

Digital Media Africa conference set to gather African publishers

Africa's media landscape has undergone significant changes since African publishers across the continent gathered for the first Digital Media Africa conference in 2016. These will come under the spotlight on 23 November at this year's gathering to explore new digital revenue models and how best to engage loyal readers.



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“Trustworthy, quality news has a value. African publishers might not migrate subscribers from print to digital overnight - but now is the time to prepare, and we can do that by creating healthy and profitable relationships with our most loyal users,” said Nick Tjaardstra, WAN-IFRA director for Europe and Africa.

Conference speakers will be led by subscription and membership-marketing expert Joss Cripps who has more than 20 years' experience in acquiring and retaining customers in the media, e-commerce and not-for-profit sectors.

An experienced marketer, Cripps has worked on both the agency and client-side with media owners such as Amazon, the Financial Times (FT), News UK and Sky. In her most recent role she managed Subscribe and Save, EU, Amazon's biggest loyalty engagement programme. Prior to that she was EVP, B2C Global Marketing at the FT responsible for print and digital subscriptions revenue growth. In that role she undertook the commercialising FT digital subs paywall globally and conducting the experimentation and analysis that led the FT to make its successful transition from metered to paid access.

Cripps says: “The key thing is that if you are a publisher or media company that is expecting to move revenues from advertising to subscription, then it is not enough to acquire new subscribers - which is already quite difficult - we also need to nurture those customers and keep them engaged.

“In my experience there are many media companies that focus so firmly on acquisition that the retention strategy is almost an afterthought.”

Cripps says the key to this process is collecting the relevant data through experimentation that can inform decision-making in what is becoming an increasingly competitive online environment.

“Your brand must have a clear and unique value proposition. It is not just about the content but also the experience and how it is delivered. We will be looking beyond the media for case studies of engagement,” he added.

The conference will be held on Friday, 23 November in Johannesburg, South Africa at The Capital on the Park in Sandton.



Lisa MacLeod

WAN-IFRA vice president and head of Digital at Tiso Blackstar, Lisa MacLeod, said the conference is essential for any African media entity seeking to either shift revenues from print to digital or those wanting to start new digital products.

“Africa has a vibrant media already tackling the challenges of monetising digital projects. This is a great opportunity to learn from people who have already started the process and are beginning to see some returns on their investments,” said MacLeod.



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The conference will precede the Digital Media Africa Awards ceremony. For more info, visit WAN-IFRA.org...

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