

VARIETY

Post-Pandemic, Americans Say They'll Keep Streaming More TV — and Go to Movies, Concerts Less

By Todd Spangler, Apr 24, 2020



Caiaimage/REX/Shutterstock

The COVID-19 pandemic could be a major inflection point that changes consumer behaviors for years.

Over the past month and a half, streaming to the TV viewing has more than doubled in the U.S. — and with the current stay-at-home lifestyle, more Americans say they expect to keep watching more TV and streaming services after the [coronavirus](#) crisis is over, according to a new poll by L.A.-based E-Poll Market Research.

On the flip side, social distancing have people wary about going to movie theaters, concerts, sporting Events and theme parks — with those activities having among the highest net-negative consumer intent on E-Poll's survey, conducted April 16-20. Only "taking a cruise" registered lower.

The top two activities Americans plan to continue after "things return to normal" are exercising outdoors and in at-home gyms, along with a pronounced lift in cooking, E-Poll's survey found.

Close behind was "watching TV shows, movies, streamed programming": 21% of those surveyed said they intend to do more of that, while 14% said they expect to do less (for a net consumer intent of +7%). Streaming music was also cited as an activity U.S. consumers plan to do more, with a net +6%.

The survey findings suggest the high-water mark for TV viewing could be the new baseline. According to Nielsen, streaming video viewing on TVs in the U.S. hit 654.6 billion minutes from March 23-April 19, more than twice the 301.4 billion in the comparable four-week period in 2019. For the week of April 13, Netflix — which [added nearly 16 million customers in the first quarter](#) — captured the biggest share of that viewing time (32%) followed by YouTube (20%).

Meanwhile, prior research has confirmed that people will continue to be skittish about attending large gatherings even after lockdowns are lifted. About [47% of those surveyed agreed that the idea of going to a major public event “will scare me for a long time.”](#) per a study last month by Performance Research.

That said, research based on asking people to forecast their own expected behavior isn’t always a great indicator of what will *actually* happen: People often say one thing but end up doing another. It’s even more dicey given the uncertainty surrounding when quarantines will begin lifting in the U.S.

With that caveat, here’s a look at how Americans currently expect their activities to change, per the E-Poll survey.

Lifestyle Changes Post-Pandemic

When the crisis is over – will you be doing more of, the same amount, or less of the following compared to what you did before the crisis?

	More	Less	Net Difference
Exercising	27%	7%	20%
Cooking for yourself/family/friends	25%	8%	17%
Using FaceTime, Skype, WhatsApp or other technologies to video call friends/family	19%	12%	7%
Watching TV shows, movies, streamed programming	21%	14%	7%
Streaming music	12%	6%	6%
Listening to the radio/podcasts/smart speakers	10%	9%	2%
Grocery shopping online	15%	15%	0%

Traveling within the U.S.	15%	20%	-5%
Traveling outside of the U.S.	9%	18%	-9%
Ordering delivery or take out	13%	22%	-9%
Eating out/Going out to restaurants	19%	28%	-9%
Seeing movies in the theater	12%	23%	-11%
Going to music concerts/theater	10%	22%	-12%
Going to sporting events	8%	20%	-13%
Going to theme parks	8%	20%	-13%
Taking a cruise	3%	22%	-18%

Source: E-Poll Market Research, April 2020 survey of 1,677 U.S. consumers 13 and older

#####

