



Smart Business During Lockdown

1. Business Challenges

The business challenges experienced by the SMME's during the lock down included:

- 1.1 Loss of revenue.
- 1.2 Poor Connectivity.
- 1.3 Loss of clients.
- 1.4 Difficulty in paying suppliers.
- 1.5 Non-Payment by debtors.
- 1.6 Costly data packages as compared to the free uncapped internet provided at the incubator.
- 1.7 Limitations in movement to conduct business.
- 1.8 Unconducive work environment and lack of facilities to conduct business.

2. Support to SMME's to Minimise the Impact of the Lock Down

The management and staff of Smartxchange worked remotely from home during the lockdown. The support provided by SmartXchange during this period is detailed below:

2.1 Rental Holiday

SMME's based at the incubator received a rental holiday for the month of April and a 50 percent reduction in rent for the month of May 2020, with further reductions if SMME's participated in the Smart Talk Webinars presented during the lockdown.

2.2 Halting of Legal Action on non-payment of rent

All legal action against SMME's that defaulted on rental payment was put on hold.

2.3 SMME Survey - Overcoming the Challenges of Covid -19

At the onset of the lockdown SmartXchange conducted a survey with all SMME's focusing on "**Overcoming the Challenges of Covid-19.**" The intention of the survey was to analyse the information

provided so that the staff of SmartXchange could assist the SMME's with overcoming some of the challenges and to provide support and assistance in dealing with the impact of Covid 19.

The findings of the survey will also be presented in a report which is being finalised and will be provided to all stakeholders.

A second survey was also conducted to ascertain the nature and availability of internet connectivity at their place of residence during the lockdown.

2.4 Launch of the SmartXchange Covid -19 Innovation Challenge to win R 1 500 000 in total

The SmartXchange Covid -19 Challenge was launched on the 6th April 2020. This innovation challenge was supported by the Black IT Forum, The EThekweni Municipality, Seda (Small Enterprise Development Agency), Sefa (Small Enterprise Finance Agency), Ray Nkonyeni Municipality, TIA (Technology Innovation Agency) and Vodacom Business.

A Call for innovative technology solutions in 3 specific verticals: Business (Employer) Labour (Employee and Community (Civil Society) was made with the intention that the innovation must create an impact, be scalable globally and lead to a sustainable business. The winners will be required to register as a start-up company and will be incubated at SmartXchange, either as a resident or as a virtual SMME.

All applications are currently being evaluated by a team of experts and the 5 shortlisted finalists in each of the three categories will be called upon shortly to do their pitch to the adjudication panel, following which the three winners will be announced. This process will be completed in May 2020.

2.5 SMME Smart Talk: “Smart Business During Lockdown”

SmartXchange initiated the SMME Smart Talk: “Smart Business During Lockdown” for the SMME's. Three episodes were held via Zoom on:

- Crises Management during Lockdown
- Marketing and Branding Your Business
- Rebooting for Success.

The SMME Smart talks were held on 16th, 22nd and 29th April 2020. Details of the contents are indicated below.

SMME SMART TALK
SMART BUSINESS DURING LOCKDOWN

16th APRIL 2020
14:00 - 15:00

22nd & 29th APRIL 2020
10:00 - 11:00

VIA ZOOM
Link to be provided on confirmation of attendance

"SMART BUSINESS DURING LOCKDOWN"
PROGRAMME

MS. SINDILE CELE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
MR. JONATHAN MAIDOO OPENING REMARKS
DR. RAJESH NIERACHAND CRISIS PLANNING USING GROWTHWHEEL
MS. FATIMA MOOLLA CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS MODELS
MR. ATUL PADALKAR PERSONALIZED MENTORSHIP SUPPORT
Q & A Session

RSVP
fatima@smartxchange.co.za
sindile@smartxchange.co.za
(FOR SMARTXCHANGE CLIENTS AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS ONLY)

SMME SMART TALK
SMART BUSINESS DURING LOCKDOWN

22nd APRIL 2020
09:30 - 10:30

29th APRIL 2020
10:00 - 11:00

VIA ZOOM
Link to be provided on confirmation of attendance

"Covid-19 Lockdown: Marketing and Branding Your Business"
PROGRAMME

MR. JONATHAN MAIDOO FACILITATOR
KZN PREMIER HON. MEC. SIHLE ZIKALALA MESSAGE OF SUPPORT
MR. JOHN CHARTER MARKETING STRATEGIES TO SURVIVE LOCKDOWN
MS. FATIMA MOOLLA BUILDING A CREDIBLE BRAND
DR. RAJESH NIERACHAND LIVING YOUR BRAND
MR. ATUL PADALKAR CUSTOMER RETENTION

RSVP
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SMME SMART TALK
SMART BUSINESS DURING LOCKDOWN

29th APRIL 2020
10:00 - 11:00

VIA ZOOM
Link to be provided on confirmation of attendance

"Rebooting For Success"
PROGRAMME

MR. JONATHAN MAIDOO FACILITATOR
MEC. NOMUSA DUBE NCUBE MESSAGE OF SUPPORT
MR. DAVID WHITE MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES DURING LOCKDOWN
MS. HIXONIA NYASULU BUSINESS SURVIVAL IN A DECLINING ECONOMY

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Messages of Support were provided by the KZN MEC for Finance, Mr Ravi Pillay, The Premier of KwaZulu- Natal Sihle Zikalala and the KZN MEC for Economic Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs Nomusa Dube Ncube.

Staff and captains of industry presented during these series of talks. These included John Charter, a marketing specialist; David White, the Chief Executive Officer of DRG Outsourcing and a Human Resources specialist; and the Patron of SmartXchange Hixonia Nyasulu, a national and international business executive.

2.6 Funding Opportunities.

Every Funding opportunity that became available was forwarded to the SMME's. In this regard the staff of SmartXchange assisted the SMME's by:

- ✓ Encouraging them to apply.
- ✓ Assisting them to complete the application forms.
- ✓ Providing the SMME's with confirmation letters which certify that they are incubated at the SmartXchange MICTe incubator.
- ✓ Providing them with letters of reference.
- ✓ Providing copies of lease agreements which were required for funding.

2.7 SMME Interventions.

SMME interventions included the following:

- (i) Assistance with completion of UIF applications.
- (ii) Constant contact with the SMME's via telephone, emails, Skype, Whatsapp and Zoom to provide guidance and assistance.
- (iii) Mentorship and coaching.
- (iv) Alerting SMME's to webinars that focused on business doing the lockdown.
- (v) GrowthWheel training.

3.Restarting Operations after Covid-19 Lockdown.

3.1 Measures to curb the spread of the virus.

SmartXchange opened on 4th May 2020. CIPC approvals were obtained to commence with operations as part of Essential Services Compliance Measures. The 5th and the 6th floors were sanitised on Saturday, 2nd May 2020. SmartXchange has purchased sufficient sanitizers and handheld temperature scanners to service both Port Shepstone and Durban.

In addition to communications on the necessary safety measures for Covid-19, SmartXchange has developed guidelines on safety measures for the workplace. Employees were made aware on how to practice social distancing and maintain basic etiquette during the commute to office, at home and while at office.

3.2 Guidelines to ensure operations run smoothly

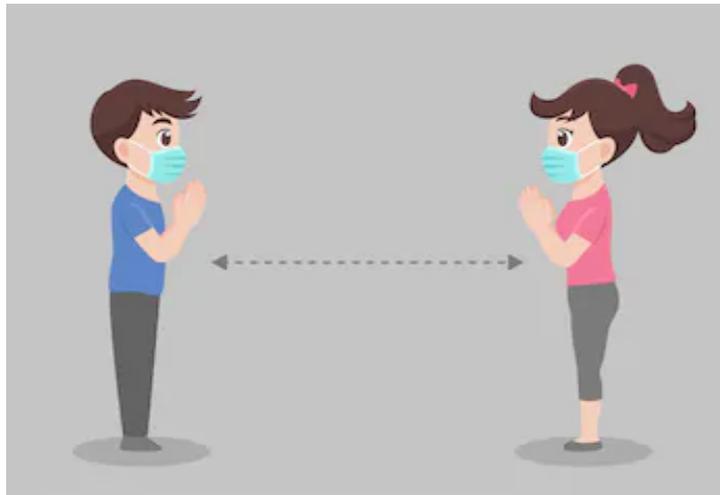
Means of Spread	Prevention
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Person to person spread❖ Commonly touched surfaces❖ Hands, touching the face frequently❖ Coughing, sneezing, and talking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Temperature screening❖ Social distancing❖ Washing and sanitizing the hands frequently❖ Usage of masks (Nose and Mouth covered)❖ Cough etiquette

3.3 Safety measures during commute to work and home.

- ❖ Wear masks throughout the commute ensuring that the mask covers the nose and mouth.
- ❖ If an employee has the slightest symptoms of cough and fever the manager and the CEO must be informed. If the temperature reading is above 98.6°F or 37°C the employee must then continue to work from home.
- ❖ Employees with underlying medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, respiratory issues and hypertension should work from home. A declaration must be made by the employee to the CEO.
- ❖ Always ensure social distancing of at least 3 meters and avoid commuting through crowded areas.
- ❖ If travelling in public transport – observe social distancing (sit in alternative seats).
- ❖ It is advisable that employees carry a hand sanitizer as a measure of hygiene.
- ❖ Avoid car-pooling. However, if you need to carpool sit diagonally to the driver and ensure that there are no more than 3 persons in the vehicle.

- ❖ If a family member or a neighbour or someone from your locality is sick, (Covid-19 related) then the employee must inform the CEO. In such instances the employee will continue to work from home.
- ❖ Employees should look out for alerts in your residential area/community.
- ❖ Employees are requested to extend cooperation to those who are trying to implement hygiene measures outside and inside the office.
- ❖ All employees, SMMEs and visitors are to complete the Access Control Register.

3.4 Measures for Safety at the Office



- ❖ Employees should maintain social distancing while entering and exiting the office premises.
- ❖ Avoid moving around in groups while entering the office, during breaks & meetings.
- ❖ All the employees should pass through temperature screening upon entering the office. If there is detection of elevated fever, the employee will be sent home immediately.
- ❖ Employees should use the sanitizer at the reception to sanitize their hands before entering their respective floors.
- ❖ Use hand sanitizers while entering a board room or meeting room.
- ❖ Employees must maintain a 3 meters distance while working and are to be seated alternately.
- ❖ Hands must be washed and sanitized every time the employee uses the restroom, attends meetings, visits other floors, leaves and re-enters the premises and during lunch breaks etc.
- ❖ Employees must maintain staggered times while going for lunch and follow strict social distancing norms.
- ❖ Eating in groups is strictly not allowed (Avoid overlapping).
- ❖ Employees must not share meals with each other. All cutlery must be washed before using.
- ❖ Employees must bring their own coffee mugs, teacups, and water bottles.
- ❖ Employees must have basic discipline and etiquette while sneezing and coughing. Use a tissue to cover mouth and nose every time one coughs or sneezes. (Resort to coughing into your elbow if a tissue is not available). Never cough into your hands or open air. Always turn your face away from people around you when coughing or sneezing.
- ❖ Use the staircase with proper social distancing and avoid touching the railing.

- ❖ No more than 3 people are allowed to use the lift at any given time. One must use a tissue when pressing the buttons on the keypad of the lift. Tissues must be used and disposed of properly.
- ❖ There should be no physical contact such as handshakes and hugging.
- ❖ Non- essential visitors will not be allowed inside the office premises.
- ❖ Employees are advised only to act on communication from an authorised source (The CEO) within the organization to eliminate panic and rumours.