

# The Future

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+ WUNDERMAN  
THOMPSON

A REPORT BY WUNDERMAN THOMPSON INTELLIGENCE

2.0.20

# Introduction

**Normal life as we knew it has been upended by a global pandemic, laying the foundations for an entirely new normal that will shape the years ahead.**

After we released “The Future 100,” our annual trend report, in January 2020, news of a novel coronavirus started making headlines. On March 11, the World Health Organization officially labeled COVID-19 as a pandemic. As the world introduced measures designed to curb the virus, including social distancing and country-wide lockdowns, our team closely tracked the new behaviors, cultural shifts and industry changes stemming from these sudden changes.

Looking back at “The Future 100,” released just months earlier, we found that many of the trends we identify in our report are still applicable, and have even accelerated and matured. “The Future 100 2.0.20” is a follow-up, highlighting 20 key trends that have fast-tracked as a result of COVID-19, plus five completely new trends to watch as the world embraces new habits (goodbye, handshakes—hello, elbow bumps).

Some of our findings show that the outbreak of COVID-19 has sent anxiety levels up. Younger Americans, aged 18 to 24, are five times more anxious than generation X and boomers; they are burdened by concerns around the economic future, job prospects and the cost of living. Despite that, an underlying sense of positivity keeps people hopeful during these uncertain

times (see optimistic futures, p4), as they take to the internet to search for good news and tune into uplifting stories.

Brands’ roles continue to evolve as companies are called on to step up and assume a philanthropic mantle. Many have taken unconventional actions, working together to further a greater cause than profit, setting aside competition, and even completely changing production (see unconventional brand actions, p31). Such actions are not going unnoticed; a vast majority of Americans, 92%, admire companies that are taking action to help stop the spread of the coronavirus.

The global lockdown has given people time to reflect, and to reprioritize and reinforce their values. From the importance of community and supporting local enterprises to the need for better public health regulations to protecting future generations, brands and marketers have a plethora of new consumer attitudes to address.

Needless to say, the year 2020 will go down in history. With a virus rippling across the world, trailing unprecedented disruption, brands and leaders need to be nimbler than ever. Those able to respond quickly, pivot business direction, and help work towards a better future will be best placed to thrive in the new normal.



Emma Chiu  
Global Director, Wunderman Thompson Intelligence  
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## 20 accelerated trends from the Future 100 2020

A stylized icon for the number 01. The '0' is a red hexagon with a white center, and the '1' is a dark brown vertical bar with a top-right corner cut-off.

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## Optimistic futures

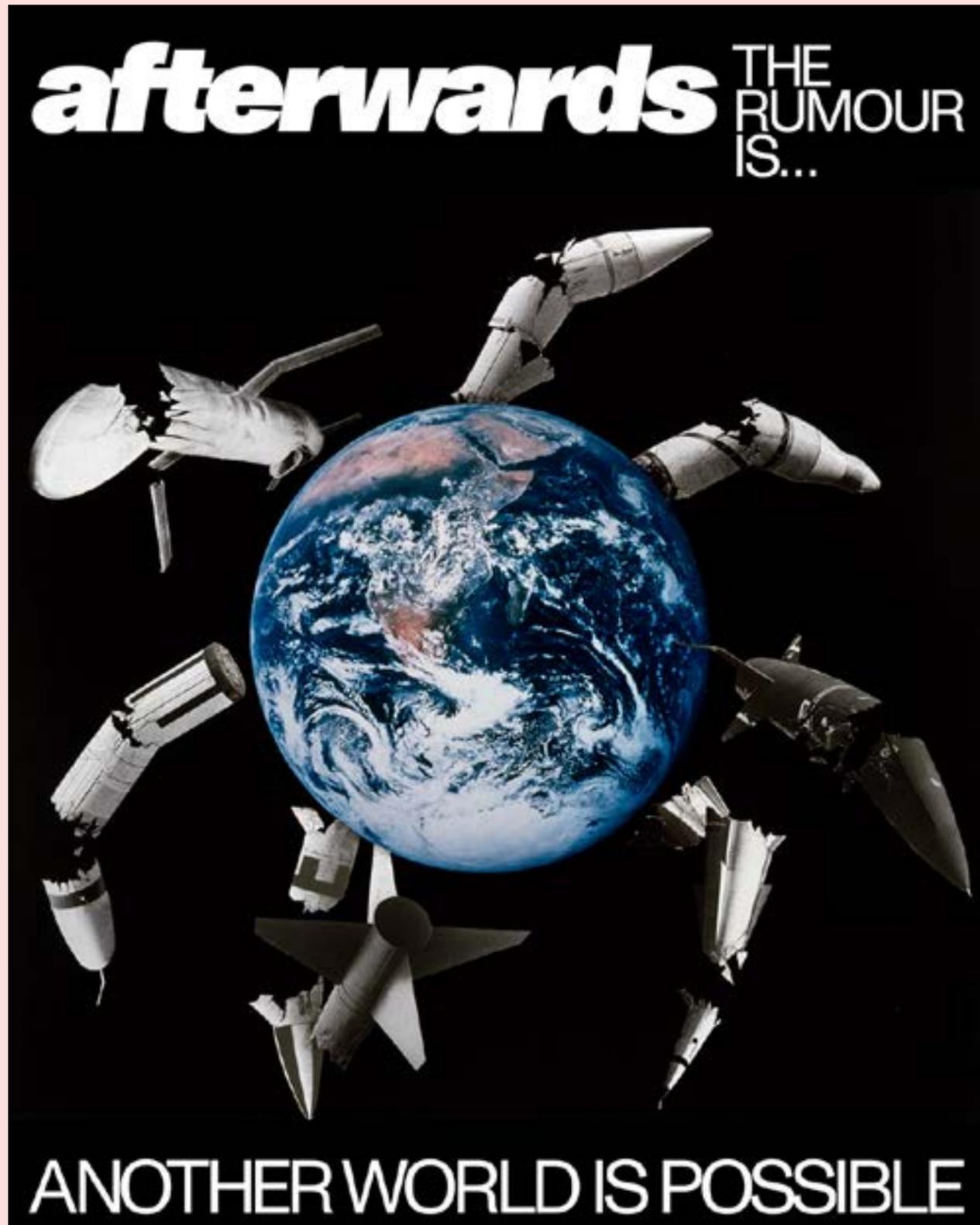
**People and brands are making a concerted effort to seek out positivity, fueling a collective momentum working towards a future built on optimism.**

People are seeking out good news now more than ever. In the United States, Google searches for “good news” spiked in the second week of April 2020, reaching a five-year high, according to Google Analytics.

World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines for coping with COVID-19 include the recommendation that individuals “find opportunities to amplify positive and hopeful stories.”

Platforms and news outlets are picking up the mantle, reframing their reporting approach to highlight uplifting and optimistic stories. On March 23, *i-D* introduced the “Coronavirus Good News Bulletin,” a weekly installment of “hopeful stories from the pandemic” intended to “inspire optimism and hope as we adapt to our new normal.” *Elle UK* has published a series of good news updates with positive stories from around the world. The *Telegraph’s* “Coronavirus Positive” column is a “daily compendium of positive coronavirus news stories from around the world.”





# We Still Believe In

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# *DREAMS*

On March 29, John Krasinski launched his *Some Good News* YouTube channel, reporting on uplifting stories and spreading happiness. The DIY news dispatch—which Krasinski films alone in his home office, in front of a poster with a logo drawn by his daughters—has received an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response, with the first episode alone receiving over 17 million views by the beginning of May 2020.

Brands are also projecting positivity with messages of appreciation and solidarity. A slew of ads at the end of March marked a collective step away from products and towards communicating unity and encouragement. Nike released



a campaign in collaboration with all-star athletes encouraging people to stay home, with the message “now more than ever, we are one team.” Budweiser partnered with the American Red Cross to “come together in support of the heroes on the front line of the health crisis.” And in April, Nescafé Chile released an uplifting commercial featuring the 2010 song “Dar es Dar” (to give is to give) by Argentine musician Fito Páez, sung by ordinary people in their homes.

On May 1, Doritos announced a new program championing the next generation. “Doritos Valedictorian” invites graduating seniors to submit short speeches that they would have given at graduation, with the chance to deliver them to listeners nationwide on iHeartMedia’s special podcast *Commencement: Speeches for the Class of 2020* alongside cultural icons such as Katie Couric and John Legend.

The goal is to inspire future generations. “The speech element of graduation was such a cultural moment for these seniors, and now they’re losing that voice,” says Marissa Solis, SVP of marketing, Frito-Lay North America. “Doritos is a brand that’s long been about giving a platform and voice to that next generation, so we wanted to help take that platform to the next level.”

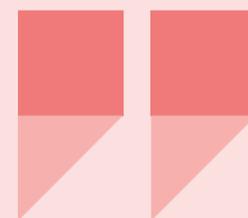
#### **Why it’s interesting:**

Consumers and brands alike are prioritizing unifying and optimistic messaging—a move that is propelling uplifting and inspiring platforms. “Coronavirus has changed our lives,” wrote Mark Rice-Oxley in the *Guardian’s* March 27 edition of its weekly column “The Upside.” “It has changed newsrooms too. Never before have so many journalists cast around for silver linings. Never before has so much optimism been published—and read.”



**Never before has so much optimism been published – and read.**

**Mark Rice-Oxley, the Guardian**



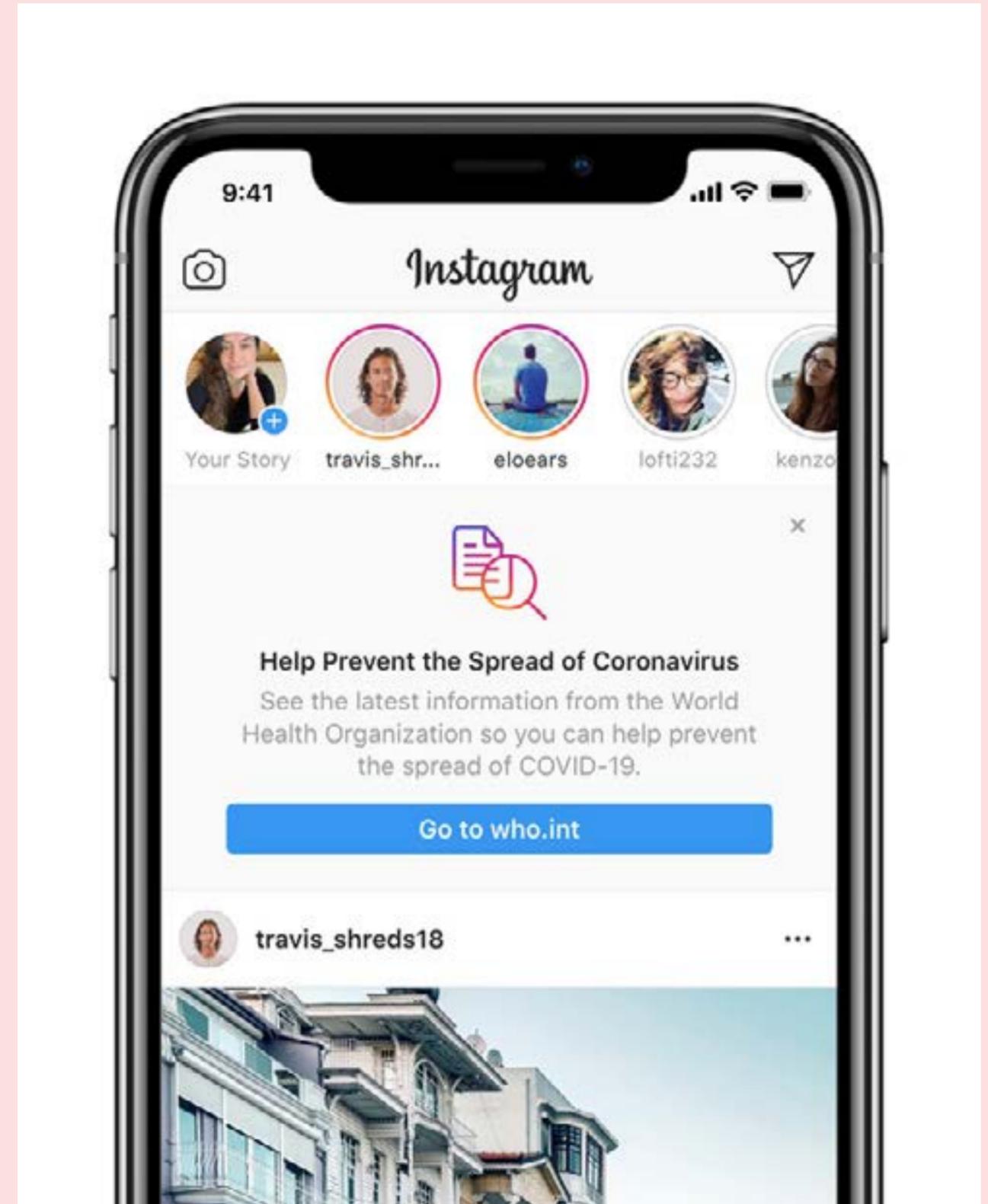


## Taming tech's influence

**It has never been more important to tame the Wild West of social media. Our lives could depend on it.**

“We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic,” Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), told foreign policy and security experts at a mid-February 2020 gathering in Munich, Germany. The statement referred to fake news that “spreads faster and more easily than this virus.”

Social media platforms have been common culprits in the spread of misinformation. From anecdotal evidence to sensational rumors to subjective opinion, these outlets are infamous for publicizing unreliable stories. During a global health pandemic, this can be not only misleading but also actively dangerous. “The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel worried,” says the WHO. “Get the facts; not the rumors and misinformation.” To help combat misinformation, social media platforms and leaders in Big Tech are rolling out new measures to promote trusted sources for information on COVID-19.

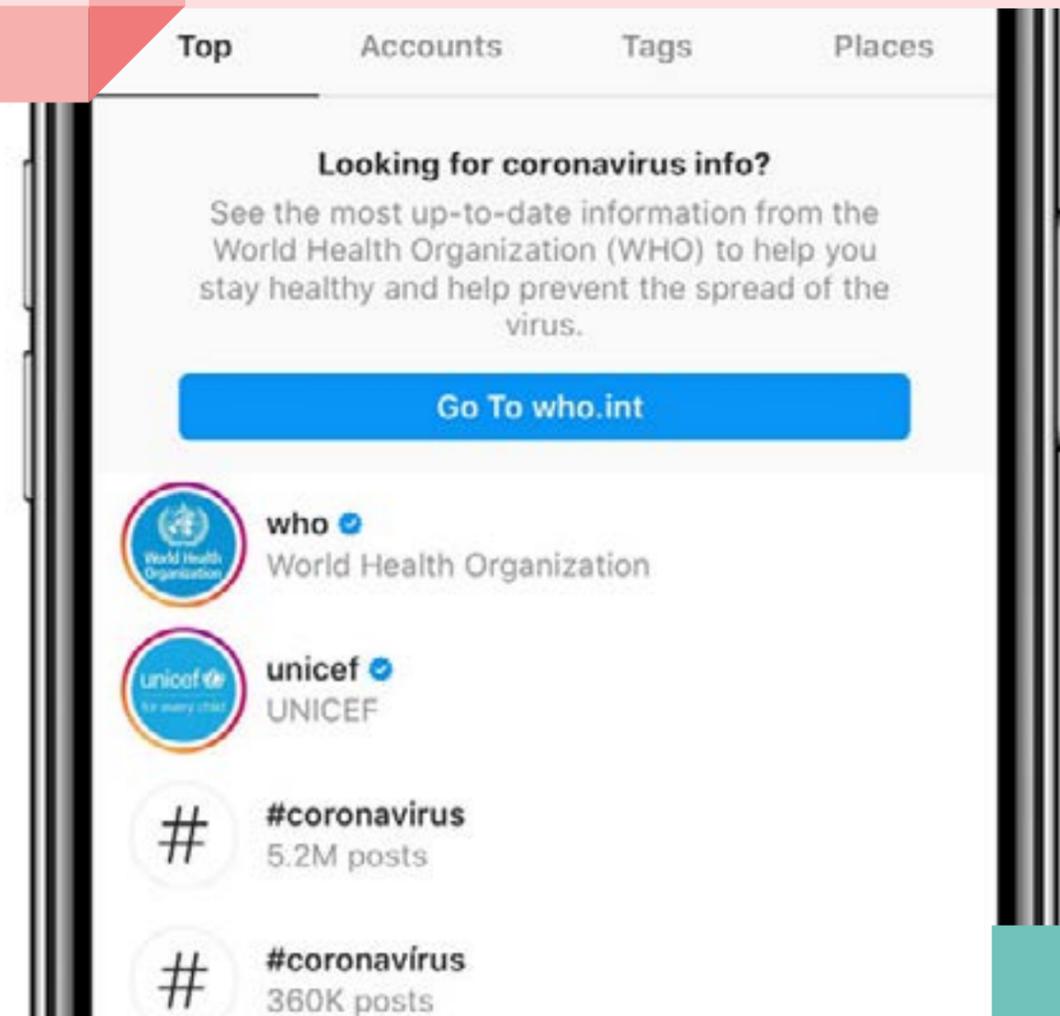


On April 28, YouTube announced that it will begin adding fact-checking panels to US videos. “When users are searching on YouTube around a specific claim, we want to give an opportunity for those fact checks to show up right then and there, when our users are looking for information—especially around fast-moving, quickly changing topics like COVID-19,” says Neal Mohan, YouTube’s chief product officer.

The video platform is one of many to add links to the WHO, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and local health authorities on searches for information about COVID-19. Google has added a side bar for any COVID-related search results that links to the WHO and CDC, and covers topics such as treatment, symptoms and statistics. Spotify and Instagram have added a link to WHO resources at the top of search pages. Pinterest is limiting search results for “coronavirus,” “COVID-19” and related terms to internationally recognized health organizations. And Facebook has embedded links into news feeds that direct users to the CDC’s page on COVID-19. The platform is also regulating its ad space more strictly, banning ads that tout fake cures and giving free unlimited ad space to the WHO, to publicize facts and accurate information about the disease.

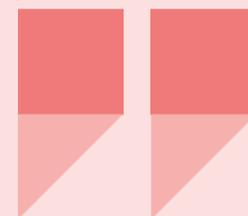
### Why it’s interesting:

In our “Future 100 2020” report, we wrote: “2020 will see a new focus on how information, particularly the political, is disseminated through these channels.” While the world’s immediate focus has shifted from politics to health, this is truer now than ever. The measures put in place during the pandemic point to a future where Big Tech plays a bigger role in regulating viral misinformation.





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## Protective tech, protective everything

**After experiencing a world that has widely adopted hospital-grade sanitation protocols, people will expect continued high standards, and will seek designs and services that help to safeguard them from germs, viruses, pollutants and more.**

In China, interest in buying new cars is on the up, with 77% of Chinese respondents saying driving cars instead of taking public transport could reduce the chance of infection, according to a February 2020 survey by Ipsos. In addition, 51% said they preferred an air-conditioning system with a germ filter and 49% expressed a preference for a car interior that used antibacterial properties.

Tesla has responded to this demand by changing its retail model, launching a contactless test drive service in Beijing and Shanghai in March 2020. The same month, Chinese car company Geely rolled out contactless car keys delivery by drone to new owners. In addition, its latest vehicle Icon, debuted on February 24, 2020, includes a new Intelligent Air Purification System that claims to eliminate bacteria and viruses.



Aware of the increased value that people are placing on hygiene, supermarkets are installing sneeze guards at checkouts to protect customers and employees from droplets that contain viruses or germs. In the United States, Kroger, Walmart and Whole Foods, as well as other local grocery stores, are putting up plexiglass barriers. An April article published by *Bloomberg* suggests that “sneeze guards and temperature checks are the new normal for US retail.” In the United Kingdom, major supermarkets including Marks & Spencer, Aldi and Tesco are also putting up clear protection screens at checkout.

As more businesses open, similar measures will be considered. Airlines, for example, are currently debating how to promote protection on board. London-based studio Factorydesign proposes the Isolate Kit, a lightweight screen that can be fixed onto the middle seat in airplanes to achieve distancing. Similarly, Italian design agency Aviointeriors proposes its Glassafe concept, a transparent hood that can be fixed onto existing seats and “reduce the probability of contamination by viruses or other.”

Design thinking is increasingly being used to offer comfort and protection. Beijing-based design studio Frank Chou initiated the Create Cures project, inviting designers to “promote the development of public health in a designer’s way.” Concepts include the Sterilizing Lamp, which uses an ultraviolet light to disinfect objects such as the user’s keys, mobile phone and wallet in 60 seconds, and the DIY Safe Capsule, an easy-to-assemble safe workspace.





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**92% of Americans admire companies that are taking action to stop the spread of coronavirus.**

Wunderman Thompson Data

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Concepts around the future of what we will wear also revolve around protection. Creative studio Production Club has introduced the Micrashell suit, which “allows you to safely socialize in times of pandemic.” Designer Joe Doucet proposes a face shield to be worn like a pair of sunglasses.

Prior to COVID-19, companies were already releasing products and technology that helped mitigate pollution and germs. Larq’s self-cleaning water bottle promises to remove “99.9999% of bacteria and viruses” from drinking water. A reusable tampon applicator by Dame is made from self-sanitizing material. Atmos Faceware’s tech-infused face protection filters air pollution.

**Why it’s interesting:**

92% of Americans admire companies that are taking action to stop the spread of coronavirus, according to a March 2020 study by Wunderman Thompson Data. Companies implementing products and services that offer protection from modern aggressors as well as viruses will reassure consumers who are prioritizing health and cleanliness.



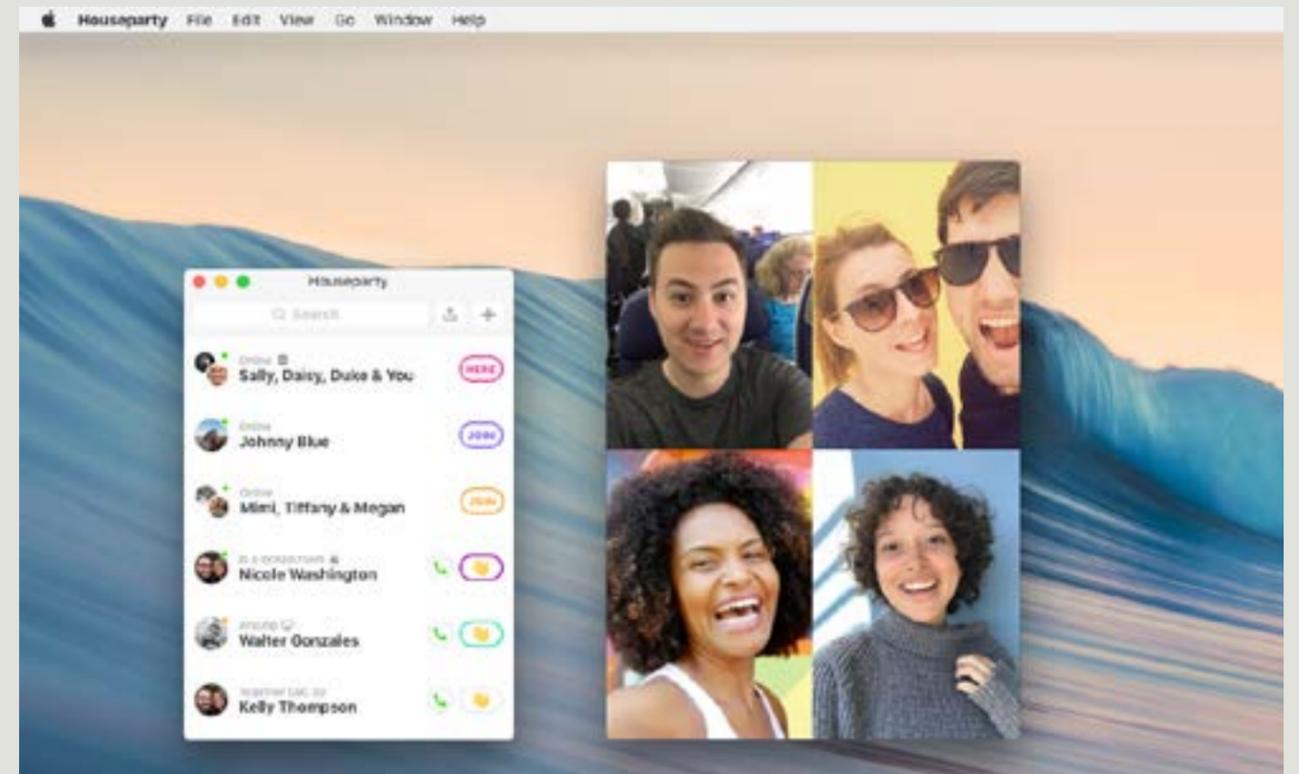
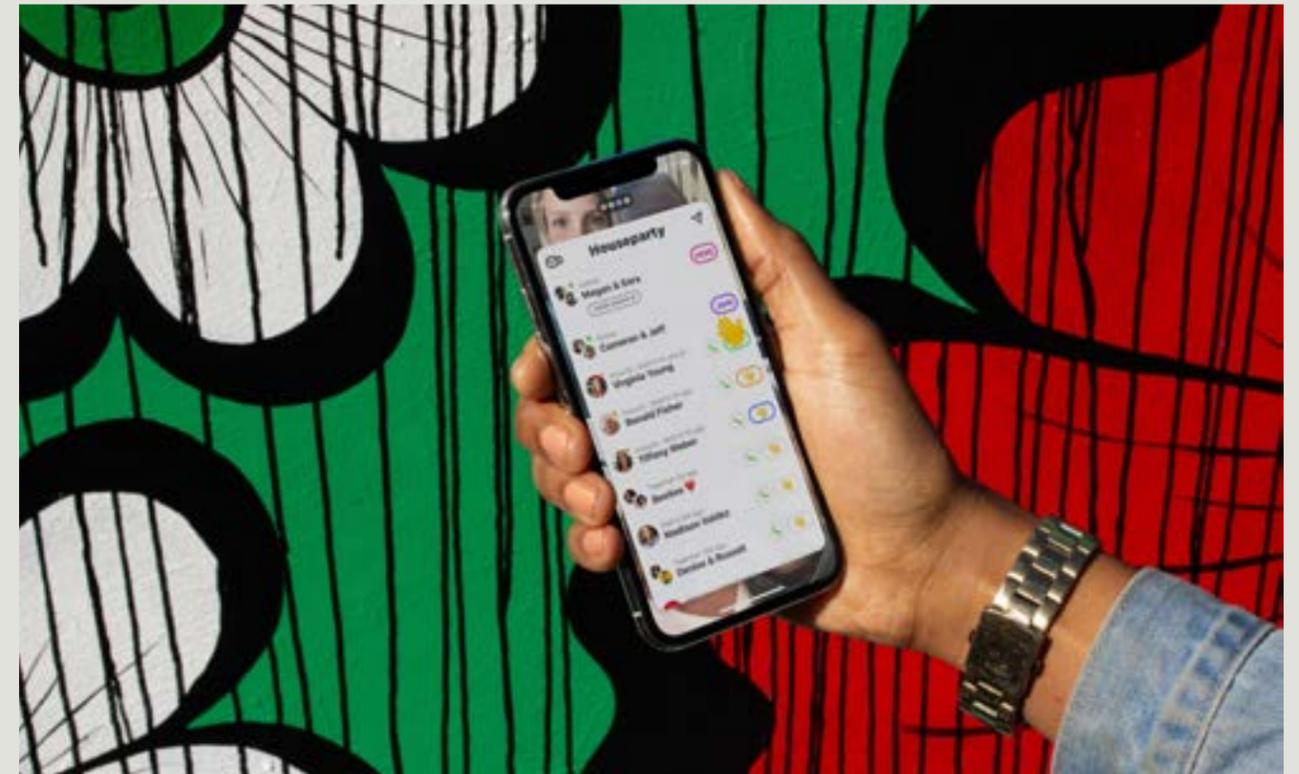
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## New digital communities

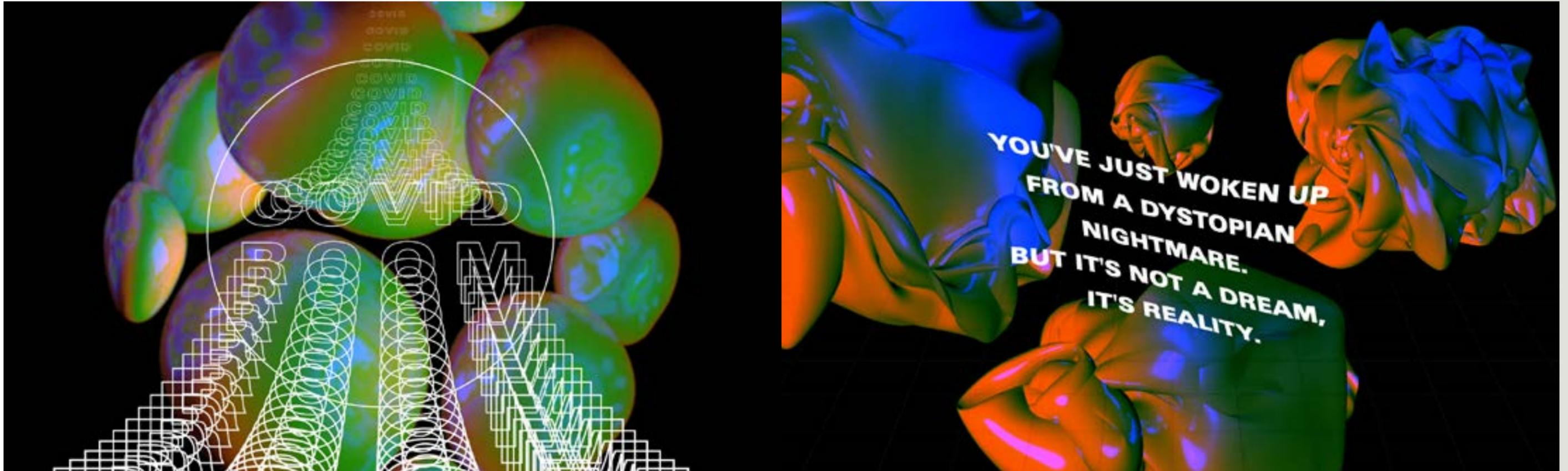
**Quarantine and social distancing have contributed a push to the evolution of social media, with new digital spaces cropping up to facilitate genuine human connection in the absence of in-person meetings.**

Previously, users chafed against the artificial and shallow values social media seemed to foster. However, the tides of social media engagement have started to turn in recent months, as platforms take steps to create intimate and sheltered spaces, and acknowledge vulnerability and the need for communication.

With physical venues no longer an option for socializing, people are turning to digital spaces, and social platforms have seen a spike in traffic since the outbreak of COVID-19. Video chat app Houseparty was downloaded 2 million times during the week commencing March 16, 2020 alone and saw an increase in daily traffic of nearly 80% between January 21 and March 24. Facebook data shows that, as of March 24, 2020, time spent in group calls increased by over 1,000%, and Snapchat reported a 50% increase in video calls between February and March 2020.







Alongside existing social platforms, people are looking for new ways to connect in the digital sphere. A crop of new projects is reconstructing facsimiles of our everyday spaces in the virtual realm, with digital alternatives to concert venues, clubs and bars.

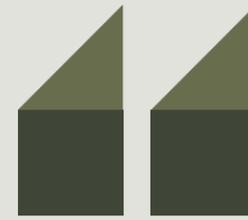
Launched on March 15, 2020, Covid Room is a new music performance platform for virtual parties and “remote crowding.” Opened on the same day, Club Quarantine is a virtual gay club that has hosted DJ sets from world-class artists such as Charli XCX. BrewDog is replicating its traditional bar experience with an online meetup program to encourage consumers to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Each BrewDog bar in Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States will have its own online session, providing an opportunity for locals and regulars to connect. The 102 virtual bars will give

customers the chance to get together with friends and enjoy a beer.

These new spaces aim to recreate the thrill of a night out. While it’s hard to imagine that these digital alternatives will fully replace in-person meetings when we once again have a choice, they are expanding the realms of possibility for community engagement—digital socialization is here to stay and redefining the very fabric of our connected lives.

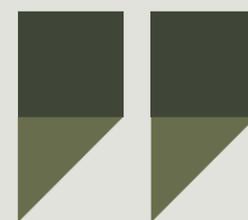
**Why it’s interesting:**

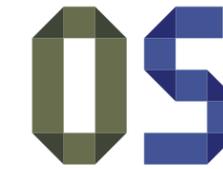
88% of Americans surveyed say they have a “better appreciation” for the role technology has played in helping culture and society during the coronavirus crisis, according to April 2020 findings from the National Research Group. The next generation of virtual spaces offers a new outlet for social connection and community engagement.



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say they have a “better appreciation”  
for the role technology has played  
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the coronavirus crisis.**

**The National Research Group**





## Privacy era

### Is privacy being sacrificed in the global fight against COVID-19?

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, health concerns have eclipsed the privacy debate that had been raging around the world. While the world turned its attention to more pressing matters, data privacy was put on the back burner. But as companies and governments enlist sophisticated tracking technology as a weapon against the coronavirus, privacy advocates are sounding the alarm.

Tracing apps have become a popular option for citizens and governments to monitor the spread of the virus, but they afford companies unprecedented access to consumer data. As of May 4, 2020, more than 4.5 million Australians have downloaded COVIDSafe, an app backed by the government that uses Bluetooth to exchange a “digital handshake” with any other user who comes within five feet, and pushes an alert if they have contact with anyone who tests

positive for COVID-19. Facebook is sharing location data with COVID-19 researchers to track and predict hotspots. Apple and Google—two companies that were under significant fire for data harvesting—are teaming up to create a tracing app for users. In May, the United Kingdom’s National Health Service released a similar app, revealing the source code in the interests of transparency. However, due to concerns around data privacy, the UK government is in talks with Apple and Google in case a backup is needed.

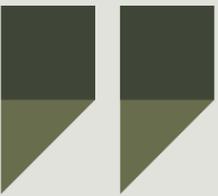
Governments are hoping that an effective offense is the best defense against the spread of the disease. In the name of public health, governments around the world have turned national defense software on their citizens. The Israeli internal security office redeployed counter-terrorism technology to track the movement of COVID-19 patients using phone and credit card data. In Russia, authorities used facial recognition software to locate a woman who had “escaped” from quarantine. In South Korean train stations, thermal cameras monitor travelers’ body temperatures. Drones in the United Kingdom and China have been used to spot people violating social distancing regulations. The Australian government is installing surveillance hardware in some homes to ensure that anyone in quarantine stays put—with the threat of fines or jail time if they don’t.

Less obvious, seemingly innocuous platforms are also coming under scrutiny for privacy concerns. The New York City Department of Education banned the video-conferencing app Zoom from school use after the FBI warned that it was susceptible to digital hacking. Other free applications, such as Google





**The “opt in”  
exchange on which these  
tools are predicated no  
longer applies.**



Hangouts and Facebook Messenger, are raising similar concerns. Google subsidiary Verily requires a Google account to locate and book coronavirus testing—and says it may share users’ personal health information with outside parties like contractors and the government.

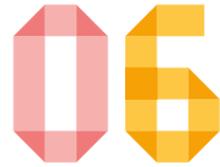
The issue, privacy advocates warn, is that the use of tools like locating testing centers, videoconferencing and chat apps is not truly voluntary. With schools and offices closed, many people don’t have any choice about logging onto Zoom for classes or meetings. And linking to your Google account seems a small price to pay to arrange testing. The “opt in” exchange on which these tools are predicated no longer applies.

“One day the COVID-19 pandemic will end. It will, sadly, take many of our fellow Americans with it,” Theresa Payton, former White House chief information officer, wrote in *Fast Company*. “But if we are careful, we may stop it from claiming our right to privacy as a casualty too.”

**Why it’s interesting:**

As people begin to adjust to life under lockdown, data privacy is starting to reappear on personal and political agendas—especially as technology is enlisted in the fight against the coronavirus. While data privacy may seem inconsequential in the face of a global pandemic, experts warn against overlooking it entirely.

*Keep an eye out for our upcoming report on the privacy era in summer 2020.*



## Legacy preservation

**A more conscious approach to tourism will be implemented as people see how nature has flourished under travel limitations.**

The tourism industry has suffered extreme damage due to the quarantine imposed by governments around the world. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, global travel may shrink by as much as 25% in 2020. While governments and the industry itself are keen to get tourism back on its feet, many are considering a more conscious approach in the future, using this downtime to bolster infrastructure and develop new plans.

The cessation of tourism has meant a return of nature to many tourist hotspots. Beaches in Thailand are seeing a record number of baby leatherback sea turtles hatching, while Venice, which is normally clogged with tourist boats, has seen a new abundance of fish in its canals. With Venetians already concerned about over tourism, the coronavirus lockdown is driving a push to consider decreasing the amount of cruise ships allowed, or limiting the number of tourists, when the city reopens. The city's deputy mayor for social welfare and economic



**This will be an opportunity to move towards intelligent tourism.**

**Simone Venturini, deputy mayor for social welfare and economic development, Venice**



development, Simone Venturini, stated that “this will be an opportunity to move towards intelligent tourism,” reports *Euronews*. In Sydney, plans to open up more cruise ship terminals have been shelved for 18 months as cities and local governments are given the opportunity to further understand the impact these will have on locals and the environment.

Other tourist spots are considering ways to promote their sites and sustainable travel at the same time. In April, UNESCO launched a campaign called #ShareOurHeritage, which encouraged the use of technology to view heritage sites while they are closed. Once the immediate crisis is over, it will maintain this campaign to support sustainable tourism with measures to protect these cultural sites.

### **Why it's interesting:**

The coronavirus and subsequent lockdown are giving cities and heritage sites the opportunity to consider and reflect on how they reopen. Those that have long suffered from over-tourism are now able to take a look at alternative ways to welcome tourists without damaging the culture and environment they wish to protect.



## Disaster-proof destinations

**The need to prepare for cataclysmic scenarios, including freak weather or a killer virus, is making bunker-esque shelters an attractive contingency plan for survivalists.**

Underground mansions and isolated hideaways are in demand since governments around the world issued country-wide lockdowns. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, enquiries and sales have “skyrocketed” for bunkers across the United States. Owner and developer of US-based Survival Condo Larry Hall tells Wunderman Thompson Intelligence that since COVID-19 was labeled a pandemic his company has seen “more than double the number of enquiries.”

“People contacting us have said they downplayed the possibility of threats like COVID-19 and now they want to purchase a condo,” says Hall. Survival Condo is a luxury survival resort with concrete walls thick enough to hold up against a nuclear blast. The 15-story-deep property is aimed at those looking for “extended off-grid living in the event of a major disaster or emergency.” Luxury is key and the development includes military-grade security, a dog park, home schooling facilities and its own aquaponics lab. One customer even requested a bespoke helicopter hangar to be built. In response to the pandemic, Survival







# The time to buy a bunker to protect your family is before you need it. Have a plan for the unexpected.

**Larry Hall, owner and developer, Survival Condo**



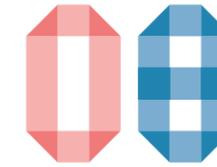
Condo's site notes its Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) air filtration can filter out pathogens like COVID-19. "Nothing is more precious than your family. If the quarantine has taught us anything is it that," says Hall. "The time to buy a bunker to protect your family is before you need it. Have a plan for the unexpected."

Luxury consumers are triggering their escape plans. According to Texan manufacturer Rising S Company, a New York client who escaped to their shelter in New Zealand needed to call the company to verify the combination to enter. Underground global shelter network Vivos claims its bunkers are "the backup plan for humanity" and able to "survive virtually any catastrophe." As interest in its properties spikes, the company is developing a 1,000-person shelter in Germany and plans to build more in New Zealand.

The hospitality industry has attempted to pivot business by advertising coronavirus escapes. While "virus-free" or "self-isolating" retreats are attractive, promoting these destinations in the thick of the pandemic has been deemed "irresponsible and dangerous" by the UK tourism minister Nigel Huddleston. His remark was specifically in response to Airbnb hosts advertising properties in Britain as "COVID-19 retreats" and "perfect for isolating with family" during a nationwide lockdown.

### **Why it's interesting:**

Vying for business during a pandemic looks insensitive and has thus proved difficult for the travel and hospitality industry. In these troubled times, secret fortresses are becoming the new purchases for luxury consumers able to shell out for disaster-proof retreats that defy cabin fever and act as the ultimate safe havens.



## The new super-creatives

**Digital creativity is in hyper-drive.**

We explained in “The Future 100 2020” how “teens are charting new territory for digital and artistic expression.” Armed with an arsenal of creative tools from platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok, the digital-native generation Z was leading the charge in digital artistry. Now, as many people confined at home cast around for new creation strategies, the super-creative movement is sweeping across generations and industries.

Creativity is flourishing under quarantine. The Virtual Art Academy’s new enrollments grew fivefold in March 2020 compared to the previous 12 months, founder Barry John Raybould told the *Washington Post*—citing this as the most drastic jump in the academy’s 13-year history. On April 13, Apple released an ad showcasing how “creativity goes on” despite lockdowns. Artists and brands are challenging people to create, and inviting them to join growing artistic communities. From April 10, Gucci invited famous creatives including Elton John, Dakota Fanning and Jane Fonda to publish original content across the brand’s channels in an effort to encourage creativity. On March 21, *Dazed* launched #AloneTogether, “a creative community in times of crisis.”

And just as people are turning to technology to stay connected (see new digital communities, page 15), they’re picking up their devices in search of a creative outlet.



Ladies and  
Gentlemen,  
we are floating  
in space.

We are  
floating  
in space.

#AloneTogether



# SAVE OUR FUTURE

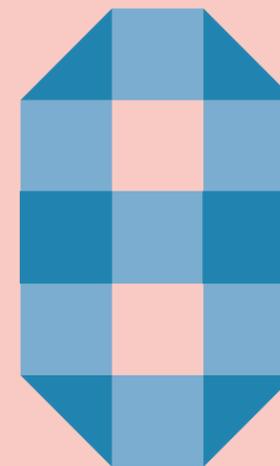
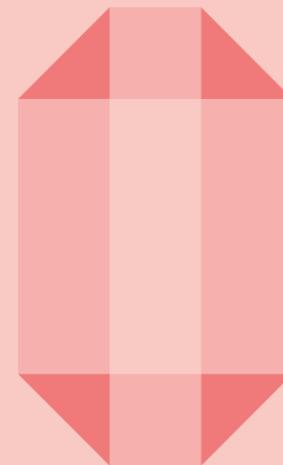
# Today at Apple\*

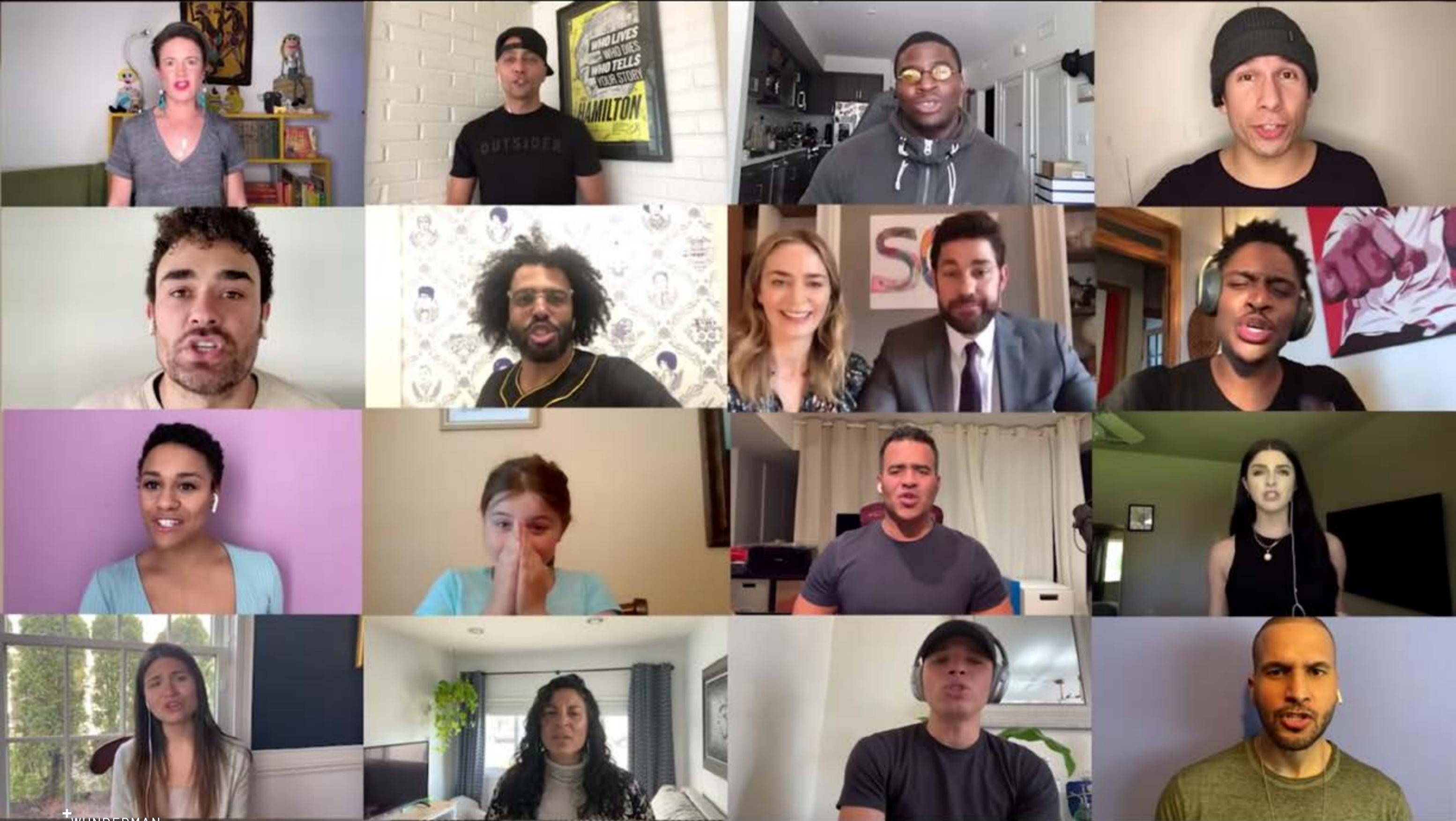
\* At Home



In April, Apple launched *Today at Apple at Home*, a streamable series of free classes from creative pros at Apple. The classes teach users how to elevate their artistic pursuits on Apple devices, including how to draw playful portraits on an iPad, how to capture striking photography and how to make movies more cinematic on an iPhone.

Following “couch concerts” by everyone from Chris Martin, who performed for fans on Instagram Live, to the original cast of the Broadway show *Hamilton*, who performed together over Zoom on John Krasinski’s *Some Good News* YouTube show, digital musical performances are becoming more sophisticated. On April 8, rock band Thao & The Get Down Stay Down released the first major music video created entirely on Zoom, introducing a new class of highly orchestrated digital choreography.





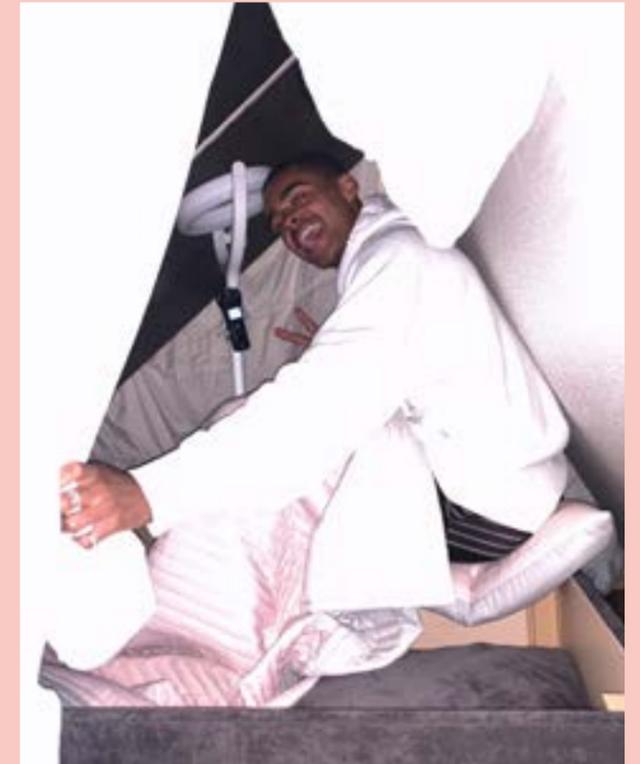
## Digital creative output gains legitimacy and becomes more refined by the day.

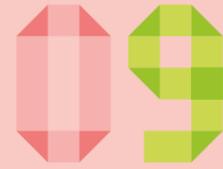
Hit shows accustomed to high-gloss production are getting creative with home hosting and production set-ups. In April, NBC pivoted with *Saturday Night Live At Home*, releasing new episodes from quarantined cast members, writers and producers. Earlier in the month, the CBS show *All Rise* produced an all-virtual episode featuring footage filmed using FaceTime, WebEx and Zoom, marking the first primetime scripted series to resume production amid stay-at-home mandates. These follow late-night talk shows, including *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* and *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, which have released virtually produced episodes including interviews conducted over videoconferencing platforms like Zoom.

Theater, too, is adopting digital creation strategies. With Broadway closed at least until June—and industry leaders predicting that it likely won't open until months later—theater productions are starting to take to the digital stage. *The Understudy*, a new online radio play starring Stephen Fry, is in the works. Actors will record their respective parts separately at home, with the full production broadcast online in May.

### Why it's interesting:

Digital creation is going mainstream. As digital creative output gains legitimacy and becomes more refined by the day, expect to see more sophisticated techniques and tools arise in line with the growing digital creativity movement.





## Unconventional brand actions

**Business strategies are being reorganized as companies prioritize corporate social responsibility ahead of profit.**

Expectations of brands continue to evolve as people now look to companies to fill philanthropic voids. In the United States and United Kingdom, 90% of consumers say that brands have a responsibility to take care of the planet and its people, according to Wunderman Thompson Data, and 71% of global consumers agree that if they perceive a brand is putting profit over people, they will lose trust in that brand forever, according to the 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer.

The global impact of COVID-19 has seen competitive brands set aside their differences and band together for a greater cause. On April 14, 2020, pharmaceutical companies GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Sanofi announced they were joining forces to develop a vaccine to fight COVID-19. “This collaboration brings two of the world’s largest vaccine companies together,” says Emma Walmsley, CEO of GSK. “By combining our science and our technologies, we believe we can help accelerate the global effort to develop a vaccine to protect as many people as possible from COVID-19.”





GSK is also collaborating with biopharmaceutical company AstraZeneca and the University of Cambridge to help the UK government conduct more COVID-19 tests, initially aiming to enable 30,000 per day.

In a similar move, tech giants Apple and Google are partnering on COVID-19 contact tracing technology that alerts people if they have been in contact with someone infected. “All of us at Apple and Google believe there has never been a more important moment to work together to solve one of the world’s most pressing problems,” says Apple.



**The reputation of a company as a whole will have to be steeped in their good deeds.**

**Pooj Morjaria, founder, Did They Help?**



Individual companies are also making unconventional business changes to support in-demand health facilities. Luxury group LVMH switched its perfume production lines to manufacturing hand sanitizer for French health authorities in mid-March; electronics manufacturer Foxconn started producing surgical masks in early February; and General Motors started working on plans to produce ventilators for the US government in March to fulfill a 30,000-unit order.

Did They Help? is a site documenting brands and celebrities that have contributed positively to COVID-19, listing them as “heroes” and allocating a point per good deed. The flipside is a list calling out brands that have had a negative impact, such as furloughing staff or providing misinformation about the virus—these are the “zeroes.” “The reputation of a company as a whole will have to be steeped in their good deeds,” website founder Pooj Morjaria tells Wunderman Thompson Intelligence. Ethics-driven consumerism, he says, “will grow and grow and grow.” Consumers will start to make “better informed decisions about where they’re spending their money, and that will have an impact on companies. So I think companies are really stepping up.”

#### Why it's interesting:

An unexpected health crisis has turned industries on their heads, and those able to make nimble, altruistic business changes in the interest of public health and the greater good are being recognized by ethically minded consumers. Coming out of the pandemic, “there will be a new ranking system or value system for holding companies and public figures accountable,” says Morjaria.

# Did they help?

Find out how a company or celeb  
behaved during the Coronavirus  
pandemic



Find out how a company or celeb  
behaved during the Coronavirus  
pandemic





## Future-proof ingredients

**Food that stands the test of time is proving to be a popular pantry requirement as consumers turn to provisions that are resilient and reliable.**

Sales of long-lasting goods have been on the rise since home quarantine regulations set in. In the United States, people are stocking up on staples like dried beans, sales of which rose 231% as of March 26, 2020, compared to last year; canned meat was up 188%; and canned tuna up 142%, according to Nielsen. In the United Kingdom, sales of canned pasta rose by 226% in the four weeks leading up to March 21, noodle sales increased by 167%, and pot noodle snacks by 150%.

“People will rely more on shelf-stable products, including frozen items, going forward, more so because people will simply be cooking more and eating out less for the foreseeable future,” Amanda Shapiro, editor of Bon Appétit’s *Healthyish*, tells Wunderman Thompson Intelligence. Shapiro also notes that, in addition to the reassurance that food is always in the house, convenience also remains a priority. “If they can’t buy a smoothie for breakfast or a salad for lunch, people will be looking for healthy convenience in other forms, like frozen smoothie packs, meal kits, et cetera.”



Frozen food sales are indeed on the up. A report released on April 28, commissioned by the American Frozen Food Institute, found that 86% of US consumers are stocking up on frozen goods, including 7% of consumers who rarely or never normally buy frozen. The report also suggests that this trend will continue, as half of consumers who have purchased frozen food since COVID-19’s onset say they will continue to do so.

In response, Sysco, the largest food distributor in the United States, recently announced that it would switch to selling frozen food in place of fresh meat and produce. In New York City, home to over 20,000 restaurants, businesses are changing tack and starting to sell frozen foods in bulk, including frozen dumplings from the iconic dim sum house Nom Wah; kosher meat, which can be kept in the freezer, from the famous Katz’s Delicatessen; and frozen Italian dishes such as gnocchi and lasagna from I Trulli.



Frozen-food subscription service Daily Harvest has seen a spike in sales since the onset of the pandemic. Rachel Drori, CEO and founder, says that over the course of April 2020, “we’ve been beating our customer acquisition target on average 70% per day.” The company’s mission is to provide healthy and delicious food conveniently.



Long-standing techniques for preparing and preserving foods, such as drying, salting and freezing, are also receiving renewed attention. In an April interview with *Time*, Michelin-starred chef Dan Barber said that he would be considering new tactics with regard to preservation and ensuring supply chains. Thinking of a particular pheasant farmer currently in difficulties, he said that, with hindsight, he would have shared the farmer’s produce with other restaurants and processed some of the meat into easily conservable dried meat and charcuterie.

**Why it’s interesting:**

Fresh groceries will still be around, but for people worried they will run out of provisions, turning to foods with long shelf lives offers convenience and comfort, and even chefs are seeing the benefit of this for their kitchens.

## 11

## Regenerative agriculture

**As consumers grow comfortable with ordering direct from local, sustainable farms during the pandemic, could we be witnessing a shake-up of our food supply?**

The pandemic has exposed the vulnerabilities of our intricate global food system. Border closures have led to the loss of migrant labor, meaning unharvested crops have been dumped or fed to animals. Tougher border restrictions have disrupted supplies. For consumers, shopping trips are now characterized by uncertainty and lengthy queues.

In some countries, this is prompting shoppers to experiment with ordering direct from smaller local farms and food producers.

In the United Kingdom, for example, YouGov research found that, since the pandemic began, 3 million people had ordered a vegetable box or ordered direct from a farm for the first time. Box scheme operators like Riverford and Abel & Cole are reporting unprecedented demand. A similar boom has been reported in Germany, according to Bavarian news outlet BR24, while in France, demand for “les drives fermiers,” a scheme that allows people to order direct from local farms, has reportedly quadrupled in some regions since the crisis.







**Since the pandemic began, 3 million people have ordered a vegetable box or ordered direct from a farm for the first time.**

**YouGov, UK research**

Farms to Feed Us is a British not-for-profit organization that is helping farmers, fishers and other food producers quickly pivot to a consumer-facing model, with the ultimate goal of establishing a more sustainable food supply chain. Founded by Cathy St Germans, a proponent of regenerative agriculture, the organization lists more than 250 businesses around the United Kingdom, many of which use regenerative or biodynamic principles.

The same trend is evident in the United States, as Dan Miller, CEO and founder of Steward, explains. Steward is an innovative “crowdfarming” platform that enables individuals to invest directly in sustainable and regenerative farms.

“We have seen a huge spike in direct-to-consumer sales,” says Miller, “with most farms in the Steward network reporting a two to three times increase in revenue in recent weeks. For example, we just rolled out an e-commerce platform for Fisheye Farms, a sustainable farm in Detroit, and it sold out its entire inventory on the first day.”



Miller adds that Steward is also seeing a welcome surge of interest from investors seeking more sustainable investments. “There is a need for capital as these farms retool their businesses to meet surging demand, which is matched with a desire for smaller-scale investors to put money into their communities and support the transition to a resilient and sustainable food system.”

**Why it's interesting:**

The pandemic is nudging us to consider how we can build greater resilience into our food system, reducing the miles from “farm to fork.” This could accelerate the growth of regenerative agriculture and food distribution, says Dan Miller, who anticipates that “this structural shift will continue to gather speed as consumers are becoming more comfortable with the direct to consumer model, helping to build a resilient, sustainable and distributed agricultural system.”



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## Skincare 2.0

**Technology for hyper-personalization in skincare is now also being used to elevate sanitation and deliver professional-grade care at home.**

Beauty experts are turning to technology to offer virtual facials and digital skin consultations. Kiehl's has made its in-store personalized consultation service, Healthy Skin Hub, available via an online chat service, while Deciem and Valmont are also introducing digital consultations to address skincare concerns and offer product recommendations. Renowned facialists including Dr Stefanie Williams, Abigail James and Nichola Joss are offering bespoke online skin tutorials and consultations, and virtual appointments.

To complement these services, skincare enthusiasts are purchasing products and devices that mimic professional procedures in the pursuit of clinical results at home. Beauty e-tailer Dermstore reported that purchases of tools such as microneedling devices were up 150% year-over-year in March and April 2020, exfoliation products were up 350% and sales of lip exfoliators and plumpers increased 200%, as consumers look for at-home alternatives to in-clinic treatments such as Botox injections and peels.



Alongside the growing appetite for medical-adjacent products, beauty brands, from the boutique to the behemoth, are pivoting to switch production to hand sanitizer, as the much-demanded product makes its way into the beauty category.

Big name brands such as LVMH, L'Oréal, Estée Lauder and Coty have all begun producing hand sanitizer, as well as indie brands including Saie, Clark's Botanicals and Megababe. Shen Beauty, a luxury boutique in Brooklyn, plans to formulate its own proprietary hand sanitizer.

Even non-beauty brands are producing products with skincare and sanitation in mind. Los Angeles-based distillery Amass launched its botanic handwash in March, blending notes of cinnamon, allspice, clove and eucalyptus.

**We are in the middle of a reframe of what a hand sanitizer is, what it looks like and what it feels like. For me, it is definitely something that will become a new part of our daily routine.**

**Katie Sturino, founder, Megababe**



To date, hyper-personalized beauty treatments have focused on factors such as microbiome conditions, hormone levels, air quality and ultraviolet rays. But with brands now claiming hand sanitizer as a beauty product, could it become the latest essential for skincare enthusiasts?

“We are in the middle of a reframe of what a hand sanitizer is, what it looks like and what it feels like,” Megababe founder Katie Sturino told *Glossy*. “For me, it is definitely something that will become a new part of our daily routine.”

**Why it’s interesting:**

Professional and back-aisle products typically relegated to the medical realm are getting the attention of skincare enthusiasts as consumers look to replicate the clinic at home.



## Anti-excess consumerism

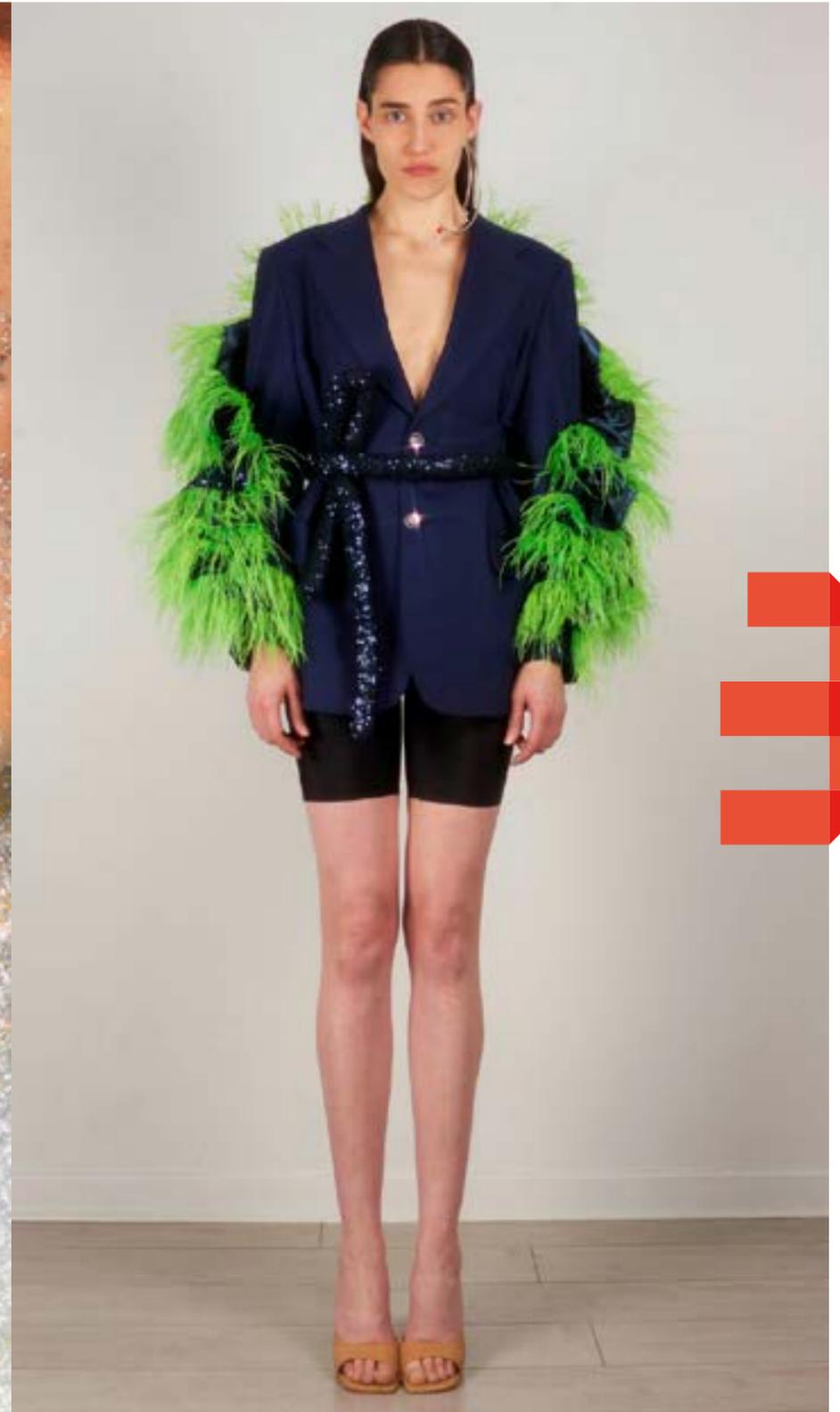
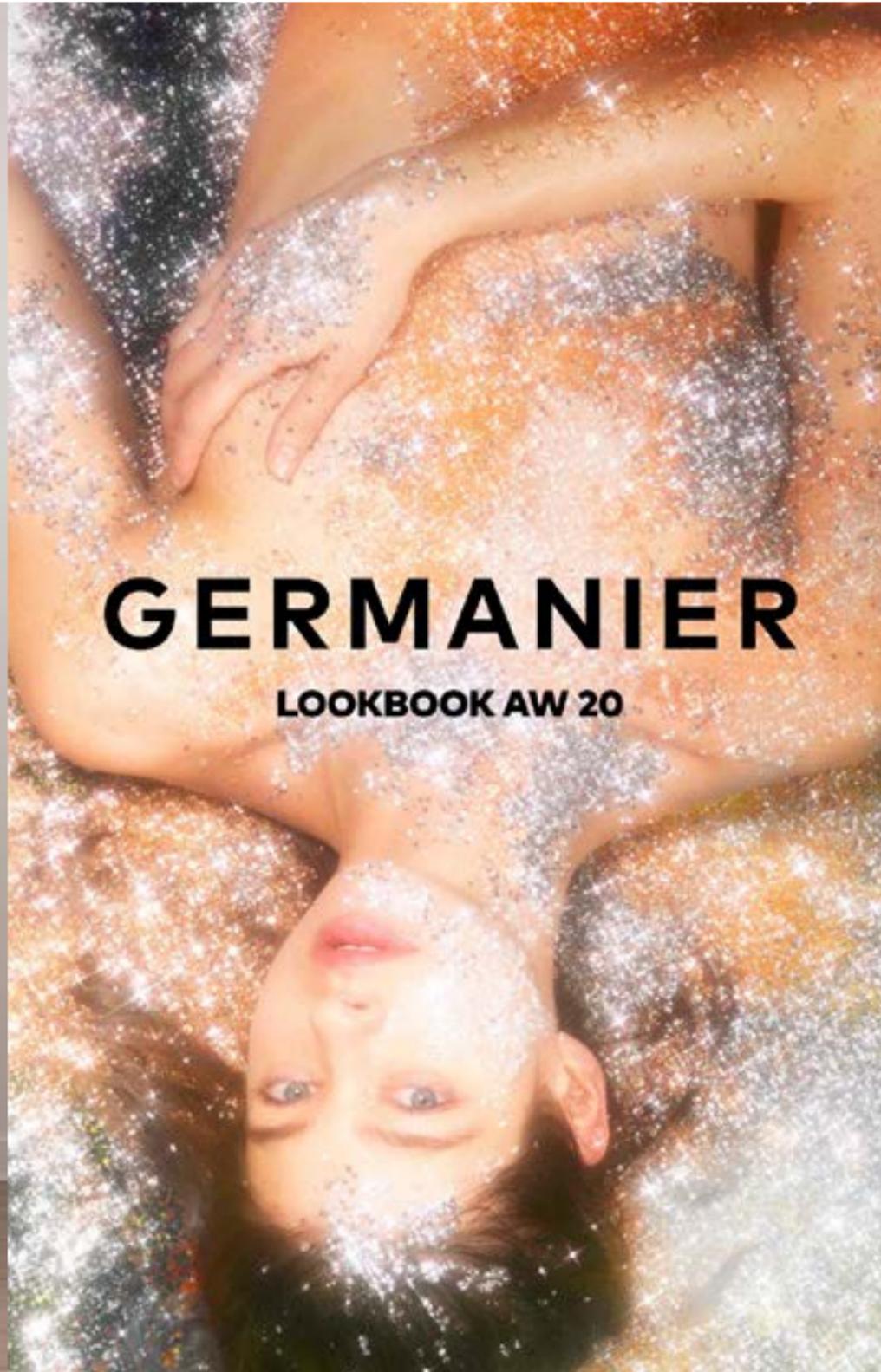
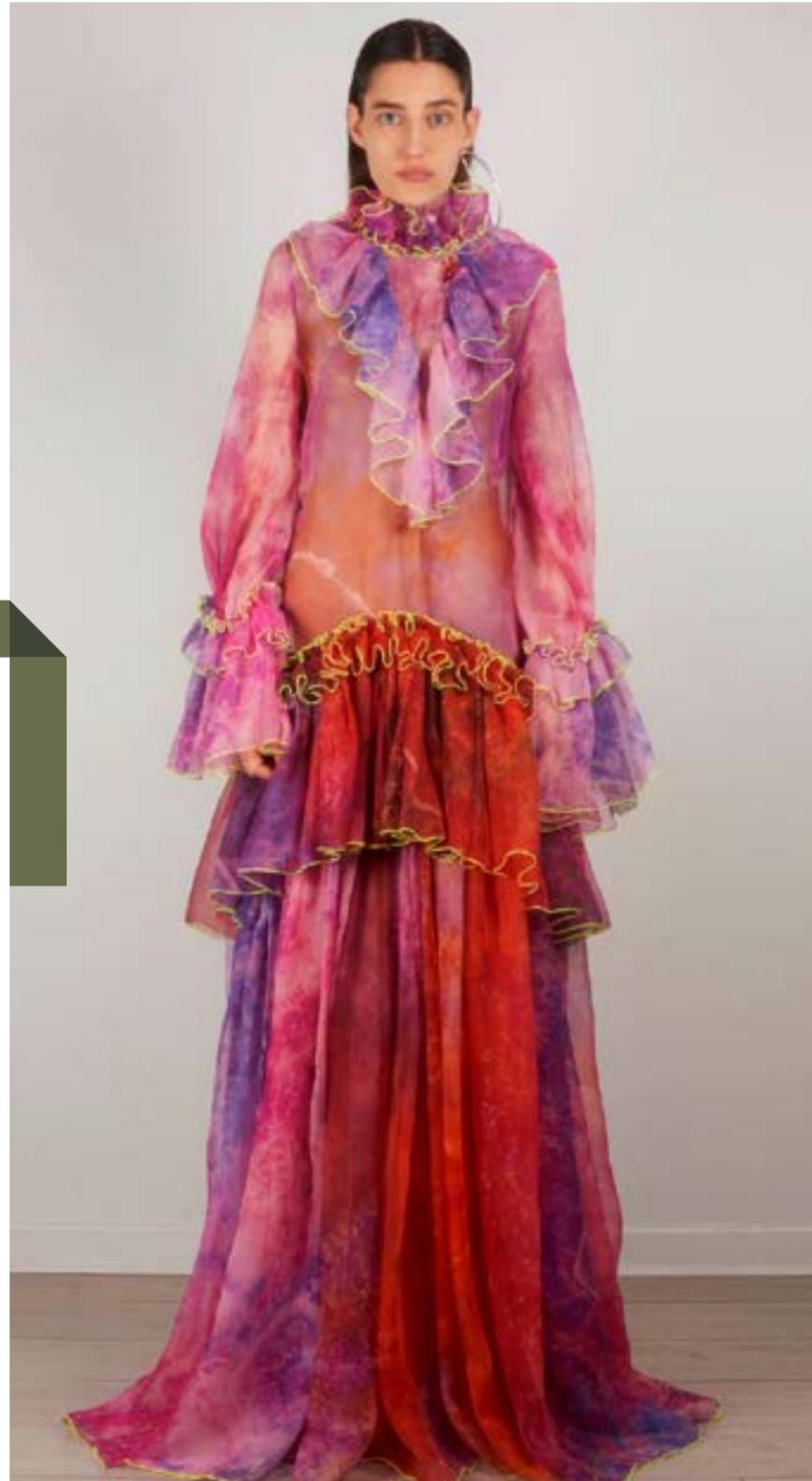
**As a pandemic recession looms, people are thinking twice before buying, and considering the long-term impact of their money on society and on the planet.**

The very definition of essential purchases is being debated. Food and medicine are obvious, but the status of entertainment or technology is less clear-cut, observed a recent article in *US News & World Report*. And what about non-essential purchases that put warehouse or delivery employees at risk?

In France, labor unions took Amazon to court for not doing enough to protect warehouse employees from exposure to the coronavirus and succeeded in temporarily halting delivery of non-essential items. In parts of the United States, local governments are preventing big-box retailers from selling non-essential items in store, to prevent crowding.

In the high-fashion world, where excess was once a badge of honor, designers are now reeling from cancelled orders, shows and collections. Kévin Germanier, the Paris-based Swiss-born designer whose luxe creations with upcycled materials have been worn by famous figures such as Lady Gaga and Björk, told the *South China Morning Post* he hoped the pandemic would hold a lesson for consumers.

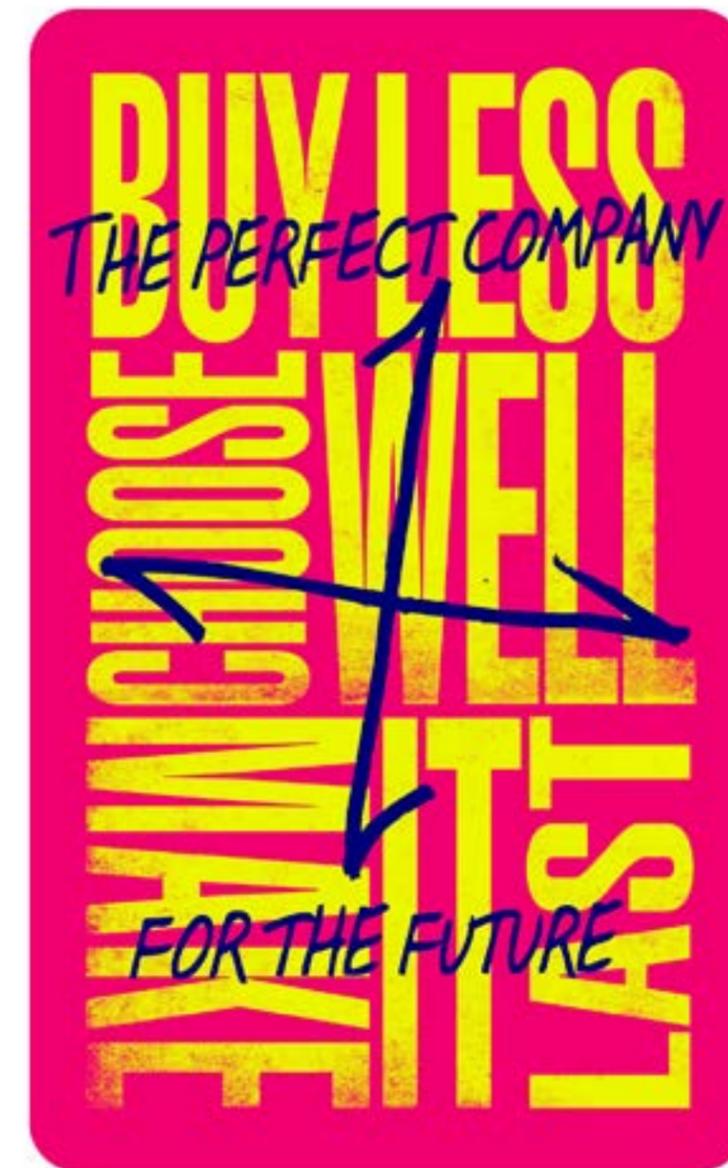






“One consequence I hope will stem from this tragic moment is that people question how and what they buy,” said Germanier. “I hope they’ll think about more sustainable choices; that they’ll have learned something from this situation.”

Jacqueline Rabot, one of the designers behind the upcycled, Los Angeles-based ready-to-wear label Rabôt, told *Vogue*: “Consumers seem to be stripping down the non-essentials and focusing on what they truly value.”





Anti-excess trends such as recycling clothing are likely to accelerate, and brands are already anticipating this. In late April 2020, Abercrombie & Fitch and Reebok became the latest brands to partner with clothing resale website ThredUp. Customers can now sell unwanted high-quality clothing via ThredUp and also earn Reebok loyalty points or Abercrombie gift certificates.

In China, a flagship Hermès store in Guangzhou reportedly pulled in \$2.7 million in sales on its first day of reopening, reflecting pent-up demand, but analysts warn against banking on such so-called “revenge spending.” “Revenge spending won’t become a mainstream phenomenon,” Gao Ming, senior vice

president and managing director of luxury practices in greater China at the Ruder Finn Group, told *Jing Daily*.

**Why it's interesting:**

Millennials and gen Zers were already gravitating to sustainable brands before the pandemic. The way some governments have framed the move to lockdown as health versus economy—as if one has to be sacrificed for the other—has left many questioning the very basis of our consumer-driven economy. Weeks in lockdown have only strengthened that introspection, and a yearning for less frequent, more mindful consumption.



14

## The new superstore

**A new breed of superstore is emerging as the restaurant industry is forced to flex.**

Despite mandated restrictions on in-person dining, restaurants are finding creative new ways to feed their communities. Across the United States and Europe, they are evolving into gourmet grocers and convenience stores to meet changing demands; patrons can now buy shelf-stable pantry staples and daily household necessities from their favorite eateries. This new hybrid business model merges gourmet restaurants, corner stores and farm shares, creating one-stop-shops where customers can buy everything from fresh produce to toilet paper to a homecooked meal.

The list of establishments' responses and the new ways they are finding to serve their clients evolved rapidly, as outlets of all kinds responded nimbly to changing conditions and regulations.

In New York, Little Collins launched Little Collins Pantry on March 17, 2020, offering products for elevated at-home dining, such as homemade pasta sauces, soups, grilled chicken and marinated portobello mushroom steak. Brooklyn wine bar Glou & Glick added sales of pancake mix, kosher salt, baking soda, tomato paste and hand soap to its repertoire alongside bottles of Bordeaux. Also in New York, Mexican restaurant Boca Santa set up an offer of



custom community-supported agriculture boxes filled with fresh produce from local farms and popular items from its menu, such as corn tortillas, salsa and hibiscus flower agua fresca. Prairie in San Francisco devised “pantry prepper kits” filled with shelf-stable cooking essentials.

Las Vegas restaurant The Stove, opened by two *Hell's Kitchen* contestants, converted into a pop-up market with eggs, canned goods and toilet paper. Porridge and Puffs in Los Angeles transitioned into a grab-and-go market with bulk grains, homemade pickles and even facial scrubs. Providence, Rhode Island favorite Avenue N put together hand-selected produce baskets with everything from peeled garlic cloves to house-made pizza dough to broccoli, rotating weekly based on market selection. Detroit bakery Sister Pie added locally sourced groceries to its more usual offer of kale salad and buckwheat chocolate chip cookies.





**This new hybrid business model merges gourmet restaurants, corner stores and farm shares, creating one-stop-shops where customers can buy everything from fresh produce to toilet paper to a homecooked meal.**

This new retail model is transforming high-end restaurants as well. Masa, the most expensive sushi restaurant in the United States, began selling \$800 make-your-own sushi boxes. And consumers found they could stock their kitchens with the same ingredients used in award-winning restaurants, as wholesalers and suppliers move from B2B to B2C retail models. Responding to reduced demand for restaurants, Natoora, whose produce graces the menu at Michelin-starred Per Se, began selling produce boxes in New York and London; wholesaler Smith & Brock in London launched a new home delivery service called Knock Knock, offering seasonal fruit, vegetables and dairy boxes; and Rozzo, a fishmonger which sources fruits de mer for Michelin-starred restaurants such as Marea and Daniel, opened a retail shop in Manhattan.

**Why it's interesting:**

Consumers are increasingly seeking out curated convenience in place of niche indulgence. As consumers' needs shift and restaurant operations evolve, the food industry is being fundamentally altered—ushering in the retail model of the future.



## Health concierges

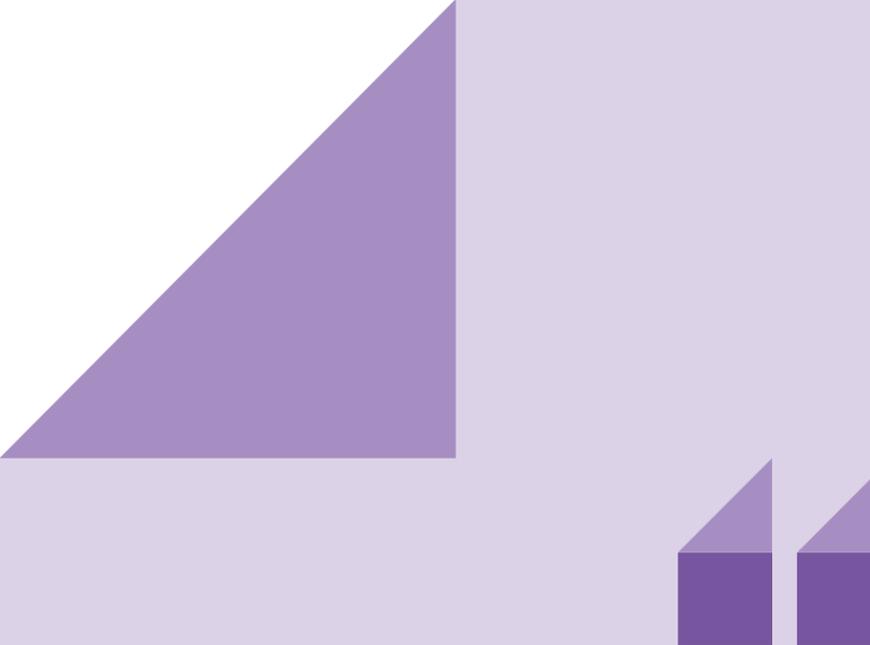
**Companies across all industries around the world are putting public health at the top of their agendas.**

According to Wunderman Thompson Data's Anxiety Index, 89% of Americans believe the government alone can't stop the spread of coronavirus and that companies have a responsibility to help. Post-pandemic, consumer concerns about health will be paramount, so businesses are starting to respond by promoting the health-first credentials of their products and services.

Amazon has started building a COVID-19 testing lab for its employees. Founder Jeff Bezos said in his April 2020 shareholder letter that the company is considering "regular testing of all Amazonians, including those showing no symptoms."

To help enforce quarantine restrictions in China, tech giant Alibaba created the Alipay Health Code app on smartphones. Users get a rating of green, yellow or red based on their personal health records, which allows them to move around in public spaces—or not.

In South Africa, mobile phone operator Vodacom is partnering with health insurer Discovery to offer free virtual doctor consultations to anybody worried they that they may have COVID-19 symptoms, through Discovery's DrConnect platform.



**89% of Americans believe the government alone can't stop the spread of coronavirus and that companies have a responsibility to help.**

**Wunderman Thompson Data**



In the United Kingdom, retailers on the city of York's famous Shambles shopping street adapted to the lockdown by suggesting a one-way system to help manage pedestrian traffic in the quaint, narrow lane, which posed problems for social distancing.

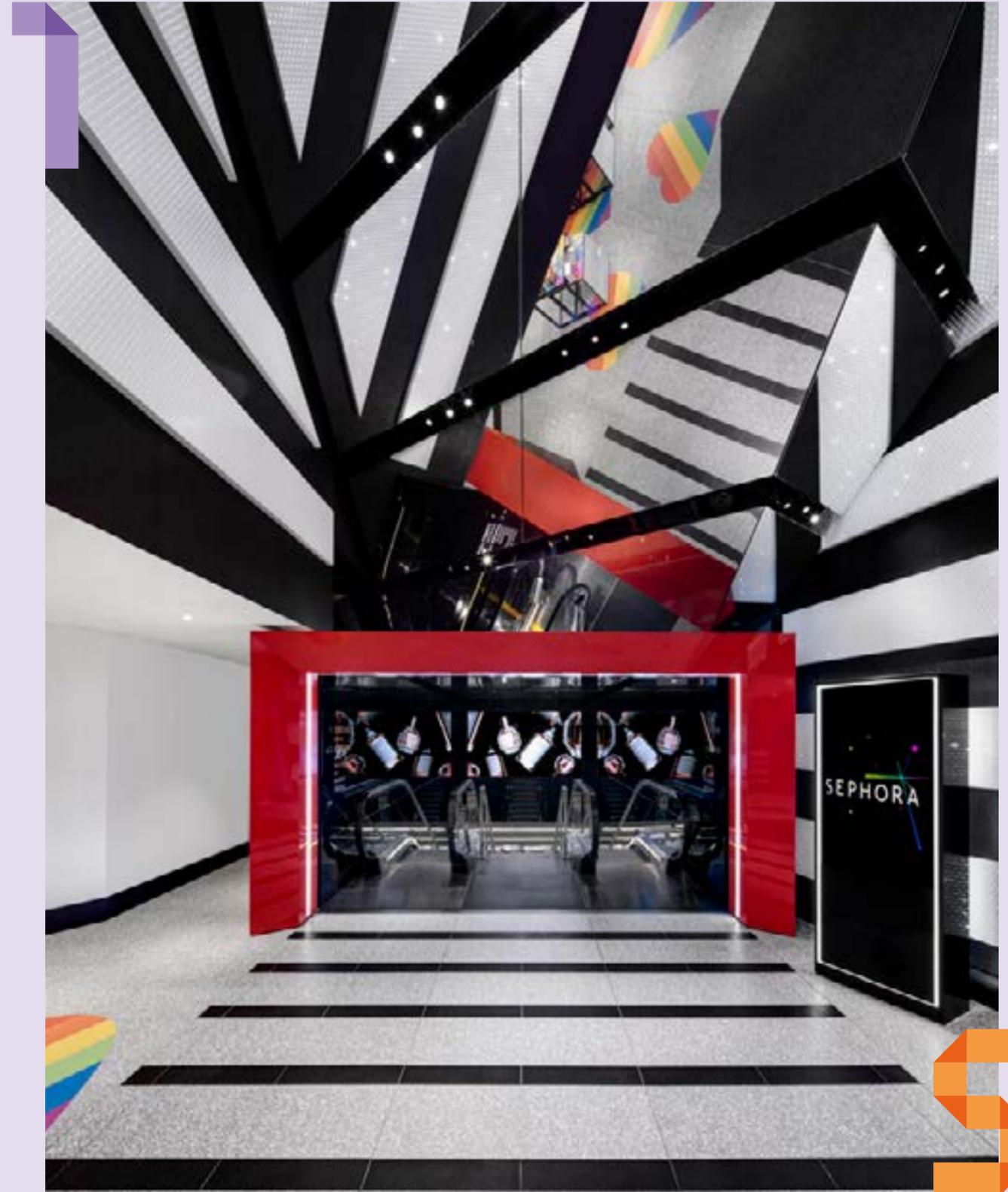
Fashion retailers are trialing new changing room measures that do not require staff to hand over number-of-item tags, and offering longer return windows for purchases to discourage the use of changing rooms altogether.

Beauty retail in particular is developing new measures to protect shoppers. In China, Sephora has implemented customer temperature checks, mask requirements, store sanitation every two hours, package disinfectant at checkout and individually wrapped disposable product tester tools. At Amorepacific in South Korea, testers are sanitized after each use. Shen Beauty, a luxury boutique in Brooklyn, plans to elevate similar measures once the store reopens, as well as formulate its own hand sanitizer which will be included gratis with every purchase.

As Accenture points out in its recent report "COVID-19: 5 new human truths that experiences need to address," COVID-19 means "every business is a health business." From now on, every company must respect consumer and employee health concerns, offering protective measures wherever possible.

#### **Why it's interesting:**

As we look towards the future, companies will seek to employ specialist health and hygiene experts who can devise innovative and preventative strategies to protect the health of employees and customers. Will chief health officer be the next trending job position in the C-suite?



## 16

## Wellness architecture

### The built environment is being reshaped as architects prioritize our health and wellbeing.

Architects are adapting existing spaces to accommodate distancing. In April 2020, days after global coworking giant WeWork announced the introduction of single-occupancy work nooks and dedensified lounges and meeting rooms, commercial real estate business Cushman & Wakefield launched its 6 Feet Office design concept, which proposes best practices including reconfiguring space so employees are properly distanced. Sanitization points and disposable desk toppers encourage daily hygiene, while visual prompts and one-way walking routes make circulation safer.

One-way routing is something we're likely to see more of, in environments from offices to retail spaces. In April, Rotterdam-based design practice Shift Architecture Urbanism published its proposal for a local outdoor micro-market concept based on a 16-square grid. Using barriers and tape to delineate different zones, the concept allows shoppers to safely order and collect groceries.



Beyond physical distancing, reducing transmission of pathogens via contaminated surfaces will be another focus. We're likely to see more designers specifying materials with anti-bacterial or anti-microbial properties, perhaps borrowing from those already in use in hospitals. Sharklet by Sharklet Technologies is a biomimetic surface technology that uses a pattern based on the texture of shark skin to inhibit the growth of bacteria.

Self-sanitizing technologies and materials will also be in demand. International architecture and design practice Scott Brownrigg recently announced it would be exploring the potential of self-repairing and self-cleaning materials "that use nano-biotic robots." The sterilizing properties of UV light are also being harnessed by designers such as Sum Ming Wong and Kin Pong Li from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, who won a James Dyson Award for their self-sterilizing door handle in 2019.

In new builds, architects may seek to eliminate the need for touch entirely. At the headquarters of Bee'ah, an environmental company in Sharjah, UAE, Zaha Hadid Architects is building in smartphone-activated services for users, allowing them to call elevators, operate blinds, lighting and ventilation, and even order coffee using their devices. Doors will be automated too, leveraging motion sensors and facial recognition technology.





Looking to the future, the pandemic is prompting architects to consider how they can build more resilient and self-reliant communities.

John Goldwyn, director of planning and landscape at architectural practice WATG in London, sees an opportunity to “emerge better and more in tune with our core values.” Goldwyn believes that designers have a responsibility “to design for people and prioritize their quality of life,” and underlines the importance of sustainability in “creating systems that help ourselves and our future generations thrive.”

Goldwyn says: “We can start by making cities greener, with parks and gardens, and more pedestrian friendly. Mindful interaction with nature improves our mental health, and our isolation during this crisis has exposed the fragility of human nature when we’re not able to socialize with each other.”

#### **Why it’s interesting:**

Expect to see an enhanced focus on hygiene and cleanliness in architecture, in tandem with a growing understanding of the important roles nature and sustainability play in building thriving and resilient communities.

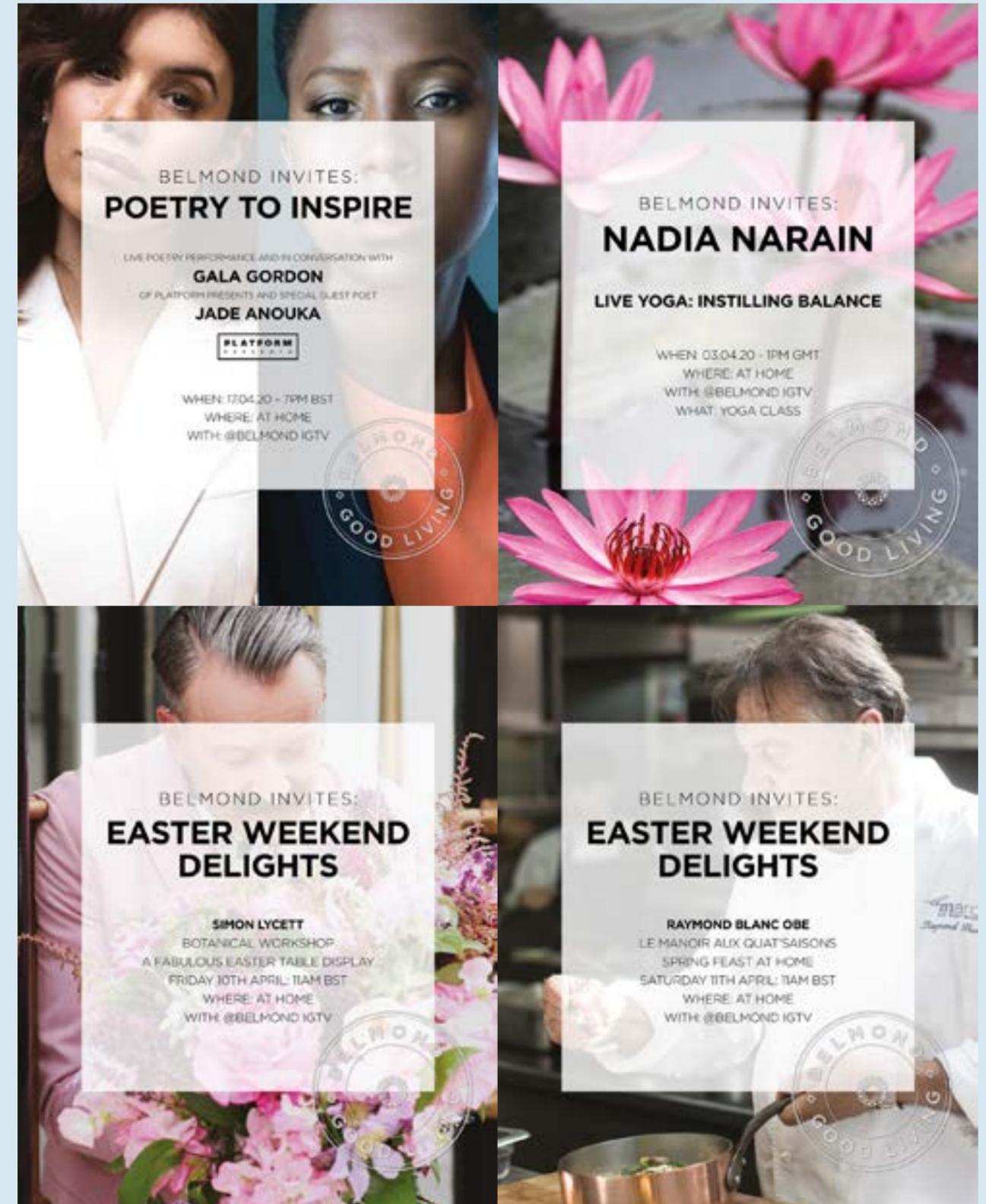


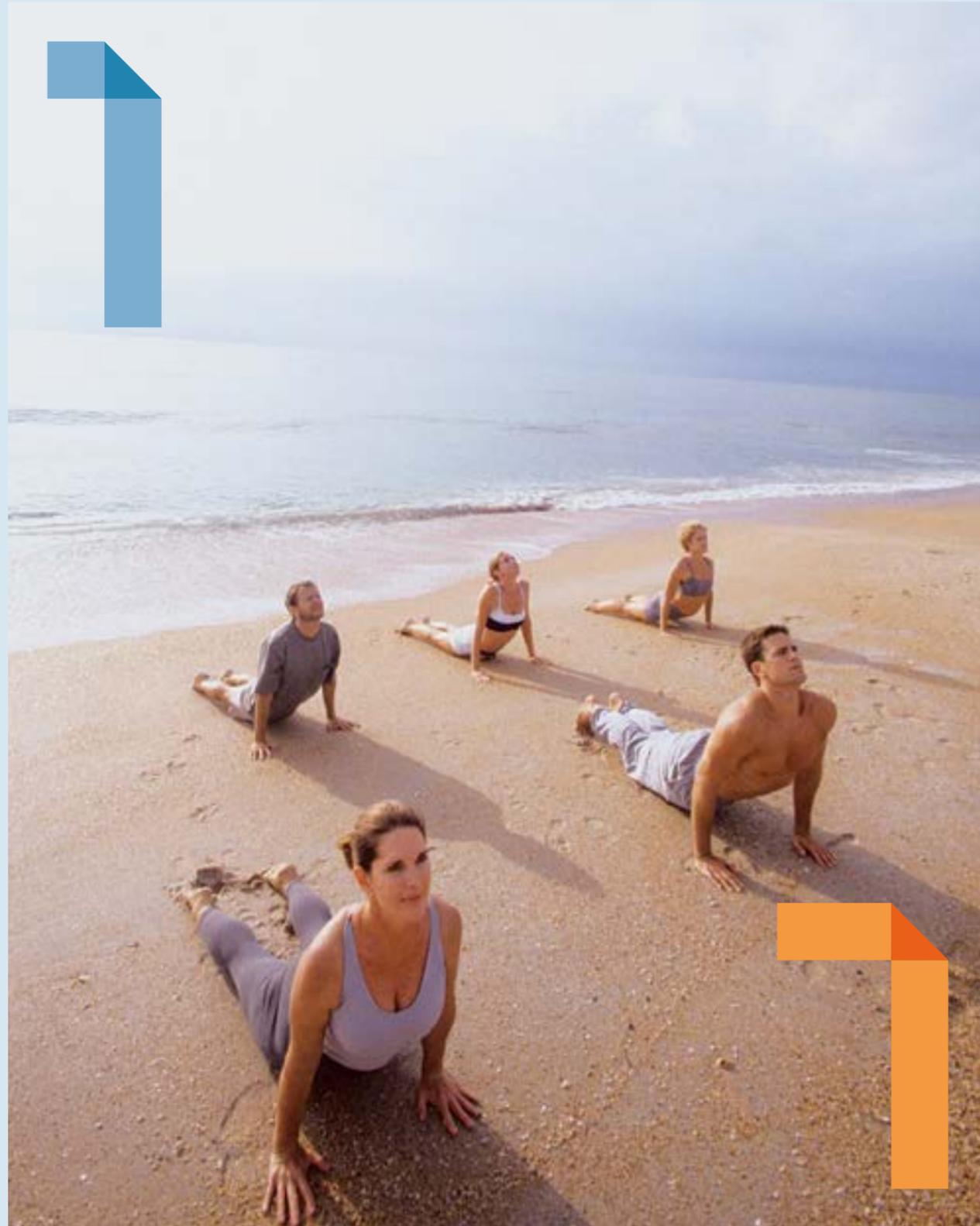
## Digital spas

**Spas are opening virtual doors to connect with customers at home.**

As consumers in isolation seek to maintain their pre-lockdown health regimes or kickstart new wellbeing lifestyles, wellness brands are finding innovative ways to translate their services into the digital realm.

Hotel groups across the world are offering a taste of bliss from home. Belmond has released the Belmond Invitations virtual Instagram series, which invites viewers to enjoy a range of performances from experts. These encompass everything from spa-inspired activities, such as calming meditations and recipes for make-at-home spa therapies, to tutorials across yoga, music, poetry and even floristry. “While travel is on pause, it is our role as a brand to inspire and keep the dream alive,” Arnaud Champenois, senior vice president for brand and marketing at Belmond, tells Wunderman Thompson Intelligence. “While everyone adjusts to their temporary stay-at-home lives, we believe it is the perfect opportunity to take time for self-care and focus on our wellbeing.”





“  
**Wellness brands are finding innovative ways to translate their services into the digital realm.**  
”

Six Senses revealed its new At Home With Six Senses virtual series, which offers viewers a host of at-home wellness activities, such as breathing and stretching techniques, making herbal elixirs and watching sleep tutorials led by experts. In Chicago, Swissôtel is hosting a variety of wellness live streams, from yoga sessions to sound bathing.





Spas and retreats are also dishing out their treatment recipes, helping people who may have planned spa getaways to get their wellness dose from home. Belmond shared the recipe for its detoxifying bath soak, which is made from ingredients found easily in the home, including sea salt, baking soda, tea leaves and essential oil. In Montana, The Resort at Paws Up is sharing tutorials that show how to create exfoliating body and lip scrubs from store cupboard ingredients, while the Mayakoba resort in Mexico is teaching people how to create immunity-boosting essential oils.

For those who aren't looking to commit to virtual classes and sessions but still want their wellness fix, the offering from Ragdale Hall Spa in the United Kingdom might hit the spot. The retreat is helping guests give their homes a spa-like touch, releasing signature Ragdale recipes and ways to make the home a calmer space in its emails and blog posts.

#### **Why it's interesting:**

As wellness finds a new space in the virtual world, how will spas, retreats and salons look when the new normal is established? Perhaps these new digital avenues will increase access to spa lifestyles—allowing a new clientele to experience treatments and activities they wouldn't previously have dreamed of, without a huge dent in their wallets. We could also see digital wellness entrepreneurs capitalizing on this trend by helping us to become smoother, tauter and healthier, in the comfort of our own homes.



## Engineering companionship

**Tech brands are stepping in to provide better ways to build and maintain relationships.**

Alongside the World Health Organization's tips for dealing with feelings of isolation, tech solutions are coming to the aid of singles, the elderly and anyone seeking companionship. Globally, there has been a rise in solo living, which has led many to feel a sense of independence and freedom, but in this time of social distancing can also be causing anxiety. Marketplace entrants include the QuarantineChat app, which offers toll-free "surprise conversations" at random times.

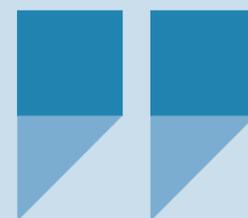
New and expanded dating apps let singles form different and potentially exciting partnerships despite lockdown. Tinder opened up its Passport feature so all singles around the world can connect with each other for free without having to physically travel, while the Hinge app added a video calling feature to replace in-person dates. The Quarantine Together dating app set out to foster good hygiene habits at the same time as new connections, by requiring users to confirm they'd washed their hands before matching them to a potential mate. It isn't just about the chat, though. The Wheel of Foreplay, by YouPorn in partnership with the Future of Sex Lab, allows users to have fun experimenting with random sexual acts, by themselves or with a long-distance or an in-house partner.





**If we approach this moment with intentionality, we may be able to use COVID-19 as a way to reset how we approach relationships and to revisit the place that relationships have in our lived priority list.**

**Vivek Murthy, former US surgeon general**

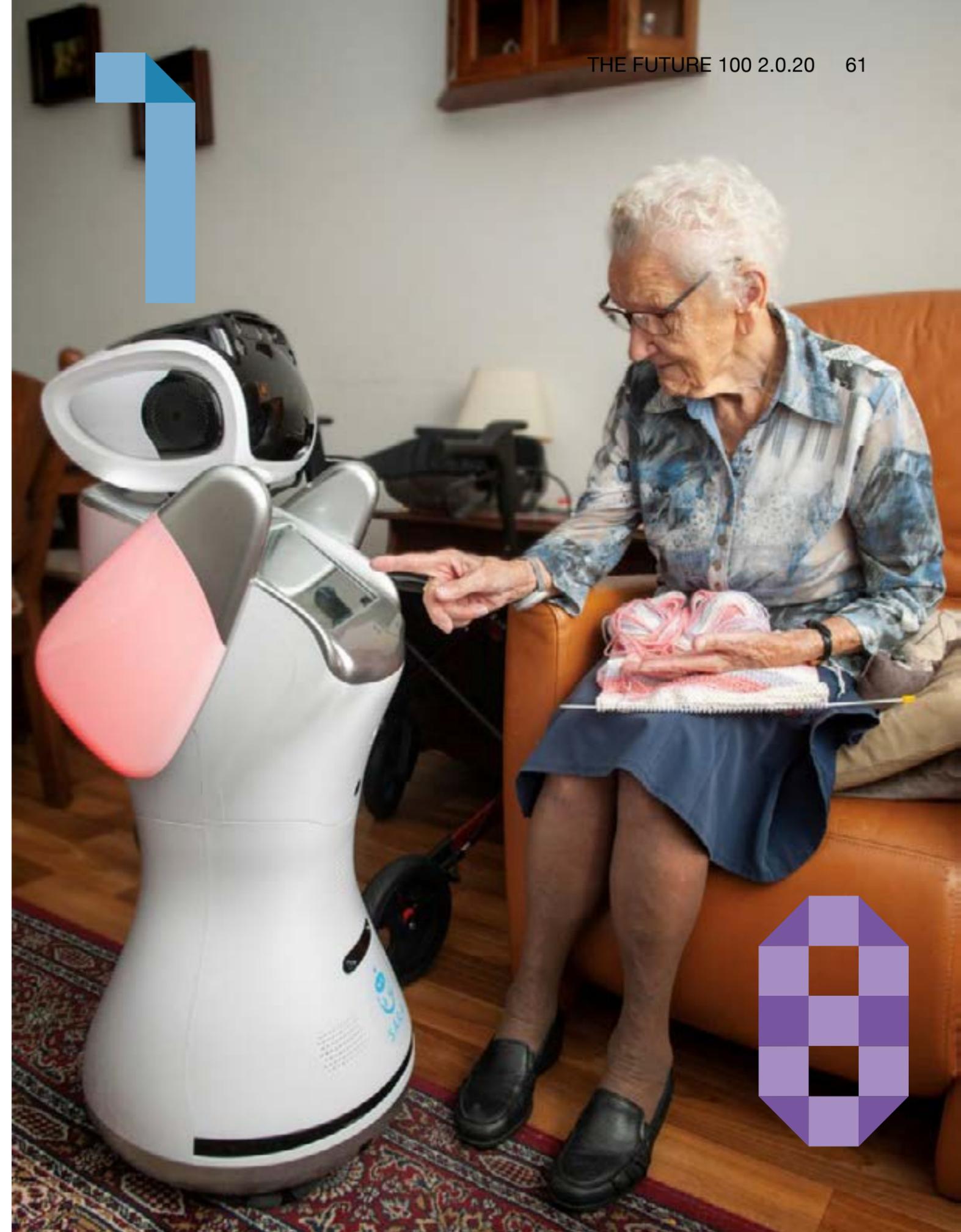




With visitors barred, care homes are looking to tech solutions to bring comfort and companionship to their residents. In the United Kingdom, care homes are trialing Facebook Portals to connect people with their family and friends. Zorabots in Belgium and SARA (Social & Autonomous Robotic Health Assistant) robots in the Netherlands have been lent to care facilities to keep residents entertained and allow them to speak to family and friends.

#### Why it's interesting:

"If we approach this moment with intentionality," former US surgeon general Vivek Murthy said on NPR's *Hidden Brain* podcast, "we may be able to use COVID-19 as a way to reset how we approach relationships and to revisit the place that relationships have in our lived priority list." Brands can contribute with tools that foster human-to-human interactions and nourish companionship.



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## New payment gestures

**With people wary of touching money or keypads, the pandemic is accelerating the spread of frictionless payment apps.**

In the past few years, the fintech world has been churning out new ways to pay by linking credit cards and bank accounts to mobile apps using identifiers such as QR codes and biometrics in place of old-fashioned signatures or PINs. Adoption degrees have been variable. Until recently, such apps were considered niche, and were only common in almost cashless markets such as China and Scandinavia.

The goals up to now have been speed, convenience and security. Now a side benefit of these apps has become the top priority: they're contactless.

In China, even before the pandemic, more than 80% of mobile phone users were already using proximity mobile payments, according to eMarketer, for everything from buying clothes and food to hailing cabs. The main players, Tencent's WeChat Pay and Alibaba's Alipay, rely on QR codes and facial recognition.

"We've seen acceleration of contactless service demand—from payment to delivery and then some," says Justin Peyton, APAC chief strategy and transformation officer for Wunderman Thompson. "The brands that already had this



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# We shouldn't be touching anything.

**Richard Crone, CEO, Crone Consulting LLC**



in place are benefiting, but more interesting are all the brands that are innovating in the space. Alipay, for example, developed a feature to help Wuhan area businesses build a footprint while enabling sales through their contactless function.”

In the United States, where there were only 64 million proximity mobile payment users in 2019, according to eMarketer, the trend will accelerate. Cash and keypads now seem fraught with risk, even if stores step up cleaning routines.

“We shouldn't be touching anything,” Richard Crone, CEO of mobile-payment research firm Crone Consulting LLC, told *Bloomberg*. Crone said he expects the pandemic to boost contactless payments by an additional 10-20% of transactions at stores and ATMs. He predicts that use of person-to-person services like PayPal, Venmo and Zelle will also increase.

Amazon is reportedly working on a hand recognition system for checkouts at Whole Foods. The system, codenamed Orville, scans shoppers' hands so they don't have to touch a screen or keypad. Walmart recently tweaked its self-checkout system so shoppers no longer have to touch a pay-now button; they scan a QR code instead.

### **Why it's interesting:**

Almost overnight, the pandemic is speeding the adoption of mobile payment apps in countries that were once resistant. This contactless imperative extends from ordering to paying and delivery. Fast-food chains around Asia are already delivering food at building entrances or to the gates of homes, to adhere to social distancing protocols. JD.com in China and Google's Wing drones in the United States have experimented with delivering essential supplies and medicine to those in lockdown, to eliminate human contact entirely.



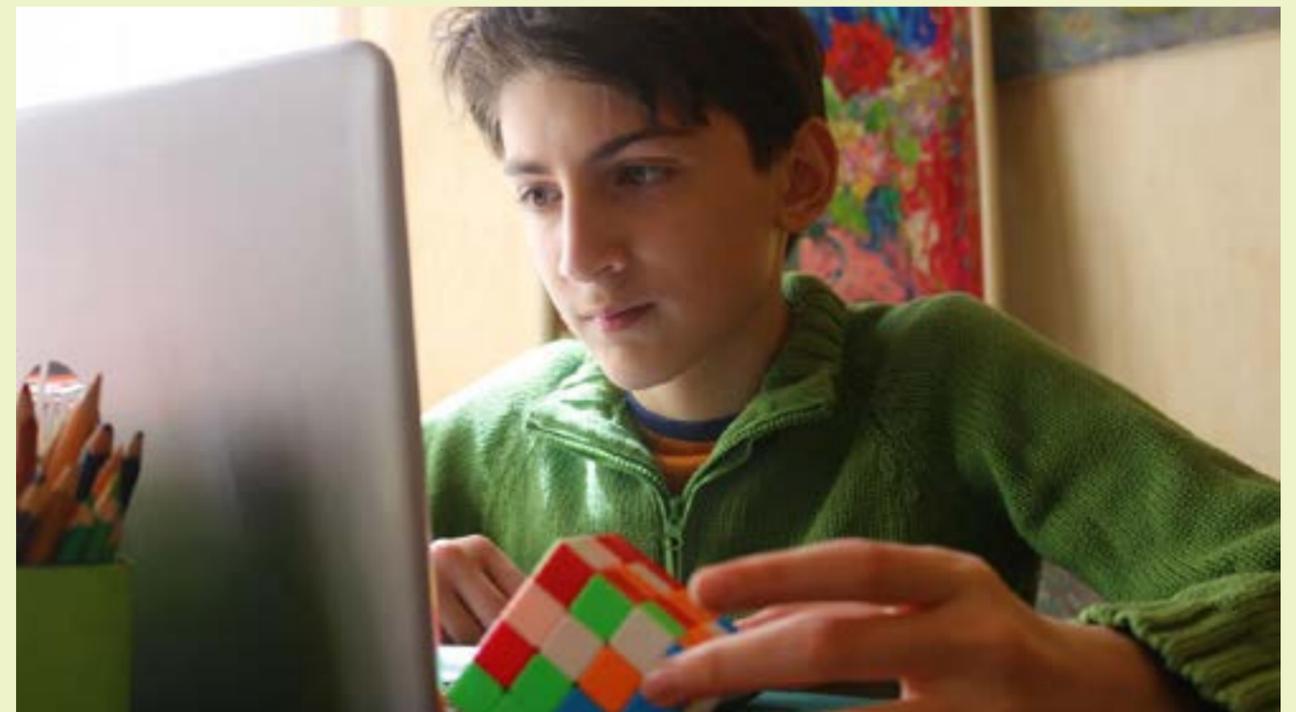
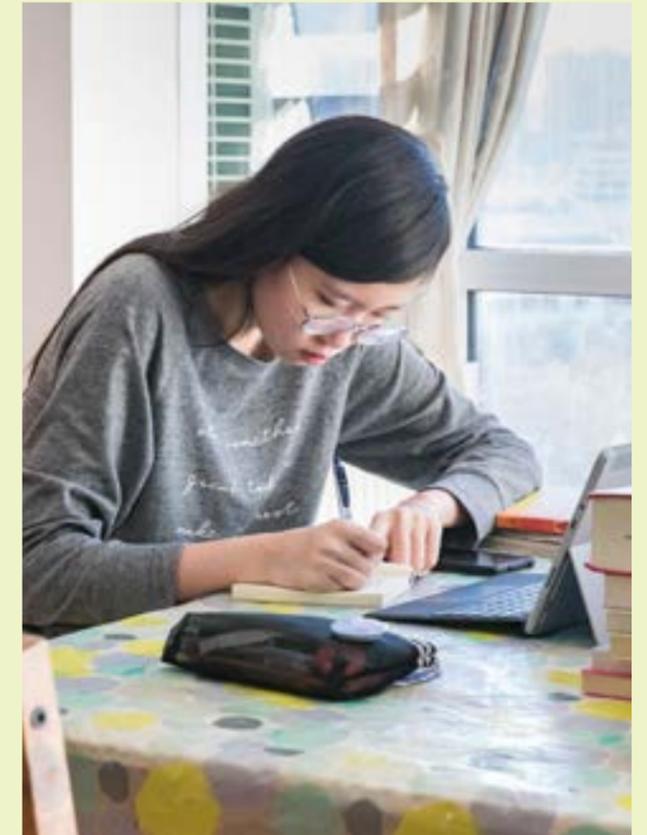
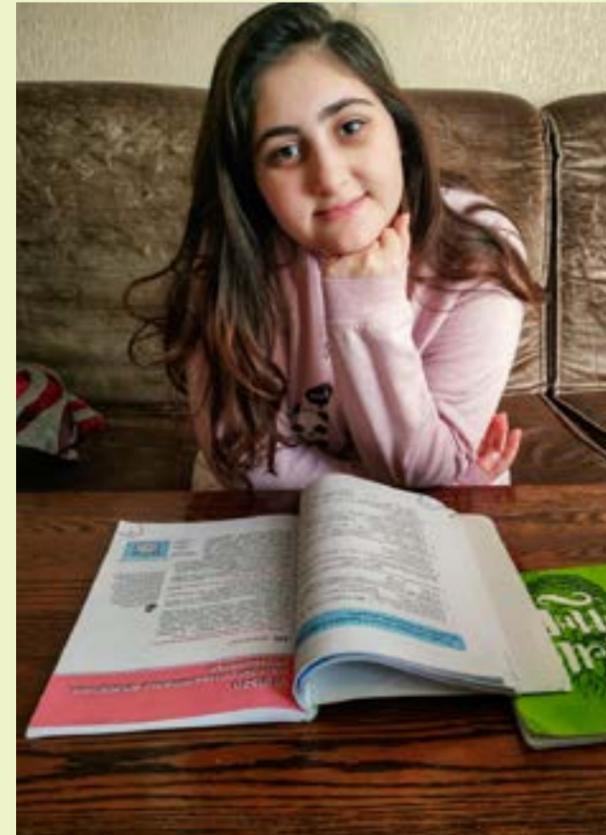
## Gen Z finances

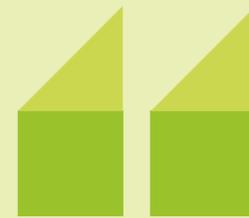
### The financial future of generation Z, today's teenagers and young adults, is set to prove challenging.

Millennials came of age in the 2008 recession, and still bear the scars in the form of heftier student loans and skimpier bank balances than their parents had at the same life stage. Now generation Z will enter the world of work amid a recession whose end point is as yet unknown. They will need to be pragmatic with finances and will need help with managing their money.

In a March 2020 essay for the *New York Times*, Katherine Hu quoted a friend as saying, "I just don't think we have the luxury to have dreams anymore." Hu, a junior at Yale, described herself as plugging along, researching sublets for a summer internship in New York City, even as her friends' upcoming interviews, jobs and internships were being canceled.

A Wunderman Thompson Data survey carried out in the same month finds that younger American citizens are significantly more anxious than older ones. It's not COVID-19 specifically that's driving their anxiety, but the implications for their future, including job prospects and the cost of living. Among respondents aged 18 to 24, over 10 times more describe themselves as anxious than not.





**Generation Z will enter the world of work amid a recession whose end point is as yet unknown.**





Significantly, younger workers are more likely to lose their jobs if businesses go under. According to the Pew Research Center, nearly half of the 19.3 million workers in America aged 16 to 24 work in the service sector. In areas hardest hit, these are the businesses most in danger of shuttering.

Youth-oriented financial influencers on social media are adjusting their advice for the times. These so-called fin-fluencers are experiencing as much as a four-fold surge in views, *Women's Wear Daily* reported in mid-April.

Haley Sacks, the Instagram influencer known as Mrs Dow Jones, is running an eight-week financial education program during the pandemic. Weekly themes include jobs, personal finance, healthcare and taxes. “Like face masks or Purell, clear, actionable advice is now a necessity,” she says. “You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control how you react.”

**Why it's interesting:**

Gen Z is starting out with the cards stacked against them financially. How they respond will shape career choices, opportunities and their financial health for decades to come.



## The new language of advertising

**Brands and advertisers are rethinking how they talk to consumers as traditional communication strategies and cultural tropes are being upended.**

Hugs and handshakes are out. Finger-licking too. And with half the world in lockdown, standard backdrops for advertising—sporting events, busy streets, family reunions, holidays—now seem off-key, if not downright dangerous.

A Jack Daniel’s ad memorably employed footage of lockdown life, showing real people at home, playing chess via mobile chat and ping pong with a makeshift net on a kitchen table, and toasting each other with glasses of whiskey, both virtually and through apartment windows.

KFC, which coined the phrase “finger lickin’ good,” has suspended ads showing people licking their fingers while eating its fried chicken. With not just finger-licking but handshakes and hugs now taboo, new gestures have arisen. The elbow bump and the “Wuhan shake,” which sees greeters tapping their feet together, have shown up in social media footage around the world.





**Standard backdrops for advertising — sporting events, busy streets, family reunions, holidays — now seem off-key, if not downright dangerous.**



There are indications that some of these new behaviors may have sticking power. A US survey on pandemic attitudes by Wunderman Thompson Data finds that, while the majority expect to return to their regular activities and behavior after the crisis, that's not so much the case with person-to-person interactions.

While more than 70% expect to go back to frequenting restaurants, movie theaters and sporting and cultural events, the numbers fell for certain social interactions; 35% say they expect avoiding hugs to become the new normal and 36% expect to continue social distancing. Forty-one percent do not expect to go back to kissing someone on the cheek by way of greeting, while 43% do not expect to resume shaking hands. The survey covered 500 adults in the United States and was conducted between March 20 and 23, 2020.

**Why it's interesting:**

Post-pandemic consumers will live in a less touch-oriented world with a focus on the home and a new emphasis on digital life. With this new set of values comes a new lexicon for advertising—brands and marketers will need to ensure the world and principles they're portraying reflect consumers' realities.

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## The gaming multiverse

**During lockdown, gaming's versatility has made it a savior for many; its benefits include companionship, education and stress relief.**

A 2019 study by the Entertainment Software Association found that 79% of American gamers believe video games provide them with mental stimulation and 78% find gaming offers stress relief and relaxation. In addition, 74% of parents believe video games can be educational for their children, while over half (57%) say they enjoy playing with their child at least once a week.

Nintendo's *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* was released in the thick of the global lockdown on March 20, 2020 and became the world that everyone wanted to escape to. The game is set on an island and requires players to nurture the land with simple actions such as picking fruits or befriending villagers. The laid-back island-life gameplay has proved therapeutic and even life-affirming for some. "In this world, my contributions may be small, but I can see my island slowly transform for the better," wrote Louryn Strampe in *Wired*. "Seeing the progress is a reminder that my actions have meaning, even when they're small, and virtual."



**As more people tune into virtual worlds, the wide and varied benefits of gaming mechanics are opening up to the mainstream.**



Canadian startup Tru Luv Media has revamped its #SelfCare app to support its users' wellbeing. The app invites users into a virtual bedroom where they can accomplish simple tasks such as watering a plant or picking up laundry, to achieve a sense of order and calm.

Building community through gaming has also risen in popularity during self-isolation. Video chat platforms such as Zoom and Houseparty include integrated games, so a catchup can turn into a trivia session or a game of Heads Up. "It is very important for mental wellbeing to maintain relationships and contact with friends and family, and online games are an excellent method for facilitating this," Dayna Galloway, head of division of games and arts at Abertay University, Scotland, told the BBC.





Games have also helped provide a “third place” in lieu of physical gatherings. In Japan, elementary school students brought classmates together in *Minecraft*, where they hosted a “telegraduation.” In the United States, students at several colleges, including the University of Pennsylvania and Berklee School of Music, are building campus replicas in *Minecraft*.

In the absence of music festivals, *Fortnite* hosted a Travis Scott concert in April, drawing in over 12 million players to join the live virtual performance. Its success, and *Fortnite*’s overall number of active users reaching 350 million in April 2020, spurred the launch of Fortnite Party Royale, which premiered on May 8, featuring Deadmau5, Steve Aoki and Dillon Francis.

As well as promoting wellbeing and community, games can help people develop a range of life skills, according to experts. “People learn how to negotiate, collaborate, to take turns, to think critically with others, and so on,” Isabela Granic, professor of developmental psychopathology at Radboud University, the Netherlands, told *Time*.

#### **Why it’s interesting:**

During mass isolation the number of online gamers more than doubled in Europe, according to Telefónica, and video-game traffic increased by 75% in the United States, reports Verizon. As more people tune into virtual worlds, the wide and varied benefits of gaming mechanics are opening up to the mainstream.



## New dining formats

**Restaurants are having to adapt rapidly to pandemic precautions.**

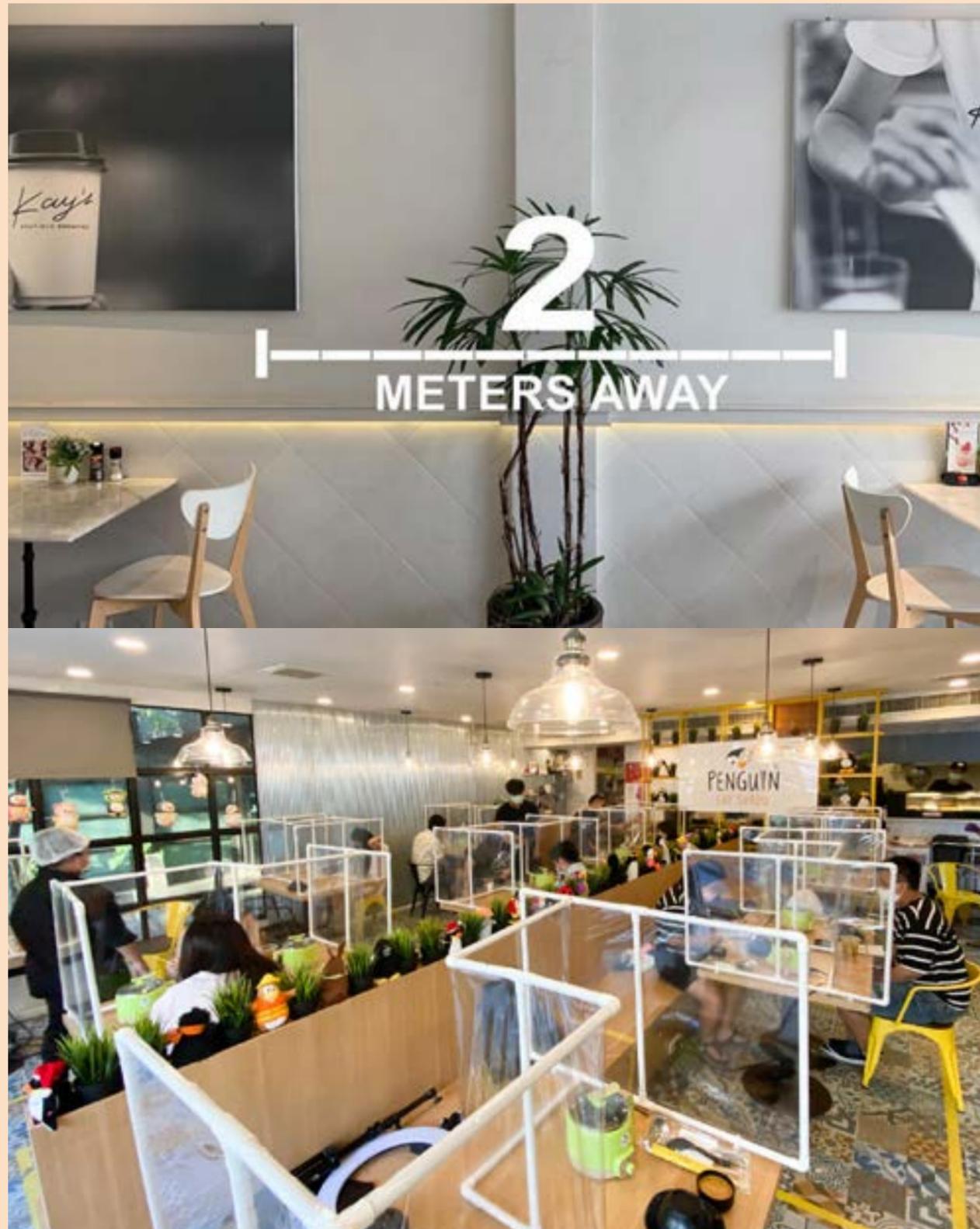
The restaurant landscape will be very different for the coming months: temp checks upon entering, masked waiters, half-empty venues. Restaurants and cafés eager to open again are turning to design solutions to create a dining experience that is safe, intimate and atmospheric.

On April 16, 2020, American-based chef Dave Chang tweeted “Can diners in Taipei, Hong Kong, Korea, China send me photos of what it looks like in restaurants.” Replies poured in, with pictures of restaurants with tape across tables, plastic sheets between diners and even cardboard dividers—not the most attractive ways to appeal to diners, but a pragmatic temporary solution.

Yardbird in Hong Kong reopened in April using plexiglass dividers between booths, only allowing a maximum of four people per party, and sanitizing surfaces every 30 minutes. Lindsay Jang, cofounder of Yardbird, notes that the “energy” in the restaurant is not the same. However she believes people appreciate the boundaries put in place so that they feel safe while dining.







Kay's Boutique café in Bangkok, Thailand opened again on May 3, 2020, with a two-meter distance rule for tables, temperature checks, thorough sanitation, partitions between diners, employees in masks and face shields and contactless payment. The café's famous flower tunnel remains open, but guests are limited to three at a time.

Dining experiences that typically cater to large groups are going through a rethink too. Bangkok's Penguin Eat Shabu hotpot restaurant has not only put up plastic dividers but is also only allowing a maximum of two people to share each hotpot—typically a communal dish.

Mediamatic Eten, a vegan restaurant in Amsterdam, has installed serres séparées (individual glass booths that resemble small greenhouses) along the waterfront outside the premises as a solution to distanced dining. Originally designed as a test concept, the experimental dining pods were rapidly fully reserved for over a month after the opening date was announced. "In these times we are re-inspired by contamination precautions and the redesign of togetherness," says Mediamatic. "Our greenhouses protect you from the outside and others while offering you a unique experience of intimate dining."

#### **Why it's interesting:**

Dining out will not be the same again for some time, if ever. As well as regaining people's trust by strictly following safety regulations, some restaurants are going a step further by purposely installing design that makes for a unique and memorable dining experience.



## Renewed faith

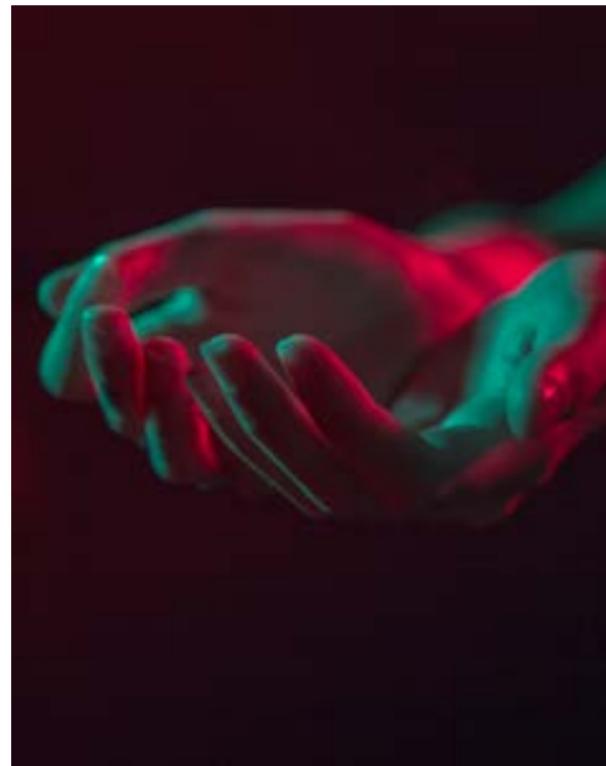
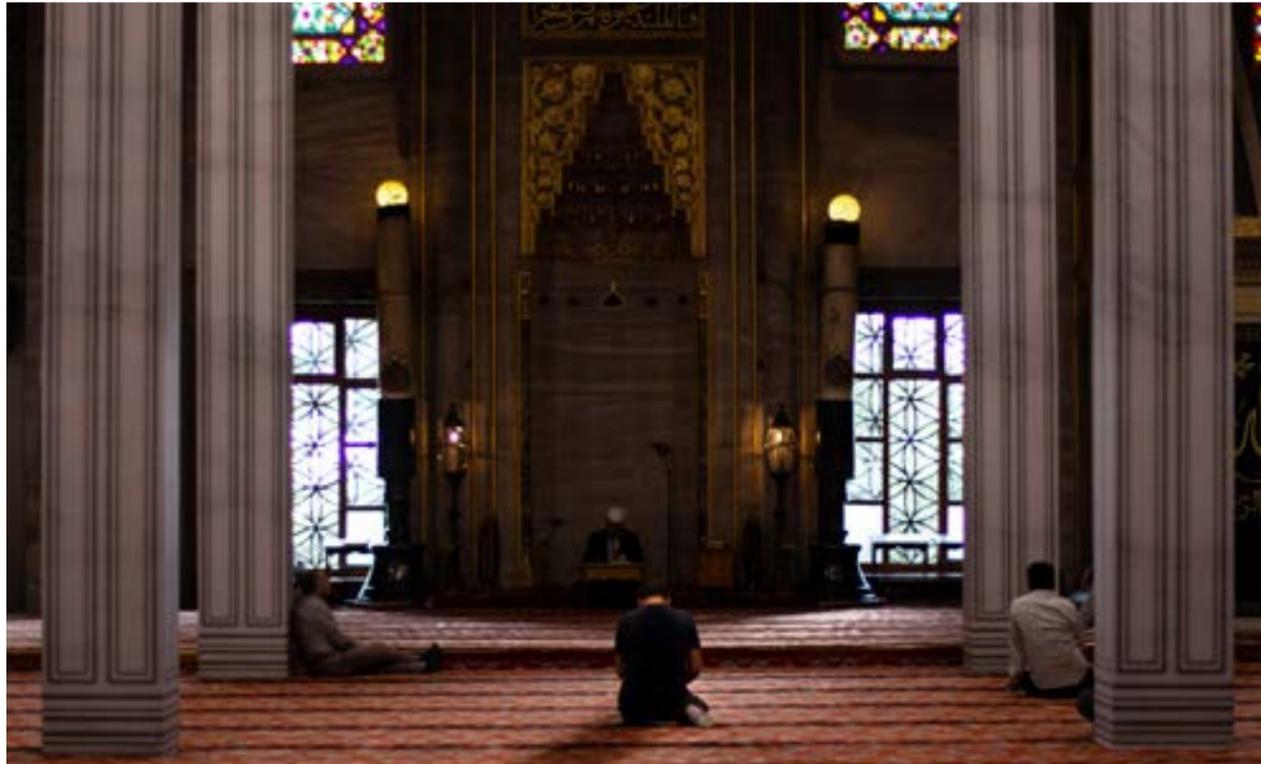
**Spirituality is surging as people seek comfort and steadiness in turbulent times.**

Google searches for “prayer” as a share of total searches surged in March 2020 when COVID-19 went global, according to Jeanet Sinding Bentzen, an associate professor of economics at the University of Copenhagen. “The results can be understood as religious coping,” Bentzen wrote in a working paper. “We pray to cope with adversity.”

Using data from internet searches for “prayer, including terms such as “God,” “Allah” and “Muhammad,” she found that search intensity doubled for every 80,000 new cases of COVID-19 infection. Her draft paper, titled “In Crisis, We Pray: Religiosity and the COVID-19 Pandemic” was posted online on March 30 and focuses mostly on Christians and Muslims. People are not just praying more; more people overall may be praying.

More than half of American adults say they have prayed for an end to the spread of the coronavirus, according to a March 2020 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. Close to nine out of 10 Americans who pray daily say they are praying in the pandemic. What’s more surprising is that 15% of those who say they seldom or never pray, as well as 24% of those who say they do not belong to any religion, have also been praying.





“

**The pandemic is providing millions with time to look inward — and upward — in newly spiritual ways that may last longer than the lockdown.**

”

At Pray Inc, which publishes and streams religious content, “business has been booming,” cofounder Steve Gatena told the *Los Angeles Business Journal*. “We’ve seen a massive increase in installs, trial starts and listening minutes across the board.” The most popular content these days is meditative prayers and children’s stories, “specifically around fighting anxiety, parenting and morning gratitude,” he said.

Others have turned to meditation and other forms of spirituality. Meditation app Headspace is offering a free program called *Weathering the Storm*, which includes meditations, sleep and movement exercises.

In an article for the Mayo Clinic website, William Creech, a chaplain from Minnesota, urges readers to build a spiritual life by doing things that bring fulfillment, joy and peace, rather than activities that simply fill lockdown time. Look for small acts that can brighten the lives of others, he suggests, such as donating to a shelter or playing a safely distanced game or music with neighbors.

**Why it’s interesting:**

The pandemic is providing millions with time to look inward—and upward—in newly spiritual ways that may last longer than the lockdown.



## Gamescape travel

**Video games and virtual platforms are evolving into modern modes for digital tourism.**

“The convergence of different technologies into the virtual realm could create a serious and exciting alternative to the reality of travel,” Philippe Brown, founder of luxury travel company Brown and Hudson, tells Wunderman Thompson Intelligence. “In the uber-luxury realm, we’re already speaking with a client who’d like us to scope out the creation of a virtual travel experience designed exclusively for their family to a land we co-create,” Brown explains. “It’s early days, but they imagine a destination that is a synthesis of several past journeys, some imagined and some on their wish list.”

Travel companies are starting to lean into this virtual extension of travel. Soul & Surf, which organizes yoga and surf retreats all over the world, recently introduced a new “virtual holiday.” Called Soul & Surf Pause, the two-day program creates a weekend retreat at home, with yoga and meditation workshops, lessons on surfing fitness and technique (without the waves) and cooking classes—all held over Zoom.







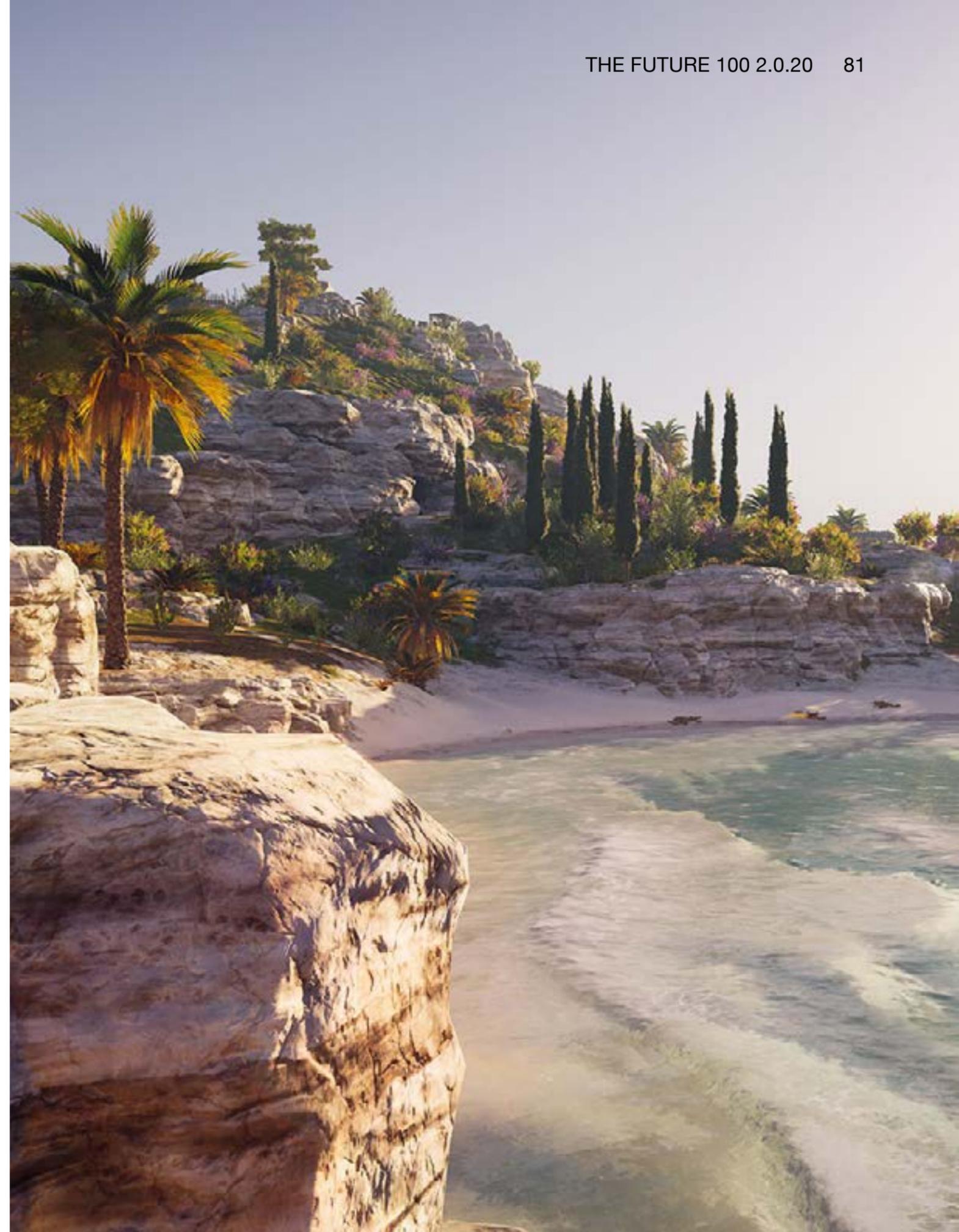
**That thrilling feeling of being somewhere new is no longer the exclusive domain of real-world travel.**

**Rough Guides**



Airbnb launched Online Experiences on April 9, 2020, allowing virtual tourists to “travel” via Zoom to meditate with Buddhist monks in Japan, visit with the dogs of Chernobyl and cook with a Moroccan family in Marrakech.

In February 2020, British travel guide publisher Rough Guides partnered with Xbox to release a virtual travel guide through the diverse landscapes and captivating universes of various games. The guide highlights beautiful don’t-miss digital destinations and otherworldly vistas in the worlds of *Halo 5: Guardians*, *Metro Exodus* and *Forza Horizon 4*, among others. “Game graphics are so immersive and all-consuming, you don’t just experience the gameplay—you experience the very world in which the gameplay unfolds,” according to Rough Guides. “That thrilling feeling of being somewhere new is no longer the exclusive domain of real-world travel.”





The cultural customs central to travel—like going on local tours and visiting museums—are also migrating to virtual gaming platforms. Nintendo has introduced several seasonal events in *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*, including a May Day tour during the first week in May. Players used a one-time May Day ticket at the island airport to head out on a limited-time island tour. For the International Museum Day event held from May 18 to May 31, players are invited to fill up a special stamp card by viewing fish, insects and fossils at various in-game museum exhibits. The Animal Crossing Art Generator created by the Getty Museum in April allows players to collect famous pieces of artwork from the museum’s archive and “bring museum artwork into their own virtual homes,” explains the museum’s blog.

IRL cultural gatherings are being also reformatted for virtual participation. Museums and zoos are inviting would-be visitors to experience their art and animals digitally. Some of the world’s most renowned art destinations, including the Louvre, the Vatican and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, all offer virtual tours while they are closed to visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic. The New England Aquarium in Boston has scheduled daily airings of feedings and behind-the-scenes tours on Facebook Live, as have the National Aquarium in Baltimore, Philadelphia Zoo, and Melbourne Zoo.





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**Philippe Brown, founder, Brown and Hudson**



In the future, these virtual travel offerings may mature into fully-fledged multisensory experiences. “What you’re seeing immediately are a lot of Zoom conferences and virtual conferences and online streaming,” Justin Bolognino, founder and CEO of multisensory experience company Meta, tells Wunderman Thompson Intelligence. But, Bolognino argues, a physical element is still needed to fully translate the cultural experience for at-home participation. We need experiences “where there is a tactility, there is a human energy component, there is a human creativity component—something you can actually touch and feel and make,” he says.

Brown agrees. “You could use content that presses the same buttons that physical travel does,” he suggests. “The virtual traveler could touch and feel objects, surfaces or people; they could hear sounds that provoke an autonomous sensory meridian response; smell things that make them salivate and eat foods that they’re seeing in their virtual world.”

**Why it’s interesting:**

As the radius of daily life constricts, consumers are using screens as a window to the world as never before, turning to digital gamescapes and virtual tours for opportunities to explore new worlds and engage in cultural customs.

## Leader POV: experts weigh in on industry futures

Wunderman Thompson Intelligence spoke to experts across a range of different industries, from creatives to data scientists to inclusivity advocates, asking them to share their top-line learnings and forecasts for the future.

### Some key themes unite their observations, including:

- Higher expectations of brands
- A new class of social demands and cultural etiquette
- A more conscious approach to many aspects of life, from tech to travel
- A new coterie in the cultural system of signification that will inform how we see the world
- A renewed appreciation of the diversity and resilience of humanity, and the natural world in which we live

### On advertising:

“Purpose will move even further up the agenda as people expect companies and brands to do the right thing, to use their influence and their voice. Actions still speak louder than words, but companies should speak to consumers about how they behave and what they are doing.”

— *Mark Read, CEO, WPP*

### On brand ethics:

“There will be a new ranking system or value system for holding companies and public figures accountable.”

— *Pooj Morjaria, founder, Did They Help?*

### On retail:

“Brands that can show they are putting people or the environment ahead of sheer profit will be rewarded by consumers and employees, and enhance the way they consider the brand.”

— *George Wallace, chief executive, MHE Retail*

### On tech:

“More efforts will be placed into making technology more humane, to support and complement our human, social, and collective experiences. As our public life has shifted into virtual space—impacting our lives in all directions—there will be more awareness and discussions of tech ethics and virtues.”

— *Yihyun Lim, director, MIT Design Lab*

**On finance:**

“The financial shock of COVID-19 has been significant and could be long lasting. We anticipate that for many consumers there will be some soul-searching into their personal financial resilience. This could go well beyond simply reflecting on their ability to weather another unexpected storm. The result could be a desire to build a financial cushion so that they can create future options for themselves.”

– *Becky Moffat, global head of customer marketing, wealth & personal banking, HSBC*

**On design:**

“Forming new habits takes between 21 and 66 days. People’s sense of personal space and hygiene is being radically altered, and future design will service these new social demands.”

– *Sam Bompas, founder, Bompas & Parr*

**On inclusivity:**

“COVID-19 really showed that we have a social sustainability problem, and customers are going to look to brands to help fix this issue.”

– *Christina Mallon, inclusive design lead, Wunderman Thompson*





### **On travel:**

“Travel isn’t going to be as easy as it used to be and that may be a good thing. Over-tourism, climate change and now this—perhaps this reset is the opportunity to revisit why we travel at all. For the first few trips people might see their travel as therapy. From there they might seek out what I call meta-travel—travel that helps them travel better and get more from their precious time traveling. Perhaps we’ll start seeing bucket lists centered on why rather than where.”

— *Philippe Brown, founder, Brown and Hudson*

### **On food:**

“People will rely more on shelf-stable products, including frozen items, going forward, more so because people will simply be cooking more and eating out less for the foreseeable future, but convenience will continue to be a priority.”

— *Amanda Shapiro, editor, Healthyish*

### **On data:**

“Brands that are most attentive to their customers’ requirements and can recalibrate the value exchange to remain personally relevant will thrive amid rapid change.”

— *Jacques van Niekerk, global CEO, Wunderman Thompson Data*

**On visual trends:**

“COVID-19 is going to have a major effect on the kind of visuals that resonate with consumers long after this health pandemic. Imagery that expresses the themes of connection and resilience—topics so important to us during this time—will continue to have huge appeal for consumers in the long term.”

— *Brenda Milis, principal of visual trends, Adobe Stock*

**On experiences:**

“There’s no way that this is the end of physical gatherings. It’s going to be a rocky road to get there, but we’re going to get back to that. We have to.”

— *Justin Bolognino, founder and CEO, Meta*

**On conscious consumption:**

“I believe this experience will help nations realize that local resilience and global competitiveness need to be balanced, so that nations don’t struggle if and when they are cut off from the rest of the world again.”

— *Sasibai Kimis, founder, Earth Heir*



### **About Wunderman Thompson Intelligence**

Wunderman Thompson Intelligence is Wunderman Thompson’s futurism, research and innovation unit. It charts emerging and future global trends, consumer change, and innovation patterns—translating these into insight for brands. It offers a suite of consultancy services, including bespoke research, presentations, co-branded reports and workshops. It is also active in innovation, partnering with brands to activate future trends within their framework and execute new products and concepts. It is led by Emma Chiu, global director of Wunderman Thompson Intelligence.

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For more information visit [Intelligence.WundermanThompson.com](https://Intelligence.WundermanThompson.com)

### **About “The Future 100 2.0.20”**

“The Future 100 2.0.20” is a follow-up to “The Future 100 2020,” highlighting 20 key trends that have accelerated and matured as a result of COVID-19, plus five completely new trends to watch as the world embraces new habits.

### **About The Future 100**

Wunderman Thompson Intelligence’s annual forecast presents a snapshot of the year ahead and identifies the most compelling trends to keep on the radar. The report charts 100 trends across 10 sectors, spanning culture, tech and innovation, travel and hospitality, brands and marketing, food and drink, beauty, retail, luxury, health and finance.

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