

# The Weekly Digest

A single source for consumer sentiment, news, and resources related to what's happening in the country today

WEEKLY DIGEST  
August 19, 2020



On March 19th, California issued the first stay-at-home order in the U.S. We are now entering our 6th month of COVID-19's impact. Scientists continue to debate what the future will look like. The pandemic's course will largely depend on the arrival of a vaccine, but even more importantly, the length the immune system stays protective after vaccination or recovery from infection. Even with a vaccine, the virus will be with us for the foreseeable future.

We have shifted from the "new normal" to what McKinsey & Company is calling the "next normal" (see Chart of the Day and Spotlight On: Next-Normal Consumer). Habits formed since the beginning of the crisis are becoming the norm – a focus on social distancing, reliance on digital over offline channels, infrequent shopping and increased basket size in offline channels, reduced loyalty as consumers change their shopping habits, increased trust in national brands, and more. Brands will need to understand and adapt to this "next normal" consumer to connect with them in meaningful ways going forward.

## Number of COVID-19 Cases in the U.S.

# 5,483,033

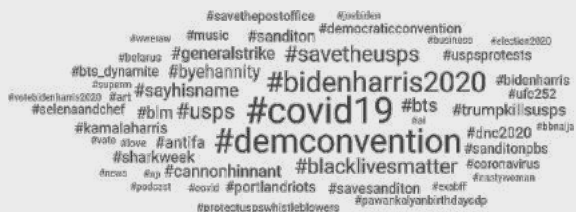
## Number of Daily New Diagnoses in the U.S.

# 38,918

## Trajectory of New Diagnoses: Increasing

As of 8:27am Source: [Johns Hopkins](#)

## Consumer Discussions



Date: 8/12/20-8/18/20 Source: Brandwatch

## Companies will need to adjust quickly to changing consumer behavior until COVID-19 is under control

### How

Consumers get information

#### Shake up of media mix— further shift to digital

Temporary comeback of TV  
Decline in out-of-home-advertising

### Where

Consumers purchase

#### Channel-mix reevaluation

E-commerce: 17-percent-point increase in grocery, surge in e-pharmacy  
On-the-go consumption decline  
Decrease in travel retail

#### Replacement of offline channels by at-home alternatives (eg, gym, cinema)

#### New channel selection attributes

Proximity to home  
Hygiene  
No queue/room in store

#### New shopping reality

Decrease in satisfaction due to inconvenience of safe shopping  
Increase in basket size  
Decrease in shopping frequency  
Decrease in density of shoppers  
Decrease in tourist spending

Date: 8/17/20  
Source: McKinsey & Company



### What

Consumers purchase

#### Overall consumption: 15% US decline with recovery in 2023

#### Basket recomposition

Grocery  
Nesting  
Health  
Discretionary-spend decline  
trading down

#### Format polarization

Large and small packs  
Reduced shopping frequency

#### Shake up in hierarchy of needs

Health and hygiene rises  
polarization of sustainability

#### Brand-preference evaluation

Turning to A-brands for trust

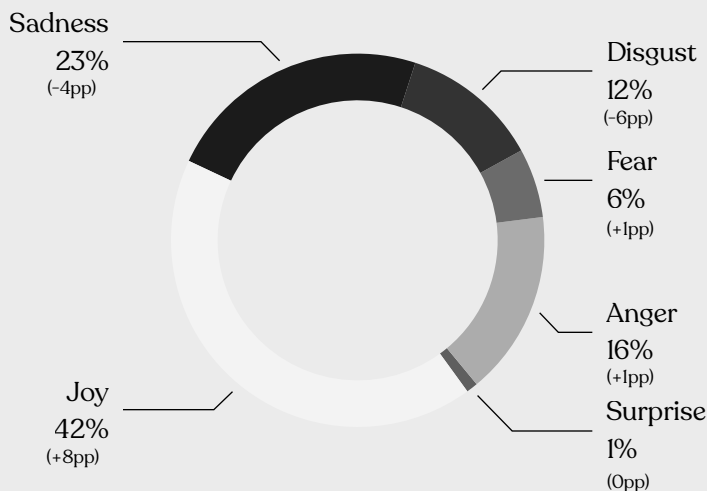
### How

Consumers experience

#### Shake-up in what consumers value

Loyalty shake-up, as consumers are forced to try new things

## Emotional sentiment



Date: 8/12/20-8/18/20 Source: Brandwatch

Note: Change in emotional sentiment is reflective of changes since 6/10, when we shifted how social listening is being pulled to be reflective of all social conversations, rather than COVID-19-specific conversations.

## COVID-Related Resources:

- It's OK to Feel OK Right Now (8/17/20) [NYTimes](#)
- How the pandemic has changed us already (8/15/20) [The Atlantic](#)
- What it's like to be a flight attendant during the pandemic (8/17/20) [Washington Post](#)
- '45 days of ambiguity': What a U.S. TikTok ban could mean for users and employees (8/17/20) [Washington Post](#)

## Racial Justice-Related Resources:

- Are racial attitudes really changing? Some Black activists are skeptical (8/11/20) [NYTimes](#)
- High school students are demanding schools teach more Black history, include more Black authors (8/17/20) [Washington Post](#)
- Black women are the superheroes the world needs (8/16/20) [NYTimes](#)
- 2020 Election: Voter registration deadlines for each state [Everett Post](#)

### Joy

**UceBuffer (Matt Malepeal)** @UceBuffer 36m  
 @ACSSPOTLIGHT95 you deserve more love for this 🙌 Leave to a postal worker to make my day though! Shout out to the real heroes 🙌🙌🙌

**skhanna914 (SK914)** @skhanna914 15 Aug  
 RT @afpelosi Thank you USPS postal workers! We deeply appreciate the risks you take every day - including exposure to covid and other diseases - to deliver our mail. You are essential in every sense of the word and we have your back. #ProtectUSPSwhistleblowers

### Anger

**JordiTheGoddess (espresso)** @JordiTheGoddess 15 Aug  
 RT @mikkymxie Why does BLM have to answer for looters but the NRA doesn't have to answer for school shooters

**tacabronbruh (444)** @tacabronbruh 16h  
 RT @spacecowbot I'm so tired of seeing "If we had all just worn masks and stayed inside we could've had a summer 🍉🍉" as if the actions of the individual are the only barrier to tackling covid and not the absolute lack of government response + unemployed pay for workers

### Fear

**Kelvin\_deSaint (KSD)** @Kelvin\_deSaint 12 Aug  
 Like I think my social anxiety is something new because I really used to like meeting people and talking. But now everytime i go out in public i'm panicking on the inside.

**CRNDigitalTalk (CRN Talk)** @CRNDigitalTalk 19h  
 It's going to be a crucial week to see how most reopened campuses are going to be handling COVID-19. <https://t.co/7ffaQdKkeZ>

### Sadness

**Gastino2 (GASTINO GODSON)** @Gastino2 16 Aug  
 U.S. COVID-19 death toll tops 170,000 deaths as new projections predict it will reach more than 185,000 by next month via <https://t.co/3Fd9rmEeiP> <https://t.co/zK6A3mvmjh>

**sadolantern (nonexistent ☐)** @sadolantern 1h  
 I jsut wanna go to a show again

### Disgust

**fionachews (fiona)** @fionachews 16 Aug  
 @Voilet215 @tokenaznboi @FuckNiggaSenpai @caroweenn @mvtchatea Plus they literally said "what's up n word" like 🤔🤔🤔 don't try to defend racism

**RussPran (Russ Pran)** @RussPran 16 Aug  
 I hate racism! <https://t.co/MktVovpXkR> via @YouTube

## Spotlight On: Next-Normal Consumer

Consumer behavior has changed drastically due to the COVID-19 pandemic and—with no clear end in sight—will continue to shift for the foreseeable future. In response, brands will need to continuously adjust for this “Next-Normal” consumer. Companies need to rethink how and where they connect with consumers, considering the following:

- **How consumers get information:** Consumers stuck at home are increasingly going online for information and entertainment (e.g., we’re seeing an increase in downloads of gaming apps and usage of online streaming services). Marketers will have to meet consumers where they are by investing in digital channels.
- **What consumers purchase:** COVID-19 has brought a renewed focus to health, safety, and convenience. With that, consumers are seeking brands that they trust. In some cases, things like sustainability will take a back seat as people prioritize health and hygiene (e.g., the usage of single-use plastic will be willingly accepted for a while).
- **Where consumers purchase:** During the pandemic, we’ve seen ecommerce skyrocket and offline channels being replaced by in-home alternatives (e.g., home gyms). However, consumers are shopping less frequently and consuming less overall, and as a result, consumption is forecasted to decline through at least 2023-24.
- **How consumers experience:** With consumer preferences shifting so rapidly and consumers being forced to try new brands, marketers have the opportunity to introduce themselves to new shoppers. Marketers will have to stay ahead of trends, improving the way they collect data and insights.

Source: [McKinsey & Company](#) (8/17/20)

## Economic News

- S&P 500 reaches new high, defying economic gloom (8/18/20) [CBS News](#)
- The recession is about to slam cities. Not just the Blue-state ones. (8/17/20) [NYTimes](#)
- 5 charts that show how the coronavirus recession is slamming the most vulnerable workers (8/15/20) [Business Insider](#)
- Here’s why this recession has been different from any other (8/17/20) [CNBC](#)

## Marketing/Media News Related to COVID-19

- The future is here now: How COVID-19 has changed consumers, now and in the future (8/17/20) [Forbes](#)
- These brands grew during the coronavirus hiatus (8/18/20) [Forbes](#)
- Walmart’s e-commerce sales nearly double as shoppers go beyond groceries in online orders (8/18/20) [Fortune](#)
- Stop & Shop owner doubles down on e-commerce amid pandemic (8/17/20) [Fox Business](#)
- Amid cruising shutdown, Carnival hypes ‘first roller coaster at sea’ on new ship in 2021 (8/17/20) [USA Today](#)
- Cabin fever: Passengers brave Covid-19 risk as cruises return to Europe (8/17/20) [France24](#)
- Why counterfeit beauty products are booming amid COVID-19 (8/18/20) [Vogue Business](#)
- Amazon offers fashion brands a lifeline in a market disrupted by the COVID pandemic (8/16/20) [Forbes](#)
- Home prices climb to record in coronavirus pandemic as buyers seek space (8/14/20) [Fox Business](#)
- Get back to ‘normal’ by wearing a mask, Mucinex says (8/14/20) [MediaPost](#)
- RV life booms during the pandemic (8/9/20) [CBS News](#)
- Postponed college football games could disrupt \$1 billion in TV ads (8/12/20) [NYTimes](#)

## Marketing/Media News Related to Racial Injustice

- Sweets vendor Good Humor hired Wu-Tang Clan founder RZA to create alternative to well-known racist ice cream truck jingle (8/14/20) [NPR](#)
- All the brands and retailers helping to get out the vote in November (8/14/20) [Footwear News](#)
- Washington hires former player as N.F.L.’s first Black team president (8/17/20) [NYTimes](#)
- Big tech pledged a billion to racial justice, but it was pocket change (8/13/20) [The Verge](#)
- National Tattoo Removal Day nears on Friday, an offer by Removery to remove racist and hate tattoos for free appears to be generating a lot of interest (8/12/20) [PR Newswire](#)
- Brands are working to change fashion’s ‘blind spot around indigenous issues’ (8/12/20) [Glossy](#)
- Teen Vogue’s August issue speaks to disenfranchised voters of color (8/11/20) [CNN](#)
- StreamElements, a company that provides streaming production tools, announced a \$100,000 Creator Diversity Fund to support underrepresented content creators (8/6/20) [Shacknews](#)
- These companies took concrete action in support of #BlackLivesMatter (8/7/20) [Built In](#)

For a regularly updated blog tracking brands’ responses to racial injustice, visit AdAge [here](#)