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9 INTERNATIONAL EXPORT *tools*

you need in your digital arsenal

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The fast-moving digital ecosystem has opened up a whole world of opportunities when it comes to international trade.

And it's not just brands that are on board; it's customers too.

According to Accenture, cross-border eCommerce is becoming the key growth engine to B2C trade, growing at 29.3% year on year from 2014 to 2020. The reality is that brands that don't capitalise on this opportunity will potentially fall behind and miss out on massive opportunities in a competitive market.

SMALLER COMPANIES CAN TRIPLE IN SIZE IN AN INSTANT SIMPLY BY EXPANDING THEIR DIGITAL BORDERS

The sheer size and scale of the international export opportunity is phenomenal.

Cross-border eCommerce is a buzzword that marketers are extremely excited about. Say a customer buys an app via a UK website and they are based in the US, then they're taking advantage of cross-border commerce.
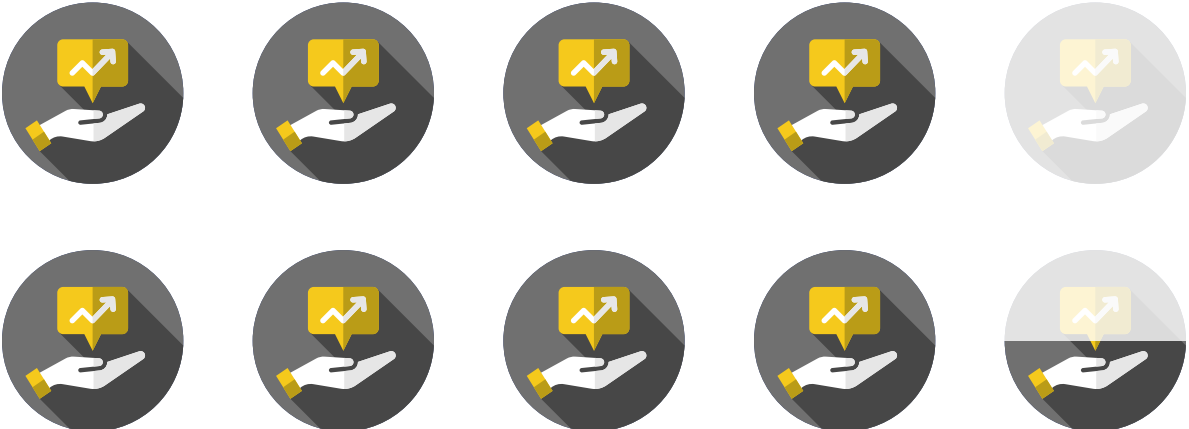
85% of companies say exporting has led to a level of growth not otherwise possible

Smaller companies can triple in size in an instant simply by expanding their digital borders.

In fact, 85% of companies say exporting has led to a level of growth not otherwise possible, and exporting businesses generate an average growth of 30% after exporting for just two years.

PEOPLE ARE BECOMING MORE AND MORE ACCUSTOMED TO BUYING WHAT THEY WANT, FROM WHEREVER THEY WANT

The introduction of international commerce online has naturally been made more feasible by the general growth of eCommerce globally. It's growing at an alarming rate. People are becoming more and more accustomed to buying what they want, from wherever they want on the world wide web, and this growth isn't going to stop any time soon.

According to Statista, global eCommerce revenues are projected to reach US$4.48tn by 2021. Now that's a mind-blowing figure, and if that doesn't prompt you to consider international exports then we're not sure what will.

Plus, there are endless examples of companies that have won in terms of international online expansion - just take AirBnB, Uber, Amazon and Slack for example.

It's clear that digital marketing is a key driving force behind international success.

But you can't just dive into new markets without the right planning and tools. It's crucial to have the correct tools to hand in order to see how your product or service might fare in other countries. Smart digital tools, analysis and research can help you to make sensible, informed decisions about where and how to launch your products or service.

So, to help you get started, we've put together a list of some of the top tools available.

1. GOOGLE MARKET FINDER

Say you want to launch a product in Australia. But you've got no insights into Australians and their habits, what they search for and how words and phrases vary in this market.

Enter **Google Market Finder**. It's a bit like an enormous international AdWords, serving up behavioural insights related to location. It also suggests local monthly search queries in 56 languages, recommended bids and competition.
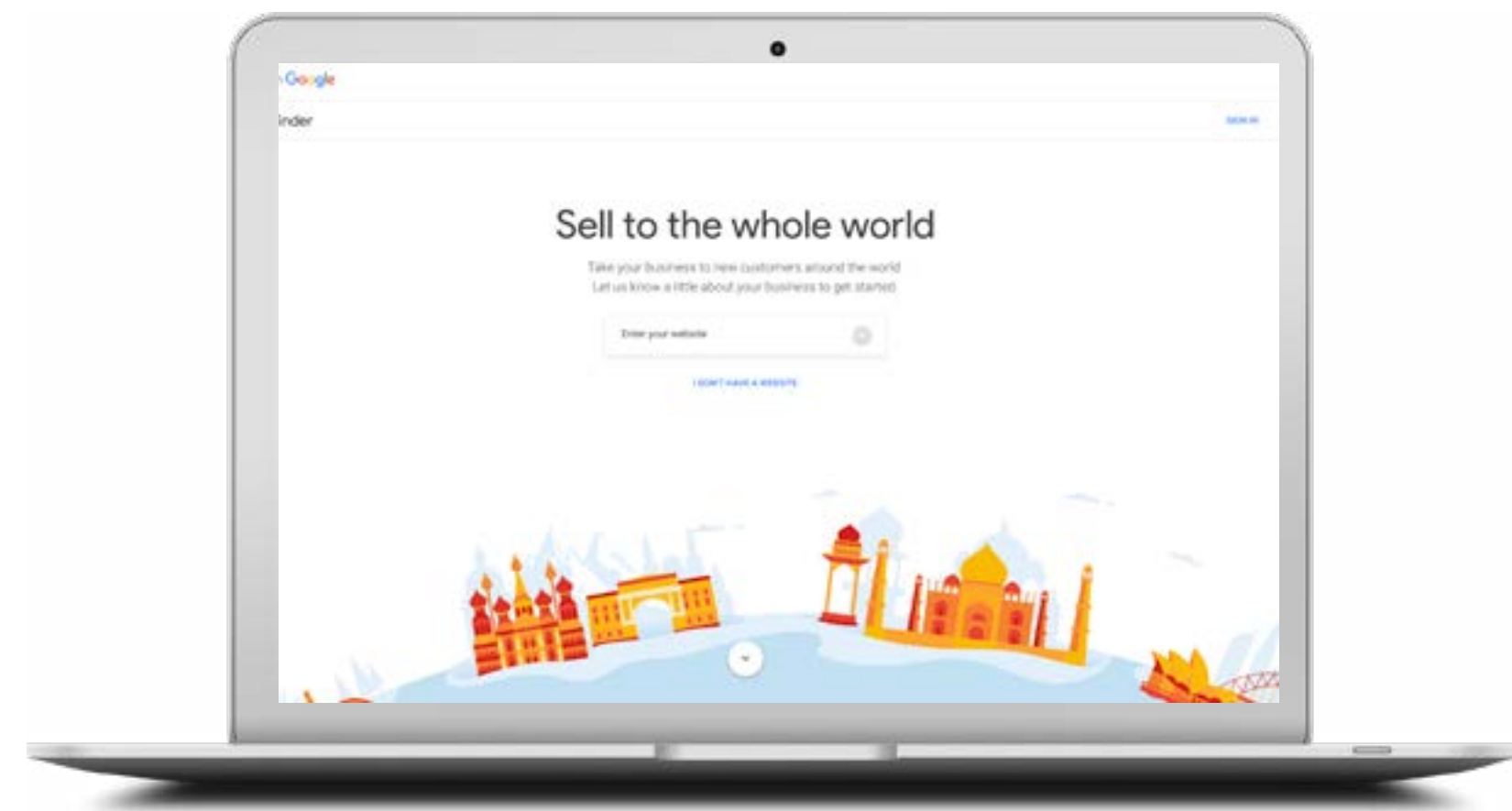
Perhaps what's most handy is it enables you to translate the search query into the native language you're after. Or perhaps you're not sure where is best to launch your product - in that case, you can use this tool to pinpoint the most relevant countries to export to. Delve into insights on 1.9 billion consumers around the globe with this handy tool.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF GOOGLE MARKET FINDER

1 Enter your website and the tool will bring up headline stats for key markets. This is your chance to get an overview of which markets might be best to drill down further into. The tool presents different countries to choose from, with headline stats to compare.

2 This tool comes up with suggested categories based on your website; don't just go with the ones it provides if they aren't relevant. Enter more relevant categories to get more accurate and helpful results. You will see the countries change as you add or remove certain categories.

3 Don't dismiss the 'ease of doing business' stat - it's worth comparing this to the AdWords suggested bid to see overall how hard it might be to target this market. This part of the Google Market Finder tool is particularly useful because it helps you rule out any particularly tough locations.

2. PUBLIC DATA EXPLORER

So you want to gain access to useful data - but you also need the data presented in a logical, helpful way.

Enter **Public Data Explorer**, 'a visual display of data [which] makes comparisons easier and promotes a better understanding of trends'. It enables marketers to combine, compare and visualise data using bar graphs, maps and line graphs.
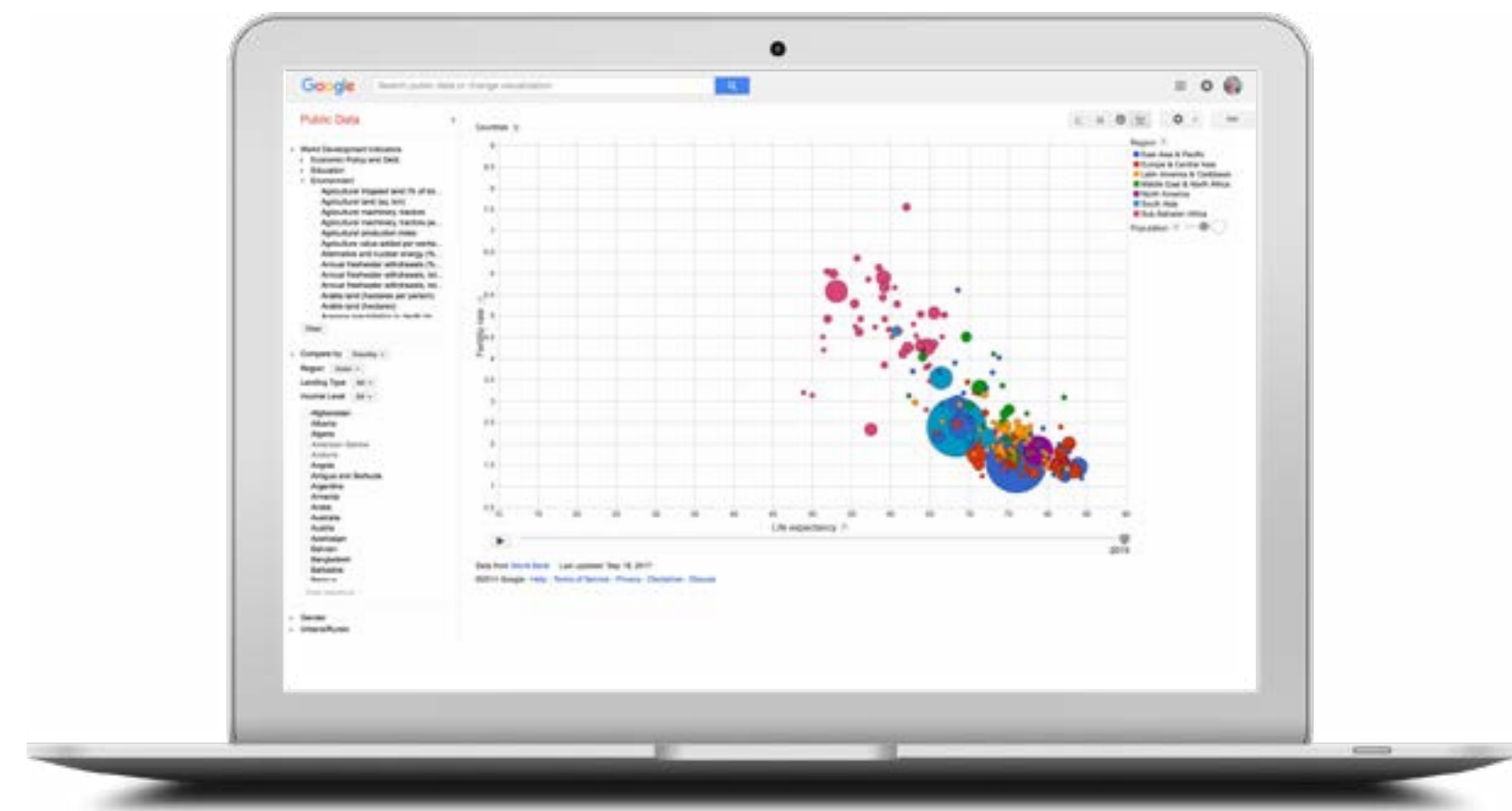
Charts can be embedded on your site and the visualisations change over time.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF PUBLIC DATA EXPLORER

1 Explore all the different options, try using different graphs to see how your data performs, and utilise the compare by region aspect of the tool which lets you break data down by things like age and gender. You can easily switch between different graphs using the tabs on the top right-hand side.

2 You upload data by selecting 'MyDatasets' from the left-hand side - as soon as you've imported the relevant data it can be transformed into visualisations.

3 To embed data to your website or blog, click the link icon on the far right-hand side and it will give you a HTML link which you can paste and embed into a website and a link you can copy into emails.

3. DISPLAY BENCHMARKS

Wouldn't it be great to be able to gauge the performance of a display campaign compared to the rest of the industry?

Well, with the **Display Benchmarks** tool you can. In fact, you can see how your display campaigns compare to others in the industry.

The tool also highlights when one particular format outperforms another.
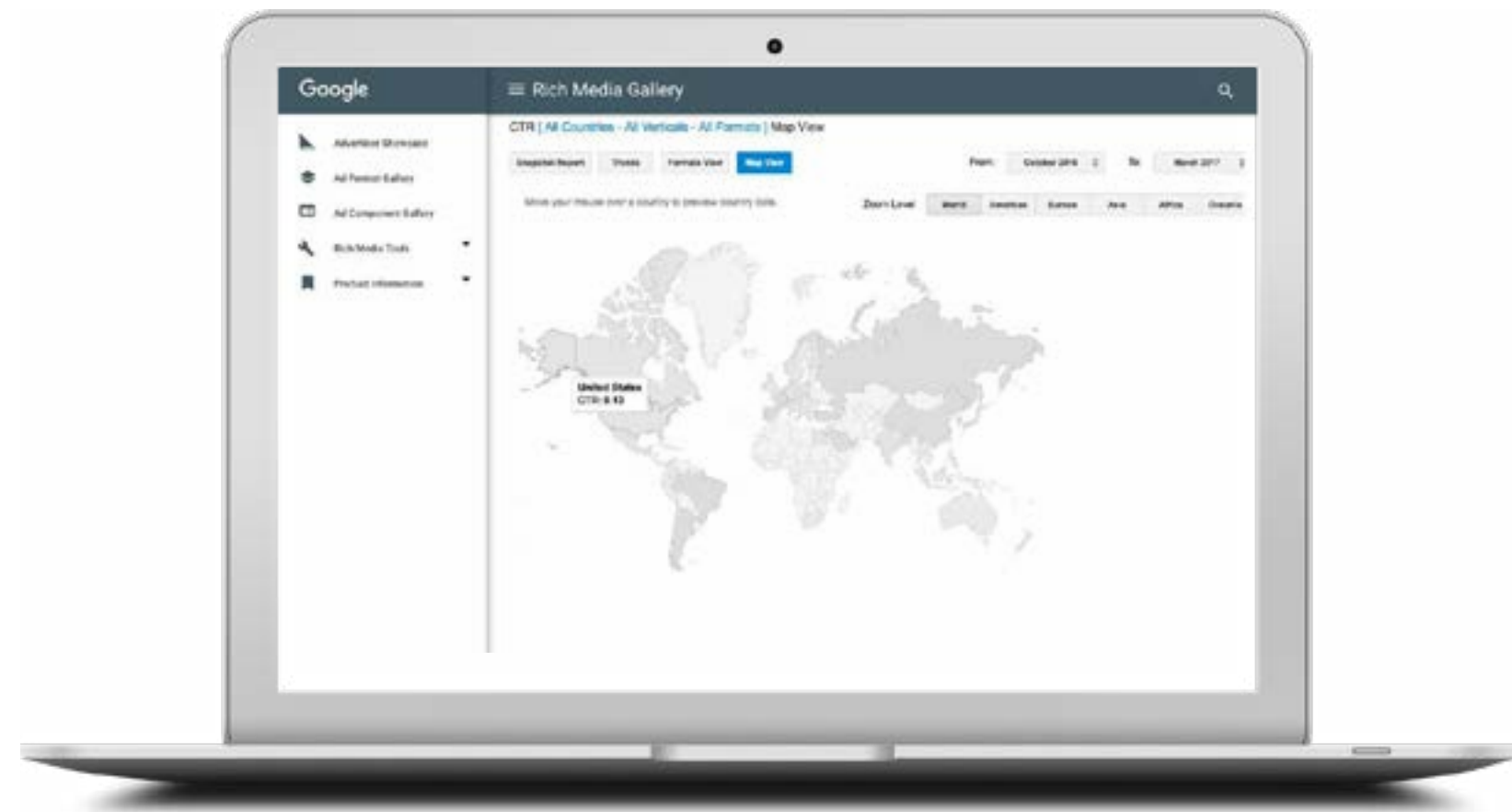
 It enables you to dig into data by vertical, country, ad size and format. You can also alter the ad size and check out snapshots.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF DISPLAY BENCHMARKS

1 Use the tool to compare display campaigns by country, ad format, size and also industry vertical. You can benchmark your campaign against 10 display metrics, including video completions, expansion rate and interaction time.

2 Nowadays display campaigns are all about the users, so why not use a tool like this which offers more insights on top of just click-through rates. Use the Display Benchmarks tool wisely and you'll get a much better understanding of what works for your audience.

3 If you're planning on selling internationally, then you'll need to crack down on the finer location details. Thankfully, this tool lets you slice and filter the data by country.

4. SHOPPING INSIGHTS

Currently only available in the US, the Shopping Insights tool providers marketers with a 360-degree view of a product's popularity - invaluable for those looking to the US market.

Whilst still in beta at the moment, the tool harnesses search volume data for over 7,000 popular products to provide a snapshot of retail trends across the US.
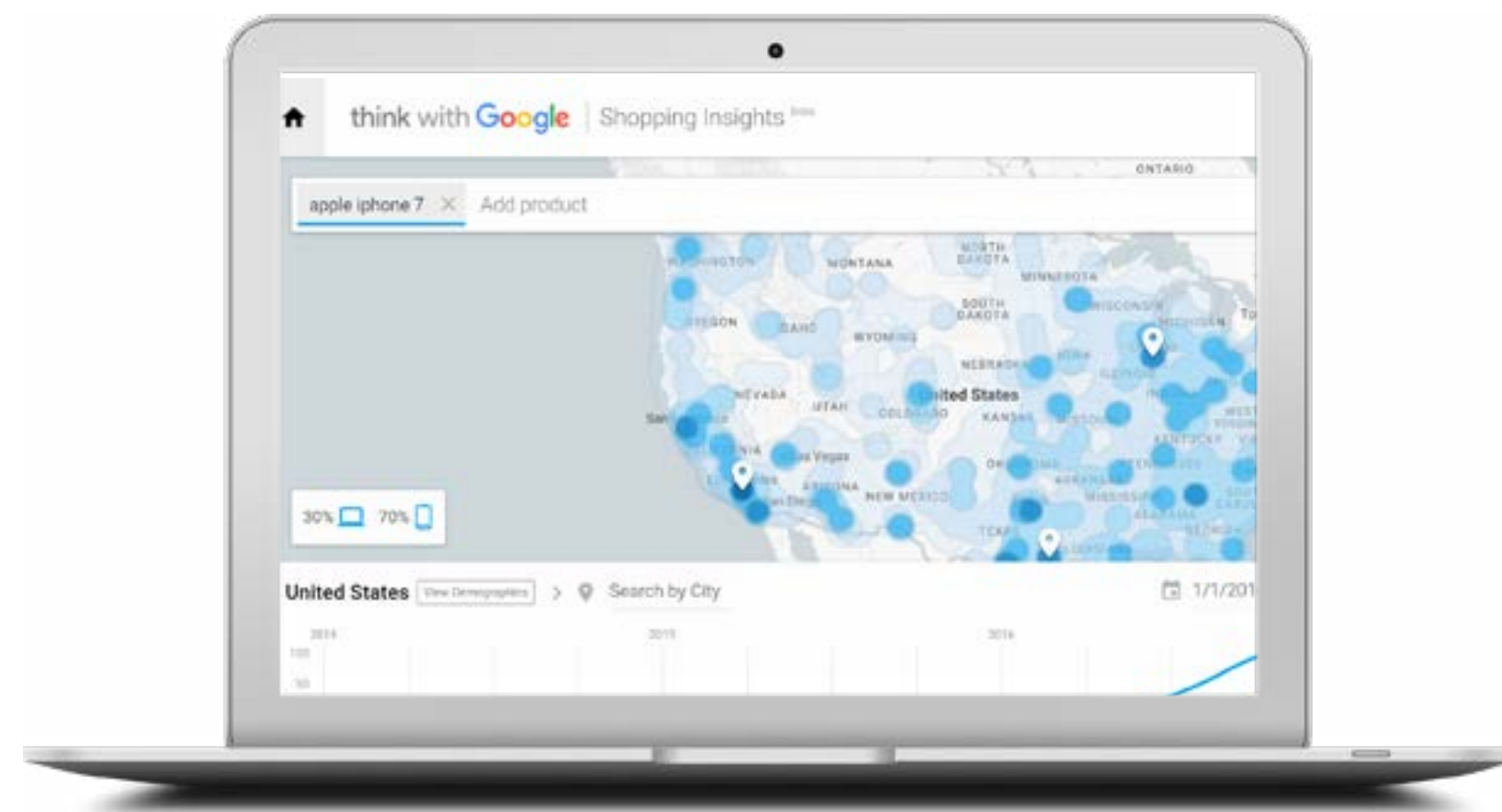

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF SHOPPING INSIGHTS

1 As well as gaining insight into general product trends over time, with data stretching back to April 2014, you can use Shopping Insights to explore how consumers use mobile and desktop to search for products.

2 Whilst overall trends data for the US can be useful, what is more insightful is the city-level data available through the tool - across more than 16,000 US cities - drill down into the detail to find out more.

3 Use the insights available to make data-driven decisions for your business. The data available in the tool can only serve to support your company presentations and reports.

5. CONSUMER BAROMETER

A customer's path to purchase is extremely valuable data to brands, especially those looking to export internationally.

This tool sheds light on the research process of consumers.

For example, it can tell you whether a customer purchases something on or offline and also the path they took to convert.
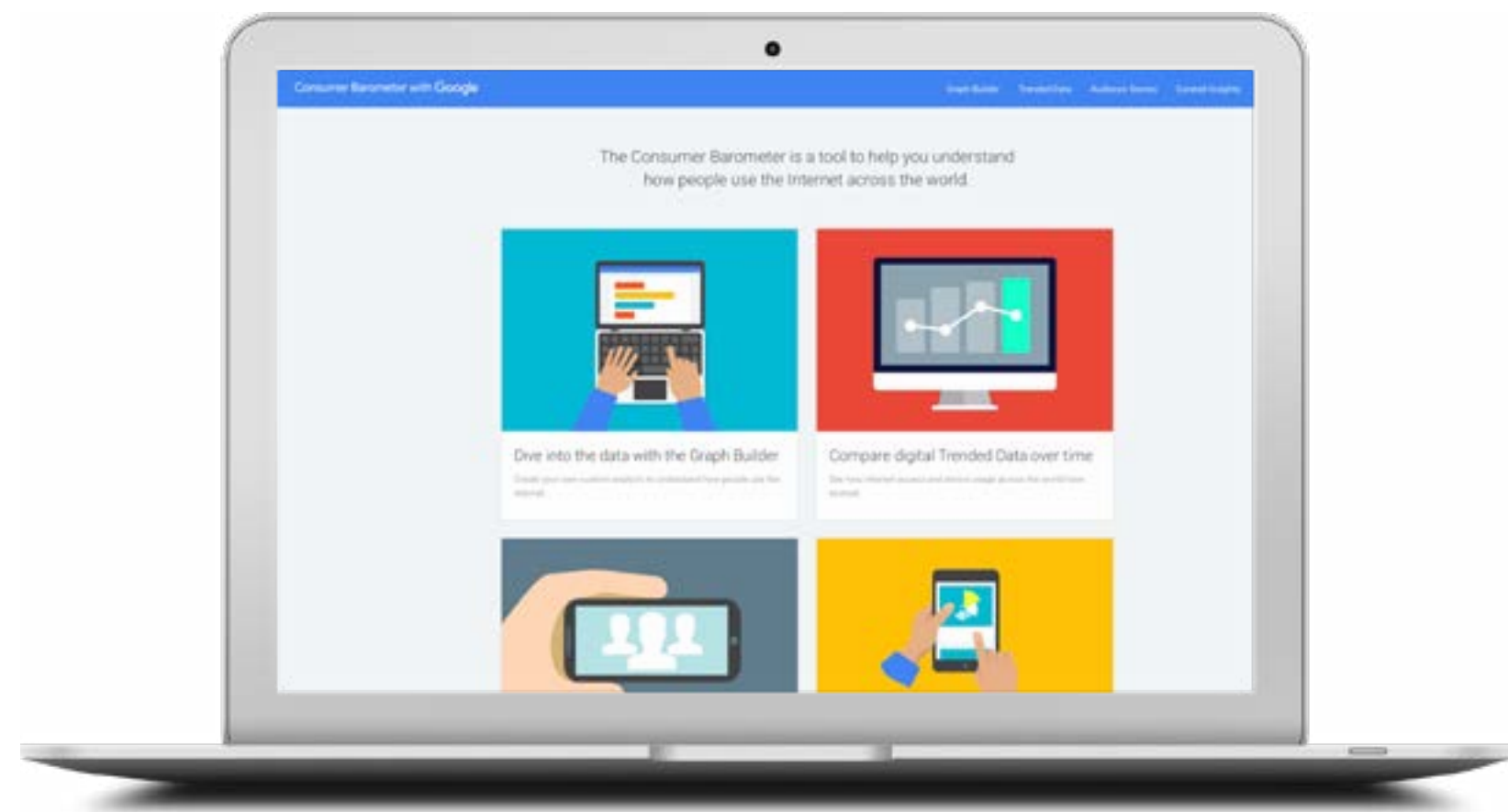
You can use this precious info to figure out exactly how to market to customers. Critically, it also lets you compare this data for a number of different countries. In Google's own words 'The Consumer Barometer is a tool to help you understand how people use the Internet across the world.'
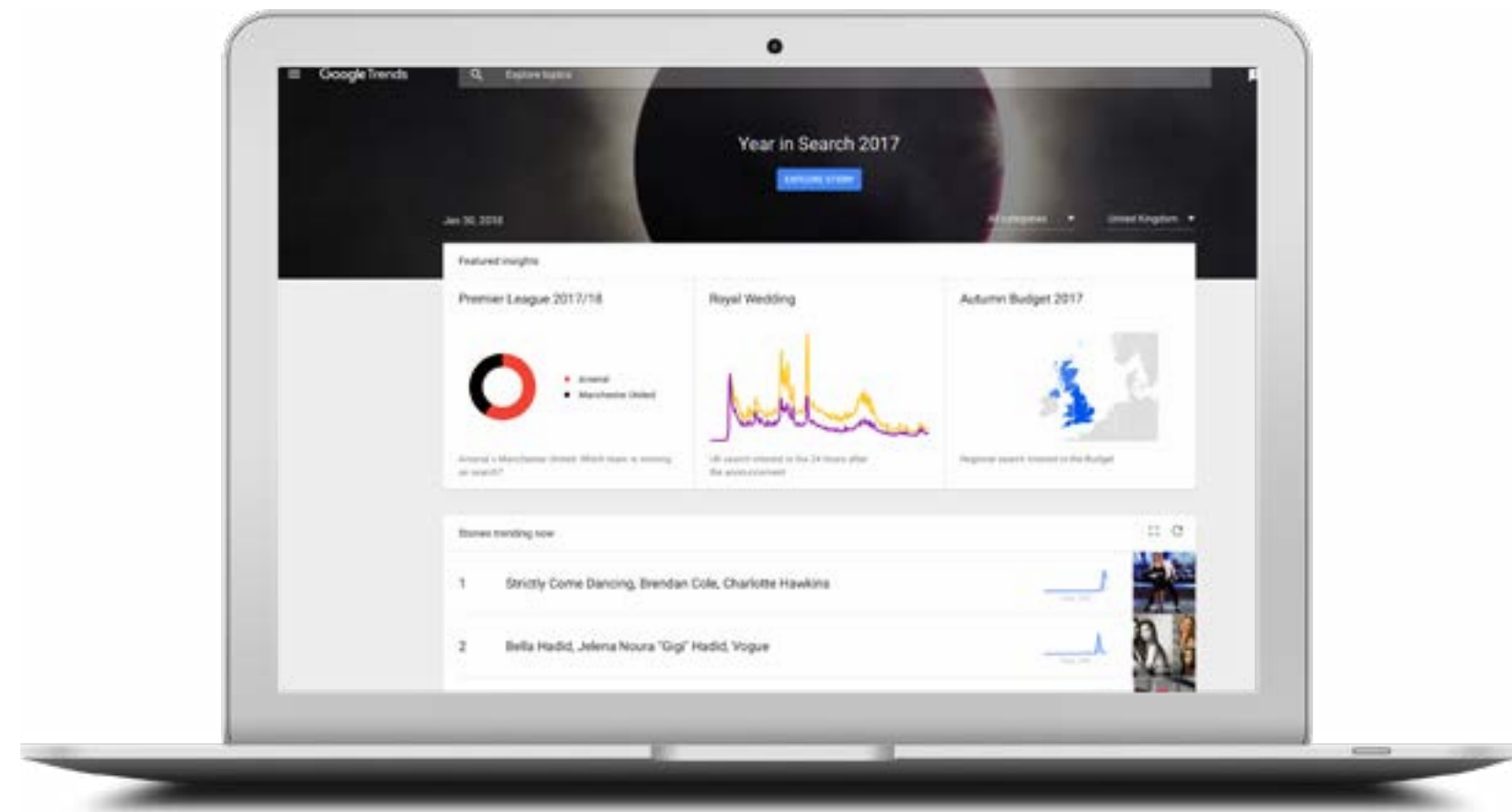
HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF CONSUMER BAROMETER

1 Utilise the handy graph builder tool, which enables you to create analysis to understand device use and the specific preferences in your target market. These insights can be used to adapt your digital marketing strategy in different locations.

2 You can compare trended data like how many people use each type of device. Discover which devices people are using in your target market.

3 The tool can be used to create curated insights, which are basically filters which utilise research from Google's marketing team. Intriguing stuff indeed!

6. GOOGLE TRENDS

Trends, things that come and go. One week it's Strictly, the next it's the Great British Bake Off.

But that info is no use if it's not for the country you're targeting. If you're looking to sell your product or service in other countries, you need to be aware of what's hot, and what's not - so that you can adjust your strategy accordingly.

Enter **Google Trends**.

It provides real-time data and insights into consumer preferences and trending topics in different countries.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF GOOGLE TRENDS

1 It's not just about what's hot; it's about what's not. As well as tracking popular trends on the rise, the tool will let you know what's going down in popularity, which can be useful too. That way you can ensure you don't create campaigns around topics that are losing interest and consider whether this is changing the way consumers are shopping or carrying out their research.

2 Google Trends can also be used to query trends for single question words. So, as well as topics, you can see which words are showing up regularly in the search engine results pages.

3 Click on the trends that are relevant to your brand in each country and drill down into the stories behind the trends. What are people saying about each topic and which debates are really heating up?

7. WEBSITE TRANSLATOR

The free Website Translator plugin is a simple yet highly useful tool for companies looking to expand their global reach quickly.

Say someone from another country visits your site, and it's in English.

Well, **this plugin** picks up if they are from Germany for example, and it will automatically translate your site into German.
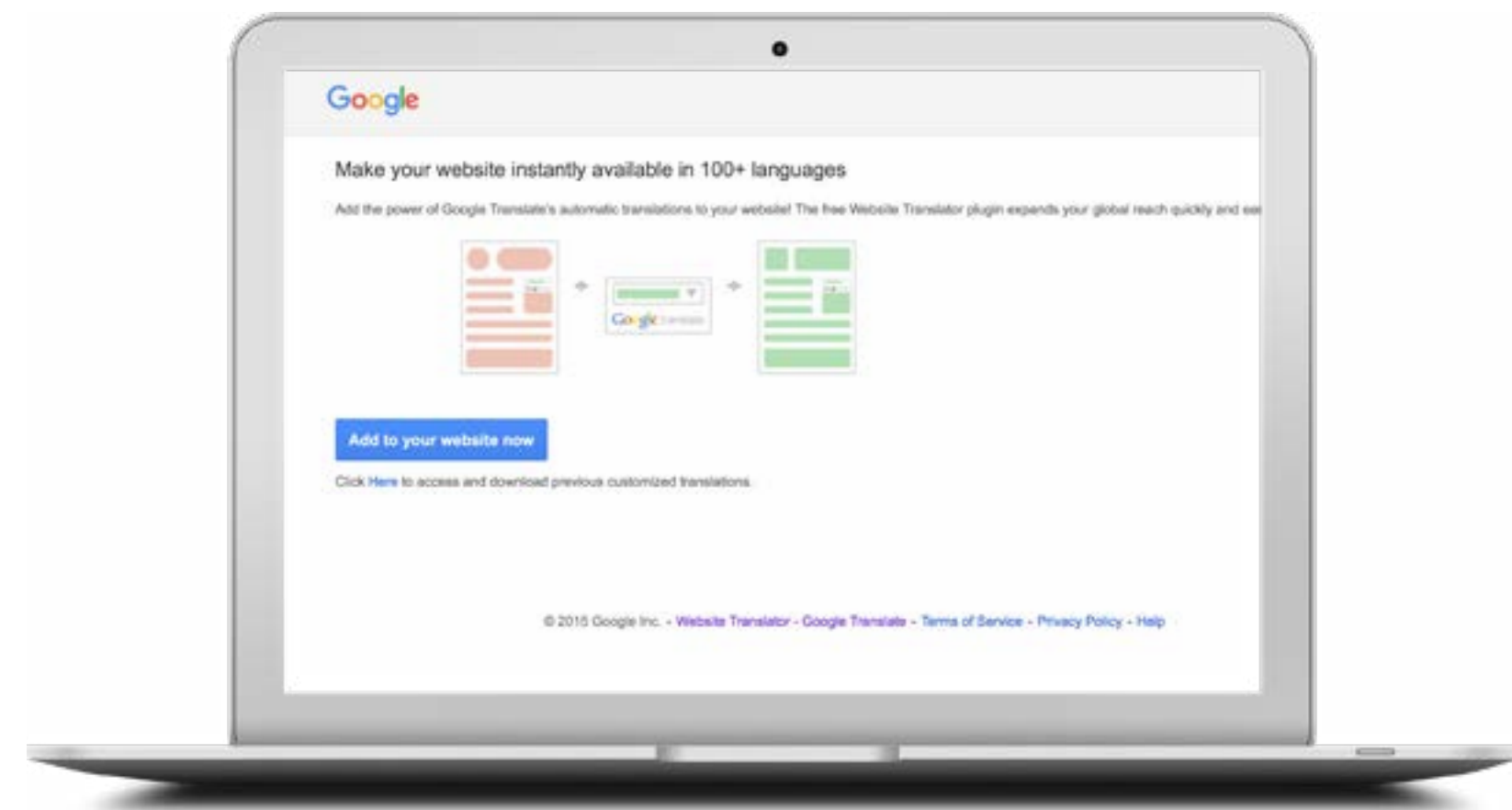
It's a good first port of call for websites that need to be understood in several languages.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF WEBSITE TRANSLATOR

1 This should really be used as more of a temporary measure. Does it translate your content? Sure, but it isn't always that accurate and may not read that well. Also keep in mind it's just text that gets translated and not images or ads.

2 If you find your business starts doing well in one particular region, it's a good idea to get your copy professionally translated by a human.

3 It's not just pages you can translate, you can browse the entire website in that language by clicking links on the site.

8. GOOGLE ALERTS

Continuously searching for news around a particular topic, say cars for example, is very time consuming.

And you're not always the first to know when stories hit.

If you are going to operate in new countries it pays to know what's going on in your industry.
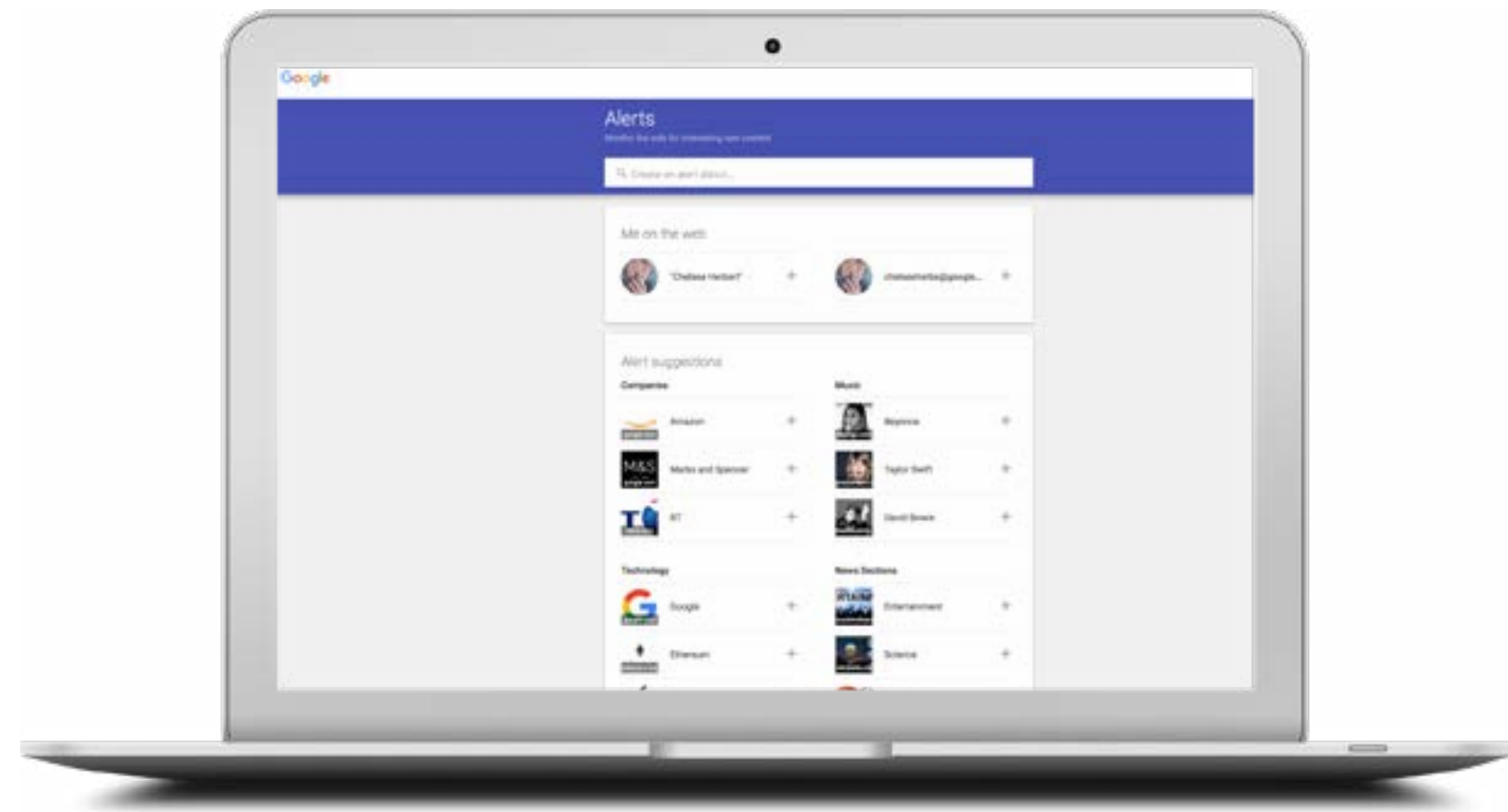
Google Alerts will automatically send you news updates and interesting new content around a specific topic area.
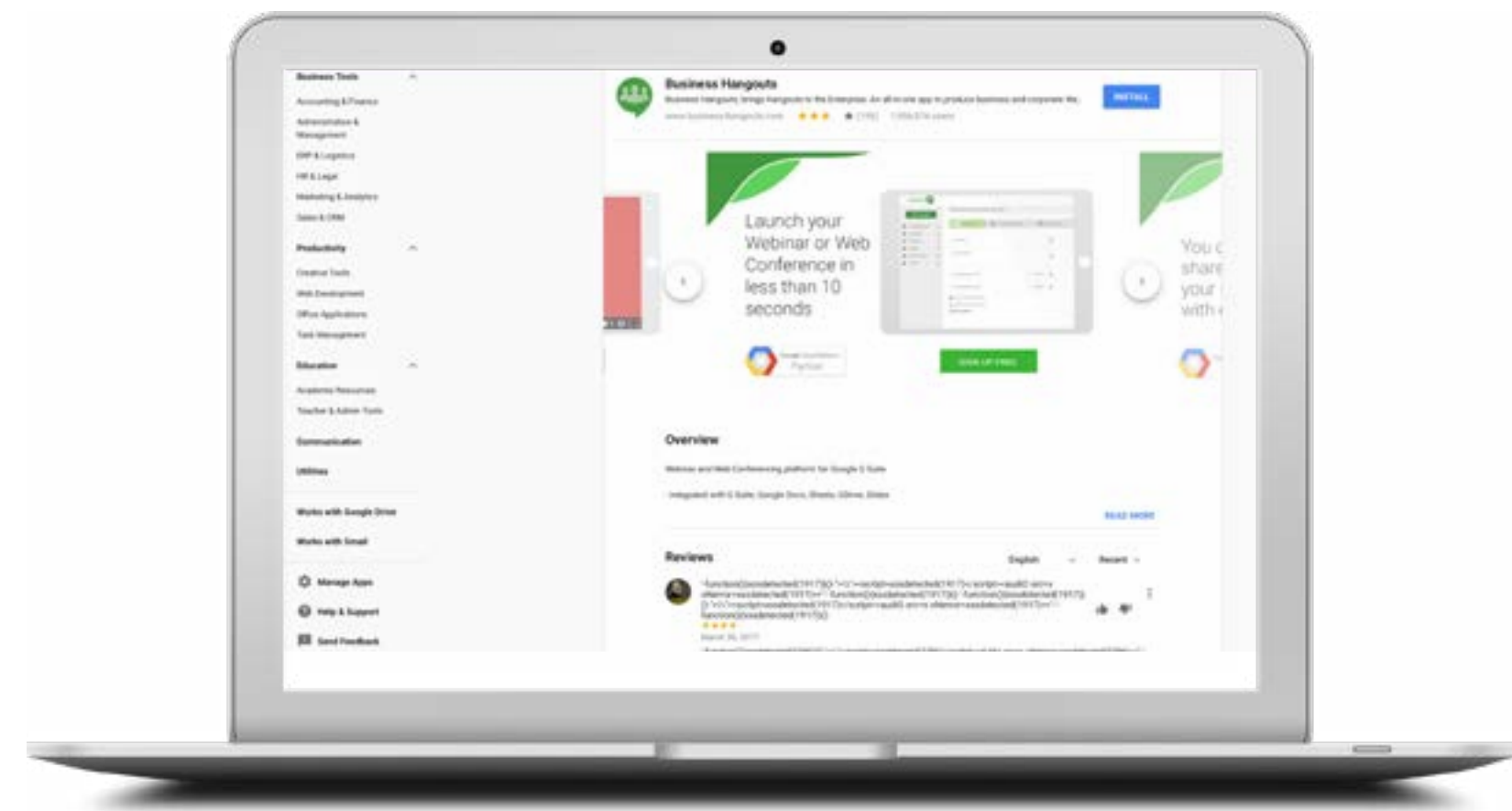
HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF GOOGLE ALERTS

1 You can also use the tool to snoop on your competitors and see what sort of stuff they're doing, which can be invaluable.

2 The more specific the better, if you set a general topic you will be bombarded with news updates to your inbox, and it can get a little overwhelming. So instead of setting an alert for 'cars', try 'driverless cars Germany' for example.

3 If you want the most timely results as they hit the Internet, then choose the 'as it happens' alerts option. Then you'll always be the first to know about new updates.

9. GOOGLE HANGOUTS FOR BUSINESS

You've probably heard of Google Hangouts, which lets you host online meetings and video calls from wherever you desire.

For businesses planning to trade internationally, **the enterprise version of Hangouts** could be a super handy tool.

You can use it to chat with experts in different countries around the world, as well as to help run a remote team.

It's a valuable tool that helps facilitate workplace collaboration.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF GOOGLE HANGOUTS

1 Phone calls, travel and meetings abroad can really add up. Hangouts can help you to avoid spending a ton of money on phone calls abroad and expensive conference services.

2 This tool can be integrated with Google's cloud-based office suite. You can collaborate with contacts using other apps such as Google Drive and Google Calendar.

3 Google Hangouts can support HD video, so you can talk to your international contacts via a high-quality video connection.

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So there you have it - nine of many tools available to help you get started on optimising your international commerce strategy.

If you're looking for support on your international journey, contact Croud to find out how we can help quickly scale your international digital marketing activity.

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