

The rise of real-time updates with Shazam

 By Ann Nurock

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Music featured strongly at Cannes Lions 2017, with Universal Music CEO Lucian Grainge the first ever music executive to be named Cannes Lions Media Person of the Year. Wyclef Jean also held an onstage talk earlier in the Cannes Lions Festival about his partnership with music recognition app Shazam. I chatted to Josh Partridge, director for EMEA, LatAm and Canada at Shazam, live in Cannes.

■ ***Josh, it is a pleasure to meet you. You have a massive presence at Cannes this year. Why is it so much bigger this year than in previous years?***

That's a great question. The opportunity for us at Cannes is that we can see so many of our partners, so many of our clients in a very short period of time.

I cover a very large geographic region, so I have had meetings with my guys from Turkey, from the Middle East, from Latin America, Germany and Italy.

So it is a great way to connect. It's also a great way to see what our competitors are doing.

All round, it's a really great event where you can accomplish a lot in a very short period of time.



Josh Partridge, director for EMEA, LatAm and Canada at Shazam

■ ***What does Shazam as a company want to get out of Cannes?***

One of the things we have been focused on as Shazam is working with brands and publishers to leverage our audience and technology in order to create new and unique ways for consumers to connect with brands. For example, I just came from a meeting with a big cinema group in Germany and we're going to look at Shazam enabling the pre-show in cinema. I also had a meeting with a very large German traditional publisher to talk about Shazam enabling their content in magazines and newspapers.

■ ***How would that work?***

Another great question! We have been using our audio recognition, as the power of Shazam lies in identifying music and finding out what it is. That then morphed into brands using that same technology for Shazam-enabled TV commercials. If you want to find out more about a particular product you can 'Shazam' the ad and have a digital experiment to find out more about a product.



Azzaro campaign lets shoppers Shazam a fragrance

20 Feb 2017



About 18 months ago we launched visual recognition, so we're moving towards not only things you can hear but also things you can see. So, for example, print ads, or content on a newspaper. That is what we have been driving towards – people using more things for Shazam than just what you hear.

■ ***So if I see an article in a newspaper and I Shazam it, what am I going to get from that?***

We've just begun partnering with *The Telegraph* in the UK. If you think about things like the election, when they print the

newspaper, a lot of things will happen in the next 20 minutes, hour, two hours, four hours... right? What we said to them is, why don't we give an opportunity for people who have bought the newspaper to Shazam and get up-to-the-minute information? That has been the focus for them. So we have been focusing on the election, the Lions tour to New Zealand, giving people real-time information.

■ ***This is a fabulous opportunity for print, because we know the medium is declining.***

Yes it's a good opportunity for them because you're right: Once they have printed it, it's old news. But one thing newspaper groups are very good at is hiring amazing journalists who are behind the scenes, up-to-date every minute. We now just give them a vehicle to get that content, get that update to the consumers very, very quickly, almost in real time. What they do very well is content; what we do well is technology and having a big audience. So working together, there are huge advantages for both groups to use new ways to ensure content.

■ ***How do you market this to consumers, to people to get them to use it?***

This is certainly a challenge. If you look at visual recognition; we launched it 12 to 18 months ago. We did a survey about three months into it and we asked our users: Are you aware of this new technology? We put the new feature on our app and we had an instruction on how it works; we had about 40 percent of users who said: Yeah, we know about this new thing we can do. We did a survey again about two months ago and it is now up to 75 percent. A lot of new apps are continuing to iterate – every two weeks a new feature comes, so users are being programmed to constantly look for new features.

■ ***But your target market is probably skewed younger, and they are so tech- and app-savvy that they know how to look for these things.***

The interesting thing about Shazam is that most people presume that our audiences are age 18 to 24 and certainly that is a big demographic but most of our audiences are age 18 to 44 – that's 80 percent of our users. Shazam as an app has been around since 2008 so we've been around for a long time; all generations like music and want to find out what that particular song is. So in the early days, app usage was young but it has broadened. It used to be mainly men but now it is pretty much a 50/50 split of female to male, and that is what we are seeing in emerging markets, too. You start with a young male audience and as smart-phone penetration increases it starts to mirror the population.

■ ***What's the status of Shazam in South Africa?***

South Africa is different from most of Africa as smart phone penetration is quite high. We've been active in South Africa for two or three years now, and apart from the Middle East, we are not too active anywhere else.



Hannes Prinsloo from Shazam

Beverley Klein 13 Jun 2016



So we have eight million annual users in South Africa; one-and-a-half million monthly users, so it's quite a big audience. Clearly it's a big population and there's still huge amounts of growth potential. Which is exciting... I mean if we look at Latin America, we look at Russia; we look at Africa – at least for our business, that's where the easy growth is going to come from.

The Festival of Creativity runs from 17-24 June 2017, with Cinemark the local representatives of Cannes Lions for SA. Visit our [Cannes Lions special section](#) for the latest updates!

ABOUT ANN NUROCK

Ann is a Partner at Relationship Audits and Management, a global consultancy that measures and optimizes client /agency relationships. Her proprietary Radar tool is used by 30 corporates globally and as a result she interacts with over 80 agencies of all disciplines. Ann spent 25 years plus in the advertising industry as CEO of Grey Advertising South Africa, and head of the Africa region followed by President and CEO of Grey Canada. Contact details: ann.nurock@relationshipaudits.com | Twitter @Annnurock

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