



entrance

Sorry, we're
CLOSED

due to **COVID-19**
restrictions



push



EBOOK

Covid-19 Economic Pulse Survey

INTRODUCTION

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the global economy is changing. Consumers are changing their purchasing behaviors and many businesses are struggling to survive.

In late March, 2020 Fuel Cycle fielded an economic pulse survey to 501 Americans to uncover the details behind their new spending habits; what they're spending more or less on, why they're making those new choices, and how they expect things to continue morphing in the coming months.

The quantitative results reflect a massive shift in the country's employment status, reveal some unexpected, evolving patterns in spend, and general anticipation of a future that is notably unlike the past. If businesses hope to survive in this strange new marketplace, it's imperative that they understand what today's customers are buying and why.

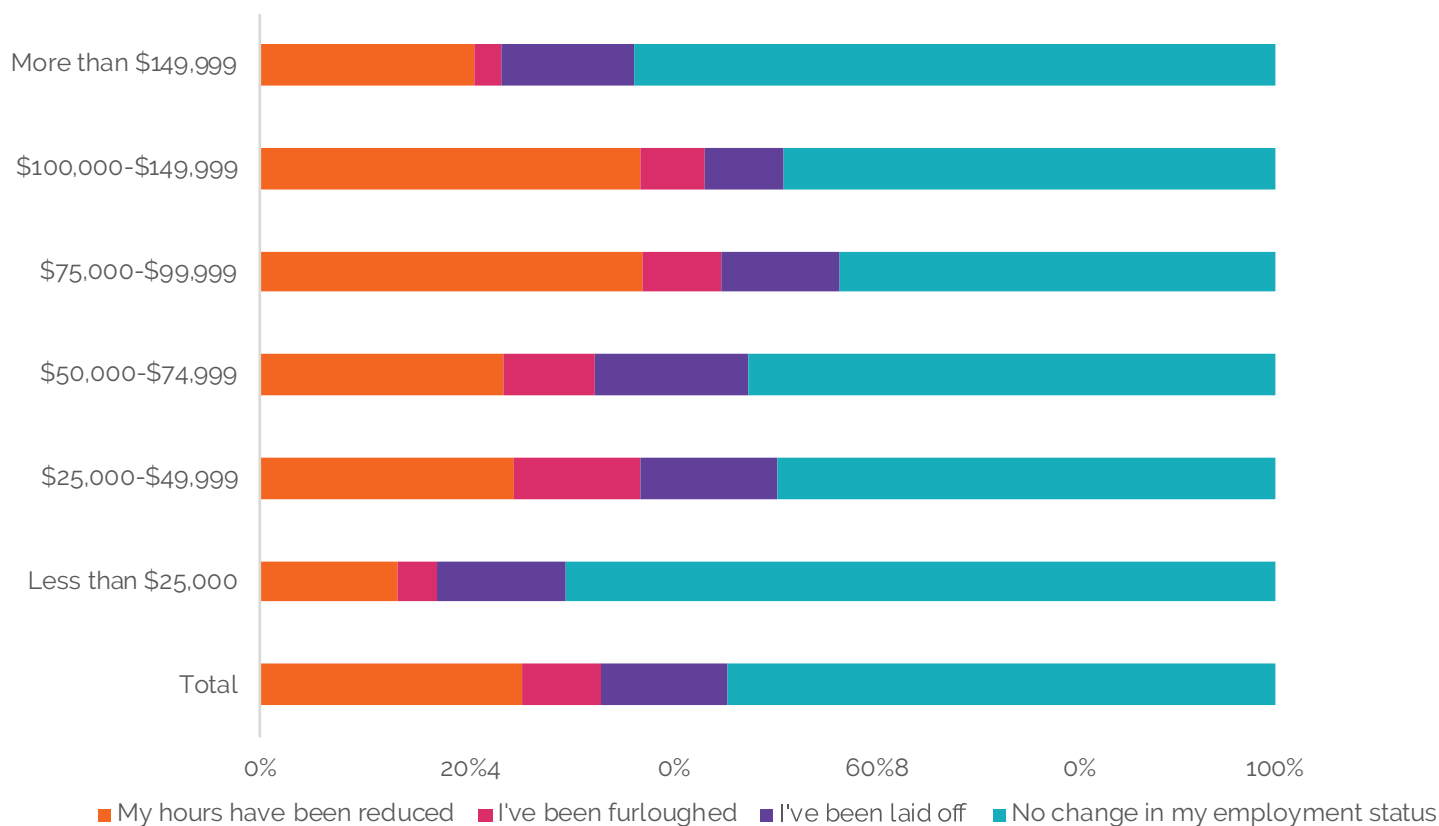
For the full story, complete with rich insight that could shape the future for your organization, check back in soon. We'll be revealing the results from in-depth interviews conducted using FC Live in the coming weeks.





CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY HH INCOME

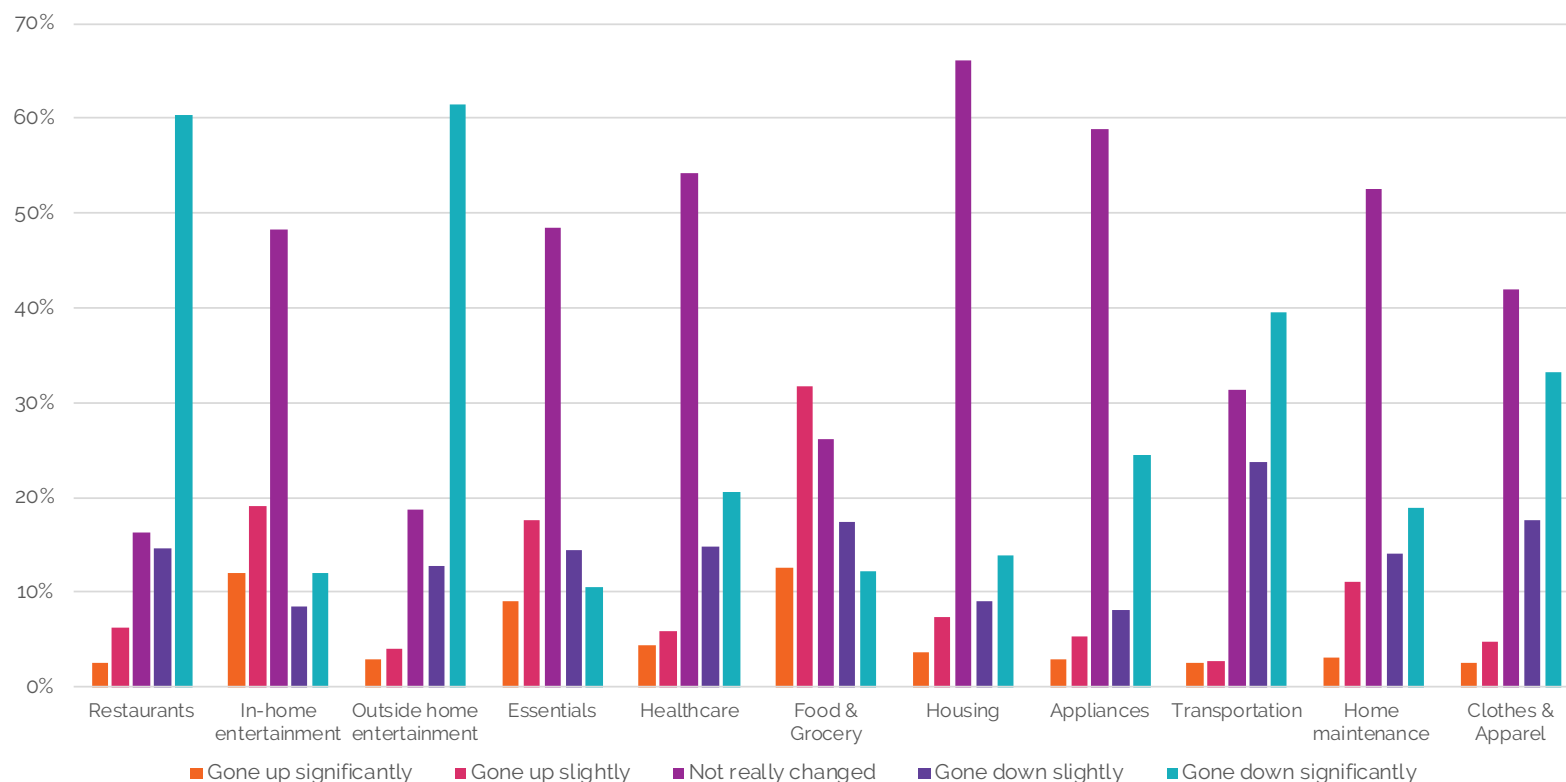
Only about half of respondents say they have not experienced a change in employment status during the pandemic, while the other half have either faced reduced hours, been put on temporary hold or leave, or been laid off entirely. Those with annual household incomes on the middle-upper end (between \$75K-\$99K) have experienced the most financial disruption and wavering job security.





SPENDING CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC

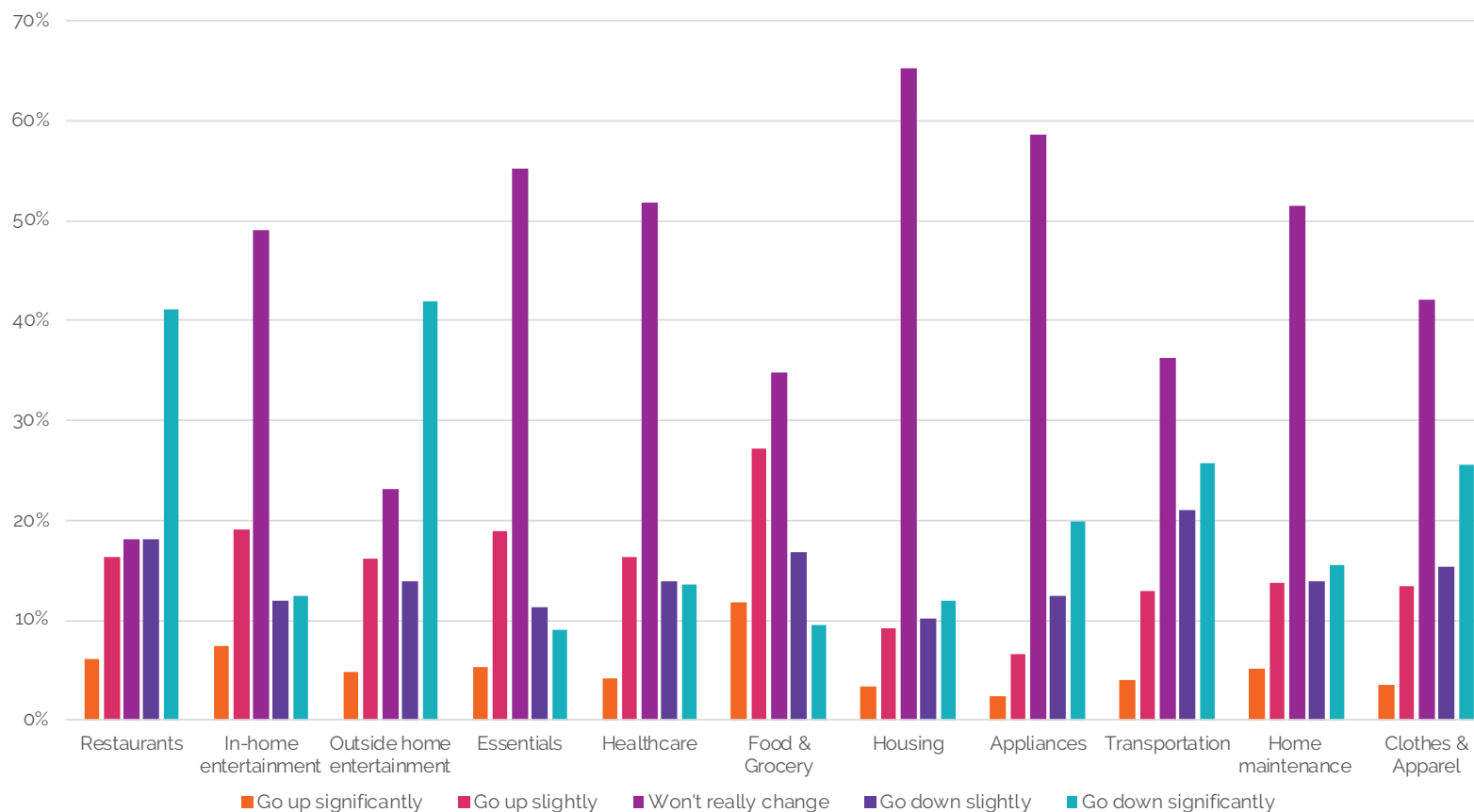
Spend on restaurants and outside-of-home entertainment dipped the most in recent weeks, with transportation and apparel having decreased too. Since stay at home orders were applied to approximately 80% of the U.S. population when the survey was fielded, it makes sense that most people are dining in more and traveling out less. Additionally, non-essential spend seems to have been replaced by higher purchase rates of groceries (45%) and other essentials (27%).





PREDICTED CHANGES IN SPENDING POST-PANDEMIC

When asked to predict future spending in three months' time, respondents say they'll continue spending more on groceries and essentials and less on restaurants and outside-of-home entertainment, but predict an uptick in healthcare. With elective surgeries and maintenance visits (such as routine check-ups and dental procedures) being cancelled or postponed in observation of nation-wide stay at home orders, we should prepare for a near-future swell in demand.

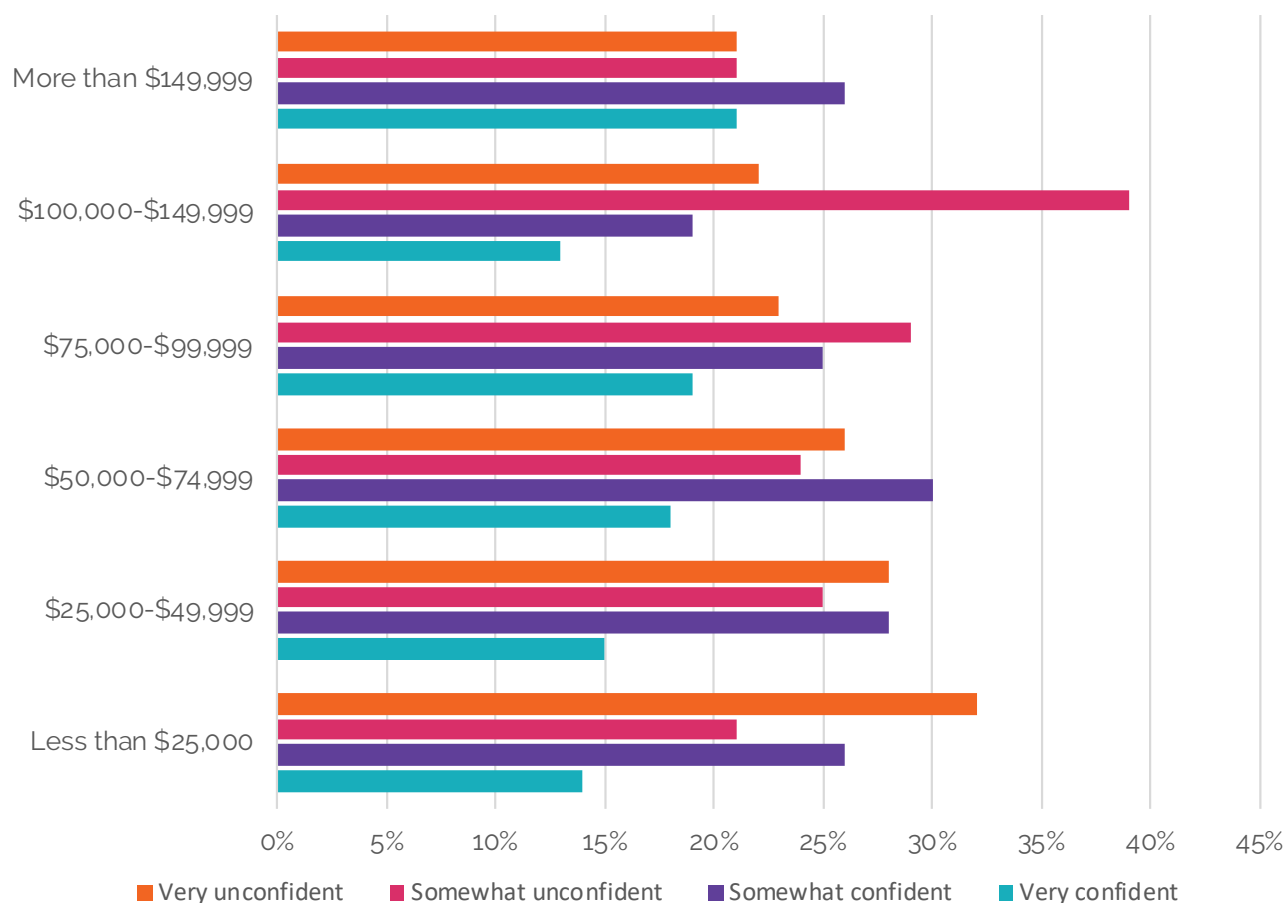




PREDICTED CHANGES IN SPENDING POST-PANDEMIC

Overall, there is lukewarm confidence in the future of the United States economy. Those bringing home less than \$25K per year are the most severely unconfident, while the wealthiest Americans appear to have the most hopeful outlook. Interestingly though, a whopping 61% of those making between \$100K-\$149K report feeling at best “somewhat unconfident” in the future of the U.S. economy, and those making between \$50K-\$74K report being at least “somewhat confident” over any other group at 48%.

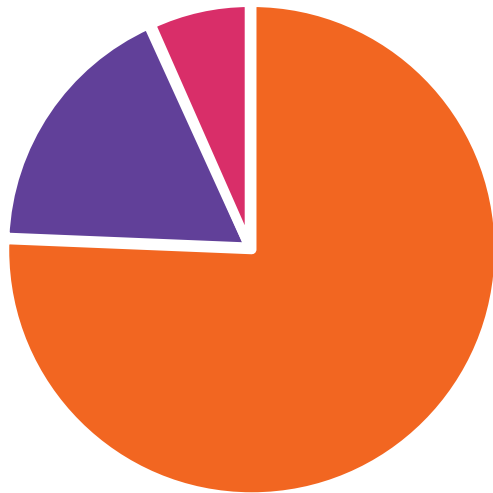
Confidence in US Economic Recovery by HH Income



CONTINUED CONSUMER RESEARCH THROUGH COVID-19 CRISIS

76% of respondents feel that brands should continue running experience management research through the crisis. While the remainder believe that brands should reduce their research or stop entirely until the crisis is over, most agree that it is just as important now (if not more important) to listen to what customers want and need. This sentiment is reinforced by action. Half of respondents report that their own participation in online research on topics such as products, advertising, and other content has increased during the coronavirus pandemic.

Continued Research



- Continue doing research like normal
- Reduce the amount of research they are doing
- Stop doing research altogether until the crisis is over

Current Research Participation



- Participating less
- Participating the same
- Participating more



SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

Colossal shifts in purchasing behavior are here and here to stay (for a while at least). People's employment status is on shaky ground and as a result, their confidence in the U.S. economy is low and restrictions on personal spend is high. But that doesn't have to mean a total shutdown. Customers still have needs; their needs are simply changing.

To keep up with those changes and get ahead on future demand, companies need to be using online research platforms like Fuel Cycle to conduct customer research NOW. Customers want to continue giving brands their feedback, they want their voice to be heard, and they have more time than ever to participate in online research. All brands have to do is ask and listen. And we're here to help with the heavy lifting! Fuel Cycle is offering four solutions to help your businesses prosper during these times:

1. 3 months complimentary use of the FC Essentials community plan
2. Unlimited use of an organizational morale pulse survey (either inside or outside an FC community)
3. 2 questions free in a weekly nationally representative omnibus survey for the next 4 weeks (use up to 2 times)
4. Previously scheduled offline focus groups, in-depth interviews, or user experience lab research may be migrated to FC Live.

For any questions or to learn how you can apply these solutions to your business, get in touch with us at sales@fuelcycle.com.

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