



A LOOK BACK AT 12-MONTHS OF **COVID CONSUMERISM.**



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Life B.C.

Life Before COVID was comfortable. The economy had been growing for 11 years straight, a new record.¹ But all that stalled in Q1 2020, and then spiraled down as the year continued.

In a matter of minutes, behaviors and categories changed. Forever.

Now, it's been a year, since MFour was first to release [pandemic consumer behavior research](#) in February, 2020.² As you look back at what's changed, let's focus on...

What you can do about it.



Q1, 2020: it starts.

Travel stopped.

We watched as airport foot traffic decreased by 38% in February. Even before the pandemic put lockdowns in place, 72% of consumers had felt like it would last more than two months.

They were right.

Soon, 92% began to limit time with friends and family. Old habits broke, as consumers quickly looked for new ways to entertain indoors. And as stay-at-home orders spread, students came home in droves. So did their parents; 74% were asked to work remotely.

Life became a juggling act.

Q2, 2020: eCommerce explodes.

Que retail therapy.

With more mouths to feed, and boredom rising rapidly, shopping levels went up too. The U.S jumped 41% in eCommerce³ – more than the last 10 years, combined. Another massive disruption in consumer behavior. And with it, 55% held fast to the new brands they found.

A greater surprise came, when 73% started to spend on apps. People quickly became more afraid of getting sick, than trying something new. So, we watched as consumers started to make familiar purchases from the safety of their phones. Those who risked going in-store, did it alone, about 62%. And stocked up—26% got water and cleaners.

On the sidelines sat the 44% who weren't ready to resume normal activities.





Q3, 2020: summer slowdown.

Then, time stopped.

Or, at least it felt that way. With 86% of summer activities cancelled, suddenly everyone had so much more time on their hands. And they spend most of it online, with social media up 50%.

Parents started to worry about back-to-school. After all, 70% still had concerns about their kids' health. Yet as they shopped online for supplies, 59% started to see Amazon as a monopoly and 93% were ready to try something new. Just in time, Walmart + launch their new app to the world.

Inside stores, 53% of shoppers braved self-checkout stands. And, surprisingly, customers loved it, as 99% expressed their satisfaction with self-checkouts. It was time to prep for the holidays.



Q4, 2020: home for the holidays.

Literally, everyone was stuck at home.

The holidays became so different. Everything did. Take dating, for instance. How do you date in a pandemic? On an app, apparently. In 2020, Hinge took 60% market share, as 79% switched from Tinder for a better experience. Stay-at-home holiday approved.

As people adjusted, 79% felt more productive working from home—and 81% of companies said they'd consider remote options long-term. Together, everyone looked to the holidays for relief.

So, even though 55% said their income was down, they spent a lot on presents. And they prioritized, Family came first, with 40% spending \$500 or more on gifts for loved ones. That meant 72% delivered gifts for Christmas, staying apart, but still together.

How they spent the money—may surprise you.

12 months of COVID consumer behavior.



Today: a little luxury.

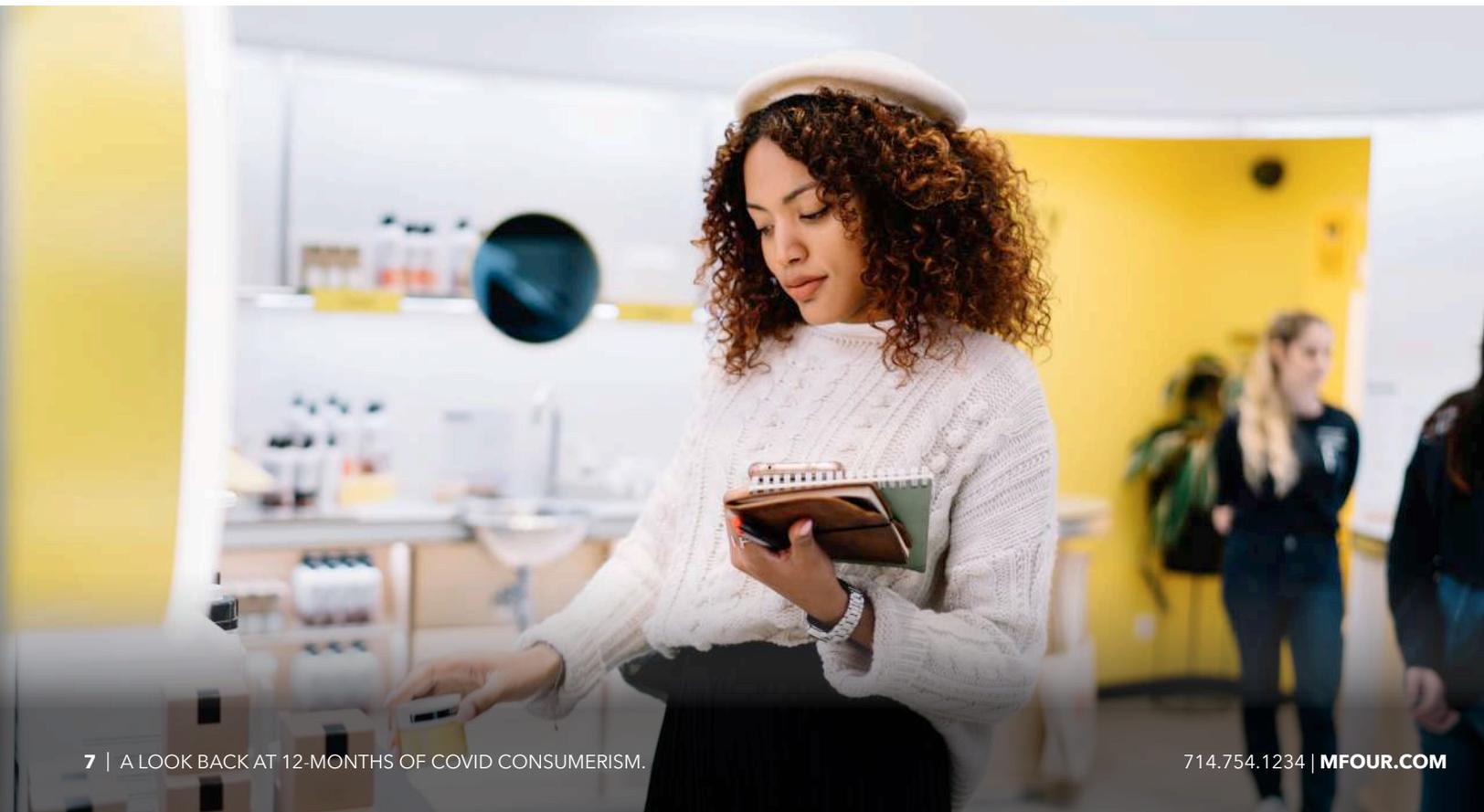
The finer things are expensive.

But, after such a hard year, consumers were willing to spend. That's all due to a concept called mortality salience.⁴ Basically, when we're reminded of how fragile life is, it impacts spending. Why? Our culture places a lot of importance on materialism. It's how we reduce anxiety.

So, now we're seeing 49% buy fewer, high-quality items. And, 78% say they're buying luxury brands when they go to a beauty store. Now, that's interesting alone, but more so when we consider that 55% say their income is down. It means they're spending beyond their means.

High-end brands are well placed to capitalize on COVID.

Now is your chance. Find out what's missing in the marketplace. Then, ask consumers what they want from your brand, and work on delivering it. This is what market research is all about. When you're ready to go, we've got a consumer panel to help.



Start your market research project today.

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If you're facing a challenge, chances are, we've seen it before—and our qualified team can help. Get answers to the questions you have, no matter how hard they may seem.

We've worked with the largest brand-name companies and biggest market research organizations in the world. We're in your court and we have your back. Let's talk.

START A NEW MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT

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