

COVID-19 CONFIRMS

THE POWER OF

EX- PERIENCE

THE BRANDEMIC STUDY

There's no escaping COVID-19. The virus has created, perhaps, history's most widely-shared experience. Now we're seeing brands for what they are, for their roles in our shared stories. This crisis will (eventually) end, but your brand's emotional impact will remain embedded in people's memories for years to come.

GMR Marketing believes we're in a brandemic, a shared experience that has a lasting impact on how we think about, and remember, brands. In our new study, we asked people what brands have become more prominent or meaningful during their COVID-19 experience.

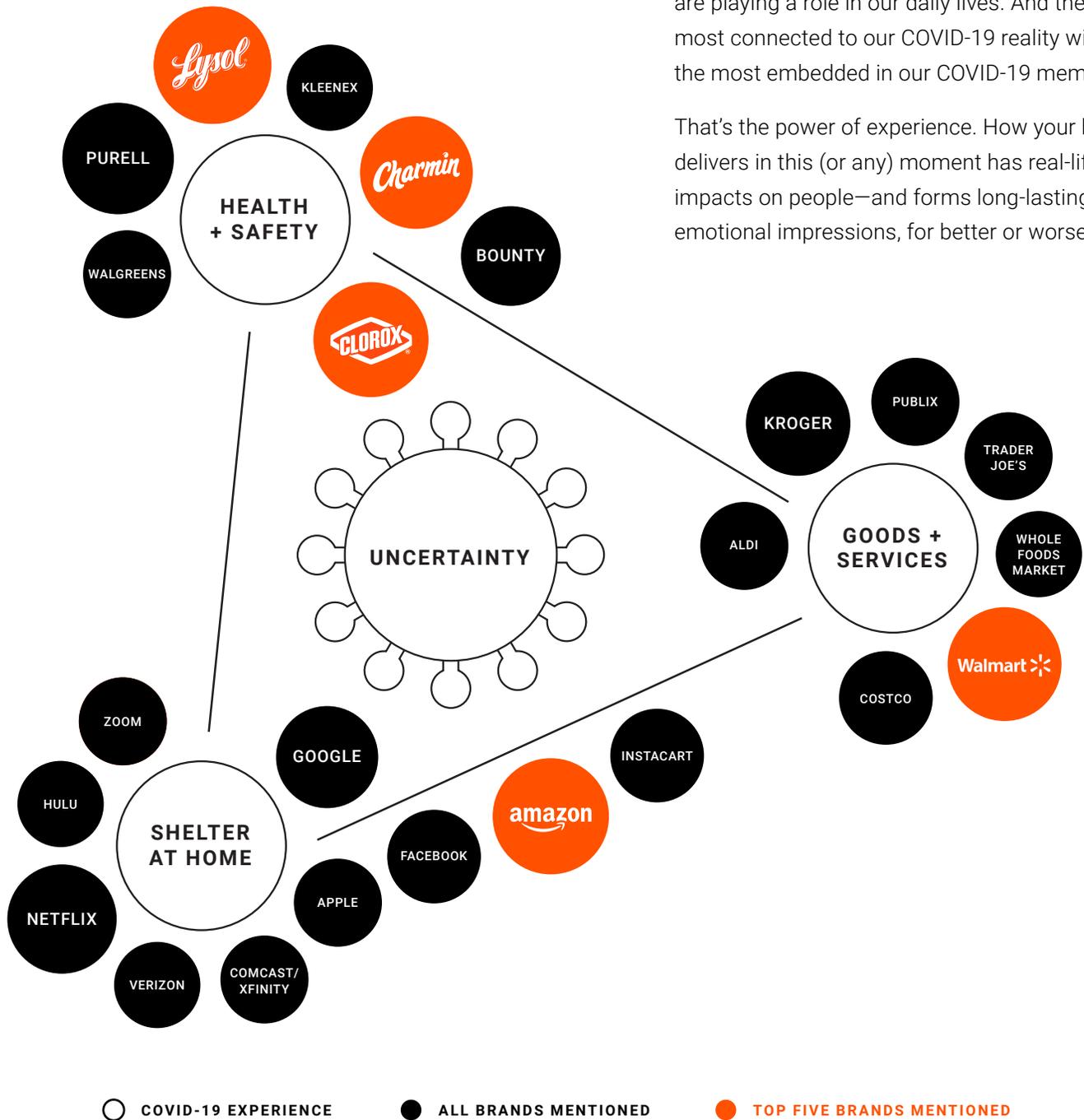
These are our findings.

01

A *CLOROX* STATE OF MIND

Experiences, not ads. Right now, Clorox and Lysol are playing a role in our daily lives. And the brands most connected to our COVID-19 reality will be the most embedded in our COVID-19 memories.

That's the power of experience. How your brand delivers in this (or any) moment has real-life impacts on people—and forms long-lasting, emotional impressions, for better or worse.

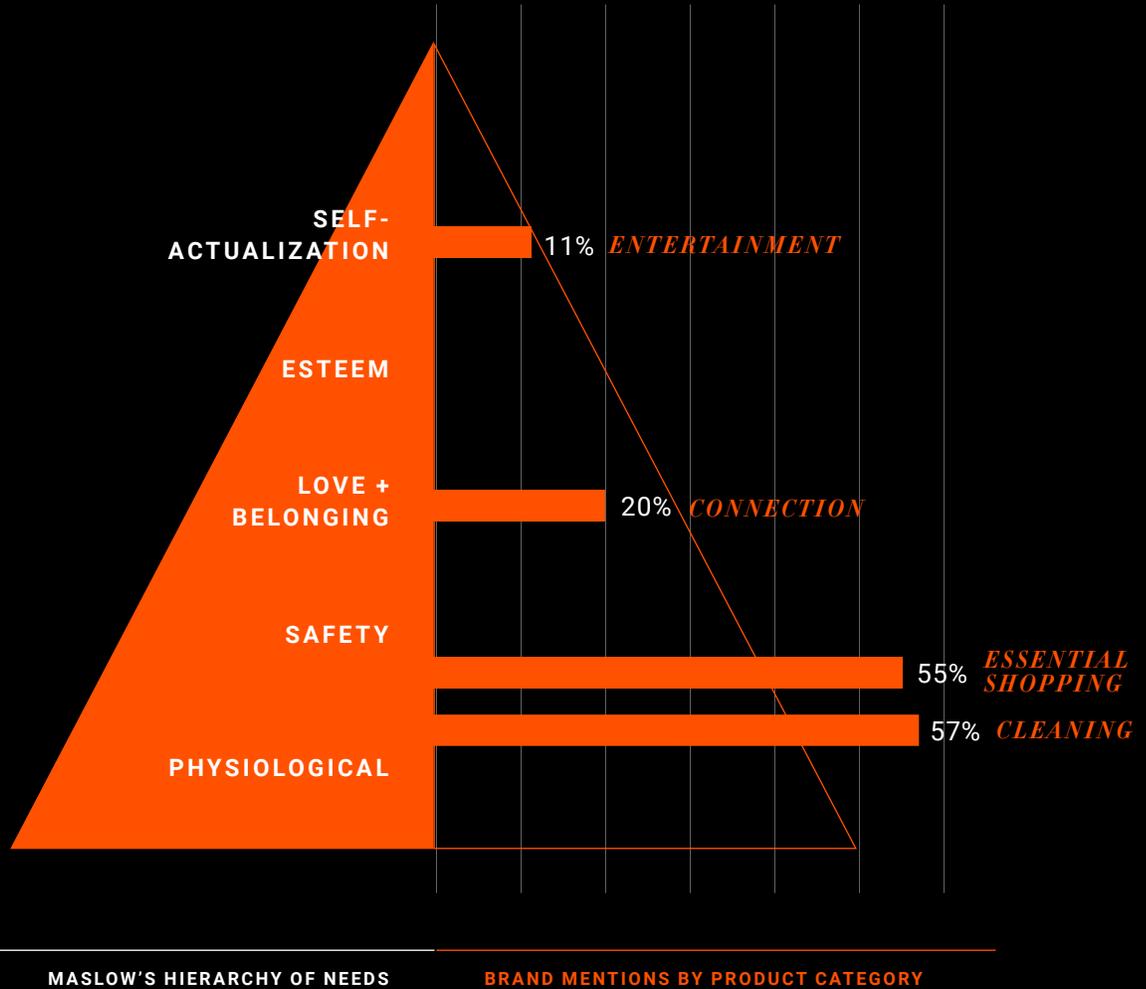


02

WE WILL *SURVIVE* (WHILE STAYING ENTERTAINED)

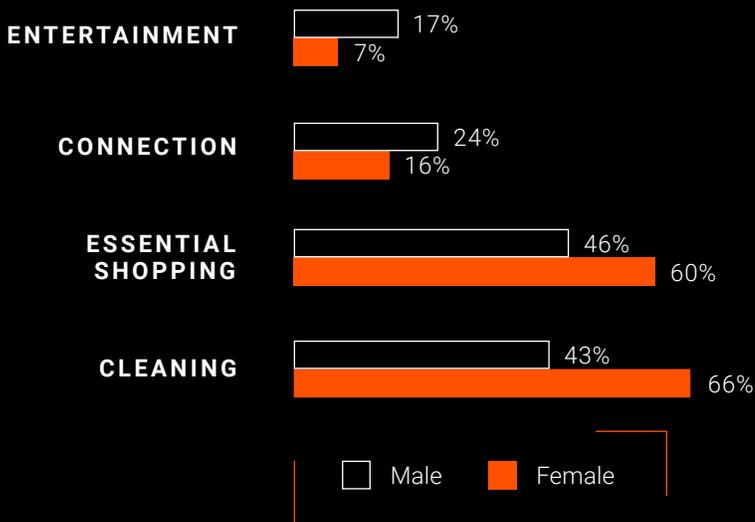
The COVID-19 chaos has caused an urgent, if temporary, reprioritization of our needs. Our new priorities launched everyday brands like Lysol into the spotlight because they address these basic needs.

In a crisis, it's natural to pay special attention to safety and physiological needs.



03

A TALE OF *TWO SEXES*



We're all sharing in the COVID-19 experience, but every individual story is different.

Gender roles are putting a unique twist on the plot, because women are more likely to mention survival and household concerns. Men are more likely to mention entertainment or connection.

The lesson for brands is that even in a universal experience, you still have to tailor your message directly to your audience.

EXPERIENCE MATTERS

The story of a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Health and safety are on all of our minds. We've thought about Clorox more in four months than in four decades—because we're over-indexing on basic needs. But we're not sheep, we all see this differently.

What does it mean for your brand?

Advertising didn't create memories, experiences did. Our mindsets drive needs, and our fulfilled needs create long-term brand affinity.

Let's talk about how your brand wants to be remembered.

THE *BRANDEMIC* STUDY

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The Brandemic Study is proprietary research and analysis powered by GMR Marketing's in-house Research + Insights team. Conducted in April of 2020, our data comes from an online survey of 365 U.S.-based consumers aged 18-55. This study is part of GMR's larger body of work exploring the psychology of human experience, memory formation and brand recall.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Dave holds a doctorate in Cognitive Psychology and a master's degree in Experimental Psychology – a combination that provides best-in-class research design and analysis, and a special perspective on the processes underlying marketing. He has worked in the marketing industry (client and agency sides) for more than 20 years.

ABOUT GMR MARKETING

We create memories that matter. By decoding human behavior, we design experiences that enrich life's stories through shared passions, driving meaningful business results that change the way people, think, feel and behave.

GMR has developed a comprehensive suite of research and measurement services that support our entire process—from strategic development, to inspiring creative, to diagnosing execution, to documenting the effectiveness and impact of specific programs. A proprietary model for calculating ROI (based on lifetime value of customer) has been developed and in use for several years.

Our current focus includes a special project in which an information processing model of experiential marketing is being tested. Specific marketing tactics are tested under laboratory and real-life conditions, and memory traces are measured in terms of strength, valance and semantic-connectedness.

CONTACT US

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**\ brand-em-ic **

1: shared experience that permanently connects brands and humans.
2: pandemic that exposes brands for what they really are.