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THE ONLINE STATE
OF SKINCARE BRANDS.

Search interest and e-commerce best practices

FOREWORD.

The global beauty market is undergoing radical changes.

Over the past five years, the market has dramatically shifted focus, thanks largely in part to digital and the rise of direct-to-consumer brands like Glossier, whose marketing strategies are centered on building a sense of community around its brand, product and experience.

More established skincare brands have been slower to adopt these new consumer strategies with a few exceptions leading the way.

Advanced technology-based skincare products are on the rise, with pioneering brands such as Augustinus Bader blazing a trail, alongside historic brands such as Neutrogena, SkinCeuticals and La Roche-Posay.

As our research will show, there is a lot that can be learnt from disruptive brands, but also more traditional brands when it comes to digital activation, the customer journey and e-commerce.

Benjamin Dubuc
Head of Search and
Performance Media at DLG

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Augustinus Bader
Drunk Elephant
Glossier

↗

Top **fastest growing skincare brands** of the past three years (2016-2019) feature **newcomers and established brands**.

77%

=

Total share of skincare searches in 2019 were **performed on mobile**.

Clinique
Estée Lauder
Neutrogena

+

Skincare brands from conglomerates **Estée Lauder** and **L'Oréal Group** are the **most sought-after** in 2019.

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METHODOLOGY.

Based on **research** conducted by DLG Search and Performance Media team, this report aims to provide a landscape of the online performance of **28 beauty brands that have skincare as their main product***. We have excluded brands whose beauty segment is not the main focus (e.g., Dolce & Gabbana, Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel, etc.).

We have also excluded companies whose brand name are homographs (e.g., Vichy as the French city versus the skincare brand), in English, and potential misspells (e.g., Kiehls instead of Kiehl's).

The panel includes **established brands** in the industry **together with newcomers/challengers.** They are mid-range to high-end brands.

The whole panel offers **direct-to-consumer e-commerce services**, at least in the United States, meaning that when buying a skincare product, the full commercial transaction is conducted on the brand's platform (users are not being redirected to a wholesaler, for instance).

This research is not exhaustive, it aims to give a sense of the trends

FULL REPORT METHODOLOGY.

This report is divided in two parts:

Part I: Search Interest

We first explored the **skincare search interest** on Google, in English, on branded and category searches, aiming to demonstrate user intent, from awareness and research, to e-commerce or physical purchase. The **branded search** part includes both brand and specific product keywords, with a total of 21.8 million analyzed keywords. For the **category search** element, we analyzed a total of 15.5 million keywords which we grouped into topics related to the skincare search, identified and categorized search patterns by *concerns, products, ingredients and skin type.*
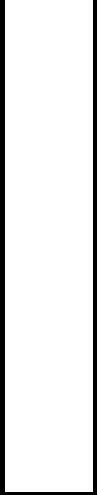
Part II: E-Commerce Environment

We analyzed a selection of websites features from 12 skincare brands: the top 6 fastest-growing brands (3 newcomers and 3 established) and 6 from the top 10 most-searched brands.

The objective was to define **the best practices** when it comes to **experiencing their e-commerce services**.

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28 BRANDS ANALYZED.

Augustinus Bader

BIOTHERM

CAUDALÍE
PARIS

CHANTECAILLE

CLARINS
PARIS

CLINIQUE

DRUNK ELEPHANT™
ESTD 2012

EAU THERMALE
Avène

Elizabeth Arden
NEW YORK

ESTĒE LAUDER

EVE
LOM

Glossier.

GUERLAIN

Kiehl's
SINCE 1851

L'OCCITANE
EN PROVENCE

LA MER

la prairie
SWITZERLAND

LA ROCHE-POSAY

LANCÔME
PARIS

(MALIN+GOETZ)

Neutrogena®

OLAY

Rodial

SHISEIDO

SK-II

SkinCeuticals

TATA HARPER™

VALMONT

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PART 1

SEARCH INTEREST.

BRAND SEARCH | CATEGORY SEARCH

#1

Users mostly search using brand-related keywords.

USERS MAINLY SEARCH USING BRAND KEYWORDS.

Brand search versus category search in 2019.

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Monthly Average Search Volumes in 2019

42%
Category Search

58%
Brand Search
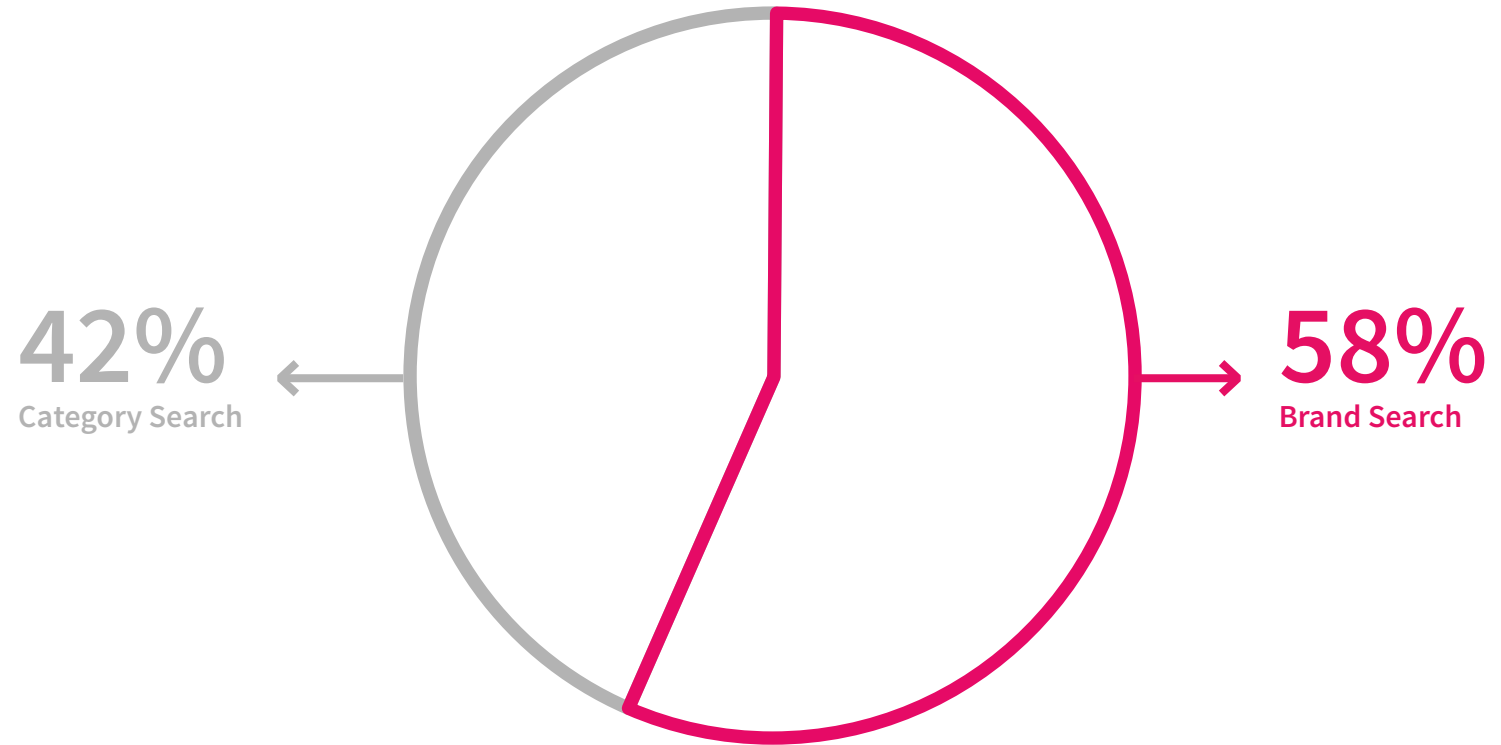
The majority of brand searches are based on branded keywords such as "glossier" for example, rather than by category type (skin type, ingredient product type or concern), for example "dry skin", "retinol", "moisturizer" or "acne".

Direct-to-consumer beauty brands have increasingly been investing in consumers' loyalty and advertising to ensure they are top of mind.

#7

Consumers perform more than 15M generic searches on average per month.

MULTIPLE WAYS TO SEARCH.

CONCERNS
⟶ **7,7M**
E.g. "Eye bags"
Avg. searches per month

PRODUCTS
⟶ **3,6M**
E.g. "Antioxidant serum"
Avg. searches per month

INGREDIENTS
⟶ **3M**
E.g. "Marula oil"
Avg. searches per month

SKIN TYPE
⟶ **1,2M**
E.g. "Oily skin"
Avg. searches per month

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Source: Google Keyword Planner, last 12 months

.Using Google Keyword Planner, we analyzed and grouped 15'500'000 keywords into topics related to the skincare search, then identified and categorized search patterns by *concerns, products, ingredients and skin type*.

.Based on this, we identified search volumes, specific topics and search trends.
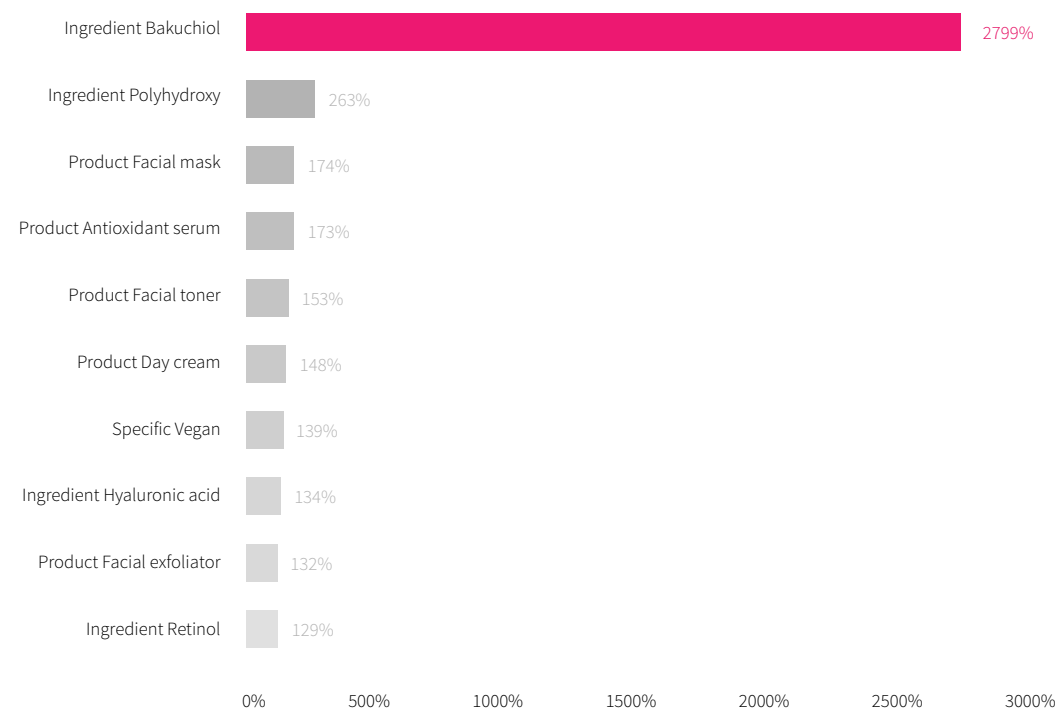
#8

Top 5 **fastest growing** search topics are within the Ingredients and Product types categories.

FASTEST GROWING SUBTOPICS IN SEARCH.

Ingredients category ranking high in the search growth, with Bakuchiol leading the way.

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## Search growth by subtopics (2016-2019)

Subtopic	Growth
Ingredient Bakuchiol	2799%
Ingredient Polyhydroxy	263%
Product Facial mask	174%
Product Antioxidant serum	173%
Product Facial toner	153%
Product Day cream	148%
Specific Vegan	139%
Ingredient Hyaluronic acid	134%
Product Facial exfoliator	132%
Ingredient Retinol	129%

0%   500%   1000%   1500%   2000%   2500%   3000%

.With consumers becoming increasingly well-informed about the properties of certain ingredients, the growing concern for natural ingredients over synthetic ones, and the ability to easily search it is clear to see why Ingredients rank high in the search growth.

.The ingredient Bakuchiol has similar properties as Retinol, boosting collagen and elastin production and reducing photo-aging like fine lines and wrinkles. However, it is a natural ingredient, unlike Retinol which is a synthetic derivative of vitamin A.

.By careful analysis of search trends, brands can adapt and tailor their product offering, their landing pages and their media activities to capitalize on trends.

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#9

Even though "acne" is the **most searched concern**, "skin redness" is the **fastest growing.**
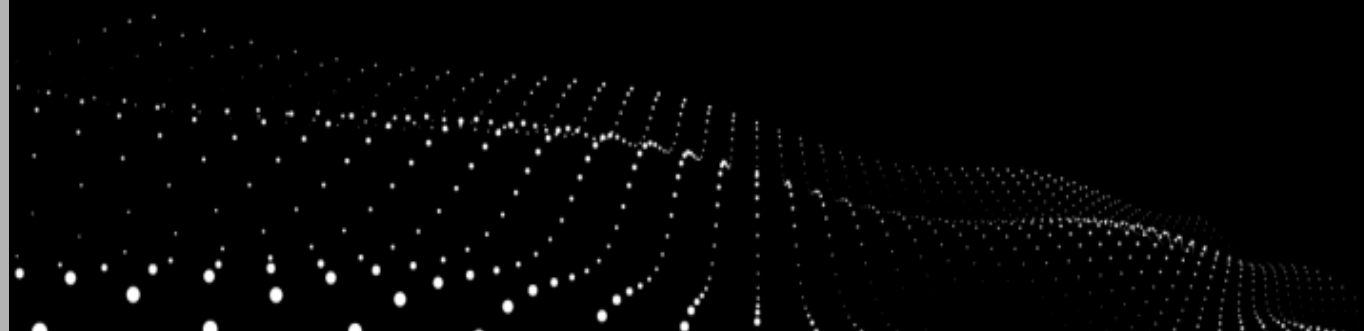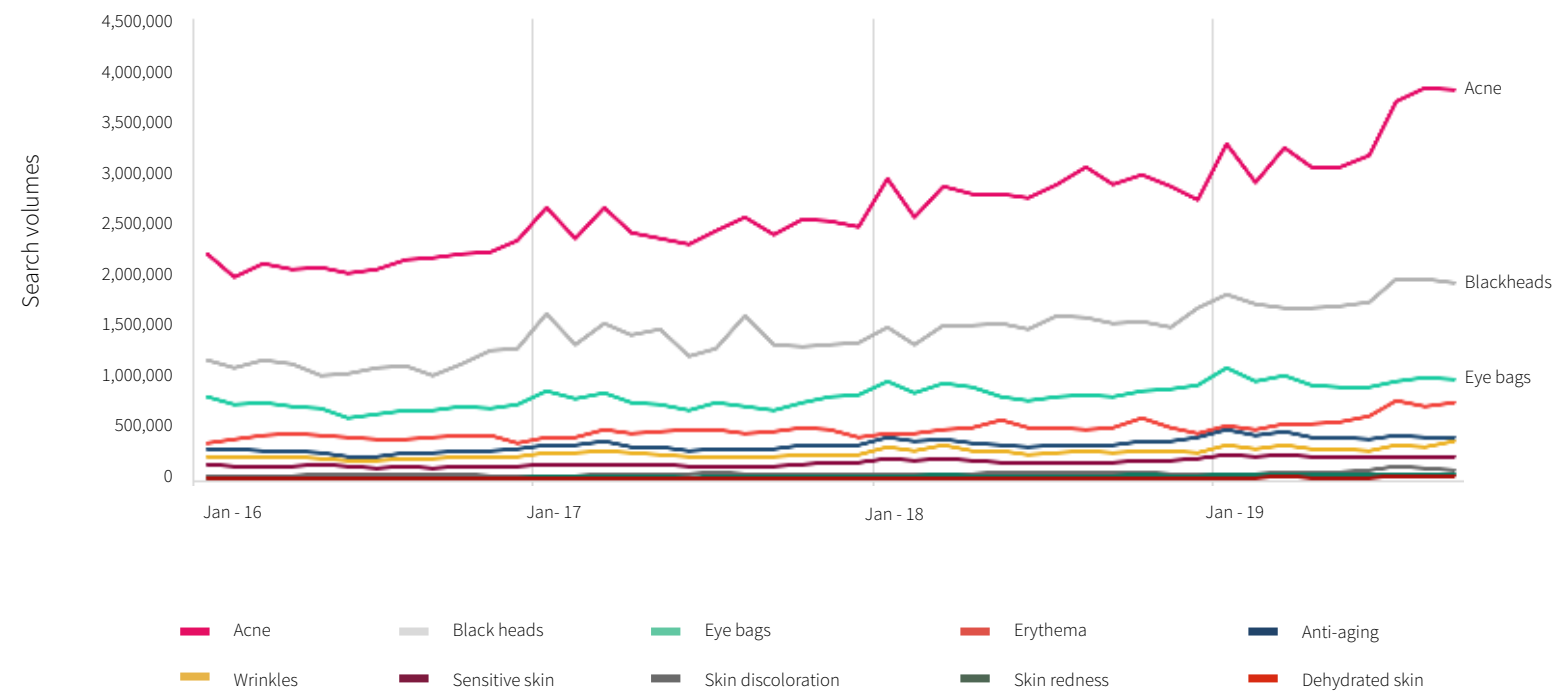
"ACNE" IS THE MOST SEARCHED CONCERN.

Steady growth, with seasonal spikes in January, March and a slight spike in August.
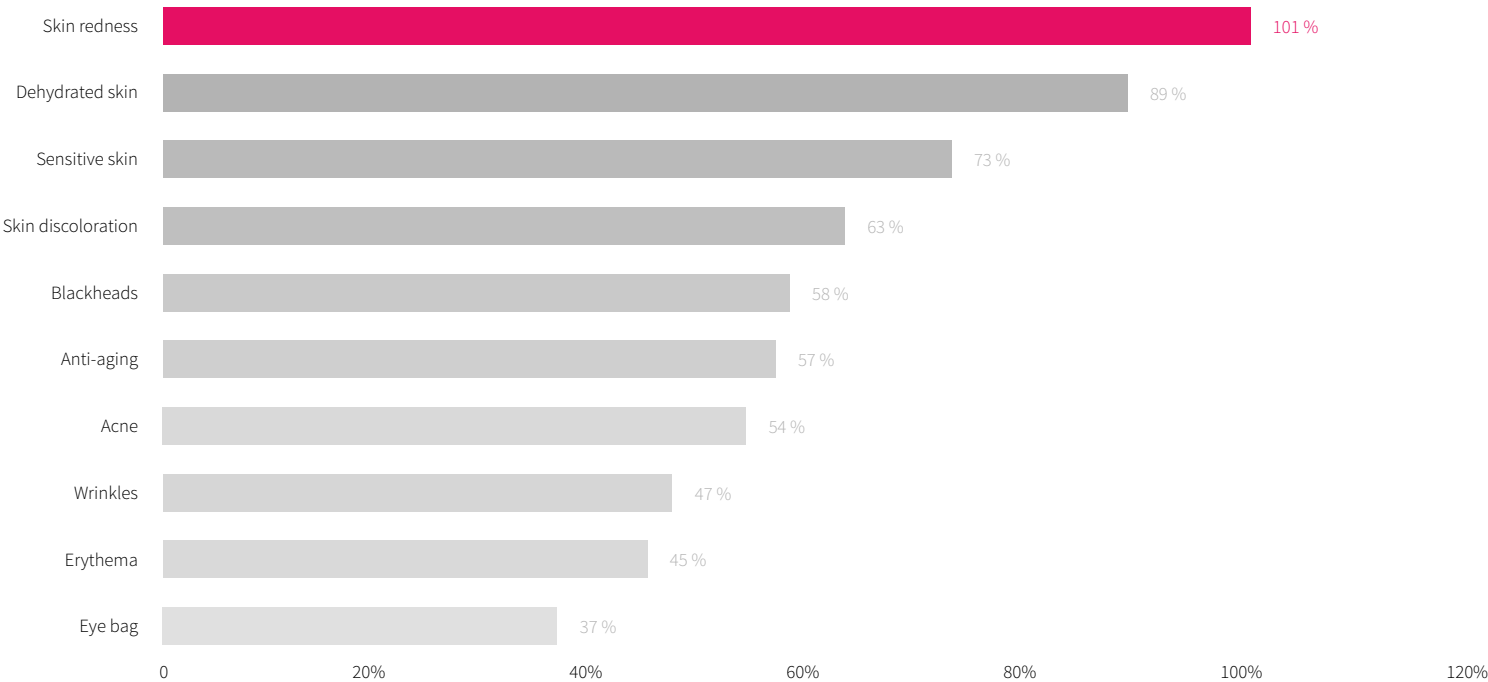
Search volumes by Concern (2016-2019)

Legend:
- Acne
- Black heads
- Eye bags
- Erythema
- Anti-aging
- Wrinkles
- Sensitive skin
- Skin discoloration
- Skin redness
- Dehydrated skin

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"SKIN REDNESS" IS THE FASTEST GROWING CONCERN.

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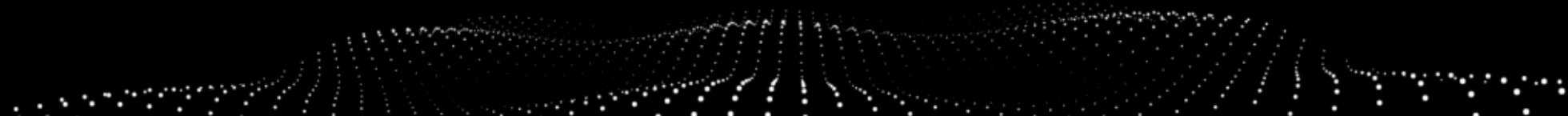
Search growth by Concern (2016-2019)

Concern	Growth
Skin redness	101 %
Dehydrated skin	89 %
Sensitive skin	73 %
Skin discoloration	63 %
Blackheads	58 %
Anti-aging	57 %
Acne	54 %
Wrinkles	47 %
Erythema	45 %
Eye bag	37 %

Even though "acne" had the highest search volume, the 3-year growth rate was one of the lowest (54%), in comparison to "skin redness" at 101%, and "dehydrated skin" at 89%.

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#10

"Moisturizer" is the **most searched product** type but "facial mask" is the fastest growing.

MOST SEARCHED PRODUCT TYPE IS "MOISTURIZER".

Steady growth, with seasonal spikes in January, March and July.

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Search volumes by Product (2016-2019)

Legend:
- Moisturizer
- Lip balm
- Night cream
- Facial cleansing
- Day cream
- BB & CC cream
- Neck cream
- Antioxidant serum
- Facial mask
- Facial toner
- Facial exfoliator
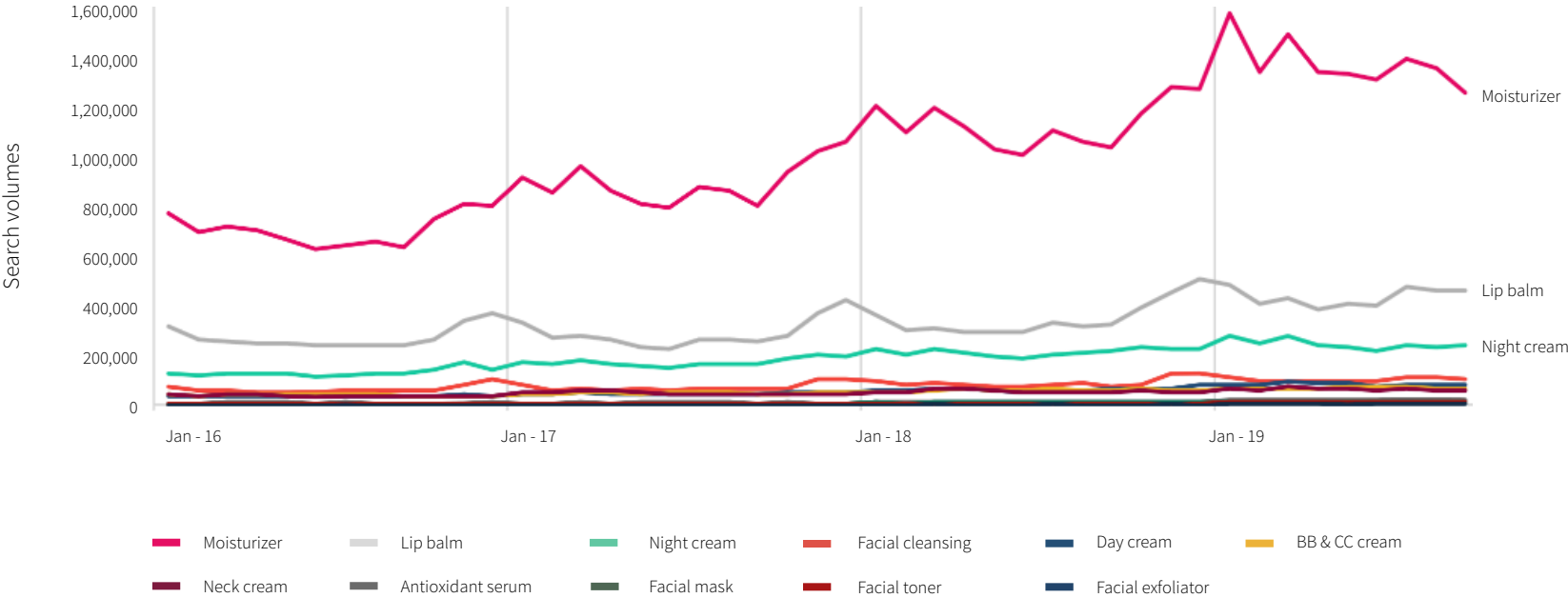
"FACIAL MASK" IS THE FASTEST GROWING PRODUCT .

Search growth by Product (2016-2019)

| Product	Growth
Facial mask	174 %
Antioxidant serum	173 %
Facial toner	153 %
Day cream	148 %
Facial exfoliator	132 %
Moisturizer	97 %
Night cream	89 %
Neck cream	81 %
BB & CC cream	70 %
Facial cleansing	61 %
Lip balm	59 %

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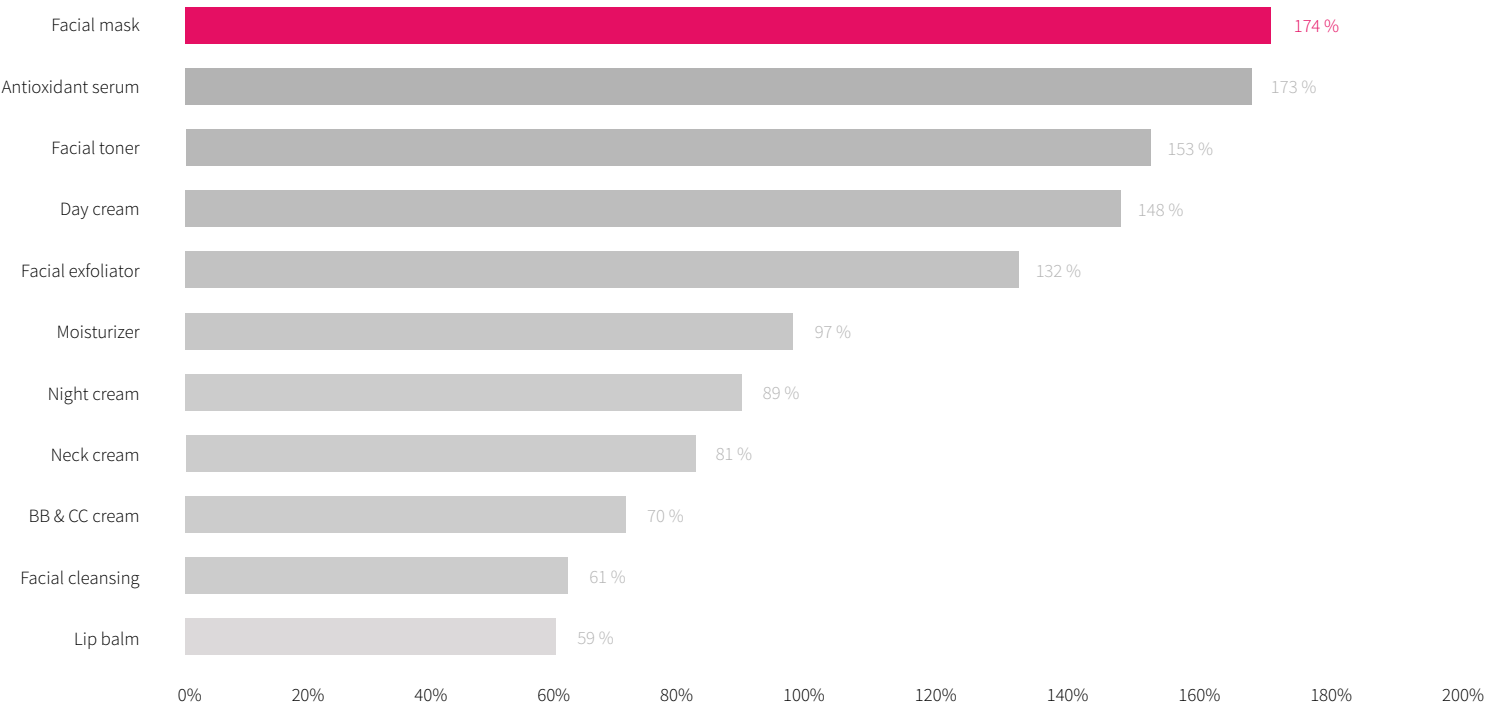
Brands can address interest in this product type by adapting their communication efforts and **maximizing consumer's purchase intent**.

THERE ARE ALWAYS CONSUMERS IN MARKET DESPITE SLIGHT SEASONALITY.

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Search volumes by Product Lip balm (2016-2019)
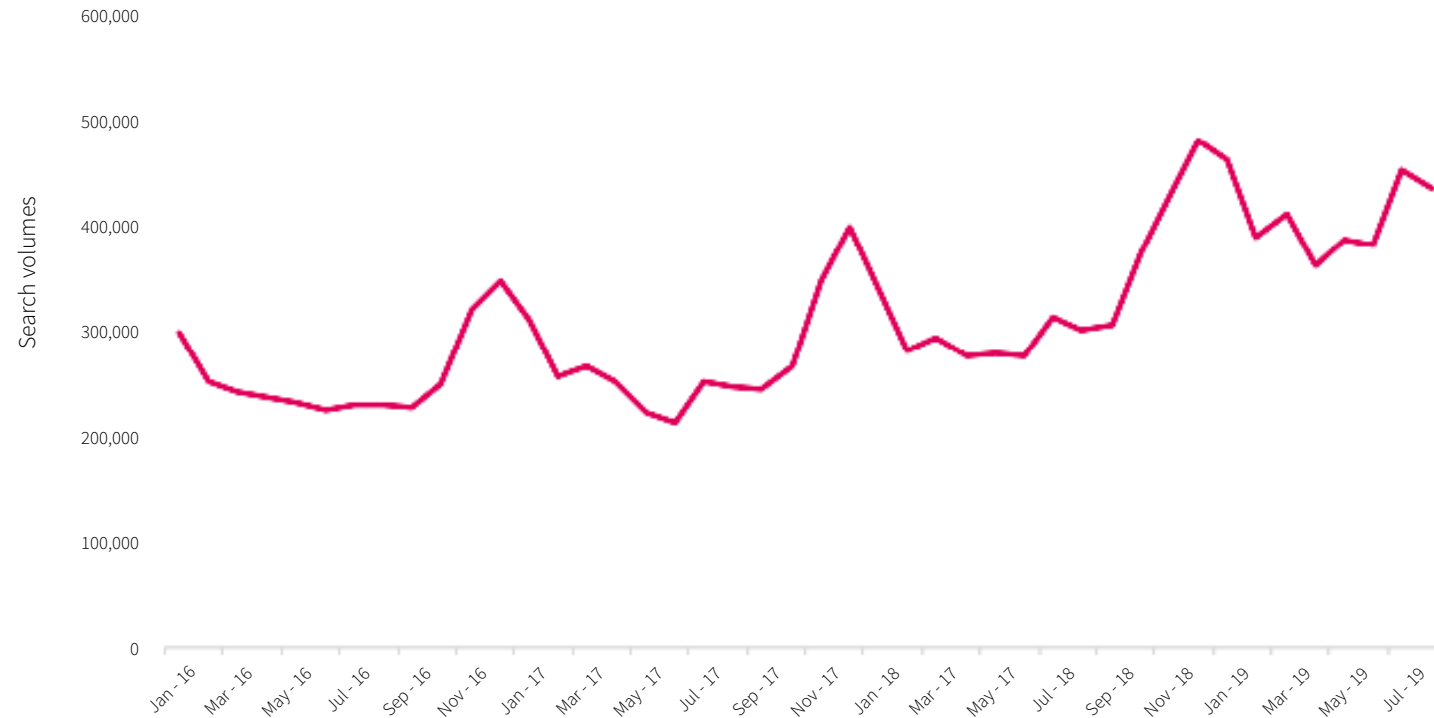
.Brands need to address seasonal interest and capitalize on the spikes. However, consumers are always-on, continuously searching and looking to shop on their own terms 24/7.

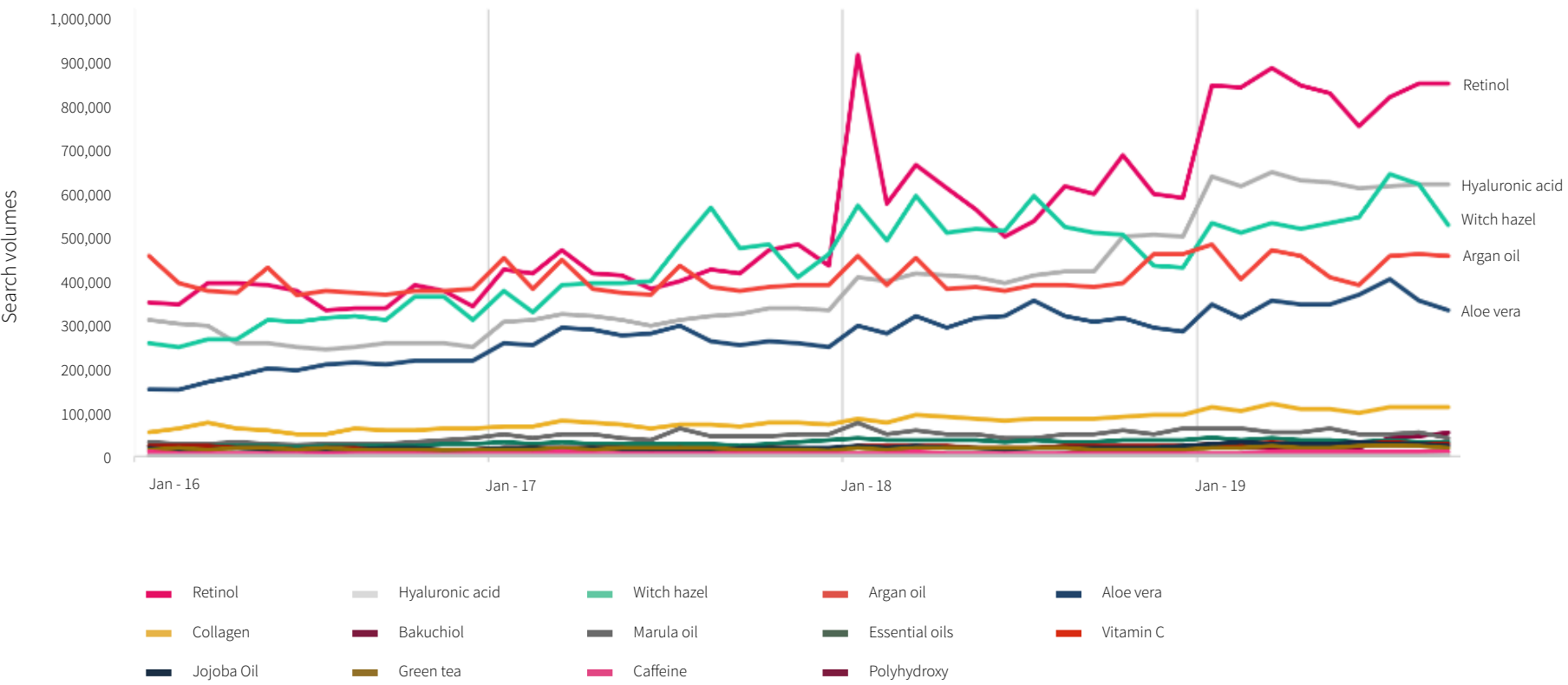.Not addressing this demand means losing revenue and leaving the exposure to your competitors.

#11

"Retinol" is the **most searched** ingredient type but "polyhydroxy" is the **fastest growing.**

"RETINOL" IS THE MOST SEARCHED INGREDIENT.
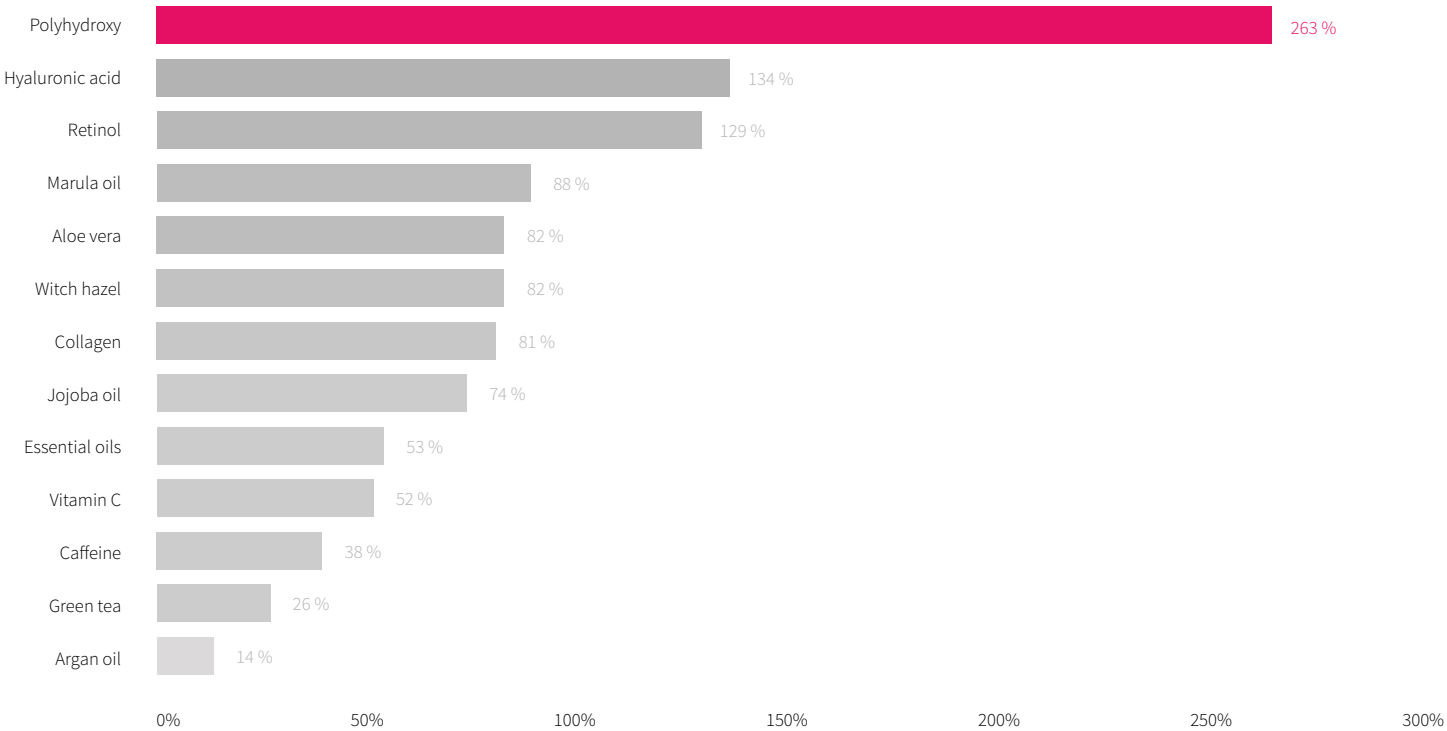
Search volumes by Ingredient (2016-2019)

Y-axis: Search volumes (0 to 1,000,000)
X-axis: Jan - 16, Jan - 17, Jan - 18, Jan - 19

Labeled lines (right side): Retinol, Hyaluronic acid, Witch hazel, Argan oil, Aloe vera

Legend:
Retinol · Hyaluronic acid · Witch hazel · Argan oil · Aloe vera
Collagen · Bakuchiol · Marula oil · Essential oils · Vitamin C
Jojoba Oil · Green tea · Caffeine · Polyhydroxy

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"POLYHYDROXY" IS THE FASTEST GROWING INGREDIENT.

Search growth by Ingredient (2016-2019)

Ingredient	Growth
Polyhydroxy	263 %
Hyaluronic acid	134 %
Retinol	129 %
Marula oil	88 %
Aloe vera	82 %
Witch hazel	82 %
Collagen	81 %
Jojoba oil	74 %
Essential oils	53 %
Vitamin C	52 %
Caffeine	38 %
Green tea	26 %
Argan oil	14 %

With **2799%** growth, "Bakuchiol" was removed from the graph.

TRENDING SKINCARE INGREDIENT.

Bakuchiol ingredient search spike started in July 2018.

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Search volumes by Ingredient Bakuchiol (2016-2019)
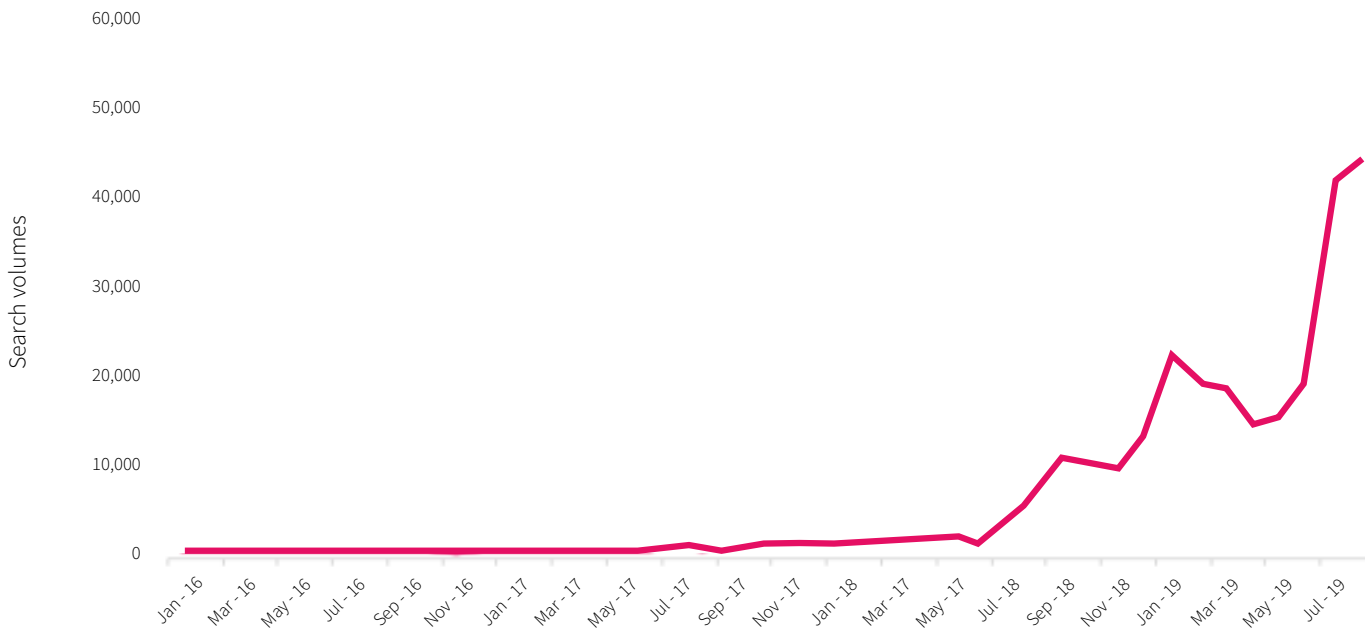
Exponential growth with 839 monthly average search volume in 2016 to 24,326 in 2019

KEY TAKEAWAYS.

✓ Brands need to be **reactive to new trends** and aim to educate the consumer on their various concerns. For example, brands can educate on how they can help consumers with "skin redness".

✓ There is a strong opportunity for brands to **personalize their advertising plan based on user's search intent**, showcasing the right products or content that can help the consumer in order to accelerate their purchase decision.

✓ **Also, brands can increase their revenues through performance marketing**. By digging deep into consumers' keyword search interests, and identifying demand trends, brands can guide their communication/production efforts accordingly. It's time for brands to predict intent instead of chasing it.

✓ Knowing **how their users search allow brands to deliver more effectively additional marketing efforts**. For example, if a consumer bought a skincare product for "dry skin", and if there is a sample offering, brands need to leverage this signal and offer related-products.

✓**Identifying trends on the rise**, such as natural-based ingredients like Bakuchiol, can leverage brand's positioning by showcasing **the right information** on ingredients, testing, benefits, and core technology, helping consumers make the right decision and accelerate their purchasing journey.

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PART

II

E-COMMERCE ENVIRONMENT.

Soon to be released

CONTRIBUTORS.

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360° Performance Marketing expert, Benjamin leads all search and performance media projects in DLG Geneva office. With over seven years of experience in digital marketing, Benjamin previously worked at leading agencies such as Publicis and FCB.
Growth hacker at heart, Ben is obsessed with moving his client's bottom-line.

Dino Auciello.

Head of Marketing & Client Development

Dino joined DLG (Digital Luxury Group) in 2017 as Head of Marketing & Client Development.
He is also the International Editor-in-Chief of Luxury Society, DLG's business intelligence division and a leading resource for luxury professionals. Before joining DLG, Dino worked eight years in the media industry. After starting as a journalist at Bilan, the leading Swiss business magazine, Dino was appointed Head of Digital, and thereafter named Deputy Chief Editor.

Andrea Silva.

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Brand and Digital Marketing expert, Andrea leads the marketing initiatives for the DLG (Digital Luxury Group) Geneva office. Previously, Andrea worked at adidas for both its Digital Brand Activation and the Business Development teams, based at its Latin America HQ.
Originally from Portugal, Andrea is fluent in five languages and holds a Masters in Marketing from Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam.

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DLG (Digital Luxury Group) is the digital partner of forward-thinking luxury brands.

With offices in Geneva, Shanghai and New York, DLG blends luxury savoir-faire, industry insights, and digital expertise to provide results-driven digital marketing strategies and services.

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