A View from South Africa
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WAN-IFRA India
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LISA MACLEOD | INTRODUCTION

- Head of Digital at Tiso Blackstar Group
- Vice President of World Association of News Publishers
- Board member of the World Editors Forum
- Former GM Digital Publishing at 24.com
- Head of Operations FT.com and Managing Editor at the Financial Times in London
- Focused on newsroom integration and change management
- BA Honours in Anthropology
TISO BLACKSTAR | INTRODUCTION

- 7 newspapers, magazines, 12 websites, radio stations throughout Africa, film and music and events
- Group digital audience is now double what it was 4 years ago, around 8-million UBs monthly
- Redesigned all newspapers, and moved to new building
- Investment in data and analysts: audience focus
- Overhaul of workflows and processes to favour a digital-first environment
• High penetration of mobile phones but smartphone does not mean internet access is a given
• Android far outweighs IOS
• Newspaper declining: dailies averaging 16% year on year decline
• Data costs are enormously high: 6 x higher than Egypt - spectrum and infrastructure, lack of competition
• South Africans spend more on communication than on health or on education
SOUTH AFRICA | CONTEXT

**JAN 2019**

The essential headline data you need to understand mobile, internet, and social media use.

- **Total Population**: 57.73 million
  - Urbanisation: 67%
- **Mobile Subscriptions**: 98.05 million
  - vs. Population: 170%
- **Internet Users**: 31.18 million
  - Penetration: 54%
- **Active Social Media Users**: 23.00 million
  - Penetration: 40%
- **Mobile Social Media Users**: 22.00 million
  - Penetration: 38%

Sources:
- Population: United Nations, U.S. Census Bureau
- Mobile: GSMA Intelligence
- Internet: Internet World Stats, Disney
- Social Media: Hootsuite, We Are Social (all latest available data as of January 2019).
• Aim: change newsrooms to be digital-facing and responsive to audience needs, rather than medium-driven

• Involves three pillars:
  1. **New newsroom tech** including a new custom built CMS called CosMoS and an upgraded print system (Good News 4 / Tera)
  2. **Changes to workflows**. Earlier starts. Filing for web. Understanding the value of content for subscribers. Internal wire service to foster collaboration between newsrooms: up to 200 stories a day for group use.
  3. **Improving print processes** and efficiencies to ensure sustainability
ORGANISATION | PRINT CHALLENGES

- High cost of petrol and high distances between drops (either retail or subscribers) – leads to high transportation costs
- High unemployment rates
- Depressed economy leading to less frequent retail shopping and smaller baskets
- High input costs of print and significant increases in the cost of newsprint
3 key developments in our print environment:

1) Increased **investment** in our informal (streets) sales network to ensure that the paper is available for purchase even when people are not shopping.

2) **Consolidation** of our retail and subscription contractors in Gauteng province, to enable us to achieve economies of scale: two previously separate networks are now combined, so a subscriber delivery route now includes several retail drops.

3) Constant **optimisation of pagination**: daily changes to print orders and based on ad ratios, anticipated sales demand, and distribution cost.
REVENUE | FOCUS ON THE FUNNEL

TOP: Track
- All about BRAND PRESENCE
- Cross device tagging and tracking implemented
- Traffic improvement measures
- SEO improvements
- Tech optimisations: Marfeel and AMP
- Tagging consolidated
- Lift Team: viral stories
- Editorial volume and speed
- Social sharing, pixel tracking and page likes
- Brand presence and awareness: external marketing

MIDDLE: Profile
- All about ACQUISITION
- Gather data on consumption and behavior
- Profile segments / personas
- Work on demographics, geolocation, transactions etc
- Internal marketing: banners and offers personalised
- Personalised content recommendations to increase engagement and time spent on product
- Targeted on-site banners and email marketing
- Push notifications
- Push to site / call to action marketing

BOTTOM: Engage + Monetise
- All about RETENTION
- Effort is aimed at engagement, and superior customer service and experience
- Recency / Frequency / Volume metrics – engagement metrics
- User journeys, renewals and churn managed meticulously
- Loyal customer programmes
- Underpinned by data, active CRM and bespoke marketing
- Corporate sales and B2B marketing
• Created a new team focused on improving traffic: Team Lift
• Three digital natives brought into to work on stories with web focus
• Part copy tasting, part packaging
• Looking for content with viral lift: breaking out of normal news day
• Stories all tagged with “lift” metadata to identify them
• Results have been phenomenal: more than 1.3-million unique browsers in a month and 1-million+ new page views
• Bigger than a standalone website
• Paid content is primary focus
• 6 operational paywalls
• All have different business models
• Three are defensive (protect print revenues) - Sunday Times, Daily Dispatch, The Herald
• One is niche business content (high end readers) - BusinessLIVE
• Two are digital editions (new concept, print replacement for closed newspaper / old vernacular brand)
• Supported by new data team
Eskom cannot survive without state support, says Jabu Mabuza

Manufacturing production shrinks for second month in July
WOEDE EN VERWOESTING

Jy moet help keer dat Eskom se kragmaste omval

'n Hele aantal kragmaste wankel op genade omdat die staal afgestee is

Erika Gibson
8 min om te lees

MENINGS & DEBATE

Die vroue-haat-kultuur: Ons moet meer doen

Jonathan Jansen
5 min om te lees

MENINGS & DEBATE

Geweld teen vroue: Die kwaad-lys mag maar lank wees

Elsabé Brits
7 min om te lees
NEW IDEAS | #DATAFREE APP

- Cognisant of data issues and affordability in SA: worked with partner Binu to deliver a datafree / zero-rated app
- SA News LIVE is powered by free content from all our newsrooms
- Can be downloaded by apk transfer - skip the stores
- 365k UBs last month
- Monetised by native content or vertical video formats
NEW IDEAS | CLASSIFIEDS ONLINE

• Build or buy? Partner?
• Wanted an opportunity to play in classifieds markets
• Partnered with Gumtree, second biggest publisher in SA
• Very simple model: pay on impressions served on referral traffic
• Early days, but some good results
• High engagement
HOW ARE WE DOING? | HEALTHCHECK

• Took an early bet on paid content: lessons from overseas
• Happy with progress: but need more revenue and better tech to support payment management and customers
• Stream of premium content, AND a heavy flow of news
• Business subscriber base increased 40%
• Active digital users represent close to 35% of total subscriber base, number is growing
• Become a sustainable subscriptions company
• Print still most important super premium product
• Keep innovating and trying new projects