

Unpacking the digital radio and podcasting trend value stream in Africa

 By [Jon Savage](#)

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If you are looking for a trend that is truly adding value for brands and consumers alike in Africa, look no further than the groundswell to podcasting and digital radio...



Jon Savage

Digital radio and podcasting, which have been threatening to disrupt the media environment for nearly 10 years, are set to make the transition from 'bubbling under' to 'mainstream'.

For several years now, both mediums have found favour with consumers, mostly because they are easily accessible and deliver niche and/or specialised content so that they are able to infiltrate culture to reach that sweet spot that brands are desperate to access.

Despite this, they have been largely ignored by brands, but this is changing. The power of audio content delivered by digital radio or podcasting can no longer be swept under the proverbial carpet.



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Tipping the scales

What's woken brands to their potential and driven their shift from an emerging trend to mainstream adoption is their ability to present totally accurate audience metrics.

Within the traditional media environment, audience reach and audience engagement metrics have only ever been 'best estimates' (small groups of people sampled to provide data which was then extrapolated over minutes, hours, weeks and months).

This meant that a brand paying to reach the millions of listeners to a certain radio station was paying for the association with that radio station and for the potential audience, never a guaranteed audience.

By contrast, the digital audio and podcasting space can provide far more accurate metrics. These can say how many people listened to the ad (not just the content but the ad itself), how many acted or engaged with it, and even whether this converted into a direct sale.

In other words, the brand pays for the actual listeners it reaches, not the potential listening audience.



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Paradigm shift

But digital audio and podcasts are still a hard sell to most brand managers. They understand the ability of these mediums to resonate with that sweet spot and they are entranced by the accurate metrics, but they are still lured by the promise of the potentially large audience numbers.

The real listenership numbers of podcasts and digital audio channels are not as sexy or impressive as the potential audience model sold by traditional media. One million people sounds awesome, even if it is sold to you as potentially one million people.

Digital audio and podcasts can deliver one million people and guarantee it. But how? Because there are so many new content creators in the audience space, you can still get your big reach numbers, in a way more effective and focused way, by diversifying your campaign across multiple creators' networks. It's a little more work but it is a way more cost-effective and targeted approach.

How are digital audio and podcasts being used?

The emerging trend in the digital audio space is to transform mindless in-store playlists into fully-fledged strategic audio identities for a brand to influence shopping behaviours, attract new customers, and upscale into social media and online shopping.

Within the podcasting space, brands are using content creators to get much closer and more personal with their target audience. With this comes a little risk, granted. The online space is still unregulated, and brands need to be highly strategic

about with who they partner.

But this is the fun of these spaces. They offer us all – content creators, brands, marketers and agencies or facilitators – the opportunity to collaborate to grow new marketing opportunities and bring digital radio and podcasting out of the shadows.

ABOUT JON SAVAGE

Jon Savage is HaveYouHeard's head of content

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