

GovComms

A newsletter for government and Public Sector communicators

HIGHLIGHTS



PULSE OF COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE



MDDA PROMOTES MEDIA FREEDOM



CRIME PERCEPTIONS

government
communications

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



GCIS shares expertise with neighbours

By Edwin Tshivhidzo
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Government Communications (GCIS) is fast becoming a leader in government communication in the SADC region. GCIS has been giving neighbouring countries insight into its communications approach, playing host to delegates from Mozambique and Botswana.

The Mozambican delegation wanted to learn more about government communications, the licensing of media institutions, and the drafting and implementation of government communications strategies. The Botswana delegation wanted to understand how GCIS provides leadership in government communications and how they could operate an effective, efficient government communications organisation.

GCIS Deputy Chief Executive Officer: Government and Stakeholder Management, Nebo Legoabe, said the Botswana counterparts wanted to learn about government communications and media engagement.

The visitors also wanted to see how GCIS conducts government communications and interacts with other media institutions, especially the South African Broadcasting Corporation. Their main interest was in how GCIS provides government communications and coordinates intergovernmental relations.

"For me it is quite humbling when neighbouring countries show an interest in our work, in how we are structured and how we relate to the different government departments and the public broadcaster," she said.

"We took them through the national communication strategy and our products."

Legoabe added that the visitors were impressed and had learned a great deal from working with GCIS. They also indicated that they planned to invite GCIS to observe the way they did things in Botswana.

"They realised that there is a lot they can learn from us and government as a whole and we are of the opinion that we can also learn from them," she said.

The officials visited various sections within GCIS including the News Service which is headed by Roze Moodley, who outlined to the officials the operations of the agency.

The South African Government News Agency ensures that the people of South Africa's need for information about government is met.

SAnews.gov.za provides quick and easy access to articles and feature stories aimed at keeping the public informed about the implementation of government's mandate.

According to Legoabe, other countries are requesting study tours so that they can learn about government communications in South Africa.

GCIS is keen to do fact-finding of its own.



Some GCIS managers with the Botswana delegation.

"As a department we also do our own benchmarking," Legoabe said, adding that GCIS senior management had visited Brazil, China, India, the United Kingdom and Tunisia.



Pulse of communication excellence is strong

As a magazine and a forum, Public Sector Manager is an invaluable part of the growing range of platforms developed by GCIS to communicate with a broad range of South Africans, in particular the senior members of the public service," said Acting Chief Executive Officer of GCIS Phumla Williams at the Public Sector Manager Forum on 22 October 2012.

Public Sector Manager and the Public Sector Manager Forum are an effort to reach out to the large Public Service community which has its own culture and information needs. The publication and forum provide a means for sharing information, views and details on government's policies.

Williams commented that it was significant to be talking about new communication platforms a few days after the media sector, in particular, commemorated 19 October 1977, also known as Black Wednesday, the day when the apartheid state gagged various progressive media organisations.

"Today, 35 years later, the country continues acknowledging and celebrating the role played by media inside and outside South Africa in exposing the plight of the majority of South Africans globally during apartheid".

GCIS mandate

GCIS aims to function as the pulse of communication excellence in government, with a focus on communication as a service delivery vehicle.

GCIS is the central agency in government that coordinates communication in ways that empower citizens and create coherent messages across government. The organisation's five key strategic objectives cover a range of activities within GCIS, and interaction between government and citizens, as well as a broad range of partners and stakeholders locally and outside South Africa.

GCIS and media

The media are among the many constituencies with which government engages because of its role in disseminating and analysing information in a very short space of time. "The administration and the media have a shared interest in the national agenda therefore we want this relationship to be productive and decent. We accept that the national agenda and that of the media differ," said Williams.

This is an issue on which government and the South



Acting GCIS CEO Phumla Williams shares her thoughts at the Public Sector Manager Forum.

African National Editors Forum reflected, at a meeting recently. Delegates concentrated on key policy issues and the overall direction in which the country is moving, with a commitment to fostering a free and prosperous nation.

Government shared information and insights with the country's editors on the global economic crisis, recent economic trends, infrastructure development, the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project and the National Development Plan.

The need for government and the media to focus the nation's attention on an inspiring national vision and help South Africans understand the balance between the country's achievements since democracy and the challenges it continues to face was discussed.

Williams argued that "because we under-appreciate, as citizens or even as public servants, the significant gains we have made that are sources of hope and allow us to believe we can overcome current challenges, GCIS will work very closely with communicators across the government-wide system. She said the aim was to ensure that communication gives people information that demonstrates the progress the country has made and the opportunities available to all South Africans.

"For this, our content focus will be on the five key national priorities of safety, health, education, employment and rural development; as well as local government and basic services, infrastructure development and the country's achievements in the past 18 years.

"We are making efforts as GCIS – and are encouraging departments – to use of social platforms more extensively to involve citizens and stakeholders in dialogue."

Williams explained that popular feedback is an important and quick way to assess government performance and public opinion thereof, and a direct means for people to tell government what they want, need and what they can do to contribute to society.



GCIS Deputy CEO Vusi Mona addresses the Public Sector Manager Forum in Rosebank.

In this spirit President Jacob Zuma recently invited various stakeholder groups to a Social Dialogue on challenges in the economy and Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe was engaging with various constituencies on the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project.

"With regard to the masses of South Africans, GCIS takes great pride in the fact that in 2011/12 we facilitated face-to-face-interactions that brought Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Premiers, MECs and other public office-bearers into contact with 21 million people.

"This demonstrates government's openness to engagement, even if difficult conversations and questions result. Our aim with engagements is not to pacify people or gloss over difficulties. It is to hear what people have to say and to respond with the best interests of all South Africans in mind," explained Williams.

Major policy initiatives such as the National Development Plan, the New Growth Path and the infrastructure development programme – which target the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality – were converging. Williams said these initiatives were expanding social protection while modernising the economy and fast-tracking industrialisation with a combination of the knowledge and resource economies.

"Over the next few years, we will be building new ports, roads, rail networks, universities and hospitals, while we will also realise the Square Kilometre Array. These are developments on a grand and long-term scale that will change the face of our country and

the lives of South Africans," Williams said, adding that they would also create new opportunities for South African businesses and international trade and investment partners.

She said the South African story was a complex but compelling one, with various stakeholders around the world focused on the country because of the opportunities and resources it offers. "As GCIS we know that all of government can do more and better in unpacking this story for citizens and the media and in making it more relevant to specific audiences and interest groups. Our communication system is designed to bring government closer to the people and the people closer to government."

Expanding range of platforms

In spite of budgetary constraints GCIS is expanding its range of platforms and products to: engage with different stakeholder groups; secure the best value for government advertising through centralised media buying, and maintain and defend government's good image.

New technologies, rapid advances in information and communication technology and growing literacy and media skills among citizens are creating new opportunities for interaction and the dissemination of information. GCIS will encourage the adoption of, and experimentation with, new technologies even if new modes prove to be short-lived.

GCIS will be launching an unprecedented effort to improve and adapt professional communicators' skills with a National Qualifications Framework credit-bearing or accredited qualification. This will ensure that communication professionals will be effective in the full spectrum of communication, from interpersonal methods to working with media and managing campaigns.

This will involve partnership with public communication institutions across Africa and other international centres as part of bringing the practice of government communication in line with best experiences globally.

"As GCIS, we represent an exciting and fulfilling sector in government and take pride in our efforts to ensure that the information we provide and the feedback we receive from citizens deepens our democracy and changes our country for the better," concluded Williams.



Breakfast took second place to GCIS Acting CEO Phumla Williams's address.

Research shows crime still a priority



By Getrude Sadiki
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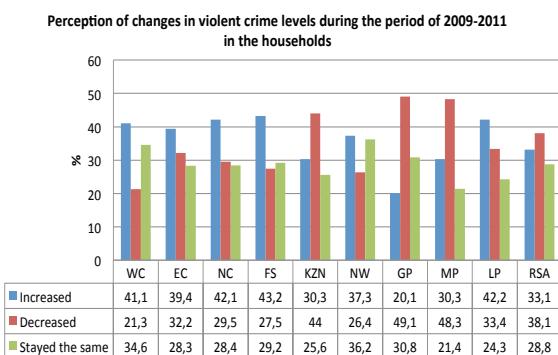
Public opinion forms as much a part of social reality as behavioural patterns, social conditions and demographic characteristics do. Public opinion studies provide a measure of the impact of government's policies and programmes from the perspective of citizens. It further provides insights into how citizens' assessments change over time as programmes are implemented.

Public perception of crime

According to the Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), from January to December 2011 perceptions about crime differed according to employment status, population group and area of residence.

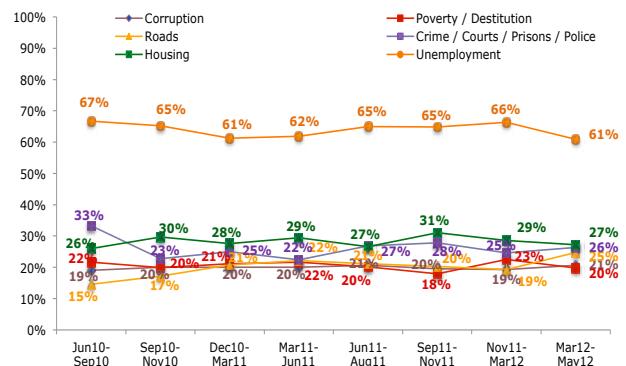
About 38% of households believed that the level of violent crime had decreased in their area of residence compared to 33% who said that crime had increased and 29% who believed that crime had stayed unchanged during the period 2009 to 2011. The Western Cape (43%), Free State (43%) and Limpopo (42%) had the highest proportions of households that perceived violent crime to have increased, while households in Gauteng (49%), Mpumalanga (48%) and KwaZulu-Natal (44%) maintained that levels of violent crime had declined (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Perceived change in levels of violent crime during the period 2009 to 2011 in households by province



The GCIS tracker study shows that when respondents were asked about the challenges facing the country, crime featured prominently. In June 2010, 33% of respondents mentioned crime as one of the main challenges facing the country while 26% of respondents had felt this way in the period of March to May 2012 (see figure 2).

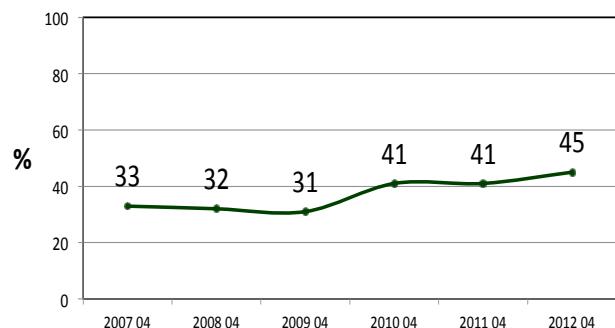
Figure 2: Challenges facing the country - GCIS research study



The 2011/2012 South African Police Service (SAPS) National Crime Statistics indicate that South Africa witnessed a decline in the number of serious crimes reported, compared to the previous year. The statistics show that the total number of serious crimes dropped by 71 200.

A positive trend in public perception is indicated by the Ipsos/Markinor May 2012 Government Performance Barometer (GPB) study. There has been a 4% increase in the public's appreciation of how government is doing at reducing crime levels compared to a year ago with 45% of people saying that government is doing well at reducing crime rates. Five years ago the figure was 33% (see figure 3).

Figure 3: Approval of government performance in reducing crime rates



Findings from the latest GPB study also indicate that there is a significant difference in opinion according to Living Standards Measure (LSM.) The SAARF LSM has become the most widely used marketing research tool in southern Africa. It divides the population into 10 LSM groups, 10 (highest) to 1 (lowest) (<http://saarf.co.za/LSM/lsm.aspx>).

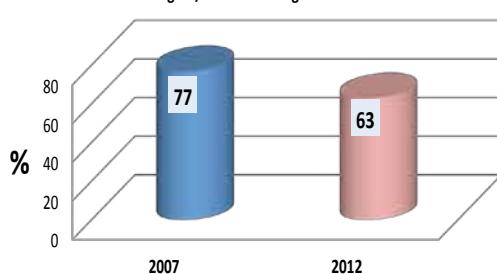
Respondents from the LSM 4-6 group (46%) are more likely to rate government higher than those from the LSM 9-10 group (39%). A difference is also observed according to age, with 18- to 34-year-olds being more positive about government's performance (52%) compared to those aged 35 and older (45%). These findings are encouraging and in line with the 2011/12 SAPS National Crime Statistics.

General views on personal safety and visibility of the SAPS in the community

Crime still features as a pressing national priority among the general public. The 2012 Futurefact study indicates a significant decrease (8%) in respondents being afraid and alert all the time in case they become victims of crime - 71% in 2011 compared to 63% in 2012. Compared to four years ago, a significant decrease of 14% is noted with 77% in 2007 compared to 63% in 2012 (see figure 4).

Figure 4: General view on personal safety

I am afraid and alert all the time in case I become a victim of crime: Completely Agree/some extent agree

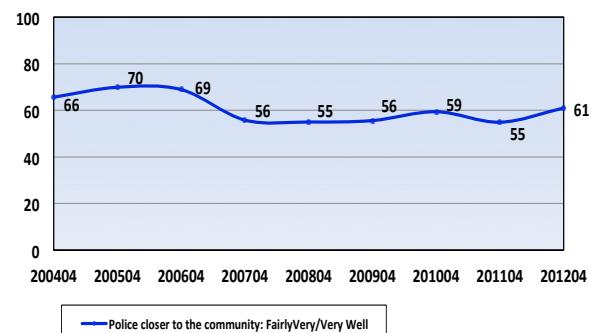


Although a significant decrease is observed, the studies confirm that fear of crime generally remains high. The 2012 VOCS indicates that in 2011 more than a third of households (35.1%) avoided going to open spaces unaccompanied because of their fear of crime. As many as 23.2% of households would not allow their children to move around unsupervised by an older person or play freely in their area. Furthermore, 15.7% of households would not permit their children to walk to school alone. It is encouraging to note an improvement in public sentiment about government's performance in bringing the police closer to the community. The GPB study reveals an increase (from 55% in 2011 to 61% in 2012) in the proportion of respondents who think government is doing well at bringing the police closer to the community (see figure 5).

Figure 5: Approval of government performance in bringing police closer to the community

This view is more likely to be embraced by those from the middle and higher LSM groups (LSM 4-6 at 62%, LSM 7-8 at 64%, LSM 9-10 at 66%) compared to the lower LSM groups (LSM 1-3 at 50%). An increase is also evident when compared to the same

Approval of govt. performance on bring police closer to the community



point five years ago namely 56% in 2007 to 61% in 2011.

The research findings reveal an improvement in public appreciation of how government is doing at reducing crime levels compared to a year ago. Much of this positive appreciation is observed in rural areas and among younger people compared to people in metropolitan areas or older people.

Perceptions about crime differed according to several aspects such as LSM status, employment status, and area of residence. People are affected by crime in different ways and therefore their perceptions about crime differ. This confirms that there is still much more to be done since crime has a negative impact on the lives of South Africans.



MDDA advances media

By Lumko Mtimde, Chief Executive Officer,
Media Development and Diversity Agency

Free speech and a free media are entrenched in the Constitution with the media operating in an environment free of oppression, persecution and the repressive legislation which sought to restrict and control the media.

Media freedom, freedom of expression, the right to communication and access to information are constitutionally guaranteed in South Africa and supported by a legislative framework. These include the MDDA Act, 2002, ICASA Act, 2000, Electronic Communications Act, 2005, Broadcasting Act, 1999, and Access to Information Act, 2000.

The Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) is a statutory development agency for promoting and ensuring media development and diversity, set up as a partnership between government and major print and broadcasting companies to assist in, among others, developing community and small commercial media in South Africa. It was established in 2003, in terms of the MDDA Act, 2002 (Act No. 14 of 2002), and started providing grant funding to projects on 29 January 2004.

Many of the MDDA's interventions have yielded positive results for the development of the sector and the promotion of media diversity. The MDDA is working on key research work, reflecting on the past 10 years, its impact and the media diversity index, among others. The outcomes of this work will help shape the agency's programme into the future.

The nine-year-old MDDA has developed very clear regulations, systems and procedures to guide its functioning. Its mandate, clearly stipulated in the MDDA Act, is the focus and basis of decision making and operations.

The MDDA prides itself on having had good and focused leadership since its inception, resulting in it performing to its maximum and attaining clean unqualified audit reports from the Auditor-General every year.

Transformation in the media industry

The challenge facing our country in respect of constitutional rights is to what extent all citizens enjoy them. We need to reflect on the degree and lack of transformation of print media and media diversity in our country.

In September 2011 and June 2012 the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications reflected on transformational challenges and tasked the MDDA and GCIS to spearhead the process to consider a print media charter.

Print and Digital Media of South Africa (PDMSA) launched a transformational task team to look into this challenge and provide guidance. We need to assess and take stock of whether all citizens have choices and access to information, freedom of expression and get to exercise the right to communication in languages of their choice.



Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Obed Bapela, and MDDA CEO Lumko Mtimde (right) with learners at one of many road show sessions.

freedom in SA

At the September 2011 and June 2012 Parliamentary discussions the PDMSA confirmed the essence of the MDDA report on Trends of Ownership and Control of Media in SA (July 2009). The report indicated that the pace of transformation in the print media is too slow for a sector that is so critical to the sustainability of our democracy.

The PDMSA reported that only an average of 14% of ownership of the mainstream print media is in black (historically disadvantaged) hands and women's participation at board and senior management level is limited to 4.44%.

This revelation indicates that it is necessary that all stakeholders honestly and dispassionately confront the question of media transformation and diversity in the interest of all citizens and the sustainability of our democracy.

In its April 2012 report the Press Freedom Commission (PFC) recommended considerations for content diversification, skills development and training, a media charter and support for community media.

Plenty of work and commitment is needed to ensure the majority of South Africans enjoy these rights. We need greater access with a diversity of voices, reflective of ethnic and racially diverse people.

It is critical to appreciate the broader context and emphasise the significant role media can play in helping people communicate with each other, strengthen our democracy, promote a culture of human rights, enable all to participate fully in economic growth and speed up transformation and development.

This can only be achieved if every citizen irrespective of their social class or location has access to a diverse range of media. We should remember that media freedom is for all citizens and not just media practitioners. Access to communication and information empowers citizens, facilitates participatory democracy and assists in defending, advancing and deepening our democracy.

We must ensure that rural communities have access to all media including radio, television, online, mobile and print services. We must ensure responsible journalism and that our media is transformed to reflect South Africa in every respect. We must also support and create an enabling environment for media development and diversity.

Challenges facing community media

Community media's biggest challenges are sustainability (more so those in rural and poor areas) and staff turnover as skilled people move to either commercial and/or the public broadcaster.

For community print media the biggest challenge is funding (the MDDA receives only R4 million from mainstream print media to support this objective). Community television's biggest challenge is regulatory uncertainty given the advent of digital broadcasting and the regula-

tory review by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa aimed at providing a framework for television in the digital era. Insufficient advertising income to support this growing media is another difficulty.

Community radio listenership increases every year (8.6 million listeners as at August 2012) but advertising (more so from the private sector) is not increasing proportionally.

Smaller community media organisations struggle to survive because of issues such as inadequate advertising income and governance, hence the MDDA's priority intervention in promoting good corporate governance.

MDDA interventions

The MDDA provides financial and non-financial support in the form of grants, capacity building, skills development and training, conducting and funding research, technical support and advice, advocacy and lobbying for an enabling environment for community and small commercial media.

The MDDA has provided support to over 437 projects countrywide and awarded grants amounting to more than R226 million. It has trained people in areas such as corporate governance, marketing and advertising, as well as financial management.

The organisation has also provided bursaries, conducted research providing data for the industry, policy makers and academia, and run programmes promoting media literacy and a culture of reading throughout the country.

The MDDA's activities have included providing coaching and mentorship plus advocating for regulations supporting community media. Strategic relationships have been established with bodies such as the Media & ICT Seta on skills development and the Independent Electoral Commission on using community and small commercial media for its democracy programme. The MDDA specifically supports the production of media in indigenous languages.

Government communications can enhance media diversity

The MDDA, working together with GCIS, has convinced government to advertise in community and small commercial media to reach targeted communities this way.

National government programmes and initiatives aimed at improving people's lives become futile and ineffective if not well communicated at local government level. It is very important that channels of communication be opened and made accessible for there to be proper dialogue between national government as the principal strategy driver, local government as the strategy implementer, and communities as the receivers of government services and programmes.





Chairperson of the MDDA Board Gugu Msibi with MDDA CEO Lumko Mtimde.

It is essential that local government communication strategies ensure that communication remains relevant, targets the appropriate audience and uses pertinent platforms. A relevant and reliable medium of communication is the lifeline of efficiency and effective communication. This will ensure a people-driven democracy where communities are part of the knowledge and information society.

The biggest challenge facing South Africa is that some local government communicators do not realise the importance of using relevant communication platforms, for example placing an advertisement about a local meeting in a community rather than national newspaper. Local matters should be communicated at local level, in local media, and in the language spoken in that area. It is important that local government helps strengthen and sustain local media. In trying to overcome these challenges, the MDDA uses its partnership with government to communicate the importance of using the relevant and appropriate media.

Government has also prioritised the use of relevant media such as community, small commercial media and public media to communicate government messages. The centralisation of government media buying through GCIS is also going to contribute to the achievement of this goal.

We hope that government communicators will assist in ensuring that limited resources are used efficiently. We intend partnering with communicators at local government level to help them in their communication strategies.

In South Africa communication will only be relevant when gains have been made in terms of diverse ownership and control of media, thus ensuring diversity of content. The scope for improving communication in South Africa is wide. The efforts of bodies such as the MDDA and GCIS to develop effective communication strategies need our support. We collectively need to create an enabling environment for the three spheres of media - public, community and commercial - to be sustainable and grow.



MDDA numbers at a glance

Total number of first applications received - 27

First Annual Report - 2003/4

First private partners funding deposit - August 2004

First allocation (Jan 2004) - R12m

Total awarded grants since Jan 2004 - R226m

Total number of projects supported in 2004/5 - 74

Total number of projects supported since Jan 2004 - 437

Total number of trained people since April 2004 - 1786

Total number of directly employed people in projects since April 2011 - 544

Total number of indirectly employed people in projects since April 2011 - 1632

Total MDDA staff numbers as at March 2012 - 23

MDDA helps community media grow



The Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) has provided support to over 437 projects countrywide and awarded grants amounting to more than R226 million since its inception in 2004.

Here are some of the projects that have benefited:

Northern Cape:

Radio Riverside

In the early 1990s a group of community leaders and an activist, the late Mr Saal established Radio Riverside to inform, educate and empower listeners by giving them a voice. The licensed broadcast coverage area includes Upington, Karoo, Raaswater, Keimoes, Sesbrugge, and Ntsikelelo.

Free State

Motheo FM

A group of development workers formed Motheo FM to create a communication platform for communities in the Motheo District Municipality, Free State. The station is licensed to broadcast in Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu. The station broadcasts in Sesotho, Setswana and English throughout the day.

KwaZulu-Natal:

EzaKwaZulu News

This is a small, free commercial newspaper which publishes in isiZulu only. It distributes 10 000 copies monthly. The coverage areas include the Durban city centre, Pietermaritzburg, Berea, Pinetown, Hammarsdale, Kwandengezi, Klaarwater, Clermont, Kwa-Dabeka and Chatsworth.

It covers careers, lifestyle, community news, health issues and development news and encourages a culture of reading.

At the 2011 MDDA/Sanlam local media awards the paper received awards for the best column and best medical and health reporting by a small commercial newspaper.

Eastern Cape

Vukani Community Radio

This Radio is a non-profit organisation in Cala, Eastern Cape, established in 1993 by the Cala University Student Association. It went on air in 1996.

The station is an example of a cooperative governance model. The purpose-built premises it received from the provincial Department of Public Works house a telecentre supported by the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa. The station also serves as a hub for other

community radio stations in the Eastern Cape. Together they are able to work with the provincial government to facilitate and coordinate the placement of advertising for community stations in the province.



Limpopo

Nthavela

Nthavela is a Xitsonga community newspaper published in the predominantly Xitsonga-speaking areas of Tzaneen, Malamulele, Elim, Phalaborwa and Giyani.

Its aim is to make news, information and entertainment available in Xitsonga and to create a platform for the dynamic exchange of ideas among members of the community, and also between the community, government and the business sector.

The publication is one of the fastest growing small commercial newspapers in Limpopo, having progressed from a monthly publication to a fortnightly one within three years.

North West

MmegaDikgang News

This is a fortnightly commercial newspaper that publishes in Tswana and English. It is distributed free in rural areas in and around the towns of Mafikeng, Delareyville, Lichtenburg, Sannieshof, Ottosdal, and Stlagoe.

Gauteng

Gulova Magazine

Made Alone Ride Along Trading Enterprise CC publishes *Gulova* comic magazine which uses comic strips and illustrations to communicate with its target market which is largely the young people of Gauteng. It focuses on issues such as peer pressure, drugs and alcohol abuse, prostitution and unsafe sex. *Gulova* combines the love of art, literature and township life to reach young people.

Mpumalanga

Coal City News

Coal City News was established early in 2004 by a young, black female entrepreneur with only two pages published in isiZulu and English targeting the community of Emalahleni (Witbank), Mpumalanga. Today it is a weekly 12-page tabloid published in isiZulu, isiSwati, isiNdebele and English.

Western Cape

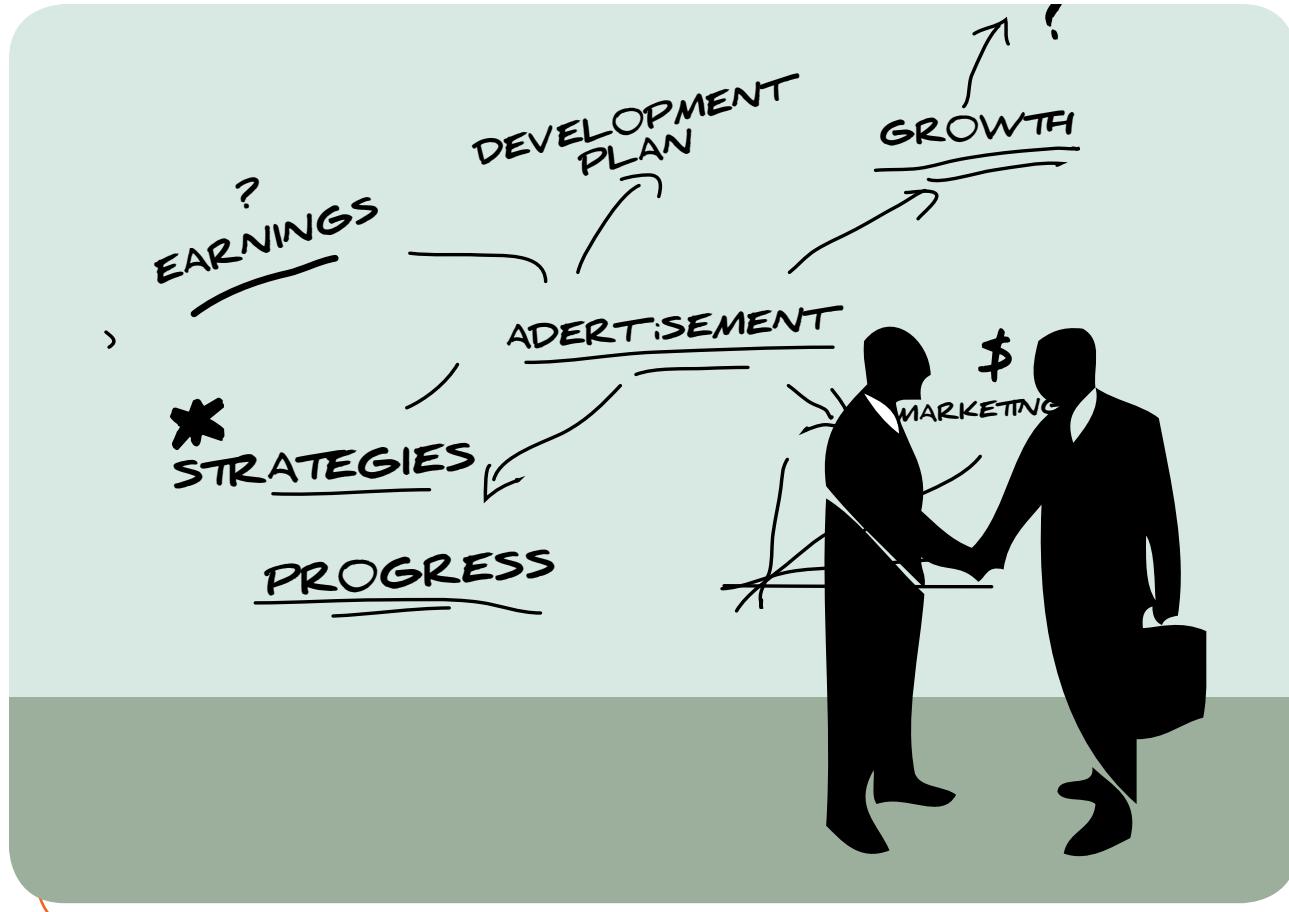
Cape Town TV

Cape Town TV is a non-profit, community-based television station aimed at the greater Cape Town metropolitan area. Founded by over 200 non-profit organisations (NGOs) in 2006, CTV gives the community access to television as a tool to promote human rights, social justice and community cultural development.

The channel gives volunteers and interns with video production skills opportunities to hone and develop their abilities in television production and it gives NGOs, community organisations, educational institutions, sports groups and government opportunities to produce programming.

Numerous partnerships with industry and regulatory bodies are helping the MDDA to enable development and diversity of community and small commercial media. The MDDA also supports sector organisations such as the National Community Radio Forum and Association of Independent Publishers as well as provincial hubs that have the potential to provide a range of services to the projects, from content sharing and exchange right through to capacity building, advertising and marketing.





What Marketers Want from agencies

At Ad Age's annual Chief Marketing Officers Strategy Summit in Chicago recently, a panel of marketing executives from leading global brands debated their expectations of successful agency-client relationships. They broadly agreed on three themes:

- "We need a partner who truly understands our business".
- "We want someone who can challenge our internal thinking – someone who makes us a little uncomfortable".
- "Be efficient – and spend our money like it's your money".

This got me thinking. How would the GCIS Communication Service Agency rate against these expectations? Are we innovating to support government communicators in the context of constrained budgets? What are we doing to build institutional capacity and marketing intelligence? At which point can we add substantive value?

Successful partnerships are delivered through people, shared values and reliable systems. We have set about rebuilding our organisational architecture and strengthening our compliance framework to make it easier for communicators to work through GCIS on an agency-of-record model and attuned to the Public Finance Management Act.

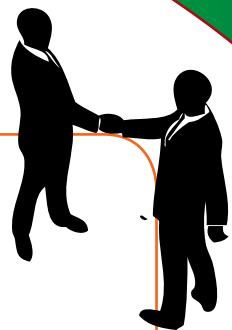
By Donaldo Liphoko
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We have developed a bespoke memorandum of understanding for accounting officers which promotes economy, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in the use of state resources and in particular the avoidance of fruitless and wasteful expenditure in the use of public assets.

The integrated Finance and Supply Chain Management model offers a compliant end-to-end solution, from campaign vendor verification to reconciliation and payment, within 30 days of receiving supplier invoices. The 30-day payment benchmark is at a respectable 98%.

Investment in technology has resulted in network and hardware infrastructure availability of more than 95%, which has been critical in making possible the processing of 2 235 orders per quarter.

This organisational fine-tuning has made it possible for us to bill R114 million in advertising media placements with no audit come-backs for the 24 national departments, five provincial de-



partments, and nine public entities on our client roster. Together we have delivered 134 separate campaigns to the public.

Keeping abreast of new media product offerings and emerging audience trends is not an easy task in a complex, rapidly changing communication environment (see table below). To help communicators navigate the media landscape we have rolled out a new suite of services.

The weekly mediaEncounter sessions, which are in-depth knowledge sharing meetings with media owners, unpack new media innovations and research. Quarterly mediaConnect workshops provide a networking get-together where we review successful government campaigns, and share consumer insights and effectiveness benchmarks.

We also publish *30DaysInGov* monthly. It is an electronic newsletter sharing Public Sector advertising case studies, industry trends and quick statistics on media bulk buying. You can also stay on top of current advertising trends through the *30DaysGovZa* twitter feed, which verifies the appearance of government print adverts in real-time, provides updates on public participation community radio interviews, and scours the web for useful consumer insights.

As a government communicator, you can access a range of interesting and valuable advertising media forums and newsletters to help your continuous professional development.

The capabilities that we are building and implementing with key clients include integrated communications planning. This is a communications approach where multiple touch points work together to create a holistic service experience for the public, presented with a similar tone and style that reinforces the government's corporate identity and core messages.

Its goal is to have all aspects of communication - advertising, activations, public relations, internal communications, events, online and social media – work together as a unified force rather than permit each to operate in isolation. This maximises their cost effectiveness and impact.

To deliver on this promise, all GCIS integrated campaigns begin with KickStart workshops that include the client and all the CSA areas of specialisation namely media buying, radio, design, photography, video and marketing project management. All touch points are thoroughly investigated and assessed to meet the communication objectives.

This multi-disciplinary approach feeds into a monthly CSA Review forum where all work produced is evaluated and scored against global benchmarks. Our membership of the South African Communications Industry Association as well as the Advertising and Media Association of South Africa has opened doors for us to collaborate with the industry on training, trends and technology. This collaborative knowledge sharing approach is bearing fruit - our 150 subscriber Audio Visual Forum has active members drawn from 27 national and provincial departments.

For media bulk buying to be a sustainable and valuable resource we need you to participate as members of the government advertising media buying pool. We need your support to use the advertising media production services and pricing incentive frameworks which are designed to assist you in meeting your departmental communication objectives cost-effectively.

We invite you to contribute your advice, queries, criticism and suggestions. All contributions will be attended to and practical, useful suggestions considered in terms of our evolving strategic plan. ***Put us to the test.***

Media Fragmentation has increased enormously over the past 30 years. Never before has the consumer had so many options!

	1975	2000	2010
TV	None	56	134
Radio	7	105	138
Daily Papers	22	17	22
Weekly Papers	19	21	27
Consumer Mags	180	480	655
B2B Mags	219	580	700
Community Press	None	260	475
Internet pages	None	1bn	14bn

SAnews.gov.za signals a fresh approach

If you are in government and familiar with the different products and platforms that exist in our communication space you would no doubt have noticed the newly branded SAnews.gov.za.

The South African Government News Agency, formerly known to us old hacks as BuaNews, recently changed its branding to update the agency's identity and enhance online searches.

Snapshots of government's extensive programme of action and how this improves lives will remain the core of the rebranded news agency that can now be found at www.sanews.gov.za.

SAnews.gov.za services the right of all South Africans to information about the policies of government and activities of political principals.

SAnews.gov.za produces hard news and human-interest features, carries loads of exciting pictures, video content on YouTube and can be followed via Facebook and Twitter.

Although government's news agency has grown over the years, there was a feeling that the name "BuaNews" could eventually become an impediment to its popularity and brand identity, as the name did not resonate with the entire South African population or its international audience. The name had to be changed to one that has a powerful and direct association with the country.

Strategic Direction

Plans are underway for news and information on SAnews.gov.za to converge on a single multi-media platform, with the focus remaining the provision of government news and information to the public. A content management system is currently being developed in this regard.

The move will also give rise to a new design for the website. As part of this process it was a strategic step to change the name BuaNews to one that reflected a refreshed and vibrant identity.

As the state's news agency, and an integral part of the government communication machinery, it was imperative that the name contain two points of association namely, "South Africa" and "Government", hence the name www.sanews.gov.za.

SAnews targets public

While news agencies and media producers have been the core market for the South African Government News Agency, SAnews.gov.za will be marketed to the broader public, complementing South Africa's rapidly diversifying news and information mix.

BuaNews was largely aimed at the media but plans are afoot for SAnews to target the public. GCIS plans to market the rebranded SAnews to the entire South African and international market.

The screenshot shows the homepage of SAnews.gov.za. At the top, the logo of the Republic of South Africa and the text "SAnews.gov.za" are displayed, along with "South African Government News Agency". Below this is a navigation bar with links for "SOUTH AFRICA", "AFRICA", "BUSINESS", "WORLD", "FEATURES", "VIEW BY DATE", and "PHOTO GALLERIES". The main content area features several news stories with headlines and small images. One prominent story is "Wrong to believe inequality has widened since 1994 - Zuma", dated 09-11-2012. Another story is "Matriots sit for Afrikaans paper", dated 08-11-2012. On the right side, there is a sidebar with a headline "Special trustee to deal with Whiteulance of Gauteng hospitals" and a date "04-12-2012". The bottom of the page shows a footer with links to "About us", "Media kit", "Most viewed", "Most read", "Most shared", and "Most liked".

There is a sense that there is an untapped audience looking for alternative news and information, which SAnews can take ownership of.

This is particularly important to those South Africans who do not have ready access to mainstream, commercial news media, and depend on government opportunities and services to improve their lives.

SAnews.gov.za will continue to offer a free news feed to media in South Africa and internationally.

Global inroads

The government news agency will also continue making inroads into the international media space.

Reciprocal agreements with a range of government news agencies in other parts of the world have been signed to strengthen the flow of information between South Africa and its international partners.

The agency has claimed its share of the international media space with stories and articles being picked up in a number of countries.

International news cooperation agreements signed include those with the Nam News Network (Malaysia), Xinhua (China), Prensa Latina (Cuba), Tanjug (Serbia), UPI (Washington), IRNA (Iran), SANA (Syria), the Cyprus News Agency (Greece), The Ukrinform (Ukraine), Azertac (Azerbaijan); Agenzia Giornalistica Italia (Italy); Le Matinal (Mauritius); The Independent Daily (Mauritius); The Himalayan Times (Nepal); The Annapurna Post (Nepal); and the Anadolu news agency in Turkey.

Communicators

Government communicators can take advantage of this platform and use it as part of their communication arsenal. Communicators wishing to alert the agency to their events and programmes are invited to email SAnews at newsfiles@gcis.gov.za.