

#impactful

the strategic newsletter
from the Omnicom PR Group



OmnicomPRGroup

Newsletter #12

impacting opinion
impacting reputation

Each month, the OmnicomPublicRelationsGroup agency takes a look at the news and trends in the world of communication, bringing you a selection of content to assist you in determining your strategy.

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#1 - impactful data

Taking care of ourselves: how the French are going about it in 2021

Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, social distancing and safety measures have shaken up our everyday lives. This new behavior has had an impact on the relationship we have with our health.

According to a study by the CSA (Consumer Science & Analytics) for Prisma Media Solutions, **health is the number one concern for the French population**, as **89% say they are preoccupied by access to care and their health**. Although this is more of a structural trend, it has become more marked and is ahead of concern about work and unemployment, which preoccupies **74.5%** of the French people surveyed.

Despite **great trust in the medical profession**, the crisis is also responsible for us changing our behavior, since **41% of French people now refrain from consulting their doctor for fear of getting infected or bothering them**. Consequently, people are increasingly relying on **self-medication**, primarily to get quicker treatment. Young people, in particular, have begun consulting online content more frequently for information.

In parallel, **telehealth has gained popularity since the beginning of the pandemic, going up by +25 points in just two years**. This is a practice that could become a permanent feature in our everyday lives.

On the whole, **French people take care of their health**. Despite a growing weariness of the exceptional current situation, they won't admit defeat and have accepted **the imperative to stay healthy**. Also, **79%** of those people surveyed understand that good health needs to be approached in a holistic way: at both the **physical and psychological levels**.

As far as mental health is concerned, **the population increasingly consults psychologists, + 2 points**, and is more prepared to discuss their anxieties and preoccupations. A reassuring and necessary trend, especially in the face of **young people's psychological distress**, highlighted by medical professionals.

People, especially younger generations, are also increasingly turning to alternative medicine like **naturopathy, yoga and sophrology**.

Ultimately, the slowing down of our way of life has allowed the French to review their choices and priorities. For **53%** of respondents, not being to **go away for the weekend or on holiday** is what they've missed most. For **47%**, it's **spending time with their families and friends**. And **urban dwellers** lament the fact that they can't **see enough nature**.

Source: L'ADN – [Beyond personal protection measures, how are the French taking care of themselves?](#)



#1- impactful data

Companies and citizens: society rallies around sustainability issues

CSR issues become more integrated in company strategies

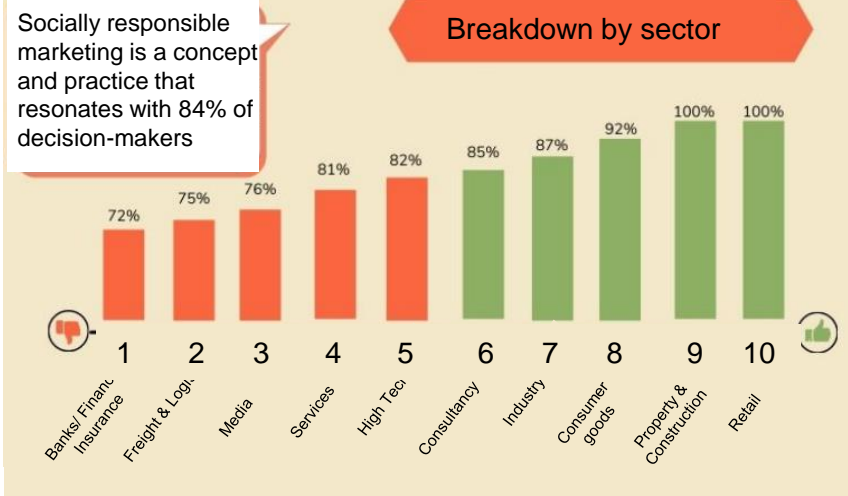
The social and environmental responsibility of a corporation, or CSR, already constitutes, for many companies, **a specific dimension of global strategy**. For others, **the implementation is happening more gradually**.

Adetem carried out a **study about socially responsible marketing** and assesses **companies' progress in terms of engagement** and **the mindset of their managers**:

59%
of decision-makers
evolve within
companies already
engaged in CSR
marketing initiatives

93%
of decision-makers
feel personally
concerned by CSR
marketing issues

Socially responsible
marketing is a concept
and practice that
resonates with 84% of
decision-makers



The most engaged sectors

81%
Consumer
goods

75%
Freight
& Logistics

64%
Consultancy

64%
Services

The least engaged sectors

57%
Industry

52%
Media

50%
Retail

45%
High Tech

Factors that encourage marketers to engage:



Obstacles within the company to socially responsible marketing:



The Covid-19 crisis: an accelerator for engagement of communication and marketing professionals

The Club des Annonceurs (The Advertisers' Club) and Cision announced the second edition of their **Engagement Marketing Barometer**, based on its study about CSR transformations initiated within companies since the beginning of the pandemic. In one year, the following changes have been observed:

- **Companies are thinking less and doing more**

99% of marketing and communication professionals, believe a company should play an **environmental and social role**. **68%** of companies have already set up **concrete actions, approximately 10 points more than in February 2020**. Only **10%** of companies surveyed have not yet thought about engaging.

- **Companies' engagement strategies have been influenced by the health crisis**

20% of the marketing and communication professionals interviewed said that **the health crisis has had an impact on their companies' CSR strategy**. What emerges from the study is that marketing professionals have never been as **concerned** about environmental issues as they are today.

- **Within companies, communication professionals are gaining legitimacy**

75% of people interviewed maintain that CSR marketing initiatives are **drastically altering their profession**, which is 10 points up from last year. For **83%** of the professionals questioned, the fact that brands are showing more commitment, is making **their roles broader**.

Consequently, communication professionals are feeling **more empowered than ever before to implement their CSR strategies**: **62%** think they are legitimate enough to change things.

The general public also seems more involved and focused on sustainability issues.

The general public also seems more involved and focused on sustainability issues

20%

of French people actively keep themselves informed about responsible consumption

39.4%

of French people favor quality or local products

+168%

in interest for concrete changes in daily life since the beginning of the global pandemic

Source: Culture RP – [The impact of the health crisis on brands' CSR strategy](#)
Influencia – [Demystifying responsible consumption with semantic artificial intelligence](#)

The flourishing industry of fake on the Internet

The huge explosion of e-commerce, the advancement of online services and, more generally, Internet traffic over recent years, has contributed to the emergence of a whole new industry, **the industry of “fake”**. Fictitious influencers, fake reviews, fake star ratings for products and services, are all now part of the **digital landscape**, forcing consumers to be even more vigilant.

Fake influencers and influencers with fictitious followers are on the increase.

The phenomenon of acquiring fake subscribers on social media something the general public is aware of, and **yet still it continues**. However, the occurrence of “fake” on social media isn't limited to followers and can directly relate to **influencers** too.

Now, a first category of **fictitious influencers** can be identified, **bots** that **share varied automated content**. Other fake influencers, as well as being able to share automated content, can also **produce publications** using specialized rewriting software. In this way, a fake influencer can generate up to 10 similar posts from one article.

And finally, the most “fake” of them all, is the fictitious influencer who can assume the appearance of a professor or scientist and **share content that appears to carry authority**.

Fake star ratings and fake reviews

In 2021, rating services and products is **something we have widely incorporated into our consumer habits**. Both upstream, when we consult other consumers' feedback before buying something, and downstream, when we rate or leave a review after purchase.

Yet recent research has shown that **most of the reviews or ratings left by consumers are not reliable**. The journalists Ismaël Hallisat and Vincent Coquaz reveal in their book, *The new War of Stars*, the fact that **60-70%** of Amazon reviews relating to consumer goods (like headphones for example) are fake.

The authors expose some of these practices. On **Facebook**, many private groups offer products, often sold by Chinese manufacturers, free of charge to their members, in return for positive ratings or reviews on Amazon.

Also, the **platform The Insiders** regroups big brands, who directly address consumers and suggest sharing positive reviews on different websites in exchange for products at discounted prices.

Source: L'ADN – [The new War of Stars / Fake media, fake influencers, the traffic of stars ... the flourishing business of fake](#)

#2 - impactful opinions

Expert opinions – governmental communication during the pandemic, traps and levers

As part of the **Covid vaccination campaign**, the French government revealed the [TV ad](#) "We all want to be together again, so let's get vaccinated" in March, in which the Ministry for Solidarity and Health **invited French people to get vaccinated and to continue to adhere to personal protection measures**. But, in the face of the growing mistrust within parts of the population, **the government didn't choose a "traditional" way of communicating, but instead invited French celebrities to set an example**. The government spokesperson, Gabriel Attal, expressed the need to **"rebuild French people's trust"** in this difficult period of uncertainty. Regardless, the **chosen communication for the vaccination program** was subject to a number of comments.

"It's true that communication can't solve crises, [...], but its role is to explain them, to support them, however difficult they may be, thereby bolstering acceptance." -

Eric Giully

Eric Giully, president of the communication consultancy firm, CLAI, observes that **"government advertising campaigns are flooding the airwaves and screens"** and considers the **causes of the failure of the government's communication strategy**. He believes that "the government committed, in our opinion, three mistakes, which considerably undermined trust in its statements: **repeated announcements with constantly modified objectives, postponed actions and, finally, not announcing certain things, which obscured the gravity of the situation and reduced mobilization against the pandemic**".

The expert asks whether it was prudent to **release an emotional televised campaign to encourage vaccination**. Was the President of the Republic right in pointing out, as early last week, that the main difficulty was going to be convincing the hesitant to get vaccinated, when the vast majority of those who want to, either can't or aren't eligible? **By making too many predictions, we run the risk of being out of sync and reinforcing the image of an authority out of touch with reality, not to mention arrogant.**"

Eric Giully concludes by reminding us that more than 300 people die from Covid in France and remarks that "nobody talks about this sad record". The consultant points out **"By choosing to not overdramatize and to communicate in a positive way, under the circumstances, [...] the government has undoubtedly missed an opportunity in the fight against the virus: the recognition of the seriousness of the situation. That is the only way to ensure sufficient respect for health measures"**.

Source: Les Echos – [Covid and communication: a missed opportunity for trust](#)



#3- impactful opinions



“Government communication is suspicious, invasive and sermonizing” - **Arnaud Benedetti**

Arnaud Benedetti, associate professor in communication at Paris-Sorbonne University, offers more generalized criticism of the government's health communication campaign. He states: “in line with the age-old prescription of the historic adman, Rossel Rove, **the executive recycled one of the oldest recipes of influencer marketing: the unique selling proposition, namely a message, or a “baseline”** whose function it is to perform by its obviousness to recipients: **“Inside with mine, outside as a citizen** [...] The intention is to condense the new spirit of healthcare, a sort of “neither...nor” somewhere between the absence of lockdown, of course, but also the absence of total freedom. **It is in this dim light that the government's health campaign seeks to speak in a way that everybody understands, which orders its message, clarifies, without ambiguity, and diminishes the risk of misunderstanding”.**

The professor however concludes that: “governmental expression has consequently changed from a bureaucratic, brutal, impersonal, pedantic language into one that is, once again, infantilizing, suspicious, invasive and sermonizing, as though a vital link was still missing in the language of authority, the only one likely to restore trust: respect for citizens”.

Source: Le Figaro – [The government's communication policy is suspicious, invasive and sermonizing](#)



There is a danger that communication on vaccination may continue to be an oversight in France” - **Nelly Haudegand**

For Nelly Haudegand, communication consultant, **“a succession of actions doesn't constitute a strategy, or even a plan”**. She adds: “there's no point in running a major campaign on vaccination when it still only concerns the minority [...]. Confusing speed and haste by launching a massive, directive campaign [...] frustrates anybody who's desperate to be vaccinated, but who isn't “in the target groups”, and **runs a serious risk of dissension when the system doesn't comply with the campaign's promises”**.

Nelly Haudegand provides a few imperatives to follow. In particular: “the necessity for **clear governance** [...] and the crucial importance, right from the start, of an integrated command center, which places communication at the heart of health policy, and is able to handle this crisis as well as others in the future”. She also highlights the importance of the **“orchestration”** of the strategy: “All communication about the Covid-19 vaccinations should be carefully combined with the information plan deployed over the last months around the three-part approach: test-alert-protect”. She adds: “and to co-ordinate mass and local communication, **large-scale recourse to opinion makers is necessary**: such as journalists, experts, celebrities, associations, moral authorities...they should all be called upon”.

In conclusion, the consultant states that **“communication must avoid dogma and respect individuals' free will** [...] autonomy and power need to be given back to the people rather than exist in a culture of injunction and order, which will always end up undermining the compliance of rules”.

Source: Le Monde – [“There is a danger that communication on vaccination may continue to be an oversight in France”](#)



#3 - impactful initiatives

“An open letter to...”: The Parisien and Aujourd'hui en France open up a new form of dialogue

On the 13th April, the French **daily newspapers Le Parisien and Aujourd'hui en France** launched “An open letter to...” a new **interactive format to cover current affairs**, with the aim of being more direct and hard-hitting. Each morning, Le Parisien's website and print editions publish an open letter addressed to a personality, **asking them questions about an everyday matter**. Elected officials, political leaders, artists, heads of companies, scientists or even TV presenters, will be challenged on this new media. The newspaper hopes to get a reply from the person in question the same day, which will be **published the following day** on their website and **shared on social media**.

Even though readers won't be able to directly write these open letters, they can suggest ideas for questions. The paper has said that this open letter should **“create an editorial co-construction between the editorial staff, and our readers, who are invited to suggest ideas for questions.”**

This new feature from Le Parisien opens up a **new form of dialogue between the opinion and personalities who manage, think, intervene and shape our society, in one way or another**. Even though social media has already become a tool for public expression over the last years, this initiative aims to provide an alternative form of relevant content.

These days, we see a large segment of the population condemn the **“uncivilized” side of social media like Twitter**, where the sharing of ideas may sometimes give rise to quite heated exchanges, **without actually generating a constructive debate**. Exchanges are often hindered by “haters” or “trolls” and the ideas shared are often forgotten about and fail to emerge from the flow of content.

This new type of exchange, initiated by a media, **re-examines the dialogue between the parties involved**. Business leaders and brands, for example, should benefit from the codes of this new form of conversation which is more structured and which won't disappear.

Source: CBNews - [Le Parisien associates its readers with the handling of current affairs](#)

Video games: the new ally in the field of healthcare

The Institut National du Cancer has created [Cancer Fighter](#) as part of the **fight against cancer**, and the **sharing of healthy lifestyle habits to adopt**. The video game is aimed at 10-12 year olds with the aim of encouraging them to incorporate sport and a balanced diet into their lives, and limiting their alcohol and tobacco intake.

#3- impactful initiatives

Choosing a video game as platform shows a **desire to use its target group's codes and areas of interest**. The video game, available online, introduces a young high school student whose mission it is to impose order to his or her's school, so that everybody can **regain a healthy lifestyle**. The player's mission is as follows: to collect a maximum number of bonuses, with which the participant can discover **the right habits to adopt to reduce the risks of developing cancer later in life**; and to avoid penalties, which signal **risky behavior**.

It isn't the first time that video games have been used as a **preventive tool for healthcare**. The **OdySight** app, developed by the company Tilak Healthcare, is used to monitor patients suffering from chronic maculopathies. It combines digitalized vision tests with fun puzzles to remotely monitor vision parameters. **This platform also gathers data that is transmitted directly to medical professionals**, in real time, who can then alert patients as necessary. This application is **much more than a simple video game** as it's now a **class 1 medical device that has been validated medically** and is used by nearly 2400 patients and 330 eye doctors, specializing in problems of the retina.

Source: Sud Ouest – [Cancer Fighter: a video game to raise the awareness of the young](#)/Challenges – [OdySight: a fun app designed to monitor retina diseases](#)

Pernod Ricard puts an end to its community management strategy

Maintaining strong links between a brand and its community these days appears to warrant a **strong and consistent presence on social media**. This investment is all the more crucial when we consider that **the time spent on social media has increased by 15% in just one year**. Yet, although seemingly counterintuitive, **the Pernod Ricard group has taken a gamble and is ending their community management strategy**.

They are putting aside the traditional "community management" in favor of **mini brand content campaigns, based on significant moments**. The group has decided that its interaction with its community should not be reduced to simple status updates which are rewarded by likes or comments but should rather be **developed around high quality interactions and stories**. For Cecile Milesi, Consumer Director, a more **meaningful** communication, based on **long-form content**, generates **interest, enriches brand messages and creates real conversations**.

To illustrate this new strategy, Cécile Milesi takes the example of Ballantine's, who recently produced a series of three 30-second content videos that were released on **Facebook** and **Instagram**. She confirms that the brand **doubled the number of full views, whereas previously there were only 3-second views**.

Source: La Réclame - [Why Pernod Ricard stopped community management](#)



#4 - digital impact

ClubHouse: often copied but not yet equalled?

In the face of the dazzling success of **ClubHouse** (which has been valued at 4 billion dollars following a new round of financing), social media and certain platforms raced to **come up with alternatives, based on the voice chatroom model**.

- **Facebook launched Hotline**: a web app that is only accessible for the moment to beta testers. Although the interface looks like ClubHouse, **Hotline offers certain differences**, like the chance to ask **written questions**. The other participants of the session can vote for or against these questions. Also, even though the option isn't operational yet, listeners will be able to **activate their cameras**. Another notable difference to the original app, which advocates immediacy and ephemeral content, is that **all discussions and sessions will be recorded**, then forwarded to the creator of the session.
- The communication platform **Discord**, from the world of gaming, has also **incorporated new features to compete with ClubHouse**. Even though Discord already had voice channels allowing users to talk as they please, the platform is breaking new ground by offering "**Stage Channels**". This new feature, more adapted to structured events (such as round tables), allows groups to get together and address audiences.
- **Twitter** also promptly offered its users a feature similar to ClubHouse. The social network has launched **Twitter Spaces**, allowing people to organize and participate in audio conferences. Available on IOS and Android, Spaces will soon also be accessible via desktop.

We have also learnt that **LinkedIn** and **Spotify** are currently working on ClubHouse-like features that should be released shortly.

Sources: L'Usine Digitale – [Facebook test Hotline, its app to rival ClubHouse](#) Stratégies – [Discord inaugurates a new ClubHouse-like feature](#) Journal du Geek – [Twitter confirms the arrival of Spaces in its web version](#)

Pinterest seeking new influencers and growth

Over the last few months, the social network **Pinterest** has been **looking for new influencers**. At the end of 2020, the network started by launching its own story function with **Story Pins**. Various other features, specifically designed for creators of content, were introduced including the updating of "**creator profiles**" to showcase published content. **Analytics tools** ...



#4 - digital impact

...have been made available as well as an engagement tab, making it easier for creators to connect with their audience.

Pinterest is now going a step further and has set out **its ambition to gain the loyalty of more influencers** and **attract new users**. To do this, the social network has announced the launch of a fund of \$500 000 to pay a small group of eight influencers “**from under-represented backgrounds**”. The company plans to add other profiles to the program throughout the year.

To benefit from the fund, the influencers must meet **certain criteria**: they must be over 18, propose original video content and have a certain number of followers.

Regarding this **select group**, Pinterest seems intent on going even further and has announced the launch of the **Creator Code**, so that the network can remain a “safe and positive” space. Creators will therefore be expected to **set an example** through the content they create, by showing kindness, practicing inclusion and not being offensive. Pinterest also prohibits the publication of **medically unsupported health claims** and **all forms of hate**.

Source: Le Siècle Digital – [Pinterest launches a \\$500 000 fund to pay its creators](#)

Instagram and Twitter promote safer and more ethical behavior on their networks

On the 14th April, Twitter announced its intention to improve **its algorithms** and presented the “**Responsible Machine Learning Initiative**”. This is an initiative to **make its algorithms more transparent**, but also to give users **more control over the content visible in their timelines**.

This action has come after users criticized the fact that **the algorithms tended to favor controversial content, the spreading of fake news and highlighted racist and sexist comments**. Twitter has made the decision to revise its algorithms to “**take responsibility**” for their decisions and “**provide equity and fairness of outcomes as well as more transparency**”.

For his part, Adam Mosseri, the CEO of Instagram recently confided that “**the race for engagement is harmful for humanity and for the mental health of our users**”. To address the situation, on the 14th April he announced the expansion of a test carried out in-house in 2019, which offers the option for users to hide the likes on their posts.

This test has now been expanded to all countries that have access to Instagram, but only certain users are eligible. If the experiment proves successful, **Instagram intends on including the option as a new feature for all its users**.

Sources: Le Siècle Digital - [Twitter wants more ethical and transparent algorithms/Instagram wants to hide likes](#)



#s- impactful expertise

#impactful news from the Health & Wellness division

A look at the delays in the anti-Covid strategy

Mobilized influencers and a government who (at last) confirms with conviction its trust in anti-Covid vaccines...are we about to switch to a proper engagement campaign? Hang in there, we can do it!

First and foremost ... engagement

Apparently, markers are accumulating but not all the lights are green yet...over the last months, we've seen McFly & Carlito successfully respond to the challenge from the French President to defend the use of masks. A good start, but why stop so quickly? Public health deserves more than publicity stunts, especially when they show us that there is definitely another way of taking preventive action: by focusing on specific groups, in keeping with the codes and practices, and going out into the field to talk to target groups, rather than waiting for them to come to us. I learnt this from my AIDS years. A period when, without invoking marketing concepts, militants knew that to change behavior, generic and bland campaigns were needed and filters removed so people could talk and be understood. This is what our two YouTubers did. Why don't we pursue that direction in order to engage other groups and segments of the population?

Then...conviction

It's taken time to move on from the dithering. I really hope it's behind us as this crisis requires strong leadership and difficult decisions to be made, even if, at times, they don't have unanimous support. In truth, we know that during a crisis, especially a health crisis, you can't please everybody. Healthcare is a consideration for both the collective and individuals, and the subject generates responses from people of all different opinions, beliefs and doubts. It is difficult to find consensus, but often all that's required is a focus on educating people in order to win support for your strategy.

Vaccinations are now being deployed in France after a period of uncertainty which slowed the process down. I've heard said that "the doubt has been dispelled", but who observed doubt? Me, I saw cases, and serious ones at that, but very few compared to the number of people who are being vaccinated. A case, in medicine, is explored and investigated in order to comprehend and take action: and that's exactly where we are today.

Several vaccines are available in France (I would love for every country in the world to be able to say the same thing). We know all about the administration procedures and, regardless of what you can read here or there, vigilance is in place and it works. So we must continue like this. Transparency is the key ingredient for public acceptance of the strategy to fight Covid-19.

Then what?

Then we need to continue, monitor, analyze, learn and adapt...there is no choice. We could also learn, incrementally, to trust pharmaceutical companies. Yes that's right, those same pharmaceutical companies, who, in less than a year and by working collectively, have produced...vaccines that protect us from Covid-19!

Hang in there, we can do it!

Thank you!

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