



## **What did Ugandans care about the most in 2013?**

### ***An analysis of Google's Zeitgeist 2013 and how to turn this into business opportunities***

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#### **Introduction**

Google, the world's largest search engine on an annual basis analyses worldwide trends of what the world searches for. It presents this analysis annually including the latest: "Google Zeitgeist 2013".

On a global level, the world was searching for People (like Nelson Mandela and Oscar Pistorius), Events (like the Boston Marathon, Typhoon Haiyan and the Chinese New Year), Movies (like *Iron Man 3*, *Despicable me 2* and *Django Unchained*) as well as YouTube Videos (like Ylvis' *the Fox*, *Harlem Shake* and Miley Cyrus' *Wrecking Ball*).

#### **But what about Ugandans? What were they searching for?**

Ugandans are increasingly using the internet including *Google*. At December 2012 per a UCC report, the number of internet users in Uganda had surpassed 6 million or about 17% of the population.

Furthermore the importance of the internet is underscored by the fact that about 78% of Uganda's population is below the age of 30 - this generation has grown up using computers and the internet or if not, they are keen not to be left behind the rest of the world.

For businesses, it is important to understand these search trends because we believe any serious business should definitely have an internet strategy. It is no longer enough to leave it to IT nerds!

Based on Google searches can we assess what matters most to Ugandans?

#### **So what matters the most to Ugandans (or did in 2013)**

**1. Football.** Just like in 2012, football related matters are still the key searched terms and images. Top searched websites for Ugandans included *livescore.com* and *xscore.com*. In addition, Ugandans couldn't get enough of Ozil and Arsenal as well as transfer news related to the English Premier and other Leagues.

*How do you turn this into a money making opportunity?*

In 2012, we thought the biggest opportunity is in form of gambling tailored to Uganda (for example by accepting mobile money) or even a mobile phone app that works on simple phones.

I still believe this is a key opportunity, particularly by development of a mobile phone app. Granted gambling is a social vice (just like alcohol and cigarettes), but it can be controlled. It is further worth noting that one of the key things Ugandans are now asking Google is “*How to bet*”.

Similar opportunities could be specialty sports shops that not only sell the traditional football t- shirts but perhaps other related items like sports books (e.g autobiographies), mugs, car stickers, sports stars’ face masks (for parties) and similar sports items and memorabilia.

**2. Entertainment (and social media).** Again like in 2012, Ugandans are still big on entertainment, but the type of entertainment is changing towards online and social media based entertainment. “Facebook” was of the top searched term. Meanwhile on *Youtube* (which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest search engine after google), the top searches were again entertainment related and included searches like for “Anne Kansiime”, a comedian; *Choti Bahu* (Indian soap opera) as well as for “Ugandan Music”.

Related to music searches were music artist searches. In 2013, the most searched for person was Bobi Wine. Other top musician searches including on *Youtube* were Chris Brown, Rihanna, Bebe Cool, Nicki Minaj, Radio and Weasel and Konshens.

Ugandans also continue to use online entertainment tools. *Whatsapp* (a messaging service) was a top search term as was *Waptrick* a portal that provides free information such as MP3 songs, movies, games etc and *Tubidy*, a mobile video search engine.

*How do you turn this into a money making opportunity?*

*Websites with targeted advertising specifically for Ugandans*

Google via its *google adwords* and Facebook via *facebook advertising* offer targeted advertising. What this means is that you can specifically choose your adverts (e.g of a website to download Ugandan music, movies, games or Ugandan comedy) to only show to Ugandans.

For you to undertake online trade, you need to consider offering online payments via credit or debit cards. *Paypal* provides a simple option for this process.

I believe this is increasingly important because there is a forgotten group of Ugandans who use internet – The Diaspora (or “*Kyeyo* as some call them). This Group is very interested in Ugandan products and services and they use the internet extensively, and they have loads of money. According to a UN report, their contribution to the economy is now higher than coffee export earnings – and mind you, Uganda is Africa’s largest exporter!

### 3. Knowledge

Again like in 2012, Ugandans continue to be very inquisitive - they want to know. They are looking for online solutions to their problems or questions. Like other countries, Ugandans no longer ask friends, family or turn to books. They turn to the *Google* to ask questions. The search results show the following to be top searches per category:

- **What is** - Love, development, internet, research, communication?
- **What is (health)** – stress, bloating, AIDs, ovulation, health?
- **What is (business)** – management, marketing, motivation, planning, research?
- **How to** – kiss, love, bet, pray, hack?

*How do you turn this into a money making opportunity?*

Consultancy! Every Ugandan can become a consultant. Ugandans are asking these questions, so all you need to do is set up a business to answer these questions.

And as for marketing the services, just like we suggested for entertainment, you need to develop an online marketing strategy – there are millions of Ugandans asking questions. A business that sets out to specifically answer the questions they are asking will make money. I set out simple examples based on some of the questions:

#### **How to kiss, love, pray – Private Counselor services.**

A website where information is available on the internet and includes the option to call a specific toll free number for telephone counseling (clients pay via mobile money). Lots of people are hurting (or stressed) and they want answers. Affiliated services would be to enter partnerships with clinics or even shops selling products to help (perhaps love enhancing pills/tablets).

#### **What is (business) – marketing, research firms.**

Ugandans are very entrepreneurial and every year new businesses are set up. But one of the greatest challenges today for business is how to market and how to get market researched information. A business that can help in these two areas is bound to make money.

#### **Oddly enough.....**

Ugandans unlike many countries (like our neighbors Kenya, for whom the most searched for people, are politicians) don't appear to be particularly bothered with politics. Are they tired of politics?

Of the top search results, there was none related to politics - not even the Mayor Office saga. Whilst there was a general search for new sites like *New Vision*, *the monitor* and *Bukedde*, this cannot necessarily be interpreted into a specific interest in politics rather than a general interest in news.

<http://www.google.com/trends/topcharts#geo=UG&date=2013>

## What about our neighbours, what did they care about?

Unfortunately google did not have trend data on S. Sudan, DRC , Rwanda or Tanzania and so it was not possible to make a proper analysis. The only information was available for Kenya.

## So what did Kenyans care about in 2013?

1. **Local politics.** Just like in 2012, The top searches for people in Kenya are all politicians including Raila Odinga (leader of Opposition), Uhuru Kenyatta (President), Mike Sonko (former MP) and Mutula Kilonzo (RIP). It's worth noting that the Westgate terrorist attack (and related Jicho Pevu) as well as the IEBC results were also widely searched events. Tied to politics is the fact that the bulk of the new sites they search are Daily Post, Daily Nation, Standard etc.
2. **TV entertainment.** Kenyans are really big on TV entertainment, so big that one of the top searched persons was Churchill, the star of a TV show. Other big foreign shows were Game of Thrones and Big Brother Africa. In 2013, they are however broadening their interests, Caroline Mutuko a radio presenter was widely searched, she was so big, she was the no. 3 person searched right after Raila Odinga and Uhuru Kenyatta!

They continue to love telenovelas like Abyss of Passion. (In 2012 it was *Eva Luna, Triumph of love and Pasion Morena*). They however also have a number of "locally tailored" shows such as *Tujuane* (a dating show) and *Jicho Pevu* (politics).

3. **Technology(and social media).** In 2012, Kenyans were searching for *football personalities like Robin Van Persie, Fabrice Muamba and Mario Balotelli* but in 2013, they changed their love to *technology and were searching for social media tools to communicate including whatsapp, Skype, Instagram and LinkedIn.*

## Oddly enough.....

Kenyans are practical and don't just want to know (what is) like Ugandans. Their top searches are:

How to:

- Kiss
- Pray
- Abort
- Swim
- Love

<http://www.google.com/trends/topcharts#geo=KE&date=2013>