

**Brand &  
Digital Marketing  
Consultant**

**CONTACT**

949-706-4296  
brannan27.com  
brannan27@gmail.com

**EXPERIENCE**

2021-2026  
The Travel Corporation (African Travel)  
Digital Marketing Lead

2014-2021  
Global Freelance Digital Marketer

2012-2016  
Blue Merle  
Brand & Marketing Lead

**EDUCATION**

Master of Arts  
Sport Management  
University of San Francisco

Bachelor of Arts with Honours  
Management, Technology & Enterprise  
Glasgow Caledonian University

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Public Relations in Sports  
United States Sports Academy

Kaizen Lean Management Training  
Toyota Management Institute

Entrepreneurial Leadership Fellow  
Babson College

**CORE SKILLS**

+ Brand Strategy & Positioning  
+ Digital Marketing Strategy & Planning  
+ SEO, GEO & Organic Growth  
+ Paid Search & Paid Social  
+ Email, CRM & Lifecycle Marketing  
+ Content Strategy & Creative Direction  
+ Partnership & Co-op Marketing  
+ Website UX & Conversion Optimisation  
+ Analytics, Testing & Insight  
+ Budget Ownership & Stakeholder  
Management

# Jonathan Brannan

Strategy that sets brands apart. Creative that earns attention. Growth you can measure. 15+ years of full-funnel marketing across sport, travel, entertainment and tech, from start-ups to global names.

**For over 15 years, I've helped sport, travel, entertainment and tech brands stand out and grow across five continents, including World Rugby, the NRL, Spotify and Wilderness.**

**Most recently, The Travel Corporation hired me to launch the direct-to-consumer arm of African Travel, its premium safari brand. As a team of one reporting to the President, with a \$140K digital budget, I positioned African Travel above its lower-priced sister brands and built a full-funnel programme across search, social, email and partnerships. Direct booking revenue reached \$3.05M in 2025. I also built the travel agent education and partnership programme that won the brand a gold industry award.**

# Case Study 1: African Travel Paid Search Optimization

Repositioning campaigns and landing pages around premium intent to turn spend into quote requests

## SOFTWARE

- + Google Ads
- + Google Ads Editor
- + Semrush
- + Google Analytics (GA4)
- + Google Tag Manager
- + Salesforce
- + Kaptio

## CHALLENGE

- Paid search had been set up to mirror sister brands selling Africa at lower price points, attracting price-driven searchers rather than clients seeking premium safari experiences.
- All paid traffic landed on the homepage, and bots and spam clouded the data, hiding which searches drove real Request-a-Quote (RAQ) submissions. Fewer than 1% of clicks converted.
- Paid search ran on a limited budget, and leadership saw it as a cost rather than a growth channel, with too few qualified leads to justify more investment.

## STRATEGY

- I aligned paid search with the brand's premium positioning, leaving budget searches to its lower-priced sister brands and structuring campaigns by trip type and destination to reach premium clients.
- I matched every ad group to its most relevant page and trained bidding only on high-intent actions, so performance data reflected real people ready to enquire.
- I tied budget growth to proven results, scaling spend only where campaigns converted efficiently and holding new formats, including Performance Max, to the same standard.

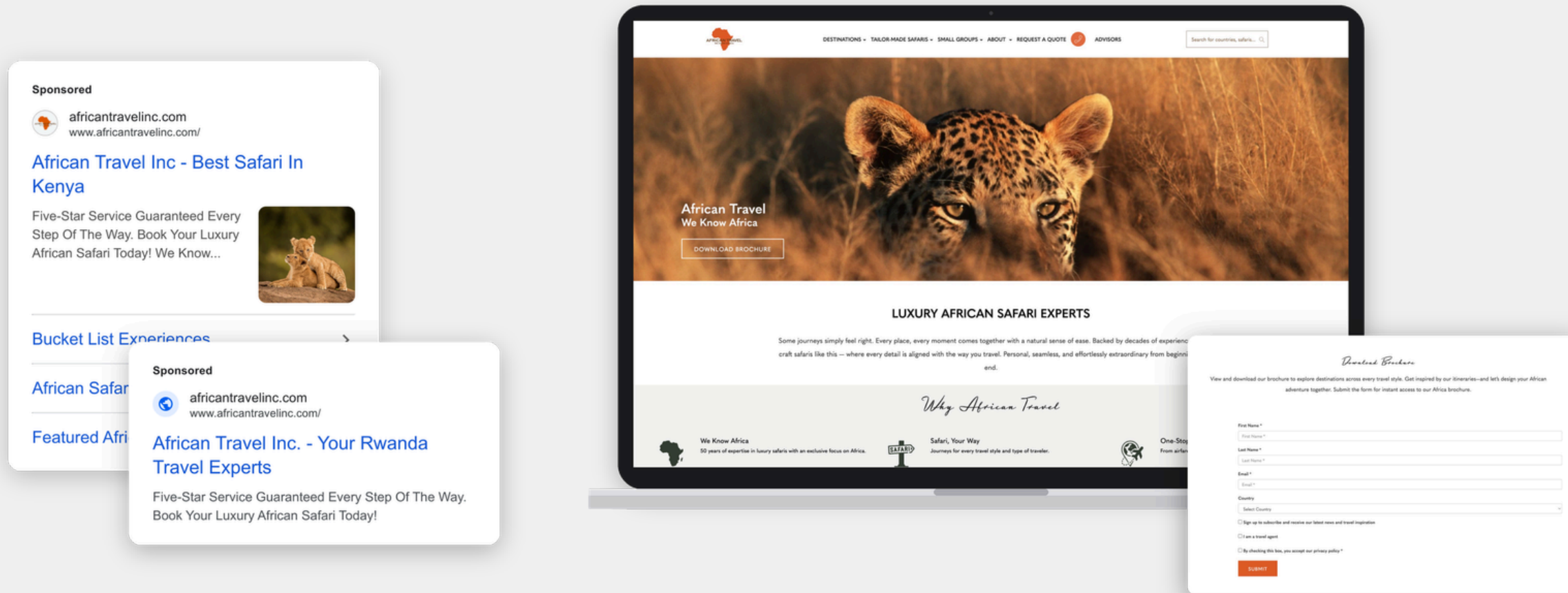
# CASE STUDY 1 AFRICAN TRAVEL PAID SEARCH OPTIMIZATION

## EXECUTION

- Rebuilt campaigns in Google Ads Editor around trip type (e.g. small-group travel) and destination (e.g. Kenya), using negative keywords to filter out budget-focused searches.
- Moved traffic to dedicated landing pages, exposed bot submissions through lead reviews with operations, added reCAPTCHA and optimised bidding for completed RAQs only.
- Tested Performance Max against the same standard. When bot traffic kept results weak despite tighter geo-targeting and IP exclusions, moved budget back into keyword campaigns.

## RESULTS

- Increased RAQ submissions nearly 7x between 2021 and 2025, from 96 to 657, with destination searches driving growth as targeting shifted to premium safari clients.
- Improved click-to-RAQ conversion from 0.83% to 1.96% through intent-matched landing pages and bot-filtered data, with the operations team confirming lead quality improved.
- Cut cost per RAQ 63%, from \$198 to \$74, then presented the results to the brand's President and the CEO of the Africa division, securing a 2.5x budget increase, from about \$19,000 to \$48,400.



# Case Study 2: African Travel SEO Growth

Technical SEO, high-intent keyword strategy and AI-ready content to reach a new B2C audience

## SOFTWARE

- + Google Analytics (GA4)
- + Google Search Console
- + Google Tag Manager
- + Data Studio
- + Semrush
- + Ahrefs
- + Google Keyword Planner
- + Google Rich Results Test
- + Drupal
- + Feefo

## CHALLENGE

- The Drupal 7 site scored 64% for Site Health, with 18,000+ technical SEO issues weakening crawlability, indexation and user trust, and limiting rankings for competitive, high-intent safari searches.
- Only 42% of traffic came from organic search. Most visits came from existing B2B agents and consortia via direct, email and referral, while B2C consumers searching for safaris remained largely untapped.
- With no structured SEO or content strategy, the site lacked original, experience-based content and had no plan for how customers would find it as search shifted towards AI.

## STRATEGY

- I put technical health first, since keyword and content work would underperform on a site with crawl and indexation issues, prioritising fixes by their impact on high-traffic pages.
- I made B2C consumers the growth focus, aligning pages to high-intent safari searches that attract premium clients close to booking, rather than broad, low-intent volume.
- I adopted Google's E-E-A-T guidelines as the content standard, so first-hand expertise, original content and real customer reviews could build trust in both traditional search and AI-driven discovery.

CASE STUDY 2  
AFRICAN TRAVEL  
ORGANIC SEO GROWTH

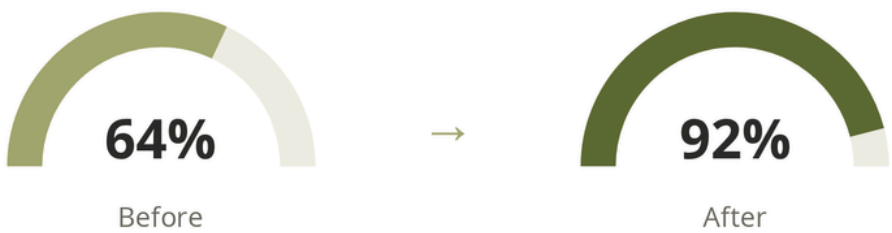
EXECUTION

- Audited the site in Semrush and Search Console, resolving broken links, 403 and 404 errors, canonicalisation and duplicate or missing metadata, then rebuilt URLs into a subfolder hierarchy.
- Mapped priority keywords to pages by search intent in Ahrefs and Keyword Planner, then optimised title tags, H1/H2 hierarchy and copy on high-traffic pages.
- Published original blogs, destination pages and itinerary FAQs, integrated Feefo reviews, validated FAQPage schema and pitched generative engine optimisation (GEO) to the C-suite.

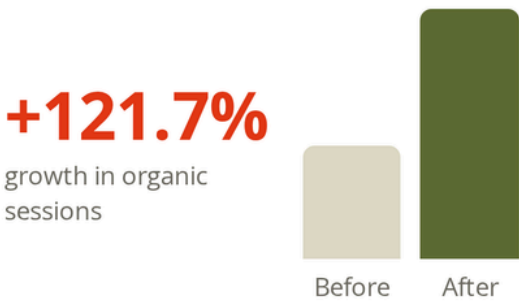
RESULTS

- Resolved 18,000+ technical SEO issues and eliminated all errors and warnings, lifting Semrush Site Health from 64% to 92%, with ongoing monitoring in place to catch new issues early.
- Grew organic sessions 121.7%, lifting organic share of total traffic from 42% to 60.9% and reducing reliance on direct, email and referral channels.
- Increased average engagement time 46%, from 2:30 to 3:39, reflecting stronger content relevance, and my GEO pitch put AI search on the C-suite agenda for the first time.

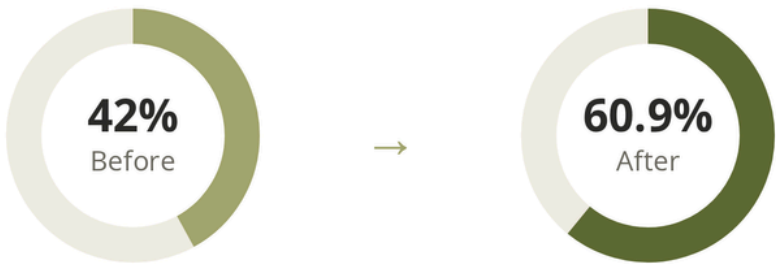
Site Health



Organic Sessions



Organic Share of Traffic

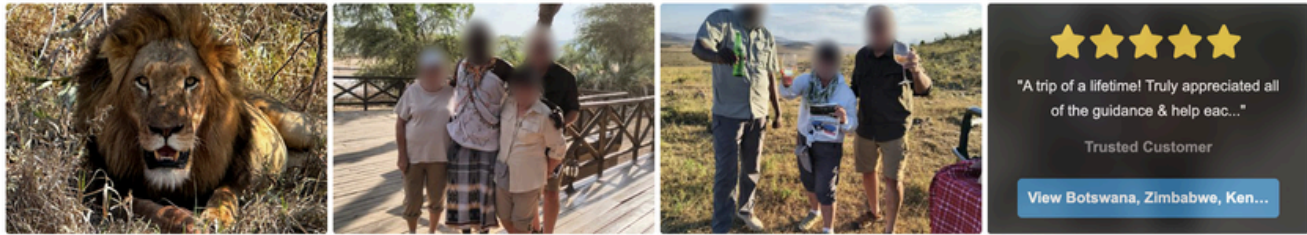


Southern African Highlights – Frequently Asked Questions

- What does “locally hosted” mean? +
- What is the group size on Southern African Highlights tours? +
- What is included in the Southern African Highlights safari package? +
- What kind of wildlife experiences can I expect? +
- What accommodations are featured on this tour? +
- Can I customize Southern African Highlights itinerary? +

African Travel, Inc.  
★★★★★ 4.9/5 | feefo

Independent Product Rating based on 1141 verified reviews.



# Case Study 3: African Travel Organic Social Growth

Building reach and engagement through audience-specific strategy, platform-native content and community

## SOFTWARE

- + Meta Business Suite
- + Sprout Social
- + Emplifi
- + Google Analytics (GA4)
- + Linktree
- + Adobe Creative Cloud
- + CapCut
- + Canva

## CHALLENGE

- Content spoke only to B2B travel agents, yet gave them no direct line to the sales team, and offered consumers, the people dreaming about a safari, little reason to follow or engage.
- Leadership saw social as a place for occasional stock images of lions and other wildlife, posted identically to Facebook and Instagram with no plan for why anyone would engage.
- Comments and questions went unanswered, so prospective clients who reached out publicly never heard back and potential leads went cold.

## STRATEGY

- I chose to serve both audiences separately: public channels would speak directly to consumers, while agents would get a private space to build relationships with the sales team.
- I made every post earn its place, planning a calendar around consumer email themes, seasons and safari moments like World Rhino Day, with native video and carousels built for each platform.
- I treated every comment as a possible first step towards an enquiry, making community management part of the sales funnel rather than an afterthought.

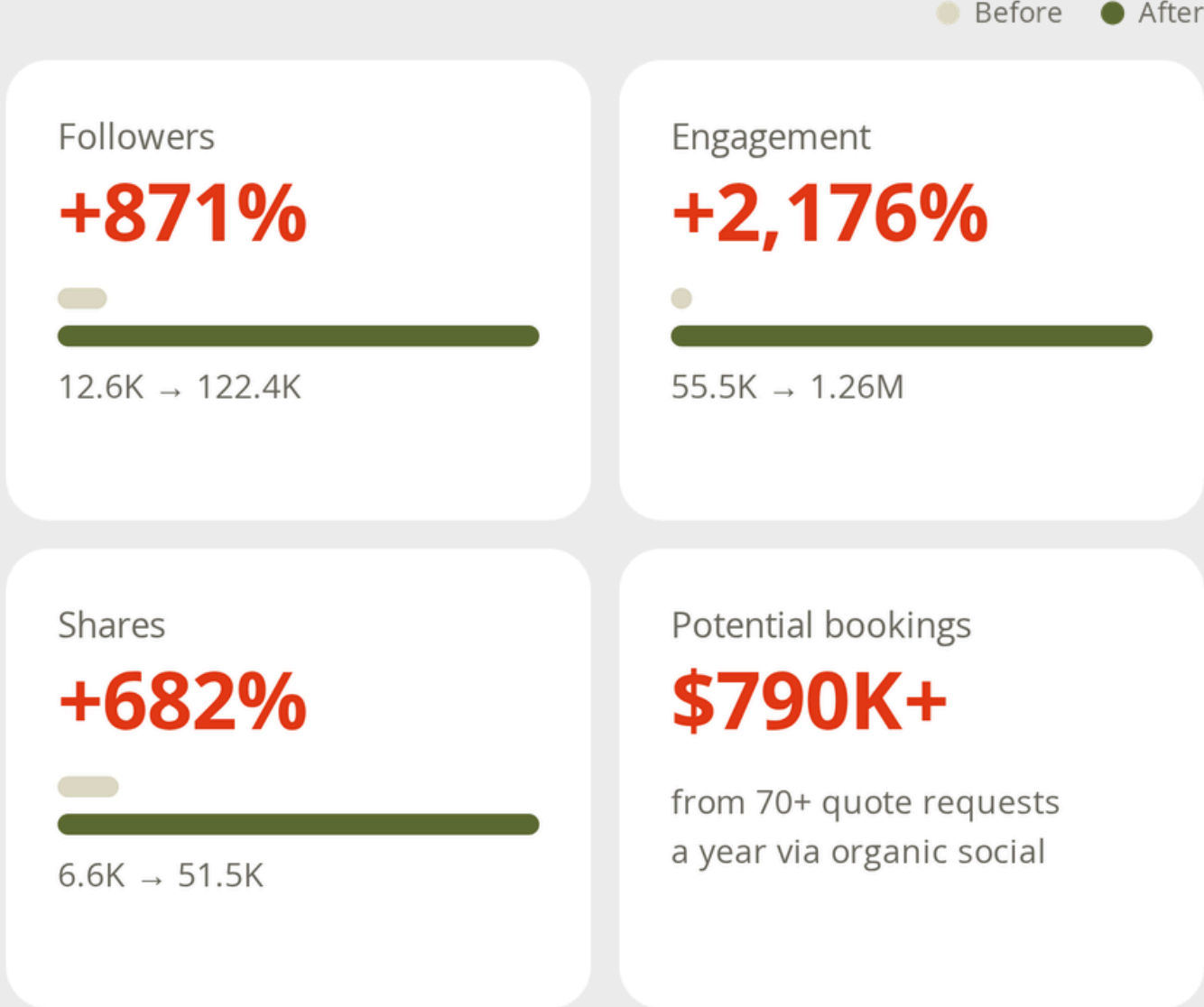
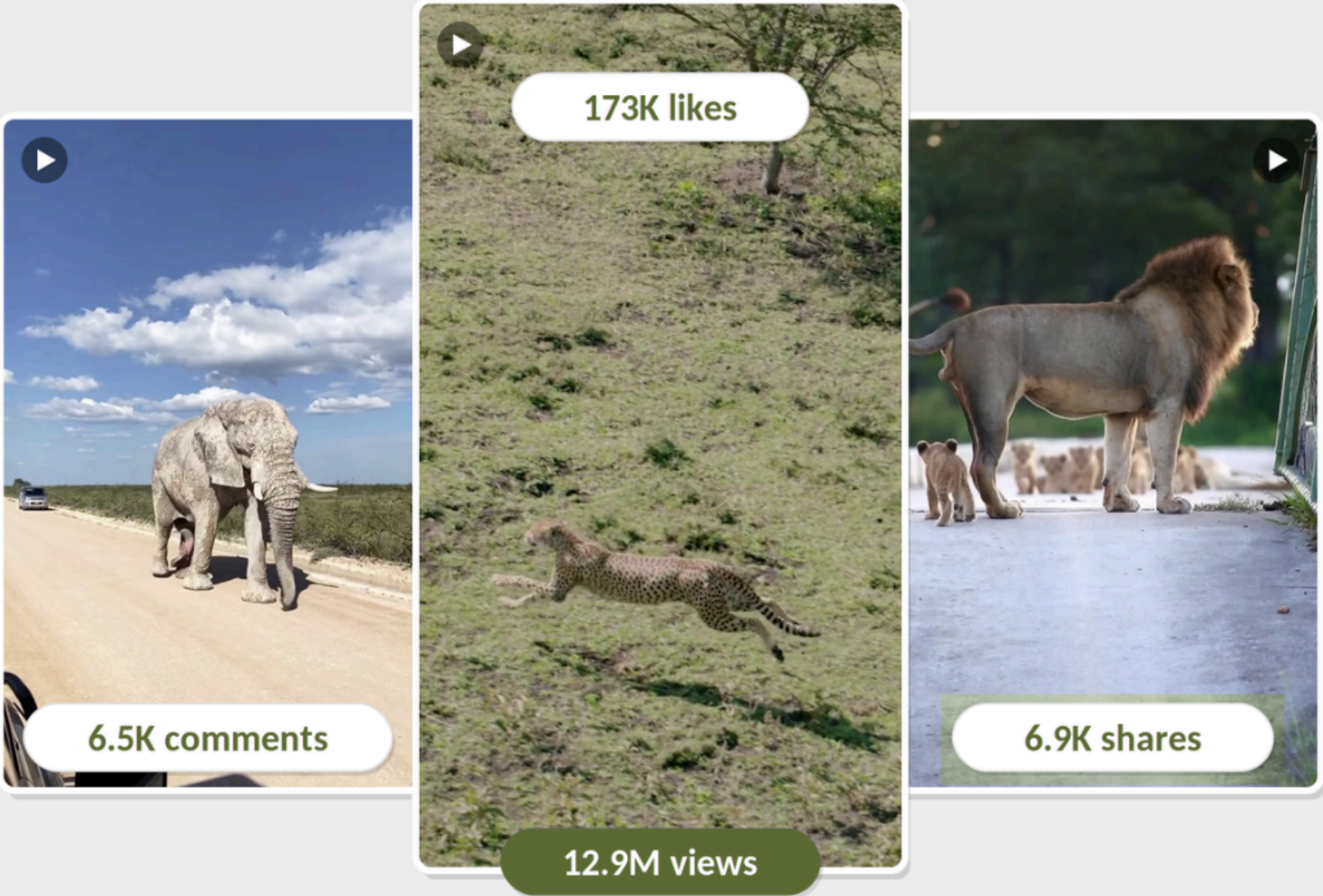
CASE STUDY 3  
AFRICAN TRAVEL  
ORGANIC SOCIAL  
GROWTH

EXECUTION

- Built a private Facebook group for travel agents, then trained the sales team to run it, from answering agents' questions to sharing content matched to their weekly sales pushes.
- Personally produced Reels, carousels and video from travel partner footage, using Sprout Social and Emplifi data to focus on the formats and topics that performed best.
- Introduced active community management, guiding engaged commenters towards an enquiry, and joined relevant travel conversations beyond owned channels to reach new audiences.

RESULTS

- Grew combined Facebook and Instagram followers 871%, from 12,612 to 122,425, as content shifted towards consumers, while the private agent group reached 1,130 members.
- Videos regularly passed 1 million organic views, peaking at 12.9 million, and shares grew 682%, from 6,590 to 51,508, leading me to also create content for the organisation's sister brands.
- Engagement grew 2,176%, from 55,517 to 1,263,542, as consumers became the most active voices in the comments, generating 70+ quote requests a year worth \$790K+ in potential bookings.



# Case Study 4: African Travel Paid Social Growth

Building a test-and-learn paid social programme that scaled spend while cutting lead costs

## SOFTWARE

- + Meta Ads Manager
- + Meta Pixel
- + Meta Events Manager
- + Adobe Creative Cloud (Premiere Pro, Photoshop)
- + CapCut
- + Canva
- + Google Analytics (GA4)
- + Google Tag Manager
- + Data Studio

## CHALLENGE

- Creative relied on generic, static stock wildlife imagery, with no original video footage, no carousel formats and no testing or refresh cycle, leaving no way to learn which messages drove action.
- No audience segmentation or funnel structure was in place, so cold and warm users saw the same ads, with no way to tell which audiences drove Request-a-Quote (RAQ) submissions.
- Paid social ran on minimal investment and delivered few leads at a high cost per RAQ, leaving little evidence that the channel deserved a bigger budget or a strategic role in the marketing mix.

## STRATEGY

- With no original footage, I sourced partner video that matched the brand's premium feel, recut into awareness, consideration and conversion ads, tested and refreshed regularly.
- I built audiences from high-intent signals, such as engaged but unconverted users and their Lookalikes, and matched them to funnel stage so each campaign reached the right people.
- I treated budget as continuously optimised, moving spend towards the formats, audiences and campaigns that delivered leads most efficiently and cutting spend that underperformed.

## CASE STUDY 4

### AFRICAN TRAVEL

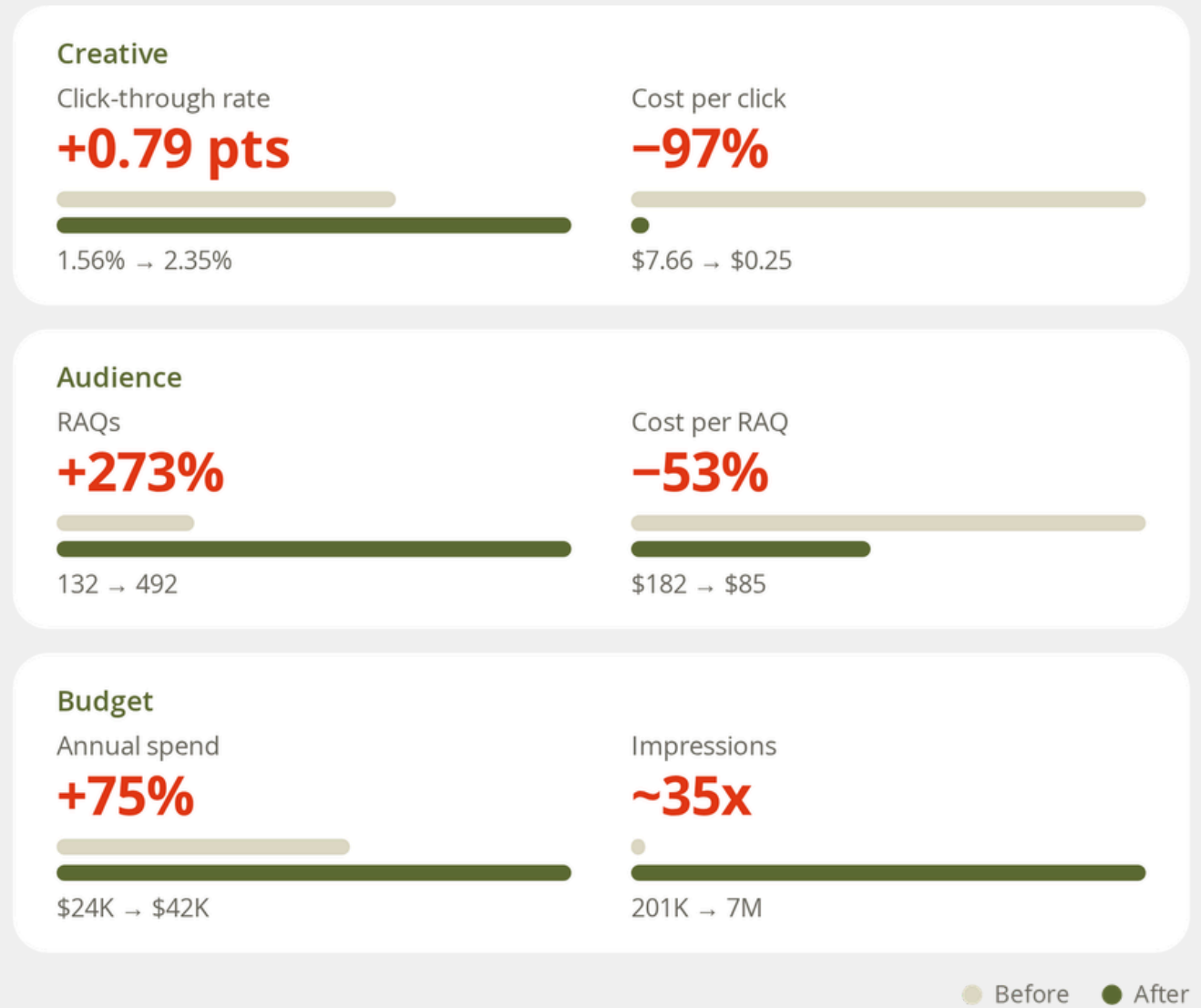
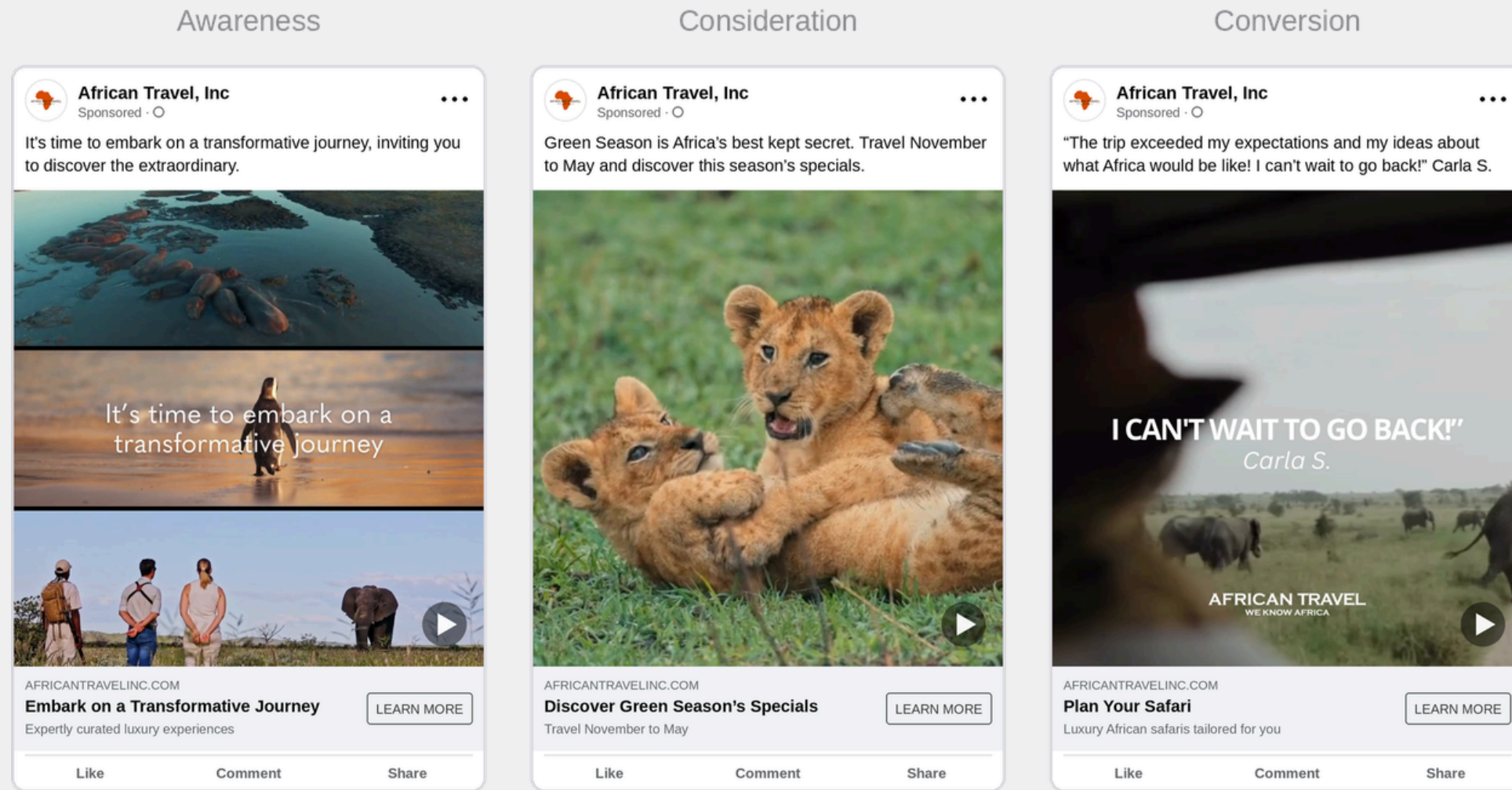
### PAID SOCIAL GROWTH

## EXECUTION

- Recut travel partner footage into video ads for each funnel stage, added carousels and refreshed creative regularly, comparing assets to find the strongest performers at every stage.
- Structured campaigns by funnel stage, synced email journey segments to Meta and built a Lookalike from unconverted RAQs, which delivered the lowest cost per RAQ of any audience.
- Cut Consideration and Conversion spend 50% in a single month, while cost per RAQ and cost per landing page view fell about 20%, freeing budget for stronger campaigns.

## RESULTS

- Raised CTR from 1.56% to 2.35% as data-led creative testing replaced static stock imagery, cutting cost per click about 97%, from \$7.66 to \$0.25, as clicks grew to about 165,000.
- Grew paid social RAQs 273%, from 132 to 492, and cut cost per RAQ 53%, from \$182 to \$85, as funnel-matched audiences replaced one-size-fits-all targeting.
- Won a 75% budget increase from the President and Africa Division CEO (\$24,000 to \$42,000), establishing paid social as a core lead channel and scaling impressions from about 201,000 to 7 million..



# Case Study 5: African Travel Website Redesign

Mobile-first UX overhaul and navigation restructure to modernise the consumer journey

## SOFTWARE

- + Google Analytics (GA4)
- + Microsoft Clarity
- + SEM Rush
- + Optimizely
- + Figma
- + Drupal
- + Umbraco
- + HTML / CSS

## CHALLENGE

- The legacy site was not optimised for mobile, disrupting the path to enquiry for a high-value, high-consideration purchase and underserving both B2C consumers and B2B travel agents.
- Visual clutter and promotional messaging undercut the brand's premium positioning, inviting comparisons with its lower-priced sister brands.
- The site ran on Drupal 7.76, which reached end-of-life in January 2025. Without security support and with some features lost, it still had to be maintained until the migration to Umbraco.

## STRATEGY

- I chose one shared, mobile-first site for consumers and travel agents, with navigation built around how both search for and compare safaris.
- I let cinematic imagery, less clutter and less promotional messaging carry the premium feel, setting the brand apart from its lower-priced sister brands.
- I used the live Drupal site as a testing ground while designing for Umbraco, so only changes proven through A/B testing reached the new build.

# CASE STUDY 5

## AFRICAN TRAVEL

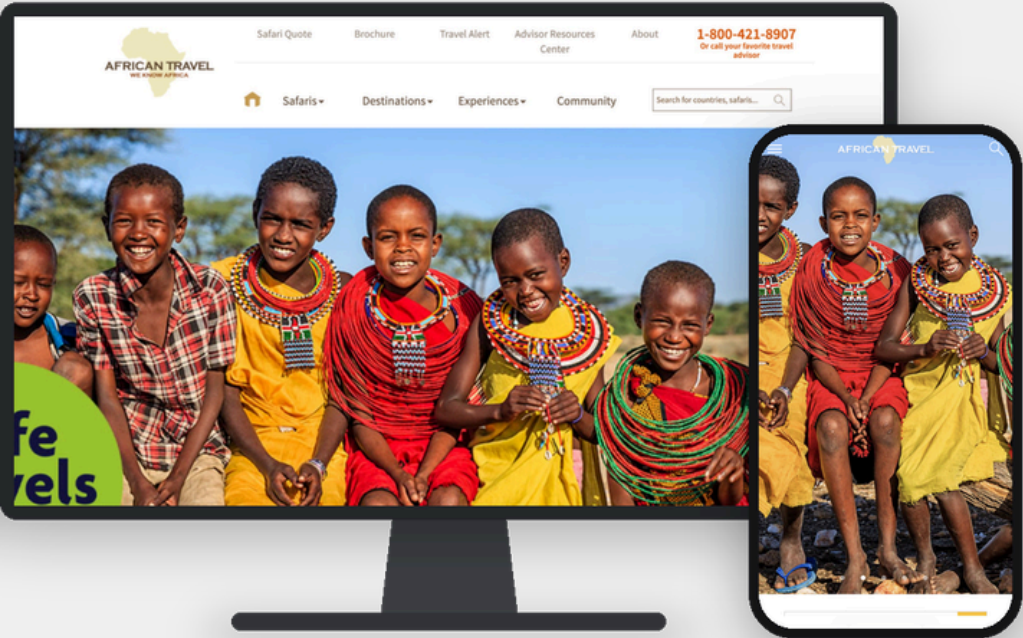
### WEBSITE REDESIGN

## EXECUTION

- Gathered input from travel agent consortia, analysed competitor menus, funnels and keywords in Semrush, and used Clarity and GA4 to shape A/B tests on Drupal.
- Led all design decisions from concept to C-suite presentation, building mockups, clickable Figma prototypes and a component library for the homepage, itinerary and destination pages.
- Implemented HTML and CSS updates on the live site, studied sister brands' Umbraco back ends to inform wireframes, and wrote migration specifications.

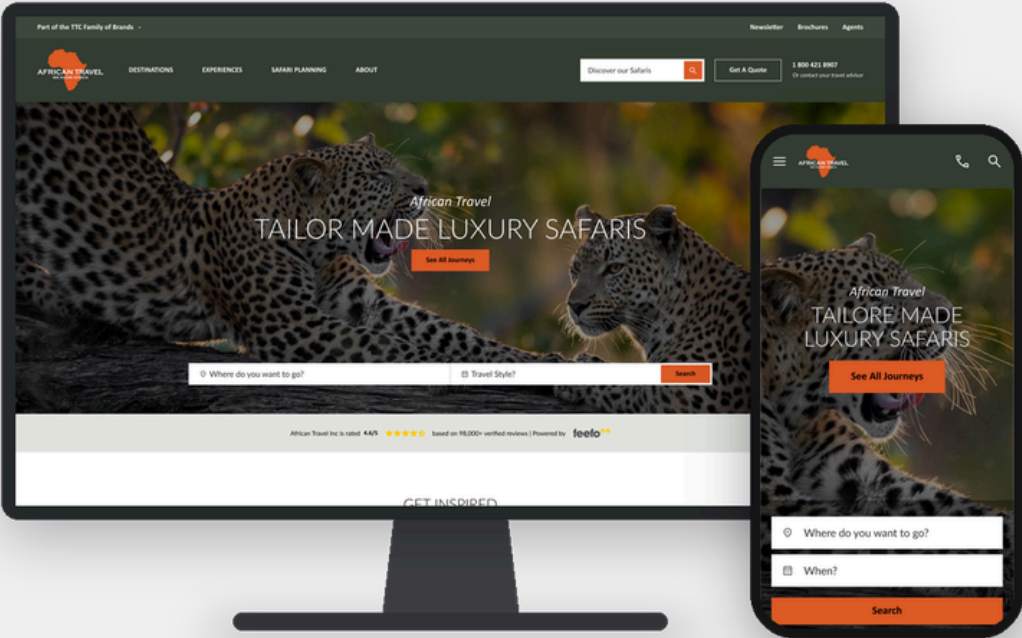
## RESULTS

- Validated the new menu structure on desktop and mobile through A/B testing before it moved into the new build.
- Secured approval from the original leadership team, then re-presented the redesign to the new owners after the company was acquired and won their approval too.
- Delivered complete designs and migration specifications, ready for the Umbraco build.



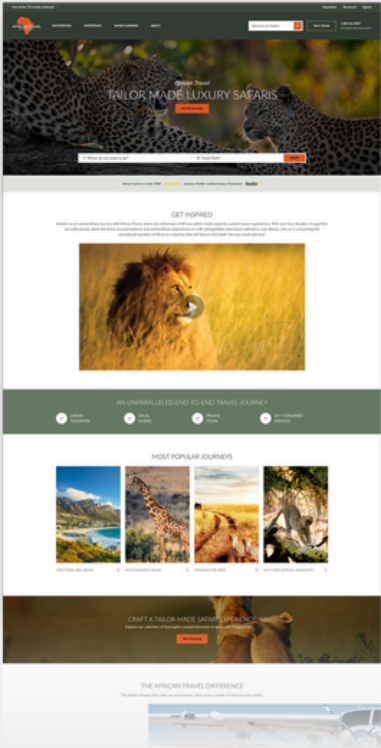
Original Site

First screen was all photo, with no search or CTA.  
The mobile menu didn't reach itinerary or destination pages.



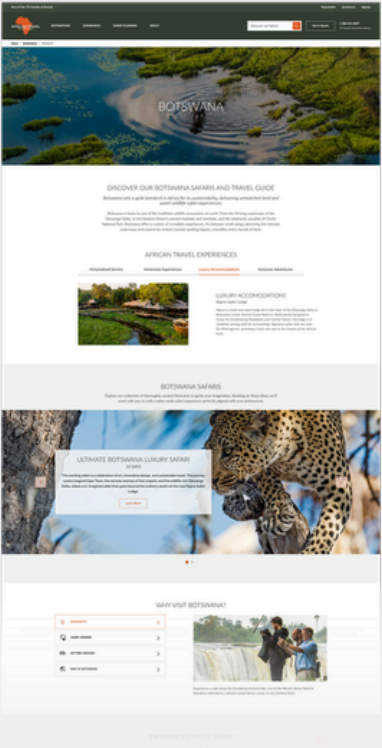
Proposed Redesign

Search and CTA above the fold, with a menu structure validated through A/B testing.

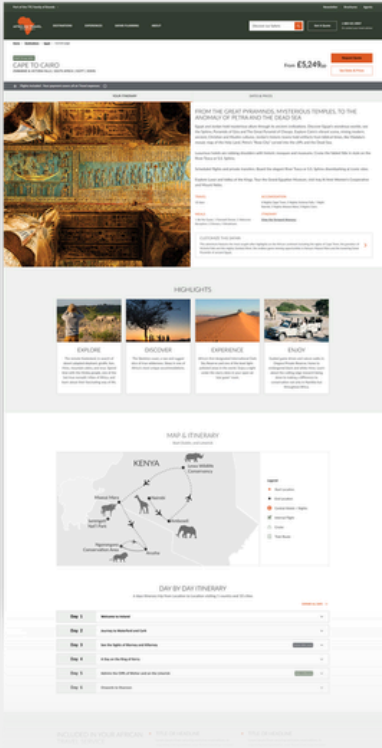


Homepage

Full page designs created in Figma



Destination Page



Itinerary Page

# Case Study 6: African Travel Email and Lifecycle Marketing

Aligning email strategy to audience and journey stage through segmentation and automation

## SOFTWARE

- + Salesforce Marketing Cloud
- + Journey Builder
- + Automation Studio
- + Salesforce CRM
- + Google Analytics (GA4)
- + Google Tag Manager
- + Adobe Creative Suite
- + Canva

## CHALLENGE

- A single newsletter went to the entire list, treating B2C travellers and B2B travel agents as one audience, with content too broad for either, a 12.8% open rate and a 5.3% CTR.
- No onboarding existed for new consumer subscribers, leaving new sign-ups without an introduction to the brand or its offerings, while stalled leads received only the same generic send.
- Subscriber acquisition relied on a sign-up form with limited visibility across the website, leaving most visitors without a clear path to subscribe and restricting growth of a key owned channel.

## STRATEGY

- I treated audience as the first lever of relevance: travellers book for themselves while agents sell to their own clients, so each needed its own messaging, content and tone.
- I shifted consumer email from broadcast to a lifecycle programme, since a high-consideration purchase needs personalised nurture to move new and stalled leads towards an enquiry.
- I made email acquisition a distinct paid social objective, capturing early-stage prospects in an owned channel for ongoing nurture rather than paying to reacquire them.

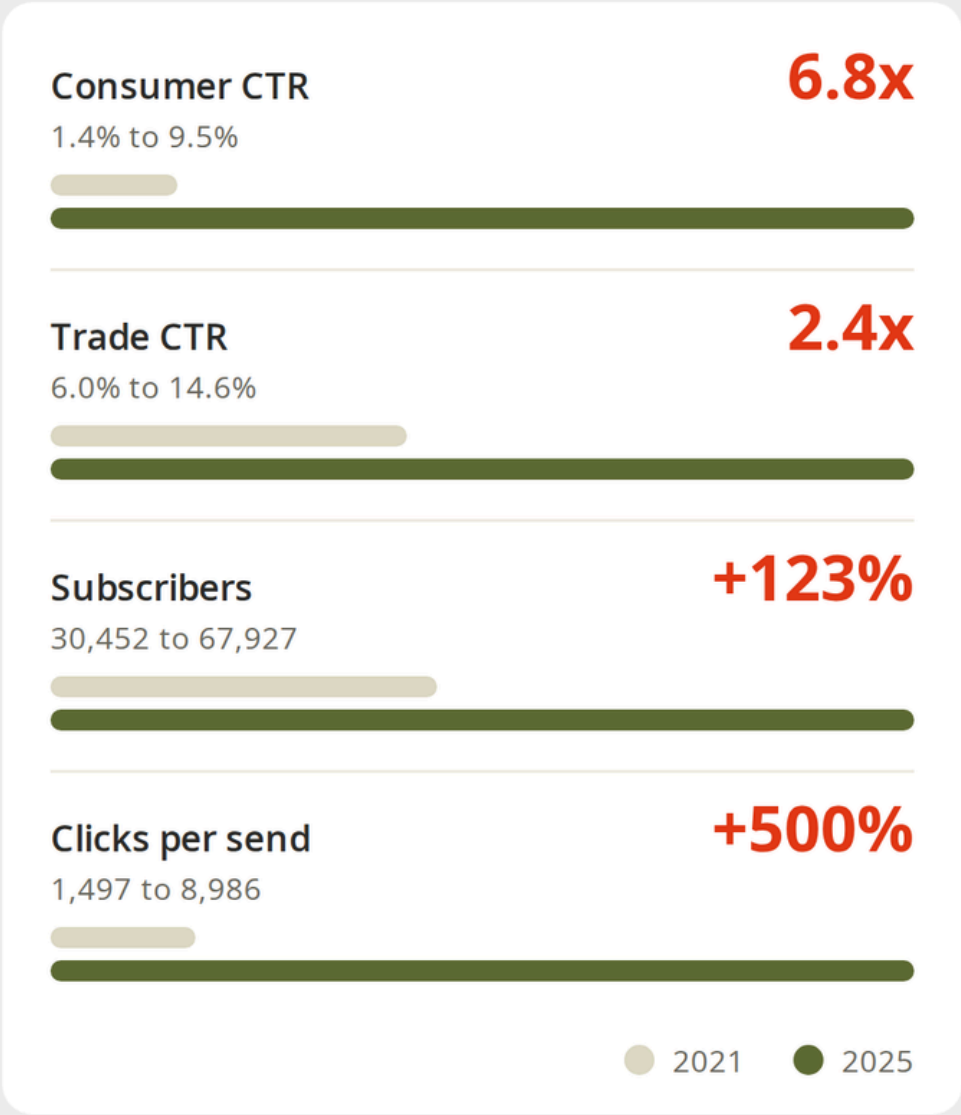
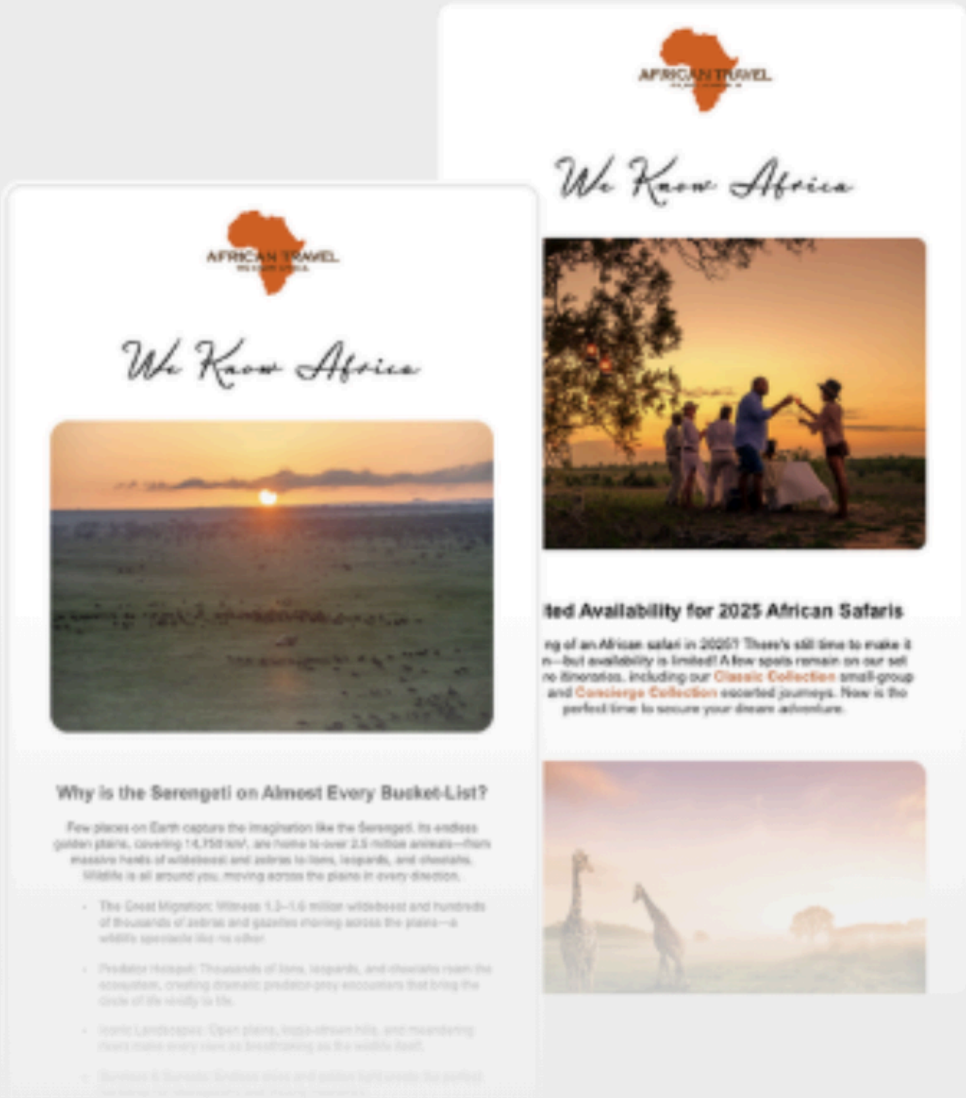
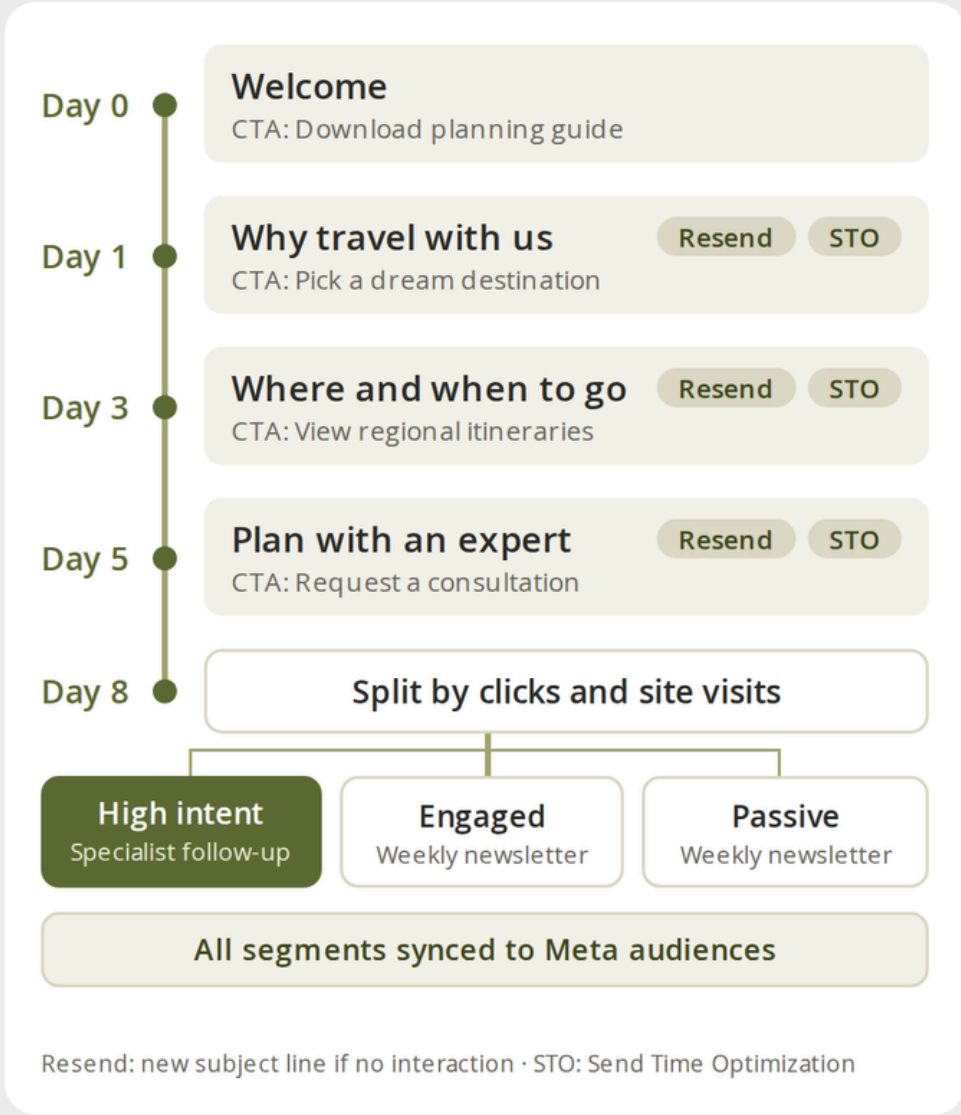
CASE STUDY 6  
AFRICAN TRAVEL  
EMAIL AND  
LIFECYCLE MARKETING

EXECUTION

- Restructured the programme into dedicated consumer and trade newsletters, segmenting subscribers at sign-up and tailoring subject lines, copy and imagery to each audience.
- Built a consumer onboarding journey in Journey Builder to introduce the brand and its offerings, with engagement-based splits routing subscribers to tailored content and re-engaging stalled leads.
- Presented the business case to leadership for paid social sign-up campaigns, initially seen as low priority, and placed the sign-up form on most site pages.

RESULTS

- Raised CTR from 5.3% on the combined send to 9.5% (consumer) and 14.6% (trade), and open rates from 12.8% to 34.3% and 33.8% respectively.
- Scaled automated onboarding to 9,900+ new consumer subscribers, replacing a single generic send with a structured path to enquiry, as email generated 368 Request-a-Quote (RAQ) submissions.
- Grew subscribers 123%, from 30,452 to 67,927, reaching 49,954 trade and 17,973 consumer contacts, and lifted average clicks per weekly send 500%, from 1,497 to 8,986.



# Case Study 7: African Travel Partnership Marketing

Turning a \$30K tourism board investment into bookings and an award-winning advisor education programme

## SOFTWARE

- + Salesforce Marketing Cloud
- + Kaptio
- + Google Analytics
- + Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint
- + Drupal (HTML/CSS)
- + Umbraco
- + Livestorm
- + Issuu
- + Meta Business Suite
- + Adobe Creative Cloud
- + Canva

## CHALLENGE

- Tourism board, airline, lodge and consortia partners each set distinct sales and visibility KPIs, yet no repeatable process existed for joint campaigns such as the Magical Kenya launch.
- Travel advisors drove most bookings, yet many lacked the destination knowledge to sell Kenya with confidence, limiting how far any partner campaign could reach.
- Owned channels alone could not engage advisors at scale, and without first-hand experience of our destinations, advisors had little authentic content to share with their clients.

## STRATEGY

- I built joint campaigns around a co-funded, bookable product, aligning KPIs with each partner upfront in a full-funnel playbook reusable across partner types.
- I treated advisor education as sales enablement, reasoning that every advisor able to sell Kenya with confidence would multiply the impact of each partner campaign.
- I used consortia to extend reach into advisor networks, with familiarisation (FAM) trips turning first-hand experience into advocacy and ready-made content easy for advisors to share.

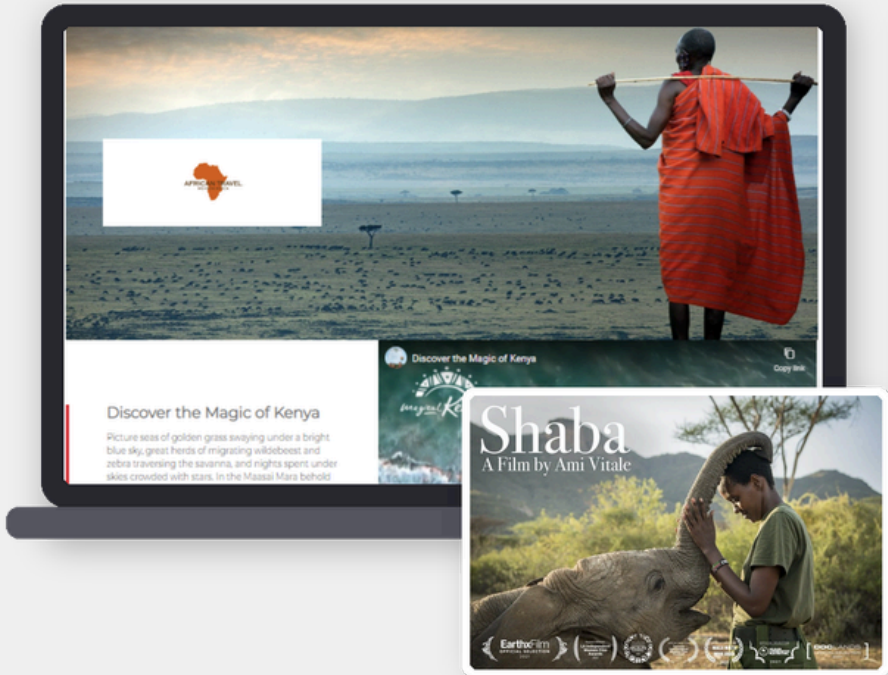
CASE STUDY 7  
AFRICAN TRAVEL  
PARTNERSHIP  
MARKETING

EXECUTION

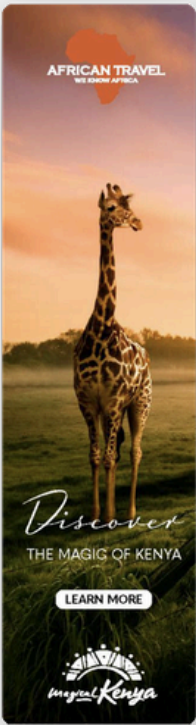
- Co-developed a Kenya itinerary with Magical Kenya, launched via a co-branded landing page, SEO, email and a watch party and Q&A with Ami Vitale for her film Shaba, tracking bookings in Kaptio.
- Created the Why Safari advisor guide for the Kenya launch, then rolled it out across later partner campaigns and general advisor training after its early success.
- Ran advisor FAM trips across multiple destinations with consortia including Virtuoso, AAA and Travel Leaders, creating social and email content advisors shared with clients.

RESULTS

- Secured a \$30K Magical Kenya co-op investment and sold out all four departures of the new itinerary: 48 [bookings/travellers] worth an estimated \$370K+. The Shaba watch party drew 212 attendees, and the playbook shaped later partner campaigns.
- My advisor education programme won African Travel a 2022 Travel Weekly Magellan Award (Gold), with the Why Safari guide drawing 490 downloads in its first week.
- Hosted 72 advisors across six FAM trips, creating content they shared with a combined audience of 28,020.



Co-branded landing page  
Shaba watch party  
with Ami Vitale



Display ad



Why Safari guide, built for  
Kenya, then rolled out



Magellan Gold  
2022



Advisor FAM trip  
Shareable social carousel

Previous Clients

THE  
RED CARNATION  
HOTEL COLLECTION

startupgrind



WORLD RUGBY

NRL

WILDERNESS

FISHBURNERS

SFDELTA

LA KINGS

PAC12

XIGERA  
SAFARI LODGE ~ BOTSWANA

Startupbootcamp

C / MIND

RAIDERS



elewana  
— COLLECTION —

mediaworks.



LOS ANGELES  
CLIPPERS

NBL



BlueMerle™

BAY AREA SPORTS  
HALL OF FAME

SAN  
FRANCISCO  
DONS

CALIFORNIA UNITED  
STRIKERS FC

GROOTBOS  
Private Nature Reserve \*\*\*\*\*

BHERE.TV

CONSTRUCTION COST CONSULTANTS

SF CITY FC

WEST COAST CONFERENCE

**THANK YOU**

**949-706-4296**  
**brannan27.com**  
**brannan27@gmail.com**

