

# Cars.co.za launches car show and digital magazine during lockdown

As the nationwide lockdown enters its fourth week, South Africa's leading online motoring portal, Cars.co.za, has come to the rescue of the nation's content-starved petrolheads.



The brand, which recently celebrated reaching the 200,000-subscriber milestone on its YouTube channel, has introduced a long-format online car show (anchored by its own *Ciro De Siena*) and launched a new digital magazine under its SentiMETAL car culture sub-brand.

“We have been working towards this project for many years now – a proudly South African long-format, multi-segment car show that celebrates our country and its rich car history,” says Ross McIlroy, co-founder of Cars.co.za.

“We toyed with broadcasting on terrestrial television, or launching on a streaming network, but with us so close to the finish line, we got blindsided by the global Covid-19 crisis. Our talks, production and the country halted,” he explains.

“But this extraordinary moment in time also creates opportunity. With South Africa ordered to stay home, online content

consumption is on the rise and content creation dwindling. As a company that takes great pride in being nimble, we simply couldn't resist the urge to fill this content void and give South Africa, and the world, something beautiful to watch.

"And so we decided to adapt our long-format car show concept, using some techniques that may have been unthinkable before lockdown, and get it ready in record time to release it for free.

"With this show, we aim to entertain, inform, inspire and hopefully make our audience smile. We have also committed to donating all revenue generated off our Cars.co.za YouTube channel for the rest of 2020 to charitable causes in support of the fight against Covid-19," McIlroy says.

"This donation will be in addition to our other current relief efforts," he adds. Cars.co.za will also be making donations to the Solidarity fund and Food Forward SA, with a view to assisting in the combat against the pandemic, as well as helping the vulnerable South Africans impacted most by the lockdown. A further donation has been made to Shout4Masks, a non-profit organisation supplying medical masks to those who are battling this disease on the frontlines.

As for the show, all content was either filmed pre-lockdown or safely under lockdown conditions by Cars.co.za's presenter himself – Ciro De Siena, "Luckily my apartment block has a huge basement," De Siena says. "I think we might have filmed the first ever car review entirely shot underground. And in terms of a studio, I didn't think my lounge would work so well. I missed my crew, however, and a live studio audience would have been nice; my toaster and coffee machine weren't very enthusiastic!"

New episodes will debut on the [Cars.co.za YouTube channel](#) every Thursday at 8pm and remain available for viewing indefinitely.\*

*The episode to be aired on Thursday, 23 April 2020 will be postponed to Friday 24 April 2020 in support of the scheduled public address by President Cyril Ramaphosa.*

## **SentiMETAL: a magazine aimed at petrolheads**

A day after the launch of The Cars.co.za Show, the brand also introduced a new digital magazine, simply titled SentiMETAL, Live To Drive #1. The striking publication features the uniquely South African Alfa Romeo GTV6 3.0 on the cover and consists of nearly 90 pages filled with pure petrolhead-loving content.

"We've noticed a tremendous increase in interest in motoring content, particularly entertaining content, in the past few weeks as people are spending a lot more time on their digital devices," says Hannes Oosthuizen, SentiMETAL project head. "So, about three weeks ago, we decided to launch a SentiMETAL digital magazine aimed at those petrolheads, and I'm really proud of the team for putting it together so swiftly and beautifully," he says.

The magazine is for sale on [www.sentimetal.shop](#). Following payment, the buyer is sent a link to download the magazine and open it in PDF magazine format. It will also shortly be available on global virtual newsstands such as Magzter and Zinio.

### **In the first issue**

- Cars.co.za's Alfa Romeo GTV6 3.0 restoration project in detail
- Driving Toyota's late bloomer, the beautiful 2000 GT
- Cruising the fabulous Western Cape roads in an ex-Sarel van der Merwe Porsche 356 Speedster
- An in-depth Buyer's Guide on the BMW (E46) M3
- Behind the wheel of one of only two Dodge Viper GTS examples in SA
- A closer look at the fascinating history of the Harley-Davidson XR750
- Future classic: we take Lamborghini's new Huracan EVO for a spin
- An odd-ball rear-engined Mercedes-Benz from the '30s: the 130

Furthermore, the launch issue features an overview of local and international classic-car related news and events (including the two SentiMETAL Gatherings earlier this year), updates on contributors' experiences with their own classics, columns by Mike Fourie and Graeme Hurst, as well as an interview with Antony Ashley from Freight Factory about global car shipping and more.

Although Cars.co.za is now a leading brand in the motor industry and has been in existence for a decade, it still embraces its startup culture.

“The long-format show and digital magazine may be examples of swift, decisive action, but also of embracing experimentation,” says Oosthuizen. “In this Lockdown period, where everyone is spending more time online searching for entertainment and engagement, Cars.co.za has fast-tracked a number of initiatives. It has partnered with Mercedes-Benz, Klipa Denim and acclaimed filmmaker Robert dos Santos to launch a fashion film (produced prior to the national lockdown, but released this week) and even hosted what could be a world-first – a virtual “cars and coffee” meet using the Zoom conferencing platform.”

[This article was originally published on Cars.co.za.](#)

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