One of the most apparent features of the ‘new normal’ is social distancing. It is said that until a vaccine is found, forms of distancing restrictions could last for more than a year (WEF, Apr 2020).

Social distancing requires cooperation from multiple parties – owners of physical infrastructure and facilities to ensure that their spaces meet distancing requirements, individuals to ensure that they adhere to such distancing measures, and the authorities to provide effective guidelines and enforcement.

In this Snapshot, we explore how social distancing looks like – from eateries, retail, religious activities and celebrations as well as technologies that are being deployed. Indeed, it’s time when we ask ourselves – what it means to be social beings?

**EATERIES**

Eateries have been quick to implement restaurant design changes. These include clear screen dividers, cosy glasshouses and inflatable bumper tables.

**RELIGIOUS AND CELEBRATORY EVENTS**

Whereas, behavioral prompts are also utilized: giant-sized “crowns” and “noodle” hats, as well as stuffed toys, mannequins and cardboard cutouts which fill empty spaces to adhere to guidelines.

**RETAIL**

Families celebrated Eid Al-Fitr in public spaces and connected digitally through video calls. Experiences of carrying out Eid prayers at home was trending on social media. Mass prayers in mosques were only allowed within green zones, limited to a maximum of 30 persons.

**GADGETS**

Thailand’s foot-operated mall lifts were widely praised. Customers will also be alerted to keep a safe distance through a digital signage.

New Zealand launched an “e-wesak diary” app, said to be only for the individual – their device, their data, their information. Wearable tech is also fast gaining traction where these bracelets buzz when people stand too close.