Growing inequalities

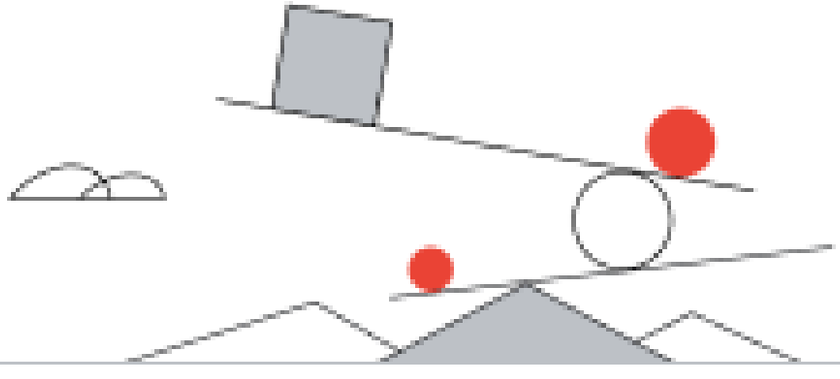
5

While everyone's way of life has undoubtedly shifted this past year, the pandemic didn't affect everyone the same way. It not only exposed existing inequalities, but accelerated them. People are turning to the internet for help: whether they're existing internet users with fresh financial woes, or newcomers with more basic needs, consumers are searching for ways to overcome the challenges they face.

Dubbed the "inequality virus," the pandemic has exposed many societal fractures along the lines of wealth, race, and gender. While many of these inequalities existed before COVID-19, the pandemic has played a role in exacerbating them, and the most vulnerable in society have been disproportionately hit.

Lower income households experienced a higher concentration of job losses[19] while their children missed twice as many days in a school year compared with those from high income families.[20] Women, too, suffered increased violence, with 83% in Indonesia reporting that domestic violence worsened due to COVID-19.[21]

To overcome these inequalities, people are searching online for solutions to help themselves and their communities. Their searches range from unemployment benefits and “buy now pay later” financing options to topics on discrimination and women’s rights, reflecting their growing interest in social issues.



SEARCHES

Finding familiarity

through local language

Searches show the anxiety that consumers face when transacting in a foreign language. In fact, up to 40% of consumers won't consider making a purchase unless they can access information in their local language.[22] With more new users coming online from non-metropolitan areas, the demand for local translations is continuing to grow.

+40%

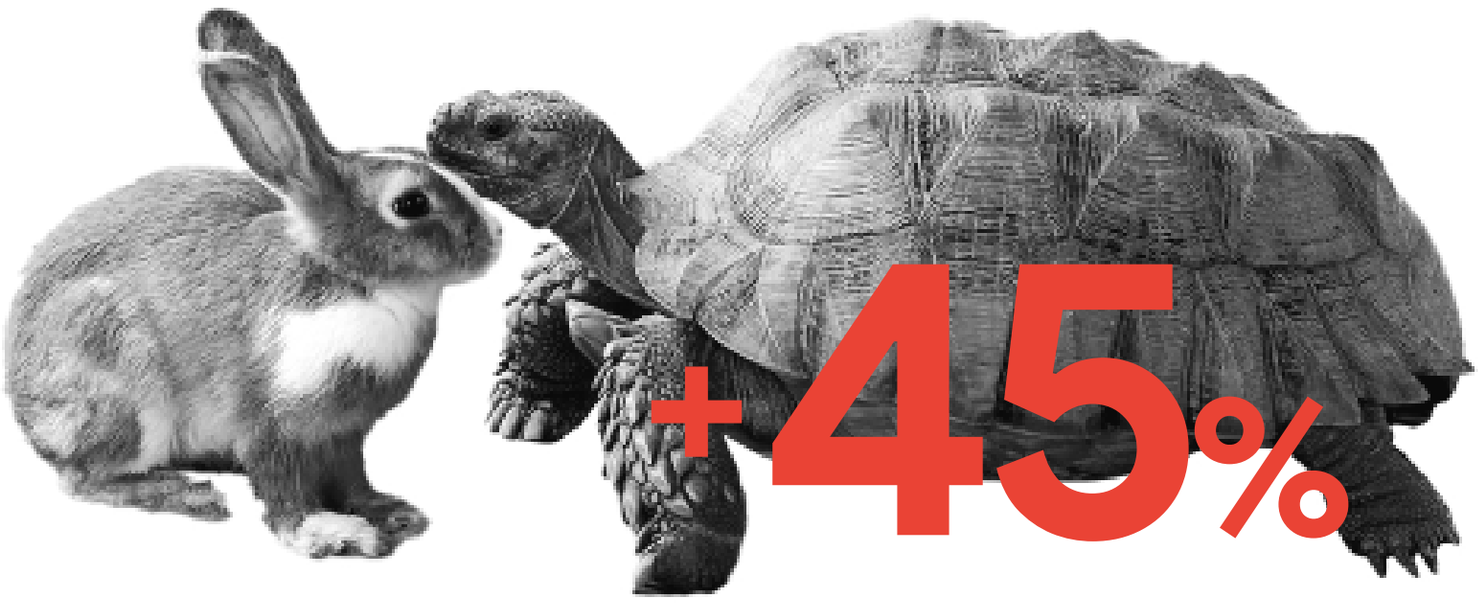
Search interest in dalam bahasa Indonesia (in Bahasa Indonesia) grew by up to 40%, showing a need among Indonesians for translations and assistance in comprehending words that are not in their mother tongue.

+52%

(vs. global average of 32%) of Indonesians used online translation tools (to translate text into a different language). Indonesia ranks fourth globally after Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico on the use of online translation tools.[23]

Access to stable and affordable internet

As more needs are being fulfilled online, people are increasingly focused on ensuring that they have reliable and affordable internet access.



In 2021, we saw continued momentum in searches testing internet speed and connectivity as more people came online. Search interest in cek kecepatan internet (internet speed check) grew by up to 45% in Indonesia.

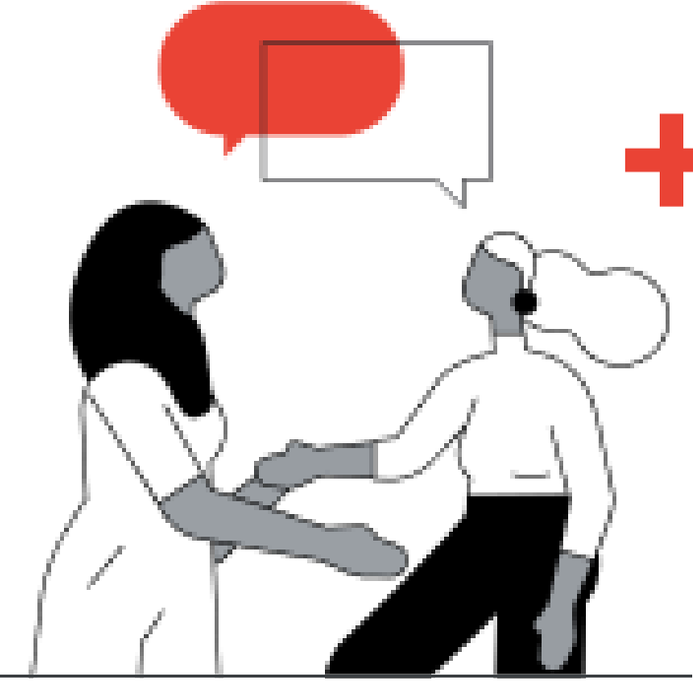
The need for financial support

Consumers are searching for different ways to alleviate economic concerns. Whether it's a business grant or a cash loan, Indonesians are looking for financial support to tide them over in an uncertain year.

+23%

Rising economic pressures and unemployment have forced many people to look for ways to make money or start their own businesses, with search interests in izin usaha (business license) growing by 23% and bantuan bisnis (business grant) growing by 150%.

Search interest in paylater increased by up to 84%.



+38%

More Indonesians are looking for financial assistance from the government, with search interest in bantuan sosial (social support) growing by 38%.

Search interests in pinjol (loan) and pinjaman online (online lending) grew by 96%.

Social inequalities

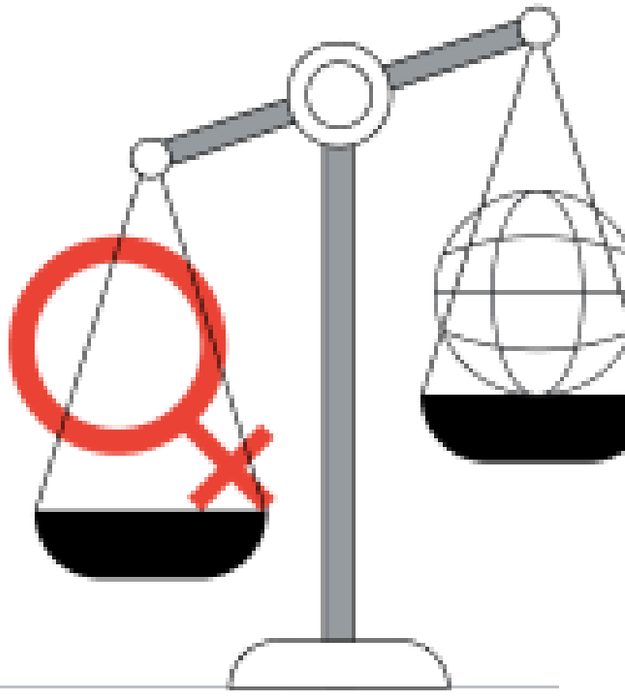
Continuing from 2020, searches reveal growing exploration and awareness around inclusion and equity.

Search interest in diskriminasi sosial adalah (social discrimination means) grew by more than

+150%

+130%

Gender equality was a key concern for Indonesians, with search interests in hak perempuan (women's rights) growing by 130% and kesetaraan wanita (women equality) growing by 80%.



MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

From reflecting society to changing it

5

Creating real change is not just about ensuring diversity and inclusion, it is about taking action towards ensuring equity as well. While the pandemic has impacted everyone's lives, not everyone has been affected in the same way, and rising searches reflect the need for help. Now, reaching customers takes more than simply reflecting society. Brands are also expected to take actions to shape it.

Edelman

"With four converging global crises over the last year — COVID-19, economic insecurity, financial/health inequities and systemic racism — brands that take a stand get a giant boost in trust. This evolved role for brands offers a new opportunity for brand marketers and real risk if they fail to recognize consumers' call for brand action."

1 Cater to consumers' basic needs to enable them to participate and engage

Don't let language be a barrier.
Engage your global audience with a full language experience that conveys your brand, reputation and trustworthiness. This might entail having translation options for your web content, or adopting voice assistance to make interactions easier for your customers, regardless of literacy levels.

Since 2019, Grab Indonesia's #MendobrakSunyi program has empowered members of the deaf community to become drivers. The brand has implemented features like closed captions for its onboarding video and also offered employees basic training in Indonesian Sign Language.[24]

Did you know?

Google Meet has launched live translated captions to help video calls be more global and inclusive. This equalizes information sharing, learning, and collaboration.

2

Help close technical, financial, and accessibility gaps.

Keep in mind that your quest for operational efficiency and digital transformation isn't leaving some of your customers behind. Not all users will have the same level of digital savvy, especially as more new users come online. In fact, many new internet users still struggle with basic tasks.

Look at your engagement metrics as indications of how your online platforms or services are used. By paying attention to potential drop-off points, you can get insights on how to improve not least the onboarding experience for customers, but also the fundamental user experience.

Did you know?

Wagely is a financial wellness app that aims to reduce financial stress for low- and middle-income employees in Indonesia by providing access to earned wages before payday.

2 Take a bigger stand

Consumers are drawn to brands that focus on the “we” over the “me.” While 63% of consumers surveyed were more attracted to “brands that focus on making the world a better place,” only 37% said they preferred “brands that focus on making me a better person.”[25] The same survey found that 86% of respondents expect brands to act beyond their product or business, suggesting that people are increasingly looking for brands that focus on contributing to society and the rest of the world.

Stand for something bigger than profits.
It's time to redefine success in business and build for a more inclusive and sustainable economy. Brands need to speak up and act beyond their traditional business boundaries, for both consumers and employees.

2

Build inclusive marketing strategies that benefit people and your bottom line.
Consumers are 4.5X more likely to buy from a brand if it addresses human rights, and 3.5X more likely if it takes on economic inequality.[26] As marketers, we are in a unique position to drive authentic and meaningful change, and it starts with the teams we build and the stories we tell. Get inspired by tips for inclusive marketing best practices.

Rexona, a deodorant brand, shone a light on the underrepresented disabled community in Indonesia by advocating for their health and mobility through its #GerakTakTerbatas campaign. The brand invited customers to count their daily steps, with every step contributing towards new wheelchairs for the disabled.[27]

Wardah, an Indonesian beauty brand, launched a series of complexion products with a wide range of shades to represent all skin colors.[28]

Sources:
All Google Search data points included in this report are from Google Trends, Indonesia, Sep 2019 - Aug 2020 vs. Sep 2020 - Aug 2021, unless otherwise indicated.

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