

#Covid-19 demonstrates that media's value is on the rise

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Radio, digital and print media is playing an important role in the Covid-19 response. New research shows between 80% and 90% of people consume news and entertainment for an average of almost 24 hours during a typical week.

The Covid-19 pandemic is disrupting every industry. On the one hand, social distancing has led to a spike in at-home radio, digital and print media consumption, and growing numbers are turning to news providers for timely and trusted information on the crisis. The crisis is being well documented by radio news teams, digital news teams and print news teams.

The current disruption may be unprecedented, but the media industry has been upended many times before. Since the turn of the century, digitisation of content, the rise of social media and acceleration in mobile consumption have all forced changes.

At the Central Media Group, subsidiary brands and products the likes of OFM, Bloemfontein Courant, and Get It Bloemfontein, with their webpages and social media platforms, have embraced the changes in consumption, seeing between 10% and 14% rise in engagement levels, from February 2020 to April 2020. Kantar completed a research study, which indicated that terrestrial radio listenership is up 30%.

In a research study conducted by the Central Media Group, with 1,545 respondents taking part in the study, it was highlighted that radio listening is on the rise, during this pandemic. Engagement with reliable news sources is also on the rise, to include the OFM news pages on ofm.co.za, and *Bloemfontein Courant* news page, on bloemfonteincourant.co.za.

What has stayed constant is the crucial role that media play in society. Media don't just help us pass the time; they keep us informed. Evermore, media create shared moments and reflect who we are as individuals.

One of the most direct ways to gauge value is engagement, and on this front media is doing well. Between 80% and 90% of us read, watch or listen to news and entertainment for an average of almost 24 hours during a typical week. It's no surprise that engagement with media is high.

The Central Media Group, with its brands and products, cover all these sensory needs to read and listen. At least 12% of respondents in the Central Media study, indicated that during this lockdown period, that they are reading more local newspapers, 51% are engaged with more social media and, collectively, indicate that they are spending more time on trusted Central South African media webpages or social media channels.

As many as 71% of Central South African's are listening to more radio than usual during the current lockdown. This shows that majority of our Central South African's are very reliant on the radio to get the latest information.

Asked, where are you getting reliable information from about Covid-19 during the lockdown? At least 39% of respondents indicated that they rely on radio, 47% of respondents indicated they rely on local news websites, and 14% indicate that they rely on local newspapers, and 37% rely on local media social pages.

The Central Media Groups brands and products are here for you, during this very difficult time. We did not create the Covid-19 pandemic, nor are we responsible for the Covid-19 pandemic, but we are accountable for our actions during the Covid-19 pandemic, to ensure the sustainability of our businesses, for the sake of our staff, their dependents and stakeholders.

"Business can be hard. Man, life can be hard. We're all on a journey, and we've all been down in the dumps before, wondering if what we're doing is worth it. Wondering if what we're doing is making an impact. But, we must be always moving forward," Andrew Roach.

What we do is worth it! What we do makes an impact! Let us move forward!

Be safe!

Regards,



Nick Efstathiou
CEO – Central Media Group

(This report was compiled with information available from the World Economic Forum, Kantar and Central Media Group.)

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