



ECLIPSE COMMUNICATIONS
TREND TALK
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DIGITAL FIRST

There is now a rapid and forced organisational transformation for various sectors around the world. In this edition of Trend Talk, we consider how digital transformation is being thrust onto the world during this time, and how brands need to adopt, adapt and produce in the new normal.

REMOTE WORK

Embracing the Fourth Industrial Revolution has been talked about for some time now and to a degree, many companies have made great strides into the digital sphere. For those lagging behind - the time is now. Workspaces are changing, and we need to be agile and adaptable to ensure that the brand promise is never compromised. We need to maintain a business unusual approach to the current situation and long after.



FUNDAMENTAL FOR SURVIVAL

Actual processes and communication methods are rapidly switching to a digital-first world. No longer is the impetus driven by an attempt to “unlock efficiencies” but in this crisis, it is mandatory through regulations, and being morally correct for employee safety. The companies that cannot make the switch will be left on the wrong side of the digital divide.

As you reflect on the rapid changes you have been forced to make, consider this from Harvard Business Review: “In a period of days, almost any process that could be rapidly digitised has been virtualised – think of video conferencing enabling a case discussion and telemedicine enabling remote diagnosis and treatment. We are seeing the digitisation of many ancient bastions of traditional business; the New York Stock Exchange just closed its trading floor and has moved to electronic trading.”

BUSINESS REACTION



VIRTUAL MEETINGS - Google Hangouts, Zoom and Microsoft teams, among others, ensure that colleagues and customers can meet at any time. There are learnings from across major industries and regions that highlight the importance of simple things such as etiquette and understanding the tech being used. This article from the World Economic Forum provides some food for thought: [Working from home? Here's how to run a really great virtual meeting.](#)



EMBRACING THE CLOUD - Data availability, security and compliance pushed companies to embrace cloud computing to manage field offices and store sites. Forbes writes: “It would be more challenging for executives to access real-time business sales information for their companies from anywhere in the world.” [The immense value the cloud unlocks during this pandemic.](#)



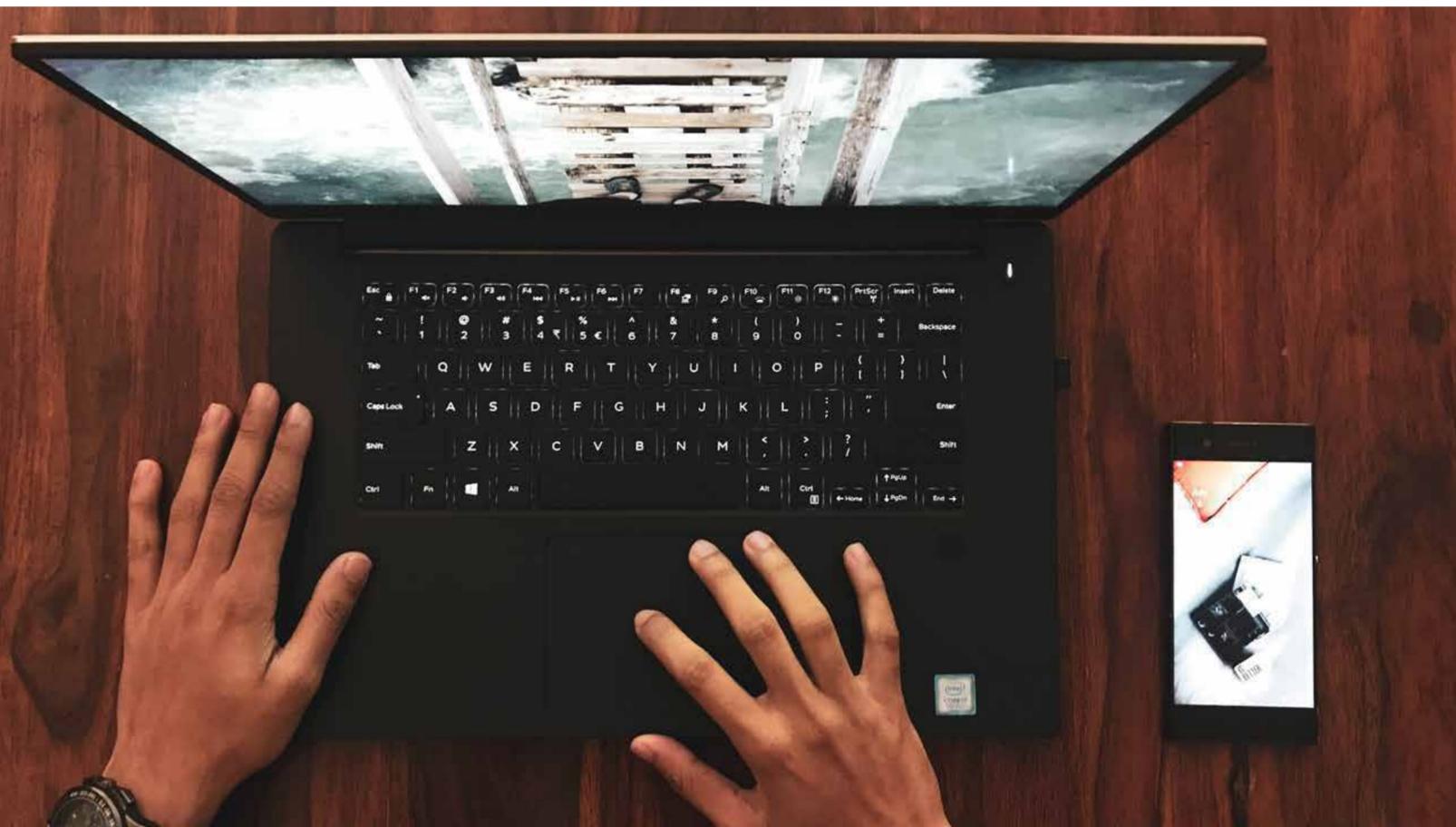
WEBINARS AND ONLINE EVENTS - Being able to bring events, webinars and roundtables into the homes of the larger target audience has shifted eventing into the digital age. [Be inspired about what is possible and what others are doing.](#)



E-LEARNING PLATFORMS - There is an influx of tools created to streamline and facilitate data-intensive processes such as learning, assessments, and training. LinkedIn has offered free courses aimed at building resilience through this difficult period. [Have a look.](#)



INTERNET OF THINGS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) - Artificial intelligence can be leveraged for a host of business processes, including marketing, offering lead generation for example. [Read this for a taste of what's possible.](#)



ONLINE EXPERIENCE



YouTube viewership is at a record high in the worst affected countries. Italy enjoyed 20x more content than previously consumed, while Germany came in at 11x. Global downloads with the phrase "at home" rose 50% during the period from 10 March to 15 March, while there was a 52% rise in "study with me" downloads globally, over the period.



Facebook says its messaging apps have seen a 50% usage surge in the worst-affected countries in the past month.



A GlobalWebIndex global report found that 95% of consumers are absorbing in-home media; where 50% are watching more streaming services, 45% are using messaging apps and 34% are devoting time to social media.



Research firm Omdia reports that total internet hits are estimated to have surged between 50% and 70%, while streaming has increased by 12% since the shutdown.



SO WHAT THEN?

The reality of a captive online audience presents opportunities to build long-term resilience by thinking with a digital-first mindset. These include:

- Participating in the innovative use of social media to build brand equity - trust is priceless
- An investment in search engine optimisation - you want the captive audience to find you
- A reflection on crisis frameworks - if something goes wrong, have a plan
- An appropriate investment in digital technologies with an eye on the future - for internal processes as well as external communication and events
- Using this time to reflect and invest in digital-first strategies will stand you in good stead for when the crisis passes - which it will.

To brainstorm ideas on how to position your brand communication, take your events into the digital world, build innovative social media campaigns or be more prepared for issues/crises, don't hesitate to email us on info@eclipsepr.co.za

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