Keep calm and play on: The rise of Digital Leisure

Perspectives on the growth of Digital Leisure and the characteristics of a winning model

April 2020

OC&C
Strategy consultants
Covid-related restrictions have led to major disruption to traditional leisure patterns – out-of-home leisure (c. 33% of time) is being forced digital

**Population Weekly Leisure Time Breakdown By Activity Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Type</th>
<th>% Of Leisure Time Spend On Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participatory activities (e.g. church)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing sports / outdoor pursuits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobbies, computing or games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- c. 33% of leisure time is spent on leisure activities that, in their traditional form, can’t be done under lockdown restrictions
- In this context, consumers are switching towards digital alternatives
- This has led to substantial growth in established digital markets like online food delivery and e-gaming…
- … But also the emergence of new forms of digital leisure as novel solutions look to satisfy this new demand and established leisure players look to rapidly shift to digital and offer a multi-channel experience
- Digital media is already relatively mature given significant historic growth, and there are already established and sizeable players operating in the space (e.g. Netflix, Sky, Twitch etc)
- These established categories have received a boost given recent restrictions, with individuals shifting away from other forms of leisure towards mass media, computing and games
- And within these categories there will have been substantial change in production and consumption patterns

% Of Leisure Time on Activity

- Participatory activities (e.g. church)
  - Traditional Models Not Possible Under Covid Restrictions: c.33%
  - Still Possible Under Covid Restrictions: c.67%

30 hrs / week

- Cultural activities
- Eating out
- Playing sports / outdoor pursuits
- Socialising

- Resting
- Hobbies, computing or games
- Mass media

Source: ONS, OC&C analysis

Keep calm and play on - The growth of Digital Leisure | © OC&C Strategy Consultants 2020
Digital leisure consumption is relatively new for many sub-sectors where intermediaries have been the primary digital model historically.

Evolution of Leisure Digitisation

10 Years Ago

Leisure Consumer

Physical Leisure Operator / Asset

2 Years Ago

Leisure Consumer

Physical Leisure Operator / Asset

Digital Intermediary (eg. Booking.com, ClassPass)

Today

Leisure Consumer

Physical Leisure Operator / Asset

Digital Intermediary (eg. Booking.com, ClassPass)

Digital Leisure Operator / Asset

Source: OC&C analysis
Over the past month, there has been a noticeable spike in a wide variety of digital leisure activities

Digital Leisure Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>% Users Gained In Last Month</th>
<th>Example Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Social Applications</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>Houseparty, Psych, TikTok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Fitness</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Peloton, Freeletics, Nike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Music</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>Freelancers, Udemy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Cooking</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>Leiths, Freelancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Sports Streaming Platforms</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>Twitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Cultural Events</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>National Theatre, Getty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Home &amp; Garden Tutorials</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Thomson &amp; Morgan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Gambling</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>Betfair, Bet365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Food Delivery</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Deliveroo, UberEats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Learning</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Udemy, Coursera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Language Courses</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Duolingo, Babbel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Dating</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>Tinder, Bumble</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Based on % Users that first signed up in the last month – from OC&C Consumer Survey Apr 2020
Source: Desk Research, OC&C Consumer Survey 2020, OC&C analysis
The uplift has occurred both among existing, established online leisure categories and those categories going digital for the first time

Worldwide Google Searches For Digital Leisure Terms (Dec 2019 – Apr 2020)
Indexed vs Peak Activity, 4 Week Rolling Average

Audiobooks were already a well established digital model, but even they have seen a spike in interest (above the New Year norm) as a result of lockdown

Online fitness classes were not a "norm" for many pre-March, but have seen significant growth search interest

Source: Google trends, OC&C analysis
Social applications and online fitness appear to have seen the most dramatic uptake, but there are a number of more niche activities that have seen growth

Penetration Of Digital Leisure Activities By Date Of First Engagement
(Apr 2020, %)

1. Responses to question: “Of the following activities that you have engaged in, when did you first begin to try these activities?” – 2. was asked first
2. Responses to question: “Have you ever engaged in any of the following digital activities?”

Source: OC&C Consumer Survey Apr 2020, OC&C analysis

Keep calm and play on - The growth of Digital Leisure | © OC&C Strategy Consultants 2020
We believe that the likelihood of these digital alternatives sticking when lockdown restrictions are lifted varies by category.

Digital Leisure Activity Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driver of Growth</th>
<th>Minimal change</th>
<th>Primarily increased frequency among existing users</th>
<th>Primarily new users with increased frequency among existing</th>
<th>Mostly new / first time users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Dating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIY Meal Kits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Sports Streaming Platforms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Language Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Fitness Classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Socialising (e.g. Houseparty)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likely Trajectory

- **Minimal Change**: Activities that are already highly digital e.g. Online Dating will not see a significant uplift from Covid, with limited white space to further penetrate.
- **Continuation of Long Term Trend**: Some established categories will see an enduring step change as digital transition is accelerated.
- **Step Change In Digital Penetration**: Some digital leisure activities will maintain participation post Covid as new habits stick... while others will more than likely drop off as better physical alternatives become available again.

Source: OC&C analysis
Most individuals indicate that they will maintain current levels of engagement, which would reflect a notable step-change for some categories.

“How Do You Expect Usage To Change As Covid Restrictions Are Lifted?”
OC&C Consumer Survey 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% Indicating Maintaining Or Increasing Current Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Home &amp; Garden Tutorials</td>
<td>27% Increase from current levels 57% Remain at current levels 12% Slight decrease from current levels 5% Significant decrease from current levels n=60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Cooking</td>
<td>32% Increase from current levels 49% Remain at current levels 12% Slight decrease from current levels 7% Significant decrease from current levels n=73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Learning</td>
<td>22% Increase from current levels 56% Remain at current levels 16% Slight decrease from current levels 6% Significant decrease from current levels n=121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Gambling</td>
<td>26% Increase from current levels 52% Remain at current levels 15% Slight decrease from current levels 6% Significant decrease from current levels n=189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Language Courses</td>
<td>25% Increase from current levels 52% Remain at current levels 14% Slight decrease from current levels 8% Significant decrease from current levels n=106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Gaming Platforms</td>
<td>26% Increase from current levels 50% Remain at current levels 18% Slight decrease from current levels 6% Significant decrease from current levels n=144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Food Delivery</td>
<td>25% Increase from current levels 48% Remain at current levels 20% Slight decrease from current levels 7% Significant decrease from current levels n=244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Music Classes</td>
<td>32% Increase from current levels 41% Remain at current levels 20% Slight decrease from current levels 7% Significant decrease from current levels n=41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Fitness</td>
<td>30% Increase from current levels 42% Remain at current levels 18% Slight decrease from current levels 10% Significant decrease from current levels n=115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Cultural Events</td>
<td>28% Increase from current levels 44% Remain at current levels 16% Slight decrease from current levels 12% Significant decrease from current levels n=50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Dating</td>
<td>17% Increase from current levels 54% Remain at current levels 16% Slight decrease from current levels 13% Significant decrease from current levels n=127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Applications</td>
<td>28% Increase from current levels 41% Remain at current levels 21% Slight decrease from current levels 10% Significant decrease from current levels n=149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commentary

- >50% of respondents indicated that they will maintain or increase current levels of digital leisure engagement post-Covid, suggesting this may indeed be a long term step change.
- Online hobbies appear to be the strongest subset of “new” digital leisure where individuals will maintain or increase their current use levels.
  - However these niche pursuits may not significantly increase penetration beyond current levels.
- Social applications are rated as the least likely to be continued post restrictions, reflecting their weak use case under normal circumstances.
**Case study:** The current spike in DIY meal kits is likely to accelerate the on-going transformation towards subscription meal prep

Home Cooking Meal Kits

**Commentary**

- Meal preparation market already worth c. $3bn USD globally, and expecting double digit growth to 2024
- Covid related restrictions have led to a spike in sales, described by commentators and directly by Hello Fresh when projecting profit upside
- A number of underlying characteristics suggest this uplift is likely to be sustained:
  - A substantial and positive shift to home cooking has been seen in Western economies, with many expecting these habits to sustain
  - Widespread trial of value added services such as these (combination of product delivery and recipe provision) is likely to lead to at least some on-going usage…
  - … Particularly in the context of negative experiences with grocery food delivery through this period

Source: CapitalIQ, Desk Research, OC&C analysis

**Hello Fresh Share Price (Jan 2020 – Present)**

**More Consumers Are Relying on Meal Kits amid COVID-19 Pandemic**

*Emarketer.com*

**Home Cooks Trapped by Coronavirus Are Flocking to Meal Kits**

*Eater.com*

**Meal subscription kits skyrocketing in popularity during coronavirus pandemic:**

*cleaveland.com*
Case study: Online fitness has seen one of the biggest spikes following restrictions, helped by several gym chains offering online classes

Online Fitness Classes

Peloton Share Price (Jan 2020 – Present)

![Graph showing Peloton Share Price (Jan 2020 – Present)]

Commentary

- Recent growth in online fitness has primarily come from prior gym goers switching towards online classes
  - Market has been flooded with new supply of free online classes from personal trainers and heavily discounted virtual classes from gym chains
- Consumer proposition from online fitness classes is compelling – it offers the flexibility and comfort of engaging from anywhere as well as (typically) costing less than gym memberships.
  - Consumers indicate they are likely to maintain current levels of online fitness usage
- Key driver will be whether gym chains can transition into a successful multi-channel model with physical gyms supplemented by online classes – as well as growth in specialist online concepts such as Peloton / Daily Burn

Daily Burn says it’s seen a 268% year-over-year increase in membership signups, a company representative told Business Insider

Source: CapitalIQ, Desk Research, OC&C analysis

Gulfnews.com

Business Insider
**Case study:** Despite being highly rated, it is unlikely apps based on social interactions maintain current usage levels when physical space is reopened

Social Applications

Social applications have grown substantially from relatively niche pursuits with small user bases to mass market usage, often with positive reviews…

...however reasons of usage have typically centred around socialising during restrictions – use case is not convincing under normal circumstances

Multi person social interactions are not easily substituted by virtual interactions – while effective temporary measures the level of usage is unlikely to be sustained when direct socialising is possible

“Ok so basically I got this app when I heard that we can’t go outside a lot and meet family due to the Coronavirus…”

Houseparty User – 4*

“Brilliant app…Especially at a time like now (Coronavirus)”

Houseparty User – 5*

“Due to the current situation (covid-19) it’s a fun way of playing something with our friends and we do really enjoy it”

Quiz Up User – 2*

Source: AppStore, Google trends, OC&C analysis
Many online leisure missions are successfully served by general platforms like YouTube, which will form a major barrier to monetisation longer term

**% Increase In YouTube Search**\(^1\) vs **Increase In Penetration**\(^2\) By Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>% Increase in YouTube Search</th>
<th>% Increase in Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Cooking</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Sports Streaming Platforms</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Home &amp; Garden Tutorials</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Music</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Language Courses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Learning</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large proportion of increased online cooking has come from YouTube viewership, as it typically represents a one off rather than ongoing structured customer mission.

While online fitness has seen a significant growth in YouTube views, a large proportion of use is on more specialist apps that provide users with additional information and support.

Online language courses typically involve highly structured and ongoing interactions which is not well served by YouTube.

**Case study: E-learning**
- E-learning requires specialist content with a structured workflow; YouTube is more effective when looking for single videos rather than a structured sequence.
- Online courses are often used as a qualification, where specialists are required for legitimacy purposes, rather than generalists.

- Modularised course content with structure and flow – YouTube recommendations typically do not follow this pattern.

- Verified instruction with a qualification available end of course.

**Screenshot of Udemy course homepage**

---

2. Based on OC&C Survey Penetration by category

Source: OC&C Consumer Survey Apr 2020, Google Trends, YouTube trends, OC&C analysis

Keep calm and play on - The growth of Digital Leisure | © OC&C Strategy Consultants 2020
As we think about sustainable winning models in this space, there is a need for both a compelling long term use case and a route to monetisation

Elements Of Digital Leisure Winning Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compelling Long Term Use Case</th>
<th>Route To Monetisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear advantages vs physical alternatives</td>
<td>Must deliver a superior user experience on some propositional axes – ideally those most important to market participants - e.g. greater flexibility in when and how I do it, more customisable and insightful, lower cost etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist with a comprehensive offering</td>
<td>Category specialised and focussed on a specific customer group and their needs in a way that a generalist platform cannot – e.g. an ability to more easily search / track relevant content, a data wraparound of core content etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering frequency</td>
<td>A customer journey and selection of content that supports and encourages regular interaction, ideally promoting habitual use – e.g. through structured programmes, regular communications etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalise on network effects</td>
<td>Encourages the development of a user community, which improves engagement, drives awareness and encourages word-of-mouth recommendation – e.g. integration with social channels, data-driven competitive elements etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertically integrated proposition</td>
<td>Ability to offer an omni-channel experience, with a retail or physical leisure component driving stickiness and maximising share of spend; particularly critical as lockdown measures oscillate over the next 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective revenue generation mechanisms</td>
<td>An effective sustainable mechanism to generate revenue, which may be ad funded (requires a large, regular user base), % of transaction fee (effective if selling a variety of standalone modules, or aggregating work from multiple suppliers) or subscription (either freemium, with significant % of users interested, or very frequent engagement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importantly, successful digital businesses display powerful network effects, strengthening their position over time

Digital Platform ‘Virtuous Circle’

- Strong underlying back end and front end technology
- Superior customer proposition (cheaper, better, etc.)
- Continuous focus on user experience and customer journeys can drive lasting benefit; product innovation tends to be more short-lived
- Loyal customers and increasing brand awareness through word of mouth
- Cheaper and more effective customer acquisition
- Ability to invest further into technology & advertising
- Deploying services on the seller side can also create attractive revenue streams, grow supplier base, and raise barriers to switching
- High visitor volumes & increasingly important channel of consumption

Source: OC&C analysis
There are a number of key questions for businesses looking to succeed in this space

Key Questions for Leisure Operators

01. Which customer groups are you targeting and what are their specific needs from a digital solution? What is the problem you’re solving for?

02. How is your proposition differentiated versus generalist user-generated platforms such as YouTube? What’s your right to win and how can you enhance this?

03. How can you use data and machine learning to enhance the user experience and improve content curation?

04. How do you foster a user community and encourage healthy interactions and even competition amongst the user base? How can you link in with other digital / social communities?

05. How can you link in with the physical world – either through your own physical space or through partnerships with others?

06. What are your options for monetisation, and what is the right pricing strategy? Are there creative incremental revenue streams from a supply-side that could support the economics?
Ask us to share more

Tom Charlick
Global Head of Leisure & Hospitality
tom.charlick@occstrategy.com

Katherine Fiander
Associate Partner, Leisure & Hospitality
katherine.fiander@occstrategy.com

Zeeshan Ashraf
Partner, Digital Media
zeeshan.ashraf@occstrategy.com