Think with **G**oogle

YEAR IN
SEARCH
2020

Looking back to move your marketing forward

What a year. One that raised more questions than answers. We all found ourselves in the same storm but in different boats. We had to dig deep to respond and to cope. However, through it all, each of us turned to Search to find answers to questions, some of which we'd never had to ask before.

As marketers we pride ourselves in knowing our consumers. But in a year where so much has changed, it has, at times, been a challenge to differentiate the trend from the reaction. Which part of the change is permanent and here to stay and which ones are only a necessity of the pandemic? We need to reflect and even relearn what we thought we knew.

We realised we need to look back in order to move forward.

That's why we turned to Search and set out to bring you the **"what now?"** Observing how people turn to Search offers us a unique view into their changing habits and needs; new worries and ambitions; and heightened curiosities and expectations. With this report we share some ideas on how you can translate these insights into actions for your business along with some inspiring examples of brands that have successfully reinvented themselves and reconnected emotionally and functionally with their consumers. Together, we hope we can reflect and be better prepared for what's next.

From marketers to marketers.
From us to you.

Shaifali Nathan
Director, Ads Marketing, APAC

YEAR IN SEARCH 2020 REPORT

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Trend 1

Individual Matters

COVID-19 quickly became common to all nations, and with it, a simple truth was reaffirmed: no two human experiences are the same. Across 2020, Search trends reveal that people are placing increasing importance on their individual perspectives, even if they lie beyond social norms.

In APAC, there are 650 million persons with disabilities - many more than any other region of the world.[1] Mental health disorders are also on the rise in every country.[2] Add to that racial, gender, sexuality, age, and socioeconomic factors, and it's no wonder half of all online APAC consumers agree that inclusivity is important to them.

"mental health tips" Q

1. Disabled People's Association
2. Lancet Commission on Global Mental Health

The global pandemic has made people's diverging needs, habits, and beliefs more apparent than ever.

And it's this unique set of experiences that remind us that our needs shouldn't be relative to the value society places on them, but rather, can be explored and defined by and for ourselves.

CONFRONTING STIGMAS

People are confronting societal stigmas, and discreetly educating themselves on how to handle these issues, even if the topics have traditionally been considered taboo.

+35%

Year-over-year (YoY) growth in searches related to "body positivity"; for example, "quotes against body shaming" (Philippines)

Philippines, India, Singapore, and Indonesia all saw over

+40%

growth in mental health-related searches like "how to take care of mental health", "mental health tips", and "mental health test".

CONFRONTING STIGMAS

+25%
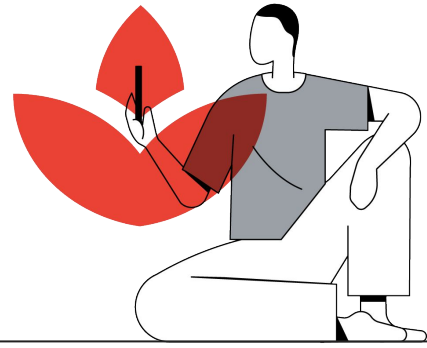
YoY growth in searches about gender equality (Indonesia)

+40%

YoY growth in searches for online counselling compared to a 10% decline the previous year (Pakistan)

+20%

YoY growth in searches for "giảm stress" (reduce stress) compared to flat growth in the previous year (Vietnam)

CONFRONTING STIGMAS

Regardless of whether mental health is widely acknowledged in a country, we observed a growth in searches for mental health-related symptoms, including early exploration of the concept.
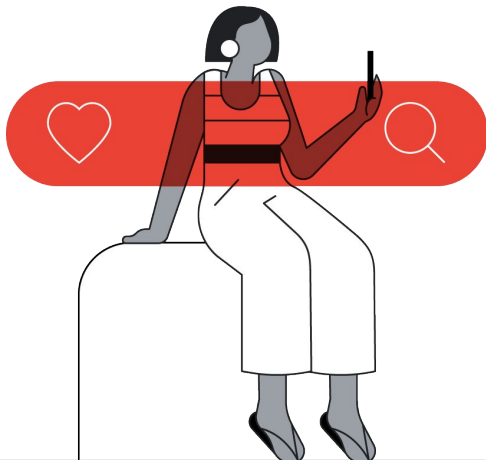
+20%

YoY growth in searches for "失眠" (insomnia) compared to 10% decline the previous year (Hong Kong)

+50%

YoY growth in searches for "asam lambung" (gastric acid), a physical symptom related to heartburn and ulcers often caused by stress (Indonesia)

In Japan, "mental health" is searched for in Katakana, a phonetic translation from the English word, rather than Hiragana. This implies that even though it may not yet be an established concept in the native language, people are still looking to understand what it means. People are also looking up terms such as "障害とは" (what is a disability?) related to dissociative, sleeping and panic disorders.

CONSIDERING OTHERS

As individuals seek "self-help" information, their support systems are showing up for them. This year in particular, consideration for others' needs have seen a steep rise.

+250%

YoY growth in searches for "what to say to someone depressed" (Philippines)

+2200%

YoY growth in searches for "employing people with disabilities" (Australia)

+250%

YoY growth in searches related to disability etiquette (India)

Takeaways for brands

Nods to diversity, equity, and inclusion aren't enough. It takes empathy for the sheer variety of situations consumers face and acknowledgement of each individual consumer journey to create both meaningful, and profitable connections.

In APAC, only 1 in 5 people feel represented in the ads they see,[3] presenting an opportunity for brands to take action.

"

Increasingly aware that personality, purpose and profit can be compatible, consumers seek brand relationships that go beyond the superficial and transactional. They will embrace brands with meaning and character; that are open, honest, sympathetic, and, most importantly, stand for something.

- TrendWatching, on the consumer search for human brands

3. GlobalWebIndex, Wave Q3 2020

Takeaways for brands

To address systemic inequalities and embed empathy into a brand's marketing strategy, consumers' individual journeys need to be considered (sometimes literally).
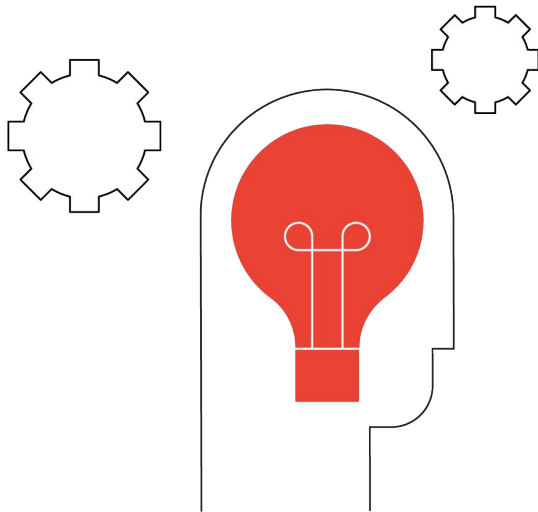
IKEA understands that because of the unique distance, each customer has to travel to get to their store, the net impact on wallets — and time — will differ. Recognizing this inequality, they introduced distance-based pricing, allowing customers to pay for their items using the time spent getting to the store.

Edelweiss Insurance understood that some drivers in India did not use their vehicles as frequently as others. To cater to this, they introduced an option for customers to switch their insurance "on" or "off" via an app, saving on premiums whenever they're not on the road.
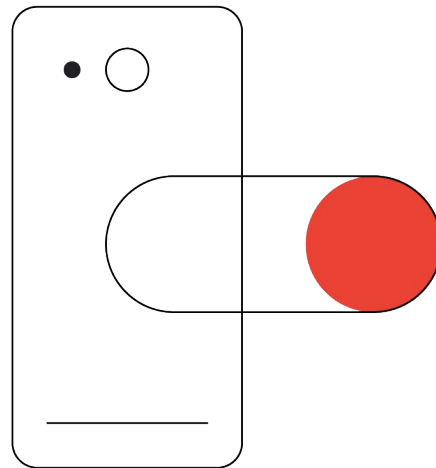
Takeaways for brands

Build inclusivity into your brand – holistically and from the get-go.

Malaysia's Sunway Putra Mall hosts Autsome, a weekly event to support and drive awareness for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). To make the shopping experience more comfortable for the autism community, the mall introduced special facilities like a calm room and sensory wall, and adjusts its operations by lowering music volume and dimming lights.
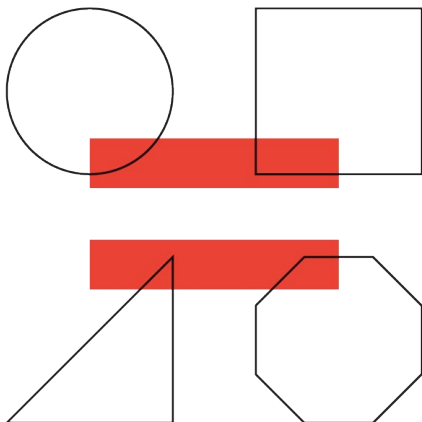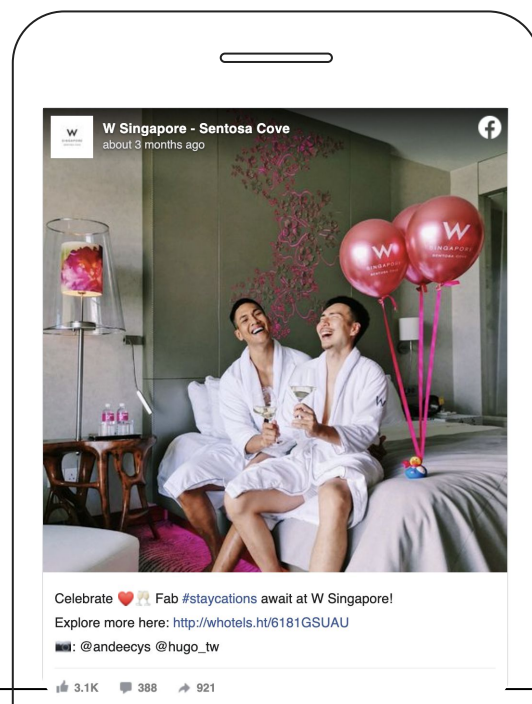
Sometimes, being inclusive simply means catering to the individual preferences of your shoppers. South Korean department store Lotte did this by offering "Do not disturb" badges to those who prefer to shop undisturbed by store assistants.

Takeaways for brands

Pay attention to tone and timing – they matter.

Don't push taboos too soon (or risk coming off as gimmicky), but show your support by sensitively connecting with audiences, when they're ready.

The W hotel[4] in Singapore recently reshared a post of a same sex couple staying at their hotel. By amplifying a user-generated post rather than creating their own campaign, the W hotel was able to land a more authentic message of support to their guests.

W Singapore - Sentosa Cove
about 3 months ago

Celebrate ❤️👬 Fab #staycations await at W Singapore!
Explore more here: http://whotels.ht/6181GSUAU
📷: @andeecys @hugo_tw

3.1K   388   921

There are many ways to make sure that inclusivity sits front and center of a marketing strategy. Google's chief marketing officer shares how she keeps inclusivity a priority across her organization: 9 ways we're changing habits, so we can make more inclusive marketing at Google.

4. Facebook / W Singapore - Sentosa Cove

Takeaways for brands

Make use of tools and technology to engage large audiences who have specific and ever-evolving needs.

Google Trends

Gauge consumer search behavior with real-time search trends.

Open ↗
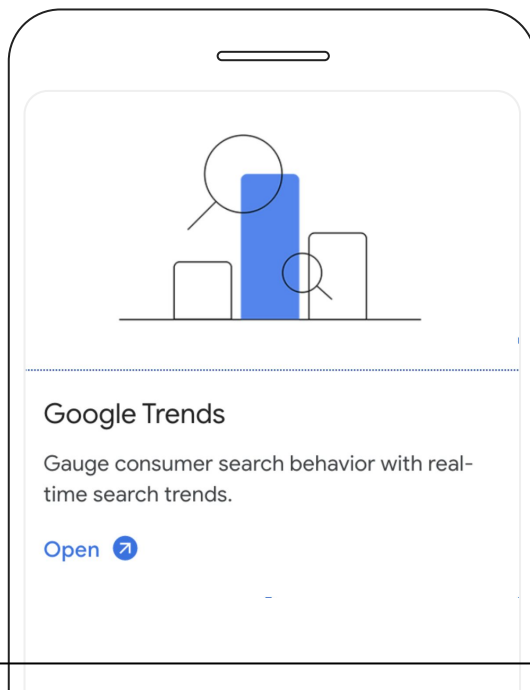
Tools like Google Trends keep us up-to-date on changing behaviors, so brands can find the right fit with their brand values and speak to them genuinely.

15% of daily searches on Google are new, making it difficult to consistently show up as helpful and understanding of customers' needs. Responsive Search Ads help adapt an ad to more closely match potential customers' search terms, making it much easier to serve relevant ad messaging.
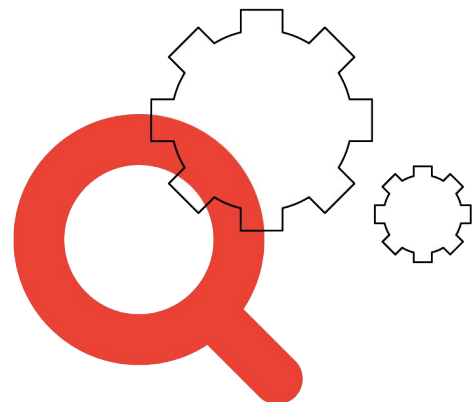
Trend 2

Higher Purpose

The pandemic forced a global reset that is testing our humanity and values. By giving us all a common purpose, it has elevated the very idea of a company's purpose — shining a spotlight on the role businesses play in our environment and our wider communities.

Environmental concerns are not new. But 2020 was a turning point that featured some key attitude shifts towards protecting our planet. First, APAC maintained its lead as the region that most expects brands to be environmentally friendly. Then, confronted with their own personal consumption habits during lockdowns, people have been reassessing their impact on the environment, with 86% saying that they've become more conscious due to the Coronavirus.[5]

"reusable cups"

5. GlobalWebIndex, Sep 2020, PH, IN, CH, SG, NZ, JP, AU

Finally, there was the inadvertent shift from eco-status to eco-shame.

> When sustainable alternatives are widespread, affordable, and just as good or better than the legacy option, then eco-consumption becomes less about the status of opting in, and more about the shame of opting out. This change shift has led millions to seek out products, services, and experiences that help them ease their eco-shame.
>
> - TrendWatching

People are also feeling a closer connection to their wider communities. According to GlobalWebIndex, people across the region agree that **"helping others before helping myself"** is important, along with **"contributing to my community"**.[6]

While the actions people take to help give back change from country to country, the common factor is the spirit of helping others. Japan is searching for ways to support its healthcare workers, Koreans are seeking volunteer opportunities, while people in Vietnam are looking for ways to donate old clothes to needy communities.
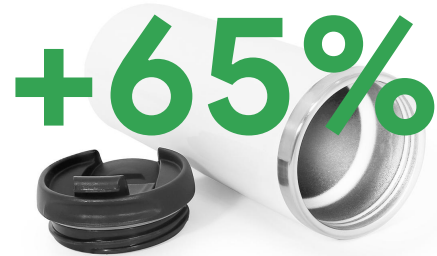
6. GlobalWebIndex, Wave Q3 2020

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

While interest in the environment and giving back to the community were the top rising trends across APAC in 2020, a surge in lockdown-induced <mark>new habits are carrying us into 2021 and beyond.</mark>

+1000%

YoY growth in searches for "環保 口罩" (eco-friendly masks) (Taiwan)

+65%

YoY growth in searches for "reusable" compared to +30% in previous year (Malaysia)

+125%

YoY growth in searches for "eco-friendly packaging" compared to +55% in previous year (Philippines)

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

+20%

YoY growth in searches for "음식물 쓰레기" (food waste) compared to +10% the previous year (South Korea)

+25%

YoY growth in searches for "how to recycle" compared to flat growth in the previous year (India)

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Social distancing – and isolation, in many cases – brought a desire to connect to our wider community by giving back.
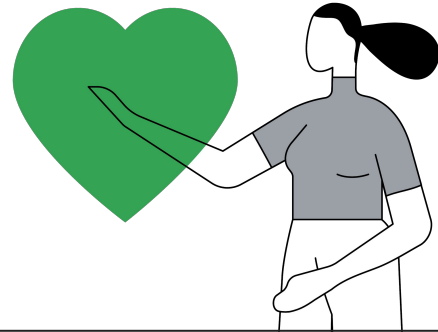
+2000%

YoY growth in searches for "봉사 활동 찾기" (find volunteer activities) over the past two years (Korea)

+150%

YoY growth in searches for "menyumbangkan" (donate) compared to +15% in the previous year (Indonesia)

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

+75%

YoY growth in searches for "how to help" compared to flat growth in the previous year (India)

+90%

YoY growth in searches for "local purchasing" (Australia)

+60%

YoY growth in searches for "help someone", compared to +10% in the previous year (Philippines)

Takeaways for brands

Expand the territories to make meaningful connections, beyond traditional corporate social responsibility. Meeting your consumers' personal, functional, and emotional needs should be a given. Now, it's just as important to actively support their communities and take actions to integrate sustainability into a brand's values.

When people find common ground with a company's values, it's more likely they will be loyal to the brand. In contrast, the 2020 Zeno strength of purpose study found that cancel culture is strongest in Asia, with consumers in Singapore (89%), Malaysia (91%), and China (92%) more likely to no longer purchase from a brand they disagree with - and even actively discourage others from doing so as well.
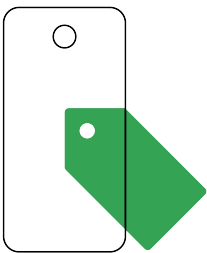
Takeaways for brands

Create new ways for consumers to connect with the environment, and each other.
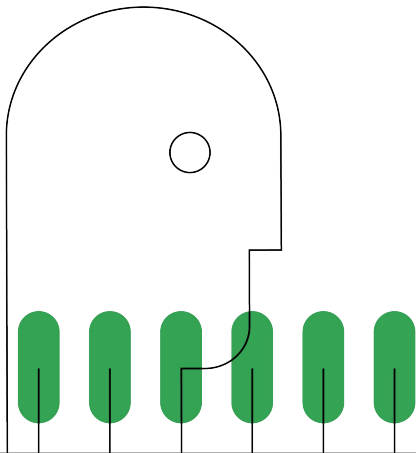
Go beyond your operational footprint and actively invest in sustainability-centered activations like Converse did with their City Forests. This community project engages local artists to create murals using photocatalytic paint that helps clean the air. These air purifying murals have been spotted in Jakarta, Sydney, Bangkok, and Ho Chi Minh City.

"

As part of Mudah. my's ongoing initiative to support local SMBs, especially during the difficult Covid-19 period, we ran our first ever Digital Ramadan e-bazaar campaign...
We managed to reach out to 1/3 of Malaysians.

- Andrew Pinto, Head of Marketing, Mudah.my

Provide access to previously offline communities through digital solutions like Malaysia's largest online marketplace Mudah, who, in the height of lockdowns, helped their sellers pivot online so that they could participate in the first-ever digital Ramadan bazaar.

Takeaways for brands

Make your values and internal practices externally visible

Consider transparency as an experience. As Trendwatching points out in their <u>Future of Work</u> report, exposing internal initiatives to your customer can be more compelling and impactful than releasing a neatly crafted press release. For example, Shiseido introduced <u>S/PARK</u>, a content hub that offers its consumers a transparent behind-the-scenes look into its research and development process and features interviews with their leadership.
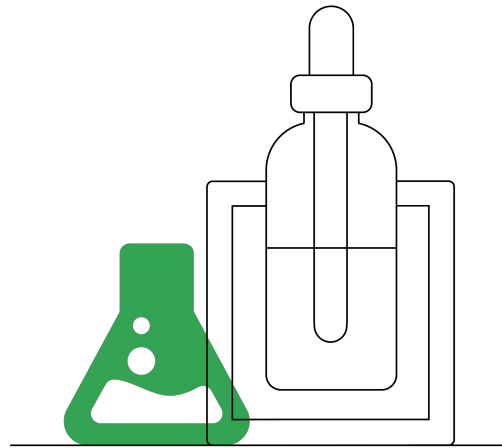
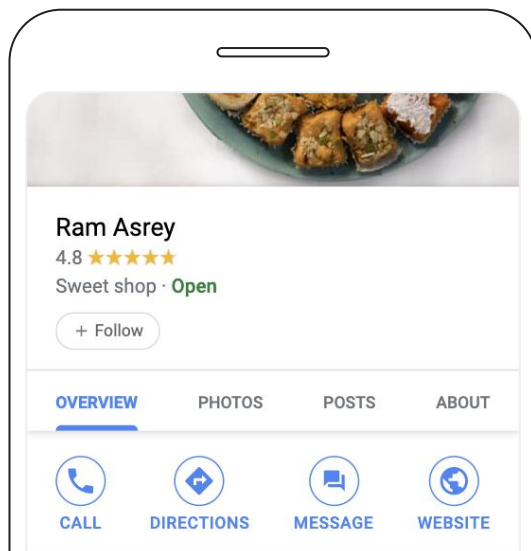## DBS creating eco-friendly urban farm for employees

Embed community values into your employee culture and day to day operations. As a way to internally match external environmentalist initiatives, DBS created an on-site <u>Food Forest</u> as a way for their employees to have a hand at producing and harvesting their own lunches.

Be proactive about challenging old business models and ways of working. Singapore Airlines launched <u>eco-friendly packaging</u> to cut down on packaging waste. It's also swerved towards sustainable food sourcing — a big step towards minimizing its carbon footprint, now and in the future.

Takeaways for brands

Connect with potential customers in the nearby community

Ensure you have a prominent online presence so that your customers can easily find you. Google My Business is an easy-to-use tool that helps businesses connect & interact with the customers who are looking for their products and services.

In APAC, 53% of online shoppers say they'll buy online even more frequently post-pandemic.[7] With millions conducting shopping-related searches on Google every day, brands have the opportunity to list their products (for free) on Listings.
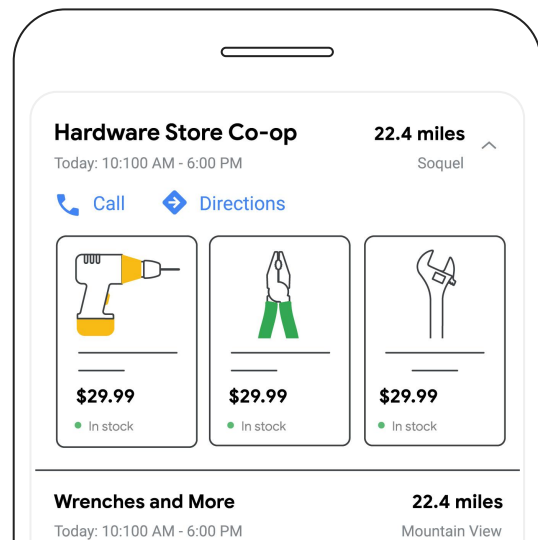
Searches for **"shopping near me"** have grown 3X in the past three years,[8] clearly indicating that shoppers are turning to digital to find what they need, nearby. Brands can tap into the opportunity by using local inventory ads to show nearby shoppers what's available, in stock, and how to get to the physical shop.

7. GlobalWebIndex, Wave Q3 2020
8. Google Trends, Worldwide, Shopping, 2019 vs 2016

Trend 3

Whole Selves

Due to the pandemic, new circumstances such as work from home and disrupted routines have emerged. Suddenly, the lines that used to distinguish the 9 to 5 manager at the office from the 5 to 7 parent at home have blurred.

Along with growing time pressures, consumers are less tolerant of suboptimal brand experiences. As a result, a new consumer trend has emerged, driven by the expectation that **brands will fit into the lives of consumers, and not the other way around.**

People now expect brands to engage with them as their "whole selves" rather than just the part of their needs that seem most profitable to their business. Understanding that people are not just "beauty consumers" but that their preference for a vegan lifestyle might affect their choice of cosmetics brands, and that they'll want more visibility into the testing and production processes.

Consumer expectations continue to spiral upward as innovations in one industry (on-demand car-hailing) can start to drive expectations in another (on-demand groceries). **The burden is on brands, not consumers, to keep up.**
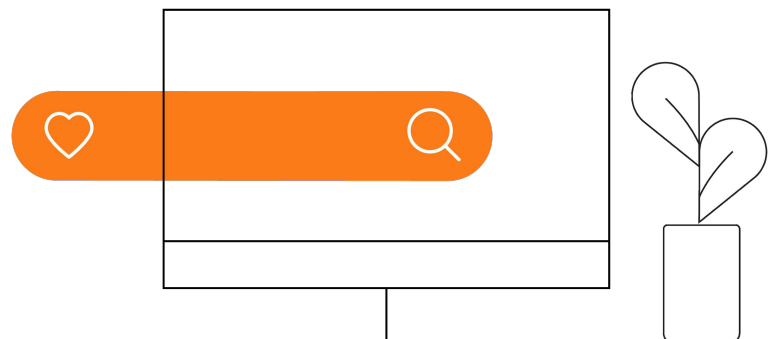
WORK-LIFE EFFICIENCY

Many are struggling to manage their work and home needs under one roof, all the time.
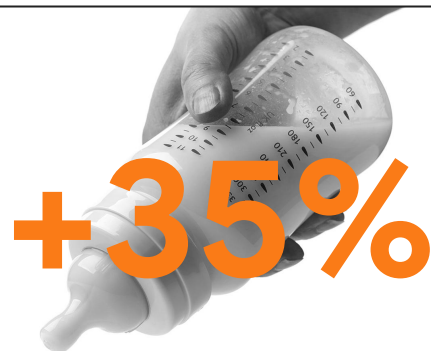
As a result, people are actively looking for ways to optimize their time while still maintaining their wellbeing, rendering efficiency more important than ever.

+60%

YoY growth in searches for "to do list" (Philippines)

+130%

YoY growth in searches for "kids at home" and related activities compared to flat growth a year ago (Australia)

+35%

YoY growth in searches for "아이 돌봄" (childcare) compared to +10% in the previous year (South Korea)

WORK-LIFE EFFICIENCY

+80%

YoY growth in searches for
"how to be productive", compared
to +15% the previous year (India)

+45%

YoY growth in searches for
"ペアレンタルコントロール" (parental
controls), compared to flat growth
the previous year (Japan)

BELIEF-DRIVEN BUYING

Consumers are now expecting brands to consider their personal beliefs and preferences across a wider range of products and services.

+30%

YoY growth in searches for halal-related searches (Vietnam)

+150%

YoY growth in searches related to "plant based meat" (Japan)

+90%

for "plant based" searches in India, including +550% increase in plant based collagen and +140% in plant based protein powder

+550%

In the last year, Malaysia has seen an increase in searches for halal versions of popular brands: 550% growth for "toblerone halal", 450% growth for "ovaltine halal", and "bischoff halal" as a breakout term

LOCAL LANGUAGE

People are seeking out brands that truly understand and speak to them. This means ~~less time spent translating information and more time-consuming content~~ in a format that best suits their needs.
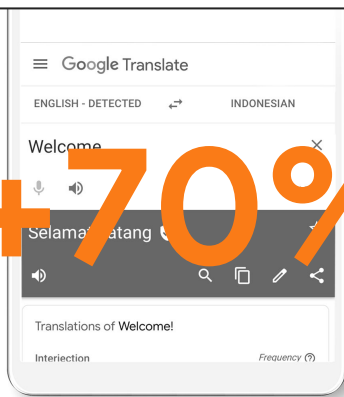
YoY growth in searches for "translate English to Indonesian text" (Indonesia)

growth in searches for "translate English to Hindi" (India)

of top searches in the past year were in non-English languages (key APAC markets)[9]

in searches for "hey google", showing a rise in voice activated searches. (Philippines)

9. Google Trends, Nov. 1, 2019 - Oct. 31, 2020

Takeaways for brands

Challenge your business to break down walls and think beyond traditional industry considerations. A wider understanding of human needs means a wider business opportunity.

For example, the latest Can't Read, Won't Buy study from CSA revealed that 75% of online shoppers prefer to buy products with information in their native language, and as much as 40% of consumers won't buy in another language. With this in mind, it's odd to think that 60% of the internet's content is in English, while native English speakers comprise only 5.4% of the global population.[10]

Another consideration is that by 2030, Asia is expected to be home to 59% of the world's Muslim population,[11] representing a huge opportunity for local brands. Alongside a growing population is a growing demand for a broader range of halal products. The 2020 Global Islamic Economy report noted a 12% increase in Halal certified products and over 200% growth in the halal chocolate, desserts, and ice cream categories.[12] The halal food industry alone is one of the world's fastest-growing economic sectors valued at over $2.2 trillion.[13]

10. W3Tech, Usage statistics of content languages for websites
11. Pew Research Center, The future of the global muslim population
12, 13. Superfood Asia; 5 reasons to be part of the Halal food industry now

Takeaways for brands

Speak to your customers like a local.

Flipkart, India's largest online marketplace, launched a voice assistant service so that shoppers who were not at ease with the written word, or the English language, could engage with the brand verbally and in the vernacular.

Welcome

ようこそ

स्वागत

Within Google marketing, even when users are on English language browsers, click-through rates are consistently higher when local language ad copy is used.

"

It was 17% higher in Hong Kong and Taiwan and as much as 34% in Indonesia, highlighting how important it is for businesses to challenge digital norms

-Sebastiaan Burgmans, Director, SMB Ads Marketing, Google APAC

Offering voice-based solutions is another helpful way to engage with existing customers, as well as attract new ones. 43% of consumers said that they would buy a product or service from a company that they have not heard of if it was recommended by a voice-based assistant.[14] In a world with increased demand for touchless solutions, voice technology has now become a key strategic consideration.

14. Cognizant, Algorithms Over Brands
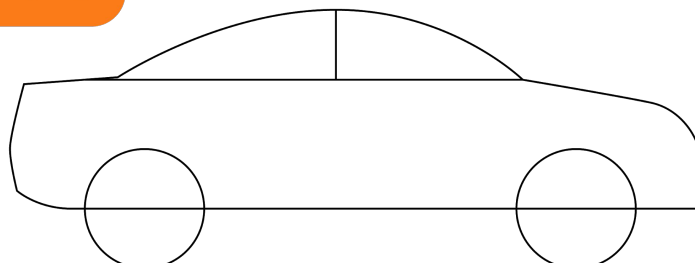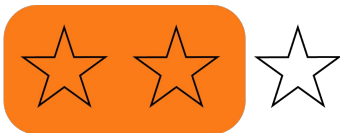
Takeaways for brands

Rethink your business boundaries.
Challenging traditional industry models will help you uncover new business opportunities.

During the lockdown, Muji redefined the concept of "window shopping" by converting an unused sightseeing bus into a mobile store. This allowed customers who live in Japan's mountainous regions to have easier access to the Muji in-store experience.
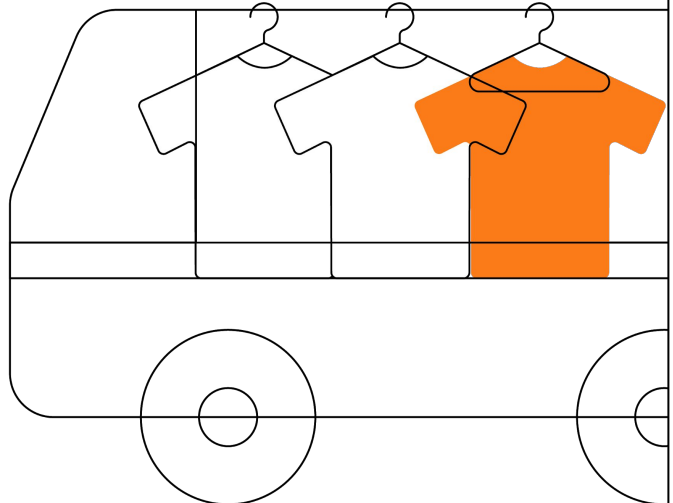
Hyundai's luxury-tier brand, Genesis, challenged the idea of a traditional showroom by launching "Genesis Concierge", a service that brings test drives and other showroom services directly to customers' homes.
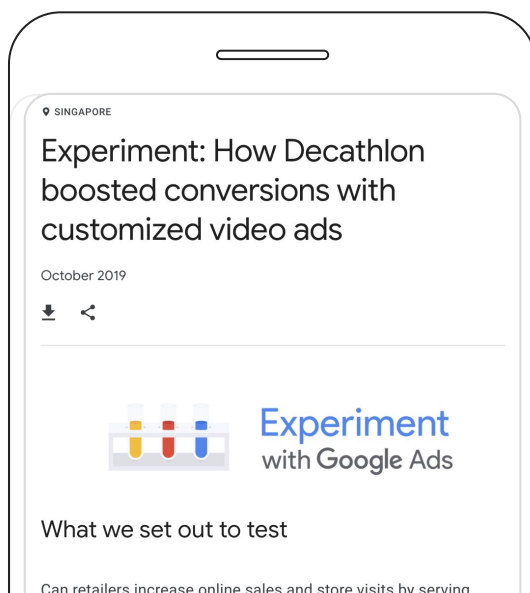
Takeaways for brands

Fit into their world

Adjust your business and marketing solutions to fit into your consumers' lives and needs either through your communication strategy or actual product solutions.

To encourage a new pre-bedtime routine, J&J Listerine in Korea created video ads with messaging that changed according to the time the video was aired.

"

My father didn't tell me how to advertise,
but I could see him watching only customized content.
We are living in an age of hyper-personalization.

- David (Eun Hyuk) Jung, J&J Korea Group Brand Manager

◉ SINGAPORE

Experiment: How Decathlon boosted conversions with customized video ads

October 2019

Experiment
with **Google** Ads

What we set out to test

Can retailers increase online sales and store visits by serving

Decathlon used Search behavior insights and Director Mix to automatically create over a 100 different versions of their original video. This allowed them to automate customization at scale, showing the most relevant YouTube video based on the search history of the viewer.

Takeaways for brands
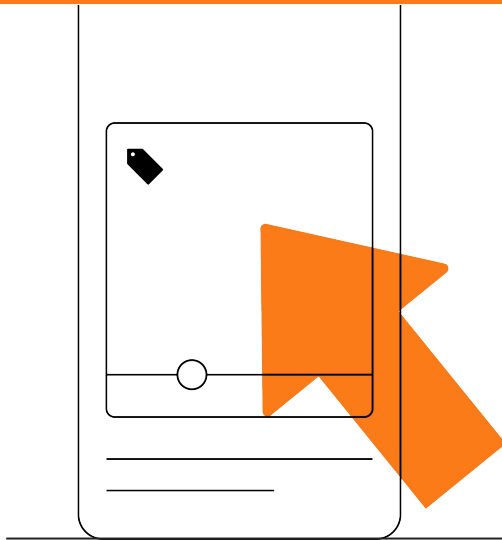
Nestle knew that users were increasingly toggling between search and online video during the product research phase, so they ran Trueview for action ads and Discovery ads alongside Search campaigns to meet consumers where they are. Nestle showed up across YouTube, Gmail, and Discovery ads, achieving a 28% higher conversion rate.

Hong Kong and Japan are home to the world's smallest apartments. But instead of making smaller furniture, IKEA partnered with a smart space company to create robotic furniture that can adjust to small spaces as different living needs arise.
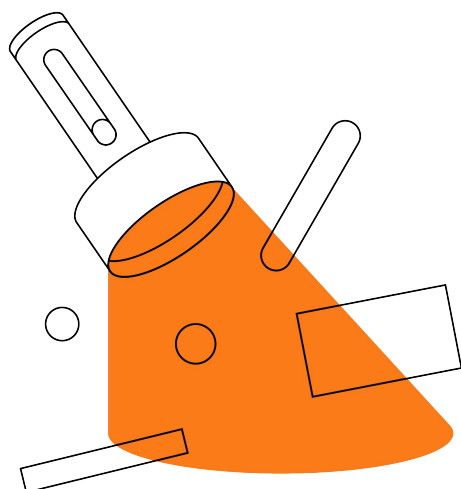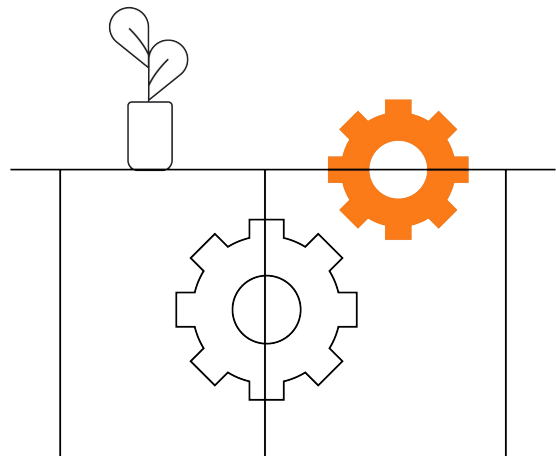
Make it easy
More time online means less patience for digital mistakes

With various levels of lockdowns still on-going across the region, a brand's online presence is especially critical. Dive into these tips for a high-level view of how to ensure your online presence becomes an effective storefront for your business.

Trend 4

Sweet Relief

Happiness and joy are always welcome, but amidst a year of historic challenges, consumers are embracing the brands that spark joy and create a safe space for them to take a break.

"staycation near me"

With millions of jobs lost around the world, and just as many people are on the brink of poverty, the seriousness of the pandemic cannot be undermined. While a brand is not expected to solve these challenges, it does introduce the need for reinforcements during times that have been harder for longer, all over the world.

After the start of the pandemic, a survey asked respondents what was most important to them. **Out of all the regions, APAC was the only region to rank** "having a positive attitude" as the most important factor, above "spending time with family" and "being financially secure".[15] This means that while delighting consumers should always be a priority, it's now more valued than ever.

15. GlobalWebIndex, Wave Q3 2020, World Regions

DOWNTIME

Given the travel constraints and the challenges many face in their everyday lives, many have been seeking alternative forms of downtime.

Indonesia, Pakistan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and India all saw YoY growth in searches for "memes". India, Pakistan, and the Philippines are in the top five countries with the highest concentration of searches for memes in the world.

+1900%

YoY growth in searches for "staycation" (Hong Kong, the top global market for this search)

+700%
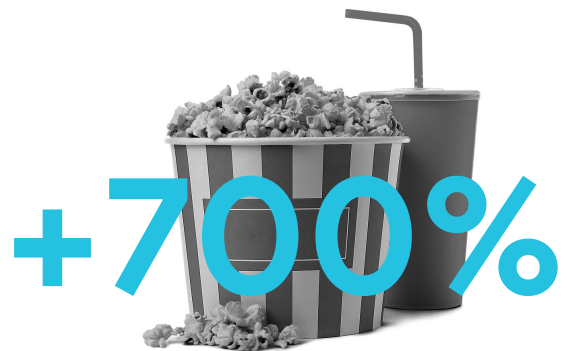
in searches for "ドライブ イン" (drive-in theater) (Japan)

+55%

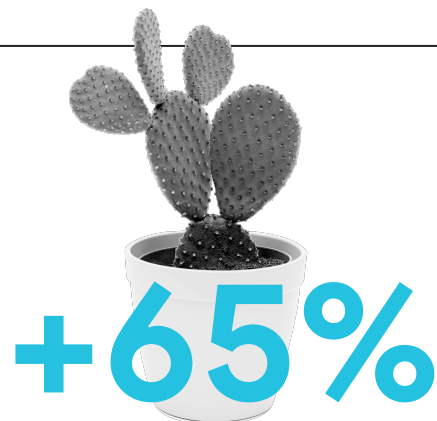in searches for "mukbang" (eating shows) (Malaysia)

SMALL INDULGENCES

Now that people are spending more time at home, they're investing in small indulgences that add to their quality of life or are meaningful to them.

+25%

YoY growth in searches for "chocolate" compared to +5% the previous year (Pakistan)

+125%

YoY growth in searches for "เก้าอี้ เกม มิ่ง"(gaming chair) (Thailand)

+65%

YoY growth in searches for plant-related terms like "plant rack" and "indoor plants" (Philippines)
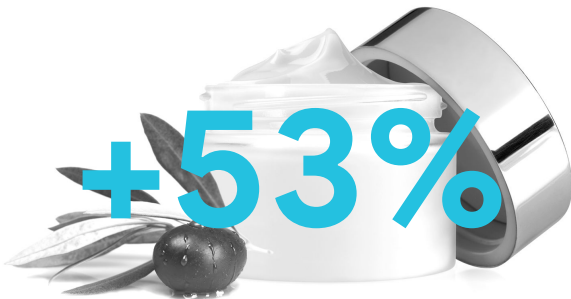
SMALL INDULGENCES

+170%

YoY growth in searches for
"お取り寄せグルメおすすめ"
(back-order gourmet), compared to 40%
decrease from previous YoY (Japan)

+25%

YoY growth in food delivery searches,
compared to 25% in previous YoY (Pakistan)

+53%

YoY growth in the share of self-care
searches (Singapore)

+600%

YoY growth in searches for
"massage gun" (Australia)

SHARING LOVE

With social distancing and lockdowns the new way of life, people have been finding creative ways to show love and care to their friends and family.

+95%

YoY growth in searches for "balloon delivery" compared to previous flat growth (Singapore)

+50%

YoY growth in searches for "adopt a puppy" compared to previous flat growth (Australia)

+60%

YoY growth in searches for "상품권 사용처" (where to use gift certificates) (South Korea)

+70%

YoY growth in searches for "flower delivery" compared to a previous year decline (Australia)
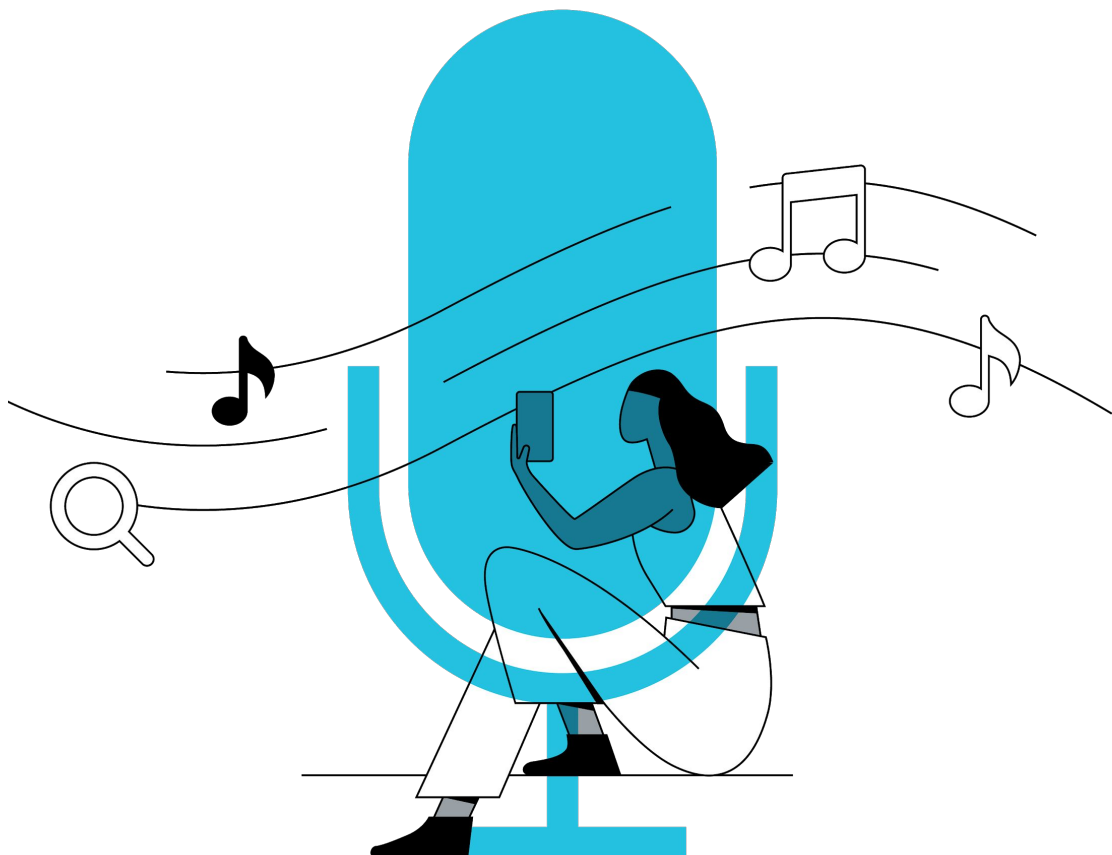
Takeaways for brands

Make things fun in a personal way

Google delights Avengers fans with surprise results when they search for one of the movie's villains.

Google introduced a new, fun way for people to search, including "hum to search" — a service that helps people figure out the name of a song by simply humming, whistling, or singing the melody.

The QT Hotel Auckland, a brand with a focus on community, hid 150 room keys across the city as a treasure hunt. Key finders received a free hotel night — a great way to engage with a wider audience in an interactive, inviting way.

Takeaways for brands

Be funny, too (in good taste, of course)

A recent global survey asked consumers how they want brands to show up at this time. The resounding answer across APAC was "Be lighthearted and funny, but do it cautiously and meaningfully".[16]

Using Search analytics, Mars identified some of the most awkward queries on Google, and delivered chocolate bars to the people in those "sticky" situations. The campaign helped alleviate some difficult or uncomfortable situations with humorous solutions.

Australian-based Project Factory felt that many were feeling the impact of social distancing, so they took a humorous approach to the issue. The developer released a mobile app that plays office background noises including someone eating chips nearby, yelling, sighing, crumpling paper, typing, and more.

16. GlobalWebIndex, Coronavirus Research Release 3: Multi-Market Research, March 2020, Countries across APAC answered 'somewhat agree' to using humour

Takeaways for brands
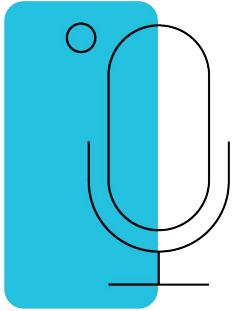
Make it easier to share the joy

Yamaha developed <u>a remote cheer app</u> that lets sports fans in Japan add to the stadium atmosphere during a game, broadcasting their claps, cheers, chants, or boos in real-time.

Trend 5

Future Proofing

In a year that nobody could have planned for, people are looking to find a greater sense of control. To ensure peace of mind, many have started looking for ways to future-proof and de-risk their lives, while seeking reassurance from brands along the way.

ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

People are safeguarding and strengthening their economic prospects by boosting their skills, financial knowledge, and building up their side hustles.

+35%

YoY growth in searches for
"đầu tư chứng khoán" (stock investing) compared
to -10% in the previous year (Vietnam)

+400%

YoY growth in searches for
"fundamentals of digital marketing"
from previous year's flat growth (India)

+215%

YoY growth in searches for
"副業 リモート" (side business remote)
from previous year's flat growth (Japan)

ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

Breakout YoY increase in "동학 개미 운동" (mom and pop investors movement) (South Korea)

+60%

YoY growth in searches for "Python course" (turnaround from previous YoY decline of -30%) (Hong Kong)

+100%

YoY increase in searches for "top online learning platforms" (comparatively flat in previous YoY) (Malaysia)

+30%

YoY increase for the phrase "how to invest" (turnaround from previous YoY decline of -15%) (Australia)

HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Health-related interest increased as a direct impact of the pandemic, but particularly interesting is the uptick in proactive and preemptive health management.

+116%

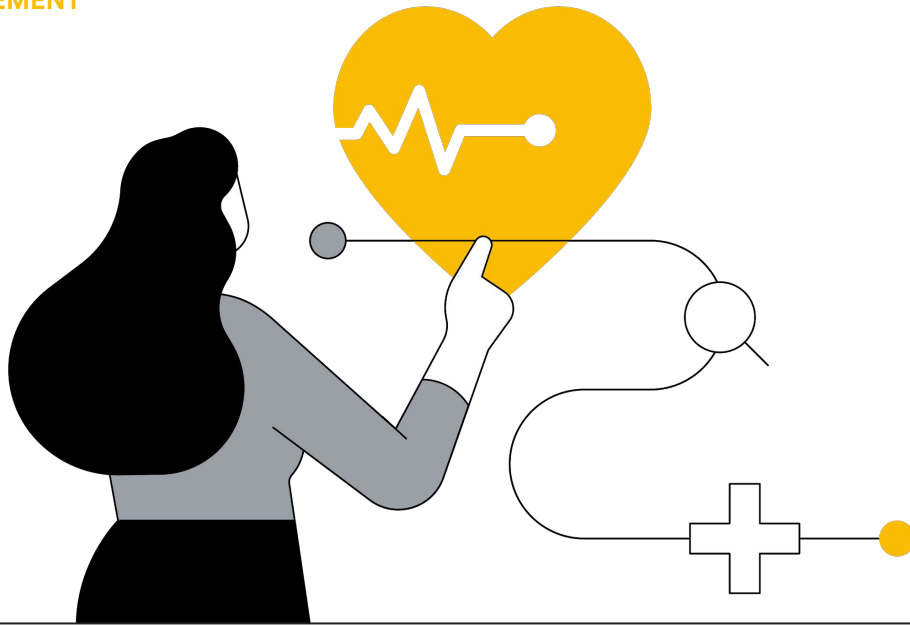(Australia) and 60% (New Zealand) in searches for "blue light glasses"

+160%

YoY growth in searches for "menjaga kesehatan" (maintain health) (Indonesia)
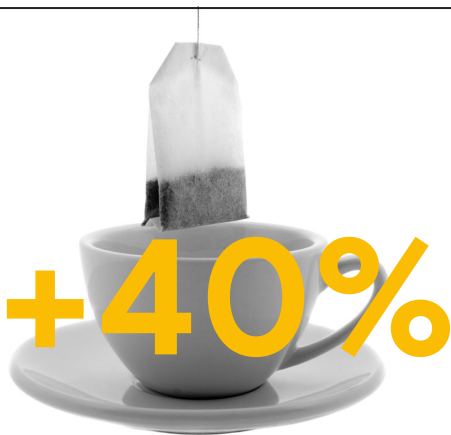
+20%

YoY growth in searches for "benefits of" solutions such as alternative medicine, from previous year's flat growth (Philippines)

HEALTH MANAGEMENT

+200%

YoY increase in searches for
"normal pulse" (India)

+40%

YoY increase in "Cách phòng"
(how to prevent) (Vietnam),
compared to 5% in previous year

Takeaways for brands

Communicate to empower your customers, not overwhelm them

Agreeing to terms and conditions is often a mandatory step before accessing an app. A recent study explored the length of the T&Cs of popular apps and discovered that the top 13 apps had more words in their T&Cs than any Harry Potter novel – leaving much room for improvement when it comes to user experience.
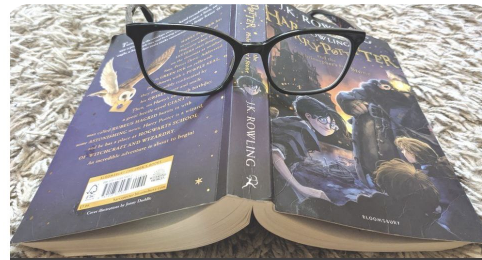
The first novel in the Harry Potter series is nearly 77,000 words long

The combined terms and conditions of 13 top apps including TikTok, WhatsApp and Zoom would take 17 hours and five minutes to read, a firm has estimated.

The documents contain a joint total of 128,415 words - longer than any one of the first three Harry Potter novels.

The longest was Microsoft Teams at 18,282 words - or two-and-a-half hours of reading time for many people.

In 2018, **a BBC study** found that several website policies required university education levels of reading ability.

22nd January 2019

EcoWorld launches HOPE (Home Ownership Programme with EcoWorld)

Kuala Lumpur: Eco World Development Group Bhd

Reduce the risk for your consumers

EcoWorld's try-before-you-buy program is a creative way of appealing to potential homeowners. The Malaysian property developer designed a rental program where people could try out a house before deciding whether or not to buy it, with the option of contributing as much as 30% of the rental towards the price of the house.

Actions speak louder than words with Hong Kong retailer Meiyume, who installed touch-free sample dispensers in their stores to address any health concerns associated with using tester products.

Takeaways for brands

Enable them to act on information easily

Aid consumer decision making by including crucial information with Search Ad Extensions. By including things like callouts, price extensions, and affiliate locations, you not only make things easier for your customers, but you become easier to find with greater visibility on the Search results page.

For B2B entities, think about ways to provide long term support for your partners

To boost sales in China, motor lubricant maker Castrol offered free advertising space to independent repair workshops that increased the sale of Castrol products. Around 6,000 workshops benefitted from the campaign, and Castrol reported a 44% increase in sales.

Recognize the role brands can play in empowering people to grow their skill sets

Grow with Google is a hub consolidating resources for job-seekers and businesses to upskill themselves and their employees. An example initiative is Skills Ignition SG, where Grow with Google partnered with the Singaporean government to build in-demand skills for the digital future through vocational and on-the-job training.

Summary of takeaways

Individual Matters

Nods to diversity, equity, and inclusion aren't enough. It takes empathy for the sheer variety of situations consumers face, and authentic outreach to those seeking help – both that impact the experiences for your brand.

- Consider consumers' individual journey to address systemic inequalities and embed empathy into your marketing strategy.

- Build for inclusivity, holistically and from the get-go, to meet the deeper needs of your audience. Pay attention to tone & timing - they matter.

- Make use of tools & technology to keep up-to-date of your audiences' specific and ever-evolving needs.
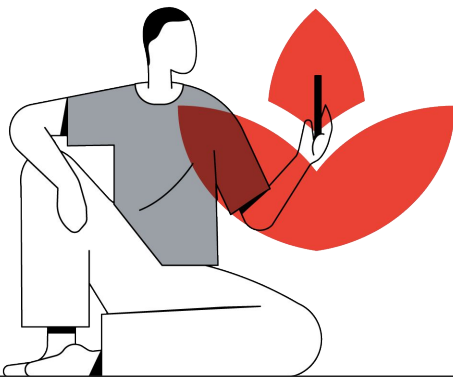
Higher Purpose

Expand your territories to make meaningful connections with (and for) consumers, beyond traditional corporate social responsibility. Actively support their communities and integrate sustainability into your brand values.

- Create new ways for consumers to connect with the environment, and each other.

- Make your business values and internal practices a visible part of your external brand.

- Connect with potential customers in the nearby community.
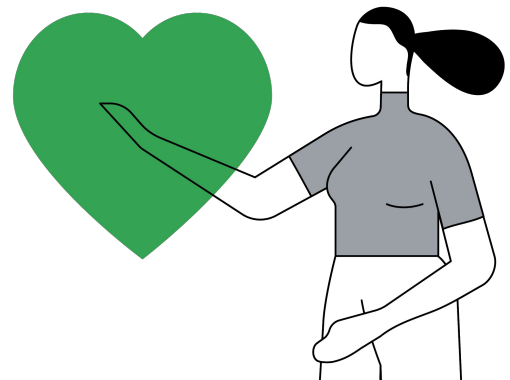
Whole Selves

Challenge your business to reexamine and redefine traditional industry norms.
A wider understanding of human needs means a wider business opportunity.

- Speak to your consumers like a local - taking their native language and format preferences into account.

- Rethink your business boundaries by challenging traditional industry models and uncover new opportunities.

- Fit into their world. Adjust your business solutions to fit into your consumers' lives and needs.

- Make it easy: more time online means less patience for digital mistakes.
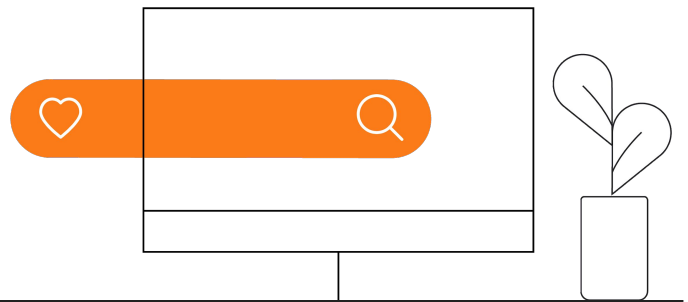
Sweet Relief

Brands that surprise and delight can reap the rewards of consumer love – especially when they do it with empathy for people's unique experiences and challenges.
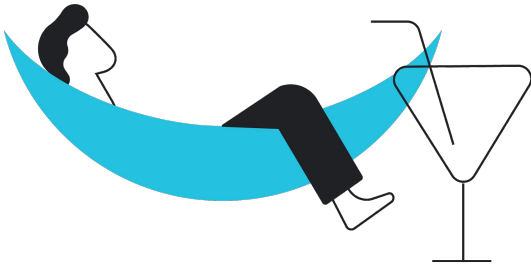
- Understand your consumers' point of view to make things fun in a more personal way.

- Be funny, too (In good taste, of course).

- Make it easier to share joy.

Future Proofing

Account for your consumers' desire for peace of mind, lower appetite for risk, and forward-planning mindset when crafting your business strategy and communications.

- Communicate to empower your customers, not overwhelm them.

- Get creative about reducing risk for consumers and enable them to act on information easily.

- Think about ways to provide longer term support for your partners from a b2b point of view.

- Recognize the role brands can play in empowering people to grow their skill sets.
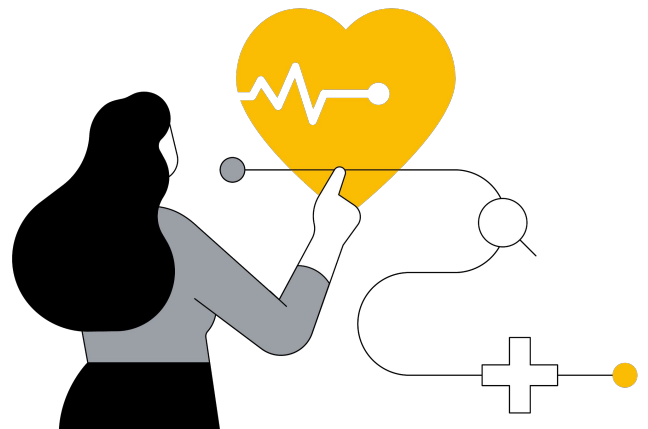
Sources

All Google Search data points included in this report are from Google Trends, Nov 1, 2019 - Oct 31, 2020 vs. Nov 1, 2018 - Oct 31, 2019, unless otherwise indicated.

Brand examples are mostly curated using trendwatching.com premium subscription

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8. Google Trends, Worldwide, Shopping, 2019 vs 2016

9. Google Trends, Nov. 1, 2019 - Oct. 31, 2020

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14. Cognizant, Algorithms Over Brands

15. GlobalWebIndex, Wave Q3 2020, World Regions

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