ContentEngine

Reactive Marketing Starter Kit

A Practical Toolkit for Brands That Want to Move at the Speed of Culture

This starter kit is designed for marketing, social, and communications teams who want a clear, repeatable workflow for reactive marketing. Use these templates, matrices, and checklists to set up an internal playbook that supports fast, safe, and effective real-time content.

1. Framework Overview

Reactive marketing becomes much easier to manage when it is built on a simple, shared framework. The structure below captures the full journey from spotting a moment to publishing content and learning from performance.

The Reactive Marketing Workflow

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Monitoring → Triage → Create → Approve → Publish

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Monitoring – Track real-time news, social trends, cultural moments, competitor activity, and emerging topics.

Triage – Quickly evaluate which moments are relevant, safe, and worth responding to.

Create – Draft timely content that matches your brand voice and visual identity.

Approve – Move through a streamlined, risk-based approval process.

Publish – Deploy content rapidly and capture performance data for learning.

2. Monitoring Dashboard Template

Use this template as the basis for a shared monitoring dashboard. You can recreate it in Google Sheets, Airtable, or your preferred project tool.

Category	Sources to Track	Tools Used	Owner	Notes
News & Current Events	AP, Reuters, BBC, Google News	Feedly, Google Alerts		
Sports & Live Events	League accounts, broadcasters	X Lists, live score apps		
Entertainment & Pop Culture	Trade press, streaming calendars	Social listening, trend tools		
Tech & Outages	Status pages, industry news	Monitoring tools, alerts		
Influencers & Celebrities	Key creator accounts	TikTok, X, Instagram		
Competitors	Brand feeds, blogs, PR	Rival IQ, manual review		
Environmental Moments	Weather, local alerts	Weather apps, news		

3. Moment Triage Matrix

Use this matrix when a potential reactive opportunity appears. Score each criterion from 1 (low) to 5 (high), then use the total to decide whether to proceed.

Criteria	Guiding Questions	Score (1–5)
Relevance	Does this moment logically connect to our brand or audience?	
Risk Level	Could any group interpret our reaction as insensitive or opportunistic?	
Originality	Can we add something unique or genuinely useful to the conversation?	
Timing Window	Is the moment still active and early enough for us to add value?	
Feasibility	Can we produce quality content quickly with the resources available?	

Scoring Guide

20–25: Strong candidate for a reaction.

15–19: Proceed with caution and an extra review.

Below 15: Do not react.

4. Reactive Content Template Library

These lightweight templates give your team a starting point when creating reactive posts. Adapt the copy and visuals to match your brand voice.

Template A: Simple Visual Statement

Format: Static graphic or clean text.

Copy pattern: "[Unexpected moment] meets [brand truth]."

Use when the moment is universal, visual, and low risk.

Template B: Branded Observation

Format: Text post with optional supporting graphic.

Copy pattern: "When [audience is experiencing event], [brand] notices [insight]."

Template C: Product Tie-In Reaction

Format: Product shot plus caption.

Copy pattern: "This moment calls for [product benefit]."

Template D: Friendly Cultural Comment

Format: Short text-only post.

Copy pattern: "[Brand voice] has entered the chat."

Template E: Short Video or Stitch

Format: 5–10 seconds of video.

Structure: Clip of the original moment, your brand's POV, a clear payoff.

5. Approval Workflow Guide

A tiered approval system helps you balance speed with safety. Use this as a starting point and adapt it to your own structure.

Tier	Risk Level	Examples	Approvers	Target Turnaround
Tier 1	Low	Light humor, non-sensitive cultural moments	Social Lead + Brand Manager	5 minutes
Tier 2	Medium	Broader public debates, industry-specific issues	Social Lead + PR or Legal	15 minutes
Tier 3	High	Tragedies, politics, public safety, sensitive topics	Do not publish	N/A

6. Publishing Checklist

- The moment is still relevant and active.
- The triage score meets your internal threshold.
- All required approvals are complete.
- Copy is concise, clear, and free of sensitive language.
- Visuals follow brand guidelines and work on mobile screens.
- Scheduling does not conflict with major negative news.
- Tracking parameters (for example UTM tags) are applied where needed.
- Owner is assigned to monitor comments and responses.

KPI Tracking Table

Post / ID	Date	Platform	Engagement Rate	Clicks	Shares	Sentiment	Notes

7. Risk Guardrails and Playbook Snapshot

Use this page to define your boundaries and core roles. Completing it once creates alignment that supports every reactive decision.

Topics to Avoid

- Events involving loss of life or serious harm.
- Violence, terrorism, or criminal investigations.
- Natural disasters and public health emergencies.
- Partisan political topics or elections.
- Anything that targets or exploits vulnerable groups.

Core Team Roles

Role	Responsibility	On-Call Window
Social Manager	Monitoring social feeds and posting approved content	
Content Strategist	Triage, ideation, and messaging	
Brand Manager	Final brand check and Tier 1 approval	
PR / Legal	Risk review for Tier 2 content	
Analyst	KPI tracking and reporting	

Once this starter kit is filled out and adapted to your brand, you will have a practical, always-on playbook for reacting to the right moments with clarity and confidence.