

How *VISI* magazine made it to 100 issues and is continuing to survive and thrive



By [Amelia Brown](#), issued by [New Media](#)

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[VISI](#) magazine is celebrating 20 years and 100 issues, something of a publishing triumph amid cutbacks and global declines in circulation. In February, the bumper collector's edition - at 356 pages, *VISI*'s largest issue to date and arguably the thickest local magazine out there - hit newsstands.

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According to *VISI* editor-in-chief Sumien Brink, this made-in-SA brand's success can be attributed to its uniquely African editorial stance, high production values despite a tight budget, and passionate team. “*VISI* is my third child! It has been such a privilege to work on a brand that people quite simply love. It is going to be around for at least another 100 issues.”

For two decades, *VISI* has shone a spotlight on local decor, design and architecture, and it has been this commitment to celebrating the best the continent has to offer that has set the brand apart. With the opening of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa and the establishment of fairs such as 1-54, the international art fair dedicated to contemporary art from Africa and its diaspora, more than ever before the world is looking to and recognising African creativity and design.

VISI's contribution was acknowledged on a global scale last year when it was awarded the A'Design Award for Best Design Media, a special recognition granted to leading design publications to salute their role and support in the creation of a better world. Recipients are selected by laureates of the A'Design Award, who indicate a list of prominent design publications they follow, wish to be featured in and adore.

VISI's approach has always been to find a unique point of view, to prioritise beautiful visuals, and to employ a contemporary, slightly offbeat and original design language. This commitment to maintaining the highest visual and editorial standards has been unwavering despite a turbulent publishing climate.

The recognition of architecture has also set *VISI* apart, giving architects a platform to celebrate their work and packaging it in a sophisticated yet accessible way that both the industry and the everyday design lover can appreciate. "From day one, *VISI*'s been a very special publication, specifically the fact that the architecture of the spaces played as big a role as the interiors," says award-winning architect Johann Snee in *VISI* 100. His buildings have been featured throughout *VISI*'s 20 years, and he is one of the many influential creatives who are featured in this milestone issue that looks at design then, now and into the future.

VISI strategically features a mix of spaces, in terms of style and size, to demonstrate that great design is not only about having big budgets, but about being innovative and finding ingenious solutions. The lean-back features section luxuriates in stunning visuals, with full-bleed images photographed by some of the best in the industry, providing readers with all the angles. This is followed by the shorter-format "reasons" section. From homeware to art and from magnificent cars to smart packaging design, if it's novel and new, this lifestyle section captures the role great design plays across every aspect of a reader's life. Commercially, this section also offers advertisers prime right-hand-page real estate next to informative, engaging, well-designed content.

With six issues a year and a two-month on-shelf duration, the printed magazine is complemented by *VISI*'s digital platforms, which allow the brand to be nimble and current, providing daily content to the passionate community of highly engaged design-loving readers the magazine has built up over the years. In addition to focusing on great local creativity, the digital offering can expand its design focus internationally. This synergy amplifies *VISI*'s reach and influence in the design space.

VISI magazine has always had an inherently collectable feel, emphasised by its size and frequency, and the brand intends to use this to develop exclusive e-commerce ranges. To commemorate the 100th issue, it created a limited-edition set of 100 boxes, which were presold on the site, filled with hand-picked products, examples of great South African design and other exclusive items.

In a collaboration with Ardmore and Mavromac (Ardmore's exclusive stockist), *VISI* created a limited-edition version of the 100th issue that was wrapped in a dust jacket covered in Ardmore fabric. Copies of these are still available to purchase on the *VISI* website here: <https://www.visi.co.za/buy-visis-100th-issue-with-a-limited-edition-dust-jacket/>

Over the years, *VISI* hasn't been afraid to evolve and adapt while remaining true to its core DNA. Its mega 100th issue shows the brand's confidence in the South African market and its established position as the voice that reflects and celebrates our rich design heritage.

<https://www.visi.co.za/>

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