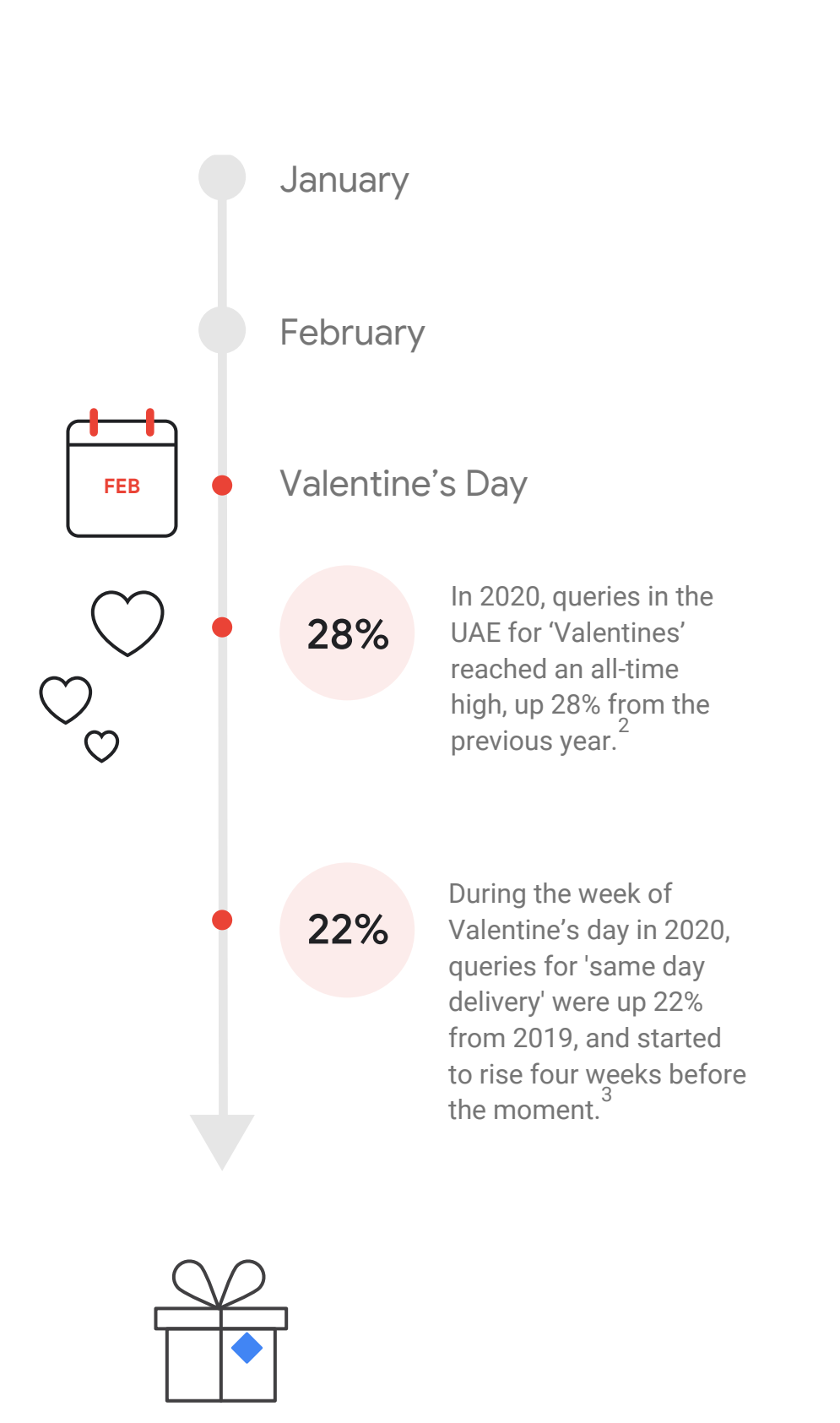


The ultimate seasonal calendar to help plan for the year ahead

Now more than ever, it's important for retailers to have a roadmap for the future. The coronavirus pandemic has presented unique challenges to retailers — altering consumer expectations, habits, and purchasing behaviour dramatically.

From Valentine's Day, right up to the holiday season, this handy infographic uses the latest consumer trends, industry insights, and digital best practices to lay out the year's key seasonal moments. Use this calendar to guide your approach, prioritise your next steps, and create a marketing strategy that meets your evolving business needs.



Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day has become one of the biggest opportunities of the year for digital retailers, with queries like 'same day delivery' and 'romantic restaurants' showing massive growth.

Types of retailers

Gift and greetings, florists, fashion and apparel, as well as personalisation services.

Consumer insights

In the UAE, 95% of shoppers research products online before buying and 41 % buy online due to the convenience of home delivery.¹

Audiences

Reach customers who are celebrating Valentine's Day and are actively shopping during this moment, which you can do through in-market audiences. This covers gifts and occasions categories — from flowers and chocolates to jewellery.

Mother's Day

Online shopping makes it easy to find a truly unique gift for Mother's Day. Make sure you're up to date with the search terms that customers are using to find one-of-a-kind gifts.

Types of retailers

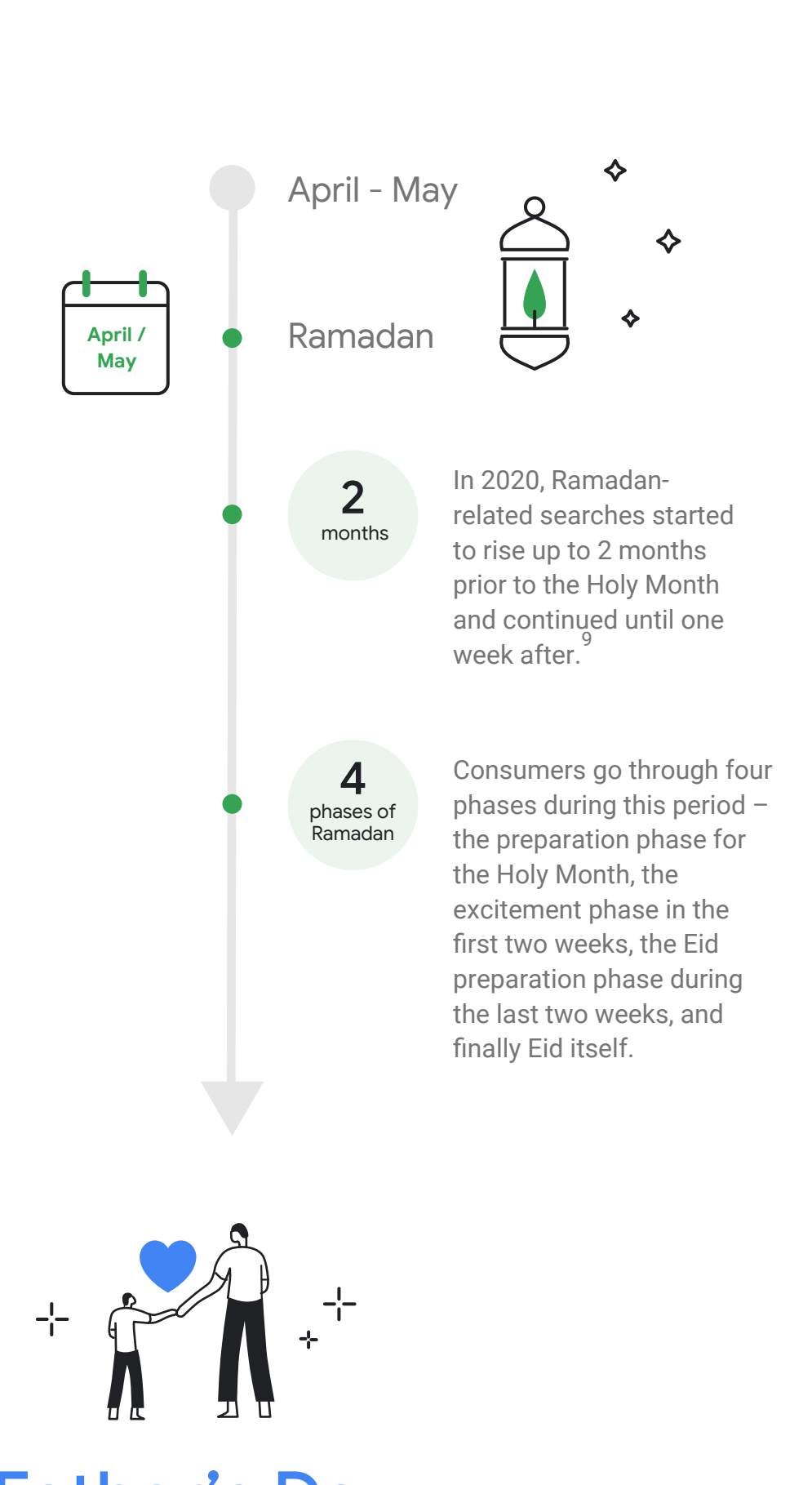
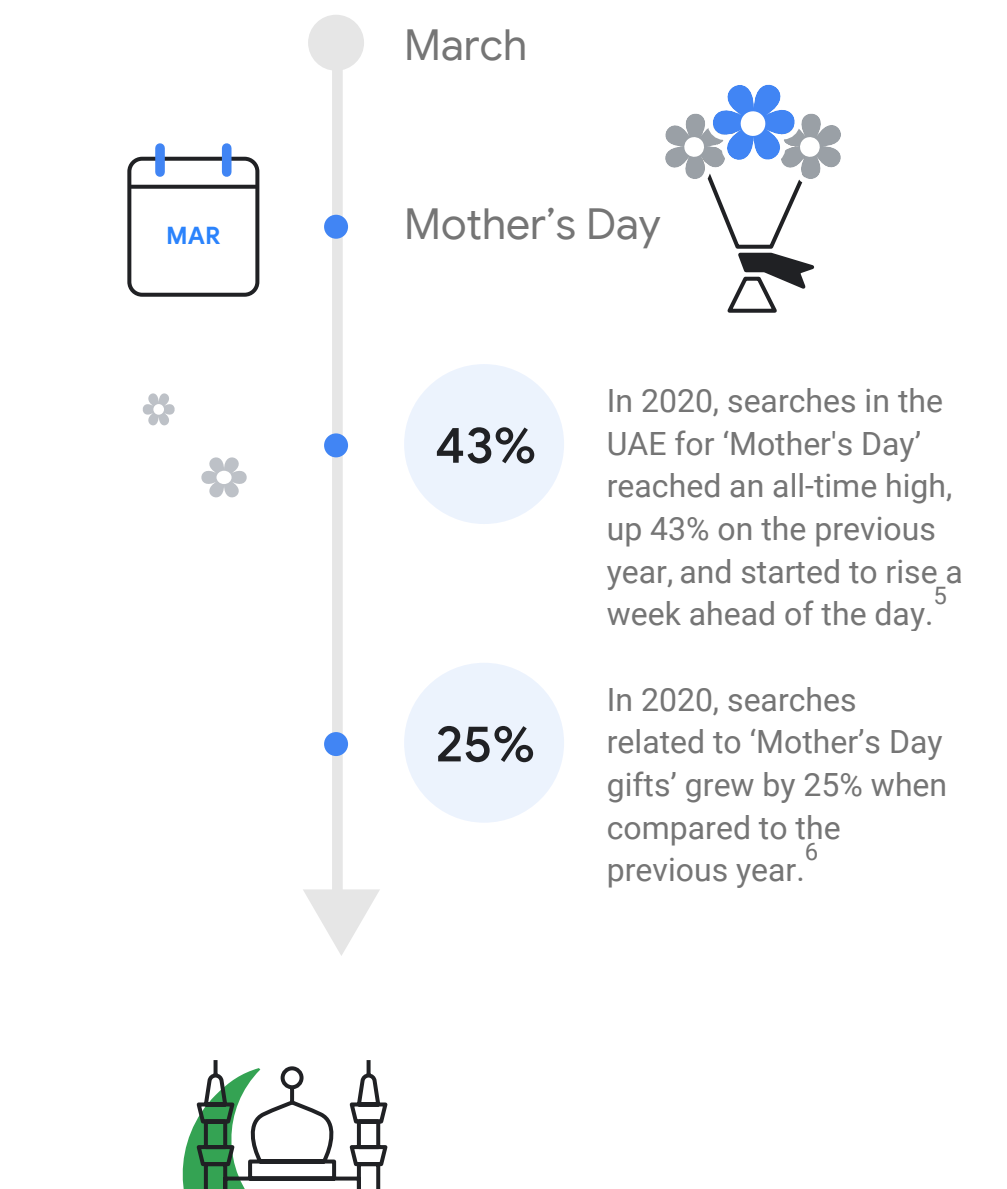
Home and garden, gift and greeting, florists, and fashion and apparel.

Consumer insights

The current situation has shifted many people to online shopping, with 26% of UAE consumers expecting to shop more online for non-groceries even after this period.⁴ Ensure your site is optimised for a positive e-commerce experience.

Audiences

Be sure to cover a range of in-market audience categories to promote your products to shoppers who are looking to buy. This can be achieved using categories such as Mother's Day shopping, flowers, and greeting cards. Combine this with remarketing to re-engage with customers who are likely to convert.



Ramadan

Ramadan is a time to celebrate togetherness and community values. Muslims fast during this period and spend a lot of time with family and friends. Preparations for Eid begin weeks in advance, with consumers browsing and buying gifts for loved ones.

Types of retailers

Beauty, fashion and apparel, food and grocery, and gift and greeting.

Consumer insights

In 2019, 53% of consumers noted that they increased their spending during the Holy Month.⁸ 49% mentioned that they were likely to increase their usage of online shopping apps during Ramadan.⁹

Audiences

During Ramadan, people are looking to celebrate and purchase gifts for family and friends, cook delicious meals for loved ones, and dress up and look their best for Eid. Affinity audiences, such as foodies and gifters, can tap into the full potential of this moment.

Father's Day

From barbeques to clothing, gift searches for dads are wide-ranging. Dads can be tough to buy for, so maybe think outside the box.

Types of retailers

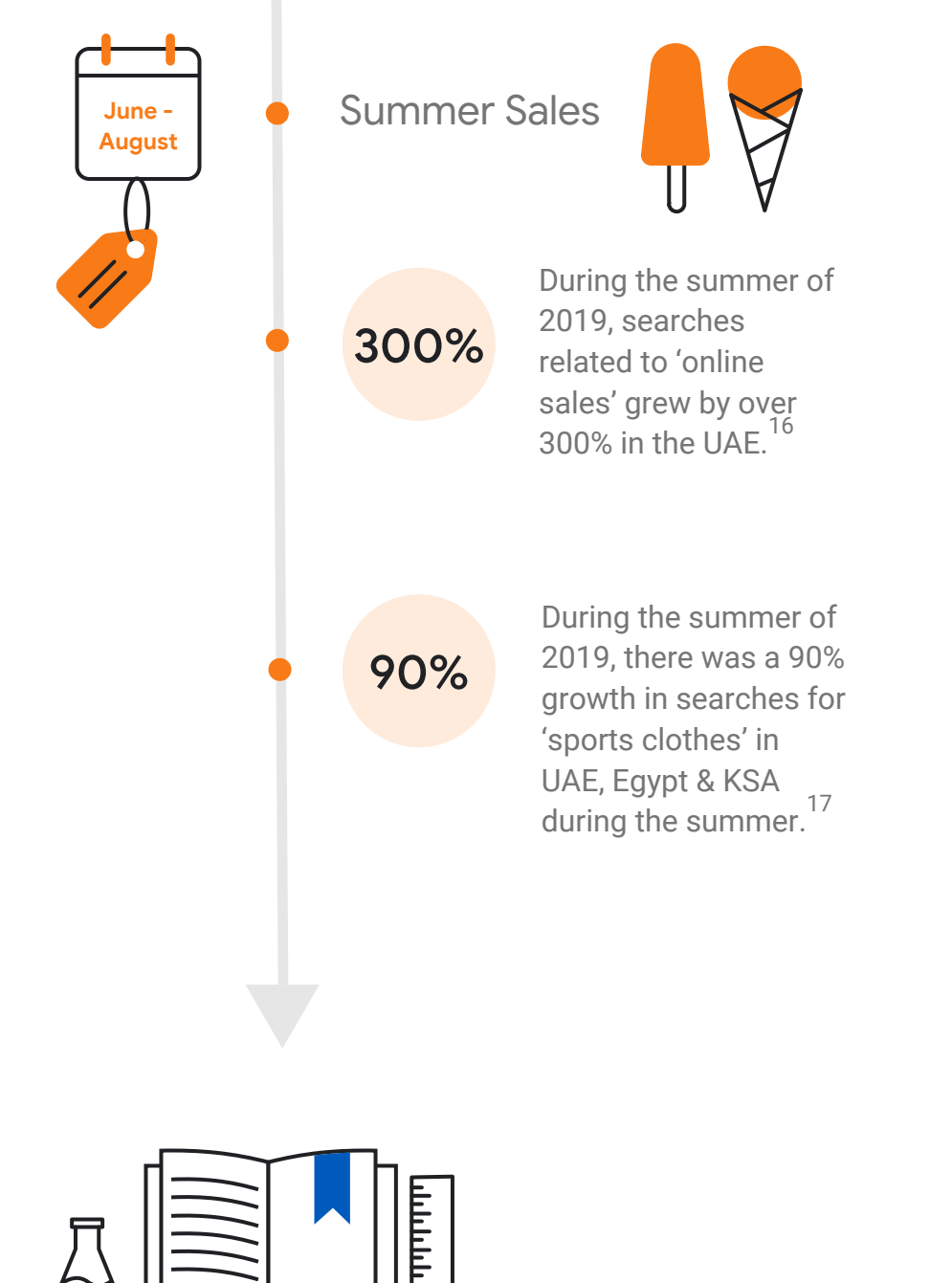
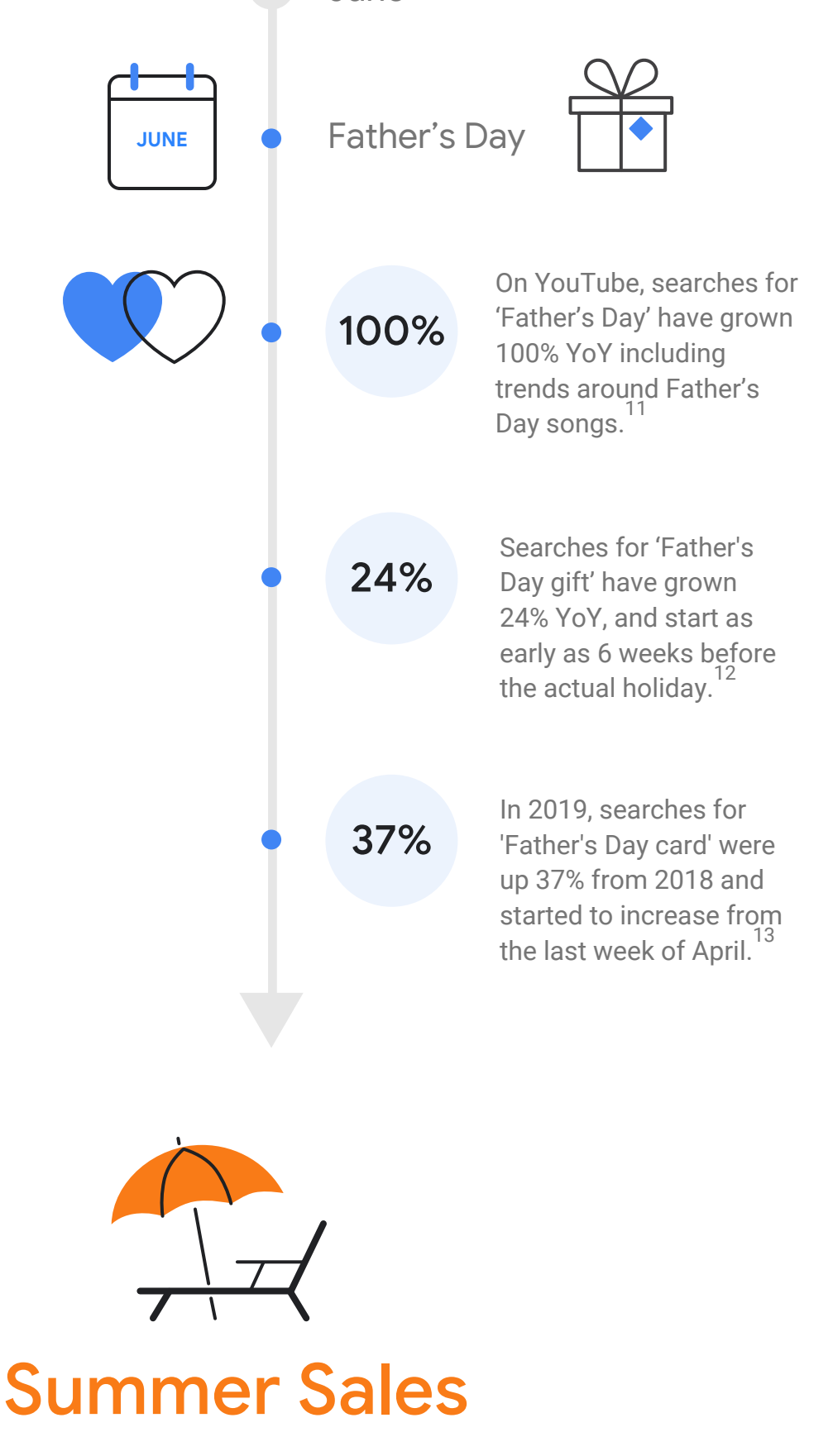
Gift and greetings, fashion and apparel, home and garden, and consumer electronics.

Consumer insights

With an increasing amount of time spent at home, people are turning to YouTube to learn new skills. Global watch time of how-to videos that include 'for beginners' or 'step by step' in the title saw a 65% increase in watch time year-on-year.¹⁰ Consider creating video content to re-engage with consumers and showcase your products in action as they look for new ways to entertain themselves.

Audiences

Information on consumer interests helps you expand your advertising into relevant markets. For moments like Father's Day, which are family-centric, affinity categories such as family-focused or lifestyle and hobbies can reach those who are interested in your products.



Summer Sales

We're making the most of our gardens now more than ever, so searches for keeping the garden glorious are at a high. Sales are up too, with many shoppers seeking bargains online.

Types of retailers

Home and garden, fashion and apparel, and sporting goods.

Consumer insight

People accept that holidaying abroad will probably not be a viable option this summer, instead they're looking for ways to enjoy summer from home. Searches mentioning 'staycation' grew by over 200% during the month of May alone.¹⁴ Also, searches for 'home DIY' peaked during the first week of May 2020, up 203% since the beginning of the year.¹⁵ Stay up-to-date with the latest Google Search trends on what people are looking for this summer.

Audiences

For summer sales, go for a mix of audience strategies, from activating key audiences such as bargain hunters, to those searching for the trending categories at this time of year. This includes home and garden, outdoor items, sports and fitness, and outdoor recreational equipment.

Back to School

Getting back to school is a busy time for kids and parents alike, with new books, clothes, stationery, and technology high on most shoppers' lists.

Types of retailers

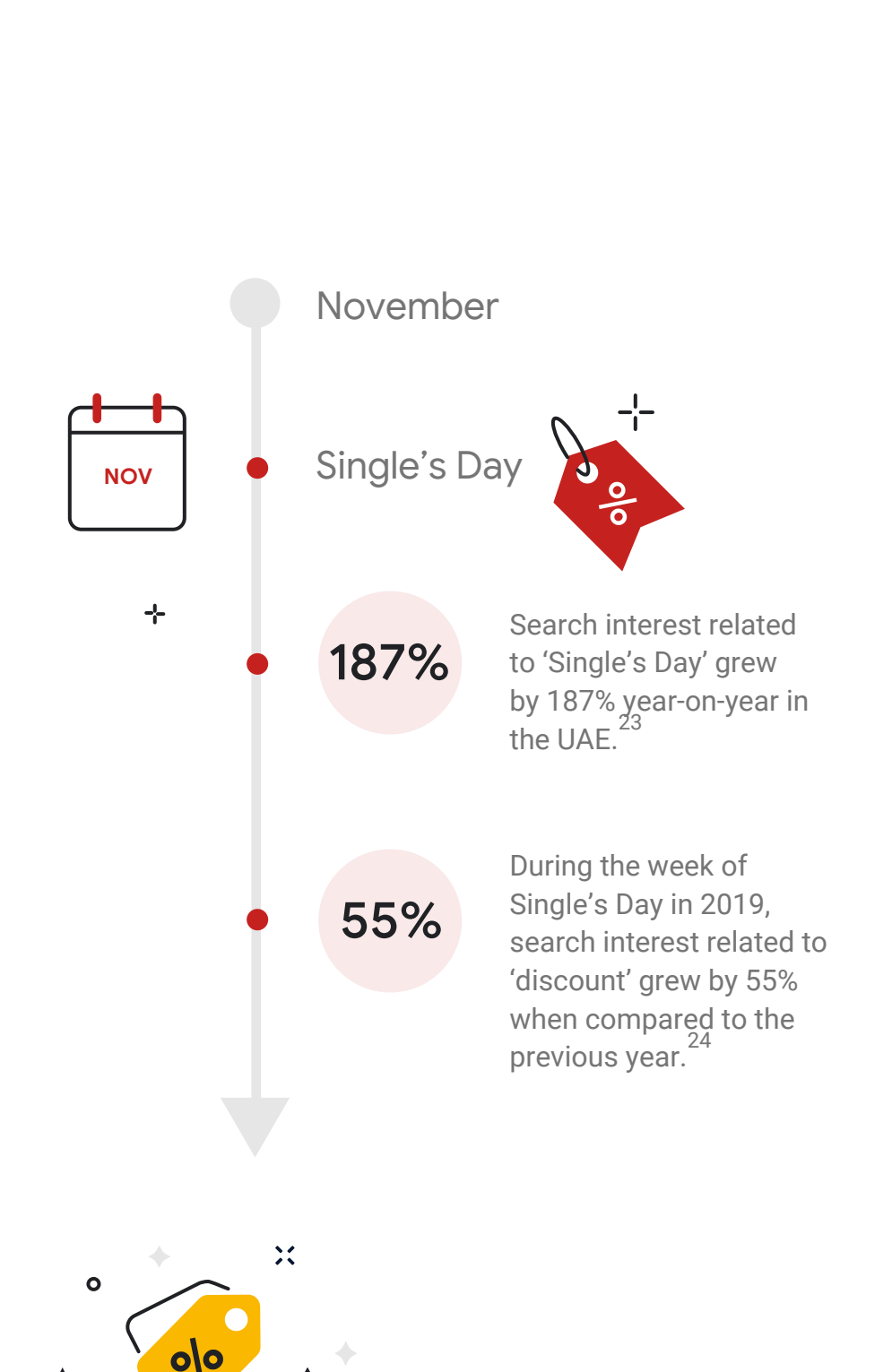
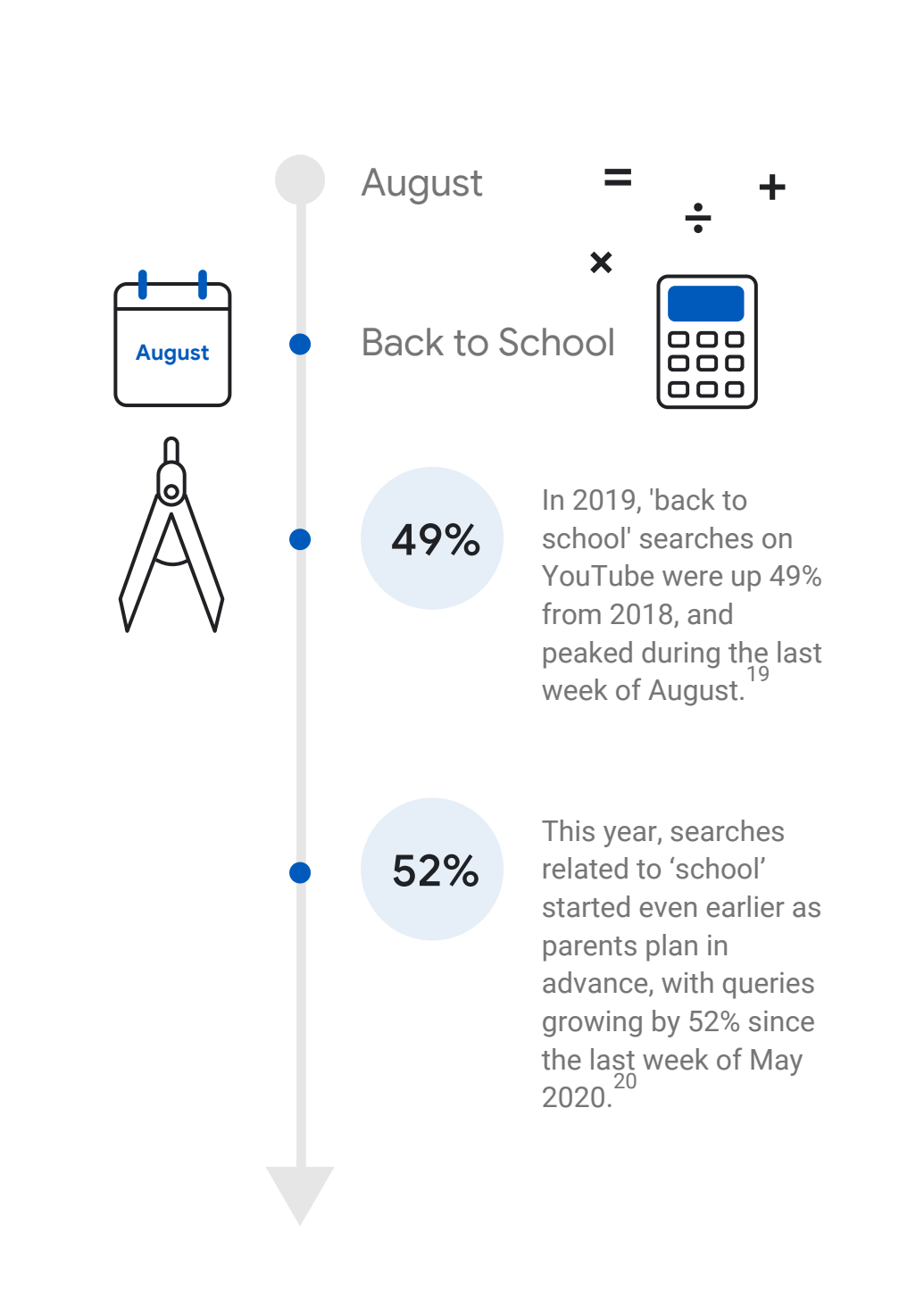
Consumer electronics, fashion and apparel, stationery, and educational services.

Consumer insights

It's still unclear how schools will operate in the near future. This year, search interest for 'distance learning' increased by 108% during March alone.¹⁸ It's important to be flexible and anticipate a change in back-to-school shopping habits.

Audiences

Back to school is one of the busiest retail moments of the year. Connect with those actively shopping for related items through in-market categories like computer and hardware, as well as apparel and accessories. Use detailed demographics to engage with key audiences such as parents, teachers, and students.



Single's Day

Single's Day is an increasingly significant seasonal moment around the world. This 24-hour shopping extravaganza originated in China as a way for single people to indulge and buy themselves gifts at a reduced price. In 2019, Alibaba's Single's Day sales surpassed \$38 billion in just 24 hours.²¹

Types of retailers

Fashion and apparel, beauty, and home and garden.

Consumer insights

In the UAE, staying home has led to more time being spent on mobile, with 50% of consumers anticipating their use of social media to increase.²² In addition more than 90% of Single's Day purchases last year were made on mobile devices, so it's important to optimise your campaigns for mobile.

Audiences

To align with relevant themes like self-care and treating yourself, focus on in-market categories like shoppers and luxury shoppers.

Black Friday

Black Friday is a great opportunity to build brand awareness in the months before the peak holiday season, while also testing new tactics and growth opportunities. Get an early start, and set your campaigns up for success this holiday season.

Types of retailers

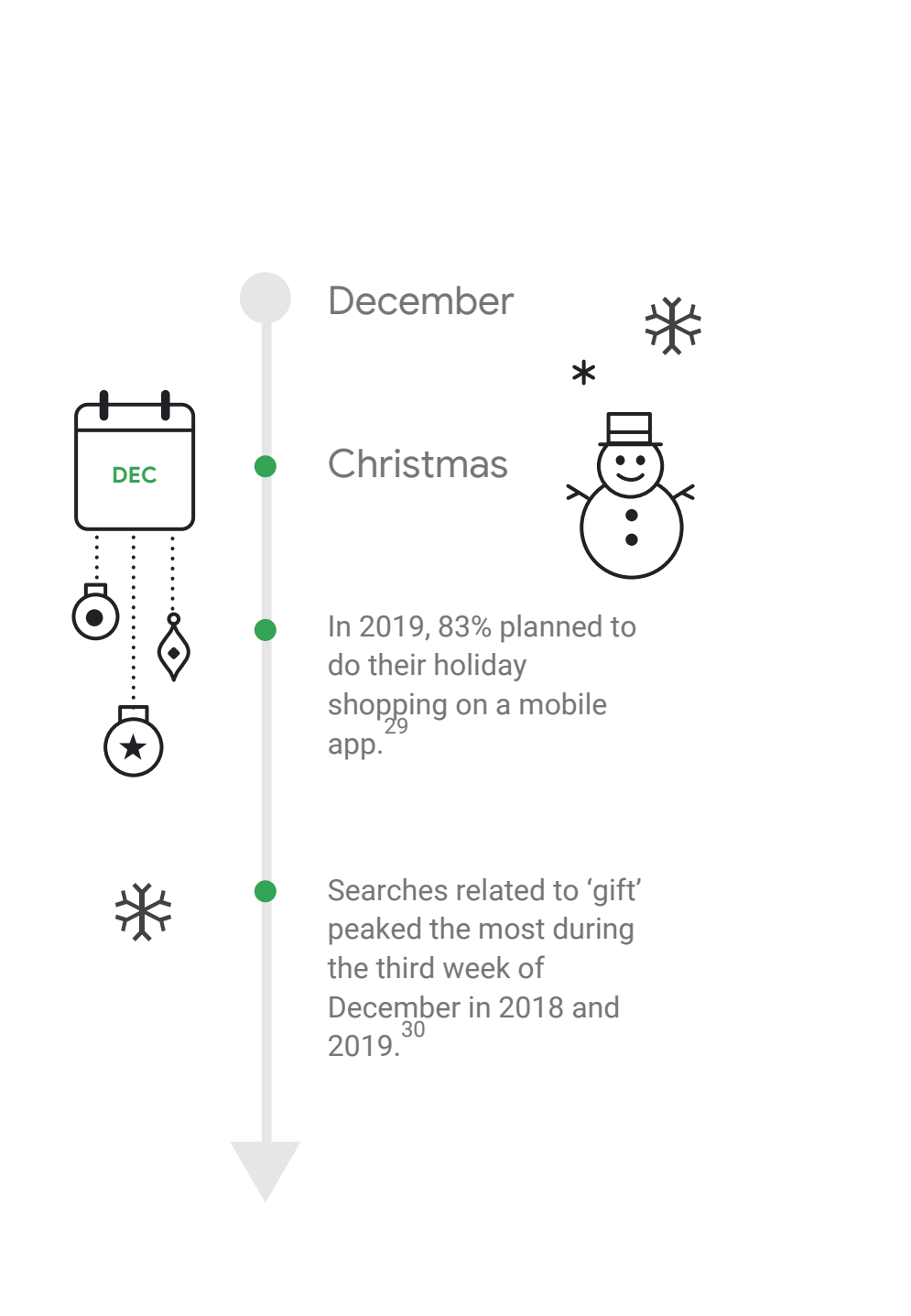
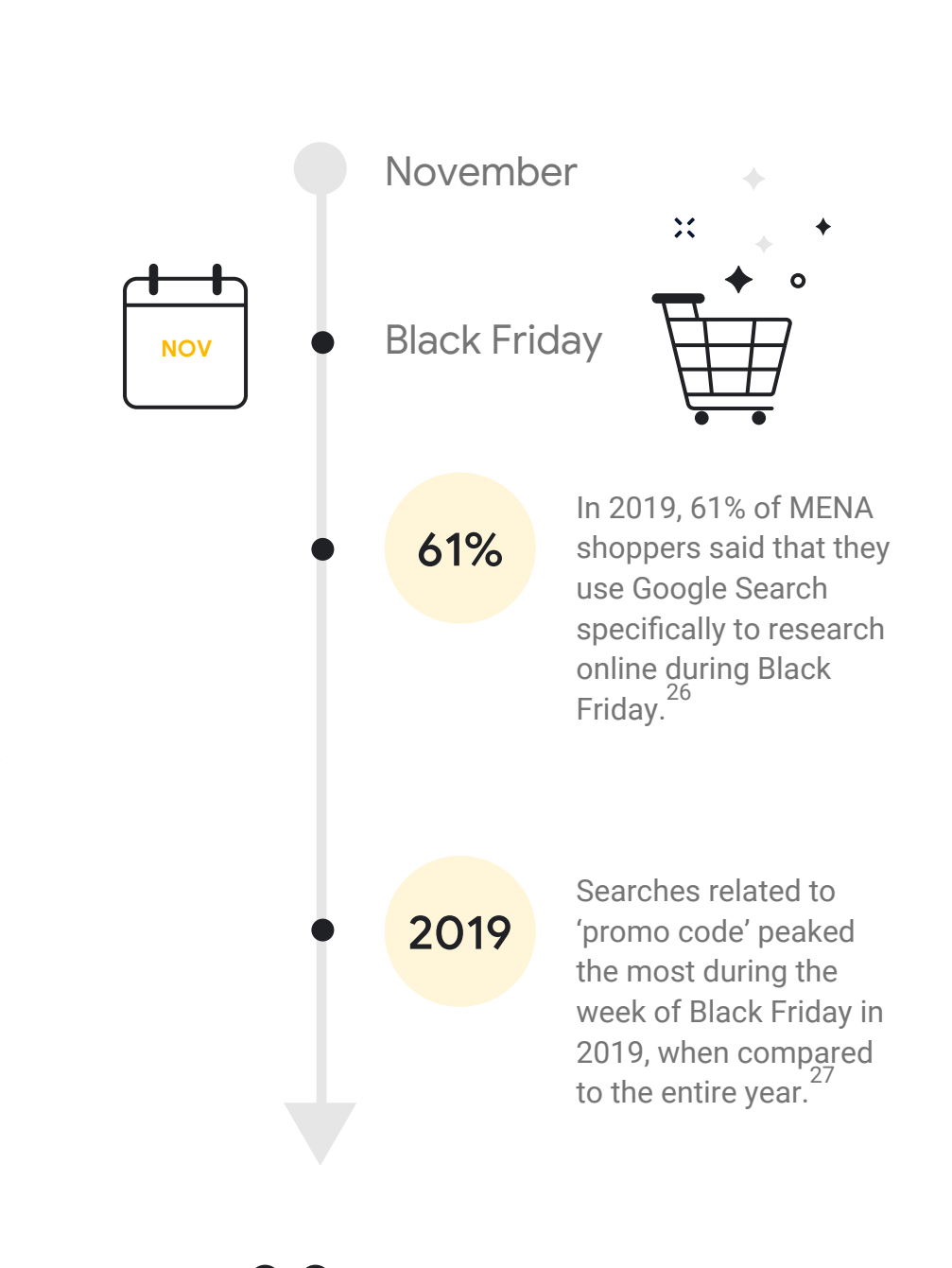
Consumer electronics, fashion and apparel, and educational services.

Consumer insights

In 2019, people in the UAE were preparing for the sales, with queries for 'when is Black Friday' up 46% from 2018. Searches for 'Black Friday deals' were also up 24%, and started to rise three weeks before the moment.²⁵

Audiences

Combine multiple audience strategies to make the most of Black Friday. Reach certain demographics like technology enthusiasts and bargain hunters, while also creating a remarketing list of previous visitors, and optimise your shopping bids to re-engage your most valuable customers.



Holiday Season

The holiday shopping season is the busiest moment of the year for most retailers. Any long-term changes in this behaviour are hard to predict, but the move to digital is assured.

Types of retailers

Fashion and apparel, toys and games, and beauty.

Consumer insights

Last year, 76% of UAE shoppers planned to increase their holiday purchases online.²⁹ Given the shift to online we have witnessed this year, be prepared for online purchases to grow even further this holiday season.

Audiences

Apply seasonal event audience strategies to reach those in key categories such as gift and occasion, holiday and seasonal, and after-Christmas sales.

Source list

1. The Smart Shopper Research Kantar/Google 2019 – United Arab Emirates
2. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, Feb 10 - 16 2019 - Feb 9 - 15 2020
3. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, Feb 10 - 16 2019 - Feb 9 - 15 2020
4. McKinsey & Company COVID-19 UAE Consumer Pulse Survey 4/24–4/29/2020, n = 510, sampled and weighted to match UAE's general population 18+ years
5. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, March 17 - 23 2019 vs. March 15 - 21 2020
6. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, March 17 - 23 2019 vs. March 15 - 21 2020
7. Statista, Consumer Behavior During Ramadan in MENA in 2019
8. YouGov, Survey UAE - How would you rate the usage of online applications for the below broad categories during Ramadan? 6th-12th May 2019
9. Google Trends Data, UAE, 2020
10. Global YouTube Data, year on year 3/1/20 - 3/31/20 compared to 3/1/19 - 3/31/19
11. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, 2019
12. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, 2019
13. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, 2018 - 2019
14. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, 2020
15. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, Jan 5 2020 - May 22 2020
16. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, June - July 2019
17. Google Trends, UAE, Egypt & KSA, June-September 2019.
18. Google Trends Data, UAE, Mar 1 2020 - Mar 31 2020
19. Google Trends Data, UAE, August 2018 - September 2019
20. Google Trends Data, UAE, May 23 2020 - June 11 2020
21. McKinsey China Digital Consumer Trends 2019
22. McKinsey & Company COVID-19 UAE Consumer Pulse Survey 4/24–4/29/2020, n = 510, sampled and weighted to match UAE's general population 18+ years
23. Google Trends, UAE, Nov 11 - 17 2018 vs. Nov 10 - Nov 16 2019
24. Google Trends, UAE, Nov 11 - 17 2018 vs. Nov 10 - Nov 16 2019
25. Google Trends Data, U.A.E, 2018 - 2019
26. Google Black Friday Survey 2019, Google Global Retail Study 2019
27. Google Trends Data, United Arab Emirates, 2019
28. Salesforce, Get ready for the upcoming winter shopping season 2019
29. Salesforce, Connected Shoppers Report November 2019
30. Google Trends Data, UAE, 2018 - 2019