

Radio: The centre of community, the original social media

By  Wayne Bischoff

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We are all well aware of the impact that load shedding has on our day-to-day life, on business and on our economy. Every sector has had to navigate the new norm of the implications that come with the electricity crisis and the advertising industry is high up on the list of sectors impacted.



Source © Ifad [Ifad](#) Load shedding is showing that radio is really at the centre of community, the original social media

When the power goes out most South Africans can't watch TV, which sends viewership numbers plummeting. The power cuts also wreak havoc on cellphone network coverage and on audiences being able to access the internet, which unfortunately impacts digital reach.

Radio listening has never been stronger

But there is one medium that doesn't seem to have been as negatively impacted. Radio listening has never been stronger.

BRC RmsS Amplify shows that 77% of South Africa's population listened to radio in the past seven days and the Time Spent Listening is at a whopping five hours and 15 minutes.

As we are forced to spend more time in traffic with traffic lights out, radio is the consistent commute-based companion.

According to the latest BRC Rams figures, listening to radio in the car and at work has seen an upward trend compared to the previous survey.

The most popular listening device for audiences that listen to the Mediamark portfolio of radio stations (East Coast Radio, Jacaranda FM, and Kaya FM) is via the car radio, at 44%.



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Radio still drives significant engagement

Despite debate that there is an analogue decline with spend increasingly moving towards digital, the statistics show that radio still drives significant engagement.

There is also the unrivalled intimacy that radio offers as a trusted media source. BRC Rams Amplify highlights that the top reasons for audiences tuning in to radio include the music (95%), the local news (88%), the weather updates (87%) and the traffic updates (79%).

The reasons listed for tune-in among listeners show that radio is really at the centre of community, the original social media.

This community-centred listening is also why Mediamark recently launched CommVibe, a package of Western Cape-based community radio stations, with a combined audience of just over 860,000 listeners.

We're excited to be tapping into radio stations that fully understand the vibration of the communities they serve.

Invested audiences are what makes radio such a powerful medium, in my opinion. BRC Rams Amplify shows that over 52% of our radio listeners are heavy users who are actively tuning in to radio six or seven times a week.

At a time filled with uncertainty for many advertisers the strength of radio in the face of load shedding is evident.

ABOUT WAYNE BISCHOFF

Wayne Bischoff recently rejoined Mediamark as CEO, having previously held the position of sales and marketing director at what was then Radmark and Digitalmark.

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