

WEBINAR

CORONAVIRUS IN US CITIES: RESIDENTS' KEY CONCERNS IN NUMBERS





Overview

local government agencies are on the frontlines of tackling this crisis:

- *shaping social distancing policies*
- *supporting local businesses*
- *providing relevant information to their communities*

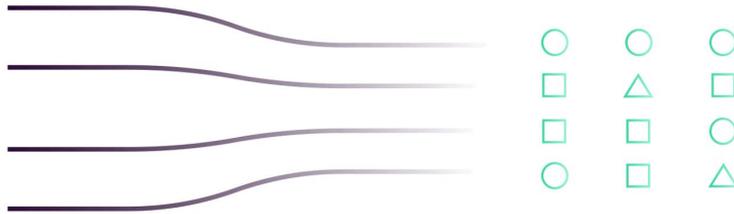


Overview

To support this acute need, we took a deep dive into millions of online public conversations from over 100 US cities to highlight key discourse trends on the coronavirus pandemic.

*Since March 1st, **we analyzed more than 1.5 million online interactions about the coronavirus from over 100 cities and counties across the U.S.** to understand key concerns. Here is what we've found.*

Our Solution



Consolidate Interactions



AI Powered Analysis



Actionable Insights



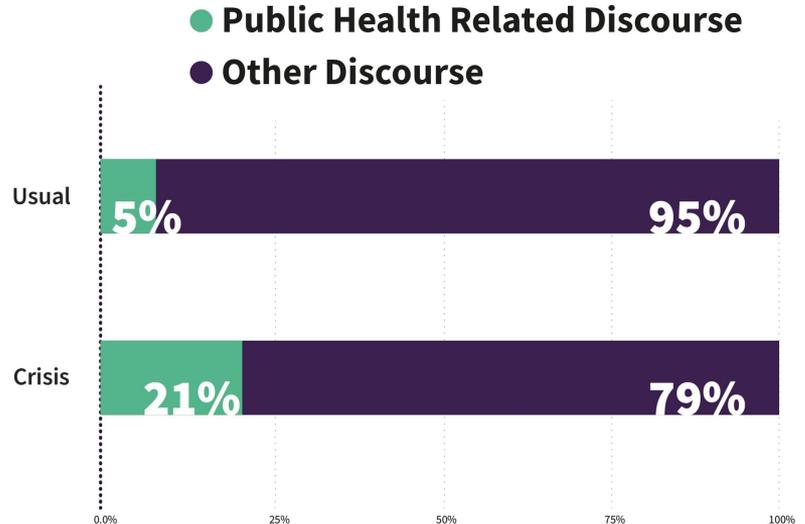
I've been studying this area for years, and Zencity is the most robust and innovative solution I've seen.

Prof. Stephen Goldsmith, Harvard, Former Deputy Mayor of NYC

Takeaway #1

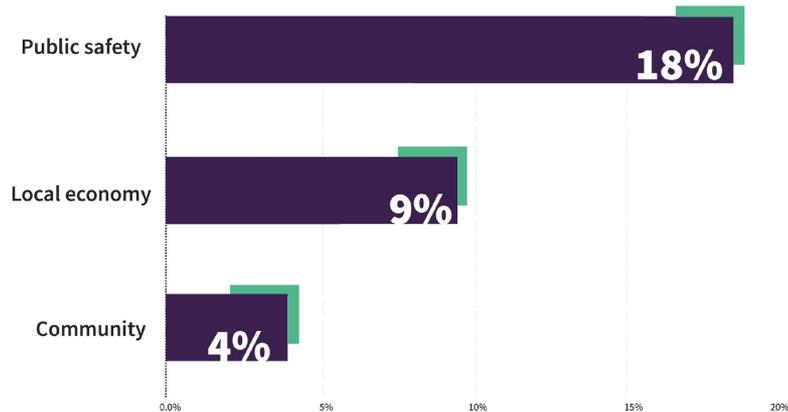
Coronavirus dominates the conversation on the residents side

- On average, public health related conversations makeup for less than 5% of residents comments
- Since march 1st, 21% of comments being about public health

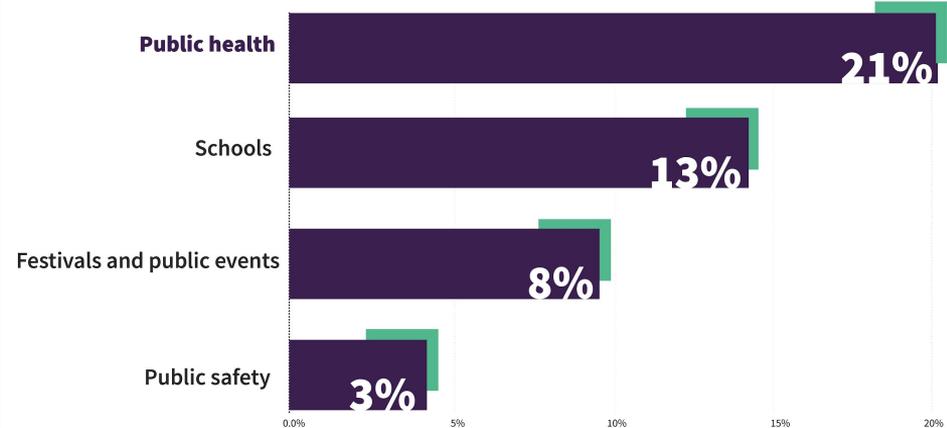


Main topics of conversation across communities change significantly since the outbreak

Popular topics of discourse (January 1-12)

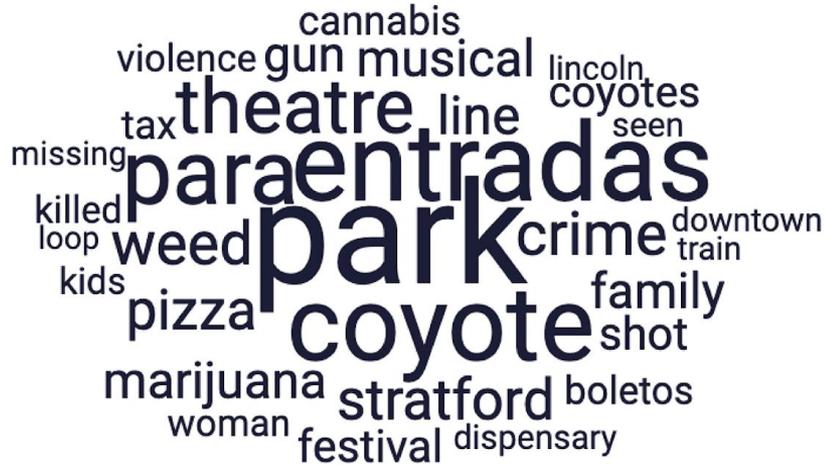


Popular topics of discourse (March 1-12)

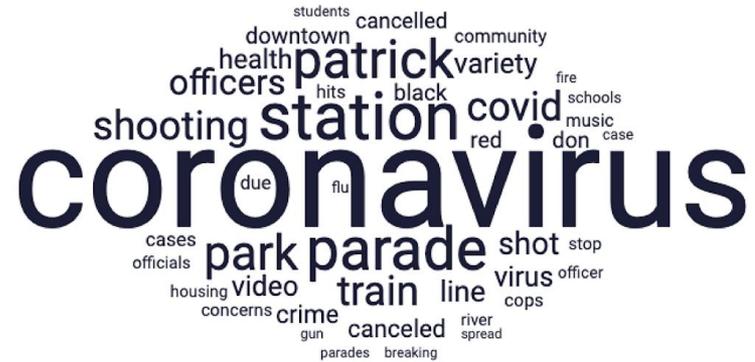


Keywords associated with Coronavirus were much more commonly used in online discourse

Typical Resident Discourse
Pre-coronavirus

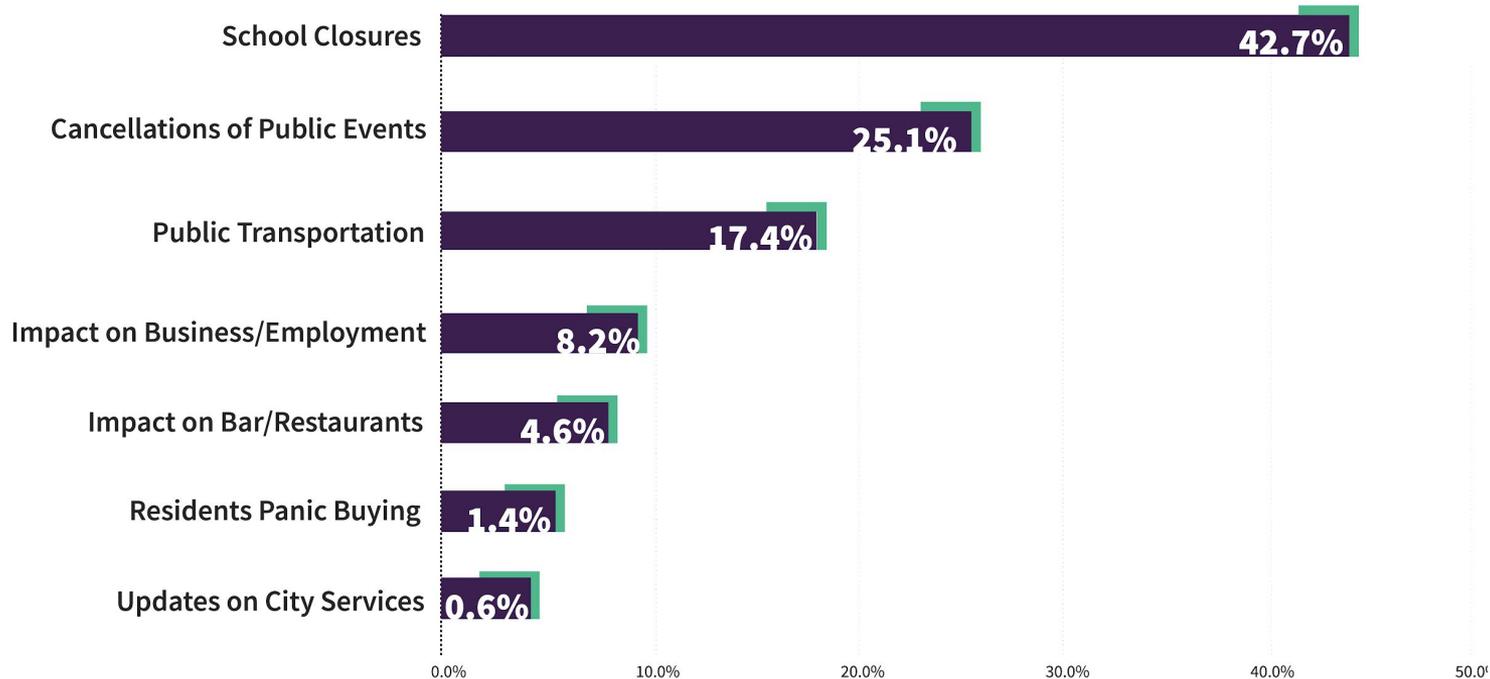


Resident Discourse
During Coronavirus



Takeaway #2

Key Coronavirus Concerns By Topic

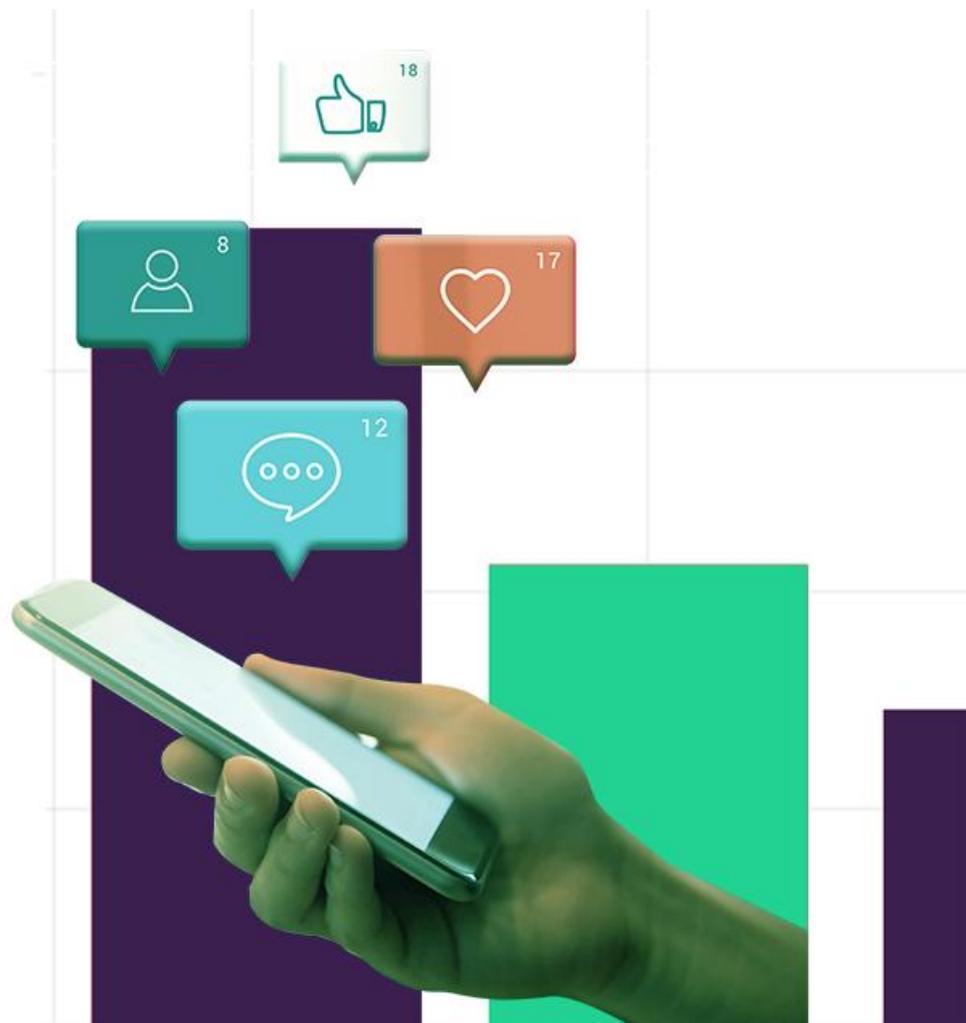


Takeaways from residents discourse:

- **School closures** is the most dominant cause of uncertainty and concern, whether they will be open or closed.
- Residents were preoccupied with **public events** in the city and whether these events should be held as normal or canceled.
- **Public transportation** was discussed in the context of cleanliness and precautions being taken in airports and in buses.
- The public was also concerned with COVID-19's impact on **local business and employment**, specifically on jobs.
- In addition to local business, they also discussed local leisure and dining establishments, and the drop in tourism (**restaurants, bars, tourism**).
- Panic buying from stores to stock up on goods was another topic of conversation, with reported shortages of basic necessities
- Small share of the discourse expressed concern over the ongoing **operation of regular city services**

REPORT

BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE MESSAGING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS





Overview

We analyzed over 92K tweets and posts from over 100 US Zencities posted in the past weeks.

The report covers real, data-based patterns of effective messaging about coronavirus – publications made by cities that received substantially positive traction from their community.

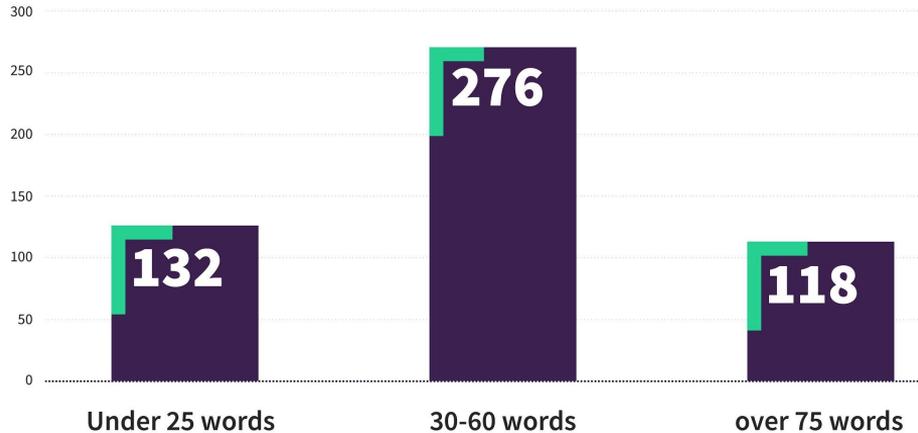
Goal: Promote the mutual exchange of knowledge and enable communication departments to quickly obtain best practices and adjust their own messaging efforts.

Takeaway #1

Balance Between Brief and Detailed Messages

Performance by Text Length

Average Positive Traction Per Item By Text Length



Best performing items contained 30-60 words, meaning two to four sentences long.

Based on the analysis of 1,600 items posted by official communication channels in 88 cities

Example: City of Pasadena, CA



 cityofpasadena [Follow](#) Pasadena, California

 cityofpasadena Avoid #PanicShopping and only buy the essentials if you're advised to quarantine for two weeks.

There's NO NEED to purchase bottled water. Pasadena tap water is high quality and safe to drink. COVID-19 has no impact on our water supply.

#DrinkingWater #Pasadena #COVID19 #coronavirus #PWP #PasadenaWater

1d



Liked by portaviaitalianfoods and others

1 DAY AGO

Add a comment... [Post](#)

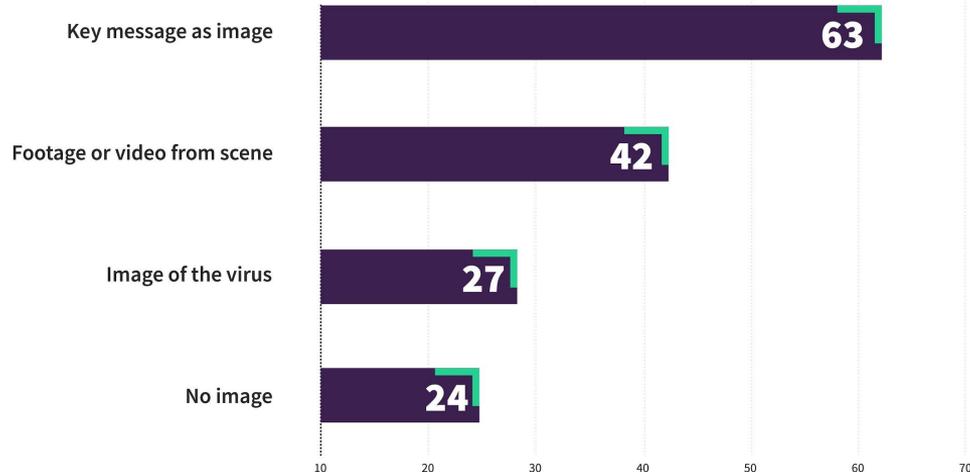
Recommendations by the Harvard School of Public Health:

- Provide the name of the source/institute you're relying on and its credentials
- When possible, provide not just information, but also the logic behind it
- Include only critical information

Takeaway #2

Adding an Image is Good, Adding the Right Image is Better

Performance by Image Type
Average Positive Traction Per Item By Image Type



Items with informative images that presented a key message had higher positive traction.

■ Based on the analysis of 821 items posted by official communication channels in 10 cities with the largest coronavirus-related discourse.

Examples of Image Type



Key message as an image:

Image containing informative text, usually the item's key message. This excellent example was posted by the City of Ontario CA.



Footage or video from the scene:

Image displaying medial or local teams in action, including image or video of official press conferences.



Image of the virus:

An image of either the virus, its name, or both.



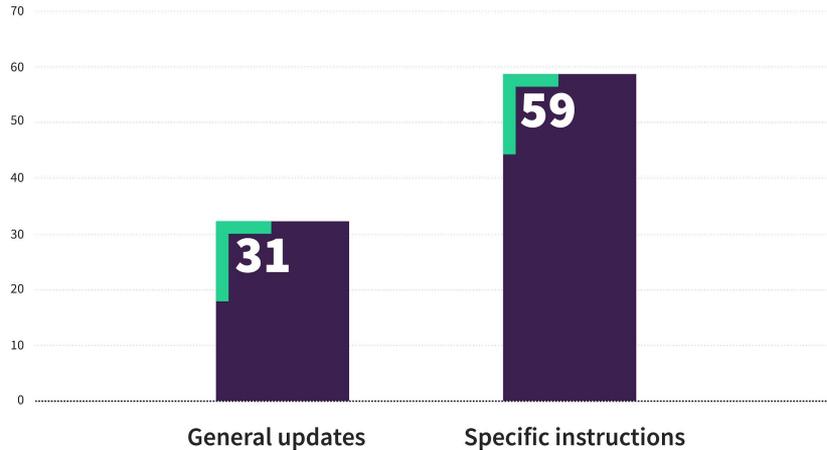
No image:

At first glance, the lack of an image can make the post seem like it was a mistake or there was a bug. This diminishes trust and residents' attention.

Takeaway #3

Increase Residents' Cooperation by Using Clear and Decisive Phrasing

Performance by Content Type
Average Positive Traction Per Item By Content Type



Items shared by the local government that contained specific instructions or a clear call-to-action had significantly higher positive traction amongst residents.

■ Based on the analysis of 821 items posted by official communication channels in 10 cities with the largest coronavirus-related discourse.

Example: City of Seguin, TX



The image shows a Facebook post from the official page of the City of Seguin, Texas. The post is a text-based announcement with a large graphic below it. The profile picture of the page is a circular logo with the text 'SEGUIN TEXAS' and 'It's real.' below it. The post text states that there are no active cases of COVID-19 in Seguin or Guadalupe County. The graphic below the text features the 'SEGUIN TEXAS' logo, the phrase 'It's real.', and the words 'Rumor Control' in a large, bold font. The post has 128 likes, 27 comments, and 295 shares.

SEGUIN
TEXAS
It's real.

SEGUIN
TEXAS
It's real.

City of Seguin - Government 22 hrs · 🌐

Despite current rumors circulating on local social media pages, there are **NO ACTIVE CASES** of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the city limits of Seguin nor in Guadalupe County. Please share this post with others. Thank you!

SEGUIN
TEXAS
It's real.
Rumor Control

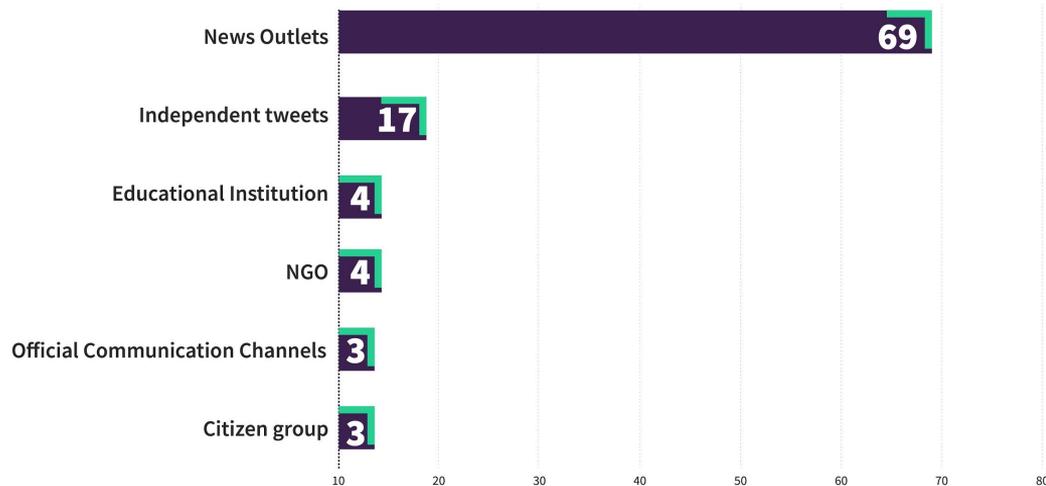
👍 128 27 Comments 295 Shares

Takeaway #4

Reach Residents on Their Primary Sources of Information

Leading Channels of Communication

Leading Channels by Type



Cooperating with local media and reaching out to local influencers to share information on Twitter using the city's hashtag can increase traction substantially.

Based on the analysis of 92,369 items made by all types of channels from 100 cities.

Takeaway #5

The Right Online Presence is Vital as Early as Possible



Here's a word cloud from a city that posted according to these best practices early on



Following word cloud demonstrates commenters' debate regarding the seriousness of the situation in a city that had not communicated directly with its residents during the early stages of the crisis.



So, how is this useful?

The men and women of local governments, Public Safety, and Public Health organizations are at the frontlines of tackling this crisis. One of their key responsibilities at this time is to share effective and reliable information with their communities, and to take immediate action around the issue that concerns their residents.

This report aggregates from real discourse of multiple communities, provides an understanding of what are some of the key issues every city/county needs to be tackling to directly address their communities needs.