



## Impact of Covid-19 on Market - Pragmatic role of Marketing Leaders

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**Abstract:** *Due to the impact of Covid-19 on the market, consumer behavior, online shopping, market leaders need to play a practical role in understanding this new general, social impact, Due to this Covid effect the financial condition of the people fluctuated and during that time the buying and selling of goods & services decreased a lot and due to the changes in the habits of the buyers the marketing leaders had to have confidence in the buyers and the business transactions had to continue to suit them.*

*Key words: Covid-19, Market, Consumers, Society, Online shopping.*

### Introduction

COVID-19 has overwhelmed lives and livelihoods around the globe. In a short period of time, the speed with which it has spread and its effects on families and daily life have led to a deep sense of fear, anxiety, and confusion. There is much uncertainty about the future. Marketers—as the advocates for the consumer in every business—have a critical role to play as companies shape their response. Marketers will need to be fast and pragmatic to manage the crisis, while also being strategic on how to weather the downturn. Now is also the time for customer experience leaders to position themselves at the forefront of the longer-term shifts in consumer behavior that result

### Consumer behavior - during COVID-19

The COVID-19 global pandemic is having a profound impact on consumers' lives. Consumer behavior is changing at unprecedented speed. As stay-at-home orders and country-wide lockdowns start to be eased, consumer behavior continues to be driven by new personal circumstances, such as changes in discretionary income and spare time, and reconsidered values and priorities.

Consumers went on a buying spurge and became paranoid during the novel corona virus outbreak and they just did not stocked staples, sanitizer, but also medicines and that too at least three-time of their immediate need. E.g. if monthly consumption of flour of a family is 10 kg, they have stocked 30

kg., but ultimately it shot up the demands for consumer goods or took them away from the shelves. This buying behavior clearly states their urge for pantry preparations assuming the time ahead.

According to Kantar report hand sanitizer, hand washes, and toilet cleaners have seen surge in demand and interestingly almost 91% Indian households washing hands more often now. In fact, portfolio of hygiene categories is extended to hand wash bar soaps, floor cleaners, liquid dish wash, antiseptic liquids, and bathroom cleaners. Many of these products are newly entering into our baskets. This also cannot be denied that there is emergence of preventive mindset by consumers, which unfortunately led to price hikes, and rising demand.

### Online shopping -Impact of COVID-19

Majority of Indians continue to have more faith on the convenient stores for shopping as they prefer touching and feeling the products and negotiating discounts over-the-counter, before buying. Customers are encouraged to shop online through bargains such as free delivery, discounts, buy-one-get-one-free and exchange offers. Corona virus disease that has infected more than 4 lakh people worldwide, since it spreads primarily through contact with an infected person (when they cough or sneeze) or when a person touches a surface that has the virus on it, the best way to guard against it is to stay at home.

This has increased online shopping usage, globally. It has led to a rise in the number of first-time-e-commerce-users in India, who had been so far inhibited to shop online. The SARS outbreak that infected over 2700 people in 2002 too is known to have dramatically changed people's shopping habits as they were afraid of shopping outdoors. With more consumers at home, media consumption is changing, too, growing in at-home media consumption, with live news and movies or shows topping the list. But the increase in time spent on media is not necessarily driving higher ROI for digital media spend. Google and Face book are seeing changes, some negative, to their business already.

### New buying behaviors in this new normal

Why, what and how consumers buy is changing due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Consumer priorities have become centered on the most basic needs, sending demand for hygiene, cleaning and staples products soaring, while non-essential categories slump. The factors that influence brand decisions are also changing as a "buy local" trend accelerates. Digital commerce has also seen a boost as new consumers migrate online for grocery shopping – a rise that is likely to be sustained post-outbreak.

In times like these, our need for the basic necessities of life takes precedence. It comes as no surprise that personal health is the top priority for the consumers we surveyed, followed by the health of friends and family. Food and medical security, financial security and personal safety were other leading priorities.

### Pragmatic role of marketing leaders

Marketing leaders will need to act across three stages:

#### 1. Resolve and flexibility: manage the now

- **Support employees, customers, suppliers:** The number-one priority should be immediately changing ways of working to focus on employee wellness and health.
- **Understand customers:** Marketers need to get an immediate handle on customer motivations and behavior. While many companies believe they have a well-

developed sense of their customers, circumstances are now so radically different that marketers should be questioning everything they previously believed to be true.

- **Build up cash reserves:** While the full implications of the crisis are not yet clear, marketers should act decisively to manage costs and increase productivity. Marketers need to do an immediate reevaluation of media performance to identify inefficiencies and optimize programs by channel, improve efficiency in how work is done, eliminate agency overlap, and get a clear picture of where the money is actually going.
- **Make revenue response:** Consumer are spending less, making it critical for marketers to narrow their focus to a number of use cases and segments with the best demand-generation profiles. With clarity on targets, marketers can commit to a number do-now actions, including:
- **Adjust mix to where the consumer is now:** Marketers will need to adopt an investor mindset to aggressively adjust marketing spend and continually track performance in order to reallocate it quickly. With stores shutting, a shift to online be inevitable, and companies will need to be both committed and creative about how to use digital channels.
- **Refocus your brand to connect with and be relevant to consumers:** Consumers are likely to remember brands whose behavior is particularly responsive to this crisis. Marketers should tap into the elements of their brands that are relevant to the current situation and can make a difference with their customer base and the world beyond. Holiday ads or overly optimistic messages, for example, may well come across as tone deaf right now. Lulu lemon, on the other hand, sent an email message saying, "The community carries on," and ways to tune in for at-home-yoga videos on their mobile app, through their Instagram ambassadors, and on Face book. Some companies have been truly inspiring—and inspired—in their response to the corona virus crisis.

- **Prioritize the most relevant product categories:** Marketers need to emphasize those that best fit online channels and are relevant to today's situation. That means taking resources from less relevant categories and quickly moving them to those where there is active or potential demand.
- **Go all-in on agile:** Agile marketing has established two-week sprints as the standard working speed, but that may be too slow for the world as it is now. Successful marketers, in these times, will be those who adjust their operations to deliver on-message campaigns in a matter of days, if not hours. Moreover, because so much of today's situation is unprecedented, rapid testing needs to be the norm so that companies can quickly learn what works and adjust in almost real time

## 2. Return: Plan for the recovery

- **Rethinking strategies and media plans:** Since consumer behaviors and attitudes will continue to change, marketing strategies and media plans should follow suit. That means essentially starting from scratch on strategies and plans because marketers are facing such a divergent market dynamic that previous assumptions and accepted truths may no longer apply. That discipline is needed so marketing leaders can rethink their companies' value proposition to consumers, reassess which products and services can best deliver on that value proposition, and re-architect how they're delivered to each geography.
  - **Winning the battle for brand awareness:** consumers willing to consider other brands. We believe that behavior could be even more drastic given the scale and nature of this disruption. Marketers should begin revisiting what their brand means to customers. Agile marketing practices—typically focused on performance marketing—will need to be adopted at the brand-building level, with communications managed rapidly in test, learn, and refine cycles of continuous improvement.
- **Redefining loyalty.** The program benefits, promotions, and other incentives that drove loyalty last year are unlikely to apply going forward. It will be important to get the input of your loyal consumers to understand what they expect to see from brands and companies, since what they value may have changed. Positive brand impressions driven by how companies handle their customers and themselves throughout the crisis. Creative acts of generosity to help the larger society and how they have treated their employees, as well as actions taken to support their customers, could have significant impact on loyalty given the severity of the pandemic.

## 3. Re-imagination: Get ahead of the 'next normal'

- **When we finally reemerge from the COVID-19 crisis:** We are likely to find ourselves in a "next normal" world. It is too early to tell what that will look like—what behaviors will stick, what attitudes will have shifted permanently, and what technologies will have firmly taken root in people's lives.
- **Develop deeper insight and seek foresight:** Going forward, it will be crucial for marketers to take a much broader view of their consumers. This means gaining insights from beyond their industries and beyond their shores. New buying behaviors and habits might solidify in categories that have undergone the most significant change during the crisis. Beyond trend spotting, marketers can find foresight with well-designed research. Techniques like market structure or consumer decision-journey mapping can uncover newly emerging unmet needs, and when these are used in agile sprints, marketers can get insights in two to three weeks.
- **Bring your business to customers' homes**
  - Home delivery has gone from a convenience to a necessity:
  - Make physical operations touch-free.
  - Reimagining customer experience for a post-COVID-19 world

- Find savings without sacrificing experience
- Build capabilities for a fast-changing environment
- Keep a real-time pulse on changing customer preferences
- Listen to employees
- Adopt agile innovation
- **Start ideating now: It's possible that entirely new businesses and business models will emerge from the crisis. Virtual-based revenue streams such as app-based services may have more promise, and new ecosystems and marketplaces are likely to appear. With uncertainty likely to be the norm for the foreseeable future, it will be important to develop a portfolio approach to launching initiatives, tracking, and reallocating resources based on how each performs.**

### Conclusion

In this article, impact of covid-19 on market and can understand the changes of consumers buying behaviors. Marketing has been the business function that best understands the customer. Customers are encouraged to shop online through bargains such as free delivery, discounts, buy-one-get-one-free and exchange offers. Marketing leaders can continue to be relevant as their customers change will play a large role in determining how businesses will weather the COVID-19 crisis and meet the needs of tomorrow's consumers. Marketing leaders **Support to employees, customers, suppliers.** Digital commerce is also booming as new consumers migrate online for grocery shopping, which is likely to spread.

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