

The Lowdown

M.i. Media's round-up of the latest market, industry and media trends

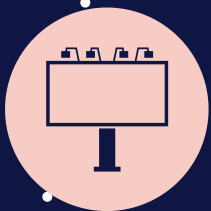
As the country prepares for further unlocking, we highlight the uncertainty around its **impact on media consumption**, see **Instagram's plans to evolve** and how **ITV is making Love Island instantly shoppable**. Read on!



Continued media uncertainty ahead

As we go to press, the new health secretary, Sajid Javid, has confirmed that England's lockdown easing will go ahead on 19th July. This will see most social distancing restrictions removed including no limits on how many people can meet, the re-opening of nightclubs and face coverings no longer required by law. This will be good news for several sectors of the economy but these changes are likely to have implications for media planning and buying too.

The onset of lockdown in March 2020 saw audiences pivot away from media consumed out of home (cinema, posters, daily newspapers etc), to the benefit (in terms of audience if not advertising revenues) of media consumed in home especially TV and internet usage. Given restrictions have been gradually easing, we don't anticipate quite such seismic shifts in audience or demand as experienced 16 months ago, but there's still plenty of scope for continued media volatility. More people spending more time out of home once again is providing a big boost for the poster industry, but the pace at which passengers re-embrace public transport (still only at c.50% of norms) will need to be closely monitored. Drops in TV viewing coupled with a return of demand have the potential to drive significant cost inflation. And question marks persist around the extent to which ecommerce and virtual behaviours will endure as "real life" resumes.



As the recently deceased Donald Rumsfeld knew, there are known unknowns and unknown unknowns. Advertisers need media partners with the flexibility to navigate the uncertainties of media behaviour and the ability to identify opportunities to enhance their media value wherever / whenever they arise.



Not just for photos! - Insta seeks to broaden its appeal

As reported on [Search Engine Journal](#), Adam Mosseri, Head of Instagram, has announced his plans to build new experiences on the platform in four key areas:

1. Creators - new monetisation features to help creators earn more
2. Video - use more to keep people entertained
3. Shopping - buy via the platform
4. Messaging - expand this more

Clearly Instagram is trying to better compete with the likes of TikTok and YouTube, for both consumer engagement and advertising revenue. The extent to which their N.P.D. roll outs succeed in expanding platform usage will be well worth watching.



Google extends lifespan of 3rd party cookies

Google has announced that they will extend the use of 3rd party cookies until 2023 ([a year longer than originally stated](#)). As reported in [Campaign](#), the news has allowed the adtech industry a bit more time to find viable alternatives - indeed tech stocks jumped nearly 15% in reaction to the news.

But let's not forget that Apple and Firefox have already cracked down on tracking, so for at least 40% the cookie has already gone, and advertisers delaying their own reaction after the delay from Google will be in trouble.



The year of the "Rewatch"

As reported in '[Comfort TV - the answer to high cognitive load](#)', Associate Professor of Psychology, Jennifer Fayard suggests that due to the 'heavier cognitive load' presented by the pandemic, many have sought relief/escapism from old TV shows.

Her thinking is that our brains have been too tired to cope with new TV shows with new plots and characters. Instead we have resorted to old favourites that make us happy. Indeed, according to [GQ](#), The Sopranos (which ended in 2007) was one of the hottest shows of 2020.

As life continues to open up, it will be interesting to see how much longer TV viewers will continue to seek comfort and security from old classics or if we're now ready to embrace the new.

Video ads launch in Console & PC Games



As reported on Axios, '[Exclusive: New platform launches to bring TV ads to console games](#)', a new advertising platform called playerWON has launched to allow advertisers to run TV-esque spots in video games. Gamers will have the opportunity to select whether they will watch a 15 or 30 second video ad in exchange for gaming perks.

The platform allows advertisers to reach typically young and hard to reach audiences but marketers will need to be wary of the brand safety risks of associating with sometimes violent games content. With gaming likely to continue to grow, more brands will be looking at how to capitalise appropriately.

Shoppable TV - Boots, ITV and Love Island



ITV has launched a Shoppable TV service in collaboration with Boots during their popular Love Island show. As reported in [Mediatel](#), the service will allow viewers to discover and shop for Boots items directly on screen to get the 'Loved Up Look' (as the official beauty sponsor of the show).

The tech is available only on LG smart TVs and uses AI tech that identifies and tags featured products during programmes and notifies opted in viewers that products on screen are available.

ITV plans to roll out the service across more of its shows later in the year so definitely one to watch (if not immediately buy)!

Key themes from Cannes Lions 2021



The Cannes Lions Live 2021 took place at the end of June, seen by [WARC](#) as a good barometer for the key trends over the last 12 months. A selection of Media Lions jurors spoke to WARC and noted several opportunities and challenges:

- **Gaming** - in-game, gaming content, esports sponsorships, gamification techniques - have all been enthusiastically embraced
- **Using data and technology for good** - for instance Tennis Australia's '[Action Audio](#)' concept increasing the accessibility of their content

- **Augmented connectedness** - the pandemic has resulted in greater blending of physical and virtual worlds with brands connecting to audiences in new ways online. [Here](#) is a great example of how a child protection charity, Association L'Enfant Bleu, created an 'Undercover Avatar' to help children at risk of violence to speak up
- **The medium is the message** - We've long known that media choice has an important role to play in effective communication as [this](#) example from French charity, Innocence En Danger powerfully demonstrates...
- **Don't forget older audiences** - consumer behaviours have undergone unprecedented changes over the last 12 months, arguably for older segments more than most, so it's worth considering if your marketing plans reflect them.



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Doing the right thing pays back – we accelerate growth.

