

Behind the scenes of Beautiful News



By [Pasqua Heard](#)

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A platform making impressive headway in sharing positive stories from South Africa is Ginkgo Agency's Beautiful News.



Anthony Hinrichsen, commissioning editor of Beautiful News.

Having only initiated on [1 November 2016](#), the platform has already grown to 50,000 followers. The videos, which are published at 4.14pm every day, show the agency's heart and capture peoples' stories in an authentic way. Anthony Hinrichsen, commissioning editor of Beautiful News, shares the platform's origin and mission; what it takes to produce videos of this nature; and Beautiful News' plans to reach as many untold stories in South Africa as possible.

1. Tell us the story of how Beautiful News formed.

Beautiful News is produced by Ginkgo Agency, the creators of [21 Icons](#), a collective of like-minded people whose shared values, passion and interest in South Africa's potential brought them together. 21 Icons celebrated South Africa's most remarkable men and women over three seasons. The experience of creating that project made it clear that South Africa is full of people whose stories are worthy of celebration. Beautiful News was born out of a desire to share them.

Beautiful News is made possible by the support of [Mercedes-Benz South Africa](#). Mercedes-Benz South Africa was the title sponsor of 21 Icons South Africa. Partnering with Beautiful News represents a continuation of Mercedes-Benz South Africa's commitment to and celebration of the people of South Africa.

Today, the Beautiful News platform and Mercedes-Benz South Africa make a commitment to South Africa. We will remind each other of the extraordinary people whom we live amongst. We will show the selflessness, the entrepreneurial spirit, and the human kindness that binds South Africans together. This country and its people have so much to give and so much to live for; now we will tell their story, our story, together.

Our stories are published on the [Beautiful News platform](#) and distributed across News24, 24.com and the Beautiful News South Africa social channels.

2. What counts as 'beautiful news' to you?

We aim to celebrate the South African spirit and people by sharing stories that are inspiring, positive and delightful. It is a reminder that, as bad as things can get, the world is full of incredible people doing remarkable things – that, in the words of Desmond Tutu, “We are made for goodness.”

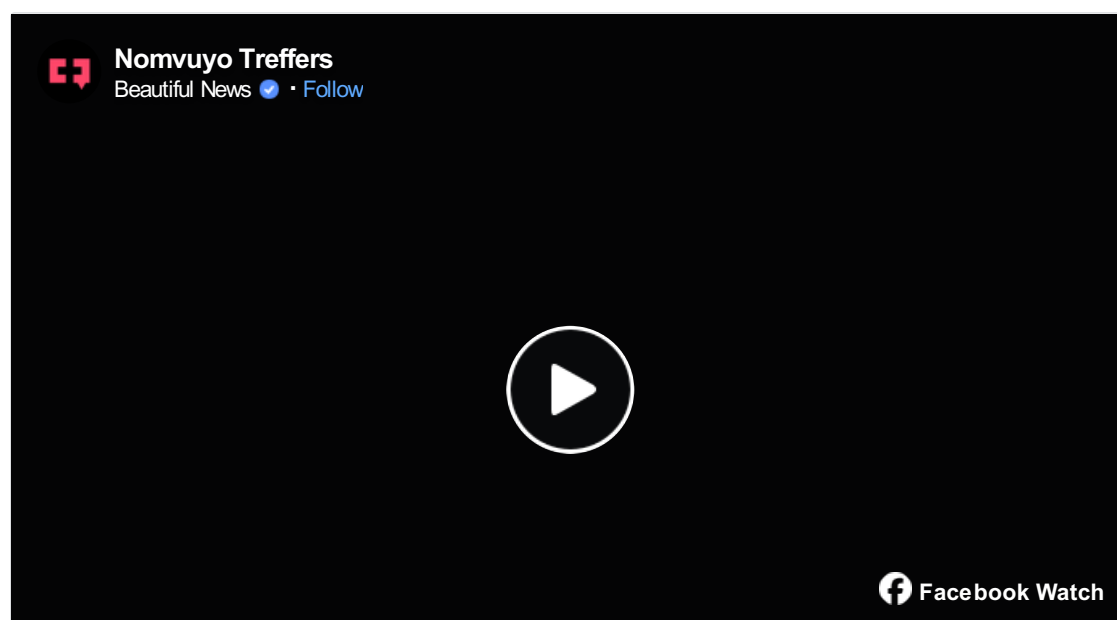
These are stories that take a personal, intimate or unexpected angle on events. They seek to inspire, surprise and delight.

3. How do you source your stories?

Stories are everywhere, and come from many different sources – South Africa is one of the most diverse countries in the world, a melting pot for ideas and stories. We have an editorial team that sources stories daily. We also invite the Beautiful News audience to [submit story ideas](#), to make sure that every person in South Africa is given a voice.

4. Who makes up the Beautiful News team? Also, what do you enjoy most about the team?

Beautiful News is a collaborative effort. We have a number of departments that handle different aspects of the process, from researchers to post-production. Outside of our walls we have our sources, our story subjects and our incredible audience, not to mention Mercedes-Benz South Africa whose support makes this all possible. Each link is important and each step in the production is just as crucial as the one before.



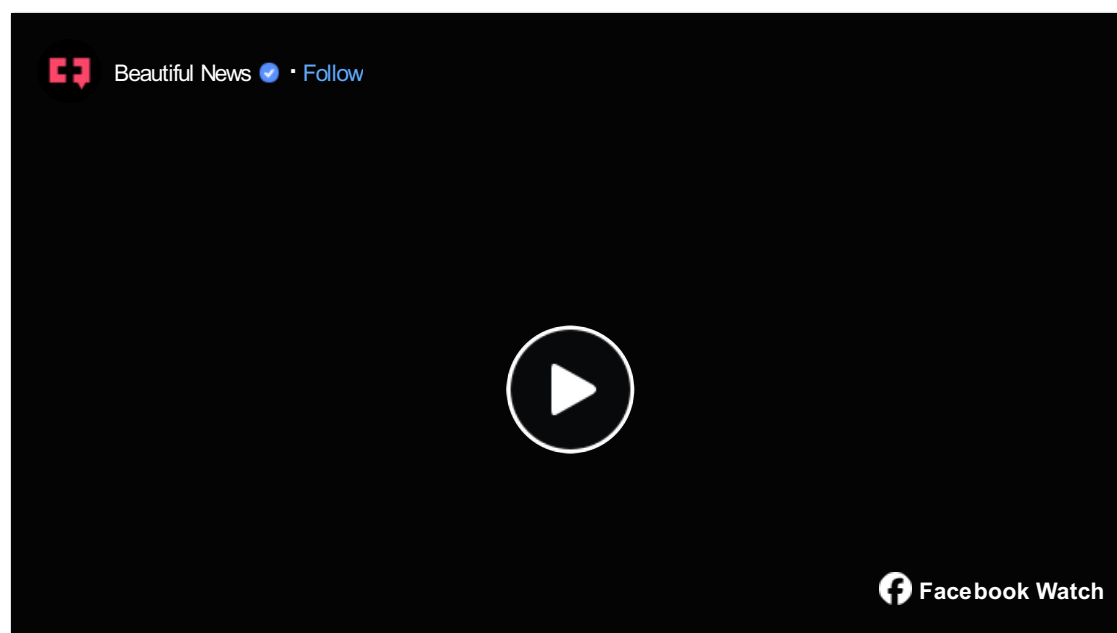
The thing I enjoy most about the team is the diverse set of voices that come together daily to unearth and celebrate stories on individuals who are surprising in their innovation and commitment to doing good.

5. Your videos are visually captivating. Please explain the cinematographic process that goes into these videos.

The way we approach it is with research, looking at our audience and asking, what do they want, how do they want it and what will they do with it? Statistics show that in this information age, with the sheer amount of data that is transmitted to us daily, the average adult has the attention span of a goldfish, now while this may sound extreme, it does give us an advantage in the sense that we know the people we are wanting to reach are busy and are pressed for time. We know that more than 80% of social media users view videos with the sound off, we know that if a video goes on longer than a minute and half that people are going to turn off (data isn't cheap, especially in South Africa). So taking these factors into account, our shooting team is equipped with the knowledge of what is needed to make an impactful and captivating film.

6. What do you feel creatives require in order to produce work as visually and emotionally gripping as Beautiful News?

As with any production, technical skills and expertise play a major factor, and we all know these, if you're in the film business you know what tools and software you need to be able to operate to be successful. If you're a writer, you know what resources and platforms you need to own and be a part of to keep abreast of trends and hot topics. The same goes for editors, social media practitioners and anyone else along the production path. However, there's something that precedes all of these technical skills and know-how.



There's something that comes before all of these practical skills that can be taught over time and through practice, and whatever this is, it cannot be taught, bought or even seen. It's something within a person that makes them want to connect with people, to make an impact in their lives and to create something that did not exist before. It's a burning passion inside of you that makes you want to tell stories, to cross language, racial and religious boundaries and connect with humans first and foremost. So technical skills are important and they can be learnt, but passion, empathy, desire, inquisitiveness and passion, these are things that you have to bring to the table, these are qualities that you have to work on in yourself.

7. Does Beautiful News have any upcoming plans?

Beautiful News is taking to the road and will be travelling throughout the South African provinces. Our intention is to tell the stories that no one is telling. From the western mouth of the Orange River to the Drakensberg wetlands in the east, there is Beautiful News all over South Africa.

Find out more about Beautiful News on their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

ABOUT PASQUA HEARD

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