

Think with Google

The Insights Briefing

A monthly look at changing
behaviors around the globe.

October 2021

At a glance

Optimism about personal finances, coupled with concerns about supply and time delivery, is setting the stage for many consumers to start their holiday shopping early. Meanwhile, “Buy Now, Pay Later” (BNPL) is becoming a preferred method of payment for a considerable proportion of Americans, regardless of income. While people are looking ahead with a sense of optimism, the prospect of continued supply chain issues still looms. People are increasingly interested in large gatherings, searching for **festivals near me**, in theaters now, and **concert tickets**.

They’re also looking for help with big life moments, whether they’re searching for a **good career path**, **college online admission form**, or **calculator for home loan**. Meanwhile, searches for **shortage** have grown globally by over 100% YoY (petrol shortage, fuel shortage, chip shortage), with implications across many aspects of life. We see increasing demand to do holiday shopping early, especially Halloween supplies like **halloween decorations for outdoor** and **family halloween costumes with baby**.

We also see increased demand for autos, with growing searches for **cars to buy** and **most expensive cars**. As businesses celebrate great quarters and look forward to a promising holiday season, they also face challenges like increased costs and labor shortages.



What people are thinking

Optimism about personal finances, coupled with concerns about supply and time delivery, is setting the stage for many consumers to start their holiday shopping early. Meanwhile, “Buy Now, Pay Later” (BNPL) is becoming a preferred method of payment for a considerable proportion of Americans, regardless of income.

- In surveyed countries around the world, 66% of people say that they are optimistic about their personal financial well-being.
Google-commissioned Ipsos COVID-19 tracker, US, CA, UK, FR, DE, IT, AU, JP, RU, IN, CN, BR, MX, ES, ZA, KR, AR, CO, BE, CL, PE, SE, NL, DK, FI, NO, n=500–1,000 online consumers 18+ per market, Sep 23–26, 2021
- Roughly a quarter of holiday shoppers across surveyed countries are worried about online delivery dates and items not arriving on time, and that things they want will be out of stock.
Google-commissioned Ipsos COVID-19 tracker, US, CA, UK, FR, DE, IT, AU, JP, RU, IN, CN, BR, MX, ES, ZA, KR, AR, CO, BE, CL, PE, SE, NL, DK, FI, NO, n=265–831 online consumers 18+ per market (n=11,123 total), Sep 23–26, 2021
- Across 26 countries, 42% of holiday shoppers say they will start their holiday shopping earlier than they did last year.
Google-commissioned Ipsos COVID-19 tracker, US, CA, UK, FR, DE, IT, AU, JP, RU, IN, CN, BR, MX, ES, ZA, KR, AR, CO, BE, CL, PE, SE, NL, DK, FI, NO, n=265–831 online consumers 18+ per market (n=11,123 total), Sep 23–26, 2021
- Among US adults who have used a BNPL service in the past 12 months, 44% prefer it over credit cards. While preference is strongest among respondents earning \$50–99k annually (46%), it’s also preferred by 34% making \$100k or more.
eMarketer, US, [“Across incomes, US adults prefer BNPL to credit cards at least some of the time.”](#) Sep 28, 2021



What people are searching for

While people are looking ahead with a sense of optimism, the prospect of continued supply chain issues still looms. People are increasingly interested in large gatherings, searching for **festivals near me**, **in theaters now**, and **concert tickets**. They're also looking for help with big life moments, whether they're searching for a **good career path**, **college online admission form**, or **calculator for home loan**. Meanwhile, searches for **shortage** have grown globally by over 100% YoY (petrol shortage, fuel shortage, chip shortage), with implications across many aspects of life. We see increasing demand to do holiday shopping early, especially Halloween supplies like **halloween decorations for outdoor** and **family halloween costumes with baby**. We also see increased demand for autos, with growing searches for **cars to buy** and **most expensive cars**.

Help with life moments	Going big on Halloween	Return of large gatherings	Demand for autos
<p>YoY searches for good career path have grown globally by over 300% (is finance a good career path, is energy a good career path, is consumer services a good career path).</p> <p>YoY searches for college online admission form have grown globally by over 100% (agra college online admission form 2021, bareilly college online admission form 2021).</p> <p>YoY searches for calculator for home loan have grown globally by over 200% (emi calculator for home loan, sbi emi calculator for home loan).</p> <p>YoY searches for how much is my house have grown globally by over 60% (how much is my house worth, how much is my house worth uk, how much is my house worth calculator).</p>	<p>YoY searches for family halloween costumes with baby have grown globally by over 300% (cute family halloween costumes with baby, matching family halloween costumes with baby).</p> <p>YoY searches for halloween decorations outdoor have grown globally by over 100% (front yard halloween decorations outdoor, diy halloween decorations outdoor scary).</p> <p>YoY searches for best halloween costumes have grown globally by over 80% (best halloween costumes 2021, best halloween costumes for couples).</p> <p>YoY searches for haunted houses near me have grown globally by over 80% (best haunted houses near me, abandoned haunted houses near me).</p>	<p>YoY searches for festivals near me have grown globally by over 500% (fall festivals near me, festivals near me this weekend, festivals near me today).</p> <p>YoY searches for in theaters now have grown globally by over 500% (movies in theaters now, in theaters now, movies in theaters now 2021, top movies in theaters now 2021, new movies in theaters now).</p> <p>YoY searches for concert tickets have grown globally by over 200% (abba voyage concert tickets, cheap concert tickets, sell concert tickets).</p> <p>YoY searches for events near me this weekend have grown globally by over 200% (motorcycle events near me this weekend, free events near me this weekend, family events near me this weekend).</p>	<p>YoY searches for cars to buy have grown globally by over 400% (best used cars to buy, cars to buy, best cars to buy used).</p> <p>YoY searches for most expensive cars have grown globally by over 2,000% (top 10 most expensive cars, most expensive cars in the world, 7 celebrities who owned the world's most expensive cars 2021).</p> <p>YoY searches for car detailing near have grown globally by over 60% (mobile car detailing near me, interior car detailing near me, best car detailing near me, complete car detailing near me).</p> <p>YoY searches for car prices have grown globally by over 70% (used car prices, car prices, when will car prices drop, when will used car prices drop, new car prices).</p>

Sourcing for all claims this page: Google Data, Global English, Aug 3, 2021–Oct 1, 2021 vs Aug 3, 2020–Oct 1, 2020.



What people are watching

YouTube - the most popular platform for non-TV video content in the US - is most commonly watched on mobile devices. Live-streaming of video game content has increased massively during the pandemic.

- YouTube is number one in the US for non-TV video content, with 65% of short-form video viewers using the popular platform.
eMarketer, US, "[When it comes to non-TV video content, YouTube takes the crown](#)," Sep 23, 2021
- Globally, mobile is the preferred way to watch YouTube, accounting for two-thirds of the platform's video views in the second quarter of this year. CTV is second with 14%.
eMarketer, Global, "[More than 3 in 5 YouTube video views occur on mobile devices](#)," Sep 8, 2021
- In Q2 2021, people around the world (excluding China) spent 9.0 billion hours livestreaming video game content. That's more than 2x the number of hours they watched in Q2 2019.
eMarketer, Global, "[Global time spent watching livestreaming video game content has nearly doubled since Q1 2020](#)," Sep 21, 2021



What businesses are doing

As businesses celebrate great quarters and look forward to a promising holiday season, they also face challenges like increased costs and labor shortages. Employee resistance is a key barrier to digital transformation.

- “Great quarter” and similar phrases were mentioned a record 327 times during earnings calls this past August, according to call transcript data compiled by Sentio.
Quartz, Global, “[Company execs are celebrating a “great quarter.”](#)” Sep 7, 2021
- Deloitte predicts that holiday sales could spike by as much as 9% in 2021 (reaching \$1.3 trillion) and that online sales could increase between 11% and 15% over last year.
Retail Dive, “[Over 30% of consumers plan to spend more on gifts in 2021: Klarna.](#)” Oct 1, 2021
- According to a Salesforce forecast, US retailers will spend \$223B more in the second half of 2021 than they did during this time last year (+62%), and will experience a labor shortage of about 350,000 workers as they head into November.
CNBC, US, “[Salesforce projects retailers will pay \\$223 billion extra for goods in the second half.](#)” Jul 20, 2021
- As many as 54% of companies rate employee resistance as their number-one barrier to successful digital transformation, while 42% of organizations name a lack of technical knowledge and skills.
Venture Beat, US, “[Digital transformation spending is up to \\$700B per year, but results lag.](#)” Sep 26, 2021



More food for thought

- In Western Europe, not only do most people aged 13 to 39 celebrate Halloween (83%), but 63% like it when brands release Halloween-themed products.
YPulse, Western Europe, "[Yes, Young Consumers in WE Are Celebrating Halloween—Here's How](#)," Sep 30, 2021
- A survey of consumers in China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the US shows that intent to purchase new and used cars in the next 12 months is almost back to pre-COVID-19 levels (94% and 97% versus pre-COVID levels, respectively).
McKinsey & Company, Global, "[Car buying is on again, and mobility is picking up](#)," Aug 27, 2021
- Global EV sales grew 160% YoY during the first half of 2021, with roughly 2.6 million EVs (fully electric and hybrids) sold.
eMarketer, Global, "[EV sales grew 160% YoY despite chip shortage](#)," Sep 7, 2021
- People across the G20 are concerned about the environment, with 58% worried about the state of nature today and 61% worried about protecting it for future generations.
Ipsos, G20 countries, "[Global Commons Survey: Attitudes to Transformation and Planetary Stewardship](#)," Aug 17, 2021



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