

The Licensing Executive's Guide:



To Pandemic Recovery

A WORD FROM THE CEO & FOUNDER

Greetings,

My name is Kalle Törmä, CEO and Founder of Flowhaven. We created our intuitive software to offer the licensing community an easy-to-use, end-to-end solution for scaling and managing their operations. We believe that centralized, flexible technology is integral to the success of the licensing industry.

In addition to being passionate about licensing at large, we're interested in the unique stories behind each business. Understanding who and what drives each company helps us modify our technology to ensure that it fits each company perfectly. The Flowhaven ecosystem and product suite are built on Salesforce, the world's #1 CRM. We are headquartered in Helsinki, Finland with offices in Los Angeles and London. Building on our connected community, Flowhaven is making collaborating, asset sharing, pipeline tracking easier than ever.

We look forward to having you join our community.



KALLE TORMA
CEO & FOUNDER



**SO, YOU'VE
SURVIVED THE
APOCALYPSE.**

**DID YOUR LICENSING
BUSINESS?**



INTRO

Whether you're in a country on the road to reopening after months of lockdown or one still working to keep its population safe, you understand that there are a lot of considerations and adjustments you must account for to help your business recover from the COVID-19 crisis.



While we've provided the information inside with COVID-19 in mind, these tips are evergreen and can be applied to any period of stagnated business.

After all, the reopening of an economy is not a return to "normal." The process will look different at each company, in different areas, with different sectors rebounding more quickly than others.

For real-world examples, we don't have to look far. Licensed entertainment, arts & crafts, toys, and, yes, sweatpants saw unexpected gains from stay-at-home shoppers, while manufacturers and others saw record losses due to retail closures and trade restrictions during lockdown. What will continue to grow and what will fluctuate is unclear. It is precisely because of that uncertainty that it is important to have a recovery plan in place.

Thankfully, there's help. Our team sat down with trusted licensing experts, Flowhaven customers, and friends from across the industry to compile tips on rebuilding after a crisis. This resource is tailored for brand licensing executives like you and is full of information to help you chart a clear path forward.

CREATING YOUR RELAUNCH PLAN

KNOW WHERE YOU STAND

As a licensing executive, you know it always helps to have a Big Picture understanding of your operations. To overcome this financial uncertainty, you'll have to make sure your financial statements are up to date and that you have clear insights into the status of your deals to develop a solid framework for action.

Using a digital solution like Flowhaven will help you break your data down by territory, product or partner to identify which segments need to be prioritized. You won't have to dig through old records or compile spreadsheets to know how you're doing.

Customized, filtered, overviews will help you decide which deals can be salvaged—and which cannot.

CUT COSTS

Once you have an understanding of what's working and what isn't, you'll be able to think about ways to cut costs and meet your earning goals. Cutting even the smallest of costs can help your business during periods of economic instability. For example, you might realize that you're paying a large sum for an office space that is no longer needed since your staff is working remotely. That is money you can save to invest in software that can make remote work easier...There's one we have in mind.

ANITA'S STORY | LICENSING AGENT

Anita Castellar runs FanGirl Consulting & Brand Management, a licensing agency on a mission to help brands unlock their fandoms. During COVID-19, Anita helped her clients extend into new categories and experiment with their brand IP.

With the help of Flowhaven's team, Anita was able to upload and analyze her new data to assess the health of her programs. Unique data insights gave her the power to see if contract terms were being honored, evaluate successes, and spot bottlenecks in real-time. The new speed at which the team was able to work gave them a new competitive advantage in the uncertain marketplace.

[➔ Read more](#)



ALIGNING WITH EMPLOYEES

UNDERSTAND WHAT EMPLOYEES ARE EXPERIENCING

Like most industries, the licensing industry experienced mass layoffs and a shift to remote work. While many employees are eager to return to work, others are interested in strengthening their efficiencies at home. To regain a sense of normalcy and keep recovery plans on track, companies need to ensure that all staff, regardless of preferences, feel fully supported.

Adapting systems that improve communication can radically transform the way your newly structured teams work

Thoughtful executives need to take figurative temperature checks to assess employee morale. Ask your employees if they feel their performance has been affected by working from home and if the practice should continue. Keep in mind that schools and other family institutions are working to reopen as well. If employees are asked to return to the office without family safety nets, you may be doing more harm to your team than good.

TAKE THE COMPANY TEMPERATURE

If employees feel comfortable returning to your office space, make them feel comfortable by being transparent about health and safety practices. If it is not imperative that all workers be on-site, reduce office occupancy, and help to minimize travel. Your efforts will result in a workforce that feels prioritized.

Workers who feel protected are more inclined to spend their time and effort helping your company succeed. Once you've been able to confer with your team and decide what action is best for everyone, you can begin to think about alignment. Consider the tools you used to communicate under lockdown. Whether it was email, video chat or a licensing relationship management system, you will need to list each one and compare the strengths and weaknesses of each.



RENEWING DEMAND

Reigniting the demand for products is an uphill battle. If you're a licensing agent or licensor, you know just how severely limitations on raw materials, labor productivity, and constraints on consumer spending affect business.

Licensing teams will have to work carefully across marketing and sales to ensure customers are aware of their brands and see a place for it in their "new normal". There is also a need to guard against the risk of price distortion and plan for changes at retail.

CHECK LIST

-  **Identify opportunities for profitable growth.** To restimulate interest, you will want to think with an investment mindset. That starts with taking a comprehensive look at your finances. Determine how much your company is making and how much is needed for marketing and exploration. You will need to weigh your commercial investments against the risk of a price war or a continued decline in interest.
-  **Be tactical with your pricing.** You should be as invested in the health and needs of your customers as you are your employees. If your product normally retails at a certain price, consider lowering the number to prevent customers from having to make tough choices just to own a piece of your brand. Keep in mind that customers are watching the pricing and ethical practices of the companies they support.
-  **Enhance your marketing mix.** Nothing can ruin a sale faster than a poorly thought out marketing campaign. Ensure that your marketing teams are producing content that reflects the concerns and needs of the moment. This can include reaching customers via social, reminding clients why you have a superior product, and rewarding brand loyalty. Testing should be handled with extreme care. The success of the plan will depend on your brand's ability to strengthen the experience of the customer journey.

STRENGTHENING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

In an ideal world, your company would be able to resume business in an instant. However, licensing executives must be mindful of the pace of recovery and be careful not to exceed it. To ensure that things move at a healthy pace, you must ensure that your external relationships are strong. That means Improving workflows between all of the licensors, licensees and agents you rely on to execute a given deal. Improved workflows will ensure that product is produced in an efficient number and that the roadblocks to success are clear enough to support your recovery plan.

CHECK LIST



Strengthen your company's ability to meet with consumer demand. This includes being mindful that you are not generating too much stock to leave yourself at a deficit. Production should be proportionate to customer demand.



Establish a control tower, with holistic visibility of your operations. Having a birds-eye view will help you envision different scenarios, inventory status, and allow you to test the efficacy of your systems. The position will also help you identify where alternatives would be best situated.



Break things down by segment. You'll need to stay tuned to the regional regulations affecting the site on which production is taking place, the state of local demand, and the site capacity to produce. Keep in mind that some factories are still focused on producing protective equipment and thus may not be able to assume consumer-facing activity as quickly as you are ready. Use the extra time to assess the cost per unit of the good you're producing, and to clean out inventory that won't move.



Reassure your partners about your operational abilities. It is important that you stay flexible during this period of uncertainty. It would help to adapt flexible production programs and implement systems that help you review your progress on a periodic basis. Keeping your data updated through a digital platform can help all parties access the information they need to take action quickly.

HOW DIGITAL TOOLS CAN HELP



Yes, some licensing empires have been built on good old-fashioned pen and paper. But modern problems demand modern solutions. Software makes it easy to build clear, easy-to-follow plans that your whole team can get behind.

There are plenty of solutions on the market that promise to help you revamp small parts of your licensing strategy in hopes of recovery. Flowhaven is the only solution on the market that provides an end-to-end solution built by licensing professionals for licensing professionals and staffed by a team of experts dedicated to seeing each customer succeed.

ANDREW'S STORY | LICENSOR

Andrew Gallagher runs Full Colour Black, one of Europe's most successful art licensing businesses. He adapted Flowhaven in 2019 when he realized that with more than 1,250 unique artwork variations and a small team in his remote studio, he needed a tool that would help him move his business forward quickly.

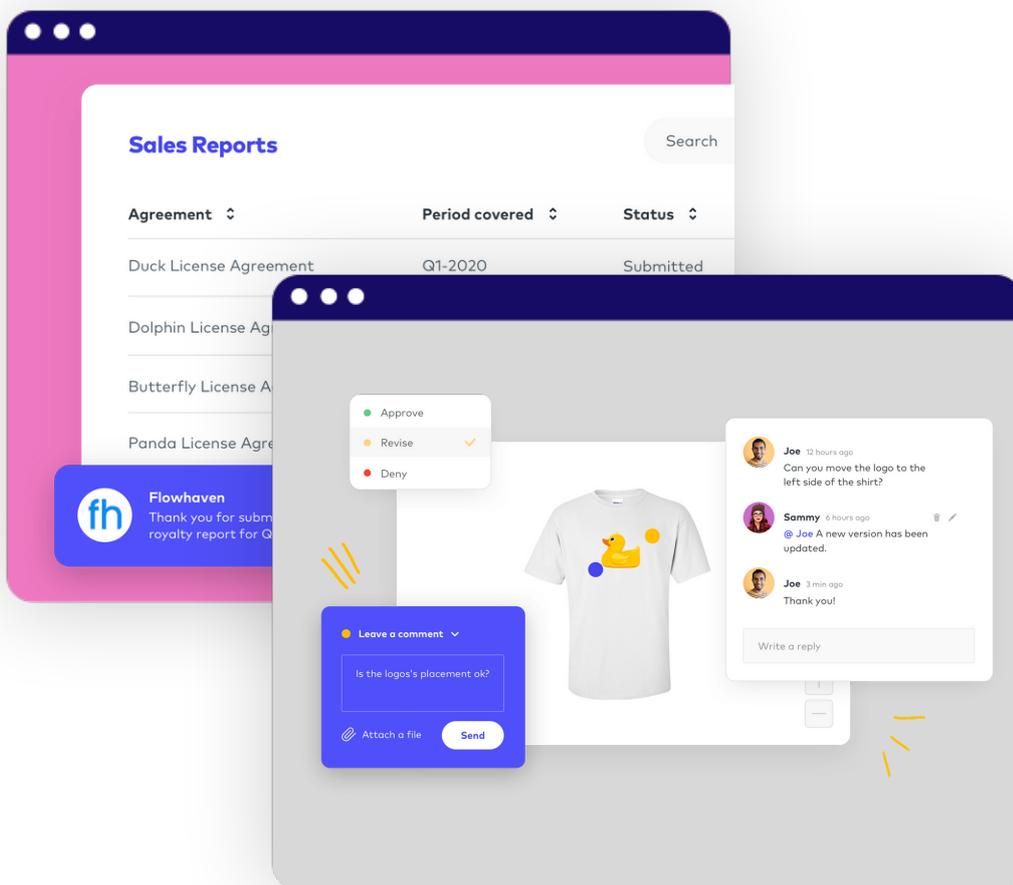
Flowhaven helped Andrew's team establish new methods of communication with their external partners and made it easier to upload and share assets even from their low-tech home offices.



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ABOUT FLOWHAVEN

Designed to streamline brand licensing programs, Flowhaven understands the real needs of brand owners, licensing agents, and manufacturers. Built on Salesforce, the world's #1 customer relationship management (CRM), our platform offers cloud-based solutions that cover all aspects of licensing management—from nurturing to scaling—to enable companies to centralize their accounts and operate efficiently.



Ready to recharge your licensing business? [Book a demo today to see Flowhaven in action.](#)