

The background of the page is a warm-toned, close-up photograph of several djembes (West African drums). The focus is on the drum heads and the intricate rope lacing that holds them in place. The lighting is soft, creating a golden-brown hue across the entire image.

# **GLOBAL NEWS CONSUMPTION AMIDST COVID-19**

ANALYSIS FROM  
STAKEHOLDERS

# OVERVIEW

As we move towards a new norm amidst COVID-19, many industries find themselves having to radically evolve and adapt or risk being left behind.

The communications industry is one that faces the paradox of being at the receiving end of the crisis whilst also being at the forefront of change.

The slow demise of certain communications channels such as print publications in a pre-COVID world has accelerated, while the usage of digital and online channels has increased rapidly and in new ways that suggest the way forward in terms of media consumption patterns.

This report by Djembe Consultants gathers analysis from global sources, supplemented with our own research on current trends and practices, to provide insights into the state of media and news consumption during this period.

Our aim is to enable organizations to make informed decisions on optimizing their stakeholder engagement priorities in these unprecedented times and beyond.



# DJEMBE INSIGHTS

GATHERING PERSPECTIVES FROM  
GLOBAL STAKEHOLDERS



# OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

GATHERING INSIGHTS FROM DJEMBE'S INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

**WE SURVEYED OVER 250 GLOBAL STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN OUR NETWORKS TO UNDERSTAND THEIR HABITS, PREFERENCES AND OUTLOOKS ON CURRENT NEWS TRENDS.**

**Top line findings included:**



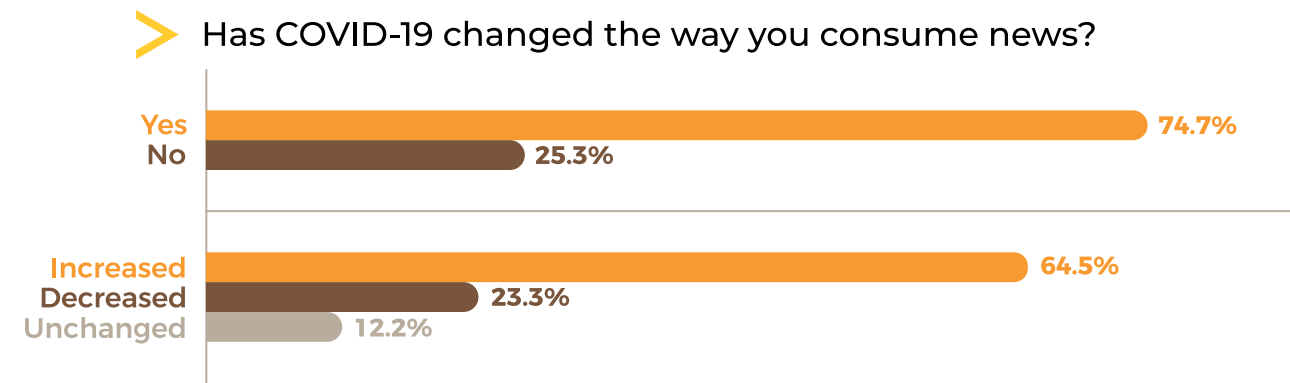
## SURVEY FEEDS

// I appreciate the media keeping me informed on topics other than the pandemic

// I have started to really enjoy podcasts and interviews with specialists

// I get two COVID-19 updates, one first thing in the morning and one in the evening. During the rest of day, I search for wide ranging news stories that are not COVID-related

# HIGHER CAPTIVE AUDIENCES



## CAPTIVE AUDIENCES = HIGHER MEDIA CONSUMPTION

- On average, people currently consume 24 hours of news per week
- Our own analysis points to a drastic increase in audience numbers

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- We consistently assess publications, both online and broadcast, based on their reach, audience numbers and viewership figures to be abreast of changes during these unprecedented times
- Increased audience numbers mean further opportunities, engagements and visibility

“

As a consumer, I see the pandemic as a defining moment for brands. Some have been genuine in their communication, showing real empathy. I was impressed by some of the creative ideas these brands came up with to help us get through these tough times, but others have really missed the mark and I won't forget that post-COVID!

# CHANGING SOURCES OF INFORMATION

## NEW MEDIA CONSUMPTION TRENDS

- The consumption of TV news has increased
- Local TV far surpasses any other news source on air or on a digital platform as a trusted news source, largely due to the need to follow guidance from local officials\*
- Content sharing is increasing across all social platforms
- Most of this increased communication is centred around the pandemic but still ensures there remains an increasingly captive audience

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

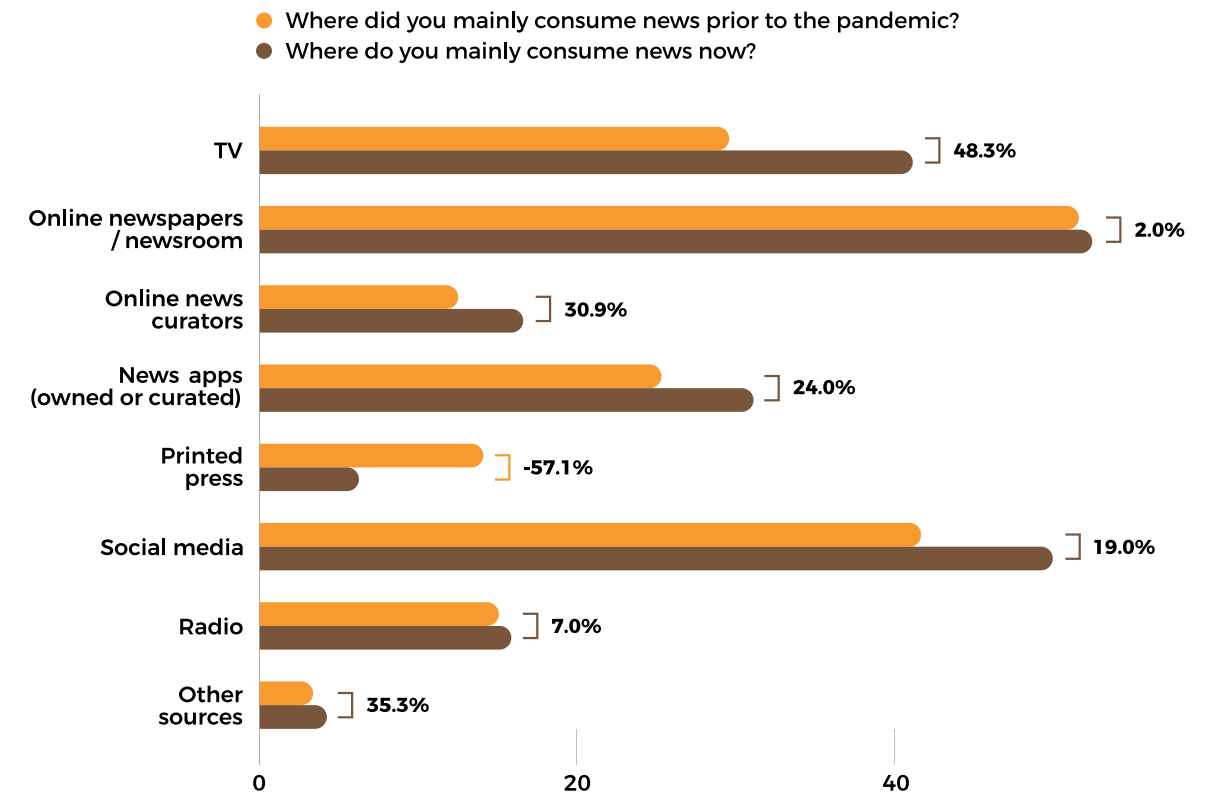
- Higher exposure and impact of TV interviews, live or prerecorded
- Greater focus to be placed on relationships with local media
- Importance for individuals and organizations to leverage their social media channels for communicating with their stakeholders

## SURVEY FEED

// I have started to rely on news apps for my updates during this period. I downloaded at least three, even though they are not free. I was convinced by the customizable notifications.

\*SmithGeiger Poll for Hearst Television, March 2020

## > Change in news consumption sources during COVID-19



## A SHIFT AWAY FROM THE PRINTED PRESS

- The sharp decline in printed press is balanced by an increase in online news curators and reliance on news apps – supported by breaking news alerts
- The Financial Times reported that app downloads have surged, led by the gaming industry but closely followed by entertainment, video and business

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- A greater focus should be placed on media with strong online or app audiences
- Less opportunities available and lower reach of traditionally strong print publications

# A SHIFT IN TIMING

## AN INCREASED REACH FOR MIDDAY BROADCAST

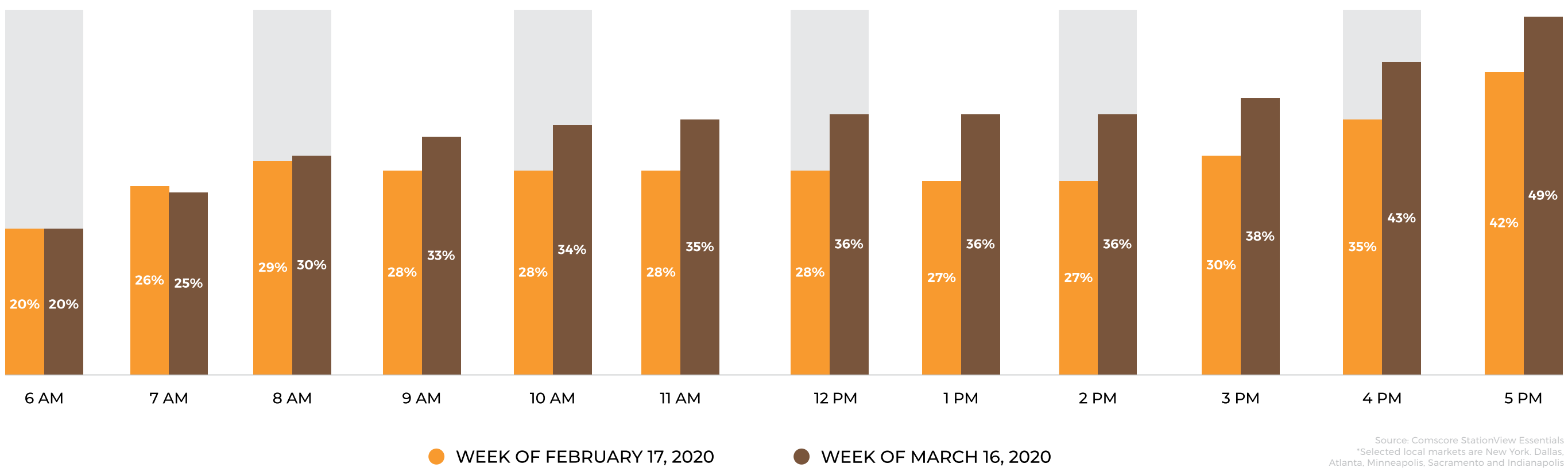
- Data taken from Comscore in selected markets shows that crisis level events, such as natural disasters or the 9/11 attacks, attract millions of people who would not ordinarily consume TV during the daytime
- This is particularly the case in countries that encourage remote working in the new norm post COVID-19
- Our market insights suggest that the situation is similar in Africa with a continued focus on radio

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- There also lies opportunity in day time hours slots both for news bulletins and promotional content that is usually better value than prime time advertising
- Timing for social media posting should be taken into consideration in this regard

## Viewing levels at hourly increments in select local markets\*

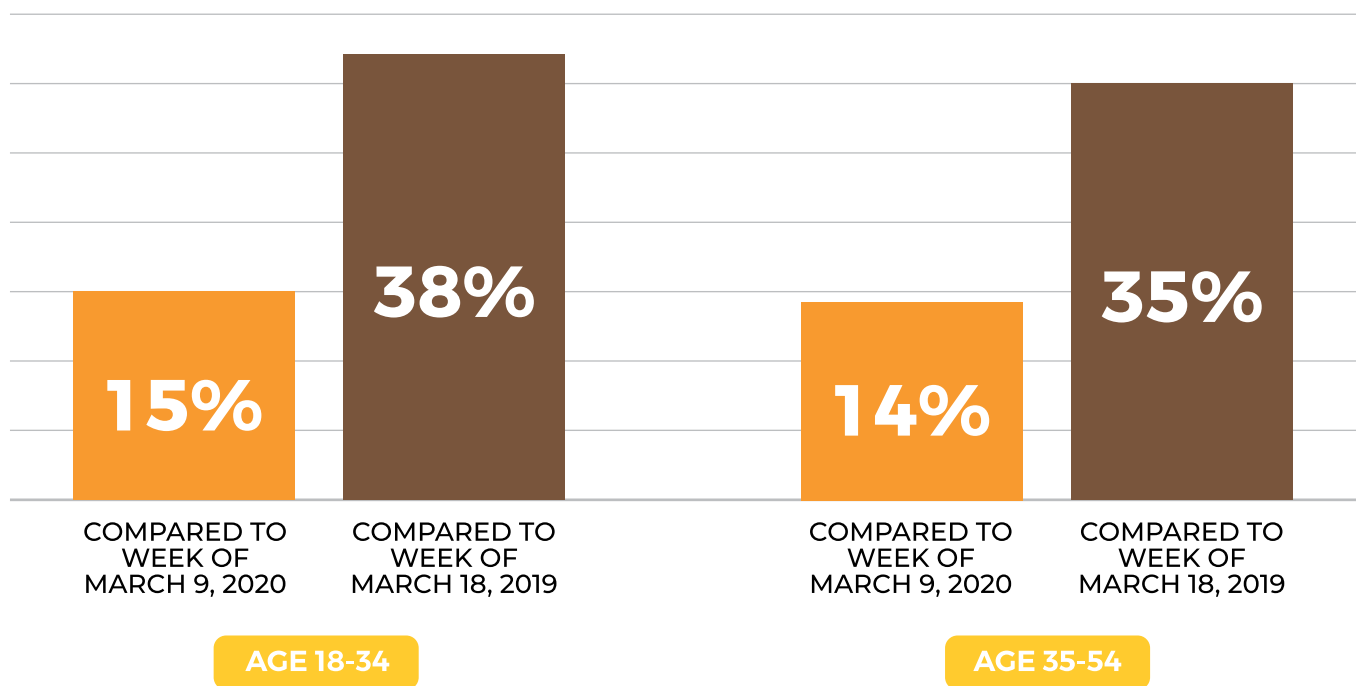
SETS IN USE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 17TH VS. WEEK OF MARCH 16, 2020



Source: Comscore StationView Essentials  
\*Selected local markets are New York, Dallas, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Sacramento and Indianapolis

## Percent increase in average audience by age

WEEK OF MARCH 16, 2020



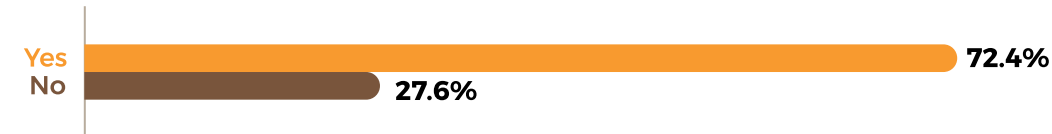
Source: Comscore StationView Essentials

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTENT

## ROOM FOR NON-COVID RELATED CONTENT

- There's an increasing appetite for non-COVID related content which is by far the biggest opportunity
- The below sentiment echoes what many of our clients, partners and stakeholders are telling us

> Would you like to be presented with more non covid-related content?



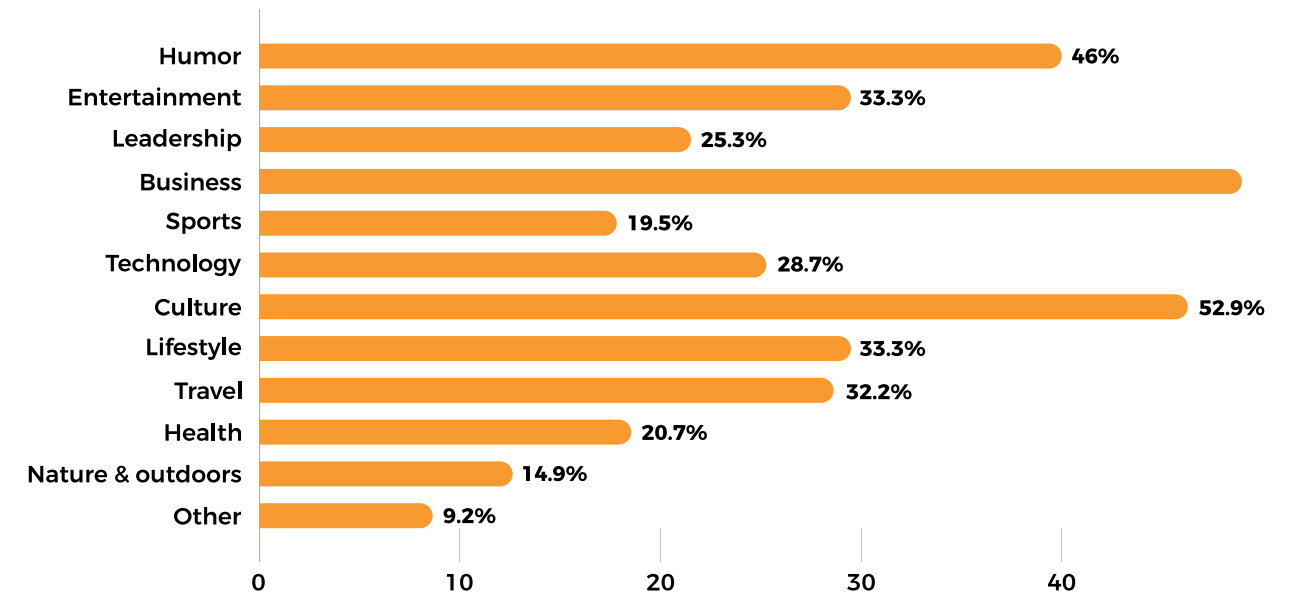
## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- This coupled with higher captive audience numbers means the time is right for increased engagement across all mediums
- Over communicating on COVID could have a negative impact
- There is an opportunity to continue communicating and engaging with audiences on non-COVID related client initiatives and updates
- Topics discussed however should however remain sensitive to the current situation

## SURVEY FEED

// I am concerned about the pandemic and I want to get updates but I want to be able to look at my screen and consume other kinds of content.

> Beyond COVID-19, what topics are peaking your interest at this time?



## NEW TRENDS

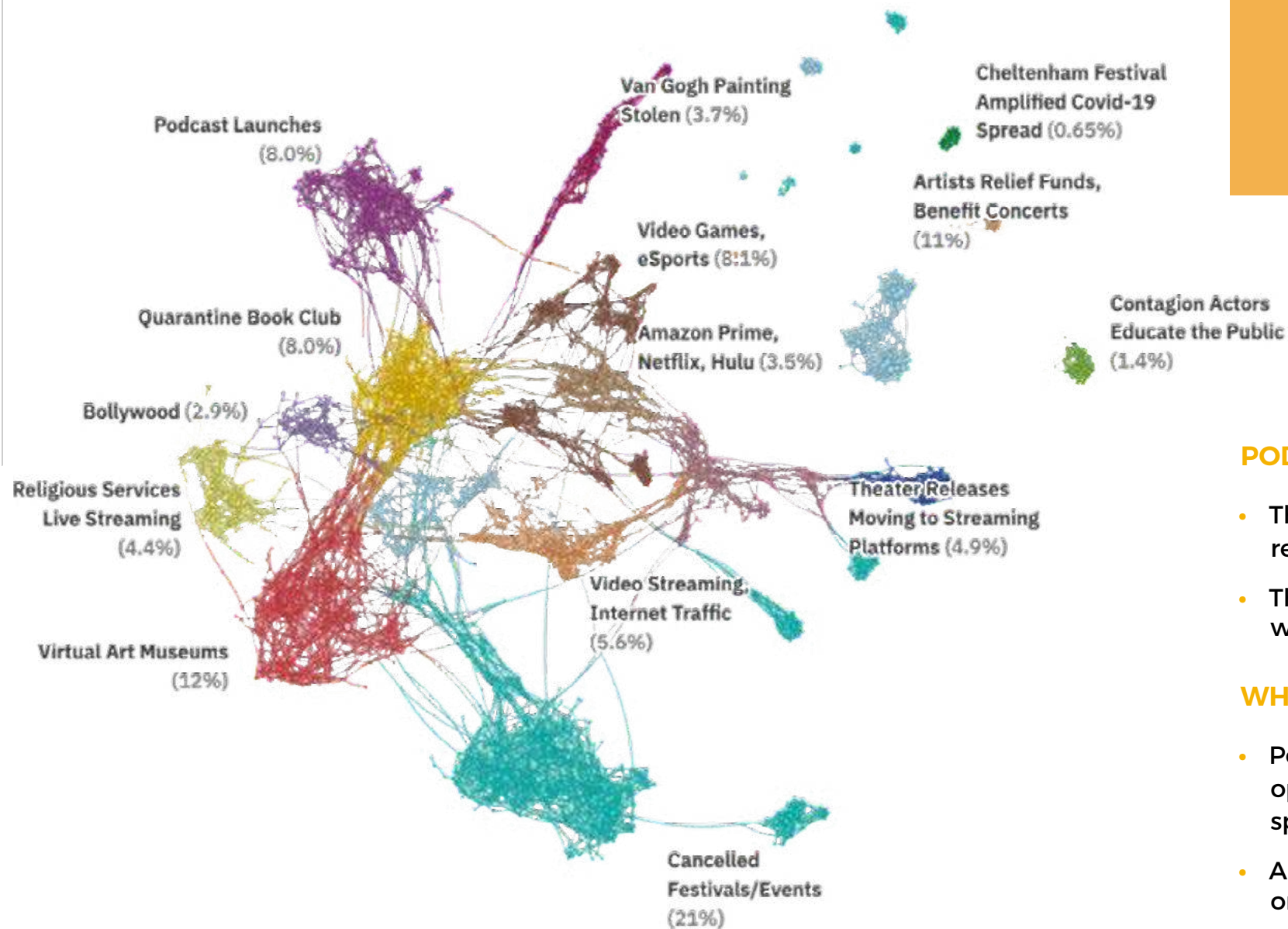
- Business and culture rank highly among searched-for topics outside of COVID
- The reduction in sporting events and therefore sports coverage has pushed greater audience numbers into other topics
- We already know younger audiences are used to discarding direct online publicity but, lately we see them increasingly avoiding attention-grabbing news headlines
- We see a spike in interest for constructive journalism, an emerging domain within journalism aiming to report solution-focused news, which is likely to last much longer than the crisis itself

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- There is still an audience for clients' non-COVID related initiatives
- Many of our clients are already slightly ahead of the curve in terms of constructive journalism and solutions-oriented journalism and should continue to use this angle in media and social media content



# INCREASED REFERENCE TO PODCASTS



## SURVEY FEED

// There was so much contradictory information on COVID, I turned to specialized medical podcasts to get accurate answers. I quickly started following podcasts on business and personal growth as well.

### PODCASTS = AN INTERESTING NEW TREND

- The analysis presents real time topics covered within COVID related news
- The rising importance of podcasts is also strong here. This trend was equally highlighted in our own market survey

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- Podcasts and blogs featuring guest interviews represent an opportunity for clients to secure speaking opportunities for spokespeople
- Alternatively, clients could consider launching their own podcast on social media

The background of the page is a solid, textured orange color. In the center, there are two djembes (African drums) positioned side-by-side. The djembe on the left is slightly smaller and has a lighter, more worn head. The djembe on the right is larger and has a darker head. Both drums have a light-colored body with dark, crisscrossing lacing patterns. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# **SOCIAL CONVERSATION**

**CONSUMPTION IN THE DIGITAL SPACE**



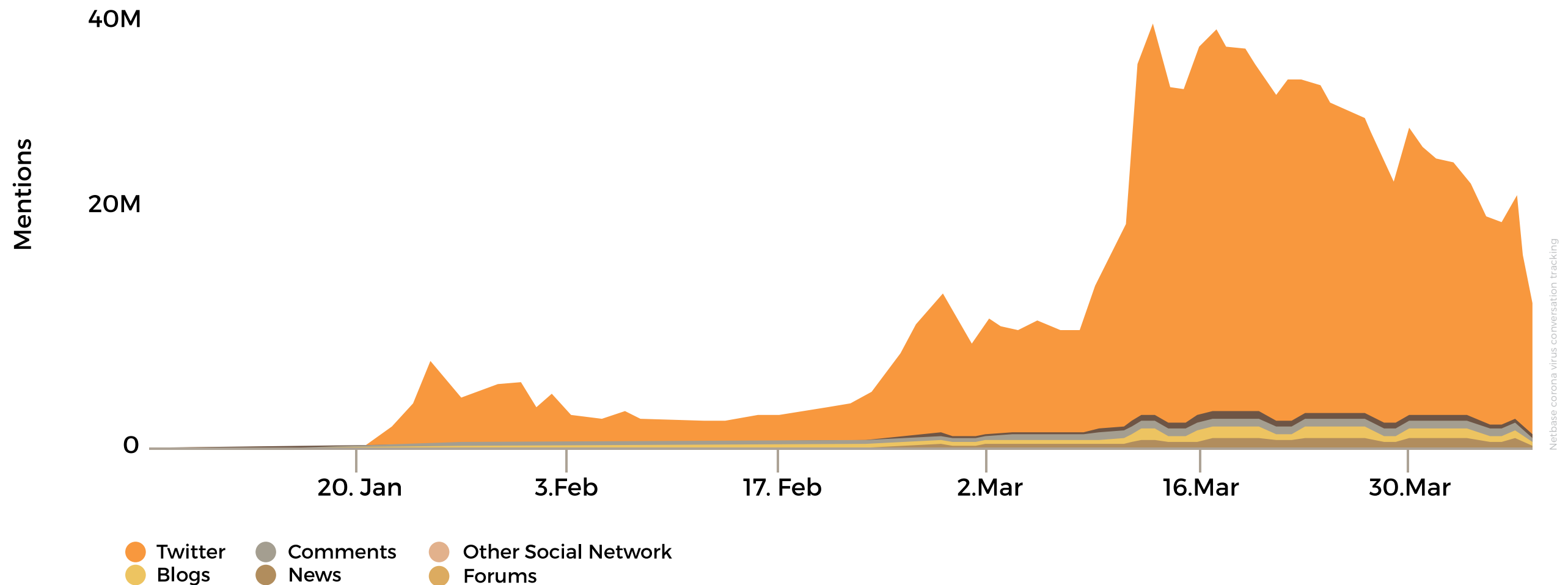
# COVID ONLINE CONVERSATION

## ONLINE CONVERSATION

- These graphs represent mentions and posts relating to COVID across social media globally
- As can be seen, mid-March saw a sudden surge in the frequency of conversation
- The vast majority of this conversation is happening on social media platforms rather than forums or online newsrooms, etc

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- This is an opportunity to develop more creative yet sensitive social media content
- Increased conversation means that clients will have the opportunity to share
- Consider increasing publication boosting to overcoming the increased chatter



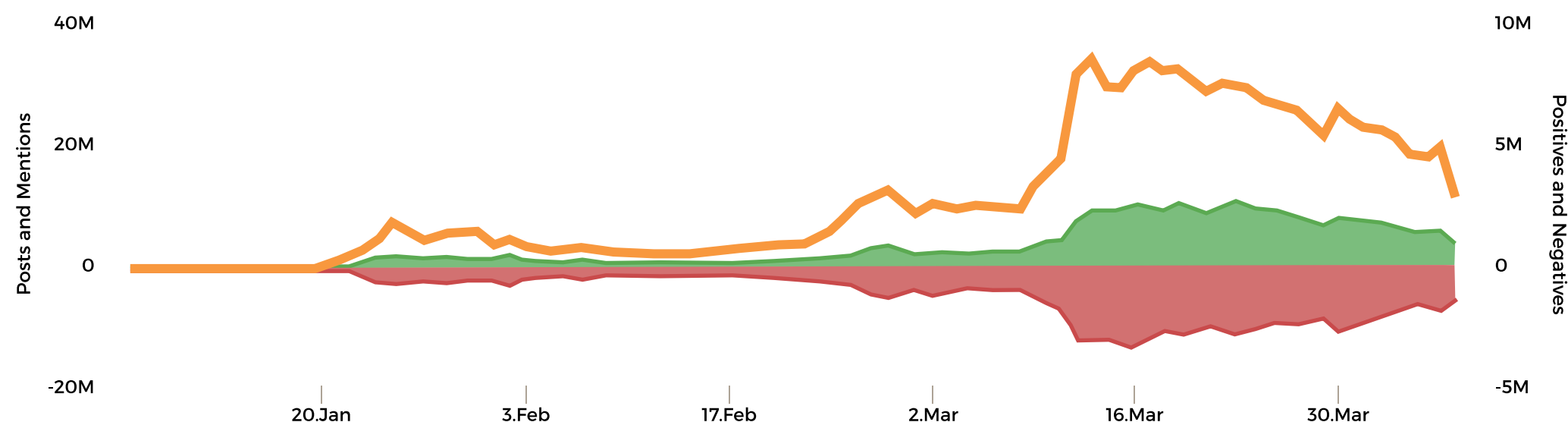
# COVID ONLINE CONVERSATION

## CONVERSATION DRIVERS ARE NOT WHO YOU WOULD EXPECT

- The top authors (by audience) driving the conversation are celebrities
- It is noteworthy that no international or governmental health agencies are present in the top 50 of conversation drivers (by audience)

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

By engagement, news outlets are still top conversation drivers. In terms of English medium media outlets, the top 25 include:



## KEY FIGURES

**POSTS**  
**990** MILLION

**IMPRESSIONS**  
**16.5** TRILLION

**NET SENTIMENT**  
**-16%**



# COVID ONLINE CONVERSATION

## CAPTIVE AUDIENCES = HIGHER ONLINE ACTIVITY

- Overall online activity has and continues to greatly increase
- Search and navigation are fast increasing

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CLIENTS?

- This is an opportunity to increase SEO & SER activity and paid online publicity, particularly across online newsrooms

### FRANCE: Top consumer categories\*, by visits

RANKING	WEEK OF JAN 13 - JAN 19, 2020	WEEK OF MAR 23 - MAR 29, 2020	INCREASE IN VISITS
1	SOCIAL MEDIA	SOCIAL MEDIA	+45%
2	ENTERTAINMENT	NEWS / INFORMATION	+63%
3	NEWS / INFORMATION	ENTERTAINMENT	+25%
4	SEARCH / NAVIGATION	SEARCH / NAVIGATION	+26%
5	GAMES	GAMES	+24%

Source: Comscore MMX Custom Reporting, France, Jan - Mar 2020

### UNITED KINGDOM: Top consumer categories\*, by visits

RANKING	WEEK OF JAN 13 - JAN 19, 2020	WEEK OF MAR 23 - MAR 29, 2020	INCREASE IN VISITS
1	SOCIAL MEDIA	SOCIAL MEDIA	+39%
2	NEWS / INFORMATION	NEWS / INFORMATION	+54%
3	RETAIL	RETAIL	+14%
4	ENTERTAINMENT	ENTERTAINMENT	+14%
5	GAMES	GAMES	+12%

Source: Comscore MMX Custom Reporting, France, Jan - Mar 2020



# CONCLUSION

## THE WAY FORWARD



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

- COVID-19 has fueled a shift towards more online activities within corporate jobs, health and wellbeing, lifestyle, retail, schooling and others. Experts believe that this trend will become the new norm, which presents opportunities for organizations to rethink how they engage their audiences
- The new norm presents significant opportunities to increase digital and social media efforts to engage target audiences. Creativity will help rise above the clutter
- With companies focusing more resources and budget online, the volume of content proposed is sizable. Audiences are increasingly looking for creative, non-COVID content and are eager to engage with their favourite brands in new ways as the dust settles and the new norm takes hold
- The new normal is driving demand for direct, real-time engagement with customers and other stakeholders, rather than pushing out promotional content
- This is an ideal time to build brand loyalty by giving audiences content of real interest to them and downplaying direct publicity, as followers gained during a time of crisis tend to be more loyal than others





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ANALYSIS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

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