



American Awareness

The coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is creating unprecedented social and economic upheaval globally. APCO Worldwide, a global advisory and advocacy communications firm, conducted U.S. public opinion research to understand how the viral outbreak is impacting businesses and what organizations can be doing to safeguard employees, operations and reputation. APCO will track Americans' attitudes and behaviors related to COVID-19 in a series of weekly polls with this second installment focused on consumer attitudes towards brand communications and job security during the outbreak.

Americans are receiving more communications from brands during the COVID-19 outbreak than before, and a majority want this frequency to continue or increase.

2-in-3 are hearing from brands "very often," primarily through e-mail (75%) and Facebook (46%).

Millennials and Gen-Z are seeking more frequent communications from brands than other generations.

Almost half (48% and 46%, respectively) want to hear more from companies during the crisis.

The frequency of communication is somewhat up for debate.

32% of consumers want to receive more information from brands and 39% want to receive the same amount of information. However, another 30% want to hear less.

Individuals in the highest income bracket want to hear more from brands.

Over half (55%) of those making \$200,000+ want to receive more communication.

Corporate behavior can help increase brand affinity.

74% of Americans say the way a business treats its employees during the COVID-19 outbreak will influence their decisions to purchase from the company.

CEO communications can make a strong impact.

44% of consumers say they would have a more favorable view of a brand if they heard from the CEO. However, 50% say their opinions would remain the same even after hearing from the CEO.

**Brands should not be afraid of communicating at this time.
Only 1-in-10 consumers say more communication gives them an unfavorable view.**

Increasing outreach during the crisis may help boost consumer perceptions of brands.

43% say more communication makes them feel more favorable towards brands and 50% say it has no impact.

Of Americans under the age of 44, more than half feel more favorable towards brands after outreach.

Opinions among older Americans are unchanged after increased communication.

Consumers prefer content that informs them of disruptions in service or can help make their lives easier during the outbreak.

Americans want more information

about changes/disruptions to services (49%), safety & health precautions (47%), product discounts (46%), product innovations that may help them during the crisis (45%) and how to use a brand's products during the outbreak (44%).

All types of communication are generally viewed as appropriate during this crisis.

COVID-19-related content is viewed as most appropriate, whether it be a company's response to COVID-19 (49%) or lighthearted tips related to the outbreak (45%). Still, brands can share information on product discounts or new products without being deemed inappropriate. This type of content is most well-received by females, young Americans, parents, African Americans and Hispanics.

Americans are increasingly concerned about job security in this rapidly changing environment.

45% are more concerned with their job security now than they were before the coronavirus outbreak.

Concern is growing especially among those under age 44 (60% are more concerned), parents (61%), Asians (56%), African Americans (67%) and Hispanics (71%).



APCO Worldwide is an advisory and advocacy communications consultancy helping leading public and private sector organizations build and protect organizational reputations, relationships and brands, and act with agility in handling dynamic marketplace and social issues. APCO has more than 800 employees based in more than 30 global markets. More information can be found at apcoworldwide.com.

Methodology note: APCO Worldwide conducted a poll of n=1,000 American adults on March 19-23, 2020. The study is based on a national sample provided by Dynata, balanced by age, gender and region. Contact APCO for further details about the study methodology or its findings: ksprehe@apcoworldwide.com.