

Think with Google

# YEAR IN SEARCH 2022



AUSTRALIA &  
NEW ZEALAND

INTRO

# Look back to move your marketing forward

When times get unpredictable, people yearn for a more straightforward path ahead. They look inward, to the things that they do have control over. Having weathered three years of disruptive changes, people are seeking to live life on their own terms and reassert their identities, lifestyles, and values.

Every year, we analyse trillions of Google searches globally, to help marketers uncover meaningful trends and shifts in consumer behaviour. Our insights allows individual businesses across Australia and New Zealand to respond to these changes immediately, in real-time.

## INTRO

This year's trends point to a renewed sense of self, even amid sustained levels of uncertainty. People are seeking out authentic, fulfilling ways of living and working — wondering “can I change...?” as they search for what's possible, and empowering themselves to make choices that provide the best overall value to their lives.

We've identified three key insights, based on what's top of mind for Australians and New Zealanders as they search on Google. In this report, we dive deeper on what they mean for your brand, and how you can strengthen your marketing strategy for the year ahead.

Year in  
Search 2024



THEME 1



# Soul searching



After three years of uncertainty, people are collectively moving past merely coping or just going with the flow. They're reenvisioning who they are and can be, on their own terms. On the one hand, we can see that people are embracing their global citizenship. From music to cuisine, searches show that people are reaching out further afield to forge a deeper understanding of cultures beyond their own. **In contrast, the past few years have brought our own communities into sharper focus. People are taking the opportunity to reconnect within their own backyard, searching for local events and goings-on.**

## SOUL SEARCHING

As people reimagine who they are within their communities and the rest of the world, they're also asking themselves how they can be their most full and authentic selves. Following on the heels of the Great Resignation, the Great Exhaustion is sweeping across the world, prompting people to focus more on their well-being and upskilling themselves to open doors and pursue better opportunities. At the same time, they're also embracing individuality and searching with much more specificity to satisfy their distinct needs and preferences.

# Soul searching

1.1

# Cultural Identity



# Globally connected, locally focused.

We're seeing a paradoxical dissonance in people's Google searches: They desire to be plugged into global culture, but they're also celebrating what traditions make their own country unique. This dynamic duality points to the increasing complexity of our identities as citizens of the world and proud denizens.

Asian cuisine crossed borders as search interest in **malaysian restaurant** grew by over 40% in New Zealand

People want to learn more about their communities and shared history, with search interest for Indigenous voice growing by over 200% in Australia, and Matariki growing by 150% in New Zealand



Indigenous voice



Matariki





CULTURAL IDENTITY



The global power of **kpop** continues to spread with a 20% increase in search interest in Australia and New Zealand



# 1.2

## Personal Identity

# Refined searches.

How people look for answers and ideas is continually evolving. Over the years, searches have become much more complex and nuanced; we're cutting right to the chase. As people of all ages look to reinforce their sense of self, and find ways to reflect their personality, the language being used is increasingly specific.

How does this show up in Google Search? Whatever they're looking for, people are exploring, evaluating, and questioning with much greater specificity in an effort to express their distinctive identities.



Q what is identity +70%

There's a touch of introspection in the air, with search interest for terms containing what is identity increasing +70% in New Zealand



When it comes to **gender stereotypes** and **gender equality**, search interest in both rose by over 30% in Australia

Search interest for terms containing **for men** grew by over 10% in Australia, with **for women** seeing a likewise 10% growth

+30%  
+10%



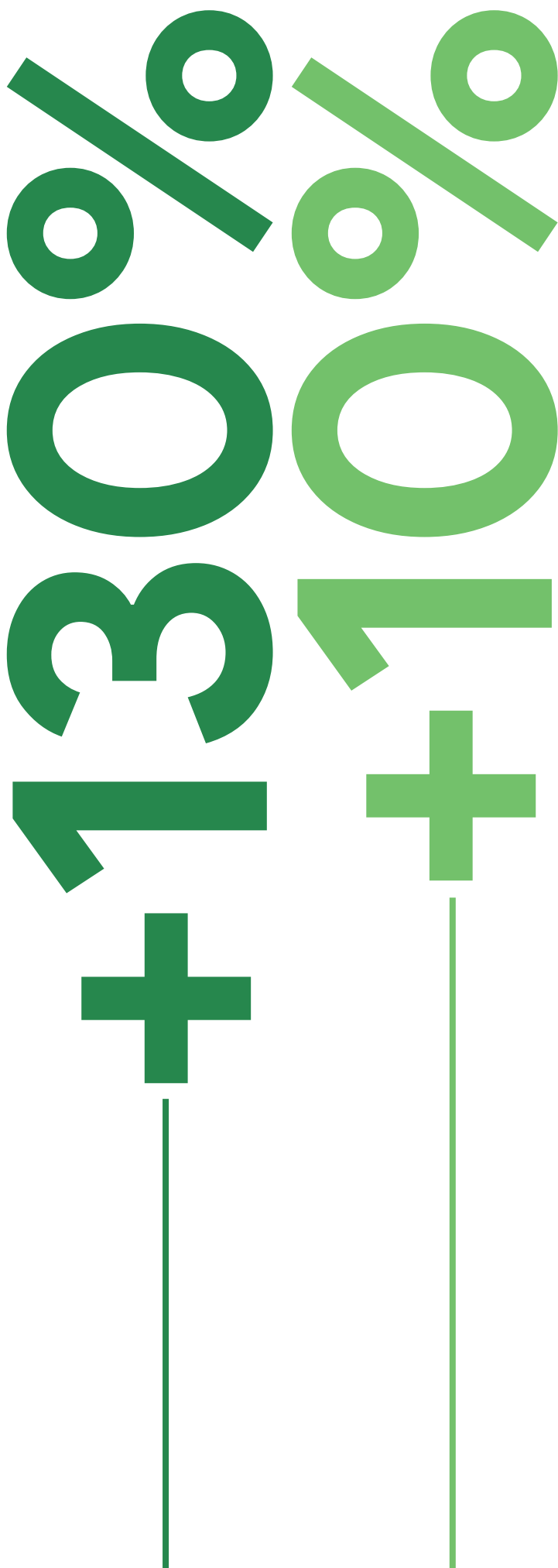
Look  
to  
move  
the  
market  
forward

# Taking better care of themselves.

Searches for various forms of self-care and self-improvement are on the rise. People want to learn about personal wellness, health and fitness – including ways to identify and manage mental health challenges.







Search interest  
in Australia for  
**signs of burnout**  
leapt up by over  
130%

In New Zealand,  
**what is anxiety**  
searches grew  
by over 10%

As people in Australia and New Zealand looked to Search for guidance, interest in **how to be healthy** grew by up to 40%

**+40%**




# 1.3

## Professional Identity

# Harmony between work and home life.

Work and home life continue to be parts of a whole but people are now looking to find a greater balance between the two. That manifests in people resigning from their jobs and actively seeking work arrangements to complement their lifestyle. 77% of workers say they value remote work, and 42% say they would refuse a job if they couldn't work from home.<sup>1</sup>



A woman with dark hair tied in a bun is sitting on a couch, wearing large over-ear headphones and a light-colored cable-knit sweater. She is smiling and has her eyes closed, appearing to be enjoying music. Her right hand is near her ear, and her left hand is raised in a small fist. The background is a plain wall with a light switch visible. The entire image has a green color overlay.

Workers feel emboldened to explore other styles of working, with search interest for **work life balance** increasing by 30% in Australia

People in Australia also explored their value in the job market, with search interest in **pay rise** up by over 70%

In New Zealand, search interest in the **great resignation** jumped by over 160%



# Upskilling and entrepreneurship.

Just as people are rethinking their work life, they're also expanding their skills with training, looking for more flexibility, and considering branching out on their own.

 side hustle  +30%

In Australia, people were curious about a range of gigs, with a +30% search interest increase in "side hustle"



Search interest in **freelance jobs**  
grew by over 40% in Australia

**+40%**





# Marketing implications

# 01

## **Adopt inclusive marketing strategies as a mindset, not a checkbox.**

Committing to diversity, equity, and inclusion needs to be a constant responsibility that is embedded into every aspect of your brand's campaigns — from conception to execution, and beyond.



A good rule of thumb is to opt for nuanced narratives and reflect intersectionality in your messages. Brands that portray women and underrepresented groups positively have greater influence on customer intent.

For more tips, check out [Think with Google's inclusive marketing best practices](#).

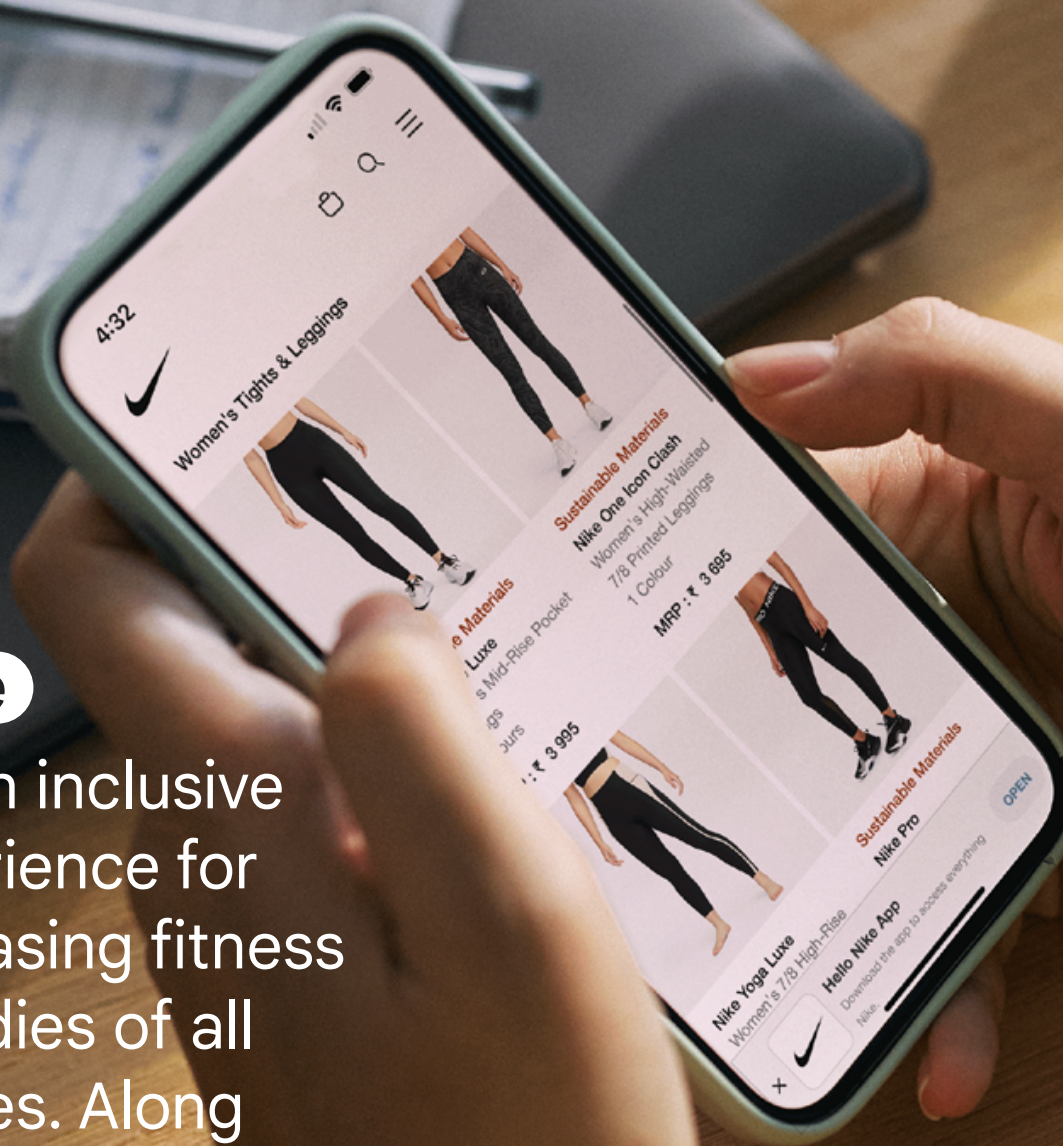
+70%

More than 70% of Gen Zers in Australia would pay more for a product if the brand supports an issue they care about<sup>2</sup>



## Brand Example

**Nike** created an inclusive shopping experience for women, showcasing fitness clothing for bodies of all shapes and sizes. Along with a plus-size section on its website, it introduced mannequins of different shapes and sizes at its brick-and-mortar stores. By being more representative, it helped more people see themselves as Nike athletes, fostering a deeper brand connection.





# 02

## Think visually beyond text search

Recent innovations in Google Search are helping consumers find what they're looking for in more natural and intuitive ways. As people increasingly search with images and text together, think about investing in compelling image assets to bring your ads to life with diverse representation of people and products. This makes it easy for people to see relevant visuals of your products and services, and take action; especially on mobile.

In fact, advertisers see a 10% increase in click-through rate when image extensions show with their mobile Search ads.<sup>3</sup>

## Brand Example

Performance Max campaigns use Google's AI to engage customers effectively, by employing compelling image, text, and video creative assets at scale across Google channels — including Search, Display, Discover, Gmail and YouTube. **AA Insurance New Zealand** used Performance Max to great effect, increasing insurance policy applications by 12% at a 64% lower CPA.





THEME 2



# Value hunting

## VALUE HUNTING

As macroeconomic factors continue to cause a tightening of belts, we're reassessing the cost of our everyday expenses and we're striving to compare. Not only are we considering the price on the tag but also looking for what will provide the most value in the long run.

**People are being more pragmatic and focusing on the essentials**, with 40% of consumers making fewer impulse purchases and prioritising needs over wants.<sup>4</sup> They're also appreciating wallet-friendly options, like second-hand clothing, that save money and help the environment.

## VALUE HUNTING

Consumers are also weighing up whether to trust or not to trust. They're searching for clear indications that a brand provides both quality service and reliable products. As they pursue the best value overall, rather than just the cheapest option, globally Google searches for **most popular** are higher than those for **most affordable**.<sup>5</sup>

# Value hunting

**Source:** 5. Google Trends, Worldwide, Shopping category, Oct 5, 2021-Oct 5, 2022.





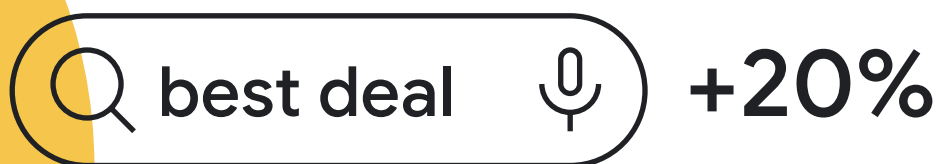


# 2.1

## Seeking Value and Knowledge

# People are more carefully weighing their buying options.

As costs rise, people are carefully considering how and when they spend, seizing the right moment for the best deals. Globally, search interest for **compared to** remains consistently high.<sup>6</sup>



Search interest in  
"best deal" grew by more  
than 20% in Australia



A photograph of two women, one younger with long brown hair and one older with dark curly hair, both looking down at a laptop screen. The younger woman is on the left, wearing a white top with red floral patterns. The older woman is on the right, wearing a colorful patterned top and large red hoop earrings. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with wooden elements.

# +20%

Comparison shopping is up in Australia, where search interest in **compare** jumped by more than 20%

# Seeking greater economic literacy.

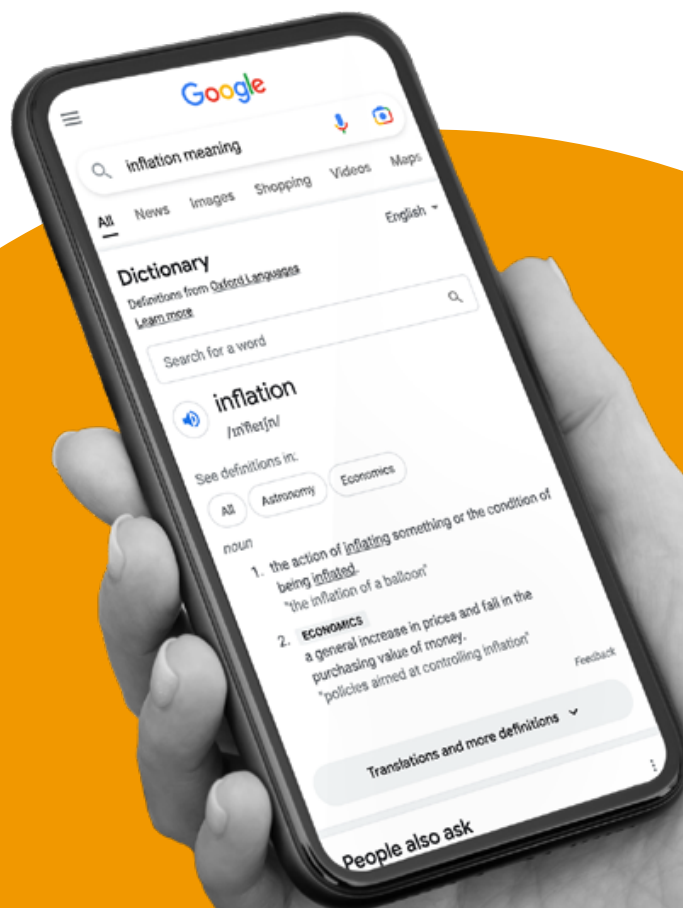
As the global economy remains uncertain, people are seeking out information that will increase their financial and economic literacy, and help in making those decisions that count — from learning about the causes of rising prices, to staying on top of emerging investment trends.





# 230%

With the cost of living continuing to rise in both Australia and New Zealand, search interest in **inflation meaning** leapt by up to 230%



🔍 why is \_\_\_\_ expensive 🎤 +40%

Search interest in  
“why is \_\_\_\_ expensive”  
was up by over  
40% in Australia, as  
people try to budget  
and plan ahead

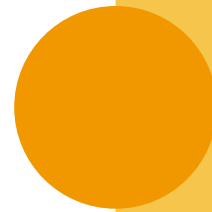


# 2.2

## Saving Money and the Planet

# **Inflation and sustainability are going hand-in-hand, forming an unexpected alliance.**

People are discovering that more sustainable purchases, such as electric or hybrid cars, can help them be savvier about their spending, especially when petrol prices rise.





As consumers search for more environmentally friendly vehicles, search interest in New Zealand for **hybrid car** and in Australia for **electric car** were both up by more than 60%

New Zealanders are looking into the government's clean car discount on electric vehicles, contributing to searches for **rebate** increasing by over 80%





# +110%

Search interest in **sustainable packaging**  
rose by over 110% in Australia

# 2.3

**Trusted  
Brands  
Above  
All Else**

# As economic concerns mount, consumer trust remains ever more imperative for brands.

Shoppers enter the messy middle with doubt and scepticism; Australian and New Zealand consumers are prioritising brands and products that offer lasting quality. Compared to a 53% global average, 62% of Australians are more likely to buy for durability versus affordable products that may need to be replaced more frequently.<sup>7</sup>







# +84%

want to trust in the brand  
before purchasing<sup>8</sup>

**Source:** 8. Google commissioned Kantar/Quantum Report: "Emotional Value of Search 2022". E4. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements? Base: Those who have purchased or intend to purchase from the vertical within 12 months IN, ID, VN, TH, AU, All verticals n=6002.



As shoppers spend more time weighing up their options, search interest in terms containing **review site** grew by over 10% in Australia

Service is top of mind in New Zealand, where search interest in **best service** grew by over 30%





# 01

## Use AI-powered ad solutions to stay nimble as trends shift.

To keep pace with how people are navigating shifts in prices, your brand can use AI-driven ads to immediately deliver the best deals to people as they search for affordable – and trusted – options.

Adopt a “tried-and-new” approach that blends traditional Search best practices with Google’s AI-powered products. For example, combining value-based bidding with broad match keywords will help your brand show up in new, high-performing queries.



# +80%

of Google advertisers around the world now use automated bidding to unlock Google Search's full potential<sup>9</sup>





## Brand Example



**Bupa Australia** transitioned to broad match with conversion based automated bid strategies powered by AI, to find more relevant Google Search queries. In this scaled test, Bupa were able to drive sales and deliver a 119% uplift in conversions at a 4% lower CPA.

# 02

## Strengthen privacy to build trust.

Google Search interest suggests that shoppers are spending more time researching and reviewing, looking for assurances of trustworthiness. This also relates to how their personal information is being gathered by businesses, and if there's transparency around the 'why'.

+74%

In fact, 74% of Australian consumers say they're highly sceptical about how companies use their data for marketing.<sup>10</sup> So, as people seek more control over their personal info, digital marketers must adapt and work together to balance sustainable performance and people's privacy. Businesses need to ensure they're earning — but also maintaining — consumer trust.





Look back

to move

forward

to market

THEME 3



# Finding joy

In the face of constant waves of disruption, people are no longer letting this lack of predictability stop them from living their best lives. **They're finding ways to add touches of luxury and ticking things off bucket lists, even if it means making concessions or spending extra time hunting for deals.**

## FINDING JOY

People have also merged their online and offline lives — fully embracing the convenience of digital services that emerged during the pandemic — and there's no going back. They're also searching out offline experiences and getting amongst it IRL. Compared with previous years, events like live concerts are ramping up, and dabbling in fine dining is back on the menu.

# Finding joy



# 3.1

## Little Luxuries and Cheap Thrills

# People care about value but aren't ready to give up the fancier things.

They're searching Google for ways to fit expensive purchases into their budget. And while some people splash out, many are still seeking cheap thrills and finding fun closer to home.



As more people look to accessorise with a touch of opulence, searches in Australia for "luxury bag" grew by over 40%

# +40%

Aussies are making moves to the movies, with search interest for **cinema near me** growing over 40%



+60%

+20%

The hunt for all-you-can-eat culinary adventures in Australia has also led to an over 60% increase in **bbq buffet** search interest

Sophisticated palates are on the rise, as search interest in **michelin star restaurants** climbs by over 20% in New Zealand




# 3.2

**Travel  
Resumed,  
Even if  
Budget**

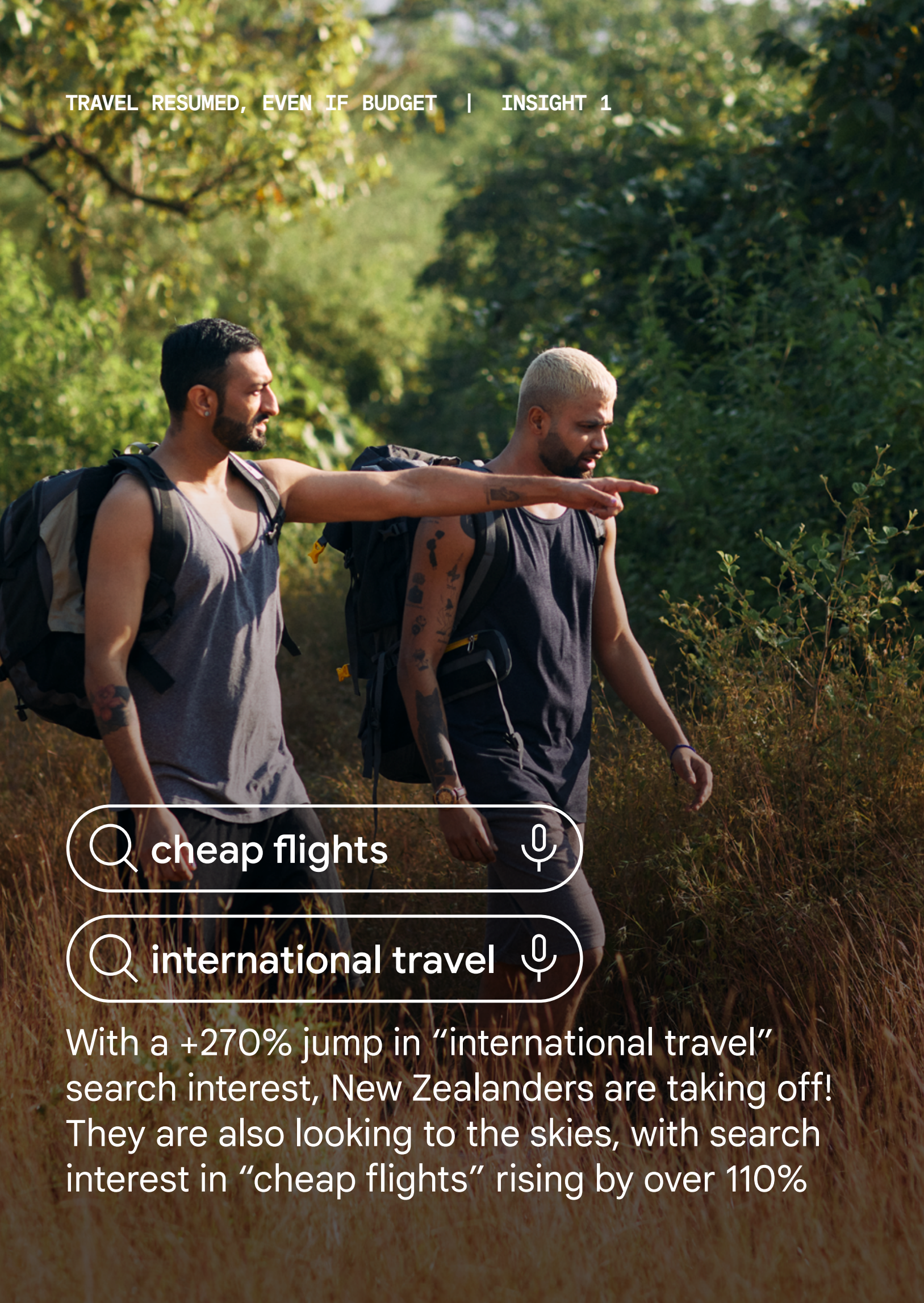
# In 2022, demand for travel surpassed 2019's pre-pandemic levels.

68% of people in Australia and New Zealand say they're keen to travel as much as possible in the near future.<sup>11</sup> They're also looking for ways to make holidaying as budget-friendly as possible, and planning ahead to stick within their means.



As people plan their leave, searches for **all inclusive resorts** leapt by over 120% in Australia





🔍 cheap flights



🔍 international travel



With a +270% jump in “international travel” search interest, New Zealanders are taking off! They are also looking to the skies, with search interest in “cheap flights” rising by over 110%



**Australians' travel preferences are nuanced.** The majority of Aussie travellers are 'urban traditionalists' who are keen to tick cities around the world off their bucket lists. On the other hand, 29% are more budget-conscious who are happily holidaying in their own backyard.<sup>12</sup>





# 3.3

Using Online  
to Simplify  
the Offline

# People are also savvier about which channels they use to optimise their experiences.

They're using digital services more consistently than ever before, to make their lives easier. And they're investing the time they save, enjoying the offline experiences that matter to them.

After lockdowns forced a reshaping of the retail world, search interest in **same day delivery** rose by over 215% in both Australia and New Zealand

Across New Zealand, as the music industry gets back on its feet, concert-goers are responding with a +60% climb in “concert tickets” search interest



+110%  
+20%

Social distancing behaviours adopted in recent times have been continually solidified, with search interest in telehealth appointment rising by over 110% in Australia

Convenience continues on the road ahead, with Aussies' search interest in drive through growing by over 20%







# Marketing implications

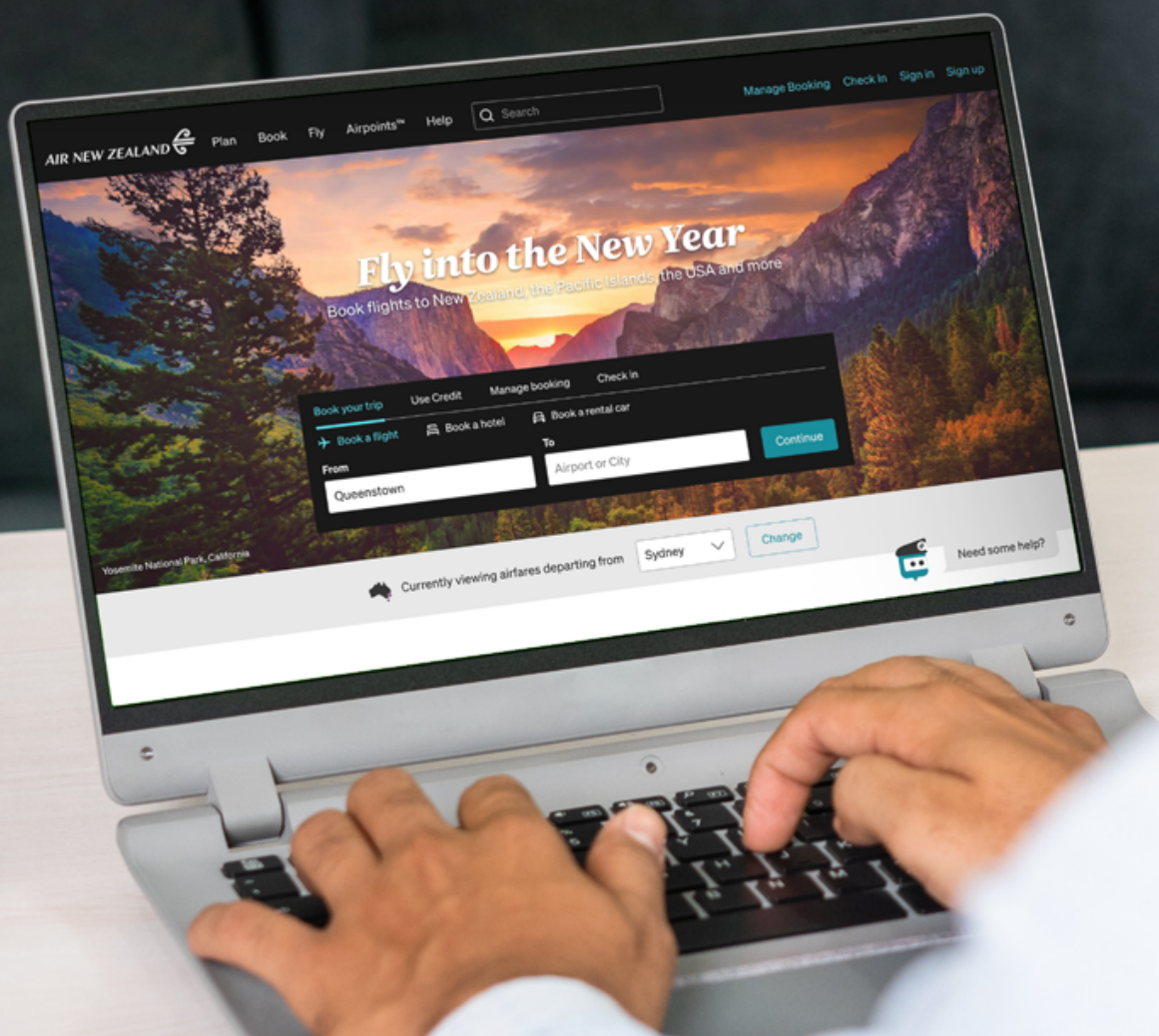
# 01

## Respond to consumer demand in real time.

These Google Search trends give us a sense of what matters to people in the moment; how they're feeling and what they're looking for. Use the [Google Ads Insights page](#) to identify new and changing consumer demand — and respond quickly, including in real time. The data shows how search behaviour is shifting in the moment and can be tailored to individual business preferences, such as location and language.

## Brand Example

As borders reopened, **Air New Zealand** relaunched their Google Search campaigns. The Google Ads recommendation tab and optimisation score provided valuable campaign enhancement tips and the ability to regularly analyse performance. With these tools, Air New Zealand could respond to real-time insights — refreshing creative as needed to keep them relevant to consumers — to achieve a +140% higher ROAS.





# 02

## Rethink online and offline boundaries to meet your shoppers wherever they are.

Today's customers are living — and shopping — in a channel-less world, making a frictionless omnichannel strategy more important than ever. Globally, Google Search interest for **in-store** nearly tripled since the beginning of 2022.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, 90% of APAC consumers expect retailers to sell their products online, and even those who purchase offline still refer to at least one digital channel for research.<sup>14</sup>

**Source:** 13. Google Trends, Worldwide, Shopping Category, Jan 1, 2022–Nov 3, 2022.

14. Google-commissioned Ipsos COVID-19 tracker, AU, BR, CA, CN, FR, DE, IN, IT, JP, MX, RU, ZA, KR, ES, U.K., and U.S., n=500–1,000 online consumers 18+ per market, Dec. 2–5, 2021.

Use Performance Max campaigns to promote your products or services across all of Google's advertising channels and inventory by creating one easy-to-manage campaign.





## Brand Example

After seeing a jump in coffee machine sales, **Nespresso** wanted to tap into this consumer buying behaviour to increase its online sales. It made use of Performance Max campaigns to get in front of people searching online for ways to enjoy a cafe experience at home. By leveraging the power of marketing automation, Nespresso used the most relevant creative assets to reach shoppers most likely to convert, improving conversions by 55% and reducing cost per action by 3%.



The marketing tips that we've shared here will help you unlock consumer trends in Australia and New Zealand and find business growth through Search and marketing innovations. We'll continue to share more of such important consumer trends and marketing strategies throughout the year on [Think with Google](#), so stay subscribed for the latest insights.

All Google Search data points included in this report are from Google Trends, Sept 2021 - Sept 2022 versus year over year, unless otherwise indicated.

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