



Tamar Sports Index - Volume 2

FIFA brand misses real benefit of the World Cup

FIFA brand misses real benefit of the World Cup – brand engagement through search and social media

Overview

Tamar research shows how organisers of the biggest global sporting event pay penalty for failure to deepen loyalty online

The World Cup kicks off this week (Friday, 11th June) in South Africa yet the brand behind the world's most loved sports tournament seems to be missing a unique opportunity to connect with fans around the globe.

Detailed research by Tamar, the UK's award-winning search and social conversion agency, for the second **Tamar Sports Index** finds that while countless brands are associating themselves with the World Cup through the search engines and social networks, FIFA seems reluctant to deepen loyalty to its brand in a similar way.

Tamar has monitored and measured online consumer/fan search behaviours to compare them with the previous World Cup competition in Germany in 2006 and at the same time researched FIFA's online campaign strategy for the tournament in South Africa.

There is no doubt that the FIFA franchise is responsible for one of the most witnessed events on earth. By the time the World Cup final is played at Soccer City (FNB Stadium) in Johannesburg on Sunday, 11th July, the total cumulative television audience is forecast to be more than 26 billion.

However, the FIFA brand online is not among the most visible brands in the world. Part of this is due to the stringent protection and insulation of its assets but FIFA clearly does not have longevity in search matches, which is a key to building brand engagement.

In all official merchandise, marketing material and advertising mentions of the tournament, FIFA is explicit in the instruction to include its branding. The natural consequence of this is that much online attention is drawn to FIFA-branded searches. However, the natural non-FIFA searches are dominant and this trend will continue long after the 2010 World Cup ends.

FIFA and World Cup online interest

Web Search Interest: fifa 2010 world cup, 2010 world cup

Worldwide, Jan 2009 - May 2010

Categories: [Sports](#), [Local](#), [Games](#), [Entertainment](#)

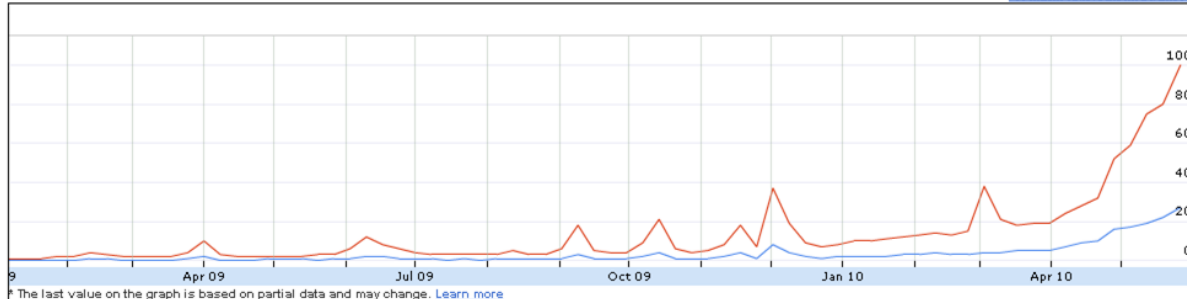
Totals

fifa 2010 world cup 3
2010 world cup 13

Interest over time

Forecast News headlines

[Learn what these numbers mean](#)



Web Search Interest: fifa world cup, world cup

Worldwide, Jan 2009 - May 2010

Categories: [Sports](#), [Games](#), [Entertainment](#), [Food & Drink](#), [Local](#)

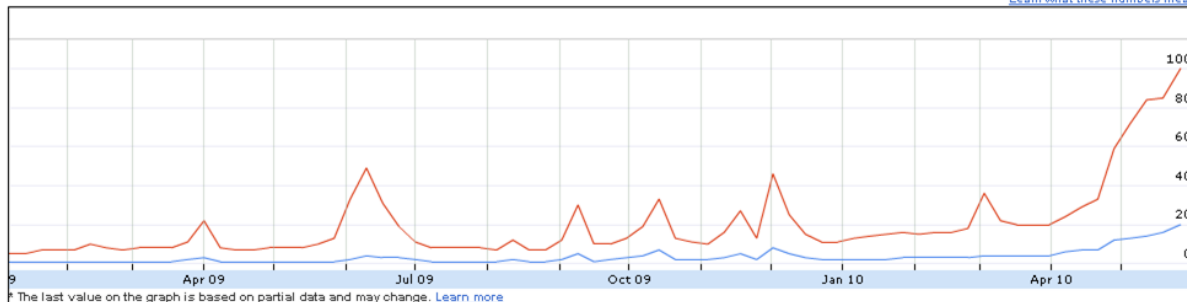
Totals

fifa world cup 3
world cup 20

Interest over time

Forecast News headlines

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The peaks shown on the graphs are directly correlated to world events; the World Cup match draw in December created peaks for all four of the highly popular search terms: 'fifa 2010 world cup', '2010 world cup', 'fifa world cup' and 'world cup'.

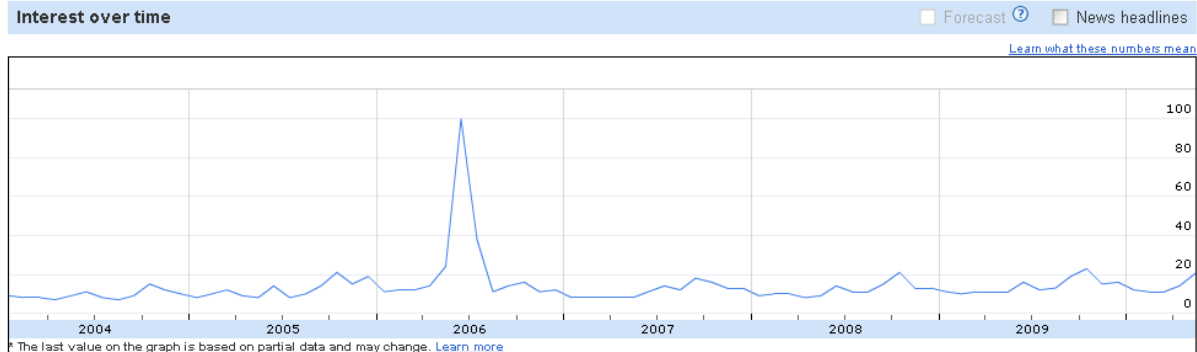
FIFA and World Cup online interest

Web Search Interest: fifa

Worldwide, Jan 2004 - May 2010

Categories: [Sports \(25-50%\)](#), [Games \(10-25%\)](#), [Entertainment \(0-10%\)](#), [more...](#)

Totals ⓘ
fifa 14



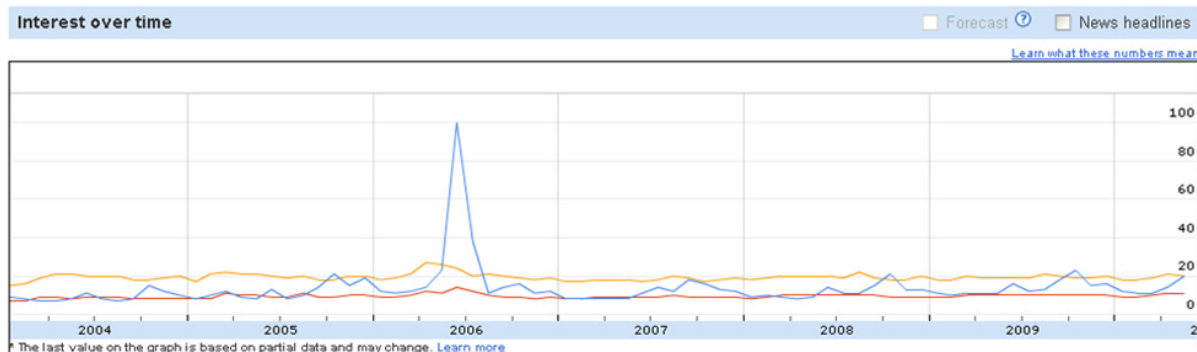
FIFA appears to be successful in increasing its search interest share over the past four years, and is competitive with a number of much more conspicuous global brands. FIFA is certainly a global player but the FIFA brand fails to make the “Biggest Global Brands Lists” with any regularity.

Web Search Interest: fifa, adidas, nike

Worldwide, Jan 2004 - Jun 2010

Categories: [Shopping](#), [Sports](#), [Games](#), [Entertainment](#), [Computers & Electronics](#), [Local](#)

Totals ⓘ
fifa 14
adidas 9
nike 19



FIFA's social media 'miss' on brand engagement goal

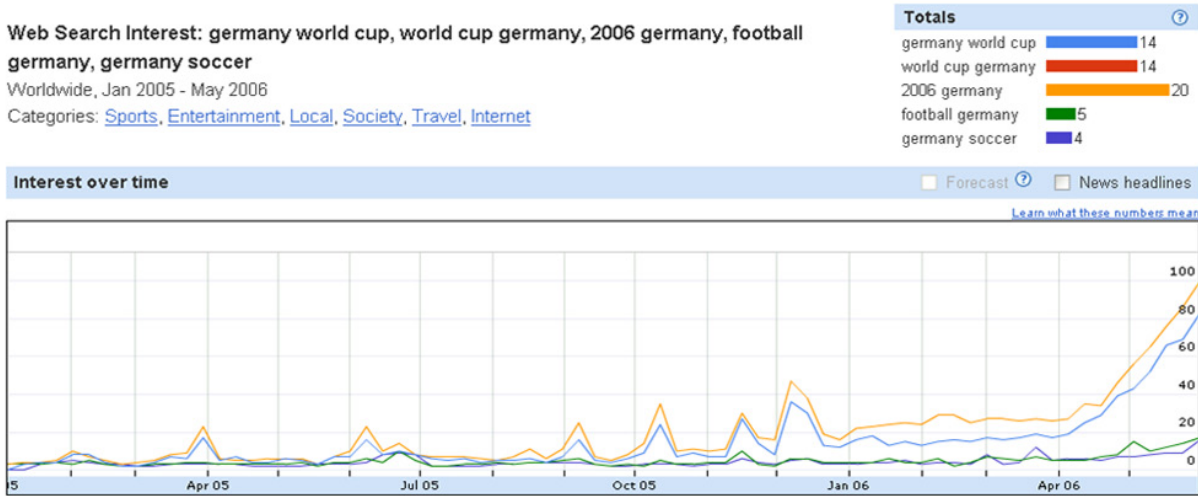
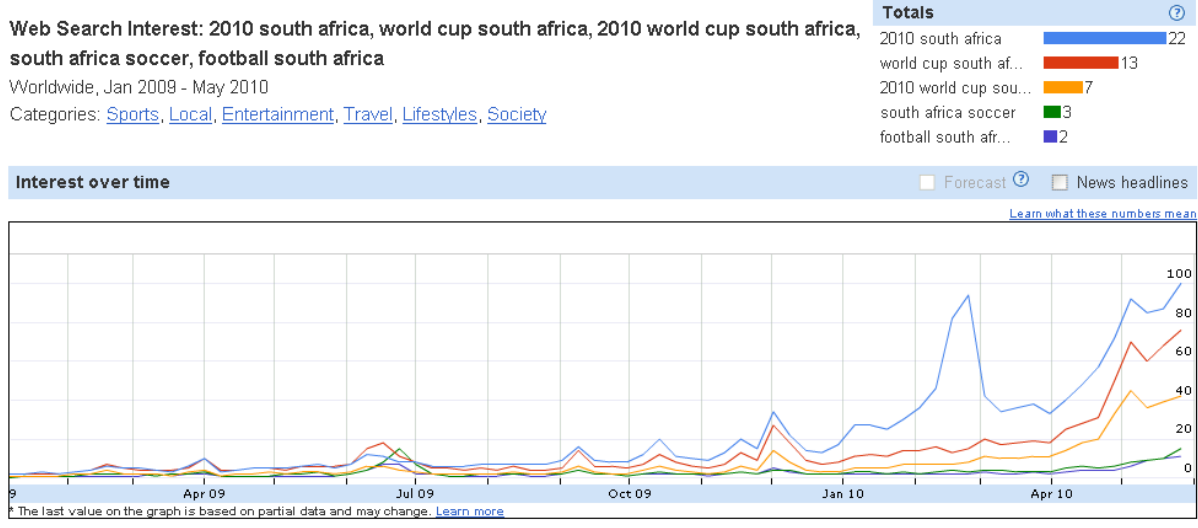
In terms of social media, there is no external "official" FIFA channel on the major social networks. While there are hundreds of unofficial pages on the various networks, FIFA has not stepped outside its stringent onsite social networking arrangement on its Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) website.

Tamar's research indicates that this lack of 'reach-out' and engagement may even isolate the brand even further.



World Cup search speaks volumes for need to engage

One of the strongest and simplest ways to measure exposure and media coverage for an event like this is with search engine volumes. We have compared the highest volume keywords leading up to this World Cup and compared them with Germany four years ago. The trends are looking quite similar in the build-up to the tournament.



For the top five keywords for each region over the period, there is a significant increase in comparative volumes with a significantly deeper penetration historically for the third most popular keyword (shown in the orange bands). Overall volumes are higher for the 2010 tournament – this is not surprising given the higher levels of internet penetration compared to the 2006 tournament.

World Cup search speaks volumes for need to engage

Web Search Interest: 2010 south africa, 2006 germany

Worldwide, Jan 2005 - Jun 2010

Categories: [Sports](#), [Local](#), [Entertainment](#), [Travel](#), [Lifestyles](#), [Society](#)

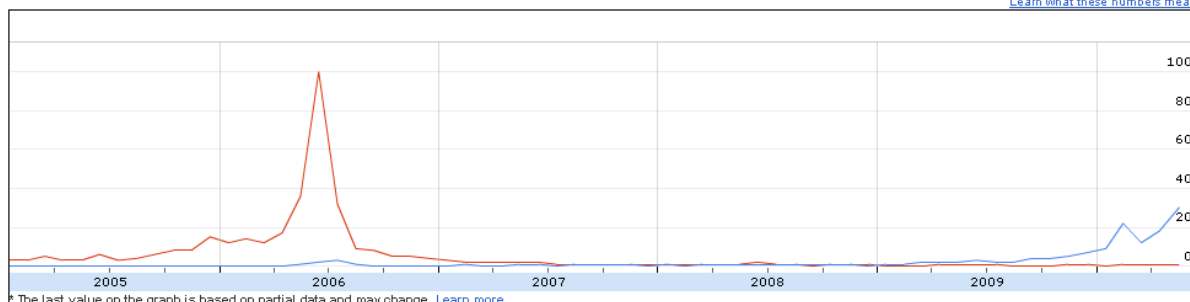
Totals

2010 south africa 2

2006 germany 6

Interest over time

Forecast News headlines



Looking at the broader picture for the higher volume terms, the build up to the peak in 2006 for the German keywords is echoed by the South African term.

Perhaps the fact that FIFA does not need to engage with fans is why they have not pursued the search and social network mediums with real seriousness. Does FIFA intend to remain a purely business-to-business entity or does it have an intention of reaching out to connect with the billions of people who love its headline product, the World Cup?

What better way to engage than through the burgeoning social platforms available? Our research does indicate that unfortunately, FIFA has not yet captured the hearts and minds of these people.

Neil Jackson
Search Strategy Director , Tamar

Neil comments...

Tamar™

The **Search & Social Conversion** Agency

Tamar, the UK's award-winning search and social conversion agency, combines extensive expertise in natural search engine optimisation with conversion-driven design and social media to generate more online sales for businesses. This results-focused delivery of campaigns is achieved through five complementary divisions: search, analytics, conversion design, technology and social media. Tamar's approach is to use its 15 years of online expertise and experience and combine this with clients' customer intelligence to maximise client revenues. Tamar specialises in working with major financial services, travel, gaming and retail brands. Its extensive, high-profile client base includes RBS, LloydsTSB, Citibank, Compare The Market, The Arcadia Group, B&Q, Royal Caribbean, Endsleigh and Domestic & General.

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