[**PERSADO**]
Words matter.

5 principles for communicating with your customers during the COVID-19 crisis.

The COVID-19 outbreak is a fast-changing crisis. Consumers are looking to the companies they trust for information, reassurance, and effective communication. Your brand purpose - and your customers' experiences with your brand - matter more now than ever, and so does the language you use. In an effort to help you navigate the weeks and months ahead, we gathered a range of insights into effective language and communication practices to help you connect with customers, employees and all stakeholders.

Below are five key communication principles derived from our content intelligence and language analysis to help guide your communication efforts.

1

This is a time to use empathy-based and customer-centric language.

Conveying empathy is vital at this time. The word "You" activates customer-centric communication and is a top performing word because it anchors the message in the customer's perspective.

Examples: **"You're our #1 priority"** and **"What you should know."**

2

Language around the emotions of Gratitude and Safety will be critical during this crisis.

Trust-centric emotional language is important during this time, especially language that conveys Gratitude and Safety.

Examples: **"Thank you for your patience"** (Gratitude) and **"We're here for you"** (Safety).

3

Approach how your brand communicates important updates with intention, care, and data.

Information-based communications could be perceived as alarming or insensitive. You can infuse these communications with trust-based language, such as **"please."**

Be cautious using the word **"Don't"** as it is a consistent poor performer.

4

Positive language also warrants close attention to detail.

Overly optimistic, exclamatory, or positive language may be perceived as alarming or tone-deaf.

Avoid phrases like **"This is unexpected"** and **"It's your lucky day."**

5

Review your brand communications for specific tactical practices that make a difference.

Avoid superlatives, hyperbolic language, and capitalization unless it's essential.

Assess any location-based variables and language for appropriate use and avoid visually alarming formatting, including emojis like ⚠️ **‼️ ❗ ⁉️**.

For more helpful resources and insights, visit **persado.com/covid**