

RESEARCH

Americans staying positive despite the hard times: report

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U.S. consumers see window of hope despite ongoing hardship over COVID-19 lockdowns. Image credit: Ipsos

By DIANNA DILWORTH

Most U.S. consumers are trying to make the best of their situation during lockdowns and are hopeful that life will return to normal this summer.

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Seventy percent of Americans said they have reached out to a friend, neighbor or loved one to help during the crisis, according to a new report from market research firm Ipsos' North America unit Omnibus called "Hope Shines in Dark Times."

"People aren't necessarily feeling more positive these days, but they are finding ways to keep their spirits up during these uncertain times," said Chris Jackson, senior vice president of public affairs and head of public polling at Ipsos, Washington.

51%	More time at home
43%	Cleaning/decluttering
42%	More time with family
33%	Staying in pajamas, stretchy pants all day
32%	More time reading or on hobbies
32%	Just sense of the world slowing down
32%	More time with pets
30%	Eating/cooking/ordering out
29%	Less worry about looks (hair, makeup, clothes)

How consumers are spending their time in lockdown. Image courtesy of Ipsos

Looking on the bright side

Most Americans are trying to find the positive during the global pandemic and economic crisis.

Ninety-three percent of consumers say they can think of something positive they have personally enjoyed or experienced during the coronavirus outbreak.

During the crisis, Americans said they are experiencing more positive qualities, such as people reaching out to one another versus negative traits such as hoarding supplies. Most have seen both.

More than half (57 percent) of consumers report seeing both negative and positive qualities equally.

Twenty-six percent of people reported experiencing more positive qualities, while 17 percent of consumers said they are seeing more negative qualities, per the report.

While they are at home, 43 percent of consumers said they are cleaning and decluttering their homes, 42 percent are spending more time with family and 33 percent are staying in their pajamas or comfort clothing all day.

"Right now, people are avoiding socializing outside of the home, eschewing activities like going out to eat," Mr. Jackson said.

"Whether that slowdown of socializing outside the home continues when lockdowns are lifted and how the structure of those activities may change is not yet clear," he said.

"We are tracking how behaviors are evolving along with COVID-19, and we are expecting some of these behaviors to change while others stay."



How families are spending their days in coronavirus lockdown. Image courtesy of Ipsos

American family life

As American families are stuck at home together, parents have had to balance homeschooling with their own working from home efforts, [according to the report](#).

Most families are adhering to a regular schedule to keep their kids on track.

The most popular activity was homeschooling (44 percent), followed by getting outside (43 percent), exercising (38 percent) and FaceTiming with friends/family (28 percent).



What people are excited to do after coronavirus lockdown. Image courtesy of Ipsos

Future plans

While it is difficult to read the future, almost half of Americans think that the crisis will wind down in May (25 percent) or June (24 percent).

Ninety-one percent of people expect a complete return to normalcy.

Americans are looking forward to going back to work, eating out at a restaurant, going on vacation, going to a movie and watching/attending a sports event.

"Given the unprecedented nature of both the public health crisis and the subsequent shock to the economy, we can't say for sure how lifting lockdowns will impact the economy," Mr. Jackson said.

That being said, Americans seem eager to resume some of the consumer activities they engaged in before coronavirus.

Forty-six percent of people look forward to eating out at restaurants and about a fifth (19 percent) are look forward to traveling, while only 11 percent are looking forward to going to the movies.

The economy will determine whether or not consumers will return to purchasing luxury goods.

Based on Ipsos research during the Great Recession, [luxury spending was initially slow to stop and slow to start up again](#) once the economy started to recover.

"Some sectors were harder hit than others, such as international travel, while other saw less of a downturn, such as home decorating and remodeling," Mr. Jackson said.

"Still, the current situation is unprecedented in modern American history, and it is crucial for brands to be connecting with their customers to gauge how their spending intentions shift with the evolving situation," he said.

[Please click here to access the PDF of Ipsos' "Hope Shines in Dark Times" report](#)

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