

REBUILDING AMERICA

Content Plan for an ambitious USA TODAY Network initiative



OVERVIEW

The U.S. is on the verge of the largest, most comprehensive economic awakening since World War II. After roughly 100-120 days of a coast-to-coast economic lockdown, states and cities are on the verge of “reopening” their respective economies.

The USA TODAY Network is in an ideal position to be the nation’s source for a powerhouse platform that tells the story of America’s rebuilding economy.

The sales plan is an ambitious undertaking that will be supported by a multi-faceted content plan that showcases “a single moment of impact,” capturing national and local angles of the most pertinent aspects of America’s economy.

THE THEME

As America rebuilds its economy, we examine the changes, the progress and what consumers/shoppers can expect related to industries that are driving the new economy. Simultaneously, we navigate readers and consumers through the “New Normal” of our American marketplace and recalibrated personal lives.

This content plan features a “menu of options,” with categories anchored by a national overview, to be complemented with local stories that more ambitiously explore the economic scenes in our respective markets.

No one can predict what will happen with a future outbreak, and it’s clear some aspects of what we’ve endured these past two months — social distancing, wearing masks, limited crowds, etc. — will continue for a period of time. But there’s a growing desire to recharge America’s economy, and this project will focus on what consumers can expect.

We have identified **12 categories** that have national and local storylines that will support the sales initiative.

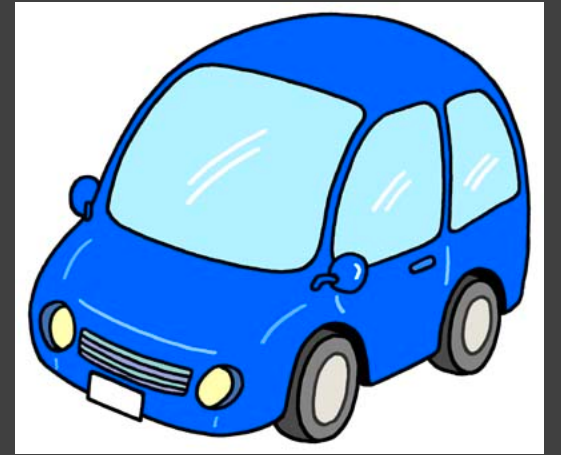
Healthcare (hospitals and nursing homes)



National: We explore the changes to America's medical industry/hospitals/nursing homes. Could include a wellness component: gyms and physical fitness locales.

Local: How are local hospitals and other types of health facilities restoring services? How have they changed since the pandemic? Special attention needs to be paid to nursing homes. From services to new levels of treatment to “come back and sweat” gym deals.

Autos/Transportation



National: What can consumers expect from the nation's largest automakers? Rebates? Bargains? What about new models? Inventory levels?

Local: Talk to area car dealers about pent-up demand, deals, inventory and financing options.

Education

National: How are America's colleges/universities and public/private K-12 school districts preparing for a reopened America?

Local: Talk to universities, local colleges, private schools.



Retail/Grocery stores



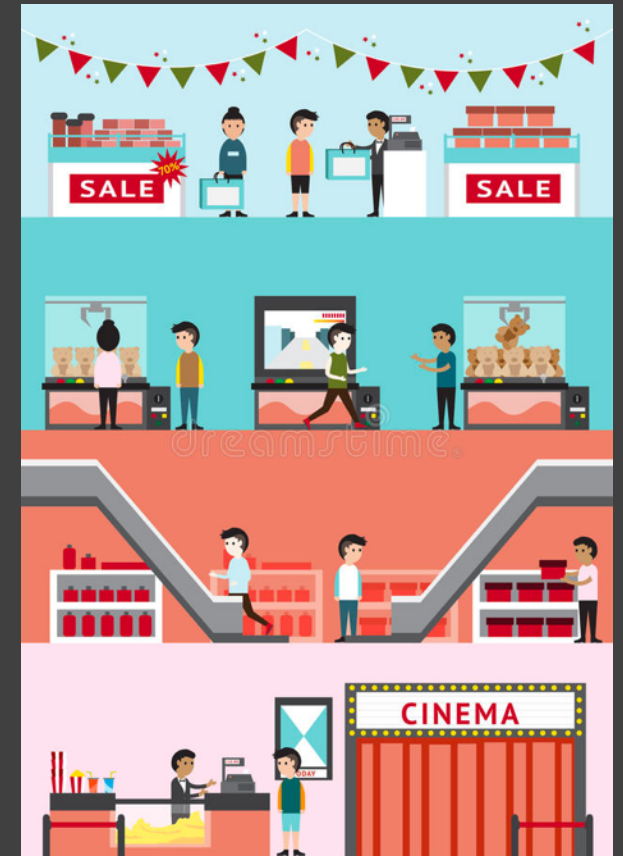
National: How has the spectrum of grocers — from national chains to big-box warehouse clubs — reacted to the pandemic? What changes will greet consumers as the economy reopens?

Local: Explore what's new with operators of regional chains to mom-and-pop markets.

Retail/General retailers- department stores

National: Can the struggling U.S. department store industry rebound? What's new at prominent chains like Target, Wal-Mart and Costco? What will the shopping experience be like at malls and lifestyle centers?

Local: Focus on Main Street merchants and regional retailers.



Residential Real Estate



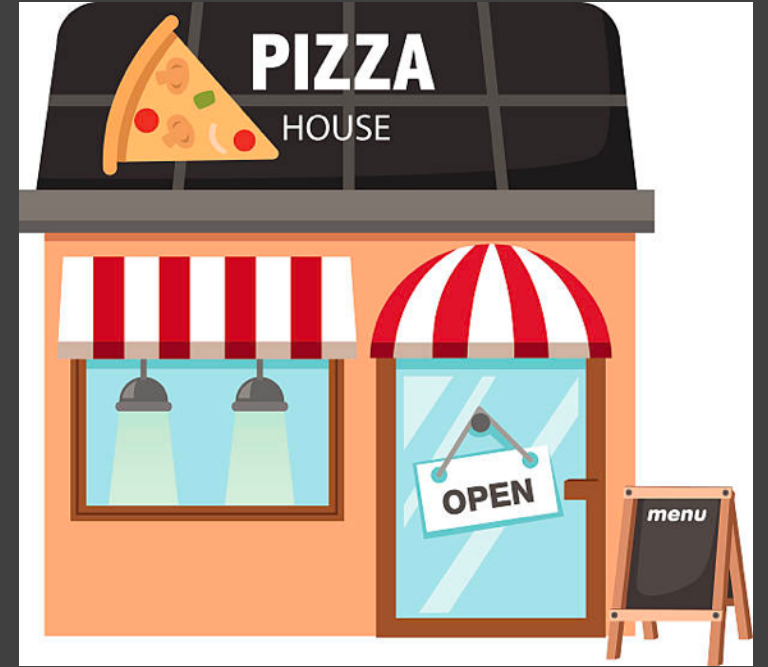
National: What can buyers/sellers expect from the summer-buying season with record-low mortgage rates? Is it the right time to buy? Refinance? What about apartments/townhouses and rentals?

Local: Our close-to-home residential Realtors and brokers share local trends.

Restaurants (food/drink)

National: How are America's chain restaurants recovering? What strategies will be employed? What challenges must be overcome? What changes await in-store diners? (Will that even happen?)

Local: How are local restaurants luring in customers? Are they pivoting to in-restaurant dining? What other changes are they making?



Financial/Insurance

National: What are the immediate repercussions for investors, consumers and the banks/S&Ls/credit unions who serve them? How has this pandemic affected insurance companies? What about small business loans?

Local: We explore similar angles with hometown financial institutions and insurance providers, as well as talking to local CPAs affected by postponed tax-filing dates.



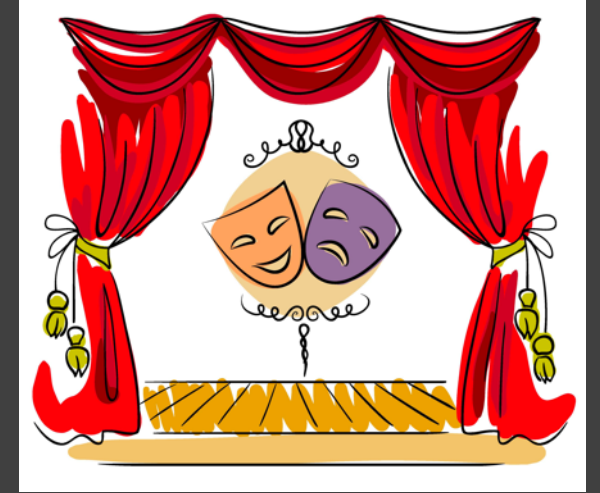
Travel/Tourism



National: What does all of this mean for the nation's tourism industry -- from national parks to regional amusement parks to the Disneys/Universals of America? Timetable for opening and special offers to attract nervous tourists? Includes discussion of the airline industry, hotel chains, cruises.

Local: From New Jersey boardwalk amusement parks to regional Six Flags chains to state parks, campgrounds, zoos and even state fairs: What can we expect close to home? Can include staycation or regional options.

Arts, Entertainment, Events



National: What does the summer concert season look like? What about Broadway? What can we expect from non-tourism/non-travel entertainment venues and attractions? Will the fall be filled with events pushed from spring and summer?

Local: We explore similar angles with hometown entertainment opportunities — from neighborhood cinemas to community theater and summer and fall events (includes things like marathons).

Sports

National: Will there be a baseball season? College football? NBA playoffs? What does this all mean from minor leagues to the majors to 100,000-seat football stadiums in September?

Local: We ask similar questions to hometown teams, from the pros to minor leaguers to colleges to high schools to youth leagues. What are the timetables? Precautions for athletes and fans?



Home Services

National: Will Americans open up their wallets and pursue home-improvement projects? What about renovations and DIY endeavors? Sources include big-box DIY stores to customized architects and repair companies. Will there be an explosion of pent-up projects?

Local: We ask similar questions to hometown home-service providers.



OTHER CONTENT ELEMENTS

- Sweeping national story on Rebuilding America, with local/regional version that speaks to state of local community and region in the re-opening process.
- ‘News you can use’ guide elements with each of the 12 industries. For instance, accompanying the autos package, specific tips on car-buying in the current climate.
- Joint column from Maribel Perez Wadsworth and Kevin Gentzel about this section and Gannett’s commitment to this process.
- Encourage local editors and sales leaders to write a joint column about each site’s commitment to their community.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

A central question: How will these stories get produced on an ambitious timetable in all 260+ Gannett markets?

- We would lean on national experts at USA TODAY to write some of these (such as Sports, Travel/Tourism, Retail/Non-grocer, Entertainment and Medical).
- We tap local reporters who have national expertise (Des Moines for insurance/financial institutions; Detroit for autos; Cincinnati for grocers; Florida for real estate).
- We use local reporters for more “close-to-home” sidebars that accompany the national trend pieces.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Will all sites be responsible for 12 local stories?

- No. We will bring a tiered approach, with the largest sites producing 10-12; medium-sized sites aiming for 6-8; and smallest sites planning for 4-8.
- Editors would choose the most relevant local stories.

SOCIAL CAMPAIGN – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- An across-the-Network hashtag: #RebuildingAmerica
- Exploring Just the FAQs network-wide show on Rebuilding America
- Call to action: Support hometown/Main Street merchants
- Social cards to accompany stories
- Sharable Instagram and Facebook stories

Questions?