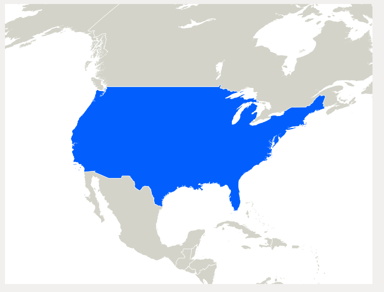
KANTAR

COVID-19 Barometer

Kantar interviewed 500 people aged 18+ in the USA during the period of 15th-18th March. They were interviewed online and were nationally representative in terms of age, sex and region.



USA Snapshot

Wave 1: 15-18th March

Next update due 2nd April

Context:

US government officially declared a national emergency on March 13th. $50 billion are made available from federal funds to combat the COVID-19. Hospitals and doctors are given more flexibility to treat people remotely. After the weekend, the nation's largest public school system (NYC) with 1.1 million students. announces closure.

By the 19th of March there were 13,789 registered cases and 207 deaths due to COVID-19 in the USA.

The national mood: we are...

Feeling concerned

Not at all — Hugely

10 21 12 34 24

33% About scarcity

31% About health

42% About economic outlook

Personally impacted

47% Experiencing day to day disruption (No that much 40%)

45% Being more proactive about financial planning (No impact 37%)

Prioritising

1. Being prepared & informed 46%
2. Readying to take action 16%
3. Too much fear; the situation will not get that serious 12%

Wanting advice about:

Prevention

- 16% How long does the virus live on surfaces?
- 12% Who is at risk of severe illness?
- 6% Am I at risk from products shipped from abroad?

Diagnosis

- 17% How likely am I to catch the virus?
- 22% What are the symptoms?
- 4% How do I self isolate?

Behaviours

- 2% Should I travel abroad?
- 4% How should I wash my hands?
- 5% Should I wear a facemask?

As the government started taking measures to limit spread of the virus, the mood in the US was one of general concern with day to day disruption felt, but not widely. People are beginning to change behaviors, but information and preparation was the number priority, especially related to diagnosis.

In comparison to the rest of the world

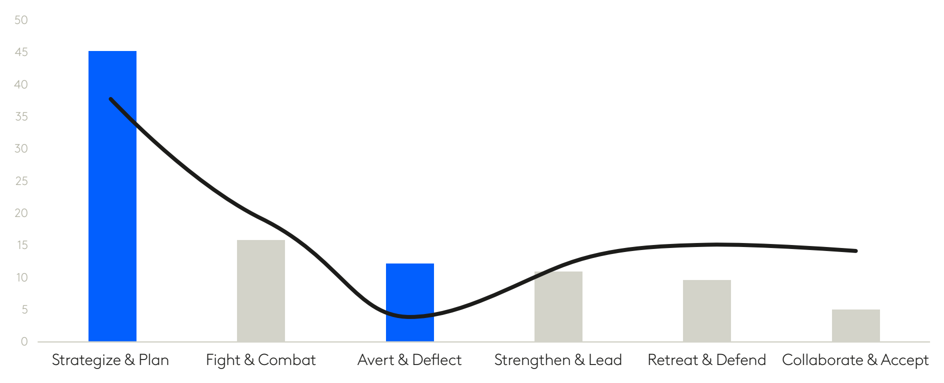
"The situation concerns me hugely"

China	63
Brazil	60
Turkey	53
Poland	51
Spain	50
Nigeria	50
South Africa	46
France	42
South Korea	41
Belgium	40
Italy	36
Canada	35
UAE	31
Saudi Arabia	28
Netherlands	27
UK	25
USA	24
Germany	19

Coming just before more drastic Delay phase measures were put in place in these markets, this fieldwork offers a window into the weekend before measures really started to affect people's real day to day lives in these markets.

Compared to other countries, we were not as concerned as we were just starting to feel the impact of the virus. This is likely to see significant change as many states have engaged in social distancing guidelines.

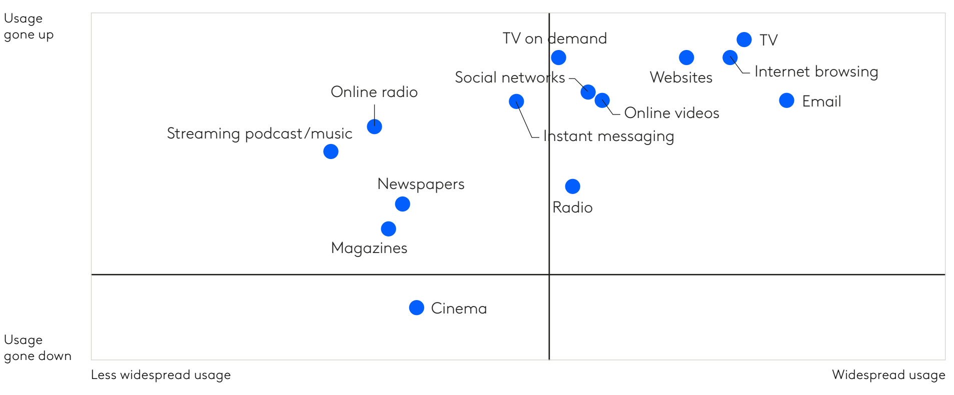
National Emotional Response



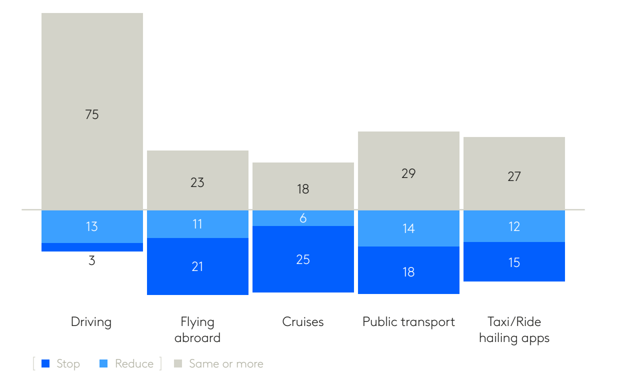
Our priorities were strategizing and planning, similar to the rest of the world, but people believed, at the time of field, the situation would not get that serious. This is likely to see a marked increase in subsequent waves

We are adapting behaviours

Claimed Media Usage (past month)



Expected travel impact



Top 5 trusted sources of information on COVID-19:

1. My doctor **41%**
2. Government agency websites **39%**
3. National media channels **38%**
4. International advisory bodies **30%**
5. My healthcare provider **29%**

In the US, we are consuming more media than normal of almost all types, especially TV, streaming content and online browsing. There are more opportunities than ever to communicate, but an increased need to ensure that communications are equipped to cut through the growing clutter by creating strong impact, a clear message and a compelling call to action.

In a rapidly changing landscape online platforms are equally trusted sources of information about the virus as the healthcare professional, and there is a critical role for national media channels to play alongside national and international health bodies in delivering accurate and timely public health information.

Plans to travel abroad were naturally most reduced – with 1 in 5 planning to stop flying or taking cruises. Public transport and taxis looked more resilient with some 29% planning to use them the same amount or even more during the outbreak. Meanwhile only 3% planned to stop driving altogether.

What, where and how we spend is changing

Change in shopping habits (past month)

	What	Where	How
Spend (down)	12% Pay attention to the origin of the product	9% Avoid superstores & big shopping centres	
Spend (up)	25% Same brands I always do	33% Supermarkets close to home	33% Electronic payments vs cash

Reasons we shop online:

Good prices	Convenience	To save time
66%	58%	60%

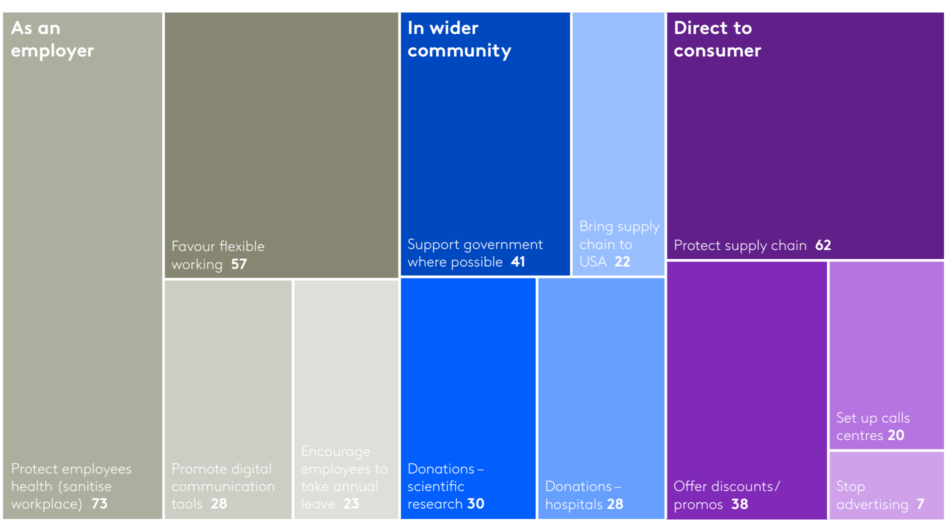
But... 21% find online shopping challenging/difficult.

Very few people consider themselves to be stockpiling, but grocery spend is moving towards local stores (rather than large format superstores) and the brands we already know and trust.

While many are happy to make purchases online for the prices and convenience, there is an opportunity to improve the ecommerce experience that many will be increasingly reliant on, under self-isolation.

People are clear what they want from companies and brands

What should companies do in this moment?



More than two thirds of the actions we want to see from companies relates to their role in the wider community and as an employer rather than the way they interact with their consumers. Most see our employer as having responsibility to protect the employer's health and favor flexible working. In addition, companies should support the government where possible.

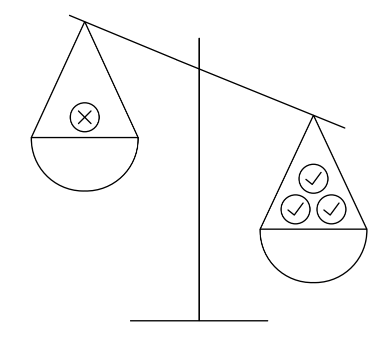
Going forward, people are looking for companies that protect the supply chain – it's very clear that we don't want brands to stop advertising but it's very important that this is not seen as exploitative or insensitive.

What should brands do

30.36% Be practical and realistic and help consumers in their everyday life.

19.07% Reduce anxiety and understand consumers' concerns.

17.53% Attack the crisis and demonstrate that it can be fought.



Should:

Inform about their efforts to face the situation 72%

Show how they can be helpful in the new everyday life 71%

Use a reassuring tone 71%

Should not:

NOT exploit corona virus to promote a brand 80%

Strong brands will lead the way and show their purpose in action. But they must be mindful of striking the right tone: what you say now must be relevant to customers, true to the brand DNA and backed up by concrete action.