

Beautiful News achieves 1.6 billion in reach

By [Michael Hathorn](#), issued by [Ginkgo Agency](#)

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How a positive news platform grew from a zero base to 600 thousand followers and 200 million views in two years



Positive stories matter. They make the world a better place. The process of sharing and celebrating uplifting narratives can generate enormous change for good. That's the power of inspiration. There's no more tangible proof of this than Beautiful News – a groundbreaking content platform that releases positive stories about South Africa every day of the year.

In the face of global pessimism and uncertainty about the future, Beautiful News presents a counter-narrative rooted in the strength and resilience of South Africa's people. Authentic, intimate, filmic portraits of individuals committed to creating positive change show a nation driven by a unique spirit of generosity and creativity. The platform's message is a simple, striking rallying cry that South Africans have responded to en masse. Just two years after launch, Beautiful News has achieved **218 million video views**, with a social media following of over **629 thousand people**. Over the course of this time it has generated immense reach, creating a total of **1.6 billion opportunities to view the project**.

Making a difference

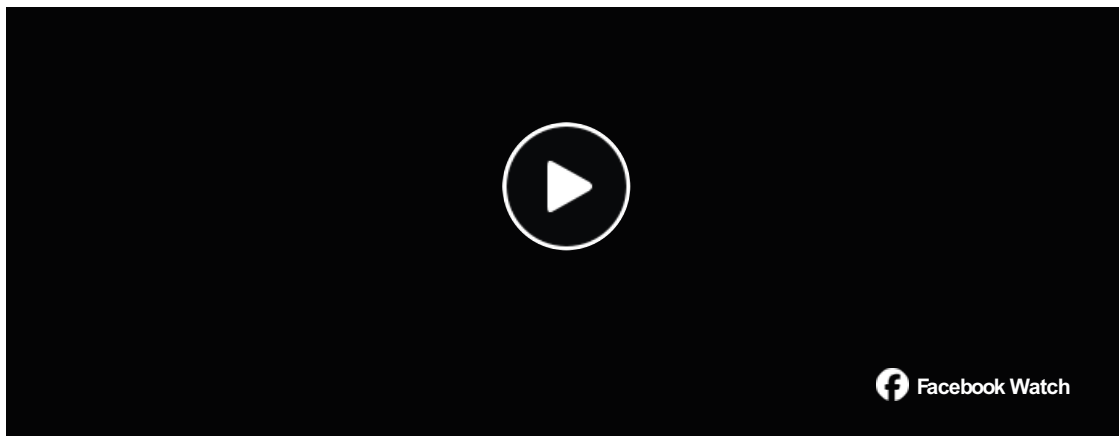
These figures are remarkable for a South African initiative that started from a base of zero only two years ago. The size of the platform has created significant opportunity for the people featured in Beautiful News stories. From Charmaine Mrwebi, the self-published author who was invited to speak in front of parliament, to Ingrid de Storie, the woman whose care and compassion for the animals in her community attracted such support from people around the world that she raised enough money to open her own animal clinic. And Yaseen Abrahams, the taxi gaatjie who provides free rides to the elderly, was offered his own taxi from a listener who heard his Beautiful News story played on radio – evidence of the extraordinary kindness that so many South Africans share.

"South Africa is a beautiful, complex place. And something that really sets us apart is the way we come together to help each other in the face of adversity," reflects Talysa Rudah, Deputy Content Director of Beautiful News. "From the moment we released our first story to today, that's been the overwhelming response: people want to contribute, they want to give back. If our audience sees a story that offers a way to help or offer assistance, they jump at it. It's the most moving thing about being part of this team."



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Leading with purpose

Beautiful News continues the ethos behind the 21 ICONS project, with both initiatives produced by Ginkgo Agency. Inspired by the life of Nelson Mandela, 21 ICONS uses short films and photographic portraits to tell the stories of South Africa's most inspirational individuals. Both initiatives are made possible by Mercedes-Benz, who view the partnership with Beautiful News as a powerful statement of purpose and the driving force behind a forward-thinking, incisive strategy that aligns with leading brands around the globe: top organisations achieve business growth by contributing positively to the world.

"Today's consumers aren't satisfied with brands that ignore the world around them. Globally, successful businesses are defined by a strong sense of purpose," says Selvin Govender, Marketing Director for Mercedes-Benz South Africa. "That's why Beautiful News makes sense for us, because Mercedes-Benz has always had a deep commitment to the South African people. Our workers gifted Nelson Mandela an S-Class in 1990, and we helped to showcase our country's most inspirational individuals with the 21 ICONS project. This is the legacy we're continuing with Beautiful News. We're leading with purpose by celebrating the very best that South Africa has to offer."

Reach and impact

While the numbers that Beautiful News has achieved are impressive on their own, what do they mean in context? According to [Socialbakers](#), as of February 2019 Beautiful News ranks in the top 20 for all media pages in South Africa by following on Facebook, which firmly establishes it as the leading good news brand in the country. Furthermore, research conducted by Publicis Machine on behalf of Mercedes-Benz established that Beautiful News achieved brand recall of 25% in its sample audience. Two years into its existence, the platform is the leading outlet in its category, and is recognised by one in every four South Africans.

"Our goal with Beautiful News has always been to inspire South Africans through stories of their own success," says Beautiful News founder Adrian Steirn. "It wouldn't be possible without the support of Mercedes-Benz. They helped us bring 21 ICONS to life, and they're continuing to help us show South Africa for what it really is: an extraordinary country filled with people whose tenacity, drive, and generosity is unmatched anywhere in the world."

At the heart of a nation

The platform's reach extends beyond digital, weaving into the social fabric of South Africa. Across the country, friends of Beautiful News have recognised the power of positive storytelling by sharing Beautiful News stories with their audiences. Radio provides an outlet to participate in conversations in and around Beautiful News content, with stories and interviews with subjects airing on KFM, East Coast Radio, and Jacaranda FM. Similarly, commuters find stories in airports and planes playing on screens through Airport TV, Mango Airlines, and SAA, and in petrol stations through Tractor Outdoor. Uber, bus, train, and taxi passengers see Beautiful News through Hubble, APM, and Transit TV respectively. VIA flights short films on TV, and IOL shares content online. Films play at university campuses around the country through Boo! TV, in front of shoppers at the V&A Waterfront and Melrose Arch, and on screens in golf clubs through Golf TV.

The network of collaborators is testament to the interest that South Africans have in watching uplifting stories, and the

engagement that Beautiful News is creating. Since November 2016, it has become a fixture of everyday life for people across the country – a daily reminder of the power of collective effort, and the deeply ingrained sense of community that binds us together. The platform is a foremost example of the power of leading with purpose. Its presence in the South African media landscape benefits everyone involved, from its story subjects and audience to the platform partner. In today's world, that's worth celebrating.

Beautiful News continues to release one uplifting short film a day. To see or submit a story to Beautiful News, visit www.beautifulnews.co.za, email hello@beautifulnews.co.za or join the conversation with #BeautifulNews and #MyBeautifulSA.

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About Beautiful News

South Africans are a vibrant, innovative, resourceful and warm-hearted people. A truth we often overlook. Beautiful News celebrates the extraordinary fabric of human nature that binds our nation by releasing one positive story every day at 4:14pm – the moment in time Nelson Mandela walked out of prison. Beautiful News' founder, photographer and filmmaker Adrian Steirn, previously created the 21 ICONS series, which profiled the iconic individuals who led the nation's journey to democracy and helped to unite its communities. Beautiful News is produced by Ginkgo Agency and made possible by Mercedes-Benz South Africa.

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