

Media startup explain.co.za wins international award

explain.co.za's flagship project, The Weekly Wrap, won in this year's Digital Media Africa Award, run by the World Association of Newspapers. The Weekly Wrap was named the "Best Project for News Literacy" in Africa.



The Weekly Wrap is a conversational and often funny weekly summary of the most important local and global news of the week. It is sent out via WhatsApp, email and podcast and via a digital PDF newspaper specifically aimed at audiences who don't typically follow the news. It focuses on hope and solution journalism over sensationalism.

Formally launched just over a year ago by award-winning journalist Verashni Pillay, explain.co.za has quickly grown to reach over 30,000 subscribers.

Pillay is a former editor-in-chief of the *Mail & Guardian* and has won accolades from CNN, BBC and others.

Judges said: "Newsletters and weekly round-ups are not new, but what explain.co.za has done is to bring them to subscribers' pockets and cellphones. Cellphones are very personal items, which means explain is building much deeper and more personal relationships with subscribers."

Pillay said the seven-member team behind The Weekly Wrap were beyond thrilled that their hard work had paid off.

"I started doing The Wrap from my lounge in my pyjamas! People always told me they found the news boring and

depressing. I wanted to change that. Citizens need to be informed. The team that now does The Wrap are just incredible, and have taken it to new levels.”

Each of The Weekly Wraps are put through four checks before publication, including a fact check.

“We regularly receive messages from our audience thanking us for making it so easy to understand what’s going on around them.” says Pillay. “We are particularly invested in reaching women, as this demographic is typically under-represented by hard news publications. Multiple global research studies have found that women are not well served by news media.”

Subscribe to the award-winning Weekly Wrap at www.explain.co.za/subscribe.

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