

Think with **Google**

# Be there for your customers with Google

A guide for MENA retailers and brands in 2021



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## Reach customers as they browse

Every day, hundreds of millions of people turn to Google to find, discover, and shop for what they care about. Find out how to be there when they do.

2

## Engage customers as they research

Reach new potential customers who are in the market for products like yours, and learn how to better connect with them in moments of evaluation.

3

## Convert customers looking to purchase

Drive more sales by providing a seamless shopping experience wherever they prefer to shop — online or in-store.

4

## Be ready to drive sales during this end of year shopping season

Last year witnessed an unprecedented growth in e-commerce especially during end of year season. Plan ahead for a digital shopping season this year, too.

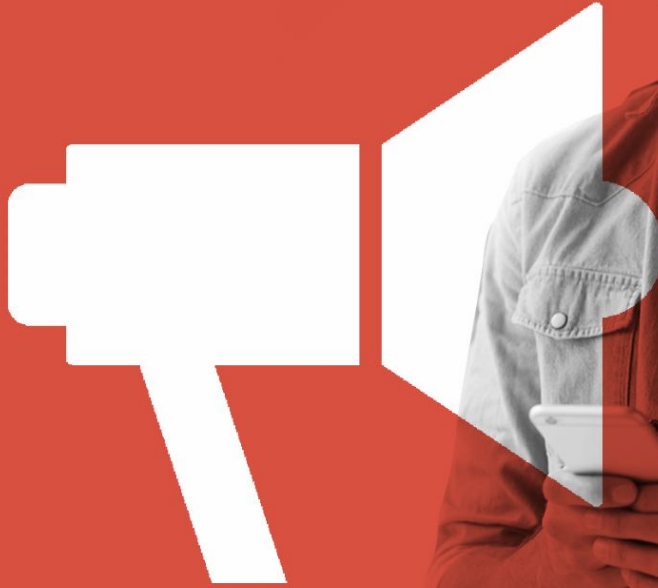
In 2020, disruptions to the retail industry caused a seismic shift in consumer shopping behavior, which we predict will continue this year. **In Q4, retail searches grew at a rate over 3X higher than the same time last year**, signifying a major shift to digital. Rapidly changing societal norms are also making the path to purchase increasingly complex, as customers combine online and in-store shopping experiences in new ways.

In this guide, you'll learn how Google can help retailers and brands connect with customers throughout these new journeys to drive more sales. We've collected the most useful tools, product recommendations, and consumer insights to help you achieve your business and marketing objectives. Whether you're looking to optimize your existing marketing mix or making a game plan for the holiday season, this guide has you covered.

**Wherever the journey takes your customer, meet them there with Google.**



**Bill Ready**  
**President,**  
**Commerce**



## Section 1

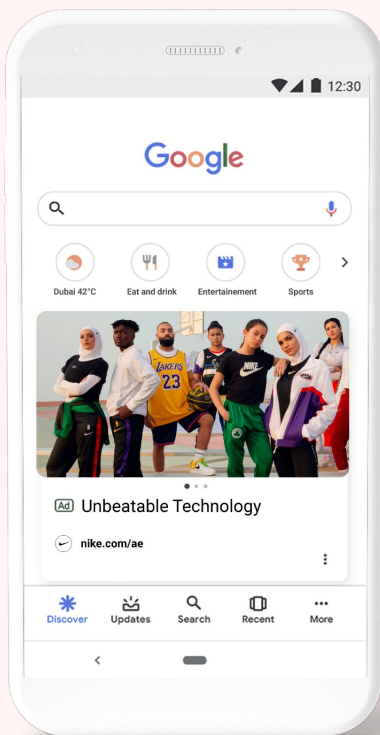
# Reach customers as they browse

## 1 Reach customers as they browse

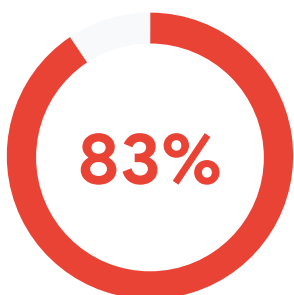
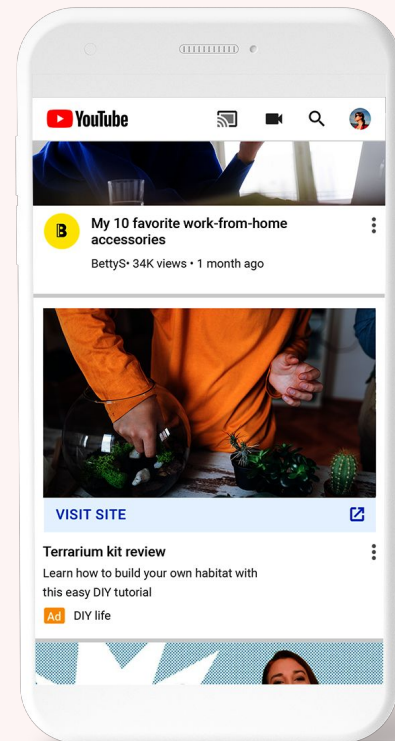
As customers browse  
they pick up brand and  
product information



whether it's scrolling through  
interesting topics on Discover...



...or watching product  
reviews on YouTube.



In the UAE, KSA and Egypt, searches for “New Brand” Increased by +83% YoY<sup>1</sup>, as consumers are discovering new brands online during COVID-19

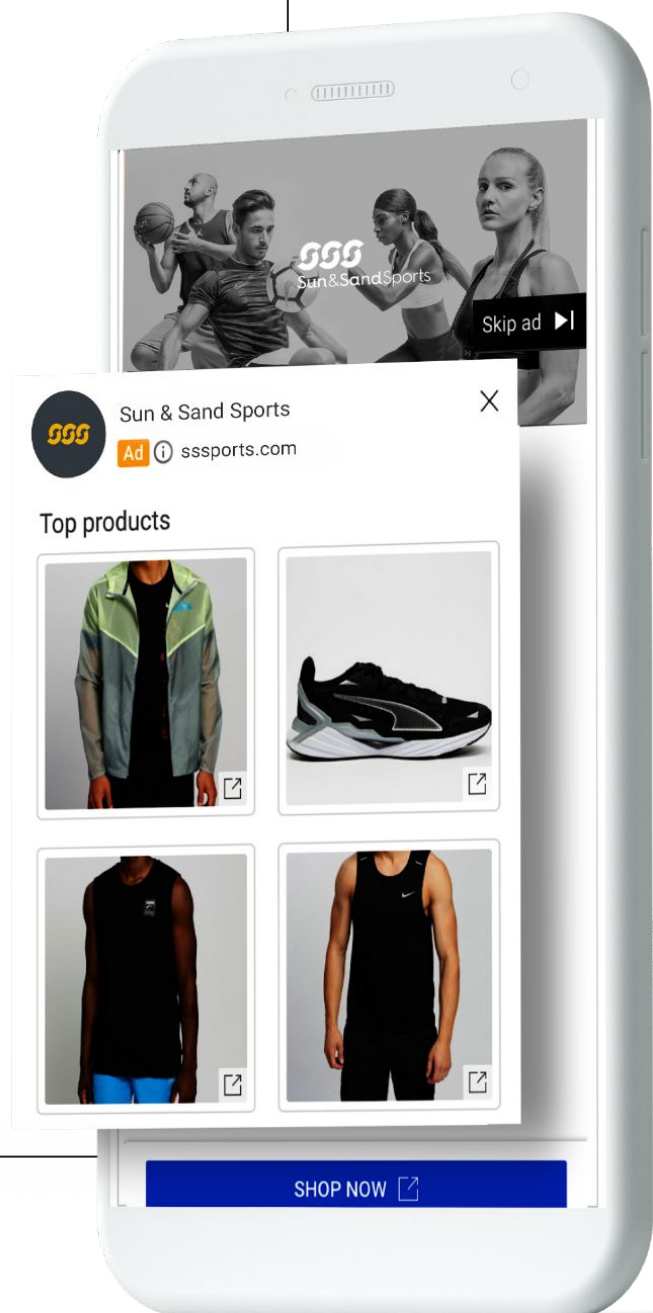


# Connect with potential customers and inspire action with video

YouTube has evolved from a singular entertainment destination to a place where people come to learn, stream, and inspire their next purchase. When watching videos, customers can shift from passive browsing to active shopping when they come across a product that interests them and motivates them to learn more.

YouTube is a great tool to [build awareness](#) and inspire people to [take the action](#) that matters to your business.

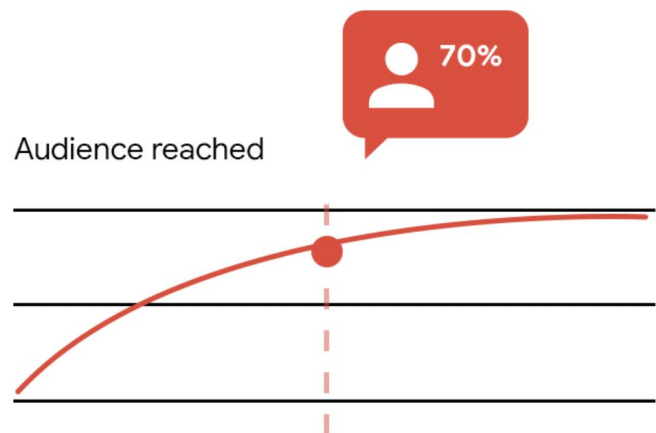
You can even transform your video ad into a digital storefront by complementing your [Video action campaigns](#) with a browseable product feed that encourages clicks and conversions.



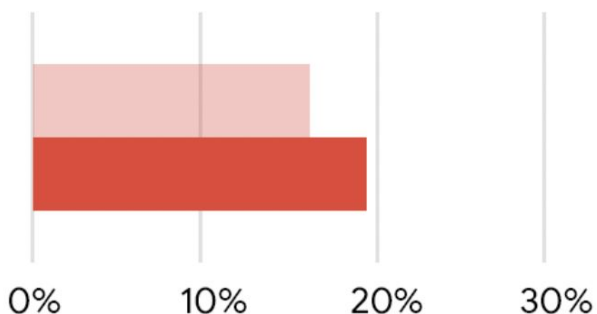
# Measure the right metrics and optimize for success

Google tools can help you determine the best YouTube strategy, measure the right goals, and uncover insights to continually optimize your campaigns.

Before you get started, [Reach Planner](#) can help you achieve your marketing objectives by showing you which audiences and video ads will be most effective for your business.



Overall brand ad recall lift



After launch, [Brand Lift](#) can show you how your campaign influenced people's feelings about your product with ad recall, brand awareness, and consideration metrics.

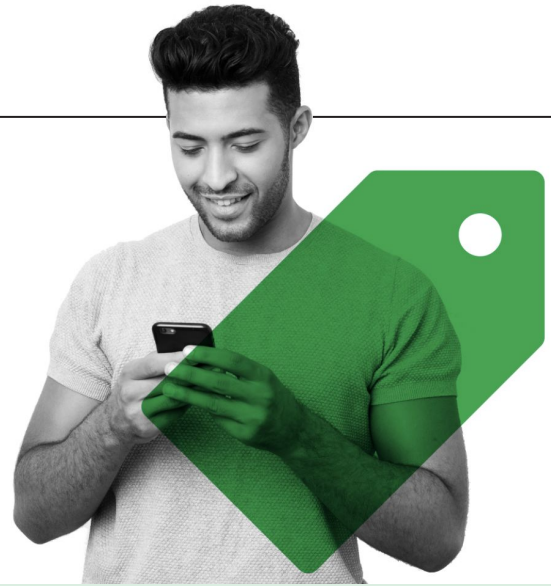


## Section 2

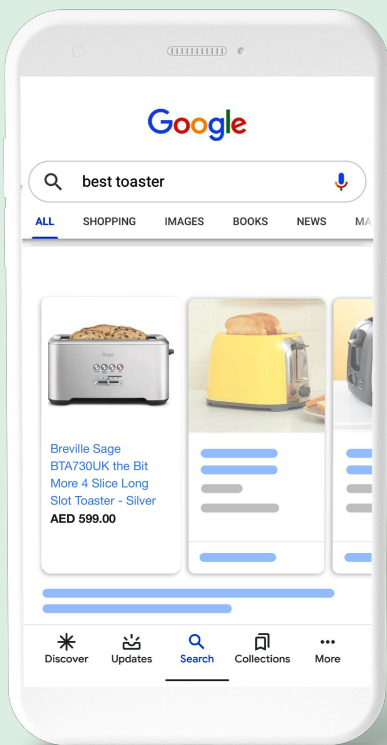
# Engage customers as they research



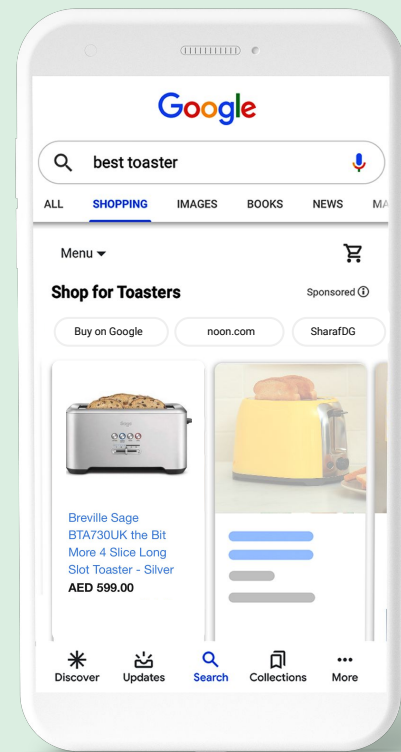
# Customers research products on Google before buying



Shoppers turn to Google to find out which product is best in its category...



...compare prices, look for sales, and check out the latest reviews.



More than 69% of consumers in the UAE, KSA and Egypt say they used online touchpoint to research their in-store purchases.<sup>2</sup>

## Be the answer when they search

Shoppers don't always have a specific product in mind when they search the category they're interested in.

**For example, searches for “best affordable” have grown 147% in the UAE, KSA and Egypt year over year.<sup>3</sup>**

When that happens, [responsive search ads](#) can put your product in the spotlight with a flexible and personalized ad that's relevant to the shopper.



popular children's toys

popular children's toys **2020**

popular children's toys **near me**

popular children's toys **for girls**

popular children's toys **for boys**

popular children's toys **in the '80s**

popular children's toys **stores**

popular children's toys **shopping**



### Success story

To expand its footprint in the gaming market, Dell tested responsive search ads for its brand Alienware. Dell was able to reach new shoppers as they researched across Google, **driving 25% more clicks and conversions.**

# Drive demand with “window shoppers” on Google’s feeds

Engage these shoppers as they explore content on [Discover](#), watch videos on YouTube, or look for seasonal deals in Gmail.

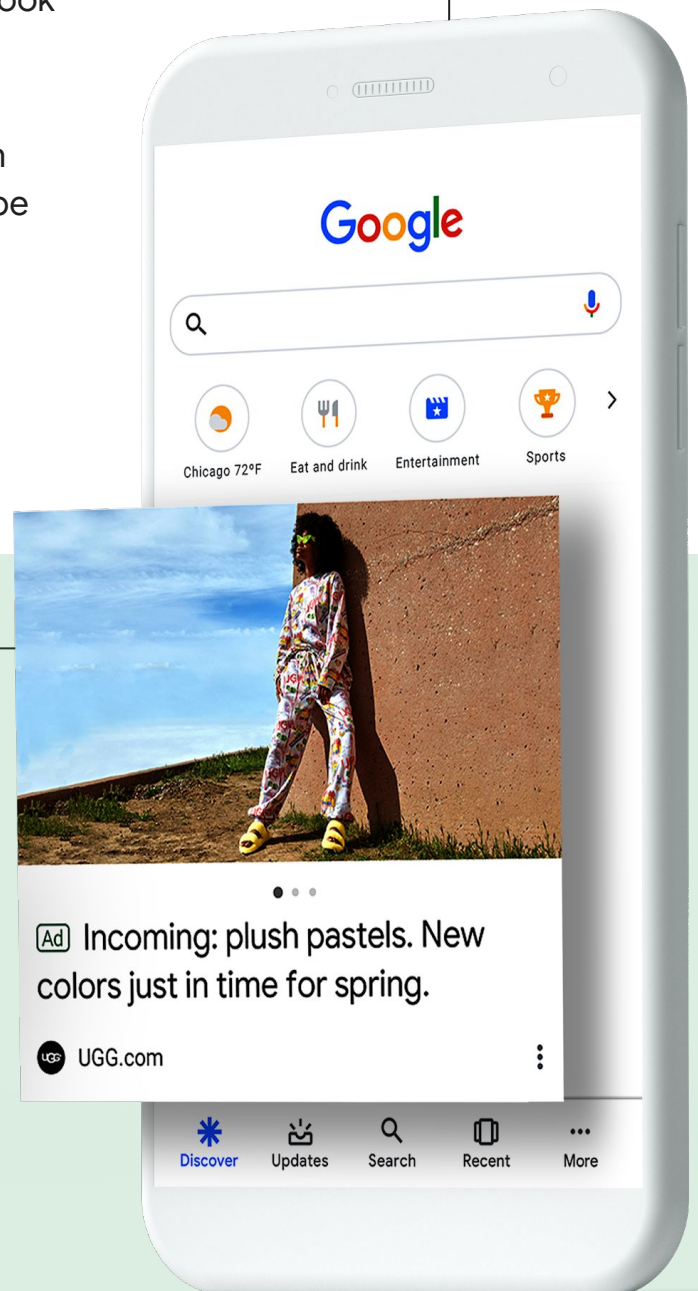
[Discovery ads](#) help you reach up to 3 billion people on feeds across Google and YouTube with a single campaign\*.



## Best practices

**Keep it simple:** Images without overlaid text drive 9% more click-throughs on average<sup>4</sup>

**Pair it with Search:** On average, Search advertisers who add Discovery ads see 12% more conversions<sup>5</sup>



# Find customers looking for products like yours

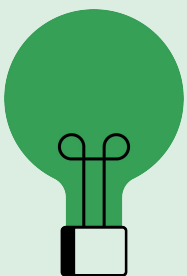
To reach new customers, choose the right [audience solution](#) for your ad campaigns.

To create awareness from potential new customers, use **Affinity audiences**. This helps you reach people based on their interests, passions, and habits.

To build consideration from people with demonstrated intent, use **In-market audiences**. This helps you show ads to people who have been searching for products and services like yours.



To drive action from existing and new customers, use a combination of **Customer Match** and **Similar audiences**. Customer match lets you upload your first-party data, like loyalty information, to engage with your existing customers across the web. Similar audiences then helps you find new customers with similar interests to people in these existing audience lists.



## Tip

Customer Match can help you cross-sell or reactivate existing customers with special offers and messaging. Learn more with our [best-practice guide](#).



## Section 3

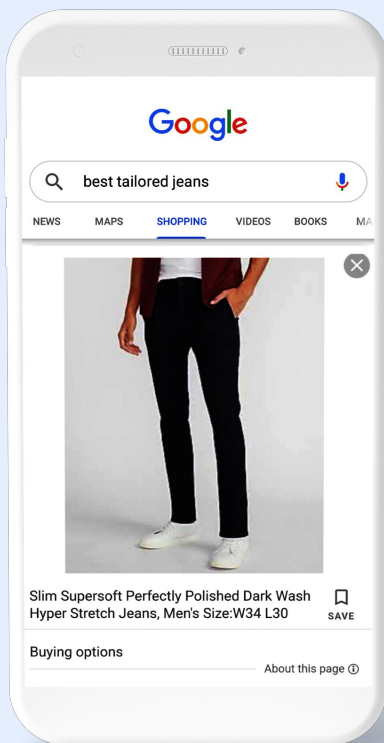
# Convert customers looking to purchase

### 3 Convert customers looking to purchase

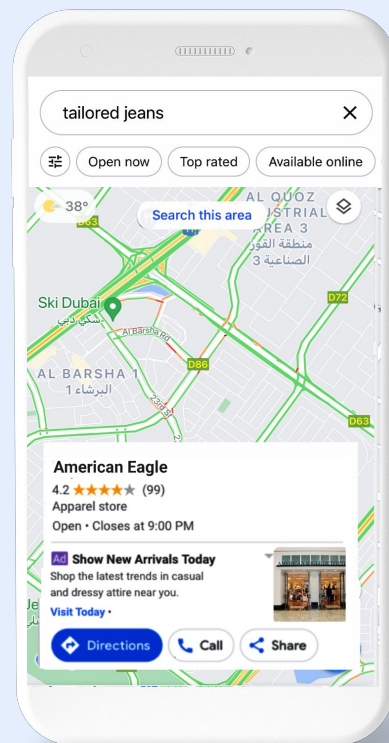
Customers expect to be able to shop wherever meets their needs



They want to be able to buy a product online as soon as they find it...



...or see if a local store has stock available for curbside pickup today.



In fact, searches for “available near me” have grown in the UAE, KSA and Egypt by over 59% in the last year.<sup>6</sup>



# Create a frictionless online shopping experience

Your website is your digital storefront, so it's important to deliver a fast, seamless, and personal experience to your customers. Every second counts — in fact, 66% of shoppers in UAE, Egypt and KSA already have left a site because site speed was too slow, 12% encounter this problem frequently.<sup>7</sup>

Use [Grow My Store](#) for a quick and no-cost evaluation of your entire retail site, including:

1

## Site benchmarking:

See how your site stacks up against retailers in your sector. For developer-friendly tips on boosting site speed, use [Test My Site](#).

2

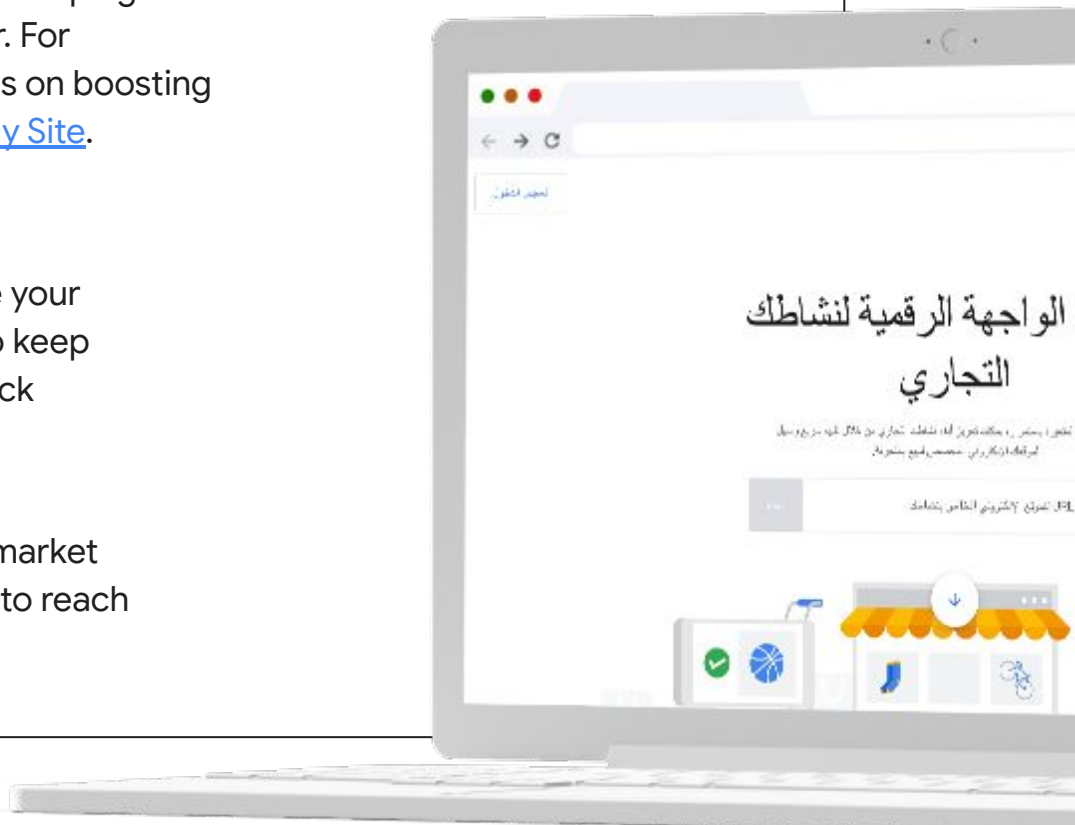
## Recommendations:

Learn how to upgrade your website experience to keep customers coming back

3

## Tailored insights:

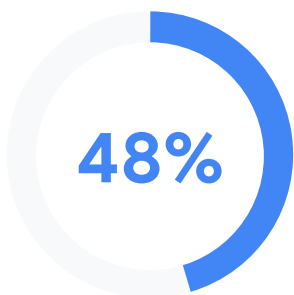
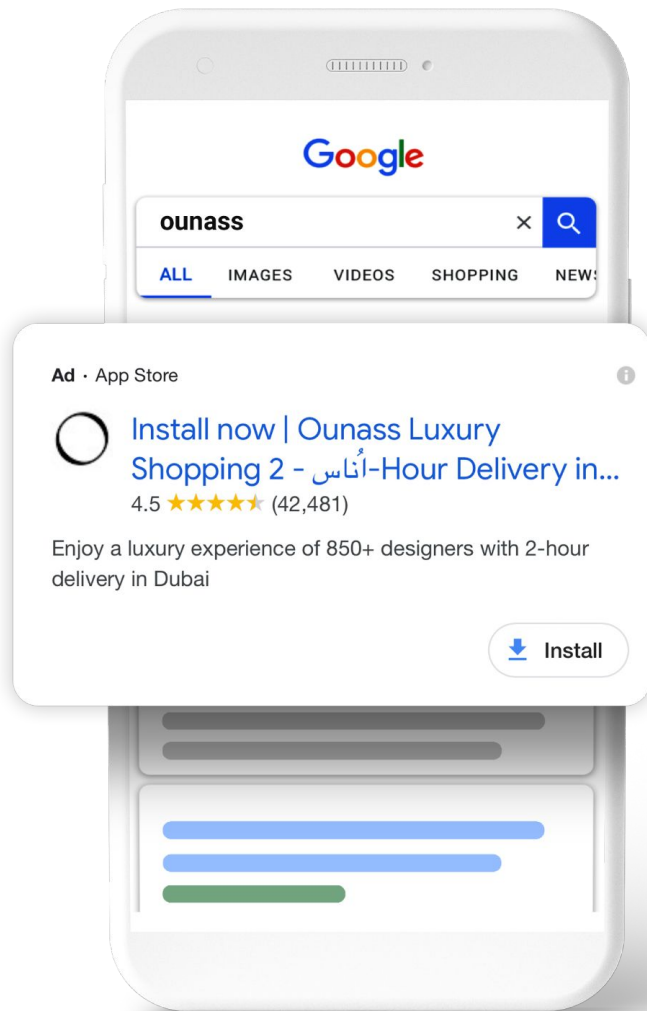
Access personalized market and consumer trends to reach new customers



## Engage mobile shoppers

Today, more people than ever are turning towards mobile to fulfill their needs. Reach these shoppers with [App Campaigns](#) and encourage them to make a mobile purchase, or take another action like installing your app.

To maximize sales, you can optimize your ads to drive [in-app value](#) and measure return on ad spend. If a customer already has your app, you can re-engage them and direct them to the right page through [deep-linking](#) your ads.



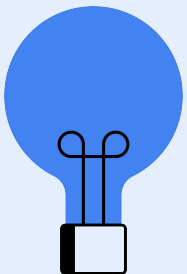
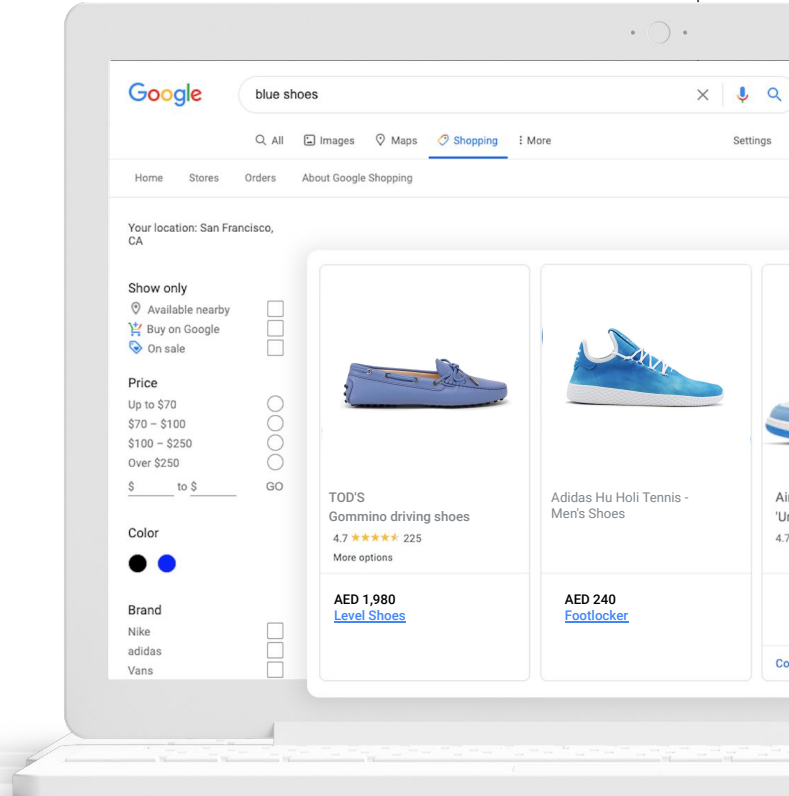
**In fact, more than 48% of shoppers in the UAE, KSA and Egypt make their purchases on their smartphone from any brand or company with a site or app<sup>8</sup>**

# Showcase your products for free on Google

Every day, hundreds of millions of people come to Google for their shopping needs, and now you can [list your products](#) in the Shopping tab on Search for free.

If you already use Google ads, these listings are a great way to boost your exposure for free. And if you're new to Google, syncing your product feed to Merchant Center will allow your products to [appear in relevant search results](#).

You'll also be able to compare [performance reporting](#) across your ads and free listings in Merchant Center.



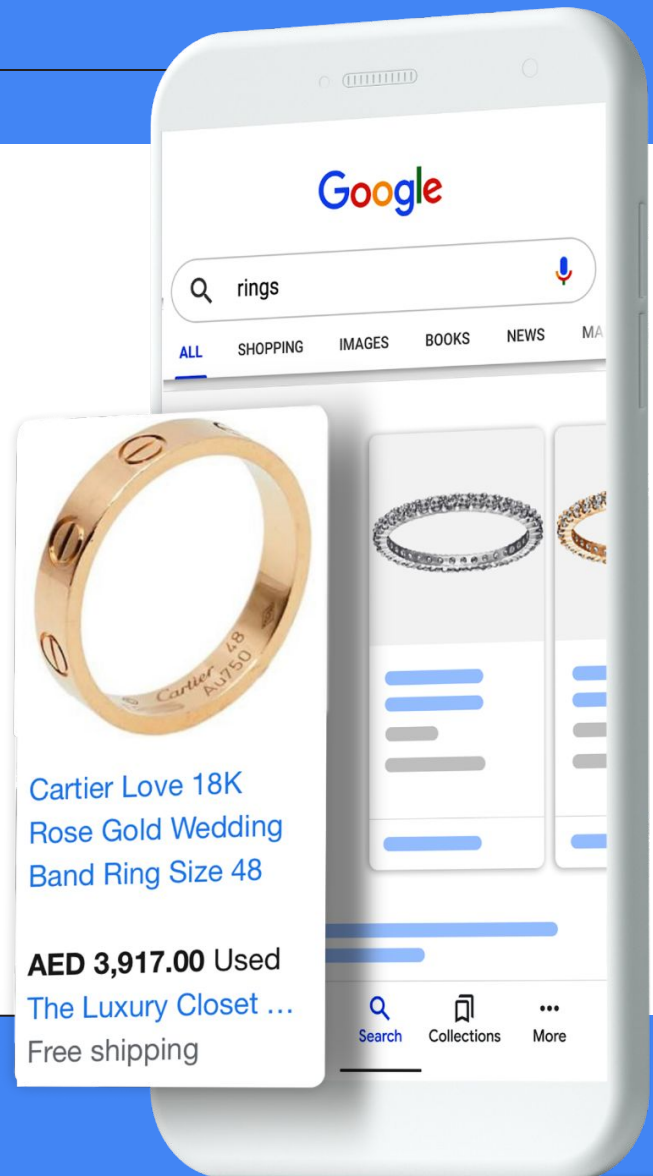
## Tip

When uploading a product, make sure to include its **Global Trade Item Number (GTIN)**. This helps us make your ad or unpaid listing richer and easier for users to find.

# Reach new customers and deal-seekers across the web

People shop across multiple Google surfaces, like Search, YouTube, Gmail, and the Shopping tab. [Smart Shopping campaigns](#) provide access to all of this inventory through automated bidding and placements, enabling you to promote your products to the right customer at the right time.

Adding [promotions](#) to your free listings or ads in Merchant Center can also help boost click-through rates and increase conversions.



THE  
LUXURY  
CLOSET

## Success story

Online boutique, The Luxury Closet, reduces CPC by **50%** and boosts conversion rate by **45%** with Google Smart Shopping Campaigns.

# Optimize campaigns with insights and measure omnichannel performance

Set up your campaigns for success by uncovering the right insights and optimizing for the right marketing objective.

[Performance planner](#) can help you forecast your Search and Shopping campaigns to optimize for seasonal opportunities.



It also lets you create plans for your advertising spend, and see how changes to campaigns might affect key metrics and overall performance.

Performance planners shows you the best opportunity for your plan by modeling the best budget allocation across your campaigns.



## Best-practice

Before you start, check the [best sellers report](#) for the most popular brands and products across Shopping ads. The [price competitiveness report](#) can also help you inform your pricing strategy by revealing the price point at which shoppers click on ads.



## Section 4

**Be ready to drive sales  
during this end of year  
shopping season**



# Retail shopping highlights from 2020

2020 was a year of reset; MENA e-commerce reached **~\$21B**, growing at 36% YoY.<sup>9</sup> Digital played a critical role in the shopping journey, even in stores, with more customers choosing to start their shopping in retail key moments earlier than before. This end of year season has evolved from one Black Friday moment to encompass several

1

Searches for “Online Purchase” grew +20% YoY<sup>10</sup> in the UAE, KSA and Egypt while retailers offering same day delivery had an edge on their competitor, as searches for “Same day delivery” grew +29% YoY<sup>11</sup>

2

Focusing on this end of year shopping key moments, searches for “Black Friday” grew by +11%<sup>12</sup> YoY and “Cyber Monday” grew by +10% YoY<sup>13</sup> in the UAE, KSA and Egypt

3

Consumers in the UAE, KSA and Egypt start searching for these peak moments up to 10 weeks ahead<sup>14</sup>

## Be ready for the end of year shopping season

1

### Be visible

Show up throughout the purchase journey with clear information about products, availability, and offers.

2

### Take a stand

Give shoppers a reason to support you by making your stance on sustainability, local ties, or key issues clear — and find authentic ways to follow through.

3

### Start early

Upload your products and key moment shopping deals sooner, as people begin their shopping earlier in the season to stock-up or avoid out-of-stocks.

4

### Be flexible

Offer a range of delivery or collection options to make the purchasing experience as convenient as possible.

5

### Embrace change

Prepare for rapid, short-term shifts in demand with automated tools, while adapting to longer-term changes in the consumer landscape by considering your overall digital strategy.

## Sources

1. Google/Kantar, The Smart Shopper Research, KSA, UAE and Egypt, 2020 [n = 2835, all product buyers of CE, Home, Fashion]
2. Google/Kantar, The Smart Shopper Research, KSA, UAE and Egypt, 2019 [n = 4716, all categories].
3. Google Trends, June - August, 2019 vs June - August 2020.
4. Google Internal Data: An Unskippable Labs analysis of 27K images, 22K headlines and 27K descriptions used by Auto, CPG and Retail advertisers from January 2019 - September 2020)
5. Google Internal Data, Global, March 2021. Based on an updated approach and analysis of campaign performance over 3-7 weeks from Jan 2019 to Feb 2021
6. Google Trends, Feb 26 - Apr 25, 2020 vs Feb 25 - Apr 25, 2019
7. Google/Kantar, The Smart Shopper Research, MENA, 2019 [n = 4716, all categories]
8. Google/Kantar, The Smart Shopper Research, KSA, UAE and Egypt, 2020 [n = 830, all product buyers of CE, Home, Fashion, last purchase online via smartphone]
9. Source: AT Kearney, Euromonitor, Note: This includes all business-to-consumer e-commerce sales for fashion, personal care, beauty, electronics and groceries and excludes business-to-business and consumer-to-consumer e-commerce, food delivery, travel, entertainment, services and auto; MENA includes all GCC countries and Egypt, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen
10. Google trends, Jun- Sept 2019 vs Jun - Sept 2020
11. Google trends, May - Aug 2019 vs May - Aug 2020
12. Google trends, Aug - Oct 2019 vs Aug - Oct 2020
13. Google trends, Oct- Nov 2019 vs Oct- Nov 2020
14. Google trends, 2019 vs 2020