

CULTURE+

## QUARANTINE CULTURE

TRENDS SHAPED BY COVID-19

# VIACOMCBS GLOBAL INSIGHTS

As part of Colleen Fahey Rush's Research and Insights Team. Led by Christian Kurz, Anna Taylor, James Guerrier, Katie Maggio, Matt Jafar, and Emily Bona-Cohen



Drive Global Consumer  
Understanding and Thought  
Leadership



Support ViacomCBS Corporate  
and Cross-Brand Teams and  
Initiatives



Collaborate to understand  
audiences as they span  
brands



## OUR TRENDS WORK

Global Insights seeks to understand our audiences, content, and culture more broadly to keep ViacomCBS teams equipped and informed.

In the trends space, we oversee a number of thought leadership initiatives across both cultural and content trends and collaborate with brand consumer insights teams to identify, surface, and track trends that impact our audiences and businesses.

# TIMELINE

IGNORANCE

SHOCK

ADAPT

RECALIBRATE

**COPING**

01 SLOW LIVING  
02 DIGITAL LARPING  
03 LIVE FROM HOME

**CONNECTING**

01 ZOOMED IN  
02 MILESTONES  
REIMAGINED

**LIFE AFTER  
LOCKDOWN**

01 LOW TOUCH CULTURE  
02 THE DISTANCED  
EXPERIENCE  
03 NEW NORMALS



# COPING



# SLOW LIVING

In the midst of quarantine, people are developing new hobbies as a form of self-care. With this, we're seeing a return to slow living as some people are embracing time consuming activities as way to fill the void and find comfort.





## QUARANTINE BAKING



More and more people are turning to cooking and baking as a form of comfort during quarantine. Partly out of necessity because of the closure of restaurants, but also as a form of self-care and a way of developing cooking skills.

Bread making in particular is having a moment and the word “starter” has taken on a whole new meaning as people tend to their sourdoughs.

And of course all of it gets shared to Instagram for clout.

This is my impression  
of banana breads publicist



# VICTORIAN LIVING

Instead of leaning into more screen time, some young people are turning to hobbies of the past and learning new slow skills while in quarantine.



## Flower Pressing

The Victorian pastime of drying flowers and pressing them to make art is gaining renewed popularity during COVID.



## Collage

Unlike the goal-oriented activity of creating a vision board to manifest the heart's desire, collage has no purpose other than creative release.



## Natural Dyeing

Some are taking on natural dyeing creating batches of dyes with turmeric powder, which creates a bright golden dye; paprika powder, for red dye and dried hibiscus flowers, for magenta dye.



# NOSTALGIC RECREATION



Roller skating has seen a resurgence in popularity thanks to TikTok which has breathed new life into the old school recreation.



## OPPORTUNITY

Slow living and time consuming hobbies were already gaining popularity among Gen Z with aesthetic movements on TikTok like Cottagecore, roller skating, and more. The influx of this content during lockdown helped to gain new visibility into the lifestyle for younger audiences.

As we come out of quarantine, it's likely that these new found skills will continue to be popular among the younger generations.





# DIGITAL LARPING

Escapism is more necessary than ever and thanks to the internet, which gives users the power to be anyone, people are adopting completely fake personas as an outlet to show their creativity and an escape from our intense world.





## WHAT'S NEW?

For years, Live Action Role Playing (LARP), an in-person game that involves multiple players acting out different characters, has been an escape from reality for the fantasy-obsessed, but the internet and new video games are bringing this behavior online.

While LARPing is nothing new, digital LARPing allows people to easily disguise themselves in various identities without the typical role-playing requirements such as costumes and travel. Because of this, LARPing has made its way from the physical world into the digital space, from a niche audience to the mass public.





## SECOND LIFE GAMING

Games like *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* have offered an alternative reality that allows people an escape from their current one. The game provides a soothing experience and aesthetic that is a balm for many these days.

The games interface is even being used to recreate experiences and milestones that are no longer possible in quarantine, like photoshoots, protests, art galleries, and even weddings.

DJ Marshmello Fortnite Concert



## ENTER THE METaverse

Fortnite has taken simulation games to another level, building an entire alternative universe filled with in-game experiences that allow players to do more than dress up their avatars. Millions of fans attended its virtual concerts featuring DJ Marshmello, Travis Scott, and most recently, Diplo.

Diplo Fortnite Concert



Travis Scott Fortnite Concert



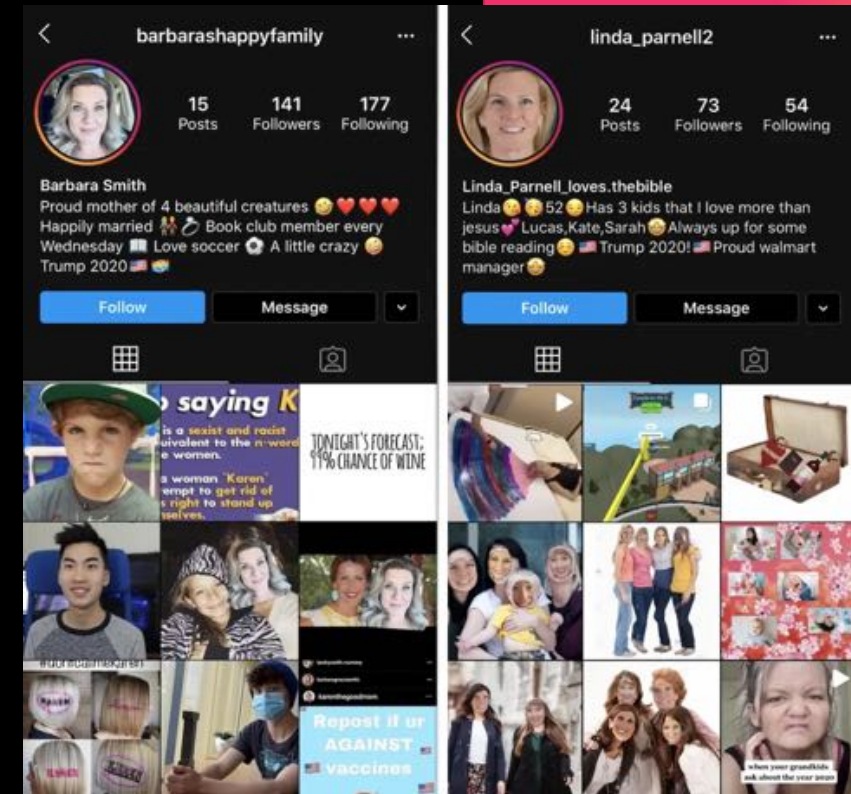


Digital larping has also evolved out of the gaming world and into social spaces like Facebook groups, parody twitter accounts, and TikTok comment sections. The most popular group in the genre, *A Group Where We All Pretend To Be Boomers*, pokes fun at older adults' struggle with social media etiquette such as oversharing personal information, typos, and blurry photos.

“Teens in quarantine are roleplaying as 'Karens' on Instagram, making fake personas dedicated to loving wine and supporting Trump. -Insider”

“A Group Where We All Pretend To Be Boomers (which has around 268,000 subscribers as of Sep 2019) was created in mid-May. According to moderator Robert Snyder, 20, membership increased by over 5,200% within a month. -The Guardian”

## ROLE PLAYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA



## OPPORTUNITY

As the popularity of these gaming universes continue to grow, more and more brands are finding unique and creative ways to participate in these communities and seamlessly build brand moments and creative partnerships that appeal to these audiences.





# LIVE FROM HOME

With in-person live events shut down indefinitely, young people have turned to the next best thing: live streamed events. In a very short amount of time, livestreamed virtual events have also become a go-to tactic for brands—and now it's clear it's very likely going to stick around even as lockdowns ease. Major trends have already started in this live digital marketing space, paving the way for what comes next.

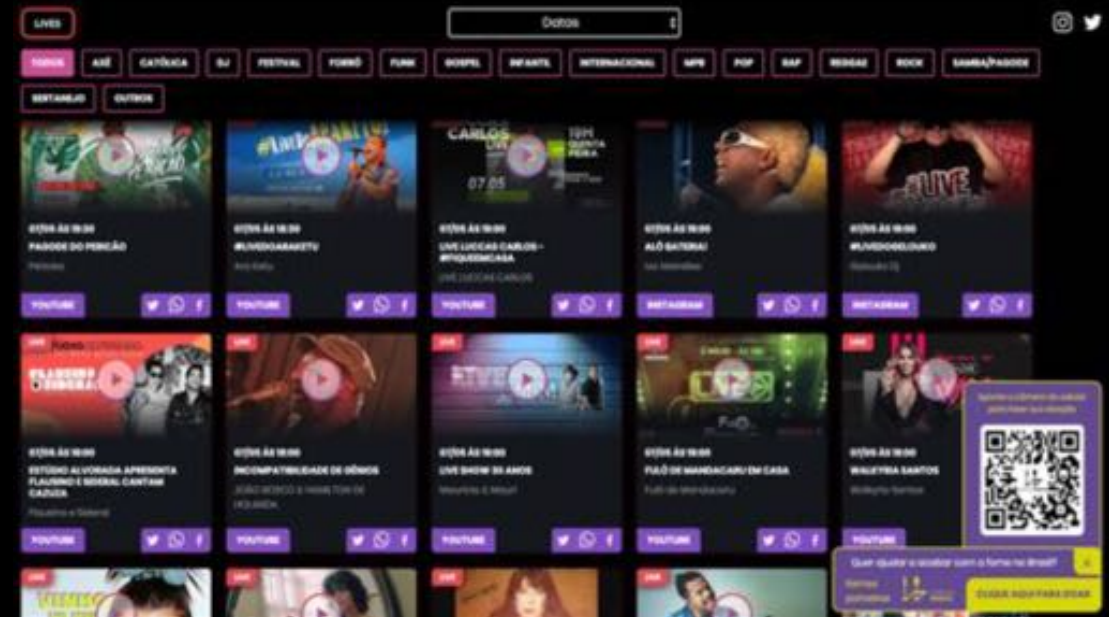


# INTIMATE CONCERTS

With touring and festivals cancelled for the season, artists are turning their living rooms into the stage as a way to connect with fans and share intimate and often times vulnerable performances. In addition to the performances, a number of resources and guides to this new world of virtual concerts have also cropped up.



Quarantine Concerts



LIVES.MUS.BR



# *One World: Together at Home Concert Series – Billie Eilish & Finneas*

GLOBAL  
CITIZEN

Cast of The Office recreates Wedding scene



# THE REUNION SPECIAL

With people seeking comforting content to remind them of better times, we've seen a number of nostalgic hits resurface to offer friendly, familiar faces.



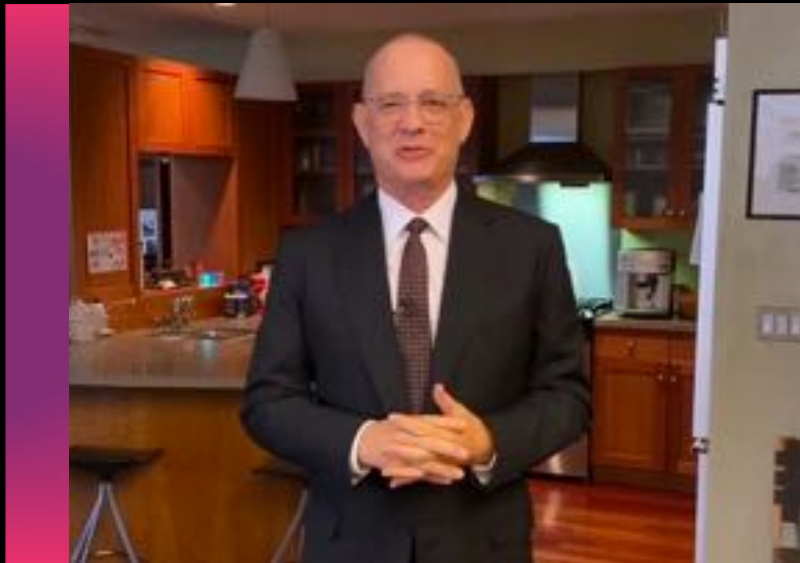
Hamilton Cast Sings "Helpless" with Jimmy Fallon



# CREATIVITY IN CHAOS

Other performing arts like plays, musicals and comedy shows have also found creative ways to keep their shows alive while everyone is stuck at home and away from theaters and clubs.

SNL From Home



Apple Family "What do we need to talk about?"



## OPPORTUNITY

The intimacy of at home and virtual performances is something young audiences have craved as of late. Gen Z in particular have started to go against the perfect aesthetic in favor of something more intimate and authentic. Brands would be smart to continue to produce this type of content and experiences even out of quarantine.



An illustration of a large smartphone screen displaying a video call with an elderly woman. A person in a green shirt and red pants stands behind the screen, holding it. The background is a solid teal color.

# CONNECTING

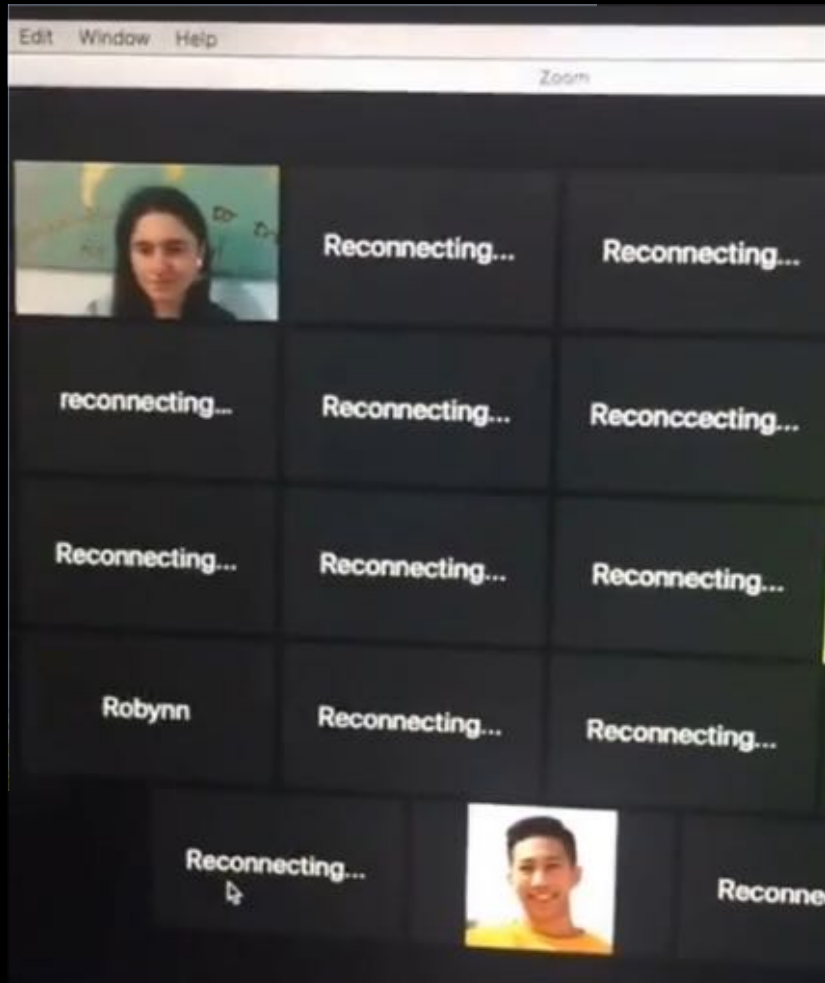
# ZOOMED IN

With guidelines in place to decrease physical proximity, we are all looking for ways to connect virtually or at a safe social distance.  
Enter Zoom to fill all of our connecting needs.





## Zoom class pranks



## LET'S ZOOM

Zoom has become the de facto platform for video conferencing, and it's no longer just used for work meetings. Schools have tapped in to the platform to facilitate remote learning, brands are leveraging virtual backgrounds as another form of advertising, and it's become a staple of our Friday nights.



Advertising in Virtual Backgrounds

# THE NEW SATURDAY NIGHT

Nightlife has moved online as DJs, party scenes, and friend groups take their weekend socializing to video conferences and social media.

Game and movie nights are hosted on Zoom and IG Live has become the place to be for dance parties, DJ sets, and artist battles.



*DJ D-NICE Dance Party*



*Verzuz IG Live battles*

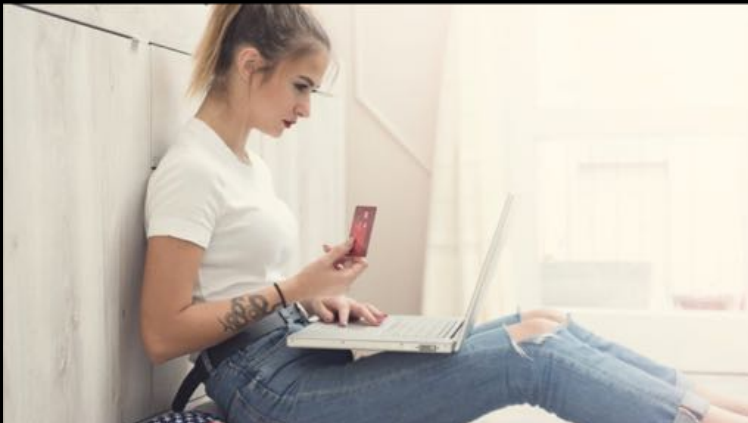


# DATING IN THE TIME OF COVID

Modern dating apps are having to adapt their platforms and functionality to meet the needs of quarantined daters

## *Catch Feelings, Not COVID*

Blind, speed dates over video calls is a way for people to maintain their dating lives amid the stay-at-home order put in place due to the coronavirus.



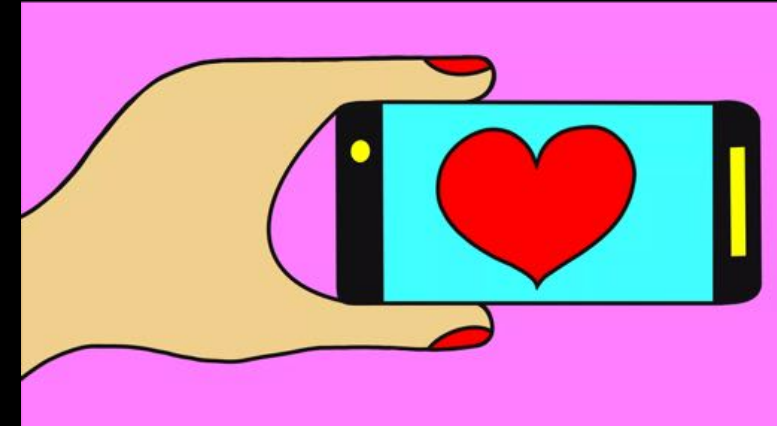
## *Tinder Passport*

Tinder's Passport feature lets you connect with singles all over the world.



## *Bumble Epidemiologist Dating Guides*

Bumble released an Epidemiologist' guide to dating to help keep their users informed during the pandemic.





## *OPPORTUNITY*

Gen Z have always been immersed in the digital world, but life online has now become a necessity. As some sort of distancing is here to stay for a while and as we all become accustomed to connecting online, audiences will be looking to brands to continue creating these experiences.



# MILESTONES REIMAGINED

With schools closed, and events cancelled, people are missing out on crucial milestones in like graduations, proms, and more. Brands, schools, celebrities, and the like sought to fill that void by reimagining these milestones in our pandemic reality.



# SAVING GRADUTION

With graduations cancelled, brands, celebrities, and world leaders stepped in to recognize, celebrate, and provide uplifting messages of hope for the graduating classes of 2020.

While these virtual graduations can never replace the real thing, they are a creative alternative that allow for a celebration during these trying times.

Robot Graduation

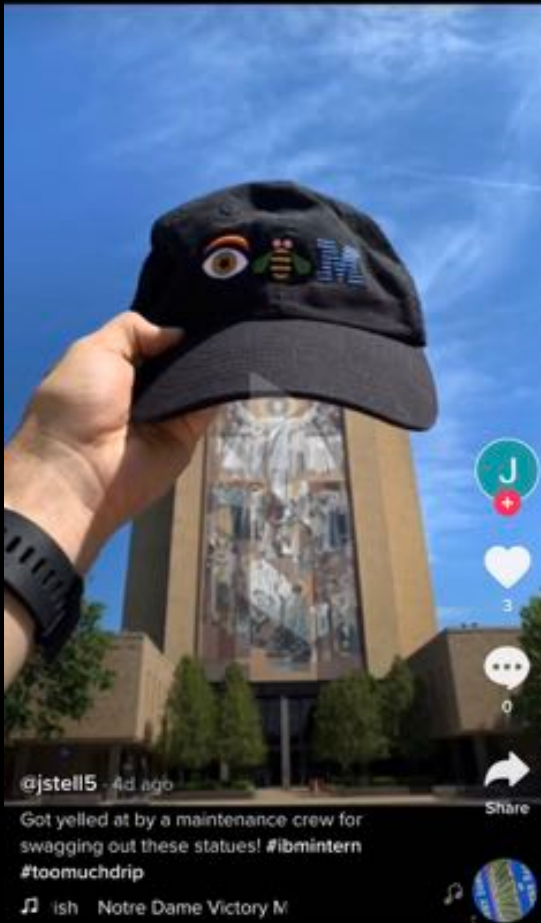


Celebrities Celebrate the Class of 2020



# VIRTUAL INTERNSHIPS

Gaining job experience during internships is an important first step for many college students before they enter the workforce. Due to the challenges with office space, many students are skipping the office life for shortened and condensed internships online.



IBM Intern TikTok Challenge



Natty Light Flavor Innovation Internship

# PROMS + WEDDINGS

Proms and Weddings have also seen a transformation in the wake of COVID as these highly anticipated celebrations are taken into the virtual space—some with the help of brands along the way.

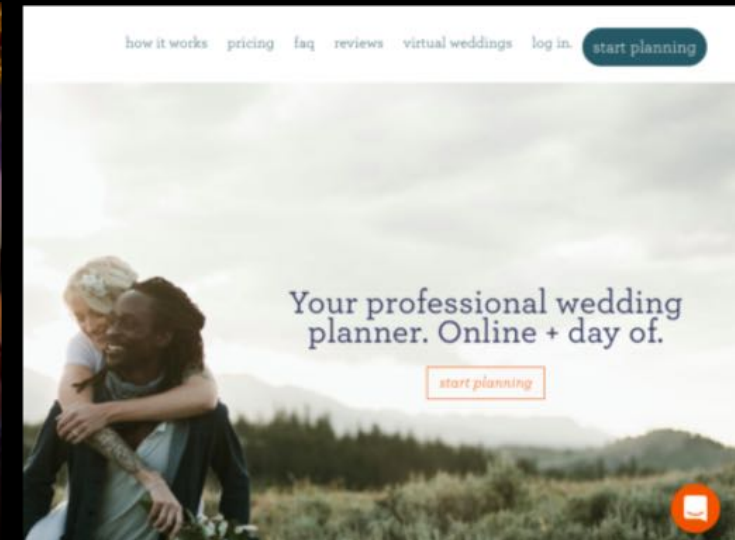
Teen Vogue Virtual Prom



MTV Prom-athon



Wedfuly Online Weddings





# Teen Vogue Virtual Prom





## *OPPORTUNITY*

As the world continues to rely on digital connection, it is likely consumers will continue to want virtual options to share their special moments. Brands have a unique opportunity here to jump in and help them do so.





# LIFE AFTER LOCKDOWN

# LOW TOUCH CULTURE

In our post-lockdown world, physical contact will continue to have restrictions and the ways the we socialize, commute, and live will have a profound impact on our products, services, and design.

**ME**  
THANK YOU  
THANK YOU  
THANK YOU  
THANK YOU  
THANK YOU  
THANK YOU  
THANK **YOU**  
THANK YOU  
THANK YOU  
**STAY 6 FEET AWAY**



# MASK ON

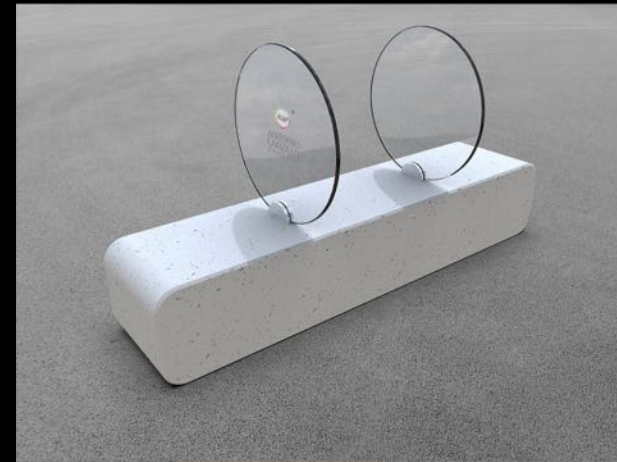
As mask wearing becomes the norm, the new accessory is becoming another identity statement and a vehicle for self-expression.





# POST-LOCKDOWN DESIGN

Globally, urban planners are adapting our cities to lockdown and shaping the post-lockdown city.



Reimagining Urban Design

## PRODUCTS + PACKAGING

Lunchskins reusable snack bags

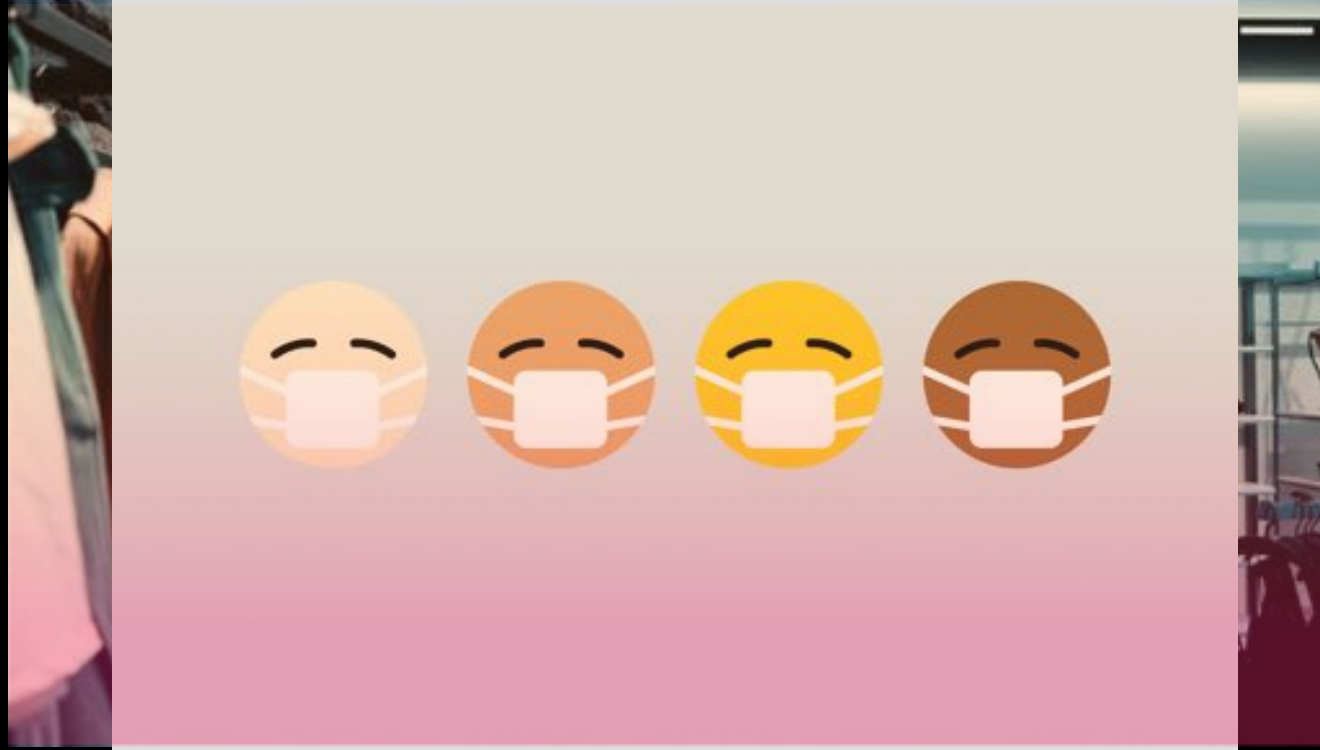


New ways of packaging and innovative products are growing in popularity as a means to not unnecessarily increase our contact with others.



PhoneSoap Portable Phone Sanitizer





## *OPPORTUNITY*

Stay-at-home orders are being lifted globally, but consumers are still looking for ways to stay safe while attempting to resume normal life. Creation of fun and fashionable products to stop the spread will definitely continue to grow in popularity as lockdown eases.

# THE DISTANCED EXPERIENCE

The global pandemic is forcing the experience economy to completely reimagine the nature of experiences and design touchpoints that are socially distant, low touch, but still fun, creative, and unique.





*Live Nation Live from the Drive-in" concert series*

## THE NEW DRIVE-THRU

The drive-in experience is getting not only a revival but a modern-day makeover, extending into an eclectic mix of live events from concerts to art shows.



*Walmart Drive-In*

*160 locations transformed into movie theaters*



# *Live From the Drive-In – Live Nation's Drive In Concert Series*

# DISTANCED DINING

For young adult travelers, dining and learning new things are more interesting than other activities such as sightseeing. All-in-one experiences that build food and drink into fan re-enactment, or party into theater, will create new hybrid nightlife offers.

Private Dining Experiences



Creative companions



Solitary Dining



Rediscover your backyard



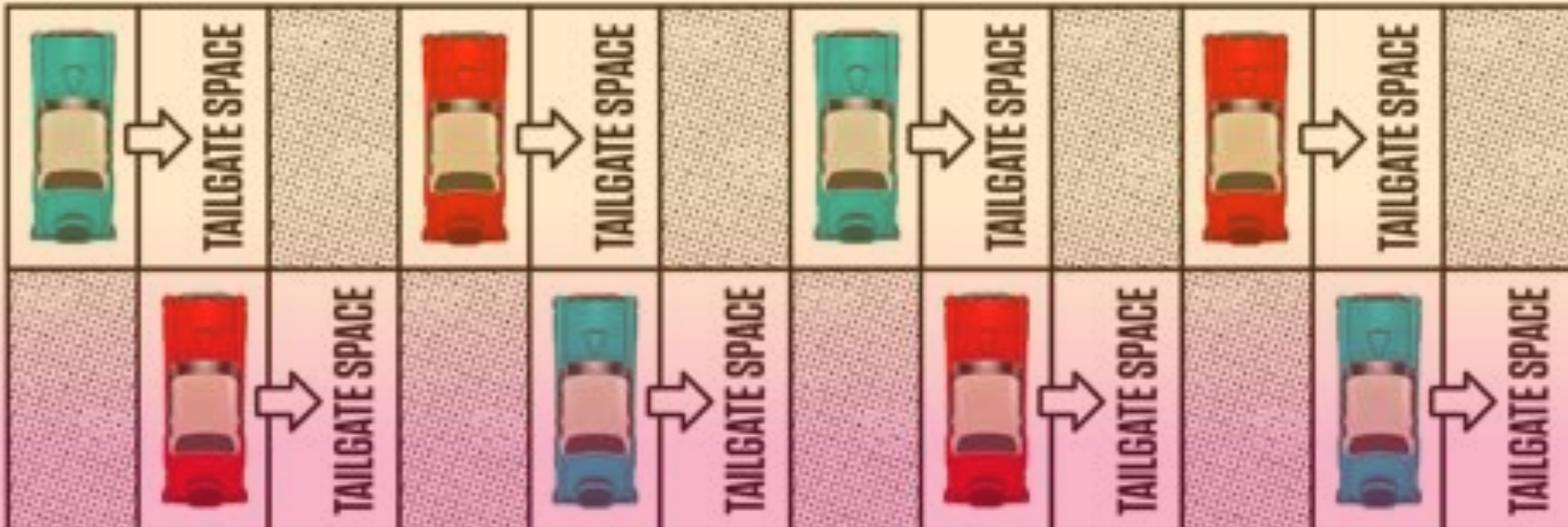
# POST LOCKDOWN TRAVEL

As international and long distance travel continue to be a substantial risk, many travel-happy young consumers are instead opting for more local excursions or taking road trips to preferred destinations.





18 FT



## OPPORTUNITY

Even as restrictions ease across the world, social distancing still remains necessary to slow the spread. We will certainly continue to see more experimentation when it comes to the structure of in-person experiences in our world post-lockdown.

# NEW NORMALS

As we emerge from quarantine into our post-lockdown existence, the world as we know it will be fundamentally changed. The ways we interact, work, learn, and socialize will evolve and adapt to fit our new normal, whatever that may be.





# FUTURE OF WORK

The way we work, learn, and cohabitate is evolving as we try to find ways to re-invent these spaces in an effort to diminish Coronavirus spread. Workplaces have been identified as high-risk environments for spread of COVID-19 and will need to adapt before allowing employees back into the office.

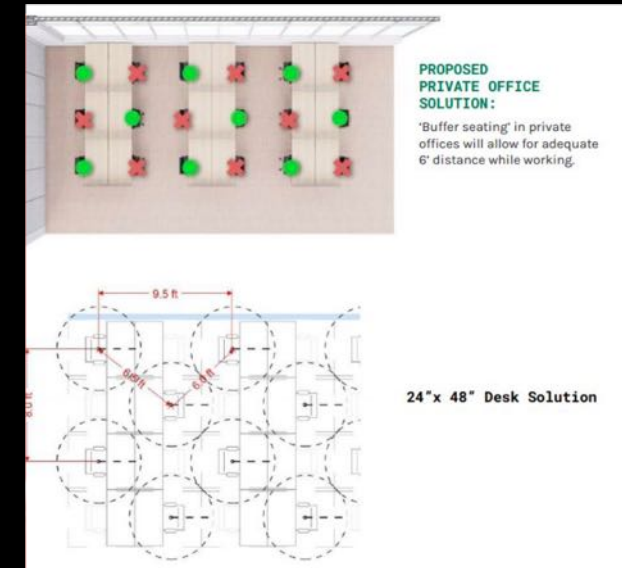
## Virtual Office Spaces



## Return of the cubicle



## Social Distanced Workspace





# DISTANCED LEARNING

Social Distancing Hats



Schools post-lockdown will look completely different as educators implement designs and policies to keep their students healthy and safe. Some policies that are being enacted in schools around the world include student designed social distancing hats, spaced out seating, hand-washing stations, mandatory temperature checks, as well as blended learning styles that allow for both virtual and in-person schooling.



## SOCIAL LIFE REVISED

As restrictions start to ease, a number of nightlife options are preparing for a post-lockdown world and creating environments that allow people to connect while remaining safe.



ONE NIGHT RECORDS

OPEN





## OPPORTUNITY

Globally, governments and businesses are looking for ways to re-open in a world where Coronavirus is and will be a reality for a while. In order to stay safe, architects, office managers, and store owners have to create spaces that minimize risk.



# THANK YOU

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