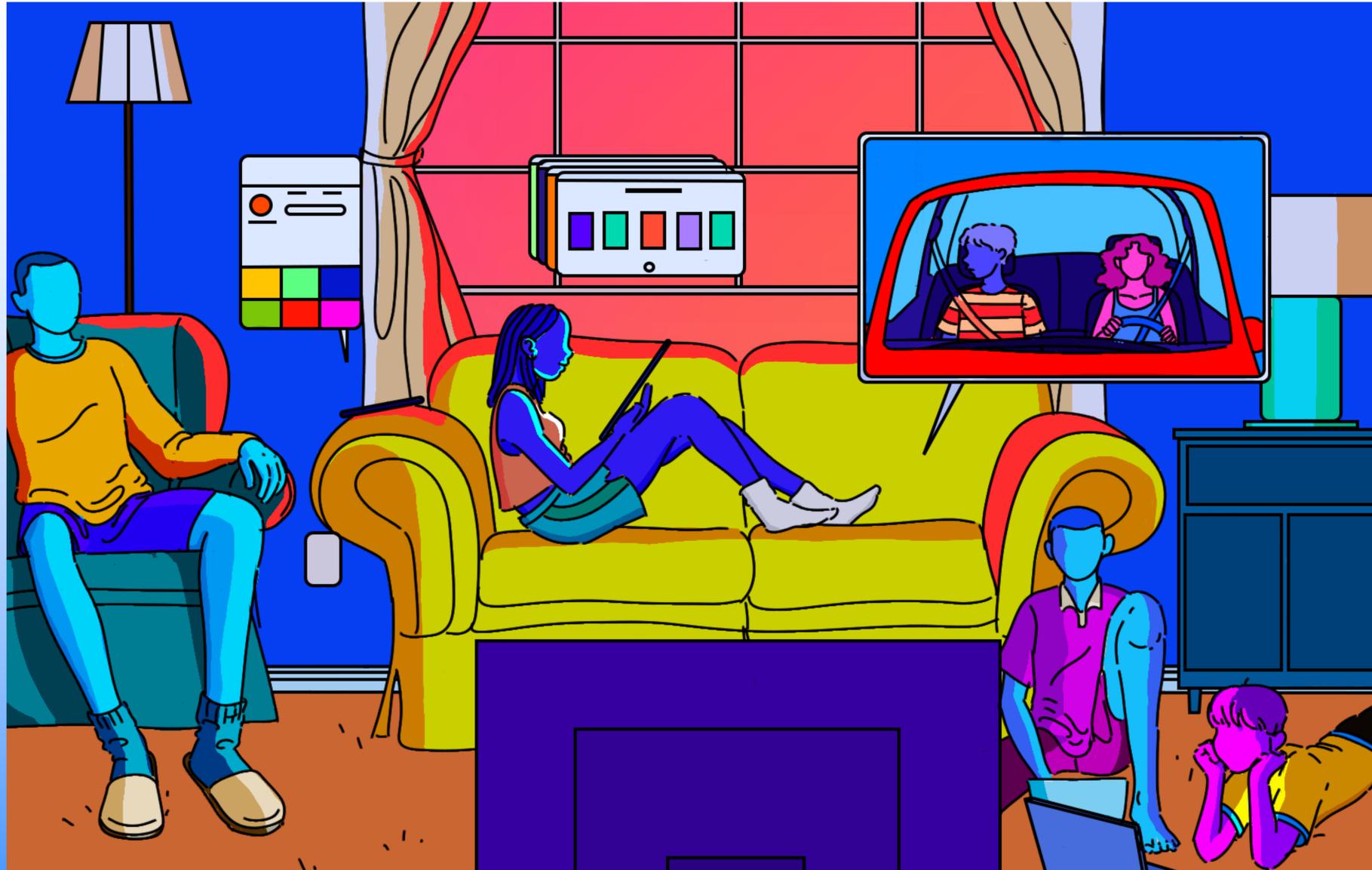


Overwrite

Webby Awards Trend Report



How the global pandemic created an indispensable Internet and ignited the urgency to build a better future



Tomorrow

Presented by



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Welcome From The Webbys

At The Webby Awards, we have been looking at the evolution of the Internet since 1996 and have had a front row seat to a number of technology revolutions over the past two decades. As we evaluate work from across the Internet we are careful to consider the full impact new technologies have on our personal and collective experiences.

Since the world shut down in March of 2020, the Internet has become our lifeline. We've seen communities come together online to create everything from new games and NetArt, to mutual aid networks, to virtual events, social media shows, and more. So much of what we saw created in the face of massive adversity—a global pandemic, economic downturn, paralyzed industries, and a social reckoning—was inspiring.

The Internet became the most powerful tool for us to support and uplift one another. We saw brands, media companies, and individuals all accelerate their ingenuity, using their platforms to respond to these crisis by innovating, connecting, informing, and helping people all over the world. What the

Internet was making possible became a launch pad for what the future might hold. That's why for our new Trend Report, we're exploring Overwrite Tomorrow: How the global pandemic created an indispensable Internet and ignited the urgency to build a better future.

As our team researched global trends impacting the Internet and our personal habits, we spoke to industry experts around the world and conducted a survey in partnership with YouGov of 3,000 people across the U.S., we recognized a theme: the shutdown has led to an acceleration of innovation across every area of our lives, powered by the Internet.

I hope you enjoy the Webby Trend Report: Overwrite Tomorrow. The research presented here is included in this year's Webby Talk and a series of virtual thought-leadership events we will be hosting through the year, with thanks to our sponsors WP Engine, Slack, and YouGov.

Having spent the summer researching the impact of the pandemic on Internet innovation, one thing

continues to ring true: while we will hopefully never again see the challenges and hardships that came to light because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ingenuity and creativity of people, and the industries we serve promises that what we have learned and experienced will not go to waste. The future can be brighter because of what we create.

“The Internet became the most powerful tool for us to support and uplift one another.”



Claire Graves
Executive Director



Overwrite Tomorrow

Intro

There is a brighter future to discover when we are forced to stop. Think. Throw away. Start fresh. Amidst a global pandemic and lockdowns, the inertia of modern life ground to a halt. In its place there was one lifeline: the Internet.

As our lives slowed down and were replaced with digital solutions, we were forced to ask questions that we didn't know we would ask ourselves just weeks before.

But there were bigger heavier questions at play as the weeks dragged into months.

Will virtual education be the end of me?

Why isn't my Amazon Fresh bot working?

How many virtual parties can I attend?

Why isn't telemedicine accessible for all?

Are students not showing up because they don't have Internet access?

Can my business stay alive?

Am I doing enough to support protests online and off?

This year's Webby Trend Report Overwrite Tomorrow explores how recent events have made the Internet indispensable, how consumers are thinking about the experiences they had, and what they want their

future to look like. It also dives into how what we've learned since this started has ushered in new ways to use technologies to build a better today, and tomorrow.



Chapter 1

Stay Still and Fix Things

Chapter 1

Stay Still and Fix Things

In March of 2020, it became the norm to watch for what would be the next cancelled event, stock up on hand sanitizer, and take “practice” work from home days. Soon after, we received the full order to stay still, in place.

This year the Internet has become our connection to the world outside of our homes. It has also shown that pausing is a component to innovation and change. Prior to widespread global upheaval, we accepted many things as fact—from office culture to public space, to who occupies positions of power. Blinded by the momentum of normalcy, we often chose business as usual over innovation.

Until things halted. Despite the turbulent consequences of pandemic and economic recession, we have also seen a phenomenal amount of innovation. New products and services, new online resources, and a deep reckoning with our current systems have defined these times. Much of this innovation was set to occur in the near or distant future, but was accelerated by this shut down and the urgent digitization of our lives.

As parts of our lives return to ‘normal’ and many parts remain online, the most important lessons from this year rest in this new, innovative work and the desire to augment for the greater good.

What Do People Think About Their Future?

In August of 2020, consumers had been living in a new way for six months. Routines and plans had changed, many reimagined their lives to adapt to new realities. To understand their expectations of what is next, we worked with YouGov on a comprehensive survey that explored that, by surveying nearly 3,000 adults representative of the U.S. population.

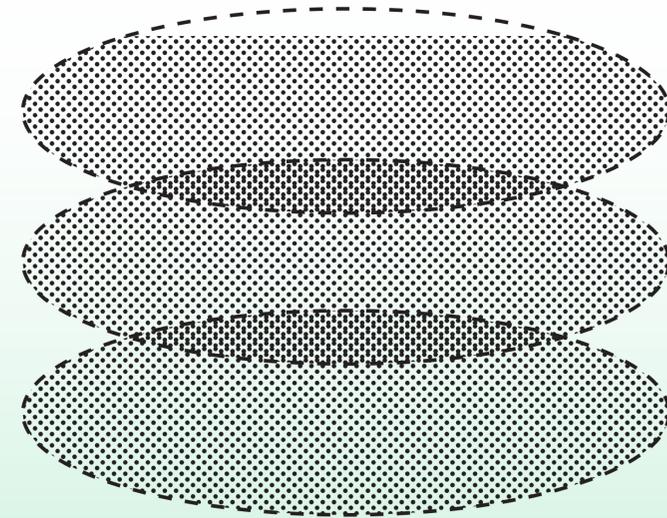
We set out to understand how respondents' relationship to societal structures fluctuated due to the pandemic to gauge their overall feelings on how things have changed:

Do they want things to go back to the way they were?

Do they want life to look different as the world begins to recover?

And what changes need to become permanent fixtures in our lives?

We found that the majority of people feel the world is forever changed and the shut down awakened them to societal flaws they hadn't previously noticed. However, the majority of respondents also feel optimistic about their work industries and ability to create permanent change.



92%

Of respondents believe the world has forever changed in some way

What the Future Holds

Other findings explored what people noticed about the world around them and how they feel about their personal and professional lives, about the state of their work industry in 1-2 years.

16%

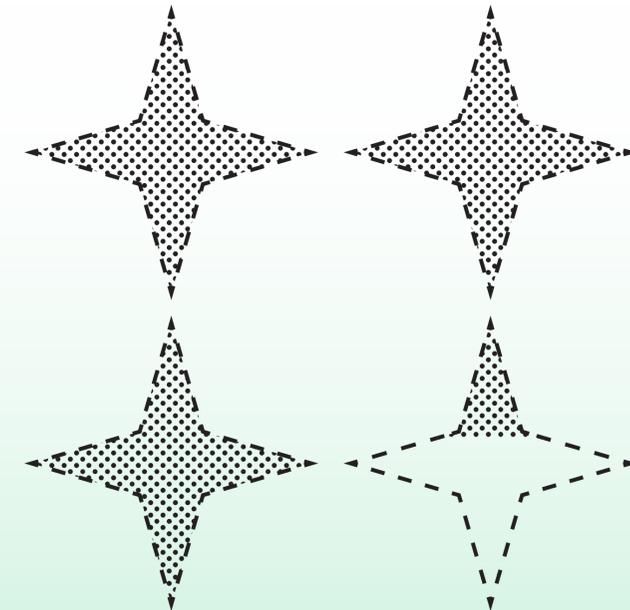
Of respondents want the world to return to the way it was pre-pandemic.

56%

Agree they've noticed flaws in society they wouldn't have noticed without daily life so drastically changing

31%

Of people have noticed flaws in their personal lives they wouldn't have noticed prior



84%

Of people in our survey feel optimistic or okay about the state of their work industry in 1-2 years

Insights & Ideas

featuring



Monica Cravotta
VP of Marketing,
WP Engine

With small businesses, pivoting from real life to virtual has meant kick-starting an online presence, tackling traffic surges or building demand in digital offerings like virtual yoga classes, streaming church sermons, new online ordering, and curbside pickup.

What were the sudden product demands you hadn't anticipated that became necessary once the pandemic hit?

When the pandemic hit, everywhere, simultaneously, consumers appreciated the convenience (and safety) of digital. overnight, websites have become the official new front door for every business.

What's your advice to creative teams looking to build meaningful digital experiences now and in the future?

Press ahead. When the pandemic hit, it rocked the way the world lived, ate, thought, worked, played, traveled, and loved. As things start to settle in the coming months and years, some things may revert, but it's clear that the way people consume information and interact will forever be impacted.

There's a new digital paradigm and that's not a bad thing. Embrace the change, push the limits further, and optimize the new digital front door.

Do you think consumers are craving digital experiences more right now?

Consumers are craving interaction, and the only way to serve up sufficient interaction at this moment is digitally. Simple physical experiences of the past, like friends playing scrabble or networking happy hours, have become elaborate virtual meetups. At its heart, technology makes things more convenient and more enjoyable.

Technology is now consumers' primary connection point to people, places, and things, so every experience must be a step ahead.

Do you see the services and products being built for this moment as temporary or permanent?

What's being built now may feel rudimentary, but ultimately the ideas behind these services and products will be permanent. Speed is key right now, which means everyone is targeting progress not perfection. If an execution is too specific to one moment in time, it will fade soon.

If a core execution is relevant and scalable, long-term adoption and optimization will take place. A doctor opening up a Covid-related hotline is too specific. A health practice now offering additional telemedicine appointments on their site is long-term, and convenient regardless of current pandemic conditions.

A mental shift has taken place due to the physical shift thrust upon us. The world has been forced to think differently. The way we interact with each other and technology is intermingled in a way we can't reverse. The human and the digital experience are one and it's not going back. The WCM and digital experience platform industry itself is ripe for disruption.

Those tasked with staying ahead of the curve with consumer demands will no longer tolerate technology that slows down new deployments, requires an unnecessary budget multiplier, and can't be easily used by everyone.

“Speed is Key Right now. Which means everyone is targeting progress not perfection.”

So, let's grab onto the challenge, push ourselves and our competitors to keep thinking differently, and build our digital future together.

Insights & Ideas

featuring



Andrew Greiner
Executive Editor,
North America
YouGov

Andrew Greiner is the Executive Editor, North America for YouGov. We chat to him about what ideological changes he has seen take hold throughout the pandemic, and how they've updated their methods to reflect these behaviors.

How have people's worldviews changed through data in the months since March?

We've seen quite a reaction over the past year to the Covid-19 illness that has impacted people's behavior in a lot of ways. One stat that sticks out is that people are hugging less often nowadays than they used to be.

Additional surveys we ran uncovered, 43 percent of Americans were somewhat or very comfortable trying on clothes at a store after the pandemic. Back in June, 17 percent of Americans were willing to head inside their favorite fast-food restaurant in the next three months. But in terms of worldview, I'm not sure

we've seen a huge change. Our country is still capitalist, and mostly moderate with slightly more liberals than conservatives.

Were there changes you saw in data that you wouldn't have expected, even given the circumstances?

As a rule, we try not to have expectations when we survey at YouGov. We are more interested in measuring

what's what. Throughout these unprecedented times we were shown how privileged we were that so many people around the world share their views and behaviors with us every day.

Since the start of COVID-19 we put our full focus on gathering information and asking people to share their experiences of the global pandemic. This allowed us to use that unique insight and provide health organizations with data that helps them understand and fight the spread of the virus. We introduced our COVID-19 Public Monitor and multiple COVID-19 Trackers to help government and public health organizations, in addition to the general public and our clients continuously track and understand people's behaviors across the globe.

Have there been any intentional editorial changes in the way you word questions since the beginning of the year, given the world has changed so much?

Of course! A lion's share of questions from March through July had to deal with behavioral changes relative to the coronavirus.

"Our country is still capitalist, and mostly moderate with slightly more liberals than conservatives."

Many of our tracking questions needed an update with the intro text, since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. With all that is happening in 2020 and the US election approaching, we continue to measure and understand the public's opinions through our daily polls and surveys.

For our most recent stories or if you would like to join our panel to share your opinions visit: <https://today.yougov.com>

31%

Of Americans say they will not shake hands again after the pandemic subsides, while 26 percent aren't sure whether they will or not. Source: YouGov



Chapter 1

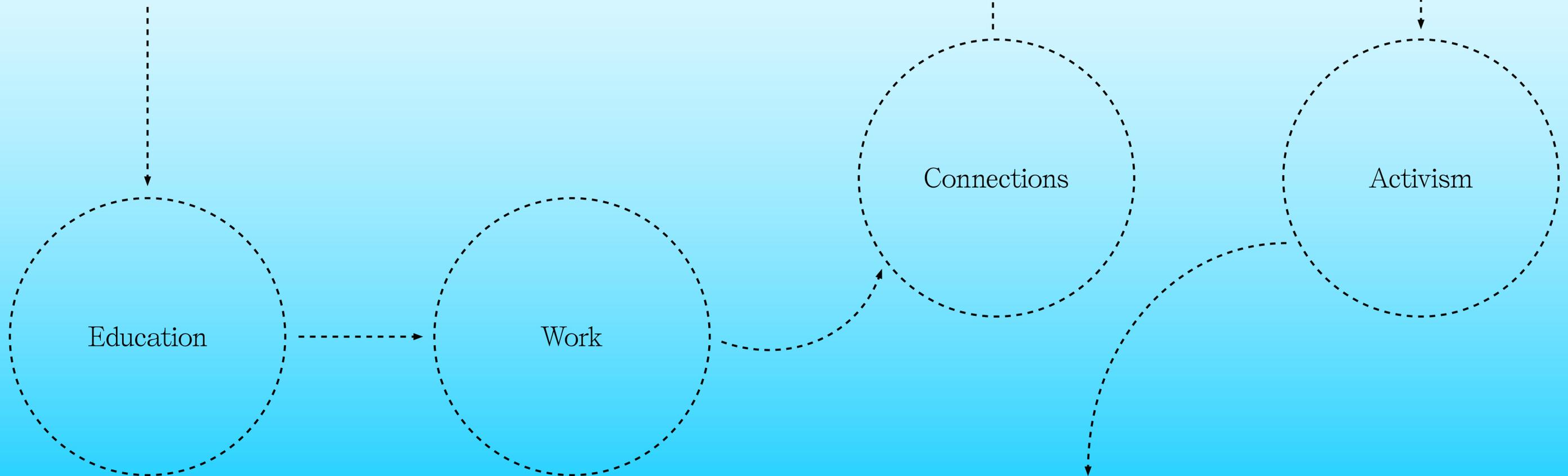
Augment and Implement Change

Augment and Implement Change

During this moment, many people have taken a hard look at the world around them and realized some changes have been made for the better and should stay. The Internet has become the main tool to facilitate this.

Since March, companies and communities have maintained closeness and created new structures using the Internet. They've laid the blueprint for how online tools can continue to supplement, not replace, in-person activities in the future.

In this report, we examine examples of this implementation and augmentation across:



Coupled with our survey results, it shows a clear picture of how we can use technology and innovation to make experiences better for all of us, not some of us.

Chapter 2.1

Overwrite: How We Learn

Education arguably has become a universal example of how digital tools can augment current, in-person practices, and improve learning for students and faculty who are unable to be in the classroom.

Forced to reevaluate the risks or lack of in-person education, educators and students made the switch to remote learning solutions like Google Classroom and popular video-conferencing platform Zoom, and many other technologies that educators scrambled to implement to help their students.

This slowdown has also further shown the cracks in the U.S. schooling system and the need for better technological infrastructure to accommodate students. Namely, a need for universal Internet access.

According to data from a [Pew Research Study](#) published this April:

- One-in-five parents with school children

said it is likely their children will not be able to complete their homework due to lack of digital access

- Over 20% do not have access to a computer at home, while 22% rely on public WiFi for schoolwork because there isn't reliable Internet access at home
- Even worse, 29% of parents reported that their children would have to do their schoolwork on a cellphone
- Many of these households are lower-income and families of color.

Other issues that have been exposed are the need for access to hardware and need for better online learning software, as well as better security protections to prevent school servers from being hacked, and protecting the privacy of parents and children. If we want these changes to stay, addressing these issues is key to insuring a brighter future.

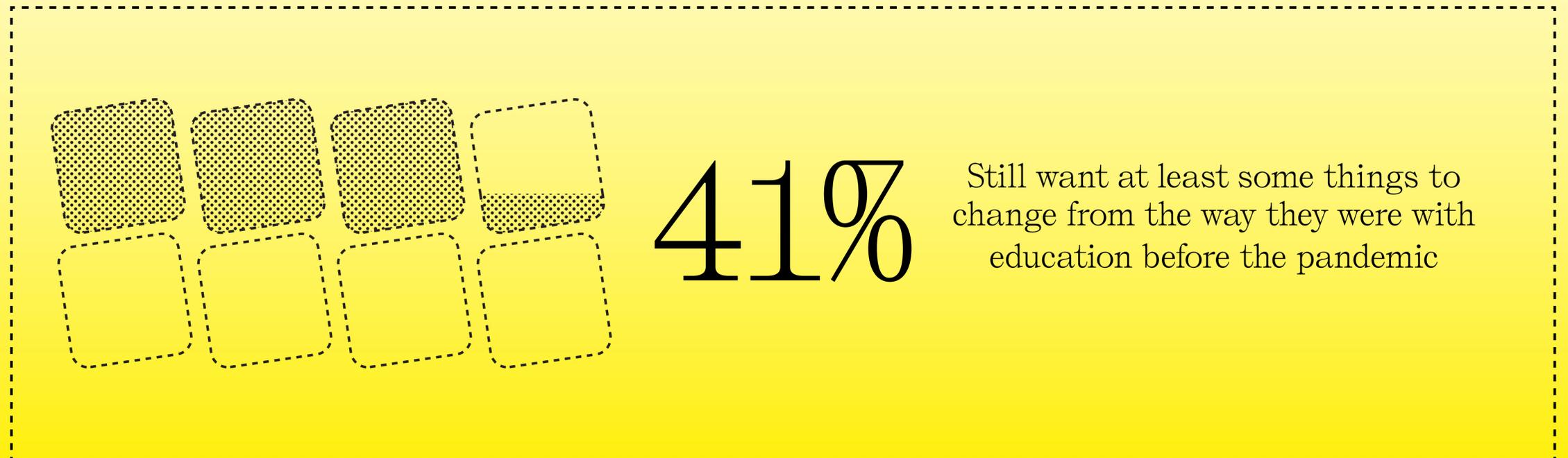
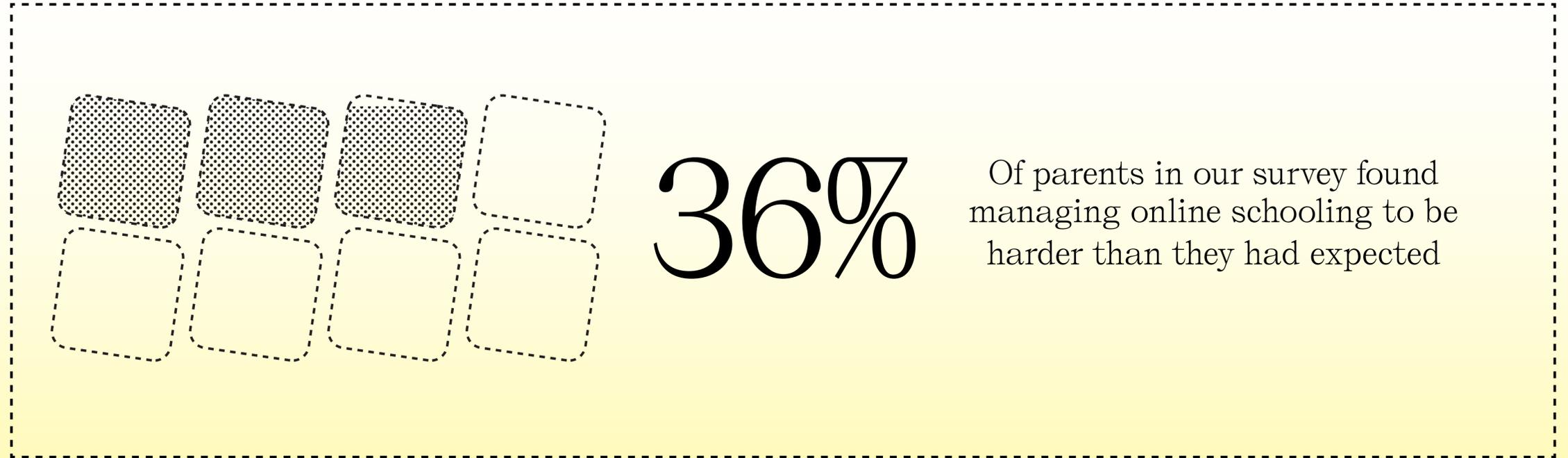


Survey Results: Education

What We've Learned

With the acceleration of virtual classes in place of in-person instruction, came the inevitable change in parents, educators, and students' relationship to schooling and technology—and new possibilities carved out for what education can now look like.

While some parents in our survey have struggled with online schooling, nearly half are ready for the education system to change in some way. This desire and necessities of the moment have accelerated innovation across education in a few key ways.



Digital Innovations: Education

With the reality of virtual or hybrid education setting in, the social aspect connecting with classmates in person quickly disappeared. The needs for students to find community, companies and individual technologists created new gamified experiences online.



Club Cardinal

[Stanford University](#)

[Watch the launch video](#)

It has also ushered in fun experiences as well. Launched August 1, [Club Cardinal](#) is a free desktop website, to recreate campus life, launched by five Stanford University students. Users can decorate dorm rooms, meet in common areas with locations that link to Zoom rooms, where other students are gathering. Not a permanent replacement for in-person activities, but a way to help college students cope.

Adventure Academy

[Age of Learning, Inc.](#)

[Check out the App](#)

The game [Adventure Academy](#) gives kids up to age 13 the ability to learn in a game setting, while also finding a sense of community. They have learning games covering a range of topics that kids can play as the online persona of themselves that they have created, interacting with other real but virtual kids in the meantime.

Insights & Ideas

featuring



Jorge Valenzuela
Education Coach,
Author and
Advocate

What have we learned from the shut-downs of 2020 physical life and schooling, that we can now implement as permanent changes to education?

The traumas and anxiety associated with the pandemic, as well as the issues associated with race, social uprising, and inequities in education, have caused many of our young people to experience a wide range of unhappy emotions, such as grief, terror, and anger. Individual teachers and schools cannot solve these issues, but they can effectively respond to students' needs by focusing on equity and integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) into academic lessons. I, therefore, believe SEL needs to be an integral part of the curriculum moving forward.

SEL can be taught effectively remotely by using daily emotions check-ins to help kids gauge where they are emotionally and for assisting them in finding strategies for returning back to a peaceful state. Effective SEL strategies can be modeled by teachers via video and breakout rooms like in Zoom or MS Teams.

Remote learning will need to stay, and I believe that schools will begin to use snow days as remote learning days and even dedicate a few days a year to remote instruction. How could we not? If there is either a spike

in COVID cases or even another pandemic, teachers will need to be fully prepared to engage learners.

Inequality in the system has been in plain view this year, how do we work to continue fixing this as we move forward?

Both policies and practices need to be revamped to dismantle inequities in the system. To really focus on equity requires teachers to know the students and their needs, and have resources for use in the classroom. Based on evidence and research, there needs to be a focus on the following items in schools:

- Access to food
- Adequate technology for distance learning (devices and WIFI)
- Culturally and socially relevant curriculum (i.e., SEL and project-based learning (PBL))
- Qualified teachers for both in-person and remote teaching.

How do you see education functioning two years from now, in comparison to last year?

As I see it, schools everywhere need to align three major items:

- Federal and Local Policy
- Needs of the Workforce
- Sound Teaching Practice and Relevant Curriculum

We need to develop our educators in aligning all three of these items through effective collaboration with entities outside of schools (business and community) and the right professional development (PD).

Sound teaching practice and relevant curriculum can be developed through PD focusing on project-based learning (PBL). Through the PBL instructional approach, we can teach all learners academic, career and social and emotional learning — thus creating better students and citizens.

“Remote learning will need to stay, and I believe that schools will begin to use snow days as remote learning days and even dedicate a few days a year to remote instruction.”

A New Permanent Option?

In the future, schools can permanently consider virtual schooling options to assist students unable to be in the classroom.

High-performing Indiana charter school Paramount School of Excellence is currently developing plans to launch virtual schooling for the next academic year, even if the pandemic recedes or effective vaccines become available.

The virtual program would mirror its usual in-person program, which services mostly low-income students of color with success. With proper implementation, it could level out the playing field for students.

According to a September 2020 [Chalkbeat article](#), Paramount tested students in March during the switch to remote instruction.

The school saw “academic growth during that time that was very close to on par with growth [they] typically see in the on-campus environment,” Kyle Beauchamp, chief academic officer for the charter network said.

While some kids may thrive in social environments, others have been thriving more virtually. Similarly to how we’ve learned with working adults, children work better in different ways depending on the child. This may be due to anxiety, introverts vs extroverts and specific school hurdles, such as bullying.

Teachers like Holli Ross of northern California said, “It’s been awesome to see some of my kids finally find their niche in education.” When the world turns back and physical options are available, we want to make sure these kids are still able to learn to the best of their abilities.

In New York City, virtual schooling options for the Fall semesters have improved since the initial panic in late March. The New York Education Department has provided technology, like iPads and laptops, to students without access to one, teachers are holding virtual office hours for students who cannot attend in-person, and parents have gotten a rundown of the semester’s curriculum.

Takeaways: Education

1.

The Internet has enabled students to continue learning away from their schools, keeping them connected with their teachers and classmates

2.

Virtual education comes with more hurdles than most predicted. As we consider the development of new platforms and curriculum these issues of inequality and accessibility need to be addressed

3.

Celebrate that social emotional skills can be addressed and measured via remote learning and continue to advance on what exists

4.

The demand for change is at an all time high - regardless of challenges - People are interested in some level of permanent change

6.

With some students thriving in a virtual setting, remote learning must remain an option regardless of public health or other environmental factors, so that all students can learn in an environment best suited to their needs

5.

Education simultaneously became more accessible via free online classes and to those who work better without the stress of social engagement and also more exclusive given the large amount of people without Internet access

Chapter 2.2

Overwrite: How We Entertain

The entertainment industry has undergone a massive change. With the shut down of public spaces and in-person events, consumers shifted to digital entertainment.

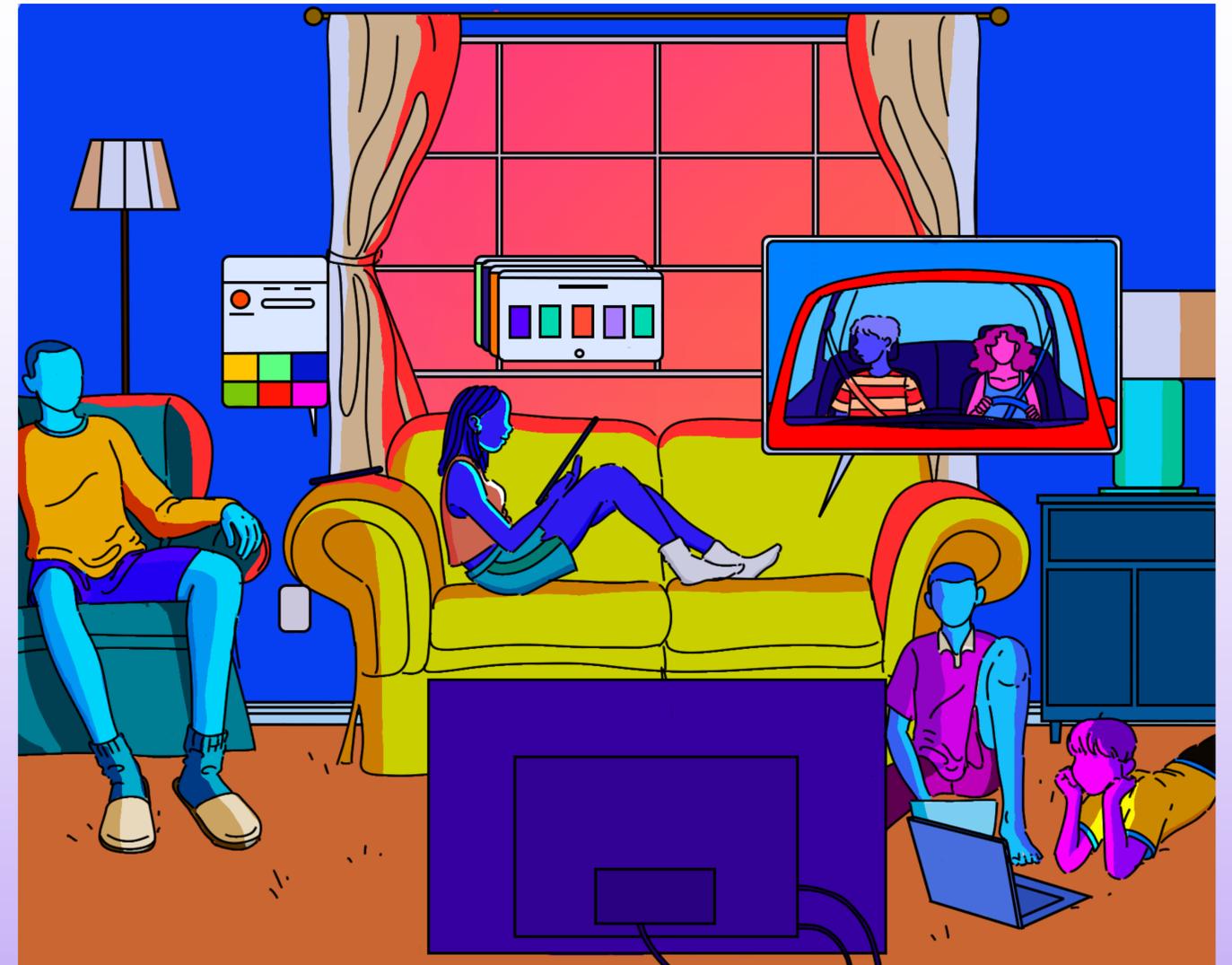
In April alone the top streaming outlets saw massive growth:

- Netflix reported almost 16 million new paid subscribers globally
- Disney+ reached 50 million global subscribers within its first five months
- By April, Twitch saw a 50% increase in hours watched, to hit 1.6 billion hours watched per month
- Audio streaming services like Spotify gained 6 million paid subscribers.

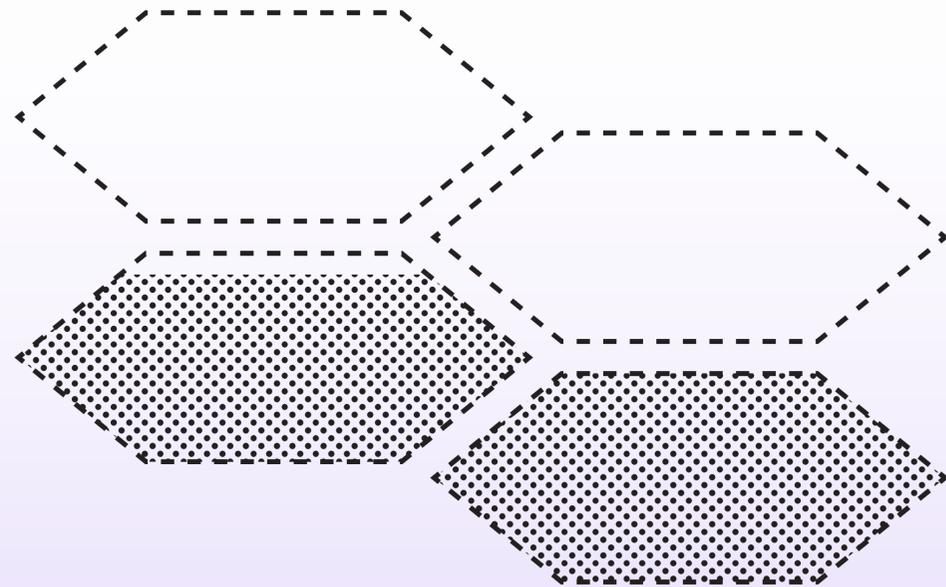
While people were tuning in, there was an opportunity to create new content and new experiences - even with the challenges surrounding production:

In our survey, 47 percent of respondents attended a virtual event as the world changed. This massive uptick in usage motivated streaming services, event companies and even artists to find innovative ways to entertain audiences that were tuned in—from in-game or remote concerts to fully immersive experiences.

While many of us still crave the feeling of being at a live event, seeing things happen in real time in front of us, we've realized through this time that creativity can be expanded as we create meaningful entertainment when we consider the full span of our options, including events online.

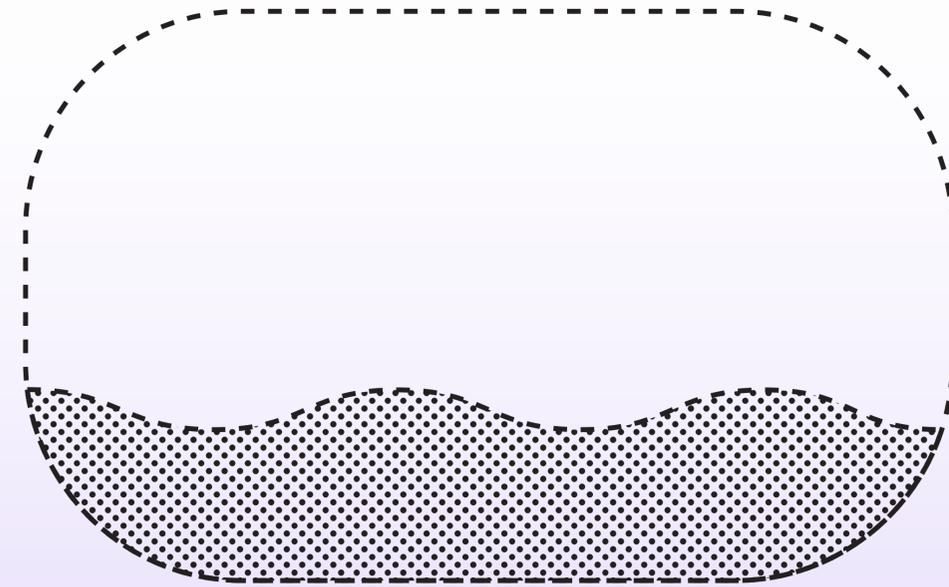


Survey Results: Entertainment



47%

Of people surveyed have attended a virtual event since the start of the pandemic

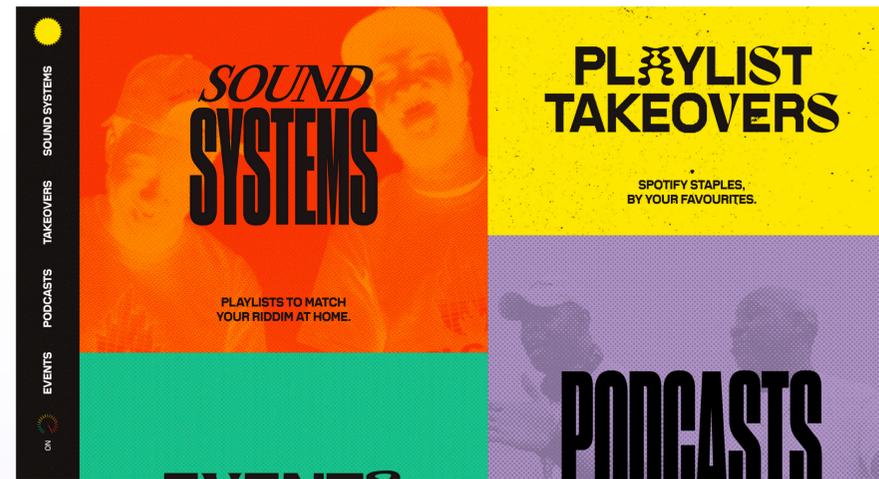


30%

Increase for Video-On-Demand year-over-year for the month of March

Bringing Live Cultural Events Online

As events, celebrations, and large in-person experiences were forced to “cancel,” organizers had to quickly decide if they would take the year off or reshape their event to reach audiences where they were—at home, online.



Carnival Sounds

Spotify, Stink Digital

[Watch the launch video](#)

There were some like London’s Notting Hill Carnival that quickly pivoted from a live cultural festival, to a digital one—effectively.

Faced with the first-ever cancellation of the Caribbean celebration, NHC organizers tapped production company Fixation to create a 3-day, [live-streamed event](#) from August 29-31st with tie-ins from brands like Spotify, Facebook, and Samsung. One of the tie-ins: Spotify and Stink Studio’s [Carnival Sounds](#), a website of curated playlists and podcasts about the festival.

Artists and brands also created opportunities to engage audiences where they were spending more time than ever before.

Astronomical

Travis Scott, Fortnite

[Watch the Event](#)

The U.S. saw a \$11.6 billion spike in video game spending between April-June 2020, detailed in an article by The Drum. This presented a massive opportunity for creators to imagine limitless ways to bring live events into the digital space.

Artist Travis Scott and Epic Games did just that with [Astronomical](#). On April 23rd, they created a psychedelic, experience in the popular multiplayer game Fortnite Battle Royale. During the first-of-its-kind event, Scott debuted new music as an avatar in a world created specifically for players. It made history: drawing in 12.3 million players at the time, and 27.7 million globally over five airings. It also raked 73 million views on YouTube.

This isn’t limited to creatives with big budgets. In April, volunteer-run event organization Open Pitt and artist Charli XCX threw an in-game concert on best-selling game Minecraft. The open-source nature of the platform further extend the possibilities for independent creators.

Digital Innovation Across Entertainment



Broadway Online via BroadwayHD

Amidst a trying time for the Broadway industry, BroadwayHD offered limited time, free access to watch Broadway programs online. Similarly, popular program magazine Playbill increased their monthly viewership from 2million views pre-pandemic to 3 million per month by producing online performances for its website.

While this won't be a replacement to their pre-pandemic work, it introduced the idea that it is accessible online while making it available for people who otherwise may have not had the opportunity to see the shows, certainly expanding brand loyalty.



Museums and Institutions

Museums, which rely on physical spaces and visits, met the moment by starting to offer free, online tours as lockdowns began. While it was certainly a different experience, museums like The Met and The MOMA offered options like virtual tours and online exhibits like The Met's Virtual Teens Take The Met event on Instagram to put forward comforting experiences of seeing something new, from your own home for the bored and uneasy public at home as well as classes.

Insights & Ideas

featuring



Bob Boilen
Creative Director
NPR, Tiny Desk

On top of directing NPR's iconic music show *All Things Considered*, Bob Boilen runs the creative team behind the Internet's favorite concert series: *Tiny Desk*, a 2020 Webby Winner in Video. We asked him how the *Tiny Desk* unit has pivoted to bring us the live music we love, from home, and digital tools can shape the music industry.

As a team that creates videos for the Internet, how did the *Tiny Desk* team pivot to keep creating once lockdowns set in?

The last *Tiny Desk* concert we filmed in our office was *Sudan Archives* on March 11. The following week, we began reaching out to the artists scheduled to come in over the next several weeks to cancel or at least postpone their upcoming *Tiny Desk* concerts. It immediately occurred to me that all these musicians would now be off tour and likely home.

On March 12, our last day in the office, I wrote a note to Soccer Mommy's publicist Jaclyn Ulman to see if she would film a few songs at home. On March 24, with an updated slate saying *Tiny Desk* (home) concert, we published *Soccer Mommy* on the NPR site and the NPR Music YouTube channel. The copy I wrote for that page reads, "Stay tuned for many more over the next couple of months."

And at this point, we're approaching 100 concerts in 6 months. The entire team worked really hard and took on new tasks and tried to keep the quality of the video and audio consistent amongst the wide array of submissions.

With an at-home format, has this changed what types of artists the *Tiny Desk* team is outreaching and booking?

Not being dependent on artists coming to NPR's headquarters in D.C. has made it easier for some artists to participate. Billie Eilish comes to mind (now with over 4 million views) as does Burt Bacharach, Lenny Kravitz, and Tame Impala and BTS are good examples.

How do you see digital technology creating a new infrastructure that can better support or augment the music industry to improve online and in-person events?

The digital world makes it possible for artists to make a living without major label contracts. Now we can be our own gatekeepers to a degree and not rely on just a few companies or individuals to let us in on what to hear.

I fear that companies whose motivation is money and not music will be the ones who consolidate and build the infrastructure first. Given our current COVID climate, less well-known artists could be at the mercy of those companies. I'm a more hopeful person than that in general - but it's a red flag I'm waving, something to look out for.

How do you see the future of live events changing over the next year?

"I don't know any musician who finds virtual audiences as satisfying as the real deal."

I expect to see the quality improve as we all begin to learn the limitations. Gimmicks are popping up to make things fun; maybe we're standing virtually in a crowd as an avatar or listening to audio in 3D. I'm sure some genre of music fans will latch on to this, but I don't see it as the norm.

I don't know any musician who finds virtual audiences as satisfying as the real deal. So what we see develop in the coming year will bring on some innovation for the future, and live online may offer new exciting ways to bring events to life. Still, the moment we're all able to go out with friends and share a moment and see the musicians we love on a stage.

Takeaways: Entertainment

1.

While we can't replace in-person experiences, companies have come up with creative and natural ways to transfer offline experiences online

2.

When the return of in-person events happens, we can and should keep some of these systems in place to make events more accessible for those who can't be there in person. There are opportunities for consumers, performers, and content creators to reach larger audiences by creating additive experiences online

3.

Creativity was forced to expand in limited circumstances, bringing to light new ideas and production methods and collaborations that were never considered. Audiences reacted well and more content was consumed than ever, proving that permanently expanding our creative options will be good for audiences and companies alike

Chapter 2.3

Overwrite: How We Work

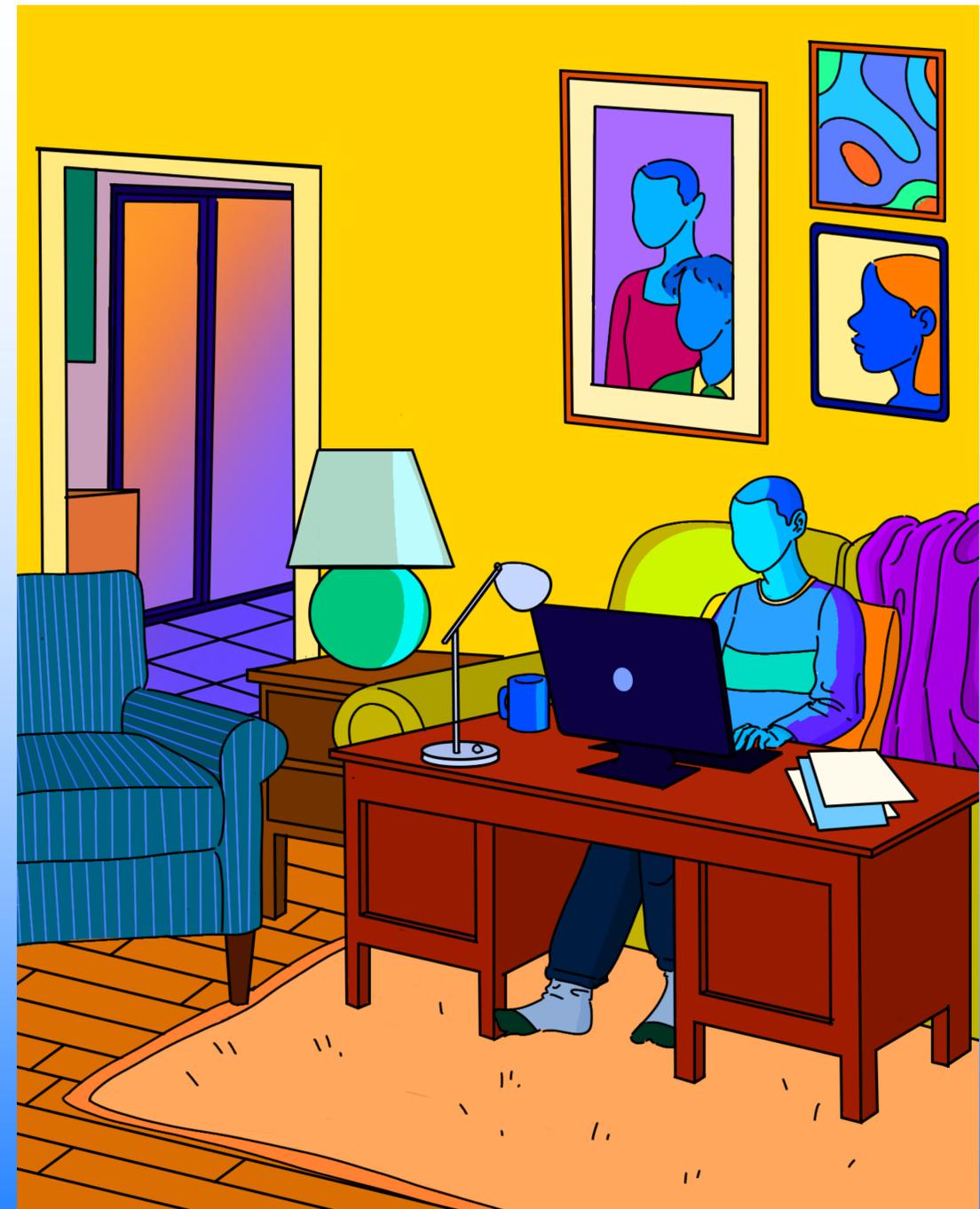
Once the pandemic set in, businesses faced a make or break moment. By July 2020, 16,000 restaurants permanently disappeared across the U.S., according to Yelp. By September 2020, 33 large retail companies had filed for bankruptcy. TV, film and advertising production sets were quiet. Essential workers continued to brace the frontlines, and their roles were celebrated like never before - we redefined what types of workers were essential. Companies were thrown into remote work, with no blueprint of how it should work.

Business leaders quickly faced a new reality: adapt to create remote work cultures while adapting to economic uncertainty, continuous closures, layoffs, and cuts. No matter the job, procedures changed with employers leaning more heavily into digital, to help sanitary measures in public facing jobs or working from home for office workers.

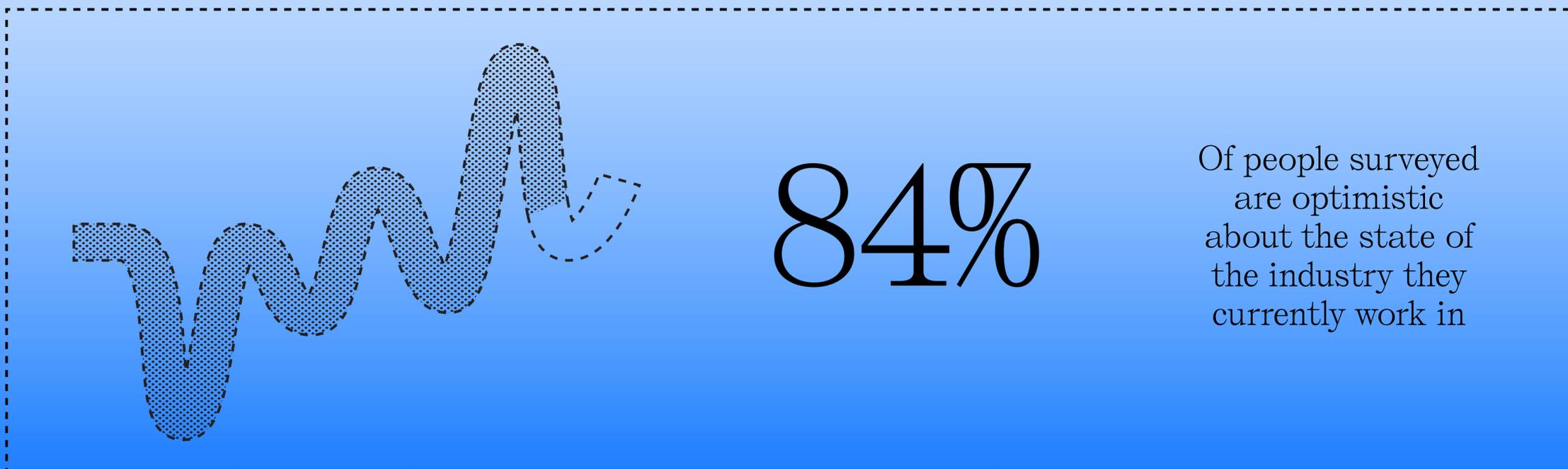
heavily into digital as a means to protect public-facing employees or remote working for office workers.

Professionals who had never used Zoom or Microsoft Teams found themselves reliant on these platforms to collaborate, while evaluating the changing world around them.

Facing new growing pains like Zoom fatigue and the harsh reality that previously inflexible work hours and work styles do not translate well virtually, companies innovated quickly. The result has revolutionized work in a way that was long needed: one that gives employees control over where and when their work gets done. Now only 1 in 5 want to go back to the work style they were living in before and companies have found productivity is possible in more variant forms than they had thought.



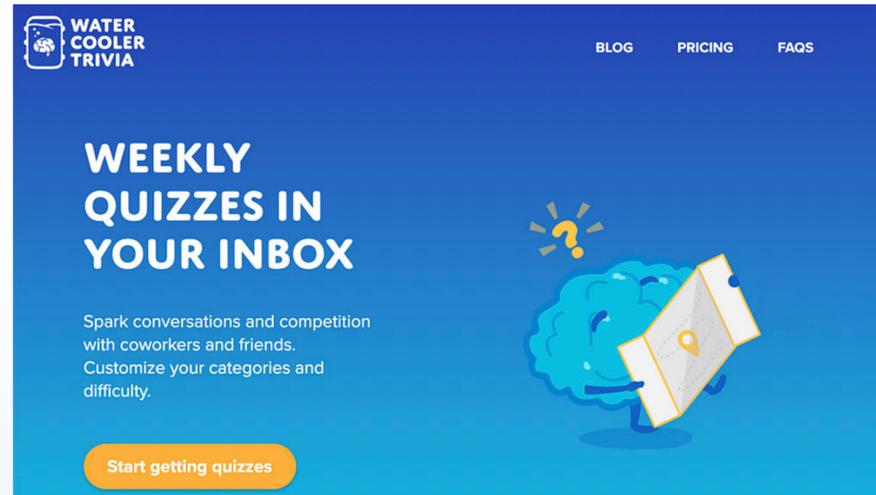
Survey Results: Work



Digital Innovations: Work

With work from home becoming a normal part of office workers' routines, companies needed to find ways to create a new kind of office culture, and keep employees motivated. This provided the opportunity to use games and products to boost morale.

Beyond needing to keep morale high, companies also had to decide which remote work platforms best suited their daily operations. Collaborative softwares became a necessity, not just an addition to our work styles.

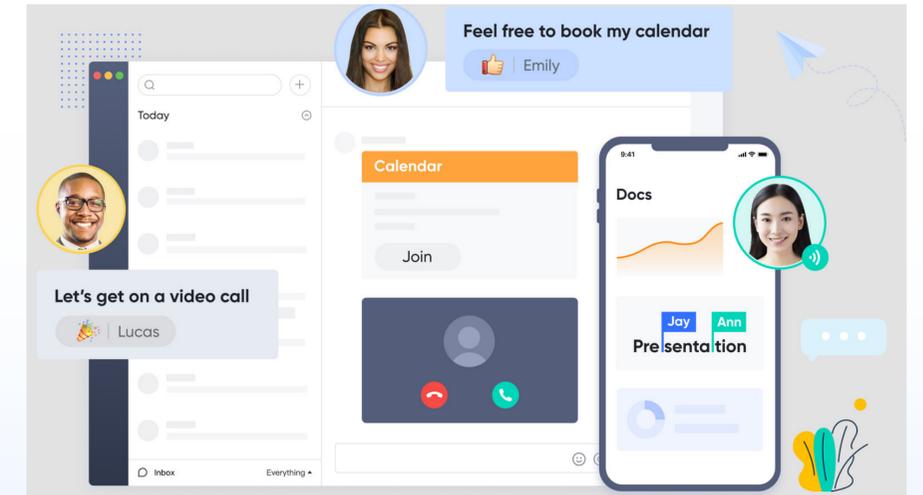


Water Cooler Trivia

Water Cooler Trivia

[View the Site](#)

Water Cooler Trivia was designed before there were any notions that a global shutdown may be on the cusp of happening. A service set up to design weekly team trivia to keep morale high for remote teams, they were poised to jump in and help navigate companies who did not have remote working as part of their DNA. Now they specifically promote how easy their weekly games and provide insights and education for leaders how to support creative team building when we can't be in the same space. The questions can be specifically crafted for the team or you can rely on their team to build it for you.



Lark

Byte Dance

[Check out the Virtual Space](#)

Lark Suite and similar services have emerged in recent years to meet the remote work needs that have been expanding. From the parent company of TikTok, Lark advertises itself as “The Next-Gen Collaboration Suite,” with all chats, video calls, calendars, docs, and emails in one place, very much serving as a “virtual office space” in the cloud which has become increasingly relevant in times of COVID, letting everything “be in one place” when we cannot be.

Insights & Ideas

featuring



Bob Galmarini
Sr. Director
of Brand Design,
Slack

Before Slack, Bob Galmarini led the Brand Design Team at Zendesk. We ask him how work has changed and how digital products can adapt to this transition.

What were the sudden product demands you hadn't anticipated that became necessary once the pandemic hit?

Slack is unique. It is a product that was built to provide a space for communication, collaboration and alignment. So, in a way this pandemic has really shined a light on the product and helped us realize something we already knew - that Slack was built for this. I think one specific product development that the pandemic has helped highlight its value is Slack Connect. The ability to use Slack with your partners outside of your company. This is a huge value in this pandemic and beyond.

What has permanently changed about the ways companies and individuals are working together?

I think the biggest fundamental change that will most likely be permanent is that it is generally more widely accepted and expected that you can work from home or not in an office. While there are companies that have adopted that philosophy before the pandemic, there was still a very large percentage of businesses that required in office work and weren't very flexible in WFH policies. The pandemic has changed that. It has shined a light on the fact that it is possible and there are great tools to get things done, be productive, stay aligned with your

team and do great work without sitting in the same room as your colleagues.

There are, of course, plenty of obstacles and challenges to that as well. Maintaining culture, morale and community are some of the biggest challenges from these changes. I believe those are the things that we haven't quite seen the full impact of yet. It's really hard work and takes an extra level of attention to maintain.

44% of U.S. adults we surveyed with YouGov said they would like some things to permanently change about their work style post-coronavirus. How do you think that will change with digital products?

I think digital products will have to adapt. Products like Slack are already there. We have a head start, but there are definitely many different considerations when you are building a product with so many variables of how people are accessing it and using it. With that being said, this isn't a new challenge. Products have been increasing variable and ways people access them for years. Right now for us the question is, How do we use the scale of this disruption to do more than just get back to where we started? What are the opportunities to do things better and more efficiently?

What advice would you give to teams when it comes to working remotely in the future?

“Right now for us the question is, How do we use the scale of this disruption to do more than just get back to where we started?”

Working from wherever presents many logistical conveniences. No commute, Don't need to buy pants, don't need to take public transportation or pay for parking... But, this isn't easy. It also presents many challenges. Especially for creative teams. An important part of creative work is being around other creatives.

Brainstorm sessions, critiques, building a team culture of trust and community.

How do we do all of those things without being in the same room? My advice is to check in often and take the extra effort to connect. This energy may not have been necessary previously because there was a natural personal connection. There isn't now. And, it takes more time and energy to build that trust as a team.

Takeaways: Work

1.
Businesses were suddenly forced to work in new, socially distant ways to protect public facing workers, and work remotely

2.
Many of the changes are making peoples lives more suitable, giving them more flexibility and time to sculpt their own lives

3.
These rapid changes exposed what we desperately need: to completely throw away how office workers work, and construct work culture that gives employees flexibility and autonomy

4.
It's up to us to do this. We can provide workers with autonomy through proper wages, paid leave, flexible schedules and remote work options

Chapter 2.4

Overwrite: How We Stay Healthy

Among the ways our lives were forced to quickly change amidst the lockdown was in respect to our health and wellbeing.

Suddenly simple things like grocery shopping, or taking a walk for fresh air were both health risks, and hassles as essentials were flying off of the shelves.

Things we all rely on to keep us healthy and with a routine, such as doctors appointments, therapy sessions, and fitness classes were suddenly not feasible to include in our daily lives. The absence of ways to care for ourselves was coupled with a sharp increase

in anxiety and depression due to COVID-19. In a UK study, depression had doubled for adults, from before the pandemic to June. In the U.S., the national rate of anxiety doubled, and depression nearly quadrupled from 6.5% to 24.3%.

We've been headed to a more tech-centric future for some time now and while these things won't permanently replace the in person options, we've seen many companies and individuals adapt to this new reality and fill the gaps in meaningful ways, some of which are here to stay.

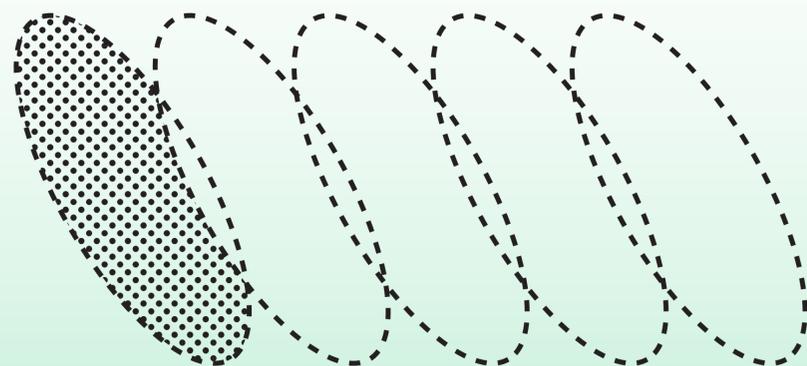


Survey Results: Wellbeing

What We've Learned

With the acceleration of virtual education in place of in-person instruction, came the inevitable change in parents, educators, and students' relationship to schooling and technology—and new possibilities carved out for what education can now look like.

While some parents in our survey have struggled with online schooling, nearly half are ready for the education system to change in some way. This desire and necessities of the moment have accelerated innovation across education in a few key ways.



16%

Of people surveyed used online medicine/doctors visits for the first time after March of this year

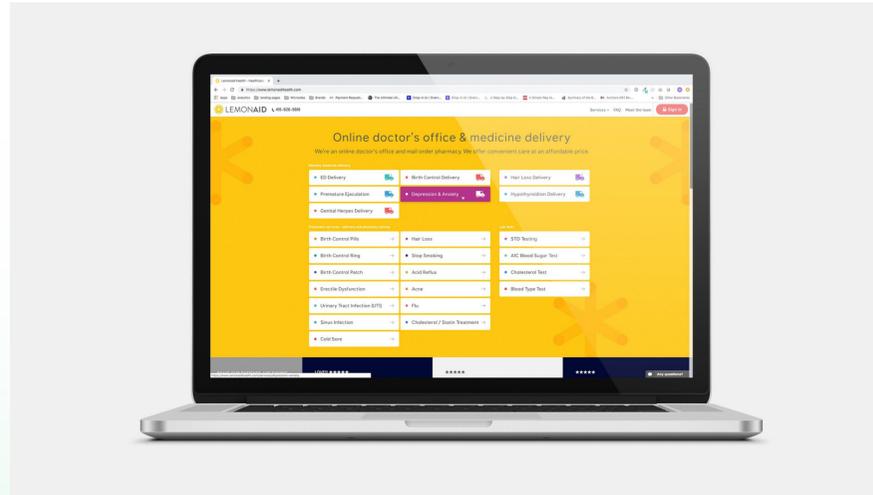


9%

Of people surveyed started using a mental health or meditation app for the first time after March of this year

Digital Innovations: Wellbeing

Virtual doctors appointments became the way to go in a socially distanced world. The moment was met with an influx of telehealth services, from boutique practices to free services essential workers could utilize.



Lemonaid Health

Icebreaker Health, Inc.

[Visit the site](#)

Telehealth service Lemon-aid has raised \$33M in 2020 and plans in to increase patients by 10x. They have treated over a million patients for issues from sinus infections to anxiety for about \$25 per visit. Providers have seen their amount of patients via telehealth platforms rise 50 to 175x since before the outbreak, according to a [McKinsey COVID-19 Consumer Survey](#).



Women's Health and Workout companies

[Visit the site](#)

Health and workout companies were in a unique position to help us continue routines for our fitness and health. Companies such as Women's Health and Rumble started doing frequent Instagram Live workouts, to keep their consumer spirits high and give people the motivation to workout in their own homes with minimal equipment. While paid online tiers have become available with many of these companies, they found a way to not only stay a part of their existing communities, but grow their audiences with positive, accessible content. Peloton set a record for most people streaming a single live class with 23,000 riders.

Insights & Ideas

featuring



Deborah Hyun
Sr. Vice President
of Global
Marketing,
Headspace

Has usage of the app increased or changed in any way?

Downloads doubled mid march compared to before Covid and there has been a 6x increase in users starting stressed meditation.

How do you see the future of digital mental health tools augmenting the healthcare industry?
How have you seen usage of the app change?

Technology is a facilitator of access, and digital mental health tools like Headspace are a great first step to mental health care. With the increase in mental health issues surfacing for a lot of people, it's important to support people in finding a range of solutions that work for them, depending on their needs.

Headspace first launched in 2010. Do you think your team could have produced the app in a pandemic work environment?

The pandemic doesn't change our vision for the app, but it now gives us the opening we need to get the app out to as many people as possible given the need. And it gives us an opportunity to lead the conversation on the importance of taking care of one's mind.

Before joining Headspace as VP of Global Marketing, Deborah Hyun was Uber's Director of Performance Marketing. We chat with her about digital apps' role to help mental health.

Headspace got to work collaborating with a variety of partners to offer solutions for anybody in need of mental help. To serve children they worked with Webby winner Sesame Street to create Monster Meditations.

Sesame Street Monster Meditations: Adults aren't the only ones feeling mounting stress and anxiety right now. Kids of all ages are also experiencing a range of big feelings.

Headspace and Sesame Street teamed up to create six animated shorts for YouTube Kids called 'Sesame Street Monster Meditation'. The shorts are an effort to educate kids on mindfulness, meditation and social emotional learning.

Headspace co-founder and former Buddhist monk, Andy Puddicombe, helps each monster learn various breathing and sensory activities and other mindfulness techniques to better manage relatable, everyday scenarios.

The shorts, roughly three minutes in length, feature animated versions of the beloved Sesame Street Muppets having feelings of frustration, impatience, being overwhelmed, nervousness, disappointment, and excitement.

Take Aways: Wellbeing

1.

With this time we realized things like doctors visits can be done often in less time, online.

2.

This time added more options into the mix for health and wellbeing, focusing on the importance of holistic health.

3.

Companies and communities met the moment and provided positive content to not only keep their audiences, but also grow them.

4.

These accelerations across the healthcare and wellness industries has ushered in normalized use of virtual options to remain healthy, expanding the access for those who are unable to seek these services in person, for various reasons. In the future, we need to make sure these services are easily accessible and affordable for people from all walks of life.

Chapter 2.5

Overwrite: How We Connect

During a time when we needed to rely on each other most, physical proximity wasn't something we could count on.

To remain connected, more people than ever used digital tools like video calling to keep in touch with loved ones, reconnect with friends, meet potential partners in new ways, and actively engaging in social media rather than passively using apps.

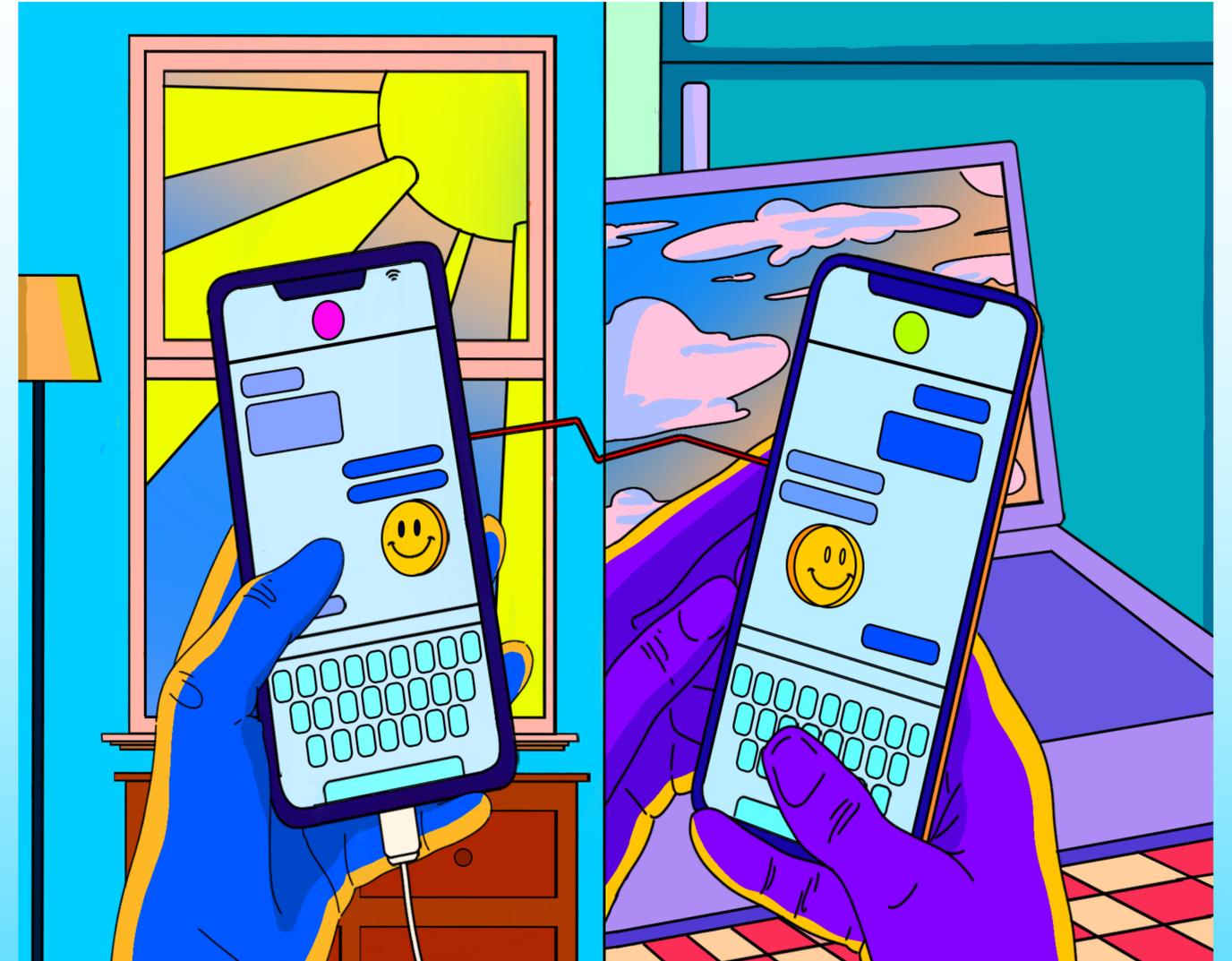
Half of respondents in our survey have become more active on social media, by commenting more, going live, and more.

Match Group, which holds popular dating brands like Tinder, Hinge, Match and OKCupid, reported a 15% increase in users for the second quarter.

Companies were quick to build experiences online that connected them to their consumers, so companies that help facilitate this digital work saw a massive increase in creation.

Companies innovated, but individuals did too, using tools like Facebook groups, Slack and GoFundMe to assist those around them who needed help with things like grocer, and to stay connected.

When left with the Internet as our lifeline to foster connections, people made do with the tools they had to stay connected to those around them.



Survey Results: Connections

30%

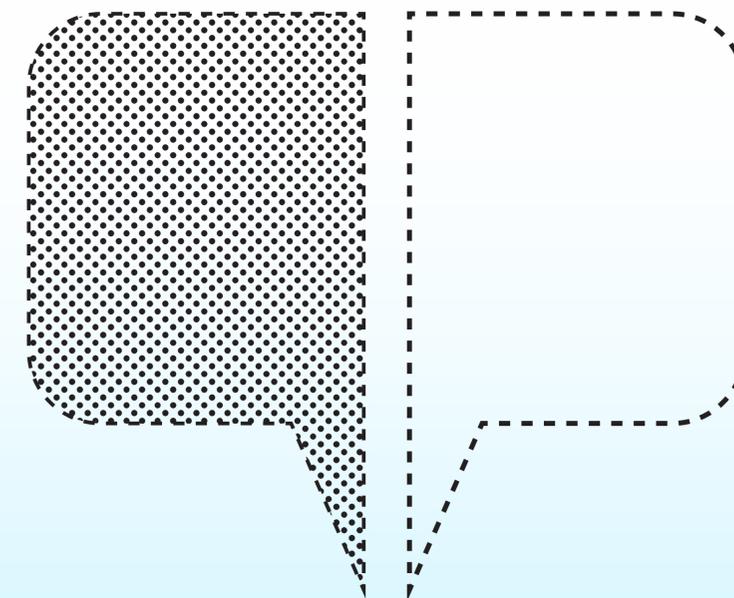
Of people surveyed of people have talked to friends and family more since the start of the pandemic

36%

Of people surveyed used Zoom for the first time after March of this year

29%

Of people surveyed of people have reconnected with a friend or family member since March 2020

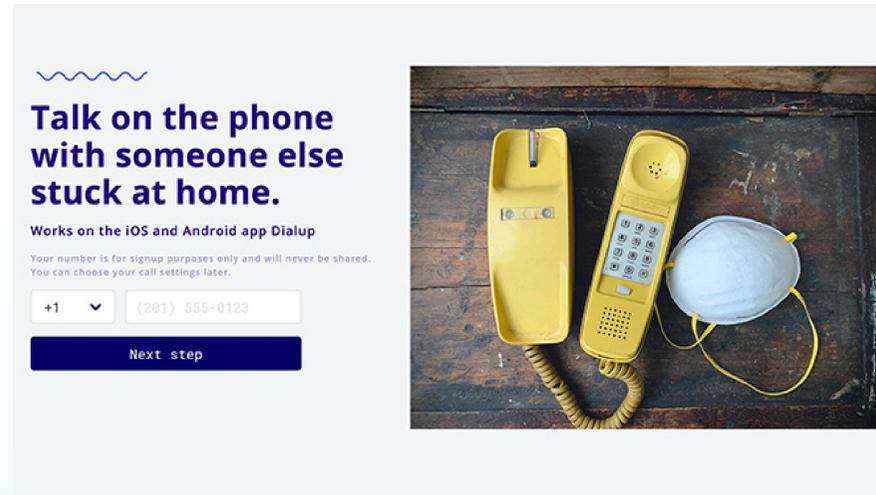


50%

Of people surveyed of people say they've been more active on social media in ways such as commenting more, going live more and engaging more since March

Digital Innovations: Connections

With so many people at home, staying connected on the Internet was not only inevitable, it was a lifeline. To help assist people stay in touch, many companies and individuals tapped into apps with video chatting capabilities, and existing dating apps introduced video and calling capabilities.



QuarantineChat

[Dialup, Inc.](#)

[Visit the site](#)

As COVID shutdowns started to take over the world, the artists Danielle Baskin and Max Hawkins creators of DialUp, a social platform designed to reinvent phone calls, launched QuarantineChat.

The app, run through Dialup, was designed to help those who were suddenly isolated due to mandated quarantines deal with loneliness. The voice chat service lets users to connect with other strangers around the globe who were in similar situations to create a sense of community. In May it was reported in the New York Times that 15,000 new users, from 183 countries joined the app and connected with strangers for a friendly chat.



Virtual Game Nights with JackboxTV

[Jackbox Games](#)

[Visit the site](#)

Similarly, friends, families, and colleagues who were apart leaned into virtual game nights. In May, popular games company Jackbox Games reported a 500-1000 percent increase in players since the start of lockdowns. They introduced a special Conquer COVID-19 Humble Bundle to help players, with all proceeds donated to charity organizations responding to the effects of COVID-19. It normalized virtual gaming for new users, something that can be taken into the future.

Permanent Changes to Online Dating

Dating being another thing completely turned around during distancing and quarantine, dating apps started pivoting to integrate video calls into their apps.

Hinge Labs found in a study that 70% of their users were open to video calling their matches. Things people probably hadn't considered before, became a major part of dating life - and likely became both more accessible and more time efficient.

Even more, Match Group, which owns popular dating brands like Tinder, Hinge, Match, and OKCupid saw a 15% increase in new users.



Competitors like Bumble quickly leaned into long-distance connections, by allowing users to match with anyone in their country. It also introduced video and audio calling, audio notes, and badges for users to signal they are open to virtual dating.

It's also led to the creation of new apps like Curtn, a video-first dating platform, letting users lead with video profiles over text.

Not a replacement for in-person connections, but this has introduced new ways to the online dating landscape, and improve the potential to foster stronger connections before meeting others offline.



Take Aways: Connection

1.

People embraced new ways of communicating and engaging because of their deep need for connection in a time where it was less available than ever, these new habits may forever be part of how we connect.

2.

With in-person gatherings off the table, hang outs that previously may have been intimate, ballooned into large virtual gatherings that defied the restrictions typically created by geography and time zones.

4.

At this moment, consumers crave connection and want digital platforms that keep up with their changing emotional needs.

3.

Virtual socialization wasn't limited to traditional social media –gaming, social media, audio calling, video calling, texting, worshipping virtually, and other new platforms emerged to allow people to feel connected.

5.

Digital tools to help people of all backgrounds maintain genuine forms of intimacy, as their needs change in real time will continue to thrive in an era of socialization and connection powered by technology.



Chapter 3

A New Way Drives Change

New Digital Realities

01

Education

Virtual education has taken hold

Students have created virtual spaces to socialize

Online classes help students who work best outside social settings

02

Entertainment

The desire for digital entertainment has skyrocketed

Events and artists innovated new ways to reach people online

Now creators can use digital to enhance in-person events

03

Work

Modern work culture has become largely remote

Acceleration in infrastructure and flexibility for remote work

Now 4 in 5 people want permanent changes to work style

04

Wellbeing

Health and wellness resources quickly shifted online

Businesses and brands provided digital options to maintain health

Now the infrastructure exists for permanent digital options

05

Community

People sought community in digital spaces more than ever

Social media, dating, and gaming platforms pivoted to meet real-time needs

Now we can foster stronger connections virtually

Overwrite: Inequalities

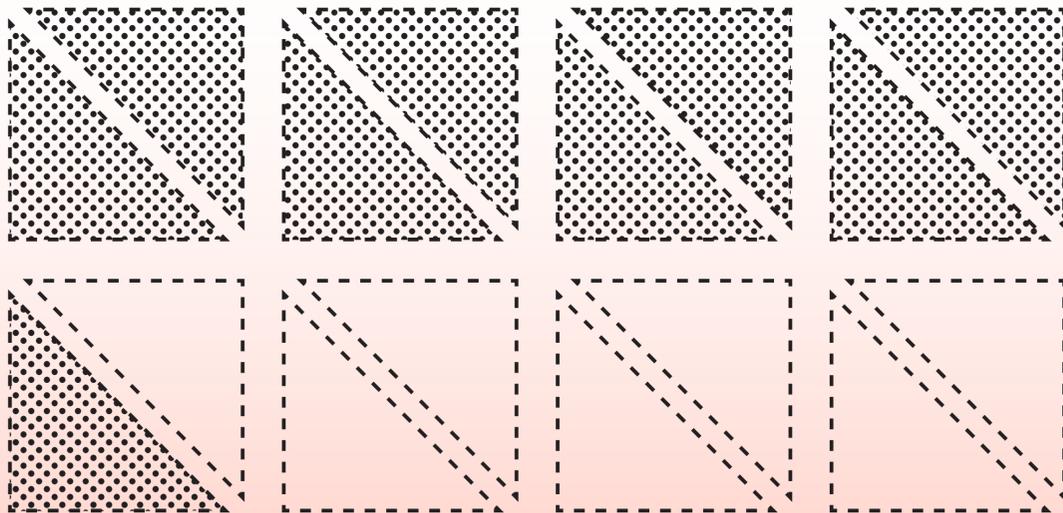
The confluence of the effects of the pandemic shone a light and exacerbated existing inequalities in today's society. In the United States, the economic crisis and the pandemic have disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and People of Color across the country.

The shut down forced us to stop and think about what matters, change how we live almost every aspect of our lives, and really see and address inequalities - for many it was a wake up to take the time to learn where we could adjust ourselves to help the bigger picture.

In May, a video of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police officers went viral and sparked an uprising against police brutality and systematic racism on a scale never seen before.

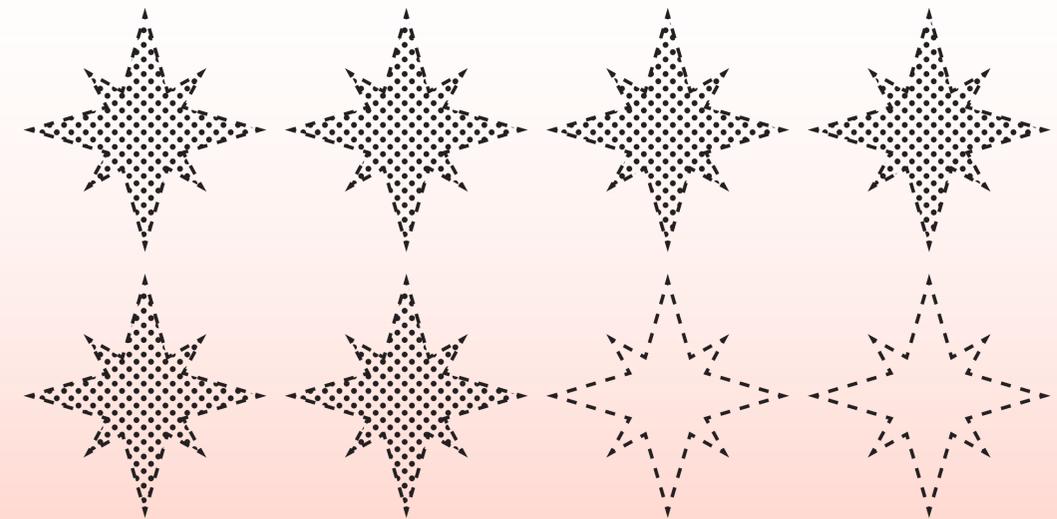
We moved with urgency to fix existing issues. Now it's time to take these lessons and create a better future.

Survey Results: Activism



56%

Of people surveyed say they've noticed flaws in the structures of society that they would not have noticed if the world hadn't shut down



75%

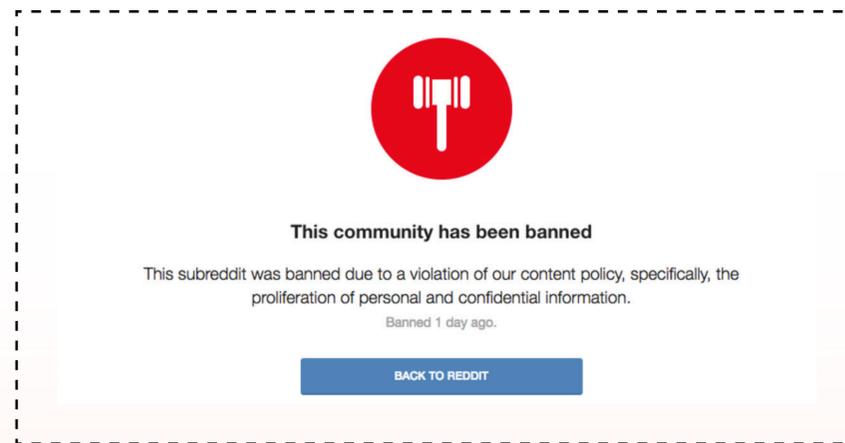
Of people surveyed want at least some things about society to permanently change

The Industry Responds

As companies across the digital, media, and advertising spaces were called to do more, actions were put in place to remedy systemic racism throughout their practices.

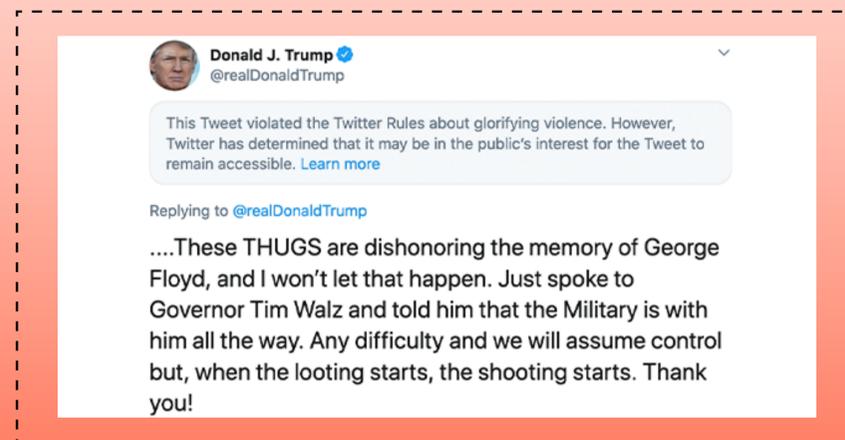
Actions ranged from 600 Black advertising professionals publishing a digital letter calling for change in the industry, media companies and agencies fast-tracking diverse hiring practices, as well as implicit bias and diversity trainings.

Others chose to implement systemic change through moving their dollars, and controlling problematic content on existing platforms.



Reddit

In June, Reddit finally banned hate speech, and removed 2,000 violent and racist forums. Known as a platform with an “anything goes” approach, Reddit’s own users called its leadership to take action against hate speech.



Twitter

The platform flagged tweets made by Trump that suggested protesters in Minneapolis would be shot, citing that it glorified violence. Users were prompted to view the warning before reading the tweet.



Nextdoor

In response to complaints of racial profiling community bulletin board platform Nextdoor removed the app’s “Forward to Police” feature. Additionally, it introduced training to Nextdoor moderators for removing posts related to racial injustice, and increase its number of BIPOC moderators.



Facebook

Major advertisers on Facebook reduced their spending by millions of dollars in July, to protest the platform’s handling of hate speech and misinformation.

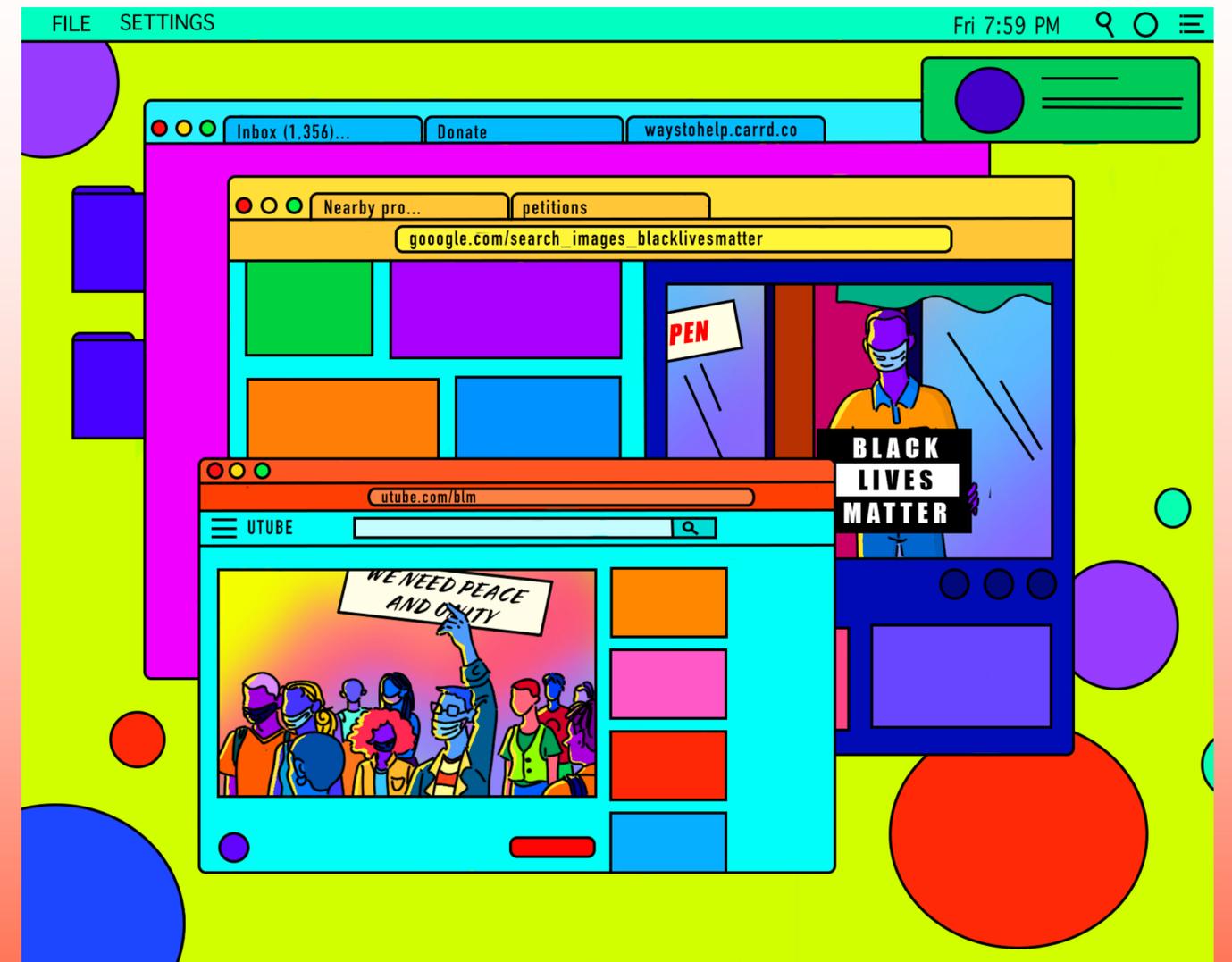
Overwrite: How We Advocate

During the peak of the pandemic, with everyone home with less distractions, many injustices burst into full view from our new screen reality. Conversely, people were called to devote their time to addressing them, by protesting in the streets or by helping virtually.

The shut down granted us transparency, matched with energy. Systemic injustices were exposed in all communities and industries, not just policing, from advertising and media to healthcare.

With these issues in full view and with many in a place of need, individuals organized with what they had, creating Slack groups to organize grocery deliveries, mutual aid networks to help those in need, and used groups to connect with neighbors and organize protests.

All of this caused a forced evaluation among companies as well, to consider their own organizations part in it all financially, within their staffs and within the content they produce or allow on their platforms.



Insights & Ideas

featuring



Rahna Epting
Executive Director
MoveOn

Prior to leading MoveOn, Rahna Epting served as Chief of Staff at Every Voice. We chat with her about how the pandemic and Internet have changed civic engagement, and how MoveOn has pivoted.

Do you think the last 6-7 months have changed the way people feel about the way the world works?

The last four years as a whole have been a period of intense grassroots energy and engagement, as tens of millions of Americans from all walks of life took action as part of a national resistance movement in which we protected our health care, showed up for immigrant families being separated and detained by the administration, and fueled a Blue Wave in 2018 that ended Republican control of the House of Representatives and put an important check on Trump’s power.

That tremendous grassroots energy has only further intensified over the past few months, as the nation has confronted a pandemic, economic crisis, racial injustice, climate change-fueled fires and hurricanes, a Supreme Court vacancy, and an election in which Trump is attacking voting and the future of democracy is on the line. Since the beginning of the year, MoveOn has seen a massive, more than three-fold increase in the size of MoveOn’s membership, which has grown as more and more people have taken action via email and SMS.

Now we’re seeing people focusing that energy into the election. MoveOn has already signed up more than 350,000 battleground

state volunteers who will help persuade their friends and family to vote, and MoveOn members have chipped in millions of dollars to help fund the campaigns of our endorsed candidates. The incredible grassroots energy across the country right now and the widespread determination so many people have to use our votes to end the Trump presidency are reasons for hope about the election and our future.

What digital innovations are necessary to better protect marginalized people or help create more equitable spaces, virtually and in real life?

Yes, the Internet has changed the nature of our democracy, in good ways and bad.

It has provided all of us with platforms that didn’t previously exist to make our voices heard, from the first viral political petition, started by MoveOn in 1998, to young Americans’ recent use of TikTok, Twitch, and other emerging platforms to organize. Certainly, there would have been no resistance movement the past four years without the Internet.

Then again, without the Internet, there might also never have been a President Trump. Internet corporations—especially social media companies like Facebook or Twitter—have too often prioritized their

“We had to re-work our entire grassroots mobilization program for the election.”

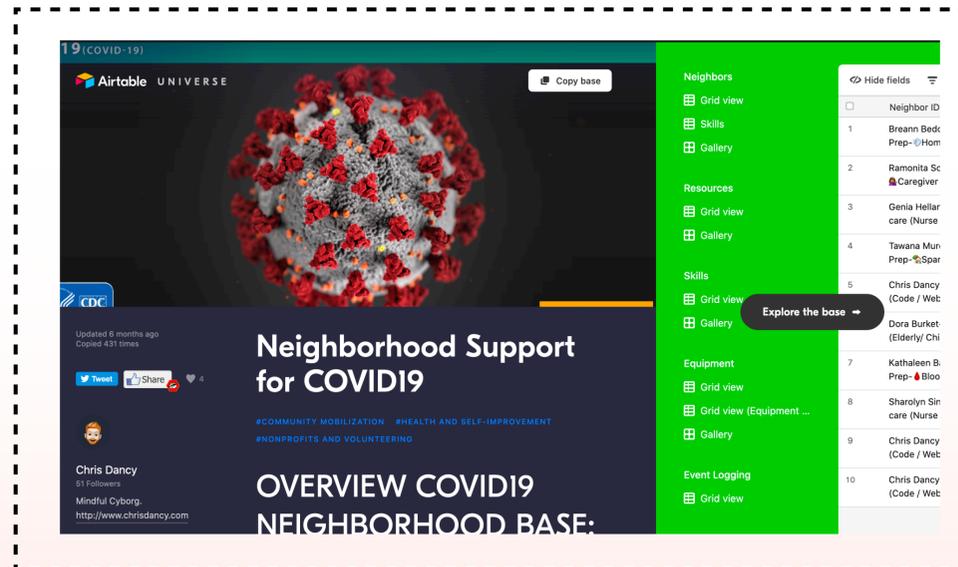
profits instead of the public interest and have given those in power harmful ways to maintain that power, including by hastening the spread of conspiracy theories and disinformation. The Internet has also given those with extreme and bigoted views, such as neo-Nazis, new platforms. MoveOn has put significant resources toward combatting and de-platforming disinformation networks that are trying to suppress the votes of people of color by increasing cynicism about politics.

How has MoveOn needed to adapt your organizing efforts in response to the pandemic?

MoveOn has always been a remote workplace, so in some ways we were well prepared for at least the stay at home aspect of the pandemic. But it definitely forced changes. For example, we had to re-work our entire grassroots mobilization program for the election, because it is much harder to organize safely in person. We are no longer going door-to-door, for example, and we’ve dramatically increased our use of text messaging as a tool for organizing and reaching voters. And we’ve started holding “Twitter rallies,” through which thousands of us taking simultaneous action have driven topics like #OurVoteIsPower to trend on Twitter. Text messaging and social media are going to be increasingly important tools for us even after the pandemic.

Digital Innovation: Activism

It is possible to reorient existing digital tools to help the most vulnerable. Covid-19 sparked communal urgency to educate and provide aide through various platforms.



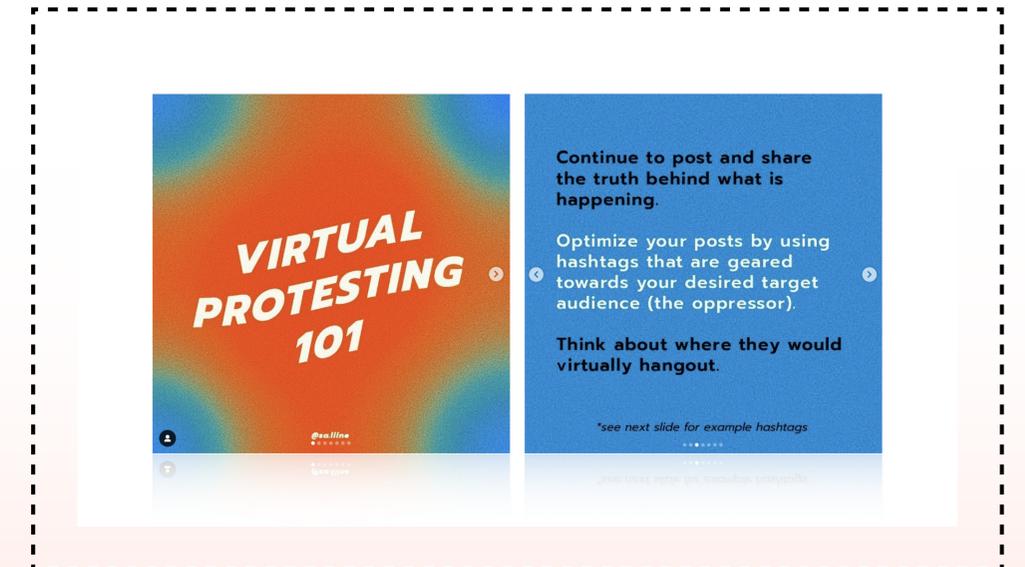
Mutal Aid Networks via Airtable and Slack

[Chris Dancy](#)

[Visit the site](#)

In the U.S. alone, 4.5 million people were active members of COVID-19 support groups on Facebook. Others hacked digital productivity tools, like Airtable and Slack, to organize grocery and essential items deliveries to vulnerable neighbors. On March 17th, health technologist Chris Dancy used Airtable to create a form for people to request assistance from community members. Airtable has incorporated this form on its Airtable Universe site, to help others. Existing community organizations moved their aid efforts onto platforms like Slack, creating channels to fill specific requests.

Amidst struggling all around us, individuals often filled in for lacking healthcare and support systems themselves using the technology tools they already had.



Movement Guides

[@manassaline](#)

[View the Guide](#)

The current social moment, combined with limitations of the pandemic and our increased use of the Internet, has ushered in a different wave of social activism, especially on Instagram.

Following the start of protests in Minneapolis, infographics and slides flooded Instagram, using the platform's carousel images feature to provide useful information, like how to protest in digital spaces by designer Manassaline Coleman, to guides on how allies can help, how to help Lebanon, and more.

Engaging in activism online isn't new, but guides like these acted as a launching pad for people to enter the conversation, and do their own research.

Digital Innovation: Activism



#sharethemicnow

[View the Campaign](#)

With prolonged coverage of the movement across the Internet, those in power were called to pass the virtual microphone to BIPOC voices who are routinely ignored.

This led to the start of actions to make permanent changes across industries, like #ShareTheMicNow. Black women across media, entertainment, tech, and sports took over the Instagram accounts of white women influencers for a day. The campaign aimed to magnify Black women who are pushing for change in their fields. The 92 participants expanded the reach of Black women digital audiences that they may not have previously reached.



Chapter 4

Conclusions

A Better Future

The confluence of the effects of the pandemic shone a light and exacerbated existing inequalities in today's society. In the United States, the economic crisis and the pandemic have disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and People of Color across the country.

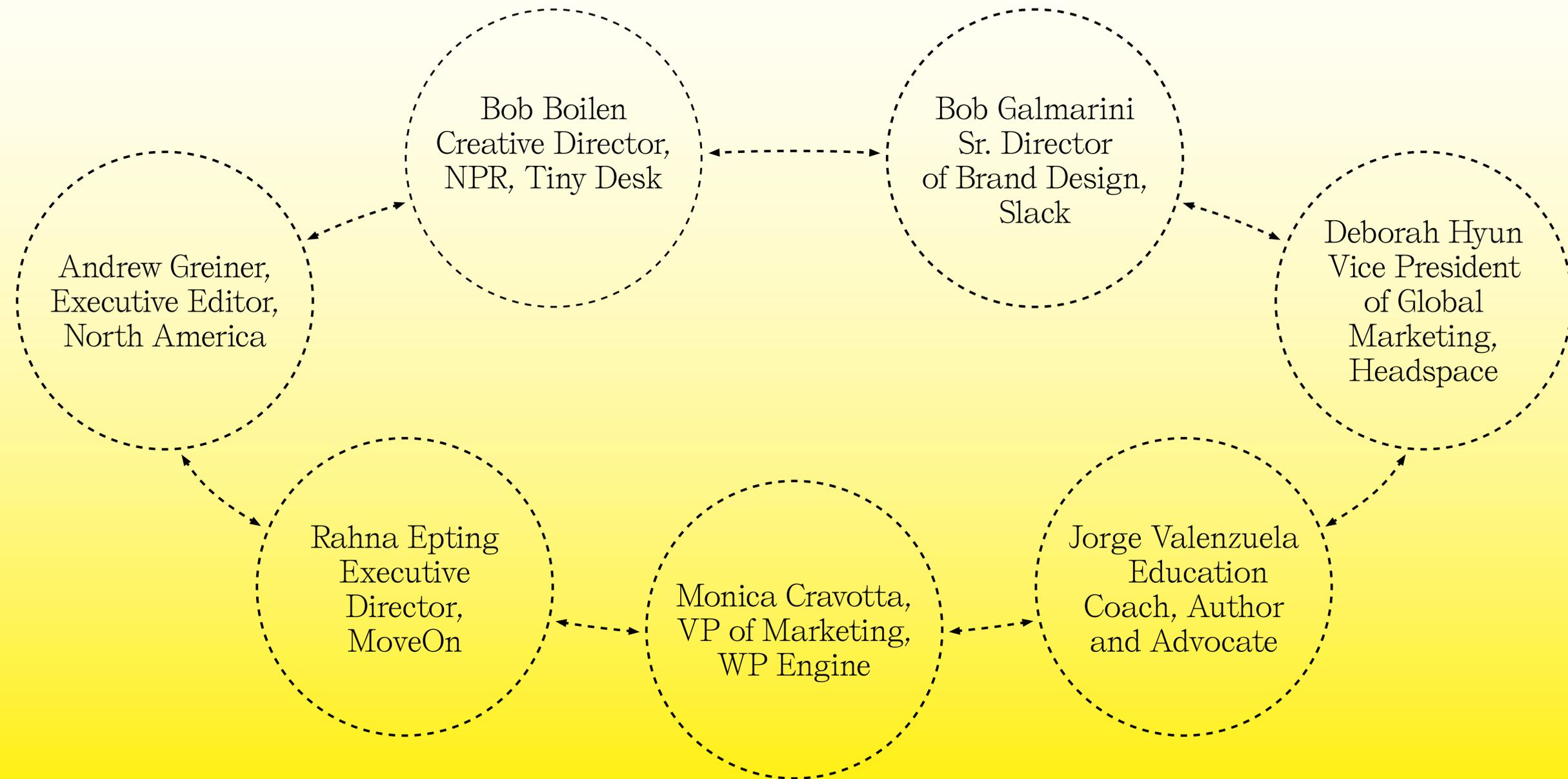
The shut down forced us to stop and think about what matters, change how we live almost every aspect of our lives, and really see and address inequalities - for many it was a wake up to take the time to learn where we could adjust ourselves to help the bigger picture.

In May, a video of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police officers went viral and sparked an uprising against police brutality and systematic racism on a scale never seen before.

We moved with urgency to fix existing issues. Now it's time to take these lessons and create a better future.

Thank You to Our Contributors

Thank you to the experts who participated in our Q&As for this year's Webby Trend Report, as well as our sponsors who helped put this together.



YouGov

About the Survey

We conducted a survey of 3,000 consumers across the U.S., in partnership with YouGov, one of the world's largest market research and data analytics firms for polling global public opinion. We set out to understand how recent events have impacted their lives online and off. Over the following pages, we dive into key findings from the survey, and explore how shutting down has bred digital innovation across schooling, work, entertainment, well-being, connections and activism.

Methodology

This survey has been conducted using an online interview administered to members of the YouGov Plc panel of individuals who have agreed to take part in surveys. Emails are sent to panelists selected at random from the base sample. The e-mail invites them to take part in a survey and provides a generic survey link. Once a panel member clicks on the link they are sent to the survey that they are most required for, according to the sample definition and quotas. (The sample definition could be "US adult population" or a subset such as "US adult females"). Invitations to surveys don't expire and respondents can be sent to any available survey. The responding sample is weighted to the profile of the sample definition to provide a representative reporting sample. The profile is normally derived from census data or, if not available from the census, from industry accepted data.

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YouGov is a global data and analytics company that collects consumer opinion and behavioral data in 45 markets from an online panel of 10 million participants. As market research pioneers, YouGov's data consistently outperforms others on accuracy, as concluded by Pew Research. Combine that with our advanced analytical technology, powered by crunch.io, and we are able to generate the most accurate, complete, and dynamic portrait of the world.

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Additional Resources

Questions about the research? Email Angela Carola, Managing Director, International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences and Industry Relations at acarola@webbyawards.com

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