

Gareth Cliff on brand interaction via podcasting



By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

16 Apr 2020

CliffCentral's 'Babies Behind Bars' podcast has recently been announced as one of NYF's 2020 Radio Awards finalists. In light of this and as part of our April feature on radio and podcasting, I chatted to Gareth Cliff about the latter during these uncertain times, its benefits and what's key for brands to remember when connecting with audiences via audio.



■ ***Congrats on CliffCentral becoming a finalist in the 2020 NYF Radio Awards. How do you feel about it?***

I think it's terrific. We're the pioneer and leader in podcasting in South Africa and we need to compare ourselves with the best in the world - our audience does!

“ People don't care if a podcast is made in South Africa or Azerbaijan, as long as it's good. ”

■ ***What does this type of recognition mean to you and do you think awards shows like this one is important and if so, why?***

Well, it's about testing ourselves to an international standard and exposing our content to new markets. CliffCentral's mission has always been to be a global content business. These awards are prestigious and we're proud to be associated with them.



CliffCentral explores the power of podcasting and how it adds value to people's lives

26 Jun 2019



■ ***Would it be fair to say that podcasting is still a new medium in the South African market?***

Yes, but people are catching on very fast. When we started, most people didn't even know what a podcast was. Now, many of those people are launching their own podcasts. Businesses that don't have podcasting as part of their media and marketing mix are missing an enormous opportunity.

■ ***How can brands/companies use podcasting as a medium to attract new clients?***

Podcasting is one of the best ways to tell stories, explain complex things and open up a real connection and conversation, with clients, customers, shareholders, staff and even competitors.

A great podcast gets shared and passed on to potentially more people than a standard commercial ever could, and we know that advertising has largely been replaced with content. That being the case, podcasting is honest, on-demand and can be produced really well to show off the most important aspect of a business's products, people and purpose.



#FutureFit Yourself: The power of podcast in the 21st century w/ Gavin Kennedy

Carmen Murray 15 Nov 2018



■ How have you personally found brands' interaction with podcasting?

Great. The ones who get it, really get it, and they trust us as podcasters, broadcasters and content experts to help them craft their messaging. The ones who don't get it are starting to realise what they've been missing, from law firms to banks to manufacturers.

■ Take us through some of the benefits of starting a podcast?

- You get to grow your *own* audience and give them something valuable that isn't *always* tied to product, sales or trade.
- You get to talk to them directly and authentically.
- You can show off your business' creativity, characters and mission without it being a hard-sell.
- You can tell the stories of your business and people.
- You can make a real connection with the people who interact with your brand and imbue it with more than price, packaging and function.

■ What do you think is key for brands to remember when connecting with audiences via audio?

- Be real. Inauthentic messaging and spin go down like a lead balloon.
- Treat the audience as your peers and don't talk up at them or down to them.
- Make it interesting. Picture those great conversations you have with friends and use that as a model for the style and direction of the content. Never be boring.
- Make it funny, or at least not serious all the way through.
- Tell the truth.
- If you aren't having fun making a podcast, the audience isn't likely to have any either.
- Give people valuable information, inspiration, entertainment or empowerment, but preferably all of the above.

■ What are some of the trends you see happening in the industry, for 2020 and beyond?

Well thanks to the worldwide coronavirus outbreak, we're all going to be communicating differently. Activation and events budgets can switch to doing online podcasts, webinars and conference calls.

“ Businesses that can make great content will turn their marketing departments into creative, front-facing communicators with an eye to publishing cool stuff rather than just spending budget on media platforms. In fact, the best ones will find a way of making that content pay for itself and perhaps even become a revenue stream. ”

■ What do you think the industry can improve on?

The advertising/marketing industry? We have to reach the audiences that contend to stop counting the audience we reach. Like anything, the 80/20 rule applies. If we're marketing to 80% but 20% are actually buying, we're doing it wrong.

■ What do you love most about what you do?

All of it. The live show still gives me a lot of energy. Lately, seeing campaigns and content creation work for our clients makes me happy.

■ What is next for you? Any exciting plans you can tell us about?

If I told you, then everyone would copy us, just like the radio stations that are all now doing podcasts ;)

Click here to connect with Cliff on [LinkedIn](#) and visit the [CliffCentral](#) website for more on their offering. You can also

visit the NYF Radio Awards [website](#) for more on the Awards and also keep an eye on our website for further updates.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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