

Over half of US consumers say brands will need to communicate differently in post-COVID world

Essential topics to address will include protection of workers, consumers – GfK Consumer Pulse research

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 8, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When US consumers emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, how should brands talk to them? New GfK research – conducted within the past two weeks – shows that a slim majority (55%) of Americans believe that brands will need to adopt a new set of concerns and messages in the post-virus world.

But the remaining 45% feel that companies should return to pre-Coronavirus themes “as soon as possible,” so that consumers can “forget” that the COVID-19 crisis happened.

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In the seventh wave of interviewing for its Consumer Pulse research – which has been tracking global reactions to the virus since mid-March – GfK also found that Americans from different circumstances have different feelings about appropriate post-COVID messaging. The latest GfK research found that

- 66% of those with children under age 3 favor a return to pre-virus messaging, compared to just 34% of those who have no kids,
- 56% of people living in large urban metropolises would prefer that brands revert to earlier themes, versus 40% of those who live in small cities, and
- 60% of women think brands should behave as if the post-virus world is completely different, while men are split 50-50 between forward-looking and nostalgic messaging.

GfK also found that the messages that consumers would like to see brands embrace after the crisis also split to some degree.

- Those who think we should return to earlier themes are more likely to favor communications around brand innovations, promotions, and general product information.
- Consumers who feel the “world is different” would prefer to see messaging about protecting the health of consumers and employees
- Both groups put a high priority, however, on themes around price controls for key items.

When asked which platforms brands should use for messaging in the post-virus world,

Americans gravitated to both traditional and digital platforms:

- TV ads – 35%
- Brand websites – 35%
- Email – 33%
- Social networks – 32%

“As we move into the summer, Americans and brands alike are ready to move on to the next chapter of life – a slow return to familiar activities and pleasures,” said Stacy Bereck, GfK’s Managing Director of Consumer Insights and Sales Effectiveness (North America) and Director of Global Consumer Trends. “Our research shows that brands need to tread cautiously in this new phase, somehow addressing a very divided consumer public – some who might want to pretend that the virus never happened, and others who see it as a transition to a new world. With the world continuing to shift on an almost weekly basis, transformed by the virus and nationwide protests and outrage, companies need to monitor consumers’ changing concerns and needs even more closely.”

GfK’s Consumer Pulse research covers 30 countries, allowing brands and marketers to #MasterTheCrisis by understanding consumer attitudes, behavior, purchase intent, media consumption, and more – both now and in the future. The research reveals changes in demand for goods and services, as well as which sectors and channels present risks or opportunities, so that companies can respond with confidence and come out of the crisis stronger, better positioned, and closer to consumers than before.

As part of this research, GfK interviewed a representative sample of 1,028 US consumers (ages 16 to 65) during May 29th and 30th, 2020.

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David Stanton

GfK

+1 908-875-9844

[email us here](#)

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