

- Search Trends - Construction Industry



MARCH 2024

Online searching helps buyers to find and buy products and services in most consumer categories, but when it comes to B2B categories search interests are wide and varied, not necessarily related to purchasing. In this paper we look at search trends in construction – the largest industry in the global economy – accounting for 13% of the world's GDP and comprising millions of companies, most of them local to individual markets. We have looked at search trends sourced from our Share of Searching search trends tool for construction companies and for some of the key topics in the sector.

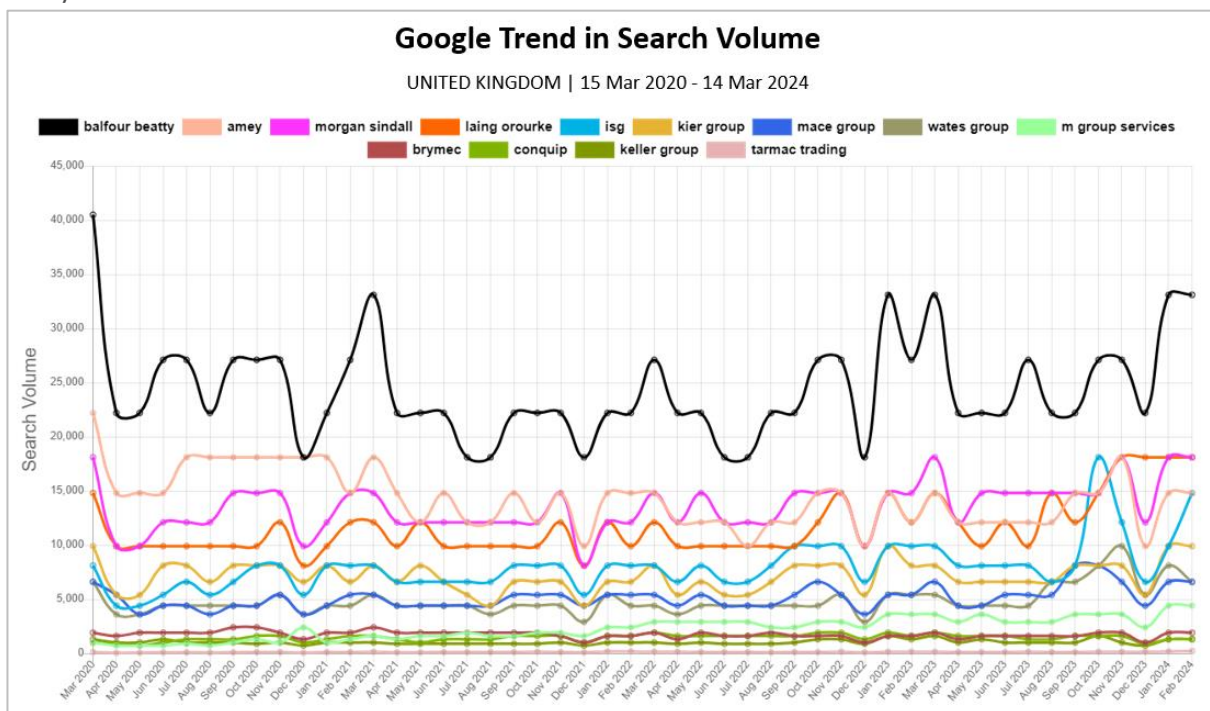
Companies

Here we reveal search trends for some of the largest companies in the construction sector in the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain.



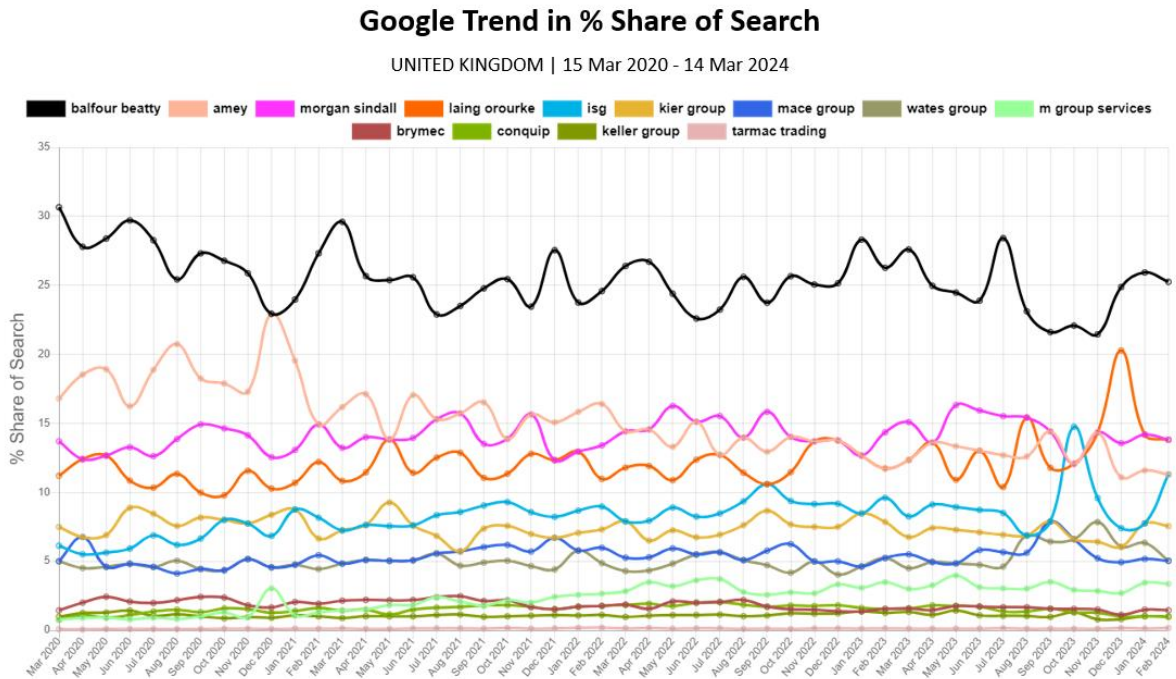
UK

We have looked at trends for 13 companies in the construction industry in the UK: Balfour Beatty, Amey, Morgan Sindall, Laing O'Rourke, ISG, Kier Group, Mace Group, Wates Group, M Group Services, Brymec, Conquip, Keller Group and Tarmac Trading. This chart shows the monthly trend in Google search volumes for each of the companies in the UK over the last four years:

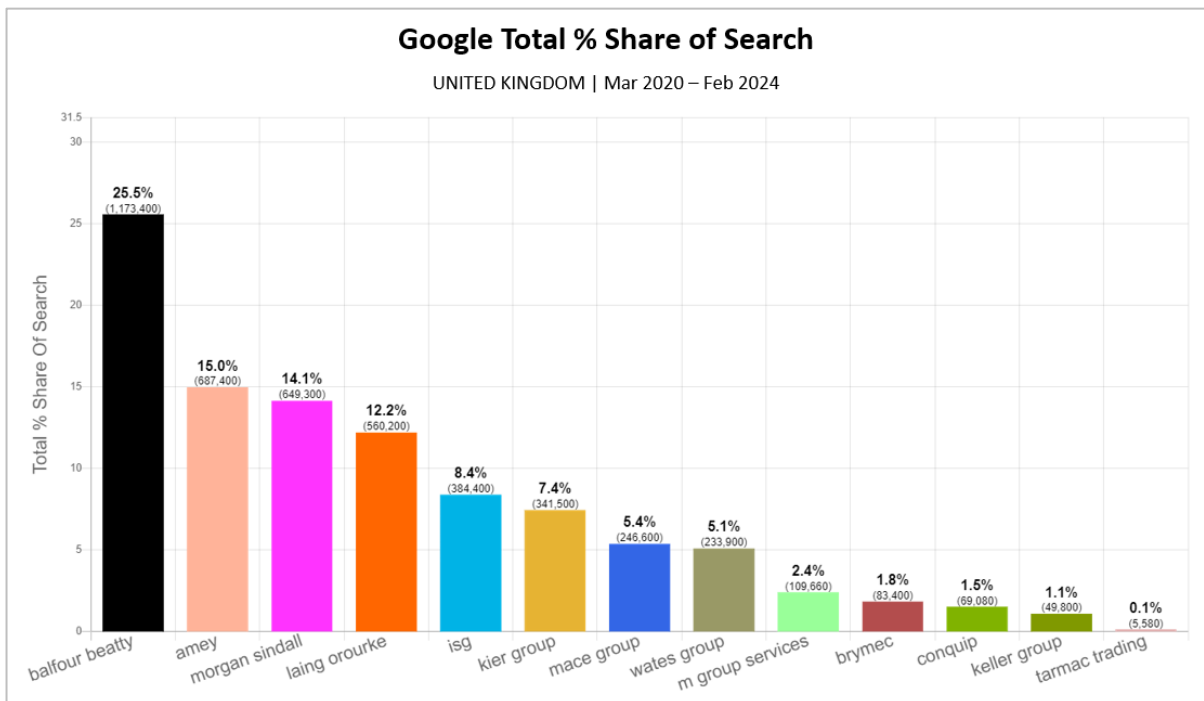


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This chart shows the % share of search (based on this group of companies) for each of the companies in each month:



This chart shows the total volume of search and % share of search (based on this group) for each of the companies over the last four years:

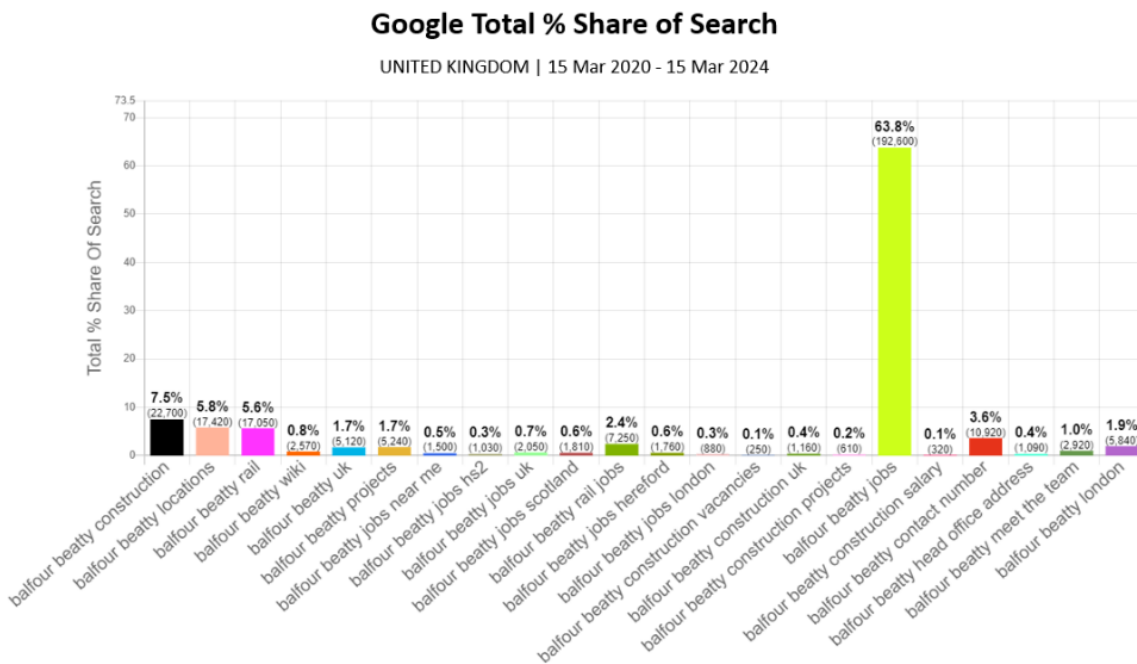


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The above charts show the following over the last four years:

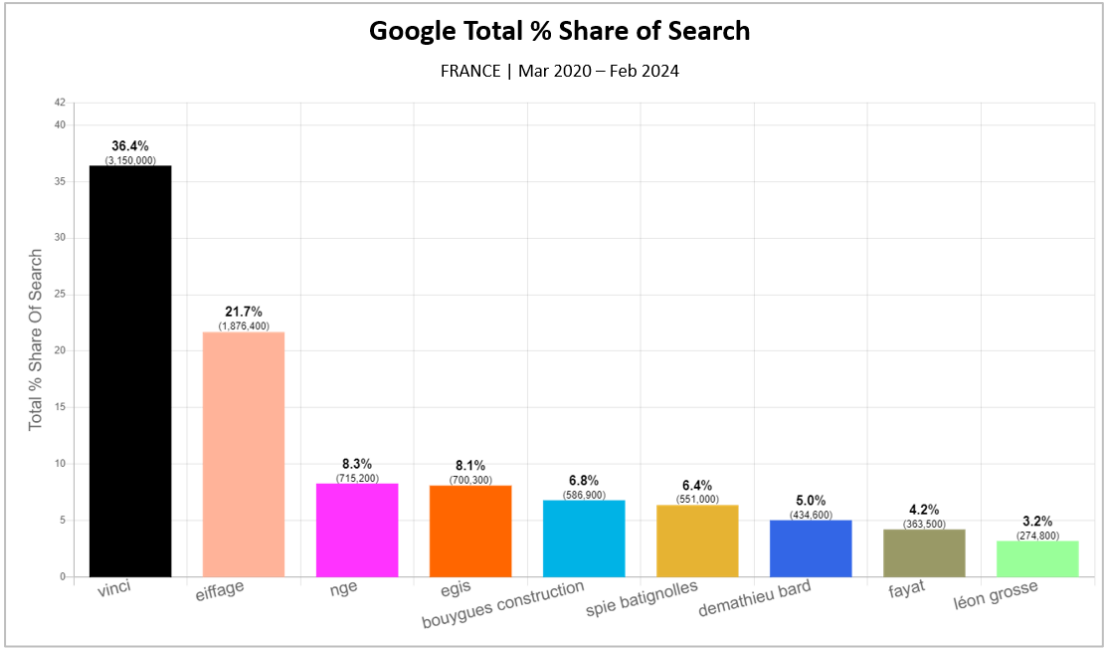
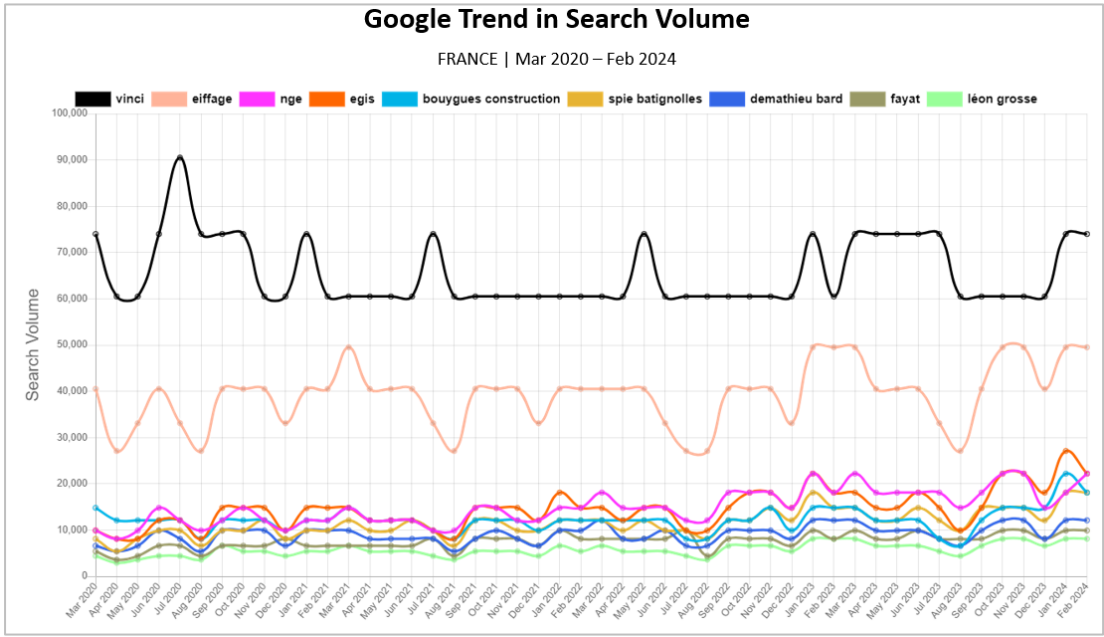
- Balfour Beatty attracts the highest level of search interest in the UK construction sector, with 20-35,000 searches (20-30% share of search) each month. The company’s share of search amongst this group has been declining slowly, from 31% in March 2020 to 25% last month
- Search volumes for most of these companies have remained fairly flat, but two saw their share of search rise significantly – ISG from 6% share in March 2020 to 11% last month and M Group Services from 1% to 3%
- Construction company searching is seasonal in the UK – with peaks in February/March and troughs in December

When people search for construction companies, what are they looking for? The answer is that a large proportion of searching is for jobs as the next chart shows. In this chart we show search volumes and % share of search for the search terms that people most often use when searching for Balfour Beatty. It shows that most of the search interest relates to jobs:



Given the high level of search interest in jobs, construction companies need to ensure they maximise their visibility in search – both organic and paid – to attract the highest interest in and talent to their businesses.

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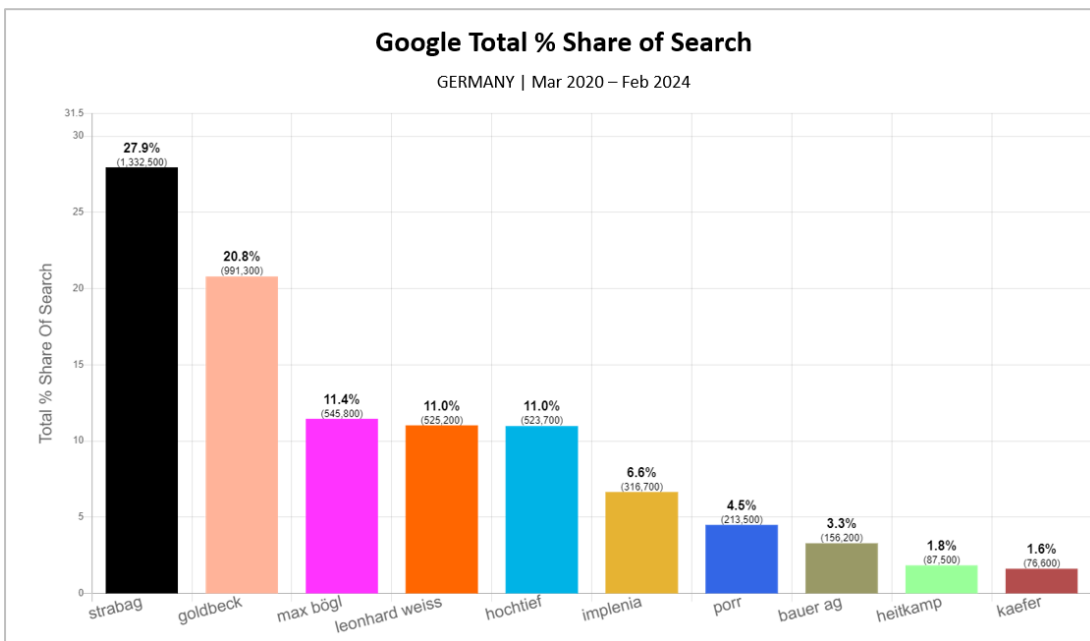
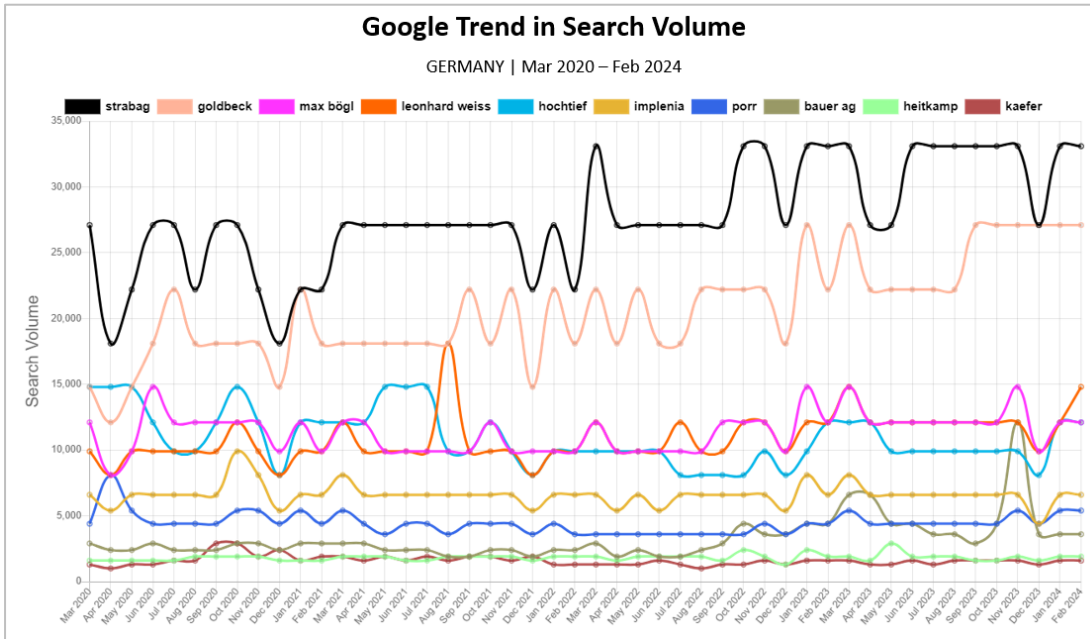
The largest construction company in France, Vinci, attracts 60-75,000 searches each month. Vinci's share of search has been falling slowly, from 43% in March 2020 to 32% last month. Vinci has a seasonal boost to its share of search in July and August each year.

Searching for construction companies is not particularly seasonal, but for most of the companies in this analysis, there is a slight uplift in search volumes in January each year.

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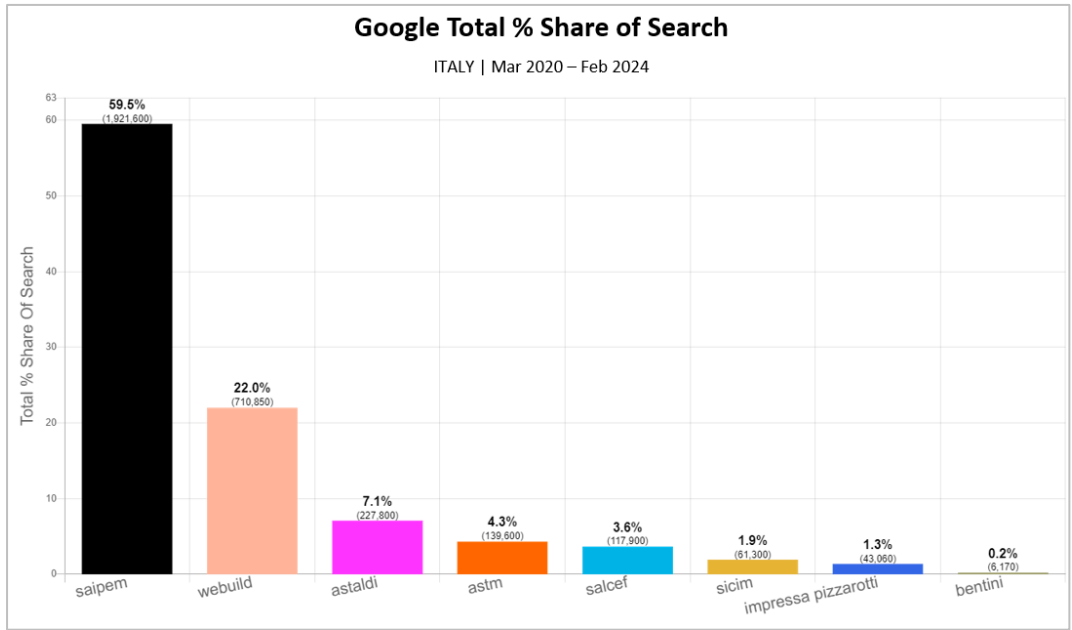
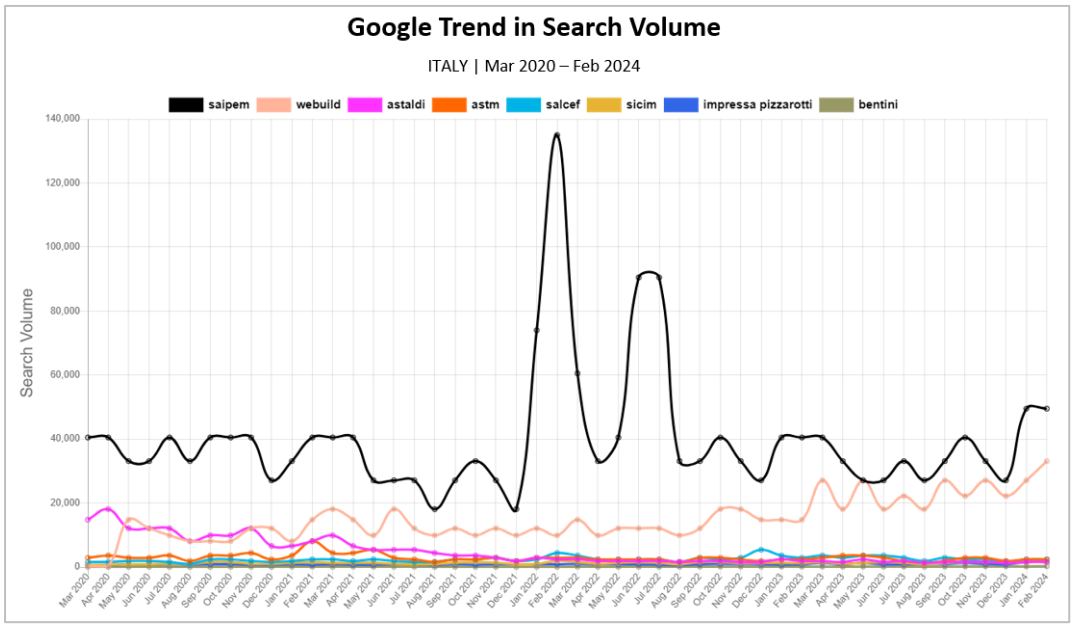
Germany



The largest construction company in Germany, Austrian headquartered company Strabag, attracts 25–35,000 searches each month. Strabag’s share of search has been fairly stable, between 23% and 31% over the last four years.

Searching for construction companies has been rising steadily in Germany since 2020.

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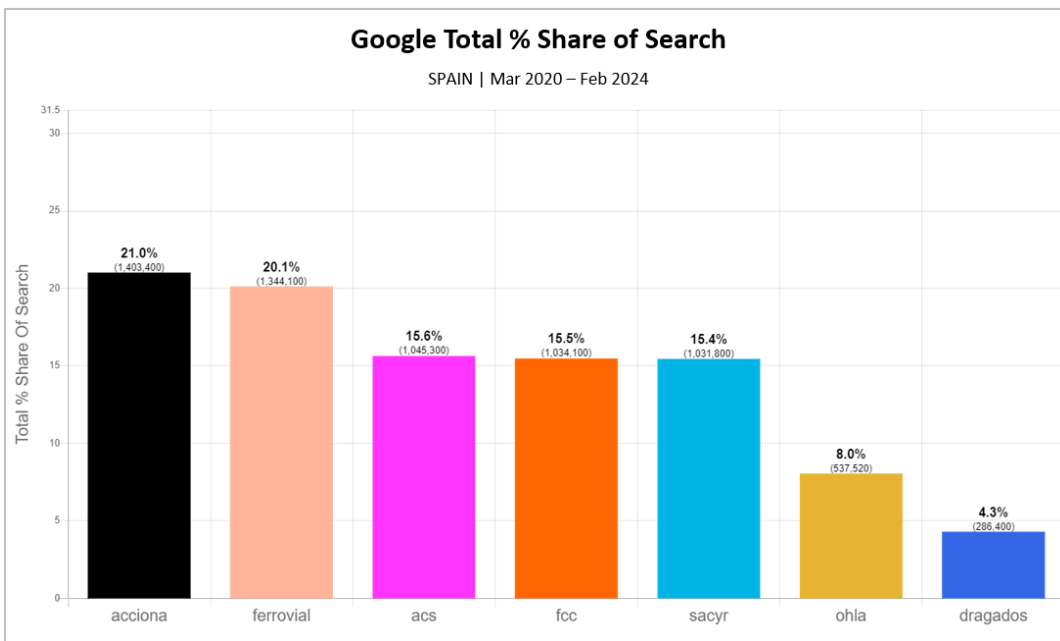
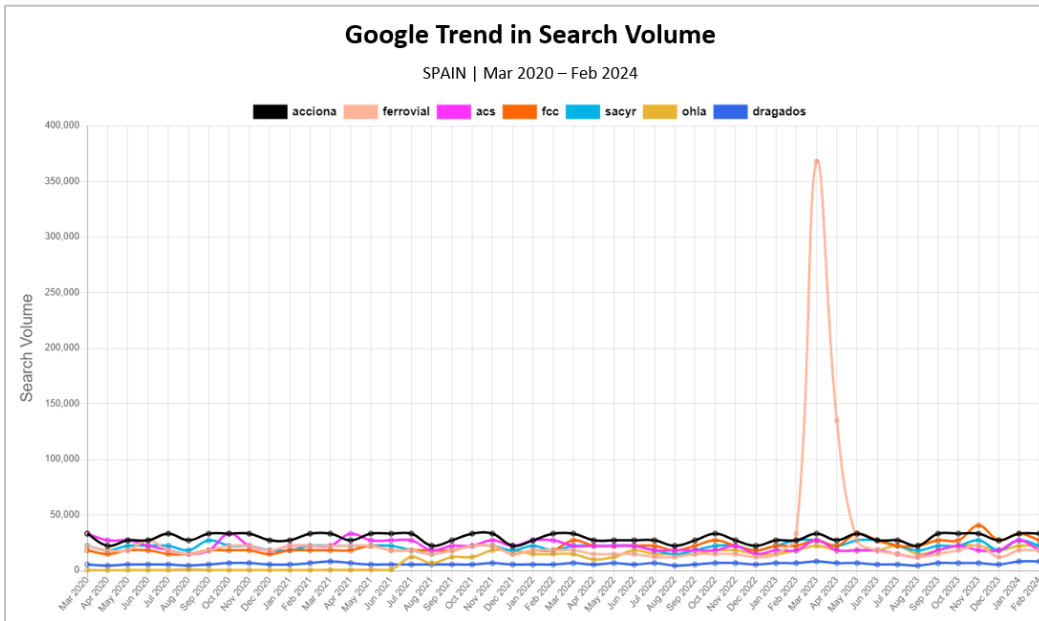
The largest construction company in Italy, Saipem, typically attracts 20–50,000 searches each month. Despite a couple of news-related search spikes in 2022, Saipem’s share of search has been fairly stable over the last four years.

WeBuild has seen search volumes increase steadily and significantly, tripling over the last three years to 33,000 per month. WeBuild’s share of search (amongst this group) has also risen from 6% in February 2022 to 35% in February 2024. This gain in share has been at the expense of smaller companies in the sector.

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Spain



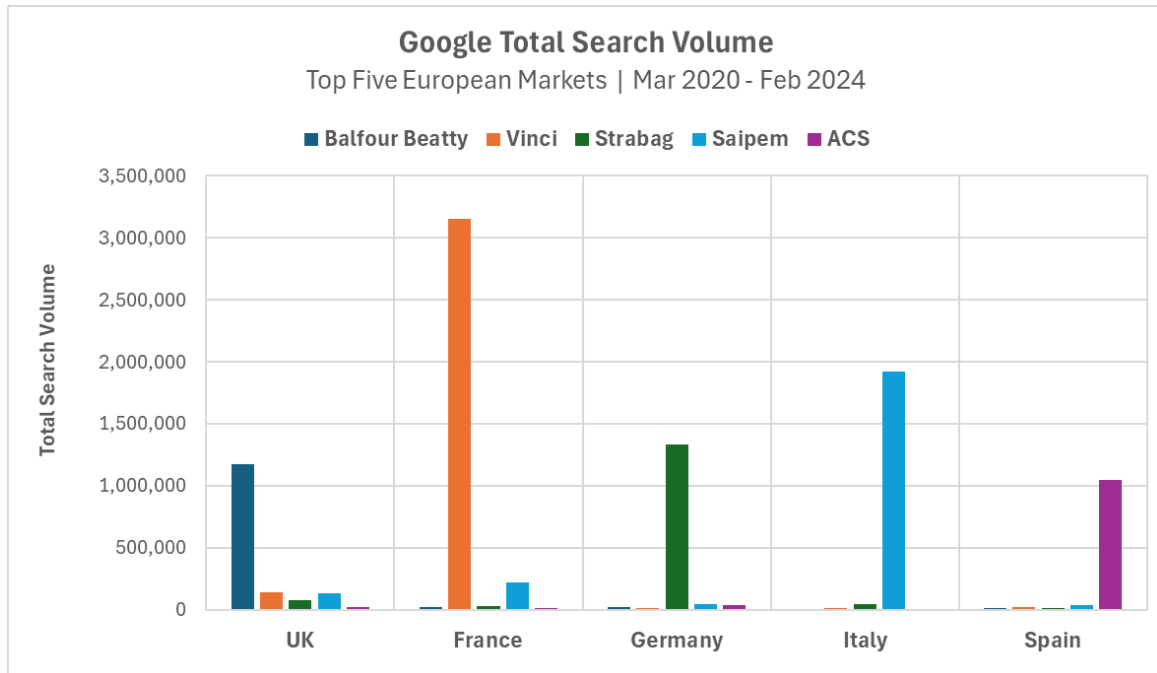
The largest construction company in Spain, ACS, normally attracts 15–35,000 searches each month. ACS' share of search (amongst this group) has been falling from 25% in February 2020 to 12% in February 2024.

Ferrovial, one of the largest construction companies in Spain, triggered uproar when it announced plans to move its headquarters to the Netherlands in March 2023, causing searching to spike to 368,000 in that month.

Construction company searching across markets

Although many of the largest construction companies operate on a regional or global scale, searching for construction companies is heavily skewed to the country where the company is headquartered or most active in.

The following chart shows the total level of search volume over the last four years for the largest construction companies in each of the top five European markets.

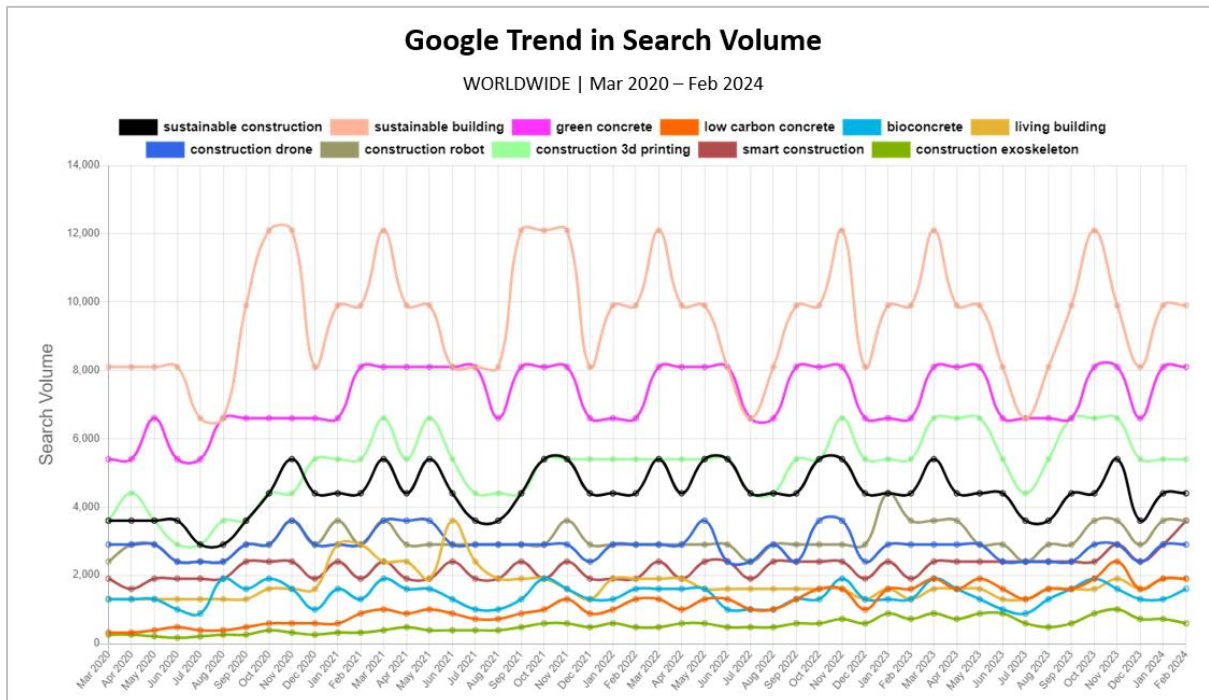


This clearly shows that search interest for Balfour Beatty – the UK’s largest construction company – is almost entirely in the UK. Searching for Vinci – the largest construction company in France – is (much greater and) almost entirely in France. The same is true for the largest construction companies in Germany, Italy and Spain. Construction companies attract almost all their search interest in the market where they are most active.

Topics

Here we reveal global search trends for some of the key trending topics in the construction sector.

The first chart shows global monthly search volume trends for various construction sector topics over the last four years:



Green construction

- There is a growing trend of search interest around ‘sustainable construction’. This includes a rising focus on sustainable building materials and environmentally friendly processes that reduce the environmental impact of construction projects
- The chart shows a rise in search interest in ‘green concrete’ and ‘low carbon concrete’ over the last four years

Living building

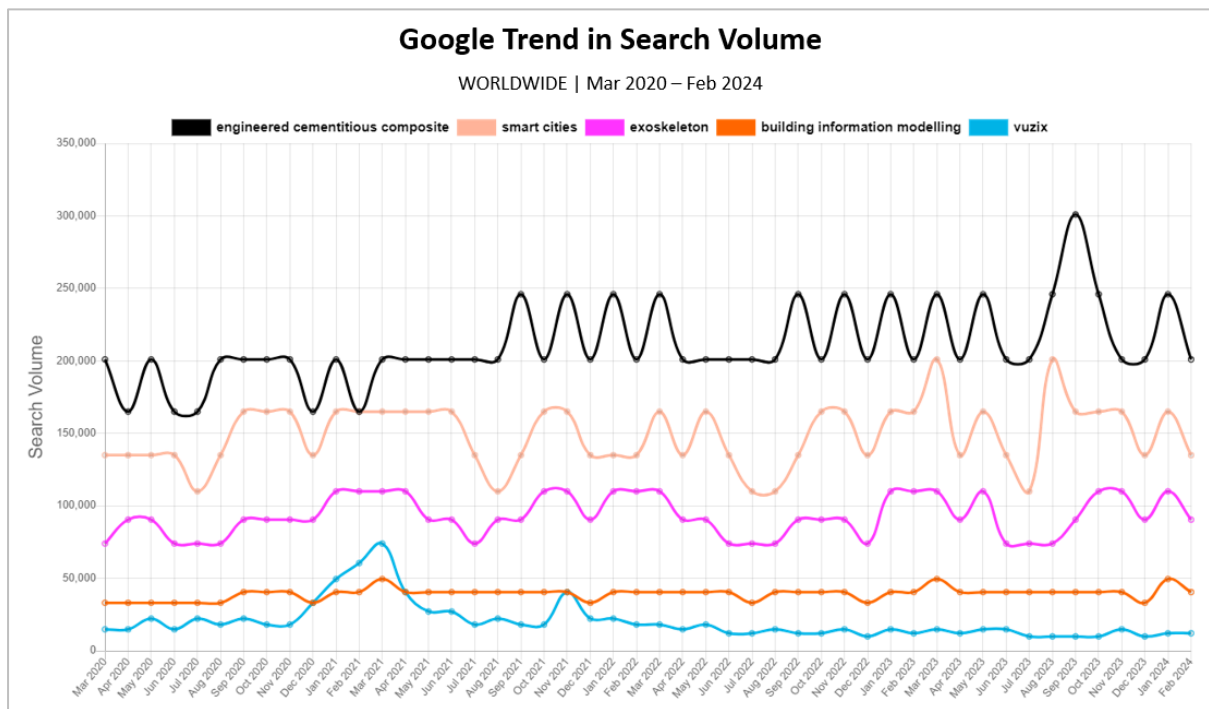
- The use of living building materials is a radical new trend in the construction industry. These materials integrate natural elements and technologies to create sustainable and environmentally friendly structures

Technology

- There is fast growth in the use of many new technologies in construction. Here we show trends in searching – specific to construction – for drones, robots, 3D printing, ‘smart construction’ and exoskeletons

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This second chart shows search volume trends for some of the topics attracting much higher global interest:



Engineered Cementitious Composite (ECC): The topic with the highest search interest on this chart is Engineered Cementitious Composite, known as bendable concrete, a type of concrete invented in the 1990s that is of growing interest due to its potential to reduce the carbon and energy footprints of the built environment.

Smart cities: The rise of smart, connected cities is expected to impact the construction industry. This trend involves integrating advanced technologies and infrastructure to improve urban living and sustainability.

Exoskeletons and Vuzix: The use of powered exoskeletons in the construction industry is of growing interest as they can provide workers with extra power and support during strenuous work on construction sites. Vuzix is one of the leaders in the development of this technology for construction workers.

Building Information Modelling (BIM): BIM is globally growing technology that provides a virtual model of a building used by all parties to create, manage and share data during the design, construction and operations process of building projects.

Key takeaways by Cecilia De La Viesca

- *As digital search continues to shape the landscape of business interactions, it becomes imperative for construction companies to harness this medium effectively.*

Historically, companies in the construction industry have lagged behind in their digital transformation journey, often falling short in their SEO and search strategy endeavours. However, this presents a significant opportunity for those willing to embrace the digital realm wholeheartedly. By prioritising their online presence and investing in robust SEO and search strategies, construction firms can gain a competitive advantage in a landscape where digital prowess increasingly dictates success.

The insights gleaned from our analysis underscore the transformative potential of leveraging digital channels to enhance visibility, attract top talent and capitalise on emerging trends. As evidenced by the surge in search interest around sustainable construction practices and emerging technologies, there lies a significant opportunity for companies to align their offerings with these, fostering innovation and sustainability within the industry.

Embracing these recommendations can not only propel companies towards digital maturity but also position them as leaders in an industry ripe for innovation and advancement. -

Contributors

With thanks to:

- The Research team at Croft Analytics, a marketing consultancy led by Frank Harrison that empowers clients to unlock scientific principles for brand growth
- Cecilia de la Viesca from Passion Digital, a proudly independent digital marketing agency that inspires brands to Imagine Better

Want to know more?



Frank Harrison

Director at Croft Analytics
frank@croftanalytics.com



Cecilia de la Viesca

Joint Managing Director at Passion Digital
marketing@passiondigital.co.uk