

SA's top Twittering editors

By [Alastair Otter](#)

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Prompted by a [Twitter discussion](#) with journalist Jonathan Ancer ([@jonathanancer](#)) earlier this week and a comment by *Business Day* editor Peter Bruce ([@Bruceps](#)), who urged [more South African executives to join Twitter](#), I decided to track down some of South Africa's top editors and compare how they were faring in the world of Twitter.

Encouragingly, many of SA's news editors are already active on Twitter, although there are still several who are noticeably absent. It is also worth noting that the past couple of weeks have seen huge editorship changes in the SA media, including those at [Rapport](#), [Beeld](#), [Finweek](#) and now [Sowetan and Daily Dispatch](#).

Top of the list

At the top of the list of active editors (by follower numbers) is *City Press*'s Ferial Haffajee ([@ferialhaffajee](#)), with more than 10 000 followers. *City Press*'s recent allegations of a [secret Julius Malema trust fund](#) no doubt boosted her follower numbers, as did her [very public spat](#) with (now former) *Sowetan* columnist Eric Miyeni.

Close behind Haffajee is the *Mail & Guardian*'s Nic Dawes ([@NicDawes](#)), with more than 9000 followers. Dawes is more active on Twitter than Haffajee, ahead by about 3000 tweets.

In third place is *Sunday Times* editor Ray Hartley ([@hartleyr](#)), with just over 4200 followers. Hartley started tweeting on 21 August 2007, though, way before both Dawes (1 June 2009) and Haffajee (21 November 2009).

At the other end of the scale, editors who have not yet joined the fray include the editors of *Sowetan*, *Business Report*, *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* and *The Herald*.

The active list

Editor	Account	Publication	Number of tweets	Number of followers	Number following	Tweeting since
Ferial Haffajee	@ferialhaffajee	City Press	1600	10301	341	31 November 2009
Nic Dawes	@NicDawes	Mail & Guardian	4593	9156	456	1 June 2009
Ray Hartley	@hartleyr	Sunday Times	2309	4274	529	21 August 2007
Alec Hogg	@alechogg	MoneyWeb	1904	3565	3583	29 July 2008
Branko Brkic	@brankobrkc	Daily Maverick	4760	3197	756	08 January 2009
Peter Bruce	@Bruceps	Business Day	3522	3075	494	18 March 2009

Angela Quintal	@angelaquintal	The Mercury	1090	1362	632	22 June 2009
Brendan Boyle	@TimesLIVEpols	Daily Dispatch*	521	1115	85	23 June 2009
Marc Ashton (acting)	@zamarcashton	Finweek	8159	1104	465	3 May 2009
Gasant Abarder	@GasantAbarder	Cape Argus	3588	930	389	4 November 2010
Phylcia Oppelt	@PhylciaO	The Times	427	570	233	28 May 2011
Barney Mthombathi	@mthombathi	Financial Mail	414	432	220	9 April 2009
Ryland Fisher (acting)	@rylandfisher	The New Age	138	366	750	04 August 2009
Liza Albrecht	@LizaAlbrecht	Rapport**	141	282	164	9 February 2009
Peet Kruger	@pkruiger1	Beeld	570	233	344	3 April 2009
Martin Williams	@Martwit	Citizen	30	135	96	22 February 2009
Mbegsien Williams	@MbegaenW	The Star	17	124	10	10 June 2011
Ainsley Moos	@Moos115	Volksblad	139	109	97	7 August 2010
Bokkie Gerber	@bokkie_gerber	Rapport**	1	11	4	27 July 2011

Missing in action

Editor	Publication
Len Maseko (deputy)	Sowetan*
Ellis Mhyandu	Business Report
Chris Whitfield	Cape Argus
Alide Dasnois	Cape Times
Bun Booyens	Die Burger
Mpumelelo Mkhabele	Daily Dispatch/Sowetan
Fikile-Ntsikelelo Moya	The Witness
Heather Robertson	The Herald
Makhudu Sefara	Sunday Independent
Deon Delport	Independent on Saturday

Notes:

*This list includes Brendan Boyle ([@TimesLIVEpols](#)) as the editor of the *Daily Dispatch*, even though he only took up that post [this week](#) as a result of the Haffajee/Miyeni spat. He is, however, an active Twitter user and therefore could be expected to take his followers with him to the *Dispatch*.

**Liza Albrecht ([@LizaAlbrecht](#)) is included, as she was only replaced by Bokkie Gerber as editor of *Rapport* at the [start of August 2011](#). Gerber appears to now have a Twitter account ([@bokkie_gerber](#)) but had tweeted just once at the time of writing.

Disclaimer(s):

Twitter follower counts are a moving target. Within minutes of publishing this, these will be out of date. These numbers were correct at the end of the working day of 4 August 2011.

In most cases, I am confident that the accounts listed belong to the editor in question. I am less sure about the accounts I have not found. They may exist but not in any easily discoverable form. If I have missed any, please [email me](#) and I'll add them to the list.

• Amended from [original blog post](#), with permission, published on 4 August 2011.

ABOUT ALASTAIR OTTER

Alastair is half geek, half journalist. He's worked for numerous newspapers and magazines over the years but has a not-so-secret passion for digital media. These days he is mostly focused on journalism training and Media Hack ([www.mediahack.co.za](#)), a project that tracks and experiments with the rapidly changing media world. Email Alastair at [alastair@mediahack.co.za](#) and follow him on Twitter at [@alastairotter](#).

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