

Marketing Trends That Defined Google's Year in Search

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Google's "Year in Search" retrospective highlights the moments that defined 2016. Not only does search activity demonstrate how consumers turn to Google, it also provides valuable insights for marketers – especially as they set out their road maps for 2017.

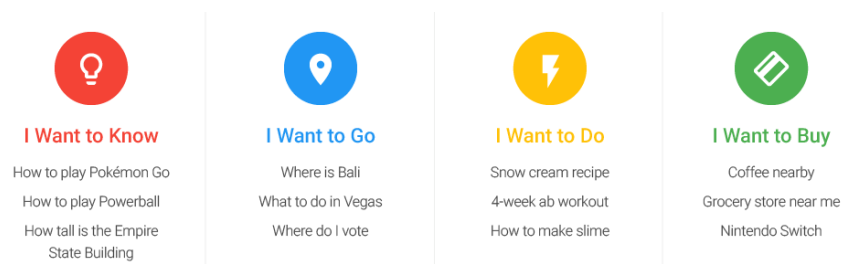
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Searches give a glimpse into what the world was interested in during 2016. And for all the year's difficulties and challenges, there were also moments of levity, beauty and inspiration.

The world mourned after the attacks in Brussels and Orlando. People struggled to understand the ins and outs of Zika and Brexit. And issues raised during the presidential election season continue to resonate even after 8 Nov. But there were also moments of comic relief – demonstrated by the unlikely memes of Dat Boi and Michael Phelps – and experiences that brought us together, such as the Olympics, Pokémon Go and a strong desire to win Powerball.

Year in Search showcases some examples of the way people are living their lives in moments-that-matter: those times when there's an immediate need to fulfil. In those moments, consumers want to know, go, do or buy – and they turn to search for information and inspiration.

Top trending searches across key moments-that-matter types:



In 2017, marketers need to be present in consumers' moments-that-matter and find ways to be useful, too. And they'll have to do it while navigating a world that is, in many ways, divided.

The Great Recession presented a similar dynamic. Marketers responded in 2009 with a spate of feel-good advertising. Coca-Cola and Pepsi premiered competing upbeat campaigns, 'Open Happiness' and 'Refresh Everything' respectively. And Anheuser-Busch InBev doubled down for 2009's Super Bowl with seven beer commercials that were "lighthearted or warmly emotional rather than infused with slapstick and sight gags", according to The New York Times.

The current climate is similarly ripe for optimistic, heartwarming messages. Marketers must find ways to reassure consumers and position their brands as trustworthy. And in order to succeed, they'll need to be relevant during the moments that, together, will add up to another big year in search.

To see more about what the world searched for in 2016, check out the [Year in Search site](#)