

# Somhale wedding takes viewing crown

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*Somizi and Mohale: The Union has taken the crown as the show with the most views ever on its first day on Showmax, bigger than any Hollywood blockbuster show. This demonstrates just how important local content is to succeeding in streaming video in South Africa, and why it's so significant that more than half of Showmax's catalogue is now made up of local shows.*



More than half of the catalogue of TV shows and movies on Showmax, whether measured in hours or number of episodes, is now local content. This deliberate shift to local started more than a year ago with shows like *The River* and *The Queen*, and more recently with *Lockdown* and *Kwa Mam'Mkhize*. And now the latest Showmax Original, *Somizi and Mohale: The Union*, is breaking viewing records.

Why does this matter? Local content drives views. The Somhale wedding just broke the all-time record for the number of views on its first day on Showmax, ahead of both the Showmax Original *The Girl From St Agnes* and the most popular international series ever screened on Showmax.

Local content doesn't just get views, it also brings in new subscribers. Showmax tracks first-views statistics - what's the first show people watch after signing up for Showmax - under the assumption that this show influenced the decision to subscribe. Currently, six out of the top 10 most popular shows as ranked by first views on Showmax are local.

Subscription video on demand (SVOD) is rapidly growing in popularity. Showmax now has almost half-a-billion play events (somebody watches a show, movie or live sporting event) annually, streaming around 200 petabytes (one petabyte = 1 billion megabytes) of data per year.



Viewing patterns are changing, with mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) becoming the dominant way to watch. Looking at viewing hours, mobile devices make up around 45% of the total, with lean-back (smart TV, media player, etc...) making up around 35%, and web viewing accounting for the remaining 20%. Interestingly, Android completely dominates mobile viewing, making up around 80% of the total, versus just 20% for iOS.

Speaking about the importance of local content, Niclas Ekdahl, CEO of the Connected Video division of MultiChoice said: "We expected Somhale to do well but the response was even bigger than we'd hoped, and it goes to show how our shift to local content is paying dividends. In fact, the views of local content are up more than 40% in less than a year.

"The key to supplying local content is realising it's a marathon. Bringing on new shows and new episodes day in, day out, week in, week out is what our customers are looking for. And thanks to the decades of local content commissioning and production expertise sitting in this company, that's exactly what we'll be doing."

Some of the most popular local content on Showmax (alphabetical order):

- *Black Tax*
- *Binnelanders*
- *Getroud Met Rugby*
- *Lockdown*
- *Kwa Mam'Mkhize*
- *The Queen*
- *The Real Housewives of Johannesburg*
- *The River*
- *Somizi and Mohale: The Union*
- *Suidooster*
- *Trackers*

*Somizi and Mohale: The Union* started this Monday with an episode celebrating their traditional wedding, which merged their respective Zulu and Sotho cultures in a flamboyant celebration full of romance, gorgeous decor, dazzling chandelier cakes, G.H. Mumm champagne and multiple costume changes... A new episode drops every Monday, from the road to their wedding, to their individual bachelor parties, and then their white wedding as the finale on 16 March 2020. Watch the trailer: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BFTO4v\\_AaQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BFTO4v_AaQ).

Watch the first episode exclusively on Showmax here: <https://www.showmax.com/eng/tvseries/p3zlk82n-somizi-mohale-the-union>. For more information, visit <https://stories.showmax.com/originals/somizi-and-mohale-the-union/>.

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