

Year in Search Trend 1: Individual Matters

July 2018



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.



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.



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



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



YoY growth in searches about gender equality (Indonesia)



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



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

Regardless of whether mental health is widely

growth in searches for mental health-related symptoms, including early exploration of the concept.



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



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,

them. This year in particular, consideration for others' needs have seen a steep rise.



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



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



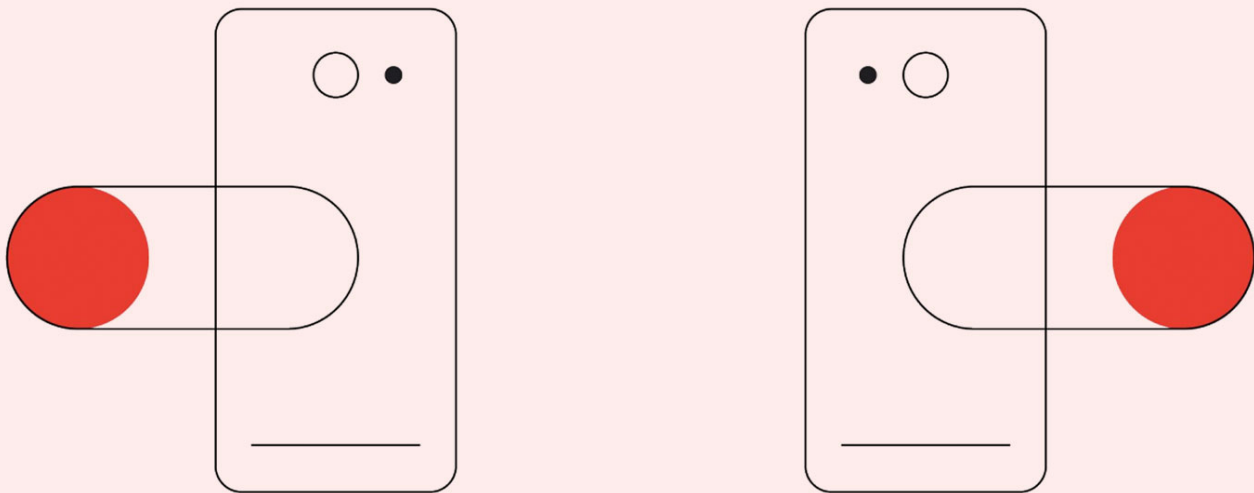
YoY growth in searches related to disability etiquette (India)

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.

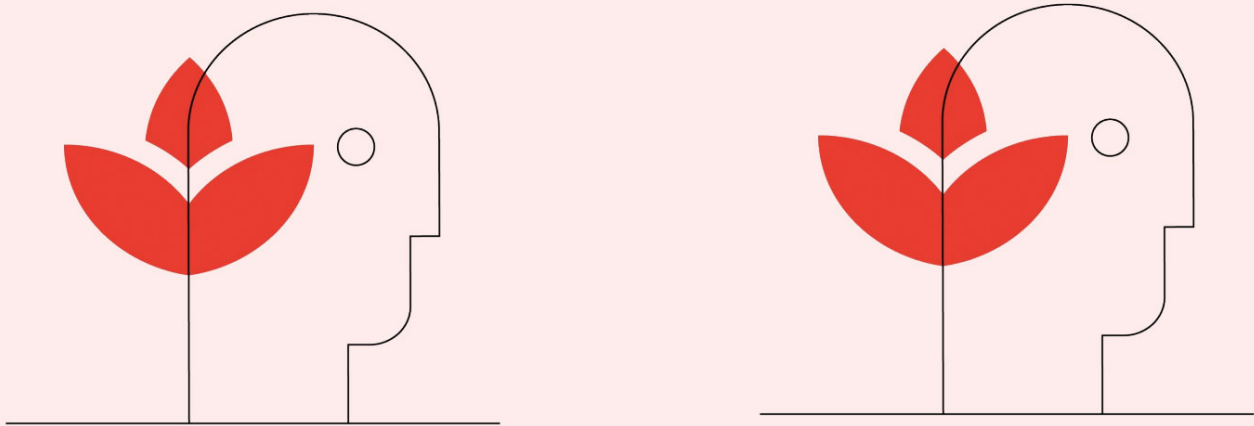
In APAC, only 1 in 5 people feel represented in the ads they see, presenting an opportunity for brands to take action.

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



To address systemic inequalities and embed empathy into a brand's marketing strategy, consumers' individual journeys need to be considered (sometimes literally).

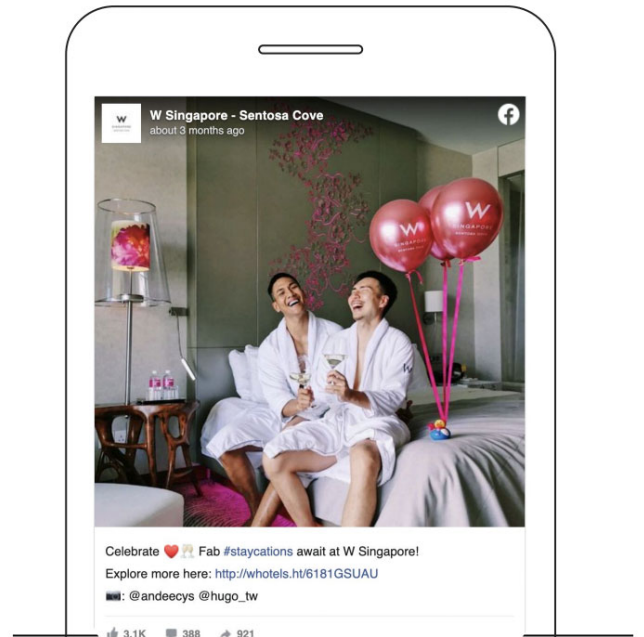
IKEA understands that because of the unique distance, each customer has to travel to get to their store, the net impact on wallets — and time — will differ. Recognizing this inequality, they introduced distance-based pricing, allowing customers to pay for their items using the time spent getting to the store.



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.



Pay attention to tone and timing – they matter.

The W hotel 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.

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 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.

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