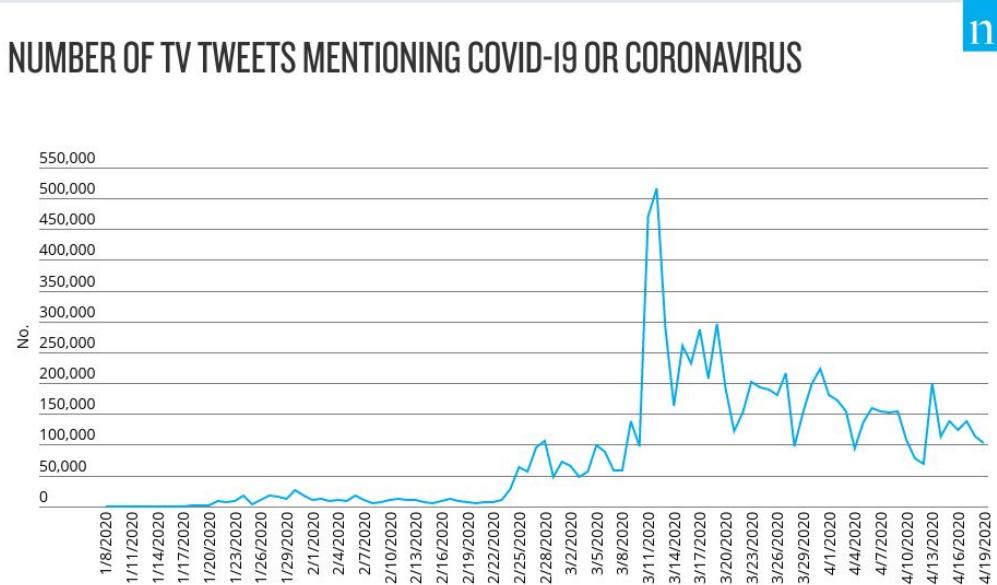


SOCIALLY CONNECTED WHILE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SOCIAL TV

For years, consumers have turned to TV during times of crisis—to stay apprised of information or simply to lean into the power of entertainment and escape. It's no different during COVID-19 as media consumption has continued to increase among home-bound consumers who have taken a very real step back from social gatherings, according to [recent Nielsen research](#). In 2020, we see this trend reflected in a deluge of social media activity about TV programs as consumers lean into the power of technology not just to view or listen, but to also fill a need to stay connected to friends, family and the world at large.

And, according to a recent Nielsen study on social behavior as it pertains to the TV, as consumers keep close to home and to their TV sets, they're using social media to stay connected now more than ever. The study found that the total volume of TV and COVID-19-related conversations on Twitter alone reached nearly 9 million since the start of 2020 in the U.S.—a staggering 40X increase between January and March amid the peak novelty of the coronavirus pandemic.



Read as: From Jan. 1, 2020- April 19, 2020 there were 891,0490 TV Tweets mentioning the coronavirus or COVID-19.

Source: Nielsen Social Content Ratings.

As more consumers shelter in their homes, they're turning to social media to pass the time. And audiences have a lot to say about the new TV, streaming, and movie options at their fingertips. Despite there being a relatively consistent number of programs on air year over year, we're seeing a sizable jump in social media activity across most TV genres. As expected, we see the biggest upticks in social buzz about talk and news programs, family movies and all streaming services.

VOLUME OF SOCIAL TV ACTIVITY: SPRING 2019 VS. SPRING 2020



| Entertainment Series and Movies | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Dates | No. of Programs | Total Social Interactions |
| 3/1/19 - 4/15/19 | 550 | 96,109,425 |
| 3/1/20 - 4/15/20 | 574 | 98,355,389 |
| % Change | | +2% |
| Hispanic Entertainment | | |
| Dates | No. of Programs | Total Social Interactions |
| 3/1/19 - 4/15/19 | 27 | 2,743,071 |
| 3/1/20 - 4/15/20 | 60 | 2,118,844 |
| % Change | | -23% |
| Primetime Talk & News | | |
| Dates | No. of Programs | Total Social Interactions |
| 3/1/19 - 4/15/19 | 55 | 12,295,554 |
| 3/1/20 - 4/15/20 | 63 | 14,441,885 |
| % Change | | +17% |
| Hispanic Talk & News | | |
| Dates | No. of Programs | Total Social Interactions |
| 3/1/19 - 4/15/19 | 30 | 13,226,546 |
| 3/1/20 - 4/15/20 | 34 | 22,595,250 |
| % Change | | +71% |
| Children & Family Movies | | |
| Dates | No. of Programs | Total Social Interactions |
| 3/1/19 - 4/15/19 | 68 | 543,644 |
| 3/1/20 - 4/15/20 | 79 | 3,740,709 |
| % Change | | *588% |
| Streaming Services | | |
| Dates | No. of Programs | Total Social Interactions |
| 3/1/19 - 4/15/19 | 125 | 71,841,480 |
| 3/1/20 - 4/15/20 | 125 | 108,992,501 |
| % Change | | 52% |

Source: Nielsen Social Content Ratings. Live/new, linear and 24/7, 3/1/19-4/15/19 and 3/1/20-4/15/20.

But there is a glaring exception: live sports broadcasts. Recent suspensions and cancellation of major events like the NBA Finals, the Masters and the 2020 Olympics, have impacted sports enthusiasts of all kinds. But marketers and brands looking to connect with home-bound sports fans can keep tabs on their non-sports preferences using real-world social media behavior alongside Nielsen intel around [Heavy Sports Viewers](#).

Now more than ever it is important for brands to find the right audiences, set the right tone and prepare for the future. Sports-heavy networks and advertisers have an opportunity to find aligned audiences in other TV programming and ride the momentum of recent increases in TV consumption. The overlap in social TV audiences is a way to identify and keep track of what these social sports fans are watching and talking about at scale.

Sports networks and brands can look to the large footprint of social affinity data between sports fans and other TV programming to identify where to place ads in the absence of live sports content. Nielsen data shows that sports fans are flocking to sports adjacent documentaries across the board, as well as comedies. However, networks and brands can dive deeper to look at league audiences and the TV programs that niche fans are highly aligned with. This gives marketers and brands the knowledge for more finely tuned advertising strategies based on demonstrated behaviors on social media about TV.

SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT: THE SHOWS SPORTS FANS ARE TWEETING ABOUT DURING THE PANDEMIC

Linear TV

NBA Basketball

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Food Network | Man v. Food | Docs & Special Interests | 4,264 | 84.78% |
| 2 | NBC | The Wall | Game Show Series | 5,828 | 80.11% |
| 3 | The CW | DC's Legends of Tomorrow | Drama Series | 35,729 | 70.32% |
| 4 | Showtime | Desus & Mero | Talk & News | 24,377 | 70.12% |
| 5 | VH1 | Nick Cannon Presents: Wild 'n Out | Comedy Series | 56,027 | 65.37% |

NASCAR Cup Series

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | A&E | Live PD: Wanted | Docs & Special Interests | 6,270 | 13.29% |
| 2 | FOX Business Network | America Works Together | Talk & News | 5,604 | 12.74% |
| 3 | FOX | Last Man Standing | Comedy Series | 3,974 | 11.32% |
| 4 | Discovery | Deadliest Catch | Docs & Special Interests | 2,839 | 11.13% |
| 5 | A&E | Live PD: Roll Call | Docs & Special Interests | 18,833 | 11.03% |

MEDIA EMBARGO UNTIL TUE, APRIL 28 @ 8AM EST

NHL Hockey

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Food Network | Man v. Food | Docs & Special Interests | 4,264 | 57.04% |
| 2 | Spike | Bar Rescue | Docs & Special Interests | 4,218 | 41.39% |
| 3 | FOX News Channel | The Next Revolution With Steve Hilton | Talk & News | 8,873 | 40.40% |
| 4 | FOX News Channel | The Greg Gutfeld Show | Talk & News | 25,822 | 39.11% |
| 5 | FOX Business Network | Varney & Company | Talk & News | 17,567 | 38.30% |

MLB Baseball

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Food Network | Man v. Food | Docs & Special Interests | 4,264 | 45.24% |
| 2 | FOX Business Network | Cavuto: Coast to Coast | Talk & News | 14,483 | 30.92% |
| 3 | FOX Business Network | Making Money With Charles Payne | Talk & News | 36,382 | 28.90% |
| 4 | FOX Business Network | Varney & Company | Talk & News | 17,567 | 28.47% |
| 5 | The CW | DC's Legends of Tomorrow | Drama Series | 35,729 | 28.46% |

MLS Soccer

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | NBC | The Wall | Game Show Series | 5,828 | 9.25% |
| 2 | UniMás | Me caigo de risa | Comedy Series | 5,274 | 6.39% |
| 3 | The CW | DC's Legends of Tomorrow | Drama Series | 35,729 | 6.24% |
| 4 | Univision | Hoy | Talk & News | 4,896 | 6.07% |
| 5 | ABC | Who Wants to Be a Millionaire | Game Show Series | 4,868 | 5.79% |

Streaming

NBA Basketball

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|---------|------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Netflix | Last Chance U | Docs & Special Interests | 10,258 | 77.61% |
| 2 | Netflix | When They See Us | Drama Series | 17,367 | 57.38% |
| 3 | Netflix | #blackaf | Comedy Series | 14,399 | 55.73% |
| 4 | Netflix | Dirty Money | Docs & Special Interests | 35,148 | 54.65% |
| 5 | Netflix | Narcos: Mexico | Drama Series | 11,319 | 54.52% |

NASCAR

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|-----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Netflix | Medal of Honor | Docs & Special Interests | 2,741 | 7.92% |
| 2 | Apple TV+ | Central Park | Comedy Series | 3,134 | 5.20% |
| 3 | Netflix | Dolly Parton's Heartstrings | Drama Series | 2,958 | 5.00% |
| 4 | Apple TV+ | Truth Be Told | Drama Series | 3,866 | 4.35% |
| 5 | Netflix | Outer Banks | Drama Series | 3,766 | 3.29% |

MEDIA EMBARGO UNTIL TUE, APRIL 28 @ 8AM EST

NHL Hockey

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Hulu | Letterkenny | Comedy Series | 8,545 | 29.82% |
| 2 | Amazon Prime Video | Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan | Drama Series | 4,785 | 29.55% |
| 3 | Netflix | Medal of Honor | Docs & Special Interests | 2,741 | 29.41% |
| 4 | Netflix | The English Game | Drama Series | 5,896 | 25.95% |
| 5 | Netflix | Arrested Development | Comedy Series | 19,655 | 25.52% |

MLB Baseball

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Netflix | Last Chance U | Docs & Special Interests | 10,258 | 27.14% |
| 2 | Netflix | Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan | Drama Series | 4,785 | 21.36% |
| 3 | Amazon Prime Video | Medal of Honor | Docs & Special Interests | 2,741 | 21.34% |
| 4 | Netflix | Narcos: Mexico | Drama Series | 11,319 | 20.43% |
| 5 | Netflix | Sunderland 'Til I die | Docs & Special Interests | 7,318 | 17.82% |

MLS Soccer

| Rank | Network | Program | Genre | TV Uniques | Affinity Share |
|------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Netflix | Sunderland 'Til I die | Docs & Special Interests | 7,318 | 27.10% |
| 2 | Netflix | The English Game | Drama Series | 5,896 | 25.64% |
| 3 | Netflix | Narcos: Mexico | Drama Series | 11,319 | 5.04% |
| 4 | Netflix | GLOW | Comedy Series | 6,438 | 4.38% |
| 5 | Apple TV+ | See | Drama Series | 6,126 | 4.16% |

Source: Nielsen Social Content Ratings. Base sports Tweets from 12/1/19-3/12/20. Series and streaming service Tweeters from 3/13/20-4/15/20.

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In these unprecedented times, social TV affinity data can shed light for sports advertisers and networks looking to understand the repercussions of recent cancellations on tight-knit sports communities. They can identify their super fans, keep track of these valuable groups, and make sure they're engaging authentically wherever their audiences are tuning in.

METHODOLOGY

The insights in this article were derived from Nielsen Social Content Ratings:1/1/20 – 4/19/20.

Interactions are a measure of total relevant social media activity on Facebook, Instagram Business Accounts, and Twitter. Social activity is measured from three hours before through three hours after broadcast, local time. Owned engagements for Facebook include comments, shares, and likes. Owned engagements for Instagram business accounts include comments and likes. Owned engagements for Twitter include retweets, quotes, replies, and likes.

*Per Instagram policy and data availability, only accounts designated as "business accounts" are measurable. As a result, this contributes to a depressed share of individual accounts on Instagram.