

Cutting Edge: Our weekly analysis of marketing news

22 April 2020

Welcome to our weekly analysis of the most useful marketing news for CIM members.

Quick [links](#) to sections

Marketing trends and issues

Advertising

Brands shouldn't stop advertising

Over a third (37%) of internet users thought that brands should continue advertising as usual, according to a March 2020 survey of 13 markets by GlobalWebIndex. Another survey by Kantar found that only 8% of consumers in 30 countries thought that stopping advertising was a priority, while 77% said they wanted advertising to "talk about how the brand is helpful in the new everyday life". Although consumers don't want brands to ditch advertising altogether, they do expect them to reconsider their strategies. Pre-pandemic campaigns may no longer be appropriate as consumers look for information on how the crisis is being dealt with. However, brands should be careful not to be perceived as taking advantage of the situation. In Kantar's study, 75% of respondents warned that brands, "should not exploit [the] coronavirus situation to promote the brand".

[emarketer.com](#), 15 April 2020 (Enberg)

Ad spend could be slow in 2021

Some 77% of marketers expect that the coronavirus will have an impact on ad spending during Q1 2021 according to the latest tracking survey from Advertiser Perceptions. Digital video will be amongst the worst affected with 78% of advertisers saying they have delayed, cancelled or reduced budgets. This is also the case for display advertising (78%), paid social (73%), linear broadcast TV (66%), OOH (66%) and paid search (65%). Spending plans vary by industry with "out and about" brands (restaurant and travel sector) being more likely to cancel campaigns than "hunkered-down-at-home" brands (groceries, beverages).

[marketingdive.com](#), 14 April 2020 (Williams)

Agencies

Staying creative

Agencies must stay creative in the current environment but how do they do so when everyone is self-isolating at home? The stereotypical vision of a group of people sitting in a room bouncing ideas off each other simply doesn't work using video conferencing which is, "better suited to presenting finished work rather than developing creative concepts". The author offers some ideas for helping teams maintain their creativity.

[ama.org](#), 9 April 2020 (Iannucci)

Ad industry prepares for downturn

Amid the slowdown in advertising, *The Drum* looks at how the biggest ad groups are coping with the lockdown and what cost-cutting measures they are putting in place. WPP says it "can't rule out job losses", Omnicom has confirmed furloughs and layoffs across "many" agencies and at IPG top-level execs have taken voluntary salary reductions. Dentsu is reducing all salaries by 10% and Publicis is implementing a €500m cost-reduction plan. Havas, meanwhile, says it is actively "avoiding" layoffs. But this could be just the beginning as the industry braces itself for a downturn.

[thedrum.com](#), 17 April 2020 (Deighton)

Brands and branding

Brand proximity, not purpose

Research from Opinium shows the high levels of concern over the coronavirus, with almost half of UK adults reporting an impact on their mental health. Human beings are creatures of habit and will create a "new normal" for themselves so what does this mean for brands? Many have withdrawn their advertising or released concerned emails from their CEOs. This is not necessarily a good idea since research shows that people still want to hear from

brands across multiple sectors. Instead of spamming people, try to make them feel good about themselves. Brands perceived to have responded well to the situation include Tesco and McDonald's which have shown leadership by demonstrating action first and "share-worthy" comms second. Yet this is not so much about brand purpose as brand proximity. Brands that are less close to the crisis than essential services, such as health and beauty, have the opportunity to entertain and provide some relief. This way they could become part of the new normal and achieve lasting connections.

research-live.com, 7 April 2020 (Tadman)

Mastercard the best sonic brand

Sonic branding is a developing facet of branding and consumer relationships with brands are increasingly influenced by sonic experiences. *Best Audio Brands 2020*, the second annual ranking, looks at how brands use sound and music to present a consistent brand experience across multiple touchpoints. This year Mastercard takes top slot as the leading sonic brand, replacing McDonald's which has fallen to sixth place. Despite its audio signature being well known among consumers for over a decade, McDonald's reliance on just one sonic asset (its jingle) was deemed to be insufficient in a rapidly changing environment. Mastercard, on the other hand, has a Sonic DNA which is heard across all audible touchpoints.

<http://ampsoundbranding.com/best-audio-brands-home/>, 15 April 2020

Can DTC brands survive?

Consumer spending has been declining as economies around the world falter and people judge it wise to save their money. This is a problem for direct-to-consumer brands, such as Everlane, Allbirds and Ministry of Supply, all of whom have seen a decline in sales. Can such start-ups survive the coming recession? Brands that have some cash in hand, and that continue to innovate and remain relevant to customers, could make it through, but if the situation carries on for too long, even these may not survive. This article looks at some of the DTC start-ups and how they are coping with the crisis.

fastcompany.com, 15 April 2020 (Segran)

Conferences and events

Video conferencing tools

Video conferencing software has become an essential technology for businesses and consumers. However, the surge in use is changing the way in which the technology competes with each other which makes it harder for buyers to evaluate the options. This article looks at how three such video conferencing tools – Zoom Meeting, Microsoft Teams and Google Meet – compare in terms of price, setup and ease of use, features and functionality.

uk.pcmag.com, 15 April 2020 (Sevilla)

Survey shows most event suppliers fear ruin

Some 60% of the UK's event industry suppliers could collapse within three months while 6% says they are unlikely to survive until the end of April without support from the Government. This is according to an online survey from the Events Industry Forum (EIF) and Business Visits and Events Partnership (BVEP). The findings come a week after tourism minister, Nigel Huddleston, said that events could potentially "kick start" the UK economy as it comes out of the pandemic. Yet just 1% of survey respondents said they had successfully applied for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

conference-news.co.uk, 14 April 2020 (Fullard)

Consumer behaviour

Consumers disclose more on smartphones

Three studies suggest that consumers are more "self-disclosing" when they generate content on their smartphone than when they use a PC. This behaviour is seen across a range of channels such as social media, online restaurant reviews, survey responses and compliance for personal information from internet ads. The authors conclude that this trait is due to two properties of the smartphone: the feeling of comfort associated with the device; and the tendency to focus more on the disclosure task due to the greater difficulty in creating content on a smaller device. The implications for marketers are explored.

Journal of Marketing, Vol 84(3) May 2020, pp28-45 (Melumad and Meyer)

Direct marketing

Direct mail is back

Direct mail is on the rise, with 51% of marketers who use direct mail campaigns reporting good or very good returns, according to research from PFL. The proportion rises to 83% for those who have integrated direct mail and multichannel campaigns. The pendulum is currently swinging back towards the offline world as many people unsubscribe from emails and this trend is leading marketers to rethink the value of direct mail. Despite being more expensive than online, it can provide higher returns, especially for higher-priced products and it can be as effective for B2B as for B2C. However, the ability of direct mail to get results depends primarily on its relevance to the audience and companies waste millions on mail that is badly targeted. This not only affects sales but can dilute the brand. Direct mail that is "skilfully integrated" with digital or other highly personalised marketing can be very effective.

CRM Magazine, Vol 24(3) April 2020, pp28-31 (Pophal)

Data and marketing apprenticeships

The DMA has conducted research into what opportunities the data and marketing industry can offer new talent to the sector. It found that 62% of employers are already using apprenticeships but

that there is a gap between large/very large businesses, where 78% use apprenticeships, and small/medium businesses, where only 41% use them. In general, only a small number of businesses said that apprenticeships don't lead to further employment which means that they play an important part in young people gaining entry to the industry. Long-term opportunities are more apparent in large/very large businesses for data analysis (36%); content/creative (36%); and data-driven technical (36%) jobs. Data-driven technical roles (42%) have the best chance of becoming long-term among small/medium businesses.

dma.org.uk, 8 April 2020

Law

Primary ingredients – greater transparency?

Packaging for coffee, chocolate and other products can be labelled misleadingly. For example, Italian coffee is not grown in Italy and Belgian chocolate isn't grown on Belgian cocoa plantations. European legislation has tried to tackle this conflict to help avoid misleading the consumer. The EU "Implementing Regulation", obliging food business operators to give the country of origin of the "primary ingredient", only came into force on 1 April 2020. Food business operators are now obliged to indicate the primary ingredient in the cases specified in the Regulation but this is by no means straightforward. This article looks at the complexities and questions whether the Regulation will give European consumers any greater certainty of where their food has come from.

lexology.com, 1 April 2020 (Voldánová)

Marketing

Marketing techniques not to overlook

It is very difficult for brands to stand out online because to raise visibility you need to diversify your marketing initiatives and, "do something your competitors haven't done yet". Sometimes the best way is to use marketing techniques that tend to be overlooked. By limiting yourself to the most popular marketing methods, notably social media, you are "just blending into the oversaturated market". It requires creativity to be noticed. Here are seven marketing strategies to help boost brand awareness and to reach a bigger audience.

digitalmarketer.com, 3 April 2020 (Karpenkova)

Mobile marketing

Mobile marketing is becoming more important than ever as people isolated in their homes turn to mobile content to pass the time. Back in February US marketers were already spending 13.5% of their budgets on mobile, up from just 3.2% in 2015, according to the *2020 CMO Survey*. Even before the coronavirus, 2020 was expected to be the biggest year for mobile, with spending reaching \$240 billion. This article looks at the data from the survey and

considers major mobile performance challenges: tracking customers across the mobile journey; insufficient in-house expertise; unclear objectives; and a weak link between mobile and the rest of the marketing strategy. It concludes that this will be the year for CMOs to get it right...

ama.org, 9 April 2020 (McCarthy)

B2B marketing automation – what it offers

Most B2B marketing automation platforms offer core capabilities such as email marketing and lead management. But, as B2B marketers increasingly want integrated marketing functionality, vendors are incorporating more advanced features into their offerings. This article considers some of the core and advanced capabilities including: dynamic content creation, lead management, predictive analytics, mobile marketing, account-based marketing, social media tools, native CRM integration, third-party software connectivity and recommendations based on AI.

marketingland.com, 9 April 2020 (Parker)

Become a T-shaped marketer

A T-shaped marketer has expertise in one main area of marketing but a more general knowledge of all other areas. The horizontal part of the "T" represents the broad knowledge and the vertical part is the depth of knowledge that the marketer has about their subject. T-shaped marketers are generalists with one speciality but they are capable of observing the whole marketing strategy and understanding all of it. This means that they can help clients with their marketing strategy across the board rather than from one perspective. Here is some advice on becoming a T-shaped marketer.

digitalmarketer.com, 10 April 2020

Market research

Home working habits – recommendations

A recent survey by NewMR suggests around 85% of market researchers are working from home, with 11% not working due to being unemployed, furloughed or freelancers. Some 26% are normally home-based, 39% sometimes work from home but 35% do not usually work at home. After analysing open-ended responses from the research, NewMR came up with five recommendations for the research industry: make the case that research matters; lobby for the interests of the research ecosystem; provide resources such as learning, business advice and general practices; help support the wellbeing of insight professionals; and help identify suitable and appropriate opportunities for research projects.

research-live.com, 9 April 2020

MRS updated guidance

The MRS issues regular guidance on aspects of research and ensures that it is up to date with the

current code of conduct. Some areas have been recently revised, including researching children and young people and qualitative research, to bring them in line with the 2019 Code of Conduct. Other areas covered are: polling and insider dealing; advice for non-researchers on interpreting opinion polls; B2B research; mystery shopping; online research; questionnaire design; and viewing facilities.

<https://www.mrs.org.uk/standards/research-in-practice-2020>

Public relations

Don't ditch marketing in times of crisis

In times of crisis the marketing budget is often the first to go. This was the case with Airbnb, which stopped all marketing activities at the end of March to save an estimated \$800m this year. This, coupled with the company's removal of cancellation fees, left its hosts seething with anger and led to a backlash. Yet the extent to which brands maintain relationships with customers during this crisis could determine their long-term success. Airbnb should be keeping both its hosts and renters happy. If hosts feel that they have been deserted, they will leave. This is a lesson for all brands whose marketing should "reflect the shift from spurring demand to maintaining the customer relationship". Airbnb has now secured a relief fund for its "super hosts" but is this enough to counteract public reaction to Airbnb's initial lack of empathy? (See also under Services)

fastcompany.com, 15 April 2020 (Jelic and Davidoff)

Actionable insights for communicators

PR professionals have more data available to them than ever before and some PR departments and PR firms even employ data scientists. Today's goal is to gain "actionable insights" in order to make better business decisions. The output from these insights should not only result in action, but must enable measurement leading to continual improvement. Here are eight steps to allow communicators to achieve actionable insights.

PR News, 2 April 2020

Sponsorship

UK public misses live sports events

Some 17% of the UK public say that live sports events are what they have missed most since the lockdown was enforced, with 23% saying they will attend live sports and entertainment as soon as the lockdown is lifted, according to research conducted this month by sponsorship specialists ONSIDE. In terms of sponsorship, the research highlights public support for cause and non-profit organisations with 70% of people believing that brands should continue with, or increase, their sponsorship of these bodies. Just over a third (35%) of UK adults say that sponsors should maintain or increase support for their favourite sports teams and events in the

current climate but 40% think that sponsorship spend should decrease this year.

sponsorship.org, 21 April 2020

E-sports carries on but not all is rosy

While traditional sports have had to cancel all events, e-sports are the only professional sports competitions still running. Twitch, which primarily hosts video-game related content, has benefitted from the lockdowns in most of the major western markets. Its average viewership has risen from 1.35m in January to almost 2.5m in April. However, the picture for e-sports is not all upbeat. While leagues and competitions have kept going, there has been a loss of live event revenue and the merchandising supply chain has suffered. Despite this, existing sponsorships are still getting good exposure but gaining new sponsors is a problem because brands are reluctant to spend at the moment. On 16 April BMW confirmed partnerships with five top e-sports teams, having decided to go ahead despite the current climate. E-sports still presents a big opportunity for sponsors at a time when they can't activate their traditional sports sponsorships.

sportbusiness.com, 20 April 2020 (McCarthy)

Agriculture, fishing and forestry

Getting consumers to eat the local catch

Most of England's fishing catch is exported to Europe or Asia or sold to restaurants but the collapse of both markets has left fishermen struggling financially. Now the Government is to offer 1,000 fishing and aquaculture businesses a share of a £9m cash grant and a further £1m for fishing operators who sell locally. England is the last region of the UK to offer financial support to its fishermen. Some fishing businesses, such as Call 4 Fish, have remodelled their businesses so that they sell direct to consumer. Efforts by supermarkets to expand consumer tastes beyond cod, haddock, salmon and tuna, have failed in the past, but Seafish, the trade body, is working with retailers to get more local fish on the shelves.

thegrocer.co.uk, 17 April 2020 (Holmes)

Saving florists and garden centres

Many retailers have reduced or ceased stocking flowers and plants in favour of essential goods. This comes at a time when florists and garden centres have been closed and events cancelled. The Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) estimates that the value of the 2020 "ornamental" crop is £1.4 billion but that a third of related businesses could fail due to Covid-19. The NFU has asked retailers to stock more British flowers and plants to help the sector. It has also asked the Government to

guarantee that garden centres will be among the first businesses to open during a phased lifting of the lockdown.

farmington.com, 19 April 2020

Building industry

Builders back to work

Despite the Government announcing more weeks of lockdown, construction companies are getting their employees back to work. Major companies, such as Mace, BAM and McAlpine, which had furloughed staff, are now taking steps to reopen sites. Some were quick to observe the coronavirus *Site Opening Procedures* which required a two-metre distance between workers wherever practical, but this was just a suggestion, and the third edition of the *Procedures* does not mandate social distancing.

theconstructionindex.co.uk, 18 April 2020;

<https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/new-version-of-site-operating-procedures-includes-risk-management-hierarchy>

OxBlue uses AI to monitor site activity

The OxBlue Activity Index from US construction tech provider OxBlue measures activity on building sites using near real-time data. Its AI capabilities were originally used to assist clients in understanding their construction activities. Now it is using its network of cameras to monitor activity at a national level to see how the construction industry has been faring during the pandemic. March's data showed that the average national level of construction declined by 5% across the US; April's numbers are expected to show a further dip as 40% of construction firms have reported layoffs. Separately, *The Construction Index* notes that OxBlue is using its AI to detect when workers are not practicing social distancing.

**constructiondive.com, 15 April 2020 (Goodman);
theconstructionindex.co.uk, 20 April 2020**

Architect confidence worst on record

March's *2020 RIBA Future Trends* survey shows to what extent the coronavirus is taking its toll on architects. The *Workload Index* show a fall of 33 points to -11, the steepest drop in confidence on record. This ranged from large practices (-20, down from +60) to medium practices (-8, down from +67) and small (-10). Private housing is the worst affected (-7, down by 21 points) while the *Staffing Index* has fallen to 0 from +8. RIBA has developed a Covid-19 hub with information and guidance to support members.

architecture.com, 16 April 2020

Businesses and strategy

Focus on the individual not generations

Generational stereotypes are commonplace, make good headlines and are easy fodder for jokes. A 2015 study by IBM's Smarter Workforce Institute,

Generational Differences at Work Are Much Ado About Very Little, was written to counteract general assumptions about generations. The study found that just 0% to 2% of work attitude differences could be attributed to generation. Yet the media tends to fixate on these differences and many organisations continue to use generational labels to make decisions about how they target certain groups. The author argues against the use of generational stereotypes and recommends focusing instead on the individual.

ama.org, 13 April 2020 (Steimer)

Sales – adapting to the crisis

Apart from asking how they can keep their field salespeople safe, leaders are wondering what the future holds for selling. The answer will depend on the industry, but there are three things that sales organisations should do: refocus – reconsider what customers value now and what the sales organisation's role is in delivering this; retool – work remotely and communicate with customers digitally; retrench – organisations are already downsizing but sales organisations must redeploy field-sales activities to key customers while increasing the use of "digital self-service" and inside sales channels.

hbr.org, 13 August 2020 (Zoltners et al)

Scheme to help start-ups

Recognising the contribution made by start-ups to the UK economy, the Government has announced a package of support for companies that are not eligible under existing coronavirus schemes. It is prepared to match £250m of private investment and add £550m to an existing loan scheme for small R&D companies. Many small companies tend to make losses in their first years. Amazon and Uber, for example, took years to make a profit and Uber still isn't profitable. However, the scheme comes with strings attached and the entrepreneur community argues that it is too complex since speed is of the essence.

bbc.co.uk/news, 20 April 2020 (Jack)

Small business survival rates

Overall, only 57% of independent businesses in the UK survive for five years, according to data from Small Business Prices. Accommodation businesses are the most likely to survive to their third year (93%), followed by petrol stations and entertainment businesses. The fifth year tends to be crunch time for most businesses, with only 47% of fashion shops making it to their fifth anniversary. The South East of England, home to 470,000 businesses, has a 64% five-year survival rate. It also has the highest weekly spend of £272 per person while the West Midlands has the lowest at £198.

prolificlondon.co.uk, 17 April 2020 (Peachey)

Charities and NGOs

Eight all-time great non-profit logos

Charities and non-profits don't have the big budgets of for-profit businesses, but they still need to have engaging branding as much as, if not more than, their for-profit counterparts. Even without a tangible product or service, a strong brand and good logo can help to convey the message and encourage people to get involved with the cause. Here are eight non-profit logos singled out for their imagination. They include WWF's panda; Shelter's iconic red lettering; Cancer Research UK's coloured dots; and British Heart Foundation's "Heartbeat" logo.

[creativebloq.com](https://www.creativebloq.com), April 2020 (McCauley)

The Big Issue goes digital

The Big Issue magazine has been launched in digital format to help vendors who cannot sell the print copies during the coronavirus crisis. An app and digital version have been launched with half the proceeds going to the vendors. Jonny Kaldor, CEO of Pugpig, the digital publisher of *The Big Issue*, says that this could become a "valuable service for *The Big Issue*, both in the short term and for the future". The app and digital edition are being promoted on social media by fitness coach Joe Wicks, who also appears on the front cover. Separately *Third Sector* reports that *The Big Issue* is also to be sold in branches of the Co-op.

charitydigital.co.uk, 20 April 2020 (Lepper);
thirdsector.co.uk, 20 April 2020 (Kay)

Economy

GDP – February 2020

The ONS's *GDP monthly estimate, UK: February 2020* bulletin reports that GDP grew by 0.1% in the three months to February 2020 after a period of no growth in the three months to January 2020. Services was the only contribution (+0.2%) in the rolling three-month growth while production (-0.6%) and construction (-0.2%) both fell. This represents the tenth consecutive rolling three-month decline in the production sector and obviously predates the full onslaught of the coronavirus.

ons.gov.uk, 9 April 2020 (Scruton);
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproduct/gdp/bulletins/gdpmonthlyestimateuk/february2020>

ONS Coronavirus report

The ONS's latest coronavirus report – *Coronavirus the UK economy and society, faster indicators: 16 April 2020* – reveals that 25% of respondent businesses had temporarily closed or paused trading for the period 23 March to 5 April 2020, while 75% were continuing to trade. Those that have continued to trade reported that, on average, 21% of their staff had been furloughed. On a personal level, over half of adults (53.1%) said that coronavirus was

affecting their well-being but for 76.9%, staying in touch with friends and family remotely is the most common mechanism for helping them cope with the lockdown.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronavirustheconomyandsocietyfasterindicators/16april2020>, 16 April (Kent-Smith)

World GDP forecasts bad but could get worse

Back in January the IMF forecast that GDP per capita would rise in 160 countries which would result in 82% of nations being better off this year. Now Kristalina Georgieva, the IMF's MD, is predicting that 170 countries will see income per capita shrink while World GDP will fall by 3% causing, "a global recession we have not seen in our lifetimes". She warns that the reality could be a lot worse and advises that, "governments should spend as much as they can afford and more". She also warns against "pandemic protectionism" in which some advanced countries are retaining all the medical equipment and drugs and stresses that, "you cannot beat the virus unless you beat it everywhere".

bbc.co.uk/news, 17 April 2020 (Islam)

Education

UUK proposes recovery measures

A paper from Universities UK (UUK), which has been sent to the Chancellor and relevant Government departments, emphasises the financial risks to the higher education sector from Covid-19. It predicts losses for the current financial year (2019-2020) of around £790m with even greater losses for 2020-21 due to the fall in international students and domestic students choosing to defer their entry until next year. UUK modelling shows that the risks from EU and non-EU students could amount to £6.9 billion in fee income. The UUK paper makes a number of proposals to ensure that universities can play a central role in the recovery following the pandemic.

universitiesuk.ac.uk, 10 April 2020;
https://universitiesuk.ac.uk/news/Documents/uuk_achieving-stability-higher-education-april-2020.pdf

Energy and utilities

Power plants and wind farms could shut down

Biomass power plants could be at risk of closing due to a lack of fuel. Many use the waste wood from construction sites or households but this is no longer available due to the lockdown. According to the Renewable Energy Association, smaller power plants used 2.1m tons of waste wood in 2019. Larger plants, such as Drax in Yorkshire, are unaffected as it imports pellets from the US. Biomass generated around 11% of UK electricity last year but National Grid has warned that the reduced demand for electricity due to business and school closures, could lead to excessive generating capacity which means that wind farms and power plants might need to be

switched off.

[telegraph.co.uk/business](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business), 20 April 2020 (Millard)

Environment

Climate change initiative post-coronavirus

In an article entitled *Addressing climate change in a post-pandemic world*, the authors consider the effects of the coronavirus on attitudes to climate change given that most attention is being given to health issues and the prospect of a major recession. They argue that this is a good time for investment in “climate-resilient” infrastructure but, to make the most of the opportunities, leaders should be asking three questions: “What lessons can be learned from the current pandemic for climate change?”; “What implications—positive or negative—could our pandemic responses hold for climate action?”; and “What steps could companies, governments, and individuals take to align our immediate pandemic response with the imperatives of sustainability?” The paper attempts to answer these questions.

[mckinsey.com](https://www.mckinsey.com), April 2020 (Pinner et al)

Business as usual or environmental benefits?

One of the few upsides to the health crisis is environmental. In Venice, for example, fish are returning to canals which are no longer clogged up by motorboats and gondolas while India is experiencing some of the cleanest air in years. The question is whether somewhere like Venice, that relies heavily on overseas visitors, will be sufficiently concerned about environmental benefits in the future. Some overcrowded tourist destinations, such as Machu Picchu in Peru, had already started to limit visitor numbers even before the pandemic. Poku-Awuah, CEO of Legacy, a sustainable event specialist, argues that destinations “will need a unique marketing proposition to encourage visitors to return” and that the “return of nature” could be used as a selling proposition. After the pandemic is over, destinations will have to choose between business as usual or making the most of environmental gains.

[citmagazine.com](https://www.citmagazine.com), 20 April 2020 (Williams)

Fashion

Fast fashion and the environment

New research, into the environmental cost of fashion and how it must change, has been published by a team at Manchester University. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reckons that the fashion industry accounts for 10% of CO₂ emission every year and uses 1.5 trillion litres of water. One of the greatest problems is fast fashion, which was epitomised by the bikini costing just £1, which was sold by Missguided last year. The research recommends that the industry should focus on better quality and longer-lasting products while new approaches, such as clothes rentals, should be

ramped up. It would also like consumers to “understand fashion as more of a functional product rather than entertainment” and be prepared to pay more for it.

[theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com), 7 April 2020 (Davis)

Oasis and Warehouse enter administration

Oasis and Warehouse are on the verge of going into administration having failed to attract new investment due to the coronavirus. The two fashion retailers have 92 standalone stores between them and 437 concessions in department stores, including Debenhams, which has itself appointed administrators.

[bbc.co.uk/news](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news), 16 April 2020

Financial services

A new payments ecosystem

An analysis by McKinsey of the global payments industry suggests that the coronavirus will lead to losses of between \$165 billion and \$210 billion this year. They predict that GDP will fall by 1.5% this year, assuming that the virus will be contained after a two- to three-month lockdown in Europe and the US. However, if there is a resurgence of the virus, GDP could contract by as much as 4.7%. Analysts stress that “there will be no return to the norms of 2019” and have set out “ten fundamental changes to the payments ecosystem that will help us find a new normal”. They include making all payments touchless and moving to omnichannel payment solutions to support omnichannel commerce.

[nfcw.com](https://www.nfcw.com), 3 April 2020 (Clark);

[mckinsey.com](https://www.mckinsey.com), March 2020 (Bruno et al)

FMCG

P&G increases marketing despite sales surge

Not surprisingly, Procter & Gamble has enjoyed some of its strongest growth in a decade, with demand in some categories rising by 20% as consumers stock up on essentials. Even shaving products have received a boost as men respond to the advice that facial masks work better without facial hair. Despite its performance, P&G is ramping up marketing spend in categories such as beauty, healthcare and baby products. Speaking to analysts, CFO Jon Moeller said that while some companies were reducing spend, P&G was “doubling down” on marketing. P&G sees this period as a “reset opportunity” to ensure that it is providing the products and brands that consumers really want.

[marketingweek.com](https://www.marketingweek.com), 17 April 2020 (Vizard and Fleming)

Beverages

Molson focuses on core products...

Molson Coors has reduced its UK operations considerably to focus on a “smaller group of core products” and just six SKUs. These “most in-demand and popular lines” include Carling, Coors Light,

Doom Bar, Aspull, Rekorderlig and Cobra. However, there has been criticism from industry sources who say that Molson has abandoned profitable lines and that it was in, "by far the worst situation of any of the brewers". Molson says that its priority is the health and wellbeing of staff. Brewers which serve both on- and off-trade have lost an entire channel over the past few weeks. Carlsberg has had to furlough many on-trade roles but claims to have seen increased demand for off-trade.

thegrocer.co.uk, 15 April 2020 (Woolfson)

...as low- and no-alcohol sales rocket

Britons were busy stockpiling low- or no-alcohol drinks in March with sales rising by 32.5% in the third week compared with the same period in 2019, according to Nielsen. In the 12 weeks to 21 March, sales rose by 18% year-on-year; non-alcoholic beers benefited the most, with sales up by 31%.

The Grocer, 11 April 2020, p35.

Food

Vegetarian burger ad banned

The ASA has banned an ad for Burger King's Rebel Whopper plant-based burger because it carried the Vegetarian Butcher logo and implied that it could be eaten by both vegetarians and vegans. The burger, launched to coincide with Veganuary, is in fact cooked on the same grill as meat and uses egg-based mayonnaise. Burger King pointed out that the small print explained that the burger may not be suitable for vegetarians or vegans and that it was targeting flexitarians, but the ASA decided that the advertising was misleading.

theguardian.com, 15 April 2020 (Sweney)

Millers launch retail flour network

The National Association of British and Irish Millers (NABIM) is launching an online map to show home bakers where they can buy commercial-sized bags of flour (over 3kg). It aims to create a "retail flour network" of local bakeries, wholesalers and supermarkets at a time when shelves have been stripped of the products. NABIM emphasises that commercial supplies are unaffected.

thegrocer.co.uk, 17 April 2020 (Dawson)

Dorito launches its biggest innovation

Doritos has taken on Pringles by launching a tube of Doritos in its biggest innovation to date. Stax is a range of newly-shaped Doritos in recyclable cannisters. This is deemed to be a welcome and well-timed innovation at a time when sales of bagged snacks are rocketing as people remain locked in their homes. Separately, *The Grocer* examines the snacks category as the trend for streaming services and snacks prevails during the pandemic.

**thegrocer.co.uk, 17 April 2020 (Woolfson);
thegrocer.co.uk, 17 April 2020 (Brown)**

Tobacco

Vaping and the legal environment in the US

It is estimated that the global e-cigarette market was worth \$11.5 billion in 2018 and will rise to \$41.7 by 2024. Although e-cigarettes have been around for many years, it is only recently that vaping in the US has attracted bad publicity and government attention. There has been a rise in law suits alleging deceptive marketing and the targeting of young consumers. In San Francisco alone, over 250 cases have been brought against producers of e-cigarettes that have allegedly targeted teens in their marketing. This article looks at aspects of e-cigarette litigation including marketing and advertising.

lexology.com, 16 April 2020 (Meyer et al)

Government and public sector

Lego teams up for Easter campaign

A campaign by Lego and the Government has brightened up the usual sombre tones of the Government's stay-at-home announcements. The film, which appeared on social media over Easter weekend, aimed to offer a message that children could identify with. It featured Big Ben chiming from a Lego version of the Palace of Westminster before moving to a presenter announcing that the Easter Bunny wanted a "new hero to step up" this year. Heroic activities might include a family movie night, washing hands and using a tissue. Larry, the Downing Street cat in Lego form, completed the picture.

thedrum.com, 15 April 2020

Health and pharmaceuticals

Tech fund for NHS England

The UK and European space agencies are offering £2.6m in funding to help NHS England deal with coronavirus. The joint initiative covers a number of projects which will focus on logistics in health delivery; managing infectious outbreaks; handling backlogs; preparing for future epidemics and so on. Projects might include drone technology to deliver PPE or satellites to monitor the spread of the virus.

prolificlondon.co.uk, 14 April 2020 (Spargo)

Telemedicine receives boost from coronavirus

There is increasing interest in remote physician care (telemedicine) for obvious reasons. Between February and March the percentage of US adults intending to use telemedicine rose from 18% to 30% according to data from CivicScience. A McKinsey study found that one in three respondents had cancelled appointments due to the coronavirus with 30% saying they would be interested in online/video consultations. Telemedicine had not been widely used in the US before Covid-19 but the

outbreak has changed patient attitudes. Telemedicine start-ups, such as Amwell and Doctor on Demand, say they have seen a huge rise in demand. The American Telemedicine Association predicts that 50% of US healthcare services will be conducted virtually by 2030. The global telemedicine market is expected to be worth \$175.5 billion by 2026, up from \$45.5 billion in 2019, according to Global Market Insights.

emarketer.com, 13 April 2020 (Han)

PHE and NHS launch Covid-19 mind campaign

Public Health England and the NHS have launched Every Mind Matters, a mental health campaign to help support mental wellbeing during the pandemic. Initiatives include a tailored Covid-19 mind plan and content. A film, narrated by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and featuring people who have been affected by the virus, is being shown on prime-time national TV.

marketingweek.com, 20 April 2020

IT and telecoms

Apple launches cheaper iPhone

Apple has launched a cheaper iPhone priced at £419. The second-generation SE, which is based on the smartphone design used between 2014 and 2017, will have no facial recognition and is only available to buy online.

marketingweek.com, 16 April 2020

Leisure and tourism

B&B's will fail due to lack of support

The Bed and Breakfast Association has estimated that up to 10,000 businesses could fail since many B&Bs across the UK are not eligible for the Government's financial support due to coronavirus. However, it says that the tourism department has been supportive and that tourism minister Nigel Huddleston is making the case to the Treasury. This article includes advice for SMEs for dealing with the coronavirus crisis.

telegraph.co.uk, 14 April 2020 (Millard)

Sports events cancelled but sector is resilient

Worldwide, only 1,870 of the 5,584 scheduled sports events took place in March, according to analysis from Two Circles, a sports marketing agency. As of 20 April, its model shows that just 53% of expected sports events will have taken place this year. Revenue is projected to fall from \$135.3 billion to just under \$73.7 billion, accentuated by the loss of the Olympics and Euro 2020. Traditionally sport has been resistant to a recession and can "win the battle for attention", according to Two Circles CEO Gareth Balch.

**BBC Radio 4 Today Programme, 20 April 2020, 7.30am;
twocircles.com, 20 March 2020 (Cutler)**

Global travel – changed for ever?

Before the coronavirus hit, more people were going on holiday than ever before and travel and tourism contributed \$8.4 trillion to the global economy, according to The World Travel and Tourism Council. Now the coronavirus lockdown has caused global air travel to fall by 65%, constituting aviation's "gravest crisis", according to IATA CEO Alexandre de Juniac. The author looks back over the past 100 years at the major crises that have affected travel (World War II, 9/11 and the 2008 financial crisis) and considers what happens next, with a particular focus on air travel.

telegraph.co.uk, 18 April (Dickinson)

Gambling industry under scrutiny

The conduct of the gambling industry has come under increasing scrutiny during the pandemic crisis. The ASA and CAP are concerned that "lockdown has created a captive audience". Many people face financial hardship and gambling could be seen as a way out. The ASA is warning gambling operators to pay particular attention to their responsibilities under the UK Advertising Codes. It is encouraging people to report gambling ads that refer to coronavirus or related matters and which include themes that might encourage gambling. CAP has previously published guidance on rules that protect adult audiences and the under-18s.

asa.org.uk, 7 April 2020;

<https://www.asa.org.uk/news/responsibility-and-problem-gambling-guidance.html>;

<https://www.asa.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/734c1499-850d-4d2f-88a441ffd1903b50.pdf>

Media

Media consumption up but not ad growth

Media consumption has risen as people are forced to stay at home, but many advertisers have cancelled or postponed advertising which means that increased media engagement doesn't equate to greater ad revenues. Advertisers may well be wary of content, such as coverage of a pandemic, but a March 2020 survey from Integral Ad Science reveals that only 16% of US internet users surveyed reported a less favourable opinion of a brand that had an ad next to coronavirus-related content while eight out of ten said it wouldn't influence their opinion of a brand. Opinion often depends on the type of brand. For example, almost half of respondents said they wanted to see health and pharma-related brands advertising near coronavirus content. People want information during the crisis and brand creatives should emphasise the brand's role in sponsoring the information that people need during this time.

emarketer.com, 14 April 2020 (Perrin)

Games

Consumer spend – video gaming surges

Starling Bank has analysed its 1.25m user accounts to reveal that consumer spending has risen most dramatically for video gaming: spend on Playstation and Nintendo rose by almost 300% from mid-March to mid-April. It also found that sales at Amazon rose by 39% for the period while sales at Argos were up by 49%, the Apple Store by 36% and John Lewis by 13%. By contrast, spending on Transport for London services fell by 93% between mid-March and the first week of April while Uber's numbers were down by 84%.

prolificlondon.co.uk, 20 April 2020 (Spargo)

Internet

IAB Europe seeks to harmonise measurement

The rise of digital channels has made marketing more measurable, but the sheer pace of change has led to a "hugely fragmented language" in the industry which in turn has resulted in confusion. IAB Europe has responded by creating a Digital Advertising Effectiveness Measurement Framework aimed at providing a set of definitions, measures and metrics. It is organised in three key areas of digital advertising effectiveness: media, brand and sales effectiveness.

iabeurope.eu, 17 April 2020;

<https://iabeurope.eu/knowledge-hub/iab-europe-digital-advertising-effectiveness-measurement-framework/>

Call for brands to review keyword blocking

The Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport has called for brands to reconsider their use of keyword blocking during the pandemic. This follows the blocking of terms related to coronavirus, which is negatively impacting publishers. ISBA, IAB and IPA are all contacting their members to support the initiative, having jointly published advice on how to responsibly review content verification strategies in this climate. Oliver Dowden, culture secretary, has shared the advice in a letter to 100 major UK brands.

marketingweek.com, 20 April 2020

Newspapers

Nationals furlough staff as ad revenues drop

The Guardian, *FT* and *Telegraph* are to furlough non-editorial staff as advertising revenues plummet in the news sector. Guardian Media Group (GMC), which has furloughed around 100 staff, expects revenue for the first six months of the financial year to fall by £20m. *The Telegraph*, despite reporting its biggest month for subscription growth in March, says that cashflow is suffering due to lost ad revenue and it has furloughed 90 employees. The *FT* is to reduce the salaries of top managers and editors by 10% and board members by 20% while 20 non-editorial employees will go on paid leave. Enders Analysis has forecast a decline in publisher

advertising of 30% this year, with a loss of around £330m.

cityam.com, 15 April 2020 (Warrington)

Coronavirus pushes the shift to digital

The coronavirus has created years' worth of disruption for the UK newspaper and magazine industry. Many print titles were already struggling and the current crisis may be what speeds up the shift to digital. Every part of the supply chain – printing, distribution and retail – has been obliterated by the virus which is reflected in the fall in adspend. Yet publications still have fixed costs, such as rent and employees, so many will simply go out of business if they haven't already done so. Newspapers, such as *The Sun*, are pushing digital sign-ups and getting readers into the habit of paying for digital versions. Coronavirus seems to be accelerating innovation. Ultimately, it would be better for newspapers to make digital pay because getting revenue direct from the reader may be preferable to getting it from advertisers!

bbc.co.uk/news, 16 April 2020 (Rajan)

Social media

Could this be the end of the influencer?

Social media influencers are currently in a strange place in which they need to maintain their influence and followers but have run out of things to say. Lifestyle influencers rely on sponsored product deals and brand collaborations which might include free clothes, events and trips. Now all this has stopped while their followers, who have more overriding concerns, are less captivated by swanky images. Influencers and celebrities alike can easily do the wrong thing if they are perceived to be privileged while others are stuck at home. Some influencers are even running polls among their followers to see if they would rather view escapism or real life. Even if they opt for realism, it is hard for them to differentiate themselves with bread-baking and cats. Meanwhile some followers, freed from inhibitions due to social distancing, are themselves becoming influencers...

wired.com, 14 April 2020

Pinterest for content marketing

A January 2019 study from Statista suggests that just 27% of marketers use Pinterest. Yet it has 300m monthly users and 2 billion monthly searches of which 97% were unbranded last year. This represents a big opportunity argues the author, who reasons that marketers probably shy away from Pinterest because it is unlike other platforms. It is not a social network and does not work in the same way as Facebook and Instagram but can work for content marketers.

businessgrow.com, April 2020 (Meredith)

Making changes to social media strategy

In the current climate one can't simply continue with the same old social media strategy. Convince & Convert has put together 11 changes that you should consider making to your social media strategy. There is also a webinar which answers questions in front of a live audience.

convinceandconvert.com, 2 April 2020 (Baer)

Television

ITV has its best first quarter share

ITV has achieved its best first quarter audience share since 2009 with 18% of overall viewing in Q1 2020. Its share of commercial viewing, which excludes the BBC, amounted to 26.7%, its highest since 2011. Programmes which helped to boost viewing figures included Ant & Dec's *Saturday Night Takeaway* and *White House Farm*, a drama. However, the coronavirus has posed a problem for broadcasters and ITV predicts a fall in ad revenues of at least 10% for April.

prolificlondon.co.uk, 9 April 2020 (Spargo)

Could TV advertising become more flexible?

In the TV ad market, advertiser demand usually outstrips TV networks' supply, during April this balance changed as advertisers are reluctant to commit to adspend too far in advance. Cancelled or postponed campaigns have led to a surplus of TV ad inventory driving down prices and forcing networks to be more flexible like their digital counterparts. In the future advertisers and agencies may prefer to maintain this current level of flexibility and ensure that it is written into future deals. They will also be more wary of making long-term commitments.

digiday.com, 9 April 2020 (Peterson)

Netflix maintains lead – for now

Netflix's *Tiger King* attracted 34.3m viewers in just ten days making it the streaming leader during the early days of the lockdown. Its subscriber base is expected to increase significantly during this period although churn is a problem and the marketplace has become crowded, according to Michael Hewson, chief markets analyst at CMC. Netflix, like its competitors, has seen many of its new productions put on hold; and if consumers have less money, they may well be more selective about their content providers. Meanwhile Disney's streaming service attracted 50m subscribers since its launch five months ago. Netflix is also facing competition from the gaming industry. GamesIndustry.biz reports that 4.3m games were sold in the week to 22 March, up by 63% on the previous week.

telegraph.co.uk, 21 April 2020 (Cogley)

Packaging

Waitrose launches wine in a tube

Waitrose claims to have produced the UK's first

supermarket "wine in a tube". Each tube, which is 100% recyclable, contains the equivalent of three bottles of wine. It claims to stay fresh for at least ten days longer than a standard 750ml bottle once opened.

thegrocer.co.uk, 16 April 2020 (Dawson)

Florette launches resealable bag

It is hard to keep salad fresh, especially when you are trying to limit trips to the supermarket. Now Florette, producer of bagged salads, has introduced a resealable tab at the top of its bags to keep the salad fresher for longer. It has also announced a "Freshness Guarantee" which will be carried on the bags from May, with money back if the customer isn't satisfied.

thegrocer.co.uk, 17 April 2020 (Sandercock)

Retailing

Online grocery shopping in Europe

Rather surprisingly the lockdown has not automatically resulted in an e-commerce boom. In Germany, for example, 41% of online retailers have reported that the number of customer orders has fallen. The exception to this decline is online grocery shopping. This has been a turning point for Germany, a country which has hitherto not been a great adopter of grocery e-commerce (over half of internet users in Germany aged 18 to 69 have never shopped for groceries online). In Italy, which also prefers to shop daily for its fresh food, grocery e-commerce has been gradually gaining momentum, culminating in massive demand in March, huge pressure on food retailers and long delivery times. In Switzerland online delivery times have also lengthened.

emarketer.com, 13 April 2020 (Abrams)

Protecting your online business

Before the coronavirus, over a quarter of British consumers were receiving regular deliveries of "non-essentials", according to Royal Mail. Now that the panic buying is largely over and people have the essentials they need, they are looking at how to source other products. So-called "letterbox businesses" are finding ways to attract attention at a time when a raft of new online businesses is entering the market during lockdown. At such a time, your brands and its "unique proposition" need to be protected to fend off copycats and counterfeiters. This article identifies key areas to be protected.

lexology.com, 6 April 2020 (Cole)

GO Outdoors goes indoors with rebrand

GO Outdoors, the outdoor activity retailer, temporarily rebranded as GO Indoors in the lead up to Easter to help reinforce the message among the British public that they should stay inside over the

warm weekend. A "Go Indoors" video and message from CEO Lee Bagnall encouraged people to have fun in safe ways ranging, "from camping indoors to star spotting from your bedroom window".

prolificnorth.co.uk, 6 August 2020 (Austin)

Micromarkets – keeping within the grid

Even though supermarkets have been restricting the number of customers entering a shop, it is hard to social distance in narrow grocery aisles. Harm Timmermans of Dutch design firm Shift Architecture Urbanism, has come up with an answer for local open-air micromarkets to adapt to the new situation. His design consists of a 16-square grid marked out by tape and fenced off by barriers. The market stalls are placed at the sides of the grid and each grid square only holds one person. The architect believes that keeping markets open will enable people to shop at venues that are less expensive than the supermarkets. The National Federation of Market Traders in the Netherlands has endorsed the micromarket project on its website.

fastcompany.com, 17 April 2020

Services

Shifting to "to-the-door" delivery

UK food and drink companies have increasingly moved over to delivery services while their physical premises are closed. Although food manufacturers have not been forced to close, some could be considering a direct-to-consumer model for the first time ever. The Food Standards Agency has issued new guidance for businesses thinking about starting a delivery service. The author provides some key points from the guidance covering registration and licences, food safety and hygiene.

lexology.com, 1 April 2020 (Vickery);

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/food-safety-for-food-delivery>

Airbnb launches virtual experiences

Airbnb, which was hit hard when people stopped travelling for all but essential reasons, has launched an online version of its "experiences" services. Its hosts will have free access to Zoom remote conferencing software to show workshops and tours. There are already workshops, lessons and tours from hosts in 30 countries but thousands will be added over the next few weeks which could provide hosts with a way of earning money. (See also Public relations)

marketingweek.com, 14 April 2020

Fast food outlets reopen for delivery

Pret A Manger, Burger King and KFC are all opening a limited number of restaurants for delivery. Pret is to open ten shop kitchens near London hospitals where NHS workers can buy half-price food. Burger King will open four restaurants with delivery-only kitchens and will donate 1,000 meals a week to staff

at NHS hospitals. KFC, which has reopened 11 restaurants for delivery only, is also donating meals.

marketingweek.com, 16 April 2020

Transport and travel

Car finance crisis could undermine market

Some 6.5m vehicles in Britain have been purchased through leasing deals with consumers. Now there are fears that the monthly payments could be unaffordable because people have lost their jobs. Britain's car market is highly dependent on this consumer debt, with around nine out of ten new cars sold being paid for via financing from a Finance and Leasing Association (FLA) member. Some car manufacturers, such as VW, are taking steps to help consumers keep their cars. Car dealers are anxious to avoid an avalanche of new cars being handed back by those unable to keep up with payments.

theguardian.com, 8 April 2020 (Collinson)

Halfords cycles to become e-scooter stores

Eleven cycle stores owned by Halfords under the Cycle Republic brand, have been saved from closure. They will be turned into stores selling electric scooters by Adam Norris, former director of broker Hargreaves Lansdown, who launched Pure Scooters a year ago after noting their popularity on the Continent. Electric scooters have received a mixed press and Parliament's Transport Committee is launching an enquiry entitled "pavement nuisance or transport innovation?"

telegraph.co.uk, 21 April 2020 (Gill)

Heathrow becomes airbridge for vital supplies

Heathrow has remodelled itself as a "vital airbridge" for supplies and medical goods during the coronavirus. The number of flights containing just cargo has now reached five times the airport's usual levels. Heathrow has predicted that passenger traffic will plummet by 90% in April. Despite the rise in cargo, the absolute volume of cargo has fallen because in normal times over 95% of it is transported in the holds of passenger planes. In March the total number of flights landing and taking off at Heathrow fell by 35%. The airport warns of the "lasting and significant" effects on the industry.

theguardian.com, 14 April 2020 (Makortoff)

Written by CIM's Knowledge Services Team

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