

Pandemic Endurance: Consumer Sentiment in the Summer of COVID-19

AUGUST EDITION

"The art of moving forward lies in understanding what to leave behind."

- Seth Godin

We're here to help marketers navigate what comes next.

Vesta is a brand community-building solution with direct access to millions of consumers, allowing us to keep a pulse on consumer sentiment throughout this rapidly changing time.

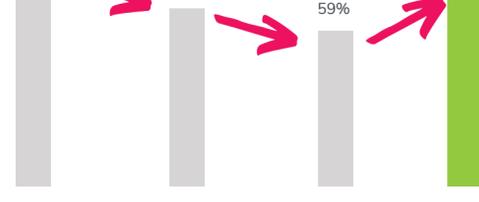
Since March, we have conducted ongoing research regarding consumer's experiences and brand sentiment.

These results come from wave 7, conducted during July, and reflect how the increase in cases across the nation has had a renewed impact on consumer sentiment and behavior.

Consumer concerns are climbing again

The steady rise of COVID-19 cases during July led to a sharp increase in concerns about the pandemic and the related economic and educational fallout.

Very/Extremely concerned about COVID-19 situation overall



The number who are worried about a resurgence increased too



Are very/extremely worried about a resurgence of COVID-19

When asked to pick their single greatest concern, the majority chose health & safety (45%) but other concerns are weighing on consumers.



1 in 4 Millennials and almost as many Gen X (23%) indicated their children returning to school is their top concern.



Gen Z is more concerned about money & finances (29%) and social justice (13%) than other generations.



Boomers remain the most concerned about health & safety (59%).

While concern is high and growing, the issues consumers are focused on varies greatly by generation. Be sure you are helping your consumers in the ways that matter most to them.

Rising case count impacting brand sentiment

The pandemic continues to impact brand sentiment, especially among younger consumers. Negative feelings increased the most, impacting industries connected with community spread and misinformation.

Almost 6 out of 10 consumers say brand actions have impacted their view of brands.

Gen Z (71%) and Millennial (63%) consumers report the greatest impact.

Industries consumers feel the most positive sentiment towards



Industries consumers are feeling the most negative sentiment toward



Negative sentiment had previously peaked at 25%, showing brands that are perceived to contribute to the pandemic will be viewed very unfavorably.

Rising case count impacting brand sentiment

The good news is that brands that take action and communicate with their consumers have the opportunity to build awareness and positive sentiment.

Brand communications that have a positive impact on perception include:



Highlighting safety and cleaning protocols 75%



Reaching out and listening to what's required from them during this time 75%



Providing information that is focused on families 73%



Communicating efforts to meet high demand 71%



Informing about the COVID-19 situation and their response 69%

4 of 5 consumers feel it is important for brand communications to be personalized to be relevant to them

These measures are especially important for the industries where having a trusted brand is seen as more important than the price and availability.



Baby 60%



Technology 59%



Pet 59%



Electronics 58%



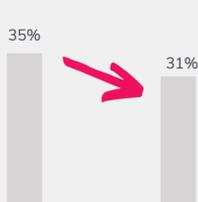
Health/Wellness 55%

The single best thing a brand can do is reach out to consumers and LISTEN to them as to what's needed from them during this time.

E-Commerce remains the safe bet

With few consumers expressing complete comfort in shopping at reopened retail locations, online shopping continues to increase.

Mostly/completely comfortable shopping at reopened businesses



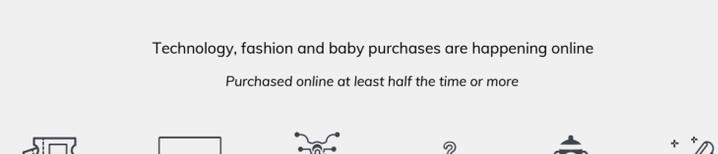
Only 39% of consumers are shopping weekly at non-essential businesses.

1 in 4 are shopping once a month or less

74% of consumers feel positively towards brands enforcing that their customers wear a mask inside retail locations

Technology, fashion and baby purchases are happening online

Purchased online at least half the time or more



Brick and mortar has a long way to go to build consumer comfort and traffic. Retailers will find overwhelming support for following health and safety guidelines, no matter the rhetoric.