



# Recovering from **COVID-19**





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As the cities, counties, and states slowly begin to work towards a new normal, many businesses are wondering what, exactly, normal now looks like. Whether your business has been shut down in recent weeks, or operating under new policies and procedures, you are likely still seeing repercussions from massive shelter in place orders. Now is a great time to take stock and make some strategic decisions about what's next for your business.

## **Don't flatten your curve too much**

The good news is that as other countries ease restrictions, they are reporting economic bounce backs happening at a faster rate than predicted. If the United States follows the same pattern, your business — and those of customers and vendors on whom you rely — may be ready for increased activity faster than you are anticipating.

What does that mean? Evaluate the cutbacks you've made recently. Are you keeping fewer supplies in stock? Have you cut back on seasonal marketing efforts? Have you canceled or suspended services that make it easier to manage your business? Now might be the perfect time to revisit those decisions. In addition to positioning yourself to be ready to go when demand for your business starts to return, many of your vendors or partners might be offering great deals you can take advantage of now.

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## Check your flexibility

This pandemic has been a learning experience for everyone. Take this time to evaluate what lessons you've been taught. Was your business too reliant on a particular sector or service? Can you start to expand?

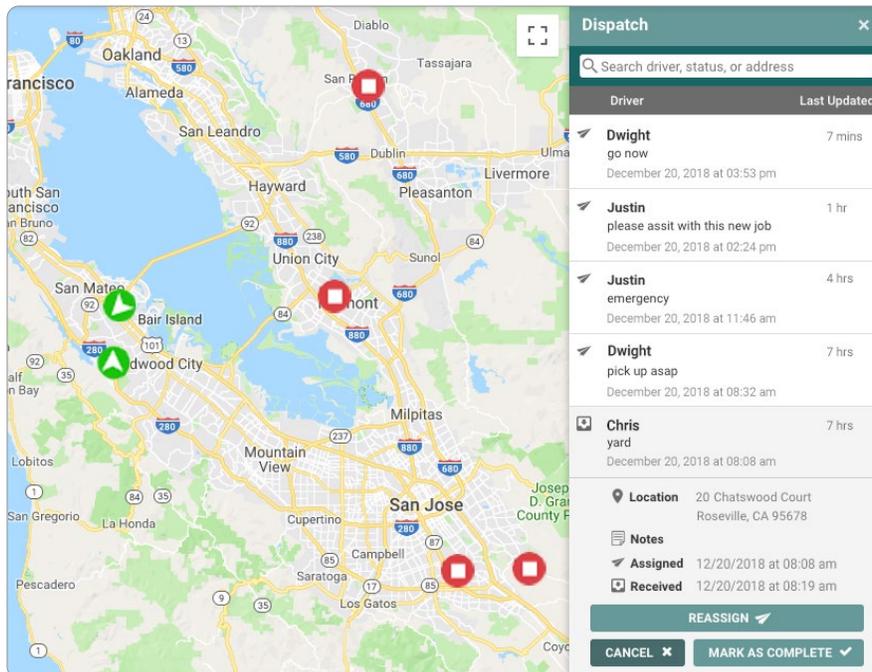
One HVAC company we talked to revised their seasonal service protocols during this time. To minimize the need to enter houses, they dropped off supplies, produced instructional materials for changing filters, and created a checklist of steps for customers to test their AC systems. Meanwhile, technicians were still able to perform their usual services on equipment outside of homes. As a result, they saw only a minimal dip in the normal level of appointments, and were able to fit more appointments in each day.

If your business took a hit during this time, take a closer look at why. You may see opportunities to change the way you handle normal appointments, opportunities with a new customer base that wasn't as affected by the crisis, or just ways to be more efficient.

## Consider whether your old normal still works

Businesses like repeatable patterns. If something has always worked, keep doing it. Take this time to consider what has worked well when you were forced to adapt.

Many businesses are discovering that working remotely has been easier than they thought. Cloud-based software solutions might be a much smaller investment than rent on larger office space. With tools like GPS tracking, you can



The screenshot displays a dispatch software interface. On the left is a map of the San Francisco Bay Area, with several red location markers. On the right is a 'Dispatch' panel with a search bar and a list of driver assignments. The list includes:

Driver	Last Updated
Dwight go now December 20, 2018 at 03:53 pm	7 mins
Justin please assist with this new job December 20, 2018 at 02:24 pm	1 hr
Justin emergency December 20, 2018 at 11:46 am	4 hrs
Dwight pick up asap December 20, 2018 at 08:32 am	7 hrs
Chris yard December 20, 2018 at 08:08 am	7 hrs

Below the list, the 'Location' is specified as 20 Chatswood Court, Roseville, CA 95678. There are 'Notes' for 'Assigned' (12/20/2018 at 08:08 am) and 'Received' (12/20/2018 at 08:19 am). At the bottom of the panel are buttons for 'REASSIGN', 'CANCEL', and 'MARK AS COMPLETE'.

	<b>David's Car</b> David's Car is in use at 9:14 AM, outside your authorized hours.	9:14 AM
	<b>David's Car</b> Vehicle started its ignition for the first time today.	9:14 AM

*Eliminate the need for yard checks with after hours use alerts*

Proactive steps now will go far to making sure the months ahead are not just about recovery, but prosperity.

keep an eye on the locations of employees, handle dispatching to customer calls from your mobile device, and eliminate the need for yard checks with after hours use alerts.

Also consider what a new normal might look like for your customers. For instance, if your business relies heavily on cleaning or landscaping for offices, check in with those customers on their future plans for those spaces.

## **Think like a new business**

When you started your business, how did you establish trust? How did you convince customers to give you a chance? It's time to dust off those efforts and approach your business with new vigor.

Don't assume that everyone is in shut down mode. Your customers may have cut back on your services during this time, but so have customers for your competitors. Don't slow down marketing efforts at this time. Proactively reach out to existing customers with messages that show you are prepared to adapt to what their needs are now. Make the sales calls you may have delayed. Consider introductory or welcome back offers to make skittish customers feel comfortable trying or resuming business.

Wherever you find your business right now—temporarily shuttered, operating under modifications, or proceeding as normal—the world around you has changed. Proactive steps now will go far to making sure the months ahead are not just about recovery, but prosperity.