

A New Outreach Approach

7 Email Templates for Outreach During Crisis



Even during the best times, B2B outreach is a challenge.

The modern inbox is a busy, crowded place. In fact, the average office worker gets more than 100 emails a day!

Everyone has something to offer, and most B2B companies make the same mistakes — they focus on themselves rather than the person they are contacting.

Today, you also have to contend with the COVID-19 crisis, which impacts every aspect of life for people — and businesses — around the globe.

Should your email stay professional and ignore the elephant in the room? Address it with platitudes?

Opt-out of sending sales emails completely?

The reality is, our world has changed dramatically in the last few months but that does not mean that every effective sales strategy you've used is gone.

It *does* mean you need to change your approach and adjust your current sales tactics if you want to be successful in the coming months.

What, exactly, does that mean in practical terms?

Email best practices during the COVID-19 crisis

This is a time of fear and uncertainty for many people — some folks may be personally impacted by the virus and be worried about themselves, a family member who is ill, or a loved one with underlying health concerns.

Others may be worried about their financial future or stressed about working with home with children out of school.

That means it is more critical than ever to be careful about the tone and words you use in sales emails.

Best practice #1: Keep it short and sweet

According to a study by Boomerang, an email plugin for Gmail, emails between 50 and 100 words are most likely to get a response.

Keep in mind; you don't have a relationship with this person yet — they don't want to listen to you wax poetic about the state of the world for 500 words.

That approach might work when emailing an established contact, but not for a cold email.

Best practice #2: Get personal

Personalization is the key to sales in the coming years.

And it is everywhere — brands like Netflix and Amazon suggest shows and products based on your interests, dynamic ads on Facebook can even adjust photos and ad copy based on a user's actions.

Now is the time to do what you can to personalize your messaging in a way that relates and respects your prospects current situation and their reality. This requires research. Using what you find in emails to make it about them is key.

The email is short, talks about how he likes the content they publish and shares a video he created for them.

Best practice #3: Yes, address the elephant in the room

Do you address the COVID-19 crisis when sending cold emails?

This is a tough question to answer, because there may be different answers for different businesses. If you sell medical supplies to businesses, then clearly, you'll address the topic head-on.

But what if you sell professional services, software or landscaping?

The reality is, the virus is impacting the daily lives of nearly every person in the world — it is something we all have in common.

Leveraging that would be reminiscent to ambulance chasing if you don't offer a service or product directly related to the COVID epidemic. so don't be that person. At the same time, avoiding mentioning how we're all being impacted and ignoring it all together can come across as disingenuous.

Here are a few don'ts to keep in mind when you are addressing the COVID-19 crisis in your sales emails:

- **Don't test emoticons and GIFS right now. Emoticons and GIFs can be a creative way to break the tension — but if you aren't comfortable using them, now is not the time to start trying. Your efforts could fall flat at best — or come across as really insensitive.**
- **Don't assume everyone has the same experience: Some folks may be stuck at home alone, others may be trying to juggle kids with a full-time WFH job, and others may be working outside the home and fearful of bringing the virus home.**
- **Don't use worn-out phrases: When we don't know what to say, it might seem easier to use canned responses like "During these uncertain times" or "X in the Time of COVID." The problem is, these phrases are overused and come across as insincere.**

So, what should you do?

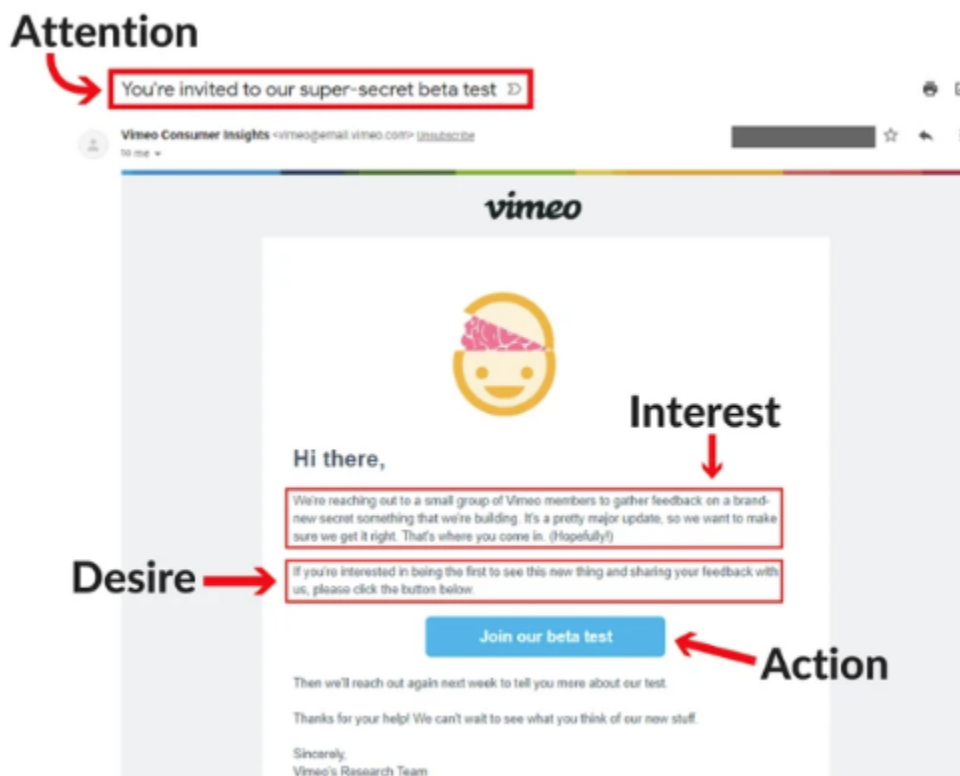
8 B2B cold email templates to use during the COVID-19 crisis

Crafting the perfect cold email is hard, even when you have a full team in the office to bounce ideas off of, let alone, as a small business when you are likely your only team member.

To make your life just a little bit easier, we've created eight customizable cold-email templates you can steal — and make your own.

AIDA: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action

AIDA is not a new concept — in fact, it dates back to the 1900s! Here's an example of what an AIDA email looks like from Vimeo, a video platform:



This format is powerful because it distills the sales process down to just a few steps. Here's a template you can use (and customize) in a post-COVID 19 world:

Template:

Hi [First Name],

If you're like most [lead's role], you know how hard it can be to [deal with the problem your company solves], especially when [relevant change in the industry since COVID-19].

Our [product/service] eliminates the stress and improves this by [one-sentence pitch]. Here's what [customer] has said about us:

[customer testimonial about the problem]

Would you like to also have [the benefit of your product]? If yes, will you email me the best time to give you a call next week?

Hope your team is staying healthy,

<name>

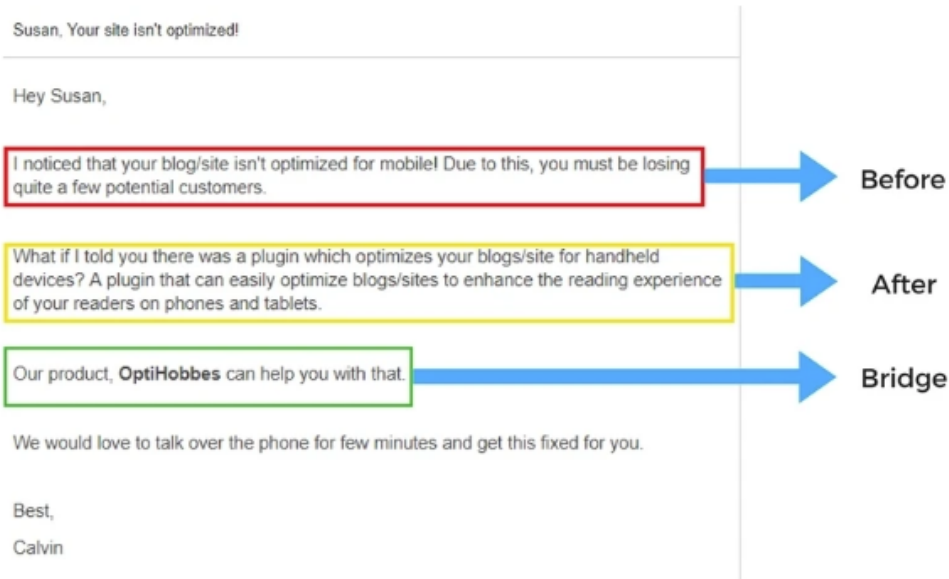
BAB - Before, after, bridge

What motivates any prospect in business is one of three things: To make money, to save money or to avoid risk. This formula is designed to trigger one of these three responses:

- **Before:** Describe a current problem your contact is or might be facing
- **After:** Paint a picture of what life will look like after solving this problem
- **Bridge:** Show how your solution helps them get from before to after.

Here's an example of what a **BAB cold email** looks like:

7 Email Templates to Help You Know What to Say During COVID-19



This format is especially useful today when many businesses are facing challenges they couldn't even imagine a month or two ago.

Here's a template for you to customize:

Template

Hi [First Name],

What would you [or leads company] do if [the main benefit of your product/service — for example, growing their business during the economic downturn]?

Does that seem unrealistic right now? It doesn't have to be.

For example, [customer who saw the benefits and their results] I'm confident [your company] can get [lead's company] similar results — even during the current economic climate. Here's why: [your company's differentiator].



Would you have some free time next week for a personalized demo?



PAS: Problem, agitate, solution

Every lead has a problem that you are looking to solve.

This format works by highlighting the problem and the frustration it brings, agitating by explaining the consequences of that problem, and then provides the solution — likely your product or service.

Here's an [example from Salesfolk](#):

 Save to write the perfect email ending 

 **Heather R Morgan** heather@salesfolk.com via mail69.sea41.rsgsv.net
to me 

Hey there,

Agitate Problem

It's a common and frustrating situation with sales emails: your open rates are high, your response rates abysmally low. What's going on?

It doesn't take exact science to figure that out. Normally, it's because we labor over our subject lines and wind up neglecting the call to action. Sometimes there's no call to action. Other times it's boring and forgettable, like the overused "Looking forward to hearing from you" line.

One of our jobs as salespeople in the digital age is to write memorable emails that stand out from competitors' messages. To do that, you need to end on as strong a note as you began with.

When these calls to action (CTAs) are well-written, focused, and offer a clear and valuable incentive, you make it easy for the recipient to want to respond. In essence, you've made the decision for them by offering value.


Solution

So take a look at the CTAs you've been sending and give them a makeover, using some tried and true tactics I've always found helpful.

[Here are three ways to improve your CTAs and make your sales emails more enticing.](#)

Cheers,
Heather

PS: There are even more tips on CTAs in [this short video course I created on email outreach with Hubspot](#). (Check it out, since it's totally free.) There are some pretty useful worksheets on CTAs inside.



Here's a customizable template for you to use:

Hi [First Name],

Is your [lead's company] struggling with [painful problem — related to COVID-19 if it makes sense]?

It's a tough issue to overcome, and something most [companies in your lead's industry] is struggling with right now. And it can cost [stat or research to agitate painful problems].

Our [product/service] helps you avoid this with [benefit /one-sentence pitch].

I'd love to show you more. Are you open to a call at [date and time] next week?

SAS: Star, arch, success

Every great story has a star — and this email format makes the most of our love of stories. Start by introducing the star — likely one of your customers, but it could also be your company.

Then, you describe the problem they faced, and then — **success!** Reveal how the star was able to win/save the day — using your product or service, of course.

Sound a little cheesy?

It can be — but people love stories.

When we hear stories, our brains light up — especially our frontal cortex, the part of the brain that experiences emotions. Our imaginations let us feel, smell and empathize with the star — which helps create a stronger connection.

Template

Hi [First Name],

In the latter half of 2018, the future was looking bleak for [star person/company].

With [cause of the problem/arch] [star] needed to [get results related to your product/service].

A tough task, considering [cause of the problem/arch] — and even tougher in today's world with [problems industry is facing due to COVID-19]

So how did [star] win?

[Short sentence on the star's triumph, related to your product/service].

[Your company] specializes in [product/service that helped star win], and I realize you might be facing similar challenges right now.

I'd love to help. I created a personalized template to help you [benefit]. Can I send it to you?

Ask a relevant question.

Asking a question is a great way to pique interest — but generic questions won't do the trick.

To be effective, your question needs to be specific and relevant to your lead. It should imply your message won't require a huge time investment and promise an answer.

Template:

Hi [First Name],

Want to see how you can instantly [benefit from your product]?

I know you're busy working to [end result that your product/service helps with], and you might be working from home, so I'll make this quick.

I'm the lead [role at your company], and I've got a few suggestions to help you immediately generate some quick wins with [area your lead is working on]. Here they are:

- **[Tip 1]**
- **[Tip 2]**

You might not have the time, though, and that's where [your company] can help. Are you available for a quick 15-minute call next week so I can walk you through the tips and discuss this further?

The recent news email

A recent news email can help break the ice and establish rapport with a new contact. This could be something related to their current business, like this example from Chris Bibey, a content specialist:

Hi [name],

I just came across your company on the 2019 Inc. 5000 list. Congrats!

Usually, when this happens, marketing becomes a priority. So, I thought you might be interested in learning how we helped [company name] use a corporate blog to boost traffic and increase leads by 7x.

I'm available to chat via phone all next week, so please let me know what works for you.

Once again, congrats on the award!

[your name]

This format can also be adjusted to address THE news everybody's talking about — COVID-19.

Keep the selling angle soft — remember, everyone is dealing with this a bit differently, so you don't want to make assumptions about their situation, struggles or lack of struggle. The problems your prospects had before COVID are still problems but COVID may or may not have affected them.

Template:

Hi [First Name],

I hope you and the [their company name] team are holding up well amidst the Coronavirus outbreak. We, like most others, are working from home and doing the best we can.

I noticed [insert link or mention site]. It's clear that your business is making an impact on the [insert industry/market].

My name is [your name], I work at [your company], and we [one-pitch sentence]. We'd like to help you [benefit your company offers] by [offer — free trial, demo, discount, etc.]

If you'd like to talk — or need anything at all, just give me a shout.

"It's up to you!"

When most people hear the term "salesperson," what do you think is the first word they think of? Pushy? Annoying? Fake?

Many salespeople don't know how to sell without annoying their prospects. Annoying people doesn't hit sales targets or revenue goals, and companies with annoying salespeople don't weather crises well.

How do you combat this stigma and avoid making marketing blunders? By putting the ball squarely in their court.

Template:

Hi [First Name],

I just found you through your [site/social media profile].

I see that you're making an impact on {what you observed from research} [or address another recent success], and deservedly so. I'm an [expert/job role] at [your company] and realized you could [benefit you offer] faster by implementing these 2 tips:

- **[Tip 1]**

- **[Tip 2]**

There's a third tip, but I don't want to overwhelm you, especially with all that is going on right now. If the first two help, let me know, and I can send the third.

If not, I understand. No hard feelings :)

Take care.

Final thoughts on sending sales emails during this crisis or any crisis

The reality is, there is no official "Post COVID-19 Sales Handbook." The world as we know it has changed in the matter of a few weeks. Many of us are still adjusting to our new normal.

Navigating sales during this time is challenging — but not impossible. Above all, engage curiously, aim to show empathy and offer help and shift away from using hard sales tactics that will come off as tone-deaf.

Now that you're here

SellMark360 is a sales coaching, training and sales education company who works with "non-traditional" sales people such as consultants, service-based business owners and teams within small to medium sized businesses. We share our simplified NextAction sales methodology to help our clients connect more consistently in order to creat more consistent revenue with less resistance.

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**You don't hate
sales...
You probably hate
the process of
selling!**



LET'S MAKE IT EASIER! THERE IS A MORE REWARDING AND EFFECTIVE WAY TO SELL and that's what I've been showing my clients for the past 3 years and it's helped them realize revenue they hadn't thought possible while enjoying the process of selling. I'll never say sales is "easy"- it can BE EASIER, SIMPLIFIED and feel less overwhelming, less frustrating and lead to more wins than losses making it more rewarding and worth doing! With options for both a Done-For-You as well as an intensive Done-With-You approach, you have options for turning this season of obstacles into a season of opportunities.

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