

The Weekly Digest

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

WEEKLY DIGEST
September 30, 2020



With roughly one month out before the Presidential election, politics is on everyone's mind. However, last night's debate was unlikely what anyone had anticipated. The chaos of last night is likely a prelude to an even more acrimonious month leading up to the election, as well as what may follow if there are delays in voting tallies.

In this election, Millennials and Gen Z will make up close to 40% of the electorate (see Chart of the Day). While younger voters tend to vote at lower rates, it will be interesting to see if this election is different and compels younger voters to engage. According to a study by Deloitte, we're seeing that the pandemic has only reinforced these younger voters' desire to make a positive change in the world (see Spotlight On: Gen Z's response to COVID-19). In the lead-up to the election, it's critical for brands to help drive engagement in our democratic process and encourage their customers and employees to vote!

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

7,191,349

Number of Daily New Diagnoses in the U.S.

41,184

Trajectory of New Diagnoses:

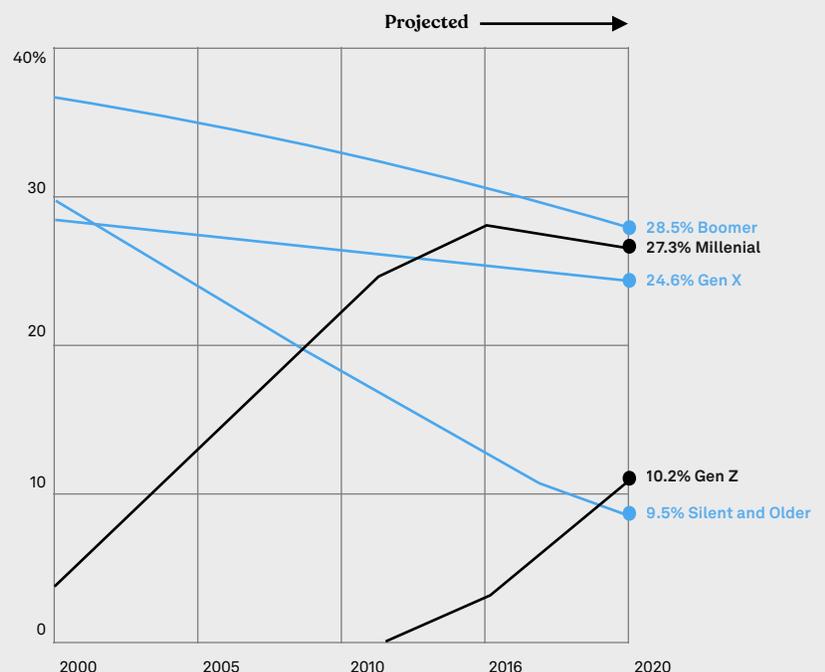
Decreasing

As of 7:23am Source: [Johns Hopkins](#)

Consumer Discussions

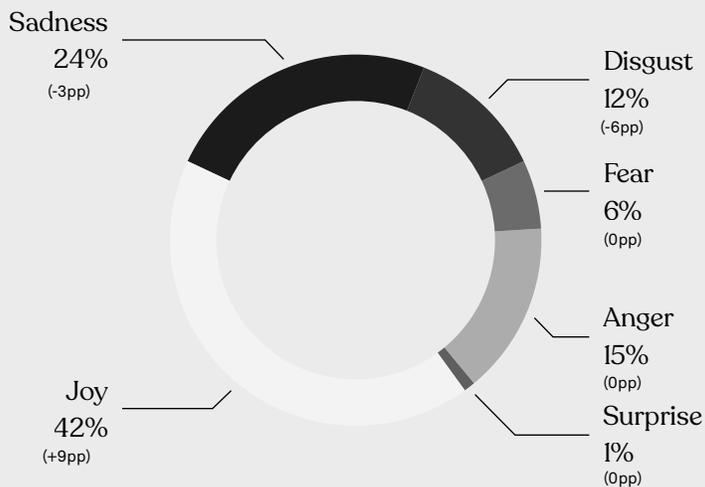


Share of eligible voters, by generation



Reproduction from a Pew Research center report; Chart: Axios Visuals

Emotional sentiment



Date: 9/23/20-9/29/20

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:

- More than 600,000 child cases of COVID-19 reported in U.S., but severe illness 'rare' (9/29/20) [NPR](#)
- 'This is too much': Working moms are reaching the breaking point during the pandemic (9/29/20) [NPR](#)
- Pandemic drives hike in opioid deaths (9/29/20) [NYT](#)
- Vaccine chaos is looming (9/28/20) [The Atlantic](#)

Racial Justice-Related Resources:

- Trump executive order on diversity training roils corporate America (9/25/20) [USA Today](#)
- When race, fandom and pop-music dollars collide: K-pop owes its start to Black music. Now the global music phenomenon is being pressed by some fans to support Black Lives Matter (9/23/20) [Washington Post](#)
- Two ways to stand against racism and sexism at work (9/28/20) [Bloomberg](#)
- Supporting protesters without undermining them (9/27/20) [The Atlantic](#)
- Black microbiologists push for visibility amid a pandemic (9/28/20) [NYTimes](#)

Joy

TheEspyRose (Espy Rose) @TheEspyRose 26 Sep
When covid got I became a total couch potato. I gained around 30 pounds in the last month. It was disheartening to look at the scale earlier this month. I bought an exercise bike and today was day 1 of my routine. I wonder if I can finally push to get to <180 lbs. Here I go.

GMA (Good Morning America) @GMA 27 Sep
Little boy creates a book library of love to help COVID-19 patients feel less lonely. <https://t.co/wZQ5KXcbMc> <https://t.co/KdTKRRLz4c>

Anger

Lorigoldst (Lori Biden/Harris2020!) @Lorigoldst
There is zero covid leadership or coordination.

sjurches (Sam) @sjurches 27 Sep
RT @NickStopTalking Obsessed with someone in a happy relationship asking me how dating in COVID is going. Comes off as "you find that kidney transplant yet? You're so cute, you must have by now!"

Fear

thatoneghai (Vinay Ghai) @thatoneghai 27 Sep
RT @WJSJ Some reopened schools are taking children's temperatures each day. But experts increasingly say a fever isn't a good gauge of Covid-19. <https://t.co/kWGSIMDURI>

viennarain (Ditch Witch) @viennarain 26 Sep
My boss probably has COVID and now I'm 🤪paranoid 🤪

Sadness

_ethiopiangold (Jefe) @_ethiopiangold 27 Sep
I can't even bring myself to watch them bodycam videos from after Breonna Taylor was shot

queenky_ (nik9) @queenky_ 24 Sep
RT @bahjandrodriguez I've really had to collect my thoughts about Breonna Taylor because it's really devastating. A total miscarriage of justice. That's all I can piece together at the moment.

Disgust

Lisagswells (Lisa Wells *Winter is coming GOP) @Lisagswells 23 Sep
RT @JoelBiden 200,000 Americans have died from this virus. It's a staggering number that's hard to wrap your head around. But behind every COVID-19 death is a family and community that will never again be the same. There's a devastating human toll to this pandemic — and we can't forget that.

Brandossius (Brando) @Brandossius 27 Sep
More importantly he refuses to believe black lives matter.

Spotlight On: Gen Z's Response to COVID-19

In the recent 2020 Deloitte Global Millennial Survey, Deloitte examines the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on society, specifically on the response of Millennials and Gen Z. It shows that these younger generations have been especially hit hard by pandemic-related shutdowns, but remain resilient and steadfast, refusing to compromise on their values. The pandemic has reinforced their desire to help drive positive change in the world, and they continue to fight for commitments from businesses and governments that prioritize people over profits, environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion, and income equality.

- **Gen Z has been hit hard:** Only 38% of Gen Zs said their employment/income status had been unaffected by the pandemic. 30% have lost their jobs or been placed on temporary, unpaid leave.
- **Gen Z has various stressors:** Job/career prospects (46%), longer-term financial futures (43%), family welfare (41%), and school/education (39%) are currently the top sources of stress for Gen Z.
- **The pandemic has increased empathy and eagerness to make a positive impact:** 75% of Gen Z say this pandemic has inspired them to take positive action to improve their own life. 74% of them say it has highlighted new issues for them and made them more sympathetic towards the needs of different people around the world and in their local community.
- **Gen Z has a new relationship with brands:** 70% of Gen Zs said that once the pandemic eases, they'll make an extra effort to buy from smaller, local businesses.

A company that has successfully resonated with Gen Z during the pandemic is American Eagle Outfitters (AEO), which has succeeded despite the shutdown of many mall brands. First, the pandemic has deepened Gen Z's desire for comfort, which has increased AEO's success in casual clothing and loungewear. Furthermore, the brand has worked hard to create marketing that makes customers feel comfortable in their own skin, which has really resonated with Gen Z, a generation that is drawn to brands that celebrate diversity and authenticity. Additionally, during the pandemic, to meet Gen Z where they were at, AEO invested media dollars in Tik Tok, launching a campaign with Tik Tok star Charli D'Amelio. This case shows that understanding the impact COVID-19 has had on Gen Z will be key to reaching this audience in the future.

Source: [Deloitte](#), [Fast Company](#) (9/28/20)

Marketing/Media News Related to COVID-19

- Nearly half of consumers will try new brands if the ad is relevant (9/28/20) [Marketing Dive](#)
- Titans, Vikings shut down in-person activities after NFL's first COVID-19 outbreak (9/29/20) [NBC News](#)
- How some grocery stores are preparing for the second wave of COVID-19 (9/29/20) [Mashed](#)
- Panda Express had a COVID-19 task force in January (9/24/20) [QSR Magazine](#)
- It's getting bleak for out-of-work hotel workers (9/28/20) [CNN](#)
- How remote pitching is showing up the agency showmen (9/25/20) [Campaign Live](#)
- WARC sees eCommerce ad spend softening pandemic cuts (9/25/20) [Campaign Live](#)
- WeWork's CMO Roger Solé on reinventing the way the world works after COVID-19 (9/29/20) [The Drum](#)

Marketing/Media News Related to Racial Injustice

- "This does feel like a different moment": As public support for Black Lives Matter drops off, will corporate America stay the course? (9/24/20) [Vanity Fair](#)
- What is the role of brands on the topic of racial inequality? (9/24/20) [Forbes](#)
- Uncle Ben's changing name to Ben's Original after criticism of racial stereotyping (9/23/20) [NPR](#)
- Jack Dorsey's Square just committed \$100 million to boost Black-owned banks and businesses. Here's where the money is going (9/24/20) [Business Insider](#)
- Jaden Smith launching racial and social justice series on Snapchat (9/17/20) [CNN](#)
- Costco yanks Palmetto Cheese brand from store shelves after owner calls the Black Lives Matter movement a 'terrorist organization' (9/25/20) [Business Insider](#)
- Accenture directs capital to Black start-ups (9/28/20) [Philly Tribune](#)
- Cream of Wheat to drop Black chef from packaging, company says (9/27/20) [Baltimore Sun](#)
- Fortune 100 companies commit \$3.3 billion to fight racism and inequality (9/28/20) [Axios](#)

Economic News

- The weird pandemic recession delivers a trade surprise (9/28/20) [Quartz](#)
- Stimulus update: \$2.2 trillion stimulus package proposal unveiled, includes \$1,200 stimulus checks and \$600 unemployment benefits (9/29/20) [Forbes](#)
- Pandemic imperils promotions for women in academia (9/29/20) [NYT](#)

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