



How Technology is Helping People Survive Lockdown

Covid-19 has put the world on hold. With no cure in the sight, the Covid-19 pandemic has sent countries around the world into crisis mode, with many now having to cope with severe social isolation and physical-distancing measures. The huge adjustments we've had to make to stay at home to help limit the spread of coronavirus are necessary, but are also having a detrimental effect on our physical and mental health. Spending large amounts of time indoors, working from home, sitting for long periods and general isolation can quickly start to take their toll. In comes, technology!

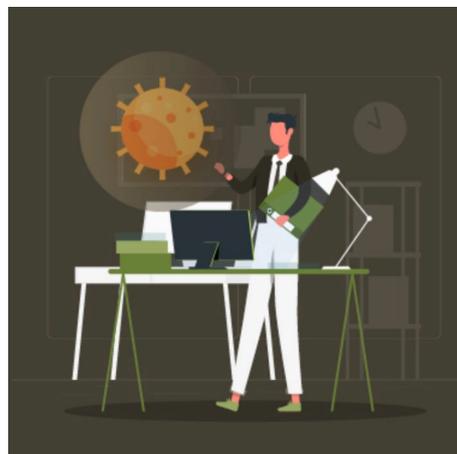
Even after the turn of the millennium, the notion that so many elements of our lives, relationships, work and public services could find a way to carry on while most of us are confined to our homes would have seemed like fantasy. And yet this is the world we now find ourselves in.

Of course there are many aspects of our lives and economies that cannot be shifted online. Key workers can't staff ICUs or deliver food to supermarkets from behind a screen; hotels and airlines can't fill empty beds and seats with digital subscriptions. And every business will suffer as the economic downturn and disruption carries on.

Nevertheless, far more activity seems to be finding a lifeline via the internet than we may have expected, and many of the technologies that we take for granted are proving essential to maintaining some semblance of normality. Entertainment, Fitness, Education or Social Gathering all these activities have been digitally transformed. Yes, technology has dramatically altered the otherwise mundane indoor space for millions in the city. From online video platforms such as Zoom, Hangouts, Skype and Duo to multi-player video games, tele-medical consultations to the smartphone's unlimited

array of killer apps, tech is everyone's obsession and salvation.

Even social interaction is something that people, for now, have surrendered to technology to socialise with their peers. For instance, according to a Forbes article, Topping the charts on the App Store in 17 countries including the UK is Houseparty, a group video chat platform that connects users with their friends. Houseparty allows for spontaneous gatherings, by sending friends a notification when you're on the app. Last week Houseparty was downloaded 2 million times. The app also offers in-app games and screen-sharing functionalities. Quirky online social interactions are being adopted, such as virtual pub quizzes and club nights.



The shock to our way of life caused by Covid-19 is with us for the foreseeable future, and there is no doubt that we will need to continue to adapt our daily lives with technology. Technology has been fundamental in allowing people to do the things they love remotely; from online fitness classes to socialising with friends. But, technology isn't always enough. Technology always has been an enabler, a layer to remove friction from our everyday lives. Whether it's traveling from one place to another through Uber or Google Maps,

technology makes it seamless to travel to meet friends or get home after a night out. Technology reminds you of those important events or notifies about anniversaries and birthdays.

Whether it's the destination, the big corporate meetup or that important anniversary— it's the face-to-face interactions that we yearn for, the technology just makes it all a bit easier. But, with the country on lockdown, we have had to rely on technology to not just enable but to be front and centre. Now, we are confined to our homes and living through screens, and although it is helping us get through this challenging time, but we are looking forward to technology going back to being the enabler of all those things we love.



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