



Coronavirus Canceled Your Trade Show, Don't Let it Destroy the Year.



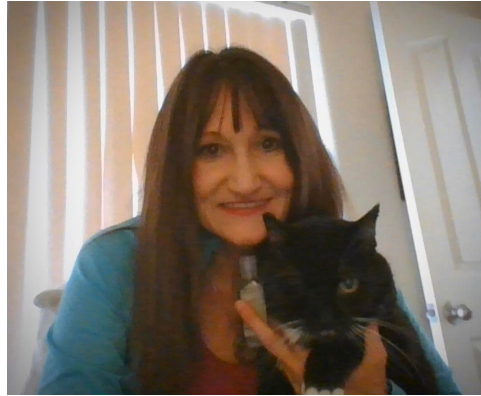
Real Marketing Solutions to the Single-Handed Decimation of the B2B Spring Trade Show Season.

Before we get started solving your authentic problems brought on by coronavirus mass hysteria (jury is out on warranted or not), let us reassure you that Orange Marketing is doing just fine.

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Due to our currently [very fashionable remote work business strategy](#), we don't talk to anyone face-to-face. We have hunkered down and are ready to go.



Tuxie and Amber (Business Operations) watching the [USC Coronavirus webinar](#).



Kelsey (our co-founder) hard at work in her perfect home office.

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Skye and Rebecca (our other co-founder) on break.

We are pissed off.

Don't let these smiles fool you. We are pissed off. We are super annoyed at the media fanned emotion surrounding coronavirus. And, [as the trade show cancellations roll in](#), we are upset for our SMB SaaS client base who has lost, one by precious one, the kick-off to their spring selling season.

Technology companies rely on these annual shows to jump-start revenue efforts for the year. One client told us his annual summit show in late March brings in 500 good leads that typically turn into 50 active deals. Trade shows, with a show booth, conscientiously run, and the resulting lead pipeline correctly managed and nurtured, can garner a significant amount of annual revenue. The 2020 coronavirus pandemic will have devastating effects on U.S. SMB revenue regardless of its [actual impact on human life](#).

What Can You Do to Recover the Revenue?

Your trade show has been canceled or will be canceled ([USA Today Updated List](#)), and with any luck, you will be getting a refund. Ask the show sponsors what opportunities will be available such as lists or virtual sessions. Many of the shows are just figuring this out, so stay in front of them and watch your email. Aside from the show opportunities themselves, what are your

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immediate options to make up for the missing leads and resulting revenue? Here are our top three recommendations:

Contents

- 1. Sponsor trade organization content like a report or a study**
- 2. Host a webinar, not as hard as it seems and a good muscle to build**
- 3. Sponsored trade publication promotion of your content**
- 4. Bonus - What do you do with all the collateral and show trinkets you have ordered?**

Warning: This is a 2,500 word blog post. Our typical recommendation is blog posts are more like 1,700 words, 2,000 at the outside. Obviously we have deep passion about this topic. Suffice it to say we are deeply concerned about the damage coronavirus has done to our community and we wanted to lay out all our thoughts in one place (and one of us always writes too much). We have made the [downloadable of this blog post](#) available as a solution.

1. Sponsor Trade Organization Content

Immediately contact your trade organization of choice, and find out what reports they are putting out that you can sponsor. Typically these come with a webinar built-in, lead lists, and have numerous opportunities for you to push marketing to the content via paid advertising. Be forewarned, these opportunities sell out, and you won't be the only company pivoting to this strategy.

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Pricing for sponsored content or research reports can range anywhere from \$10K to \$25K. It's a bargain considering the multiple opportunities you will have to leverage this content. And you will receive leads that your sales and marketing teams can immediately attack via

1. Webinar signups
2. Downloads of the report (organization site and your website)
3. Paid media promotion to the report (sponsors and yours)

Here are examples from our clients who are extremely happy with results received from these recent promotions:

- [Transcepta](#) sponsored an ebook [Ardent Partners Metrics That Matter 2020](#). Leads are still pouring in with SQLs in creation process right now.



**Download
Content Bundle**

**Ardent Partners'
Accounts Payable
Metrics that
Matter in 2020**

Download Now!

- [FreightPop](#) sponsored a webinar put on by [Logistics Management: 2020 Rate Outlook Webcast-- Fortune Favors the Bold](#). They received so many leads that they had to run a prioritization strategy to outreach the top ones by Sales ASAP while Marketing nurtures the remainder.

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2. Host a Webinar

Recently one of our SaaS Founders tried to tell us webinars were dead due to people's lack of time, inability to focus, blah blah blah. We disagree, and research vigorously backs us up.

[Webinars are far from dead according to this HubSpot article](#) because:

- Webinars are still highly engaging
- Webinars work across all stages of the customer journey (top, middle, and bottom of the funnel)
- Webinars generate high quality leads for Sales

Although webinars are not dead, they are changing. Directionally, this is where they are heading:

Webinar Trends

- Webinars will increase in quality as a result of increased competition.
- Webinars will decrease in length - people have less time and shorter attention spans.
- People may register with the expectation not to attend live, but to catch the recording on their own time (send the recording within 24 hours).
- Webinars are moving in a more automated direction. Why create new content all the time when you can replay one great webinar?
- People don't care about slideshows anymore. They would rather see someone's face who is exciting and energetic. Webinar hosts should focus more on the quality of the speaker and less on the content.

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- Webinars are increasingly being streamed or posted after the fact on YouTube and Vimeo.
- Considering forgoing slides and a script completely for a discussion-style webinar with the host asking live questions.

Webinars aren't as daunting to run as they might seem, but honestly, make sure you have a marketing person involved. We like HubSpot's [Ultimate Guide to Creating Compelling Webinars](#).

We recently attended the highly informative Coronavirus webinar put on by USC. We accidentally dialed in ten minutes early, and the speakers were all live, discussing "the latest" they had heard through the grapevine about coronavirus. Better than the webinar. Even though it killed us to do this, we chatted and let them know they were live. They sent out the webinar afterward loaded to their private Google Drive. Poor sweet things. We uploaded it to our [Vimeo account so that you can watch it as it is FASCINATING content](#).



Which webinar software should you use? Currently, [GoToWebinar](#) integrates seamlessly with HubSpot, and we have been pleased with its simplicity and effectiveness. We hope Zoom will have an integration with HubSpot soon because it is our preferred meeting solution (and the [new darling of Wall Street](#)).

Should you use Vimeo or YouTube to house your videos? It's an interesting debate. YouTube is best for search while Vimeo is best for control [but decide for yourself](#).

Our only other tip for webinars is to expect everything to go wrong. We have experienced everything under the sun happening on webinars (power outage, computer outage, speaker

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missing), so you have to double-check your double-checking. In no particular order, here are some tips we abide by.

Webinar Fail-Safe Checklist

- Practice using the webinar software before the big day. The controls are not necessarily intuitive, so best to take a look in advance.
- Have a backup host who also has a copy of the slides, who is not in the same location as you.
- Bug the CRAP out of your speakers ... put the meeting on their calendar, remind them, just be a pest in general. Webinar speaker no shows are an unfortunate real-life experience. You can't be too careful.
- Plan for success. We have seen webinar maximum attendees bite even the most seasoned companies in the ass. An actual quote from a real email from last week, *"Yesterday, our webinar experienced technical difficulties and many attendees weren't able to experience the webinar. In short, we had several thousand attendees and our third-party webinar platform was unable to handle this volume."*
- Write out your introduction speech and practice it.
- Don't let your host intro and your webinar speakers drag on with too much introduction. Get to the presentation within 2 - 3 minutes. Tops.
- Pre-meet with the host, speakers, and everyone about a week in advance to discuss the content and the logistics.
- Get your speakers, and your host logged onto the webinar software 30 minutes in advance of the actual presentation. Get the slides loaded and everyone comfortable.
- Ensure you know how to record your webinar and that you are recording. We are bringing it up because we've forgotten to record.
- Make sure you are not in presentation mode until it is time to present.
- Have one moderator strictly in charge of questions and coordinating.
- Don't forget to have three seed questions to get the ball rolling.

If you feel your B2B list won't support invitations to a webinar, see who you can partner with and how you can pay for promotion. A typical ratio is one attendee for every three signups. It is the signups you most care about as you can send the recording out to them afterward, which they are expecting.

In B2B, we are over the moon if we get 100 signups and 30 attendees. It is not uncommon to get 35 signups and 10 attendees. Don't let that bug you. The content created is fantastic.

Additional Uses for Webinar Content to Generate Leads

1. Recorded webinar on the website, many times gated

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2. Transcribe the webinar and turn it into a downloadable white paper
3. And, turn the white paper into a top [pillar page](#).

Here is an example of just such a strategy, created for Transcepta from a webinar : [Straight-Through AP Invoice Processing](#). And another one for iNymbus regarding [Freight Claims Processing](#).



How To Automate Shipping Carrier Freight Claims Processing

Unique Solutions To Solve Freight Claims Issues

[DOWNLOAD WHITEPAPER](#)

The image shows a promotional graphic for a whitepaper. On the left is a 3D rendering of the whitepaper cover, which has a blue background and white text. To the right of the cover is the title "How To Automate Shipping Carrier Freight Claims Processing" in blue, followed by the subtitle "Unique Solutions To Solve Freight Claims Issues" in orange. Below the text is a red button with the white text "DOWNLOAD WHITEPAPER". To the right of the button is the iNymbus logo, which consists of a stylized blue and orange shape above the word "iNymbus" in a small, blue, sans-serif font.

3. Sponsored Publication Promotion of Your Content

Research the best trade websites and publications for your target market. Research and reach out to them to understand what paid opportunities they have with their publication.

Research Best Trade Organizations

You are looking for directly targeted opportunities that get right to their members, preferably email. A targeted email can cost anywhere from \$3k to \$7k per send. And you are looking to promote some piece of your content that is gated. A landing page will allow you to scrape leads from their membership database.

Researching appropriate publications isn't easy. You have to stay organized and keep your results in some sort of spreadsheet ([an example here](#)). When you reach out to ten to fifteen media reps and organizations, trying to understand paid opportunities, it quickly gets confusing. You will get callbacks lickety-split and meetings requested from eager reps.

Use a product like [SEMRush](#) to analyze each pub website to understand what the reach is. You are looking to understand their organic search, are they paying for search and what type of backlink activity do they have. Do they have the traffic that warrants whatever prices they are charging?

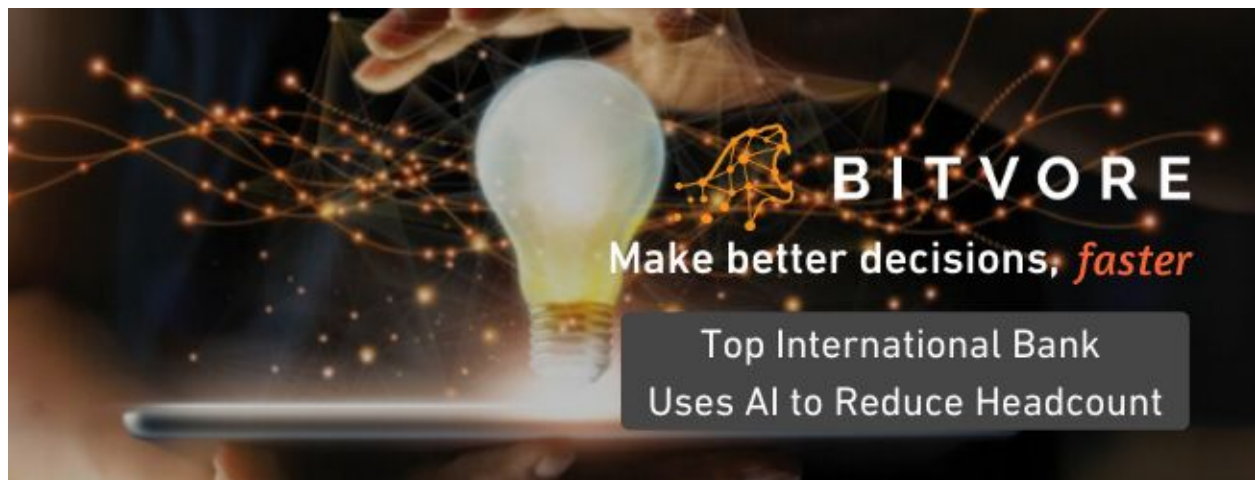
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Place Your Bets

After you have researched the opportunities, place your bets. For every publication that will promote your gated piece of content, make sure you provide them with a tracking link so you can understand just which publications were most successful. Analyze your cost per lead from each pub. Get feedback from Sales. Did you get SQLs or (still my beating heart) actual Deals?

One customer of ours, [Bitvore.com](https://bitvore.com), placed a few bets last summer with a number of publications. We were shocked when a piece of content we put in a targeted email for [Bob's Guide](#), garnered 60+ leads. Were they qualified? As we continued to fine-tune our use of this lead machine, we are proud to report we have a couple of SQLs soon to be Opportunities in the pipeline. It is an ongoing experiment. Test and pivot.



4. Bonus Idea - What to do with all the Show Collateral, Trash & Trinkets you purchased?

Did you order a lot of collateral, trash and trinkets for the show? Don't let them languish in a closet hoping they are useful at some point. This stuff obsolesces quickly. What is cool one day is junk the next. And collateral has a short shelf life.

Send out an email to your highest prospects or the show list if you are lucky enough to get it and tell them you want to give it all away. But, to receive the t-shirt, USB drive, or whatever, they must first answer a short survey regarding "information that is important to your target and to you."

Make sure the survey has proper safeguards in it: you will only give one prize per person, and the survey must be completed only by the person you emailed it to, by a specific date. Then by

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good old fashioned postal mail, send the items to the respondents with the datasheet you printed for the show. Don't forget a cover letter with a clear-printed phone number and URL (test both first please). We love old-fashioned mail at Orange Marketing, and no one does it anymore. Trust us, you'll stand out from the crowd.

Finally publish the results of the survey as a piece of content. Lemonade from lemons!

Conclusion

Yes, this coronavirus trade show cancellation thing sucks. And you spent a lot of time and money preparing for the trade show that didn't happen. Don't let it be soul-crushing. Fight back by digging deep into your marketing back of tricks.

Do you love these ideas but don't know how the **F** you are going to get this done? [Call us](#). We are as mad as hell about this whole thing and want to help out.

We leave you with this. Yes, it is an Instagram post from the ever so popular Stories, and yes it is preachy, but seriously media friends, get a grip and stop terrifying everyone. As we have explained to Rebecca's 21-year-old son who thinks this is "end of days," been there - done that.

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