



## Communicating into the COVID-19 Storm

With all the news coverage, and social and public chatter, your job is to provide your key audiences with straightforward, actionable information about the issues of most importance to them. At this point in this rapidly evolving scenario, most questions will likely revolve around these basic issues:

- **Access**
- **Safety**
- **The Economy**

What follows are three scenarios and how you might communicate according to where your organization currently stands:

- **Open for Business**
- **Temporarily Closed**
- **Preparing to Reopen**

Rather than prepare a lengthy Q&A, as is often standard operating procedure, you will be better served to decide what you want to say about each of those issues when you hear questions that relate to that issue (see examples below). For all other general questions, refer those who ask to information from health authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or other sources appropriate to your region. For your convenience, IAAPA has a list of these organizations on its [Member COVID-19 Resources page](#), which is regularly updated.

When speaking with media, your goal is to respond to a question to get a key message across, not to answer questions simply because a reporter or others whose objective is not the same, asked. Listen to the questions you are asked, identify the issue to which it is most closely related, and then rather than a specific answer, make the point that is most important to your organization.

### **Scenario 1: Open for Business**

**Access** ... Is your facility open for business?

- Having ensured we are able to provide a safe environment for our guests and employees, *VacationLanding* is open for business as usual with a cautious eye kept daily on any changing circumstances.

**Safety** ... Is it safe for us to visit? Does your facility present any danger to our community? Are your employees safe? Can you assure the traveling public that your facility is safe?

- *VacationLanding* is ...
  - Committed to the health and safety of all our guests and associates and neighbors and we have taken extraordinary steps to see that we keep our facility clean and safe for all.

- Following all the directives of the Centers for Disease Control/World Health Organization, etc., including making abundantly available hand sanitizers and hand-washing facilities, enhancing our cleaning procedures, and more.

**The Economy ...** Has attendance been affected? How long will this last? Can your business survive?

- These are unprecedented times, and all of us have been impacted in some way. We are confident in our ability to continue offering a safe and fun experience for our guests as they continue their visits with us.

### **Scenario 2: Temporarily Closed**

**Access ...** Now that you have closed, how long do you expect this to last? Are any of your secondary facilities, such as restaurants and stores on property, still open? What are you doing to care for animals? How many of your staff are still working to keep equipment working? What about back-of-house and administrative personnel?

- *VacationLanding* is following the guidance of health authorities, and federal, state and local experts, and a) we will keep you updated as the situation continues to unfold, b) we are currently planning to reopen on X.
- Only those necessary to perform vital functions are working in the facility while others who can are working from home. We remain in touch with all our associates. Rest assured that our animals are well taken care of.
- Our peripheral operations are a) part of our closure, b) open as usual, c) open until further notice as we carefully evaluate federal, state, and local guidance every day.

**Safety ...** What kind of safety issues do you face with an empty facility? Do you have to have extra security? Are the animals caged? What will be your safety protocol when starting up equipment after this is over?

- *VacationLanding* is following our comprehensive safety plan that ensures the safety of our people, guests, animals, our property and that of our neighbors, as well as the community at large.
- We have a complete plan that has been in place from the beginning and is updated on a regular basis that will be followed as we return to normal operations.

**The Economy ...** Are you paying/helping your workers? How many are out of work? What do you project the cost is daily? How long can you keep this up? Has the government reached out to you with any relief?

- *VacationLanding* is ...
  - Doing everything we can to support our employees and mitigate the financial impact them (according to your policies that may include things such as paying our employees for sick leave, furlough benefits if any, working to see that they receive unemployment benefits promptly, etc.).
  - Aware that this is an unprecedented time for all of us, and we are doing everything in our power to manage through and prepared to open as soon as is reasonably possible. While no one has a crystal ball, we believe we are well-prepared.

### **Scenario 3: Preparing to Reopen**

**Access ...** Now that the “all-clear” signal has been given, when will the doors open? When do you expect to see people traveling again? Will you bring back all your employees right away? Is everything up and running? What’s your biggest challenge?

- *VacationLanding* is thrilled to be ready to welcome the public back (DATE) and to have our employees back on property to make sure that we are totally prepared to have our guests enjoying wonderful vacation experiences they’ve come to expect.
- We understand people may still be hesitant to resume normal activities. We want to reassure everyone that we’re taking all the necessary measures to ensure [VENUE] is ready to welcome visitors for a safe and enjoyable [day/time/visit/season] with us.
- In preparation, we have been maintaining our facilities and readied our team, so opening day may be enjoyed by all.

**Safety ...** As high tech as your industry is, aren’t you concerned that you could have some glitches as you reopen? Is it safe to start out at full capacity or should you have a soft-opening?

- *VacationLanding* is fully prepared to reopen, and we will do so as soon as reasonably possible. We will not before it is time and we are certain that (DATE) we will be fully operational.

**The Economy ...** How big a hit has this been economically? What will it do to pricing? Can we expect special prices to attract tourists back? Can you afford all the workers if the crowds are small at first?

- *VacationLanding* is more than ready to get back to providing fun and memorable experiences to our guests. We think many are ready to do the same, and that eagerness will quickly help us and our great team move the economy upward.