L'Oréal Paris Discovers the Beauty of Search for Building Brand Love

L'ORÉAL®
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About L'Oréal Paris

• A member of the L'Oréal Group's family of beauty brands, L'Oréal Paris offers leading makeup, skin care, hair care, styling and hair color products to women and men worldwide.

• www.lorealparisusa.com

Goal

• L'Oréal Paris wants to build brand love and be there for consumers at the moment of inspiration. It aims to appeal to a wide range of consumers, and be the top destination for beauty.

Approach

• **Understanding the audience:** L'Oréal Paris uses Search Insights to understand beauty trends and develop products and messaging to meet consumer needs.

• **Reaching the audience:** L'Oréal Paris advertises against branded, category and affinity search queries to address diverse consumer needs throughout the purchase journey.

• **Engaging the audience:** L'Oréal Paris provides branded content such as its innovative beauty site, hairstyle.com, to address people's needs at exactly the right moment.

Results

• Established Search insights as an essential tool for trend spotting and trend monitoring

• Rejuvenated the home hair color category: 50% of Feria Ombré consumers were new to the category, most under the average age of the typical hair color consumer

L'Oréal Paris offers leading makeup, skin care, hair care, styling and hair color products to women and men worldwide. Its products and ambassadors embody a beauty ideal summed up by its legendary signature: "Because you're worth it."

Over recent years, L'Oréal Paris has increased investment in digital marketing, while simultaneously rethinking the ways it uses digital tools such as Search. Although Search is traditionally viewed as a means of driving online leads and sales, for L'Oréal Paris it's much more. It provides a way to connect with people at the moments that matter in their lives, allowing the brand to position itself as an innovative beauty resource. Specifically, Search plays three roles for L'Oréal Paris: (1) it provides unique consumer insights, (2) it reaches a vast, passionate audience and (3) it engages the audience with the content they're most interested in, when it matters most.

Search insights to understand what's trending

L'Oréal Paris uses search behavior to stay on top of ever moving consumer beauty trends. Julie Chamberlain, VP of marketing for L'Oréal Paris haircolor, shares, "In the new context of digital, it's easier for consumers to be even more immediate at the moment of inspiration. We see what's rising to the top and then how and what she is searching for."

For example, Search insights inspired the creation of L'Oréal Paris' innovative Ombré hair kit. "We started seeing this new look on celebrities and fashion runways that was the Ombré look," explains Julie. "So we turned to Search and found a considerable rise in search terms for Ombré hair and dip dye hair. We also learned there was a deep dissatisfaction with available instructions, especially at home." So, while it was clear that more consumers wished to achieve the Ombré look at home, what was clearly missing was an applicator tool. L'Oréal Paris responded to this insight by developing and launching the world's first DIY Ombré solution.

Julie shares, "Within L'Oréal, what we did with the Ombré launch has really become a success model. It proves you can be nimble and respond to trends even if you're a consumer packaged goods company. If you use Search to stay close to the consumer, listen and really understand what she's looking for, you can react to it quite quickly."

Beyond inspiring the launch of the Ombré kit, Search insights were also used across the product development and promotion stages—from informing which color formulas to deliver to determining which messaging to use on media and packaging. What's more, after experiencing the power of Search insights with the Ombré launch, they are now an essential input to every brand innovation brief at L'Oréal Paris.
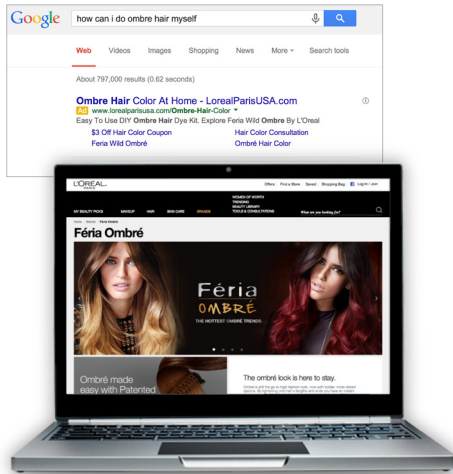
Reaching the interested audience

Search also offers L'Oréal Paris access to a large and active audience. Whether someone is learning how to achieve a particular look or discovering where to buy a L'Oréal Paris product, the brand wants to be part of that conversation. Specifically, L'Oréal Paris has moved beyond product keywords, bidding against a range of terms that map to all stages of the consumer journey. These diverse keywords are then met with relevant messages that drive customers to tailored content.

For example, the brand advertises against affinity searches, such as "how can I do ombre hair myself," to reach audiences who are interested in beauty-related topics but may not be aware of how L'Oréal Paris can help them. These searchers are then taken to pages with further information on the topic and how they can achieve the look—positioning the brand as a trusted partner in their journey.
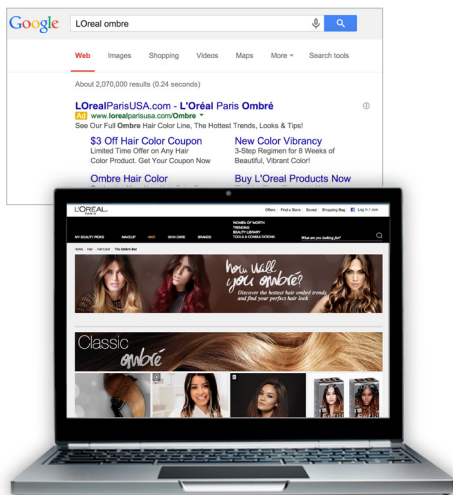
L'Oréal Paris also bids against category keywords such as "ombre kits" as well as "branded keywords" such as "L'Oréal ombre" to drive users who are farther along the purchase journey to pages with product information, tutorial videos and product recommendations. The goal is to be the beauty brand that is always there, always relevant and as helpful as possible. Julie shares, "If you're thinking about it in the traditional product-centric way, you're actually not there for her because—guess what? That's not how she's searching. So you're definitely not expanding your reach or increasing relevancy."

By being comprehensive and strategic in how it reaches consumers interested in Ombré, L'Oréal Paris has been able to not only increase consumer frequency in the home hair color category, but also attract a new, younger audience to what was once considered a stagnant category.

Engaging interested audiences for Ombré and beyond

L'Oréal Paris is delivering relevant, useful brand content to people searching for Ombré, at the moment they want it. But it hasn't stopped there; the brand has gone a step further to create an entire website based on how it sees people searching—by hairstyle.
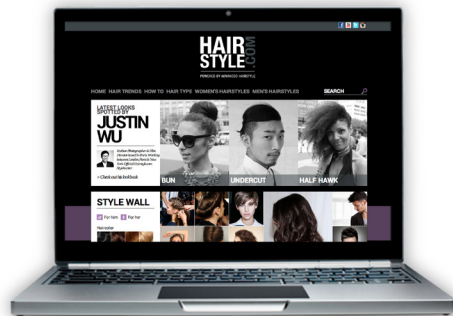
Julie explains, "This year, we launched our first styling line. As we were researching the styling category, we learned a really interesting insight: consumers don't search by mousse, bun or ponytail. Instead, they're at another level: the occasion. They're looking for 'wedding hair', 'beach hair', 'date hair,' and so on."

From that insight, L'Oréal Paris built an entire website, hairstyle.com, just dedicated to providing inspiration and education for hairstyle's by occasion.

"We're really happy to help her feel empowered, that she can create the look she wants in her own budget, at home, anytime she wants," shares Julie. "It's really about building that trust with our brand that we're going to bring her solutions every time. That's an expectation that we've built with her, and we need to make sure that we're using all the tools available to us to continue to deliver on that promise."

A beautiful future ahead

Today, L'Oréal Paris continues to put Search at the heart of its brand marketing. It provides insights that inspire new launches, reaches an interested audience and delivers engaging brand content at exactly the moment the audience wants it.

Julie's view: "We call it marketing nirvana. I mean, if we can use Search to find out when is she searching, what is she searching for and therefore what message to serve her in the right medium, it's beautiful for everyone."

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— Julie Chamberlain, VP of marketing L'Oréal Paris haircolor, L'Oréal Paris

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