

Think with Google

# YEAR IN SEARCH 2020 VIETNAM

Looking back to move your marketing forward



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Welcome to the Year of the Ox. It is a new year, but it feels like our search for certainty is ever constant. If 2020 was any indication, we have so many questions about the present and the future. 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 reaction to the pandemic? We released [our first Year in Search Report](#) in October 2020, and are committed to keeping current with the shifting trends.

Observing how people turn to Search offers us a unique view into various dimensions, such as people's 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 new, 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.



**Tammy Phan**  
Head of Marketing  
Google APAC, Vietnam

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Lines are blurring in the roles people play, and Vietnamese are looking to have more specific needs met at any one time. They are searching for brands that fit into their lives, and not the other way around.

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Happiness never goes out of style, but amid the historic challenges of the pandemic, consumers are welcoming brands that spark joy in their lives and create a safe space for them.

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In a year that nobody could have planned for, there's been a new wave of interest in managing the things you can control, wherever possible, and seeking more assurance from brands to ensure peace of mind.



## Trend 1

# Individual Matters

COVID-19 is far more than a health crisis. It affected societies and economies at their core across nations, and with it, a simple truth was reaffirmed: no two human experiences are the same. Throughout 2020, Search trends revealed that people are placing increasing importance on their individual perspectives, needs, and challenges.

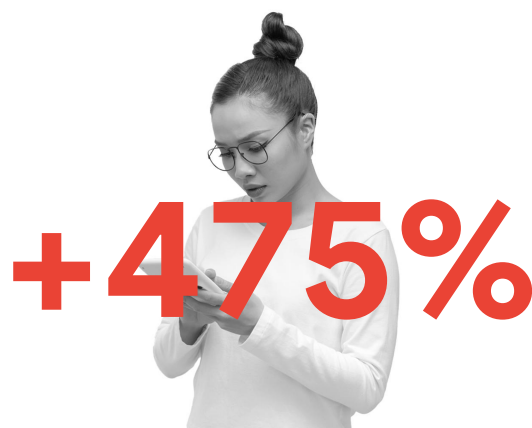
The global pandemic has made people's diverging needs, habits, and beliefs more apparent than ever. This unique set of experiences remind us that individual behavior shouldn't be influenced by what society considers to be appropriate and inappropriate. Instead, the focus of what Vietnamese are searching for is shifting to prioritize mental and physical well-being, in order to emerge stronger as individuals and as a society.



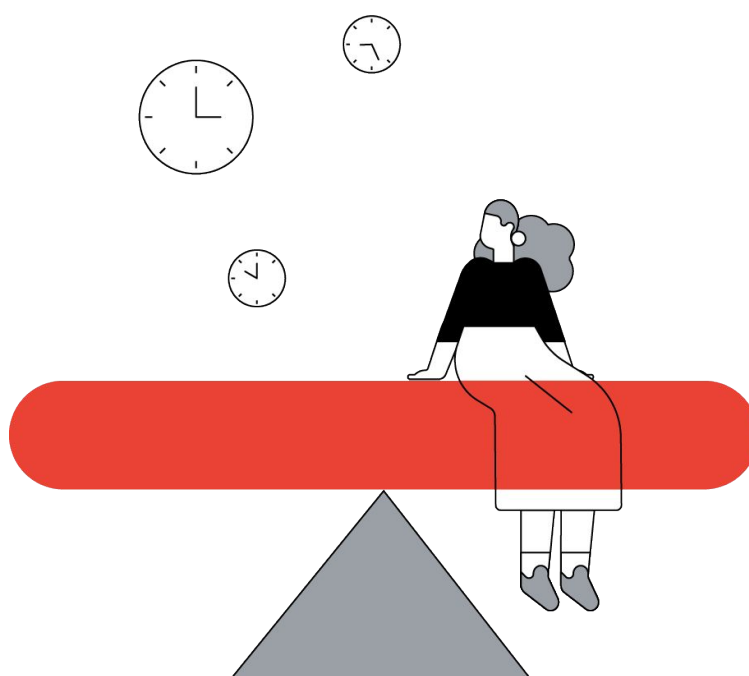
People are confronting mental health-related stigmas, educating themselves on how to handle these issues, and searching for resources to help themselves through professional help, thereby validating a historically taboo topic.



YoY rise in searches related to **“mental health”**  
(sức khỏe tinh thần)



YoY increase in searches for **“online counseling”**  
(tư vấn tâm lý online)



We observed a growth in searches to understand and alleviate mental health-related symptoms and markers of stress, which impact all aspects of Vietnamese life.



YoY growth in searches for  
**“insomnia”** (“mất ngủ”)



YoY growth in searches for  
**“how to relieve stress”**  
 (“cách giải tỏa stress”)



**“stress test”**

(kiểm tra mức độ stress)  
one of the top-searched  
health tracking terms,  
as the pandemic had  
a profound effect testing  
fortitude, well-being, and  
stress management skills

With health now centered  
as an utmost concern  
in society, individuals are  
also looking to prioritize  
self-care.



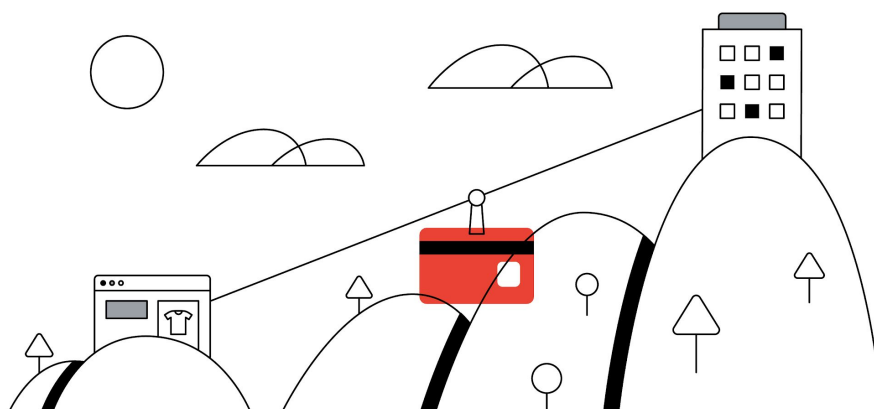
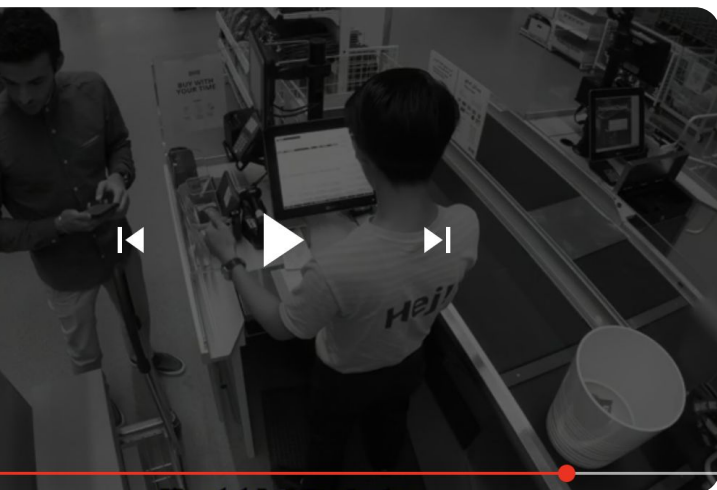
YoY jump in searches for  
**“healthy living tips”** (“bí quyết sống  
khỏe”), as Vietnamese spent more time  
to be mindful of the choices they  
made to improve personal health  
and wellness

# What it means for brands

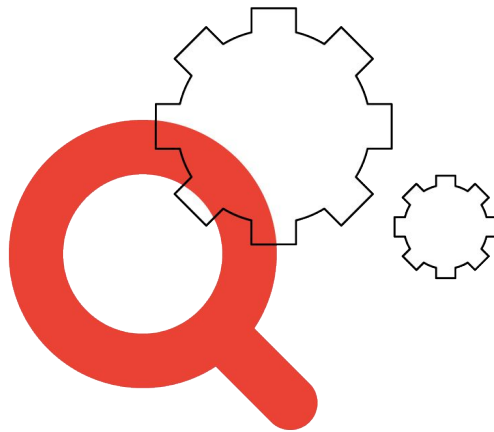
Highlighting inclusion and well-being isn't enough. It takes demonstrations of empathy for a brand to understand the spectrum of lived experiences that their consumers face and to acknowledge an individual consumer's journey in order to create both meaningful and long-term connections.

## 1. Consider the individual journey of each consumer (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.

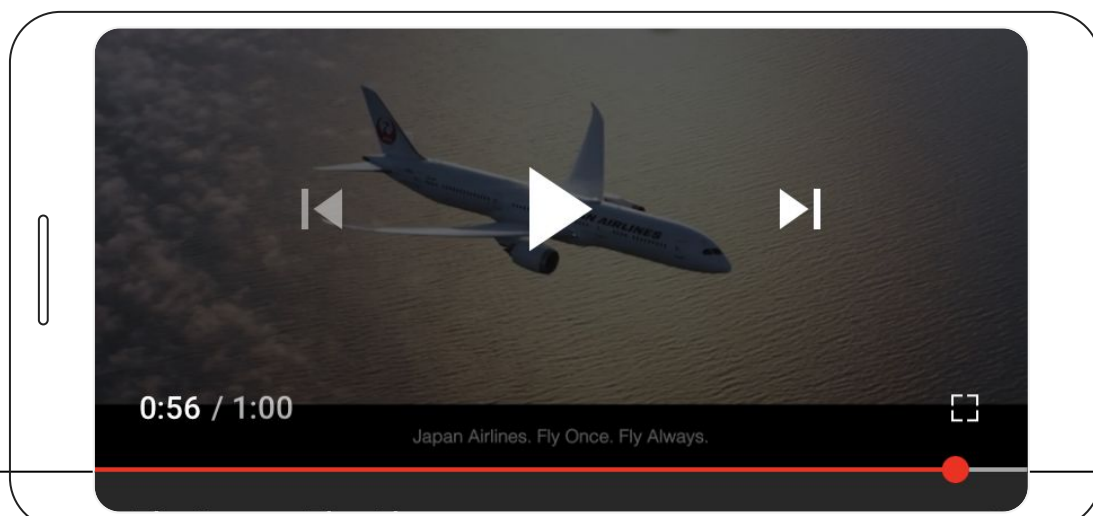


# What it means for brands



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

Japan-based **Japan Airlines** (JAL) launched a hyper-personalized video campaign, 'Fly Once, Fly Always', for five markets across Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, in November 2019. The campaign leveraged 3,000 unique creative assets to create 24 different versions of the video that recreate the special 'first time feelings' of flying among travelers. The content displayed is chosen according to the viewer's relevance. For example, the version shown to viewers in Vietnam features a man being served food by a flight attendant to highlight the tailored in-flight experience each customer gets.



# What it means for brands

## 3. Pay attention to tone and timing – they matter.

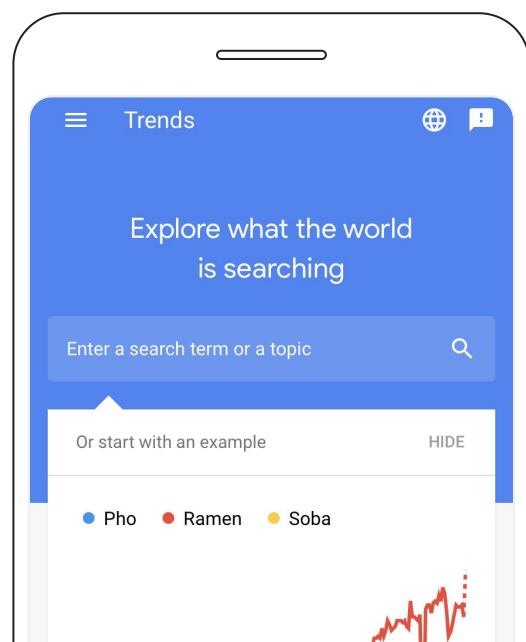
In partnership with YouTube and Tribeca Enterprises, the **United Nations** launched a campaign to drive awareness about 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The campaign used a video ad sequencing tool on YouTube which allowed them to tell a sequential story based on how the viewers choose to interact with the content at their own pace, and hopefully inspire them to take action against inequality.



Tone should be clear and direct to communicate purpose, like centering inclusivity in 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.](#)

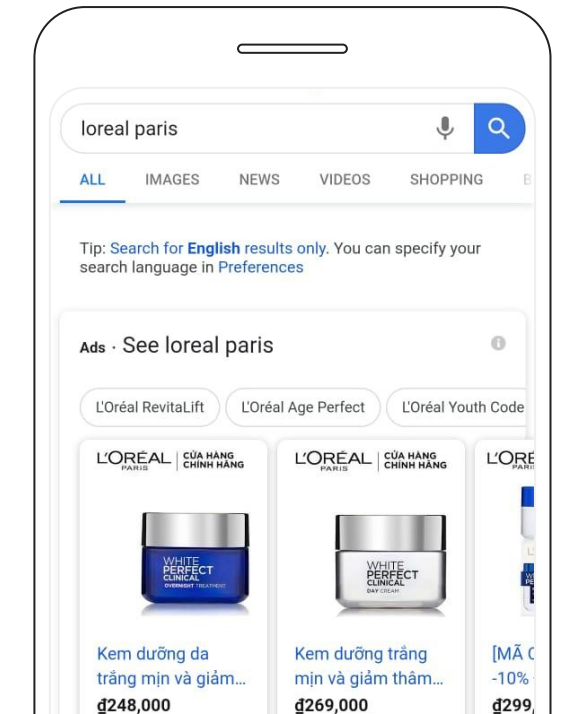
## 4. Make use of tools and technology to engage large audiences who have specific and ever-evolving needs.

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

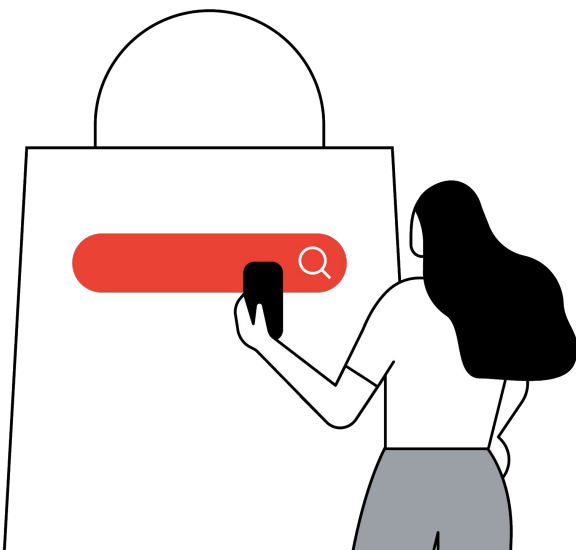


# What it means for brands

When Covid-19 relegated entire cities of people to stay at home, millions of consumers moved from offline to online experiences. CPG brands in Vietnam had to react swiftly and create a compelling online presence. In a programme piloted in Vietnam with Shopee, Google used signals and data to help L'Oréal drive consumers using Search with the intent to purchase directly to their e-commerce store on Shopee. L'Oréal also measured lower-funnel performances (i.e. sales) and shifted some offline trade activities to digital given the success of the pilot.



As **L'Oréal** continues to shift their presence online, they are discovering that keeping up with consumer demands and understanding changing needs and desires can be challenging. 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 tested our humanity and values by compelling a global reset. The time spent apart from loved ones encouraged us to think beyond ourselves, focus on the greater good of the community, encounter new ways to connect with each other and a higher purpose for our individual existence. While some Vietnamese sought ways to give back to society through charity work, others adopted green habits.



Environmental concerns are not new. But 2020 was a turning point that featured some key attitude shifts towards protecting our planet. Confronted with their own personal consumption habits during lockdowns, Vietnamese have been redirecting their attention and purchasing power to positively impact the environment.



YoY increase in  
**“environmentally friendly”** (thân thiện  
với môi trường) -related searches



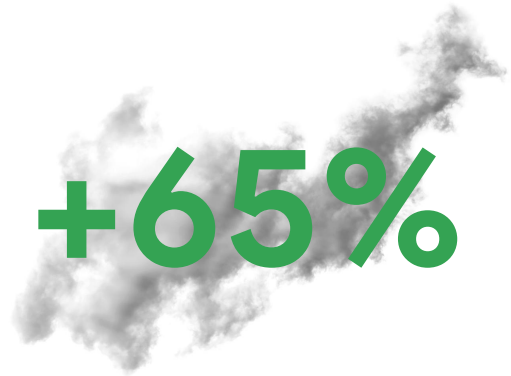
of Vietnamese consumers are willing to  
pay more for **sustainable products**



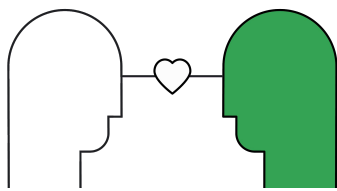
While interest in the environment and giving back to the community were among the rising search trends in Vietnam, a surge in lockdown-induced new habits are carrying us into 2021 and beyond.



YoY rise in **“sustainability”** (thân thiện với môi trường) -related searches, as the pandemic laid bare the links and the existing gaps between health, environment and the economy



YoY growth in **“climate change”** (biến đổi khí hậu) -related searches, as many Vietnamese anticipated how the pandemic will affect the climate crisis



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



YoY growth in searches related to **“donate to support”** (“quyên góp ủng hộ”), as Vietnamese opened their hearts and wallets to help those impacted by the pandemic and the central region flooding in October 2020

# What it means for brands

Make meaningful connections to establish human values of empathy and inclusivity that go beyond traditional corporate social responsibility. It's also important to actively support communities and take actions to integrate sustainability into a brand's values.

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



Go beyond your operational footprint and actively invest in sustainability -centered collaboration like **Converse** did with their City Forests. This community project engages local artists to create murals using photocatalytic paint, which helps purify the air and mitigate pollution. These air purifying murals have been spotted in Jakarta, Sydney, Bangkok, and Ho Chi Minh City.

## 2. Make your values and internal practices externally visible.

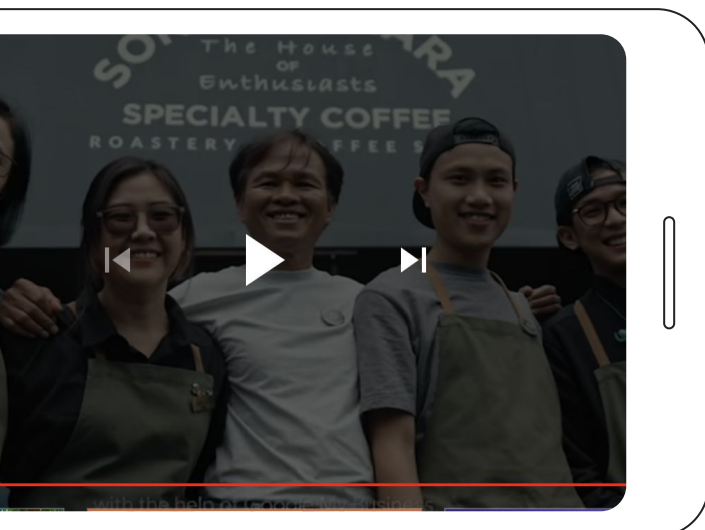
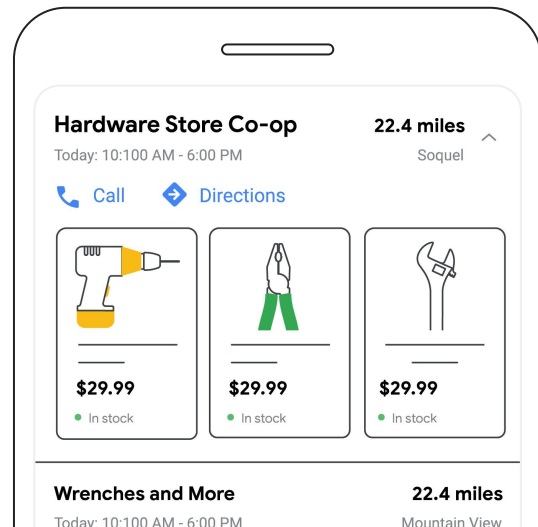
Consider transparency as a shared practice and experience for your audiences. As Trendwatching points out in their Future of Work report, exposing internal initiatives to the customer can be more compelling and impactful than releasing a neatly crafted press release. For example, **Shiseido**, a well loved brand in Vietnam, introduced S/PARK, 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.

# What it means for brands

## 3. Connect with potential customers in the nearby community.

Searches for “shopping near me” have grown 3X in the past three years, clearly indicating that shoppers are relying on digital resources to procure what they need, with proximity as a primary concern. Brands can tap into the opportunity by using local inventory ads to show nearby shoppers what’s available, how much is in stock, and directions to get to the physical shop.

After the pandemic, shopping trends are likely to also stabilize in a new normal as people have digitally adjusted most facets of their life. In APAC, 53% of online shoppers say they’ll continue to buy online more frequently post-pandemic. With millions conducting shopping-related searches on Google every day, brands have the opportunity to list their products (for free) on [Listings](#).



Ensure you have a prominent online presence so that your customers can easily find you.

[Google My Business \(GMB\)](#) is an easy-to-use tool that helps businesses connect and interact with the customers who are looking for their products and services. For example, Local businesses such as [Tân Mỹ Design](#), [Đà Lạt Foodie](#) and [Sơn Pacamara](#)— whose customers are mainly foreign tourists — turned to GMB to connect with local customers and maintain their livelihood during the pandemic.



### 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 manager in the office from the parent at home have blurred. Vietnamese now have to juggle their home and work needs, without the refuge of time at home away from time at the office.

Many people are struggling to balance their work and home responsibilities under one roof continuously. As a result, Vietnamese are actively looking for ways to optimize their time and become more effective in less than ideal circumstances.



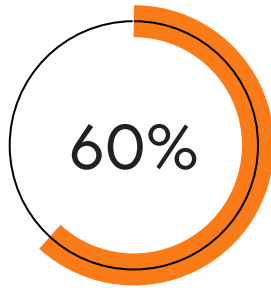
YoY rise in searches for **“study at home”** (“học tại nhà”), as students had to refocus their learning and transform their personal space into a learning space



jump in searches for **“online learning”** (“học trực tuyến”), as many students and teachers had to transition from in-person classes to online classes to prevent the spread of COVID-19

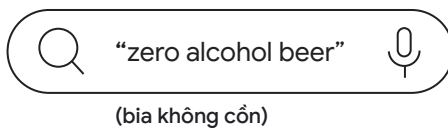


Consumers are now expecting brands to consider their personal beliefs and preferences across a wider range of products and services.

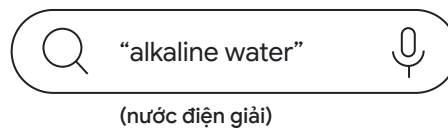


of Vietnamese consumers said they bought and drank ready to drink (RTD) drinks because they had health benefits

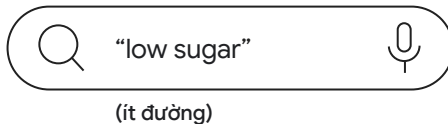
In Vietnam, there has been a growth in searches for healthier products:



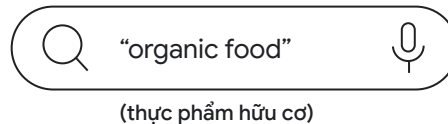
▲ 250%



▲ 80%



▲ 100%



▲ 30%





Vietnamese are using more specific Search terms, indicating the development of more unique needs. Brands can use this as an opportunity to **“be there” for their audiences** by furnishing more helpful and relevant information.



YoY increase in searches for **“baby shower gel for rash”**  
(sữa tắm trị rôm sảy cho bé)



YoY growth in searches for **“baby formula for developing weight”**  
(công thức sữa tăng cân cho bé)



YoY growth in searches for **“[hairstyles] + for round faces”**  
([kiểu tóc] cho mặt tròn)



YoY growth in searches for **“baby food for 5 months baby”**  
(thức ăn cho bé 5 tháng tuổi)



YoY growth in searches for **“face wash for + [skin condition]”**  
(sữa rửa mặt cho [loại da])

## What it means for brands

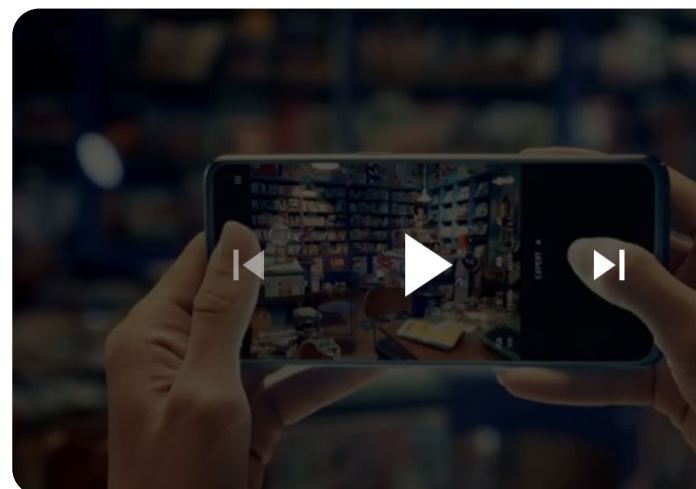
The lines between the different roles that people play are blurred. People no longer comprise a singular consumer persona (i.e. the parent, employee, teacher). Individuals are shown to be multifaceted with a range of consumer needs and preferences and who carry the responsibilities of various roles, every day. They're looking for brands to meet their specific and diverse needs. Brands must fit into their consumers' lives, and not the other way around.

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

Google made it easier for merchants normally providing in-person services to pivot online. Merchants verified on [Google My Business](#) could add attributes like **“online classes,” “online appointments”** or **“online estimates”** to their Business Profile. This information is visible on merchants' Business Profiles on Search.

Oppo pushed its boundaries by launching a new flagship phone entirely online during a pandemic - a move that significantly broke away from the industry's tradition of big hefty offline launch events.

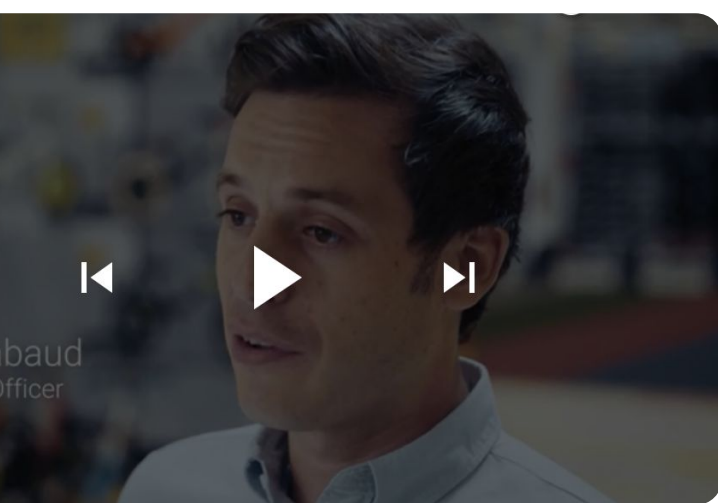
Oppo strategized to launch the flagship device, Reno 3, by appearing when people searched for Oppo branded keywords or competitors' keywords on both Google and YouTube Search. The consolidated approach to Search revealed striking results: a 50% share on brand keywords and 74% share on competitors' keywords.



# What it means for brands

## 2. 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.



**Decathlon** went online in its Metro Cities— Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City— and used Search behavior insights and Director Mix to automatically create over a 100 different versions of their original video. Decathlon was able to automate customization for each person at scale, showing the most relevant YouTube video based on the search history of the viewer, so Decathlon can directly provide what's important to their customers.

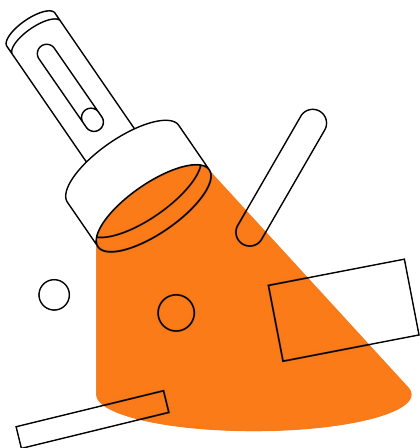
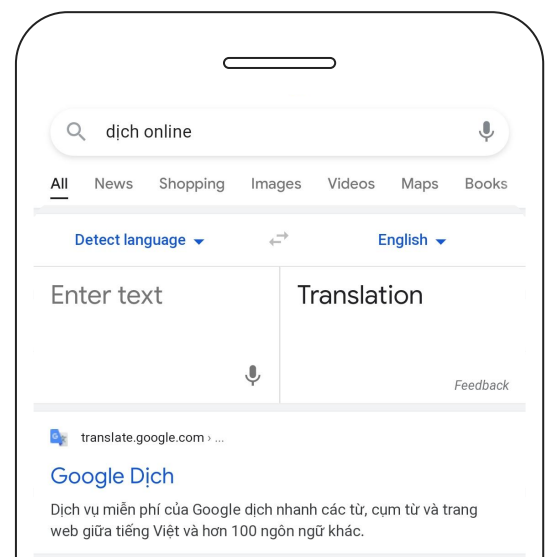


# What it means for brands

## 3. Speak to your customers like a local.

Even when people are using English language browsers, click-through rates within Google marketing are consistently higher when local language ad copy is used.

We've seen Vietnamese people search more via voice on Google Assistant, which literally speaks their language. There has been a 33% YoY rise in searches for “online translation” (dịch online), as people prefer to engage with brands and products in their native language. Being personable, relevant, and giving a sense of similarity can go a long way in making your customers trust you as one of their own.



## 4. Make it easy.

With various levels of ongoing lockdowns across APAC, a brand's online presence critical. Dive into [these tips](#) for a high-level view of how to ensure your online presence becomes permanent, effective storefront for your business.



#### Trend 4

# Sweet Relief

Life in Vietnam has mostly returned to normal since a relatively short lockdown in early 2020 that limited mobility and restricted entertainment activities. Despite that lockdown, happiness and joy remained paramount and were welcomed from the brands speaking to them.

Consumers embrace the brands that spark joy and create a safe space for them to take a break from challenges that are here to stay. Consumers and brands alike have shown tremendous resilience by adapting and re-adapting to “new normals” when there are fluctuations in COVID-19 cases.

At the height of isolation and lockdown, many Vietnamese faced unfamiliar challenges in their everyday lives and have been seeking alternative forms of downtime to ease new burdens.



increase in searches for **“ASMR”** (autonomous sensory meridian response)-related food and drink videos, showing a need for calming and sensory experiences



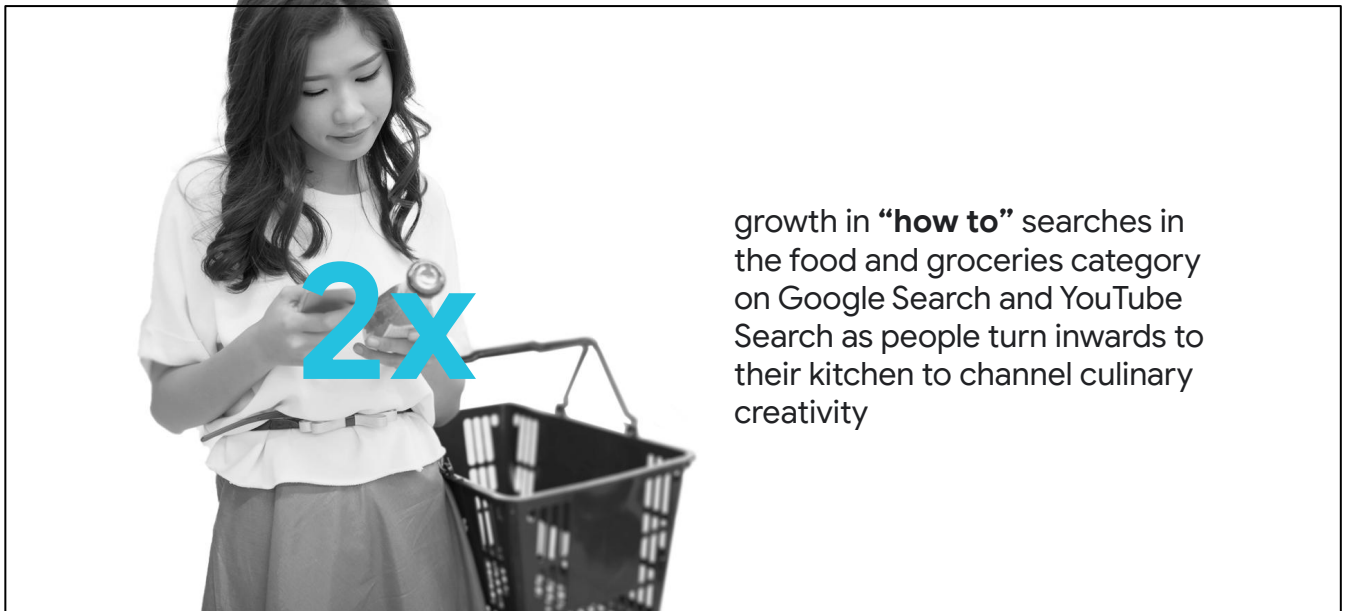
jump in watchtime for **“gardening”** (làm vườn) -related videos in July 2019 in comparison to July 2018



YoY growth in searches for **“mukbang”** videos



Now that Vietnamese are spending more time at home, they're investing in small indulgences that add meaning and improve their quality of life.



### Popular recipes to make at home in 2020:

  
(bánh)

  
(kem)

  
(sữa chua)

  
(bánh mì)







## Top trending dishes of 2020:



"Dalgona coffee"



(cà phê bọt biển)



"soy sauce eggs"



(trứng ngâm tương)



"garlic bread"



(bánh mì bơ tỏi)



"chicken feet with Thai sauce"



(chân gà sốt thái)



"boneless pig leg"



(giò heo rút xương)



"meat dumplings"



(bánh bao nhân thịt)

"dalgona coffee"



People have also been finding ways to treat loved ones and spend quality time with them.



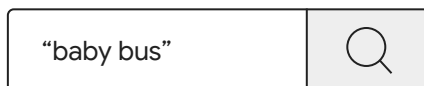
YoY rise in **“gift card”**  
(thẻ quà tặng) -related searches



increase for **video-on-demand platforms**  
(video theo yêu cầu) like YouTube and Netflix in H1 2020, as home entertainment emerged as the topmost entertainment for people stuck at home



Growth in YouTube searches:

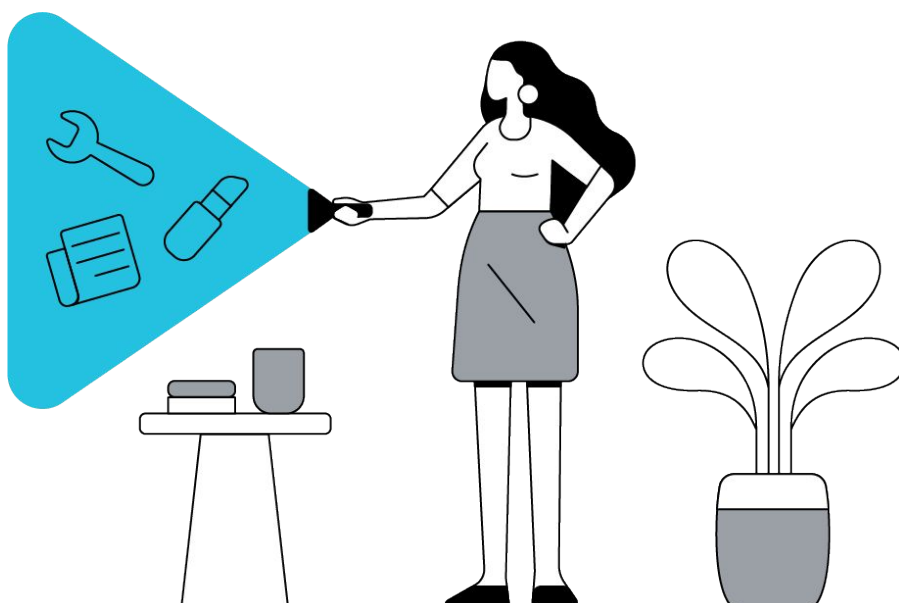


▲ 180%



▲ 40%

(phim ngoài rạp)

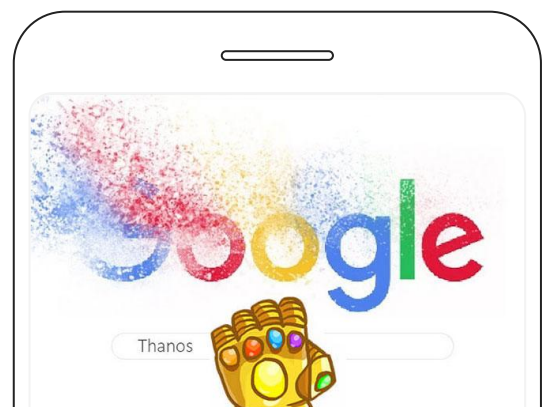


# What it means for brands

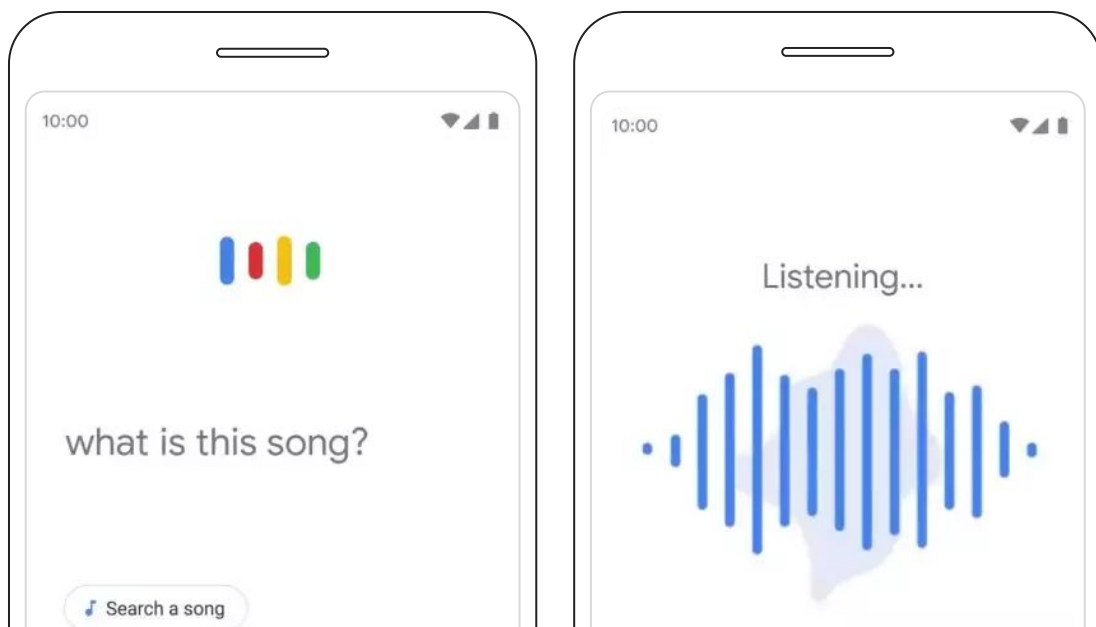
Brands that surprise and delight people amidst a landscape of negativity and fear are able to reap the rewards of consumer love – especially when they can connect with people's unique experiences and challenges.

## 1. Make things fun in a personal way.

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



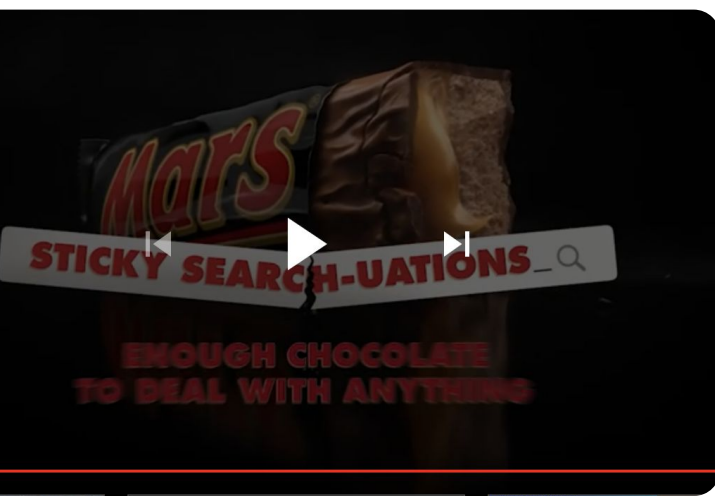
Google introduced a new, fun way for people to search. The “**hum to search**” feature helps identify the name of a song when you by simply hum, whistle, or sing the melody.



# What it means for brands

## 2. Be funny (in good taste, of course).

A recent global survey\* asked consumers how they want brands to present themselves and the resounding answer across APAC was “Be light-hearted and funny, but do it cautiously and meaningfully”.



Using Search analytics, the chocolate company **Mars** identified some of the most awkward queries on Google, and then delivered its famous chocolate bars to the people in those admittedly “sticky” situations. The campaign helped alleviate some difficult or uncomfortable situations with a humorous and touching token of solidarity.

## 3. Make it easier to share the joy.

**Grab** launched GrabFood Delivery Doodles that uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to magically transform children's doodles of favourite dishes into actual food orders delivered via GrabFood. Children of employees and friends submitted over 10,000 doodles to train the AI to recognise popular local dishes like Bánh Mì, Martabak and Nasi Lemak.



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



## Trend 5

# Future Proofing

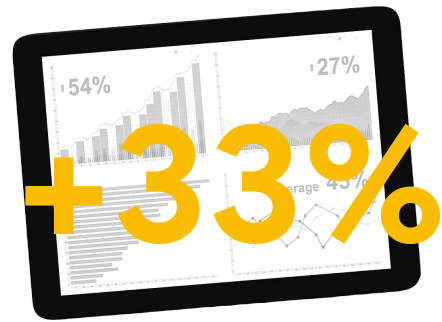
After a year that effectively upended everybody's best-laid plans, people want a greater sense of control. Vietnamese are curious about financial products. In response, traditional banks are transforming their brand identity, marketing strategies and product offerings to connect with younger Vietnamese in need of more accessible, digital financial services.

Vietnamese experienced a wake-up call for healthier lifestyles during the pandemic. For peace of mind, many Vietnamese started looking for ways to future-proof and avert risk in their lives, all the while seeking reassurance from brands.

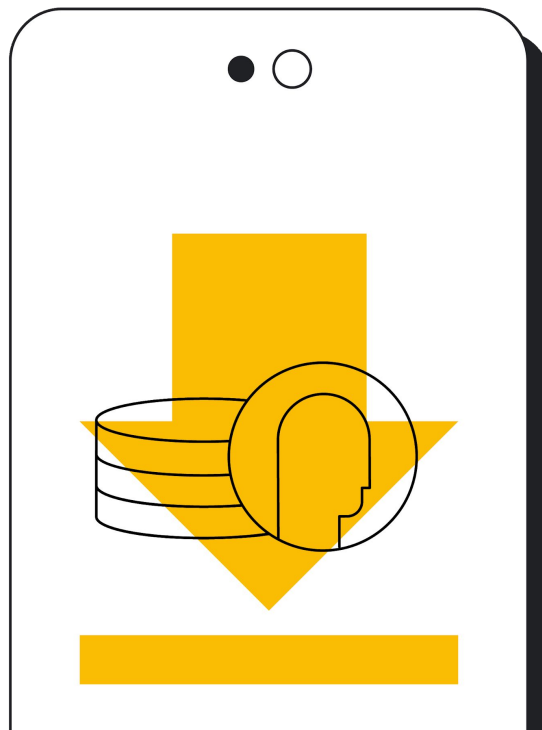
People are safeguarding and strengthening their economic prospects by learning to manage their money better.



increase in watchtime for  
**“Finance”** (tài chính) -related content  
 in the past year, indicating the urgency  
 that people feel to understand financial  
 management and risk



increase in the download of  
**finance apps** as consumers shift from  
 in-branch to online transactions







## YoY growth in searches:

“stock investing” ▲ 20%  
 (“đầu tư chứng khoán”)

“debit card” ▲ 40%  
 (“thẻ ghi nợ”)

“life insurance” ▲ 40%  
 (“bảo hiểm nhân thọ”)

“credit card” ▲ 40%  
 (“thẻ tín dụng”)

“digital wallet” ▲ 40%  
 (“ví điện tử”)

## ...and building up their side hustles.

### Rising search terms for sellers and budding entrepreneurs:



“how to sell online effectively”  
 (“bán hàng online hiệu quả”)

“learn to sell online”  
 (“học bán hàng online”)

“what to sell online”  
 (“bán hàng online nên bán gì”)

“online selling softwares/apps”  
 (“phần mềm/ứng dụng bán hàng online”)



## Interests in everything related to health

increased during the pandemic, and particularly eye opening is an uptick in proactive and preventative health management.



YoY growth in **“home workout”** (bài tập ở nhà) searches, as Vietnamese brought their workouts from the gym into the home, highlighting an understanding of the importance of staying fit

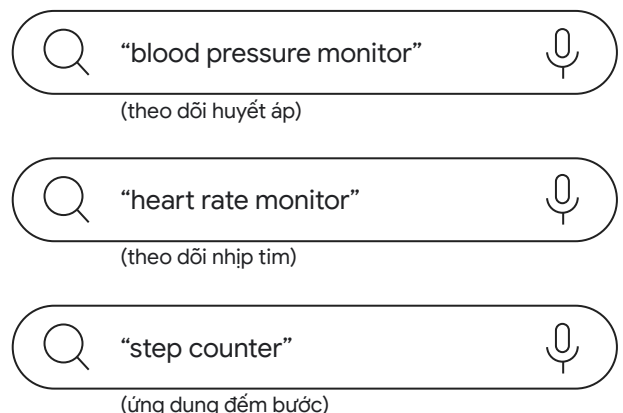
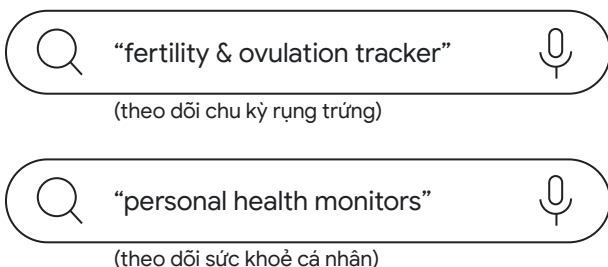


YoY surge in **“health wearables”** (thiết bị đeo theo dõi sức khỏe) searches, as more people began monitoring their health data



YoY increase in **“healthcare mobile apps”** (ứng dụng theo dõi sức khỏe) downloads

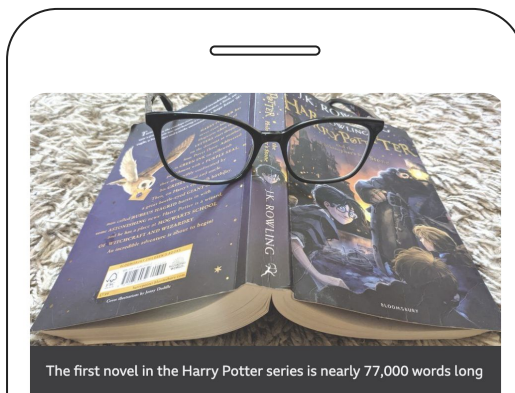
### Top searched tracking devices:



# What it means for brands

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

## 1. Communicate to empower your customers, not overwhelm them.

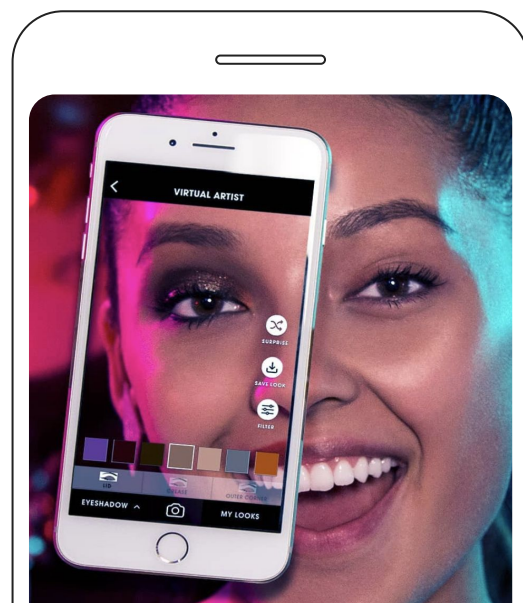


The combined terms and conditions of 13 top apps including TikTok, WhatsApp and Zoom would take 17 hours and five minutes to read, a firm has estimated.

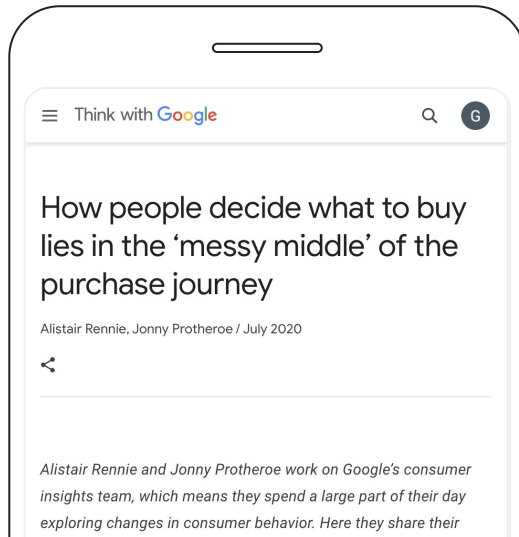
Agreeing to T&Cs is often a mandatory step before accessing an app. A recent study explored the length of the T&Cs of popular apps and discovered that the top 13 apps had more words in their T&Cs than any Harry Potter novel (an average of at least 79,000 words) – showing a need for brevity when it comes to user experience.

## 2. Reduce risk for consumers.

When **Sephora's** famous makeup consultations and trials were no longer safe under COVID-19 guidelines, the brand created a digital platform for users to virtually try on different lipstick shades, eyeshadows and even false lashes with imaging technology before making a purchase through the Virtual Artist feature on their app.



# What it means for brands

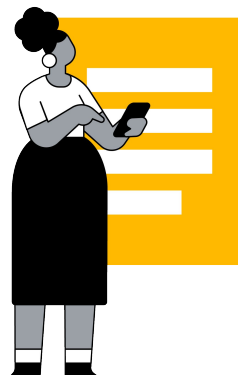


## 3. Enable your audience to decide easily on information

Aid consumer decision making by including crucial information with Search Ad Extensions. By including things like callouts, price extensions, and callouts, price, and reviews, you simplify things for your customers and, become more visible on the Search results page.

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

Google offers free learning resources online for individuals and small businesses to reach new opportunities with Grow with Google. Tap into resources to find the solutions needed to improve your brand or upskill employees to meet your business goals.



# Sources

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All Google Search data points included in this report are from Google Trends, Vietnam, July 2019 - June 2020 vs July 2018 - June 2019, unless otherwise indicated.