



The Way Forward

FROM RESILIENCE TO RECOVERY:
Serve your customer along every step of the way

We're living in a vastly different world than just a month ago, but the goal of modern marketing remains the same:

*sending the **right message** through the
right messengers to the **right audience**.*

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, marketers working across all industries have been forced to scrap plans and shelve playbooks, thrust into an uncertain and quickly-changing landscape. As consumer behavior has shifted, marketers have re-defined their strategies to weather the storm.

In the first few weeks of the pandemic, industries emerged from reactive silence to action, showing incredible creativity and resilience. While no one has a crystal ball, one thing is certain - customers are looking to the future. It is imperative for brands to listen and take the necessary steps to respond promptly to these needs in order to emerge on the other side of this crisis supported by loyal customers.

Transformation happens fast - **how should brands support consumers along every step of the way?**

Transitioning from “Crisis” messaging to “Resilience” messaging

Many businesses are still stuck in the Crisis mindset, sending out delayed responses to the initial shockwaves of the pandemic. But human beings are remarkably adaptable, and many of us have already come to terms with life in this temporary #NewNormal.

Indeed, consumers are rewarding brands that offer value and a sense of normalcy. According to recent Twitter data, 64% of users said that brands should continue advertising, with half noting ads even provided a sense of normalcy. This is why talking points that were relevant just a few weeks back are already at risk of sounding out of touch.

**“In these difficult times...”
“We’re in this together”**

***How are consumers feeling now that they’ve adjusted to new routines and mindsets?
How can brands address their current needs and concerns?***

Preparing for life + business in the Recovery phase

Consumers are already looking to the future with a sense of optimism and anticipation. Searches for “future home,” “future party,” and other forward-looking terms on Pinterest are indicative of a global population busy planning for what comes next.

However, we can’t expect consumers to immediately return to their old habits in one swoop. Fear and anxiety will be hurdles that brands will need to address during the “awakening” that we will all go through. Focusing on value-driven content will be critical to connect meaningfully with audiences. From educational materials to entertaining feel-good stories that replace anxiety with reassurance, these narratives will be key in taking the dreams consumers have in their heads now and stirring them into action.

	Crisis	Resilience	Recovery
Emotion	Strong negative emotions: Sadness + Fear	Prolonged boredom, anxiety	Optimism, Anticipation, Hesitance
Behavior	High need for information and escapism.	Increased DIY activity and openness to learning new skills	New habits stick with slow return to previous habits
Shopping Behavior	Panic buying, stocking up on essentials	Experimentation with different ways to shop	Retention of new shopping behaviors and perspectives

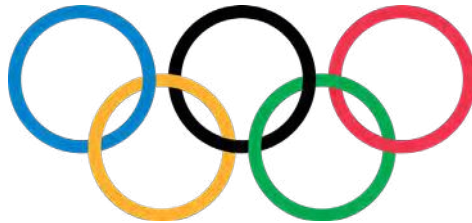
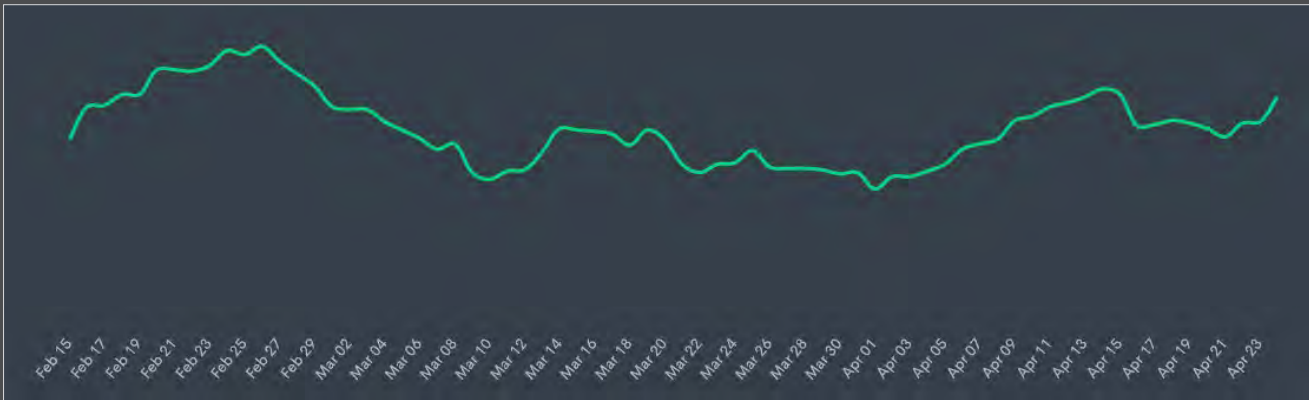


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ENTERTAINMENT

Looking at the Numbers

Sponsored content from entertainment brands saw a 6-week low on March 6th, dropping just as the industry received one of its biggest blows, the cancellation of SXSW, and five days before the NBA officially cancelled its 2020 season. However, sponsored activity has been on the rise as entertainment businesses have put new plans into action to keep content flowing and their customers engaged.



#IsItCancelledYet

The Entertainment industry responds to the challenges of COVID-19

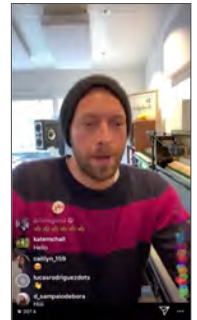
With the need for content at an all-time high, entertainment brands have been exploring innovative ways to stay connected with customers despite rising challenges. Here are ways businesses have been innovating across the industry:

ENTERTAINMENT

Type	Challenges	Responses
Sports	Major seasons and events cancelled/postponed	Traditional sports brands are learning from the exploding Esports industry, or organized video gaming. For example, NASCAR began broadcasting a virtual racing series featuring real drivers hooked up to simulators, while Major League Soccer is providing fresh and innovative content via televised matches of professional athletes playing the popular video game FIFA20.
Music	Venues closed and major event	Musicians are propelling the already growing trend of virtual events and live streaming on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. We saw the global community come together on a massive scale for the One World: Together at Home event, which aired across 60 global broadcast networks, nine major digital platforms and more. Virtual events have really gotten their moment to shine, opening new avenues for entertainers to connect with audiences on a global scale. Andrea Bocelli's live-streaming concert from Milan broke records for the largest audience for a classical live stream in YouTube's history.
Film	Theaters closed with earliest return in late summer/early fall	Hollywood is experimenting with digital-first models. This can have long-lasting effects in the way people consume entertainment, as D2C could become less or a temporary solution and more of an industry-wide shift in distribution. Universal's 'Trolls 2' became the first post-coronavirus film to skip the theatrical window and be distributed directly to consumers, drawing in over \$100M in revenue in PVOD rentals in its first three weeks alone. The brand supported the release with new marketing strategies, like a virtual watch party to help parents transform movie night into a full-fledged family experience. Universal also leveraged popular streaming platforms Spotify and Pandora to market the home release via personalized playlists based off of characters in the film.

ENTERTAINMENT

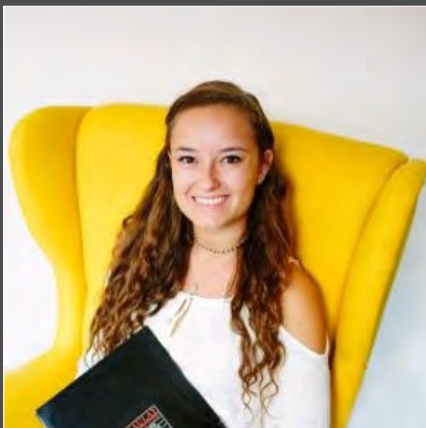
Human beings need entertainment to keep our spirits up through difficult times. Our favorite songs, movies and sports teams help us stay centered as we navigate new challenges, which is why it has never been more important for entertainment brands to engage with consumers via unique digital and interactive experiences.



From virtual red carpets and concerts to stay-at-home watch parties to esports challenges, brands need to develop creative solutions to engage with isolated audiences that are increasingly relying on their mobile devices to stay connected.

Even when it's time for cameras to roll, athletes to hit the field or seats to be filled, brands should continue to connect with customers at scale via digital experiences that extend far beyond the limits of a physical event.

When it comes to compelling digital experiences, brands should consider partnering with the leading authorities: ***influencers.***



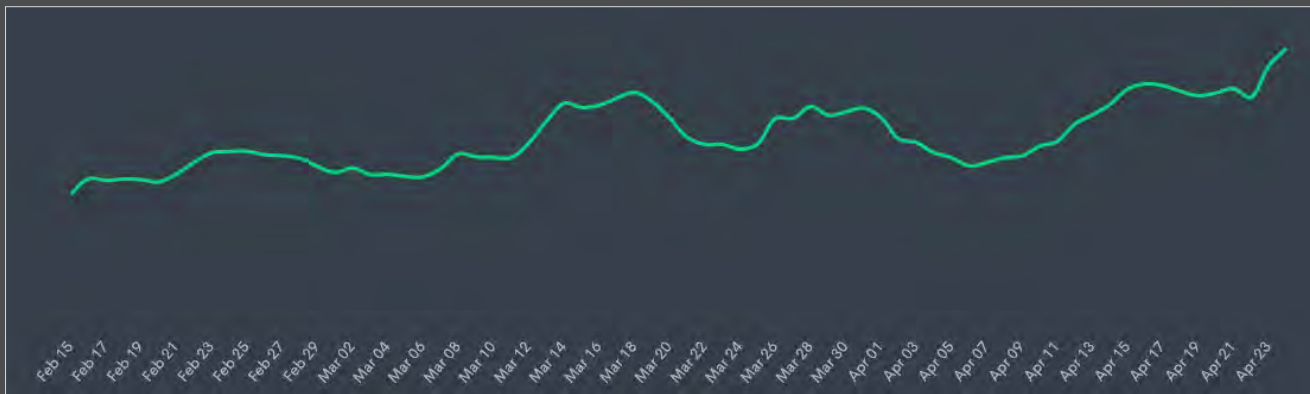
From Account Manager Diana Perlov

"Any out-of-home strategies or tactics involving mailing items just aren't an option at this time. That's one reason why we're seeing such a huge shift in focus to digital, and in particular, influencer marketing. Still, influencer strategy isn't the same as it was a month ago - our context has changed, and audience behavior has changed too. I've noticed a prioritization of family experiences right now with content themed around a movie night in. With influencers you're getting access to some of the most creative people on the internet. They live for making their content relatable to the moment."

BEAUTY

Looking at the Numbers

Beauty brands have continued to sponsor content on social media at a steady rate since the pandemic began, indicative of the industry's extensive experience with social media and success with models such as DTC Ecommerce. Without access to key retailers, customers are relying even more on digital marketplaces like Amazon, social media, or company websites to find and purchase the products they need.



Self-Care Has Never Been More Relevant

Over the past decade, beauty brands have been repositioning many of their products to fit the growing self-care movement. Now with people stuck at home, tapping into how consumers feel about themselves has never been more important.

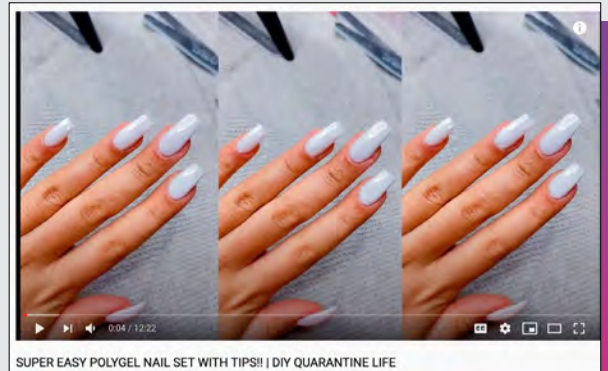


BEAUTY

Challenges	Responses
Retailers closed - Key names like Ulta and Sephora shut down until further notice	<p>Brands Are Finding Success in Key Retailers While we know that a lot of specialty stores have closed, audiences might need to be reminded that they might still have access to their favorite beauty products via key retailers. While prestige beauty brands experienced a slump in the first quarter, big box stores like Target reported overall sales increases of up to 20 percent year on year. Some beauty brands that sell their products in these key stores, which have been allowed to remain open due to selling other “essential” goods, are seeing sales remain stable or even increase. Other than large retailers, brands have been leaning on digital.</p> <p>Brands Are Playing to their Strengths - ECommerce Consumers are currently spending record amounts of time on their mobile phones, especially on social media. Platforms like Instagram and Pinterest allow brands to sell their products directly to consumers using the app’s native infrastructure. Businesses that have previously focused more on brick-and-mortar sales would do well to diversify their distribution models going forward with a greater emphasis on DTC.</p>
Change in daily lifestyle routines. Less social activity could mean less need for beauty products.	<p>Brands Are Enabling Consumers to Go DIY Humans have an inherent need for self-care. With salons temporarily closed, brands catering to the DIY crowd - aka everybody living under quarantine! - are seeing impressive results, with categories like hair color and nail polish experiencing heavy sales lifts. Brands that go the extra step and provide consumers with educational content that helps them achieve their in-home beauty goals will be rewarded even further with loyalty and goodwill. Some of these temporary beauty solutions may end growing into long-term habits.</p> <p>Brands Are Focusing on The Glow at Home Trend Maybelline and Revlon are just two leading brands to unroll marketing based on glamming up for Zoom meetings and Facebook date nights. Beauty products have a different context in today’s world and brands need to meet customers where they’re at emotionally and understand how they fit into their new lives.</p>

BEAUTY

The beauty industry plays a huge role in the self-care movement that's been steadily growing and has only strengthened during this whole period. Consumers aren't expecting their favorite brands to go silent - so don't!



DIY QUARANTINE HAIR CUT (1 MINUTE)

Ychakroni • 2.3K views • 1 month ago

In this DIY (Do it yourself) I'm going to show you how you can cut your own hair in a straight even line. It was my first time and it ...



At Home DIY Quarantine Hair Color Kit

Victoria I Escobar • 1.5K views • 1 month ago

Who knows when we will be able to get back into the salon again due to Covid-19 and/or Corona Virus, so I'm here to help.

4K



From Account Manager Ilyssa Frank

“Beauty brands quickly came around to the idea that silence isn't an option. While they've been monitoring for any negative feedback with these first few campaigns, so far audiences are responding really well. It helps that influencers have been able to pivot their captions and keep them relevant to the situation.

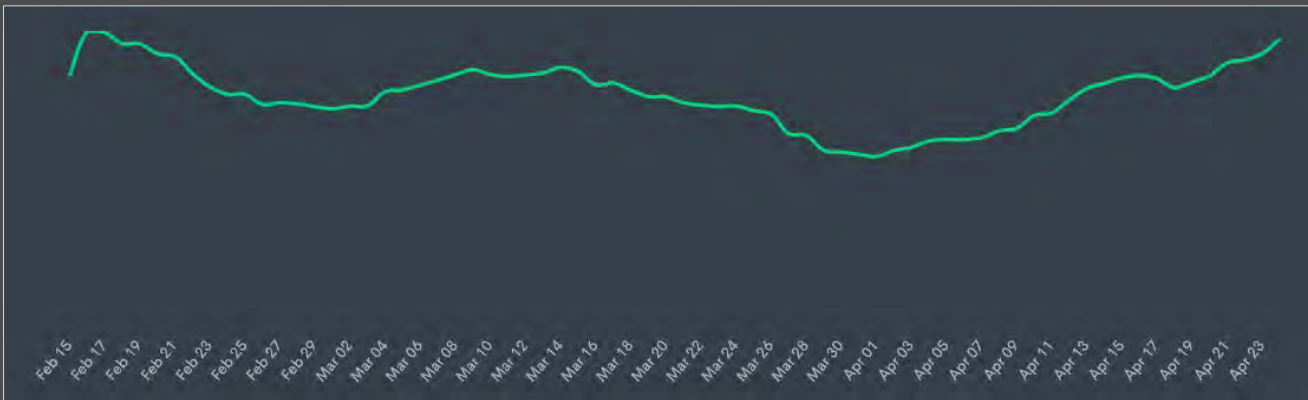
Influencers have been able to make their captions quarantine-friendly, but it hasn't been their only focus. The focus should always be on the product or key message – it's more something you need to remain cognizant of at all times.

Beauty products are consumed mainly in the home and that's where we're spending all our time, so the creative hasn't changed all too much and reshoots are easy. Just make sure whatever it is your marketing is easily available – whether it's through websites or in stores.”

FASHION

Looking at the Numbers

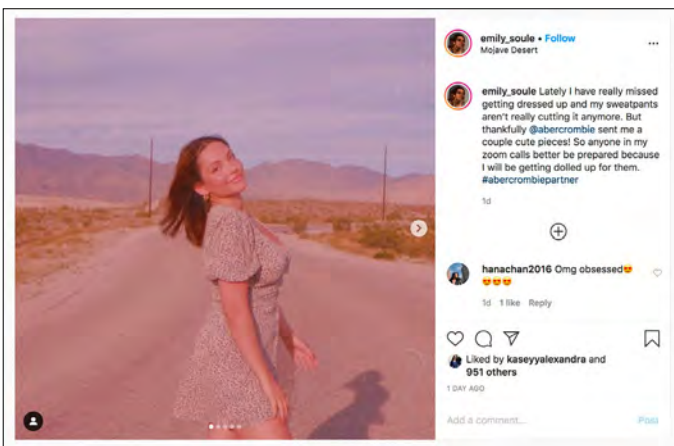
Fashion and Apparel brands continue to sponsor content at a steady rate, with the industry experiencing a significant increase over a six week rolling average. With production shoots halted, brands are leaning into flexible models such as influencer marketing to keep up the flow of relevant content, as well as impressive leaps in digital tactics such as virtual fashion shows, chief among them the upcoming all-virtual (and gender neutral) London Fashion Week.



They Say that Fashion is Never Finished

neither is the fashion industry's resolve and spirit of innovation

With physical interactions at a standstill, it's more important than ever for fashion and apparel brands to connect with consumers via engaging online content. *Here's how fashion brands are adapting to life under prolonged limbo to service clients:*



FASHION

Challenges	Responses
Industry events delays/cancellations	<p>Fashion brands are experimenting with virtual events and other tactics</p> <p>Fashion brands are leading the charge when it comes to changing the way we attend and think about industry events. Between June 12-14, the London Fashion Show will move forward despite the pandemic - this time as an entirely virtual show. Brands are even planning to hold in-house virtual events, such as Ermenegildo Zegna's upcoming "phygital" showcase in June that will feature a mixture of prerecorded material and CGI.</p> <p>Not only are efforts like these innovative ways to keep the fashion world strong, they also might further democratize the sometimes exclusive space. A world full of virtual showrooms will help consumers get closer to the trends than ever before.</p>
Global retail closures	<p>Faced with global store closures that are just now beginning to ease, fashion brands have been relying even further on their ecommerce capabilities. Social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest can natively support the entire customer journey from discovery to purchase, so brands are working harder than ever to turn their social channels into spaces where people connect and learn how their products fit their current lifestyles.</p> <p>For example, Nike is activating influencers on Instagram and TikTok to encourage people to stay fit while #stayinghome. Lead designer of Moschino Jeremy Scott recently caught up with friend Miley Cyrus over a live Instagram workshop that taught viewers how to recycle and repurpose old jeans. These types of entertaining and valuable experiences are what will keep brands like these top-of-mind when consumers buy online or are ready to walk into the stores once again.</p>
Sluggish consumer spend	<p>Eventually everyone gets tired of wearing the same pair of sweatpants, and consumers are already expressing the desire to break out containing ideas of what it means to get dressed under quarantine. Brands are leaning into the needs of today's homebound consumers by designing and offering the types of clothes people need now: clothes for our new work-from-home lives, clothes for virtual date nights, clothes to boost our confidence or simply clothes so comfy we never want to take them off. Unsurprisingly, Lyst's first-quarter index showed that "off-white mask" has become the most searched fashion term of 2020. Our home is our new world, and fashion brands are helping us update our wardrobes to match our new lifestyles.</p>

FASHION

Clothing and fashion have always been shaping forces in society and that's certainly true now. What we wear impacts us not only on a physical level but also how we perceive ourselves and the world around us. As our lives have changed, so too have our wardrobes, and it's up to fashion brands to meet the needs of consumers in these changing times.

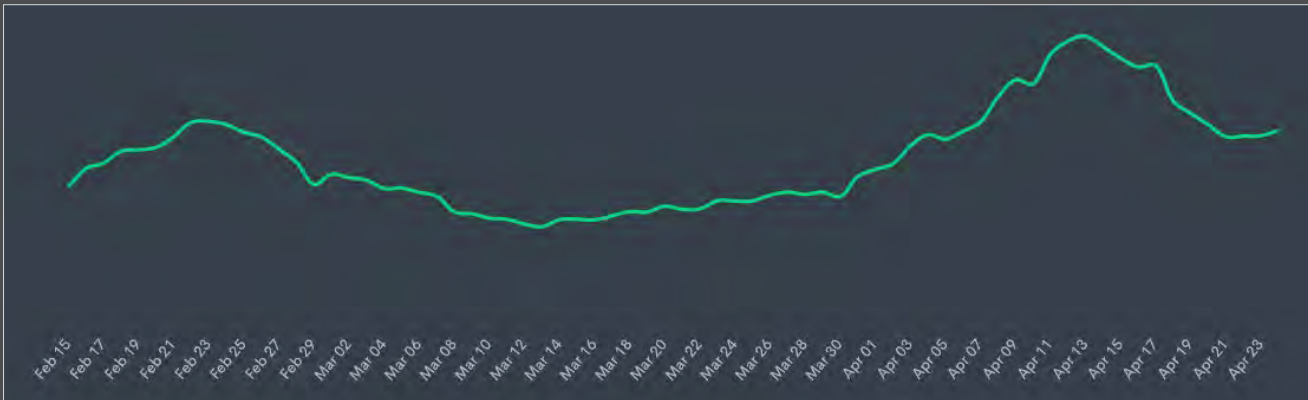


From Account Manager Kasey Hughes

“Shoppers want a sense of normalcy in their lives and the smartest companies are connecting to them on this wavelength, whether it's helping people dress up for their Zoom call date nights or how to dress for success while working at home. Right now we're seeing fashion brands resume influencer campaigns that may have been put on pause, updating captions with quarantine-friendly messaging, or even starting new campaigns altogether. People have been adapting to their new lives. As a brand you need to adapt just as fast, if not faster, if you want to grow alongside them.”

A Look at the Numbers

CPG brands have continued to sponsor influencer content with intermittent spikes in activity. On the whole, CPG influencer spend is up by about 5%, with many brands in the space experiencing sales lifts as consumers prepare their homes for life indoors. Nielsen data shows that as of March 21st, upwards of 35% more people had shopped online for CPG items compared to a typical week.



CPG products are essential so is the need to stay connected

CPG brands have been indispensable to society as we've navigated the initial stages of the pandemic. While we've sheltered in place and come up with ways to overcome this challenge, we've relied on a plethora of products to keep our families healthy and safe. This is a critical time for consumer trust and brand management, as the experiences consumers have now will certainly shape their purchase decision in a post-COVID world.



Challenges	Responses
Health Concerns	<p>When shoppers are more concerned than ever about their health, their concerns naturally extend to what they put in their bodies or use around their homes. Brands should be doing everything they can to replace anxieties with reassurance and comfort. This is exactly when communication is paramount, which is why we've seen TV advertisements for household items increase over 43% year-on-year for much of March.</p> <p>Even brands who are enjoying heavy sales lifts - such as Vita Coco - are putting in the work to make sure customer loyalty remains strong. They're paying it forward by donating a portion of their revenue to charitable causes and putting purpose back in the spotlight for all of their messaging.</p>
Changes to Shopping Behavior	<p>Consumers behave in different ways as they transition through the different phases of the pandemic. We've seen stockpiling on a myriad of items such as cleaning supplies, OTC pharmaceuticals and the now-infamous bottles of hand sanitizer to keep themselves clean and safe. Other notable trends include a resurgence of trust for older brands, and an explosion in home cooking. Nielsen found that sales of yeast were up nearly 650% for the week ending March 21st year-on-year.</p> <p>As more and more shoppers transform themselves into home cooks, cleaning experts and beyond, we've seen a huge spike in the need for educational content. Brands that offer a steady supply of accessible, entertaining content to help their customers prepare and use these essential products in new and exciting ways will be rewarded in brand equity. Now more than ever, people are searching for recipes, cleaning techniques, repair tips and more!</p> <p>To fill this need, consumers are increasingly turning to social media influencers to educate themselves about the products they know and love. The most forward-thinking CPG brands are committed to offering value to mindful consumers who seek to make informed purchasing decisions and who have made a healthy lifestyle their priority.</p>
Explosive increase in demand for online shopping	<p>As shoppers try to buy the things they need without having to leave home, some retailers have become inundated with an unprecedented spike in online shopping. Amazon alone has seen over a 50x increase in demand for groceries and other goods. This massive swing in consumer behavior is exactly why brands across the space are investing in their ecommerce capabilities including Clorox, P&G and Unilever, and that extends to their marketing practices.</p> <p>As Procter & Gamble CFO Jon Moeller put it in his explanation for why the brand continues to ramp up its marketing amidst financial gains - <i>"this is not the time to go off air."</i> As more and more shoppers reward digital convenience, brands must increase their digital marketing efforts to better reflect their audiences changing needs.</p>

CPG

Consumers look to CPG brands as their day-to-day essentials and find in them the comfort they need to feel healthy and safe. The road to recovery is a critical period where brands need to make sure their customers feel reassured and supported. These feelings will last even after this historic event is long behind us.

***Thank
You for
Shopping
With us!***

(online)



From Account Manager Abbie Levi

“I’ve noticed a lot of messaging around overall health and wellness. Companies are sponsoring content that helps parents educate their kids about nutrition, or talks about their products in the context of integrating them before or after home workouts. Connecting with consumers has become much more about offering value through educational or entertaining content. It’s not just about letting customers know how your products will be good for their bodies, you have to offer them experiences that are also good for their minds! This is what influencers do best by default, which is why brands have been so eager to work with them as this situation has unfolded.”

TRAVEL + HOSPITALITY

Looking at the Numbers

Travel and hospitality brands have cut back on sponsored content as well as all other forms of marketing to help curb the loss in sales. The initial weeks of our Data Tracker indeed show an industry grappling with an unprecedented level of disruption



Wanderlust to Fuel the Future of Travel

The travel and hospitality industries have been deeply affected by COVID-19, yet positive signs are already beginning to make headlines. In some European countries, governments are beginning to test the waters of opening public activity in a safe and controlled capacity.

As society navigates its way through the Resilience phase, and with small but reassuring signs of wanderlust returning, it's more critical than ever for brands to keep their audiences engaged and eager to roam. During this period of reduced travel, marketers should be doing everything they can to ensure their brands stay top-of-mind and ready for when health officials give us the green light.



TRAVEL + HOSPITALITY

Challenges	Responses
Travel is on pause. There are forced lockdowns and closed international borders.	<p>Prioritizing marketing during a crisis might not seem pertinent. But it's been proven that brands can speed up their recovery post-recession by building brand value and awareness during trouble times. One example of a destination currently putting this into practice is Visit Last Vegas with its #OnlyYou campaign. The video showcases an empty Las Vegas strip and works to remind people that the city will be there when they begin to travel again.</p> <p>While consumers are not able to travel and hotels are closed, brands have maintained strong relationships with past and future travelers by contributing to the community.</p> <p>Delta, for example, is flying medical volunteers for free, Four Seasons in New York City is offering free rooms for healthcare workers, and the Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas donated more than \$250,000 to local nonprofits.</p> <p>Creating content experiences that add value to people's lives in these uncertain times has also been crucial at this time. Airbnb for example, recently launched Online Airbnb Experiences. With so many people needing to stay indoors to protect their health they wanted to provide an opportunity to their hosts to connect with their global community of guests in the only way possible right now: online.</p>
Safety concerns once travel is allowed.	<p>Consumers are behaving in different ways as they transition through different periods of the pandemic. People have started to come back to the future with optimism and beginning to daydream about rebooking and planning vacations. It is imperative for brands to craft brand messages that meet these desires at the right time. Once travel is allowed consumers will slowly start to embark on their journeys with the same strength as before. Brands should issue statements calling for responsible travel and inform audiences in every step of the way.</p>
Accelerated increase in travel demand by a consumer with a unique set of expectations.	<p>When consumers do begin to feel ready for travelling again, they'll need a combination of the right price points and the right messaging based around reassurance and safety in order to make the leap. Direct-to-customer digital channels will be pivotal in that process. Being able to get the right messages in front of the right customers at the right time will help brands bounce back faster.</p>

TRAVEL + HOSPITALITY

As the world reopens, we anticipate customers will need to pass through an “awakening” period and this will be especially true for travel. Brands should remain sensitive to their messaging during the initial stages of Recovery, as these initial experiences will be critical for growing consumer confidence.

Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas donates more than \$250,000 in items to local nonprofits




Provided





Miss Lelo #StayHome
@MsLeloB

Airbnb just introduced Online Experiences, I think creatives should jump on this. Register as hosts to earn money during lockdown

E.g. Interactive cooking /photography/ dance / make up classes, acting /writing workshops & have people all over the world be able to book \$\$ & join.




Let's try something new together



Introducing Online Experiences

Today, we're excited to announce that you can now enjoy Online Experiences. Try something new together with small groups from around the world. Join tango classes, tarot card readings, farm visits, and more—all while meeting new people. Thanks to the dedication and passion of hosts, you can keep traveling even when you're staying home.



What is Airbnb looking for in an experience?

- It's led by a knowledgeable and passionate host

What we're not looking for:

The following things don't qualify as an Airbnb experience.

- Large and impersonal tours
- An event with no clear host



From Account Manager Jenifer Golden

“Travel and hospitality brands are doing some amazing work to keep themselves top-of-mind amidst all this noise and turmoil. Some amazing things I’ve seen are: hotels offering food tips from the head chef on site, recipes to recreate their signature dishes, wellness tips from yoga teachers, all kinds of useful and relevant content. The tone is very future-oriented, with a lot of messages involving things like “We can’t wait to get back to this again.”

I’d recommend brands focus efforts on thinking locally, using geo-targeting with things like paid social. Every country should be sowing the seeds for domestic travel because that’s what will return first! The more anticipation travel and hospitality brands can build now the better off they’ll be. If they set up flexible booking policies and communicate through the right channels, people will be back and travelling soon - I know I can’t wait!”

RESTAURANT / QSR

Looking at the Numbers

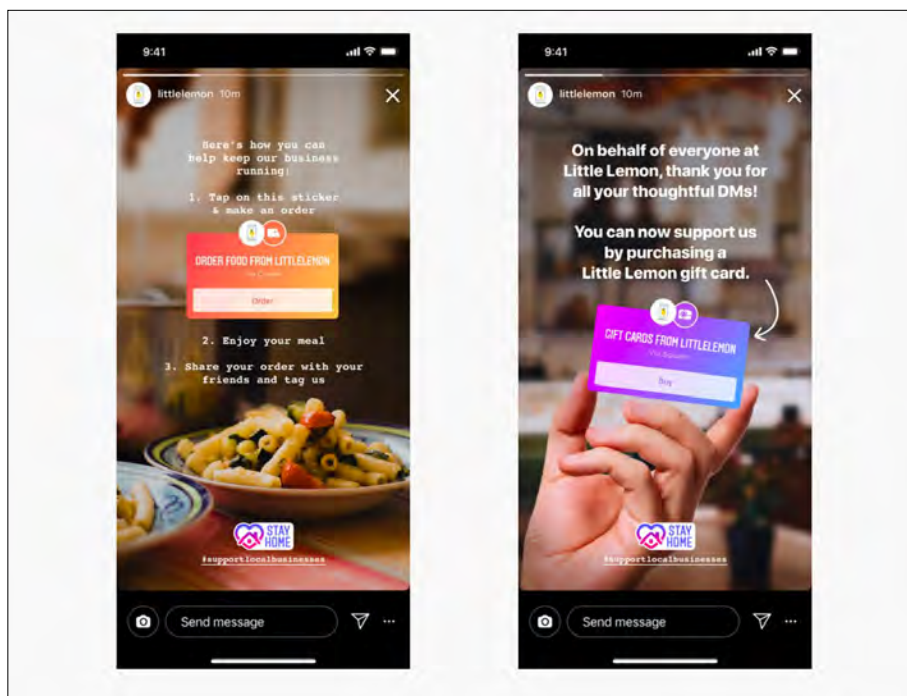
Restaurant and food businesses were some of the hardest hit and experienced this early on in the pandemic's development. Corresponding with this is a significant decrease in paid sponsorships starting at the end of February.



Keeping the Ovens Hot

How Businesses Are Adapting

Restaurants and food businesses have been affected by the loss of physical storefronts, but were also some of the first to find innovative solutions to keep business running and stomachs full. They've received a tremendous amount of support from their local communities to help them overcome these challenges, especially through social media-driven and other digital-first initiatives.

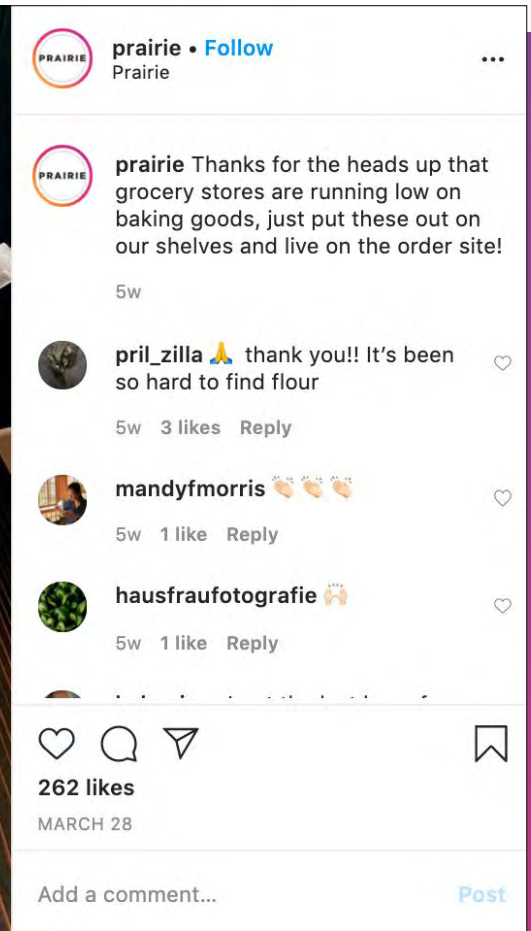


RESTAURANT / QSR

Challenges	Responses
Health concerns	<p>Brands are addressing consumer health concerns by keeping vital lines of communication open through platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Google, Yelp and more. Businesses have been keeping customers updated on their statuses, using digital touchpoints to quell anxieties and reassure customers that while physical storefronts are closed, the ovens are still hot and are ready to deliver.</p>
Lack of physical storefronts	<p>Businesses have had to adapt quickly to the loss of physical storefronts. They've swiftly developed new ways to get food in the hands of hungry customers, as well as spread the word through digital platforms on how to support their local restaurants and bolster this vital industry.</p> <p>Brands are finding new ways to spread the word Restaurant and QSR brands have been quick to find alternate ways to keep their business running, both with their services and how they connect with customers. Consider the Great American Takeout, an event organized by a coalition of restaurants that successfully mobilized local communities through the power of social media and magnified by the help of content creators around the globe.</p> <p>Brands are offering bundles, family meals and other budget-friendly options: Consumers have been responding favorably to "family meal" style options that package large amounts of food at decent prices - tantalizing offers to homebound consumers hoping to ease the increased demand for cooking.</p> <p>Brands Helping Bored Eaters Keep their Minds Full with DIY Kits Some restaurants have begun selling DIY kits including cooking instructions to serve the consumer and stave off boredom while in isolation.</p> <p>Brands are pivoting to Gift cards, credits & other options Platforms like Instagram are helping businesses compensate for a lack of in-store activity with gift cards and other products options with tools such as their Gift Card Sticker specifically designed to help small businesses stay afloat.</p>

RESTAURANT / QSR

Food is the engine of society, and businesses have worked tirelessly over the past three months to ensure the world stays fed and turning. The innovations that are put in place now to help restaurant and QSR companies stay afloat will ultimately shape the eating and shopping habits of tomorrow, and brands should prepare themselves for the needs of future consumers with digitally-minded strategies that begin today.



From Comm. and Marketing Director Maria A. Rodriguez:

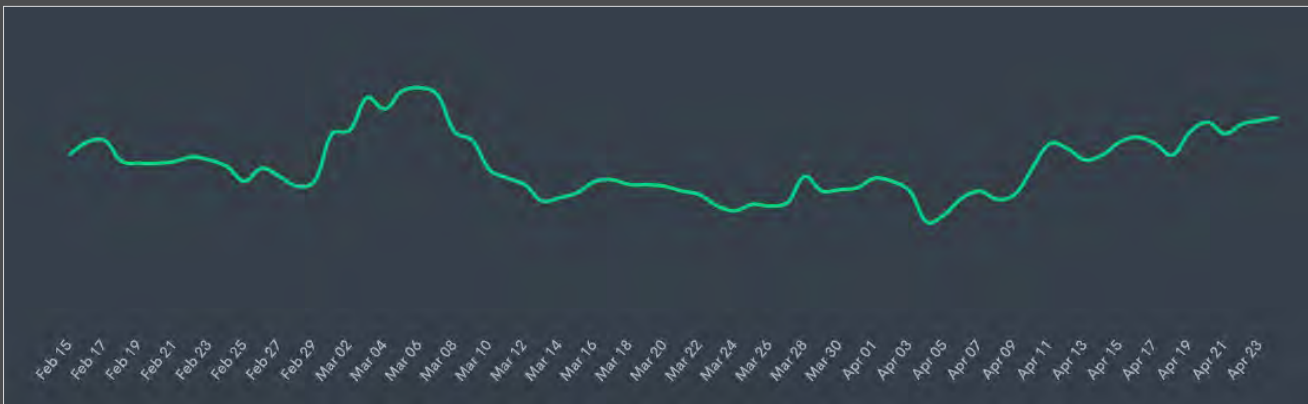
“It’s been fascinating to see how restaurants have adapted to meet the needs of consumers under these difficult circumstances. Some restaurants even transformed into grocery stores in a matter of days.

As these resilient businesses have found ways to keep operating, social media has been an incredibly useful and powerful tool to spread the word and find support within their local communities. Now you can even order food or send a gift card to a friend through Instagram.”

AUTOMOTIVE

Looking at the Numbers

Data shows that automotive brands continue to sponsor content at a steady rate despite significant challenges in the face of COVID-19. With productions halted and dealership closed, brands are turning to flexible marketing tactics such as virtual showrooms and partnering with influencers to stay connected with consumers, tools that can be deployed quickly and more efficiently in a world of ongoing isolation.



With Society Stuck in Neutral, Auto Brands Are Moving Forward

Automotive businesses face many difficulties in the wake of COVID-19, from a sluggish consumer base to manufacturing woes to critical event cancellations. However, positive signs have begun to trickle in, such as Cox Automotive daily estimates show a slight uptick in used and new sales towards the end of March and early April. Meanwhile a survey by car comparison website Car Wow show that over half of people still intend to change their vehicle in the 'not too distant future.'

The auto world is incredibly resilient, with many key brands already displaying the same level of tenacity and creativity that helped the auto industry endure similarly troubled times such as the 2007 financial crisis.

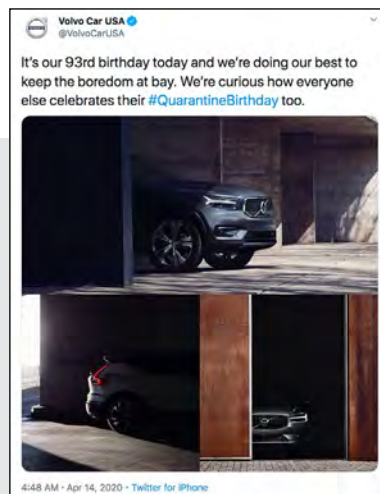


AUTOMOTIVE

Challenges	Responses
Closed dealerships	<p>Along with a number of industries, automotive businesses have been hit hard by the lack of physical interaction due to mandated closures. As a result, businesses have been innovating in their sales tactics in order to raise awareness for an increasingly popular and efficient way to purchase cars - online. Auto brands are embracing innovative tactics like virtual showrooms or <i>Delivery and Disinfection</i> programs paired with drone technology to keep customers informed about the newest models and eager to purchase. Car manufactures have noted increased web traffic as a result of the pandemic, accelerating their investment and staffing in online sales channels.</p> <p>Lincoln recently unrolled a spot to promote its contactless pickup and delivery options, allowing customers to explore financing options and car specs online and even purchase one of their models without leaving the sanctuary of their own homes.</p>
Worried customers	<p>Right now customers are experiencing high levels of anxieties, health, economic and otherwise. Buying a car is the second biggest purchase people will make behind a house, so it's not something customers take lightly. Brands need to make sure their current and potential customers feel reassured with content centered around hope, optimism, and how customers will make it through this event and drive again.</p> <p>i.Spot.tv noted that of the top auto brand for the week of March 6th, the most-viewed commercials were all coronavirus-aware. One of the most-watched spots from Honda discusses the power of a greater purpose and how the brand is there for its customers.</p> <p>Meanwhile automotive brands like Toyota and Hyundai continue to purchase airtime to highlight their responses and educate consumers on their support initiatives to ease some of the burden off new car purchases. By mid-March, Ford had dropped its ongoing ads in lieu of two new spots focusing entirely on their relief efforts. These types of quick pivots to customer education and support are what will help get people back on the road and ready to purchase cars.</p>
Lack of Travel	<p>People aren't on the roads as much as they used to be, but this is only a temporary state due to mandated isolation that is already beginning to ease in many parts of the world. The important action brands should be taking now is to remind customers of the many reasons that we, as people, form deep connections with our vehicles, building anticipation for all the activities consumers soon be able to resume or try for the first time. A new generation is about to embark on their first car-buying experience, or their first roadtrip post COVID-19 - there's a plethora of universal stories on the horizon that will resonate with consumers and keep brand loyalty strong.</p>

AUTOMOTIVE

Major auto brands have continued to roll out marketing campaigns designed to comfort audiences and educate them of the new and exciting ways they can begin their car-buying journey, from digital showrooms to home deliveries. The brands that focus on the long-term by building invaluable brand awareness and customer loyalty now will be the ones to shift-gears faster and get ahead of the competition when customers emerge from this period of isolation and are ready to hit the road once more.



From VP of Sales, Andrew Fox

“As we journey into May and process the events of the month, OEMs need to start thinking about the way back and what that means for consumers in-market to purchase or lease. The last few weeks consumers have been taking respite in their vehicles, leveraging them for short essential trips to the grocery store, food pick-ups and pharmacy outings. As shelter-in-place orders are lifted, we need to think about what consumers care about while also understanding that their vehicle is the next safest place to be outside their homes. We’d challenge our OEM partners to think strategically around the consumer psyche and interests in venturing outside for the first time. Ideas like the first road trip during the summer or car-pooling with a family or two and of course getting to and from work will be some of the actions consumers will take as they emerge from this situation with a different mindset. OEMs should lean on influencers to help authentically communicate how to get back on the horse, or behind the wheel, as the case may be. Consumers will look to the people they trust for guidance and it’s important that Auto brands remain committed to providing support and guidance as we all step back into the light. How do you think Auto Manufacturers should connect with their buyers in a new world?”



NEXT, NOW, BEYOND

Our current situation is defined by unprecedented limbo and stagnation. As societies shelter in place, consumers are busy making plans, drafting dream boards and writing checklists of all the things they hope to soon be able to do. World leaders assure us that, if the proper steps are taken, global activity will most certainly bounce back stronger than ever, and initial recovery plans are already underway. It's critical for brands to understand that major cut-backs on advertising now may cut expenses in the short term, but will most certainly affect their resilience as society begins to emerge from this period of dormancy.

Henry Ford said,
“The man who stops advertising to save money
is like the man who stops the clock to save time”

100 years later and his words are just as true! But when marketers find themselves cut off from significant touch points due to ongoing quarantine, and as customer behaviors shift continue to evolve, marketers need to make sure they're using the right techniques for today's environment. The demands of today's changing landscape demand that brands are able to reach audiences at scale and with speed - and influencer marketing is proving itself as a vital strategy to do so.

Influencers: Relevant, Trustworthy, Reliable

We know that consumers are spending more time than ever on social media, and as a result they're getting even closer to the content creators they admire and relate to. In times of unparalleled uncertainty, consumers are relying on influencers to discover fun activities, learn new skills, plan future events and decide what products to try and trust. That's why brands from across every industry are partnering with these awesome content creators to tell their messages and share their stories.

As you've seen from the many examples above, brands and influencers have been hard at work collaborating across all of social media to produce engaging and useful content at scale. These experiences are laying the foundation for long-lasting connections between brands and a new consumer base that is eager to experience life as we know it once more, and only proves that even in the midst of so much change, the power of human connection is a constant.

IN CONCLUSION

The most successful companies will be defined by their ability to adapt and respond in-step with the global consumerbase. Just like people right now are balancing their immediate problems with looking to the future, companies need to be creating strategies based on adapting to today while innovating for the Post-COVID world that is just on the horizon. It's a balancing act that requires a comprehensive/updated strategy with communication strategies designed to reach people where they are now, and where after emerging from the global consumer awakening that's soon to come. This is an opportunity for companies to innovate at scale, and the choices they make now will set the stage for their future success.

And what is on the horizon? Based on what we've seen, our post-COVID world will consist of a New Normal categorized by permanently shifted consumer behavior, altered work habits, and new economic realities. Consumers will cook more, create more, learn more, and become even closer to the content creators that influence their decisions.

We've been incredibly inspired by all the work done by our peers in the marketing space. We hope you've learned from these examples and are able to implement these best practices into your own efforts. If you'd like to learn more feel free to contact us at any of our social channels or drop us an email at social@openinfluence.com. We'd love to hear from you!



*The way forward
is together.*