

The new consumer behaviors that defined Google's Year in Search

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If you want to see the events, personalities, and moments people cared about in 2017, search no farther than, well, search. What people look for provides a window into their interests, needs, and wants. This year, people turned to Google Search to discover the secrets of slime and locate solar eclipse glasses, as well as to learn how to help hurricane victims, and support the city of Las Vegas in the wake of October's mass shooting.

Amid all of these searches, [new consumer behaviors emerged](#) and a new super-empowered consumer took shape. We found that people are [more curious](#), [more demanding](#), and [more impatient](#) than ever before. We saw evidence of this throughout 2017, and it will be critical for marketers to understand these new behaviors as they move into 2018.

More and more curious

People have long turned to search to satisfy their curiosity. In 2017, the questions people asked provided a snapshot of the cultural flashpoints that defined the year. People turned to Google Search to find out about Bitcoin and fidget spinners. And they also asked "what is net neutrality" and "what is the Paris Climate Agreement."

think with 

How to...



How to make
slime



How to make solar
eclipse glasses



How to watch
Mayweather vs.
McGregor



How to buy
Bitcoin

What is...



What is DACA?



What is covfefe?



What is Paris
Climate
Agreement?



What is net
neutrality?

But how they're searching paints a picture as well. People are being more specific than ever, and they still expect to get useful, relevant information. For example, people didn't just search "how to make slime." They searched "how to make fluffy slime," "how to make butter slime," and "how to make slime without Borax."

Right here, right now

The fact is, people expect to be able to find exactly what they're looking for, wherever and whenever they're looking for it. We saw that play out with the continued prevalence of "near me" searches. Across the country, people turned to Google Search to find stores, restaurants, and events near them.



An interesting twist that marketers need to keep an eye on: Some people have grown to expect so much from search that [they're even dropping the phrase "near me," but still expecting local results.](#)

Impatient to help

Searches have become more detailed and more relevant to an individual's specific daily experience. But search is also a powerful unifier.

This year had more than its fair share of disasters. But people were not content to simply follow the news coverage. They were itching to take action, turning to Google Search in the moment to quickly find ways to help.

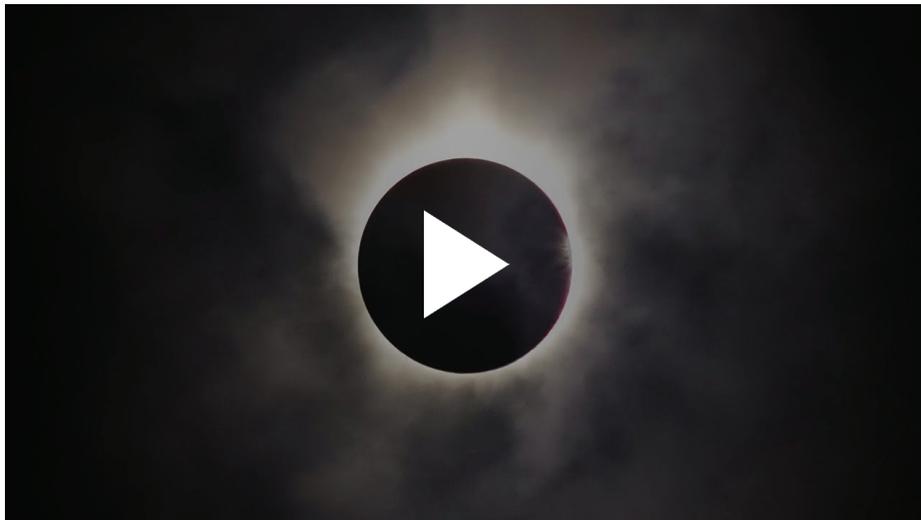
In October, wildfires ravaged Northern California and a mass shooting in Las Vegas sent the country reeling. Plus, the 2017 hurricane season ranked as one of the most active and destructive on record, with 17 named storms.

In these moments, we saw people around the country eager for information about how they could make a difference for victims of disasters stretching from Puerto Rico to Napa Valley.



As we head into 2018, we expect this super-empowered consumer to continue to evolve. Expectations will only continue to rise. People will ask more detailed questions and want more personally relevant answers, and they'll want it all [faster than ever before](#). It's a puzzle—and a challenging one at that—but marketers have an abundance of information that will help solve it. Marketers can then unlock new opportunities and ensure they're well-positioned to serve this new super-empowered consumer.

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