

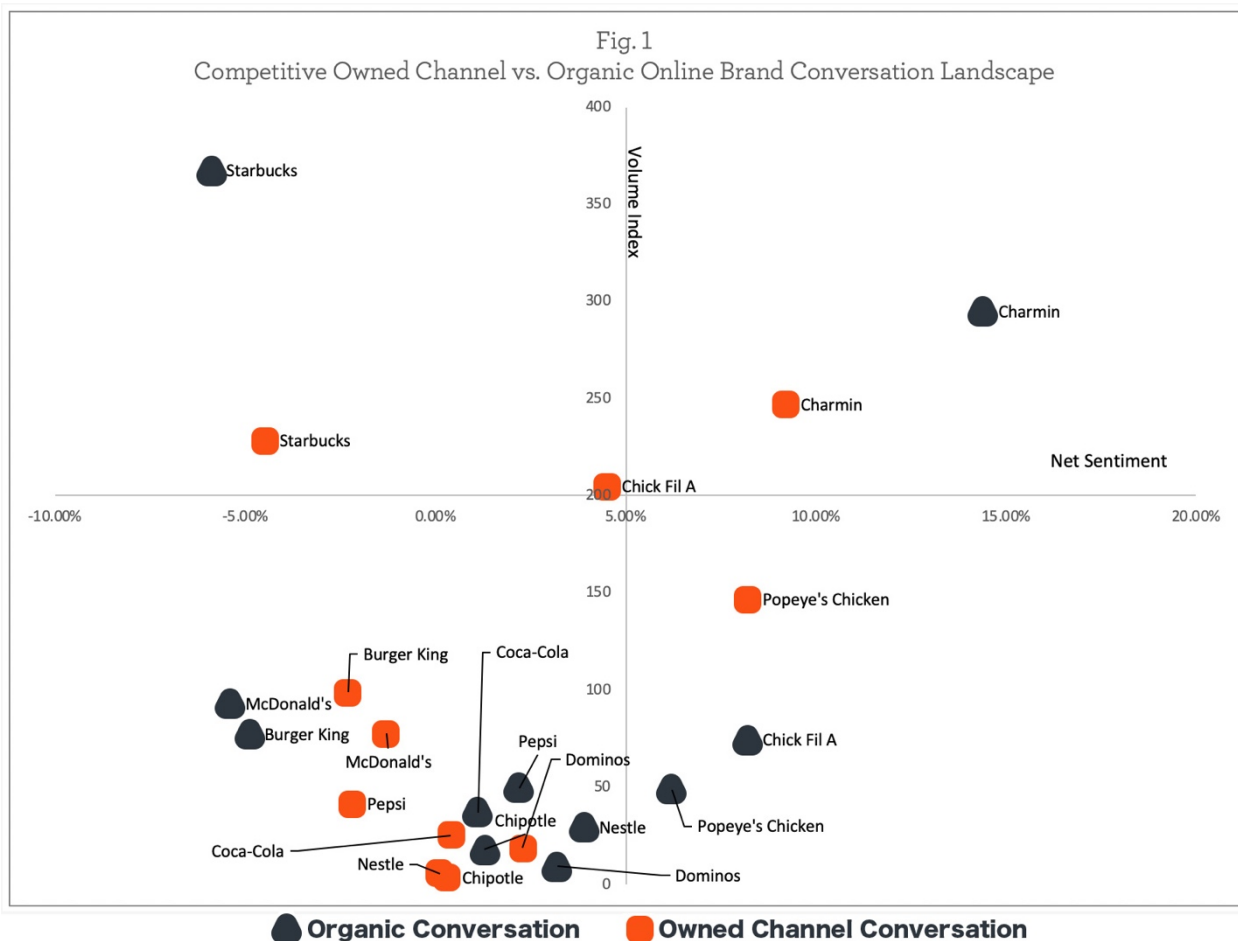
# Are Brands Meeting Consumer Expectations?

By [Darren Bosik](#) | March 25, 2020

Restaurants and CPG brands are coping with a new consumer reality amid the coronavirus crisis. Their brands are now relegated to take-out or home delivery, depriving consumers of the coveted in-store, highly social experience.

Intelligence from APCO Worldwide’s proprietary COVID-19 Response Index (CRI) shows that brands such as Starbucks, McDonald’s and Pepsi are underperforming in consumer online conversations despite having pushed out messages of reassurance, hope and health.

Our CRI shows one outlier – Procter & Gamble’s Charmin brand is being discussed rather favorably both on its owned channels and in the organic conversation (see Figure 1). Consumers delight in the brand’s message of good health while users post stories of coveting the product and bringing it home.

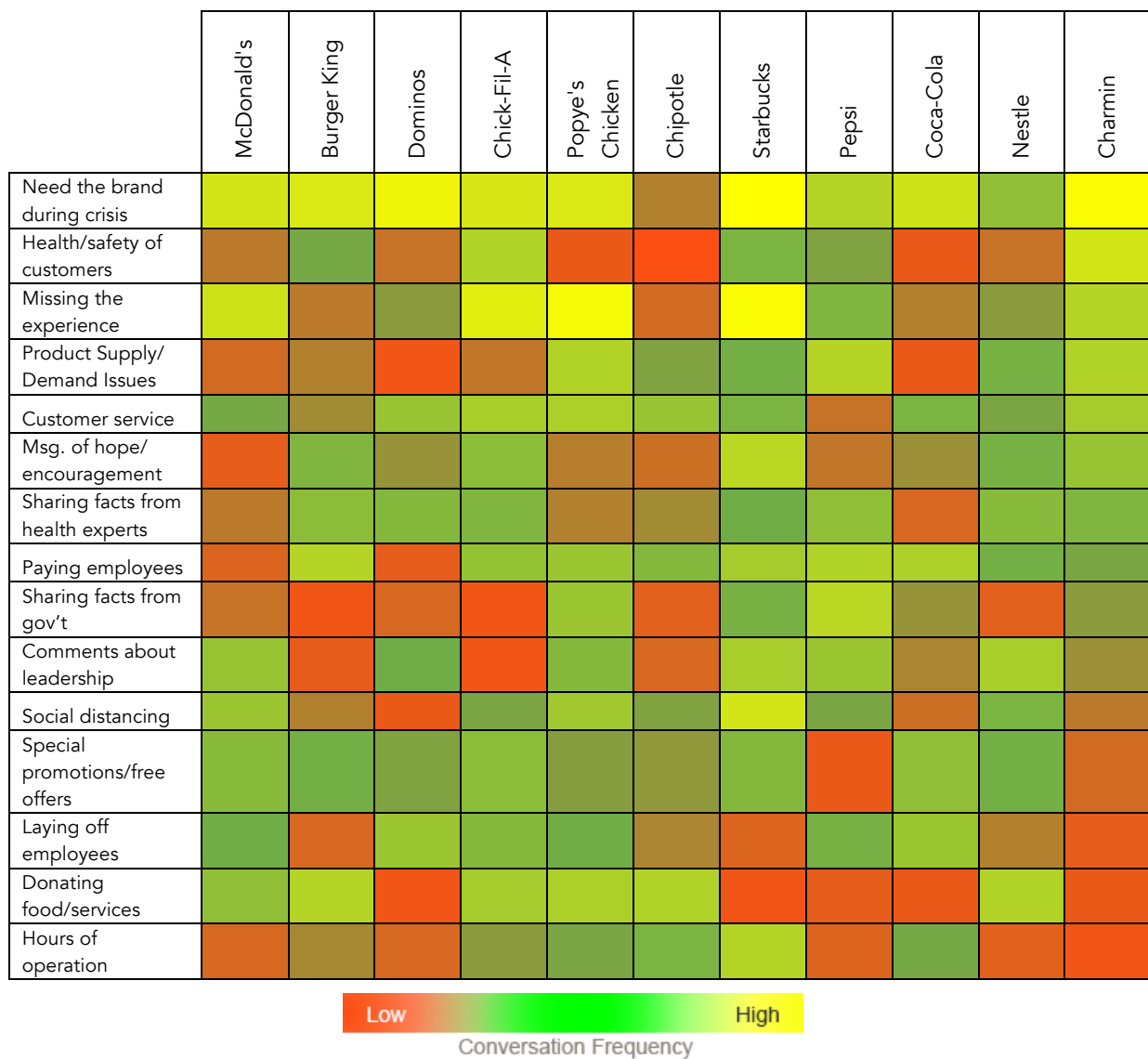


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Starbucks' poor CRI performance (scores of -10 and -22 in the organic and consumer CRI) is attributed to how it was slow to move to a take-out only model coupled with complaints about long lines and lack of social distancing to get its products. Plus, consumers are quick to point out the deficiencies of drinking Starbucks at home instead of with others at the store.

In fact, the at-home brand experience is one of the leading topics of conversation driving CRI scores across multiple brands we measured (see Figure 2).

Fig. 2 - Key Topics Discussed in the Online Organic Conversation Related to Brands and COVID-19



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**Methodology:** We used social listening software to collect thousands of organic and owned channel conversations related to the brands in the competitive set around COVID-19 during March 9-22. We extracted the raw data and conducted a sentiment analysis on the posts to determine the percentage of positive, negative and neutral messages. We created the COVID-19 Response Index (CRI) by multiplying the volume of conversation times the sentiment to come up with a score for both the owned channel conversation and organic.

## Owned Channel COVID-19 Response Index

	Volume	Sentiment	Volume Index	CRI
McDonald's	534	-1.30%	78	-1.0
Burger King	679	-2.30%	99	-2.3
Dominos	130	2.30%	19	0.4
Chick-Fil-A	1405	4.50%	205	9.2
Popeye's Chicken	1007	8.20%	147	12.0
Chipotle	25	0.30%	4	0.0
Starbucks	1566	-4.50%	228	-10.3
Pepsi	285	-2.20%	42	-0.9
Coca-Cola	175	0.40%	26	0.1
Nestle	41	0.10%	6	0.0
Charmin	1693	9.20%	247	22.7

## Organic Online Conversation COVID-19 Response Index

	Volume	Sentiment	Volume Index	CRI
McDonald's	12,813	-5.4%	93	-5.0
Burger King	10,642	-4.9%	77	-3.8
Dominos	1,315	3.2%	10	0.3
Chick-Fil-A	10,305	8.2%	75	6.1
Popeye's Chicken	6,737	6.2%	49	3.0
Chipotle	2,496	1.3%	18	0.2
Starbucks	50,648	-5.9%	367	-21.7
Pepsi	6,844	2.2%	50	1.1
Coca-Cola	5,135	1.1%	37	0.4
Nestle	4,071	3.9%	30	1.2
Charmin	40,626	14.4%	295	42.4

For more information on APCO's coronavirus research and to get additional resources, visit [apcworldwide.com/coronavirus](http://apcworldwide.com/coronavirus).