

BA's *High Life* comes to South Africa



By Herman Manson: @marklives

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High Life, the much applauded inflight magazine of British Airways, is getting a localised edition for BA-operated Comair. The new magazine replaces [Horizons](#) - Comair's previous inflight title, published by Media24. The contract was awarded to Omnicom-owned content marketing firm [Cedar Communications UK](#) and the first edition appeared 1 April 2012.



International expansion programme

Cedar is also the publisher of the UK edition of *High Life* and has recently started on an international expansion programme, which includes China and now South Africa.

According to the magazine's South African editor, [Sonya Schoeman](#), the local edition of *High Life* will replicate the international edition's content intact in the second half of the magazine, while SA content will be placed in the first half of the magazine.

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The combined magazine will run to 128 pages, of which 54 will consist of local content and advertising, and the rest will be made up of the international content and ads.

Compact, punchy and fun

This way, the international content stays intact while relevant local content, which will focus on southern Africa, gets a chance to stand on its own. Stories will focus on travel and lifestyle trends, and content will display unusual angles and be compact, punchy and fun.

Schoeman hopes to establish the read as a favourite with flyers by focusing on the latest trends and linking it to undiscovered or unlauded SA success stories. So, for example, a story on foodie entrepreneurs looked to discover and tell readers about quirky but excellent local food producers - some of them even operating from their garages. A taste test of five different brandies featured an expert taster's opinion, that of a mixologist, and [Jack Parow's](#).

While the magazine won't have a digital presence immediately, it is on the cards, says Schoeman. A local team of four, including a ~~deputy editor~~ content director ([Adelle Horler](#)) and a local art director, work on the magazine full time.

16 000 print run

The initial print run will stand at 16 000. Research suggests a readership of 10 people per copy, says Schoeman.

Schoeman, who also edited *Horizons*, says her strong relationship with Comair meant the client was keen to continue their relationship with her, resulting in her being offered editorship of *High Life*.

Cedars' international and UK business development director, Hannah Saunders, says the group is driving international expansion through UK clients, such as BA and Tesco, with interests in other countries and territories. Last year it opened an office in Shanghai, where it is producing a magazine for Tesco in Mandarin.

Collaboration with New Media



Sonya Schoeman, editor of *High Life* South Africa and former editor of *Horizons*.

Cedar has been publishing the UK edition of *High Life* since 1992. It was bought out by Omnicom in 1994 and placed with the BBDO group. *High Life* in SA will be produced in collaboration with New Media, whose offices it also shares.

Saunders says the alliance with New Media allows it to join international best practice with local management skill. Saunders believes Cedar, with [experience](#) in retail, travel and leisure, fashion, and finance, will be able to expand and grow its content marketing portfolio in SA, including its digital offering. She is excited by the possibilities SA offers to her group.

Cedar is also exploring the possibility of further localised editions of *High Life* in other parts of the world.

Chinese wall

According to New Media's business development director, Andrew Nunneley ([@nunnels](#)), the contract for *High Life* in SA is held by Cedar UK, which has outsourced most of the publishing services to New Media as its partner in SA. Saunders and Nunneley both reiterated that a Chinese wall exists between competitor clients (New Media holds the publishing contract for low-cost airline Mango, as well as retailer Woolworths).

'50 Wildest African Experiences' is the theme of the premier issue and looks at events as diverse as [AfrikaBurn](#) and encounters with lowland gorillas in Central Africa.

Corrected at 2.02pm on 4 April 2012. Bizcommunity.com apologies for the error.

ABOUT HERMAN MANSON: @MARKLIVES

The inaugural Vodacom Social Media Journalist of the Year in 2011, Herman Manson ([@marklives](#)) is a business journalist and media commentator who edits industry news site [www.marklives.com](#). His writing has appeared in newspapers and magazines locally and abroad, including Bizcommunity.com. He also co-founded *Brand* magazine.

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