



COVID-19 TREND UPDATE

The Impact of 2020 on Consumers

LASTING CHANGES IN MINDSET AND HABITS

AN OVERVIEW

A Year of Disruption

IN 2020, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, SOCIAL INJUSTICE AND POLITICAL DIVISION CREATED MAJOR DISRUPTIONS in the lives of Americans and forced significant changes to the way we navigate the world around us. While some of these new habits are likely to wane as 2021 continues and the chaos of 2020 recedes, others are predicted to remain and continue gaining strength.

Recommended Reads

- Fortune makes [2021 predictions across industries](#)
- Fast Company interviews [leading thinkers about a post-pandemic world](#)
- McKinsey & Company predicts [2021 defining trends](#)
- Accenture identifies [retail habits that are here to stay](#)
- The Guardian covers [America's year in pictures](#)

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Health Trends

MASKS ARE HERE TO STAY: Experts predict that wearing masks during flu season, when sick and in crowded places will continue post-pandemic, and recent consumer surveys show that many Americans are expecting to wear masks occasionally in the future.

Despite the politicization of mask-wearing in the United States, recent surveys show that Americans are now more united than divided on the practice. In a major shift since the early months of the coronavirus pandemic, more Americans across party and generational lines say they are wearing masks when they leave their house and feel that wearing a mask is part of everyone's responsibility.

TELEHEALTH'S FUTURE REMAINS UNKNOWN: It is still unclear how popular telehealth appointments will be post-pandemic. While patients have become more comfortable with telehealth technology over the last nine months, many patients, especially older generations, still prefer to see their providers in person when possible.

Recommended Reads

- Discover magazine uncovers [whether face masks are here to stay](#)
- Healthline predicts [how life will \(and won't\) change post-vaccine](#)
- Medical Economics explores [the role telehealth will play after COVID-19](#)
- December 2020 [mask opinions poll](#)

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Lifestyle Trends

AT-HOME COOKING AND WORKOUTS ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE:

Cooking at home is the number one activity that consumers expect they will continue to do more of in the future. Whether cooking more often out of necessity or interest, many Americans gained cooking experience and skills in 2020. To a lesser degree, at-home exercise is also expected to continue - while some say they will return to gyms, others have invested in pricey exercise equipment and subscriptions (Peloton subscriptions doubled in 2020) and have built the habit of working out at home.

REMOTE WORK AND HYBRID SCENARIOS: The future of offices remains up in the air. Over the last year, office employees have become accustomed to working from home, and businesses have found ways to make this format work. Some expect to fully return to the office and others expect to work remotely full-time, but most expect future offices will become something in between: the hybrid workplace, with employees who mix remote and in-office work.

Recommended Reads

- Pitney Bowes provides insight on [consumer culture trends](#)
- Food Processing outlines 2021 [home dining trends](#)
- Fortune explores [Americans' plans to continue at-home workouts](#)
- Pew Research Center covers [how the coronavirus outbreak has - and hasn't - changed the way Americans work](#)

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Shopping Trends

GROWTH OF ONLINE SHOPPING WILL CONTINUE: 2020 dramatically accelerated the trend of online shopping, with consumers buying everything from groceries to furniture to cars online. As comfort and skill with digital tools for shopping have grown, online shopping is expected to continue among a wide swath of the population.

LOCAL AND VALUE-BASED SHOPPING ARE HERE TO STAY: In 2020, the struggles of small businesses during COVID-19, the Black Lives Matter movement, climate change concerns and political divisions during the presidential election converged. In response, American consumers demonstrated an increased awareness of and support for local small businesses and a boosted appetite for sustainable and other value-based brands. Value-based shopping is projected to continue – many Americans want the brands they use to take a stand and show that they advocate for their customers’ values.

LARGE ONLINE PURCHASES MAY OR MAY NOT CONTINUE: Online car and homebuying skyrocketed in 2020. Real estate agents and car dealers like Carvana rushed to innovate the online experience to meet this surge in demand. However, many consumers value the in-person experience when making such large-purchase decisions – they want to test-drive a car or walk through a home before buying it. It is yet to be seen whether consumers will be comfortable buying cars and homes online in the future.

Recommended Reads

- Shopify identifies [five pandemic buying habits that are here to stay](#)
- Retail TouchPoints explores [values-based buying](#)
- CNBC explores [virtual homebuying post-pandemic](#)

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