

7+ Months In: How the pandemic has affected our forecasts in 2020

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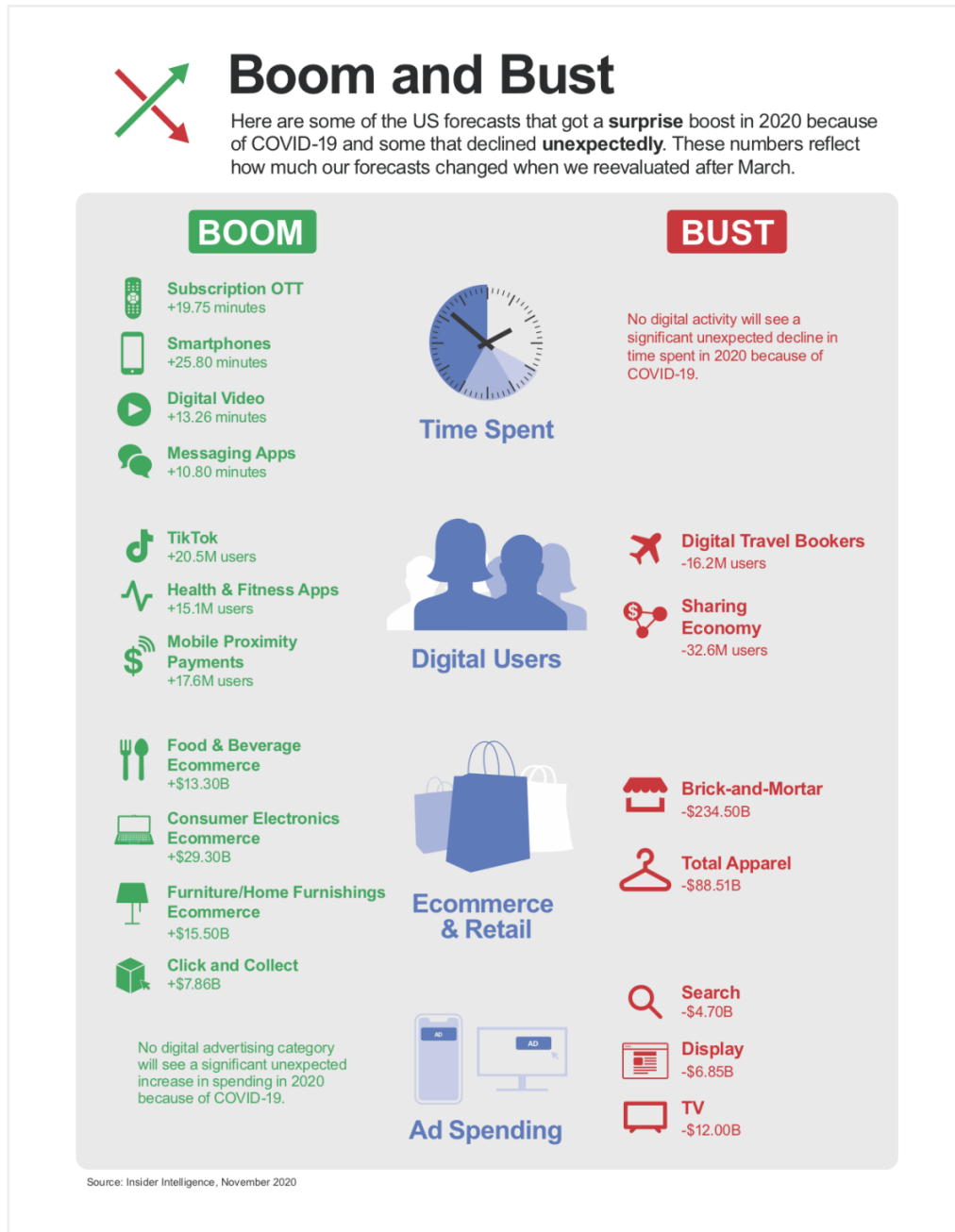
Yesterday marked a big milestone at Insider Intelligence: We launched our new platform, unifying our two brands (eMarketer and Business Insider Intelligence) into a [single online experience](#) and expanded our Financial Services coverage. We also just published a report that's been long in the making—and it happens to be our very first under the new brand.

2020's Biggest US Forecasting Shocks: A Year of Recalculations Brought About by COVID-19 looks across all of the forecasts the company is known for and compares what we thought would happen back in February 2020 vs. what we think now. Given the breadth and depth of our forecasts, we're in a unique position to publish this birds-eye view of the impact of COVID-19 on a variety of different activities. We looked at changes in 1) time spent with media, 2) number of users, 3) advertising spend and 4) retail spending.

Two Graphics That Summarize the Changes

We summarized the net changes in behavior and spending in the first graphic in the report, showing which areas got a surprise boost and which declined unexpectedly. Note these figures show *how much we*

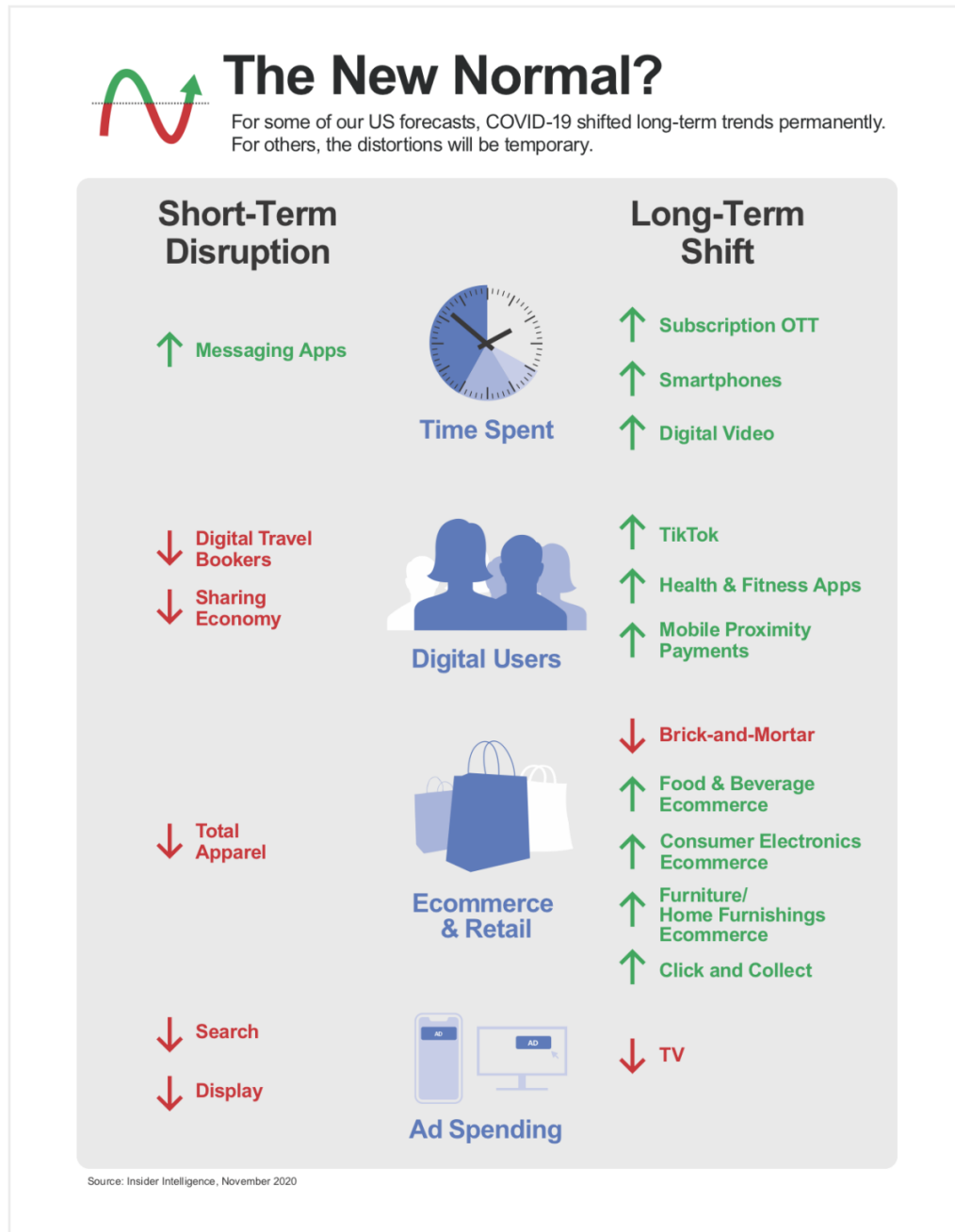
ultimately changed our US forecasts this year when we started to revisit them in March as COVID-19 took hold--they are *not* the net increases or decreases for the entire year over last year. Think of them as the bump up or the hit these categories took as a result of the pandemic.



A second key graphic in our report included a look at which of these changes are set to be short-term aberrations vs. long-term shifts, as it's

become apparent that some shifts will be temporary while others are harbingers of a different future.

Green indicates those categories that increased when we revisited our forecast; red indicates the declines. We've placed these changes in one of two columns to indicate whether the increase or decrease is likely to be a long-term trend.



The Biggest of the Big Changes

Readers of the report will also have a chance to compare our forecasts to see how categories rolled up and how they compare to each other. A few highlights directly from the report:

Which US forecast shifted the most in absolute terms? [Overall retail ecommerce sales](#): The forecast shifted up by \$119.62 billion, now reaching \$794.50 billion in 2020 instead of \$674.88 billion as originally forecasted prior to the pandemic.

Which digital services will see the most unexpected increases in US users? We now forecast that [189.0 million US adults will participate in digital banking](#) this year, an unexpected additional uptick of 22.8 million people compared with our pre-pandemic forecast. Similarly, [TikTok will gain an additional 20.5 million US users](#) compared with our first projection.

Which digital time spent forecasts increased the most? Adults in the US will spend an average of 64 more minutes with media per day in 2020 than we thought they would. Within this, users will spend almost 26 additional minutes per day on their [smartphones](#) compared with our earlier expectations.

Our Forecasts in 2021

As many have quipped, we're all yearning for more "precedented" times--and hopefully 2021 will usher in this new era. With vaccines on the horizon, we can only hope the pandemic and the destruction it has caused will slow and then begin to abate. Our forecast teams will be carefully watching and analyzing the market as industries start to shift and as the short- and long-term effects of the pandemic become clearer.

With thousands of forecasts set to be published in 2021, our clients will have first-hand insights into the impact that COVID-19 will ultimately have on marketing and advertising, media, financial services, retail, healthcare and beyond. Just as we helped our clients navigate the challenges of COVID-19, we'll also help them figure out their strategies

as we begin to emerge from this incredibly challenging time. Please [reach out if you have an interest in learning more.](#)

A special thanks to Ethan Cramer-Flood who wrote this report, Monica Peart and Cindy Liu who ran the forecast numbers that made it possible, and Ann Marie Kerwin who oversaw the team's work.

Insider Intelligence subscribers can read the full report [here](#):

Report by Ethan Cramer-Flood Nov 17, 2020

2020's Biggest US Forecasting Shocks

