



How Mobile Has Changed How People Get Things Done: New Consumer Behavior Data

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In moments where people need to know, go, do, and buy, relying on our phones has become second nature. Google's VP of marketing, Lisa Gevelber, shares new research that quantifies how people use digital to make decisions and take action in their daily lives.

think with **Google**

Take a moment and think back to how you got information before smartphones existed. You probably printed directions before a road trip (or relied on a paper map you already had). Maybe you looked up movie times in the newspaper. Maybe you called a store to check its hours (or just took your chances and showed up, hoping to see the "open" sign).

And now? You turn to the nearest device—your smartphone.

To get a better understanding of how people meet their needs in a world of limitless online and offline options, we collaborated with the research firm, Purchased. All of the findings presented here are from this research study. We asked 1,000 smartphone users to take a quick poll several times a day for a week to tell us what kinds of needs they had throughout the day and the actions they took to meet them.

The result was more than 14,000 responses, ranging from choosing a restaurant for a special dinner to looking for coupons in the store aisle to planning a family vacation. Detailed in these responses were thousands of [micro-moments](#) when people turned to their devices for help.

By examining all of these needs, we learned how consumers choose—both online and offline—to navigate their [I-want-to-know](#), [I-want-to-go](#), [I-want-to-do](#), and [I-want-to-buy moments](#).

Here's what we found:

#1: In moments of need, people turn to their phones and search

When a question or need arises, our phones are far and away our most trusted resource, with 96% of people using a smartphone to get things done.

To meet these needs, people are at least twice as likely to use search than

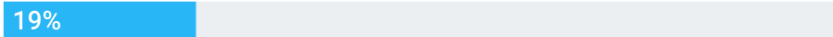
other online or offline sources such as store visits or social media. Not only is search the most used resource, it's the resource 87% of people turn to *first*.

How Needs Were Addressed

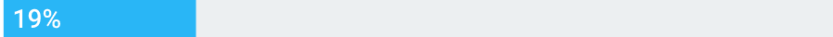
Search engine:



Visited a retailer website or app:



Visited another website or app:



Visited a store or other location:



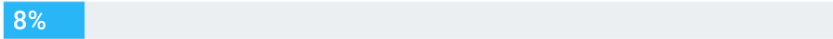
Used a map:



Looked at images or photos on a site or app:



Asked someone via a call, online messenger, or text message:



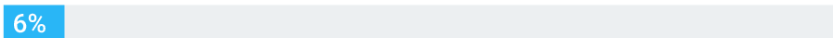
Watched an online video:



Used social media:



Connected with a business:



Source: Google/
Purchased Digital
Diary, "How Consumers
Solve Their Needs
in the Moment,"
representative sample
of U.S. smartphone
users=1,000,
responses=14,840
(needs=10,540), May
2016.

#2: Mobile helps people make decisions when they're ready to buy

People rely on their phones to help make the best decisions at the moment of purchase. In fact, 70% of smartphone owners who bought

something in a store first turned to their devices for information relevant to that purchase. And when people search on mobile, it tends to lead to action: 92% of those who searched on their phone made a related purchase.

Actions That Most Commonly Preceded a Purchase

Google/Purchased Digital Diary, "How Consumers Solve Their Needs in the Moment," representative sample of U.S. smartphone users=1,000, responses=14,840 (needs=10,540), May 2016.

Used a search engine:

30%

Visited a store or other location:

30%

Visited a retailer website or app:

24%

Visited another website or app:

14%

Used a map:

13%

#3: Mobile search is used for more than just immediate needs

While search has long been useful to help with quick tasks like looking up a dinner recipe, it's also widely used to make progress on long-term projects. In fact, 68% of people used search to help with things they want to address at some point in the *future*, the highest of any other online or offline source.

And those searches for future needs largely happen on mobile with 97% of people searching on a mobile phone to do so.

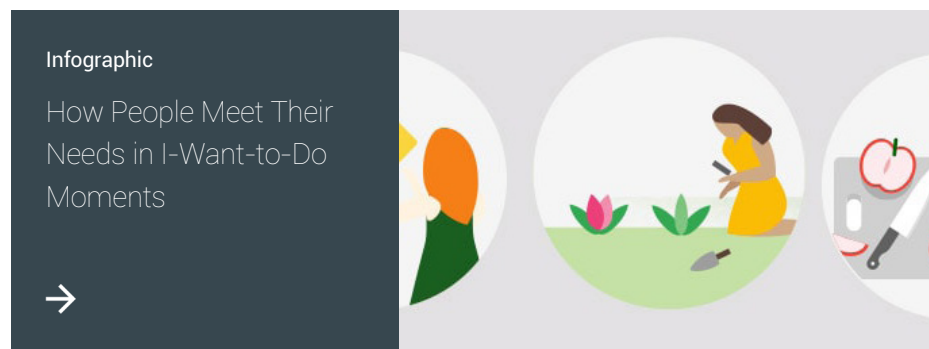
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So what does all of this mean for marketers?

People have more choices than ever to meet their needs—online and offline. And as they turn to their smartphones to make decisions, learn something new, get something accomplished, or tackle a future goal—search is their lifeline. This is why so many brands use search to make an impression early and get into the consideration set when people are starting to form opinions.

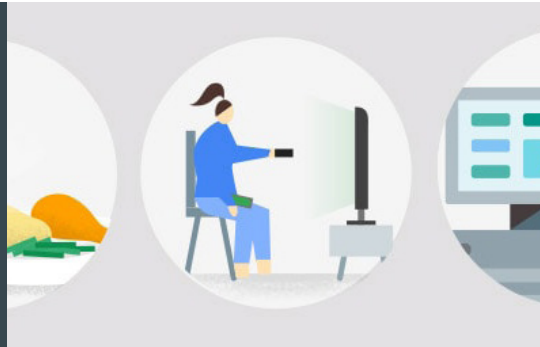
As marketers we have to connect the information we provide across screens, channels, and formats. And search, particularly on mobile, is where to start. By anticipating people's needs, you can ensure you're meeting people in their micro-moments with relevant and useful information.

Check out the infographics below to see how people meet their needs in I-want-to-know, I-want-to-go, I-want-to-do, and I-want-to-buy moments based on this research. Included are the categories where these micro-moments most often occurred, how often they occurred on mobile, and how and when they influenced purchase activity.



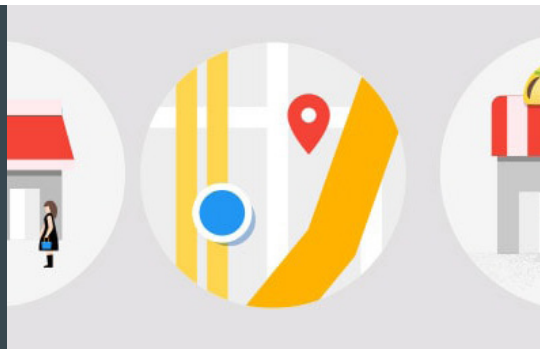
Infographic

How People Meet Their Needs in I-Want-to-Know Moments



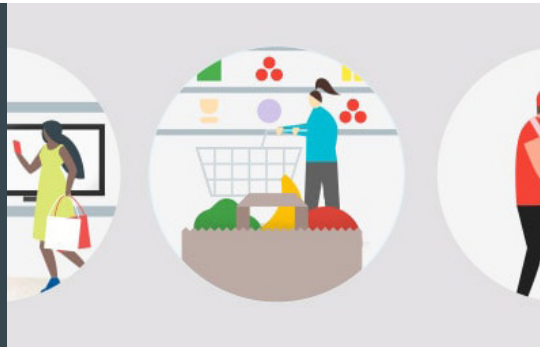
Infographic

How People Meet Their Needs in I-Want-to-Go Moments



Infographic

How People Meet Their Needs in I-Want-to-Buy Moments



Source

Google/Purchased Digital Diary, "How Consumers Solve Their Needs in the Moment," representative sample of U.S. smartphone users=1,000, responses=14,840, needs=10,540; smartphone users by need type=614-940; purchasers by need type=228-763, May 2016.