

Top 3 trending topics in South Africa

Issued by [Meltwater](#)

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Almost halfway through 2020 and no one could have predicted the outcome of what this year would look like. Social distancing has become the new norm and in South Africa, the first five months of the year have certainly been an interesting one.

From watching two tennis champions at the [#MatchInAfrica](#) to the insights developing amidst the [Covid-19 global pandemic](#), the social media landscape in South Africa this year has been a place where the country has united in numerous ways. But as we enter June, the month of May has particularly been an interesting one for South African social media users. The global leaders in media intelligence, Meltwater, took a look at some of the top themes for the month of May to bring you the hottest topics that had social media buzzing.



MARKETING & MEDIA

#MatchInAfrica: What social media said about the Nadal vs Federer tennis match for charity

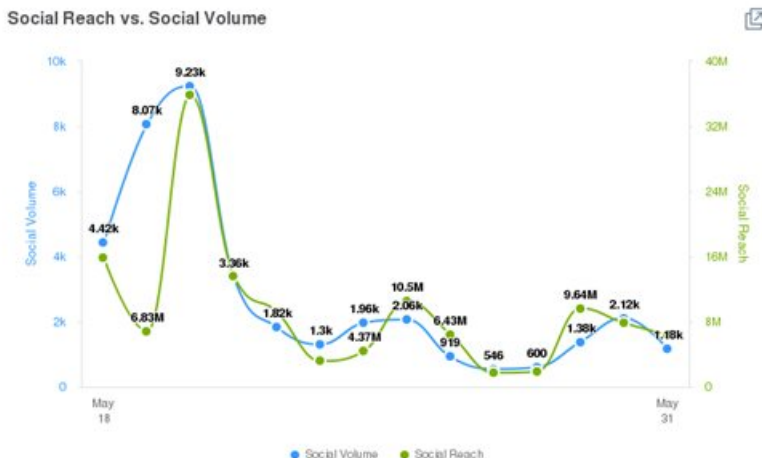
Meltwater 10 Feb 2020



1. #MissSA2020

With the new rebranding of the Miss South Africa organisation, thousands of hopefuls vying for the coveted Miss SA crown have been sharing their entry videos on social media since entries opened. In May, '#MissSA2020' was mentioned in social media posts 41,000 times.

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Social reach vs social volume, in numbers, of '#MissSA2020' between 18 May and 31 May 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

The first big spike in mentions recorded was on 18 May, when Twitter user [@yonellamakalima](#) shared her entry the night before. A total of 15.8 million people were engaging with the hashtag on this day as online users began retweeting the entrant's video and contributing to the 61% of positive feelings that South Africans had for the overall '#MissSA2020' hashtag.

“ Hope you make it to the top16 I will remember you and vote. Goodluck♥☐ <https://t.co/68QADHpgzN>— Momo (@Momo_fortunate) [May 17, 2020](#) ”

On 20 May, however, the '#MissSA2020' hashtag did not only reach an all-time high of 39 million people on social media, but it also received the highest number of mentions on the day. This was due to previous tweets from entry hopeful, Bianca Schoombee, resurfacing on Twitter due to alleged racism and consequently public anger.

As online users expressed their opinions on these tweets, the '#MissSA2020' hashtag, which had been receiving a general sense of positivity from the South African public from the third week of May as entries poured in, received its highest amount of negative feelings on the day, with 76% of social media mentions having a negative impact on '#MissSA2020'.



#MissSA2020 Sentiment



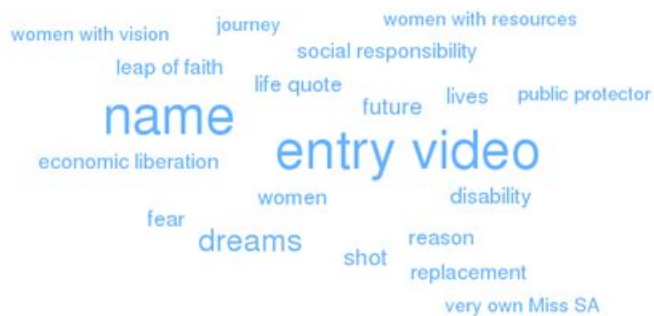
Sentiment analysis, in numbers, on '#MissSA2020' between 11 May and 31 May 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

But overall, the hashtag has garnered some aspiring hopefuls, and some of the trending themes that have been associated with '#MissSA2020' during May include:

- 'entry video', which refers to the mandatory short video clip that entrants must upload to social media
- 'leap of faith', which refers to many entrants expressing their decision to enter the pageant
- 'economic liberation', 'social responsibility', 'women with vision' and 'women with resources', which refers to the key messaging that entrants have been sharing in their entry posts

#MissSA2020 Trending Themes



Trending themes on '#MissSA2020' between 1 May and 31 May 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

2. 'Alcohol will be sold'

After President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation on the new regulations under Level 3 on Sunday, 24 May 2020, there was one particular phrase from his speech that made its way to the top of the trending list on social media.

Following the announcement of South Africans now being able to buy liquor, 'alcohol will be sold' quickly trended that evening, reaching a total of 36 million people on social media. While many shared humorous tweets and posts on the topic, the prohibited sale of tobacco still emerged as a dominant theme, along with the 'strict conditions' that alcohol will be sold under, highlighting how some South Africans are still unhappy about the decision of maintaining the prohibition of tobacco products.

'alcohol will be sold' Themes



'Alcohol will be sold' trending themes on Sunday, 24 May 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

While 74% of online users shared their negative feelings about the selling of alcohol, in true South African style, the humour was not lost as social media was abuzz with South Africans celebrating the news.

“ South Africans don't deserve the internet 🤖🤖🤖🤖🤖

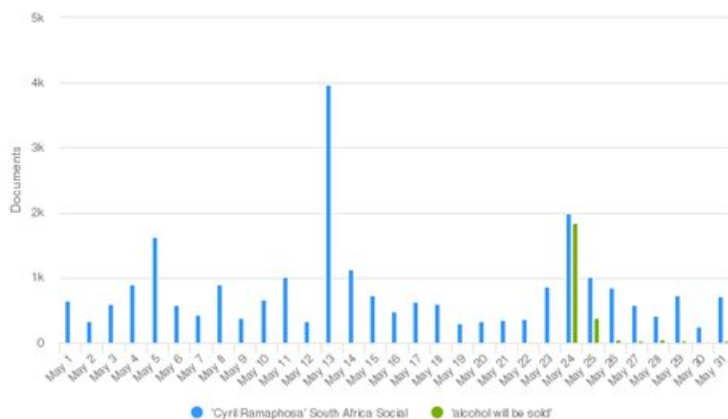
Alcohol will be sold 🤖🤖 pic.twitter.com/Chyc35g79T— Boipelo 🤖🤖🤖🤖 (@peloz_) [May 24, 2020](#) ”

Along with ‘alcohol will be sold’, social media mentions on President Cyril Ramaphosa also increased on Sunday evening following his national address. While 51% of social media mentions were about ‘Cyril Ramaphosa’, 48% of social media mentions in the country were about ‘alcohol will be sold’, [echoing the reports of articles](#) mentioning South Africa’s joy at this news.

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Media Exposure

| Filters: Country



Media exposure on ‘Cyril Ramaphosa’ mentions in South Africa (blue) and ‘alcohol will be sold’ mentions in South Africa (green) between 1 May and 31 May 2020

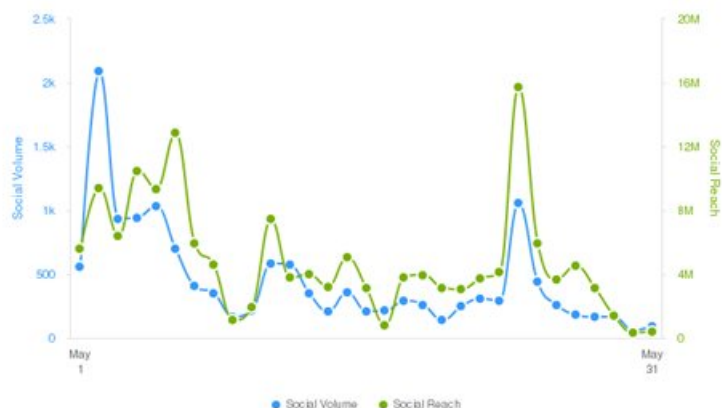
[click to enlarge](#)

3. #LockdownSouthAfrica

South Africans have had to adjust to a new way of life under lockdown regulations as an effort to slow down the spread of the coronavirus.

During May, the #LockdownSouthAfrica hashtag was mentioned just under 14,000 times on social media, and on 24 May 2020, close to 16 million people were engaging with the hashtag following President Ramaphosa’s national address.

Social Reach vs. Social Volume



Social reach vs social volume, in numbers, of #LockdownSouthAfrica between 1 May and 31 May 2020

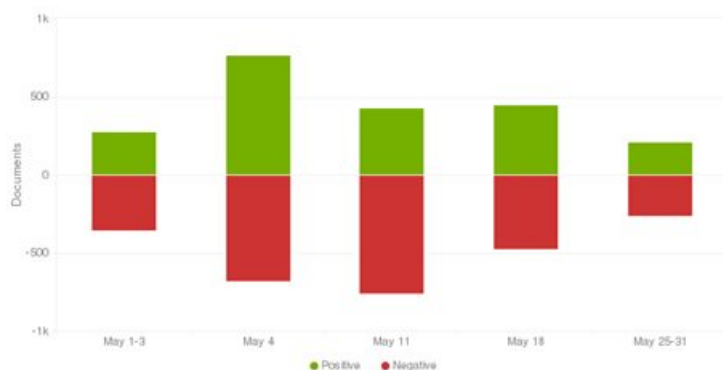
[click to enlarge](#)

Some of the key moments that #LockdownSouthAfrica showed in May include:

- 2 May 2020: #LockdownSouthAfrica received its highest number of mentions following a media statement released from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development the day before
- 6 May 2020: The hashtag reached almost 13 million people on social media following the announcement of local TV show *Uzalo* on SABC making an announcement that it would resume production and return to viewers' screens
- 11 May 2020: The hashtag reached over seven million people on social media following an online video that emerged on Twitter showing abuse of power from a police official

During the third week of May, feelings around #LockdownSouthAfrica were at its most negative (64%) as online users shared more of their concerns around the regulations, particularly around the announcement of schools reopening in the middle of the pandemic.

#LockdownSouthAfrica Sentiment



Weekly sentiment analysis on #LockdownSouthAfrica between 1 May 2020 and 31 May 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

Some of the top influential people and platforms, by social reach, speaking about #LockdownSouthAfrican includes 'eNCAnews' and 'Uzalo on SABC 1' on Facebook and [@garethcliff](#) and [@Nandi_Madida](#) on Twitter.

Following President Ramaphosa's address on 24 May 2020, the #Level3Restrictions hashtag emerged and has since reached over 25 million people on social media. Since then, trending themes related to this hashtag have included:

- 'bottle store rush', which refers to the overall feeling of mass purchasing of alcohol at bottle stores from 1 June 2020
- 'home consumption', which refers to the sale of alcohol only being permitted for consumption at home under Level 3 regulations
- 'sale of cigarettes', which refers to the prohibition of tobacco products, like cigarettes, under Level 3 regulations
- 'justification', which refers to a recent tweet from the political party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), which called out Minister Dlamini-Zuma on her reasoning for the continued ban on tobacco products

“ It appears that Dlamini-Zuma lied to South Africans in her justification for the continued ban on the sale of cigarettes & other tobacco products. If this is indeed the case, then Ramaphosa has no choice but to fire her.

-@jsteenhuysen#Level3Restrictions<https://t.co/Ct88isdJCe>— Democratic Alliance (@Our_DA) [May 29, 2020](#) ”

As the month of May comes to a close, we now look to start the month of June with new rules and regulations in place, and no doubt that South Africans continue to share their woes and wins on social media. From a new Miss South Africa coming soon, to the slow return of 'back to normal' living amidst a global crisis, the South African social media landscape will surely be one to document and share it all.

If you want to get insights like these, contact the [Meltwater team](#) today!

Source: Data gathered by Meltwater between 1 May 2020 to 31 May 2020.

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