

A cyclist wearing a pink jersey and a black cap with "LE COL SPECIALIZED" on it is kissing a large, multi-tiered golden trophy. The background shows a large crowd and a stone archway, likely the Colosseum in Rome. The text "#sport on social" is overlaid in white, with "on" underlined. Below it, "Giro d'Italia 2022" is written in pink.

#sport on social

Giro d'Italia 2022

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welcome to #SportOnSocial Giro d'Italia 2022

Chris Argyle-Robinson, Strategy Director, Redtorch

The first of a series of short reports looking specifically at the cycling Grand Tours. This #SportOnSocial report focuses on the digital performance of Giro d'Italia.

The Tour had a lot of firsts, from the first Black African rider, Biniam Girmay, to win a Grand Tour stage to the first Australian, Jai Hindley, to claim overall victory.

However, the Tour did not reach the digital performance of last year's race. I believe there are a number of reasons for this.

- 1. A lack of big names competing for the Pink Jersey:** Colombian fan favourite Egan Bernal did not defend his title and cycling superstars such as Slovakian Peter Sagan did not compete.
- 2. A low-profile winner:** Jai Hindley's social media footprint of **38k+** is small compared to that of Egan Bernal's **1.8m+** followers; even the Australian's Wikipedia is light on content and despite a great win, he lacks the media profile to attract significant audiences.
- 3. A largely European field of competitors:** **75%+** of starting riders and the majority of cycling teams were from European countries. This made it harder to generate audience reach and relevance in other countries, especially North America and Asia – many riders and teams need higher profiles and/or need to be from these areas.
- 4. Social media algorithm changes:** outside of the event itself, market forces such as algorithm changes will have impacted the digital reach and engagement levels of Giro d'Italia and its competing teams – as demonstrated by the **31%** decrease in engagement despite producing double the amount of content on Giro Italia's social media channels.

“ events need athletes with a large online media profile to be relevant and to generate reach in global markets. Without them, they will struggle to grow. ”

There are, nonetheless, a number of positives to be taken from the 2022 Tour:

- it has maintained a strong foothold in Europe
- it has seen positive growth in Africa and Central America
- it still has a huge South American audience that can be reached in 2023

I hope you enjoy the report and the insights provided.

Chris

digital headlines



Giro d'Italia boomed on TikTok

Giro d'Italia gained **328.4k** new followers on TikTok. This equates to **60%** of its total social media growth and, although it posted the fewest times on the platform, TikTok generated the most video views and 2nd-highest engagements after Instagram.



Global search interest down

Search for 'Giro d'Italia' was down **18%** globally. Search in North America was down **18%** and in Asia **20%**. In Europe, however, search was up **3%**.



Africa on the rise

Search increased **32%** in Africa when Biniam Girmay became the first black African rider to win a Grand Tour stage.



Instagram the #1 platform for teams

Instagram accounted for **44%** of teams' total growth, more than any other platform. Only **13%** of content posted by teams was on Instagram yet it generated **65%** of their total engagements.



Multi-channel video strategy

A big winner was Intermarché-Wanty-GoBERT Matériaux, which experienced the highest growth of any team on Facebook and YouTube as a result of producing engaging highlight and reactions videos throughout the Tour.



Mountain stages generate a big uplift in interest

From the first mountain-top finish, each mountain stage consistently generated a minimum **15%** increase in Google search interest compared to the other stages.



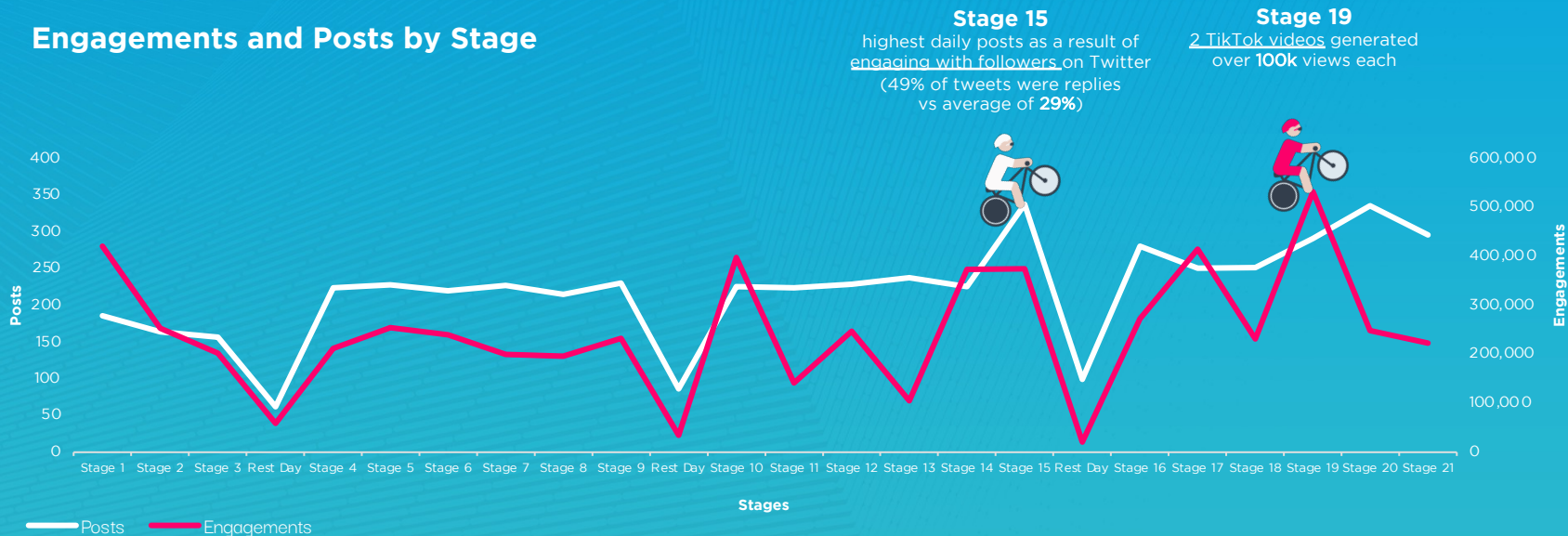
social media performance of Giro d'Italia

This section analyses the performance only of Giro d'Italia's social media channels

Giro d'Italia produced 5.3k social media posts (145% year-on-year increase) with 77% of the 5.9m engagements driven by Instagram and TikTok

39% of total (2.3m engagements) came from Instagram, more than any other channel. TikTok represented 38% of total engagements although it accounted for just 2% of total posts. 56% of content was produced on Twitter and 6% on Facebook.

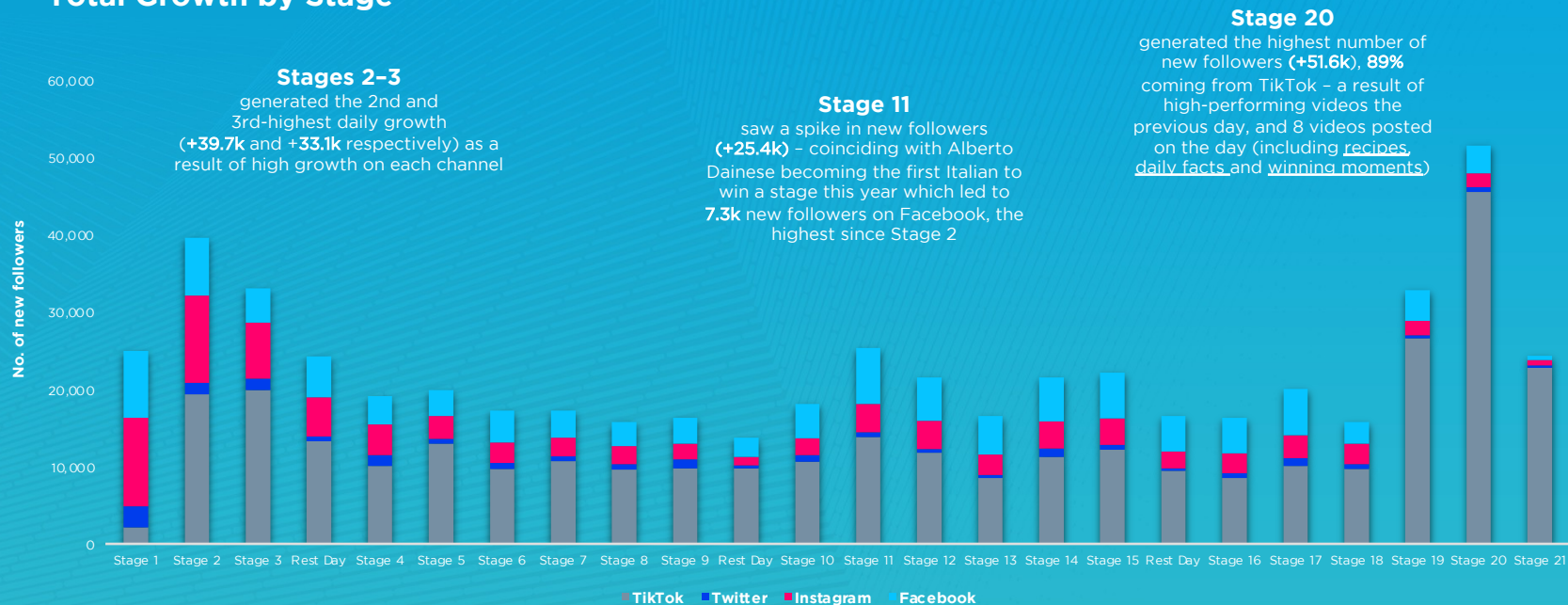
Engagements and Posts by Stage



and amassed 542.8k new followers across all their channels, 60% from TikTok

328.4k new followers were generated on TikTok, more than any other platform, followed by Facebook (+109.5k) and Instagram (+84.5k).

Total Growth by Stage



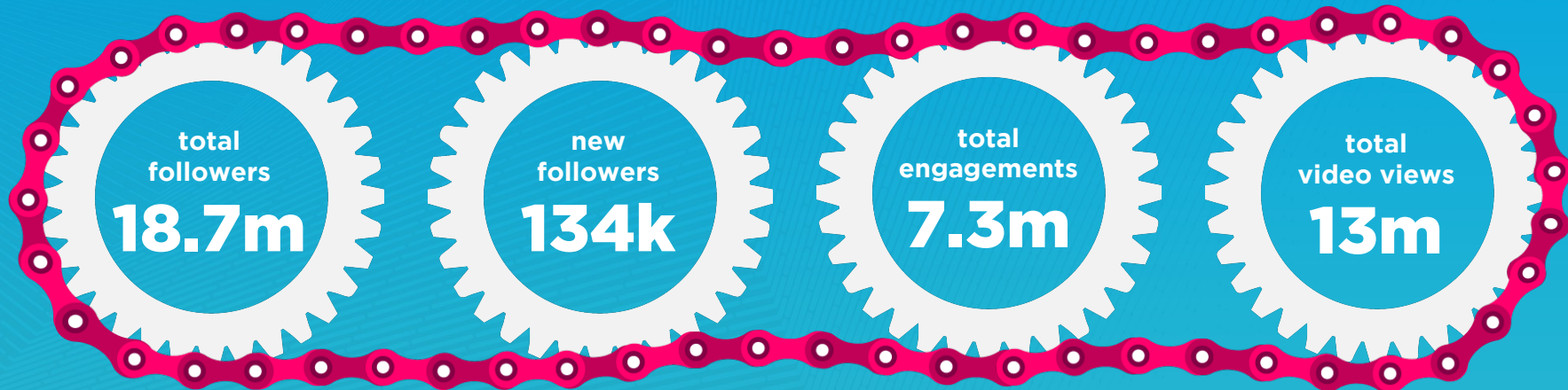


social media performance of cycling teams

This section analyses performance of the 22 competing teams

the 22 teams collectively produced over 10k posts, but the key metrics were dominated by INEOS Grenadiers and Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert Matériaux

topline social media performance (all teams)



18%
of total followers are from
INEOS Grenadiers

22%
of new followers came from
Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert
Matériaux

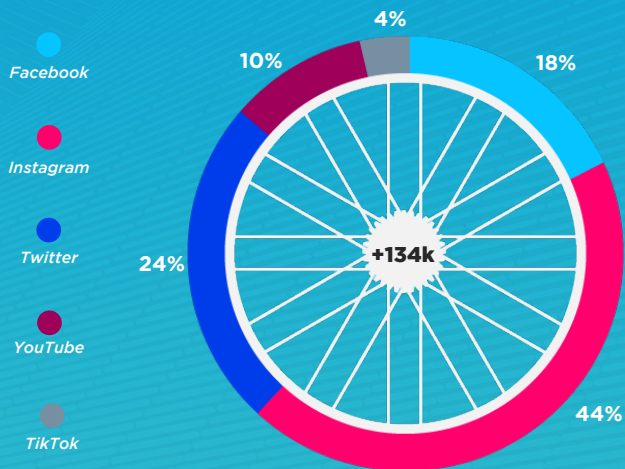
20%
of engagements were
generated by INEOS
Grenadiers

31%
of video views came from
Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert
Matériaux

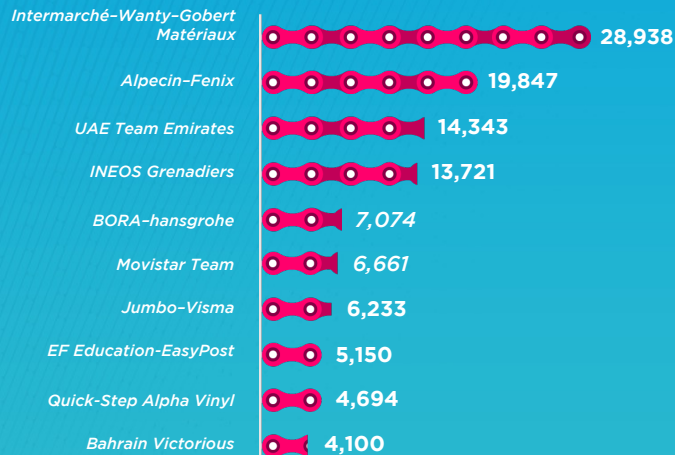
the only team to create consistent YouTube content throughout the Tour, Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert Matériaux amassed more new followers (+28.9k) than any other team

+9.8k of new followers came from YouTube (more than any other team). The biggest growth spike across all channels was when Biniam Girmay became the first black African cyclist to win a Grand Tour stage (Stage 10). The majority of teams (16) experienced their largest growth on Instagram.

Total Team Follower Growth by Platform



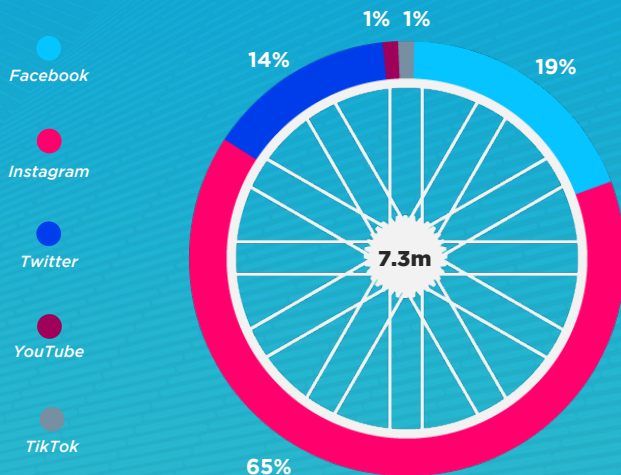
Top 10 Teams by Follower Growth



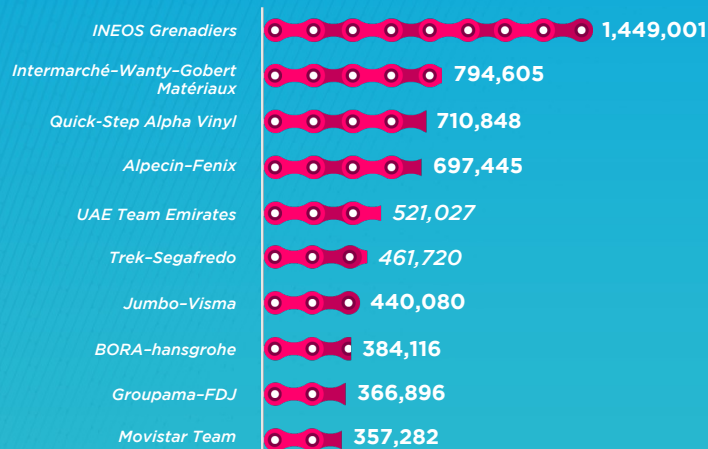
the largest team on social media – INEOS Grenadiers (3.2m followers) – generated 1.4m engagements (20% of overall total)

With the largest Facebook following (953.0k) of all teams, it produced 8 of the top 10-performing Facebook posts; all but one of their top posts featured 2nd place rider Ecuadorian Richard Carapaz. Other teams benefitted from having high profile riders: Alpecin-Fenix was responsible for 2 of the top 3 most engaging posts on Instagram, both of which featured the Dutch Stage 1 winner [Mathieu van der Poel](#) (who has 889k followers, 4x more than Alpecin-Fenix).

Total Team Engagements by Platform



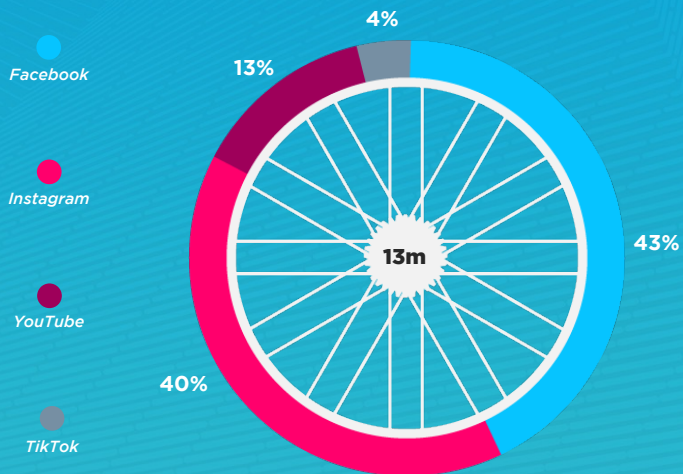
Top 10 Teams by Engagements



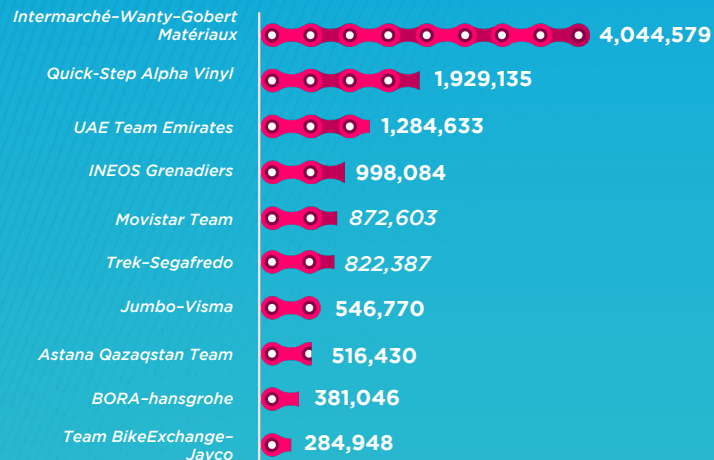
Intermarché-Wanty-Gobert Matériaux utilised video content on each social media channel, generating 4.0m views (31% of overall total)

It was the only team to generate over 1.0m video views on each of Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Teams generated a combined 5.6m views on Facebook, of which 75% came from videos less than 1 minute long. The most-viewed video featured [Richard Carapaz taking fan selfies](#) (178.5k views), followed by [a sprint between Biniam Girmay and Mathieu Van der Poel](#) (157.0k views).

Total Team Video Views by Platform



Top 10 Teams by Video Views

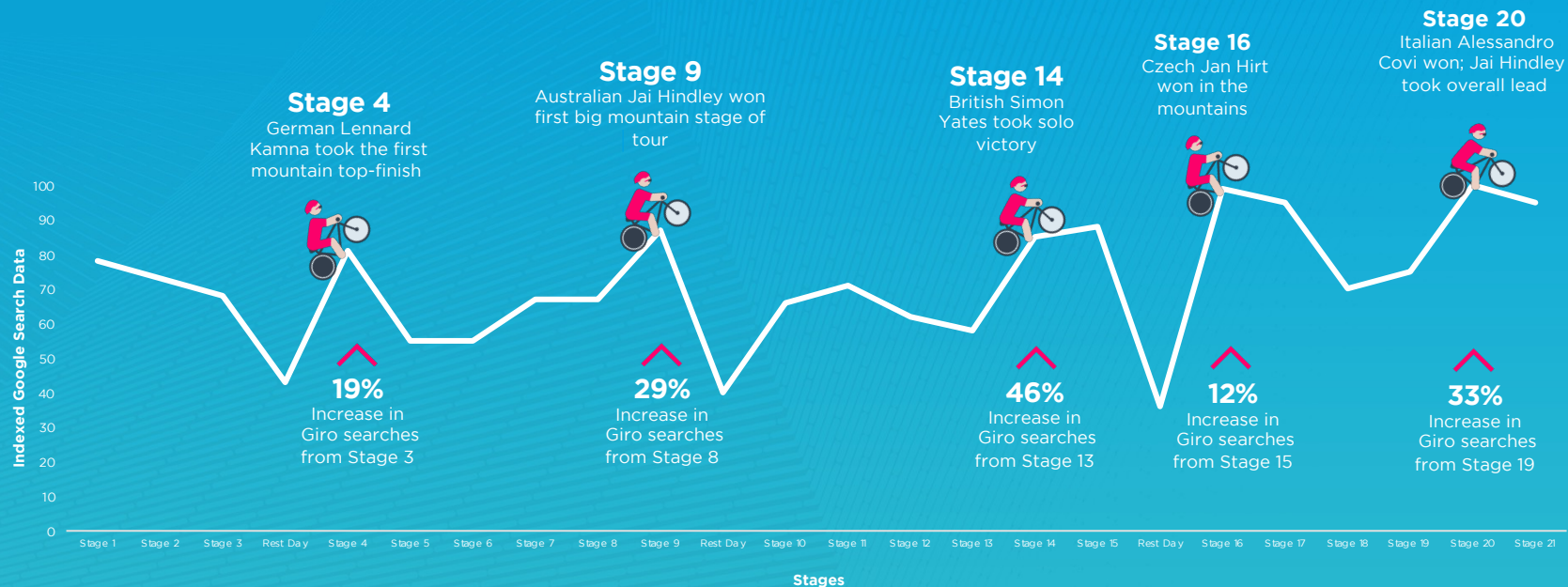




global
search interest

year-on-year Google search interest*

followed a similar pattern although the volume of searches was down **18%** worldwide



*Google worldwide search data around the topic 'Giro d'Italia'
Dates: 6-29 May 2022

a mix of interest* across global regions

Search Interest by Region

Marginal increase in European interest

With a large number of Italian riders, online interest remained the same; interest from Belgium dropped; interest from the other big cycling nations such as the Netherlands, Germany and Spain increased.

Africa on the rise

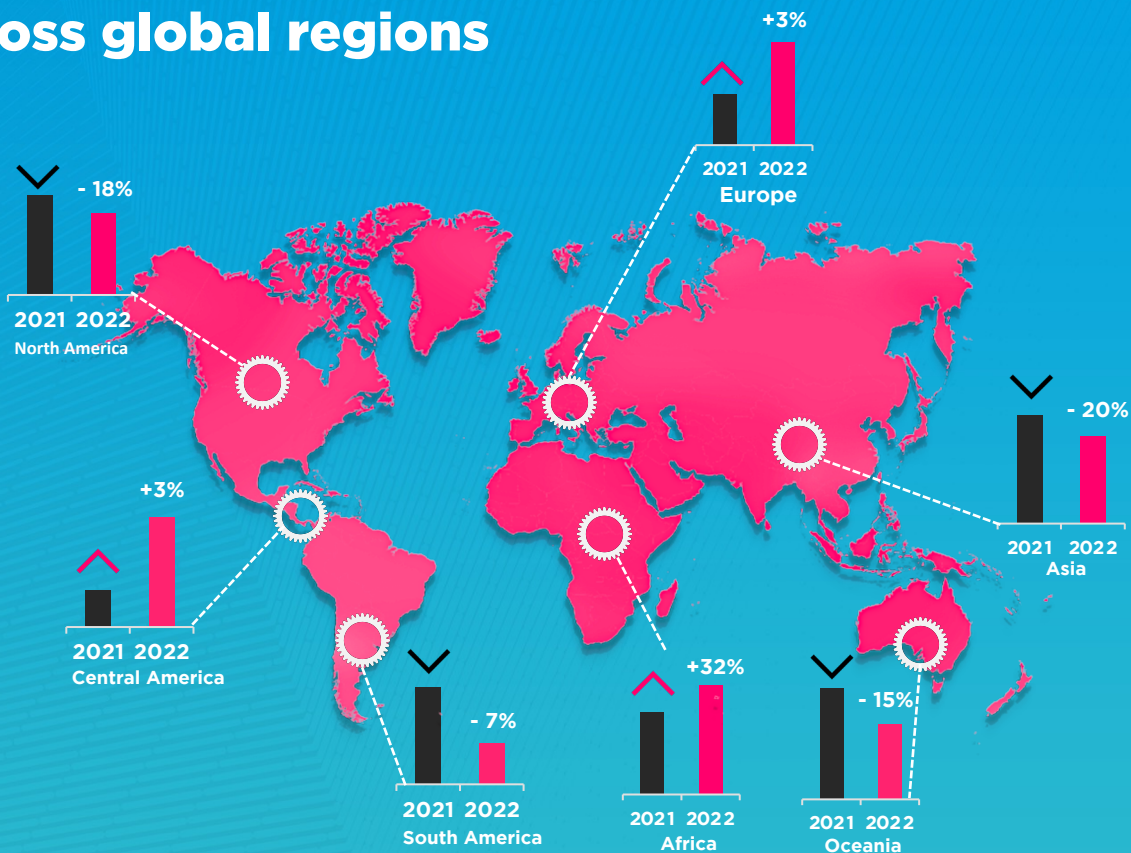
Biniam Girmay became the first Black African rider to win a Grand Tour stage; this helped increase interest in Africa by 32%.

South American markets decline

With the absence of a strong Colombian presence, interest declined in South America; the only countries to buck this trend were Ecuador (home of 2nd-place finisher Richard Carapace) and Peru.

Oceania interest drops

Despite an Australian winner, interest from New Zealand dropped as Kiwi George Bennett did not feature and thus lowered search numbers.



*Google worldwide search data around the topic 'Giro d'Italia'
Dates: 6-29 May 2022 vs 8-30 May 2021

riders and hosts dictate interest* in home countries

Low-profile Australian wins

Australian winner Jai Hindley increased interest in Australia by 95% even though his social media footprint of 38k+ was small in comparison with the previous winner, Colombian Egan Bernal, and his 1.8m+ social media followers.

Richard Carapaz and Ineos Grenadiers combine in Ecuador

With the Ecuadorian star finishing 2nd overall, interest within Ecuador was up a whopping 533% on 2021 – partly driven by the large online profiles of Carapaz and Ineos Grenadiers.

Colombian riders have limited presence

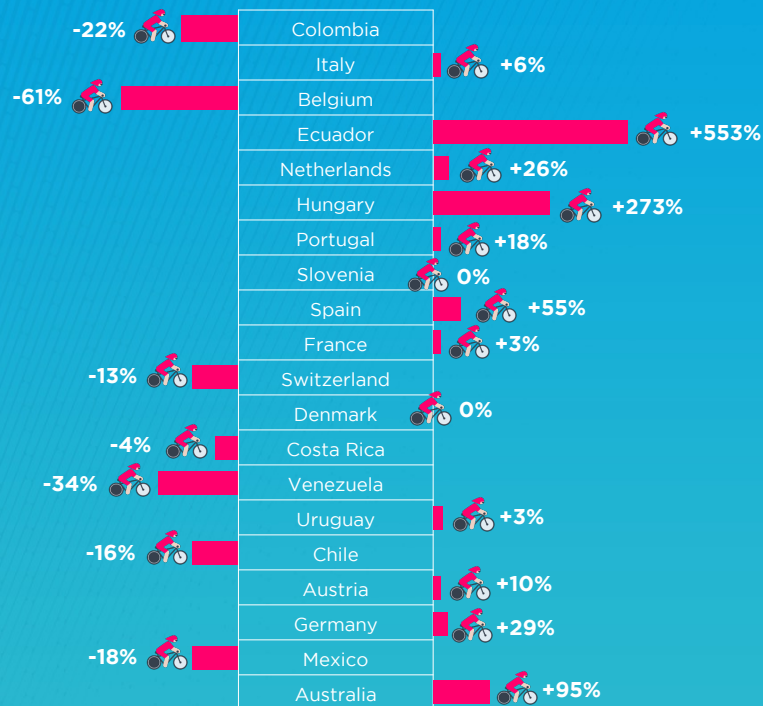
A large drop in Colombian interest (22%) can be attributed in part to the absence of the high-profile and defending champion Colombian superstar Egan Bernal not competing.

Hungary generates significant uplift by hosting

With the tour starting from the Hungarian capital Budapest, interest within Hungary was up 273% on 2021.

*Google worldwide search data around the topic 'Giro d'Italia'
Dates: 6–29 May 2022 vs 8–30 May 2021

Search Interest from Top 20 Countries



methodology

Social media performance

Our proprietary #SportOnSocial Tracker analysed the social media pages of Giro d'Italia and its 22 competing teams on the following platforms:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- YouTube
- TikTok

The monitoring period covered the entire Tour: 6–29 May 2022.

Engagements included reactions, comments, shares and retweets.

Video views were collected on every platform except Twitter.

Redtorch cannot guarantee the accuracy of analysis of #SportOnSocial and disclaims all warranties —either express or implied — including warranties for merchantability and fitness for any particular purpose

Global search interest

Google has over 90% of the search engine market and 5 billion users worldwide. As it is the most representative method of measuring global interests, Google Trends data was used to reflect the searches users made throughout Giro d'Italia.

- Each country was individually measured by the 'Giro d'Italia' search topic for the entirety of the race in both 2021 and 2022.
- An index score was calculated by averaging each weekly index score over the event period in the 2 years.
- The percentage illustrates the direction of change.

Countries included

Europe: Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Hungary, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Norway, United Kingdom, Sweden, Ireland, Romania, Poland, Finland

Africa: South Africa, Eritrea, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, Nigeria, Kenya

South America: Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Peru, Brazil

Central America: El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras

Oceania: Australia, New Zealand

Asia: Japan, India, Indonesia

North America: Canada, United States, Mexico



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