

Podcasts begin to show real returns in SA

The podcasting business in South Africa is on the brink of delivering real returns for its participants - for podcasters that means meaningful financial reward, and for the brands that have explored the genre as a marketing tool that translates into solid KPIs that would impress even the most jaded of boardrooms.



Source: www.pexels.com

That's according to InBroadcasting's director, Jon Savage, a veteran of content creation and production across multiple media channels and technologies, as well as the creator of award-winning digital content platforms such as AMPD Studios, BUSQR, the Mashlab and the Eye digital radio station.

Savage references three milestones as proof of the podcasting industry's tipping point.

Key performance indicators

The first is the key performance indicators achieved by AMPD Studios by Old Mutual concerning its series of eight podcasts curated and co-hosted by rapper, songwriter and record producer Nasty C. The series ran on Nasty C's YouTube channel where it achieved 359,500 organic views over that period (and many more in months to come).



Jon Savage 25 May 2021



It also featured on the AMPD Studios powered by Old Mutual Creative Industry Podcast channel where it achieved an average weekly listenership of over 10,000 listeners, with a total listenership of 100,000 listeners over the eight weeks. In terms of radio listenership (excerpts from each series were broadcast on Primedia's 947 music radio station), it reached over 700,000 listeners during the first four weeks.

In addition, the podcast was ranked as the Number 1 podcast series on the podcast charts in eight African countries for three months in a row for Old Mutual and AMPD Studios – South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Uganda.

"While these stats for the three-month campaign more than delivered on Old Mutual's KPIs, even more impressive is the fact that – more than three months after we've stopped promoting the series – it is still pulling in the listeners and viewers and still charting all over the continent.

"As long as the content is authentic and relevant, podcasts are the gift that keeps giving as they continue to snowball listeners, long after they first go live. People who discover the 8th episode, often go back and devour the series from the beginning. For Old Mutual and Nasty C, this is certainly proving to be the case," Savage said.

From podcast to TV show

The second milestone is that Savage's own podcast was turned into a TV show, only to be turned back into a podcast.

"Funny story, actually," he said. "My podcast, *What's Your Poison*, which involves me sharing a bottle of whiskey with comedian and musician friends, caught the attention of Viacom (Comedy Central, BET, MTV) who wanted to turn it into a TV show.



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"We then approached Scottish Leader to come in as a sponsor, which has now opted to retain the podcast format but match it with a new host, the fantastic South African musician and dancer, Moonchild Sanelly, who is unquestionably a far more dynamic and exciting host!

"The important thing here for the industry is that, with limited avenues for engagement in our still-impacted-by-Covid world, brands are embracing podcasts with alacrity, and taking them seriously – not just bastardising them and turning them into unauthentic, watered-down versions of what they used to be. This is seriously good news," he said

Business opportunities

The third milestone identified by Savage is the realisation of real business opportunities for podcasters. In the past month, we have managed to bring in a plethora of brands into the podcasting space, creating successful campaigns for them and creating sustainability for the creators.

With MacG's Podcast and Chill, InBroadcasting has managed to secure an unprecedented licensing deal with a DSTV channel as well being the first podcast to have a historic – and sold out – episode screen at Ster Kinekor cinemas

nationwide.

For Vusi Thembekwayo's podcast, *Ideas That Matter*, the agency created a powerful brand partnership, and the AMPD Creative Industry Podcast (for Old Mutual) continues to deliver new unexpected high impact results.

"Podcasts are a largely unexplored opportunity across Africa for creators and brands; they present enormous potential for further reach, following and education within the industry," said Savage.

"There has been an increased uptake in YouTube creators in South Africa, and YouTube Stars are becoming even more prominent. Very few marketers and brands have wholly embraced this opportunity – and I'm proud of the fact that InBroadcasting is pioneering this innovative creative marketing avenue for impact.

"We are clearly trailblazing our way to success as our Top Podcast results indicate – but I soon expect, and look forward to, many other nipping at our heels as the industry passes its topping point," he concluded.

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