On the heels of another police shooting, sports teams -- from the NBA to the MLB -- postponed their games last week after players protested the shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man, in Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Bucks, who led the NBA’s protests, are the first NBA team to boycott a game in the wake of nationwide unrest over racism and police brutality.

Amid racial tensions, the ongoing pandemic & economic uncertainty, the U.S. hit another milestone, with six million reported cases of COVID-19. The past week also saw governors and Democrats denounce a change in the federal government’s coronavirus testing guidelines. The CDC eliminated direction that everyone exposed to the virus should be tested, regardless of whether they have symptoms. Experts were quick to call out that this change could increase public confusion and could lead to another surge.

We’re here to support your efforts in effectively communicating an appropriate narrative while being mindful of the shifting nature of this crises. This document is intended to provide the analysis you need to best determine your communications efforts in the weeks to come. Sections for analysis include:
PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

- Influencer marketing appears to be bouncing back nicely from its early pandemic dip—and far faster than the broader marketing and media economy. - Ad Age

- Travel is starting to pick back up again, albeit slowly, and this is being reflected in search trends on Pinterest. - Adweek

- Facebook CMO Antonio Lucio is stepping down to help companies accelerate diversity efforts - Forbes

- Indie ad agencies are pressing Facebook and Google to change payment terms they call unfair, as the pandemic raises fears that clients will fail to pay - Business Insider

- After last month’s Facebook boycott, companies are demanding more control over how their ads appear online. And the tech companies seem to be listening. - New York Times
Business & tech press reported on another battle with Apple as Facebook claimed Apple’s new iPhone update will cause huge disruptions in online advertising. In a move that addresses the ongoing privacy changes Apple has been making to its mobile phone software, Facebook said Apple’s changes could hurt its ability to keep running its ad network. In a statement, Facebook claims that “…Apple’s updates may render Audience Network so ineffective on iOS 14 that it may not make sense to offer it on iOS14”. Apple’s new privacy changes will have an impact on Facebook properties (Instagram, WhatsApp) and also on the Snap Audience Network.

A major departure drove coverage this week as Antonio Lucio, Facebook’s CMO, announced he was stepping down to pursue “diversity, inclusion and equity” in the ad industry. Reporting focused on Lucio’s efforts amidst the backdrop of misinformation, election interference and brand trust issues with the giant technology company. Lucio’s departure comes in the wake of the ongoing advertiser boycott and Facebook’s efforts to regain trust with the marketing community.

And to kick off the week, speculation around the impending sale of TikTok swirled with rumors of a deal to sell its U.S. operations could be announced in the days ahead.
Spotify is developing a ‘virtual events’ feature to connect artists with their fans through ticketed live music events. The new feature will alert fans to the artist’s upcoming virtual events. - *TechCrunch*

Esports Business Summit, the world’s largest conference connecting the entire esports ecosystem will go 100 percent virtual this fall, with a lineup of digital experiences designed to educate, connect and prepare the top leaders in esports for the year ahead. - *Event Marketer*

The World Economic Forum announced it decided to postpone its meeting in Davos, Switzerland, out of an abundance of caution regarding COVID-19. The meeting, originally scheduled for January 2021, will be rescheduled to “early next summer”. - *CNBC*
The Association of National Advertisers and Innovid, the video marketplace company, released a connected TV best practices report. The researchers worked for four months with agencies, publishers and brands, analyzing 60 million interactive CTV impressions across 17 ANA brand marketers, seven verticals, 10 CTV devices and four creative formats. - MediaPost

- It confirms that CTV can be used to extend reach and drive more interactivity and viewing time for ads, making them a valuable complement for traditional linear TV.

Under the disruption of the industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, The One Club for Creativity has announced that One Show Greater China Awards this year will become The One Show Asia Showcase, where the best work will be free to submit and be showcased online for the world to see. - BrandinginAsia
We anticipate the major news coming out of tech companies will likely continue into the days and weeks ahead. With Kevin Mayer stepping down from his role as CEO of TikTok (only three months into his role) and the upcoming sale of the company’s U.S. operations, reporters are looking for answers and continue to report on the story as news trickles out.

And while privacy experts continue to praise Apple’s upcoming iOS14 updates, Facebook and other organizations -- reliant on data to fuel their business -- will continue to raise alarm bells that their ad business will be cut in half due to these updates.

Also of note, while Americans are in a sprint to return to the sports they love, there is interest in how brands and advertisers will approach next year’s Super Bowl. CBS is seeking around $5.5 million for 30-second commercial spots in the game. This is roughly in line with commercial prices in the 2020 game (according to recent coverage). How ad buyers and brands respond, the approach they take and how they connect with this massive audience will be top-of-mind.
BE SAFE & STAY HEALTHY!

Have questions or need help navigating the current COVID-19 environment? Contact MaryLiz Ghanem at maryliz.ghanem@digennaro-usa.com

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