



State of Social Media Report:
The Impact of COVID-19





About the Report

Revealing crucial insights into the changes and developments of behavior for both brands and users, Socialbakers' State of Social Media Report: The Impact of COVID-19 shows how the marketing landscape has changed due to the worldwide pandemic.

The report details key data behind both organic and paid performance, including the evolution of engagement and changes in ad spend and cost per click in global regions as well as industries. Socialbakers data also highlights fan and audience behavior and brand communication about coronavirus during these critical times.

The goal is to help marketers weather this current crisis and come out strong on the other side.



Socialbakers is the trusted social media management partner to thousands of enterprise brands and SMBs. Leveraging the largest social media dataset in the industry, Socialbakers' unified marketing platform helps brands large and small ensure their investment in social media is delivering measurable business outcomes.





A Word From Our CEO

There's no denying the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our lives, our behaviors, and our routines. Businesses are also feeling the impact as they realize that their digital transformation is being accelerated, even beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

Our latest social media data report reflects key insights from this unique time in our history. Because of uncertainty about the economic environment and the increase in users' engagement with digital content, brands are increasing their use of organic content and decreasing their ad spend. Brands should be future-proofing their business by embracing digital transformation. If this time is showing us anything, it's that digital channels are where customer engagement is happening and businesses that neglect them do so at their peril.

In difficult times it's more important than ever for brands to invest in understanding their customers, their buying journey, and the kind of content that will resonate with them at each step of the purchasing process. We are seeing that now more than ever customers want to hear from the brands they follow, so cutting back on social media investment could be a mistake.

Faced with more time at home, users are looking to the digital world to keep them feeling connected, updated, and entertained. This presents a great opportunity for savvy marketers. Additionally the lower ads costs we are seeing across many COVID-affected regions presents an opportunity for brands that have the budget to share their message with a wider audience. The report also provides unique insights into East Asia, where the market is already showing signs of rebounding from the impact of the pandemic, as business resumes in the region.

All in all, this report shows that brand marketers looking to engage their audience can do so by taking advantage of cheaper ads, with smart organic strategies, or a winning combination of both.

Yuval Ben-Itzhak, CEO, Socialbakers

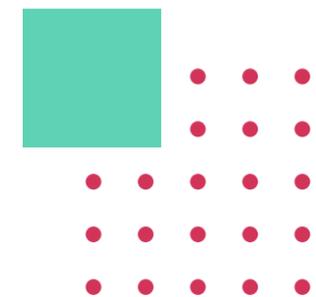




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The State of Engagement on Instagram

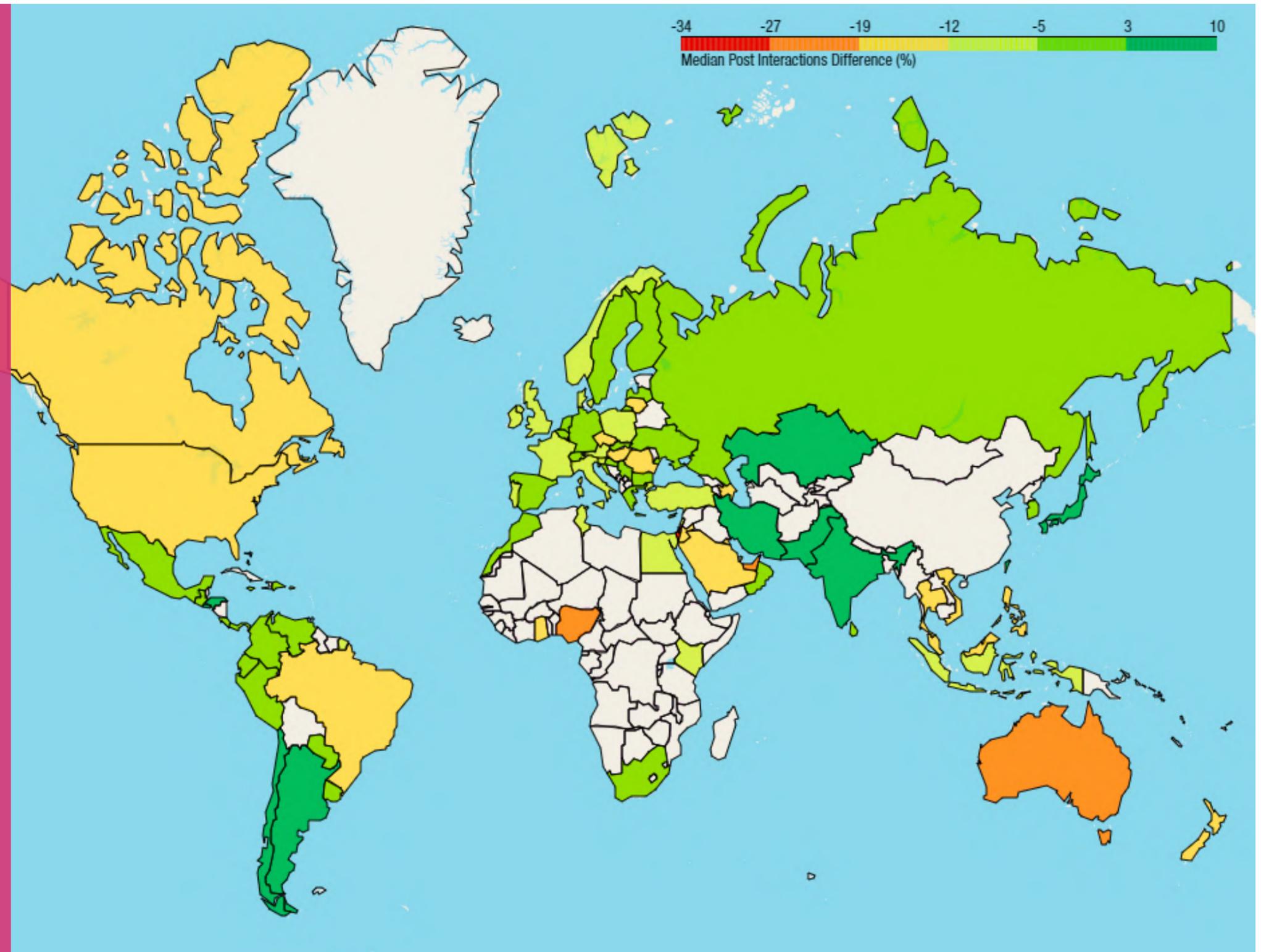


Median Post Interactions in 2019 vs. 2020

This map compares the difference in median post interactions on Instagram for worldwide Brand accounts from March 1 - March 26 in 2019 vs. 2020.

Some countries that saw growth in interactions included Japan (10%) and Argentina (2.2%), while Belgium was one of the few countries that remained at the same level.

However, most of the countries in Europe, North America and the Middle East experienced a decline. That includes the UK (10.5%), the US (13.8%), and Israel (29.5%).





The State of Engagement on Facebook

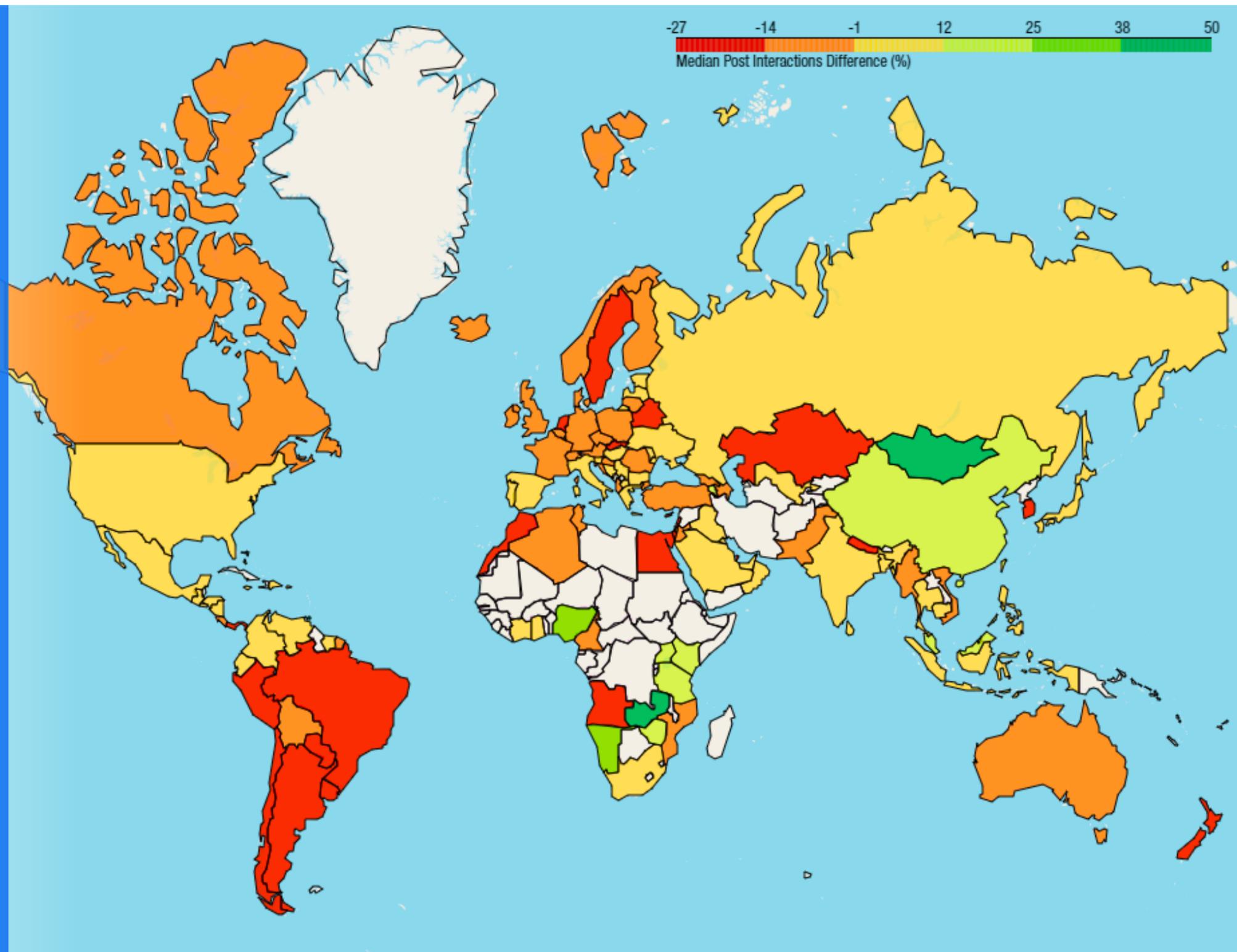


Median Post Interactions in 2019 vs. 2020

This map compares the difference in median post interactions on Facebook for worldwide Brand accounts from March 1 - March 26 in 2019 vs. 2020.

Some countries that saw growth include Austria (7.7%) and Japan (3.3%) while Ireland and Switzerland remained at the same levels.

On the other hand, many countries across Europe and North America decreased, including Italy (3.6%), the US (6.7%), and Sweden (15%).





Coronavirus Communicated by Brands on Instagram & Facebook

Hashtags Used by Brands

Most Common Coronavirus #Hashtags

The top six most commonly used hashtags related to the pandemic were the same on both Facebook and Instagram. At the top of the list is #coronavirus, #covid19, and #covid_19.

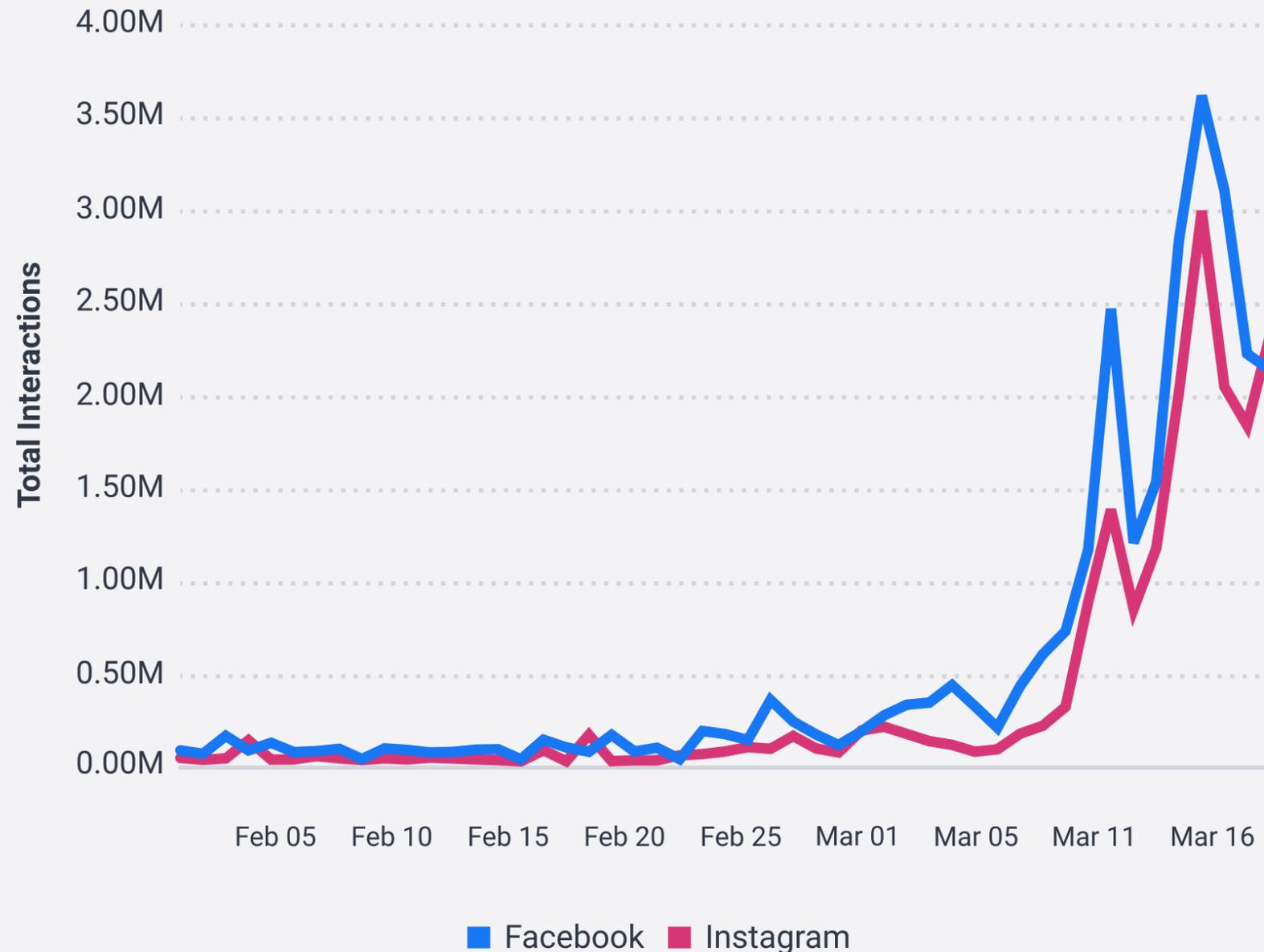
Other common hashtags include advice – #stayhome or #stayathome – as well as more general terms like #health and #virus.



Rank	Hashtags	By Profiles	In Posts
1	Coronavirus	3,315	7,464
2	Covid19	2,674	5,546
3	Covid_19	1,457	2,358
4	corona	887	1,765
5	staysafe	707	1,026
6	covid	543	910
7	socialdistancing	424	664
8	yomequedoencasa	395	652
9	virus	284	635
10	health	269	596
11	stayhome	403	569
12	quedateencasa	320	530
13	dirumahaja	261	523
14	stayathome	295	468
15	stayhealthy	251	373



Rank	Hashtags	By Profiles	In Posts
1	Coronavirus	7,110	18,364
2	Covid19	6,914	16,395
3	Covid_19	1,654	2,841
4	corona	1,135	2,547
5	staysafe	1,266	1,887
6	covid	1,184	1,885
7	yomequedoencasa	873	1,334
8	quedateencasa	604	953
9	stayhome	602	802
10	socialdistancing	556	755
11	stayathome	499	705
12	coronavirusoutbreak	249	697
13	quédateencasa	392	669
14	health	345	607
15	virus	339	584



Evolution of Total Interactions for Coronavirus Content on Facebook and Instagram

Following a few upticks in early and late February, the amount of interactions on Brand posts mentioning coronavirus really picked up at the beginning of March and skyrocketed in the following weeks.

One of the largest single-day increases in mentions on both platforms was March 16, and the highest number of mentions for both came on March 17. On March 16, the New York mayor ordered the city’s bars, theaters, and cinemas closed – a sign of the increasing cases in the US – and several other countries closed their borders.

Those developments changed things for a lot of brands, and many people were seeking answers, too.

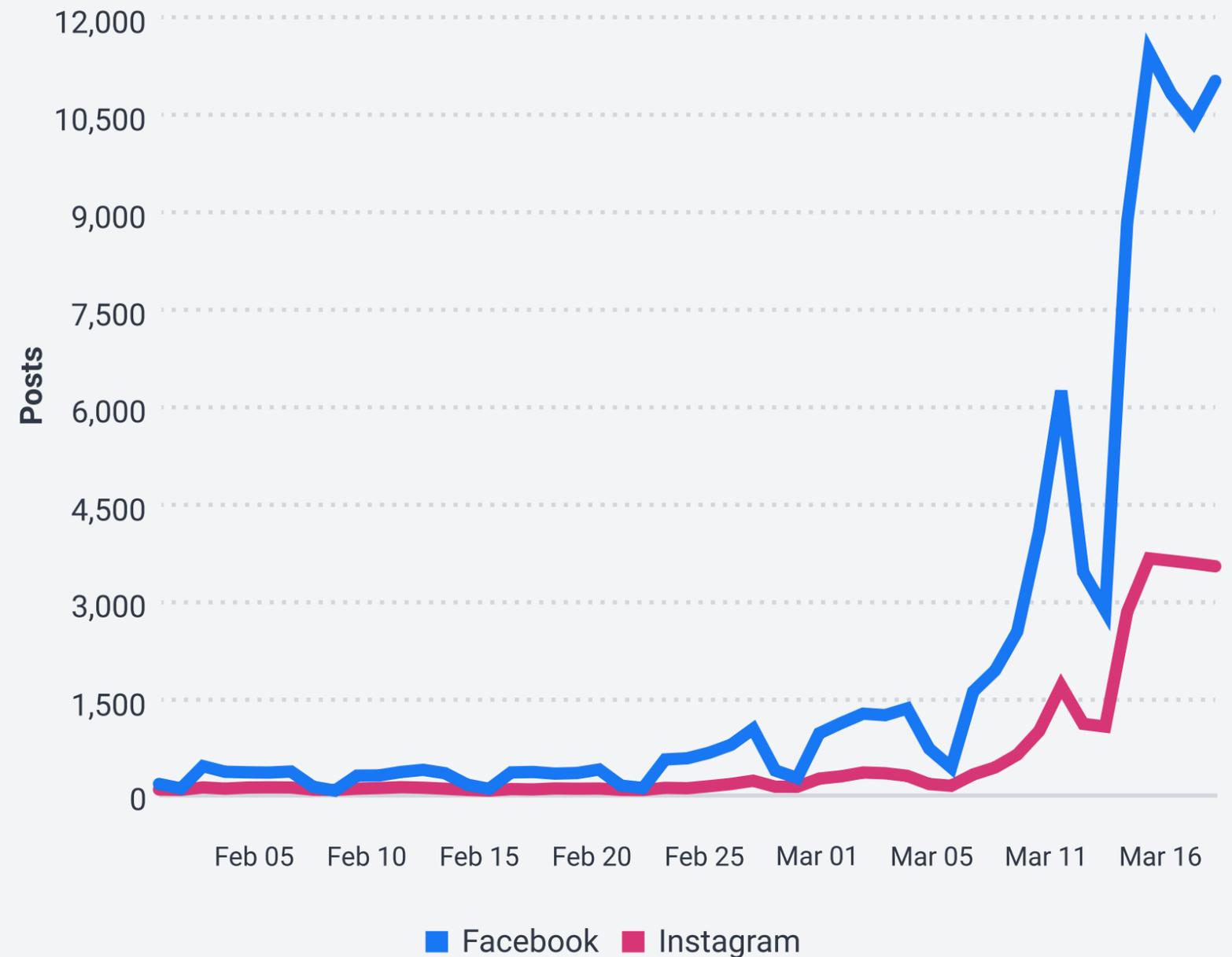


Evolution of Total Posts for Coronavirus Content on Facebook and Instagram

Highlighting the different ways that brands use the platforms, posts mentioning the coronavirus have been far more common on Facebook than on Instagram, according to Socialbakers data.

That suggests that people turn to Facebook more often when looking for news and updates, while Instagram has often been a place to get away from those things. Still, brands are using both platforms to give updates to their followers.

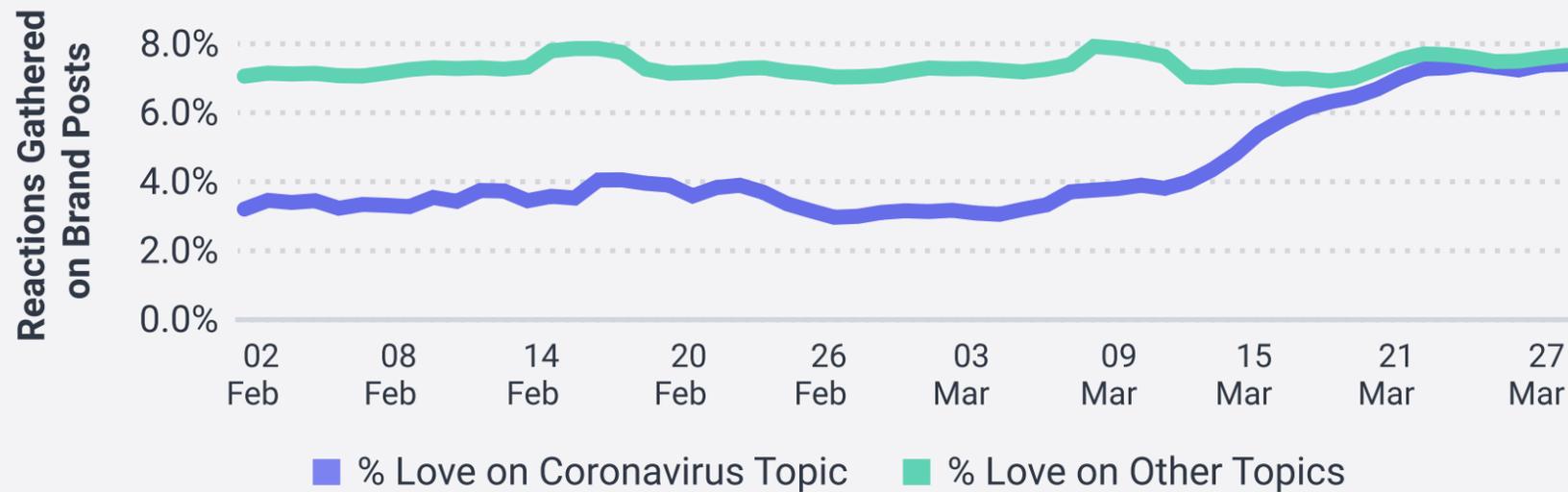
As the coronavirus moved from country to country, one of the biggest single-day spikes in posts came on March 16, and the following day was the peak with more than 11,000 Facebook posts and 3,300 Instagram posts about the pandemic. That, to date, was the single-highest volume day during the crisis.





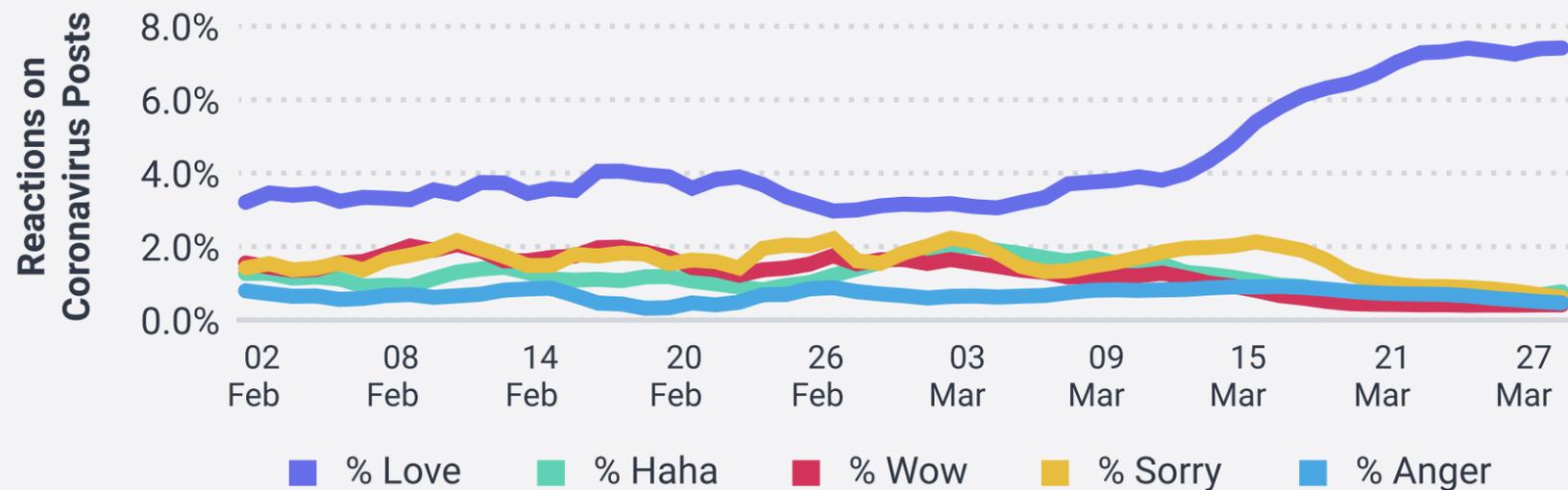
Brands Communicating Coronavirus

Evolution of Love Reactions Share (3-Day Moving Average)



Coronavirus Communicated by Brands on Facebook

Reactions Gathered on Brand Posts (3-Day Moving Average)



Coronavirus Content on Facebook by Reactions Evolution

Starting in early March, Facebook audiences started reacting to coronavirus-related content on worldwide Brand accounts with a lot more Love reactions. That timeline roughly coincides with many brands [sharing their messages of support or details of what they were doing to support their communities and employees.](#)

That suggests that during these trying and emotional times, people are appreciative of what the brands they follow are doing to help in whatever ways they can. As the pandemic drags on longer, it will be interesting to see how these sentiments evolve.



The Most Interactions on Facebook Posts About Coronavirus

The Facebook posts about coronavirus that got the most interactions were all from brands announcing steps to either fight COVID-19 or to help employees affected by the pandemic.

Brazilian brewery [Ambev](#) said it would use its production lines to make half a million bottles of hygienic alcohol gel and distribute them to hospitals in need. Meanwhile, UK chain [Home Bargains](#) and US-based [Skrewball Whiskey](#) created funds or donated money to employees who were either out of work putting their health at risk to keep essential stores open.

1



Ambev /ambev

Pra gente da Ambev, ir além dos rótulos também é cuidar uns dos outros. Por isso, vamos transformar o álcool de nossas cervejarias em...

Interactions **586,456**

2

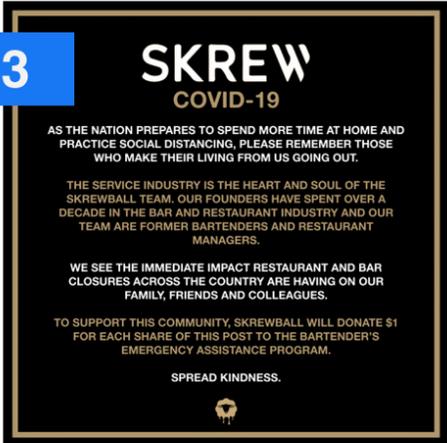


Home Bargains /homebargains

!! Announcement to all our staff and customers **!!**
To our staff: Thank you for your amazing work during this...

Interactions **242,440**

3



Skrewball Whiskey /skrewballwhiskey

SKREW COVID-19

AS THE NATION PREPARES TO SPEND MORE TIME AT HOME AND PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING, PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE WHO MAKE THEIR LIVING FROM US GOING OUT.

THE SERVICE INDUSTRY IS THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE SKREWBALL TEAM. OUR FOUNDERS HAVE SPENT OVER A DECADE IN THE BAR AND RESTAURANT INDUSTRY AND OUR TEAM ARE FORMER BARTENDERS AND RESTAURANT MANAGERS.

WE SEE THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT RESTAURANT AND BAR CLOSURES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE HAVING ON OUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES.

TO SUPPORT THIS COMMUNITY, SKREWBALL WILL DONATE \$1 FOR EACH SHARE OF THIS POST TO THE BARTENDER'S EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

SPREAD KINDNESS.

In an effort to support our friends and family in the service industry that have been impacted by the spread of COVID-19, Skrewball is pledging to...

Interactions **228,419**



The Most Interactions on Instagram Posts About Coronavirus

[Ambev](#)'s post about producing hand sanitizer also garnered the most interactions on Instagram.

The other top posts came from Italian car companies [Ferrari](#) and [Bugatti](#). Ferrari announced a €10 million donation from its owners while Bugatti expressed sympathy to the people of Italy, the country most affected by the virus in Europe.

1



ambev  **Ambev**
 /ambev

Pra gente da Ambev, ir além dos rótulos também é cuidar uns dos outros. Por isso, vamos transformar o álcool de nossas cervejarias em...

Interactions **771,445**

2



 **Ferrari**
 /ferrari

The Agnelli family donates 10 million euros in support of the Covid-19 crisis. Ferrari, together with other companies from the EXOR Group...

Interactions **297,342**

3



 **BUGATTI**
 bugatti

BUGATTI and all Bugattisti presently feel for the Italian nation - the country where our founder Ettore was born, the country which bestowed the...

Interactions **228,419**



Top 10 Industries Posting About Coronavirus on Facebook and Instagram

According to Socialbakers data, the industry with the highest median post interactions on both Facebook and Instagram was, by far, Airlines. That industry, which also had the highest percentage of active pages on both platforms, has been hit especially hard by the pandemic as millions of people scrambled to get answers through their airline’s social media.

Other industries with lots of active pages posting and garnering interactions about coronavirus include Finance, Telecom, and Gambling.

Coronavirus Communicated by Brands on Instagram & Facebook

Industries Ranked by Active Pages in the Industry



Rank	Industry	Total Posts	Total Interactions	Median Post Interactions	Active Pages in the Industry
1	Airlines	202	627,146	808.00	43.84%
2	Finance	2,274	681,720	54.00	43.80%
3	Telecom	809	262,223	73.00	43.30%
4	Gambling	187	69,749	47.00	34.94%
5	Industrial	737	235,838	53.00	31.27%
6	Services	6,206	3,050,426	43.00	30.77%
7	Travel	475	264,715	81.00	29.75%
8	Software	404	479,920	38.00	28.50%
9	Conglomerate	77	91,635	44.00	28.03%
10	Healthcare	373	73,639	52.00	27.76%

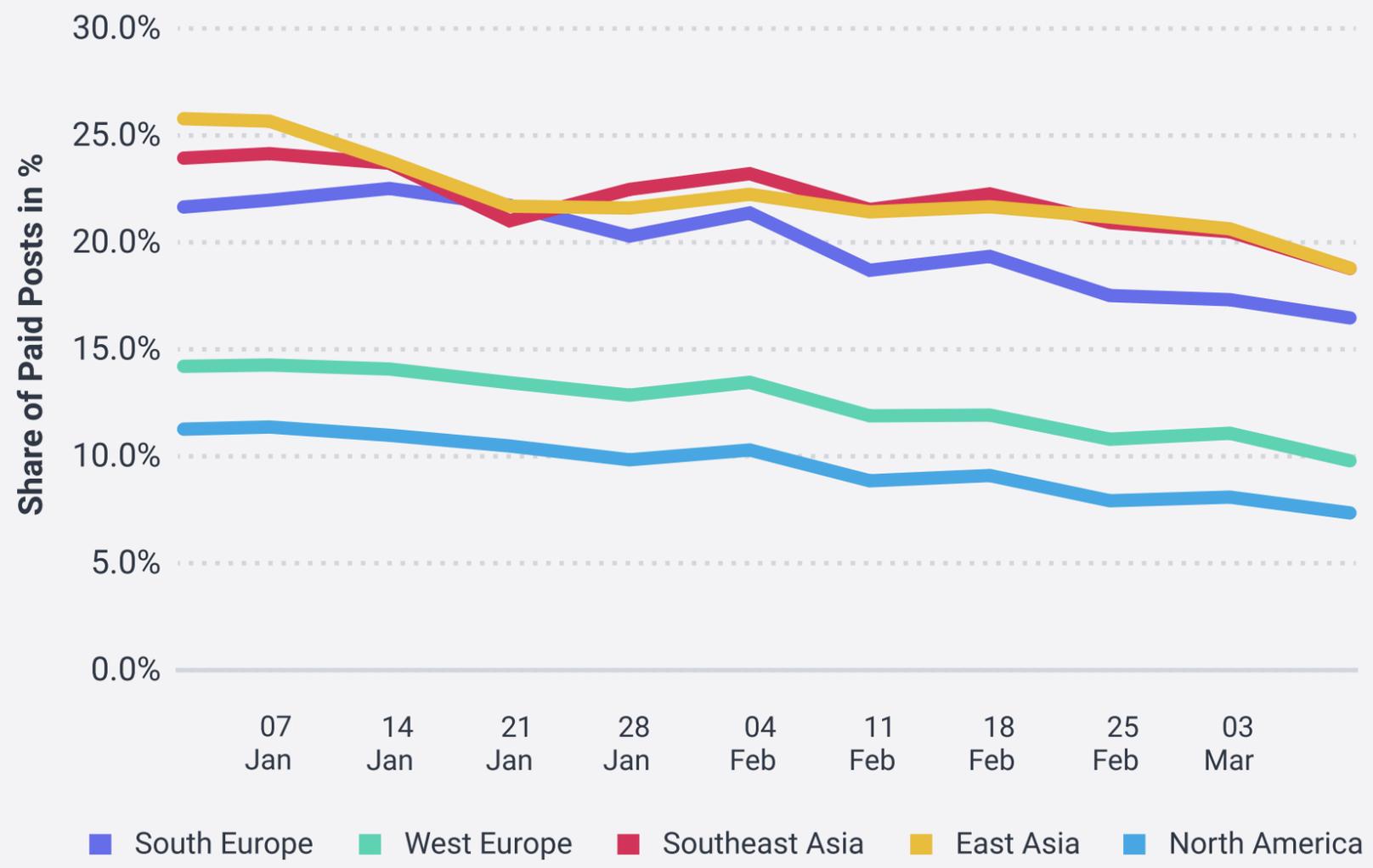


Rank	Industry	Total Posts	Total Interactions	Median Post Interactions	Active Pages in the Industry
1	Airlines	1,963	1,892,231	147.00	67.90%
2	Finance	16,987	4,129,015	29.00	54.51%
3	Telecom	2,996	1,607,865	62.00	45.77%
4	Gambling	652	213,206	52.00	39.40%
5	Software	2,667	537,728	9.00	38.15%
6	Travel	3,048	798,388	22.00	38.08%
7	Conglomerate	392	158,067	62.00	37.87%
8	Industrial	3,354	1,310,267	34.00	36.37%
9	Services	24,642	4,047,515	10.00	35.06%
10	Healthcare	2,149	675,321	23.00	34.49%



Proportion of Paid Posts vs. Organic Posts by Region

Average Weekly Values



Paid vs. Organic Posts by Region

Brands across all regions have consistently posted fewer pieces of paid content in 2020. Not all of this can be attributed to COVID-19, but as the trend continues it has become clear that some of it is related to the tightening of budgets.

As a result, organic posts have increased slightly across all regions since the start of the year. This trend is expected to continue as businesses look for less costly alternatives to engage their audiences. That means that organic strategies driven by the right content may win during this period.



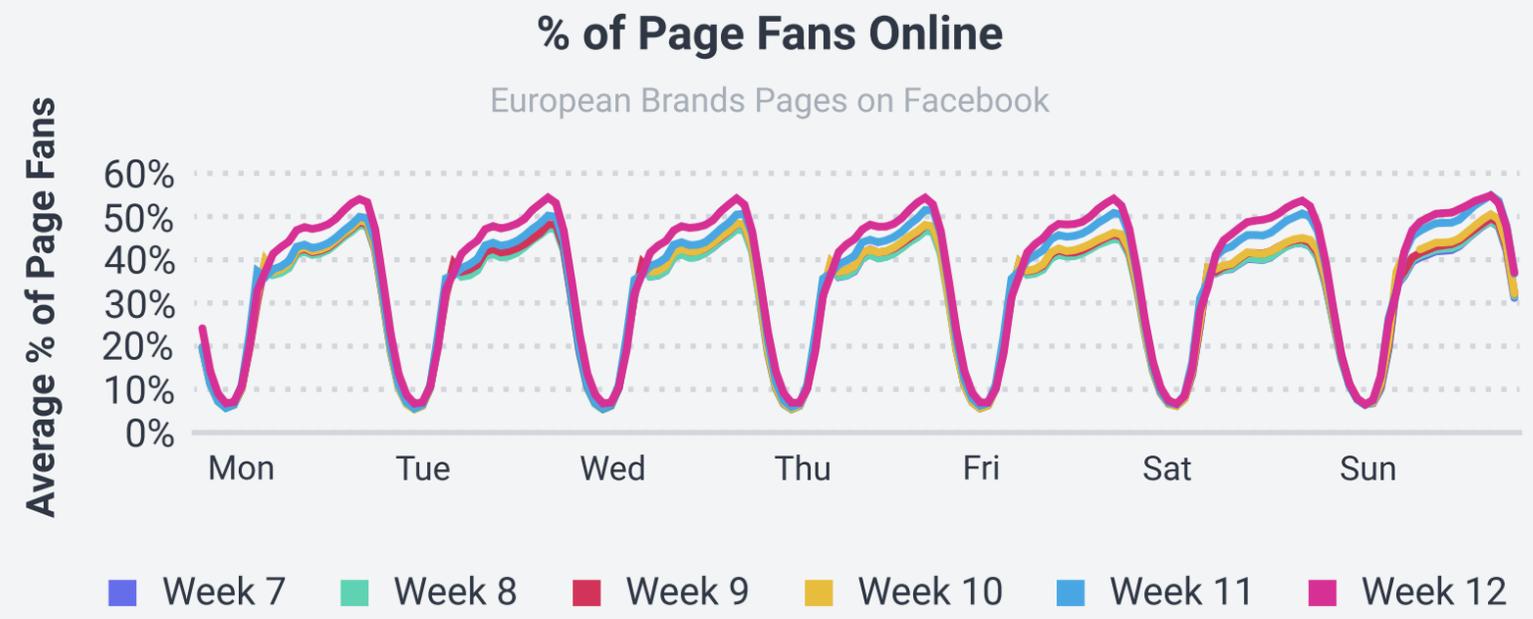
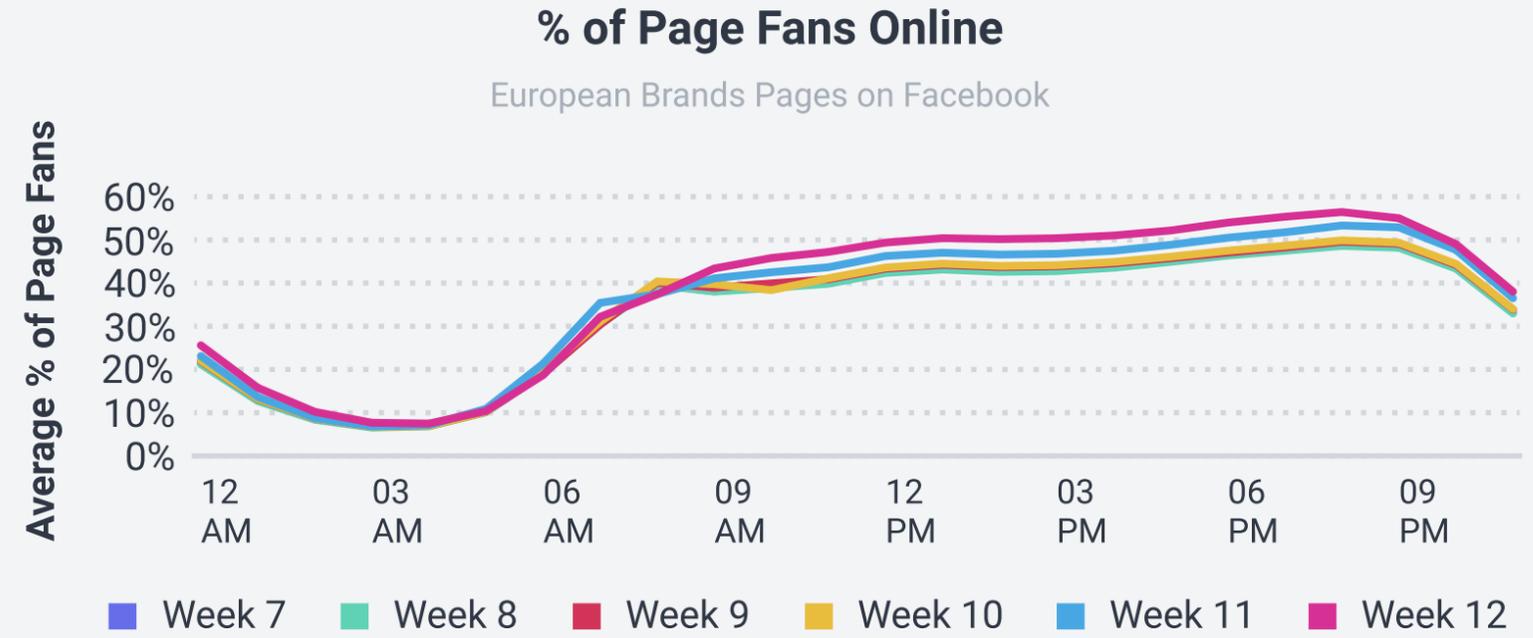


Fans of Brands Online More Often

Backing up what you might expect considering the situation, Socialbakers data suggests that fans of Facebook Brand pages in Europe have been spending more time online every day in recent weeks.

As more and more companies have settled into home office situations, the percentage of fans who have spent time on Facebook has increased a little each of the last three weeks. The peak time every day of the week is 8 p.m., and when looking at the most recent full week compared to the last full week of February, the activity increased by 16.1%.

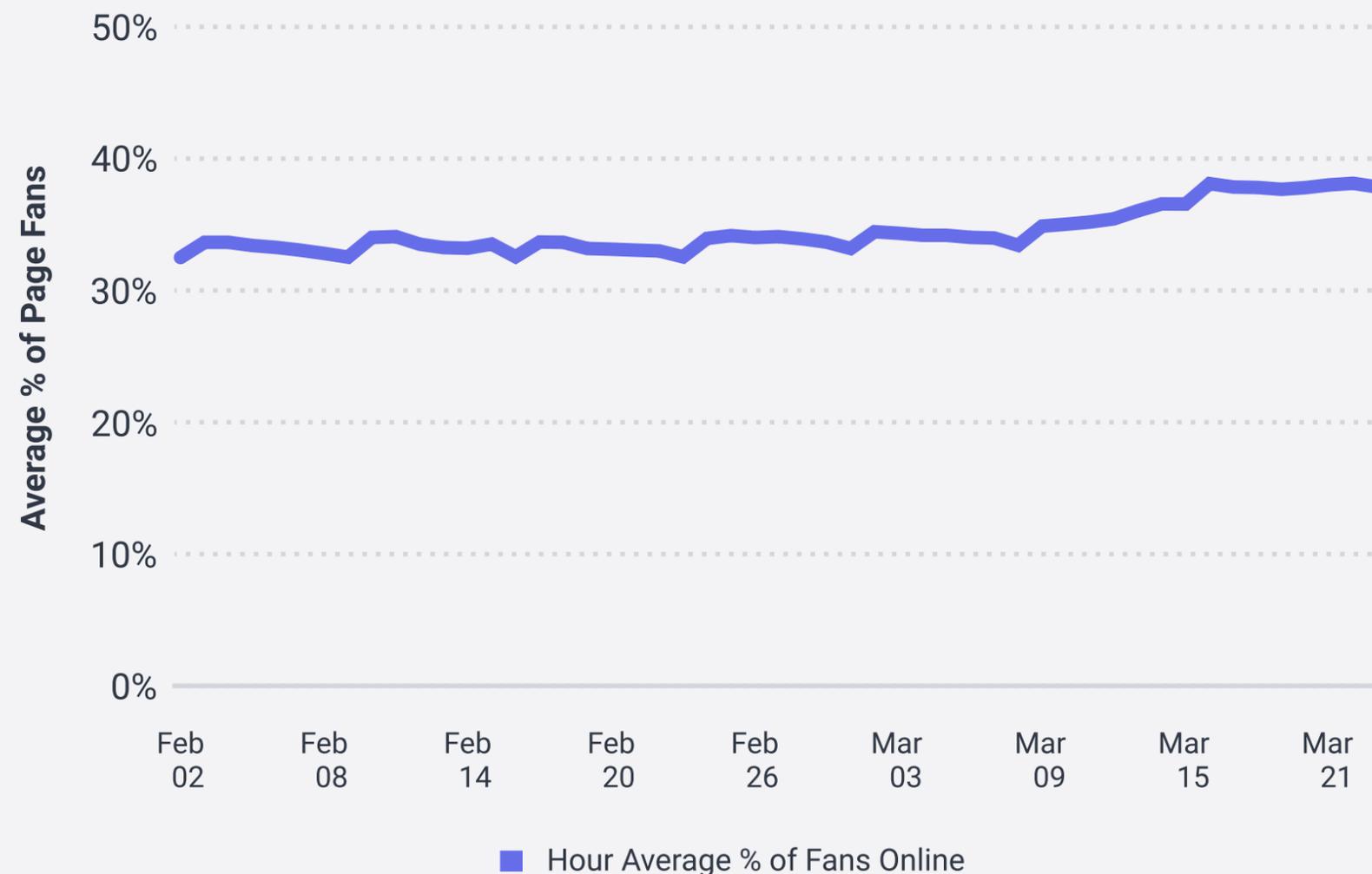
And it's consistent throughout the week. Looking at the same time frame comparison, there was an identical 12.3% increase in activity at 8 p.m. on both Sundays and Mondays.





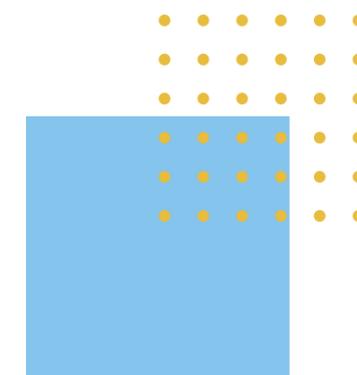
% of Page Fans Online

European Brands Pages on Facebook



Fans Spending More Time on Facebook

The pandemic has kept people inside more often, and as a result people across the globe are spending more time online. This can be seen on Facebook as fans of European Brand pages spent 11.9% more time on Facebook from March 16-22 compared to the last seven days of February.





Advertising



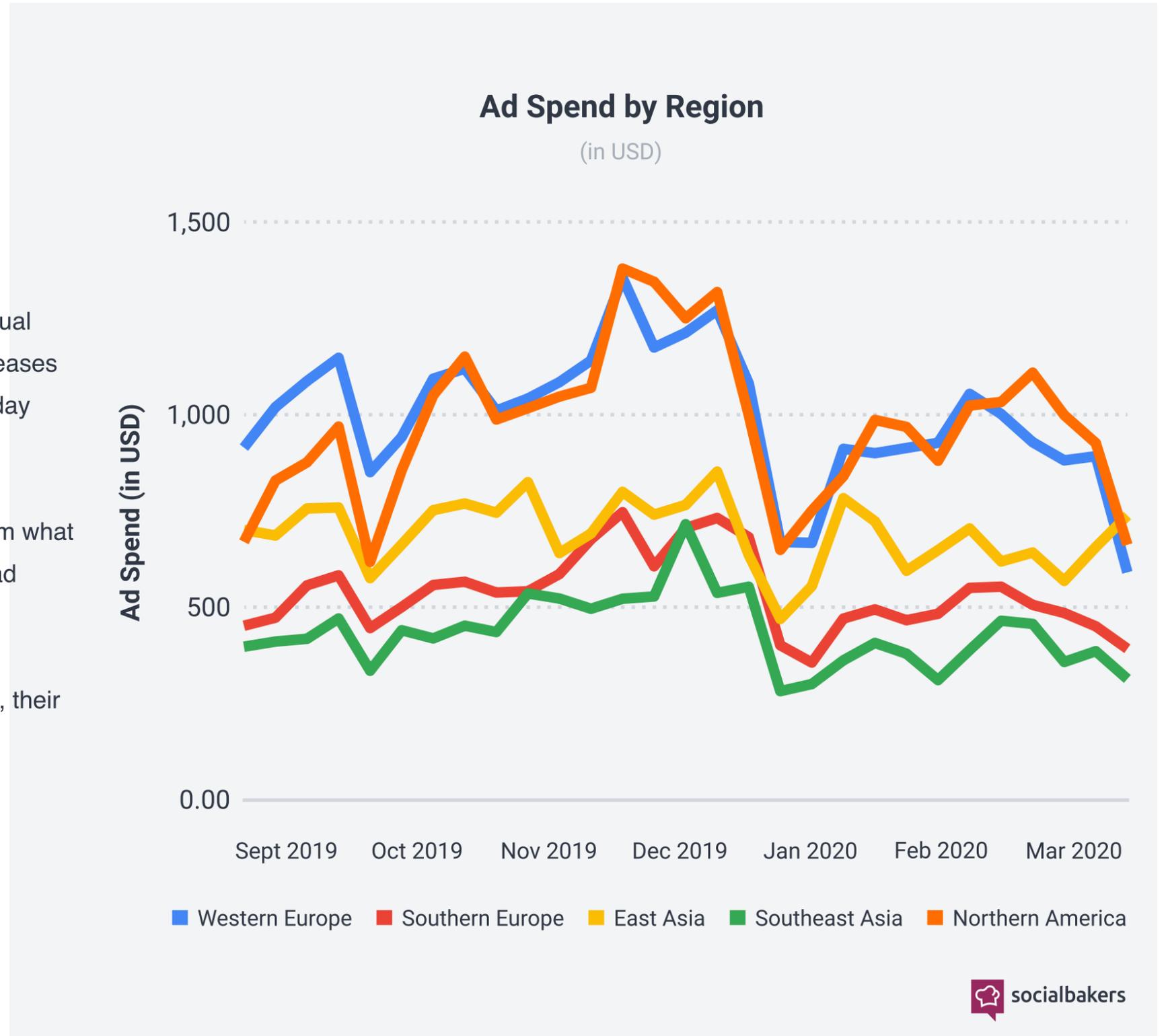


East Asia Increases Spend 21.5%

Looking at five regions globally, all of them showed the expected annual decrease in ad spend around the holidays. However, after some increases in the new year, most of them have decreased back down to the holiday level or even lower because of the pandemic.

The exception is East Asia, where brands have started to recover from what they hope is the most difficult part of the coronavirus. In that region, ad spend **increased by 21.5%** since the beginning of March.

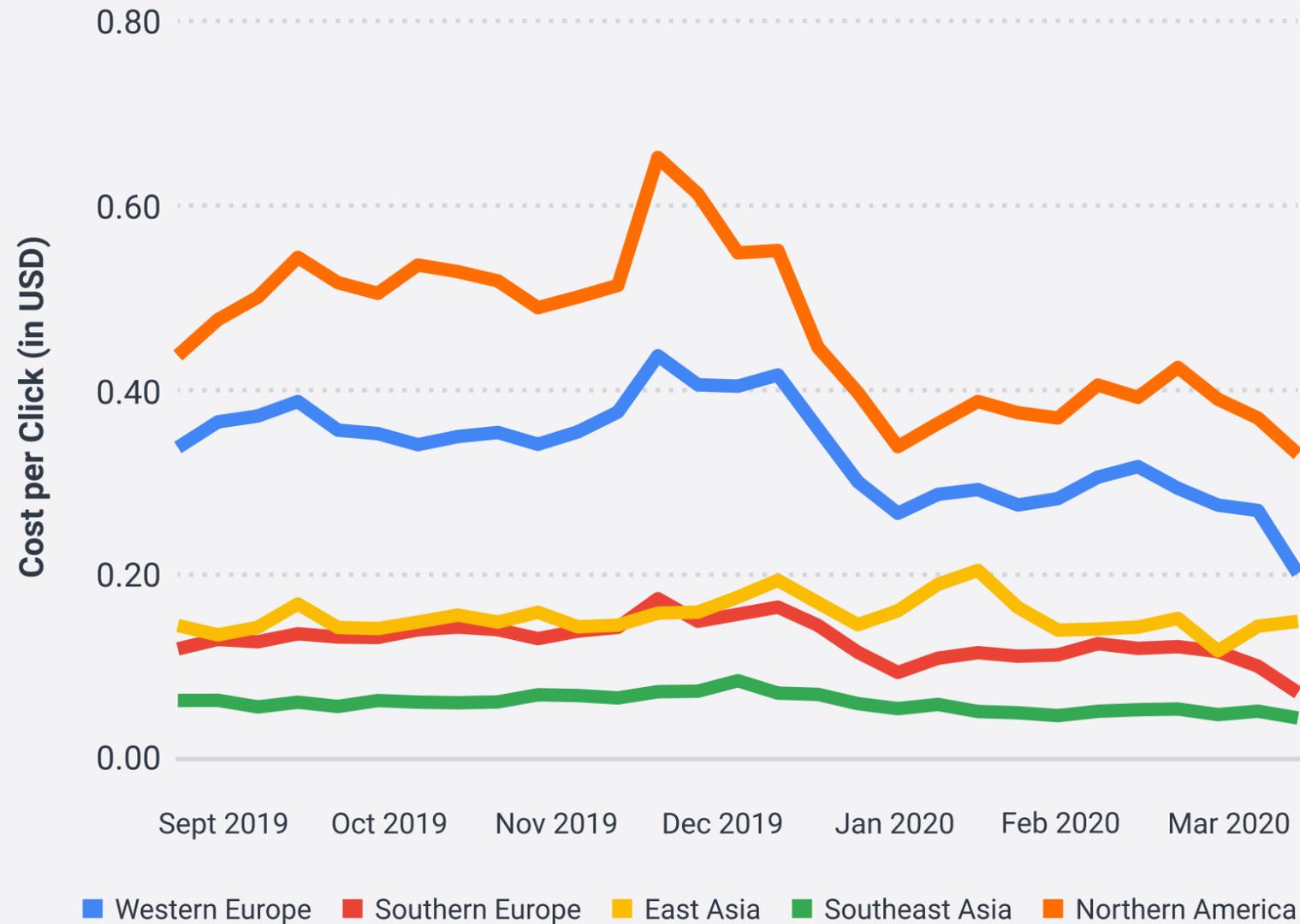
This suggests that as other regions get the coronavirus under control, their ad spend may return to more normal levels.





Cost per Click by Region

Median Weekly Ad Value



CPC by Region

Regionally, the decline and recovery in CPC has mostly followed the spread of COVID-19 and its impact on each region. Overall, CPC mostly declined following the pre-holiday peak.

However, that change has been more dramatic since the start of March, where the decreases ranged from 6.8% down in Southeast Asia to 36.7% down in Southern Europe.

As with ad spend, though, the exception is East Asia, where CPC actually increased by 25.6% in March.





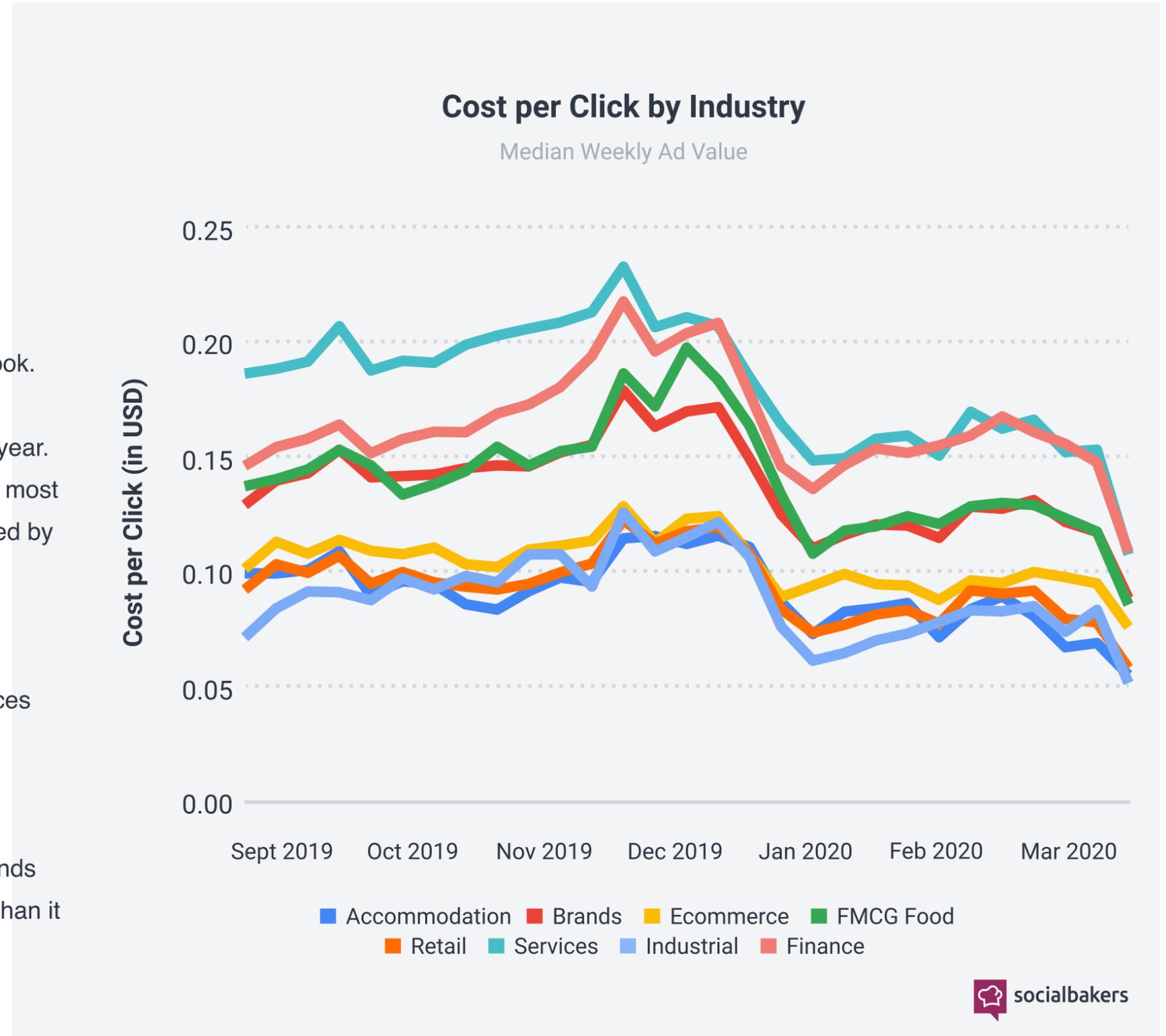
Brands' CPC Decreased 30.8%

The cost to advertise is much lower for nearly every industry that Socialbakers analyzed because of a decrease in the CPC on Facebook.

Most industries traditionally have the lowest CPC right after the new year. Brands, for example, were at \$0.110 during that time. Comparing the most recent numbers to the last full week in February, Brands' CPC dropped by 30.8% (\$0.130 to \$0.090).

Looking at some specific industries during that same time frame, Accommodation decreased by 30.5% (\$0.082 to \$0.057) while Services decreased by 34.4% (\$0.163 to \$0.107).

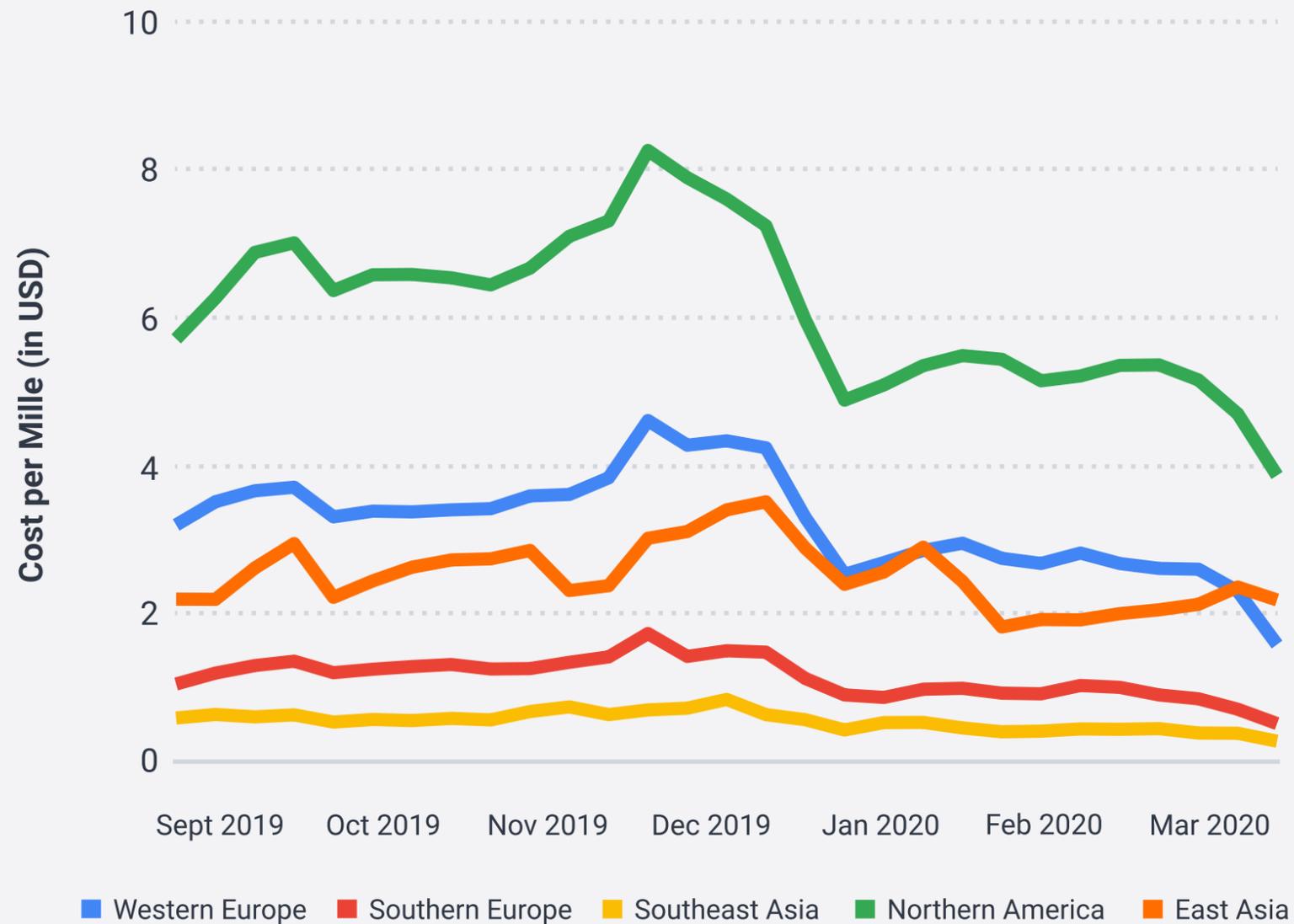
Because of this situation, the CPC is similar or lower than those post-holiday costs. That means there's a possible opportunity for brands that have the budget to make their message go to a wider audience than it normally would.





Cost per Mille by Region

Median Weekly Ad Value



CPM by Region

The CPM in East Asia has bounced back to nearly the same level that it was at seven months ago. However, the other regions, which are still in the midst of the pandemic, have steadily declined in the new year.

Northern America has gone down from a high of \$8.394 at the end of November to \$4.074 in mid-March, which is when the region really started feeling the impact of COVID-19. Both Southeast Asia and East Asia showed a similar drop in February 2020, and so far East Asia is the only one to increase in a meaningful way.

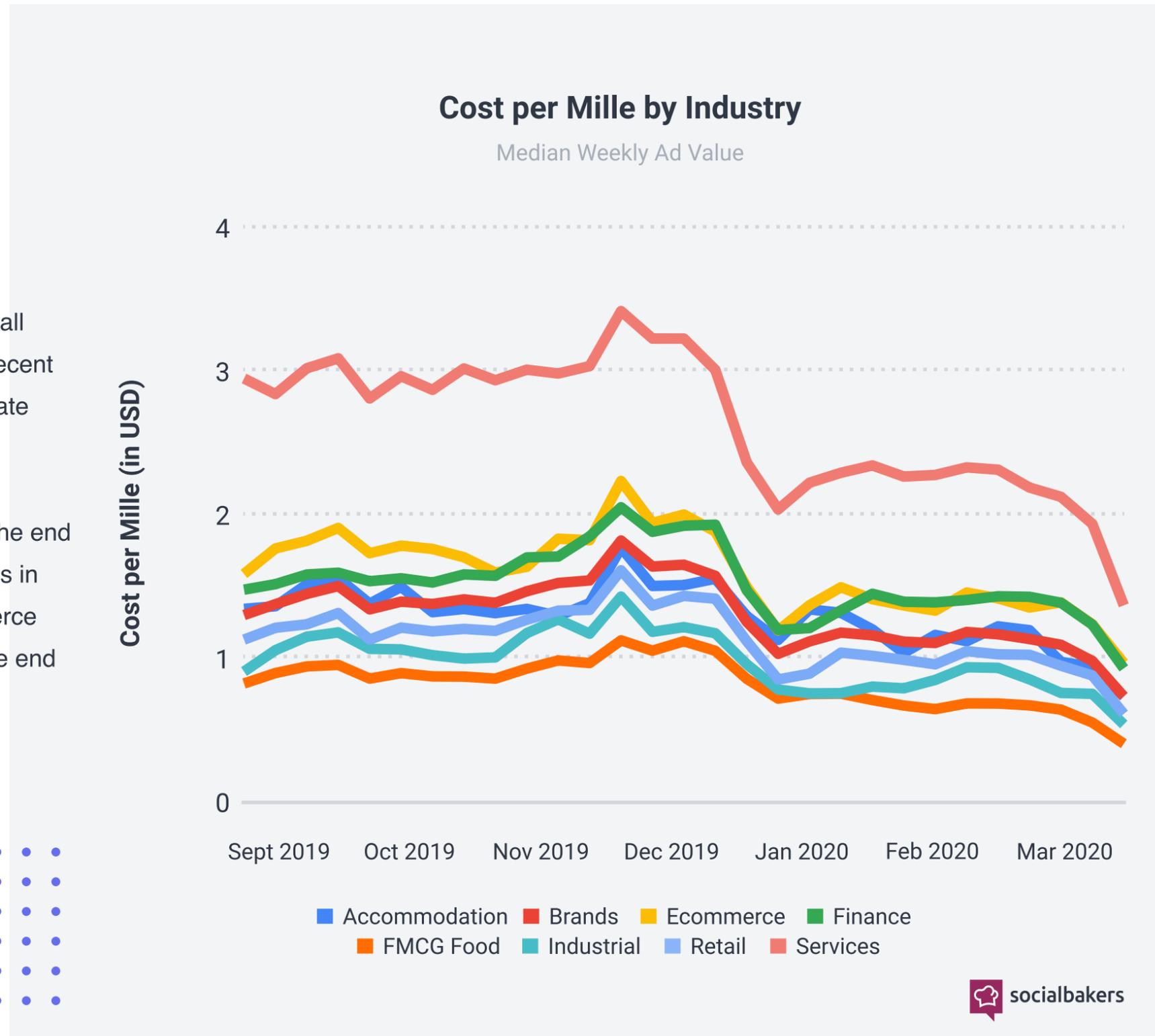
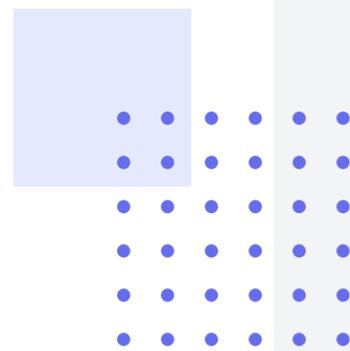




Ads Cheaper as CPM Decreases

Similar to CPC, there's been a decrease in CPM across the board of all industries that Socialbakers analyzed. For Brands overall, the most recent figure (\$0.810) is less than half of the previous seven-month high in late November 2019 (\$1.883).

Looking at some specific industries, Services hit a high of \$3.486 at the end of November, then experienced the same decrease as most industries in early 2020 and declined all the way to \$1.436 in mid-March. Ecommerce also mirrors the overall trends as its previous seven-month high at the end of November (\$2.304) is more than double its current CPM (\$1.043).





socialbakers

**Have a question regarding any
of the data in the report?**

Contact us at ask@socialbakers.com

socialbakers.com