

# From the MarComms (Marketing and Communications) Editorial Team

## A snapshot of 2020

The year 2019 ended like any other. We welcomed 2020 with open arms and hearts full of hope, anticipation and all the other usual emotions the world has experienced for millennia. There was absolutely no need to worry; everything was under control, or so we thought. Except for over a billion people in China, the whole world thought so too.

As we eased into 2020, we were bombarded by news that the coronavirus that had originated in China's Wuhan province was spreading to other parts of the world, and that people were dying in increasing numbers. Soon the focus shifted to Italy as the second epicentre of the outbreak. Panic started to set in, and when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, all eyes turned to the governments of the world – what were they to do?

At the same time the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other organisations continued to give the information they believed would save the world. Much of this information was about the way the virus was spreading – namely, that it was mainly transmitted by humans via droplets like saliva and mucus – and the need for people to keep a distance from each other. Like most governments of the world, our government also had to consider all this information and, working with scientists, to make decisions that were aimed at shielding everyone within the country from the scourge. Towards the end of March, the President of the country announced the unthinkable: the country would be under lockdown in less than 10 days. This was a difficult decision that would bring much of the economy to a halt.

At MUT we also closed down and hoped that the three weeks set by the government would be enough



to ready our defences. However the situation became worse, and we knew we were approaching the cold winter months when the virus appeared to thrive. Working from our homes, we quickly formed a team that would steer staff and students from this nightmare of biblical proportions. This issue is dedicated to the extraordinary efforts of our people to “save lives and save the academic year” throughout the pandemic. We hope that, despite the heaviness of the scourge we have faced – and continue to face, both from a human and economic point of view – that your spirits will be lightened by the stories of hope and encouragement in its pages.