

Guide for brands

in times of COVID - 19

EQUAÇÃO LÓGICA
Market Research & Insights



CONTEXT & OBJECTIVES

WE ARE LIVING UNCERTAIN TIMES.

Our habits and routines suffered a disruption, not voluntary but imposed by the COVID-19 pandemics. We are all trying to readjust to this new reality. If this is true in the life of each one of us, it is also true in the life of most brands.

We talked with the consumers and they shared with us, in a generous manner, how this new reality is shaping their behaviour and attitudes, not only individual and social terms but also in terms of consumption. The nature of the qualitative research, powered by the technology, allowed us to achieve this objective.

Based on this portrait of a new mindset, Equação Lógica attempts to offer here to our clients, a Guide about how brands should adapt and stay relevant at the moment.

MORE CERTAINTY IN THEIR DECISIONS.

METHODOLOGY



TARGET

Men and Women, aged between 19 and 58 years old, resident in Great Lisboa.

Representing each life stage:

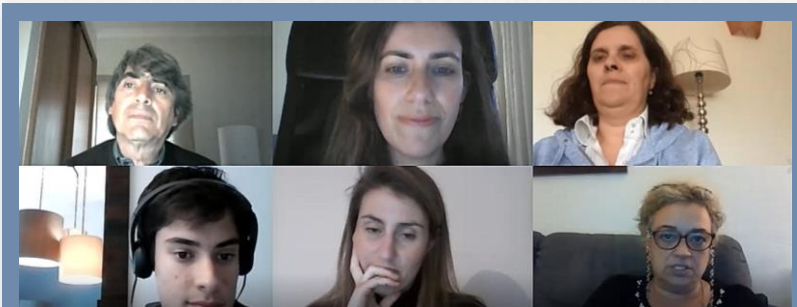
- Young adult living with parents
- Single living alone
- DINKIES
- Young families
- Mature families



SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

3 ONLINE Focus Groups, conducted between the 30th March and 3rd April 2020.

Each FG involving 5 to 8 participants.



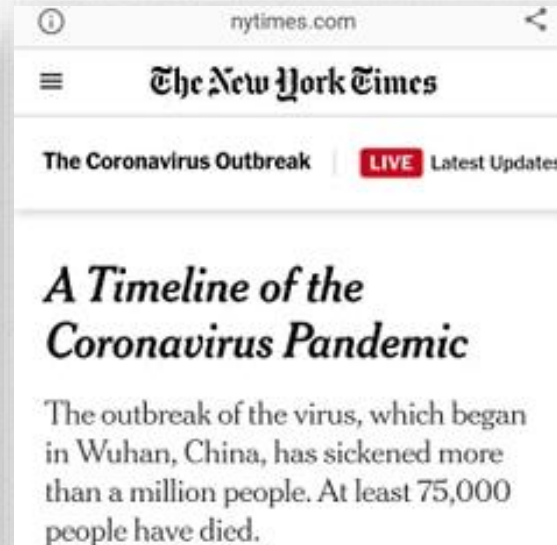
ONLINE QUALITATIVE FG



Results



A new reality



A crisis that hits EVERYBODY at global level,
regardless of age, gender, socioeconomic status, nationality...



"I think it will be very memorable. We are living something historic."

"All our lives are being changed. Everybody is being affected."

"Let's say that this is a trial period in our lives... it is a kindergarten of a period that can still evolve a lot"

A pandemics that has the potential to
change reality for all and simultaneously.

That, for its dimension and dramatism has, clearly,
**the capacity to change immediately the attitudes and
behaviour at the present moment.**

An event that, adding to a likely economic crisis, will undoubtedly mark
our **global collective memory** and that, depending on its time
length and/or repetition probability, has an enormous **potential to
generate new feelings and behaviours, both at individual and
society level.**



Those that have to stop

for them and
for the others

A suspended world

*"I feel prisoned and powerless in face of this
worldwide calamity."*

Those that can't stop

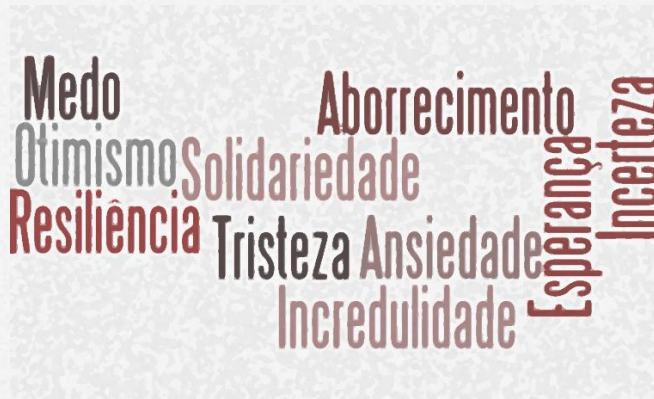
because they
must continue
serving the
community



A world that doesn't rest

*"The health professionals that risk everyday."
"There are people that have to displace so that we can
stay at home."*

The psychological reactions to this situation tend to be intense and potentially ambivalent



It was clear in the sample a strong tendency to the expression of negative sentiments even if some are able to express optimism and hope.

Yong adults in the sample demonstrated less intense reactions, mostly showing **annoyance** about a daily routine with no novelty.

"It looks like if we were living a movie... it is unreal, it looks like it makes no sense for our lives to change this much. And the basic things, like going to the cafe, are no longer guaranteed. Its strange."

"And I'm feeling very bad about this situation... I don't make anything new. (...) All of this is bringing me down. I don't see anything positive... there isn't one day that I think: today I did something positive or that made me feel fulfilled."

"While some are crying the other sell paper handkerchiefs, we have to see this as an opportunity."

"I'm more attached to the mobile phone or the PlayStation, but It is more of the same."

A new context that brings na ultra demanding need to social adaptation

What is being more difficult ?



DEPRIVATION of liberty

DISRUPTION in daily habits and routines

The social **DISTANCE** and the **ABSENCE** of physical contact

VULNERABILITY not only physical but also financial

UNCERTAINTY about the future

A new mindset

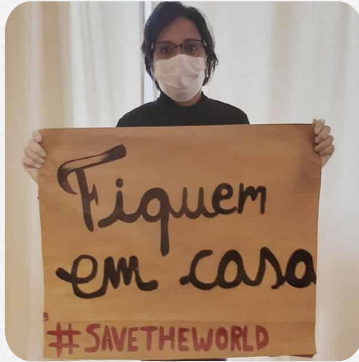
REVALUATE REFLECT REDISCOVER

How are we adapting to this new reality?

"...And because we were forced to stop, we see opportunities. (...) we are discovering things that we wouldn't discover if we were comfortable. We are at a stage where we have to find solutions."

REORGANIZE REDEFINE
REINVENT

A new mindset. 10 tendencies.



Think Here (at home)...



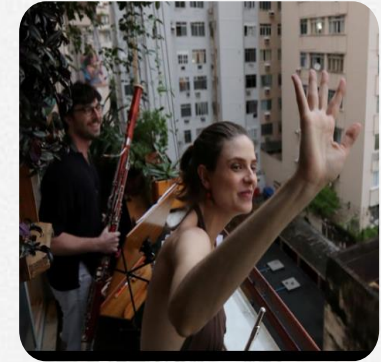
...and think Now



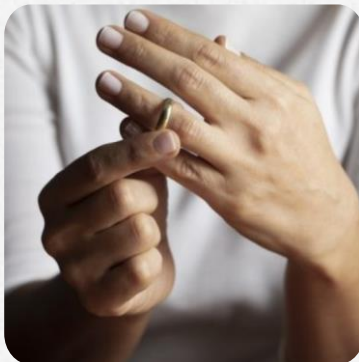
The Touch is worth more than 1000 words.



Humanity and Solidarity



Rediscovering the sense of Community



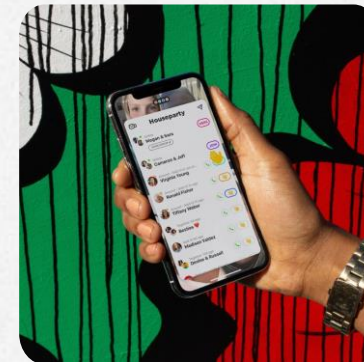
What I want and who I want in my world?



Caring about psychological well-being



More environment conscience



Search for entertainment

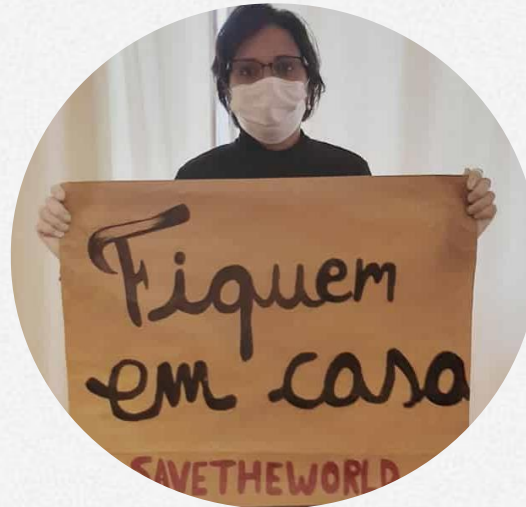


Digital acceleration

Think Here (at home)...

Home as a place that now raises ambivalent feelings

Shelter
Insurance
Control
Health preservation



Social isolation
“Claustrophobia”
Deprivation of freedom
Monotony
Privacy reduction

Safe and sound but little happy

A place where we are performing all activities and social roles,
which is being specially penalizing for families with small children



Space, comfort, outside space, office area and kitchen are highly valued.

...and think Now

Uncertainty is the only certain

- . Which of us will get sick and will be the outcome?
- . What will change in the world?
- . When will the economy recover?
- . When will life “normality” return?

“Uncertainty because we don’t even know when will this end, how long are we going to stay home... how much more time will the economy take to work again.”

“I try not to panic, because it will useless. The reasoning has really to be ‘one day at time’.”

“And live more the present. Usually we live a lot the future and that creates anxiety. So we are much more relaxed for being living the present, and we are tasting it. Before, we used to eat the present and almost have a congestion! We were always thinking about tomorrow, what we would be doing in a month or in a year. Now we don’t. We are living the present, because we don’t know about tomorrow. Therefore it is not even worth to project.”



Privilege more the present and live less in function of future plans

Dramatically different from the way got used to think before the pandemics, projecting us more in the future and less in living the present moment.

And with the challenge of accepting to live a present time that is not favourable to us

Social isolation brought more clarity about the importance of essential values to human condition

A stronger awareness of the importance of the presential relationship and the affections demonstrations.



The touch is worth more than 1000 words.



"I have a group of friends in WhatsApp de amigas where we share what is going on. I don't have the sensation of being alone... but the truth is that it is no the same: we aren't together, we don't share the coffee, we don't share laughing... things that used to be normal, and now we can't do it."

"I can't socialize with nobody, because I can't, unless with my wife, my son of the lady at the supermarket."

The notion of vulnerability, made more evident the fact that we depend all from each other

The initial individual search for self-sufficiency (for ex. via hoarding) demonstrated the inefficiency of this survival strategy and the absolute need for self-help and cooperation.



“At the beginning, when there were the first words about all of this stopping, people went massively to buy toilet paper and canned products and forgot about the others... but now it is more calm.”

Some families reorganized themselves and re-joined in the same house.

In the sample, couples that divorced decided to live together again, for the children, during the quarantine. Parents and children (and grand children in some cases) re-joined in the same house, so that the children can help the older ones.

“In my case, since I came to my parents house, I had to get used to their rhythm... I live alone for 20 years and it’s hard.”

“I cam to live to my ex-wife house. It us much healthier for our daughter to be together than otherwise, because that would mean for one of us to be without her. It is awful to make someone be away from their children, and so we talked and we understood that we could perfectly adapt our differences to make the most of these times.”



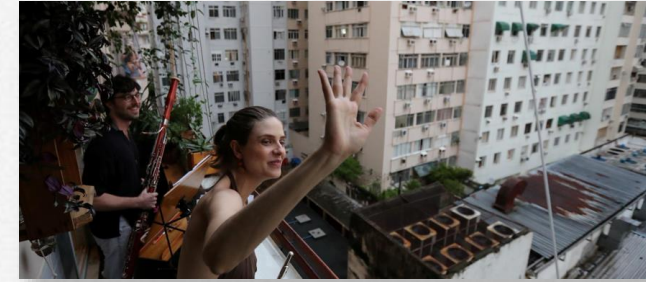
It isn't only about surviving but also about socially contributing

Union and solidarity replacing the tendency to individualism

This notion is bringing a higher sensibility to aged people, to the more unfavoured or needed.



or simply a higher sensibility to those that are closer and need help... or just entertainment



Rediscovering the sense of COMMUNITY

- Neighbours are more attentive to each other and they talk more among them.
- The artists in the neighbourhood share with the neighbours their entertainment capacities.
- The contacts in the neighbourhood commerce are activated between neighbours to facilitate orders or home deliveries.

“A higher self-help. Even between neighbours. Neighbours with which one never talked before. They thought it was strange for me not being home, they got my number via others and they called me. I thought it was incredible that after all they knew I lived there, and I didn’t even know their name. I think that the human being reveals a generosity and a companionship since we are all in the same boat. And that is beautiful, in fact.”

“The neighbours try to help each other. There are building groups created in Facebook. They share information about various things like purchases in the area, or home delivered. In this case I think that it is no longer “good morning” and “good afternoon” and there is self-help. Even from the window, sometimes. Here on the street, there are neighbours that take a little walk with their children to get some air and those that are at the window talk to them, like it used to be in the old days.”

“And the neighbours putting signs on the building entrance doors offering help, if necessary they would go to the pharmacy or shopping. I think that is one of the more interesting things to see.”

“Here in “Paço de Arcos” there is a neighbourhood with a DJ that makes some extraordinary sunsets, and the neighbours already agreed to have a big party to meet after this is over.”

“I feel that people are more concerned with each other. I think that in spite of all, the Portuguese people is showing that together we can make it.”

**A preference for what is closer to us because it is safer
and easier to relate to.**

The importance of the contact with nature. Nature as a way of self-subsistence.



In these quarantine moments, many expressed they miss contact with nature. Those that have that contact in the house where they are living, referred to be more attentive to nature and others are more available to perceive it as a mean of self-subsistence.

On the other hand, this is a unique experience that demonstrates which are the behaviours that can be changed and that might impact more positively environment and health.

"Since we don't stop voluntarily, something came up and made is stop. And during this stop, pollution will decrease. That is good."

"Somehow nature, the environment and the world are calming down."

"I started to create a vegetable garden. Yesterday we planted potatoes, that is something I never thought I would do... its funny somehow. "



This is a time to reflect and reevaluate

What I want and who I want in my world?

A REVALUATION OF PERSONAL, FAMILY AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

SEARCHING FOR A BETTER BALANCE AND WELLBEING

Am I happy with the person I live with?

What friends do I really have?

What I understood my family needs most?

What is essential and what is accessory in my life?

How to reorganize my professional life?

How to achieve a better balance between professional and personal life?



This is a time to reflect and reevaluate

What I want and who I want in my world?

"I think this made us take some time to think... Perhaps I have to re-equate my life in the future, because perhaps it is not worthwhile to work so much. I'm reaching that conclusion. I kill myself working for what? For nothing... This is all ephemeral. Tomorrow I might die and its over. Perhaps I have to see life in a different way, and this is obliging me to see life differently, that is for sure."

"When life was normal, we would waste some time with not so relevant people and now we can see it clearer. We should think: if the world was to end now and we could only make three phone calls, I think we would all know who to call. This only helps underlining it. "

"Now I look to my daughter like I didn't since she was a baby. Now she asks me to hold her and I do it. These are things that I eventually stopped valuing, and now I value a lot. It can be small things, but to me they are making a big difference."

"I think this a slap from the Universe for people to open their eyes and no to focus so much on objectives, on work, on money. But make people look to their families and to what they really want, to what they really like, to whom they really want to be with."

"I believe that there are a lot of marriages and relationships ending, because people will question if they want to be with a certain person or not. I think that people will think if it makes sense to be wasting time with people they don't want to be with."

"I'm still working and the kids are still in classes with videoconferencing. But we have been using our evenings to watch some movies and be together, things that are never possible, because there is never time for it. We are having the meals all together, which is something that we didn't use to do. It was only diner. The living together in family is much higher."

"This is also true in terms of jobs: I believe that there will be a lot of people that will be freed because of this, because they saw their lives going backwards."

Caring about psychological well-being

If before the pandemics there was already a very strong notion of physical wellbeing, the **notion of psychological wellbeing stands out now as fundamental.**



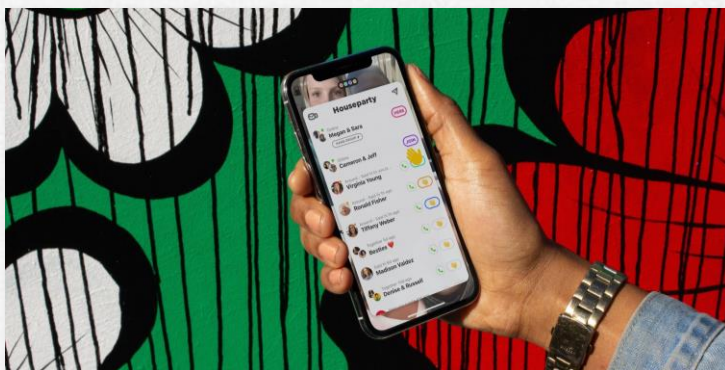
*“Lets take better care about us.
Specially at mental level. “*

*Resilience as the most valued capacity at the moment.
We can, in this context talk about “PSYCHOLOGICAL IMMUNITY”?*



A search for entertainment

Como forma de combater a monotonia e o aborrecimento e de tornar mais “útil” o tempo de quarentena, muitos (exceto os jovens adultos da amostra) estão a experimentar novas atividades ou a recuperar outras, via digital e não digital, como forma de entretenimento e/ou de desenvolvimento pessoal.



“Jogos de tabuleiro, que já não jogávamos há imenso tempo. Ocupa-nos o tempo e dá-nos prazer porque vai-nos buscar memórias de infância. É a parte melhor disto tudo.”

“Temos aberto eventos virtuais no Facebook em que combinamos ir à discoteca... e há páginas que têm feito umas noites engraçadas e estamos ali como se tivéssemos na discoteca e em casa dançamos e tudo. Para ver se nos conseguimos animar um bocado.”

“Combinámos estar em videochamada como se fossemos sair: a beber copos, a pôr a conversa em dia.”

“Estou a aprender e a aperfeiçoar coisas que já queria, como línguas e ver tutoriais.”

Mas os **jovens adultos** parecem estar aborrecidos, sem iniciativa para a realização de novas atividades. Espera-se a curto-prazo que a sua necessidade de socializar surja de forma mais intensa e que descubram formas alternativas de o fazer, trazendo novidade aos seus dias – as dating apps poderão começar a fazer (mais) sentido agora para este target, como via para conhecer pessoas novas e socializar.

A search for entertainment

The participants claim that digital has been having a very important facilitating role:

In shortening distances in personal relationships, via video calls.

Allowing remote work.

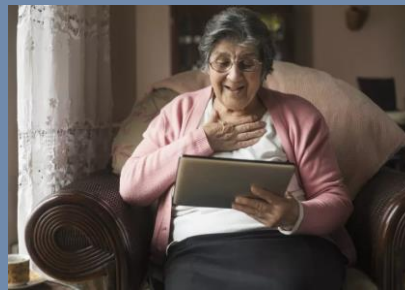
Watching online classes.

Allowing access to products and services, via online purchases.

Having a very important role in the daily entertainment.

A more tech savvy society?

Also children and aged people are needing to use (more) digital technology, specially live streaming.



"I think we are all learning a lot, mainly working remotely... like for instance this meeting that we are having now that I think is extremely positive. Things can still be done. Perhaps we are even more relaxed doing things, not having to displace, even being perhaps all more creative and more open to develop something funnier."

"There are a lot of people installing a Skype for the first time and having this type of interaction. If we think about older people that now have to talk with their children this way (at distance), we understand the giant transformation that this is producing on us. That expression 'old donkey doesn't learn languages'... it is not true, yes it learns."

"I also see it by the innovation and all the transformation that we are suffering at the moment, that I think is extremely positive because we are adopting new ways of working, adopting even new ways of being with friends."

A new way of shopping and consuming

REORGANIZE

RATIONALIZE

As has consumers how are we adapting to this new reality?

PRIORITIZE

FACILITATE

A new way of shopping and consuming



Online shopping and home deliveries



Less frequent larger quantities shopping



Less demanding brand choice



Valuing what is closer



Shopping and consumption rationalization



Valuing of small pleasures

Online shopping: safety besides convenience.

When they displace to a store consumers feel insecure, strange, uncomfortable with everything it implies: all the hygiene and social distancing norms in store, and the disinfection when returning home. The experience is conditioned by the fear of infection.

Online shopping became a safe shopping experience, and in some cases, the only possible way to access certain products and services.



Going to a store became a risk.

"Much more online shopping. Even the toys for my child anniversary, I ordered online."

"Another thing online is bread. They bring it to me at home everyday, which is very good."

Also because of safety, there are references to diminishing shopping frequency of essential goods and a necessary increase in its volume.

The consumers that used to shop everyday or almost everyday, are the ones that report a higher conflict and more difficulty to readjust. They refer that they diminish purchase frequency but they still do it several days a week.

For the remaining, it was necessary a great initial effort of reorganizing but presently the shopping frequency was already stabilized to fortnight or monthly supply. Some of these participants stated that this lower shopping frequency was more gratifying since they don't like particularly to go shopping in the super/hypermarket.



"I'm not going everyday like I was before, but I go every two days."

"Before I used to shop for the month but there was always something missing and that I had to buy daily. Now I don't, I take note and I buy it the week after."

Less demanding brand choice



In terms of shopping in distribution, several participants referred that, currently, it is more important to *buy the product* than to *buy a specific brand or in a specific store*.

A disruption in the relation with brands

A propitious scenery to experimenting new brands.

Some confess that experiencing with new brands they never tried before has been positively surprising, anticipating its maintenance in the post COVID-19.

Others, on the contrary, refer a less positive experience, projecting a return to their usual/preferred brand as soon as possible.

“Before I used to go to the supermarket and I needed spaghetti and if there wasn’t the brand I usually buy, I wouldn’t buy it, and eventually I would go to another supermarket or go back a few days after. Now, if there isn’t “A” I buy “B”.”

“I have been trying new things that I didn’t usually buy: Usually I would go to Pingo Doce or Continente, but they were full so I went to Lidl and I noted that some products are better... I would never buy their yogurts or milk or juices and the results were great.”

“I used to go to Continente and Pingo Doce but since I have an Aldi near home, I’ve been going there. The butter I’m having now, I never had before... since they don’t have the one I usually buy, I buy this one. These are things that a person has to change.”

Valuing what is closer

Also at the consumption level there is a valuation of what is closer, because it is easier to relate.

Responding to the external threat, there is a **response of centring and protection: of the country, the municipality, the neighbourhood.**

A “protectionist” behaviour that is national or local

Privilege the Portuguese products/brands.

Privilege the neighbourhood commerce.

“What I note is that fruits and vegetables I buy here at the grocery store, because I try to avoid supermarkets as much as I can... I already came to the grocery store, but the large purchases I used to make in Continente, now I try to buy everything in the grocery store”



Shopping and consumption rationalization

Young and Mature families, are adopting a rational attitude in the purchasing and consumption moments, having in a very evident way the following behaviours :



Distinction between the essential and the superfluous.

Shopping list is compulsory, not only has a shopping organization instrument but also to decrease impulse purchasing.

Priority to what can be made at home.

Avoid at maximum the waste in consumption.

"Being obliged to stay at home I think that we are becoming happier with less... in other words, I think we perceiving that we don't need to spend so much and we spend only the essential."

"Since this started, we only spend money in the supermarket."

"Now I only buy in a more rational way: what we really need?"

"I used to buy a lot of things that were in promotion, even without knowing if I needed it or not. I don't see anyone in the supermarket without a list."

"I bring a list and I try to hurry up not to be for too long in that space."

"Even cookies aren't bought. A lot of things are made at home."

Valuing of little pleasures

In spite of the scenery of contention, there are small consumption pleasures that are specially gratifying in the daily consumption, on which the consumers are willing to spend money.



"I invested in Spotify Premium to listen to more music."

"What I buy different is better wines... instead of being packed ones, I look for some quality. The world might end tomorrow! It's the little pleasure that gives me a big satisfaction. A little glass of wine makes no harm to anyone... also because we are not driving."

And after COVID-19?

Two different perspectives about the future, that can coexist or not in the same individual

1.

**The attempt to maintain the routines and the status quo.
Wish to return to absolute normality.**

I hope that nothing changes.

"I want my life back again."

"I like to think about all this as a bad period in my life, that we will overcome and I will get back to my life. I wait for the day when things will go back to be more normal."

2.

**Learning of new behaviours that are gratifying.
The expectation of a return to an "admirable new world".**

I believe that a lot will change.

"I think that in the middle of all this there will be a giant transformation: of people and companies."

"Perhaps this is our compulsory introspection period. I think that the values are readjusting in sight of this pandemic."

And after COVID-19?

Will history repeat it self?

CRAZY 20's



"I think that I will spend even more... If I used to travel 10 times a year, now I will want to travel 20. Because that is what gives me pleasure, satisfies me."

"I think that the streets will be full, I think that it will be impossible to be in public places."

GREAT RECESSION



"I just received a message from my wife saying that her salary will be reduced... there are several people that are going to be jobless and eventually become greyer and unpleasant people. The change for better... I'm not sure it will happen."

HIPPIE MOVEMENT



"I expect to change to be a more human person."

"I will have changed physically for sure, but also spiritually . All this stage makes me equate 'what am I doing here'. For sure I will become a better person."

"I think I will hug a lot and kiss a lot."

War is progress, peace is stagnation.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

 quote fancy



Orientations to brand actions in times of Covid-19

1.

ADEQUATE YOUR COMMUNICATION TO THE CONSUMER MINDSET

Eliminate from your communication all the messages that collide with the consumer mindset, as well as the settings or experiences that can't be lived at the moment. The tone of your communication should be positive but realistic. The consumer is very attentive and will notice if anything is inadequate and it can trigger negative WOM about your brand.

2. DON'T ABANDON YOUR CONSUMER

This is an extraordinarily marking moment in emotional terms, and, for most brands, a unique pain point in the buying and consumption experience, as well as in the relation with it's consumer. Understand the “pains” of your consumer in this contact experience with your brand and find solutions that might attenuate the difficulties felt.

3.

KEEP YOUR BRAND RELEVANT IT IS MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN EVER BEFORE

Remember this is a moment when the consumer is reevaluating the relationship with your brand and product, and redefining how much it is necessary in their lives.

If your brand belongs to a set of products or brands that are clearly an accessory at this stage, invest in an emotional relationship, creating relevant contents and maintain presence.

4. CREATE A POSITIVE EMOTIONAL MEMORY

Your consumer is passing a fragility moment, brands that support consumers beyond their own interests are remembered as real partners. This is an opportunity to create an indelible emotional memory in your consumer, which can become a strong competitive advantage vs your competitors, now and in a post COVID-19 stage.

5. DEMONSTRATE HUMANITY AND SOLIDARITY

Like people, brands should also contribute socially besides surviving. Brands should mirror this consumer's behaviour and more than ever assume an attitude socially responsible. The larger the brand, the higher the expectation of social contribution. In the quantitative research conducted by EQL on the 26th March, we identified brands that stand out for their positive contribution and that there are more or less adequate contributions depending on the product/service category. Visit or revisit our report here <https://www.equacaologica.com/brands-that-are-scoring>



6. MINIMIZE THE FINANCIAL IMPACT

One of the main fragilities and concerns of consumers at this stage, is the financial impact that this pandemics will have in the economy in general and in their lives in particular. Part of the relief of this financial impact will certainly pass by brands, via measures that somehow can reduce consumers spending (promotions, free services, etc). The communication of these measures can create emotional proximity, via the mitigation of one consumers main concerns. Still, it is important to make sure that the communication is a relevant and with adequate messages.

7. DIGITAL CAN BE A BRAND RESCUE

Your consumer is dedicating much of his time to the digital, therefore this has become an excellent media to provide awareness for your product and brand.

If your public was not reachable via digital until now, it is very likely that it will be at this stage. The need generates the learning and, for example, the seniors seem to be more familiar with this environment than before.

It is important to ensure that also in the digital there is quality and consistency in communication.

8.

OFFER OPTIONS OF TRANSPARENCY

Brands should facilitate consumers everyday life, offering simple options for the consumer to obtain its products and have access to its services. Brands should also act with transparency. Brands are also adapting to this new reality and consumers are understanding and receptive to this adaptation as long as brands are transparent about less favourable situations (delivery delays, difficulties in responding, etc...).

9.

BE NOTED BY THE CREATIVITY OF YOUR COMMUNICATION

Consumers are short of subjects to talk about and share besides COVID-19. This is a good moment for your consumers to comment your communication creativity with family and friends as well as to share in the social networks.

10. IT IS IN TIMES OF CRISIS THAT REPUTED BRANDS STAND OUT

Consumers are more attentive to brands behaviour in general and specially in terms of their contribution to the control and eradication of the COVID-19 pandemics. It is in times like these that reputation is built across all stakeholders, but particularly among consumers for whom values like Empathy (Capacity to understand clients) or Ethics (Transparency and Honesty), are highly valued and translate into reputation.

11. BRAND RESPONSIBILITY STARTS IN HOUSE

There are brands that, by the nature of their business, their “*purpose*”, can do little to directly help in fighting the pandemics, and the consumers know it. Still, consumers in this crisis situation are more supportive with their closer community, and they recognize therefore the value of brands that, in spite of not being able to do much in the mitigation of the general pandemics situation, ensure the dignified subsistence of their collaborators reinforcing their security feelings and their compromise.

12.

BE AGILE: LEARN AND EXECUTE FAST

The faster you learn how to act in this particular moment, the faster you will be able to act and communicate efficiently. These learnings will certainly also be useful after COVID-19.

13. INNOVATE

It is these moments of disruption, that put us in unexpected and unlikely sceneries, with new consumer needs to respond, that allow for qualitative jumps in the value delivery. Consumers also expect this from brands. Be inspired, for example, in what other totally different product categories do, and question if they can adequate to your product/brand in this particular stage.

14.

MONITOR AND SUPPORT IMPORTANT DECISIONS IN CONSUMER RESEARCH

We are leaving in a dynamic context of uncertainty. Don't take unnecessary risks. In reality, we are still conducting qualitative and quantitative research of excellency and we continue to be able to deliver rich and actionable insights. We already replaced the face to face data collection by the online one and we are learning best practices quickly. This is a time when we have an easier access to common consumer. Also at this stage, Equação Lógica is available to think about your brand/product problems with you and certainly we will find an efficient research solution.

EQUAÇÃO LÓGICA

Market Research & Insights



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