SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

SOUTH AFRICA IS AMONG THE LEADING DESTINATIONS IN THE WORLD

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There was a prevailing feeling of joy across the majority of sentiment drivers, so it is important to increase the volume of conversation in these top sentiment drivers to raise the TSI scores of South Africa and gain traction against competitors.

Opportunities to increase positive sentiment for South Africa

The emotion attached to South Africa as a tourism destination is that of joy, despite the recent COVID 19 pandemic being a challenging period for the sector. With the discovery of, the Omicron COVID 19 variant and the subsequent restrictions placed on travel to and from South Africa by source markets, this presented further challenges for the destination. However, despite it all, South Africa's score based on the Tourism Sentiment Index (TSI) increased during the period 2021 to 2022.

*Tourism Sentiment Index is a consolidated measure of a destination's ability to generate positive online word-of-mouth about its tourism offering.

SENTIMENT CATEGORIES

South Africa's online conversations are mostly:

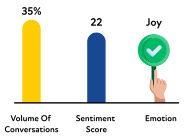
Held on social media

EXCITING
NEWS

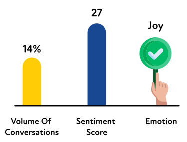
Reactions to news and lifestyle articles

In the month of February 2022, the overall volume drivers and sentiment categories were:

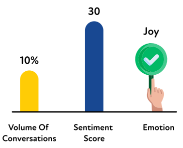
🟨 VOLUME OF CONVERSATIONS | 🟦 SENTIMENT SCORE



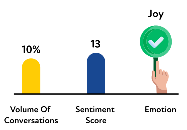
Outdoor Activities



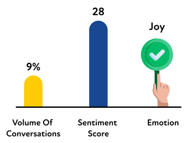
Food + Culinary



Amenities + Entertainment



Access + Transportation

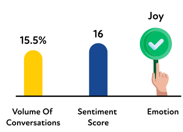


Relaxation + Wellness

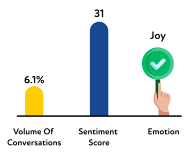
TOP 5 VOLUME DRIVERS

The Top 5 Volume Drivers in February 2022:

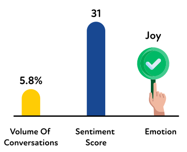
🟨 VOLUME OF CONVERSATIONS | 🟦 SENTIMENT SCORE



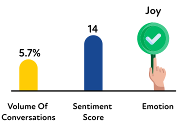
Outdoor Activities - Wildlife Viewing



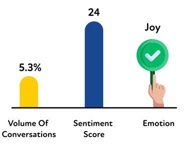
Food + Culinary - Restaurants and dining



Relaxation + Wellness - Beaches



Access + Transportation - Air Travel

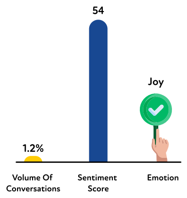


Food + Culinary Winery - Vineyards

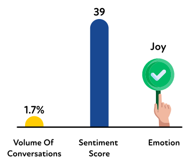
TOP 5 SENTIMENT DRIVERS

The Top 5 Sentiment Drivers in February 2022 were:

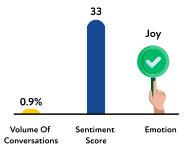
🟨 VOLUME OF CONVERSATIONS | 🟦 SENTIMENT SCORE



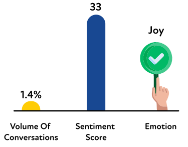
Destination Services - Weddings



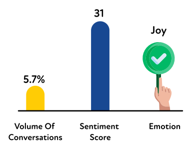
Amenities + Entertainment – Nightlife



Food and Culinary – Brewery + Pubs



Amenities + Entertainment – Attractions



Relaxation + Wellness – Beaches

TOURIST SENTIMENT

What are people across the globe saying about South Africa as a tourism destination online.

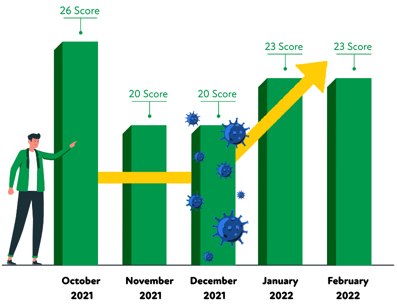
Among the top drivers we see mostly positive sentiment with high sentiment in:

Destination Services – Weddings

Amenities + Entertainment – Nightlife

Food and Culinary – Brewery + Pubs

SENTIMENT TREND



November and December 2021 sentiment was lower as a result of the discovery of the Omicron variant, which was identified in South Africa. However, encouraging signs show positive sentiment recovery in January and maintained this in February 2022.

SOUTH AFRICA'S KEY COMPETITORS

PERFORMANCE IN 2021 COMPARED WITH SOUTH AFRICA'S KEY COMPETITORS

South Africa is among the top tourism destinations in the world and is well placed among exotic destination competitors. South Africa's top competitor destinations:

1st **Thailand**
Sentiment score
24

2nd **South Africa**
Sentiment score
23

3rd **Australia**
Sentiment score
23

3rd **Kenya**
Sentiment score
22

4th **Brazil**
Sentiment score
19

TOP DESTINATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

TSI and Destination Think released a list of the top 100 most loved destinations on earth in 2021. Five (5) of South Africa's city destinations made it on the list confirming South Africa as the major destination on the continent.

19th **Knysna**
Sentiment score
30

23rd **Stellenbosch**
Sentiment score
29

41st **Hermanus**
Sentiment score
28

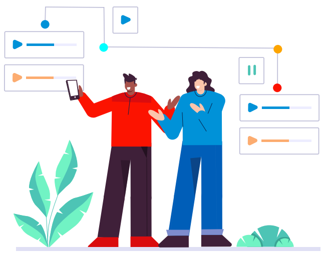
54th **Cape Town**
Sentiment score
26

73rd **Pretoria**
Sentiment score
25

Did you know: Zanzibar and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and the Red Sea in Egypt made the list along as the African competitor destinations.

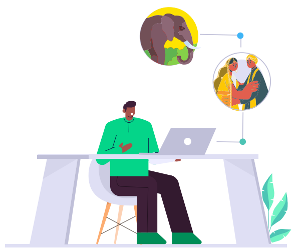
KEY TAKEAWAYS

South Africa's positive sentiment as a tourist destination is recovering however, there are great opportunities for improvement.



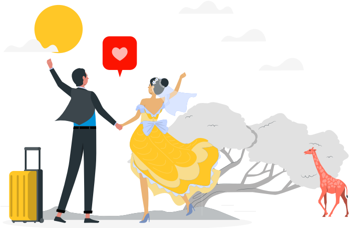
In order to increase joy / positive sentiment; we need to drive the volume of high sentiment topics by creating more enticing content to create talking points and "shareability".

South Africa needs to increase conversations in forums and blogs; where we have a much lower volume of conversation about South Africa while other competitor destinations have positioned themselves well.



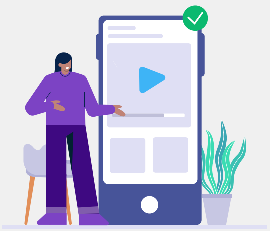
An always-on campaign approach to consistently generate a positive buzz to leverage on the greater volume of conversation is necessary.

Profiling chefs, wedding venues and establishments with food and nightlife will likely increase engagement and the likelihood of tourists intending to visit South Africa and the specific establishments profiled.



CONCLUSION

Industry bodies and tourism players need to collaborate and coordinate the content they share to amplify and concentrate on the sentiment drivers and place more content in the areas where our volume of online conversations is low.

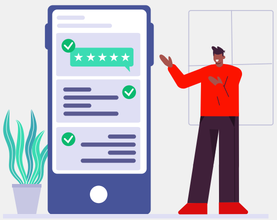


The main efforts will need to focus on broadening the online media mix and providing more content (creating new audiences to increase the volume of conversation).

Boosting that content through paid campaigns on Facebook, review sites, travel blogs and forums (boosting the sentiment driver topics to improve the destination sentiment score).

Building audiences on platforms such as Reddit and Tumblr alongside the more widely used Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

Seeding more news content and positive comments.



SA Tourism's efforts towards developing a media hub to provide content in line with global news cycles will likely have a positive effect in this regard.

*"The pandemic has done nothing to dampen our enthusiasm in welcoming holiday-makers and business tourists to a country known for its warm hospitality and giving value for money… Our new brand campaign invites the world to come to South Africa and **Live Again**. We look forward to welcoming travelers into our shores to experience our vast tourism offering."*

South African Tourism (SAT) Acting CEO Themba Khumalo

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