

2021 Year in Review



The year 2021 will go down in history as an incredible year of change. From the continuing impacts of COVID-19 and lockdowns to vaccine rollouts and society adapting to this new normal, it has been a monumental year. In this blog and podcast, we take a look at this iconic year in review.

Word of the Year

The Oxford Word of the Year reflects the year's 'ethos, mood or preoccupations' and has the potential for lasting cultural significance. In 2021 the word of the year was 'vax'. While [in 2020 there were a number of words chosen](#) (including Bushfire, COVID-19, Lockdown and Black Lives Matter) the word of the year for 2021 being vax shows how monumental the rollout was for countries across the world to combat the Coronavirus. This is especially the case considering that the word vaccine is not a new word, but rather, the colloquial term

'vax' has been widely introduced and used in 2021.

Australia's most Googled terms of 2021

The most searched terms on Google reveal what we are most curious about. The top overall Google searches centred on sport, COVID-19 and cryptocurrency.

1. NBA
2. AFL
3. Australia vs India
4. NRL
5. Euro 2021
6. Wimbledon
7. Olympic medal tally
8. COVID NSW
9. Coinspot
10. Prince Philip

Most downloaded apps

Social media apps are the most popular apps in the world, with TikTok continuing its dominance as the most downloaded app. The other Meta owned platform of Instagram also features in the top five, as well as other visual social media platforms like YouTube and Snapchat.

1. TikTok
2. YouTube
3. Instagram
4. Snapchat
5. Facebook

The [most downloaded apps of 2021](#) were ones that helped us stay connected with others when we had to social distance and isolate. In 2021, social media apps like TikTok and Instagram became important pathways for people to share with others in the lockdown and social distancing measures they were experiencing. It helped people to stay connected and provided humorous ways of understanding and coping with the vast amount of change that we lived through.

Most liked Instagram posts

The most liked photo of 2021 was a wedding photo posted by Ariana Grande. This was followed by a photo Billie Eilish's new hair style. Interestingly, while both these photos amassed over an incredible 23 million likes, neither come close to the most liked Instagram photo of all time - a photo of an egg which amassed over 55 million likes (which was posted in 2017).

What we tweeted about most

Twitter has been making a comeback in the last few years as the platform of choice for real-time updates as the news cycle increases its velocity. For Australian users, #COVID19 was knocked off top spot by #auspol as the nation's most tweeted hashtag, followed by #BTS #Crypto and #Tokyo2020.

TIME person of the year

Each year, Time magazine awards a person of the year to, according to the magazine, someone "who affected the news or our lives the most, for better or worse". Elon Musk has been named as Time Magazine's 2021 Person of the Year. [TIME describes Elon Musk](#) as 'the richest man in the world' who 'with a flick of his finger, the stock market soars or swoons. This is the man who aspires to save our planet and get us a new one to inhabit: clown, genius, visionary, industrialist, showman, cad ... [he] invents electric cars and moves to Mars. He's a player in robots and solar, cryptocurrency and climate, brain-computer implants to stave off the menace of artificial intelligence and underground tunnels to move people and freight at super speeds.'

Colour of the Year

[Pantone has described](#) the two colours that best express the mood for 2021 - Ultimate Gray and Illuminating (yellow) - as 'independent colours that highlight how different elements come together to support one another. Practical and rock solid but at the same time warming and optimistic, the union of these colours is one of strength and positivity. It is a message of happiness supported by fortitude, the combination is aspirational and gives us hope. We need to feel that everything is going to get brighter - this is essential to the human spirit.'

Learnings from 2021

A major event like a pandemic can cause [a reassessment of life](#). From relationships to work and even where people live. As a result of extended lockdowns, people have realised that a slower pace of life and return to a simpler life is desirable. Although the last two years have brought about unforeseen challenges, it's also worth noting the learnings and positive changes that came out of this tumultuous year. From a recalibrated focus on our wellbeing to changes in how and when we work in the future, this important time will go down as one of great change.

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