**How is Covid19 changing how we communicate?**

According to research firm [Apptopia](https://venturebeat.com/2020/03/26/houseparty-discord-zoom-and-marco-polo-downloads-explode-amid-coronavirus-pandemic/), worldwide daily downloads of Zoom’s mobile app across all app stores have climbed from 171,574 on February 15 to 2,410,171 on March 25.

Most notably, [Houseparty](https://houseparty.com/) has seen its daily downloads rise from 24,795 per day on February 15 to 651,694 on March 25. [Epic Games](https://venturebeat.com/2020/03/26/epic-games-will-publish-new-titles-from-the-makers-of-the-last-guardian-limbo-and-control/), makers of [Fortnite](https://venturebeat.com/2020/02/20/fortnites-second-season-2-expects-you-to-die/), [acquired Houseparty last summer](https://medium.com/@houseparty/houseparty-is-joining-epic-games-8b6344a4d8e2). The service lets up to 8 people chat simultaneously, while also offering games and other interactive features.

[Discord](https://discordapp.com/), [the social network for gamers](https://venturebeat.com/2019/05/13/discord-crosses-250-million-users-as-it-hits-4-year-anniversary/), has also seen a nice uptick, though less dramatic than Zoom and Houseparty. The app’s downloads went from 219,585 on February 15 to 443,480 on March 25.

Finally, the lesser known [Marco Polo](https://www.marcopolo.me/) app has seen some solid traction. From just 12,674 downloads on February 15, it has grown to 73,395 downloads on March 25.

1. **Complete the table below**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| App Name | Number downloads a day on Feb 15 | Number downloads a day on March 25th | Increase in number of downloads  (Hegarty 19) | How many **times** more?  (Hegarty 23) | Percentage increase  (Hegarty 97) |
| Zoom |  |  |  |  |  |
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1. What apps have you downloaded since lockdown?
2. How has this changed how you communicate?
3. Imagine if we lived in 2005, before any of these apps were created. How would we have had to respond differently? (Go to google classrooms to read some interesting [articles](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-52052502) about this.)
4. Write a response, agreeing or disagreeing with the argument below. Use evidence, explanation and persuasive arguments of your own.

What was once an opportunity to connect is now primarily an opportunity for big companies to collect information about our lives and sell it back to us. We speak to our friends about our new pair of trousers, the corporations try to sell us two more pairs. Social Media is sold to us as a way of connecting. But this is a lie that the lockdown has only confirmed. When we log on to instagram, tiktok, snapchat, facebook or hundreds of other ‘platforms’, we believe we are connecting with others, and there may be some of that. But what we are actually doing is falling into the trap of believing that we are ‘connecting’ when in fact we are ‘disconnecting’ from the real world. Covid-19 is rightly a fear for us all. It has taken many lives and will continue to do so. But the enduring tragedy, the one that will outlive this one, is our reliance on social media.