



THINKING HATS

SENTIMENT POST NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

On 14th April 2020, India announced an extended lockdown until 3rd May, keeping in mind the increase in a number of coronavirus cases in the country.

Most sectors are witnessing an un-anticipated, un-welcomed and disruptive aftermath of COVID-19. In this on-going scenario, several brands are coping to adapt & manage the balance in the paradigm shift noticed in consumer behaviour and attitudes.

Thinking Hats has been tracking Social Behavioural Change (SBC), among consumers across diverse aspects, from the day the lockdown was announced.

SBC in media consumption habits, decision making & purchase patterns, psychological adversities that are influenced by anxieties and fears, are evolving with every passing day. SBC professionals have a critical role to play in this disease outbreak scenario.

Looking beyond the COVID-19, Thinking Hats has initiated consumer discussions to gauge 'What happens after the lockdown is lifted?'

How will the consumer react to his surroundings, will the change in behaviour define his 'new reality' or will consumer seamlessly seep back into the pre-corona routine?

Intriguing insights were unearthed from the consumer's perspective that threw light on the precautions that will continue to be taken after the lockdown ends & the few things that consumers would immediately indulge in to satiate their deprived state of mind.



Situational Agoraphobia

Agoraphobia is usually related to a fear of being in public or a fear of large crowds.

Social distancing has forced people to stay in their houses for long with extremely limited transit & interaction with another. This shift is predicted to continue to affect consumer access in the upcoming weeks.

Priyanka from Mumbai says, "I will certainly avoid mass gathering events, cinema halls and religious places of visit for a few days at least."

While Shruti from Nagpur says, "I will adhere to social distancing norms even after the lockdown is over."

Revenge Spending

One factor that is expected to boost sales after the lockdown is revenge spending, which means shoppers will binge-buy once the lockdown is relieved, to cover up for the days they have stayed inside the house.

E-commerce will see similar growths as people will avoid going to malls and other public shopping places and thus will shop online for most of its need.



Online shopping for anything that is essential to being quarantined will grow – it's a huge range from exercise and hobby equipment, to gardening and home improvement.

"I miss shopping. But you can never tell who has been and touched what in a public space. It's safer to do online shopping, where transfer is between limited hands."

Conscientious Hygiene

Consumers will continue taking precautions to maintain hygiene and sanitization habits they have inculcated due to COVID-19. Wearing masks, regularly washing hands, being their top most priority.

Being vary of the COVID-19 situation, workplaces will get transformed in a safer and more comfortable environment.

Akshita from Delhi connotes, "I will be more conscious about my personal health as well as the hygiene in my surroundings. Will make it a point to use sanitiser and also make the people who work for me, aware of the importance of maintaining basic hygiene."



Personal Grooming

Perhaps the most challenging task is to see yourself in a less than 'perfect' avatar. Some men are already missing staying groomed, evident from the recent trend of going bald.

Thus, once the lockdown is lifted, men and women will flock salons, as that's one of the most important routines to their life that is missing. The beauty and cosmetics industry has been hit by the fact that consumers are not heading out to shop nor working from the office. It will see a revival once people are allowed going out of their houses.

Conservative approach to extravagance

Consumers raised a concern for the economy slowing down in the near future due to the sudden effect of COVID. Even if your job is secure, the market uncertainty makes it volatile to take anything for granted.

Vihang from Mumbai said that he will “Continue to spend reasonably as this economic slowdown is going to affect the monetary stability of all salaried people in some way or the other”

“My full family takes a foreign vacation every year. This year we will surely avoid it.”

“Our next car can wait. We do not want an additional burden of EMIs.”



Rise in the Digital Workspaces

COVID-19 has triggered a change in the way companies' function, with work from home already been adopted by major companies, employees too will prefer working from their home environment to avoid public transport, or long travel.

Arzoo from Mumbai says, “I will not travel for some time, I will ensure that work-from-home is seamlessly executed

and will continue strategizing on business continuity plans.”

Value Family Kindred

Those currently staying away from their family and cannot travel to their hometown would prefer to visit their family on priority. In moments like these, you feel most connected and responsible for your loved ones.

“I work in the city, but my family is in the village. I want to be with them in this lockdown situation”

Saransh from Mumbai says, “I am currently stuck in another state & desperately waiting for flights to resume. My folks are alone & the first most thing that I am going to do, is rush home.”

Foodgasm

Perhaps the most keenly awaited indulgence is to 'eat at your favourite restaurant'. Many have also gotten tired of cooking and eating their own home cooked



meals and are looking for a break from this routine.

“I’m tired of eating the same kind of food everyday. I need to eat something different.”

Pursuing Hobbies

Many time killing activities emerged during the lockdown period – cooking, fitness and health, music, craft, talent etc. These could just as well develop into full fledged hobbies that will be continued after this lockdown as well.

“I never use to bake. But I have baked so much in the last few days that I am enjoying it now”

“I think I want to take up Yoga professionally too after the lockdown”

“I taught myself how to play the guitar from online classes”

Mr. Rajesh Mishra, Social Behaviour Change analyst and Founder Director of Thinking Hats Consumer Insights shares his views –

“As countries move through the contagion curve, consumer habits and behaviour will keep evolving, but it is too early to tell how much of an impact will be seen on consumer sentiments in the long run.”

“While consumers believe in continuing to be cautious, they are also hopeful and excited about the things they will immediately do/indulge in, post the lockdown. This is a form of Personal Indulgence that will serve as a reward for their compliant behaviour.”

“The adaption of new apps and services will accelerate digitisation in various sectors. This adoption will penetrate in lower tier markets, as well as adoption by older age groups and are likely to impact their consumption behaviour permanently.”

“Situations like these will test a company’s capability and agility to react. Advertisers who see this as an opportunity to help, to provide utility and to solve consumer problems rather will be able to curb the collapse and come out the other side stronger than before. Taking a more empathetic view can reveal opportunities and an advantage for communities, organisations and brands.”