Beat: Business

THE BIZCOMMUNITY IS NOT TAKING LOCKDOWN LYING DOWN

B TO B AND OVERVIEW OVER 19 SECTORS

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USPA NEWS - Bizcommunity´s essential daily business-to-business information provides a snapshot overview of 19 industry sectors that helps companies keep a virtual presence aliveIn true South African spirit, even in times of adversity, daily stories of generosity and ingenuity abound. Never have we been more proud of how business communities are using our publishing platforms than since the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus. Recent comments from UK press (https://bit.ly/3aPhB6T) referring to South Africa´s 'formidable leadership' in the handling of the coronavirus are telling: “South Africa seems to have acted faster, more efficiently, and more ruthlessly than many other countries around the world...a government so often attacked as corrupt and inefficient, and a private sector so often seen as aloof and greedy, are rising to meet what is widely anticipated to be the greatest challenge this young democracy has ever seen.“

Praise aside, income and job losses are only too real, posing economic threats almost as serious as health-related ones. Bizcommunity´s essential daily business-to-business information provides a snapshot overview of 19 industry sectors that helps companies keep a virtual presence alive. From government directives to daily updates on labour law (https://bit.ly/2XkMCvw), business survival plans (https://bit.ly/2yBRVMV), here´s a guide to who´s publishing what by sector right now to keep business virtual, as usual, on Biz:

Marketing & Media (https://bit.ly/2JKc8Cw)----------

During Covid-19 the M&M and greater communications industry (https://bit.ly/34fr3xX) has shown up with stockpiles of ideas on how to weather economic crises - doing what it does best, reputation management, anticipating client needs, identifying audiences, embracing digital solutions and staying relevant. A survey by Jacaranda FM and East Coast Radio (https://bit.ly/2UMig3D) found radio to be a lifeline amid the global pandemic; we have seen virtual and online solutions in action from IAB Bookmarks migrating their awards event and monthly seminars digitally; a Loeries-led campaign (https://bit.ly/2V4h9eE) inviting our creative capital to meet coronavirus pandemic challenges. The sector is ideally positioned to advise socially-isolated audiences what to watch, listen to or consume, such as Openfield (https://bit.ly/2JFEqOJ) advising on how to keep marketing sports relevant, Multichoice sharing programming highlights (https://bit.ly/39OU6cO) and PR company Hewers (https://bit.ly/34gqFzo) on crisis communication best practices.

Agriculture (https://bit.ly/3dZaOd6)----------

The essential essential service. Publishing real-time information on food-related trade, production, consumption, stocks and prices are top of mind right now, as are directives around food security (https://bit.ly/2UMwdOX) and supply chains. Nutritional information and guidelines would also be valuable.

Automotive (https://bit.ly/3bWw6WN)

Biz Automotive portal shows any sector can get creative in pandemic efforts. Brands behaving responsibly so far include Jaguar Land Rover SA (https://bit.ly/34flEqD) making 11 vehicles available to the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) to help the organisation in its coronavirus (Covid-19) efforts and Sumitomo Rubber SA´s (https://bit.ly/3e1tpF5) 'Don't Take The Road' message urging the public to adhere to lockdown directives; Transport minister, Fikile Mbalula announced a 30-day grace period (https://bit.ly/3e1tpF5) for vehicle, driver´s licences and permits due to lockdowns.

Construction & Engineering (https://bit.ly/2UQbKJj)----------

In the short term, conveying information about projects (https://bit.ly/2XdbMwd) put on hold, the shutdown of plants, labour or other lockdown-related impacts are advisable. Around the world, many built environments are being repurposed: hotels and convention centres into hospitals, quarantine units or mobile ICUs; workspaces evolving into 'centres of human interaction´ (https://bit.ly/39OXTXL); transport hubs providing more multi-use and communal facilities. Potentially an exciting space to watch.

CSI & Sustainability (https://bit.ly/2Xkxs9X)----------

Repository of the most heartwarming humanitarian stories of business in Covid-19 action ““ from the Atlantis factory of Polo fashion brand converting production to 250,000 commuter masks (https://bit.ly/2xRIHvO) to Santam Group´s R200m toward the government´s Solidarity Fund (https://bit.ly/3dXqAoE); the R50m appeal (https://bit.ly/34h28u3) by non-profit food redistribution organisation FoodForward SA, which has received an over R11m response to its donation appeal so far; an emergency

fund (https://bit.ly/34fsgoZ) set up by Charities Aid Foundation Southern Africa (Cafsa); African Development Bank's $3bn Fight Covid-19 Social Bond (https://bit.ly/2Re1ojY); 1st for Women (https://bit.ly/2xPjnGP) that has donated emergency supplies to social workers "" the list, which positions our region as proactive and resourceful, goes on...

Education & Training (https://bit.ly/3bZ9gOu)----------

Webinar content and upskilling platforms are proliferating in response to a collective reset of personal and professional goals. Online learning and digital migration service providers are in demand. An announcement such as SA´s Sasol Foundation (https://bit.ly/34gt2SX) of a free online education resource platform for learners and parents; Think Ahead, in partnership with iStore Meets offering free online virtual coding classes (https://bit.ly/3aO9l7o) to children during South Africa's 21-day lockdown; and the many brands that have been quick to react, provide resources for people bound by extended quarantine periods. It is a privilege to be able to share innovative initiatives as in this space widely as possible.

Energy & Mining (https://bit.ly/39OYgl7)----------

Agility, in the form of tax incentives from the SA Government Employment Tax Incentive (ETI) programme, compliance measures, the conversion of hostels into quarantine units to reduce infection spread and others has been encouraging (https://bit.ly/3dYSlNF). We also look forward to hearing how oil prices will impact in real terms.

Entrepreneurship (https://bit.ly/2XdxekL)----------

Micro, small and medium enterprises are among the hardest hit by Covid-19 lockdown directives. In an article on Bizcommunity, last week, Small Business Development Minister Khumbudzo Ntshavheni announced that government would introduce support measures for SMMEs (https://bit.ly/2XfN2ng) during this extremely difficult time in the form of a Debt Relief Fund; many major banks are also starting to extend lifelines to SMME clientele. The simultaneous health and economic crises experienced around the world are necessitating entrepreneurs to dream up even more entrepreneurial (https://bit.ly/3bUKi2v) models.

Finance (https://bit.ly/2JKtorq)----------

In the true South African spirit of Ubuntu "" the Xhosa term that literally means humanity "" the Solidarity Fund (https://bit.ly/2wW0NwB), launched by SA President Cyril Ramaphosa, has seen swift uptake from individual and corporate benefactors, with Harry Oppenheimer, Johann Rupert and Patrice Motsepe donating R1bn each and prominent businesses and organisations such as Shoprite (https://bit.ly/34hcl9C), Aquelle (https://bit.ly/3bXbptW), Santam (https://bit.ly/2xVW8uM) coming on board with donations to supplement the R150m state pledge, which will be used to contain the impact and spread of Covid-19 among the country´s most vulnerable. In addition, the crisis is seeing SA´s major banks (https://bit.ly/2UNt41y) offering debt repayment holidays, extended loan periods or short-term credit extensions with constant updates evolving in this short space of time.

Healthcare (https://bit.ly/3aPyDSm)

Bizcommunity´s dedicated Covid-19 Special Section (https://bit.ly/34qgs3D), Useful links (https://bit.ly/3aJ7vVc), Healthcare (https://bit.ly/3aO9J5Q) and company news portals feature daily updates and breaking news, such as this from Cipla (https://bit.ly/2Vaovgs) partnering with Cricket SA for the Covid-19 awareness #NoHands challenge; The Centre for Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing (CRPM), the Product Development Technology Station (PDTS), the Centre on Quality of Health and Living (CQHL) and CUT Innovation Services (CUTIS) collaborating with government to print 3D masks (https://bit.ly/3e19aaE) for non-invasive ventilation and other Covid-19 related challenges.

HR & Management (https://bit.ly/39PZ2hE)

Communication, communication, communication! HR companies are providing advice on matters such as the impact of coronavirus on conditions of employment, sick leave entitlement and labour relations. Shifts necessitated by recent work from home directives are likely to impact long after lockdown. Digital and management consultants (https://bit.ly/2wXNdZF) come into their own as virtual meetings, project management, web conferencing, scheduling and workflow become the new norm. In a move designed to assist South African companies track indicators of Covid-19 in the workplace, data monitoring company The Social Collective has created a free platform (https://bit.ly/2XemFOc) that allows decision-makers to monitor key metrics daily. We look forward to more directives from this key job sector.

IT & Telecommunications (https://bit.ly/39NyWvC)

With global economies migrating to digital platforms virtually overnight, unlimited opportunities exist in the ICT sector. Connectivity, digital marketing, e-commerce, development, data analysis, cyber security (https://bit.ly/2UOsBfn) and more offer opportunities, potentially opening up new markets and modus operandi.

Legal (https://bit.ly/34fw1L7)

The Biz Legal portal (https://bit.ly/39I3tLu) has showcased info around Covid contracts, cancellation and confusion. So far, there´s a handy podcast series by Fluxman (https://bit.ly/3bWAF3n); how courts work (https://bit.ly/2Rd4Jj9) during lockdown; retail tenant and labour agreements (https://bit.ly/34fo2xB) and more as they happen.

Lifestyle (https://bit.ly/2UPUYKh)
Whether restaurants, bars, clubs, coffee shops, music, arts and entertainment fall under formal or informal sectors is debatable, but we do know that the livelihoods of these often young, dynamic, diverse SMME job creators are the least likely to have financial safety nets and be one of the hardest hit by travel bans and stay at home orders.

Last week, Biz Lifestyle editor Ruth Cooper showcased such economy-boosting content such as EatOut´s crowdfunding (https://bit.ly/2UNvcpQ) initiative for restaurants and staff; 'quarantine cuisine' (https://bit.ly/3aZ9uFf) "" which sees six SA chefs, keeping spirits up during #SALockdown with super nutritious content; Spur Corporation (https://bit.ly/2xVXZ2I) suspending franchise fees; a #Playitforward fundraiser from SA superstar Ard Matthews (https://bit.ly/2Rd5EjB), donating 75% of his live virtual rooftop performance to beneficiaries nominated by the public; SA Department of Sport, Arts and Culture finalising R150m Covid-19 relief fund for artists and athletes (https://bit.ly/2yvSec3); SA celebs (https://bit.ly/2UNv5La) giving up #AtHomeWithMe, #HappyAtHome, #FitAtHome content on TikTok to inspire and provide entertainment for uncertain and challenging times. Globally, we have heard reports from Berlin of DJs livestream sets and this trend is likely to spread.

Logistics & Transport (https://bit.ly/3dZjYGp)
Supply chain professionals are essential service providers who will ensure medical supplies, food and goods remain operational. Read about amendments to the new 21-day National State of Disaster Covid-19 cargo ships (https://bit.ly/2Xd5cpu), airfreight and port regulations implemented by SA Government and other innovations in the sector.

Manufacturing (https://bit.ly/34dN0gW)
Last month, Albert Louw, the marketing manager at Lasher Tools (https://bit.ly/2yvSV59), announced on Bizcommunity that the company had gained new business as a consequence of the outbreak of coronavirus in China and urged local manufacturers and government to stand together to expand the crucial manufacturing job creation sector. We have been heartened by the stories above of the Polo factory repurposed to produce commuter masks, CRPM 3-D printed masks and hope that the downturn in tourism revenue will see a long-overdue injection of investment into the local manufacturing economy and pharmaceuticals.

Property (https://bit.ly/3bWIaHI)
As per the news from the Construction sector, the Property industry needs to innovate. Flyt Property Investment (https://bit.ly/39Mb6Rb) recently published that the Eaton Square development in Cape Town has made suitably sanitised units available to those requiring Covid-19 quarantine stays. Work-fromhome (https://bit.ly/2JHH9ah) habits are also likely to have shifted irrevocably post-lockdowns, and this may impact on future demand for home office space, location desirability or repurposing of existing work hubs to more multi-use offerings.

Retail (https://bit.ly/39Tn0c9)
Stocks, staff, safety and solidarity (https://bit.ly/2wm1VJy) "" all top of mind for retailers. Keeping communication channels open remains a priority. A surge in "˜contactless commerce´ is likely and would love to hear more from services in this sector. Retail brands raising the bar include Pernod Ricard South Africa (https://bit.ly/2ULIxPj) #KeepTheSpirit initiative committing R2m to support nearly 1,000 bartenders and waitrons during the lockdown. Analysis from research partners Nielsen Global (https://bit.ly/2wiAJLL) Intelligence and Kantar (https://bit.ly/3bT4YYL) on Biz, last week, unpacked some early insights on new consumer patterns and behaviour. Abovementioned actions by brands such as Shoprite (https://bit.ly/34cHw6e), Aquelle (https://bit.ly/2xPAp7A), Santam (https://bit.ly/2RfuVJY), Polo, Spur and others can only benefit all in the longer term.

Tourism (https://bit.ly/2XbWl7y)
The global travel lockdown sees this sector hardest hit, especially in South Africa where estimated job creation was projected to somewhere around 9%. Despite this, many are not taking lockdown lying down, keeping brand awareness alive, publishing travel insurance-related and other information; SA´s Department of Tourism (https://bit.ly/3dZvfGD) pledged R200m for tourism and hospitality sector SMMEs under particular stress due to the new travel restrictions. Travel journalist Jared Ruttenburg, shares #SAwinelockdown and other interim initiatives; Tintswalo Safari Lodge (https://bit.ly/2UKTHUw) is offering free virtual game drives, including wildlife sightings and game rangers on patrol. From Egyptian relics to Everest expeditions, technology such as AI and VR captures may soon see new carbon-free travel. But please don´t leave home yet.
Africa (https://bit.ly/2wYz9z7)----------
Never has intra-African connectivity been more important. As real borders close, virtual opportunities open up (https://bit.ly/3aO8nI7). Sectors such as finance, healthcare, energy, food security and NPOs have vital roles to play in opening up both channels of communication and revenue. Let´s connect!

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY REAL BUSINESS----------
The Bizcommunity nine-dot logo represents connection. As communities physically distance but virtually come together, our online business platforms continue to provide a valuable snapshot of the energy and enterprise of business communities of our continent and region, as we proudly unite to meet these most challenging of times from one of the most economically challenged positions in the world. The Biz team is working remotely, as usual, ready to promote your company news, virtual events, courses, seminars and crowd-sourced activations on the indispensable business-to-business website from South Africa to the world. Source : Bizcommunity.

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