

There's a quiet revolution happening in broadcasting

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Radio has been a medium that has essentially stayed the same for the last century. A trusted, resilient and human-centred medium that has withstood waves of technology disruption and even built communities around audiences of common values. But there is no denying that radio is often seen as sleepy, stagnant and disrupted by the digital and social revolution.

Who would have thought then, that the most interesting thing happening in modern radio would be coming out of Africa, and Durban at that? Gagasi FM, one of South Africa's best-loved and the number one regional commercial radio station, is delighting listeners with their new digital engagement platform. The Gagasi FM App available on Google Play and iOS has created a trusted socialised space for listeners to become truly a part of the real-time life of the radio station.

On 22 November 2019, Gagasi FM launched its Gagasi FM App. During the launch, Gagasi FM's head of brand, Phinda Magwaza, took guests through the Gagasi FM App on-screen to demonstrate exactly what it can do. The Gagasi FM App includes, amongst others, these useful features: live-streaming via the app so you can listen to your favourite radio station, anytime, anywhere; real-time podcasts available within seconds of broadcast; private and secure messaging channels with the Gagasi FM team and other listeners. Listeners are also able to enter competitions via the app plus submit music for possible airplay on the station. The Gagasi FM App also enables listeners to vote for your favourite song for the Urban Top 30. It's literally Gagasi FM at your fingertips.

Over 23,000 listeners have already downloaded the new Gagasi FM app with over 70% registering and opting into the Gagasi FM community. But this is not just another radio app. This is an eco-system driven by audience interaction and engagement. A powerful backend collating all messages, storing all broadcast audio, and making it even easier for the station to create and deliver on podcasts. "Creating a socialised audience with a real-time feedback loop into the studio and amongst the community has been an incredibly exciting innovation for our creative teams," commented the station's managing director, Mr Vukile Zondi.

Gagasi FM's head of brand, Ms Phinda Magwaza, added: "We did a soft launch over the December/January holidays and couldn't be more excited by these early results. The audience is now taking us in new directions already with over 1,000 of them opting into the conversational channel Uthando 101 chatting away about life, love and living exclusively on the platform."

Gagasi FM is already getting more direct engagement from its audience community than through global social platforms. "This feels like African digital," mused Zondi. "Visit your nearest App Store and get engaged. We are charting new journeys in modern media and using local, homegrown IP to do it." Zondi is referring to Fabrik, the Microsoft Azure cloud-based platform powering their private digital community. Built by Durban wizards Immedia, the hot new OTT technology is offering broadcasters new freedom to build and own their own digital audiences.

The world had better keep an eye of Durban as the city that's leading the way in broadcasting revolutions.

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Gagasi FM

Gagasi FM is the number one commercial radio station in KwaZulu Natal to reach the black urban and peri-urban black youth.

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