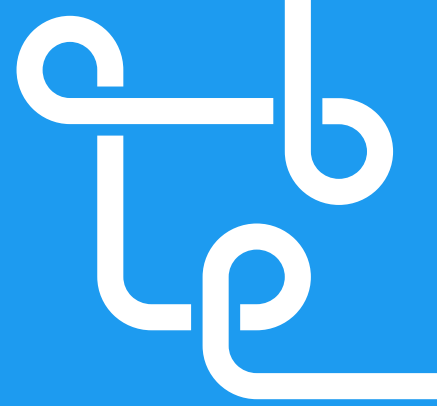


mopub™

Global app usage trends in the COVID-19 era

March 27, 2020 update

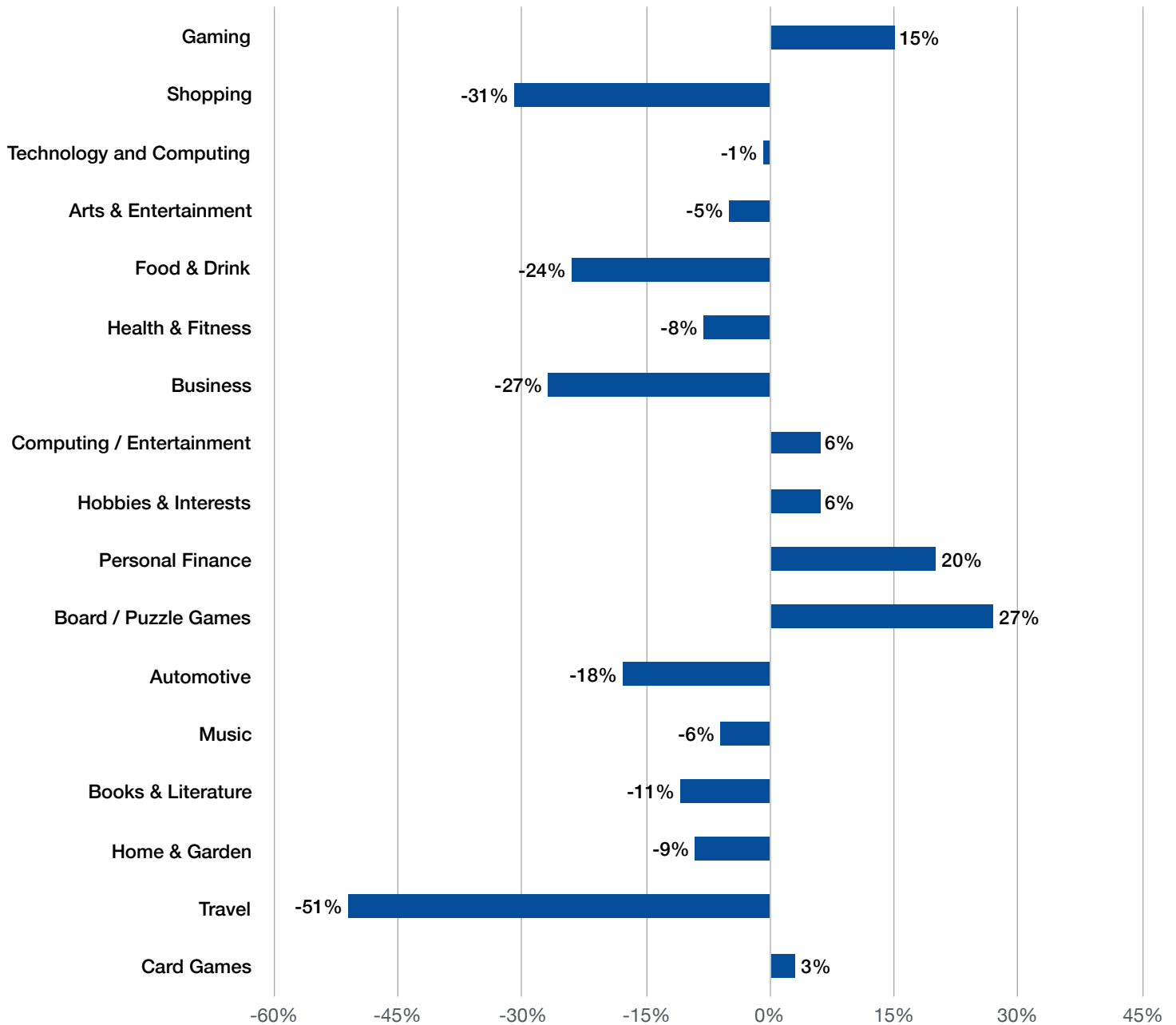


The COVID-19 global pandemic has left people around the world confused and searching for answers. At MoPub, doing everything we can to make sure our teams and partners are safe is our top priority.

This new reality is impacting both personal and business situations, and on the business side, we recognize the needs of our partners and customers to have timely and actionable data. Some of our current observations of the COVID-19 impact on MoPub's mediation platform follow, with the intent of informing decisions that marketers, demand partners, and app publishers need to make in the midst of an environment of uncertainty.

Observable ad spend trends on MoPub's exchange

Change in ad spend by advertiser category

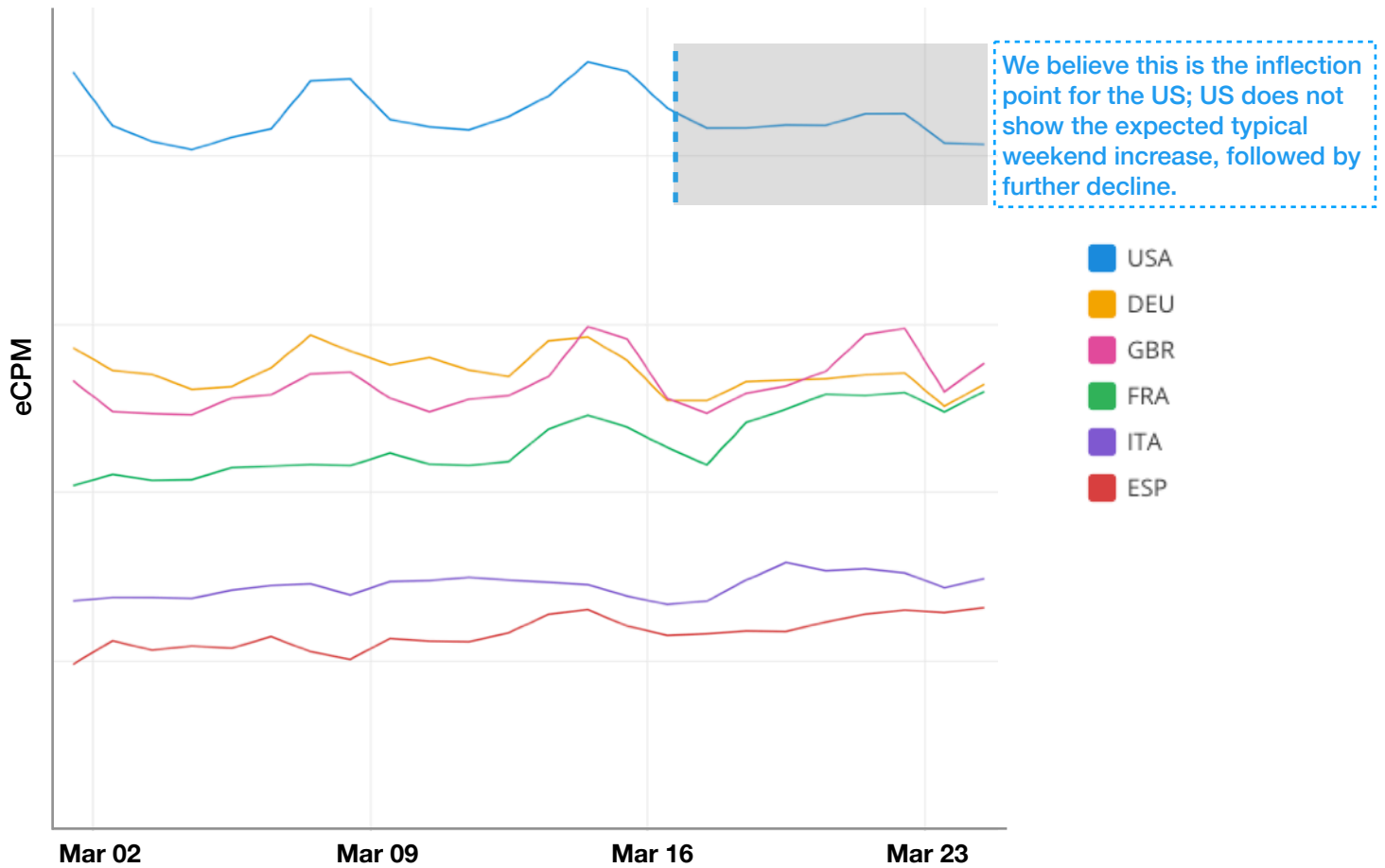


■ % Change in ad spend, trailing 7 days (March 26, 2020) vs. prior two weeks

Sources: Internal MoPub mediation platform data, March 26, trailing 7 days vs prior 2 weeks;
Advertiser category: IAB creative served category

It's clear that certain advertising verticals have withdrawn or ramped down budgets. From the buyer's perspective, we won't know the true impact on ad rates until we enter Q2. However, there are some observable changes on the supply side that can help anticipate future changes, which we look at on pages 4-6.

Observable ad rate trends on MoPub's exchange



Source: Internal MoPub mediation platform data

We've received a number of inquiries about the impact of COVID-19 on ad rates. While it's still early, we haven't seen CPMs drop dramatically. There are a couple reasons for this:



User acquisition (UA) spend

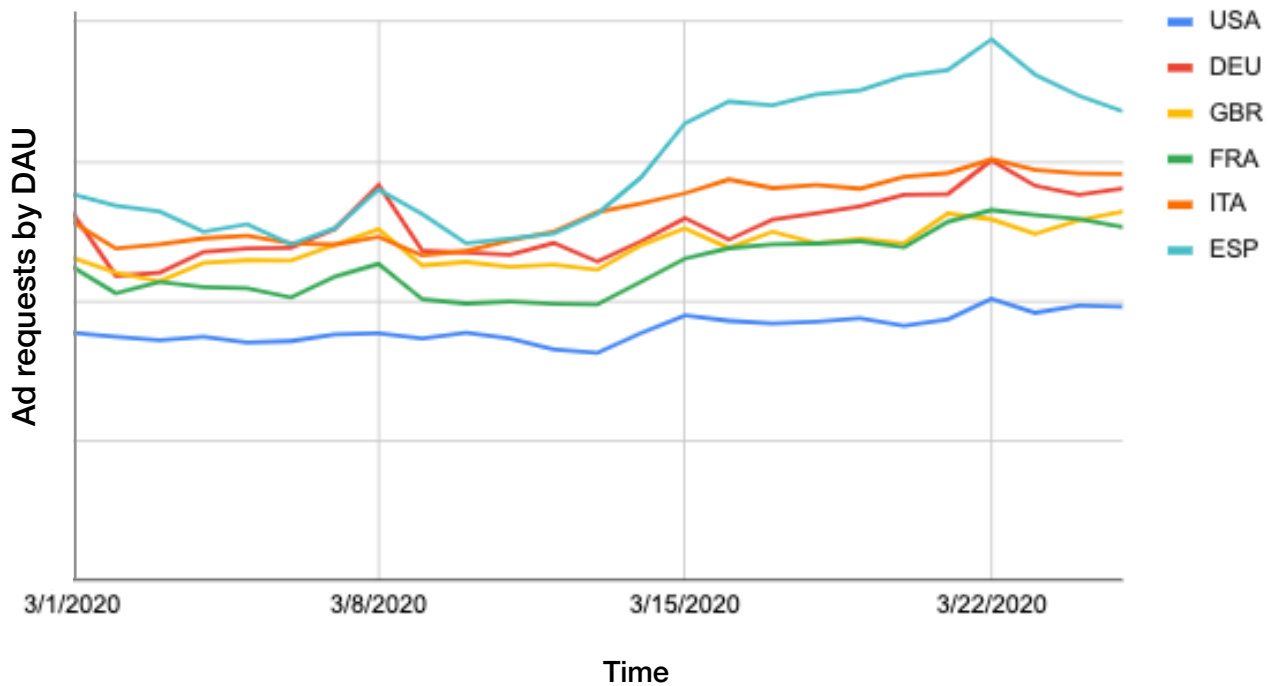
A growing mobile user base and an increase in time spent in-app means a larger potential audience for app developers. As a result, we see a 20% month-over-month increase in UA activity. Gaming is the primary driver here; specifically, we see auction pressure on high-performing ad formats on gaming inventory.



Preallocated Q1 budgets

Many digital budgets were locked in well before COVID-19 made its effects felt. There is usually an increase in buying activity in the last month of a quarter as buyers ensure delivery and fulfillment. We expect this is particularly true right now, as the probability of rolling unspent budgets into the next quarter seems lower than normal.

Observable app usage trends on MoPub's exchange



Source: Internal MoPub mediation platform data

As the world spends more time at home, people are turning to their mobile devices to stay connected.

Unsurprisingly, there's a strong correlation between global containment measures and use of mobile apps. As local and national governments enact "stay at home" policies, we see app usage patterns directly reflect the needs of users in these areas in the following ways:



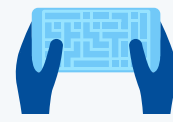
An increase in information-seeking



A strong increase in content that fosters connection



An emphasis on productivity and utility



A need to stay entertained and pass the time

Across all affected markets, the clear trend is a correlation between more aggressive containment ("stay at home") efforts and increased app usage. (Of course, it's worth noting that not all changes in usage are tied to the impact of COVID-19; MoPub's exchange had apps integrating and going live before the virus spread globally, which contributes to user growth as well.)



Observable COVID-19 impact on MoPub's exchange: APAC China, Japan, Korea, Singapore

The four markets reviewed here have spent more time under mandated isolation. Gaming is the top category; as people spend more time indoors, they appear to turn to their mobile devices to stay entertained.

The use of books, education, and finance apps is also notable, especially compared to other regions (see next two pages). This suggests that app usage behavior and needs may change in parallel with the amount of time spent under quarantine, with a shift to invest time in more instructive and educational options in addition to gaming and entertainment.

	Primary app category	Ad requests	Requests per device
	Overall	^ 3.6%	^ 1.6%
	Games	^ 1.2%	^ 0.7%
	Social networking	^ 6.5%	^ 1%
	Entertainment	v 4.4%	v 1.6%
	Photography	^ 14.6%	^ 18%
↑ Total ad requests	Utilities	v 9%	v 8.6%
	Productivity	^ 12.9%	^ 16.5%
	Music	^ 3.3%	^ 27.7%
	Lifestyle	v 4.1%	v 1.3%
	Books	^ 106.9%	^ 82%
	Education	^ 23.8%	^ 37%
	News	^ 18.6%	^ 40.5%
	Sports	v 28.3%	v 24.5%
	Finance	^ 10.7%	^ 23%
	Healthcare & fitness	v 7%	v 7.7%
	Travel	v 1.7%	^ 4.6%

Mar 7-Mar 21 vs. Feb 7-Feb 21



Observable COVID-19 impact on MoPub's exchange: EMEA

France, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom

All four markets entered varying degrees of lockdown during the reporting period. The app categories that enable connection, provide entertainment, deliver information, or help the user continue working show increased usage. Unsurprisingly, sports and navigation apps show massive drops due to event cancellations and travel restrictions.

Also notable is the drop in healthcare and fitness ad requests for healthcare and fitness apps. Anecdotally, we've heard that many developers are making their pro (ad-free) versions available to affected markets for free, which means a decrease in ad inventory even as app usage increases.

Primary app category	Ad requests	Requests per device
Overall	^ 4.6%	^ 13.1%
Games	^ 7.4%	^ 24.3%
Utilities	^ 22.5%	^ 72.9%
Social networking	^ 19.3%	v 12.9%
Sports	v 32.3%	v 34.3%
Music	^ 6.4%	^ 27.9%
Entertainment	^ 5%	^ 84%
Photography	^ 39.2%	^ 53.2%
Productivity	^ 7.9%	^ 12.9%
Healthcare and fitness	v 27.3%	^ 34.7%
Lifestyle	^ 36.4%	^ 23.8%
News	^ 8.8%	^ 31.9%
Books	v 0.7%	v 4.5%
Navigation	v 26.8%	v 17%
Education	v 3.4%	^ 353.1%
Reference	^ 6.7%	^ 1.5%

↑
Total ad requests

Mar 7-Mar 21 vs. Feb 7-Feb 21



Observable COVID-19 impact on MoPub's exchange: USA

The US is earlier in the COVID-19 impact cycle than APAC or EMEA. During the reporting period we saw multiple travel restrictions and varying degrees of “stay at home” mandates implemented across states and counties. The data somewhat parallels the mixed approach to containment and reflects a usage pattern of a market in transition.

However, the impact of the announced travel restrictions and significant decline of the stock market both seemed to drive increased usage of apps in these respective verticals.

As more of the US embraces self-isolation, we anticipate games, social networking, and productivity app usage will increase to match what we've already seen in EMEA and APAC.

	Primary app category	Ad requests	Requests per device
	Overall	▼ 2.1%	▼ 1.6%
	Games	▼ 0.2%	^ 7.7%
	Social networking	▼ 4.6%	^ 0.1%
	Entertainment	^ 0.9%	^ 19.9%
	Music	^ 0.7%	^ 35.5%
	Utilities	▼ 3.9%	^ 43.9%
	News	^ 4.1%	^ 2.3%
	Lifestyle	▼ 16.7%	▼ 7.3%
	Productivity	▼ 15.5%	▼ 5.8%
	Healthcare and fitness	▼ 20.1%	^ 15.8%
	Photography	^ 21.9%	^ 28.3%
	Sports	▼ 37.5%	▼ 34.5%
	Weather	^ 10%	^ 11.1%
	Books	▼ 30.6%	^ 2.5%
	Travel	^ 90.2%	^ 50%
	Finance	^ 74.6%	^ 43.7%

Total ad requests ↑

Mar 7-Mar 21 vs. Feb 7-Feb 21

What's next?

We're currently in discussions with our partners to understand how the media buying community is being impacted by the COVID-19 situation, and if there's any further trends or guidance we can offer. If there are any questions you think we may be able to help answer, or you'd just like to brainstorm and chat, please don't hesitate to [get in touch](#) with our team.

This is a tough time for everyone, and again — our top priority is the safety and well-being of all of our partners, clients, and all Twitter employees. If you're looking for additional resources for your business at this time, Twitter has recommendations for [brand communications during times of crisis](#). You can also stay up to date with information about COVID-19 from credible, authoritative news sources and public health agencies by following [Twitter's live curated coverage](#).

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