

Target Group Index research achieves phenomenal year-on-year revenue growth

By [Maria Petousis](#), issued by [Ask Afrika](#)

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Target Group Index (TGI) research had an astonishing year, achieving a 22% revenue growth, servicing close to 70 top companies, with 12 Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed companies, 14 multinational companies, eight media owners and eight banking and insurance service providers topping the list.



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Furthermore, 75% of the top 50 South African advertisers, representing more than 250 consumer brands, are currently using TGI to guide their brand and media decisions. This success is in part based on a revised costing and access structure for agencies, the need for product and brand level information and best-practice methodology innovation.

It takes constant innovation and reinvention to remain at the forefront of the research sector. We are committed to this process by consistently updating our data, upgrading our methodology and finding new ways to bring fresh and relevant data, backed by integrity, to the market. And our innovation has paid off in a big way, being honoured with the 2018 Jenny Davis Award at the TGI Global Conference for the best data collection methodology.

Ask Afrika, which is the license holder to TGI in South Africa, has more than 20 years of syndicated data tracking and related expertise. Data collection at this scale is both a science and an art, and our long tenure illustrates our ability to work from a solid tried and tested scientific methodology through to the fine art of drawing valuable and relevant insights for clients.

Our expertise is also cemented in the Ask Afrika Kasi Star Brands and Ask Afrika Icon Brands benchmarks, which track loyal brand consumption of more than 26-million South African consumers. These benchmarks provide strategic indicators for our clients on brand performance and drivers that enable brand loyalty and close the loop to understand their performance relative to their competitors.

We are living in a world where data is ubiquitous to any marketer and yet TGI has proved to be the marketer's choice for marketing data, insights and intelligence. TGI's versatility, robustness and access to about 70 markets globally are part of the reason for this, but it also offers other benefits.

The demand for strategic competitive intelligence

A strong demand driver for the TGI research tool is the increased need for marketers to stay ahead of their competitors. The TGI tool includes data for more than 8,000 brands, which allows our clients to not only strategically plan on their own brands, but also benchmark and purposefully position around their competitors' brands.

And, just as importantly, the insight that the data set provides into why consumers are behaving the way they do allows marketers to access consumers' basic needs, motivations and desires - providing powerful understanding of into how to address the needs of not only their consumers, but also those of their competitors.

Not only did Ask Afrika have new media owners coming on board this year, but the company has also signed up various media agencies on our new agency model, illustrating the industry's need for holistic consumer and audience data.

TGI continues to be the leading research platform in the fast-moving consumer goods sector. Steady growth in this sector has contributed to a substantial proportion of our user base. TGI is the go-to tool in this sector, because of the powerful brand information it provides.

The subscription base is also well represented by the financial services sector, including eight top banking and insurance firms. The TGI database includes a robust set of financial behaviour and services sector data, ranging from personal banking, investing and insurance to funeral cover and stokvel behaviour, as well as attitudes towards financial services, all of which can be understood and compared across competitors, closing the current data gap in the market for our clients.

Ask Afrika is also seeing an increased uptake in annual TGI database subscriptions and customised reports from other sectors, including pharmaceutical companies, automotive, quick service restaurants and retail companies. TGI can provide research solutions for almost any industry sector, due to the depth and scope that the database offers.

With too much data comes too little information

With technological advances, companies have access to more data than ever before, but it is interesting to note that this has not necessarily translated into improved marketing performance.

The availability of data has increased tenfold, but has not achieved exponential performance in terms of brand recognition, improved customer service or increased sales. All too often, the available data provides valuable information for tactical decision-making, but does not give marketers the insight that drives strategic decision-making.

There is a plethora of technologically-driven do-it-yourself surveys and research tools that provide marketers with “weapons and combat techniques” – but they often lack the effective “battle strategy necessary to win a war”.

What the TGI database offers clients is the “battle strategy” and the ability to understand customers from a 360-degree view, enabling them to make future decisions that will lead to business growth and profitability.

Too much data often comes with too little information, which provides another challenge. The current marketing landscape has provided marketers and agencies with a sea of data points; however, there is no coherent structure or links between these points.

In other words, as stressed by the author of a [Harvard Business Review](#) article, the data that practitioners need to work with to make key decisions is often fragmented, with numerous gaps, making it impossible to draw clear strategic insights to guide marketing and media direction.

Instead, the volume of data has made things worse as marketers are ending up needing “Marie Kondo-type” techniques to sift through the clutter to distinguish the data that will provide insights “joy” versus “junk”.

Having more data doesn’t make marketing more strategic, but it can make it more precise. TGI has empowered our clients to drive strategic value from their marketing information and data, guiding decisions for where they can play and how they can win.

TGI provides interlinked data for everything consumers do from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to bed. We are seeing that clients are increasingly using the TGI database as a foundation to their data stack and building on it by fusing market segmentation and secondary plug-in data into the TGI system.

Focus within a strategic framework

TGI provides focus within a strategic framework and this is where its beauty lies - the type of data captured is informed by proven best-practice strategic approaches.

The data collected can be immediately applied to existing strategic frameworks, such as “word-of-mouth segments” outlined by Malcolm Gladwell in his best-selling book *The Tipping Point*, or the segmentation, targeting and positioning model, or a life values framework based on the Schwartz theory of basic values.

One of our key successes this year was our intimate workshops, where we showed clients how to use frameworks to inform their strategic marketing and brand plans based on a scientific approach.

Our amazing year-on-year growth is a testament to the value that TGI brings to the marketing table. Our data provides our clients with major benefits in supporting their marketing decisions.

We thank all our clients for their continued support – we are excited to enable and unlock their future marketing strategies.

About Ask Afrika

Ask Afrika is a full-service market research company with a B-BBEE level 3 rating. With 23 years of experience, we partner with clients in the retail, telecoms, financial services, automotive and public sectors for customised research. We work across Africa, which makes us a great partner for multinational companies.

Ask Afrika is a specialist in customised customer service research. Besides having the most extensive proprietary benchmarks, Ask Afrika is also the preferred partner for the government and NGOs seeking proactive social research.

The Target Group Index (TGI) survey has a global geographic coverage of 70 markets and measures service, products, media and brands.

Ask Afrika's knowledge of brands is extensive and TGI is already used by the majority of the top 50 advertisers and media owners in South Africa. TGI complements local and global measurement currencies, and offers the most comprehensive insights into consumer demographics, behaviour, and product and brand usage, with rich attitudinal statements.

The Ask Afrika Group's exclusive product suite includes the Ask Afrika Orange Index®, TGI, Ask Afrika Icon Brands™ and Ask Afrika Kasi Star Brands. With us, you can make game-changing business decisions confidently.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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