



**FERGUSON VALLEY MARKETING INC**

27 March 2020

Dear all

Crazy times!

*I started writing this on Tuesday, and it is now Friday. I thought that with enforced closure it would be a bit like a “stay at home holiday”, but I seem to be busier than ever trying to keep abreast of, and manage the ever-changing situation. I also think that with the constant clutter of information and thoughts that my efficiency has taken a bit of a hit.... I guess that we are all in the same place, and that we should be kind to ourselves and forgive ourselves for the affect huge changes make on our ability to cope with life.*

I thought I would send this letter to all FVM members to give my perspective on the current situation.

From a medical perspective, I am very convinced that the move to close all non-essential businesses and group gathering places makes absolute sense. The only caveat being that it should have happened a week earlier. As you probably know, the FV Visitor Centre is closed indefinitely and our FVM Business Networking Night scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> April has been cancelled.

I am sure most people are all over this, but just a couple of “facts” which I think are relevant:

- 80% of transmission of the Corona virus occurs prior to symptoms appearing
- The transmission rate has been 2-3 people infected per person with the infection
- That creates a doubling time of 3-5 days.
- Around 5% of infected people need ICU care and artificial ventilation.
- The projected figures without the current steps being taken meant that we would run out of ICU ventilator beds around the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> April
- Changes as made by the government on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March take 2 weeks to be effective... around the 7<sup>th</sup> of April!
- Once ICU care is not available the death rate jumps from 1-2% to much higher.
- If we can get the transmission rate to below 1 person per infected person we start to see a decline in infection rates as in Wuhan.

The Ferguson Valley Marketing Board would like all of our members to know that we are feeling your pain, both on our own behalf, and as a collective tourism-based community. Though we are fairly powerless in the face of this oncoming tsunami, there are still some ways which we can band together to get through the situation.

- Lets keep talking. As we hunker down in our own silos and safe places we will need to continue social interactions and exchange messages. Facebook and other social media conduits are full of doom and conspiracy theories... often not grounded in the facts. It is my feeling that it is very easy to become negatively affected by this, and we need to stay grounded and share positive stories. To this end I would like to set up a Ferguson Valley chat site/support forum with a view to sharing positive ideas, good news stories, and also any questions relating

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to FVM business. As a medical practitioner, I am happy to try to respond to any questions regarding the health side of the pandemic.

- FVM would be happy to use its “What’s Gnoming On” newsletter, social media platforms and website to promote any businesses which are trying to continue to offer services to the public either by remaining open, or online/phone orders. We will need to know who is providing what services to be able to action this. Perhaps that could happen through the chat line, or by emailing Brigitte ([marketing@fergusonvalley.net.au](mailto:marketing@fergusonvalley.net.au)) or myself ([phil@saintaidan.com.au](mailto:phil@saintaidan.com.au))
- FVM is advocating for the tourism businesses on all of our behalves with ASW, TWA and the Wine Industry of WA. As an example of this WOWA has successfully lobbied the Minister for Tourism and RGL, Paul Papalia, who has just reviewed the 3 bottle sales restrictions, and the state government has now agreed that online and mail order sales may be up to 12 bottles delivered per week for each customer.
- We are happy to try to help our members in any other way that you can suggest, so please feel free to get in touch with me or with Brigitte if you have any needs where FVM can provide our assistance during these difficult times.

In conclusion I think the main things to remember are that we are all in this situation together, that the world is a very changed place, and that we need to be flexible, adaptive and whenever possible to be proactive to look after ourselves, our families and employees, and our businesses.

Keep washing those hands, and maintaining social distancing, in accordance with the latest WA Department of Health news and guidelines. ([www.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.health.wa.gov.au))

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Smith', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

**Phil Smith**  
Chairman FVM