

The Impact of 2020 on Our Digital

Last year was a year like no other. In many ways it put our lives on hold as the coronavirus pandemic swept the globe, causing tragedy and economic turmoil the world over. It has changed the way we work, socialize, shop, and the way we view the world. But while 2020 will be remembered for the havoc wreaked by COVID-19 many other events made their mark, the worldwide Black Lives Matter protests and the tumultuous US election to name just two. 2021 seems like it can only be better, but with the pandemic still at large, people are already adapting to the 'new normal'. And it's unlikely that things will ever return to how they once were, especially in our digital lives.

Work

Worldwide lockdowns saw almost all office staff begin remote work. Telecommuting may well remain the norm as companies see that they can remain active and trading without having employees physically present in offices – if this becomes a permanent solution it may benefit employers who can cut down on large workspace overheads. Remote work has been facilitated by the rise in easy-to-use technology which is available free – solutions such as Zoom and Skype for video conferencing and cloud storage solutions. Working from home can have many benefits for employees – allowing them to remain productive with a better work-life balance, and eradicating long, stressful commutes.



Photo by Glenn Carstens-Peters on [Unsplash](#)
Communication and Socializing

Forced into a socially distanced world, Zoom parties have

become the norm. While this will never replace in-person communication, it proves that keeping in touch with friends and family is possible without actual physical contact. We've seen such varied events as remote pub quizzes, lectures, awards ceremonies [and even dating](#) become popular as people get creative with communicative possibilities in an isolation. These creative trends will continue to benefit those who live in remote areas or families and friends who live great distances apart.

Entertainment

Without access to cinemas, clubs, gigs, theatres, and museums we've seen an increase in online entertainment activity. Streaming services are more popular than ever, with Netflix and Amazon Prime among others offering more and more content to socially distanced viewers. Online casinos were already popular before COVID-19 took hold, but a whole new audience has discovered fun – and cash prizes – at reputable gambling sites. [According to CasinoTopsOnline](#), if you have any concerns about the safety of UK online casinos you should check online – you can find a list of sites that are regulated by the UK Gambling Commission on their site.

Shopping

Online shopping is nothing new, but is now easily the dominant method of purchasing for most of us. And high street stores have become increasingly reliant on the digital side of their businesses, in some cases saving themselves from closure by taking their brand online. We'll see more of the same in the years ahead, as high street stores become increasingly unprofitable, and companies look to slash overheads.

Food and Drink

The hospitality industry has felt the full force of the economic havoc caused by the pandemic. Millions of employees worldwide have been left without jobs, as restaurants, cafes

and hotels are forced into temporary or permanent closure. Delivery companies have helped many businesses to continue trading, but the future looks very uncertain. One interesting point that may affect the way we consume food and drink in the long term is our changed perception of value. While nothing can match the atmosphere of a bricks-and-mortar establishment, a bottle of [quality single malt whiskey](#)– for example – when bought for consumption at home is notably cheaper than ordering a couple of glasses in a bar.

The Value of Responsibility

The Black Lives Matter protests, as well as the LGBTQ+ movements across the world, have highlighted injustice and discrimination, and many brands were quick to express their support. While this is a step in the right direction, many people felt that simply using words is not enough – they want to see action. Brand value, therefore, is becoming more reliant on social responsibility and ethical trading rather than a monetary expense. Expect to see companies become more outspoken on big issues and transparent with their business practices.

Sport

After an uncertain few months, the EPL and SPL went underway with play ‘behind closed doors’. While there have been a few events with spectators – the Anthony Joshua vs Kubrat Pulev fight at Wembley Stadium for example – we all sincerely hope to get fans back into seats as soon as is safely possible. There have been some examples of ingenuity. The Formula One season, hastily reorganized after the cancellation of the first few races, saw events at new circuits that provided much novelty and entertainment for fans. Away from the racetrack, many sports broadcasters increased their interactive services for fans – we also saw an increase in sports betting, helping spectators feel in touch with the action, while not being able to attend in person.

There is no denying that many facets of life have been forever changed by the events of 2020. Let's hope for a better year, and that the 'new normal' will be bright.