

Methodology

The study examines the public interest for open houses over time using Google search data. Google Trends is a tool that allows you to see what people are searching and how specific terms have trended over time. Derived from Google's search data, Trends measures the relative volume of searches made on Google. It creates indexes that show trending instead of actual volume of the specific search terms.

Filters selection

Selecting from several filtering options, this study focuses on the following region, time frame, category, and engine accordingly:

Region: nationwide, state and metro area.

Time Frame: nationwide (Jan/2004 through Jun/2017), state and metro area (Jan/2011 through Jun/2017)

Category: real estate category. While there are multiple uses of the term "open house" e.g. open house in school, we limit the term and search volume for open houses to the real estate category.

Engine: web search.

Search Terms selection

Google Trends allows you to compare the search activity of up to five search terms. From a wide pool of terms related to open houses, we concluded that the following terms were the most popular terms for an open house search (ranked based on the interest):

1. Open houses,
2. Open house,
3. Open houses real estate,
4. Open houses today,
5. Open houses near me,
6. Open houses this weekend,
7. Sunday open houses,
8. Open houses near me today

However, we are not interested in comparing the public interest in the terms above. The study examines the search activity for terms related to open houses instead of querying results for each one of these terms. Google Trends allows you to combine multiple terms under Boolean logic. Google Trends adds up the results of each term and returns the total results of these terms.

We combined the following five terms:

"Open houses", "open house", "Open houses near me", "open houses today", "open houses near me today"

Results:

Then, we get the results in two separate graphs:

- a. **Interest over time:** Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A value of 50 means that the term is half as popular. Likewise a score of 0 means the term was less than 1% as popular as the peak.

Here is an example of what Google Trends data looks like:

Month	United States
2011-01	46
2011-02	50
2011-03	53
2011-04	57
2011-05	58
2011-06	53
2011-07	54
2011-08	48
2011-09	50
2011-10	55
2011-11	41
2011-12	25

- b. **Interest by geography:** Numbers show in which location the term was most popular during the specified time frame. Values are calculated on a scale from 0 to 100, where 100 is the location with the most popularity as a fraction of total searches in that location, a value of 50 indicates a location which is half as popular, and a value of 0 indicates a location where the term was less than 1% as popular as the geography with the most popularity.

Here is an example of what Google Trends data looks like:

Category: Real Estate	
Region	Open houses + open house + Open houses near me + open houses today + open houses near me today: (1/1/11 - 6/30/17)
Connecticut	100
North Dakota	88
Montana	83
Rhode Island	69
Massachusetts	69
Kansas	61