

# COVID-19: Interview with Paul McKeever, CEO of Continually

*Based in Belfast, Continually makes sure its customers never miss another lead from a website. Today, when people visit a website to request a product demo, for instance, they expect the company to reply straight away. Even after hours, or if they're in another time zone. Maddyness spoke to Paul McKeever, CEO of Continually to understand how they are coping with the COVID-19 crisis.*

Temps de lecture : minute

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14 May 2020

[Maddyness] What is the biggest professional challenge for you today? (and what's the ray of sunshine?)

[Paul] Right now at Continually we are trying to adapt our positioning and messaging to reflect the current situation and new priorities (digital transformation, reducing expenses), as well as expand what our product does to serve types of customers we're attracting who weren't buying before without slowing down what we were doing for our existing customer base. Finally, we had our biggest month of churn as some of our customers have had their revenue go to 0, but that has quickly tapered off so looks like a one-off rather than an ongoing trend. The ray of sunshine would clearly be that our product - website chat and automation - is in a category that customers need more than ever.

## What is the biggest personal challenge today? (and what is the silver lining?)

I have three young children and my wife works in a hospital setting as a speech therapist, so like many people, we are finding it tricky to juggle everything. The silver lining is that I haven't lost my job, or personally suffered any terrible loss from COVID-19. It is a great opportunity to be grateful for the good things we have in life.

## Is remote working a new thing for you?

We're a remote-first team so very fortunate to have been well prepared for the shutdown. But there is a greater level of activity in the business and like all businesses, we could do more to improve how we work.

## How is your relationship with your investors?

They are very supportive but I find investors don't always tell you what they're really thinking. Our existing investors can only re-invest in a future round if there is a new outside lead.

## What do you think of the support packages for startups offered by the government? What have you been able to use?

None of the government programmes so far really help as far as I can see. The Future Fund sounds promising but depends on a healthy appetite for new investment and as far as I can tell everyone is in a "wait and see" mode. Furloughing staff isn't something that we've considered and I think for a startup would be very damaging.

# Do you feel confident in your business post-COVID?

We're MORE confident in the future of the business than before. The majority of businesses still don't use tools like live chat or chatbots to engage customers or generate leads from their website. The current situation means that those who haven't adopted are either getting started or making plans to. For those who are already using tools like ours, they are now re-evaluating their existing choices to either reduce expenses or just ask "Could we do this better?". Which I think will be great for lots of businesses like ours in categories where customers still need the value you bring.



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Article by Maddyness & Paul McKeever