent. We have extensive online collaboration capabilities and a proven track record of over 10 years' experience working with distributed teams. Remote working has been a cornerstone of our success. It is part of our DNA and this pandemic has had little to no impact on the level of service we provide to our clients. Since we were never tied to local talent alone, we've always leveraged the best talent regardless of its location to form distributed teams of elite professionals working remotely.*

*We are proud to be partners with our clients, and in that spirit, we stand with them during these challenging times and will do everything we can to support them in their plans. In this time of crisis, we understand that it is critical that we make it possible for our clients to continue their operations. We will also endeavor to assist them in responding to the unique demands that they may be facing.”*

**Nacho De Marco**

CEO



## 8 Best Practices to consider during the COVID-19 pandemic

1. Manage internal communications effectively
2. Keep in touch, move beyond face-to-face
3. Serve new needs
4. Safeguard infrastructure and security
5. Think digital
6. Be agile
7. Keep your brand active
8. Prepare for the new rules ahead

## 1. Manage Internal Communications Effectively

It is likely that part of **your workforce is not used to working remotely** on a daily basis for extended periods of time.

For this reason, now more than ever, a targeted, high-impact communication strategy within the company is **essential to strengthen relations with geographically dispersed or remote workers** and to keep them motivated and productive.

Some important tips to take into consideration:

- Establish a centralized set of trustworthy channels (Zoom, Jira, Skype, Google Meets, or others).
- Put together internal documents to suggest best practices for those tools.
- Communicate regularly with your team. Fix dates for weekly or biweekly meetings.
- Make sure employees are aligned with what is expected from them.
- Keep workers promptly and adequately informed about the situation.

## 2. Keep in Touch, Move Beyond Face-to-face

As the possibility to organize face-to-face meetings has been drastically reduced, now is the time to **exploit all the opportunities technology has to offer**.

From organizing video conferences to setting up virtual live events, **be extra attentive to your customer's needs** and prioritize supporting them throughout their journey.

Understand how this pandemic is affecting each of your partner's businesses, how it has affected their operations in particular, and articulate specific plans to address their needs. Excellent customer service does not have to suffer, and all clients will appreciate guidance in times of uncertainty.

### 3. Serve New Needs

Abrupt adjustments in the behavior of your customers and all stakeholders will surface **new user norms and behaviors**, including a clear increase in the use of digital experiences.

The global economy is being completely transformed and all industries are facing previously unknown issues and complications, while at the same time discovering unimagined opportunities.

Motivate all of your employees to **brainstorm new ways to do business**, from different ways to create value to new markets to focus on, thought-provoking ideas are bound to appear and they can help mitigate the current scenario.

One of your main objectives is to discover how your business can cater to the new world imposed by this health crisis.

### 4. Safeguard Infrastructure & Security

In order to guarantee business continuity, it is essential for organizations to establish or reinforce their remote access protocols and infrastructure. All the necessary tools and technologies have to be working accordingly and all team members have to be fully aware of the **best safety and security practices** to follow for their use.

Make sure your employees are following their usual behavior guidelines. Take into consideration that **IT support teams should be highly accessible** to assist employees at all times. This might imply creating new support channels if necessary, putting together new guides on how to detect phishing and other cybersecurity attacks, upholding robust password management and protection protocols, and providing additional cybersecurity training to reinforce best practices and recommendations.

It is also crucial to **map out wireless data providers** in all countries in case they are needed to backup existing internet plans. Take into consideration

that it may be necessary to relocate key work across diverse locations to diminish risk when possible.

## 5. Think Digital

Technology and data are key elements to improve decision-making processes and **orientate transformation the right way**. An integral transformation process has to be accompanied by changes in the organization's culture and workflows, and this needs to be embedded in the new company DNA.

It is necessary to **rebuild the way we do things**, the way we interact with one another, our routines and patterns, how we operate in our businesses, and how we spark change.

Some things to take into account when facing a digital transformation process:

- A Cloud-based approach: These services integrate IT infrastructure with economic alternatives that cater to your business needs.
- Data is key: Your company should have access to information regarding both your customers and your internal performance.
- Collaboration: everyone should engage in building this new -paradigm to promote trust and heighten team structures. It is also relevant to empower decision making and a more horizontal approach to contributing ideas.
- Innovation: experimentation should be encouraged and viewed as a learning and growing opportunity.
- Prioritizing customers: The ultimate goal is always to offer the best experience for your clients and prospects.

## 6. Be Agile

Agility should guide all of your actions to successfully implement change in the long run. When facing adversity, agile companies can still guarantee the **continuous delivery of valuable services** to all of their stakeholders.

To work in an agile manner, organizations have to be **flexible, dynamic, and fast-learning**, with structures that are already embedded with responsive and adaptable procedures.

## 7. Keep your Brand Active

Use this time to **strengthen your presence in the industry**, participate actively in relevant conversations, be present to support all of your stakeholders.

Be especially attentive to your social media strategies. Make sure not to come across as opportunistic or too “salesy”. Instead, highlight how your company can **add value to your consumers** at this particular time.

Other important considerations for social media management:

- Know how to listen: Be thorough in understanding what your customers are saying.
- Tune in to the most appropriate tone and message you want to communicate aligned with your stakeholder’s values.
- Build trust by communicating clearly and accepting the corresponding criticism.
- Be responsive to changes that may occur on a daily basis. Your content plan can’t be set on stone.



## 8. Prepare for the New Rules Ahead

The world after COVID-19 will definitely be different. Understand that most changes and habit modifications introduced now will surely prevail in the long term.

Keep this in mind when strategizing for the new market scenario that lies ahead, making careful and detailed considerations of how this will particularly impact your company.

A “new normal” will emerge, and you should identify where your brand will stand. Once again, flexibility and adaptability are keywords that will help your business go through uncertain situations with more ease.

This situation can also serve as a reminder of the importance of organizing detailed crisis management scenarios that will help you be better prepared for future unexpected events.

# Business Continuity Management

Aligned with our smart working methodology, and in order to tackle the situation rapidly, following our guide on best practices, we developed a strategy focused on elaborating a Business Continuity Management Plan. This includes:

## 1. ASSESSMENT

Conducting a thorough organization assessment to go over all ongoing operations and processes and their needs.

## 2. PLAN OF ACTION

Writing down an exhaustive plan of action including responsibilities and their owners.

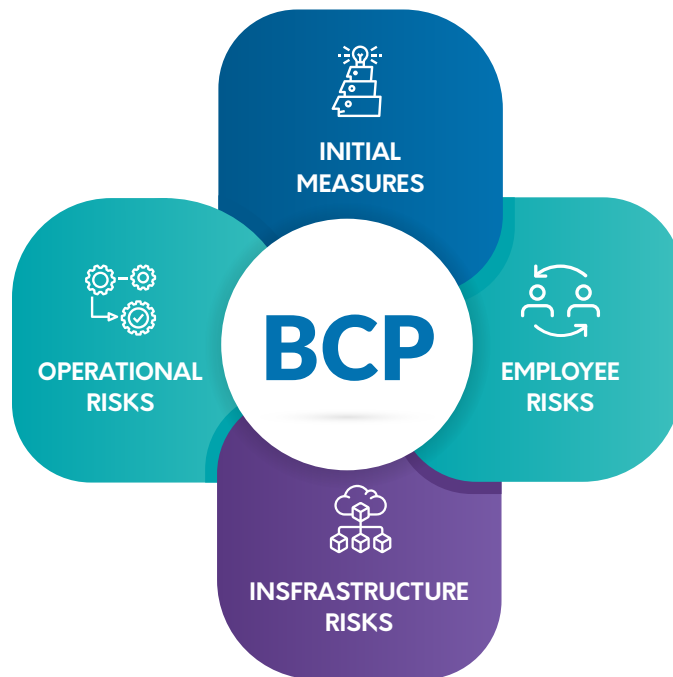
## 3. CONTROL

Effectively implementing the strategy with comprehensive monitoring policies.

This plan was based on assessing four pillars which provided us with a necessary structure in times of uncertainty: initial measures, employee risks, operational risks, and infrastructure risks.

Find below a checklist of measures categorized by these four pillars. We recommend you use this list to evaluate your company's performance in assessing business continuity and how you stand towards the future.

And if you haven't, we encourage you to write down your own Business Continuity Management Plan.



## Initial Measures

- ☐ Implement travel restrictions.
- ☐ Move all on-site employees to work remotely.
- ☐ Communicate 24×7 Support desks for IT & HR-related concerns
- ☐ Implement all the recommendations from the WHO, CDC, and local authorities.

## Employee Risk

- ☐ Roll out measures to help employees with stress management.
- ☐ Managers schedule weekly calls with their direct reports to ensure all employees are performing their regular tasks and providing assistance in any personal matters.
- ☐ Identify backups for all key employees due to resignation or leaves of absence.

## Infrastructure Risk

- ❑ Plan for corporate systems to be managed remotely without the physical presence of IT Support and IT Operations employees.
- ❑ Check and test the readiness of infrastructure and other services for the higher load of employees working remotely.
- ❑ Test applications for remote access. Deploy Awareness campaigns for specific cases of social engineering attacks in communication-related to this crisis.
- ❑ Conduct periodic assessment and internet speed tests for all remote workers. Identify wireless providers in each country for data plans in case of temporal outage of the employee's main internet service.

## Operational Risk

- ❑ Disaster recovery plans: review scenarios, prepare plans and measures to restore business operations.
- ❑ Prepare for any issues around logistics or in the supply chain.
- ❑ Set up a plan to maintain communications with clients, partners, suppliers, and authorities.
- ❑ Establish emergency measures and organizational instructions in order to ensure continuity of operations according to the level of risk.
- ❑ Map single points of failure within the organization (processes, employees, technologies) and prepare countermeasures.



Many countries across the globe have established new legislation that impacts human behavior and are demanding people and companies to **define new ways of working**.

Your business has to be prepared for a rapid shift in demand, be ready to **reinforce digital experiences**, and adjust policies and processes to be efficient during this contingency.

**Plan ahead**, be flexible, and innovate to emerge from this crisis strengthened. We invite you to read Nacho's article on LinkedIn about how to start preparing for the post-Coronavirus business world [here](#).

For further information please contact [info@bairesdev.com](mailto:info@bairesdev.com) or your Account Manager.



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