

The growth of mass market digital content

By [Zibusiso Mkhwanazi](#)

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The growth of mass market digital content. That's the biggest shape-shifting, game-changing trend I am seeing.



Zibusiso Mkhwanazi is the founder and Group CEO of M&N Brands.

Daily Sun is still one of the most widely read newspapers in SA and the growth that DSTV Compact has seen in the mass market with channels like Mzansi Magic.



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Viewers have evolved in the way in which they consume content. Netflix SA service has grown by over 500%, with shows that speak to South African audiences since its' launch in January 2016 and is estimated to grow to more than 337 thousand subscribers in South Africa in 2020 (Statista, 2019) The rapid growth of Video on Demand services such as Netflix vs DSTV Premium is evident. Viewers want to be entertained in time and places convenient for them.

The Competition Commission has mandated that South Africa's two Big Mobile Operators Vodacom and MTN, reach an agreement with it on "substantial and immediate reductions" on data tariffs by February 2020 — especially prepaid monthly data bundles — or face prosecution. Vodacom and MTN to reduce data costs by 30% to 50%. Coupled with this there is increasing availability of Fibre in densely populated areas like Soweto and Katlehong, Giving rise to the access of fibre in townships. This means that online video consumption and the VOD trends that we see will increase at a faster pace in the main market and consumption patterns will change. What does the African agency of the future look like? It's the one telling the most compelling African stories, in the spaces and places where consumers want them. Whether that's on the small screen or whether that is on their laptops at work – it's the homegrown content that they are searching out and resonating with.

And the type of content that is working is blurring the lines between advertising, publishing and media. The three are becoming one. Why? With great content, you don't need large media spend because the nature of the content would be of a sharable nature. The power no longer lies in the 30" TVC or radio ad. I am seeing a huge change in media consumption patterns too. Consumers are avoiding clicking on banners judging by the CTR numbers – savvy marketers are embedding their product in the content for better resonance and engagement. Or rather, they should be.



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Enter the world of content marketing, a phrase too often abused by advertisers who use it when it's convenient to do so, but rarely is it applied in the true and authentic sense of the word. To truly embrace the principles of content marketing, brands need to realise that consumers are not sitting around waiting for their branded content.

This is especially true in the digital realm, where brands need to realise that they are encroaching on the personal space of the consumer. With that, comes the responsibility of supplying consumers with content that has tangible and real-world value, first and foremost. The brand's agenda needs to be put on the back burner if they want to have any shot at building authentic brand affinity amongst the mass market.



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And as data prices become more and more competitive the consumption of this type of content increases. More content demand and consumption that resonates with the mass market. Advertising and publishing are getting closer and closer because content creation is an integral part of advertising.

Mass market consumption is exclusive, unique and entertaining. I am excited. Which agencies will flourish?

The ones with brands that tell the best African stories.

ABOUT ZIBUSISO MKHWANAZI

Zibusiso Mkhwanazi is the founder and Group CEO of M&N Brands a holding company with diversified investments in leading advertising, media and communication businesses. M&N Brands, owns Avatar JHB, Avatar CPT, Avatar DBN, Avatar Media Agency, Avatar PR, Mela Events, Mela Projects. The group has acquired the The Wake Beautiful Agency in their most recent acquisition to form part of their Integrated Advertising Division as well as Zkhiphani.com to form part of M&N Publishing...

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