

What Google's year in search tells us about South African search behaviour

Issued by [Location Bank](#)

31 Jan 2020

Google recently released their annual **Year in Search** findings highlighting what we as a country, continent and planet have been asking Google in 2019. Analysing different countries indicates not only what the hot topics were, but how each country uses search.



In the UK, Europe and the USA the focus is on people, news and politicians. The leading search behaviours are information gathering. In South Africa (and with our neighbours to the north) **"Near Me"** searches are the top trending search behaviour. Our primary search behaviour focuses on information gathering online, to find a real world destination offline.



See what was trending in 2019

United Kingdom

Searches	Movies	Sporting Events
1 Rugby World Cup	1 Avengers Endgame	1 Rugby World Cup
2 Cricket World Cup	2 Joker	2 Cricket World Cup
3 Game of Thrones	3 Captain Marvel	3 Wimbledon
4 Chernobyl	4 Once Upon a Time In Hollywood	4 Women's World Cup
5 Thanos	5 The Favourite	5 KSI vs Logan Paul 2
6 Notre Dame	6 Green Book	6 Ashes
7 Avengers Endgame	7 Lion King	7 Six Nations
8 iPhone 11	8 Aquaman	8 Grand National
9 Caitlyn Jenner	9 It Chapter 2	9 Champions League Final
10 Joker	10 Bohemian Rhapsody	10 Liverpool vs. Man City



See what was trending in 2019

South Africa

Top trending 'Near Me' searches	Top trending searches	Top trending sports searches
1 Job openings near me	1 Load shedding	1 Rugby World Cup
2 Parks near me	2 Election results	2 Cricket World Cup
3 Restaurant near me	3 Thanos	3 India vs South Africa
4 McDonalds near me	4 IEC	4 Kaizer Chiefs vs Orlando Pirates
5 Hotels near me	5 Fiona Viotti	5 AFCON
6 Hair Salon near me	6 Black Friday Specials	6 Bafana Bafana
7 Voting Station near me	7 Gavin Watson	7 Cricket live scores
8 Petrol station near me	8 Mark Batchelor	8 Proteas
9 Makro near me	9 Teacher's Day	9 PSL Standings
10 Woolworths near me	10 Hoerskoel Driehoek	10 Stellenbosch vs Kaizer Chiefs

The key difference between African and first-world-based search, is that the majority of searches happen on mobile, while on the move and have a specific outcome (finding a store) while in the UK/USA the majority of searches are still PC-based and the user is at their desk or at home.

The numbers back this up – 85% of South Africans have a smartphone, compared to just 24% who have a laptop or PC.

With the exponential growth of **"Near Me"** search in South Africa, the accuracy and ongoing management of your Google My Business listing has never been more important.

In the past two years:

- There has been 150% growth for searches like "near me now". E.g. "Pizza near me now".
- There has been a 900% growth for searches like "near me tonight/today". E.g. "petrol station near me tonight".
- There has been 200% growth for searches like "now" + "near me". E.g. "stores open near me now".

Simply having a Google My Business listing isn't enough. **Consumers are looking to find you**, so having accurate location data, updated store hours, contact details as well as reviews and questions that are promptly answered are critical components of your digital strategy.

Location Bank are the presence management leaders in SA and across the continent. We consider ourselves your **Location Custodian** ensuring your listings and presence are always 100% accurate.

[Get in touch now to make sure consumers can find you, and find you first.](#)

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