Online Shopping, Grocery Sales Explode; AT&T's Beloved Lily Returns: Wednesday's First Things First

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Online Shopping Spikes, Grocery Sales Reach 50-Year High As Covid-19 Rages On

The Labor Department reported that prices for groceries across the U.S. jumped by 2.6% in April, the highest single-month bump since February 1974. The spike reflects the surge in demand, as grocery stores have been some of the only retailers to keep their doors open during the pandemic, and many items

continue to fly off shelves.

All that social distancing during the month of April led to huge year-over-year spikes in online shopping, including pick up in store (BOPIS) orders, for items including pajamas, groceries and alcohol. Plus, Etsy saw a bump in traffic from people searching for masks and supplies for diversionary activities, and even cleaning supplies and groceries, offering some hope for small businesses who sell on the platform.

PepsiCo's Move Into DTC Is Both Sales Tactic and Consumer Research

Monday's launch of two direct-to-consumer sites, PantryShop.com and Snacks.com, represented PepsiCo's first move into the DTC space. But the tactic isn't just about revenue—it's also about gathering clear consumer data. "[I]f you own the interface, you own the customer," said Wunderman Thompson Commerce's Hugh Fletcher. "If you own the customer, you own the data, and if you own the data, you own the future."

Read more: Beyond consumer demand and shopping patterns, controlling an ecommerce platform can reveal price-point sensitivities and richer information about basket sizes.

Walgreens Boots Alliance Is Reviewing Its Global Advertising Account

Pharmaceutical retail giant Walgreens is reviewing its global advertising account. Walgreens Boots Alliance confirmed the global creative and media review across all of its brands, which also include Alliance Healthcare, Boots and Duane Reade. The review follows the conclusion of the company's three-year contract with WPP.

Read more: Incumbent WPP is defending in the review process, which is being handled by MediaLink.

Popeyes and Burger King's CEO Says Coronavirus May Permanently Alter the Restaurant Experience

José Cil, the CEO of Restaurant Brands International (RBI), which owns Burger King, Popeyes and Tim Hortons, addressed the changes that RBI's locations will incorporate upon reopening. Shifts will include mandating gloves and masks for employees along with additional training and cleanliness protocols, plus partnering with delivery apps and expanding mobile ordering.

Read more: Cil said they'll also mandate social distancing within dining rooms, even at restaurants in cities or states that aren't requiring such rules.

Broadway's Hamilton to Skip Movie Theaters, Debut on Disney+

Disney is releasing the filmed original Broadway production of Hamilton more than a year earlier than planned. And instead of premiering in theaters, it'll be a Disney+ exclusive. The move is a big one for Disney, which has seen a significant hit to most of its businesses due to the ongoing pandemic, but it does scrap any plans for the theatrical revenue that Disney had counted.

Read more: Disney has already opted to move some theatrical releases over to the streamer early, those releases were responses to more immediate impacts of the lockdown.

Also in TV and Streaming News:

- Instead of Telemundo's typical upfronts celebration, the company created a video for media players that highlighted its pivots in the face of the pandemic, as well as its focus on reaching U.S. Hispanic adult viewers, given that they are on track to represent more

than 40% of total future video usage. Univision echoed the importance of targeting Latinx audiences as part of advertisers' upfront buy in its presentation today.

- Doug Ray, CEO, media at Dentsu Aegis Network, explored the ways the pandemic is reforming TV's supply chain: "Knowing that growth comes from exposing a brand to more prospective buyers, reach and cost per reach point should be the focus—not CPM. "

More of Today's Top News and Highlights

Ad of the Day: AT&T's Beloved Spokesperson 'Lily' Is Back, and Working From Home

Milana Vayntrub, the actress who became ubiquitous on TV screens across America a few years ago in the role of AT&T employee "Lily," is back with the brand in a pair of spots. This time, she's working from home.

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