

## TITLE OF THE CASE STUDY:

# Pandemic increase the appetite for BIO

Name of the organisation:

**BIO Boutique Organic**

Country and sector of the organisation:

**BULGARIA, bio food industry**

Type of organisation:

- Private organization

Size of the organisation:

- small

Brief description of the organisation:

BIO Boutique Organic is a family business established in the 2000s. It is located in the centre of Sofia and offers a big variety of bio cosmetics, bio food, bio beverages, food supplements and others. Its main goal is to provide products for a healthy life and to support other family businesses as the main suppliers of BIO boutique are small producers.

Short description of the case study (500 characters)

Organic products have become even more popular during the pandemic. This case study aims to describe how a small business managed its employees, deliveries and clients during COVID-19. We will take a look at the changes of consumer needs and how did the market change. The company illustrated in this case study is an organic shop which survived the crisis and is performing even better than before. Owners of BIO Boutique implemented several measures in order to keep their business and to keep their employees.

## KEY WORDS:

Health, organic, bio, pandemic, disease, consumer, consultant, nutrition, sustainable, quality, awareness

## BEST PRACTICE PROFILE

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Since the first lockdown in Bulgaria, the new normal now is eating at home, working from home, “travelling” from home, staying at home. Kids don’t go to school, there are no school meals, restaurants are closed so people are trying to prepare healthy and nutritional food at home. Fortunately, organic and BIO products become more popular with each day. “Most of the people believe that healthy food could help us be healthy too and this is what we want to provide to our customers.” – says the co-owner of the bio shop.

Owners of BIO boutique had the complicated task to be employers, consultants and psychologist at the same time. Firstly, their employees were afraid of the disease, as they are having parents, grandparents and fragile people in their families. Working from 10 am to 7 pm every day with thousands of different people coming every day isn’t very reassuring for the times of a crisis. A work schedule was established in order to have only one consultant in the shop. Face masks are obligatory both for employees and clients and only one person could enter the shop to avoid gathering of people. Employers knew that it is important for their business and their employees to keep the workplace a safe place and to minimize the risk of a disease. Work from home wasn’t an option in this case.

An interesting fact is that during a crisis (both health or economical/financial) consumers become price sensitive as they are afraid for their jobs, finances etc. However, because of the pandemic, they became more quality conscious and are willing to pay more for a healthy and organic food.

### RATIONALE

These measures were essential for BIO boutique to continue working and build loyalty between employees and clients. It was important to increase the awareness of the role of quality food supplements/immunity-related products and nutrition to our health. Leaders focused on providing a safe place for their staff and their clients. Employees focused on informing and consulting consumers.

The owners of BIO boutique took the risk to work with new suppliers in order to respond to the current market needs. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, people started searching for specific products. Fortunately, most of them already knew the benefits of organic food, so sellers didn’t have to convince them of what is good and what is not.

## GOALS

In the first place, managers wanted to stay as close as possible to their workers and to reassure them that the shop will continue working taking all the necessary safety measures.

All the staff of BIO boutique aimed to build trust with consumers. It was important to continue providing them quality products and to listen to their current needs. For example, some studies have shown that there is a link between vitamin D and COVID-19. So, a lot of people were searching for food supplements with vitamin D and consultants had to inform them that vitamin D is good for bones, teeth, muscles etc. Another goal of the company was to support other local businesses by ordering from them.

## IMPACT

COVID-19 pandemic increased the demand for organic and sustainable foods and raised consumer awareness of the relationship between health and nutrition. At the beginning the impact of the crisis was negative as they remained closed for some weeks. Later, BIO boutique increased its turnover thanks to the growing demand on sustainable and organic food and food supplements. So, we could say that the short-term impact was more or less negative, comparing to the long-term impact which is certainly positive, as the team is growing and BIO boutique is now offering a lot more products than before the crisis.

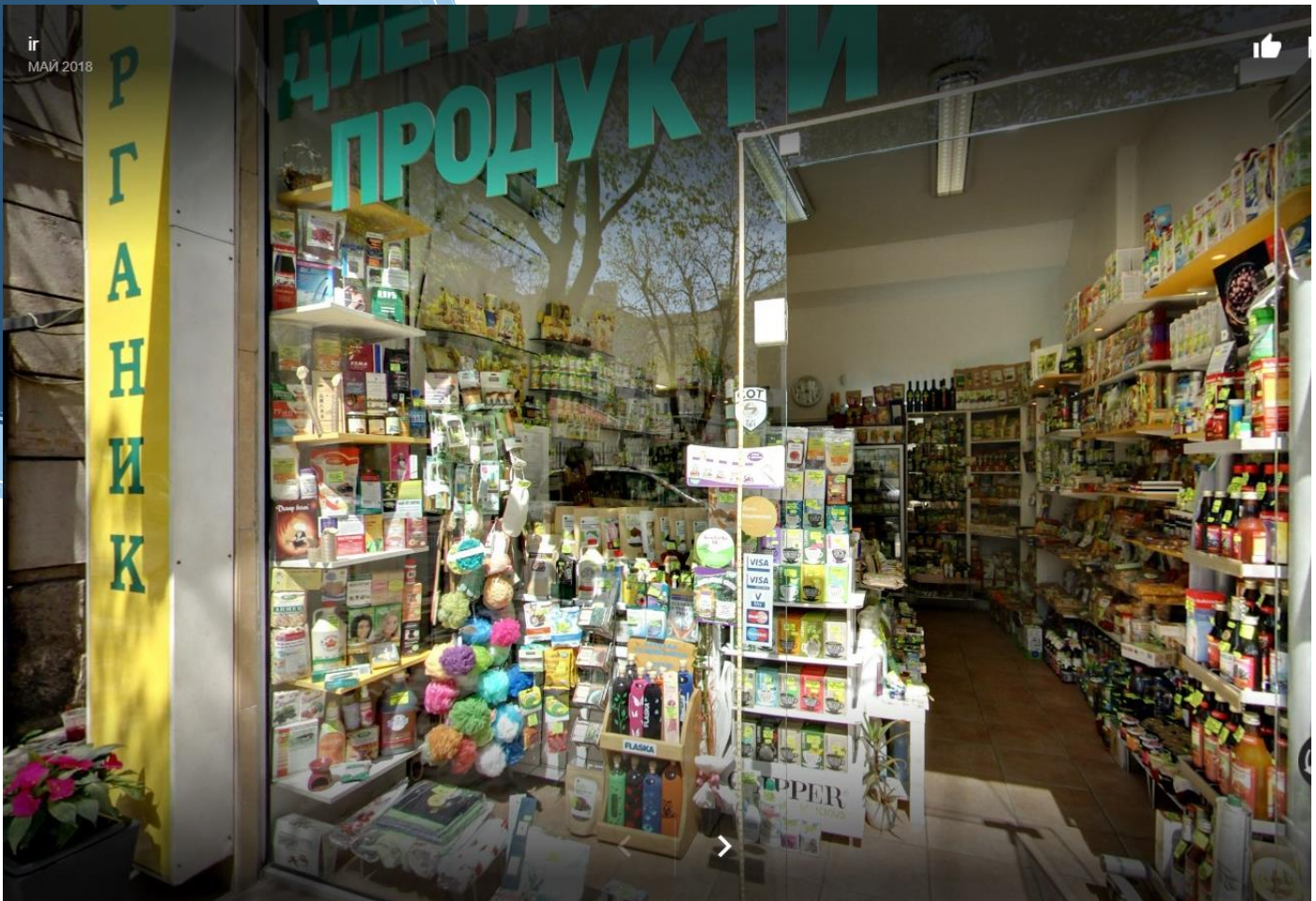
## LESSONS LEARNED

Leaders learned to take advantage of the difficulties and to take more risks without the fear of failure. The COVID-19 pandemic showed us that we have to take care of ourselves and our inner health. We were used to a very fast rhythm, “jumping” from one meeting into another, sometimes without even taking the time for a good meal. The owners of BIO boutique developed their communicative skills as they had to convince people that we can stay in good health if we chose wisely what we consume.

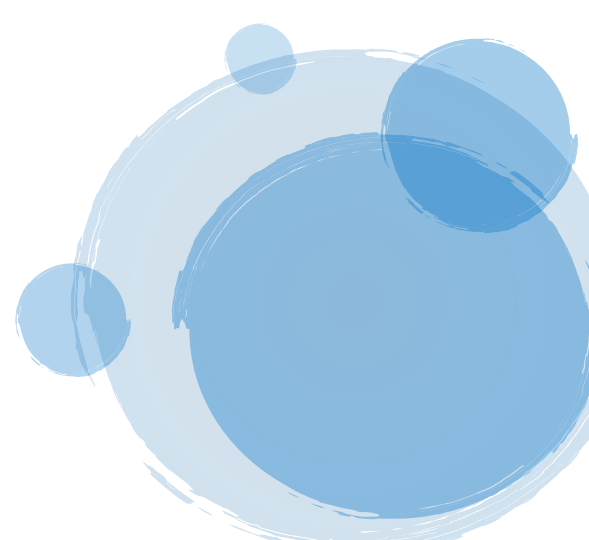
Employees developed their positive attitude, willingness to learn about the new products, empathy and responsibility.

Both employees and leaders learned that dramatic changes are not always scary, but they are challenging. They increased their sense of cooperation by supporting other local organic brands.

MATERIAL



BIO boutique facade





**Their variety of products**

## REFERENCES

Discussion with the co-owner of BIO boutique

<https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2020/05/06/Organic-food-gets-coronavirus-boost>

