

Putting control back in the hands of content creators

African content creators - whether TV and film production companies or TV channels - are increasingly faced by a strategic choice: do they distribute widely across multiple online platforms or do they run their own platform? Russell Southwood talks to Nam Mokwunye about his platform Public Vine that puts the control in the hands of the creators for those who want to run their own platform.



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Public Vine is a cloud-based software company founded by Nam Mokwunye. Its flagship product is a streaming platform-as-a-service (PaaS) technology that it licenses to enterprise clients so they can launch their own branded, streaming telemedia platforms-faster, cheaper, safer.

Although a diaspora Nigerian living in Florence, Alabama, USA, Mokwunye has been round the block in Africa, having worked doing business development for Busy Internet when it launched, and for various broadband providers in Nigeria subsequently.

The idea of Public Vine "came from the work I'd done in the internet, telecoms and content industries. I started it while I was a visiting scholar at Stanford University, launching it in 2009. It was software to allow people to launch a channel and we turned it into a company in 2010 and got funding in 2014".

Investment of US\$5.6 million came from Joe Anderson, chair, Anderson Media: "He understood the implications of what I

was trying to do," said Mokwunye.

"For content creators and broadcasters, its biggest selling point is that it allows them to create their own platform and "go direct to the consumer and make more money. Clients having their own platform means it's their choice how to promote their content and whether they do streaming or VOD. It also gives them access to a lot of other capabilities, including monetisation."

Other capabilities include social media, chat and mail.

It also takes two African content owners to have interconnected platforms: "Cross-aggregation allows two clients which have individually branded platforms, to interconnect their content. One might have more content and the other might have more users."

Public Vine currently has five client users (primarily in the USA but also in Asia) who use it for music and film. Noir TV, which is an African diaspora channel that goes out over cable in the USA, is a user: it has a channel that includes entertainment, movies and music which it wants to take to Africa.

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