

**Episode 2:**

# B2B & B2C products & services during and after COVID-19

This is the second episode in our three-part series based on a survey of 570 U.S. personal and business consumers:

## Adapting B2B & B2C Strategies in the Time of COVID

**Episode 1:**

Insights to help B2C companies survive & thrive during COVID-19 derived from innovative message & image testing

**Episode 2:**

B2B & B2C products & services during and after COVID-19

**Episode 3:**

The changing consumer & business perspectives from COVID-19

# The Gist

**Both B2B and B2C companies have an opportunity to acquire and retain more customers by providing more safety and convenience in the way they engage and serve customers. These are the cornerstones of what customers now want.**

- People will continue using the majority of the B2B and B2C products they have started, or increased their use of, during COVID even after physical distancing ends.
- For B2B products, the most desired products employees plan to continue using are virtual training, video calls with coworkers and attending virtual conferences.
- For B2C products, the most desired products customers plan to continue using are telemedicine, curbside/pickup shopping applications and shopping with local businesses.

## → LOOKING FORWARD

The pandemic may be the catalyst that drives sustained adoption of virtual appointments, meetings, and increased efficiency of “chore-like tasks” such as grocery and food pickup.

**A silver lining** here for all organizations is the ability to more efficiently serve and support customers saving customers and organizations time. This can result in more satisfied customers and more profitable organizations.

**Best Buy is a case in point as they innovate to adapt to changing customer needs and are being rewarded for it.** According to Corie Barry (CEO), “I am so incredibly proud of our team who seamlessly implemented a new and highly effective operating model in a matter of 48 hours across our entire store base. We are fulfilling essential technology needs for customers in a safe and innovative way, including continuing to provide remote technical advice and support. We have retained approximately 70% of our sales compared to last year since moving to our enhanced curbside service model despite the fact that all our domestic stores are closed to customer traffic. This is a testament to the strength of our multi-channel capabilities – as our Domestic online sales are up over 250% and approximately 50% of these sales are from customers choosing to pick up their products at our stores since moving to our curbside service model.”

# The Details

Paradoxes regularly conducts research to understand appetite and demand for new products and services, as well as Total Addressable Market (TAM) analysis. This testing indicates how a product will perform in the market over time.

As the Covid-19 situation transitions from quarantine to opening, we asked 570 Americans which products they used before, during, and will use after COVID-19.

Those who took our survey were able to select their usage of products before, during, and after COVID-19, which will help companies understand how consumers plan to use their products when physical distancing ends.

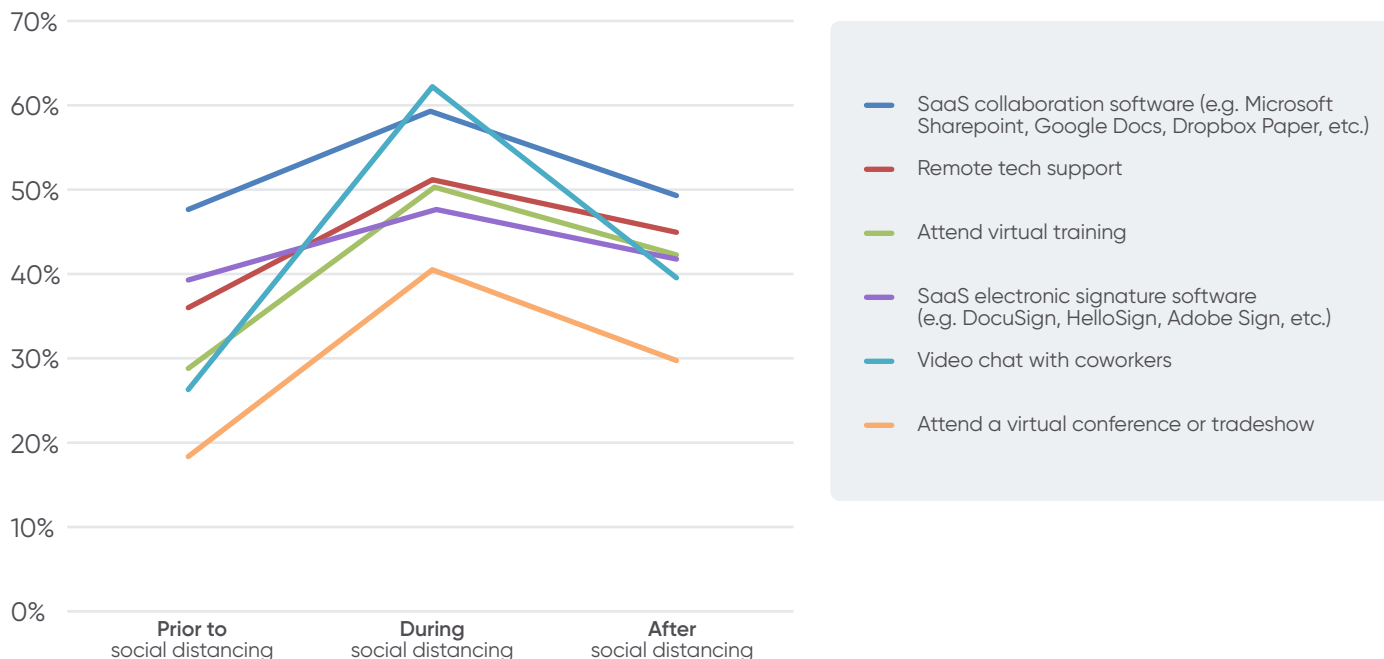
## B2B

## Pre-During-Post B2B Product Testing

In order to understand how businesses and employees are collaborating with each other, we asked about online collaboration technology that allows workers to more easily collaborate from home. Unsurprisingly, we found that there was a large uptick during physical distancing where those working from home were suddenly using much more collaboration software and technology.

Q:

**In your business activities, which technologies did you use, do you currently use, and/or do you want to use at least once per week prior to, during, and after social distancing?**



n=478, Gen Pop Currently Employed, May 2020

Q:

**What technologies are growing the most?**

The business technologies where usage increased most from pre-COVID to during are **video chat with coworkers (up 36%)**, **attending a virtual conference (up 22%)** and **attending virtual training (up 21%)**. These were followed by **remote tech support (up 15%)** and **collaboration software (up 12%)**.

**The commonality here is all centered around supporting work from home.**



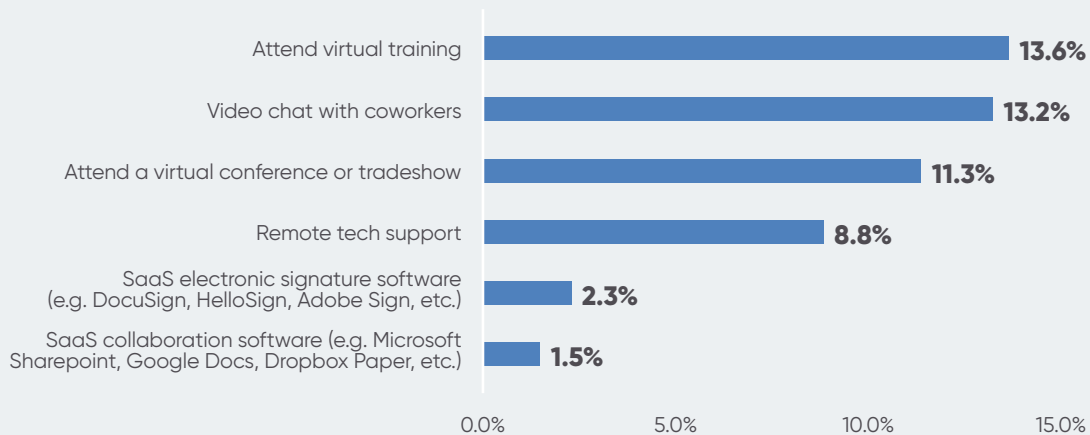
### Are these trends permanent?

While many employees are increasing their usage of various technologies that support remote working such as training, support, and communication, many indicate they will decrease their usage of these products from their current usage levels after physical distancing subsides.

However, the silver lining for companies providing and using these technologies is workers predict they will keep using all of these technologies at a greater rate than they were before COVID. Many products which had a low rate of initial adoption have high percentages of employees who will continue using these products after physical distancing.

Attending virtual training (up 14% from pre to post), video chat with coworkers (up 13%), attending virtual conferences (up 11%), and remote tech support (up 9%) are seeing the greatest intent for post-COVID use.

#### These business products & services are forecasted to see the greatest usage increase from pre to post COVID



n=478, Gen Pop Currently Employed, May 2020  
Delta: change in %populating using technology from before to after COVID

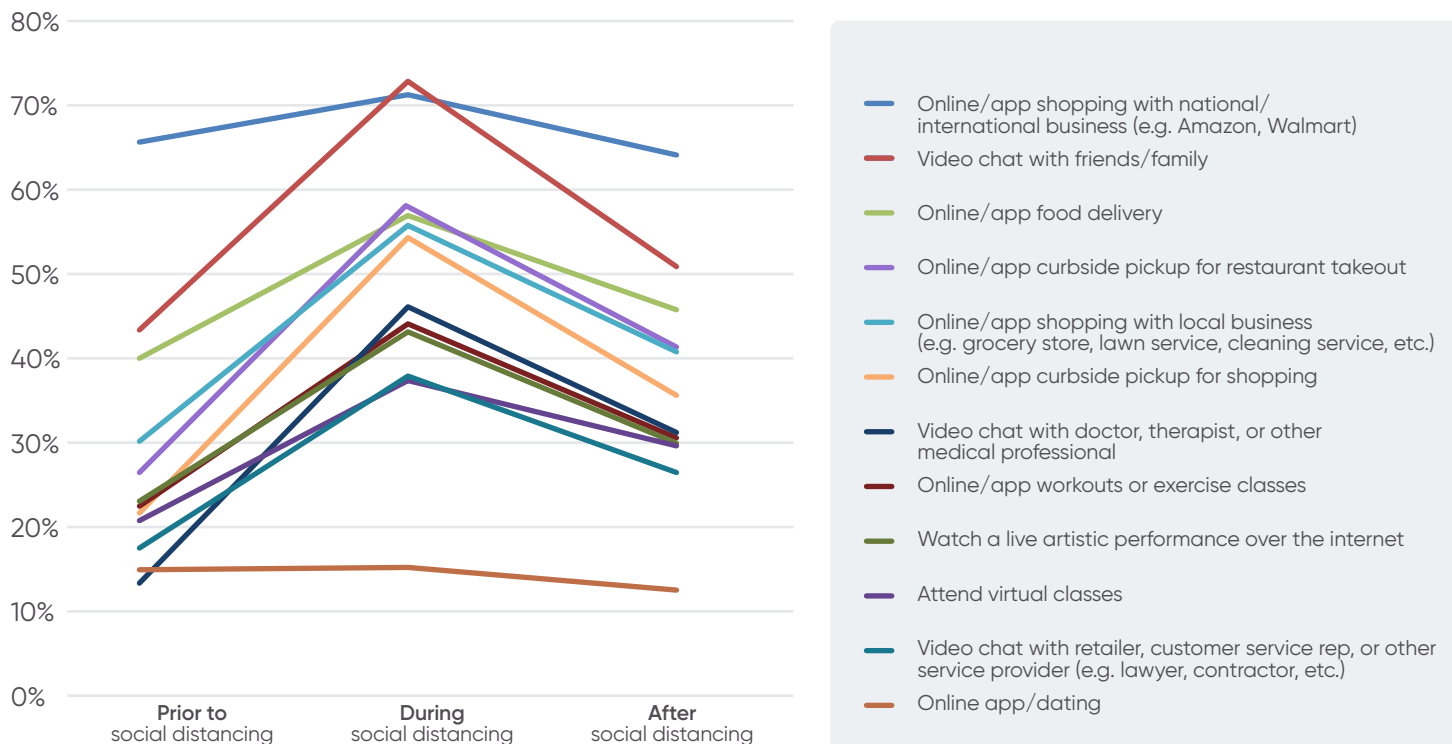
## B2C

## Pre-During-Post B2C Product Testing

In order to understand how consumers are interacting with businesses during physical distancing, we also asked consumers which products they were using before, during, and will continue to use after COVID. Unsurprisingly, we found that usage of consumer technology increased during COVID.

Q:

**In your personal activities, which technologies did you use, do you currently use, and/or do you want to use at least once per week prior to, during, and after social distancing?**



n=478, Gen Pop, May 2020

The consumer technologies that increased most from pre-COVID to during are **virtual doctor visits (up 33%)**, **ordering online and picking up curbside (up 33%)** and **video chat with family and friends (up 29%)**. These were followed by **online exercise classes (up 21%)** and **live, online artistic performances (up 20%)**.

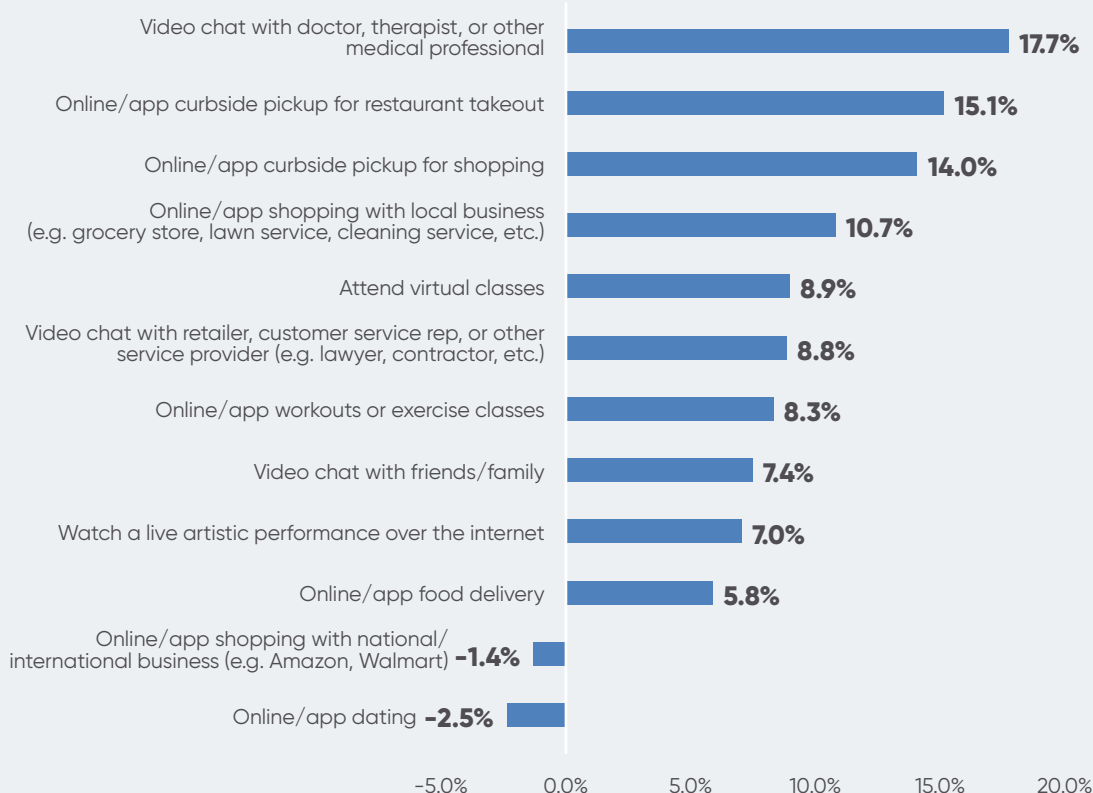
**The commonality here is convenience, safety and some form of human connection.**



## Which of these new behaviors will stick with consumers?

Looking forward, consumers indicate they will likely continue using nearly all of these products after social distancing ends. Telemedicine is forecasted to see the highest continued use post-COVID (+18% pre to post), order online and pickup curbside (food and retail items +15%), local shopping (+11%) followed by virtual classes, video chat with service providers (e.g. lawyers, contractors) and video chat with family/friends (+8%). Businesses have an opportunity to respond to these changing consumer behaviors by providing services and support that provide this safety and convenience.

### These consumer products & services are forecasted to see the greatest usage increase from pre to post COVID



n=478, Gen Pop Currently Employed, May 2020  
Delta: change in %populating using technology from before to after COVID

## Services and technologies after social distancing

In addition to asking consumers and employees which technologies they will continue to use after social distancing through a poll question, we also asked this open ended question: **What services, technologies, or behaviors have you adopted during social distancing, and would like to continue even after social distancing fully stops?**

### THIS IS SOME OF WHAT THEY TOLD US:

*"I would like to stay as thoughtful as I currently am, and relaxed. I would also like a lot of curbside pick up things to continue after."*

*"I'm going to continue supporting more local businesses and video chatting with my friends and family that I don't get to see because they live far away more often; that's been a blessing during my self quarantine."*

*"Work from home works out well so I could do my work and after do what I like to do and go outside in the back yard and have a good time and I don't have to get up early while I work in my house and get ready for work; for me it is just perfect at home to work."*

*"Generally accepted use of virtual technology with results-orientation; no shame or judging if/when the kids cry or shout or the dog barks. Behaviors that enable trust building even if/when we can't always see each others' faces."*

### CATEGORIZED AND QUANTIFIED RESPONSES

**What services, technologies, or behaviors have you adopted during social distancing, and would like to continue even after social distancing fully stops?**

**Instances**

Digital communication	127
Social distancing measures	90
Food delivery	46
Work from home	30
Digital purchases	20
Enjoying people's company	11
Exercise	10
At home class/gathering	10
Social media	9
Other	144

## Most innovative technologies

Respondents were also asked: **What is the most innovative use of technology you have seen a business use during social distancing?**

We heard many responses detailing creative and innovative technologies they experienced businesses providing during COVID, which were able to mitigate some aspect of pain related to social distancing:

### THIS IS SOME OF WHAT THEY TOLD US:

*"I saw a board game convention go 100% online the week before the convention was supposed to happen, managing and running tournaments for players and spectators from across the globe, actually increasing attendance beyond the group they had expected to attend physically."*

*"Telehealth works great for me since I am in a very rural area and need to drive 55 miles to see a doctor and possibly get exposed to COVID 19 on the trip to town."*

*"I'm amazed at how quickly companies set up on-line ordering and curbside pick-up to meet the new demands placed on them due to social distancing."*

*"The Travis Scott Fortnite concert clocked 12.3M concurrent viewers. No doubt Fortnite would have not done virtual concerts without social distancing measures in place but still an incredible example of what's possible in a virtual space. Watch the video."*

*"Personalized texts from owner of small business reaching out to customers to invite to a virtual dinner party with the restaurant as host."*

### CATEGORIZED AND QUANTIFIED RESPONSES

**What is the most innovative use of technology you have seen a business use during social distancing?**

**Instances**

In-person meetings to remote	168
Essential appointments	28
Delivery applications	25
Digital group experiences designed for the pandemic	24
Online	13
Work from home	12
Capabilities of monitoring technology	13
Medical innovation	10
PPE	9
Physical distancing	9
Touchless documentation	7
Other/None	140

## Desired characteristics in new products and services

In order to understand the unmet needs of consumers today, we asked: **What (realistic) technology-driven service do they wished existed during social distancing but does not?**

Many people had creative ideas of a technological future with VR and hologram projection, but at the heart of these answers, many people want technology that makes their lives easier and allows them to communicate and connect with their families, customers, and prioritize their safety.

### THIS IS SOME OF WHAT THEY TOLD US:

*"VR for my personal training business."*

*"I wish that we could project a holographic image of ourselves to our employers, family, and friends in these times. Unfortunately, we aren't that advanced just yet."*

*"A projector face call so we can feel like others are around us."*

*"True virtual meetings, like we're in the same room together, that enable normal side conversations and group dynamics including non-verbal communications."*

*"Be able to access stores' counters of how many people are inside, so I can plan a trip to the grocery store or hardware store, for example, when there aren't many people there (or at least avoid them when they have a line or are near capacity)."*

### CATEGORIZED AND QUANTIFIED RESPONSES

**What (realistic) technology-driven service do they wished existed during social distancing but does not?** **Instances**

Ways to connect	50
Item delivery	37
COVID detection	33
VR	11
Internet connection	8
Medical	8
Robots/automated companion	7
Bulk documentation	2
Government tasks	2
Food delivery	2
Work from home	2
Other	252

Businesses have done an impressive job of adapting for their employees and customers alike in the midst of a global crisis. Simultaneously, both workers and consumers have begun to adapt to new technologies that enable them to stay connected with family members, coworkers, and stay on top of appointments, training, and events.

Additionally, many people have indicated they are going to continue using these technologies well after social distancing ends. The change is real, and many changes are likely here to stay. Businesses need to make choices – how they partition retail space, how they conduct meetings and training, how they support work from home all centered around safety and convenience. As one respondent so eloquently said – **“Businesses who did not use their virtual space effectively [are] suddenly realizing that not doing so will cause them to be left behind.”**

---

In our final episode of **Adapting B2B & B2C Strategies in the Time of COVID** study, we will explore the changing consumer & business perspectives from COVID-19.

## About Paradoxes

Established in 2007, Paradoxes is a strategic marketing organization that gathers and analyzes information to help clients make sales, marketing and product decisions.

Our focus is on creating sturdy foundational marketing components, anchored in customer and market intelligence, that span the product lifecycle: Design, plan & build; Market & sell, and Adopt & use.

We welcome the chance to test messages for your company, produce strategies for evolving products in a post-COVID world, or to produce research like what you see here. You can find us at **[paradoxesinc.com](https://paradoxesinc.com)**.

