



# Second-Screen Searches: Crucial I-Want-to-Know Moments for Brands

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Forget the remote; smartphones are becoming the essential TV-watching companion. People are using their second screens to search for info about what they're watching—commercials included. These "I-want-to-know" moments are a chance for brands to be present, relevant, and to gain insights.

think with **Google**

The Seattle Seahawks were two yards and 25 seconds away from upsetting the mighty New England Patriots in Super Bowl XLIX when an undrafted rookie intercepted the ball on the goal line. Fans cheered (or groaned) and in unison asked, “Wait, who *is* that guy?” Well, to be more accurate, they pulled out their phones and searched “#21 on Patriots.” Malcolm Butler’s last-minute interception created one of the largest search spikes during the game; and now we all know his name.

These [micro-moments](#), when people search Google to get answers, happen constantly, even while people are watching TV. Second-screen search moments can serve as a barometer for what people think, what they’re curious about, and what they want to explore while they’re watching TV.

American adults watch over [five hours of TV per day](#), according to Nielsen, and they’re not doing it with their eyes glued to the tube. [Eighty-four percent](#) of smartphone and tablet owners use their devices as a second screen while they watch: 12% of them are reading discussions about TV shows on social media, **and more than double that**, 29%, are searching for show-related information.

Second-screen searchers present a huge opportunity for marketers. These people aren’t passively following a conversation; they’re leaning forward—looking for more information, learning, and taking action.

As we congratulate the [Emmy winners](#) (who wasn’t excited to see Jon Hamm finally win for “Mad Men?”) and gear up for fall TV, we took a look back at search patterns from this past year to see what kinds of TV moments drove searches and what brands can learn from them.

**More than twice as many second screeners are searching for show-related info as are reading about it on social media.**

## Reach second screeners with real-time campaigns

Marketers can create compelling campaigns by amplifying and adding value to what people are interested in when they turn to their second screens. TV viewers often want to know more about what they're watching, and brands can capture their interest in these moments of curiosity.

Leading up to last year's [Oscars](#), the Google Play team looked at search behavior from previous award shows and found that searches for winning movies in each category peaked instantly, with heightened search interest lasting 15 minutes after the win. With that in mind, [Google Play served dynamic, real-time ads](#) congratulating each winner as the award was announced, right in the moment of highest interest. Using second-screen search insights as a starting point, the campaign saw a 19% increase in click-through rates for the real-time ads versus control ads.

Think about how your brand can connect in real time. Spend some time in [Google Trends](#) to learn what meaningful TV moments your brand can leverage to connect with searchers.

## Team up TV and digital marketing efforts

People don't just search for info about the TV shows they're watching. Commercials can also drive large search spikes. During the Super Bowl, Squarespace's "Jeff Bridges Sleeping Tapes" campaign drove the biggest ad-related search spike. The [mysterious TV ad](#) didn't include details about the product, but it did display a URL at the end, providing a subtle call to action for intrigued viewers. Interestingly, although the TV ad displayed the URL, [www.dreamingwithjeff.com](http://www.dreamingwithjeff.com), thousands of viewers typed "Dreaming with Jeff" directly into their search bars.

Two-thirds of smartphone owners say they turn to their phones to learn more about something they saw in a TV commercial.<sup>1</sup> An effective

TV ad can stimulate dozens of micro-moments, where your potential customer is looking for more: product specs, prices, details, or reviews. These mobile moments are great opportunities for brands to provide an engaging experience. Here are some best practices to consider:

1. Be there or be square. Ensure you have a digital presence when your television ads are running, especially on mobile. Don't miss the chance to capitalize on the demand your ads create.
2. Don't count out those category terms. People are often just as likely to search for a product/general category term as they are to search for your brand. If you aren't there on category terms, you might be driving demand to your competition.
3. Make it easy for consumers when they reach out to learn more. Align your ad copy and landing page with your television creative. This makes it easier for them to choose your ad, and get to the information they're looking for quickly.

Without a strong digital presence, your brand could be missing out on connecting with potential customers, right at the moment their interest is piqued.

**Two-thirds of smartphone owners use their phones to learn more about something they saw in a TV commercial.**

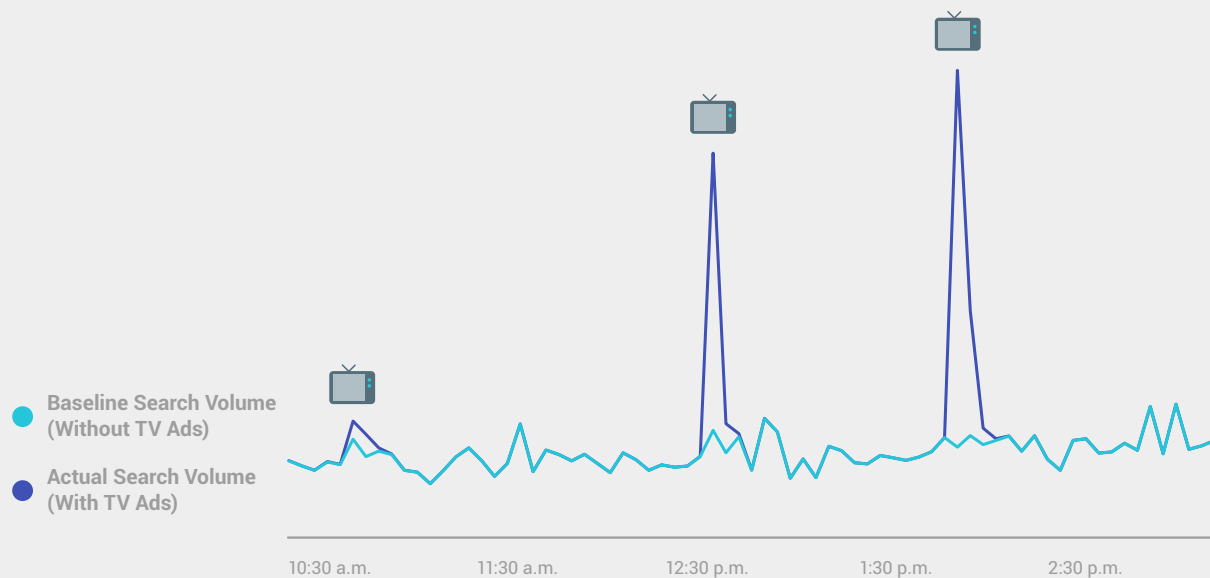
### **Use second-screen data to gauge TV performance**

Search traffic can also provide insight into the effectiveness of your TV ads. Nest, a Google Inc. company dedicated to reinventing home products, recently worked with [Adometry](#) (part of Google Analytics) to uncover how consumers respond online when Nest ads air on TV. The team found that ads drove immediate and dramatic increases in

searches, especially on mobile. They were also able to determine which ads and programs performed the best.

By measuring search traffic against different time slots/programs and creative executions, Nest could optimize its media buy and air its best-performing ads at times proven to drive search lift. Gauging search activity has allowed Nest to identify the influence its ads have on second-screen behavior and take a lot of the guesswork out of its TV media buying.

### Nest Search Volume With and Without TV Ads



Source: Google Data, U.S., November 2014.

### Get your brand “picked up” by second screeners

Watching TV isn't just about the “watching” anymore. More than ever, consumers are in control of their media choices, and when they choose

to engage, they go deep. TV viewers want more while they watch—the who, what, why, and how much. These second-screen moments are an incredible opportunity for brands that make the most of them.

Understanding how TV and digital go hand-in-hand presents all kinds of opportunities for marketers to build more relevant creative campaigns, get the most out of media dollars by pairing TV and digital, and use search lift data to evaluate the effectiveness of TV ads. So break a leg, get renewed, pitch that pilot, (don't) jump the shark, make a blockbuster—and don't count out those second-screen searchers.



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## Sources

- 1 Google Consumer Surveys, U.S., May 2015, n=1,243.