

Ketchum London COVID-19 media intelligence report – Edition 8

Technology Triumphs

Welcome to the eighth edition of Ketchum London's COVID-19 media intelligence report. It's hard to believe that we're in week eight of lockdown. So much of what felt 'unfamiliar' about being in this unusual situation has started to feel more familiar as we adjust our home and work lives in these unprecedented times. This week we take a closer look at technology in its broadest sense. It's hard to deny the fact that technology has been a saving grace for so many people and businesses in lockdown so, coming from an already powerful position, what will COVID-19 do for the tech world once we emerge?



This week we heard Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, announce the launch of the [Test, Track and Trace](#) programme; a new app being trialled on the Isle of Wight that will allow the NHS to track who someone has been in contact with after testing positive for COVID-19. It's another example of the way in which technology and the digital community have rallied to innovate tools designed to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and facilitate better treatments.

[The Daily Telegraph](#) ran a fascinating article this week in which it said that “Big Tech is likely to emerge from the pandemic richer, more powerful and more dominant than ever.” They featured a quote from Eric Schmidt, the long-serving former Google boss, who said that coronavirus should make us more “grateful” to tech giants adding: “imagine having the same reality of this pandemic without these tools...The benefit of these corporations, which we love to malign... is profound and I hope people will remember that when this thing is finally over.” Time will certainly tell...

Not everyone holds this opinion. Whilst many people have reappraised their relationships with the screens in their lives, it is hard to say whether consumers will abandon new tech-led experiences in favour of more physical interactions once the lockdown subsides. Either way, we don't think a post-COVID era will be zoom-less. Virtual singing lessons, cooking masterclasses and digital movie premieres will likely prevail to some degree as new consumer behaviours emerge.

So, what are the four strategic client takeaways for this week?

The World Economic Forum shared an interesting [post](#) last week about technology trends we should watch during (and arguably after) the pandemic. Some of these are things businesses should be thinking about when they consider ways technology can help (re)build their products and service propositions. Here are four we wanted to spotlight:

- **Will COVID-19 see an acceleration in drone delivery technologies?** We have heard this week already that a drone business in Ireland partnered with Ireland's health authority to deliver prescriptions to people self-isolating. Companies like Amazon have been very vocal on this topic but when will we see regulation match up to the technology to make drone deliveries more commonplace? What health and safety protocols will need to be assessed? Our guess is that we may see an acceleration in this as social distancing and online shopping habits prevail.
- In the UK, the Government has been urging people to seek out NHS help for non-COVID related issues as A&E admissions plummet by a third. This has given rise to telehealth services – everything from wearable personal Internet of Things (IoT) devices to chatbot-based services and remote GP access. The truth is, telemedicine software has been around in Europe for years, with the likes of Britain's Babylon, Germany's Ada and Sweden's Kry providing digital health services across the continent. **If your brand is in the healthcare space, consider ways to engage with consumers more directly through these platforms.**
- If we come to rely more on technology to do some of the jobs that might become more difficult for human beings - due to things like social distancing rules - how will that lead to a reshaping of the skills required to service these new 'roles' and innovations? COVID-19 provided a strong push to rollout the usage of robots and research on robotics. Will we see further acceleration here? If so, **consider ways in which your brand can get in on the action as robots break out of niche and into the mainstream.**
- What about 5G? Mast vandalisation aside, 5G will surely be critical as all of the technologies we have come to depend on during lockdown will rely on a stable, high-speed affordable internet connection. From powering remote working to ensuring remote medical consultations can happen, access to stable internet services has been tested. So, as 5G networks expand globally, there will be a need to ensure everyone can access it, and at a fair price. **It is worth brands thinking about the role they can play in the 5G narrative to bring new consumer propositions to life at a time when the appetite is perhaps already there.**

Tech for good

HEALTH DATA

Technology firms have really stepped up in the way they've been able to help health officials share accurate information and provide academic researchers with massive data sets to help predict the spread of the virus or forecast its impact on hospitals. Here are some recent examples we wanted to share:

- [Amazon, Microsoft, Palantir](#) and London-based Faculty AI Data are on hand to help the NHS predict where ventilators, hospital beds, and medical staff will be most in need by analysing NHS 111 telephone data
- [Google's](#) foray into public health came with the release of its COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports. The reports use data from people who have opted in to storing their location history with Google to help illustrate the degree to which people are adhering to government lockdown instructions
- [Verizon Media](#) unveiled three new resources for developers and data teams to help them better organise and understand publicly available COVID-19 data. The resources – a dataset, API, and dashboard that help engineers analyse and navigate COVID-19 data – are powered by the Yahoo Knowledge Graph
- Former Microsoft CEO, [Bill Gates](#), weighed in on his GatesNotes site with a lengthy description of what he sees is needed to fight the pandemic, arguing that innovation will be critical to stemming the damage from COVID-19



GADGETS

There have been a flurry of COVID-19 inspired innovations that have come to the fore, designed to help the healthcare system and also consumers manage healthcare and daily life in a new era. From hygienic ways to open doors, to masks and ventilators, the technology industry has been supporting governments and health systems in several ways. Here are some of our hot picks:

- London-based designer, Steve Brooks, has invented the '[hygienehook](#),' a new door-opening device small enough to fit in a pocket and made from easy-to-clean, non-porous material. He has already had interest from NHS Wales
- [Virustatic Shield](#) has filed a patent for a snood mask with an antiviral coating – it plans to scale up production to a million a week and reserve part of their stock for the NHS
- Rhys Thomas in Wales went straight to the heart of global health concerns when he devised a "simple and robust" [basic ventilator](#) designed to help patients breathe – and which also kills COVID-19. Although it won't replace an ICU ventilator, he says 'the majority of patients won't need intensive care if they are treated with this ventilator first'
- A drone company that had to abandon its fast-food delivery tests has partnered with Ireland's health authority to deliver prescriptions instead. [Manna Aero](#) is working with the Health Service Executive to deliver medicines and other essential supplies to vulnerable people in the small rural town of Moneygall

BUSINESS / TECH

One of the biggest changes ushered in by COVID-19 has been the flick to remote working. But not only that...technology companies big and small have been coming up with interesting ways to use their tech for good as well as introduce hardware and software solutions that help businesses remain productive. Here are some examples:

- [Salesforce](#) on Monday unveiled a website – [Work.com](#) – it says can help guide businesses as they look to return from work-at-home orders and deal with disruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak
- [Facebook](#) is installing thousands of Portals in nursing homes in the UK. The goal is to stave off loneliness since visits have been put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic
- [Cisco](#) has created two new programs to help healthcare organisations quickly get networking equipment for free: a "Pandemic Equipment Brokerage" and a "Healthcare Rapid Response Network Bundle." The brokerage is designed to match companies looking to donate unused wireless equipment with healthcare facilities that may need it
- [YouTube](#) said it will move to reduce the number of conspiracy theory videos linking 5G technology and COVID-19 that it recommends to users. The news comes after four attacks were recorded on phone masts within 24 hours in Britain

Brands taking action

ENTERTAINMENT

- [Coronation Street](#) characters will be seen dealing with life during the coronavirus pandemic in storylines when filming resumes, its producer has said
- [TikTok](#) continues to offer home entertainment during lockdown, with performers making more money via the social platform rather than previously performing live. TikTok U.S. general manager is quoted in Los Angeles Times how the user numbers and engagement numbers are up
- [Dolby](#) promotes home technology by providing tips on creating the best home entertainment set-up, seen on Techaeris

BEAUTY

- [Beauty brand Avon](#) has made a commitment to support frontline workers and victims of abuse during the pandemic. It is sending care packages to NHS staff and has dedicated resources to creating hand sanitiser, a proportion of which will be ring-fenced for health workers and Avon's own representatives. The rest will be for sale, with £150,000 of the profits going to the domestic-abuse charity Refuge
- [The Body Shop](#) has created the #IsolatedNotAlone campaign with its partner No More (a domestic violence and sexual assault charity). The aim is to raise awareness of domestic abuse during isolation
- [Germaine de Capuccini](#) has created Treat Yourself Kits for clients to maintain their skin health at home, with the company sending them out directly, allowing salons to retail them
- [Sea Magik and Spa Find](#) has launched the Retail Revenue Scheme for its trade accounts. The code gives the salon's clients 10% off all products on seamagik.com and the salon receives 20% commission on all sales
- [Unilever](#) to donate 500,000 personal care packages to frontline staff. The Soothe & Care Pack will feature products from brands including Vaseline, Dove, Radox and Simple

FASHION

- [Anya Hindmarch](#) has pledged to make 3,000 hospital gowns for the Royal Marsden, a world-leading cancer centre. Each gown is washable and reusable, meaning less landfill. You can sponsor a gown for £17 via the designer's personal Instagram page [@anyahindmarchpersonal](#)
- [Aspinal of London](#) has launched a social media campaign titled #AspinalHeroes. Each week it will reward 100 "heroes" with a surprise personalised gift to acknowledge their effort
- [Boden](#) has joined forces with the NHS charity Helpforce to donate clothes to those who need them, from nightwear for NHS workers who can't return home at the end of their shift.

SPORT, FITNESS AND WELLBEING

- [Fitbit](#) is planning to turn its fitness bands into social distancing and coronavirus symptom trackers, in a move that could help it get a controversial \$2.1bn Google deal over the line. Fitbit is currently working with Stanford University and Scripps Research Institute to collect user data to track the spread of COVID-19
- [Peloton](#) enjoys stay-at-home fitness boom as it increased its forecasts, telling investors that lockdown orders had prompted hordes of people to exercise at home on the internet-connected bikes it pioneered
- [Seen On Screen](#) has been making waves offering dancers of all levels the chance to learn routines inspired by stars including Beyoncé, Rihanna and Britney Spears. The dance studio is providing its followers with the opportunity to learn the routines at home by following live-streamed tutorials on its School of SOS Instagram page and on video chat platform Zoom
- Exercise company [Move It or Lose It](#), which caters for older adults, is offering live workout sessions on its Facebook page. The company has also created a support pack for older people providing guidance on how they can keep exercising at home

FOOD

- [Uber Eats](#) ceases operation in multiple countries to adapt to COVID-19
- [Asda](#) to launch 'largest' food box for vulnerable customers. The boxes will be priced at £30 and be available via a new website, with Asda saying it was keen to avoid adding pressure to its existing grocery home shopping site
- [Craft brewers](#) turn to mini keg and cask delivery to help stay afloat during lockdown

- [Princes](#) launches DTC food box for coronavirus key workers. The canned food giant is making its £10 'Hero Pack' available to holders of the Blue Light discount card
- Virtual supermarkets report growth in popularity as brands like Amazon Grocery and Ocado have demonstrated an increase in users. A blog on [Retail Technology Innovation Hub](#) outlines how digitisation could help if old-fashioned supermarket shopping continues

TRAVEL

- [Airbnb](#) has announced plans to cut 25% of its workforce and is forecasting that revenue for 2020 will be half the \$4.8bn generated in 2019. However, the company has also noticed a rise in bookings in a number of European countries, which it sees as a signal that people are starting to make holiday plans as coronavirus restrictions are gradually eased
- [Heathrow Airport](#) is to trial temperature screening technology to monitor people for signs of coronavirus. The thermal screening technology will initially be introduced at Terminal 2 and will be expanded to other areas if the trial goes well
- [Transport for London](#) is to transform main roads and centres across the capital to create safe spaces for a massive increase in pedestrians and cyclists. They predict a 10-fold increase in cyclist commuters and five times more pedestrians walking to work as the public seek to avoid crowded public transport systems

TECHNOLOGY

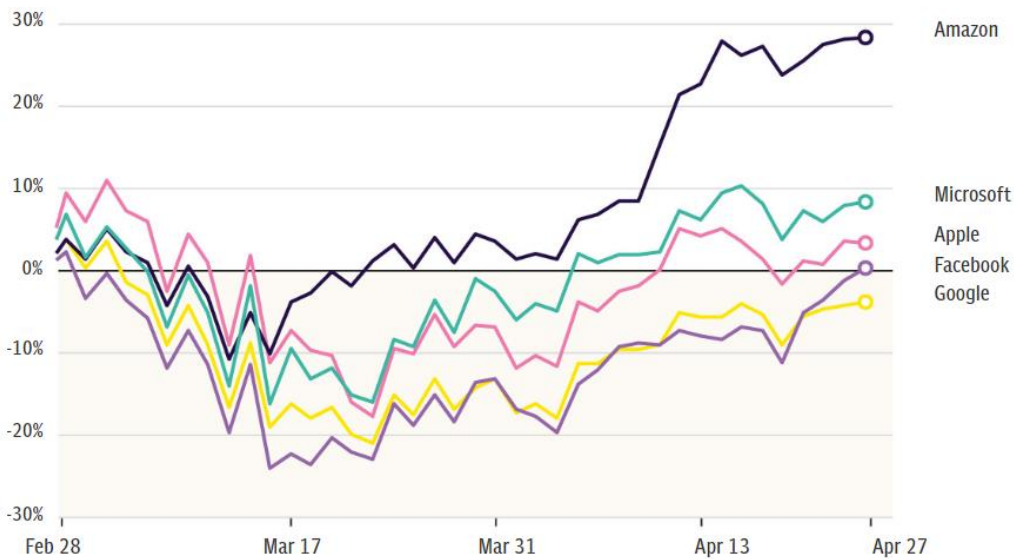
- [Zoom](#) is adding new security features to its videoconferencing platform to address the problem of Zoombombing, whereby video calls are hijacked and disrupted by third parties
- [Twitter](#) is responding to conspiracy theories linking the spread of coronavirus to mobile phone technology by directing users looking for '5G' to government-verified information stressing that there is no link between 5G and COVID-19
- [Klarna](#), the global payment provider, pledged to donate £1, \$1 or €1 to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for every Klarna transaction placed at Asos globally on 29 April



Useful charts

How Big Tech has coped with coronavirus

Amazon's stock has soared in recent weeks

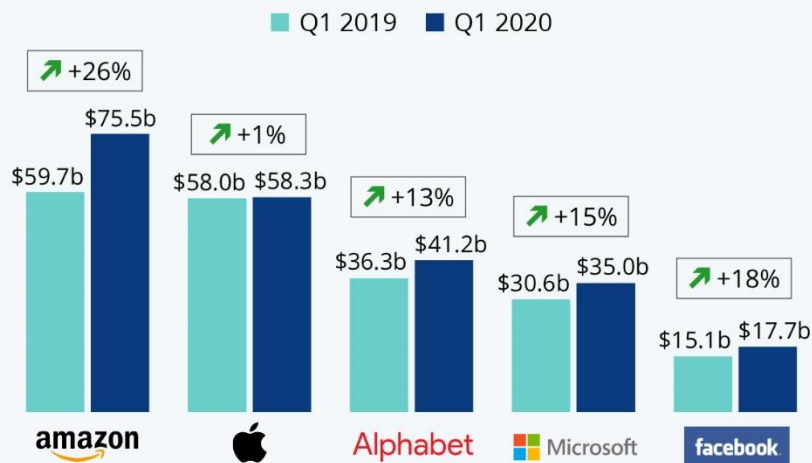


SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

[Source: [The Daily Telegraph](#)]

Tech Giants Shrug Off COVID-19 Crisis in Q1

Revenue of selected tech companies in the first three months of 2020 vs. 2019



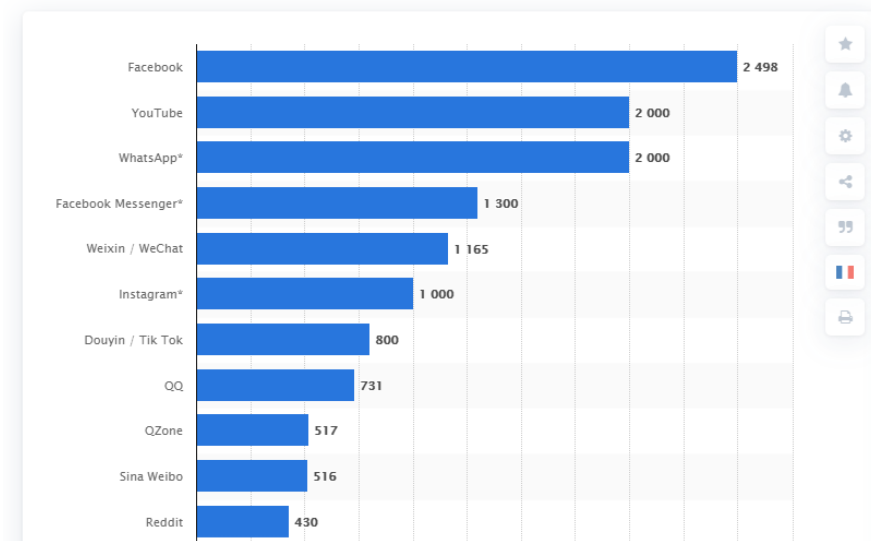
Source: Company filings



statista

[Source: [Statista](#)]

Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2020, ranked by number of active users (in millions)



[Source: [Statista](#)]

Media insights on key verticals

NATIONAL NEWS

COVID-19 continues to dominate the media landscape, although it might not be directly mentioned within headlines, most thematic in the national news pages relate to the outbreak.

- [The Independent](#) has a well-balanced news page. When it comes to tech, they have published articles relating to the very-talked about [NHS coronavirus app](#), alongside cyberattacks at NHS hospitals. The publication is still reporting on product news such as the release of [Apple's new Macbook Pro](#)
- Tech journalists at the [Evening Standard](#) have stories relating to [misinformation spread during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). The tech pages are heavily dominated by gaming reviews and gadgets, this can be correlated to a rise in interest in gaming due to lockdown
- [Metro](#) has also reported on the [controversial NHS app](#) and has highlighted its privacy fears. Mimicking The Independent, Apple's latest release is also found in its front page alongside many stories on virtual meeting apps, such as Zoom and the newly launched Google Meet
- Similar to the above, the BBC has also focused on the [NHS coronavirus-tracing app](#). Alongside the aforementioned, the BBC also has a couple of gaming-focused articles within its tech page as it reports that the [video game industry has gotten a boost](#).
 - As mentioned on previous reports, City AM is now focusing on publishing digital content. With that said, we were informed that our key contact in the publication got furloughed. As a result, the consumer-focused tech pages on [cityam.com](#) have remained dormant. The [latest article published](#) went live at the end of March and revolved stuck to the gaming thematic

CONSUMER LIFESTYLE AND BEAUTY

This week in consumer lifestyle, press focus on:

- As summer approaches, outdoor products dominate the pages of lifestyle publications

- Gardening advice and tips can be found across leading lifestyle publications such as [Real Homes](#) and [Good Housekeeping](#)
- [Marie Claire UK](#) continues to release its [COVID-19 Global Diaries series](#). The series brings its readers stories from around the world demonstrating how the virus is affecting women globally
- Thanks to our ongoing conversations with [Trusted Reviews](#), David Ludlow- author at the website- shared that they have witnessed an “*uplift in the likes of cleaning products, personal care, gaming and that kind of thing. I’ve been holding off putting up reviews that probably don’t make so much sense, such as a cameras to keep an eye on your pets when you’re out...*”
- [Techerati](#) reports how technology can revolutionise your at-home workout. Listing wearables, fitness apps, live streaming workout classes and virtual reality as ways of keeping fit at home incredibly easy
- [Wired](#) questions why fitness trackers can’t diagnose Coronavirus. The article calls out brands such as Apple who claim the Apple Watch could combat coronavirus, whereas sensors are not precise enough to monitor accurate for medical use
- [BBC News](#) took a look at the evolution of home fitness. After looking at the history of the fitness industry, the article analyses the different fitness ‘trends’ during lockdown and how everyone started tuning into fitness for heart and health situations. Without technology such as Zoom, online classes could not have taken place
- Home fitness start-ups funding effort were helped by COVID-19, such as Every Mother, reported on [techcrunch](#)

TRAVEL

Insights from Lisa Minot Webinar, Travel Editor at The Sun

Travel content focus

Lisa voiced that she is very receptive to receiving content at the moment. She used to receive 5,00 emails a week and complain about the volume, but now she is willing those emails to come back! Without the regular news from PRs, her and the team are having to think outside the box.

- **Aspirational/bucket list content:** Lisa explained that people still want to dream of travel plans. Some of the focus for her current content is on bucket list and really aspirational travel, coupled with covering consumer issues around refunds etc
- **Image/video led content:** Following a request to readers, they are receiving loads of great images from past holidays. There is no monetary incentive, but the volume of entries highlights that people are keen to get away again and reminisce about great times away. Lisa is always keen to feature quirky picture stories – often pitches don’t come with amazing visuals, but she explains that these are really key. Videos are also well received - for example The Sun travel team just did a piece on “10 incredible flights” and included x2 videos as part of that
- **Trend lend content:** Lisa explained that this is really key. Now is the time PRs can start pitching developments for 2021 travel stories. New hotels, general trends re. increases or decreases for searches for certain destinations. Additionally, info from post offices or banks on currencies to help them establish where people are still hoping to travel to is welcomed
- **Forward looking travel:** Consumers want to know when and where they can go away, so there is a real appetite for these type of stories at the moment. Additionally, stories around countries which have been affected the least by COVID-19 have been getting the most hits on The Sun’s website
- **Press trips / nostalgia:** The Sun aren’t currently featuring any previous branded press trips (deemed as unfair to publish at the moment, given brands have invested time and money into these and no one is going anywhere). In their place, Sun journalists have been sharing amazing photos and personal travel tales, which feeds in to the “nostalgia” theme that has continued to emerge over the last few weeks

- **Media fatigue:** Lisa highlighted that she is currently receiving a lot of content about virtual travel, which is great, but she needs something new. Similarly, although the pro-bono stories are lovely as many travel brands are helping during this crisis, given that they are all very similar this doesn't necessarily constitute as "news" for her anymore
- **Adapting regular columns:** The team have changed their usual weekend columns to: "Take 3" on Saturday, which is essentially three great treehouses, three great apartments etc (each having a Budget, Bargain and Blowout option). On Sunday they have "Sofa escapes" which explores how readers can experience destinations virtually, via books and films etc. May be opportunities for us to explore here

Trends & Predictions

Some of the trends Lisa expects to see following COVID-19 are:

- **Inter-generational travel:** Given that people will want quality time with their whole family
- **Activity travel:** Given that we have been cooped up and may want a health kick after this is over
- **Staycations:** Lisa thinks this will be the summer of the staycation given people are going to want to stay closer to home. There is less risk involved and some countries won't be allowing tourists in for some time. She touched upon how Australia are talking about a ban on visitors until next year, although in contrast countries like Greece have been quite the opposite in hoping to welcome visitors as soon as they feasibly can
- **Altruistic travel and sustainable travel:** Lisa expects this topic will continue to be high on the agenda, even with The Sun's audience. She also highlighted that people will likely be looking at ways they can support local communities after the crisis with travel
- **Domestic vs international travel:** Lisa said that although domestic travel will dominate this summer, with local travel coming back first, people will still be looking at venturing further afield in the future and their readers included, will still want to go on big international trips. For instance, the USA has been voted most popular holiday destination for two years in a row by The Sun readers

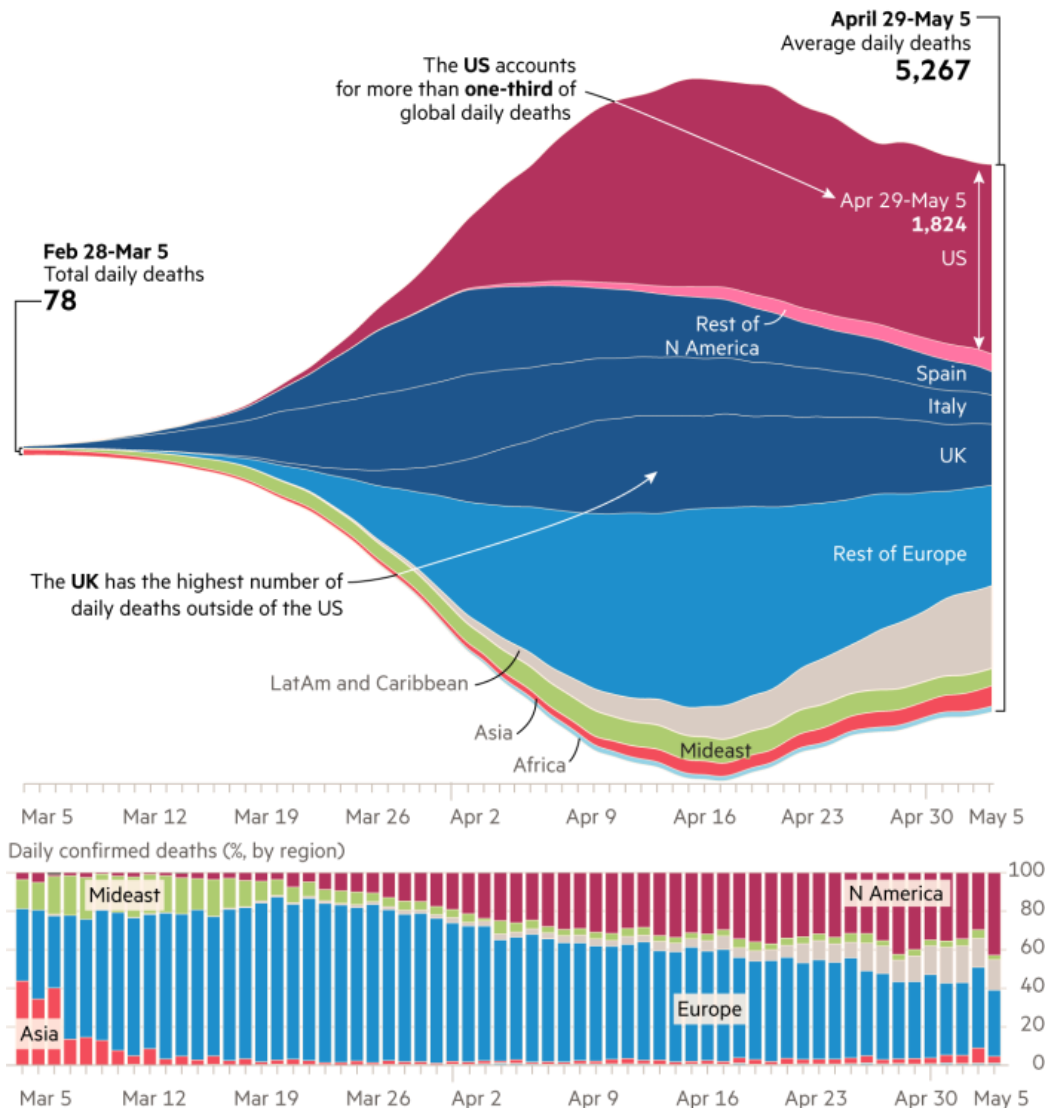
Core Travel Insights/ Take outs

- **Current media impact:** Travel media is still being impacted during this time with journalists continuing to directly inform us that their travel content is either reduced or on pause indefinitely. Recent direct feedback includes:
 - **Yahoo!**: "Currently the majority of our travel content is paused, but I will let you know when we start to re-introduce it"
 - **Trinity Mirror:** "We are holding off branded travel content at the moment, as so many people are having trouble getting money back from cancelled flights, and future travel is still very much up in the air."
- **Negative brand coverage:** Brands that appear to not be following or supporting government advice continue to be scrutinised/condemned by the media. The most recent example includes Expedia, who has been slammed for continuing to accept hotel bookings in Edinburgh during the lockdown. This condemnation has once spearheaded by MP Ian Blackford. ([Edinburgh Evening News: 'It beggars belief' Expedia slammed for keeping Edinburgh hotel bookings open](#); [Scotsman: Expedia slammed by Scottish MPs for keeping holiday hotel bookings open](#))
- **Reader led content:** Publications are searching for alternate travel content, which includes calling upon their readers to provide them with material, such as images from their previous holidays and/or written travel tales. ([The Guardian: Tell us about your happy place: readers' travel tips](#); [The Times: Gallery: the best of our readers' postcards](#))
- **Data stories:** Articles which include data/insights on consumer search behaviour are continuing to appear, which reflects the media appetite for details on travel trends and patterns. This type of content opens up opportunities for brand led content/research stories. ([Mail Online: The most popular holiday destinations for Zoom background pictures have been revealed - and travel firms have made jaw-dropping photos from their vaults available for downloading](#); [Express Online: UK travel: Staycations set for a boom after lockdown as Britons crave domestic holidays](#))

International Updates

The global Covid-19 death toll is finally easing

Daily deaths of patients diagnosed with coronavirus (7-day rolling average)



FT graphic: Steven Bernard / @sdbernard
Source: FT analysis of ECDC and Covid Tracking Project data
© FT

Stories making the news around the world [Source: Kantar]

NORTH AMERICA

- President Trump has backtracked on plans [to disband the White House coronavirus taskforce](#) after he was heavily criticised for the move. He had publicly discussed scrapping the group but tweeted yesterday that it would continue “indefinitely” and that it was doing a “fantastic job”

EUROPE

- The European Commission has warned that [the eurozone is facing a ‘recession of historic proportions’](#), with the economy set to contract by 7.7% in 2020. Even though the EC expects an economic rebound of 6.3% in 2021, it has warned that it will be ‘unevenly felt’ across the continent, with Germany expected to be in a much healthier position than the likes of Italy or Greece

- [Cases of the coronavirus in Russia have hit 165,929 with the total number of fatalities at 1,537](#). The rate of death has fallen in recent days and remains much lower than many other countries. Russia believes the lower rate is due to the virus hitting the country later than the rest of the world, which gave authorities more time to prepare although critics have cast doubt on the numbers
- UK Prime Minister [Boris Johnson has pledged to reach 200,000 coronavirus tests per day by the end of May](#), ‘and then go even higher’. Speaking at Prime Minister’s Questions, Johnson also confirmed he would set out plans for lifting coronavirus lockdown measures on Sunday, with some action to be taken as early as Monday
- The German government has given the go-ahead for the Bundesliga to resume on 22 May, but only after all top-flight clubs have completed a 14-day period of isolation. [Matches will be played behind closed doors](#)
- People in Britain are more scared of coronavirus than those in other countries because they care more about their fellow citizens, the first international study into fear of the disease has concluded. The research carried out by a team from the [University of Cambridge](#) found that a British sense of social responsibility was fuelling the highest levels of concerns over the risk posed by COVID-19

ASIA

- [High school students in Wuhan are returning to classes for the first time](#) since the outbreak of coronavirus and will begin studying for exams in summer. The return applies to students in grades 9 and 12, while junior and middle school students are yet to return. In order to ensure safety, all students will take a coronavirus test, class sizes will be reduced and arrival times will be staggered
- [Covid-19 cases in India are confirmed at 49,391 as the death toll reached 1,694](#). Mumbai is the worst affected region with nearly 10,000 cases of the virus. Union health minister Harsh Vardhan hoped “behavioural changes” brought about by the virus could become the “new normal” after the pandemic abates
- Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has [extended the country’s state of emergency to 31 May](#), which he says will give the country time to ‘prepare for the next step’. Abe added that the state of emergency could be lifted sooner in some areas if an expert assessment concludes that this is possible. Japan has confirmed over 15,000 coronavirus cases with around 550 deaths

SOUTH AMERICA

- As the world grapples with the COVID-19 crisis, [deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon rose more than 50% in the first three months of 2020](#) compared to the same three-month period last year. There are concerns the scaling back of enforcement measures will leave its indigenous tribes at risk of being infected by coronavirus, which could be rapidly passed throughout an entire tribe