



THE AMAZON KEYWORD SEARCH ECONOMY

And How Shopper Searches
Have Changed Since 2014

Methodology

At MerchantWords, we feel lucky to have been the first Amazon keyword tool available to third-party sellers. Over the years, we've had a front row seat to the evolution of the platform.

With over 1.6 billion keywords drawn from worldwide searches in the Amazon search bar, MerchantWords has a unique and exclusive perspective into the trends occurring within Amazon and e-commerce at large.

For the first time, our team is sharing some insights on five years' worth of Amazon US keyword search data. We looked at how Amazon shopper searches have changed since 2014, as well as current emerging patterns, to help you grow your business in 2019.



Executive Summary



The dynamics of the Amazon marketplace provide valuable insights into consumer demand for any product, brand, or location.

- Since 2014, there's been a significant growth in keywords year after year.
- Every month, 25-30M *new*, unique keyword suggestions appear in the Amazon search bar.
- More than half of the total keywords searched every month include a brand name.
- The types of keyword variations shoppers use in searches provide evidence that Amazon is a thriving product search engine.

“Amazon was like the wild west for sellers when we started out. It was mind-blowing to see the amount of data being generated.”

George Lawrence, MerchantWords Founder



5 Years of Amazon Growth*

- 2014** Paid Prime memberships grew more than 50%.
- 2015** The fastest company ever to reach \$100 billion in annual sales.
- 2016** Jeff Bezos revisits Amazon's core value proposition:
"desire to delight customers will drive you to invent on their behalf."
- 2017** More than five billion items shipped with Prime worldwide.
- 2018** \$1 trillion market cap reached for the first time.

*Amazon Annual Reports 2014-2017, CNBC Sept 2018

An orange silhouette of the United States map, including Alaska and Hawaii. Overlaid on the map is the white Amazon smile logo, which is a curved arrow pointing from the bottom left to the top right.

92% of US online shoppers
bought something from Amazon in 2018.*

**NPR/Marist Poll 2018*



In 2018, Amazon beat Google as the destination for 54% of all online product searches.*

Amazon is an influential part of a customer's shopping journey. No longer considered just a marketplace, Amazon is a product search engine.

**Jumpshot Data Report Q2 2018*

More customers.

More searches.

More sellers.

More searches.

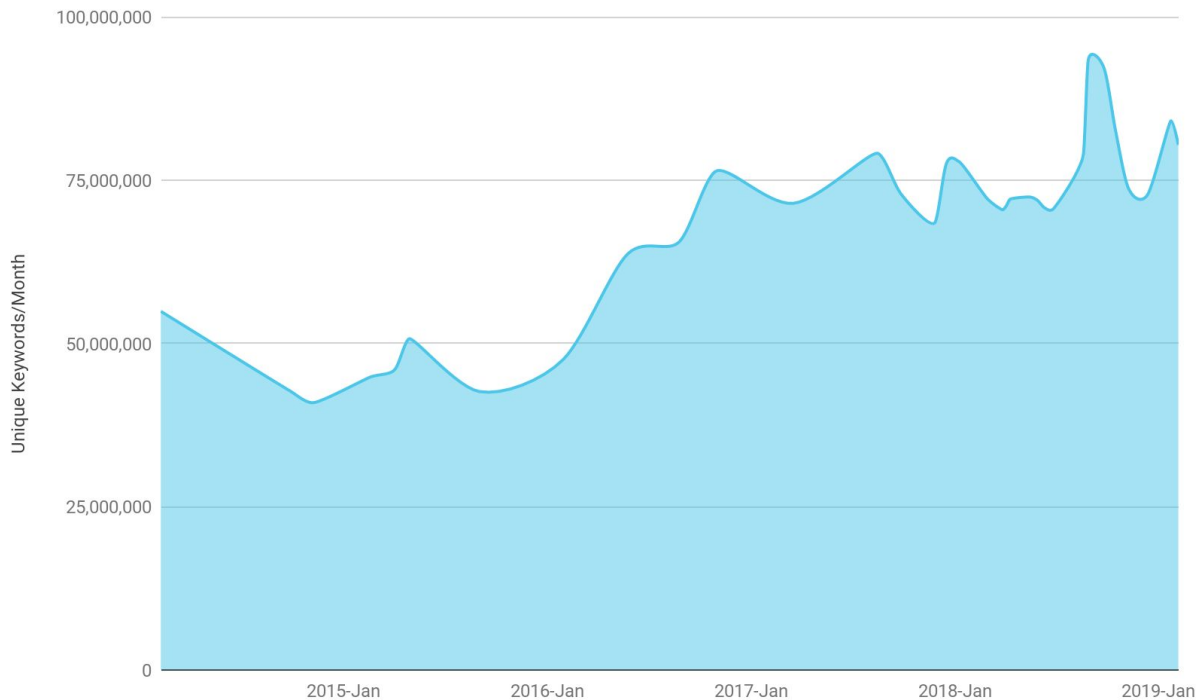
More products.

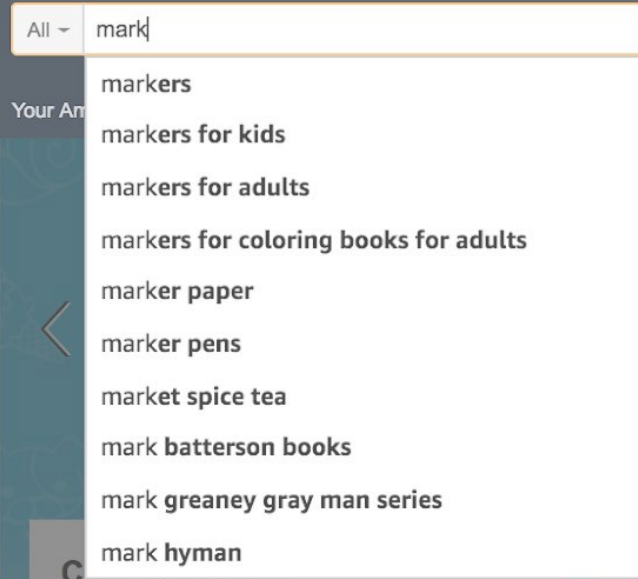
More searches.

More sales.

More searches.

With the growth of Amazon,
MerchantWords has seen a
corresponding growth in
keywords year over year.





The Amazon search bar is a direct reflection of customer behavior.

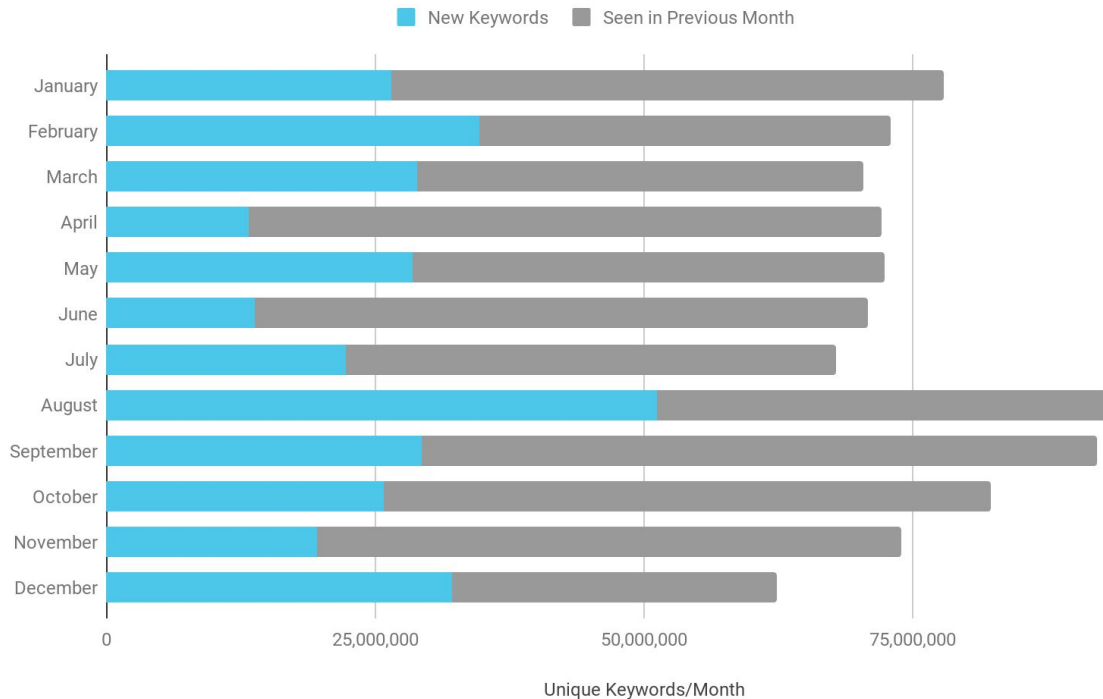
Its purpose is to steer customers toward the products that are most relevant to their query and offer the best chance of completing a sale.

The more letters you have to type into the search bar for a term to appear as a suggestion in autocomplete, the less popular (and newer) it is likely to be.

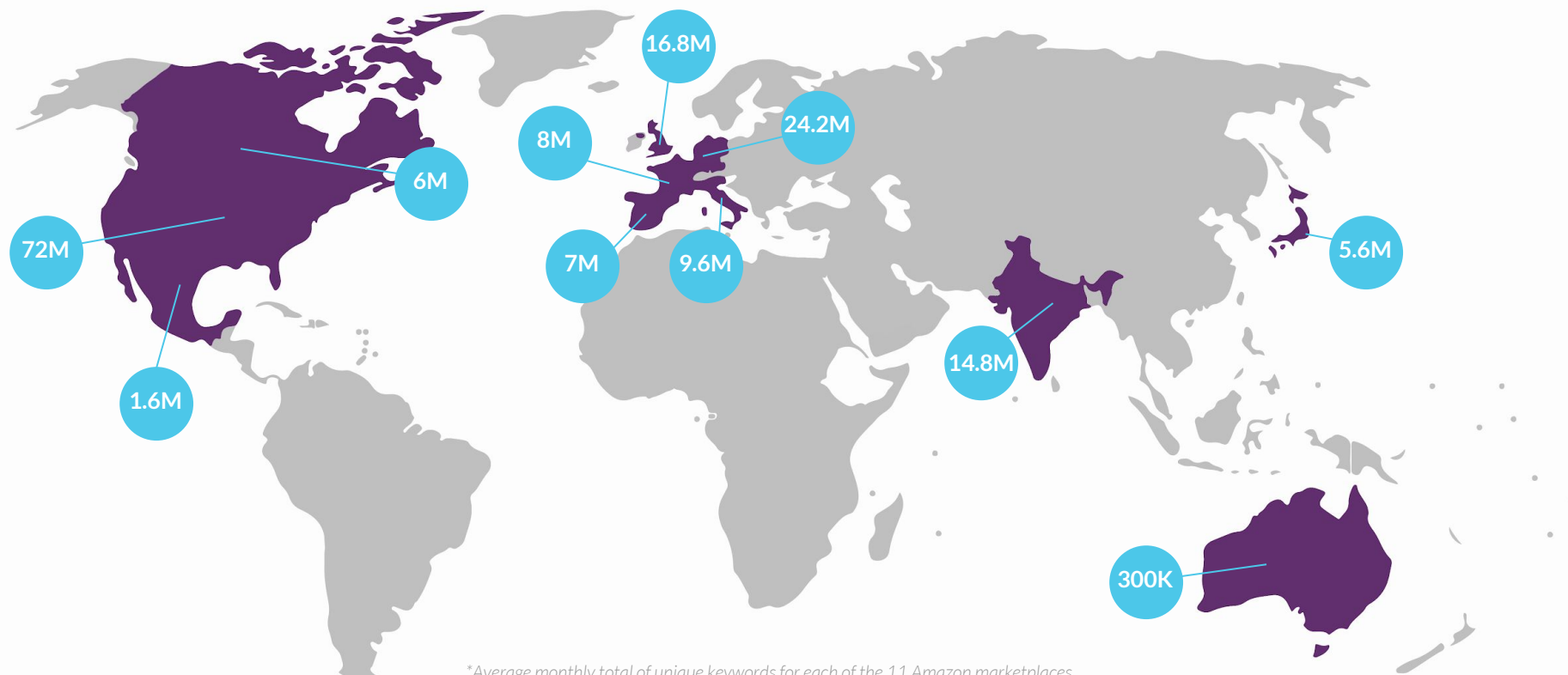
The search bar is the first place on Amazon to record new trends and products.

In 2018, the “universe” of search terms on Amazon US hovered around 72M unique keywords per month.

On average, 36% of keywords change each month: these terms are new, seasonal, or have appeared before but were not searched the month prior.



Unique Keywords Per Month by Amazon Marketplace, 2018*



**Average monthly total of unique keywords for each of the 11 Amazon marketplaces from which MerchantWords collects data: US, Canada, Mexico, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, India, Japan, and Australia.*

Amazon is uniquely qualified to spot and highlight shopping trends, as it's where 75% of Americans do most of their online shopping.*

* Vox, Sept 28, 2018

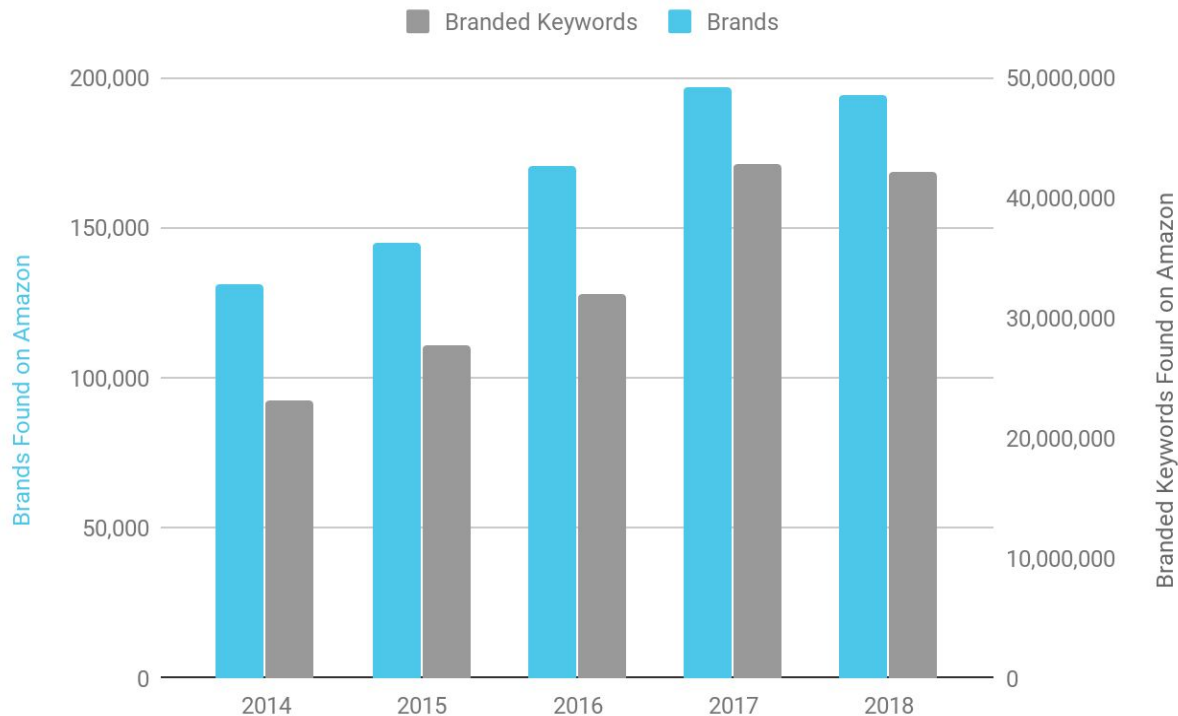
The logo for CHAPS, featuring a small square icon to the left of the word "CHAPS" in a serif font.The logo for LANDS' END, featuring the words "LANDS' END" in a serif font.The logo for carter's, featuring the word "carter's" in a lowercase sans-serif font.The logo for BUTTONED DOWN, featuring the words "BUTTONED DOWN" in a serif font.The logo for J.CREW MERCANTILE, featuring the words "J.CREW MERCANTILE" in a serif font.The logo for simple joys by carter's, featuring the words "simple joys by carter's" in a lowercase sans-serif font.The logo for VANS, featuring the word "VANS" in a bold, sans-serif font.The logo for Clarks, featuring the word "Clarks" in a script font.The logo for Champion, featuring the word "Champion" in a script font.The logo for Samsonite, featuring the word "Samsonite" in a sans-serif font.The logo for Herschel, featuring the word "Herschel" in a script font.

Brands matter.

In the last five years, more and more brands of all sizes have partnered with Amazon. The number of sellers on the platform has exploded over the years, and some of these brands are digital natives, born and bred on Amazon.

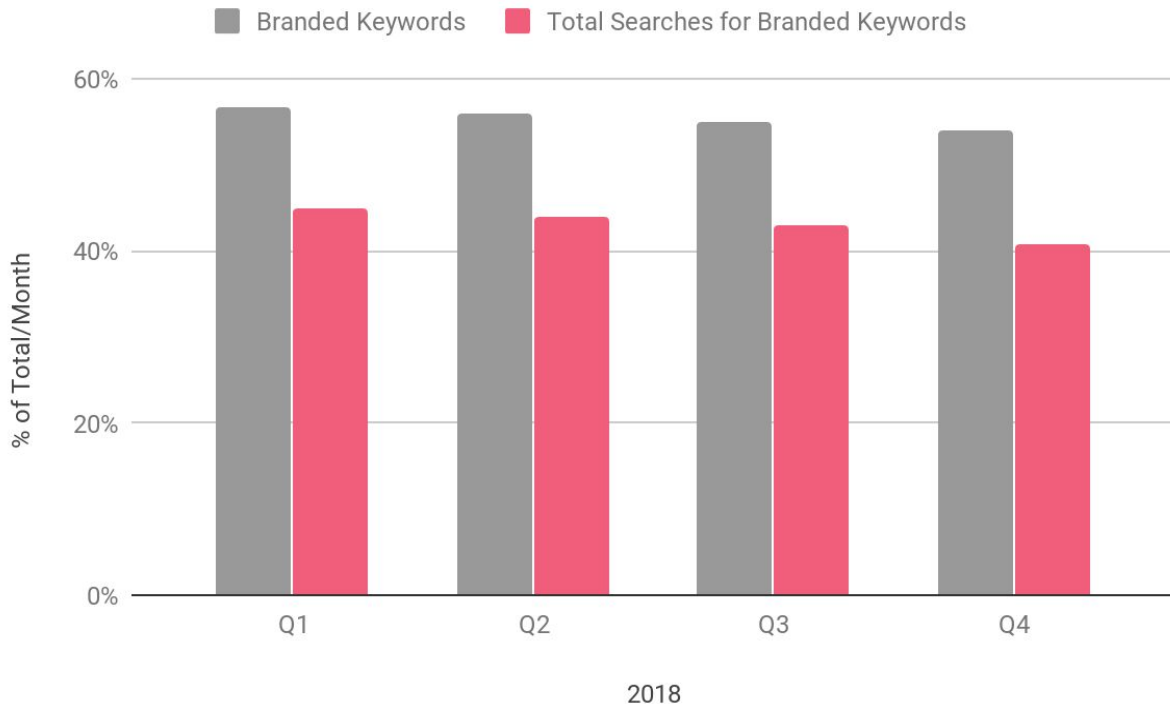
In 2014, nearly 23M monthly keywords contained a brand name. After five years, that number has almost doubled to 42M.

Today, close to 200K small and large brands appear on Amazon. Branded keywords (e.g., *apple watch*, *bose speaker*) appear in more than 50% of the total unique keywords every month.



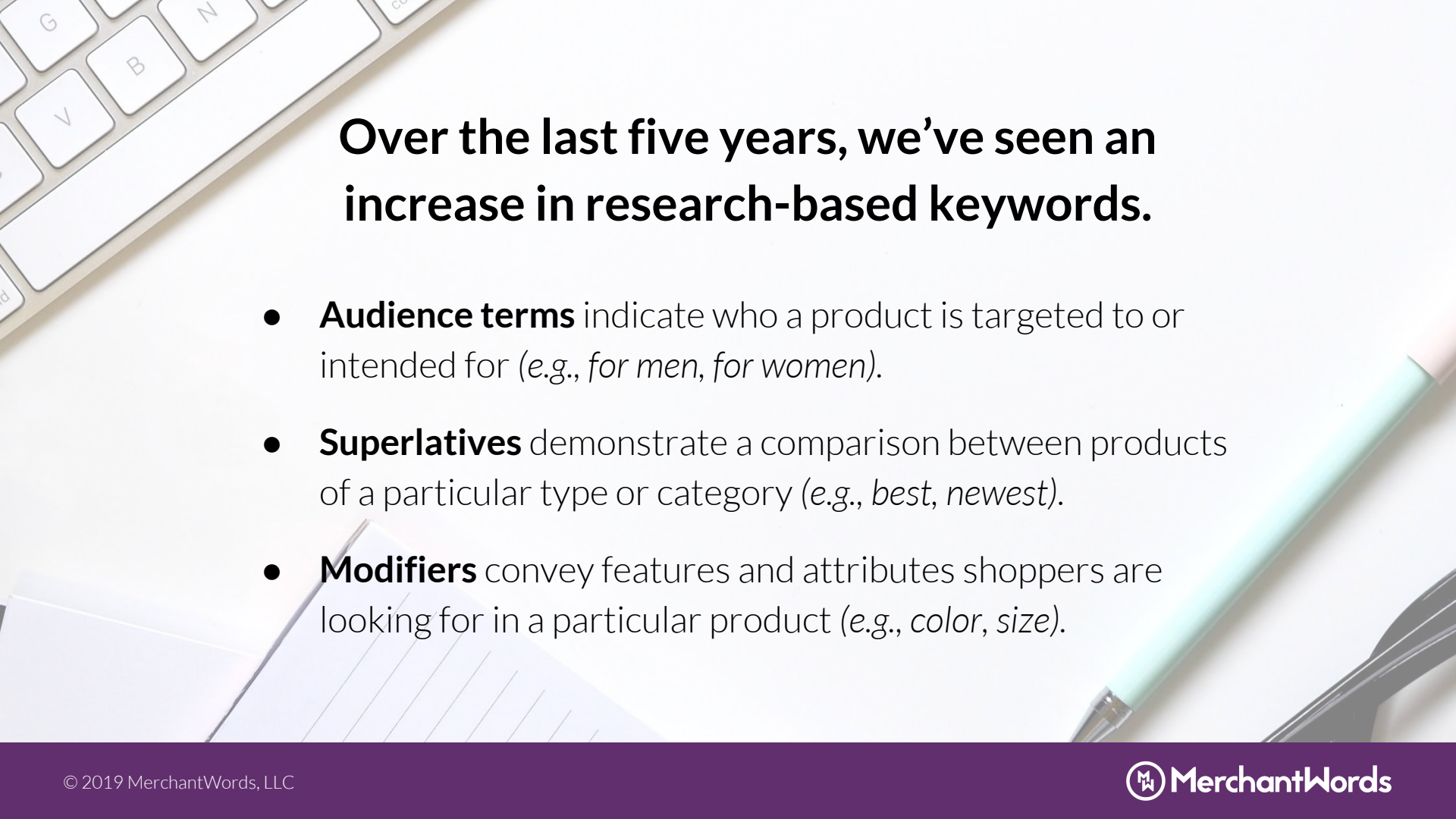
Despite this, when customers search on Amazon, they don't always have a specific brand in mind.

While branded keywords represent more than 50% of total monthly keywords, they only represent 40% of overall search volume. Non-branded terms, those describing a need or want, for example, carry more weight in search.





Customers increasingly use terms that indicate they go to Amazon to research products before making buying decisions.



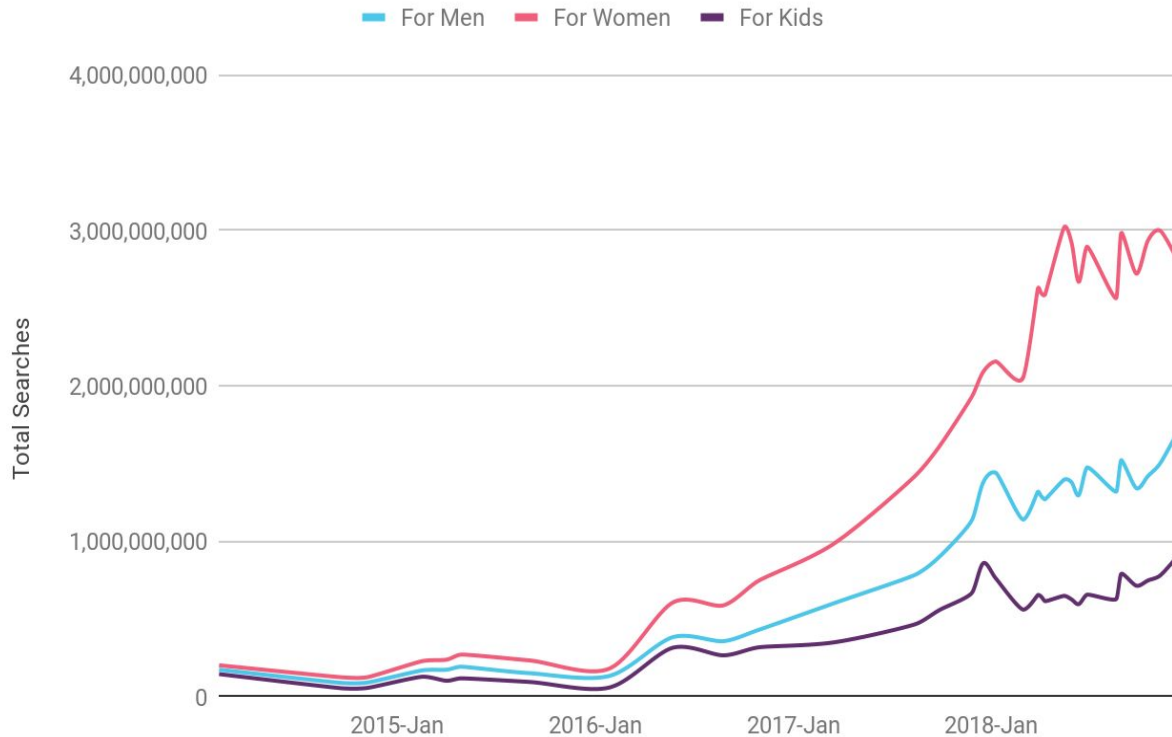
Over the last five years, we've seen an increase in research-based keywords.

- **Audience terms** indicate who a product is targeted to or intended for (*e.g., for men, for women*).
- **Superlatives** demonstrate a comparison between products of a particular type or category (*e.g., best, newest*).
- **Modifiers** convey features and attributes shoppers are looking for in a particular product (*e.g., color, size*).

Who are you searching for?

In 2016, Amazon shoppers increased the use of targeted audience terms in their search phrases. This trend has continued as more individuals use the platform to research their desired products.

Over time, interesting patterns have appeared. Amazon shoppers search “for women” twice as much as “for men.” Searches “for kids” are a distant third.



Within audience searches, the broad topics used indicate that customers are using Amazon as a product research engine.

This pattern can be demonstrated for any audience. As the number of products increases, so does the number of searches using audience identifiers.

2018 top 10 keywords within the “for kids” audience:

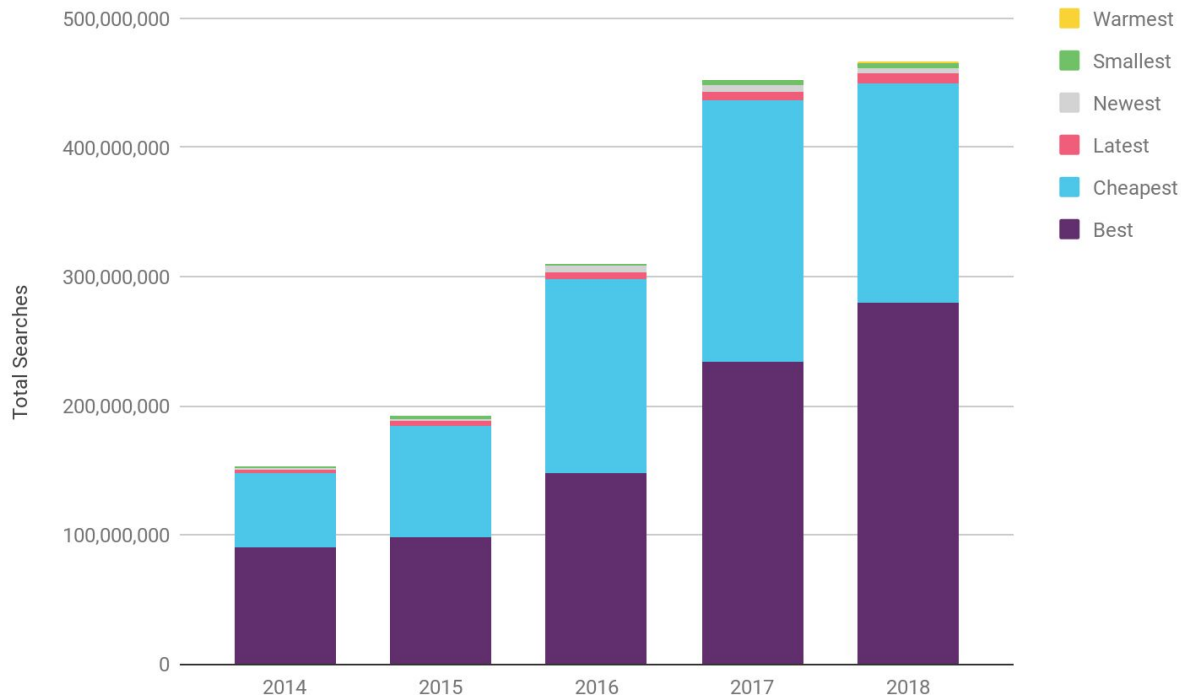
headphones for kids
for kids
watches for kids
sunglasses for kids
stickers for kids
stocking stuffers for kids
valentines day gifts for kids
lunch boxes for kids
books for kids
shoes for kids

2018 top 10 keywords within the “year old” audience:

4 year old girl gifts
7 year old girl gifts
6 year old girl gifts
1 year old boy gifts
4 year old boy gifts
2 year old boy toys
3 year old boy toys
1 year old girl gifts
7 year old boy gifts
8 year old girl gifts

The increasing use of superlatives indicates shoppers desire to be guided in purchase choices.

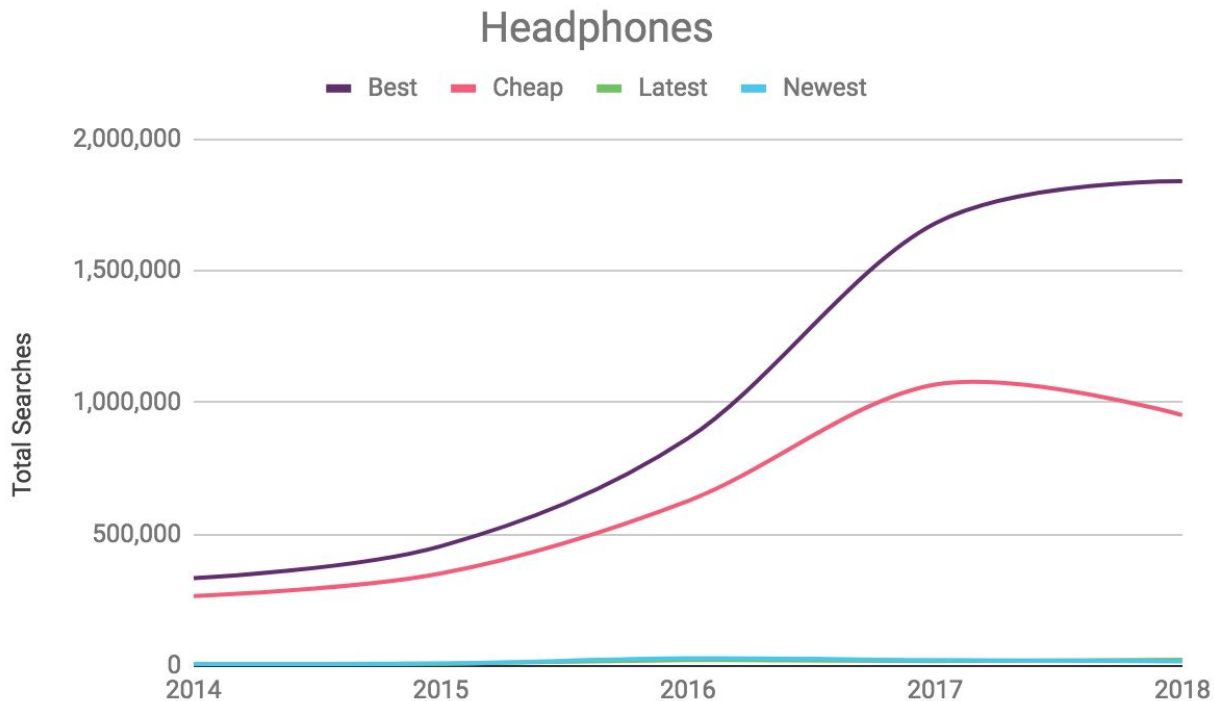
In the last five years, we've seen a substantial increase in the use of superlatives like "best" in searches. As the number of available products grows, so does shopper desire for guidance in purchasing decisions.



Superlatives are especially important in competitive product categories.

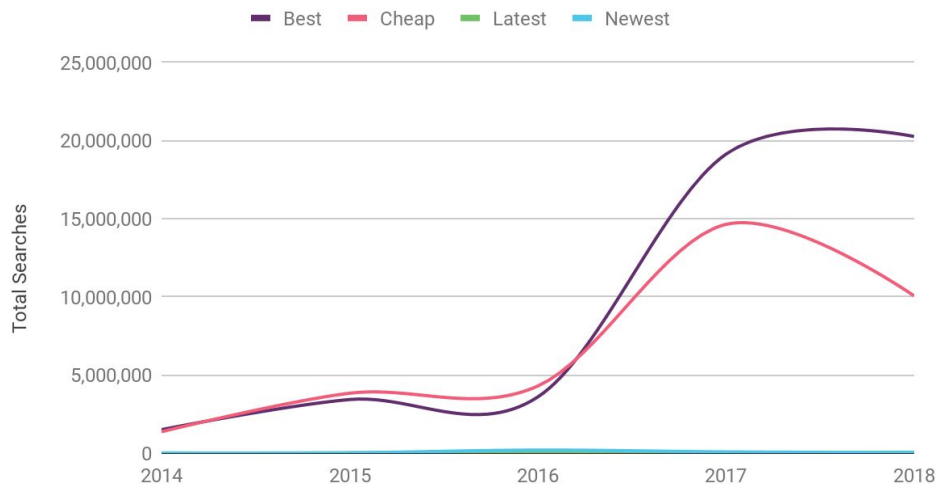
Rather than just searching for the base keyword, like “headphones,” shoppers are searching with qualifiers, such as “best headphones” and “cheap headphones.”

Customers searching with these terms are still educating themselves about what they want to purchase.

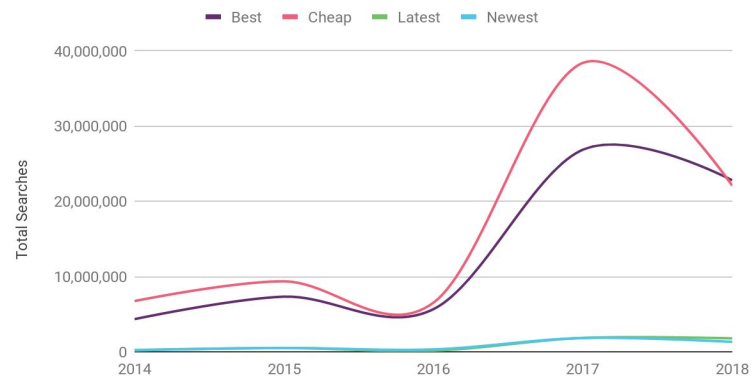


Across a wide variety of products and categories, superlative search patterns are focused on value, quality, and price.

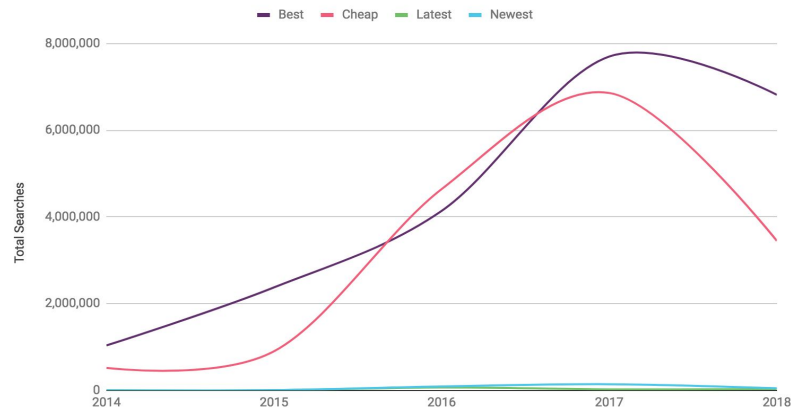
Beauty Category



Electronics Category

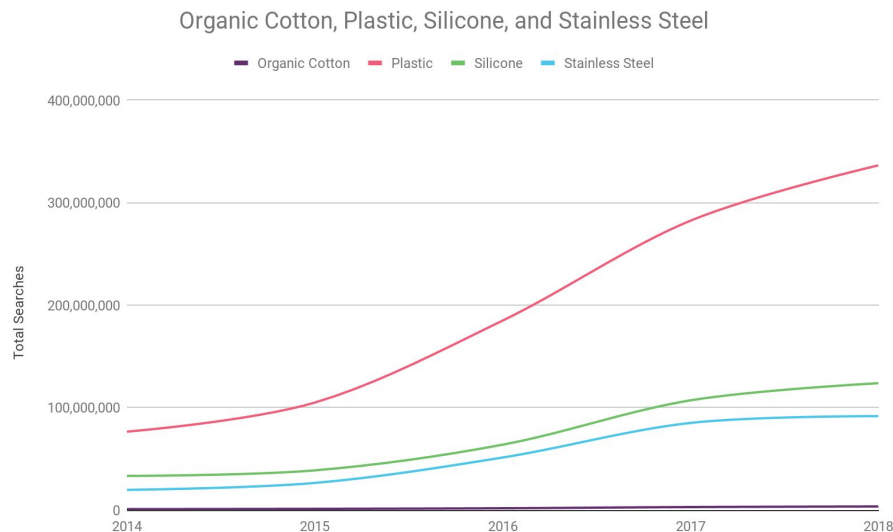
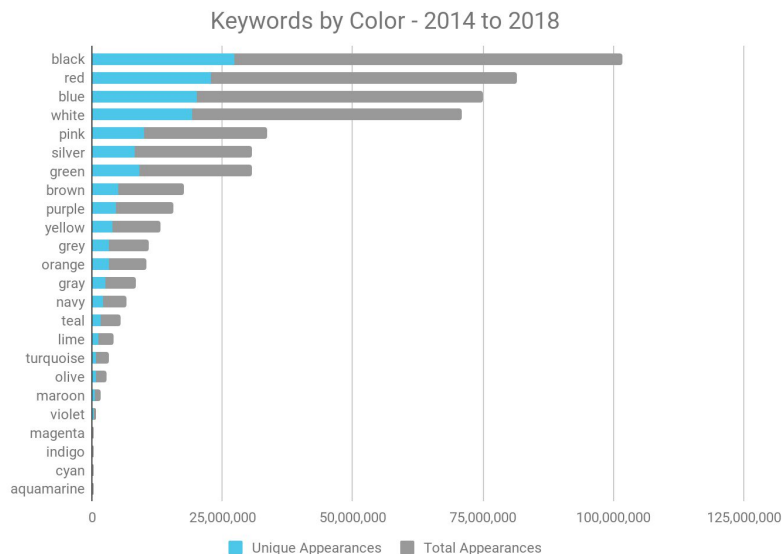


Baby Category



Shoppers increasingly use modifiers to refine their searches.

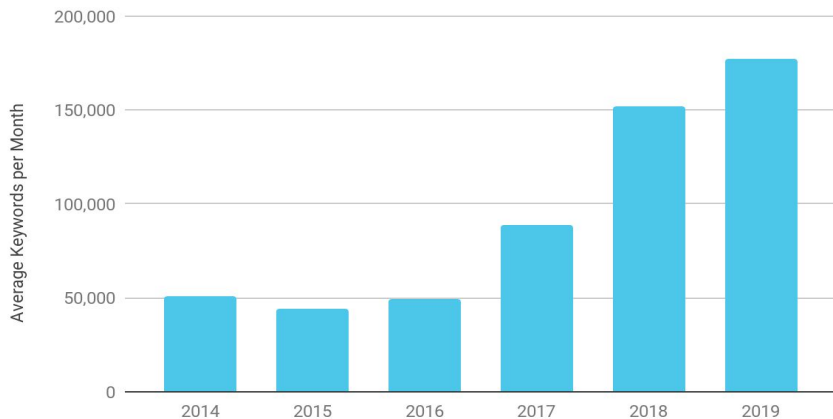
Adjectives now appear more frequently as search refiners. Customers use them to describe the desired qualities of the products they're looking for, and attributes like color and material factor into the search process.



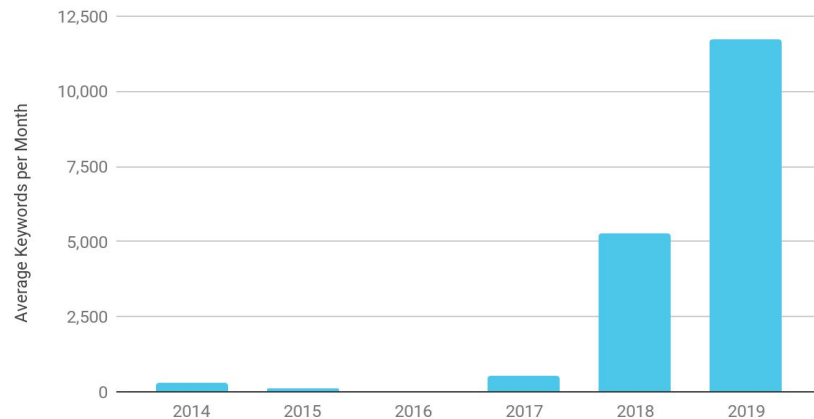
In the US marketplace, not all searches are in English.

In the last five years, there has been an increase in non-English searches on Amazon. While this may be evidence of America's diversity, it also showcases Amazon's reach and influence.

Spanish Keywords Found on Amazon



Chinese Keywords Found on Amazon





Amazon's unique position as a product search engine *and* marketplace gives it the ability to exploit current market trends, fads, and opportunities.

2018 Trend: Clout Goggles.

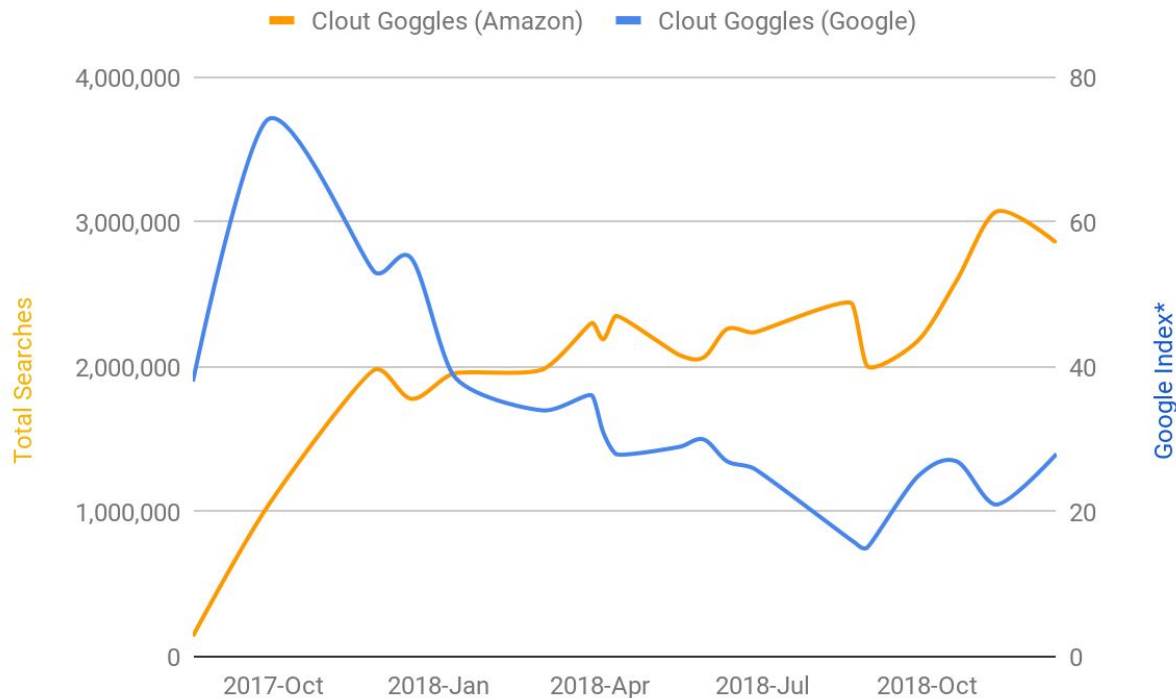
The retro style of the 1990s is officially back in fashion. The classic, thick, oval framed sunglasses originally made famous by Nirvana's Kurt Cobain were a popular search on Amazon in 2018.



Clout Goggles jumped onto the scene in 2017.

These sun specs showed up as a fashion trend and were intensely searched online.

After Nirvana fans, stylish guys, and some of the hottest up-and-coming rappers pushed these glasses mainstream, shoppers moved their searches to Amazon looking for “red,” “white,” “checkered,” “pink,” and “og” clout goggles.



*<https://trends.google.com>

Ongoing Trend: Z-Wave.

The cool thing here is that Z-Wave isn't actually a physical product. It's a protocol: a way of getting different internet-connected appliances to talk to each other so you can control your home life from your device.



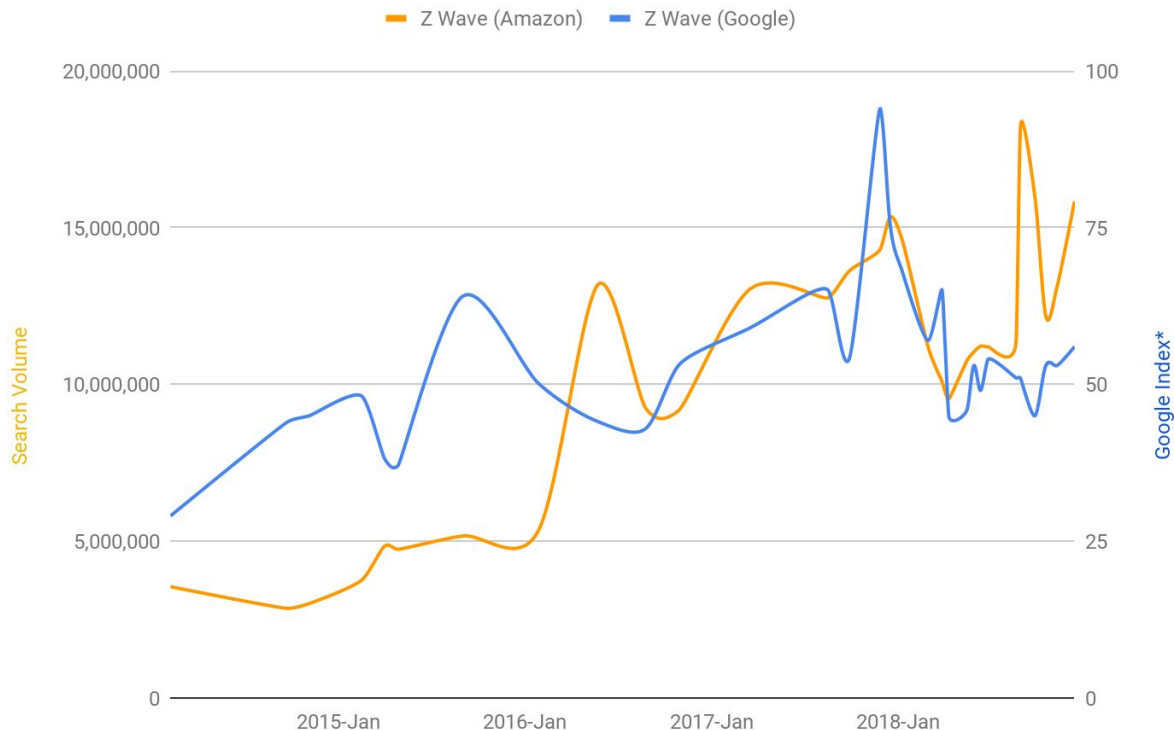
What's a Z-Wave?

Google it.

Want to buy it?

Go to Amazon.

Makers of smart home appliances are benefitting from the increased demand for products using this protocol.



*<https://trends.google.com>

2018 Trend: Hidden Camera

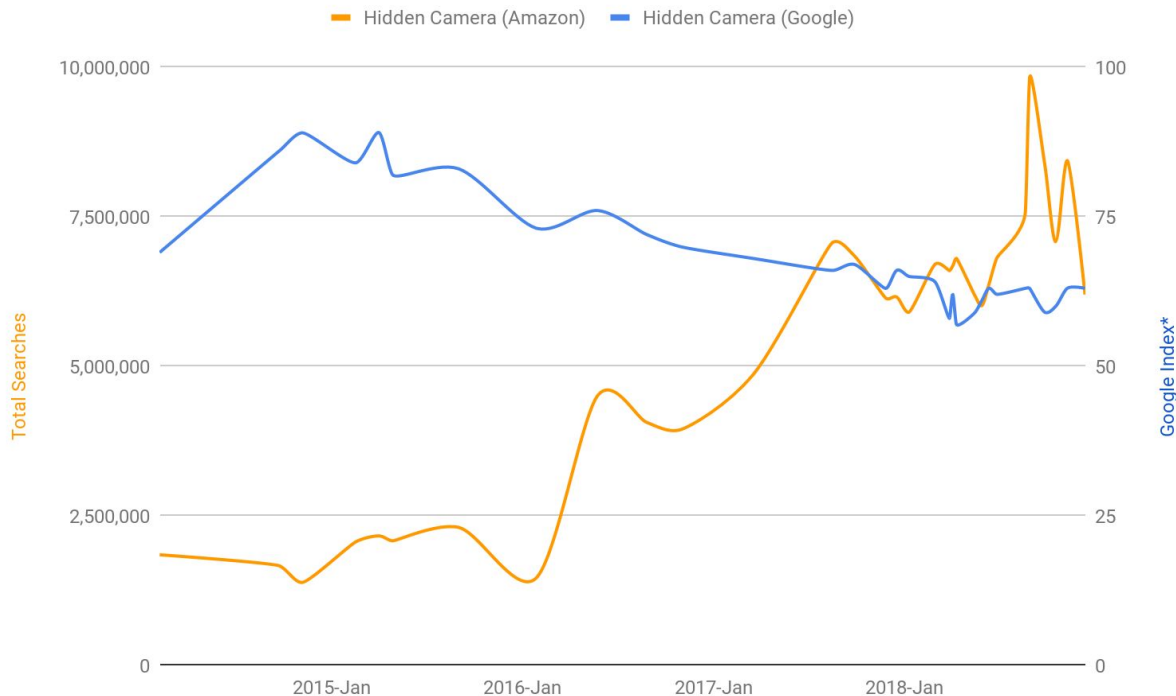
Yes, hidden cameras are kind of a big deal, and voyeurs... we mean shoppers... love to search for them on Amazon.



Who's watching you?

Google searches for hidden cameras are on a downward trend, while Amazon searches are surging upward. This data suggests high purchase intent.

Searches for hidden cameras on Amazon are driven by a range of features, such as “4k,” “wifi,” “mini,” and “outdoor use.”



*<https://trends.google.com>

Conclusions

Amazon's worldwide growth comes from its accessibility and position as a valuable resource for buyers and sellers alike. However, each Amazon marketplace is a finite and contained universe with the total amount of unique keywords per month varying from 300K in Australia to roughly 72M in the United States.

On average, 25-30M new keywords are entered into the Amazon search bar every month. As fads come and go, seasons pass, and technology rapidly advances, consumer desire changes, and this is reflected in the dynamics of the Amazon marketplace.

Amazon keywords signify an intent to buy rather than a casual interest in a topic. And trends and searches on Amazon are reflective of the e-commerce industry as a whole. Regardless of whether a shopper makes a purchase, the terms used in their search can inform how brands and marketers develop their marketing and advertising strategies, and also the future of products themselves.



MerchantWords is the most extensive database
of Amazon shopper search data available anywhere.

Our global Amazon keyword data powers a suite of products designed to help entrepreneurs, brands, and marketers discover new opportunities, achieve successful product launches, and run profitable advertising campaigns on Amazon and beyond.

Learn more at merchantwords.com