

Expo 2020 Dubai: What is the world expecting?

MAVENMAGNET X MOTIVATE MEDIA GROUP

A year to go...

Revealed:

EXCLUSIVE

INSIGHTS

**into global discussions
around Expo 2020**

**“This is the best thing
to bring people together”**

EXPO 2020 DUBAI

With one year to go before the start of Dubai Expo 2020, Motivate MavenMagnet – a partnership between Motivate Media Group and market research firm MavenMagnet – conducted a global social listening study to understand the universal sentiment around the event.

An analysis of 16,285 global conversations between January 2019 and July 2019 revealed this...

**Economy
infrastructure
Pavilion food Transport
jobs Experience Design biggest
culture airport growth visitors
innovation construction future Messi
investment Government Sustainable
Music shows events opportunities
participation Development Metro
Expo Live VoIP relationship Hotels energy excited
Ain Dubai showcase Real Estate architecture
tourism Technology 500 days Beautiful
collaboration AI Wasl aviation
Exhibition 5G**

IMPACT SCALE

The bigger the size of the word, the more interactions it generated. Impact is calculated as a measure of reach (passive readers/viewers) and engagement (active participants in conversations)

BY AARTI NAGRAJ

The one-year countdown has begun for Dubai Expo 2020, with robust preparations underway to attract global audiences. With an ambitious target of 25 million visits for the six-month event - which runs from October 2020 until April 2021 - the Expo aims to rope in business visitors, thought leaders and change-makers from across the globe. More than 70 per cent of visitors are projected to come from outside the UAE - the largest proportion of international visitors in the 168-year history of world expos.

In the lead up to the event, Motivate Media Group - Gulf Business' parent company - teamed up with market research firm MavenMagnet to conduct a global social listening study to understand the universal sentiment around the Expo, the anticipation levels among international consumers, and the impression that it has created so far. The report analysed 16,285 global conversations around Expo 2020 between January 2019 and July 2019 (the UAE was excluded).

Overall, the study found a largely positive overview about the event, with the Expo being perceived as a symbol of 'global unity'. Specifically, its themes of sustainability and mobility generated optimism, highlighting global awareness about the issues and the priority they are starting to take worldwide.

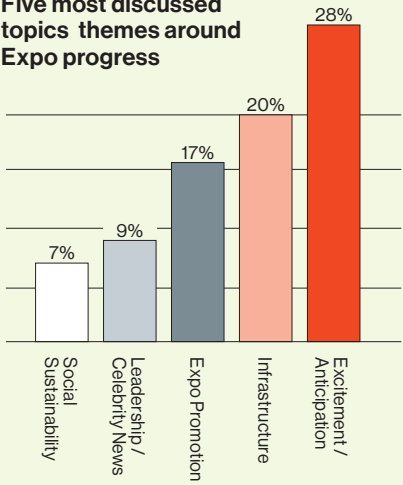
EXPO PROGRESS

Looking at the buzz created around the progress of Expo 2020, global consumers led 41 per cent of the conversations, with an overall net positive sentiment of 81 per cent (positive was at 89 per cent and negative at 7 per cent). News and drone footage of the progress on site is driving anticipation and excitement globally. In terms of infrastructure, the introduction of the new Route 2020 Metro line and overall plans announced by the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) to upgrade the transport network garnered positive feedback. While 56 per cent of the buzz around transportation was positive, only 1 per cent was negative. On the other hand, telecommunications registered a negative sentiment of 20 per cent, versus a 4 per cent

LOOK WHO'S TALKING

Motivate MavenMagnet analysed 16,285 conversations globally around Expo 2020 between January 2019 and July 2019

Five most discussed topics themes around Expo progress



Key conversation themes around Expo progress

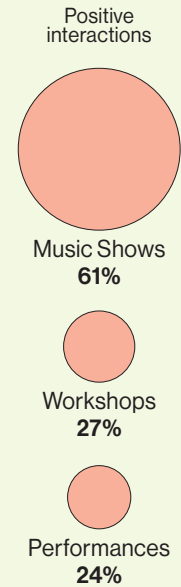
21%
Dubai Tourism

22%
Convenience

27%
Live Events at Expo

39%
Food

Music shows, workshops, and performances drove the excitement around live events at Expo

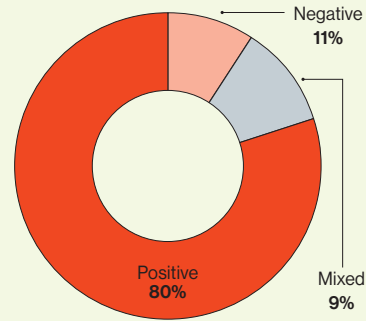


COMMENTS AROUND EXPO 2020

- Turkmenistan getting ready for World Expo 2020
- Expo 2020 Dubai is ready. Messi is ready. And you?
- Dubai to build advanced transport system for Expo 2020 #construction
- Eagerly await this event, wish you the most bright future ahead
- On completion, Ain Dubai will become the world's tallest observation wheel
- Wow! I will be there Dubai... one of my passions
- Dubai developing transport system to serve 25 million for Expo 2020
- The Expo 2020 will commence a knowledge economy in Dubai
- Music still unites the world
- Unique culinary experience awaits Expo2020 visitors
- VoIP ban. I still can't believe its a thing in 2019 !!
- C'est un pavillon ou un arbre de Noël ? Ça clignote beaucoup non? (It's a pavilion or a Christmas tree? It flashes a lot, doesn't it?). [France pavilion]
- Till now I still don't know what an expo is

Positive economic sentiment

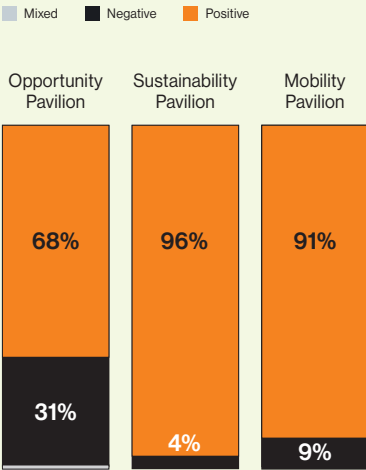
Conversations around economic opportunities being created by the advent of Expo 2020 and its lasting impact on UAE are mostly positive



Global consumers drive the conversations around Expo 2020

UK.....	14%
India.....	11%
US.....	10%
Germany.....	6%
Thailand.....	5%
The Netherlands.....	5%
Canada.....	4%
Australia.....	3%
France.....	3%
Spain.....	3%

Overall net sentiment around pavilions



positive reaction - mainly due to the VoIP (voice over internet protocol) ban in the UAE. The use of applications such as Skype and WhatsApp have become ubiquitous for professional and personal connectivity globally; hence many questioned the ban in a hub like Dubai.

"VoIP ban. I still can't believe it's a thing in 2019," said one social media user.

Another addressed the issue directly with UAE telco Etisalat, saying: "Regarding Expo 2020, what are you going to do when millions of people come to UAE to discover that most telecommunication apps are not working? You should keep in mind that people are not ready to pay for a service they had for free." One person also

offered a temporary solution: "Special Expo 2020 SIM cards for expo visitors only with unlocked VoIP service. Offer lasts the duration of the expo. Simple."

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

With over 190 nations confirmed as exhibiting at Expo 2020, the event is being perceived as an "important tool" to strengthen the economic and cultural ties between Dubai and the participating nations. The Dubai government's pro-business initiatives to attract overseas investors and increase the ease of doing business in the UAE garnered appreciation, with the study also citing a 100 per cent positive response to the idea that the Expo will enhance global unity. "Expo

2020 in Dubai will become a new stage in the development of international relations. New doors to the markets of many countries will open,” said one person. “Expo2020 is a golden opportunity for local, regional and international companies to connect and explore new possibilities in [the]ME and beyond,” said another.

PAVILION TALK

Design reveals for country pavilions received keen attention, with some seeing increased scrutiny as compared to others.

The study found that the UK pavilion was the most discussed within the Opportunity District, with 46 per cent talking about it. Inspired by a Stephen Hawking project in which he pondered how humanity could express itself to an extraterrestrial civilization, the pavilion will offer a glimpse into the future. Designed by UK artist and designer Es Devlin and produced by brand experience agency Avantgarde, the pavilion is being built by McLaren Construction and Pico.

The reactions were mixed. “The design is stunning, I am really excited to see this beautiful creation,” said one person.

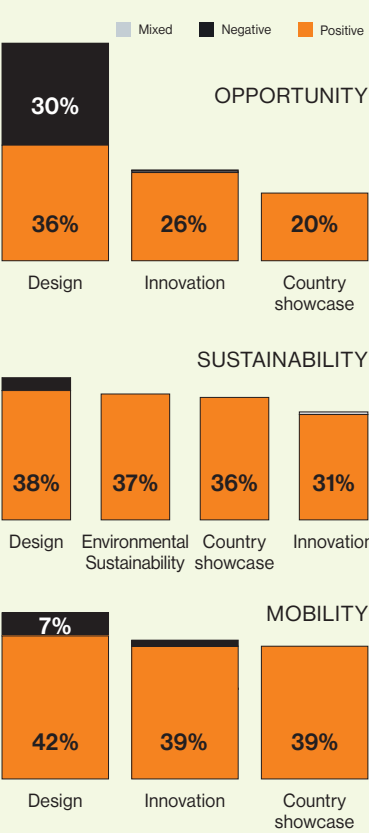
“The whole point of a pavilion at a world expo is to express your country’s best concepts and ideas, not some kumbaya unity sculpture,” opined another. “The competition couldn’t have been very tough if this is the winner, who else took part?,” questioned one person.

On the other hand, the Belarus and the China pavilion designs - also located in the Opportunity District generated a positive response, with the Emirates pavilion driving the optimism around innovation.

Within the Sustainability District, several discussions centred around the Philippines and Netherlands’ pavilions, with the themes of design, environmental factors and innovation drawing positive feedback.

The technology of producing water from air by using solar energy displayed at the Netherlands’ pavilion, the world’s first rope-less elevator display at the German pavilion, and Canada’s AI showcase drove positivity around innovation and received appreciation. Moving over to Mobility District, the study found that Thailand’s pavilion was the most discussed, with its unique design creating a positive buzz. Covered on the outside by a curtain of 500-plus woven artificial flowers, the Thailand pavilion will present the nation’s advances in the fields of transportation, logistics, digital connectivity and

The buzz around the districts of Expo 2020



COMMENTS AROUND OPPORTUNITY PAVILION

• Poetry is part of the DNA of the UK and also part of the Arabic culture. We will see it become part of a never-ending digital legacy. [UK]

• Interactive technologies will showcase the onboard experience of tomorrow and you'll also glimpse next-generation aircraft innovations. [Emirates]

• Dubai #Expo2020 has unveiled more pavilions, including China's 'symbol of hope and a bright future' [China]

COMMENTS AROUND SUSTAINABILITY PAVILION

• Harmonising water, energy and food, the #Dutch Pavillion is indeed a #sustainable utopia [Netherlands]

• UAE: Expo 2020 To Unveil World's First Rope-Less Elevator. [Germany]

• Canada is a global leader in #AI research with more than 500 companies active across the country! [Canada]

COMMENTS AROUND MOBILITY PAVILION

• Fab and unique Thai pavillion [Thailand]

• Reflective of Thai [culture] but not reflecting the theme of mobility for the future. [Thailand]

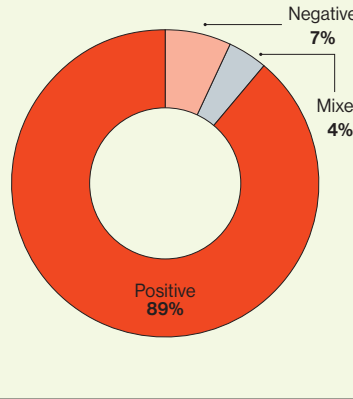
personal mobility. “Fab and unique Thai pavilion,” said one person. “Reflective of Thai [culture] but not reflecting the theme of mobility for the future,” said another.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Dubai Expo 2020’s long-term investment in the country will boost its economy by Dhs122.6bn and support 905,200 jobs between 2013 and 2031, according to a

Perceptions around the progress of Expo 2020

Conversations around infrastructure development drove the positive buzz



Key drivers for economic opportunities

Dubai economy.....	81%
Government policies.....	13%
Showcase at Expo 2020.....	10%
Infrastructure.....	9%
MICE hub.....	6%
Innovation.....	5%

report by consultancy EY. During the six-month period of the Expo, the event is also predicted to add the equivalent of 1.5 per cent to the UAE’s gross domestic product (GDP). According to the Motivate Maven-Magnet study, the Expo is being seen as a catalyst for providing a boost to the economy, with strong sentiment generated around sectors such as real estate (76 per cent), tourism (24 per cent), hospitality (18 per cent) and construction (12 per cent). From an employment perspective, while 19 per cent were positive about the opportunities, 3 per cent expressed concerns about jobs drying up after the event.

INNOVATION

Innovation has been a key theme around Expo 2020 and the study highlighted growing expectations from the participants and the event. Expected to be the “most connected world fair” in history, it is hoped to serve as a catalyst for creating the blueprint for future smart cities. Siemens’ MindSphere, an open IoT operating system that



will provide connectivity at Expo 2020, as well as the 5G network onsite that local telcoms operators such as Etisalat and du will provide boosted the positivity around innovation, the study found. Overall, the sentiment around 5G and IoT garnered a wholly positive response.

“Expo 2020 will commence a knowledge economy in Dubai, making it a destination that attracts visitors, students and companies from varied sectors,” said one person.

EXCITEMENT AROUND FOOD

Interestingly, the study also found that the Expo’s planned global culinary experience could be a major draw for potential visitors. Catering to a global audience, Expo 2020 will have more than 200 dining outlets, offering more than 50 varieties of cuisines. Up to 300,000 meals are anticipated to be served each day of the event.

The study found an all-positive response to the food choices, with 85 per cent looking forward to the global dining experience and 17 per cent excited about the restaurant options. As one user put it: “A foodie dream at Expo 2020 Dubai - what’s not to like?”

The wider entertainment extravaganza planned for the 173-day event - including concerts, robot workshops as well as live performances by comedians, dancers, acrobats and poets - also generated enthusiasm among global audiences, the study found.

Global audiences were also excited about visiting Dubai as a tourism hotspot, with 31 per cent of the conversations discussing the

‘destination likeability’. One of the specific projects that drew attention is Ain Dubai, the world’s tallest observation wheel that’s coming up on Bluewaters Island. Earlier this year developer Meraas announced that the project will be completed “in time for Expo 2020 Dubai celebrations”.

While many conversations highlighted the eagerness to experience Ain Dubai, the study also found concerns around the timely completion among consumers.

WHO IS ENGAGING?

Consumers and influencers from the UK (14 per cent), India (11 per cent) and the US (10 per cent) drove the conversations around the Expo, the study found. However, the study found limited interest from countries such as China, Japan and South Korea, in addition to Latin and Central American nations. Not surprisingly, the sector most active in discussing Expo 2020 was found to be media (8 per cent), followed by real estate (5 per cent) and government (4 per cent).

However, the study also found that there was an awareness gap, with 10 per cent citing a lack of knowledge about the expo. “Globally, while there is lot of excitement around Dubai Expo 2020 among people who are aware of the event, there is a need for an ongoing campaign to generate further global awareness about the event,” the report said.

To purchase a copy of the complete report, contact Motivate Media Group