Chanell Noise

Spring 2022

Data-Driven Journalism

**The Week Americans Gave Up On Indeed**

COVID-19 gave American employees a hard time; many people lost their jobs at the height of the pandemic. When reported COVID cases rose in March 2020, a ton of “shelter-in-place” ordinances went into effect. Only jobs deemed essential by state authorities were allowed to carry on with business.

Essential business left out favored gyms, nails salons, dive bars, movie theatres and more. All these types of business shut down indefinitely. With no end in sight, employers let folks go. Just laid them off in the middle of a global pandemic.

The federal government’s response to the rising unemployment rate was to beef up state-unemployment benefits. Interest in unemployment, measured by Google searches for the term *unemployment benefits*, peaked between March 29, 2020 and April 4, 2020.

Unemployment searches peaking on Google chronologically line up with the shelter-in-place ordinances mentioned earlier.

[Graphical user interface, chart, application, line chart

Description automatically generated](https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2019-12-01%202021-12-01&geo=US&q=unemployment%20benefits,%2Fm%2F09ylwk)

Google Trends explains the numbers as search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for a given region and time. A value of 100 is peak popularity, 50 means the term is half popular and 0 means there was not enough data for the term.

Using Indeed, the popular platform for jobseekers, as a comparable Google search point reflects a deeper story. While Americans were searching ‘unemployment benefits’ in droves, less Americans were searching for jobs. [According to Labor Department employment data, there were 4.2 million fewer jobs in October 2021 than in February 2020.](https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-economys-effects-on-food-housing-and)

Indeed searches and unemployment searches have this weird synchronicity at certain dates. Where the blue line spikes, in March, July and December, is when the red line dips. Again, the biggest spike in Google searches for unemployment happens at the biggest dip for Google searches for Indeed, March 29.

There was a depressing week in a two year span (Dec 19’ – Dec 21’) where people saw careers and income streams disappear.

[Chart, line chart

Description automatically generated](https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?q=pua%20unemployment&date=2019-12-01%202021-12-01&geo=US)

From December 2019 to December 2021, “remote jobs Indeed” was up 350% as a Google search term. PUA, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, was a term searched heavily June 28, 2020 through July 11, 2020. Americans either wanted to find a job that they could work from home or needed to find out to apply for relief from being sent home and laid off.

People lost their jobs. Their jobs ceased to be. And the federal government threw a life raft out to people. Folks just had to figure out how to apply and collect pandemic assistance via unemployment. So, they Googled it.

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**Keep It A Buck: Giannis Antetokounmpo is Underrated**

Giannis Antetokounmpo (Yon-is Ahn-ten-tah-koon-mm-po) is a Milwaukee legend and no one saw it coming. No one was checking for Giannis in the months leading up to Milwaukee’s 2021 NBA championship. Interestingly enough, no one is checking for him now.

Giannis nabbed MVP in the NBA Finals and the second championship, ever, for the Bucks. The Bucks hadn’t won a conference title, much less a championship, since the early 70s. And after 50 years, Giannis brought home some rings.

[Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated](https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2021-05-01%202021-07-31&geo=US&q=%2Fm%2F0pdnj7h,%2Fm%2F05_l0r)

It made sense that everyone searched his name the day after the game. Wisconsin especially, took up the helm on Google searching their local hero. But the internet was largely quiet for Giannis after his historic win.

Chart, map

Description automatically generated

People stopped searching for Antetokounmpo just as quick as they stopped searching for a seasonal event, like the NBA Finals.

2020’s NBA Finals MVP, Lebron James, continued to trend post championship. [In fact, Lebron kept a steady popularity over Giannis in the 2020 post season completely](https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2020-08-01%202020-10-31&geo=US&q=%2Fm%2F0pdnj7h,%2Fm%2F05_l0r,%2Fm%2F01jz6d). Giannis is no Lebron. Not by a long shot. But this Google search data begs the question: Why are we still sleeping on Giannis?

He’s a family man off-court (and on court too- brother Thanasis plays every now and again.) He’s a strong forward and he brought home a ring in the first normal season in the pandemic.

Giannis doesn’t have a traditional athletic backstory. He’s an American immigrant that was a street vendor before becoming a professional basketball player. Giannis personifies the American Dream but most people aren’t searching him up, learning his story nor keeping tabs on his stats. Not on Google anyway.

Is his humble nature a consequence of his deflated celebrity? Or is the opposite true? Meaning, we leave quiet guys out of the limelight.

Think Kawhi Leonard. The former Toronto Raptor quietly acquiesced celebrity after winning the 2019 NBA Finals Championship. He is known for not saying much. He even was a meme because of his dry, non-smiling laugh he gives in interviews. He too was under-searched until the post-game season. Through it and after, Kawhi in all his silence, still trended on Google.

[A picture containing chart

Description automatically generated](https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2019-04-01%202019-06-30&geo=US&q=%2Fm%2F0gh6pc6,%2Fm%2F05_l0r,%2Fm%2F01jz6d)

Perhaps Giannis is an outlier for success. A player can come into the league under-rated. They can work their way onto the court from the bench. They can balance a personal and professional life- get married or win a couple of championships. Then I guess they rinse and repeat quietly.

Giannis is a Milwaukee legend. Perhaps he’s a NBA legend-in-the-making. We just don’t see it yet.