

IAB SA / PWC Report shows a healthy digital advertising industry

This year's IAB South Africa / PwC Internet Advertising Revenue Report - 2021 Study reveals exciting insights, including a 31% year-on-year (YoY) growth in digital media, up a whopping 21% from the same period in 2020.



Source: © raw pixel [123rf](#) This year's IAB South Africa / PwC Internet Advertising Revenue Report – 2021 Study has been released

The Report is part of the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) South Africa's aim to empower the media and marketing industries of South Africa. The objective of the annual report is to effectively quantify the size of domestic media revenues on the internet – both online and via mobile.

Report findings

Despite the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, sustainable high digital growth is expected as the economy recovers.

Other findings include:

- Internet advertising is at an all-time high of 32.3% of the overall ad market, up from 29.6% in 2020 and 22.8% in 2019.
- Total internet advertising revenue for 2021 was worth R12.1 billion, R2.9 billion more than in 2020.
- Paid search grew by 16.8% to 20.4% in 2021, up from 3.6% in 2020.
- Google remains the market leader in paid search, with 99.0% of revenue in 2021.
- Google Chrome remains the most popular browser in South Africa, with 69.4% of people using it.
- South Africans remain worried about data privacy, with 47.5% reporting they decline cookies at least some of the time and 40.4% using ad blockers.
- 61.5% of South Africans aged 13 or older use social media, with Meta accounting for 80.3% of paid social revenue in 2021.
- Finance (29%), FMCG (14%) and alcohol (11%) remain the categories with the highest percentage of media spend.
- Performance-based ad campaigns remain most popular, accounting for 47% of purchases.

Realistic, reliable and trustworthy data

“The analysis and resulting findings are based on actual figures and provide realistic, reliable and trustworthy data that can

be used by media agencies, publishers and marketers for improved decision-making for them and their clients,” says Haydn Townsend, chairman at IAB South Africa.

“These results, as well as those from other territories where similar studies have been conducted by PwC, provide improved comparisons of the size, growth and trends in the South African market in relation to global findings,” comments Townsend.

The study includes input from various market stakeholders such as the Advertising Media Forum (AMF), online and mobile publishers and agencies, and advertisers for the year 2021.

The report is driven by the organisation’s Research Council, chaired by Shaun Frazao, Global Strategy Partner at Wavemaker.



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Empowering the industry

“The IAB SA Research Council exists to empower the industry by collecting, collating and distributing accurate, non-biased research findings that reliably reflect industry trends,” says Frazao.

“The study is conducted with buy-side advertising agencies and clients and this information is then cross-checked with information from research provider Omdia before being independently compiled by PwC,” Frazao comments.

A measure of the health and opportunity in SA’s media and marketing space

“PwC undertakes similar studies in territories across the world and this study is therefore accepted as the most comprehensive measure of online and mobile advertising. The report provides smart, actionable and motivating insights that enable industry players to make better decisions,” adds Frazao.

“Being able to benchmark available ad revenues over time is a measure of the health and opportunity in South Africa’s media and marketing space. The media industry has, for some years now, experienced significant challenges and this data is a powerful resource to manage forecasts and expectations,” adds Claire Cobbledick, vice chairperson at IAB South Africa.

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IAB South Africa acknowledges that the data set may not be complete, however, with the support of PwC and IAB global, the organisation remains committed to providing a consolidated, instructive view of ad spending that can assist to inform publishers' commercial models and monetisation strategies.

The IAB South Africa/PwC Internet Advertising Revenue Report - 2021 Study is available to IAB South Africa members [here](#).

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