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COVID-19 accelerated the shift to e-commerce by five years

E-commerce has gained considerable momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to IBM's U.S. Retail Index, the shift away from physical stores to e-commerce has leaped about five years in the U.S.

Read more: [IBM's U.S. Retail Index](#).

Three main findings:

1. Changing shopping patterns

Department stores in the U.S. are expected to decline by over 60 percent in 2020. At the same time, e-commerce will grow by about 20 percent.

2. Changing product demands

Sales of clothing declined due to social distancing and many people working and schooling from home. On the other side of the graph, groceries, alcohol, and home improvement materials increased rapidly.

3. Changing the pace of digitalization

The report points to the need to increase the pace of digitalization and utilize the synergy between e-commerce and physical stores (buy online and pick up at your local store/or home delivery). Some of the largest retailers have already embraced a new omnichannel approach with exceptional success.

Generation Z: Journalism matters

A new report from Tinius Trust takes a deep dive into how Generation Z (born 95-05) in Norway and Sweden consume digital information.

[Download the report](#) (in Norwegian).

Four main findings:

1. Journalism matters

7 out of 10 in Norway and 6 out of 10 in Sweden thinks it is important that the information they find digitally results from journalistic work. They also have more confidence in a journalist's report than information reported by a blogger they follow.

2. Norwegians choose news media over search

In Norway, 64 percent first go to Norwegian news media when they want to be updated digitally – followed by social media (53%) and search engines (44%). The importance of news media is increasing with age.

3. Swedes searching for news – literally

Search engines are the go-to platforms when young adults and youths in Sweden (65%) want to be updated digitally – followed by social media (57%) and Swedish news media (53%). Search engines and social media are equally important sources of information for Swedish youths (15-19).

4. Willing to pay for digital news

Generation Z has a lower willingness to pay for news digitally than for music, video, and gaming. Yet many believe they will be paying for news in the future: In Norway, 20 percent already pay for news, and 40 percent think they will pay in the future. In Sweden, the same numbers are 15 percent (today) and 34 percent (future).

37 percent of Norwegians are not aware of GDPR

Over two years after implementing the GDPR, the data protection regulation is still unknown to 37 percent of Norwegians.

This is one of the findings from a survey conducted by The Norwegian Data Protection Authority (Datatilsynet).

[Download the report](#) (in Norwegian).

Four main findings:

1. Widespread ignorance

The majority of Norwegians (56%) have little to no knowledge about GDPR. 37 percent say they do not know the GDPR at all, and another 19 percent say they know very little about the privacy regulation.

2. Socio-economic divide

Knowledge of GDPR, and hence knowledge of their fundamental digital rights to privacy, is strongly linked to education and income: The less formal education, the less knowledge about GDPR. For the lowest educated Norwegians, 66 percent responded that they have no knowledge of GDPR.

3. Feeling powerless

When asked about their ability to control their personal information online, 61 percent say they feel powerless. Only 5 percent of Norwegians believe that GDPR has strongly strengthened their online privacy.

4. The cooling effect increases

Uncertainty about privacy and surveillance leads people to change their digital behavior. Some examples: 36 percent have refrained from searching for information on the internet. 47 percent have failed to complete online shopping. 48 percent have avoided participating in a debate on Facebook. 55 percent have refrained from using a service or product.

Adblock usage in decline

The usage of adblock is in decline in Norway and Sweden.

AudienceProject is asking if adblocking has peaked after a new survey among 14.000 respondents across seven countries.

[Download the report.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Fewer people use ad blockers

Adblock usage is decreasing in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, and Great Britain. 31 percent of Norwegians and 32 percent of Swedes use an ad blocker, but more importantly, the usages are only 5 and 8 percent on mobile.

2. Irrelevant ads

Despite less ad blocking: 65 percent of Swedes and 48 percent of Norwegians feel that online ads are irrelevant to them.

3. Context matters

The context and environment in which the ads are shown are essential: 32 percent of Norwegians and 31 percent of Swedes would positively perceive a brand if advertised next to relevant and trustworthy content.

Claims Facebook is a major threat to public health

The nonprofit organization Avaaz has analyzed the spread of global health misinformation. Their conclusion: Facebook's algorithms are a major threat to public health.

[Download the report.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Extensive spread of misinformation

Global health misinformation spreading networks spanning at least five countries generated an estimated 3.8 billion views on Facebook in the last year.

2. Disproportionate distribution

Content from the top 10 websites spreading health misinformation had almost four times as many estimated views on Facebook as equivalent content from the websites of 10 leading health institutions, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO).

3. Does not warn users

Only 16 percent of all health misinformation analyzed had a warning label from Facebook. The other 84 percent remain online without warnings – despite being fact-checked.

China is tightening COVID 19-censorship

The Chinese government leaves nothing to chance when it comes to information about COVID-19. Tracking performed by The Citizen Lab reveals increasingly comprehensive censorship of content about the pandemic.

[Read the report.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Excessive censorship

At least 2.174 keywords related to COVID-19 are censored on WeChat – the most popular messaging app in China. The censorship is so excessive that also general and legit health information is removed. This includes basic health information, such as the fact that the virus spreads from human contact.

2. Shaping the narrative

Through tracking censored keywords, The Citizen Lab provides a view into how narratives and messaging on the pandemic are controlled and molded on social media in China. The censorship related to COVID-19 began as early as December 31st, 2019.

3. Censorship by fear

Control of information on Chinese social media is mediated through a system of intermediary liability in which companies are held responsible for the content on their platforms. Therefore, the level of direct government guidance for each censorship decision made by Chinese social media companies during the pandemic is unclear.

No, you have no idea how much time you spend on Facebook

Do you know how often you visit Facebook every day? The correct answer: No.

Facebook has asked close to 50.000 of its users in 15 countries to estimate how much time and how often they use Facebook. The responses were then compared with the users' logs.

[Download the study.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Exaggerate time used

People tend to overestimate how much time they spend on Facebook daily. On average, they miss 112 minutes, but the margin of error varies depending on how the studies' questions are asked.

2. Miscalculate number of visits

At the same time, people underestimate how many times they visit Facebook daily. This is especially true for those who use Facebook most often. Teens and younger adults were more likely to misreport their time than their older peers.

3. Recommends using tracking instead of surveys

The misreporting led Facebook to suggest that researchers use time tracking applications as an alternative to self-report time-spent measures. This is interesting in light of media usage surveys, which are largely based on self-reporting from respondents.

People more positive to robots during the pandemic

COVID-19 has affected people's perception of social robots. This is one of the findings of a study conducted by researchers at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada.

A 'social robot' is thus an autonomous robot that is made to interact with humans and other robots.

[Download the study.](#)

Three main findings:

1. More positive

People have generally become more positive about social robots during the corona crisis – regardless of whether they have felt lonely.

2. Increasing desire to buy

On the other hand, the degree of loneliness reinforces the urge to buy a social robot yourself.

3. The importance of humanity

A robot's ability to recognize people and show emotions is more important than that it is flawless.