

INCREASINGLY CONCERNED AUSSIES ARE CHOOSING TRUSTED BRANDS DELIVERING SAFETY AND VALUE DURING COVID-19

45% of Aussies are now overwhelmingly concerned about COVID-19 impacting their life compared to just 16% two weeks ago

Australians are increasingly overwhelmed and concerned about their financial security as new restrictions to combat Covid-19 threaten jobs and income. Based on a two-wave survey of 1,000 Australians between 6-9 March and 20-23 March 2020, Kantar insights reveal that due to the rapidly changing situation, 45% of Aussies are now overwhelmingly concerned about COVID-19 impacting their life compared to just 16% two weeks ago.

64% of Aussies are worried that the coronavirus crisis will be worse than an economic recession

Just a fortnight ago, only 19% of Aussies felt coronavirus would descend into a recession, but government shutdown measures and rising unemployment has now tripled the concern. To address these worries, 6 in 10 people are proactively looking for support to plan their financial future and security and overwhelmingly want affordable pricing, deals and promotions from their banking and insurance providers.

45% of Aussies are also concerned about how coronavirus will impact their daily life

As a nation, Australians are finally beginning to get the message around the critical importance of social distancing measures and other protocols designed to reduce their exposure risk. From working at home to avoiding social activities, there have been major changes in the lives of Australians in the last fortnight. For example, 6 in 10 cancelled domestic travel plans while in a massive swing from 15% in early March, three-quarters reduced time in public places – before the government shutdowns were enacted.

Prior to closure of restaurants and cafés to in-house dining, 6 in 10 Aussies had already stopped eating out in the past fortnight (up from 9%) with 9% increased their use of meal delivery services. 63% of people socialised less (up from 7%) including 4 in 10 stopping social gatherings in their homes (up from just 3%). Cinema patronage also fell with 56% of people avoiding the movies (up from 10%) leading to 30% of people streaming more content (up from 5%).

Older Aussies are more positive about their health and wellbeing despite being more at risk

Overall 45% of Aussies are confident of being safe with precautions and good hygiene but those aged 55-69 are actually the most positive age group about their health in this crisis despite being more at risk. 51% believe they will stay safe with precautions and good hygiene and just 1 in 4 are worried about falling sick no matter what. Overall, more than 1 in 3 Australians reduced their exercise and sport over the last fortnight too (up from just 4%).

Safety, affordability and product availability are key with health and hygiene brands benefiting most

In the last fortnight, Aussies spent significantly more on personal hygiene with 3 in 10 filling their basket with these products more than just 18% a fortnight ago. Over 2 in 10 are buying more bathroom products (up from 14%), while well-publicised pantry stockpiling has driven 29% of people to buy more (up from 14%). Beauty and luxury goods are less appealing as Aussies conserve their cash. 15% reduced purchases of beauty products (up from 3%) and 1 in 4 spent less on luxury items (up from just 4%).

Online shopping is important – three-quarters of Aussies are still purchasing online at the same rate

Three-quarters of Aussies maintained their online shopping habits from a fortnight ago, with 1 in 10 increasing online shopping and 16% reducing it – likely driven by lack of product availability and/or closure of supermarket home delivery services. Social distancing and virus concerns has led to 1 in 3 people reducing their bricks and mortar shopping over the past 2 weeks but 14% actually increased in-store attendance driven by stockpiling tendencies.

Regardless of how they shop, Aussies overwhelmingly want brands to make grocery items safe and affordable with 8 in 10 demanding easier access. Most believe we won't run out of the essentials with 6 in 10 people confident we won't face scarcity – yet 16% still admitted to stockpiling.

Aussies are looking to trusted brands to provide them with safety and security in these testing times

"Aussies want to be assured that the brands they choose are transparent, trustworthy and in control of their supply chains," says Jonathan Sinton, Chief Commercial Officer, Kantar Australia.

"The way brands deal with the crisis now may also influence consumers in the future. People expect brands to deliver real value, act responsibly and do right by the community, including their employees. While these findings show the extent to which coronavirus is affecting people's daily lives, we recognise that it's a rapidly changing event. As the crisis intensifies and continues to spread, people's attitudes and concerns will change just as quickly," adds Sinton.

"Brands must consider current consumer concerns, how coronavirus will impact longer-term economic health and that the choices people make may continue to change well after the epidemic comes to an end. People will likewise look for trust in brands and their supply chains as they make choices as to what they may or may not buy. The upsurge in consumer behaviour change is forcing a rethink of resilient business strategies for short-term survival and on long-term strategy to ensure recovery and sustainable growth."

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