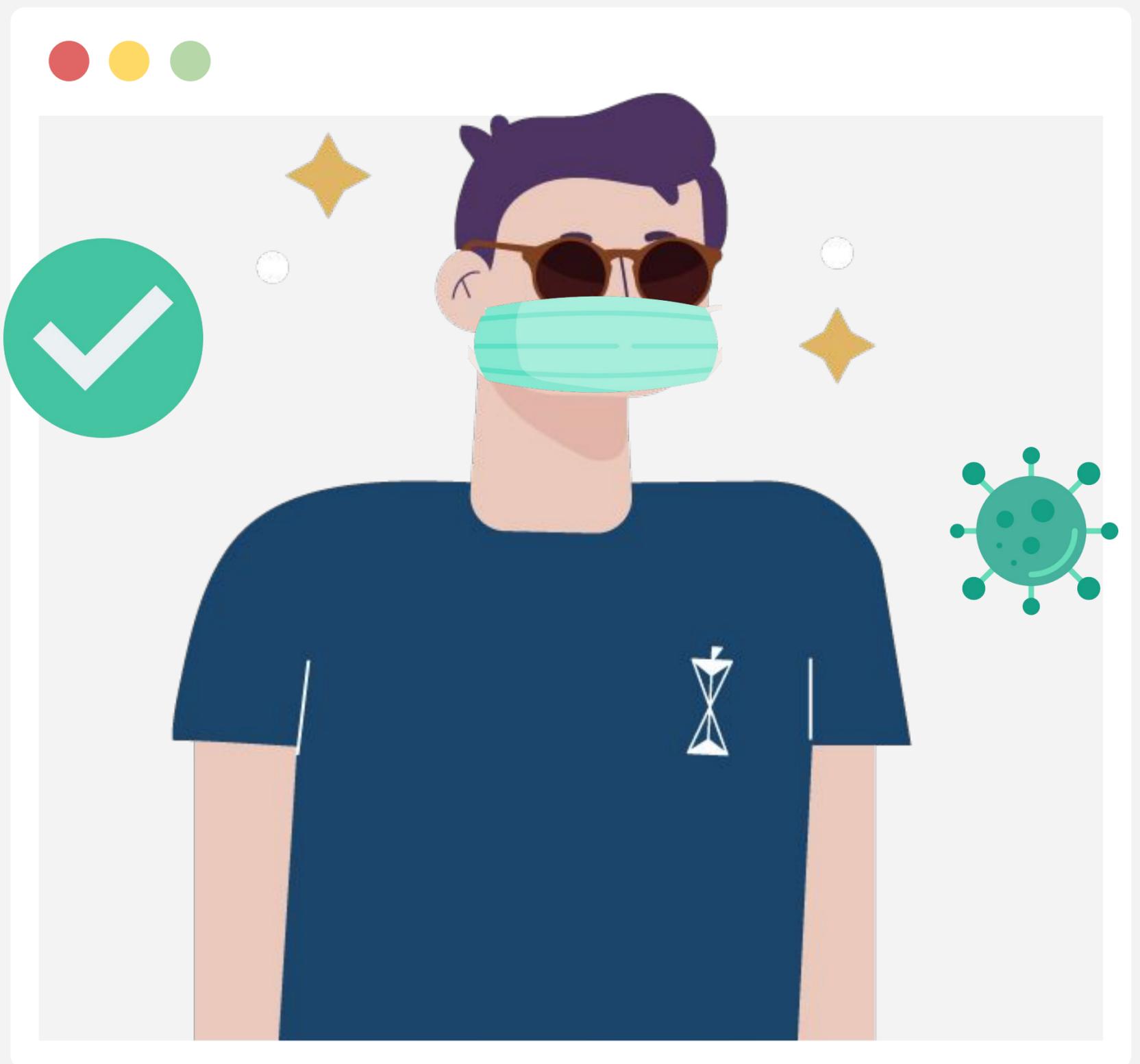


# Re-Imagining The New Reality— What's Next?



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# PRELUDE

As defined by the Cambridge English Dictionary, a crisis is “a time when a difficult or important decision needs to be made.”

With the effects of the global pandemic, COVID-19, looming on the nook and crannies of the lives of individuals and businesses, there’s no doubt that we have been battling a crisis.

For many businesses, any decisions made during this difficult time will have lasting consequences and will be remembered by the customers. Plans made have to be well-executed through and through.

So how have businesses adapted to this new reality?

# CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGIES ADOPTED DURING TIMES OF CRISIS

# 02

“An iPod, A Phone & An Internet Communicator - Are you getting it?”

Just 13 years ago, Apple Founder, Steve Jobs, changed our perception of the Phone. We were introduced to the concept of an iPhone- an amalgamation of 3 different functions that allowed you to not only listen to music, talk to people but also, access the internet.

Now, we are mildly unimpressed by the speed of our WIFI, the bulkiness of the smartphone and/or the camera quality of the photos taken. What felt like an innovation a decade ago have become our new reality.

We have embraced it, adapted to it and now, can't live without it.

The pandemic may have brought about many unprecedented situations but that's not to say that most businesses have not adapted well to these situations. While the end is still a distant reality, our team has rounded up a few strategies that these businesses have adopted thus far so that you can apply them to your businesses too.

**“The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.”**

Amelia Earhart

## 2.1 LEVERAGING ON READY RESOURCES TO STAY RELEVANT

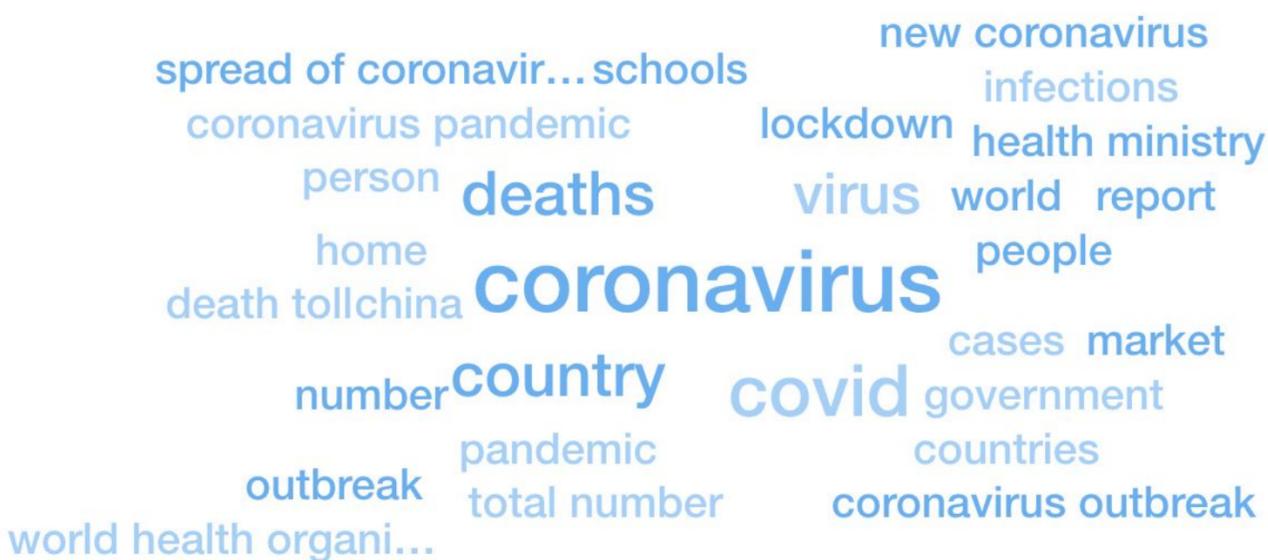
### 2.11 Social Listening To Communicate Effectively With Customers

Over the years, the importance of social media has shaped how brands communicate with their audience - allowing brands to keep their community informed and updated.

On an average day, connecting with your audience on social media requires tact and careful consideration. When in the epicenter of a crisis, the pressure to communicate with precision heightens. So what happens, after the crisis?

While many hope to return to normalcy, the truth is, there's no going back. What stands before us is a new reality; the aftermath of a pandemic where there is [collective loss](#).

Learning to listen to what your customers want to hear becomes of utmost importance to the brand. Through listening in to conversations happening online, brands can effectively communicate and speak the language of your customers.





By actively listening to the spending behaviour of customers it allowed the brand to initiate new product innovations such as the Express Delivery and thereafter, showing customers that they are listening through communication platforms such as social media.

Social listening opens up those missed opportunities and allows companies to muscle those areas to create effective content topics on social media to engage with customers in the current climate.

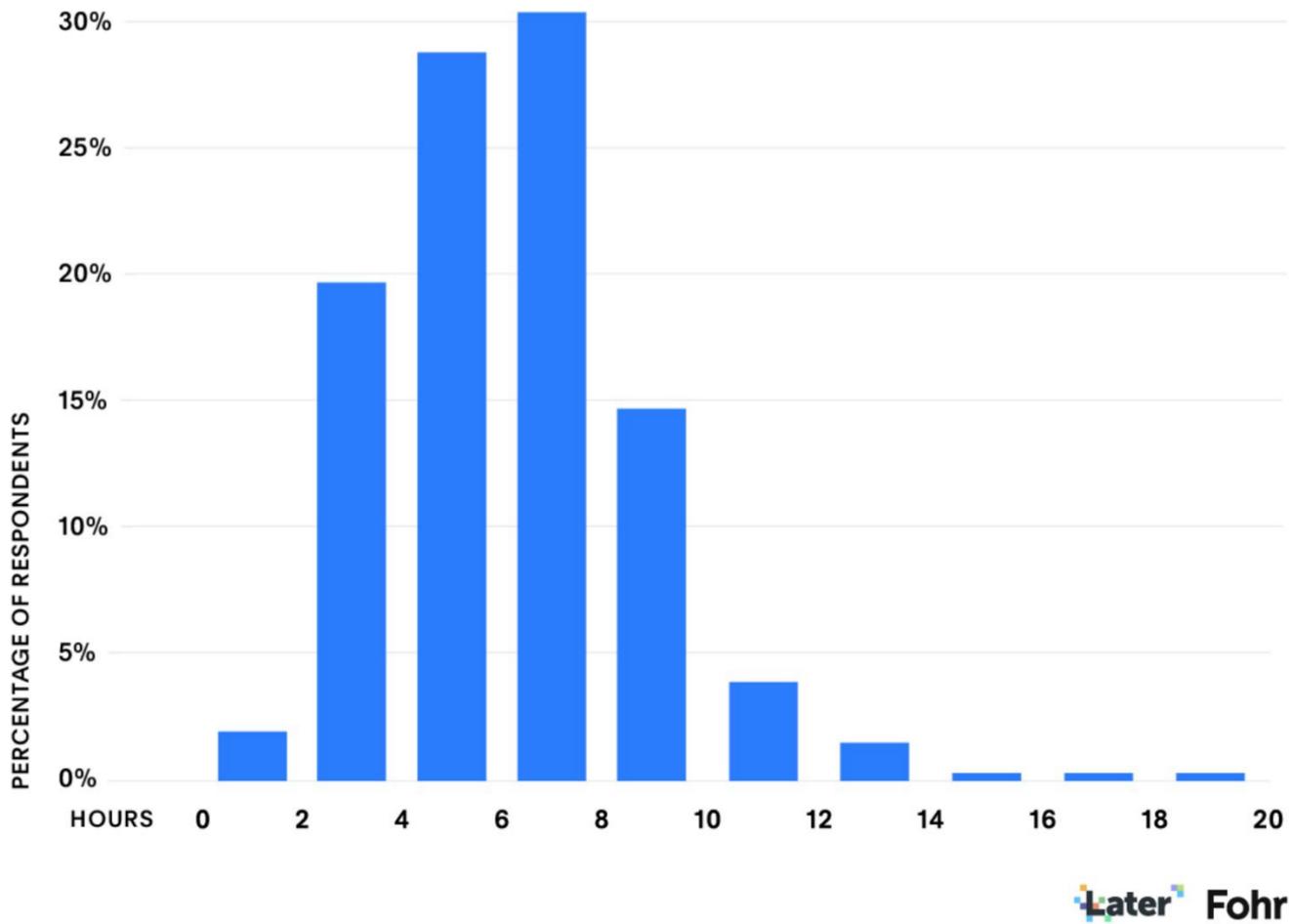
### *2.12 Create a Movement with Influencer Marketing*

Like many businesses, the pandemic has affected the content creators with cancelled/delayed campaigns and reduced influencer rates.

But at the same time, we are also noticing record-levels of activity on social networking sites and messaging apps such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram. As reported by TechCrunch, there has been an [overall increase of 40% in activity on these apps](#). With more and more people spending their time online than socialising in real life, what this means for brands is that it now makes a whole lot more sense to increase ad spends online than offline with a larger audience base.



**COVID-19 + INFLUENCER MARKETING:  
HOW MUCH TIME ARE YOU SPENDING ON YOUR PHONE?**

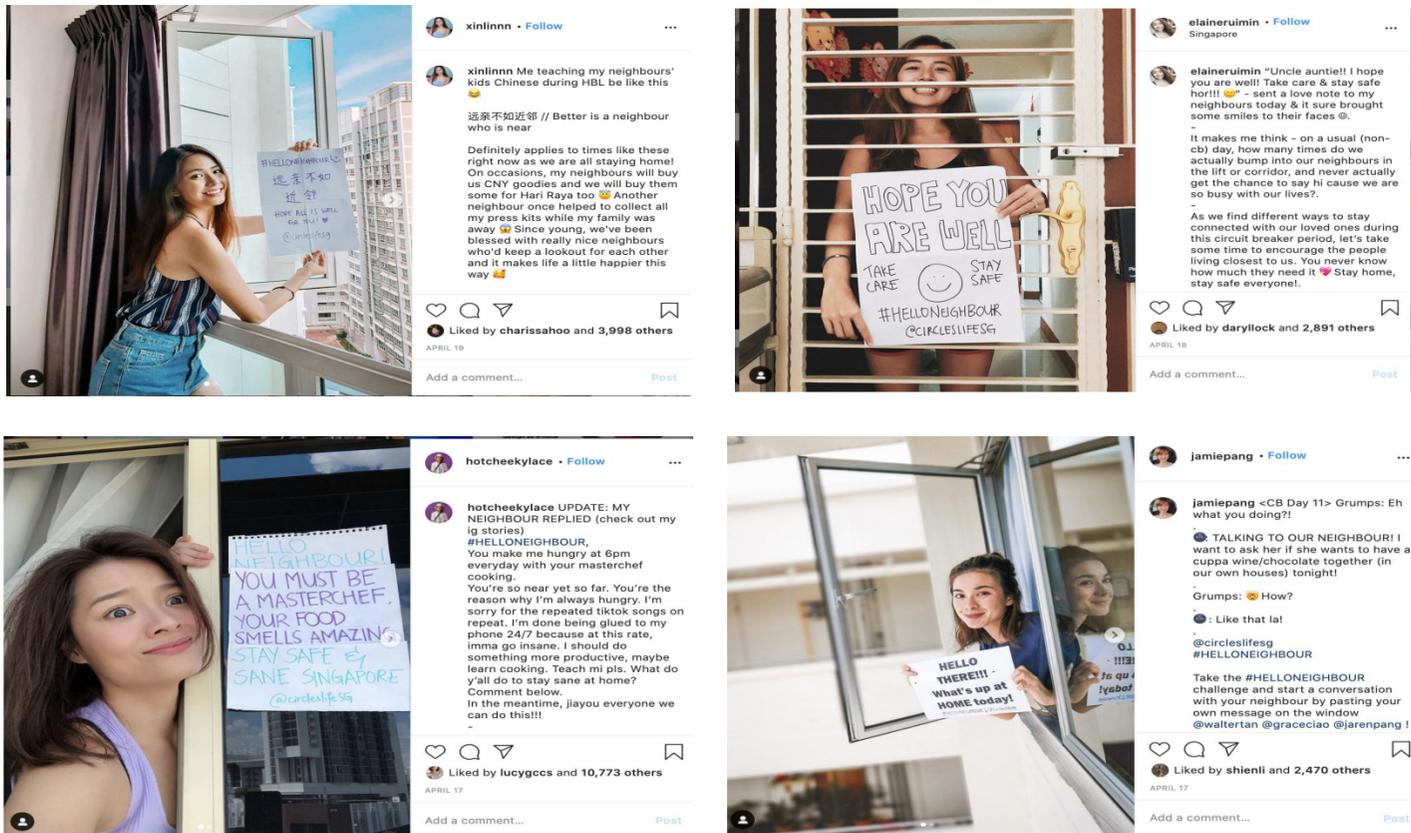


As more turned to e-commerce, the marketing strategy had to be tweaked and adapted to fit into the new digital narrative. Live streaming via services on Instagram Live, Youtube Live and Twitch have also been adopted by content creators to engage with their community.

Pomelo, a fashion e-commerce retailer, with headquarters in Thailand, have also been quick to put its influencers in the forefront of their marketing campaigns during the pandemic. The campaign, #PomeloAtHome, saw many influencers dressing up in Pomelo clothing despite being at home; creating a lookbook of home outfit inspiration.



Circles Life, Singapore's 4th Telecommunications Service, have also embraced this new reality by creating relevance to customers who are now home-based with their #HelloNeighbour campaign - to encourage conversations.



Leveraging on the pool of influencers to find the right content creators for your campaigns can help to expedite the brand's reach and narrow in on your audiences effectively.

## 2.13 Video Content To Engage With Customers

For as long as we can remember, most video content requires the production team to scout for locations and capture scenes in person. With the pandemic, this has been made largely impossible; forcing videographers to get creative and think outside of the box to find new ways to create compelling content that engages with their audiences.

NBC TV Network, an American English-language commercial, have also evolved to adapt to the pandemic by getting Jimmy Fallon to film his late night shows in his home. #Relatable #Human

This pandemic may have resulted in a slew of social issues such as [Cabin Fever](#) but producing content at home has not only made the audience feel that they are not alone but also, more intimately connected to the brand.



## 2.2 Switching to the Business of Convenience

### 2.21 Getting Started

COVID-19 has massively accelerated the growth of e-commerce, and it's not a trend but rather a new norm. Businesses were forced to adapt quickly during the lockdown to ensure operations continue despite the regulations and restrictions.

“It would’ve taken between 4 and 6 years to get to the levels that we saw in May if the growth continued at the same levels it was at for the past few years,” according to Adobe’s Digital Insights Manager Vivek Pandya.

As a result, consumers turn to the few means they can turn to: e-commerce and delivery. Customers flock to online sites and rely on delivery apps for all their shopping needs. Digital was the only escape during the lockdown. However, not every industry could flourish as quickly.

One example is the local hawker scene that suffered immensely from the lack of operational support and the slow adoption of digital and alternative revenue streams. Food is an essential to any Singaporeans, and it was a heartbreaking time for us to watch our hawkers risk closing shop during these uncertain times.

Fortunately, the pandemic gave rise to a strong sense of community. Businesses, agencies and individuals came forth to support other local businesses.

FairPrice Group and food delivery start-up WhyQ have launched a new food delivery platform called Marketplace @ WhyQ which will enable food and beverage (F&B) operators to deliver their food islandwide while charging them zero commission.

**Marketplace @ WhyQ**  
A community initiative with FairPrice Group

POSTAL CODE/BUILDING NAME SEARCH

Largest virtual real estate of Food Courts, Coffee Shops, Restaurants and more!

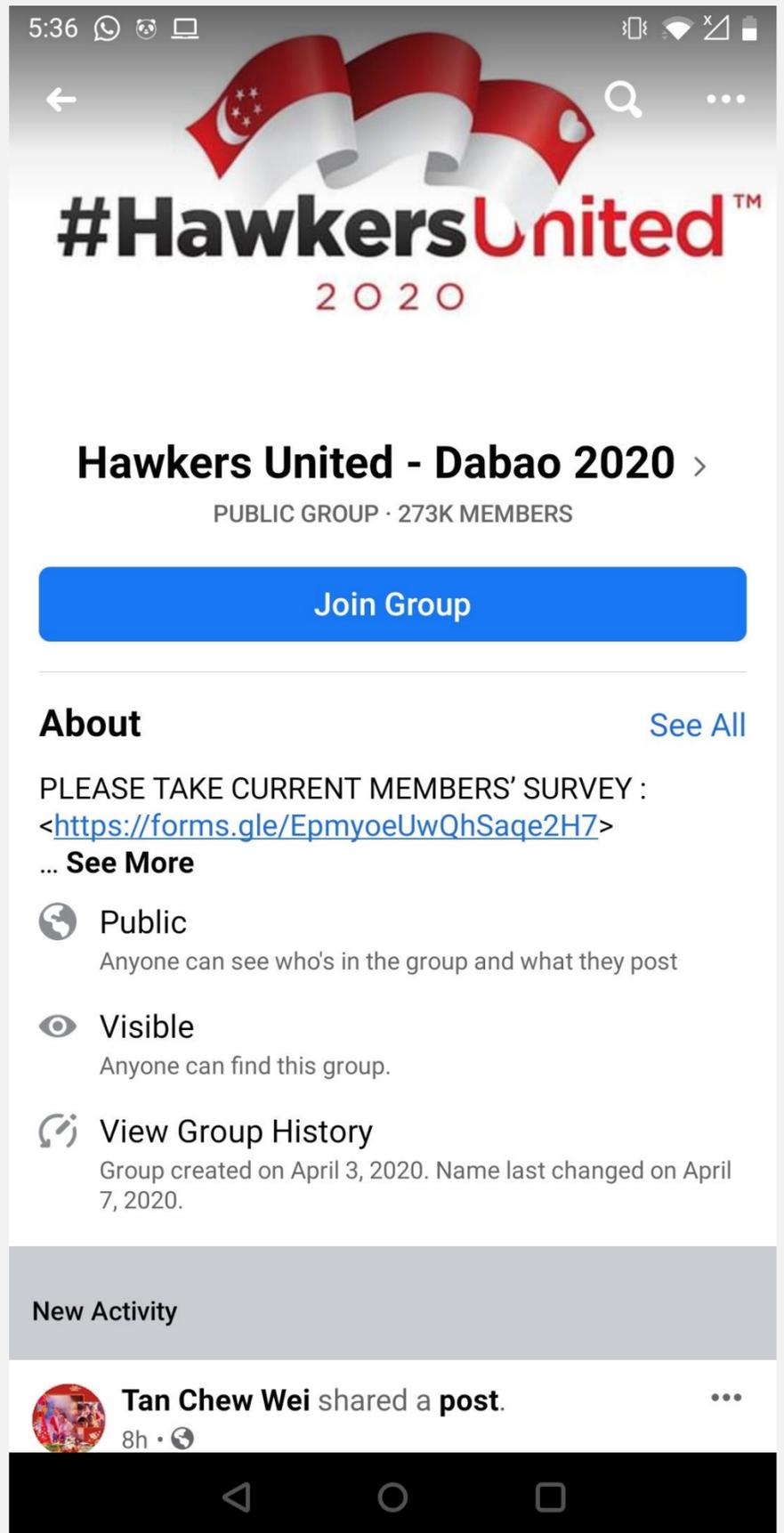
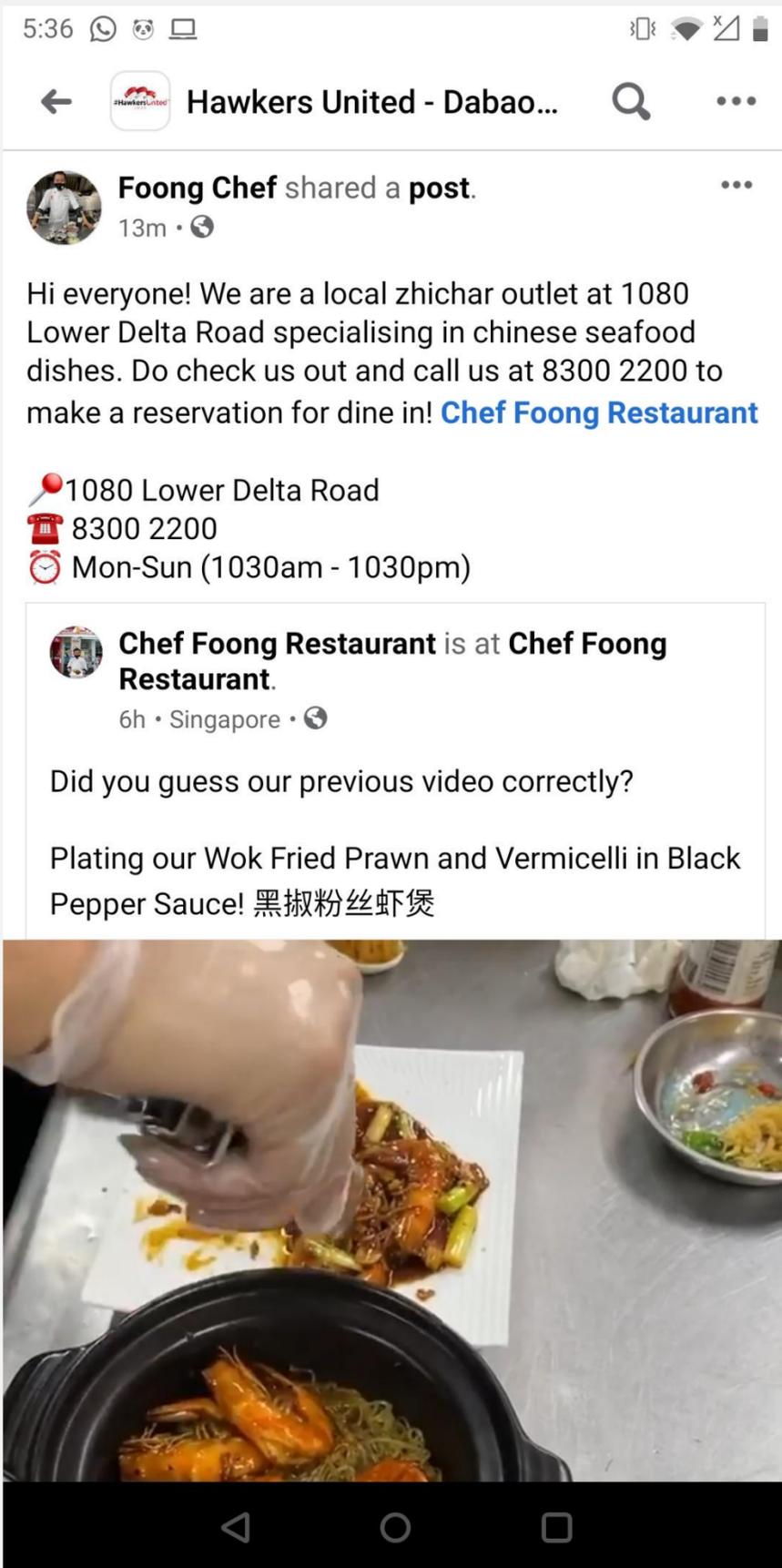
**How it Works**

Marketplace @ WhyQ seeks to empower our local F&B community by providing them online access for ordering and delivery solutions at no cost. Support our local food community by ordering here!

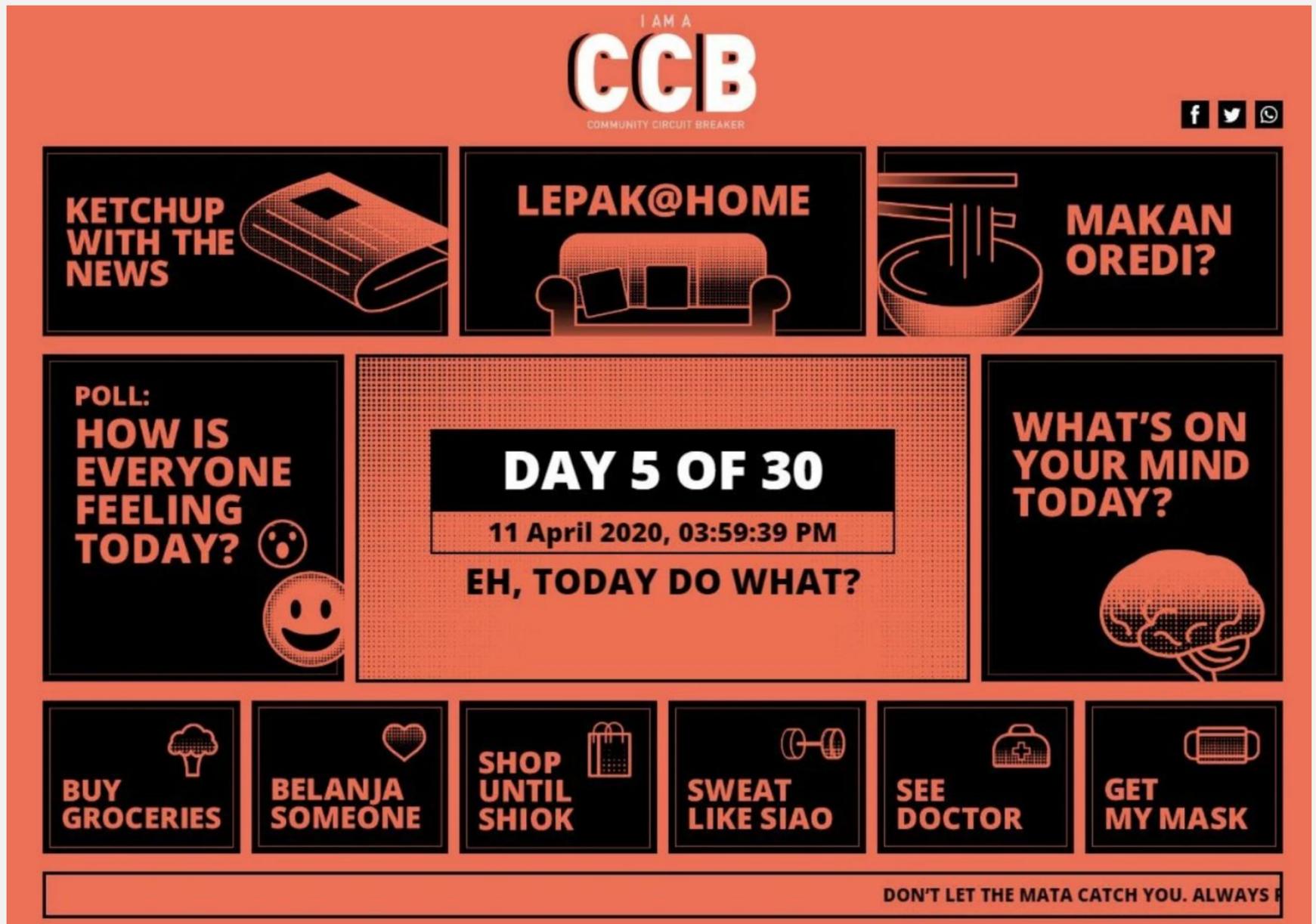
- Enter your location**  
We deliver island-wide from a wide variety of vendors
- Choose a vendor**  
Browse and select your favourite dishes
- Checkout & Pay**  
With transparent pricing, it's quick easy and totally secure.
- Enjoy your meal**  
Dig in to a delicious meal delivered to your doorstep!

*Marketplace @ WhyQ is an alternative to food delivery apps, allowing hawkers and small business owners to run at zero commission*

Agencies and developers selflessly used their time to rally the power of the community. Facebook Groups like Hawkers United – Dabao 2020 and even agency-led resource sites like <https://iamaccb.sg/> has been a free community-first platform for Singaporeans to come together and show their support for local businesses.



*Ground-up initiatives like Hawkers United - Dabao 2020 help to build a free and ever growing resource to connect hawkers with consumers*



*Resources like iamccb helped to connect Singaporeans with information and updates with the outside world*

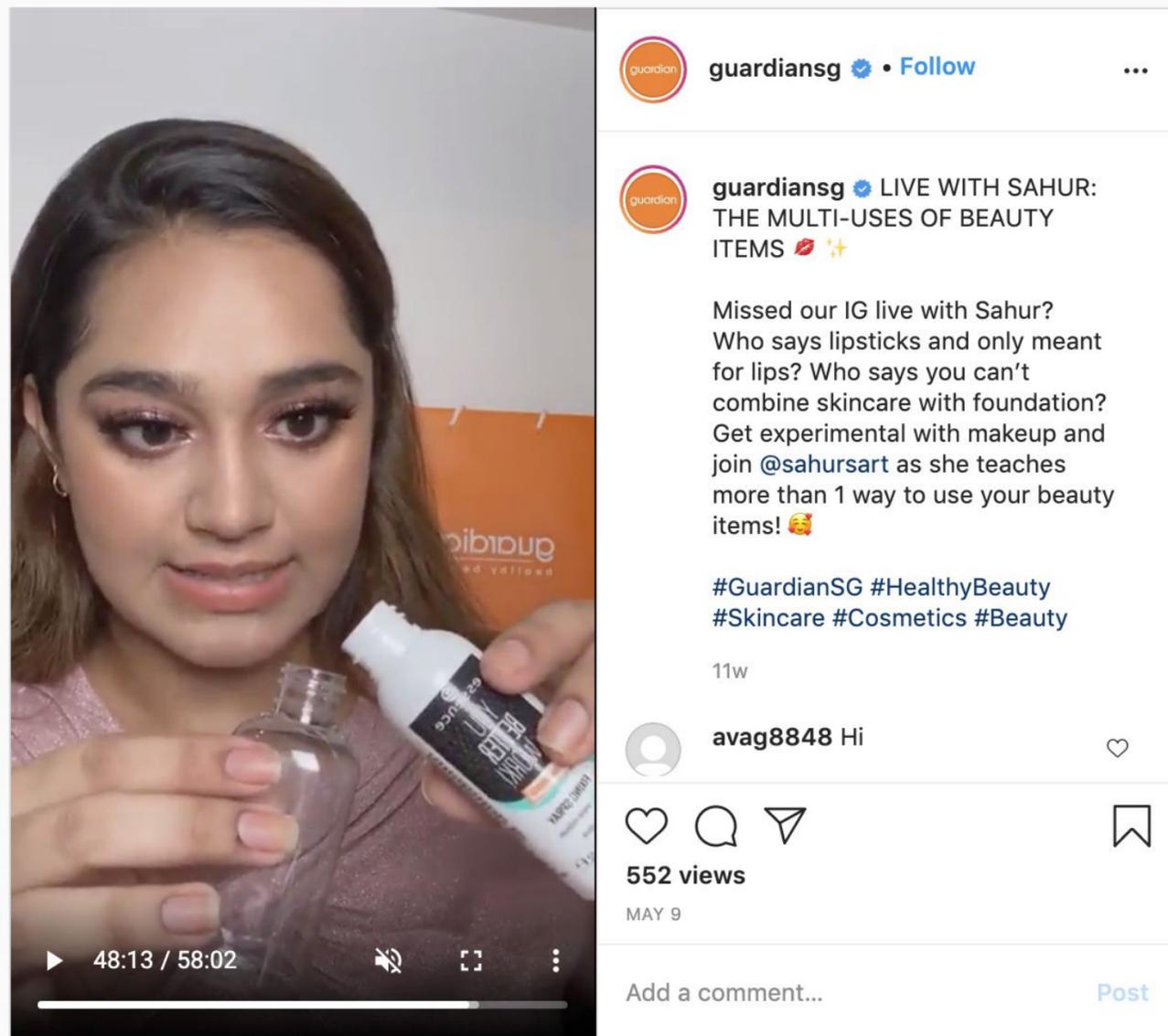
Social media is no longer just a platform for you to stay updated with their friends but also a primary channel for you to get the latest information on opening hours and updates on a store. It's an essential channel for brands to build relationships with their fans, against all odds and during trying times.

## 2.22 Social: From Alternative to Primary Revenue Stream

What is the craziest item you have bought online? A cake? A plant? Or even a used car! Even brands like Starbucks are jumping on the bandwagon, selling their merchandise online.

With social becoming saturated with ads and content, brands need to seek new ways to cut through the clutter. Shoppertainment helps to keep audiences engaged and purchasing, and not just as a shopping platform.

Brands are jumping on the LIVE on e-commerce apps to sell their products, giving away limited vouchers (and free dances) during each sessions. From makeup tutorials, to product reviews, to face-offs, brands are turning to this Live channels to sell.



*Guardian collaborated with MUA @Sahursart to create looks using products available in-store and online in this IG Live session*

Whether you love it or hate it, going LIVE on either FB/IG or even e-comm platforms are a way for brands to stand out from the e-commerce crowds. Live gives you a 100% SOV on platforms as you are not competing for ad spaces with other brands. It's an ode to the late night TVCs that exists even till today!



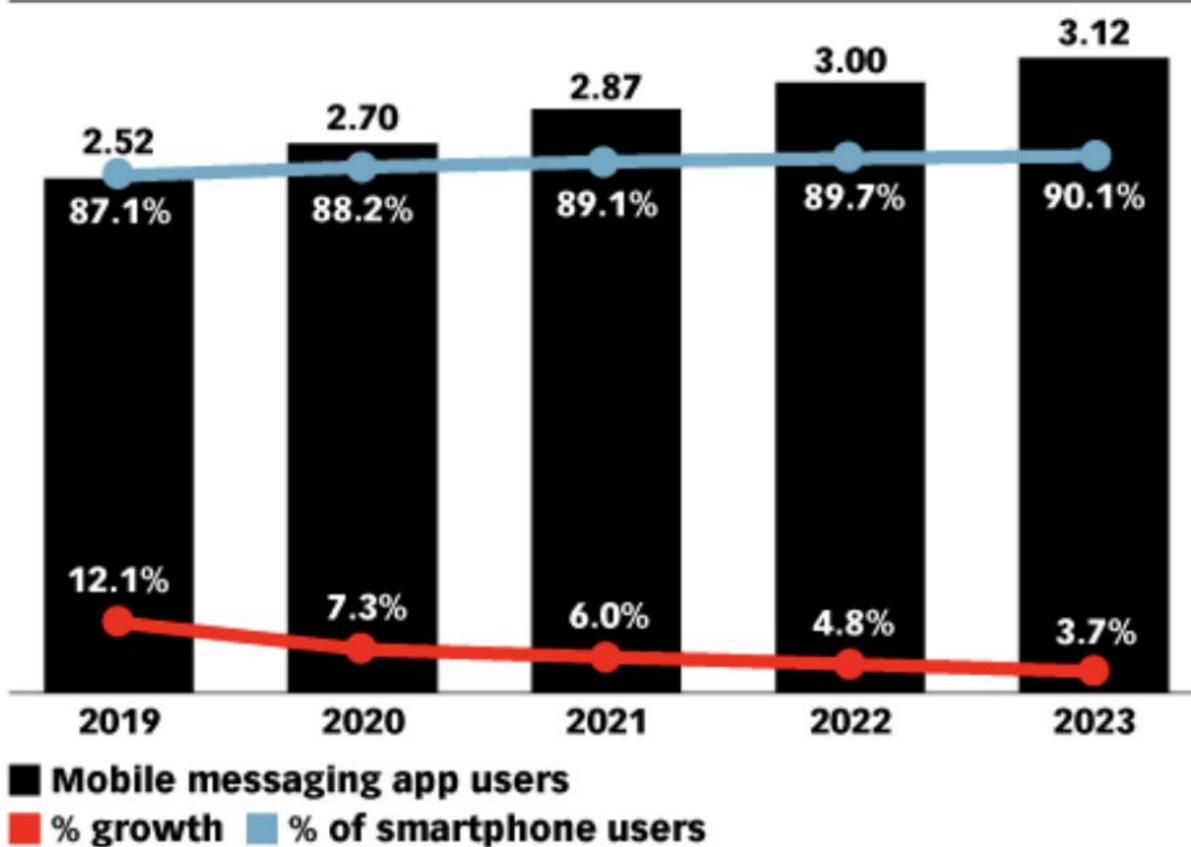
On FB Live, Guardian also worked with influencers Sylvia from NOC and Titan Media Debbie for a showdown to promote a new product which includes a giveaway and promo code

## 2.23 The Art of Conversational Commerce

Messaging apps are becoming the preferred means of communication. According to eMarketer, 2.52 billion people worldwide, or 87.1% of smartphone users, will use a mobile messaging app at least once per month.

### How Many Mobile Messaging App Users Are There Worldwide?

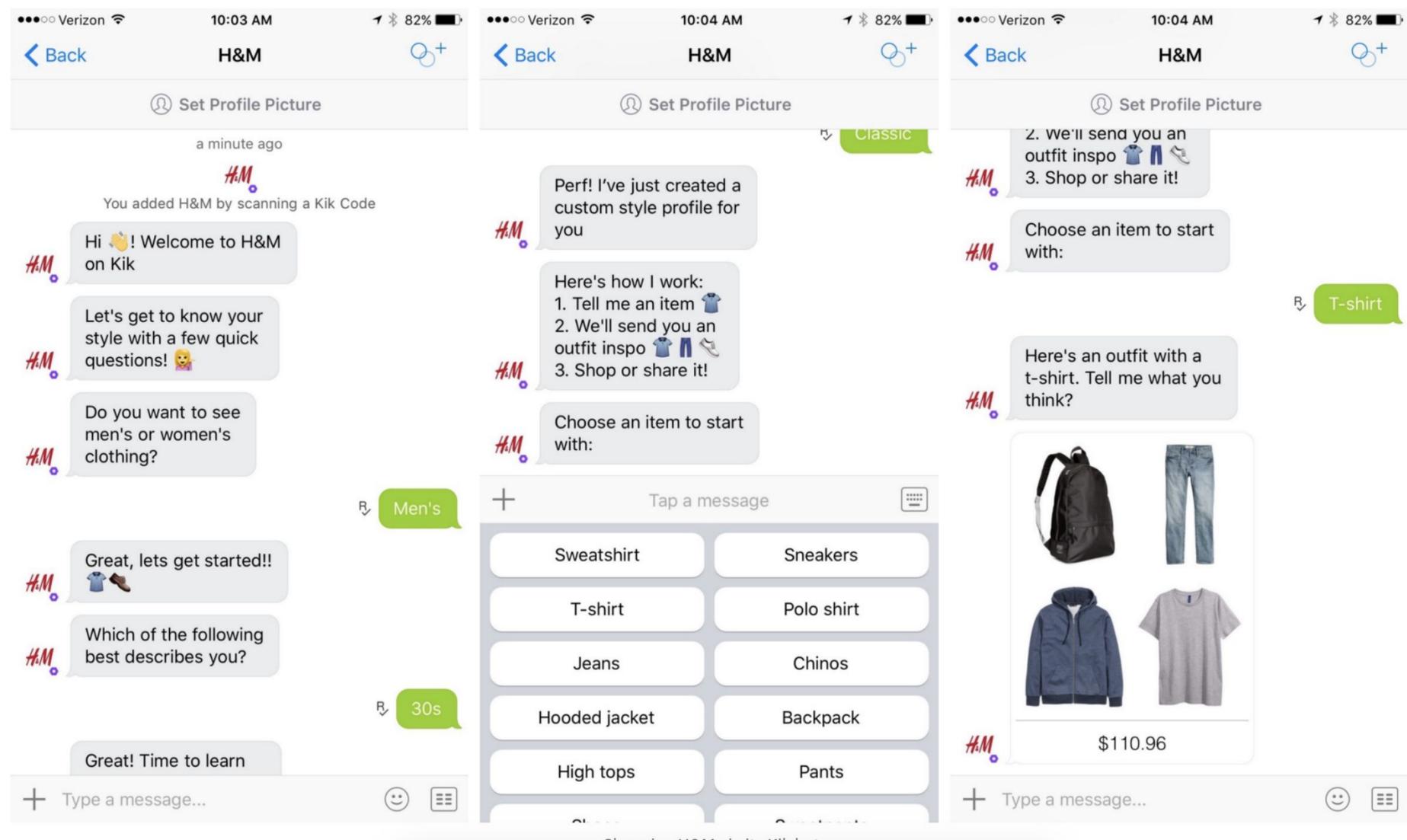
billions, % change and % of smartphone users, 2018-2023



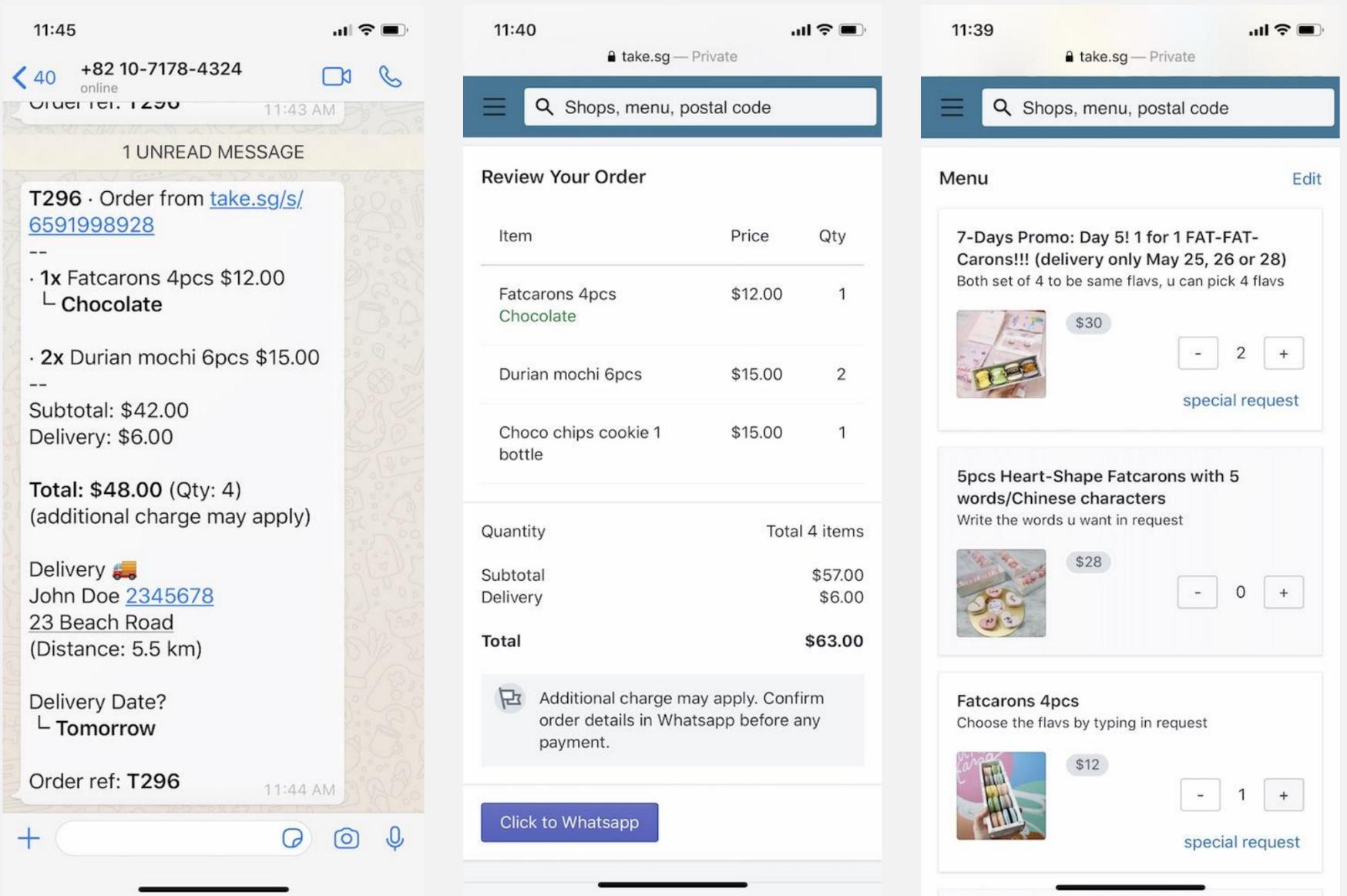
During a lockdown, messaging apps are the key platform for majority of our communications, whether personal, business, or commerce.

There is also an increasing use of messaging apps, to find and select products and services, and to complete the payment process, all without having to call, email, or even visit a brand's website. This is conversational commerce where everything is happening within the messaging app.

Chatbots are not just for customer service. It's also a tool that can be used for selling. The key is conversation. It's how chatbots communicate with users, via back-and-forth chat. It's also how your bot can gather information about a user's needs or preferences in order to make custom recommendations.



Example of how H&M used Conversational Commerce to drive sales



*Even though not as automated as a chatbot, Take.sg allowed customers to send their orders to hawkers in a systematic manner.*

## 2.3 Collaboration: Brand X Partner(s)

Did you remember the period when all Bubble Teas were phased out? Some shops decided to milk it till the last minute like Tiger Sugar until the last hour, others were selling DIY Bubble Tea kits on e-comm platforms giving you a chance to make your own (since we're spending so much time at home anyway)!

However the most interesting outcome from the circuit breaker was the creative collaborations between brands to ensure that BBT lives on. An example is the tag team between food provider Grain and koi, allowing you the chance to still get a fresh cuppa even during the lockdown.

KOI The × GRAIN

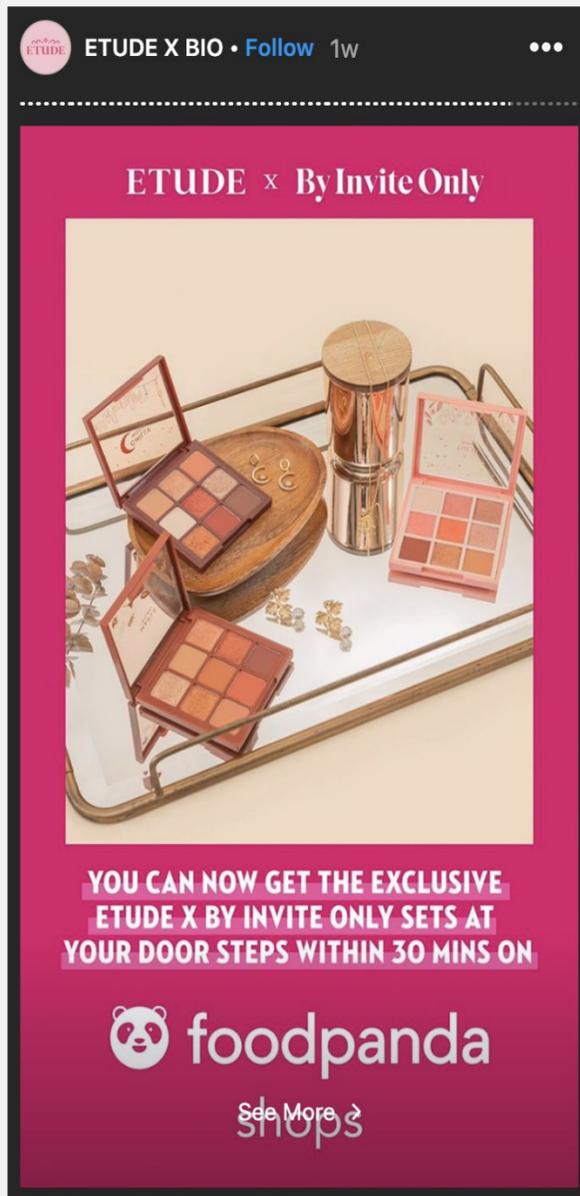
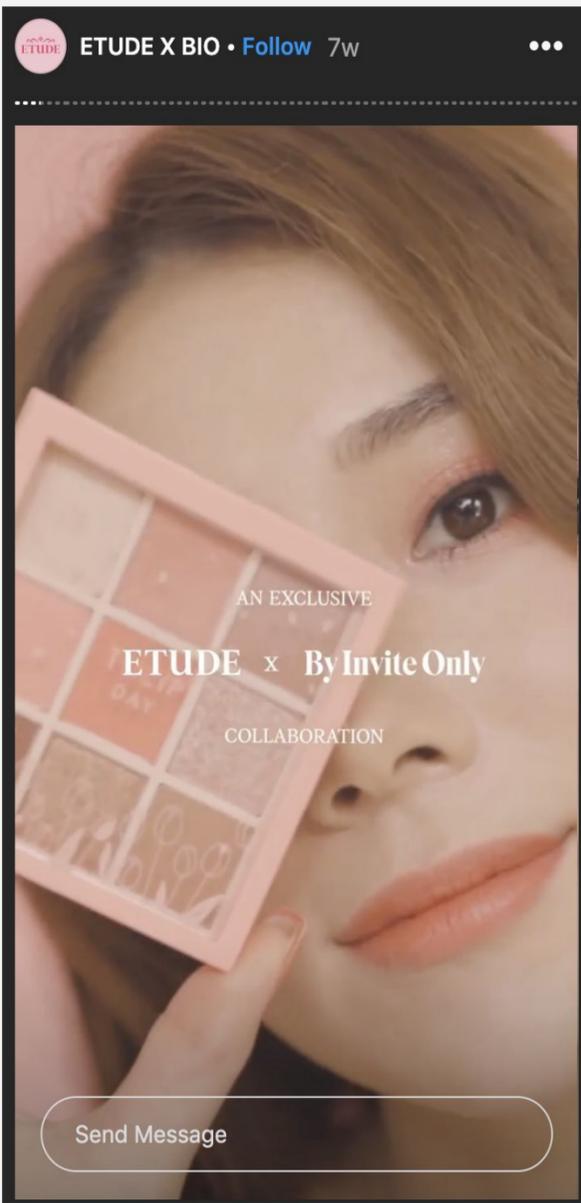


*Bubble Tea FTW!  
Through creative  
collaborations, both  
koi and Grain  
successfully thrived  
through the circuit  
breaker period.*

Brands like Etude House which also had to quickly turn to digital to drive sales. Their recent collaboration with By Invite Only saw them partnering with Foodpanda for sales, mongabong for content and co-collaboration with accessories brand By Invite Only. Each brand had their own following but the collaboration allowed each brand to cross-promote with each other.



*Influencer @mongabong was the face for the launch, creating 3 looks using the 3 different palettes, effectively promoting the products to Mong Chin's 260k strong followers.*

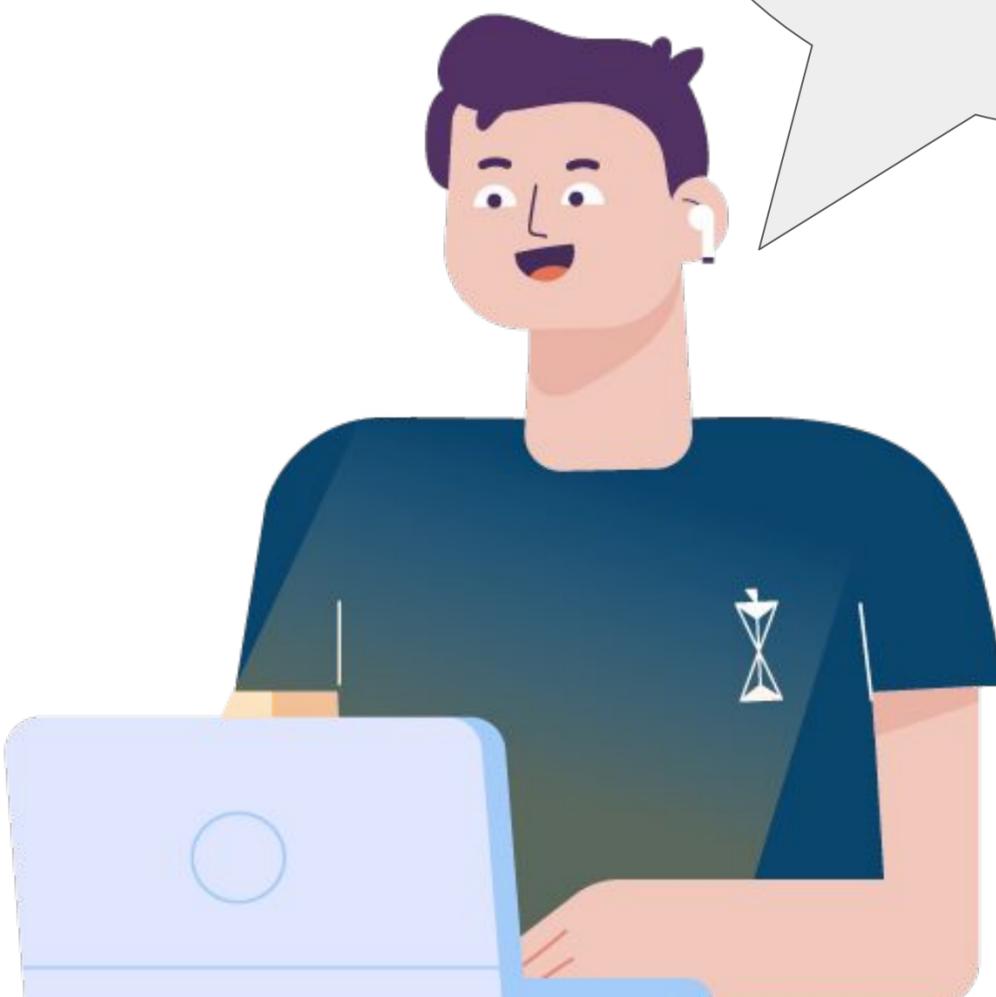


*LEFT: Etude House collaborated with local jeweller By Invite Only for an exciting SG-exclusive launch.*

*RIGHT: Although an online exclusive, Etude House worked with various delivery partner including foodpanda to enable shoppers to grab a hold of the palette wherever they choose.*

Are you all ready to start making your social strategy pandemic-proof?

Keep reading!



# WHAT'S NEXT? PUTTING THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE



## Tip 1: Finding new revenue streams online

When your primary revenue stream gets hit by a pandemic, pivoting your business might be a worthwhile investment to get your business back on track. However, before you jump right into it, do a baseline research on where the demand is coming from and what the demands are. It is also important to consider the type of investment you will need to make and always, get a second opinion before committing to it.

Thankfully, with the advent of technology, there are many revenue streams available such as Facebook Live Shopping and Instagram Shops which can help you shape the online shopping experience to engage with your existing customer base and extend your reach to a wider audience, locally and globally.

## Tip 2: Improve your online presence

Investing time and effort into building your brand's online presence can help to increase the credibility of your business.

For a start, ensure that your owned media such as website, social media and email marketing newsletters are of a consistent design and brand message - providing basic information that a first-time consumer will require. This helps with brand recall when promoting your products and services in the long run.

Thereafter, strengthening your online presence can come in a myriad of ways. From creating and curating valuable

content such as reviews from other consumers to making the required tweaks to improve the user experience (UX) and increasing data protection for customers' information can help set your business apart from your rivals.

### **Tip 3: Build relationship with your customers virtually**

With the premise of relationships built on having face-to-face interactions, forging new relationships with customers is easier said than done when we have to do it all online. However, that should not deter you.

If you currently do not have an online strategy, now is the time to create a cadence of communication with your customers. Whether it is through email marketing or through your social media and website, keep an honest, on-going and thoughtful conversation so that you know what your customers are looking for.

By observing the behavioural patterns of your customers, it might also provide your business with previous customer insights when you next promote your products or services to them too. Platforms such as [Facebook Audience Insights](#), [Locowise](#), Social Bakers and Meltwater soare tools that can help do the hard work of pulling these information for you easily.

### **Tip 4: Get Creative**

Gone are the days of traditional marketing. When it comes to marketing during a pandemic, the more creative the better it is.

Finding a unique way to stand out from your competitors, can help keep your business booming. A great way to do so is suss out your competitors and find

out what they are doing before diving into a brainstorming session with your team.

**“ Creativity is not the domain of one single person. Through free-association of thoughts and brainstorming, an accidental suggestion can be the best solution.”**

**Joshua Fernandez**

### Tip 5: Speak with empathy

“There are two types of people in the world. People who think, it’s not happening to me so **I don’t care**. And people who think, I would never want it to happen to someone else, so **I do care**.”

Instead of speaking to customers about your products and services, appeal to their emotions and sensitivities so that they know you care. There are many ways to go about this such as providing solutions for the customer or help identify issues faced by customers and many more.

Show up (online), listen (to your customers) and show that you understand (through your marketing efforts).



# APPENDIX: IS MY SOCIAL STRATEGY PANDEMIC-PROOF?

During a crisis, communication is key for you to reach out to your audience. However, it's important that you prioritise what your customers are truly seeking for in your business.

To help you plot out your next steps, print out the [following worksheet](#) and start auditing your strategy!

isaac  
DIGITAL - CREATIVE - IDEAS

THE  
isaac Digest

**PRINTABLES**  
IS MY SOCIAL STRATEGY  
PANDEMIC-PROOF?

During a crisis, communication is key for you to reach out to your audience. It's important that we prioritise what your customers are truly seeking for in your business. To help you plot out your next steps, use the following guiding questions:

**#1 What are your current primary brand goals?**

- Brand awareness (impressions, reach)
- Engagement (likes, comments, shares and clicks)
- Share of voice (volume, sentiment)
- Sales/revenue (referrals and conversions)
- Customer care (response rate and time)
- Other

 **Tip:** For each brief, focus on one key brand goal for a more effective campaign.

APPENDIX: Is my social strategy pandemic-proof? 1

# EPILOGUE

The new reality is now the reality.

The only way forward is to embrace our reality and welcome a new way of life.

This paper was born from a time of the New Normal which we will all fondly remember.



# QUESTIONS? HIT US UP!



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[Meet Isaac](https://vimeo.com/MeetIsaac)

