MICROSOFT ADVERTISING INSIGHTS

Cybersecurity & antivirus insights

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Key takeaways

Search and click volumes for security queries are elevated over 2019 estimates and have seen positive momentum that is expected to continue through the end of year (EOY).

Consumers are searching for security and antivirus terms in three distinct ways, which often overlap: proactively, reactively, and for specific software and tools.

When shopping for software, users search with action-driven terms like "protect" and "secure". Cover keywords using this terminology to ensure you are reaching users who are ready to engage with security software and tools.

More than a fifth of consumers are explicitly searching for free security software.

Users are frequently searching for more than one cybersecurity brand at a time. Consider conquering to expand your reach and remain top of mind to consumers.

Most non-brand searches are proactive in nature, meaning users are ready to take steps towards engaging with security providers.

Reactive queries are more likely to happen in a single search, while proactive consumers do more research – which means there are more opportunities to reach them.

Work-from-home (WFH) climate: Search traffic for virtual private network (VPN) terms saw positive momentum since the WFH climate began in 2020 but may have begun to normalize.
Forecasts

What do we expect search and click volume to look like in the coming weeks?
Search volume for cybersecurity is elevated over pre-COVID 2020 estimates

Network security: search volume forecast

Searches (2021 & 2019) vs. Forecast vs. No-COVID Forecast

% Difference: 2021 (Actuals/Forecast) vs. 2019

Microsoft Internal Data 1/20/2018 – 11/12/2021 | Forecast starts 11/13/2021
Clicks for cybersecurity have seen positive momentum

Network security: click volume forecast

Clicks (2021 & 2019) vs. Forecast vs. No-COVID Forecast

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Consumer search behavior

Who are our consumers, and how are they searching for cybersecurity and antivirus topics and brands?
Searchers tend to be older than 35, skew male, and live in large cities. Security and antivirus searchers user demographics:

- **Age**
  - 18-24: 11%
  - 25-34: 16%
  - 35-49: 25%
  - 50-64: 24%
  - 65+: 24%

- **Gender**
  - Male: 34%
  - Female: 0.01%
  - Other: 66%

Most U.S. consumers clicking on cybersecurity or antivirus ads come from larger cities and technology hubs, like New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Austin, Dallas, and Atlanta.
Consumers are searching in three distinct ways, which often overlap.

Additionally, most searches are branded:

- 69% Brand
- 31% Non-Brand

Most non-brand searches are proactive in nature
Non-brand searchers are ready to take steps towards engaging with security providers

Top non-brand themes
(Non-Software Focused)

= Proactive
= Reactive

Reactive queries are more likely to happen in a single search

Proactive consumers do more research

Position of user in path

When searching for security software and tools, consumers use proactive themes like “antivirus” terms frequently. They also search with action-driven terms like “clean”, “secure”, “scan”, “protect”, and “remove”. Cover keywords using this terminology to ensure you are reaching users who are ready to engage with security software and tools.

More than a fifth (21%) of consumers are explicitly searching for free security software.
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