



COMMUNICATIONS

South Africa boasts an outstanding telecommunications infrastructure and a diversity of print and broadcast media. The communications sector (together with transport and storage) accounts for almost 10% of the country's gross domestic product.

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With a network that is 99% digital and includes the latest in fixed-line, wireless and satellite communications, South Africa has the most developed telecommunications network in Africa.

By July 2009, the Government was contributing more than R28 billion to 2010 World Cup-related projects. Of this, R300 million was being spent on broadcast and telecommunications.

Access

The Department of Communications' mandate is to create a favourable information and communications technology (ICT) environment, ensuring that South Africa has the capacity to advance its socio-economic development goals and support the renewal of Africa and the building of a better world.

The Electronic Communications Act, 2005 seeks to remove policies that hinder the development of cross-sector applications, services and businesses. The Act enables the sector to reflect the integration of telecommunications with information technology (IT), broadcasting and broadcasting signal distribution.

It also empowers citizens with better access to knowledge and information. The Telecommunications Amendment Act, 2001 has enabled the Department of Communications to liberalise the South African telecommunications market, increase competition and, as a by-product, stimulate the sector to bring down the costs of communications and remove constraints on growth.

The National Information Society and Development Plan, as the Department of Communications' National E-Strategy adopted in 2007, remains one of the blueprints that guide the engagement in the building of an advanced information society. The continued implementation of this plan will bring opportunities for creating decent and sustainable jobs, especially targeting the youth through the Youth Information Society and Development Programme.

By June 2009, the Department of Communications was working on the development of an Integrated National ICT Policy Framework. The policy framework will seek to promote the convergence of technologies and stimulate the growth of the economy in line with the objectives of the National Industrial Policy. It aims to

encourage e-commerce activities and expand ICT infrastructure, linking rural and urban communities as well as uplifting the poor.

The National Broadband Policy was expected to be finalised in 2010. The policy will provide a holistic, coordinated national approach to the provision of affordable, reliable and secure broadband infrastructure and services. The New Partnership for Africa's Development Broadband Project is a continental initiative that aims to connect African countries to one another and to the rest of the world through a fibre-optic cable network that will result in the provision of affordable broadband capacity.

Mobile communications

In recent years, South Africa has witnessed tremendous growth in the cellphone industry. South Africa has four operators, namely Vodacom, MTN, Cell C and Virgin Mobile.

In December 2008, there were an estimated 34,1 million cellphone users in South Africa.

Internet

The number of South African Internet users passed the five-million mark for the first time, finally breaking through the 10% mark in Internet penetration for the country. This is the key finding of the *Internet Access in South Africa 2010* study, conducted by World Wide Worx and released in January 2010.

Telkom

Telkom has been operating as a commercial company since October 1991 and is the largest provider of communications services in Africa, according to operating revenue and assets.

Neotel

South Africa's second landline operator, Neotel, aims to reduce the cost of doing business by enhancing the operational efficiencies of companies through the optimal use of advanced ICTs.

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The undersea telecommunications cable, Seacom, went live on 23 July 2009. The \$600-million (R4,5-billion) cable links Johannesburg, Nairobi and Kampala with India and Europe and aims to make bandwidth up to 50% cheaper. Until recently, Africa was solely dependent on Telkom's SAT3 cable, resulting in congestion and high international bandwidth tariffs.

The 17 000-km fibre-optic cable system has a capacity of 1,28 terabits per second.



Postal sector

The Government-subsidised South African Post Office (Sapo) is required to provide a basic letter service that is reasonably accessible to all.

Sapo delivers almost six million letters per day to 11 million addresses in South Africa. It has more than 2 500 outlets covering the length and breadth of South Africa.

The media

South Africa's Bill of Rights guarantees the freedom of the press and other media.

Broadcasting

The independence of the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), is guaranteed by legislation. The SABC is being corporatised and restructured to better fulfil its mandate.

Radio

The SABC's national radio network comprises 18 radio stations. Fifteen of these are dedicated specifically to public-service broadcasting and include 11 full spectrum stations, one in each of the official languages of South Africa, a cultural service for the Indian community broadcasting in English, a regional community station broadcasting in isiXhosa and English and a community station broadcasting in the !Xu and Khwe languages of the Khoisan people of the Northern Cape. The SABC boasts three stations in its commercial portfolio. They are 5FM, MetroFM and Good Hope FM.

South Africa's first stamp, the Cape Triangular, was issued in the Cape of Good Hope in 1853 and is valued at about R1 million.



Channel Africa Network reaches millions of listeners throughout Africa. Broadcasts are in English, French, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Chinyanja and Silozi. The network targets audiences in Africa and the Indian Ocean islands, and concentrates on providing programmes with African content.

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa has granted licences to the following private radio stations: Radio Algoa, Classic FM, Kaya FM, YFM, Highveld Stereo, Radio Jacaranda, Radio 702, Radio Oranje, East Coast Radio, P4, Cape Talk MW and Radio KFM.

Community radio stations have a huge potential for the support of, among other things, cultural and educational information exchanges. These radio stations use all indigenous languages, ensuring that people receive information in languages they understand.

Television

The SABC's television network comprises four television channels – three of them free-to-air and the fourth pay-TV. Combined the free-to-air channels attract more than 17,5 million adult viewers daily, reaching 89% of the total adult TV-viewing population.

By March 2009, South Africa had 21 daily newspapers, 27 major weeklies, 660 consumer magazines, 735 business-to-business publications, 470 community newspapers and magazines, 92 television stations, 137 radio stations and over 65 DStv audio channels.

There were 8,5 personal computers and 72,4 cellphone subscribers per 100 people. Web pages indexed by Google were estimated at more than 10 billion.

International news agencies Bloomberg and Reuters have bureaus in Johannesburg, while the British Broadcasting Corporation has correspondents in the country. The CNBC Africa was launched in South Africa in 2007. Local news services include the South African Press Association and African Eye News.



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In October 1998, the country's first privately owned free-to-air television channel, e.tv, started operations.

M-Net became South Africa's first private subscription television service when it launched in 1986. Today, it broadcasts its array of general entertainment and niche channels to subscribers in more than 50 countries across the African continent and adjacent Indian Ocean islands.

MultiChoice Africa (MCA) was formed in 1995 to manage the subscriber services of its sister company, M-Net. It became the first African company on the continent to offer digital satellite broadcasting. In July 2008, Multichoice launched high-definition television, the first in Africa. MultiChoice provides digital media entertainment, content and services to multiple devices, which include pay TV subscriber services to more than 1,5 million customers.

Print

Technically, the local print media rate among the best in the world. This is one reason why newspapers and magazines have held their own in a volatile information era, identified by the vast

Biggest weekly and daily newspapers

January to March 2009

Weekly papers	
Sunday Times	504 163
Soccer-Laduma	317 571
Rapport	282 260
Sunday World	203 460
Sunday Sun	214 357
Daily papers	
Daily Sun	507 328
City Press	181 816
The Times	140 895
Sowetan	130 060
Beeld	95 914

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations

In 2009, the Nat Nakasa Award for Courageous Journalism was awarded to photographer Greg Marinovich.



development of various new forms of media-delivery platforms via the Internet.

South African newspapers and magazines are mainly organised into several major publishing houses: Media24 (part of Naspers, the largest media group in Africa), the Irish-based Independent News & Media (Pty) Ltd group, Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd, and Avusa Ltd. Other important media players include M & G Media Ltd; the Natal Witness Printing & Publishing Company (Pty) Ltd; Primedia Publishing Ltd; Ramsay, Son and Parker (Pty) Ltd; and Kagiso Media.

Newspapers

According to the Audit Bureau of Circulations figures released for quarter two (July to September 2009), daily newspapers showed a decline of less than 3% year-on-year, with no change in the number of titles. While weekly newspapers showed an overall decline of less than 5% with one new admission and one resignation, weekend newspapers showed a 3% decline.

Community newspapers reflected a stable performance, showing an overall decline of 1,5%. About 17 new free newspaper titles reported for the first time while 10 were discontinued, resulting in an overall growth of 10%.

Magazines

The magazine industry in South Africa is fiercely competitive, with new titles appearing all the time, despite the worldwide challenge from electronic and interactive media.

Weeklies *Huisgenoot* and *You* are the two biggest money-making magazines in South Africa.

According to the Website Association of South Africa, by June 2009, the most popular South African websites were: News24, IOL News, MSN, Hotmail, CompleatGolfer, Webmail, The Times, bidorbuy, Mybroadband and MWEB.



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Among the monthlies, women's magazines are still the most widely distributed despite declining sales. *Sarie*, *Rooi Rose*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Move!* and *True Love* are all in the top 10.

News agencies

The national news agency, the South African Press Association, is a cooperative, non-profit organisation.

The main foreign news agencies operating in South Africa are Reuters, *Agence France-Presse*, Associated Press, *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* and United Press International.

Media diversity

The independent Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) is jointly funded by government, the media and other donors.

The MDDA works to foster diversity, particularly in community and small commercial media, and to redress imbalances in the industry.

The MDDA awarded its first grants to community and small commercial media projects in January 2004.

By January 2009, the MDDA had expenditure plans of about R73 million for 229 media projects. Those ranged from community radio, TV and newspapers, magazines and small commercial newspapers, throughout the country.

Advertising

Several South African agencies are active in Africa. The industry is self-regulated through the Advertising Standards Authority.

In 2008, South Africa's total ad spend was R34,18 billion, one percent of that was Internet advertising. From 2008 to 2009, Internet ad spend increased by 38%, making it the fastest growing advertising medium (Online Publisher's Association South Africa).