

The Weekly Digest

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

WEEKLY DIGEST
September 9, 2020



Six months into the coronavirus crisis, the U.S. stands at over 6.3M cases and close to 190,000 deaths. While new U.S. cases are slowing compared to past months, new spikes are cause for concern elsewhere. Yesterday, the U.K. announced a ban of all gatherings of 6 or more people in England in response to a sudden rise in infections. And while Trump has claimed that a vaccine may be ready by October, nine vaccine makers have signed a joint pledge to uphold “high ethical standards,” promising that they won’t seek premature government approval of any vaccines they develop.

As the pandemic continues to rage on, consumer behaviors are permanently shifting and new consumer segments are being identified. For instance, Fast Company has recently written about “Generation Novel” (see Spotlight On: Meet Generation Novel), a cross-generational segment of connected consumers, by choice or by default, whose decisions are driven by the stressors, feelings, and consequences of the pandemic. McKinsey and Company has also identified consumer behaviors that are accelerating and likely to continue post-pandemic (see Chart of the Day). Brands will need to keep their finger on the pulse of behavioral shifts and emerging consumer segments to position themselves for growth not only for today, but long-term.

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

6,328,099

Number of Daily New Diagnoses in the U.S.

26,450

Trajectory of New Diagnoses: Increasing

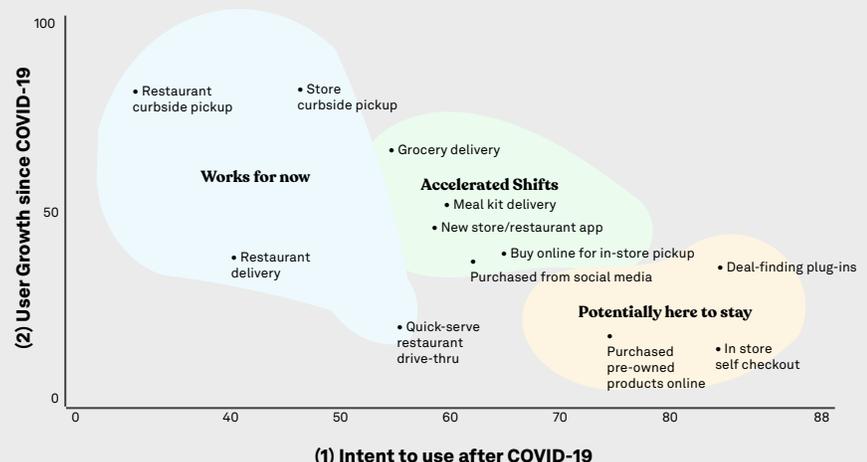
As of 7:28am Source: [Johns Hopkins](https://www.jhu.edu/)

Consumer Discussions



Date: 9/2/20-9/8/20 Source: Brandwatch

Chart of the Day: Shifting Consumer Behaviors



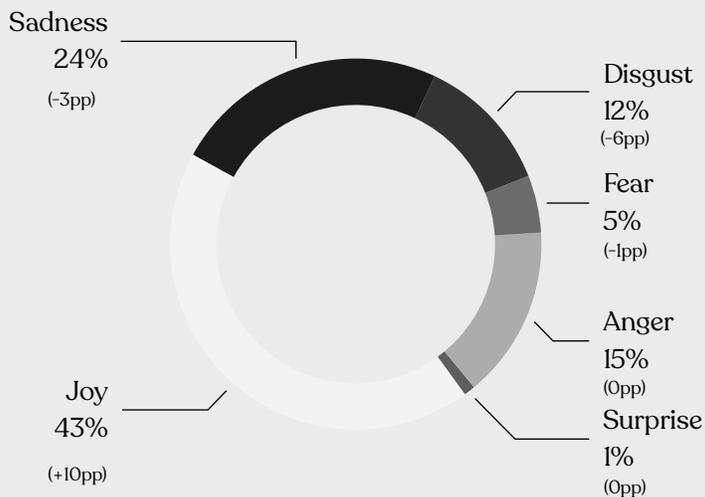
Percent of new or increased users who intend to keep doing activity after COVID-19

(1) Q: Compared to now, will you do or use the following more, less, or not at all, once the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation has subsided? Possible answers: “Will stop this”; “will reduce this”; “will keep doing what I am doing now”; “will increase this.” Number indicates respondents who chose “will keep doing what I am doing now” and “will increase this” among new or increased users.

(2) User growth is calculated as % of respondents who replied that they are new users over % of respondents who replied that they were using the products/service pre-COVID-19 (using more, using the same, or using less).

Date: 8/28/20 Source: McKinsey and Company

Emotional sentiment



Date: 9/2/20-9/8/20

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:

- 9 vaccine makers sign safety pledge in race for COVID-19 vaccine (9/8/20) [CNN](#)
- What we know about the C.D.C.'s COVID-19 vaccine plans (9/3/20) [NYTimes](#)
- What Young, Healthy People Have to Fear From COVID-19 (9/7/20) [The Atlantic](#)
- The coronavirus is mutating – does it matter? (9/8/20) [nature.com](#)

Racial Justice-Related Resources:

- Trump orders federal anti-racism training to be ended, calling it “a sickness” (9/5/20) [Vox](#)
- For the first time, America may have an anti-racist majority (9/8/20) [The Atlantic](#)
- Listened through ‘1619’? Here are 11 more podcasts to add to your list [Hour Detroit](#)
- How to find and support Black-owned businesses [Yes!](#)

Joy

FroggyBottomPnd (Sukie 🐸 #WearTheMask) @FroggyBottomPnd 20h
 RT @TeamPelosi On this #LaborDay in particular, America owes an even greater debt of gratitude to essential workers who have been the backbone for our communities in this covid-19 pandemic. Our thanks must be matched with PPE, living wages, union rights, and workplace safety.

vtidigger (VTdigger) @vtidigger 2h
 As Vermont schools open Tuesday with various configurations of in-person and remote education, school nurses have stepped up to engineer a Covid-safe model of education. #vied #covid19vt <https://t.co/ATpwUkrX7I>

Anger

RManning47 (Rob Manning) @RManning47 10h
 Let's see... global pandemic, mass unemployment and violent clashes between police & activists on multiple sides weren't enough so #Summer2020 decided to add #wildfires, a #windstorm & a regionwide #poweroutage. @PacificPower_OR says the lights will be back in 15 mins. Right.

K.Thomas_Ross (Guns Are Killing Us) @K_Thomas_Ross 4 Sep
 RT @UpNorth62 @K_Thomas_Ross Weird. It's almost as if refusing to take any precautions to slow the spread of Covid has resulted in more cases of Covid.

Fear

joy31608 (Joy316 Victory! 🏆 #BidenHarris2020) @joy31608 13h
 RT @uche_blackstock As a healthcare worker, I would be one of the first groups eligible for a vaccine in November. Despite the horror of what I've seen from #coronavirus firsthand, I would not take a vaccine that had not undergone Phase 3 clinical trials. Period.

digitalsista (Shireen, Harlem's Shuri, In Political Mecca) @digitalsista 17h
 We have three pandemics: 1. Racism: old as time 2. Covid 3. disinformation <https://t.co/RE5XwUB923>

Sadness

chulynne (Cheryl Emerick) @chulynne 3 Sep
 RT @KamalaHarris As @JoeBiden said, the shots fired at Jacob Blake pierced the soul of our nation. We see the pain and hurt of yet another Black man shot by police—and a family with extraordinary courage come together. His family is in my heart today as we continue our fight for justice.

SPECNewsHV (Spectrum News HV) @SPECNewsHV 6 Sep
 More than 410,000 people in the United States can die from the coronavirus by the end of the year, more than doubling the current death toll, according to a study predicted by health officials on Friday. <https://t.co/y1vY9nXk>

Disgust

_msbutler (Lexx) @_msbutler 2h
 RT @chancsmith So basically America has adapted to working, living, operating in A WHOLE PANDEMIC. I'm guilty of this also, but it just hit me, that we made living with Covid-19 our new normal instead of trying to get rid of it completely like other countries have done.. our minds are so warped

amytree (Packy) @amytree 17h
 RT @GJust4 @nodank Capitalism has profited off of racism. Ask for profit prisons, MIC, redline districts, and policing.

Spotlight On: Meet Generation Novel

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the creation of what Fast Company's Brian Solis calls Generation Novel (Gen N), a digital-first and emotionally-charged consumer segment that spans generations. As public life as we know it continues to stand still, companies that keep up with the fast-changing digital transformation of consumer habits will be in a better position to overcome the disruption and uncertainty that lie ahead.

Gen N is a developing psychographic group that consists of customers who were previously hyperconnected (pre-COVID), in addition to those who are now becoming digital-first due to COVID-19 shutdowns. These consumers appreciate digital's ability to offer health and safety, greater choices, flexibility and control, time savings, and overall convenience. Gen N is also defined by a unifying set of emotional ties: With consumers anxious and worried about their health and that of others, their personal job security, and the economy overall, consumers are thinking, feeling, and making decisions in a different manner than before. Gen N is thus "a connected consumer, by choice or by default, whose decisions are now also driven by the stressors, feelings, and consequences of a global pandemic."

The acceleration toward digital experiences is expected to continue and consumer habits formed during the pandemic are likely to persist post-pandemic. Even as stores begin to reopen, we're seeing customers continue to shop online, with 61% delaying shopping in physical stores to avoid getting sick. Additionally, 35% of U.S. consumers report that they prefer contactless shopping and delivery options. And further research shows that purchases on social media have grown 104% in Q2 2020, the largest increase ever. With all this disruption, companies will have to relearn who their customer is and what they value in order to enhance their business models, products and services, and customer experiences.

Source: [Fast Company](#) (9/8/20)

Economic News

- Mortgage refinancings boom, even as coronavirus hits economy (9/8/20) [WSJ](#)
- U.S. economy faces \$15 trillion hit as a result of school closures, OECD says (9/8/20) [CNBC](#)
- Global economies are 'several quarters' away from returning to pre-pandemic levels, while China will likely get there by end-2020 (9/7/20) [Business Insider](#)
- Trump touts big job gains, says the U.S. is 'rounding the corner' on the coronavirus (9/7/20) [CNBC](#)

Marketing/Media News Related to COVID-19

- These restaurant chains are unveiling new designs inspired by the pandemic (9/5/20) [CNBC](#)
- How WeWork and other flexible office providers are striving to save office life (9/8/20) [AdAge](#)
- How has the pandemic changed influencer marketing? (9/8/20) [eMarketer](#)
- Entertainment marketers bullish about industry's prospects post-pandemic (9/7/20) [The Drum](#)
- Americans just can't quit the gym (9/8/20) [The Atlantic](#)
- The two men buying your favorite retailers (9/8/20) [NYT](#)
- Amid a deep recession, outdoor equipment is flying off the shelves (9/8/20) [NPR](#)
- First giant cruise ship takes off since COVID-19 – with new rules (9/8/20) [NY Post](#)

Marketing/Media News Related to Racial Injustice

- Support in racial injustice protests is up in wake of Kenosha, Edelman survey finds (9/8/20) [Edelman](#)
- Walk the talk: Brands need more than lip service in 2020 (9/8/20) [Forbes](#)
- Workplace diversity goes far past hiring. How leaders can support employees of color (9/7/20) [NPR](#)
- How do we create an anti-racist workplace in a virtual world? (9/7/20) [Forbes](#)
- American Airlines allows crew to wear Black Lives Matter pin on uniforms (9/8/20) [CBS News](#)
- From Target to Twitter, U.S. companies urge workers to vote (9/7/20) [NYTimes](#)
- Black woman harassed by white passenger on Delta flight praises company for response (9/5/20) [NBC News](#)
- BBLK app connects customers to Black-owned businesses (9/4/20) [CBS Local](#)
- Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg intervened after internal Black Lives Matter debate grew heated: Report (9/2/20) [Fox Business](#)
- New agency, Color of Sports, formed to 'create true change' in sports and entertainment (9/1/20) [LinkedIn](#)
- Pinterest places new global head of inclusion and diversity under executive management team (9/1/20) [Pinterest](#)
- Ben & Jerry's new podcast tackles America's long history of racial violence and discrimination (9/1/20) [USA Today](#)

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