

Hot 102.7FM helps Westside FM get back on air

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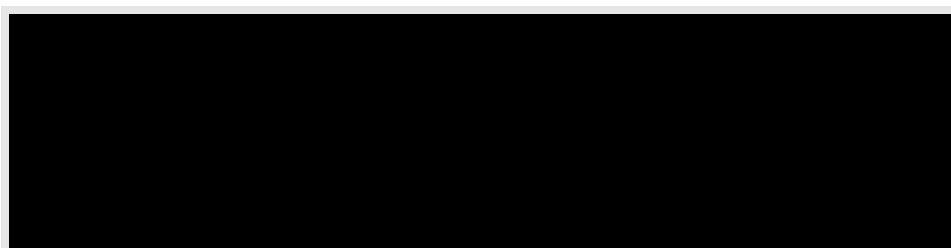
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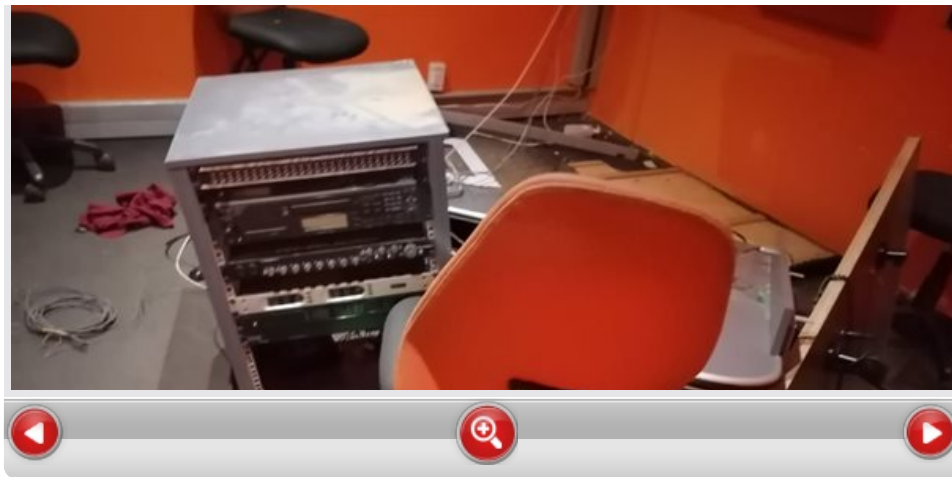
In the early hours of Tuesday, 13 July, community radio station Westside FM, a mouthpiece of the West Rand community since 2013, was ransacked in an outbreak of civil unrest. For the founder of the station, Goodhope Ledwaba, this was a devastating blow: "It was terribly sad to see how our studios were looted and vital broadcast equipment either stolen or destroyed. It robbed our community of a voice as we had no means of delivering the programs that are so important to our community."



Westside was one of four community stations that were destroyed in the unrest and as news of Westside's plight came to the attention of Lloyd Madurai, managing director of Hot 102.7FM, he immediately sprung into action. "As a member of the broader South African radio industry family, we could not just idly sit by as a community station was unable to deliver programming to their listeners," he said. "I immediately contacted Carmen Rocha, Hot Cares manager to see what assistance could be given."

Hot Cares is a public benefit organisation associated with Hot 102.7FM. "I wanted to know what Westside FM would need to get back on air," said Carmen Rocha, "so I made contact with Goodhope Ledwaba to see where we could assist. We're blessed with the ability to help communities in our area and the priority for us was to get Westside up and running again. After all, they're also part of the greater radio industry family in South Africa."





Although Westside FM had managed to get back on air in a rudimentary fashion, the station needed several items of equipment including soundcards; a computer; microphones, headphones, and a computer monitor. Through relationships with various equipment and component suppliers, Hot Cares was able to procure the required items and these were handed over to a delighted Ledwaba at the Hot 102.7FM offices by Lloyd Madurai and Carmen Rocha.

“For Hot 102.7FM, it’s an honour to be able to assist our fellow broadcasters and to give back to the community,” says Madurai. “We love the radio industry, we’re privileged to be able to do what we do and we are blessed with the ability to give back to our friends in need.”

“I’m so happy that we will soon be able to give our community the programming that they have come to expect from Westside,” said Ledwaba. “I was despondent after the destruction of our facilities, which were built at a cost of R1.4m in 2016, but now I am resolute that we will be back soon – stronger than ever.

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