



Shining Beacons Through Tough Times

#Top10ShiningBeacons

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The Future is Now

While 'agility' has been a buzzword for UK businesses for a few years, it's safe to say that the current crisis has tested many company's ability to adapt like never before.

The news is rife with stories of companies that have been crippled during these difficult times, but we have been blown away by some of the innovation we have seen – whether it's companies who have made a massive turnaround to help with PPE, testing kits, delivering food parcels to the vulnerable or quick thinking in new product lines to save businesses that may have otherwise faced huge challenges.

Here are our Top 10...



#1

Arco - making sure it fits

The UK's leading supplier of safety equipment, workwear and maintenance supplies committed to support the safety of frontline employees and commissioned a £25m investment to extend its supply capability, changed its distribution model to ensure they can meet the current demand and placed priority on healthcare and frontline responders.

The supplier's Safety Services team worked around the clock, seven days a week, with frontline healthcare and key workers to provide critical respiratory equipment face fit testing.



#2

Brakes - feeding the nation

Not only did the leading wholesale food supplier Brakes join the mission to deliver care packages to more than 200,000 vulnerable people from its distribution centres throughout the UK each week – the company also added to its already successful B2B proposition by opening its food supply to the public.

Working day and night to completely redesign its offering to support consumers in need of critical food supplies, Brakes launched a direct to consumer website in just 9 days - something that might usually take a number of months.

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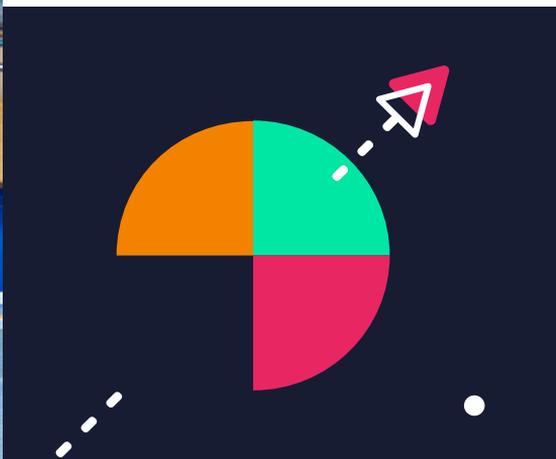


#3

Barbour - from waxed jackets to disposable gowns

Having transformed their operation over a century ago to assist with the production of military garments during both World Wars, the premium clothing brand, Barbour, were swift to volunteer their services once again with the manufacturing of PPE garments in a bid to support local NHS Trusts in the fight against COVID-19.

The Barbour factory, based in South Shields, kicked off their efforts to help by teaming up with the Royal Victoria Infirmary to produce an initial quantity of disposable gowns. They then moved onto large scale production of much required gowns and scrubs for frontline medical staff.



#4

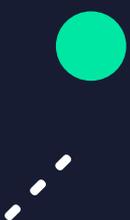
Gtech - stepping out of the comfort zone

Worcester-based manufacturer Gtech swiftly designed a prototype ventilator to help patients with coronavirus.

The company was approached by the government to assist in making up to 30,000 medical ventilators in as little as 2 weeks.

Although their expertise lies in vacuum cleaners, the team took on the challenge and designed a ventilator that was entirely made up of parts that can be readily made from stock material or bought off the shelf anywhere in the world. These designs have been made public and can be manufactured in a matter of days for emergency use.

Despite the fact these designs were not selected by the government, this is a massive achievement for the gtech team, going above and beyond to help those in need.



Gtech



#5

Coats - piecing it together

Coats, the world's leading industrial thread producer, joined the Gerber PPE Task Force to help and support manufacturers move into the production of PPE.

Coats provided high quality threads, trims, technical support, and guidance on PPE regulations to those manufacturers who also made the switch.

The Gerber PPE Task Force offers support and contacts for every aspect of the manufacturing process, whether that is with materials, regularity guidance, suppliers and equipment.



#6

Sofa.com - sumptuous sofas and glory in your garden

Sofa.com recognised that, now more than ever, customers' homes need to be a place of sanctuary and relaxation. And, in response, the retailer expanded its offering within a matter of weeks to include a new range of garden furniture.



#7

Reiss - from store to scrubs

The British fashion retailer, Reiss, did its bit to keep morale high and expressed its thanks and appreciation to the NHS staff by lighting up shop windows with a special message up and down Britain.

What's more, they switched production, initially working directly with factories to purchase and donate 10,000 masks across a multitude of NHS trusts.

Partnering with the volunteer led enterprise, Emergency Designer Network (EDN), Reiss coordinated local production of hospital scrubs in London and donated 4000 meters of NHS approved fabric, enough for EDN to assemble 1,900 sets of scrubs.

Additionally, the fashion retailer teamed up with their retail partner, Style for Soldiers charity, founded by Emma Willis, they made another fabric donation, allowing for the production of over 900 scrubs.



#8

BrewDog - from brewing beer to banishing bacteria

With the closure of pubs up and down the country, and a drop in export sales of 50%, BrewDog could have licked their wounds. However, James Watt and Martin Dickie, founder and co-founder, wanted to protect as many jobs as possible. They personally committed to stop taking any salary for the rest of the year, and the senior team volunteered to take pay cuts. Though 70% of employees had been furloughed (as it wasn't possible to keep everyone in production due to safe distancing measures), the remaining 30% were kept on to produce hand sanitiser for NHS frontline workers and charities.

They did their bit for consumers too, running 'Virtual Pubs' where you could log in for an online tasting session, watch live music or participate in pub quizzes. Recently holding their Annual General Meeting online, BrewDog had 14,000 people logging on to watch.

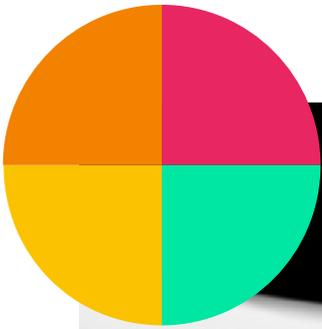


#9

Jaguar Land Rover - leaping into action

Luxury car manufacturers wasted no time leaping into action, pivoting its production at their Warwickshire factory to produce up to 1,300 protective visors a day for the NHS.

They also supported the emergency response globally, loaning 300 vehicles to the national and international efforts.



#10

Burberry - re-fashioned factories to the rescue

Switching their supply network to fast track the delivery of 100,000 surgical masks to NHS workers, the high end fashion retailer Burberry, re-fashioned its trench coat factory in Yorkshire to produce non-surgical gowns and masks for hospital patients.

The retailer has contributed to funding research into a single dose vaccine currently being developed at the University of Oxford, a world leader in emergency vaccine development.

Burberry has also been actively supporting the efforts to tackle food poverty during this crisis, making donations to charities including The Felix Project and FareShare.



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marketing@uk.kps.com

uk.kps.com

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