



The Pulse of COVID-19:

Harris Takes a Look at the Trends of the Past Week

As we close March with sober notes and silver linings, we could never have imagined such a force of disruption entering our lives, our businesses, and giving the whole nation pause. **Americans continue to feel the overwhelm and stress as 56% are worried about losing their jobs and 46% think the stimulus package for individuals and families was not enough support.**

Yet at the same time, we are starting to see a shift out of paralysis into remarkable action – business leaders are stepping up, business models are pivoting overnight, consumers are starting to mend their mental and physical wellbeing, and overall we are coming together as a community to help those in need most.

With that in mind, let's look into what's emerging in the market and how companies are (re)acting as a source of information, insight, inspiration, and maybe even a point of levity.

This week we've woven Harris' latest data throughout the trends, highlighted **in green**.

Survivalist Companies: We've been following companies that have stepped up to bridge the leadership gaps over the past month, but there has been a greater shift in the American psyche as COVID-19 persists. Americans expect more from private leaders and will remember the companies that took action, sent resources to the front line, and did the right thing. In these intense times, consumers are looking for signs of hope from CEOs and companies that have their back (a.k.a. not sales emails). **In fact, 34% of Americans say marketers should "only advertise if they have taken action to address COVID19," while 41% are more open to messaging and say "COVID-19 advertising is a good thing regardless of actions companies have taken, it shows they care."**

- Faster tests in more hands: last week the **U.S. FDA** approved a 45-minute fast test; this week it's fast tracking a [point of sale COVID-19](#) test that gets results in 15 mins or less. Meanwhile, more companies are rushing to get COVID-19 screening apps/sites into consumers' hands from [Ro](#), to [Microsoft](#), to [Alexa](#), and now [Apple](#). **In fact, already 6% of Americans report they've been tested for the Coronavirus (9% male, vs. 3% female). Meanwhile, 16% of Americans think they should be tested, including 19% of young Americans (18-34 yrs old) and 22% of parents.**
- Companies are pivoting into wartime supply chains: for example, **Dyson** is [building 15,000 ventilators](#), **Apple** is [sourcing 10 million face masks](#), **3M** has [doubled its global production](#) of N95 respirator masks to a rate of [nearly 100 million per month](#), and Delta is offering [free flights to qualified medical volunteers](#).
- CEOs are pledging to save their employees: **Marc Benioff**, CEO of Salesforce, challenged fellow CEOs to join his ["90-day layoff pledge"](#), while Disney's CEO **Bog Iger** (entertainment's highest-paid executive) and Marriott CEO **Arne Sorenson** [are forging their salaries](#), and Lyft co-founders John Zimmers and Logan Green are [donating their salaries to help their drivers](#).
- Hospitality brands like **The Four Seasons Hotel** are offering [free lodging to doctors, nurses](#) and other health care workers, while [Airbnb relies on the goodwill of its hosts](#) asking them to provide [100,000 free rentals](#) to first responders.
- **54 software companies** are [offering their services pro-bono](#) to government agencies scrambling to get control over the virus.
- After giving away \$500,000 of shoes to the medical community, **Allbirds** is [asking consumers to help fund the next round](#) through a "good for you, good for me" product bundle to support medical workers. In Brazil, gangs are enforcing curfews and [handing out hand soap](#) to slow the spread.
- **Burger King** and **Moe's Southwest Grill** [are offering free kids meals](#), and Sweetgreen is offering [free salads to hospital workers](#).
- **Our latest data shows that these measures are having an impact on Americans' perceptions. Positive perceptions are on the rise from last week for the following industries (in order of positivity/weekly increase): healthcare (+8%), retail (+7%), pharma (+6%), restaurants (+8%), F&B (+6%), and tech (+6%) since the outbreak.**



Overnight Transformers: “Ask for forgiveness later” never has been more true as companies scramble to reimagine their business models, pivot overnight, and keep their lights on. **We see small businesses especially making nimble moves in our latest SBO report: 19% have moved online, 15% have changed their product offering to keep revenue coming, and 10% have changed their product offering to address pandemic-related shortages.**

- **Canils**, a 69-year old fine dining establishment in Seattle [pivoted away from fine dining and reopened as three micro-hubs](#): a bagel shop, a drive-through burger joint, and a “family meal” delivery service that includes a bottle of wine.
- **Athena**, an Austin security firm, redirected its AI heat sensing technology from detecting firearms to using it [to identify those who have fevers](#).
- **NASCAR's new normal resumed Sunday with another virtual event**, the second in an iRacing series thrown together. The first iRacing event drew 903,000 viewers to Fox Sports 1 and was the most watched eSports event in U.S. history.
- Family-run businesses are tapping into a newly captive audience: [online butchers are seeing a surge in orders](#), such as **Rastelli's**, a family butcher out of New Jersey, who said, “Overall, we’ve seen an increase of about 1,000%, 95% of which are new customers.”
- In the absence of sports to gamble on, casinos are now taking [bets on the weather](#) - the chances of rainfall have never been higher stakes.

Love In The Age Of Corona: While half of young Americans likely went into social distancing [without a romantic partner](#), the rest of Americans with a partner are cozying up and/or trying to not to kill each other. Love in a lockdown has had interesting implications on how we find, react, receive, and celebrate relationships. Almost half of **Americans (47%) report virtually connecting with friends and family this week, up 8% from last week, while 57% of young Americans (18-34 yrs old) are doing it.**

- [Drones for dating?](#) A love story between two 20-somethings that went viral, from dancing on roofs, to exchanging numbers via drone, to finally meeting each other in a [giant inflatable ball](#).
- When reality TV becomes our actual reality: “[Love is Quarantine](#)” is a “Love is Blind” parody that matches self-isolated singles amid the coronavirus wave. Singles everywhere are getting more [creative with their pick up lines](#): for example, the classic: “I’m just a girl, standing 6 feet away from a boy. Asking him to maybe move back another foot. Thanks,” or this [comedian who is self-quarantining with a mannequin](#), documenting their romantic adventures, from Sunday brunch to couples yoga. Meanwhile, The Cut explores [Virtual Sext bunkers](#) and highlights that dating app Hinge found that 70 percent of its members would be happy to start digitally dating.
- New crushes are also emerging: [‘My Boyfriend Andrew Cuomo...’](#) highlights our love for people who lead in times of crisis. **In fact, 48% of Americans rely on their governors for information on COVID-19 (4% weekly increase), beating out the president at 45% (3% weekly drop).**
- Meanwhile, making up for lost time on the frontline, a **nurse in China** requests that the government [assign her a boyfriend after she helped fight corona](#). The **Washington Post** weighs the possibilities of what will happen to couples across America post-quarantine, will it be a [baby boom or a divorce tsunami](#)? In [China the divorce rates spiked](#) after the quarantines

Wanderlust @ Home: The travel industry works to teleport their values of escape, adventure, and relaxation to Americans who feel trapped indoors via virtual staycations. **In fact, once the lock-down is over roughly 1 in 4 (24%) Americans say “going on vacation” will be the first major purchase they will make, surpassing buying new clothes (19%), household goods (17%), and attending live sports/concert events (12%).**

- Now you can [live-stream views](#) from the world’s best hotels, catch [the northern lights](#) from the comfort of your couch, observe [elephants in their natural habitat at the Anantara resort](#) in Thailand, and even take [virtual tours](#) or [listen to nature sounds](#) of U.S. National Parks to transport you away from your living room and into a new reality.
- With or without brands, consumers are recreating travel experiences themselves. For example, these [Disney fans are recreating](#) their favorite theme rides at home, while Disney is launching their [own virtual parades](#) to fill the void.



- For those who live in Switzerland, you can now simply check-in to **Le Bijou** a luxury hotel offering a [quarantine package that includes a personal coronavirus test](#), or you can now buy a pimped out “[winnebago on steroids](#)” to get off the grid that will set you back \$600,000+. And **Hotel Gaythering** is hosting virtual cocktail hours, bingo nights and [events for LGBTQ community](#).

The Age of Consciousness: Is this a tipping point for the time and space Americans will use to finally pick up meditation practices? **According to our latest poll, 25% of Americans are using Wellness apps (e.g., Meditation, fitness apps) more since the outbreak, including 36% of parents.**

- **HBR** suggests that [team leaders start meetings with a few minutes meditation](#), to pull workers out of their anxiety and into the moment.
- **Yale** is offering their most popular class around cultivating happiness called the [Science of Wellbeing](#) online for free. Meanwhile, Deepak Chopra's [meditation stream crashes](#) as over 1 Million people tune in, as other mental health companies offer [free therapy](#) during this trying time.
- A former **NASA astronaut** gives advice about [warding off cabin fever](#).

Fitter Or Fatter?: Wellness has been the largest macro-trend we've seen in the past 5 years creating a \$4.2 trillion global industry impacting most consumer verticals. Now with all this new found time, [physicians](#) wonder if this will be the tipping point we needed to set and keep healthy habits. **According to our latest poll, nearly 41% of Americans are going for daily walks (+5% weekly increase) and 54% of Americans say they break the stay-inside rules for daily exercise (+6% weekly increase).**

- There is a list of [48 free ways to exercise](#) during the virus circulating the internet, including a class taught by NYC [Ballet principal dancer Tiler Peck](#).
- **Kevin Hart's** “[What the fit](#)” series features celebrities learning new workouts for comedic exercise inspiration, while **Venus Williams** has started a [daily live short workout](#) on Instagram in which she does exercises anyone can do from home. **Chris Hemsworth** is giving people [free access to his home fitness app](#), **Arnold Schwarzenegger** shared his [at home workout](#) with the Reddit community, and Las Vegas **Chippendales dancers** turned [their routines into quarantine workout videos](#). Even the **FBI** says now is a great time to download its [home fitness app](#).
- A **man in France** [ran a marathon from his balcony](#) demonstrating the limitless potential to exercise in small spaces.
- Eating your emotions? [PlateJoy](#) is offering 1-month free access to personalized meal planner. Or, if that is too much, here are 14 foods you can [eat as much as you want](#).

Cabin Fever Fuels Consumption & Creativity: Americans are doubling down on their screen time, diving in deeper, and even reading more. **According to our latest poll, Americans have reported increasing the amount of time watching TV (57%), on their smartphones (56%), streaming TV (50%), reading books (35%), and reading magazines (19%). For parents, these numbers increase significantly for smartphones (67%), streaming TV (63%), and books (44%).** Many are also tapping into pent-up creativity to create and share content of their own

- **Tiger King** continues dominate the number #1 spot for Netflix and celebrities get involved by live-tweeting their responses, including **Jared Leto** [dressing up as the tiger king](#). All pandemic movies have been pushed to the sidelines (perhaps hitting too close to home) and are instead replaced by “drug dealers/cartels being your worst case scenario,” as **Ozark** comes in at #2 this week and Mel Gibson's **Blood Father** comes in at #4.
- Home-cooked entertainment: [Tiktok families host over-the-top themed dinners](#), from hibachi at home to eating on an airplane to [Tiger King dinners](#). We're also seeing new forms of creative quarantine cuisine, such as the rise of the “[tot-waffle](#)”.
- Looking for other ways to unwind? Now you can watch **Patrick Stewart** [reading Shakespeare live on social media](#), join **Ben Platt** for a [virtual dance party](#), or play with [3D giant animals in your living room](#) to distract your kids (thanks to Google)..
- Celebs really are just like us: they're bored, picking up hobbies, and reaching out to their networks. **Giannis Antetokounmpo** is [learning guitar](#), sport announcers are [narrating our mundane realities](#), and **Steph Curry** used his Instagram platform to [interview Dr. Fauci](#), where over 50,000



The Harris Poll

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people tuned-in, including **President Obama**. And if you have down time to kill, you can hire a celebrity to give your special someone a shout out, [Cameo is booming during quarantining](#).

Humanity Surges Together To Support The Frontline & Each Other: This invisible enemy (as horrible as it is), is showing the strengths of humanity coming together. **In fact, 90% of Americans feel that the most patriotic thing we can do for our country right now is to make a national sacrifice to stay home for the welfare of others. While, 4 in 10 say they will donate some of their stimulus economic relief to hospitals and around a quarter of Americans have helped an at-risk friend or neighbor with errands (23%), a 4 point increase from last week.** And it's important to keep the good news in mind, as we all fall prey to '[Negativity Bias](#)', so here are some stories to get you started:

- The Office's [John Krasinski launched a YouTube channel dedicated to good news](#), with a visit from Michael Scott.
- [Young boy spends his life savings to help the elderly](#), while **WestJet threw 4 students a mini-graduation on their flight** home after their college closed due to the coronavirus.
- Foster dogs are reported to be New York's [newest shortage](#), as people seek companionship during quarantine. While, mothers reach out to expectant mothers in a heartwarming video, saying "[You Are Not Alone](#)". And in British Columbia, a couple was surprised with [a social distancing wedding parade](#).
- Banding together, [Americans are sewing homemade masks](#) to fight coronavirus, and [communities are rallying around one another — and Google Docs](#) — to bring coronavirus aid to those in need.

That's it for now. Til Next week.

Cheers,
Libby Rodney & Abbey Lunney

If you want more custom insights or have additional burning questions, our teams are running 24hr OnDemand Flash Polls, and are conducting an ongoing syndicated COVID-19 Corporate Perception Monitor. For more details about these offerings and how we can best support your organization, please reach out to us at information@harrisinsights.com.

For any media inquiries, please email us directly at media@harrisinsights.com.