American researchers, physicians and public experts, many from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), had been working at the World Health Organization’s (WHO) headquarters in Geneva late last year. According to international officials, they were sharing real-time information about COVID-19 and its spread in China with the Trump administration. This new information challenges President Trump’s argument that the WHO failed to communicate the threat of COVID-19.

To date, dozens of grocery store workers have died from COVID-19, even when they’ve had masks and temperature checks. Coverage is now starting to discuss the potential need to restrict customers from going into grocery stores to protect those on the front lines.

On Sunday, Disney announced that it would stop paying 100,000 employees this week as a cost-savings measure during the pandemic. The company expects to save $500 million a month with this new decision. According to reports, Disney has taken more cost-saving measures compared to its competitors (NBCUniversal and Warner Media).

Nearly 100 employees at a Tyson chicken plant in Tennessee have tested positive for COVID-19. Officials in Iowa have asked Tyson Fresh Meats to close its Waterloo pork processing plant due to concerns of spreading COVID-19. The company reported conducting 2,700 tests over the weekend; however, the results are not yet available.

“One World: Together At Home” raised $127 million to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The production was sponsored by Lady Gaga and Global Citizen, lasted eight hours and featured performances from the likes of Elton John, The Rolling Stones, Stevie Wonder, Sam Smith and Jennifer Hudson.

According to a recent NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll, nearly 60% of American voters are more concerned that if stay-at-home measures are relaxed it would lead to more COVID-19 deaths, than they are about the impact the restrictions will have on the economy. Republicans are more divided on the question compared to Democrats and Independents, with almost half of Republicans being more concerned about how the restrictions might affect the economy.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that New York will be testing thousands of residents this week for COVID-19 antibodies. As coverage points to the fact that New York might have passed its apex, health officials will be conducting 14,000 antibody tests this week (with the aim of conducting 2,000 per day). While...
this is progress, this is still short of the capacity needed to screen the state’s 19 million residential population for COVID-19.

Sunday was the 25th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing. Former President Bill Clinton said “that horrific act of terrorism in Oklahoma City provides lessons as America rebuilds from the deadly coronavirus pandemic.” For the first time, a ceremony could not be held due to social distancing guidelines.

Note: The map showcases the different types of topics that have been covered and talked about in the past 24 hours. The map details how each of these topic clusters are tied to or connected to other topic clusters.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- **The need for tests in the U.S.:** The availability of test kits has continued to be a focus in the U.S. Governors who have talked about plans to reopen their economies and relax the stay-at-home orders have noted that a significant variable in being able to do so relies on being able to test the population to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Coverage is now uncovering deeper issues with tests – quality issues. On Sunday, the Department of Health recalled 12,000 COVID-19 kits after the producer (UW Medicine) notified the department about a potential “quality control” issue. Over the weekend, the Washington Post reported that the CDC’s COVID-19 tests were delayed due to a “glaring scientific breakdown” at the lab. A former CDC officer, James Le Duc, stated that the error was “devastating to the country.”

- **Multiple roads to a treatment or cure:** Various entities and health professionals are hyper-focused on figuring out how to prevent the spread of the virus and how to treat or cure it. Remdesivir gained some attention after a study by the National Institute of Health (NIH) reported that after monkeys that were infected with COVID-19 took the drug they had “significantly better health.” Additionally, over the weekend Gov. Andrew Cuomo revealed a very aggressive plan to conduct tests on thousands of New York residents’ antibodies. This week alone the state aims to conduct tests among 14,000 residents. Last week, reports began showing that testing antibodies could potentially help treat current COVID-19 patients. Findings from these tests, according to Gov. Cuomo, will be “the first true snapshot of what we’re really dealing with.”

- **The WHO, alcohol and COVID-19:** For the past few weeks, alcohol sales have increased as the pandemic is forcing Americans to stay inside. The WHO, once again, reminded citizens around the world that excessive alcohol consumption does not protect them against COVID-19 and it will not kill the virus. Inversely, excessive alcohol use could actually weaken the immune system. This was another round of communications by the WHO, as misinformation about how to treat or prevent COVID-19 infections continues to make its way through the internet and populations.

- **Protesting during a pandemic:** Protestors continued to take to the streets voicing their opposition against strict stay-at-home orders. Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) said on Sunday that he doesn’t think it’s helpful for President Trump to encourage protests against stay-at-home orders that have been put in place due to the pandemic. Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine (R) stated that he didn’t oppose the protests against the closures; however, he cavetated that the demonstrators should not violate social distancing guideline measures while protesting. And Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) defended her state’s approach to stay-at-home orders that were set to prevent the spread of COVID-19. According to the governor, “Michigan right now has the third largest death count in the country… As you can deduce this means we have a uniquely hard issue going on here.” Coverage also focused on healthcare workers in Colorado peacefully counter-protesting against protestors.

- **New discussion on aid during COVID-19:** Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) introduced legislation to cancel rent and mortgage payments nationwide during the pandemic. The bill would establish a relief fund for landlords and mortgage holders to cover losses. These cancellations would be available to all Americans, regardless of their household income and there would be no debt accumulation for renters or homeowners. This bill also proposes that these moratoriums on payment stay in effect until one calendar month after the end of the national emergency.
BELOW SHOWCASES MORE DETAILS FROM COVERAGE & CONVERSATION

COVERAGE OF COVID-19 BY THE MEDIA
Volume: 25.5K

In the past 24 hours, journalists and outlets that have the influence and engagement around COVID-19 were:

- A LOUISIANA PASTOR WHO DEFIED CORONAVIRUS ORDERS IS ASKING PEOPLE TO GIVE THEIR STIMULUS MONEY TO THE CHURCH
  - ERIC LEVENTON
- DELAWARE COUNTY WORKERS GOING HOME AFTER 23 DAYS MAKING COVID-19 PROTECTIVE GEAR
  - GEORGE SOLIS
- FACT CHECK: TRUMP DID HOST RALLIES, PLAY GOLF AS COVID-19 OUTBREAK RAMPED UP
  - ADRIENNE DUNN
- POLL: MAJORITY OF AMERICANS DISAPPROVE OF TRUMP’S HANDLING OF CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK
  - JUSTIN WISE
- TRUMP SOME GOVERNORS HAVE GONE TOO FAR ON CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS
  - BRETT SAMUELS
- MNUCHIN SAYS PUTTING TRUMPS NAME ON CORONAVIRUS STIMULUS CHECKS WAS HIS IDEA
  - DEVAN COLE
  - NICKY ROBERTSON
- TAMPA NEWSPAPER GETS LOAN UNDER CORONAVIRUS RELIEF PACKAGE
  - ZACK BUDRYK

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT COVID-19 ON SOCIAL MEDIA
High Engagement Conversation Volume (500+*): 13.1K

U.S. only – High engagement conversation volume on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube

*Posts with less than 500 engagements are not part of this sample
April 19 (9AM) – April 20 (9AM), 2020

- On social media, users were highly engaged with posts relevant to protests and counter-protests over the COVID-19 social distancing regulations. The top post over the past 24
hours was a video of two nurses, who had witnessed firsthand the toll COVID-19 is taking in Colorado, peacefully counter-protesting by standing in front of traffic. However, the video also included a woman yelling from her car that they have no right to limit her freedom. Another popular tweet shared a video of actor and comedian Tim Robinson mocking COVID-19 protesters surrounding the Michigan state capitol amid criticism of governor’s “stay home, stay safe” order.

- President Trump continued to be in the spotlight on social media and most recently shared the quote, “On February 19th there was a Democratic Debate, in Las Vegas. Three words weren’t said: Virus, CoronaVirus, or COVID19. NEVER came up!” to combat criticism he had been receiving from Democrats on not discussing COVID-19 sooner.
- Social media users continued to engage with popular figures as they share news and statuses of relatives as it relates to COVID-19. Most recently, people were thrilled to hear that the fiancée of singer/songwriter Davido has now tested negative twice.
- The WHO remained prevalent on social media as people continue to seek relevant, trustworthy, and easily digestible information regarding COVID-19. Yesterday, the WHO released an illustrated short video on Facebook with seven simple steps to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 along with other helpful infographics.
- We also saw a continuation of interest in the communication between world leaders on combating COVID-19. Good Morning America shared photos on Facebook of President Duterte of the Philippines receiving a call from President Trump to discuss bilateral cooperation against COVID-19.
- Citizens were paying attention to an important announcement by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo where he stated that New York “will undertake the most aggressive statewide antibody testing survey in the nation in the next week. It will tell us for the first time what percentage of the population has actually had #Coronavirus. This will be the first true snapshot of what we’re dealing with.”

Today’s Media Relations Insights

- Broadcast media is showing a renewed ability to bring people together during social distancing.
  - This weekend’s One World: Together At Home concert aired across all three major networks, drawing a total of 14.6 million viewers. That number doesn’t include viewers who watched it on the myriad of streaming platforms also hosting the concert (which may account for the older viewership on network TV). The show, which was jointly hosted by all three networks’ main late night anchors – Jimmy Fallon, Jimmy Kimmel and Stephen “Jimmy” Colbert – was a throwback to past star-studded concerts like Band Aid and Live Aid, according to CNN.
  - The Disney Family Singalong, which also featured stars performing from home, drew 10 million viewers on ABC last Thursday.
  - ABC World News Tonight has been the most watched program on TV for five of the past six weeks. All three network evening news shows have seen substantial audience growth over the past six weeks, with viewership up 42% over a year ago.
  - The Last Dance, the new ESPN docuseries about the Michael Jordan-led Chicago Bulls, debuted last night with intense social media discussion. The program had been eagerly anticipated by NBA fans who were starved for new content.
  - CNN adds, “The current shelter-at-home scenario has temporarily thrown TV back in time a few years. Network ratings are notably up, despite the advent of streaming services and seemingly ubiquitous tide of content.
...What we've seen in the last few days, with the Disney and ‘Together at Home’ specials, is that there's still a craving for the feeling of connectedness, of togetherness, that broadcasting has traditionally been uniquely able to provide."

- Facebook and Google are facing increasing pressure to share advertising revenue with local news outlets.
  - Last week, regulators in France forced Google to negotiate with publishers over payment terms for the use of their content in both Google News and search engine results.
  - Australia’s treasurer asked the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to develop a code between media companies and digital platforms including Google and Facebook that would see the tech giants sharing advertising revenue with Australian media companies.
  - Over the weekend, the president and chief executive of the News Media Alliance, a trade association representing 2,000 news publishers in the United States and Canada, published an op-ed in The New York Times calling on the U.S. to take a similar action to ensure that Google and Facebook have to pay local publishers for their work, in the same way that they currently work with music publishers.

- Media are starting to look beyond the short-term and try to determine what the future of the world will look like.
  - The New York Times published a highly reported piece based on interviews with more than two dozen experts, which has been widely shared and discussed in media circles. Among the most shared excerpts: despite reporting that a vaccine won’t be ready for at least 18 months, the previous record for shortest development time for a vaccine was four years, for mumps.
  - Vanity Fair interviewed Dr. Anthony Fauci – not about the current efforts to fight the virus, but about what the world should look like moving forward. (You may have heard Fauci’s assertion from the interview that handshakes will have to be a thing of the past.)

Additional Media Insights
- Meredith Publishing just announced a cost-cutting plan that doesn’t include any layoffs or furloughing of employees, “Including reductions in Board of Directors fees and officer, executive and exempt employee salaries; and even tighter control over production costs and variable expenses.”

Corporate/Workplace Communications

Corporate America taking reopening the workplace (safely) into their own hands. Following the Trump administration’s convening of corporate leaders last week, companies across sectors are exploring measures to make workplaces safe to return to. From mandatory face coverings to temperature checks, the workplace will look a lot different. Widespread testing is the biggest hurdle of all, and major employers like Amazon are seeking to secure kits and build corporate testing sites.

- The Wall Street Journal, To Get Back to Work, Companies Seek Coronavirus Tests for Workers: “Regular testing on a global scale, across all industries would both help keep people safe and help get the economy back up and running.” - Jeff Bezos, Amazon CEO
- CNN, Walmart employees will be required to wear face coverings from next week: A number of retailers have said they will provide workers with masks but sourcing such protective equipment has proved difficult as hospitals and health workers also struggle to get their hands on such gear.
Reuters, Amazon deploys thermal cameras at warehouses to scan fevers faster:
Other companies that have explored using the thermal camera technology include Tyson Foods Inc. and Intel Corp. The camera systems, which garnered widespread use at airports in Asia after the SARS epidemic in 2003, can cost between $5,000 and $20,000.

Brand Announcements – COVID-19 Related
Brand news focuses on companies’ efforts to support their employees and the public amidst COVID-19. Companies are using their core capabilities to provide resources and support for frontline workers; collaborative brand fundraising efforts pay off in a big way.

- Facebook created country-by-country maps of coronavirus symptoms based on users’ self-reported data from a voluntary survey. The goal is to direct government officials to areas most in need of resources such as medical personnel and PPE.
- Uber is utilizing its out-of-work drivers and couriers for the Uber Direct logistics platform, which will start testing on-demand delivery for necessities such as medicine, pet supplies and mail services around the world.
- Rite Aid is expanding drive-thru testing in several states, with each site able to conduct approximately 200 tests per day.
- In a joint LinkedIn post, Shake Shack founder Danny Meyer and CEO Randy Garutti wrote that the chain is returning its $10 million PPP loan so that small restaurants who need it most can access funds.
- The One World: Together at Home concert, sponsored by brands including Verizon, PepsiCo, Target, Proctor & Gamble and Coca-Cola, raised $127.9 million for the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund and local and regional first responders.
- Citi announced its relief efforts have totaled over $65 million; support is going to both immediate relief for frontline workers as well as programs focused on economic recovery.

Brand Announcements – Non COVID-19 Related
- Jack in the Box is giving away free food April 20 – April 26 in honor of customer appreciation week for those who purchase through the chain’s app.
- After teasing details of the new LG Velvet phone, LG shared a video previewing the phone’s features.