

The media industry needs your support

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

6 Apr 2020

The global pandemic has certainly shifted business as usual, with increased pressure on media organisations to provide a trusted and reputable source of information while having to get creative in cutting costs and selling to advertisers, while brands need to ensure they stay top of mind and prepare for new growth.



Image credit: [Unsplash.com](#)

Sanef believes that the importance of journalists and journalism in South Africa - and across the world - has never been stronger. “Journalists are playing a critical frontline role in keeping the nation abreast of all developments around Covid-19. We understand that audience figures, across the media industry, have sharply risen as citizens constantly seek updates on the spread and containment of the disease.”

Independent Media and African News Agency’s (ANA) senior management teams have already incepted several interventions to ensure the sustainability of these businesses during the Covid-19 crisis and beyond, the company said in a press release published on *Bizcommunity*. “These include stringent cost reductions across the supplier chain, procurement, logistics, printing and syndication costs.”

Independent Media and African News Agency announce measures to counter impact of #Covid-19



Independent Media 6 Apr 2020



Sanef has therefore appealed to members of the public, corporates, donors and government to support the media industry and journalism through advertising and the payment of subscriptions, membership fees, donations and sponsorships, and urges media companies to get creative in cutting costs before resorting to newsroom cuts.

Lynne Gordon, managing partner of the Consulting Division at Kantar SA, said that we should not overlook the impact of the crisis on organisations. “While many will face the dire impact of unemployment during the shutdown, even large corporates continuing to operate will see changing organisation dynamics as employees work remotely and need to adopt new practices, tools and structures to be effective.”



Publisher sites news consumption soars as readers search for truth on coronavirus

Josephine Buys 3 Apr 2020



Furthermore, Josephine Buys, CEO of the Publisher Research Council feels strongly that publishers and journalists are vital in times of crisis and that their work should be supported. “The sterling work being done by South Africa’s publishers and journalists during this extraordinary time should be supported, not just by readers, but by brands and advertisers too. Never before have advertisers had such a captive audience, with millions at home, tuned into media for information, and longing for reassurance that not everything they rely on and trust has disappeared,” she said.



The power of domestic publishers in the time of the Covid-19 crises

Narrative 3 Apr 2020



Greg Mason, Narrative’s regional lead for sub-Saharan Africa, asks advertisers to consider digital publishers reliant on advertising revenue to run their businesses and tirelessly covering the news, making a special effort to provide a trusted and reputable source of information. “In such uncertain times, all businesses are doing everything they can to adjust and adapt to the crisis. The world’s economy has gone into survival mode. This is even more so in the advertising sector as marketing budgets are aggressively slashed in cost-cutting efforts.

“Now, consider digital publishing, which is predominantly dependent on advertising revenue to run their business and cover breaking news. However, with all this uncertainty in future income, domestic publishers tirelessly continue to deliver breaking news to the nation and provide a trusted and reputable source of information which people can rely and depend upon.

“It is with this in mind that domestic publishers should be supported now more than ever by advertisers. Any brands that have an increase in demand due to these drastically different times should rally behind local publishers and support the fantastic work they are doing in delivering breaking news to the nation.”

There certainly is incentive for brands to advertise now as numerous research reports point to an increase in media consumption and news in particular.

Statista researcher Amy Watson said that there has been a direct impact on in-home media consumption around the world, with 35% of total respondents professing to have read more books or listened to more audiobooks at home and 18% having listened to more radio, while more than 40% of consumers spent longer on messaging services and social media.



Survey proves radio remains a beacon of hope amid the chaos

3 Apr 2020



Specifically looking at radio and as a side note to let interested readers know about this month's [Radio & Podcasts](#) content feature, Jacaranda FM and East Coast Radio recently released the results of a survey they commissioned on listener attitudes and habits during the crisis, showing that communities are increasingly relying on radio in this case to bring them reliable news and information. Interestingly, more than 90% of respondents said they were more likely to listen to radio during this time, and over 40% at each station said they were already consuming more radio than they used to before the crisis started escalating.



The printer market will suffer for two years but will recover

Chris de Beer 2 Apr 2020



And then as far as print is concerned, Chris de Beer, Africa regional manager at InfoSource, is of the opinion that the printing sector is going to be hard hit and expects the impacts of the virus to hasten the shift to digitalise rather than merely buoy the bottom end of the printer market. "What we need to do now is plan for 'the day after'. Our print vendors will need to draw up immediate, medium-term and long-term recoveries based on a range of scenarios. We feel that early action by the South African government has put local vendors on the forward foot. But it's still going to be a hard road to walk."



Navigating growth in a Covid-19 world: Understanding shifts and preparing for growth in uncertain times

Lynne Gordon, Kantar 3 Apr 2020



In terms of the way forward from here and 'navigating growth in a Covid-19 world' as they call it, Kantar suggests optimising media plans for 'in-home friendly' options. Gordon said that consumer media behaviour is shifting significantly as people isolate themselves in their homes. "Digital media usage is up, with over 40% of people spending more time on websites, social media and WhatsApp to stay connected and inform themselves on the status of the world around them. At least 43% of South Africans claim to be watching more TV in a desire to entertain and inform themselves at home."

The research also suggests that brands should invest for long-term outcomes. Gordon said brands need to maintain presence and awareness, preparing themselves for the future by ensuring their brand remains top of mind. While the cause of the current crisis is different to the financial crisis of 2007-2008, the effect is similar in that the brands that continued to spend remained strongest and recovered most quickly afterwards, according to Kantar's BrandZ data.

"For brands and business, it is a challenging time. The demands of the rapidly changing world require fast responses and deliberate choices today. But opportunities abound to respond to the shifts around us... As winter comes, can spring be far behind? As the world recovers, new opportunities will emerge for brands to thrive, having navigated the crisis and prepared for new growth," concludes Gordon.

Kantar is hosting a webinar Thursday, 9 April from 12pm (GMT+2) discussing some considerations for creativity during Covid-19. You can register your place [here](#).

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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