

TikTok reaches 1 billion global users - these are the 5 top trends

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Having recently hit the milestone of 1 billion monthly active users, TikTok has been one of the best performing social media channels in the year of 2021. We saw the platform erupt into the scene in 2020, the year the world went into lockdown - many users have taken comfort in using TikTok as it allows individuals to be their authentic selves when they create content. TikTok is famously known for their dynamic 15-60 second multclip videos that often trend across all social media platforms.

Meltwater, the global leader in media intelligence, analysed social media mentions and trending themes around TikTok this year, both in South Africa and globally. Here are 5 TikTok trends that took 2021 by storm:

1. TikTok Hacks

TikTok has become a source of information-sharing amongst users and the world at large. From medical doctors debunking myths, to beauty gurus sharing makeup tips and tricks and to regular users sharing family recipes. These hacks have often been tried on other social media platforms such as Youtube where famous Youtubers such as James Charles test and react to the hacks.



2. "I understood the assignment"

The song released by Tay Money titled 'The Assignment' has been trending on TikTok videos globally. The phrase has been used as slang to describe someone or something that surpasses expectations. For example users posting a transformation video in relation to weight, makeovers or getting ready, the outcome of the transformation is understanding the assignment.



TikTokers have created over 600,000 videos using the sound, ensuring that the phrase remains in our heads at all times. The trend started to rise to fame in September 2021 in the USA and began to spread across the world to countries such as South Africa. From 1 September–31 October 2021, the phrase received a total of 309 mentions on South African Twitter.

- Assignment(276): The most mentioned word as assignment is part of the phrase.
- Solo Date(18): Discussions around a user looking good for a solo date.
- Grooms and Wedding entourage(11): This was in relation to a user dressing the groom and his entourage and doing a good job.

Matt Jones from Kentucky Sports Radio tweeted about using the phrase. The Tweet had a reach of 229K and an engagement of 715, with fellow Twitter users agreeing.

3. Stealing Challenge

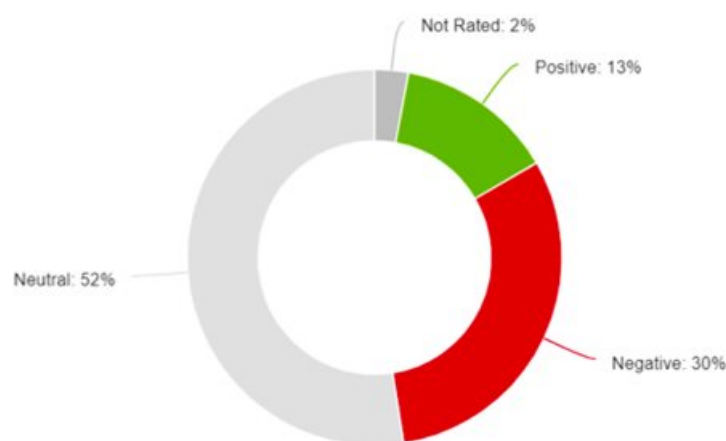
The TikTok stealing challenge can be described as controversial as it required the platform users to steal tools from their high school premises, thus damaging the schools. With over 94,000 videos with the hashtags #deviouslicks and #diabolicslicks, the trend resulted in the theft of soap dispensers, fire alarms, bathroom mirrors, teachers desks and many other items. Schools took action by suspending, issuing restitution orders and even filing criminal charges against the students.



I don't like when TikTok songs end up in my head I am at the Mexican restaurant and when I said I was ready to order as I sat down, the waitress said "well that's quick".....and without thinking I said (almost singing) "I understood the assignment" She looked at me oddly

The negative sentiment accounted for 30% on social media as there were many negative comments about the trend and the impact it had on the community.

Global Social Media Sentiment Analysis 1 September–31 October 2021:



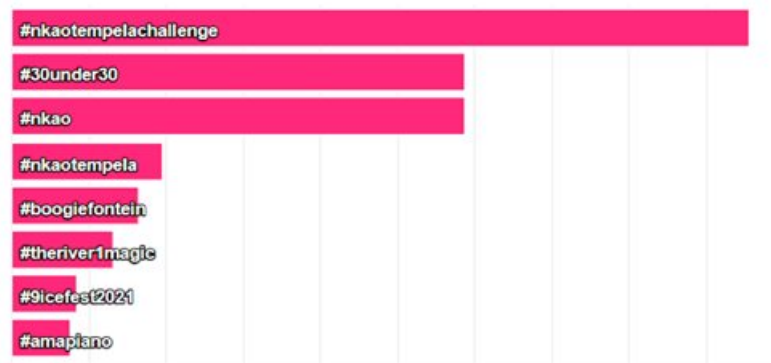
4. #musicnotiktok

Music on TikTok has become the main element in creating entertaining content that connects people across the world. TikTok has facilitated the interaction between artists and creators where they can use their respective talents to propel trends forward and impact on culture. As many as 430 songs have passed 1 billion video views as TikTok sounds globally, over 175 songs that were trending on TikTok charted on the Billboard Hot 100. The South African music industry has been dominated by the Amapiano sound and it does not come as a surprise that the Amapiano hashtag was the most popular music hashtag in South Africa. Some of the most popular songs in South Africa were Siyathandana by Cassper Nyovest, It Aint Me by DJ Abux, Banyana by DJ Maphorisa & Tyler ICU and Izolo by DJ Maphorisa & Daliwonga & Visca, all part of the Amapiano sound.

One of the newest Amapiano songs to trend with a challenge in South Africa is Nkao Tempela by Ch'cco, Mellow & Sleezy, South Africans are posting videos of themselves dancing to the new hit songs. From 1 September–15 December Nkao Tempela has been mentioned over 19K times on social media.

The Top Hashtags in association with the song from 1 September–15 December 2021:

Top Hashtags



#nkaotempelachallenge had a total of 239 mentions in relation to the TikTok challenge.

5. Voices of change

In 2021 TikTok became an even safer space for communities to come together and to lift each other up. TikTok has created the opportunity for users to uplift each other, speak out against social issues they feel strongly about, and support the causes they feel strongly about. There has been an increased amount of creators that are fighting for a positive change across the globe. South Africa has seen some of their impactful content creators being recognised on the platform such as woman pilot of colour, Dr Siya being recognised by the World Health Organisation and #RisingVoices, a project by Tiktok to upskill South African content creators of colour.



The overall sentiment on #RisingVoices this year on social media was positive, this speaks to the impact it has had on local creators.

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