

Holyrood's 'Public Sector Communications 2021'
Thursday, 28th January 2021

**Assessing the public sector's
communication response during
COVID-19**

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Public Sector Super Volcano

- Rapid emergence
- Prolonged duration
- Chain effect
- Seismic impact
- Revolutionary response
- Collective response



Picture Source: <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/explained/article/3041783/explained-asias-deadliest-eruptions-and-four-volcanoes-watch>

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Paradoxical Dynamic Communication

- Simple and complex messaging
- One way and multi-way channels
- Symmetrical and asymmetrical outcomes
- Proactive and reactive responses
- Cognitive and behavioural objectives
- One public and many publics
- Reality and hyper-reality
- Individualism and collectivism

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Strategic vs Tactical Communication

- **Why** do we need to communicate?
- What is the desired **end-result**?
- What are the **barriers** to achieving this?
- **Who** is involved?
- **What** should we do/say, **how** and **when**?
- How will we know if it's **working**?

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Pandemic External Issues

- Government policy/restrictions
- Public compliance with policy/restrictions
- Limited/no financial support
- Supply chain availability/reliability
- Consumer/investor confidence
- Media/public scrutiny
- Unpredictable planning environment
- Digital divide/systemic inequalities aggravated

Pandemic Internal Issues

- Furlough of employees/redundancies
- Sickness absence/self-isolation
- Remote working costs/challenges
- Covid secure workplaces/working conditions
- Union and employee engagement/consultation
- Leadership/decision making/credibility
- Innovation and vision

Basic Communication Principles

- Rule of three
- Repetition, repetition, repetition
- Important 'C' words
- Honesty, transparency, and trust
- Relatable storytelling
- Right content, right time, right place

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Lives and livelihoods – a delicate balance



Source Articles:

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-they-call-it-the-apocalypse-inside-italys-hardest-hit-hospital-11960597>

<https://www.restaurantbusinessonline.com/operations/even-they-await-new-round-federal-aid-independent-restaurants-continue-shut-their>

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COVID-19: PEOPLE SPENDING MORE TIME WITH DEVICES

PERCENTAGE OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16 TO 64 IN SELECT COUNTRIES* WHO REPORT SPENDING MORE TIME USING EACH DEVICE IN RECENT WEEKS

SMARTPHONE OR
MOBILE PHONE



76%

global
web
index

LAPTOP
COMPUTER



45%

we
are
social

DESKTOP
COMPUTER



32%



TABLET
DEVICE



22%

SMART TV OR MEDIA
STREAMING DEVICE



34%



GAMES
CONSOLE



17%

global
web
index

SMART
SPEAKER



11%

we
are
social

SMART
WATCH



6.3%

SOURCE: GLOBALWEBINDEX'S CORONAVIRUS MULTI-MARKET STUDY (WAVE 2, APRIL 2020). ***NOTE:** FIGURES REPRESENT THE FINDINGS OF A SURVEY OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16 TO 64 IN AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL, CANADA, CHINA, FRANCE, GERMANY, INDIA, IRELAND, ITALY, JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND, PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE, SOUTH AFRICA, SPAIN, THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND THE UNITED STATES. DATA COLLECTION (FIELDWORK) TOOK PLACE BETWEEN MARCH 31 AND APRIL 02, 2020. SEE [GLOBALWEBINDEX.COM](https://www.globalwebindex.com) FOR MORE DETAILS.

**APR
2020**

COVID-19: RANKING OF TOP APPS IN MARCH 2020

GLOBAL RANKINGS OF TOP MOBILE APPS BY **NUMBER OF DOWNLOADS** AND **CONSUMER SPEND** BETWEEN 01 MARCH AND 31 MARCH 2020

RANKING OF MOBILE APPS AND GAMES BY GLOBAL DOWNLOADS

#	DOWNLOADS	COMPANY
01	TIKTOK	BYTEDANCE
02	WHATSAPP	FACEBOOK
03	FACEBOOK	FACEBOOK
04	FACEBOOK MESSENGER	FACEBOOK
05	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK
06	ZOOM CLOUD MEETINGS	ZOOM VIDEO COMMS.
07	SLAP KINGS	APPLOVIN
08	DRAW CLIMBER	VOODOO
09	WOODTURNING	VOODOO
10	NETFLIX	NETFLIX

RANKING OF MOBILE APPS AND GAMES BY GLOBAL CONSUMER SPEND

#	CONSUMER SPEND	COMPANY
01	GAME FOR PEACE	TENCENT
02	MONSTER STRIKE	MIXI
03	HONOUR OF KINGS	TENCENT
04	PUBG MOBILE	TENCENT
05	CANDY CRUSH SAGA	ACTIVISION BLIZZARD
06	AFK ARENA	LILITH
07	TIKTOK	BYTEDANCE
08	GARDENSCAPES - NEW ACRES	PLAYRIX
09	COIN MASTER	MOON ACTIVE
10	LINEAGE 2	NETMARBLE

A Credible Voice in a Sea of Noise

- Integrity
- Authority
- Experience
- Expertise
- Engaging
- Consistent
- Trustworthy
- Relatable
- Reliable
- Inspirational



Picture Source: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/martin-luther-king-jr-model-american-patriot/>

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Some PR Disasters During The Pandemic

- **UK Government** - confusing campaign messages
- **Education** – exam results fiasco / university students ‘on campus’
- **Hospitality** - Wetherspoons poor employee relations
- **Fashion Retail** – Oh Polly misguided CSR
- **Travel and Tourism** – Aer Lingus overcrowded flight

To be a good crisis communicator understand human complexity...



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