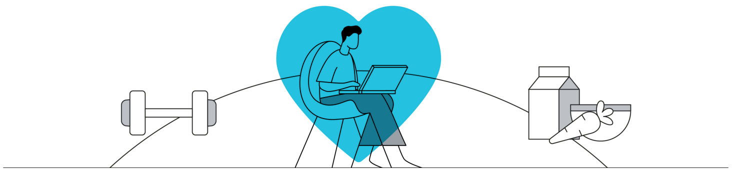
Lives re-examined

2

Following the sudden disruptions of the pandemic, people emerged in 2021 with a realization that some changes weren’t temporary after all. This prompted **a sense of introspection and a reevaluation of their values and lifestyle choices**. As a result, they looked for more comfort and ease in their lives, and shifted their focus to the things that matter most to them.

People have endured many waves of change on the global and local level over the past few years. As people try to embrace new unknowns in their lives, they’re reexamining former lifestyle choices, once-familiar ways of life, and the comfort of established routines.

In a recent survey, half of consumers in APAC said the pandemic inspired them to reevaluate what was important to them in life, with the most significant shifts in priority being their approach to finance and savings, time with loved ones, and a greater sense of self-care and “treat yourself” mentality.[11] Indeed, emotional well-being is predicted to be a key focus for people in 2022 as they gravitate towards emotional acceptance and dedicating time to feel.[12]



From small everyday upgrades to more major life decisions, searches are showing how people are taking stock of their lives and assessing how closely their choices are aligning with what truly matters to them. In fact, 78% of Indians are now eating healthier foods, and 67% have been exercising more.[13]

Evidence of this shift is also seen in the “Great Resignation,” a global trend where a significant number of people are leaving their jobs voluntarily, considering changing employers or planning a career change. In India, 59% of professionals surveyed are actively looking for new jobs.

Such significant, widespread shifts in life priorities among consumers should be studied closely by brands. The changing core values and priorities of people are often a strong indicator of how they will behave as consumers. But it's not just customers that businesses need to care about. Given how many people are reassessing their careers in APAC, employee satisfaction and well-being should be top priorities for attracting and retaining top talent.

As people spring-clean their lives, there's a window of opportunity for businesses to reconnect and convince. How can you persuade your customers and employees to continue to make your brand a part of their new lives? How will you show the value your brand can bring to their newfound priorities?

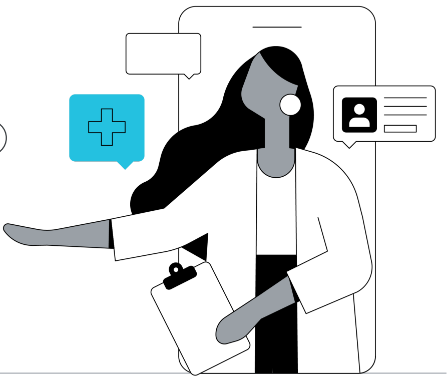
SEARCHES

Acceptance of a blended life

Even as restrictions ease, it seems a blended way of living is likely to remain. Signs point to a semi-remote future of work, with 70% of organizations in India looking at hybrid work models beyond the pandemic.[14] Searches reflect this adaptation to a more flexible future for work and daily activities as people begin taking charge of their own time and space, particularly at home.

Search interest in hybrid workplace grew by 350% as people consider returning to offices in a hybrid setup.

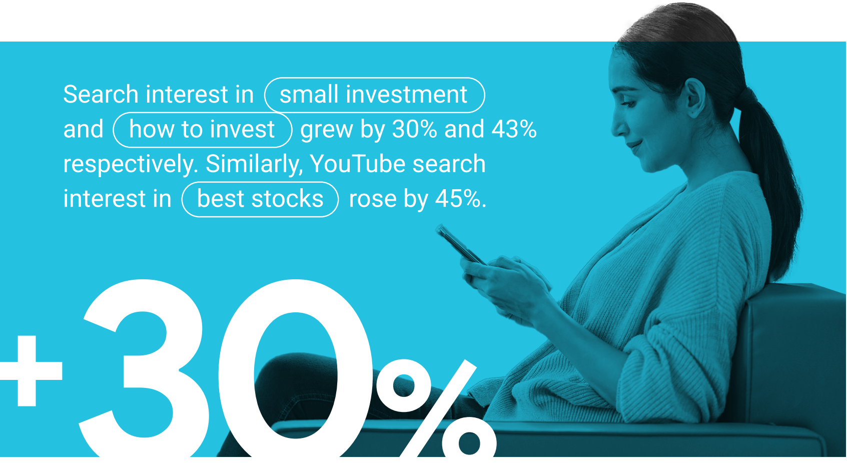
Search interest in online doctor consultation rose by 80% as consumers look for online options for healthcare.



Reevaluation of finances

We see people changing the way they look at their finances. While some looked for ways to put their savings to work through investments, others searched for deals, discounts, and ways to stretch their rupee.

Search interest in small investment and how to invest grew by 30% and 43% respectively. Similarly, YouTube search interest in best stocks rose by 45%.



Search interest in second hand car and second hand laptop grew by 25% as people look for more economical ways to get around the high costs of ownership.

Quality time with loved ones

People in India have placed more value on spending time with their families, and some even see it as more important than being financially secure or successful. This is echoed in searches, with consumers looking for moments of quality time with their loved ones.

Search interest in pet-friendly grew by more than 70% as people seek to have their furry family members join them on their staycations and dine outs.

with children

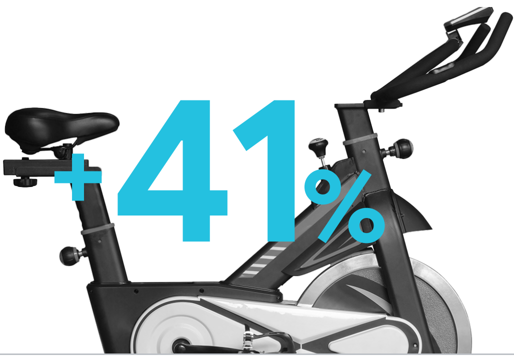
People are seeking to build stronger familial relationships. Searches that include with children grew by more than 36% while search interest in quality time rose by 53%.

Self-care, introspection, and the reevaluation of lifestyle choices

Consumers today view wellness through a broader lens, valuing physical, emotional, and mental health. As people reevaluate their lifestyle choices, we see introspection and consideration for holistic wellness and the good of their loved ones playing a bigger role in their decision-making processes.

Search interest in health insurance for family grew by 44% as the pandemic spurred consumers to ensure their loved ones were insured.

+44%



+41%

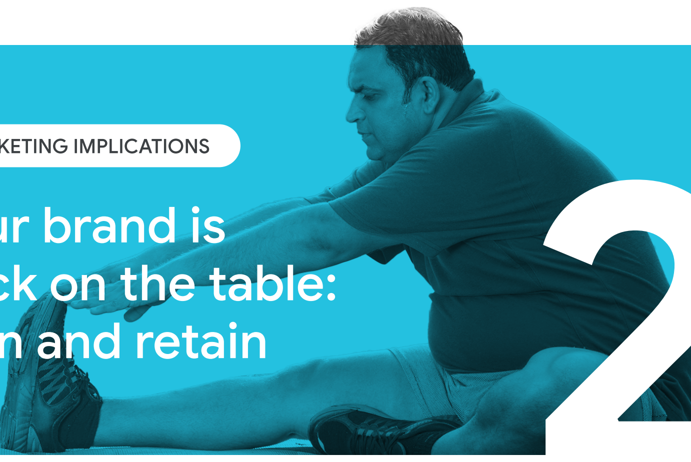
Search interest in cycling grew by 41%, suggesting increasing awareness of the importance of physical wellness.

+37%

People's desire to keep their loved ones safe is encouraging more Indians to consider buying family cars like SUVs. Searches for this category of vehicles grew by 37% year over year.

+27%

In India, search interest in wellness grew by 27%, and this includes **mental wellness**, **emotional wellness**, and **physical wellness**.



MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

Your brand is back on the table: gain and retain

2

From reactive behaviors and short-term solutions, to a greater acceptance of our new blended lives, searches show that people are emerging from the pandemic with updated priorities. As people reevaluate their choices, **brands and businesses should also be updating how they show the value they can offer**, not just externally to their customers, but also internally to their employees.

Simon Kahn
Vice President, Marketing for Google APAC

> “The next decade will be defined by a state of accelerated disruption. In order to enable people in the region to achieve better, more equitable outcomes in the face of increasing disruptions, businesses need to stay curious and cultivate a desire to understand what works and, more importantly, what doesn’t to uncover and refine an understanding of users’ true needs.”

1

Ensure your brand makes the list as consumers reevaluate their options

Today, as shoppers look for the brands that best align with what they need and value, up to 75% are buying from newly discovered brands rather than familiar ones.[15] As consumers look to be empowered and confident about their purchase decisions, Search ranks as a top touchpoint for providing them with relevant and helpful information.

1

Tap into the power of Search and automation to grow your brand's discoverability.

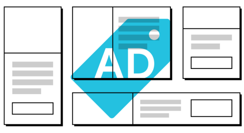
Fifteen percent of queries every day are brand new searches.[16] By broadening your keyword match type to Broad Match with Smart Bidding, you're able to automatically adjust your campaigns to capture the different ways consumers are looking for your products, and act on new opportunities as they arise.

When consumers research, they don't always have a specific product in mind yet. Responsive Search Ads can put your product in the spotlight with personalized ads that are relevant to the shopper.

MyFlightSearch, an all-in-one travel booking service, successfully used Responsive Search Ads to achieve 11% incremental clicks and 15% reduction in cost per booking.

Abhishek Mago
Chief Marketing Officer, MyFlightSearch Inc.

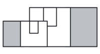
> "Ad copies are the face of a brand on Search and at MyFlightSearch, we have always had multiple ad copies and shown different versions, based on relevance, to various users. With the new ad strength inputs from Google, we were able to make these ads best in class and more relevant to the search query, which resulted in great marketing and business metrics."

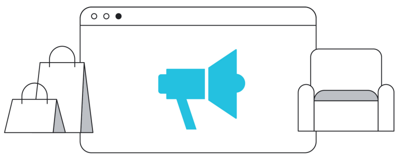


2

Create data-driven marketing cycles to keep up with evolving needs.

An adaptable advertising strategy allows you to act on what matters most to consumers in the moment, and adopt a test and learn approach for sustainable optimization.

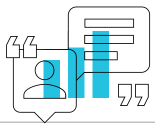




Rising Retail Categories and Google Trends show you what the world is searching for at both a local and global level.

With the new Insights Page in Google Ads, you can forecast and capture demand with insights tailored to your ads business and identify products offering growth opportunities.

Get inspired by APAC industry leaders, who share how an experimental approach helps their marketing strategies stay data-driven and agile, and turn uncertainty into business growth opportunities.



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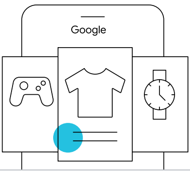
2 Use direct-to-consumer strategies to own your brand presence and experiences

Consider owned, direct-to-consumer channels (a brand.com and app property) that can enable you to build a bespoke brand presence and experience, and showcase your brand values and consumer offerings without compromise. They also give you the freedom to experiment and evolve your platforms to make your brand stand out even more.



3

Don’t overlook your internal stakeholders

During times of reevaluation and change, attracting and retaining top talent becomes ever more critical to ensuring sustainable business growth.

1

Prioritize building a diverse and inclusive workforce that will not only help to attract and retain top talent, but also increase innovation and profitability.

2

Recognize the importance of purpose beyond pay.
Nurture your employees as internal stakeholders and representatives of your brand.

To encourage employees to find their unique purpose and build a workplace where people enjoy their work and are engaged, Unilever Sri Lanka ran a series of “Discover Your Purpose” workshops. The sessions combine e-learning with personal connections to challenge personal growth.

Sources:
Google Trends, India, Sep 1, 2019 - Aug 31, 2020 vs. Sep 1, 2020 - Aug 31, 2021, unless indicated otherwise

11. GWI, Zeitgeist, 2021.
12. WGSN, Future Consumer 2022, 2021.
13. Google commissioned Ipsos COVID-19 tracker, BR, CN. IN, IT, U.S., U.K., n=1000 online consumers 18+ per market, Apr. 22, 2021--Apr, 25, 2021.
14. NASSCOM, Return To Workplace Survey – Evolving Towards Hybrid Operating Model, Oct. 2021.
15. Global Web Index Core, Sample Size by Country: All (n=3,919 internet users aged 16-64), ID (n=656), MY (n=651), PH (n=655), SG (n=650), TH (n=656), VN (n=651), April 2021.
16. Google Data, July 2019.