



A Year in Search 2014: HIGHLIGHTS FOR MARKETERS

THE **RUNDOWN**

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We conduct searches in every moment of our lives—to understand world events, to discover new products, to settle small arguments. That adds up to over 100 billion searches every month, creating an unparalleled demonstration of our collective curiosity. Google’s annual Year in Search report explores the people, places, and events that captured consumer interest in 2014—from cronuts to crowdfunding, selfies to soccer. It’s more than a trip down memory lane; it’s a reminder that people turn to Google in all the moments that matter. Here we pull out key trends and insights for marketers.

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Marketing has always started with understanding people—who cares, about what, and why. There’s no better source for these insights than searches. Because we rely on search across so many topics, the data it captures offers a real-time pulse of our culture, marketplace, and society. We can see news stories chronicled through search, we can see broad movements and trends reflected back at us, and we can see how certain shared moments engage our curiosity.

Taken together, they form the world’s best focus group, one that’s authentic, real-time, and at scale. At the end of each year, Google taps into this focus group, sorting through billions of searches to capture the fastest-rising global queries. The result is [A Year in Search 2014](#), a revealing glimpse into what happened in culture and in the minds of people in 2014.



Here are some highlights from this year’s report:

SELFIE OBSESSED

From A-listers at the Oscars to monkeys in the jungle, selfies hit the mainstream in 2014, with searches increasing 8X on last year. People wanted to know how to take a **“better selfie,”** up 6X, while the rest of us were simply asking **“what is a selfie,”** up 3X on 2013. Interestingly, the world searched for **“guy selfie tips”** and **“men selfie tips,”** but almost never for **“girl selfie tips.”**

RAISING CANCER AWARENESS

In March, Cancer Research launched the “**no make-up selfie**,” inspiring girls to post *au naturel* selfies. During the month, searches for “**cancer awareness**” doubled, according to Google Trends.

GETTING COLD FOR A GOOD CAUSE

The Ice Bucket Challenge brought amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) to the fore, and in 2014 we searched for the disease more than we had in the entire past decade. There are now over 90M search results for “**ice bucket challenge**,” turning a little-known disorder into a global conversation.

VOTING WITH OUR WALLETS

It was a big year for “**crowdfunding**” with 21X more interest than in 2013, and retro classics continued to make a comeback. Oculus Rift was sold for \$2 billion whilst Coolest Cooler and Star Citizen broke all-time funding records.

HUNTERS AND GATHERERS

Last year was all about kale and quinoa, but in 2014 we searched for new favorites, **chia seeds** and **goji berries**. Meanwhile, the “**paleo diet**” was the top-searched way to trim down.

BUY PHARRELL’S HAT

When it came to global “hat” searches this year, Pharrell's was high on the list after its dazzling debut at the Grammys. The “**Mountain Hat**” has become Pharrell's signature look, causing a dramatic rise in searches to buy our own.

MOST-SEARCHED SPORTING EVENT

After 64 games, 171 goals, and over 2.2B searches, “world cup 2014” was the third-highest peak in search and the most-searched sporting event in history. For brands looking to reach an audience of sports fans—from the crazed to the casual—[the opportunity](#) didn't get any bigger.

See what else caught the world's attention at [A Year in Search 2014](#). Not only is it fun to see cultural stories play out through search data, but it's actionable. In today's constantly connected world, brands must be hyper-aware of the latest trends, conversations, and news. Using search as a constant barometer, brands can stay with—if not ahead of—the curve and find meaningful ways to connect with consumers.

To get a rich understanding of consumers throughout the year, track [Google Trends](#) and keep tabs on our [Data Insights reports](#). Use the data to fuel your creativity, back up your hunches, and inform media decisions. From there, you can ride the waves of interest—or create new waves altogether.