

The Weekly Digest

A single source for consumer sentiment and news related to the impact of COVID-19

WEEKLY DIGEST
June 17, 2020



In this week's Digest, we are balancing our coverage of COVID-19 and the protest movement in support of racial equality. COVID-19 cases are on the rise, particularly in states that reopened early (see Chart of the Day). At the same time, we are confronted with yet another murder of an African American at the hands of police this past Friday, with the killing of Rayshard Brooks. Brooks is among many others who have been killed recently, some of whom are Oluwatoyin Salau, Dominique Fells, Riah Milton, and Na'Kia Crawford. We are entering a 23rd day of protests since the murder of George Floyd. 76 percent of Americans now say that racism is a "big problem", up from 51 percent in 2015. According to the New York Times, public support for the Black Lives Matter movement increased nearly as much in the past two weeks as it did in the previous two years.

In this environment, brands need to be mindful of what they've learned from the COVID-19 crisis, but also take real action when it comes to racial injustice (see Spotlight On: Lessons learned from COVID-19 and the Protest Movement). Brands need to do more than just talk about race, justice, and equality issues; they must tackle them within their own organizations and take meaningful action to create change.

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

2,141,276

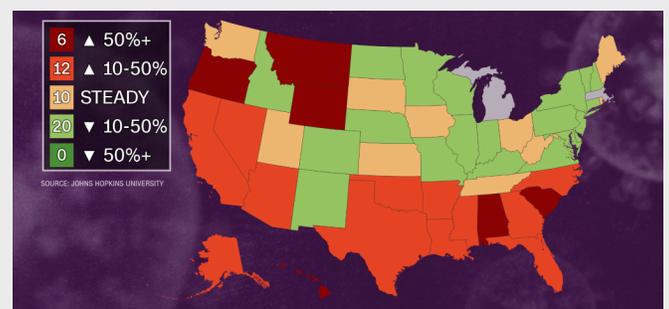
Number of Daily New Diagnoses in the U.S.

26,197

Trajectory of New Diagnoses:
Increasing

As of 10:33 Source: [Johns Hopkins](#)

COVID-19 in the United States – New cases in past week vs. previous week



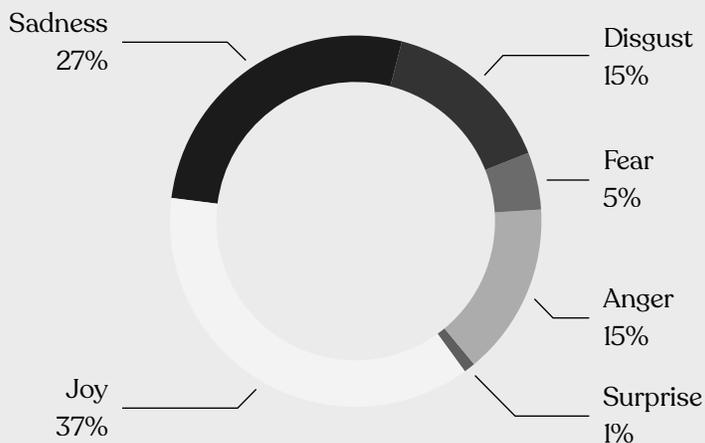
Date: 6/15/20 Source: Johns Hopkins University, [CNN](#)

Consumer Discussions

#happybirthdaytrump #jin #thekingofstatenisland
#defundthepolice #obamaappreciationday #allbirthdaysmatter
#jhope #obamadayusa #justiceforrobertfuller #atlantashooting
#sayhername #trump2020 #obamadayjune14th #ps5reveal
#exposebillgates #trumpisnotwell #covid19 #bts #maga #georgefloyd #btsarmy
#voguchallenge #scotus #blacklivesmatter #breaking #kag
#seattle #justicefortoyin #ps5 #blm #insecurehbo #coronavirus
#wwg1wga #breonnataylor #rayshardbrooks #antifa #playstation5
#atlantaprotest #obamagate #chaz #nowplaying #trump
#7toeternitywithbts #shopmycloset #qanon #obamaday
#blacktranslivesmatter #2020btsfesta
#endtrumpswaronamerica

Date: 6/10/20-6/16/20 Source: Brandwatch

Emotional Response to Protests for Racial Justice



Data: BrandWatch, 6.10-6.16, US only.

Economic News

- U.S. stock futures point to fourth day of gains (6/17/20) [Wall Street Journal](#)
- U.S. markets slid amid fears over rising virus cases, but rebounded after the Fed announced it would be buying corporate bonds (6/15/20) [Washington Post](#)
- U.S. retail sales rose record 18% in May as states eased lockdowns (6/16/20) [Wall Street Journal](#)
- How Shopify and Genius Brands defied Monday's down market (6/15/20) [The Motley Fool](#)
- Chinese consumers add fuel to factory-led economic recovery (6/15/20) [Wall Street Journal](#)
- These charts show how COVID-19 is helping smaller consumer brands steal share on Amazon after their giant competitors ran out of stock (6/10/20) [Business Insider](#)

Joy

Anger

Fear

Sadness

Disgust

Spotlight On: Lessons learned from COVID-19 and the Protest Movement

For several months, the COVID-19 pandemic produced fear and uncertainty in consumers' everyday lives and transformed people's buying habits and preferences. With the economy reopening, uncertainty around consumer behaviors remains and has only become more complex after weeks of protests against police brutality and racial injustice. While these issues must be addressed through systemic change, they can also be addressed through brand actions. Marketers will need to strike a difficult balance as they acknowledge the COVID-19 crisis and social justice issues, while also communicating the role their brand plays in consumers' lives. People's need for security is more heightened than ever, in terms of both physical health and justice for all. There are a few lessons from today that brands should take into the future:

- While many brands focused on uplifting messages of comfort and togetherness during the pandemic, brands must go beyond those platitudes as they speak out about race, justice, and equality. Brands must do more than just talk about these issues, they must tackle them within their own organizations and take meaningful action to create change.
- Marketers' priority should be building relationships. Due to changes that may have occurred in consumers' lives during the crises, recommitment to the things that define the relationship is crucial. Brands will have to communicate how they are going to help consumers adapt to the "new normal" and offer ongoing support.
- Brands should let their consumers know what they're learning and highlight new products, processes, or policies that are being created to improve the safety and wellbeing of employees and customers.

Source: [Adweek](#) (6/15/20)

Educational Resources:

- Learn about Juneteenth, which is coming up this Friday ([PBS](#))
- 8 films to watch in a time of protest against systemic racism (6/15/20) [CNN](#)
- How 70 years of cop shows taught us to valorize the police (6/3/20) [Vox](#)
- They marched for civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s. Here's what they have to say about today's movement. (6/15/20) [CNN](#)
- The reckoning will be incomplete without Black women and girls (6/14/20) [The Atlantic](#)

Marketing/Media News

How Brands are Addressing COVID-19 :

- Brands look beyond COVID-19 for the role of social media influencers (6/14/20) [Forbes](#)
- The 2021 Oscars will be delayed until April because of the coronavirus pandemic (6/15/20) [Washington Post](#)
- After COVID-19, we may be in a volatile gig economy that relies heavily on the internet (6/7/20) [CNN](#)

How Brands are Addressing Racial Injustice:

- Agencies begin to reveal the diversity of their executive boards after an [open letter](#) to U.S. agencies outlined actions that should be taken to achieve equity for people of color in the industry. (6/15/20) [Adage](#)
- Instagram accounts call out 'Silent' and 'Vocal' brands (6/15/20) [Adage](#)
- The co-founders of the Saturday Morning coalition have issued a call to action for the advertising industry over racism. (6/13/20) [Adage](#)
- The Aunt Jemima brand, acknowledging its racist past, will be retired (6/17/20) [CNN](#)
- The NFL joins Nike and Twitter in making Juneteenth a company holiday (6/12/20) [NBC News](#)
- PayPal pledges \$530M to support minority-owned businesses in US, while YouTube launches \$100M creator fund. Read more on what other major platforms are doing. (6/12/20) [Fox News](#)
- P&G debuts 'The Choice' in multimillion dollar ad push addressing racism in America (6/11/20) [Marketing Dive](#)
- Marketers are increasingly preventing their ads from appearing alongside content related to Black Lives Matter protests. (6/11/20) [Adage](#)

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

Resources on ways to take action

- From donating to volunteering: Here's how to support Black Lives Matter, protesters and equality initiatives ([Time](#))
- Actions and resources for solidarity of Black trans lives ([Crowd-sourced Google doc](#))
- 75 Black-owned businesses to support ([Forbes](#))
- Join a reading group that discusses Black texts. @urdoingreat on Instagram is posting weekly reading questions ([here](#))
- Buy a photographic print from Reframing the Future and 100% of proceeds will be donated to the Marsha P. Johnson Institute and National Bail Out. ([Rtfprintsale.com](#))