**How Covid Has Changed Us As Consumers**



The coronavirus pandemic has completely altered the world and its functioning. It has proved costly to the global economy and various businesses, who are struggling to make their ends meet. Businesses have no choice but to transform the way they run according to the present circumstances. This is largely due to the change in consumer behaviour which is forcing businesses globally to adopt new practices. It is imperative to study consumer behaviour for assessing the current condition of the market and developing strategies with the aim of consumer satisfaction in such uncertain times.

According to a research by [Capgemini](https://www.capgemini.com/in-en/research/the-consumer-and-covid-19/), the general trend that has been observed throughout the pandemic is that more and more consumers are shifting towards online shopping. Out of 11,000 consumers, 59% had high dependence on physical retail stores before the pandemic which has now reduced to just 24%, indicating the shift towards online shopping. Moreover, according to this research, interaction with online channels is also predicted to rise from 30 to 37%. Nonetheless, even after the cessation of the pandemic, 77% of the consumers out of the sample size say they will be more cautious about hygiene and cleanliness.

Hence, for consumers still relying on retail stores, the concern for sanitation and cleanliness of the stores will be of high priority. Also, the inclination towards ‘touch less last mile delivery’ among consumers has also been on the rise. For businesses, partnering with delivery platforms to ensure quick and convenient delivery can turn out to be advantageous.

Besides, as more and more consumers clear their shelves to make space for essential items, the buffer stock of essential items will play a crucial role in the functioning of businesses. For instance, due to rising demand for food, Unilever has shifted its focus on larger SKU items such as large jars of eatables instead of small containers. Local businesses are bound to grow significantly as 54% of the consumers say they will switch to local/regional products.

It is quite evident that businesses will change as per the behaviour of the consumers who, in the midst of this pandemic are switching to online mediums. Although as the crises faints, retail stores will re-emerge but consumers would ultimately prefer those stores which are conspicuously sanitized and cleaned.

Businesses must drive shifts in the long term behaviour and set a new normal especially for the young consumers who are likely to develop new habits easily than old consumers. This new normal should aim to integrate their products with the needs of the consumers in a post coronavirus world. As per a report by [McKinsey](https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/a-global-view-of-how-consumer-behavior-is-changing-amid-covid-19), more and more product categories will eventually fall under ecommerce and for business to thrive in such circumstances, it is best to align their strategies as per the changing attitudes of the consumer behaviour. The report also states that overtime, consumers might abandon loyalty towards one brand and switch to others due to non-availability of desired products or availability of products but through undesired channels.

It is also witnessed that more and more consumers (especially in India) are moving towards less expensive products due to rising uncertainty regarding income and employment. A conspicuous change that can be observed is that more consumers are subscribing to online services like e-learning, streaming, etc. This has also resulted in adequate usage of the digital infrastructure. There is a possibility that once more consumers switch to online platforms they will not want to go back even after the pandemic settles.

Ever since the coronavirus pandemic, consumers have become more conscious of their actions as buyers and the changes in their behavior may extend even beyond the pandemic itself. Thus, the post Covid consumer will be much more aware and open to change than ever.