



What do Ugandans care about the most?

An analysis of Google's Zeigist 2012 and how to turn this into business opportunities

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Introduction

How do google find out what is important? In their own words:

We studied an aggregation of over one trillion searches (or queries) that people typed into Google Search this year. We used data from multiple sources, including [Google Trends](#) and internal data tools. We filtered out spam and repeat queries to build lists that best reflect the spirit of 2012.

So what matters the most to Ugandans (or did in 2012)

1. Football. Xscore was the 2nd top search in 2012. It is a website that provides sports scores. In addition the no.1 event searched for was Euro2012. The no.1 and 2 websites searched for were also soccer related i.e livescore and soccervista. Of the top 10 people searched for, 6 were footballers (Van Persie, Ronaldinho, Nuri Sahin, Lucas Moura, Alex Song and Fabrice Muamba)

How do you turn this into a money making opportunity?

This is currently already being milked through sale of jerseys, sports bars and betting shops and mobile apps. My best bet(no pun intended) for the future of this however is through online football gambling that is tailored to Uganda (say accepting mobile money transfers). This should be supplemented by physical soccer betting shops similar to the UK ones like *William hill* and *Ladbrokes*.

Of course gambling is an addiction but so is alcohol and cigarettes et al. So the moral implications need to be considered.

2. Mobile Entertainment. Waptrick was the top search in 2012. It is a portal that provides free information such as MP3 songs, movies, games etc. In addition the 5th top search was wapdam, a portal providing free games for the mobile while the 7th top search was Tubidy. A mobile video search engine.

How do you turn this into a money making opportunity?

A portal tailored to Uganda

A similar portal that allows payment by mobile money in return for downloading Ugandan music, movies, videos (*Anne Kansime anyone?*) or games (how about *omweso* or *ludo*) will be a breakthrough.

With a link to entertainment news tailored for Uganda

It should in addition have a link to all the top entertainment and gossip websites or tweeter accounts. The BET awards 2012 were for example one of the top event searches and likewise *the sun* a UK tabloid was one of the top 10 news sites.

And where to buy mobile phones.....

Finally, it should have a link to where the newest mobile phones and tablets can be bought - now this is an opportunity to charge advertisers to use your portal. Ugandans love phones and the top phone searches were: Samsung, apple and Nokia products.

A word of caution. When developing your technology portal or website. Please keep it simple and if possible, include Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

It seems Ugandans are not yet very conversant with technology. A huge number of searches in 2012 were still the “basic” questions (for someone who has been in the technology world since the 90s) like *What is software, what is URL, What is google, What is a computer, what is internet.*

3. Knowledge/Information

Ugandans are a very inquisitive nation. They want to know. There are 3 whole categories of the top searches dedicated to finding out “What is”. These categories include health, technology and business. Some of the top 5 questions Ugandans are asking include:

- What is love?
- What is technology?
- what is planning?
- what is ethics?
- What is language?

How do you turn this into a money making opportunity?

Content based advertising

This is free market research! To make money, the entrepreneur should use the concept *Google* has mastered: Content based advertising. When someone for example searches for “love”. Google will always offer information on the sides on say, where you can find a “love doctor”. The advert/information on where to find the love doctor is paid for by that love doctor.

Tailored to Uganda by means of a mobile based app

For Uganda, this can be tailored by means of developing a classified portal or a “digital mall website” (Which can be viewed on mobile phones) that classifies shops/retailers on the basis of people’s information needs.

What this means is that for example, if the top search is “What is love” The portal/website should use category names like “love” “Technology” “ethics” and below that have say a list of counselors, bookshops selling books on love, shops with gadgets and religious counselors and ethical businesses.

Target advertisers with this free market research

The portal developers should be going to advertisers with this information to show them that this is what Ugandans are searching for! Like I said, this is free market research.

Oddly enough.....

Ugandans don’t appear to be particularly bothered with politics. There was not even 1 search related to politics. Whilst there was a general search for newsites like *New Vision*, *the monitor* and *Bukedde*, this cannot necessarily be interpreted into a specific interest in politics rather than a general interest in knowledge.

<http://www.google.com/zeitgeist/2012/#uganda>

How about our neighbours? What did they care about the most in 2012?

Kenya

1. *Local politics and governance.* The top search in 2012 was the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). Kenyans it seems are keen not to repeat the last election’s tribal violence. The other top searches included the International Criminal Court (ICC) (following the 2007 electoral violence cases in that court), Miguna Miguna (a politician with a controversial book) and the late Njenga Karume. Likewise of the top searches for people, 5 were for local politicians.
2. *TV entertainment.* Kenyans are big on TV entertainment. They particularly love telenovelas like *Eva Luna*, *Triumph of love and Pasion Morena*. They however also have a number of “locally tailored” shows such as Shuga, Tusker Project fame and KulaHappy (entertaining online videos).
3. *Football personalities.* Kenyans it seems are not as passionate about football as Uganda. While top searches include *Robin Van Persie*, *Fabrice Muamba* and *Mario Balotelli*, this appears very specific about individuals rather than the general soccer craze which engulfs Uganda.

Oddly enough.....

Kenyans are practical and don't just want to know (what is) like Ugandans. They want to do it. One of the top searches for them was "How to abort". This was followed by "How to drift ". This second search is strange. It basically means learning how a car can skid at high speed around a corner!

Other top searches for them include "how to seduce" and "how to romance."

<http://www.google.com/zeitgeist/2012/#kenya/>

Rwanda, Tanzania, Southern Sudan and DRC

Unfortunately google does not have statistics on these countries. This is telling in itself. It means probably one of two things:

1. *Lack of sufficient IT infrastructure.* Perhaps the searches from these countries are not sufficient to make meaningful conclusions as there is not enough persons with access to the internet. There is already a business opportunity, Internet and related hardware! **OR**
2. *English language difficulties.* A sizeable portion of our neighbours don't speak English. In Tanzania - Swahili, in Rwanda - French, in DRC – French while in Southern Sudan its probably Arabic. The primary opportunity for these therefore is sending Ugandan (and Kenyan) teachers to help in speaking English and translation services. English is the international business language and therefore this is a real opportunity for Uganda and maybe this could be one of our greatest exports to the region!

About us

Dickson Wasake, FCCA is a Chartered accountant and a principal at Inachee, an ethical thought leadership firm that is passionate about transforming business in Uganda and sub Saharan Africa. As part of that work, Inachee writes the "Investing in Uganda-Naked eye series" which regularly profile what is involved in starting business in different sectors.

In addition, they write the following thought ledership articles:

- *Sources of finance- profile articles www.inachee.biz a sister website. These feature different sources of alternative financing available for business in Uganda.*
- *"1 minute management tips". Profile articles on www.inachee.biz These provide simple tips on the trends that shape doing business.*
- *"advanced thinking" e- newsletter is sent our regularly for subscribers. It provide tips on various aspects of starting, growing and consolidating a company. The concepts covered include corporate governance, marketing, accounting and best practice.*

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