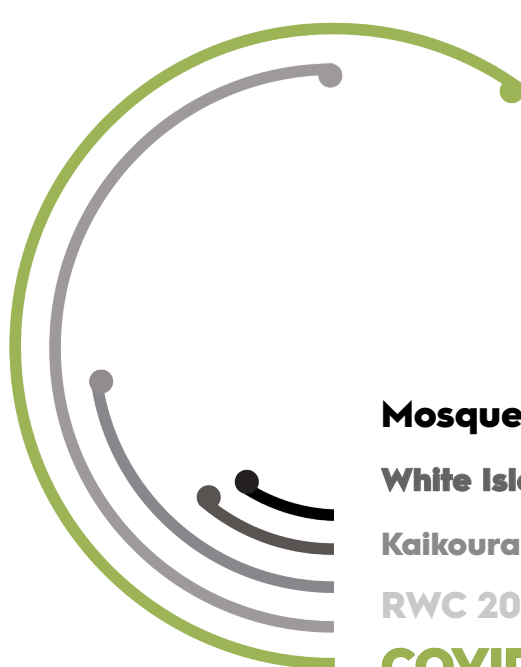




## Rutherford Labs: How has Level 3 affected conversation about COVID-19 online?

**While COVID-19 is still a hugely dominant topic on social media, the share of conversation has dropped.**

Despite NZ's progression into Level 3 protocols, COVID-19's share of social media conversation has dropped from 8.1% to 6.1% of total conversation. However, it is still by far the most dominant topic NZ has seen in the last 5 years.



**Sadness has seen a large jump in the last two weeks, but all other emotionality has decreased. Overall, conversation is becoming less emotional.**



26.0%

*"May their memory be a blessing to family and friends having to deal with their loss and grief in such difficult circumstances"*

**SADNESS: Increased 6.2% since last report.** Sad posts are mainly in response to deaths reported worldwide. Despite the death count remaining low in NZ, Kiwis acknowledge and discuss the mortal implications of this virus.



15.8%

*"You can treat Covid yourself by raising the temperature of your nose and throat. The virus cant stand heat. Try steam."*

**DISGUST: Decreased 1.1% since last report.** Posts that express disgust feature descriptions of the symptoms of COVID-19 or comparisons to the flu, usually in posts that provide advice on how to protect from it.



24.1%

*"Another week to learn and grow. Grateful for opportunities and lessons that come my way"*

**JOY: Decreased 0.6% since last report.** Many joyful posts in this time period involved people discussing the silver linings of the lockdown. People are finding time to reflect, learn new skills, and try new things.



10.9%

*"The fear is irrational and that's when mistakes happen e.g panic buying. People need to control their emotions and fear when facing the unknown."*

**FEAR: Decreased 2.4% since last report.** Conversations about lockdown anxiety, panic buying, and uncertainty over the severity of the crisis still dominate fearful posts.



22.7%

*"Only two new Covid-19 cases today, but Dr Bloomfield warns 'concerning behaviours' could extend Level 3 >:"*

**ANGER: Decreased 2% since last report.** The content of angry posts has shifted to discussing "stupidity." People frustrated with others' actions are expressing their disapproval online.



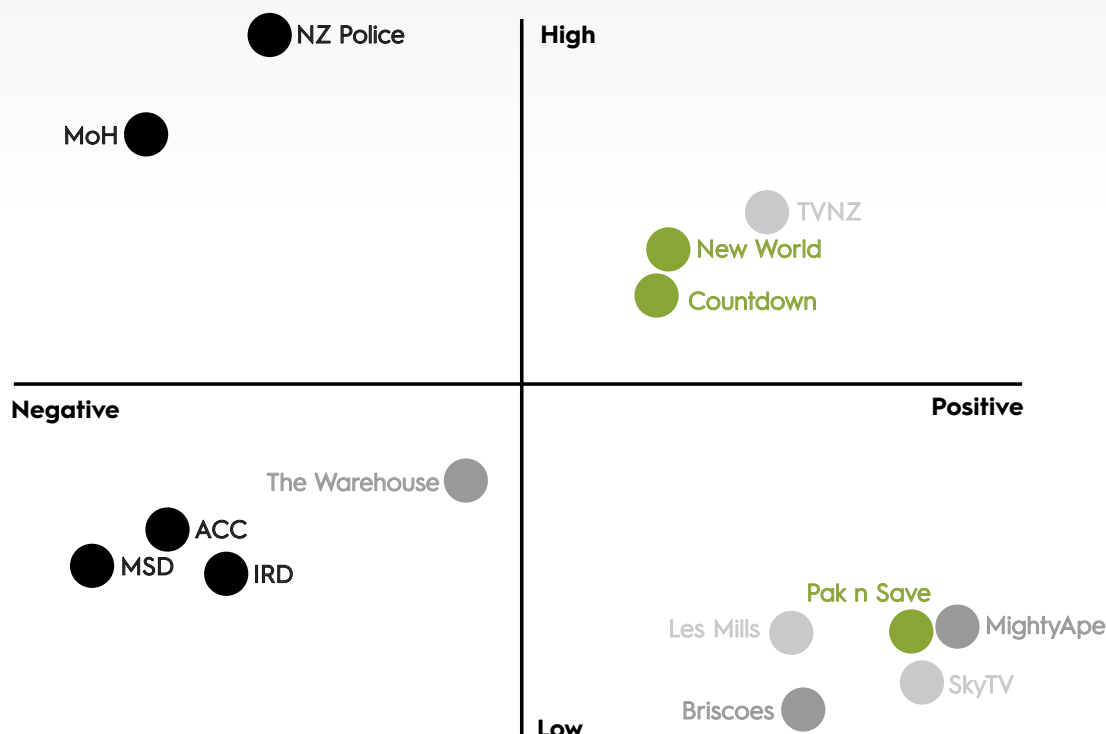
0.6%

*"Surprise, surprise - gang members who think the Covid-19 restrictions don't apply to them: Eight people arrested after party at Mongrel Mob-linked property."*

**SURPRISE: Stable since last report.** Most conversatins that express surprise contain either feigned surprise (sarcasm) or genuine surprise over how the lockdown has affected people.

### Brand social sentiment landscape

- Supermarkets
- Government
- Retail
- Entertainment



### What's Trending?



LEVELS 2 & 3

*"Will Jacinda Ardern extend the lockdown or will we go to alert level 3 this week?"*

*"Who's going out for coffee first thing tomorrow?"*

During this time period, New Zealand proposed and executed a transition to Level 3 COVID-19 protocols, which heralded the return of takeaways and an increase in online shopping. Many conversations expressed excitement or anticipation for this transition, and in the latter days of the time period, there has been some speculation about what life will be like in Level 2.



LOCAL BUSINESS

*"Fried chicken and bento...That's just wrong! We want to support local businesses, reduce carbon, grow our own, work together, not buy crap from the multinational fast food industry."*

There are several movements on social media aimed at supporting local and NZ businesses, and more of these hashtags and conversational topics are appearing over time. Our research has shown New Zealanders are placing much more importance on shopping "NZ made" or at "Kiwi" businesses after the COVID-19 lockdown period lifts.

### What's Fading?



PANIC BEHAVIOUR

*"Some interesting tidbits about panic buying at my local nz supermarket: people are buying the expensive loo rolls first, cheapos last. All sanitising wipes are sold out, but they've somehow ignored baby wipes."*

There are fewer instances of people talking about panic behaviour such as "toilet paper hoarding," long lines at grocery stores, stockpiling, etc. Now that New Zealand has experienced what Level 4 is like for a few weeks and that supermarkets, for the most part, have kept up with demand, conversations about these behaviours have reduced.



GOVERNMENT CRITICISM

*"If she keeps going like this people are just going to be extremely risk adverse. That means firing workers and shutting up shop until they get more certainty. That's a bad thing for workers."*

In March, there were a fairly large number of conversations criticising the government's policies about COVID-19 and the decision to move to Level 4 lockdown. Now that these measures are proving effective at slowing the rate of transmission, the volume of these conversations has reduced. There has even been a small trend of conversations praising Jacinda Ardern that has cropped up.

If you are interested in learning more about the conversation in relation to your own organisation, visit us at [www.Rutherford.net.nz](http://www.Rutherford.net.nz) to arrange a chat.