



COVID-19: the CX Impact

Executive Summary

The disruption COVID-19 has created would have been unthinkable, even several months ago. It's forcibly changing consumer behavior and buying habits, causing companies to totally reimagine their traditional approach to work and has led governments around the globe to introduce extraordinary measures to protect their people, their economies and their countries.

However, even in the midst of a pandemic, consumers are focused on and value emotional connection. They are seeking out brands that understand and can cater to their needs and are actively avoiding those that are judged to have fallen short.

As the immediate threat of coronavirus begins to recede, and as our economies begin to return to a semblance of normality, the businesses that prioritize customer experience management will be the ones that thrive, rather than survive in the new normal.

Customer behavior and expectations have always been and will continue to evolve and change.

Coronavirus may have moved the goalposts again, but with the findings of our COVID-19: the CX Impact study, forward-thinking brands have a playbook to help guide their investments and develop their customer-centric strategies.

Key findings:

- **The COVID-19 pandemic has forced consumers online.** Consumers switching to online are recognizing the convenience, speed and ease of use online offers. 76% of consumers say they have moved to the web to shop for items they would typically have purchased in person. 57% of those intend to continue shopping online for those items once the pandemic ends.
- **Consumers will continue purchasing online after the pandemic ends, but only if the experience remains faster, more convenient and offers wider variety.** Both brick-and-mortar and online brands should consider how they will meet these new expectations post-COVID-19 in order to retain new customers or win back those who have experienced the benefits of online.
- **Consumer acceptance and understanding of the challenges businesses face as they respond to COVID-19 will not continue indefinitely.** Brands must act now to build resiliency into their CX, or risk customers choosing to do their business elsewhere.
- **Consumers are increasingly looking to social media as a preferred communication method.** While this remains an emerging channel, the pandemic is encouraging more consumers to use social channels to ask brand questions. 17% of U.S. and 13% of U.K. Gen Z respondents want to use social media to converse with organizations. Brands must ensure they build an omnichannel experience with consistent and timely responses across all channels.
- **Millennial and Gen Z consumers are especially looking for self-service solutions.** For 35% of all consumers (and 42% of Gen Z and millennials), being able to find an answer to a question or resolve an issue for themselves when they encounter a problem with a product or service is a crucial element of the customer experience. Brands should act now to put these solutions in place, leveraging the opportunity to both deflect calls to more cost-efficient channels and drive customer satisfaction.



Learn More

The COVID-19: the CX Impact white paper is available to download at [sitel.group/2020_cximpact_study](https://www.sitel.group/2020_cximpact_study)

For a presentation of the research findings and analysis of how Sitel Group could help your brand to deliver a best-in-class post-COVID experience, contact us at hello@sitel.com.

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