

How to re-engage consumers to speed up post-pandemic recovery

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Understand how six distinct consumer tribes can help marketers to reshape their messaging, consumer experiences and even their innovation plans to drive recovery.



Chaos and order

Governments around the world are slowly reopening societies and economies, but here in South Africa we are still facing the eye of the Covid-19 storm.

Although shops, restaurants and cinemas are re-opening, many of us are reluctant to get back to our old way of life. While 50% of us are keen to get back to work in the next month or go to the hairdresser, more than half of us want to delay sending our children back to school, visiting a restaurant or travelling, because of concerns about our own or our loved ones' safety. Instead, like people all over the world, we are taking an alternate route, preferring to forgo the liveliness of restaurants, cinemas and gyms and stick to the safety of homemade meals, streamed movies and living room workouts for the moment.

Wave six of [Kantar's Covid-19 Barometer](#), which has interviewed more than 150,000 consumers in over 60 markets worldwide across six waves, finds that only 25% of South Africans are keen to bounce back to our old way of life as soon as possible, and 2/3 of us remain concerned about social distancing and avoiding busy places. The basic Maslowian needs around safety and security remain unmet and until people are ready to climb the pyramid to the next level, economic recovery may stagnate. But brands can play a positive role with the right knowledge — providing the signals of hygiene and safety that encourage people back into the marketplace.

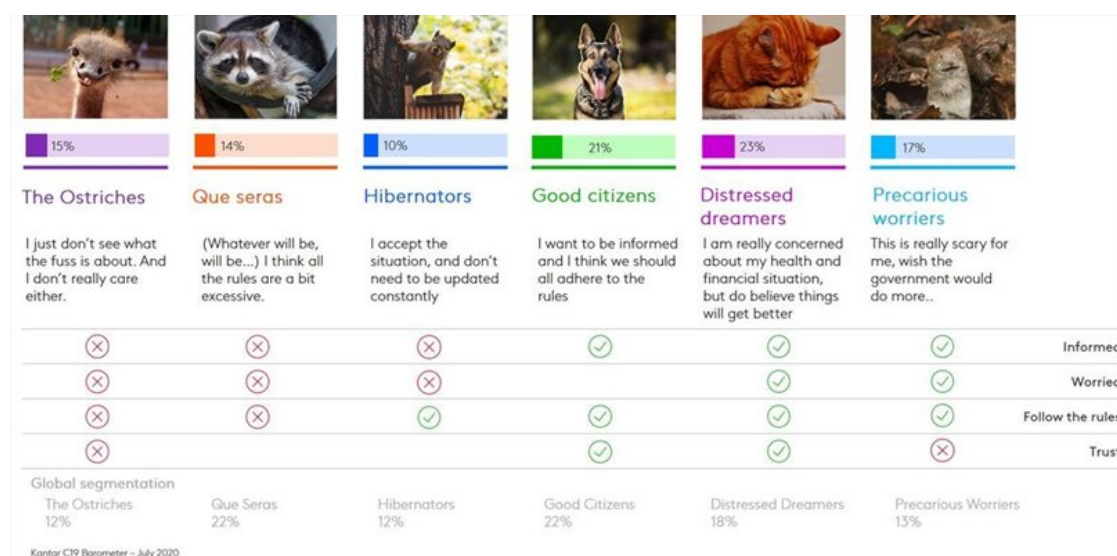
Pandemic tribal affiliations

People are tribal. Different things bring people together: kinship, ethnicity, culture, politics or ideology. For example, here in SA we have the growing [Curly Girls South Africa](#) movement, dedicated to nurturing natural hair for the best possible version of those natural waves, curls, kinks and coils. We're also home to [Harley Davidson Riders in SA](#), dedicated to riders who relish that twin-motor growl and sharing rally news. While these two groups possibly represent opposite ends of the

population spectrum – though there’s certainly some overlap – the tribally affiliated individuals within them are apt to share common beliefs and behaviour, and this is key.

To help brands better navigate Covid-19 complexity, Kantar research has identified six distinct coronavirus tribes defined by the levels of worry that they are experiencing, their information consumption about the virus, how conscientiously they adhere to the rules and their trust in government. Our segmentation helps brands better plan, communicate, engage and innovate in ways that will encourage people with empathic understanding, and entice them to interact with brands in ways that will shorten the path to economic recovery. This segmentation informs a perspective of how each tribe responds differently to stress and adversity, empowering businesses to better navigate the consumer environment in the near and longer term. The tribes have been created in 18 key markets around the world including South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria, providing a truly global solution to aid strategy and brand planning for the future.

The six Kantar coronavirus consumer tribes in South Africa are:



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Not only are the tribes different according to how they respond to the pandemic, they also differ in their attitude to travel, how and where they shop, their financial attitudes and behaviours and their tendency to make big plans. While Ostriches are keen to get back to their old way of life as soon as possible, including travelling, going to the cinema and attending large events; Precarious worriers are much more cautious – they are very conscious about continued social distancing, avoid busy places, and will delay engaging in most of their old behaviours.

The coronavirus tribes in action

Businesses can use the tribes’ segments to inform brand strategy, communications, customer experience and innovation. Marketers can first familiarise themselves with the tribes’ landscape of differing emotional and practical needs to inform overall brand strategy. They should appreciate each tribe’s relationship with the category and their specific brand. This determines the overall role the brand can play in peoples’ lives and the primary benefit it will deliver, whether that is reassurance, practical help and guidance to get through the crisis for Precarious worriers, or being optimistic and inspiring for the Que seras and enabling them to discover exciting, positive experiences in our new world.

Next, clarifying each tribe’s unique behavioural dynamics within the category and brand will help focus investment around the strategic initiatives most likely to deliver value to the customer and the business. For example, Distressed dreamers who generally need support are likely to respond well to practical interventions that reassure them at key steps along the path-to-purchase, whereas Ostriches who are eager to escape, will be well-served by a brand that reduces friction caused by the pandemic and lets them forget it’s happening. Finally, the tribes’ segments can be overlaid or combined with clients’ own data or brand segments to further propel learnings and add a powerful dimension for your messaging.

Tribes are transitional to growth

As lockdowns loosen globally, it's important that marketers meet people 'where they're at', along their personal journeys towards resuming life. Like the distinction between focusing on what you take out of the product box to treat your tresses as a Curly Girl to letting your mane fly behind you on that Harley, our research mirrors the polarising differences observed in modern societies in the opposing sentiments of the Precarious worriers and the Ostriches. But taking the middle road for marketing won't work to bridge the divide between these two groups. Rather, acknowledging and working with people's differences in beliefs, attitudes and behaviour is essential to effective marketing, particularly when many are feeling stressed and disconnected, while others are not. With this understanding, businesses can work to effectively encourage re-engagement and foster the return to economic growth.

Summary: How understanding the Covid-19 tribes helps your brand

Empathise

Understanding the differences between C19 tribes helps you step in their shoes when it comes to designing effective strategies. Empathy is the most powerful tool you have in driving action and winning in the new battleground.

Inspire

Understanding each tribe's relationship with your category and brand opens up new ways of adding value. This is a fast-track to more powerful marketing communications, CX and innovation.

Focus

Understanding each tribe's unique behavioural dynamics with your category and brand helps you focus on value-driving initiatives. This helps increase your ROI, at a time when every penny is under scrutiny.

Target

C19 Tribes can be overlaid or connected with your own data. This adds a powerful dimension to your messaging.

[Please reach out](#) to bring to life each tribe and see how you can target them differently in your category and brand portfolio. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) to keep up to date with our comms, and stay safe!

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