

# DECODING THE POST-COVID-19 CONSUMER MIND AND DEVELOPING NEW MARKETING STRATEGIES

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## ABSTRACT

*COVID-19 has changed the mind of consumer all over the world. There is a paradigmatic shift from non-essentials to essentials in buying patterns, relegating loyalty to brands to the background. Fear of contracting the virus has led the consumers to give importance to healthy foods and vitamin supplements, medical and protective apparels. In this post-covid consumer world, this paper analyses the difference between the consumer mind of pre-covid time purchase process and post-covid purchase process. First, conventional consumer behaviour process is stated – internal, external influences, and purchase process. Second, the paper looks at the ways by which COVID-19 has changed the consumption process. Finally, the paper attempts to suggest marketing strategies for the post-covid market.*

**Keywords:** Consumer Behaviour, Factors Influencing Consumption, Covid-19 Mindset, Post-Covid Market Strategies.

## INTRODUCTION

“Consumers use information to form beliefs about the likelihood of a product meeting a specific need” (Hagerty & Aaker, 1984). Consumers have not been looking at life differently until they encountered a pandemic like “COVID-19”. The world has been under the grip of this virus since its outbreak in December 2019. The damages seem to be very devastating with time. Reports suggest that COVID-19 has changed consumers completely irrespective of whether one belonged to a developed nation, developing nation or a third world country. It has impacted every life. Looking at the changes COVID-19 has brought into the world, it is evident that there is a shift in the consumer mind. This significant and visible change refers to how consumers purchase during this pandemic. The availability of essentials are being prayed for by the consumers. The essentials have become more important than the purchase of non-essential items i.e. the consumers focus on needs than wants. Consumer brands are no longer able to attract their loyal customers as most of the nations are forced to lockdown, confining consumers to their homes. This has brought a surge in the sales of healthy foods, vitamins, medical equipments, preventive medicines, personal hygiene products protection from the deadly virus is on top of every consumer’s mind thereby, affecting the conventional consumption process. This further influences how industries like retail, fashion, manufacturing, health care, automobiles have to remap their segments so as to survive and sustain the pandemic.

A study found that youngsters considered price to be an important factor while purchasing, it was suitability for older consumers and durability for eldest consumers when it came to clothing (Herve & Mullet, 2009). The conventional consumption process is well known but the identification of major changes in consumer mind due to COVID-19 situation is a significant study. Such changes are set to affect the future of marketing. The strategies in the days to come need to fulfil these changes. This provides ample opportunity to study the consumer mind Pre-COVID-19 and Post-COVID-19 by understanding the change in the consumption pattern during the given period. Also on suggesting how marketing strategies may need modifications to adapt to the new normal.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Generally, the customers look for offers that are cheaper and of good quality. Among the determinants making customers buy in particular selling outlets, the customers' ethnocentrism plays an important role; however, its role can be less important in the times of global crisis. (Stefanska & Bilinska, 2014). According to Flatters and Willmott, one of the four main tendencies in consumer behaviour during the economic crisis (Flatters & Willmott, 2009) is the need for simplicity - in an attempt to avoid risk; consumers seek simple and valuable offers. Our measures of shopper "traits" are not confined to demographics alone, but also include measures of the household's overall shopping habits. (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998) and (Rook & Fisher, 1995)

In times of crisis, consumers and their buying behaviours change. Now, in the COVID-19 situation, consumers have shifted to protection mode. Social distancing has made many businesses migrate from offline to online. Crowding and gathering are what people were normally used to in markets while shopping, using public transport, at movie halls, restaurants and many other occasions. All these are now being reconsidered seriously today. This is leading to major shifts in behavioural trends like gaming apps over children playing at parks, entertainment online over playing a sport together, purchasing online than waiting in long queues outside a grocery store, live-streamed work out classes over hitting the gyms, attending online classes individually at home over sitting in the classrooms with friends together and so on. These long held habits are undergoing changes due to COVID-19 crisis.

Meanwhile, the need for essentials has increased the pressure on the new delivery channels to reach consumers on time. Consumers are now driven more towards health, hygiene and safety. The fear of contracting the virus has made consumers shift to online purchase than walking in to their favourite store to buy items. A recent McKinsey study in China suggests that consumers would prefer shopping online even after relaxing the lockdown and this would continue for longer time. This definitely requires the seller's attention on understanding these behavioural changes in consumers. Those who fail to adapt, are feared to lose a large chunk of their business. Some innovative retailers have started using their offline stores into fulfilment centres and started delivering the essentials for the orders they receive online. Some other retailers have quickly made themselves available online and rest are exploring ways to reach their consumers through online mode in their race to recover from losses.

According to research by DISQO in March 2020, shopping habits have been affected in tandem with the progression of coronavirus news and increased case reporting. The survey also showed a significant lift in online searches for grocery items as people prepare to cook from home. Another area is where consumers reported they were "stocking up." (Source: Alexandra Pasore, Women's Wear Daily, 18 March 2020)

A research from Nielsen finds, in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, consumers are changing their shopping behaviour in ways that could shape future buying patterns. Consumer behaviour crosses six thresholds, first, consumers engage in proactive health minded buying as a precautionary measure. In the second stage, this shifts to reactive health management where the consumers focus on buying face masks, hand sanitizers and disinfectant products as a reaction to “community spread”. The third stage looks at “pantry preparations”, the stocking of shelf-stable foods, reducing trips to stores by increasing the quantity of purchase. Threshold four, triggered by rising percentage of COVID-19 confirmed cases. The consumers increase their online shopping by avoiding going out of their homes due to emergency and understanding risk of stock outs and supply issues. Fifth threshold comes with restricted living. The excessive use of online and purchase of available essentials under lockdown. Finally, threshold six is living the new normal. People return to work with renewed cautiousness about health. (Source: [www.supermarkets.com](http://www.supermarkets.com))

According to KPMG, in its document dated 30 March 2020, it has recorded that COVID-19 has disrupted and left an indelible mark on consumers. The customers known just three months ago are not the same people today. Long held normal preferences have shifted as customers exercise caution – about where, what and how they buy. COVID-19 has its long-term implications but, what’s clear is that it has already fundamentally changed the way people around the world think and act. Customers shifted from discretionary items to those perceived as essentials. People started to prioritize health and supply chain safety over cost and convenience.

The virus impact is also affecting companies like Google, Microsoft, Mahindra, Wipro and many more across the world. The luxurious lifestyle of their employees like travel, sports, events, restaurants, gyms, theatres have changed and the focus has now shook their own workplaces from office spaces to work from home mode. They are being forced to stay put. Large employers are now reframing their operations and relationships with their employees. Every department is hard hit. Finance grappling with cash management, Human resources with layoffs, Sales trying to sell with budgets drying up and Customer support is from home. Companies are finding the best alternatives to the pandemic – rising safety and hygiene concerns, managing supply chain, ensuring best customer experience to stay relevant to the testing times. A recent McKinsey survey of US consumers found that 64 percent of respondents have felt depressed, anxious, or both over the past several weeks, and 39 percent stated that they would be unable to pay their bills after one month of unemployment.

According to findings of Euromonitor International, COVID-19 would severely impact both the supply and demand sides of the economy. Some retailers would fare better but there will be grappling with the “new normal” and the pandemic will reshape the retail moving forward. Technology and e-commerce will be interwoven henceforth. Mandated shutdowns, sudden demand shifts, economic devastation have given the retail industry and unprecedented shock. Managing the supply of essentials without shortage is very crucial. Hence, the impact of COVID-19 has changed the consumers’ mind and their long held habits.

### **Pre-Covid Purchase Process**

The conventional consumer decision making process involves 5 steps: Need recognition, Information search, Evaluation of alternatives, Purchase decision and Post purchase behaviour. In the context of COVID-19, the process has not been the way it used to be Pre-COVID. Consumers had the discretion to buy any product or service of their liking. Consumers used to wait for a specific brand of their choice, colour they preferred and bargain using all their skills.

But, today it is not the way it used to be before this crisis. Any purchase, be it a small grocery item or as big as a car that is purchased once in few years, the process would flow through the above mentioned traditional method.

Today, in the need recognition stage, consumers focus on essentials. There is a change in their behaviour. Their need is to refrain themselves from contracting the virus, stay healthy and safe. Accordingly the consumer starts gathering information about becoming healthier, hygienic by constantly exposing to the social media and other forms of news. The consumer mind today is clogged with the information about the virus forcing them to follow health and safety measures everywhere. Now, with health and safety in mind and all the information surrounding it, the consumer is now at evaluation of alternatives stage. At this stage, the consumer is skeptical about the alternatives as he is already left with no option but with what is available and no choices due to the spread of virus and restrictions. There is no convenience as the restrictions on supply chain are on the rise. In the purchase decision stage, the consumer is made to buy only what is available due to the situation. The post purchase behaviour is satisfactory if the consumer is able to get essentials without contracting the virus.

### **Change in Consumption Pattern**

Consumers exhibit a pattern in their purchases and spends. Here we classify this pattern in to two types: Pre-COVID and Post-COVID. The purchases were more want-based in the Pre-COVID times and has become more need-based Post-COVID. For example, Asian shoppers tend to buy luxury goods on their foreign trips to benefit from lower prices in Europe. Shopping was considered an integral part of the travel experience: buying a brand in its country of origin came with a sense of authenticity and excitement. With the recent travel restrictions, an important driver of luxury spending has come to a halt.

The ever changing fashion industry has been driving a large set of consumers from old trends to new. Consumers in this industry thrive with massive live audiences to promote their brands at fashion weeks and live shows maintaining lasting relationships with their trade partners and consumers. This would be affected now. In Italy, the fashion capital of the world, more than 40 percent of the global luxury production factory houses including small, family based businesses have shut down. If Italy's *façonnières* (a French term that loosely translates to "*contract manufacturers*") do not survive, though being a signature element of the luxury ecosystem—the craftsmanship which is the outcome of excellence and skill passed down through generations, and the source of the "Made in Italy" aura—could be lost forever. Luxury Players have already started to see changes in spending habits and buying behaviour. For example, purchase of children's wear and smaller leather goods have been on the rise during the crisis than ready to wear apparel. Consumers being the ultimate stakeholders in the luxury business, shifts in consumer sentiments and behaviour are much anticipated with a new normal being quite different than it was Pre-COVID.

With the fight continuing against COVID-19 and daily life being put on hold, organizations are now finding ways to address the safety concerns. The definition of safety has transformed into a more personal level with focus on becoming hygienic, contactless and distancing between people. There are three points of contact – Employees to Employees, Employees to Customers and Customers to Customers. Organizations are investigating to shift towards contactless customer service and continuing operations with enhanced safety precautions

to employees and customers and yet remain human centric in their approach. A creative approach to solutions on contactless operations are being looked at by businesses in the future.

Some of the critical changes in the consumption process are how organizations have changed the way they work due to change in behaviour of consumers.

Some distilleries are using their ethanol supplies to provide materials for hand sanitizers through partnerships with refineries. Apparel manufacturers are responding to a drop in sales by producing thousands of urgently needed face masks during the crisis. Some automotive companies are utilising their production facilities to manufacture ventilators, say, General Motors is partnering with a US-based medical device company to produce respiratory care products. Rideshare companies are looking to use their network of drivers to transport medicine and basic goods, rather than passengers. Some of the McDonald's workers from temporarily closed branches may be redeployed at ALDI stores to ensure that the retailer can meet the currently increased customer demand. Likewise, a sustainable-footwear company Allbirds is giving free shoes to healthcare workers, and pharmacies and drugstores are also gearing up to donate space in their parking lots for medical testing. These include some of the significant changes in the work pattern. Some of the offline stores could completely shift to e-commerce. Companies that were already in the process of digitizing could cope with the COVID-19 crisis better than those which were not ready to move online.

McKinsey, in their survey report dated 17 June 2020, on how consumer's behaviour in car buying and mobility is changing amid COVID-19, there is a drastic change in commuting among people across the world and their fear of travel in public transport. Automotive and mobility is one of the hardest hit sectors. A survey was conducted among consumers in US, UK, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and China on their mobility and behaviour on car buying and servicing. Most countries showed a dip except China which was just nearing its pre COVID-19 levels. The shrink in mobility is evident with consumers shifting from air and train travel to use of private vehicle to stay safer. It was also found that 20% of the consumers revoked the sale and 2/3 of the remaining delayed their purchase. Consumers have decided to delay purchase and spend less. On average, about 15% of consumers plan to delay their maintenance and repair as well. The car buying, after market and mobility significantly decreased and are less likely to recover as per the survey.

### **Post-Covid Consumer Mind**

According to Mintel, 54% of Canadians say they wash their hands more frequently now due to COVID-19. A greater percentage of Asian Canadians (86%) are making at least one change to their behaviour compared to all Canadians (69%), 66% are washing their hands more often, half (50%) are using hand sanitizer more often, 48% are avoiding crowded places, and 28% are avoiding restaurants/going out to eat (compared to 14% of consumers overall). (Source: Mintel, Canada Newswire, 03/24/2020)

Researchers at Harris Poll said most Americans are "concerned about COVID-19 harming the health of older people and the economy." Eighty-six percent of those polled said they were most worried about the impact of COVID-19 on the health of older friends and relatives as 84 percent cited the effect the pandemic will have on the economy. Sixty-five percent of respondents were worried about their own health being impacted by the virus. Social media was found to amplify this fear and uncertainty among them. (Source: Arthur Zaczkiewicz, Women's Wear Daily, 18 March 2020)

The COVID-19 driven shutdown has made the retail business owners in the U.S. to lay off workers and retail giants have steadily witnessed the stock markets nosedive by many points. The loss of millions of jobs across the globe has led to an unexpected economic downturn. This cyclical effect has instilled more fear and anxiety in people about their future. The rising unemployment rates have made people spend least to save money for future needs. The freedom and luxury enjoyed during Pre-COVID era is now far from reality. Consumers have almost no choices in their purchase. They focus on satisfying their basic needs and there are no wants anymore.

According a syndicated report on impact of COVID-19 by Nielsen, which covered 11 markets in Asia—Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, the consumers are expected to continue to look after their health and wellbeing post the lockdown period. More than four in five consumers in Singapore (83%) are likely to buy health supplements again in the next 12 months, and 58% of consumers will continue buying hand sanitizers. It has identified that the spending patterns signalling consumers are increasingly opting for safer, non-physical stores focusing on emergency pantry items and health supplies. On the whole, Supplements, household cleaning, personal and healthcare products saw a significant uplift in value sales, whereas alcoholic drinks, chocolates and ice cream declined. Understandably, consumers' first reaction to the outbreak was to boost their immunity rather than indulge.

Earnst & Young (EY) Future Consumer Index, conducted a survey of 4,859 people tracking consumer sentiment and behaviour across the US, Canada, the UK, France and Germany during the COVID-19 crisis. It reports that the COVID-19 crisis is being defined by four distinct consumer behaviour segments namely, "Cut deep," "Stay calm, carry on," "Save and stockpile" and "Hibernate and spend". Consumers that fall into the "Cut deep" segment (27.3%) are spending less across all expense categories as the pandemic impacts employment; others representing the "Stay calm, carry on" category are continuing to spend as normal (26.2%). Most consumers (35.1%) represent the "Save and stockpile" segment, indicating that they feel pessimistic about the future, while consumers that fall into the "Hibernate and spend" segment (11.4%) are spending more across the board. Overall, 42% of respondents believe that the way they shop will fundamentally change as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. When it comes to brands and products, 34% of consumers indicate that they would pay more for local products, 25% for trusted brands and 23% for ethical products.

During a crisis it is so fashionable to save money that customer are becoming less and less loyal to the brands they have been buying so far (and to the companies). Under the influence of the fear for their well-being, consumers are predominantly interested in the benefits of buying at lower prices, minimizing purchase risk, as well as in obtaining "hard," explicit purchase benefits (Herman, 2009).

According to Deloitte Consumer 2020 Report, there were several behavioural changes in consumers during the economic crisis. It is inferred that most of these changes are likely to continue post the economic recovery. Countries like the US, China, Europe have all witnessed changes in this regard. The spending of consumers have reduced. The emerging markets would grow more with their middle class consumers. Demographics of countries have more impact on the consumer behaviour with special reference to consumption of food.

A survey among US consumers from April 6 to 12, 2020 revealed that 67 percent of respondents said they expect to spend less on apparel in the near future than they typically do. This potentially longer-lasting behavioural change is the accelerated adoption of e-commerce.

Even before the pandemic, consumers were increasingly browsing and buying online. With COVID-19 changing consumer behaviour, perhaps permanently, and retail stores will need to take these new behaviours into account. The physical visit to stores is expected to reduce more than ever and without proper measures in the place, the survival in Post-COVID would be bleak.

The unexpected rise of hygiene practices among consumers due to COVID-19 has prompted the efficient use of available resources. Needs have increased and wants have decreased. Consumers have started to realise the importance of health. A number of trends in the post-COVID-19 world—the “*next normal*”—could make digital and analytics play a very important role. Physical distancing may continue, making consumers less likely to visit brick-and-mortar stores, and a no-contact economy could be preferred—raising e-commerce and automation to a new level.

Brands today can no longer stick to their old methods in customer retention. COVID-19 has created an unstable market environment and the consumer decision making has changed. Consumers now consider bulk buying, contact less customer experience and crowd avoidance. Brands need to transform their style to engage better with their loyal customers. One of the reasons brands hesitate to take steps is that they prefer to stay away from being looked as opportunistic. With governments relaxing the lockdowns gradually, consumers still prefer self-isolating, quarantining and social distancing. Automakers have gone online, museums and art galleries are creating the experience from home. As Mark Ritson, Columnist Marketing Week says, “*The wheels of industry need to keep turning so workers are paid and families are fed. Those wheels are best greased by effective marketing.*”

### **Marketing Strategies for Post-Covid Market**

COVID-19 has put all the businesses to test. Organizations are revisiting strategies, formulating best practises for employees, customers, supply chain and scrutinizing financials. There is a clear need for the marketers to ramp up their efforts to fit themselves into the new behavioural changes caused by COVID-19 among consumers. Some behavioural changes could be temporary but many habits could be permanent. Consumers feel vulnerable right now and marketers should be empathetic in their approach. Many industries are struggling to even become normal but most of them follow well established methods like work from home, remote work places, online meetings etc., Marketers should look forward to modifying their media mix. The focus should be on engagement and relevance.

For instance, millions of people rely on the luxury-goods industry to make a living—from factory workers and retail-store employees to small-town artisans and craftsmen—industry leaders are planning ahead and wrestling with longer-term strategic questions to ensure the survival of their businesses. From global traveller to local shopper, the luxury sector appeals to a global consumer: 20 to 30 percent of industry revenues are generated by consumers making luxury purchases outside their home countries.

Consumers are more likely to remember companies like Ford, GE and 3M partnering to repurpose manufacturing facilities to making the most needed ventilators. Wipro letting their Pune facility to be converted to an isolation ward. Many colleges generously providing their infrastructure facilities for the COVID-19 patients. Unexpectedly, we have adult beverage companies like Diageo repurposing their alcohol manufacturing units into making sanitizers are unforgettable gestures. Corporate giants like the Tata, Mahindra and many others who have provided unrestricted support for the society and their employees will remain in the consumers’ mind.

Brands have already taken on global health challenges. Carling Black Label, the largest beer brand in South Africa, steered a campaign to end violence against women. It saw a clear connection between alcohol consumption and abusive behaviour. Though the brand primarily catered products to men, it turned heads when it took up a challenge of being socially responsible to women. Knorr, a €3 billion Unilever brand that includes bouillon cubes, a century-old product line with a large global market. As part of a broad push to address malnutrition, Knorr identified iron-deficiency anaemia as a serious health threat in developing countries, particularly for young women. Focusing first on Nigeria, where nearly half of reproductive-age women suffer from anaemia, Knorr developed a new iron-fortified bouillon product and launched a campaign encouraging women and teenage girls to add it and iron-rich leafy green vegetables to stews.

Lifebuoy, in 2019 hit its goal of reaching one billion people with hand washing messages, which have had a clear effect on behaviour and health. A randomized, controlled trial involving 2,000 families in India showed that hand washing with Lifebuoy soap led to a 25% reduction in diarrhoea, a 15% reduction in acute respiratory infections, and a 46% reduction in eye infections. Since the launch of the Lifebuoy programs we have also seen a sizable drop in child mortality due to diarrhoea and pneumonia in countries where we established them. At the same time, Lifebuoy has become one of Unilever's fastest-growing brands and is now the world's best-selling antibacterial soap. Such real life examples inspire how creative and innovative marketing strategies can have positive societal impact and growth. This inspiration could be an eye-opener for the current health crisis.

As people spend more time at home and are discouraged from going out, the virus will lead to a continued increase in consumers shopping online. This could affect the retail industry in developing markets. The global retail industry is experiencing an unprecedented crisis in the wake of COVID-19. Consumers staying home are tightening their spending as they face uncertainties related to their health, wealth, and jobs. Availability of products, regardless of the channel is the key. Consumers are even ready to pay a premium to get the much needed essentials to survive. This has consumers giving more importance to restocking as well due to fear of non-availability of essentials.

Marketers have to quickly track trends and build strategies to cope with the changing behaviour of consumers. They should co-ordinate with other departments to forecast future scenarios and potential outcomes, depending on how long the crisis lasts. The need to quickly adapt to the digitization of their businesses to survive and continue to develop as digitization has become a priority. The 'omnichannel' approach to their business can lead to better engagement and personalization. The product development has to be in line with these changes by reducing physical interactions and shifting them to healthy and safe online interactions without losing on the human touch.

It is natural to be skeptical at this current crisis to try investing in digitization of business. They could select an ongoing-learning approach to strategy: discovery-driven planning (DDP) developed by Rita and MacMillan in the 1990s. This was later incorporated into the popular "lean start-up" tool kit for launching businesses in an environment of high uncertainty. At its center is a low-cost process for quickly testing assumptions about what works, obtaining new information, and minimizing risks. This includes 5 key steps:

1. Define the operating experience: Identify areas likely to be improved. Redesign for betterment and efficiency
2. Focus on specific problems: Identify outcomes and progress metrics, how to create value for customers, ROI calculations
3. Identify your competition : Look at your rivals, determine if our outcomes and metrics were reasonable



4. Look for platforms: Don't forget the ecosystem implications, identify platform like opportunities to develop customized, higher-value offerings
5. Test your assumptions: Failures are lessons too! Payoff is spending less and learning as you experiment

The DDP approach provides a way to address the challenges. (Source: HBR, May-June 2020).

Another approach is called the HEART Framework of sustained crisis communication: This provides guidelines on what to say and what not to say during a crisis. It emphasizes making current and potential customers aware of your company's plan for supporting them and providing new value that they might require.

H – Humanize your company

E – Educate about change

A – Assure stability

R – Revolutionize offerings

T – Tackle the future

(Source: HBR, April 2020).

On the other hand, Technology is helping manage crisis. The role of technology is so pivotal to our everyday living. Lack of technological support would have questioned our survival and washed away the human race much faster than expected without communication. It is really scary to imagine life today without technology be it a mobile phone, internet services, telecommunication, online shopping, transportation, medical facilities, payments through banks, supply chain management and the list goes on. It has been able to keep everyone connected and continuing. Some free technological tools have made life much easier for people. The shift from offline to online by consumers made everything go digital and it has started to payoff. Technologies such as cloud services, warehouse robotics, and smartphones have redefined entire industries, making old business categories obsolete.

In traditional business thinking, the essence of strategy is choosing to perform activities differently than rivals do. In the new era, this approach makes little sense. Borrowing ideas instead of trying to be different. Secondly, commit but keep testing. Thirdly, pause, watch and wait. This is "*parallel play*". This does not mean that the conventional rules of strategy should be abandoned. In this uncertain times, there is no standard formula to get the right strategy. It needs to be borrowed, tried, tested, watched, waited and then taken forward based on the output. Business today is data driven. Customer data gives us valuable insights to predict and prepare for future. The data can be used to provide value to customers.

Consumer habits, companies' interactions with consumers, and the number and types of touch points will all change. Products are also being developed considering the new normal i.e. health, safety and hygiene. Companies' already using cutting edge technologies have fared better than peers. Digitization of product development has been a blessing during this critical situation. Organizations are looking forward to adopt agile ways of working to speed up development of digital and analytics products and projects. Agile techniques enable companies to release MVPs (Minimum Viable Products) into the marketplace quickly and refine them iteratively based on consumer feedback. For example, Birmingham City University Business School has developed a

Corona Clearance Certificate (CCC) using Blockchain Technology to trace product journey and verify supply risk ofnCOVID-19. Another UK based health Tech Company Babylon provides AI-powered diagnosis and virtual consultations through digital app.

## CONCLUSION

The world is still under the grip of the pandemic COVID-19. Most businesses are gazing at uncertainty during these hard times and gear up to prepare themselves to work under such ambiguous circumstances. The new normal is what each business has to quickly adapt to for sustaining themselves. Firstly, businesses should consider going digital. Technology has made it possible to keep all businesses running till date. Business should deliver value that is safe and contactless to gain customer's confidence.

The use of above mentioned models like DDP or HEART Framework definitely can help businesses face challenges. These tools guide us smoothly during these tough phases. Coming to new marketing strategies, businesses need to adapt to the new normal and quickly understand how to sustain their businesses by reaching or contacting their existing customers. Assure them that the relationship is now improved and better. The service and delivery is still the same. Build the bond again. Businesses can try new innovative ways to retain their customers.

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