

STATE OF THE NEWSROOM

SOUTH AFRICA INSIDE/OUTSIDE
2015-2016



WITS
Journalism



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PREFACE:

The South African newsroom continues to face significant challenges, both political and economic. The business model that has underpinned journalism in much of the world for at least a century is under strain and is unlikely to recover. Audiences are increasingly moving to new, largely free, media platforms to satisfy their information needs, leaving legacy media struggling to adapt. It is the wild information frontier, where it becomes increasingly hard to distinguish what is reliable.

Citizen journalists and eyewitness accounts can add value, but fake news sites deliberately set out to mislead. Meanwhile, new political leaders, as in the USA, seem to take pride in asserting that truth is simply what they say it is, refusing to be held accountable by journalism. Are we really entering a post-truth world? In fact, we would argue, journalism becomes more, not less important, even though its future shape is very unclear.

These global challenges face SA newsrooms too, although there are additional local dynamics arising from the ongoing struggle to overcome the legacy of the past. The media mirror a society that is deeply split between a wealthy and middle-class elite that is small, although less racially defined than it used to be, and a majority that struggles with grinding poverty. The elite, urban media do not reach the majority of the population, that has very few information choices. At the same time, calls for transformation continue, sometimes legitimate, sometimes driven by politicians' discomfort with vigorous, independent journalism.

Against this backdrop, Wits Journalism is pleased to present a new edition of our State of the Newsroom report, our third. There has been a two-year gap since the 2014 report, and so this one covers 2015 and 2016. As before, the report first attempts to provide an overview of major developments affecting journalism, and then picks out some specific themes of significance. In other words, it is not intended as a comprehensive account, but as an overview of key issues and trends. It aims to promote discussion among journalists and observers of the media, providing another snapshot of the landscape as the media grapple with challenges on many fronts.

The report purposely adopts an approach that is neither purely journalistic nor academic, drawing the best from both worlds to be rigorous and careful, while remaining accessible. It is a compilation of relevant information for the record, and asks a range of questions, such as what we mean by "the newsroom", the nature of diversity and other issues.

As Wits Journalism, we sit at the heart of South Africa's media landscape. Our programme is built on three pillars: teaching, doing and reflecting on journalism. We offer courses for young people wanting to become journalists, working professionals, development communicators, community radio and, increasingly, those who want to learn just a specific skill.

Our career-entry students learn by reporting weekly, daily, sometimes hourly, on issues such as the #FeesMustFall protests that unfolded at Wits and other campuses, often on the streets of Braamfontein outside our building.

The department is active in producing journalism, including through its award-winning teams on the Wits Justice Project and Wits Radio Academy; it supports journalistic projects through Taco Kuiper grants and the Africa China Reporting Project, among others; it hosts public lectures and major conferences including Radio Days Africa and the Investigative Journalism Conference which in 2017 will host the world's muckrakers. (Full details at www.journalism.co.za)

This report fits under the third heading, being one of several ways in which we hope to contribute to debate and reflection on the state of journalism. We hope you find it useful.

We are already planning the 2017 edition, which will be published early in 2018. We welcome feedback and suggestions for themes that we should pick up in the next round.

A warm word of thanks must go to everyone who worked on the venture, particularly Alan Finlay, the lead researcher and editor. But there were many others who contributed with feedback and suggestions or in other ways, and can't all be named here. We are also particularly grateful to the Open Society Foundation and the Media Programme of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, for supporting aspects of the research.

Adj Prof Franz Krüger
HoD: Wits Journalism

INTRODUCTION:

Inside/outside

Alan Finlay

If diversity can be understood as access to and use of multiple media sources and channels, South Africa – despite reports of job losses, financial cuts, and possible consolidations in the media industry during 2015 and 2016 – still maintains a healthy, rich and diverse media environment. But it may also be true to say that a good deal of this diversity has little to do with the mainstream media itself.

In 2015 alone, some 38 new community radio stations were launched, bringing the number of both commercial and community radio stations in the country to nearly 300.¹ While circulation in print media continues to fall – and most notably of free newspapers – internet access is increasing. According to the 2016 South African Social Media Landscape survey,² Facebook is now used by a quarter of all South Africans (some 13-million people), with 7-million accessing the site using smartphones.

As the recent #FeesMustFall student protests showed, many – particularly urban media consumers – are now likely to know the details about an unfolding story from Twitter or Facebook before any of the usual news outlets get to the scene. There is a sense of active engagement with and participation in the newsmaking, which, in the case of #FeesMustFall, included sympathetic academics reporting from the frontline. The public's news 'diet' now comes from multiple sources: friends, students, NGOs, independent news websites, and even a neighbourhood WhatsApp group, all writing into the maelstrom of what we call news.

The power of these 'alternative' news sources in influencing and shaping public discourse appears to be growing – both reflecting a need for relevant content from shrinking mainstream newsrooms, and the attempt by newsrooms to remain relevant. While newsrooms drew on social media to keep up with the recent #FeesMustFall protests, #FeesMustFall also showed that with social media students were no longer dependent on the mainstream media for coverage of student concerns – a 'voice' amplified by the work of independent news sites such as The Daily Vox.

Independent media websites are now talking about in-depth issues that the mainstream media won't talk about, or don't have the capacity to. And some of these new news producers are facing similar restrictions that were the domain of the professional journalist. Activists who report on government corruption and maladministration are surveilled by the state; in 2014, community activist and freelance photographer Michael Tshele was shot dead while covering a community protest in Brits in the North West.

All of this makes us ask: What do we mean by the "newsroom", now, in 2016 in South Africa?

Of course, we still have newsrooms in the old sense; we still have newspapers, broadcasters, professional journalists, and professional journalist organisations. We still have an urban-rural divide on media consumption – and concerns remain about those who do not have access to diverse media sources. Many people in South Africa remain offline – most people don't use Facebook or Twitter. And media and research organisations (including universities) still focus on the output from and operations of these formal media institutions – who owns them, what they do or do not publish, and their readers and audience.

But the media diet of individuals is no longer just the domain of these media groups. And if we just consider them, we do not provide a useful account of influence and power and how the media – in the broadest sense -- interact with public opinion and processes. As much as there is still a 'newsroom' to quantify and talk about, the newsroom is now also something much more amorphous, transient or informal.

This State of the Newsroom offers perspectives on what is happening both 'inside' and 'outside' the newsroom as we know it.

Part 1 offers an overview of key events shaping the media environment in South Africa over 2015 and 2016. As it suggests, economic pressures continue to squeeze the media industry, most notably in rounds of retrenchments of newsroom staff. The extent of the retrenchments does not appear to be as dramatic as in 2014, but they are nevertheless felt over the two years surveyed.

While people turn online for their news, and radio remains strong, fewer and fewer South Africans are buying newspapers. At the same time the state continues with attempts to put a stranglehold on media freedoms, whether through its proposed Media Appeals Tribunal (MAT), or through legislation that requires pushback from media rights activists and civil society generally.

The government's bungling of key processes such as digital terrestrial television, and constant shocks at the public broadcaster, also define this period. Bright lights include a reinvigorated Press Council with its oversight of the online media space. In the appendices to this issue one can see how strong the Council's membership remains.

Part 2 looks at transformation of the print media industry – a view from the inside. In the context of necessary calls for transforming South Africa's media, and pressure from the government through MAT, Levi Kabwato asks the critical question: Is black ownership of the press enough to ensure transformation? While his conclusions suggest that this is not enough of an indicator for transformation, he makes the important additional observation that part of the problem is the lack of editorial independence in the press.

Something of the mainstream media's separation from grassroots concerns is felt in Part 3, which looks both at the role of social media in the #FeesMustFall student protests, and how mainstream media were, at least at first, caught on the outside as this crucial national event unfolded. In articles by Ruth Becker – who makes a tentative link between this and violence directed by students at journalists – and research by Wits Journalism and Media studies students, Doreen Zimbizi and Vuyo Mthembu, the impact of social media on the newsroom is shown, and the extent to which social media amplified student concerns.

We are very happy to include the perspectives of editors and journalists in this section and in Kabwato's reflections on transformation. Alongside this we offer an brief overview of key 'alternative' sources of news and views – ways that researchers and journalists located 'outside' the newsroom frame their work of writing into the news.

NOTES:

1. <https://businesstech.co.za/news/media/123473/these-are-the-10-biggest-radio-stations-in-south-africa/>
2. <https://www.worldwideworx.com>

PART 1: INSIDE

THE NEWSROOM IN REVIEW: 2015-2016

The following is a snapshot summary of key developments that impacted on the newsroom in South Africa in 2015 and 2016. It is inevitably fragmentary, but captures what we consider key shifts and trends over the period. Clearly economic pressures continue to squeeze the lifeblood out of our newsrooms. These are evident in fewer jobs for journalists, rumours of consolidation at the top end of the industry, the selling off of assets and the continuing decline of print circulation.

At the same time, there is increased political pressure on newsrooms, shifts in political allegiance amongst news publishers, and a general pressure felt on the independence of the journalistic profession as a whole. The bungled digital terrestrial process, the virtual collapse of good management at the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), and the drafting of new legislation that impacts negatively on media freedoms, suggests a government seeking greater control of the South African media, but at the same time unable to manage the media resources and processes at its disposal and under its responsibility.

There are positive signs of resilience. Journalists continue to break important stories in the face of state surveillance, and take risks to report from the frontlines. The South African National Editors Forum (Sanef) has been vocal on incursions into media freedoms, and a re-invigorated Press Council is demonstrating its relevance in the face of counter proposals of state interference in the regulation of the industry.



Downward pressure on print circulation continues...

Print circulation continued to decline over the 2015 and 2016 periods – including, for the first time, the circulation of free newspapers¹ – placing increasing pressure on media houses with print titles to attend to rapidly constrained resources. In 2015 only the weekly Mail & Guardian achieved a quarter-on-quarter growth of nearly 10%,² with other titles such as the Sunday Times, Business Day, City Press and Financial Mail recording declines of 10-23%.³ By the end of 2016, both daily and weekly presses had recorded declines in circulation, with the weekly press proving more resilient showing a 6.4% decline compared to the 12.6% recorded by dailies.⁴ Reflecting this trend, the Audit Bureau of Circulations of South Africa (ABC) also reported a decline in newspaper membership (a drop of some 11 titles).⁵

Dwindling job market...

The tide of retrenchments sweeping media houses and reported in State of the Newsroom South Africa (SoN)2014 continued in 2015 and 2016, albeit at a somewhat dissipated rate. While there were almost 600 retrenchments in 2014 alone,⁶ in mid-2016 reports emerged that 65 employees at Times Media Group (TMG) would lose their jobs,⁷ bringing the total number of layoffs at the media group over the previous year to over 100.⁸ In August 2016 it was reported that eTV/eNCA would downsize its Cape Town newsroom, while over at Independent Media, despite staff cuts in April the previous year,⁹ in November 2016 it was further reported that more than 70 of some 500 journalists would accept retrenchment packages.¹⁰ Not all journalists who lost their jobs over the period were retrenched – both SABC and ANN7 fired journalists. At ANN7 eight journalists lost their jobs in 2016 for participating in public protests,¹¹ while the SABC was forced to reinstate seven journalists to their positions following a decision by the Labour Court. The journalists had been dismissed after refusing to follow a directive not to air content on public violence.¹²

The end of an era

The shrinking job market for journalists got off to a bad start in March 2015 with the closure of the South African Press Association (Sapa). The nonprofit newswire, initially set up as a content-sharing service in 1938, had been at the forefront of feeding breaking news stories to the media industry since the Soweto uprising in the 1970s.¹³ Sapa fell into financial trouble in 2014 following the withdrawal

of the country's three biggest media houses – TMG, Caxton and Independent Media – from the association. Its financial position was further weakened by a decision by Agence France Presse (AFP) to end the distribution rights for its foreign newsfeed with the association in a bid to license its content directly to publishers.

In an account of the complex “news-agency type slugfest”¹⁴ that ensued, Sapa editor Mark van der Velden described how initial plans to create a new, for-profit Sapa failed, and ended up with rival media organisations including Independent Media, Media24 and TMG setting in place strategies for competing newswires. “Growing mutual distrust among members led directors to decide in January [2015] that, really, their only task was to close Sapa at the end of March. Tacitly, they admitted their vision was clouded by the notion of shaping also the creation of a new Sapa the way they would want it... Running deep underneath all this was the uncomfortable truth [that] it was most unlikely Media24, Sekunjalo and Caxton could ever live happily together inside a new Sapa,” Van der Velden wrote for Fesmedia,¹⁵ an article that is reprinted in this SoN.

While two new for-pay newswires were launched during this period – African News Agency (ANA) and News24 Wire – with the closure of Sapa the industry lost a critical resource for authoritative breaking news, and a vital news archival repository. Near its end, Sapa had a staff base of some 35 journalists.

and further consolidation...

The retrenchments were followed by fears of further media consolidation in the sector, sparked by insider reports in late 2016 that TMG was the leading bidder in a buy out of Primedia – despite murmuring resistance from Primedia's minority shareholders.¹⁶ Primedia operates four radio stations – KFM, 94.7, and talk stations 702 and Cape Talk – and is jointly owned by the Mineworkers Investment Company (MIC), Brait Entities, Old Mutual and the FirstRand Group. News of the buy out – in which TMG staved off interest from Caxton and Thebe Investments – were initially quashed by Primedia, but the resignation of Primedia Broadcasting CEO Terry Volkwyn, ostensibly due to shareholder dissatisfaction over the buy out, was reported in mid-November.¹⁷

“ Further consolidation in the media is not what the country needs...It would kill the diversity that is so important to keep our democracy going...”

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the owner of MIC, criticised¹⁸ its investment arm for giving priority to financial rather than media freedom interests. NUM General Secretary David Sipunzi said the point of investing in media was to promote media diversity. Meanwhile, media watchdog, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), said on the move: “Further consolidation in the media is not what the country needs...It would kill the diversity that is so important to keep our democracy going.”¹⁹

Digital terrestrial television

The bungled launch of digital terrestrial television suffered another setback in May 2016 when eTV won a Supreme Court of Appeal bid against the government over encryption in set-top boxes.²⁰ ETV's challenge followed a failed High Court bid by the broadcaster,²¹ together with MMA, SOS Coalition (SOS), and the National Association of Manufacturers in Electronic Components, to have the process halted after a sudden decision by Communications Minister Faith Muthambi that the set-top boxes would not be encrypted. ETV took its case to the Supreme Court of Appeal, arguing that the minister's decision had crippled its ability to source content from international distributors because of the dangers of piracy.

Multichoice was accused of using underhand means to fight for an unencrypted model, motivated by the desire to protect its monopoly of the pay-TV space as that meant that competitors such as eTV would not be able to use the new decoders to offer a subscription service.²²

On February 1, 2016, broadcasters were finally able to launch digital services with the start of a process called “dual illumination” that refers to the simultaneous broadcasting of analogue and digital signals. The dual illumination period gives television audiences several years to buy the set-top boxes they need once the analogue signals that broadcast SABC and eTV are switched off. The switch-off date was to be announced following a cabinet decision.²³

In its judgement, the Supreme Court called Muthambi's last-minute about turn on encryption and her decision making on the digital terrestrial television process in general, as “confused” and “irrational” and lacking in proper stakeholder consultation, including with the regulator, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Icasa).²⁴ To make matters worse, the government had already placed orders for 1.5-million non-encrypted set-top boxes with local suppliers.²⁵

SOS and MMA argued that by not encrypting the set top boxes, new entrants in the broadcasting sector would not be able to access premium content, and the net result would be that only wealthy viewers would benefit from high-quality television, such as DSTv.²⁶ In a joint statement,



SOS and MMA said: “For us, the prospect of government actively deepening inequality in South Africa through the amendment of policy which has the manifest effect of defining the people of South Africa’s access to diverse and relevant information, education and entertainment TV services of a high quality on the basis of affordability could not be allowed to continue unchallenged.”²⁷

South Africa has long missed its deadline for digital migration set by the International Telecommunications Union, and is behind countries such as Zambia that are already broadcasting digitally.

Better statistics...

The Broadcasting Research Council of South Africa’s (BRC) new Radio Audience Measurement (RAM) – in collaboration with market research company, TNS – received positive reviews in early 2015. Called a “transformation of the audience measurement system”,²⁸ the system offers a new sampling framework, and is said to “give the media industry a new and more realistic view of the structure of the South African population”.²⁹ Collection of radio listenership data began in January 2016.³⁰ The new system had two components, a “placement interview” which collects household and individual data of those over 15-years of age, and a “radio diary” which would map radio listening patterns for commercial and community broadcasters. The BRC said the number of households sampled would now be 30,000 (a 20% increase on previous samples). Some 70,000 radio diaries would be completed each year. It also said that new to the BRC RAM was data on the location of listening, and the device used for listening.³¹ BRC RAM was to be released four times a year.

And a more effective Press Council

In March 2016, a re-launched Press Council announced that its work would now also serve online media, including the appointment of a deputy ombud for online media, and a deputy public advocate for online media. This followed negotiations with the Interactive Advertising Bureau South Africa, the online media association that had begun the previous year. The Press Council also said that it was talking to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) and the National Association of Broadcasters about the challenges presented by the online operations of broadcasters.³²

Amongst other changes at the Press Council – reflecting the financial struggles of the media sector overall – was the dissolution of Print and Digital Media South Africa (PDMSA), previously responsible for collecting member fees at the Council. The collection of fees would now be the Council’s responsibility. PDMSA was to become a new organisation, the Publishers Research Council.³³ The Council also said that its organisational structures would continue until 2018 when “a new organisation of print and online media” would be established.³⁴

The Council said that a noticeable increase in public complaints between 2007, when only 46 complaints were

received, and 2015, where the number stood at 591, was an indication of better public understanding of its function, and overall support for its services.³⁵ It had received 22 complaints in the first 75 days of accepting complaints regarding online media.

The Council’s new constitution became effective in January 2016.³⁶

“They will be embarrassed when we go to the Constitutional Court”...

The apparent intention by the Zuma-led governments to, wherever it could, curtail media freedoms in the country, was also seen in 2015 when the ANC reinvigorated the controversial idea of establishing a Media Appeals Tribunal as a way to effectively dampen criticism of public figures. The tribunal was already proposed in an ANC discussion paper in 2007 presented at its Polokwane conference, arguing that the rights to privacy and personal dignity should be balanced with media freedoms.

While Zuma – himself subject to intense personal criticism and satire – reassured journalists and editors³⁷ in October 2015 that a Parliamentary investigation into the feasibility of the tribunal would take the Constitution into account, many analysts agreed that the proposal was simply an attempt to restrict criticism of the state – pointing out that the Press Council, in a system of co-regulation, included public representatives in its processes and procedures, and was already an adequate mechanism to monitor and redress any complaints directed at the media. For its part, the Press Council reiterated its objection to the tribunal. “We have always been opposed to a Media Appeals Tribunal in all of our writings and interactions with the ANC,” its executive director, Joe Thloloe, said. “It would go against the South African Constitution. And they will be embarrassed when we go to the Constitutional Court”.³⁸

“Excessively high legal costs”...

The regulation of the news media sector came under further strain over the period with the announcement in October 2016 by Independent Media that the company was to withdraw from the Press Council³⁹ – citing high legal costs in the absence of a waiver preventing complainants from pursuing their complaints in court as the reason. Independent Media is reported to have said: “The removal of the waiver by the Press Council has the unintended consequence of involving Independent Media and other media houses in excessively high legal costs which cannot be justified in the current economic climate in which media houses find themselves.”⁴⁰

“The Council [has] been a bulwark against statutory regulation that would violate the country’s Constitution...”

However, in a statement, the Press Council – chaired by retired judge, Phillip Levinsohn – countered that the Council had “saved publications from the huge legal costs

they would have had to incur if complainants went directly to the courts and didn't have the avenue of the Press Council to clear their names quickly and without having to pay a cent."⁴¹ It added that "The Council had been a bulwark against statutory regulation that would violate the country's Constitution".

Independent Media was to appoint its own ombudsman, a position given to former editor of a number of Independent Media titles, Jovial Rantao. In a further complication, Sanef noted that Independent's move would mean that its titles were no longer subject to exemptions for pre-publication approval required by the Film and Publications Board (FPB), exemptions guaranteed by participation in the Press Council.⁴² Newspapers such as the Cape Times, The Mercury and The Star, as well as IOL, would be affected by Independent Media's decision.

Saving the SABC...

As public broadcaster, what goes on at the SABC has always served as a useful litmus test of the state's intention regarding media freedoms in the country – and the past two years have been particularly worrying with the controversial appointment of Hlaudi Motsoeneng as chief operating officer at the broadcaster. His appointment was initially set aside by the High Court in 2015, following findings by the Public Protector that he had lied about his matric qualifications and had increased his salary by nearly R1-million in just one year. Motsoeneng nevertheless remained at the helm [in a temporary position],⁴³ provoking increasing alarm when SABC stations were instructed that they were no longer permitted to read newspaper headlines on air, and when SAfm's highly-regarded Sunday radio show, The Editors, which dealt with news and media trends in discussion with editors, was taken off air.

Also in 2016, the state broadcaster refused to show an independently-produced documentary, *Miners Shot Down*, detailing the events of the so-called Marikana Massacre at the Lonmin mine in the North West province where 41 protesting miners were killed by police, thereby demonstrating the SABC's willingness to gag content strongly in the public interest but critical of state actions.⁴⁴

In May 2016, Motsoeneng attracted renewed criticism and backlash from his own staff following a directive that footage of violent service-delivery protests may no longer be shown on the broadcaster's TV channels. Ostensibly a politically motivated move given the approaching local government elections, the broadcaster covered its tracks by claiming that broadcast footage of public violence encouraged others to resort to violence in public protests. Eight journalists who refused to follow the directive were subsequently fired from the broadcaster, resulting in protests both from journalists at the broadcaster and media freedom advocates.⁴⁵ The directive was vigorously challenged by civil society, with Media Monitoring Africa and the Save our SABC Coalition bringing an application before the regulator, Icasa, which ruled that the directive was in contravention of the SABC's broadcasting



Censorship at the public broadcaster: Right2Know protests outside the SABC offices in Cape Town in August 2016. Protesters were demanding that the public broadcaster screen the award-winning documentary 'Miners Shot Down'. The documentary deals with strike action at a mine owned by Lonmin in Marikana in the North West that led to the deaths of 41 miners in 2012.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)

mandate. This decision tested the authority and the political mettle of the Chapter 9 institution.

Seven of the eight journalists were subsequently re-instated. The eighth, Vuyo Mvoko, wasn't, on the technicality that he was a contractor, and not an employee.⁴⁶ The end of 2016 left the SABC in a dishevelled state, with the collapse of its board following mass resignations of board members,⁴⁷ and its chairperson, Professor Mbulaheni Maghuvu, resigning in December, but only after he had forced parliament to convene an inquiry into the SABC board. At the centre of the resignations were reported disagreements around the permanent appointment of Motsoeneng. The parliamentary inquiry started at the end of November, and the year ended with lobby groups calling for urgent parliamentary action to nominate an interim board.⁴⁸

The power to censor...

If both what happened at the SABC, and the renewed push behind a tribunal can be seen as indicative of the state's intentions regarding media freedoms, of equal concern was the publishing of two pieces of proposed legislation during this period. With the much-maligned Protection of State Information Bill – or so-called "Secrecy Bill" – still under presidential review, the Films and Publications Amendment Bill was published in early 2015 and hearings convened in late August 2016. The bill provoked concern from civil society groups in particular. While its main objective is to create a new code of classification of visual content and to ensure the protection of minors from harmful content online, it also poses serious threats to free expression and to citizen journalism.

The bill has been criticised for calling for pre-publication classification for publications that are not defined as newspapers or magazines – effectively meaning that online video content posted on blogs or social media posts would have to be classified before publication.⁴⁹ The context of the bill’s proposal is increasingly relevant – for example, the SABC’s decision not to show footage of public violence in the run-up to the 2016 local government elections.

A remedy to this is eye-witness accounts by ordinary citizens posted online – as we have seen in numerous public protests, including the student protests on campuses across the country. The bill effectively could serve as a censor to this evidence of public violence, including vandalism, and the authorities’ illegal responses to protests, all of which is in the public interest. As civil society organisations have argued: “This is tantamount to giving the Film and Publication Board the power to effectively censor any Facebook post, Twitter ‘tweet’, YouTube video, or any other user-generated internet content created by any South African.”⁵⁰

“ That Penny Sparrow and others seem to have precipitated such a major policy shift is worrying...”

The publication of the draft Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill in 2016, while welcomed in general, caused some concern with the inclusion of a hate speech clause, ostensibly as a response to the growing number of racist outbursts on social media sites.⁵¹ Earlier in the year, former Durban estate agent, Penny Sparrow, faced a case of *crimen injuria* after calling black people “monkeys” on her Facebook page when complaining about beach litter.⁵²

“That Penny Sparrow and others seem to have precipitated such a major policy shift is worrying, because it suggests the state did not consider hate speech a problem up until that point. Cause for further concern is that a decade-long process of deliberation has been interrupted by a knee-jerk and political reaction to what is the deep and complex problem of racism and white supremacy in South Africa,”⁵³ said Matthew Clayton from the Hate Crimes Working Group, which had been involved in the development of the Bill. In its response, Media Monitoring Africa said that although the Bill should be supported, its formulation was currently too broad, and would, as it stood, make satire unlawful.⁵⁴

Similarly, the Cybercrimes and Cybersecurity Bill, due to be brought before Parliament before the end of 2016, in many instances is likely to impact negatively on personal and public freedoms online.⁵⁵ While seeking to address the most important loopholes in legislation regarding online crime and the security of data, in doing so the bill was criticised for granting the police and the state security cluster too much power and not being framed from the perspective of public interest.⁵⁶ In effect it “compromises those in possession of information or data,

such as journalists, journalists’ sources, bloggers and whistleblowers, with the intention of sharing this data or publishing it to expose corruption or wrong-doing”.⁵⁷

The need for independent oversight mechanisms...

The net effect of a media distrustful of state intentions with regards to the sector’s freedoms was hardly ameliorated by ongoing concerns about state surveillance – targeted not only at the media but at activists generally. Surveillance concerns deepened during this period with reports of state infiltration of civil society organisations such as the Right2Know campaign, sketching a stark and worrying picture of state security apparatuses reverting to apartheid-style tactics in clamping down on dissent.

While concrete evidence of state surveillance of journalists is largely undocumented – as is the manipulation of media content through plying journalists with false or forged documents and other forms manipulation – there is widespread agreement in the industry that it exists, with the experiences of Sunday Times investigative journalists, Stephan Hofstatter and Mzilikazi Wa Afrika, who had their phones tapped by a former crime intelligence officer, standing as one of the clearest examples of this.⁵⁸

South Africa, under review at the Human Rights Council (HRC), has also met with international sanction for its lack of regulatory safeguards when it comes to surveillance, and was criticised by the United Nations Human Rights Committee for contravening the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in March 2016: “The State party should refrain from engaging in mass surveillance of private communications without prior judicial authorization and consider revoking or limiting the requirement for mandatory retention of data by third parties.

It should also ensure that interception of communications by law enforcement and security services is carried out only according to the law and under judicial supervision. The State party should increase the transparency of its surveillance policy and speedily establish independent oversight mechanisms to prevent abuses and ensure that individuals have access to effective remedies.”⁵⁹

In particular, the Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act (RICA) has come under fire. RICA requires SIM card registration and service providers to retain communications data, with critics arguing it is inconsistent with international norms with respect to the right to privacy.



No more Gupta journalists: EFF leader Julius Malema was criticised in 2016 for saying he did not want journalists from ANN7 and The New Age at his party's media briefings.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)

“We regret the misunderstanding”...

South Africa's position with regards to freedoms generally at the HRC has been unclear – its voting on resolutions at times positioning it alongside oppressive regimes such as Russia, China, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

This, to the extent that civil society has called for more transparency in the reasons behind its voting, and to bring its positions more firmly in line with the Constitution. Recently South Africa voted against granting UN status to the Committee for the Protection of Journalists,⁶⁰ a position that the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco) had to clarify in a media release, going to some length to emphasise its commitment to free expression, and blaming “archaic” procedural issues for the “No” vote by South Africa: “In accordance with our Constitution, laws and policies, South Africa supports freedom of expression and the role that Journalists play in democracy and free societies.

Journalists play a key role in the consolidation of democracy, transparency and good governance. As a matter of principle, South Africa has no objection to CPJ being granted an observer status by ECOSOC given the outstanding and sterling work undertaken by the CPJ in the area of promotion and protection of journalists across the globe.

We regret the misunderstanding and the wrong message that the lack of explanation of our vote in the NGO Committee could have portrayed.”⁶¹

It is nevertheless worrying that the Dirco was forced into a position of clarifying its commitment to free expression – which should under normal circumstances be taken for granted.

“Almost Idi Amin”...

The safety of journalists has received some attention over this period when it comes to their vulnerability in their coverage of social protests and to crime. A Daily Sun journalist was attacked while reporting on a social protest in Port Elizabeth.⁶² Members of political parties have threatened community reporters covering unfolding events,⁶³ while the police have also been reported to have harassed journalists, forcing them to delete footage and photographs.

Reports of journalists being robbed, ostensibly for their equipment, in both Johannesburg and Tshwane have appeared, and an SABC contributing editor was mugged outside Milpark Hospital in Johannesburg “while the cameras were rolling”.⁶⁴ Journalists also came under threat from stone-throwing students with several being injured, while some have been pepper sprayed by private security companies during the nationwide #FeesMustFall

student protests.⁶⁵ In a march on parliament in October 2015, students threw stones both at police and journalists.⁶⁶

Meanwhile the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) were criticised in early 2016 by Sanef following statements made by party leader, Julius Malema, that the party did not want journalists from broadcaster ANN7 and broadsheet The New Age – both owned by the Gupta family – at its media events. Following a wave of public outrage at the mounting evidence of influence in the ruling party, Malema called the Guptas a “corrupt cartel”, and, in what amounted to a threat to journalists, is reported to have stated: “Sisters and brothers in Gupta firms we love you and don’t want you to be casualties. We cannot guarantee the safety of those printing New Age and ANN7.”⁶⁷

In its response, Sanef said: ““It is unacceptable for any political party to intimidate journalists and to publicly state that they cannot guarantee their safety”.”⁶⁸ A similar response came from the media houses, with editor-in-chief of The New Age and ANN7, Moegsien Williams, saying in a statement that “All freedom-loving democrats in South Africa should condemn the leader of the EFF for his utterances and threats...”⁶⁹ with the The New Age reporting that Malema’s threats were unconstitutional and an infringement of freedom of expression and of the media.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, Mathatha Tsedu, Sanef’s then executive director, said the ban on the journalists was “almost Idi Amin”.⁷¹ While Malema later insisted the banning was not a threat of violence,⁷² it may not be that his supporters felt the same way. Sanef again rallied to the defence of journalists, labelling EFF supporters “thugs” following an attack on an ANN7 news team outside the Pietermaritzburg High Court in December 2016.⁷³

Fake news: Satire or hate news?

Finally, so-called “fake news” raised the ire and irritation of many over the period. Fake news is typically sensationalistic “news” published online by websites that run with names close to actual news organisations, such as News24-TV and T1mesLive. It is often shared rapidly across social media platforms by unsuspecting internet users, testing the line between news-as-satire, and false information that would otherwise be in the public interest.

As Hadlee Simons writes in a review of fake news websites, one website “hides behind the ‘satire’ label... which is interesting because its stories often involve prominent people dying rather than classic satire, which makes light of societal issues.”⁷⁴ Faux-satire stories put out by the fake news sites include the shooting of former Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela, ballot papers marked with ANC votes being discovered during elections,⁷⁵ the death of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and Desmond Tutu, and believable headlines such as “shot former Wits SRC president dies”, “Government bans lobola starting 2017” and “four crocodiles escape Johannesburg Zoo floods”.⁷⁶

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INSIDE A CHANGING NEWSROOM

By Levi Kabwato

Ownership and transformation in South Africa's press

The year 2016 marked the 25th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press. Since its adoption in 1991, the declaration has been used to justify the existence and promotion of a free press. At the time, South Africa was still under the stranglehold of apartheid, with very little being done towards media freedom, media diversity and plurality.

The declaration defines an independent press as one that is free from “governmental, political or economic control or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of newspapers, magazines and periodicals”.¹ Plurality is defined as “the end of monopolies of any kind and the existence of the greatest possible number of newspapers, magazines and periodicals, reflecting the widest possible range of opinion within the community.”²

Although little mention is made of the Windhoek Declaration within the South African media fraternity, contemporary experience, practice and imagination is bringing to the fore the relevance of the declaration, especially in how critical questions around media ownership, diversity and transformation are framed.

Ownership of media has been placed at the heart of transformation in South Africa. In years past, criticism has been hurled at the state of play where concentration of media ownership was in only in a few hands, most of which were not representative of the country's demographics. While some notable changes have been recorded, the general pattern of media ownership in South Africa has not changed to a point where the issue of transformation can cease to be as contentious as it currently is.

Since 2007, the African National Congress (ANC) has been advancing an idea of a Media Appeals Tribunal (MAT), a regulatory proposition that envisions a media that is accountable to parliament and overseen by an independent body whose constitution is not clear as yet. Initially met with strong resistance, talk of the tribunal is entering media discourse again and is likely to dominate news headlines as the ANC prepares for its elective conference in December 2017.

“ Ahead of the 2017 conference... various wings of the ANC are making pronouncements about media...”

A 2010 ANC discussion document on the MAT stated: “Free, independent and pluralistic media can only be achieved through not only many media products but by the diversity of ownership and control of media.

As sites of transformation, information and communication networks are subjected to contested politico-economic tussles. That is, the makeup of ownership and shareholdings, the control of management and production of content, the composition of the workforce employed in these industries.”³

Ahead of the 2017 conference, therefore, various wings of the ANC are making pronouncements about media and these are likely to have an effect on the event's resolutions on approaches to media ownership and transformation.

The ANC Women's League (ANCWL), for example, has already taken a position and issued instructions to look into the print media and act. “The print media,” they said in an October 2015 media statement that borrowed extensively from the MAT document, “is at the centre of the battle of ideas, a contested terrain that reflects the ideological battles and power relations based on race, class and gender in our society needs to be transformed for it to be an unbiased platform. It cannot be allowed to continue being a wholly “white-owned” subjective determiner of the public agenda and opinion.”⁴

Given the dual imperative stated in the Windhoek Declaration, both of the need for transformation, and to avoid the undue interference of the state in journalism in South Africa, it is important to ask: how transformed are South Africa's media ?

How transformed is ownership of the press?

It is worth highlighting that when critics talk of “the media” in this context, they are mostly talking of traditional newspapers. If one took into account the full range of sources of information, it would be clear that ownership has shifted considerably. The largest audiences are not with newspapers, but with broadcasting giants such as the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). And as digital media get more entrenched, ownership patterns are beginning to emerge in that sector too. However, the disproportionate importance of print journalism remains in its ability to set the news agenda, and this is why ownership in the sector remains a subject of debate and controversy.

Traditionally, four media companies have always ruled the print media roost. They are: Media24, Times Media Group (TMG), Caxton and Independent Media. The dominance of the four companies in the print media market has been a source of both hope and despair. Hope that, as market leaders, these companies would lead the transformation drive and not require substantive lobbying from government and other stakeholders to do so; despair that the companies appear to be doing too little to transform themselves at a pace that can inspire confidence and give an indication of a changed – changing, at the very least –

print media industry in South Africa. However, the latter has not discouraged the companies from declaring their commitment to transformation.

The following analysis offers a perspective on the state of transformation in the newspaper sector, using publicly available information. The details put together by companies for their Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) scorecards have been particularly useful.

Independent Media

Among the four, Independent Media ranks as one of the most transformed companies given its majority shareholding from the black-owned Sekunjalo Media Consortium (SMC) as well as significant holding by the Government Employee Pension Fund (GEPP) through the Public Investment Corporation (PIC) and other entities. This puts black ownership in the company at 55%. Worth mentioning, of course, is that this ownership structure only took form in 2013 following major changes at the company. Prior to that, the group was wholly owned and controlled by an Irish company.

“ Amongst the four [print houses], Independent Media ranks as one of the most transformed companies...”

Independent Media boasts 20 of the most-read newspapers in South Africa, including four indigenous language titles. Isolezwe (IsiZulu) and Isolezwe lesiXhosa (IsiXhosa) both reach over 4.5-million South Africans in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape respectively. Two other indigenous language newspapers appear on the weekend, Isolezwe ngoMqibelo and Isolezwe ngeSonto. Both newspapers reach a combined audience of almost 1.3-million readers.

Other daily newspapers in this stable include the Cape Argus and Cape Times catering to Cape Town audiences; The Mercury for KwaZulu-Natal audiences; The Star (Johannesburg and surrounding areas); and Pretoria News (Pretoria and surrounding areas). The weekend press includes Saturday Star, Weekend Argus, Sunday Independent and Sunday Tribune. In addition to this, the company also circulates at least 646,000 community newspapers, spread across various titles and all distributed within the Western Cape.⁵

Independent Media also launched, in 2015, an Africa-focused newspaper, African Independent, which is distributed in at least 40 countries on the continent. Further, the consortium also started the Africa News Agency (ANA) to “provide the first news and content syndication service by Africans for an African and global audience”.⁶

Times Media Group

Over the years, TMG has gone through a series of changes that have resulted in the company showing significant progress towards transformation. With black ownership pegged at 58%, TMG holds the status of a Level 3 B-BBEE contributor⁷ although ownership by black women is still less than 30%. And while the company is transforming its procurement mechanisms as indicated by high performance on enterprise and supplier development, it still does not have a black-owned designated group supplier.

The TMG stable has 10 newspapers (dailies and weeklies) most of which are both popular and influential. These include, among others, The Sunday Times, Business Day, The Times, Sowetan, Sunday World, Daily Dispatch, Financial Mail and Weekend Post.

The Sunday Times has a circulation of almost 340,000 which attracts a readership of over 3.7-million South Africans per week. With a circulation of 92,000, Sowetan is read by just over 1.6-million people every day and Sunday World is read by 1.5-million people every week, on a circulation of 94,000. Business Day’s readership of 62,000 comes from a circulation of 25,800.⁸

Other TMG interests in broadcast and content combine to strengthen the brand and give it significant reach within South Africa, estimated at over 8-million people.

Media24

Media24 publishes at least 80 newspapers (dailies and weeklies combined) and is one of the most recognisable brands. Of these, it claims to have seven of the leading 10 titles in South Africa in its stable. These include Beeld, City Press, Daily Sun, Die Burger, The Witness and Rapport. As part of the large Naspers group, Media24’s interests also expand to “digital media and services, newspapers, magazines, e-commerce, book publishing, print and distribution.”

Approximately 5-million people per day, mostly ‘blue collar’ workers and other lower income households, read The Daily Sun. The newspaper gains this readership from a reported circulation of close to 440,000. The community media titles within the Media24 stable have a combined circulation of 1.3-million per week and are published in both English and Afrikaans. City Press (English) has paid circulation of almost 85,000 and readership exceeding 1.5-million per week.⁹ Its sister newspaper, Rapport (Afrikaans) has a paid circulation of almost 130,000 and a readership upwards of 1-million.¹⁰

Media24 is a Level 4 B-BBEE contributor, meaning – in simple terms – equity ownership, management control of the company enterprise and supplier development, among other indicators, point to a transforming entity but one that has not yet achieved desired targets. Consequently, voting rights of black people within the company stand at 35%, (16% for black women); economic interest of black people is at 53%, (25% for black women). ‘Interest’

here is broadly defined because in the final analysis, the company, as its B-BBEE scorecard¹¹ will show, has black ownership of less than 51%, (less than 30% for black women) and has no designated black supplier for the group.

Caxton & CTP

Caxton & CTP is, arguably, the smallest company in the sector. Its flagship print media product is The Citizen, which appears on weekdays and on Saturdays. There is also a raft of community newspapers within this stable and these are “either company-owned or major partnerships and total 120 publications”.¹² The Citizen has a daily circulation of 55,000, with the circulation of the Saturday paper at 37,000. The paper has a readership of just over 100,000.

On B-BBEE performance, Caxton & CTP fell one level to Level 4 between April 2015 and April 2016. This has left black ownership at 18% – down from 19% – and ownership by black women remains at 6%. Although not a significant drop, this is a trajectory that does not point to the kind of progression one would expect to see in light of the narrative of transformation. That said, Caxton & CTP is doing well on enterprise and supplier development.

Beyond newspapers, the company’s other interests are in “magazines, commercial print, book printing, stationery, packaging and labels, as well as manufacturing ink for web presses”.¹³

Mail & Guardian and The New Age

The dominance of the above four entities gives them a significant advantage in accessing the media market and more importantly, perhaps, in controlling the day-to-day discourse on politics, democracy and economic development. However, there are other players in the market also worthy of mention.



The Mail & Guardian sits alone in its stable. The circulation of 30,000 belies its influence within the South Africa media space and also in nationwide political and economic discourse. With a readership of over 55,000 per week, the newspaper is synonymous with investigative journalism and thought leadership.

Zimbabwean entrepreneur, Trevor Ncube, holds a 78% stake in the entity. Another 10% is held by the company’s staff share trust and development investment fund. The remaining 2% is distributed between other minorities.

On November 1, 2016, Mail & Guardian appointed a new editor-in-chief, Khadija Patel, who took over from Verashni Pillay. The passing of the baton from one woman to another can be interpreted as commitment by the publication to maintain a transformed newsroom on both gender and identity fronts. Pillay now edits The Huffington Post – South Africa.

Scant information is available about The New Age, owned by TNA Media and distributed as a nationwide newspaper. It has links to Oakbay Investments, a company currently mired in controversy over allegations of illegal activities and improper conduct with several institutions of government, including the presidency. Justification for the company’s involvement in the media is given thus: “Oakbay and its portfolio companies seek to empower ordinary people. In the case of TNA, this happens through connecting and informing communities across the country, enabling them to stay up to date with local and international news, as well as actively raising awareness of local issues that affect South Africans.”¹⁴

Since its launch in December 2010, The New Age has refused to have its circulation figures officially audited and therefore information about its print runs and readership is not readily available. Information on its B-BBEE is also not easily accessible so there is no telling what the ownership structure looks like and what the extent of black ownership is.

Community press

Central to ownership and transformation of media in South Africa are independent publishers who service various communities that are routinely ignored and marginalised by the big, urban press. These communities are predominantly rural and poor. Not only do community media provide vital access to information, they also contribute towards literacy development and the nurturing of a newspaper-reading culture.

At least 87 community newspapers are published every week, commanding a circulation of over 1.2-million. Another 38 newspapers are published every fortnight, while 55 are published on a monthly basis. This means over 6.5-million newspapers are circulated by independent publishers across South Africa every month.

“Ninety-seven of the [community newspaper titles] publish in indigenous languages...”

Ninety-seven of the titles within this ambit publish in indigenous languages, while the rest are either in English or Afrikaans. This is quite significant for transformation as it points to transformed newsrooms, however small they might be.

The Association of Independent Publishers (AIP)¹⁵ says black-owned newspapers amount to 60% of the titles. Women own 18% of the newspapers. Although much remains to be done in getting women to become media owners while publishing independently, black ownership of community media shows a rapidly transforming sector that, perhaps with more attention and support, may change the fortunes of print media in South Africa.

Does ownership equate to transformation?

So, as far as transformation is concerned, the position from the ANC as expressed in its MAT statements appears to go against the grain of what is happening in the print media industry, for example. As pointed out, among the legacy media companies in South Africa – Media24, TMG, Independent Media and Caxton-CTP – two of these (TMG and Independent Media) are black-owned, adding to a raft of other big broadcast media companies that are also transformed.

So, transformation appears to be happening at the highest level in the print media sector in South Africa, albeit at a slow pace. At the same time, indications of transformation occurring at the community newspaper appear strong.

However, questions of influence and control at the ownership level should also be asked. “Management control,” as defined by the Print and Digital Media Transformation Task Team (PDMTTT), “refers to the effective control of an enterprise by black people and the employment of black people in positions that are core to the operations of a company.”¹⁶

“While entities like Independent Media and TMG are black-owned, shareholder matrices might tell a different story...”

The term “effective control” is interesting. While entities like Independent Media and TMG are black-owned, shareholder matrices might tell a different story because of various confidentiality clauses. Although a case can be made for transparency, given the level of interest and investment in big media by entities such as the Public Investment Corporation (PIC) as well as various workers’ trade unions, the inner workings of the media are not common knowledge. In addition, other shareholders (who can sometimes be very influential) often choose to remain confidentiality, hence accounting for their power and influence becomes difficult to do.

Money from the PIC and trade unions, which is used to invest in some media companies mostly, belongs to black South Africans. But this is the extent of ownership and it does not translate into a wholly representative seat in the boardroom, complete with voting powers. This is not unusual. It is a common pattern within most media that pass the B-BBEE criteria.

Moreover, the exercise of voting rights, among other

powers and restrictions, may yield different consequences than what may appear otherwise obvious on paper. Interestingly, this means that even where black owners of media exist, share structures might not empower them to gain effective control of the media companies they are part of. For example, one of the biggest media companies, Naspers (the parent company of Media 24), has black ownership at 26%. However, media reports say, “23% of the ownership is through mandated funds and 2.2% through retail investors holding beneficial ownership on behalf of black South Africans.”¹⁷ This gives the black ownership very little scope to influence key decisions at the company using the strength of ownership percentage. At the same time, a notion of transformation that does

“In South Africa we are extremely lucky that we live in a society in which seeing women in positions of leadership is not a strange sight...”

not include an enquiry into ideology does not account for the preferences of media owners and their motivation for running media companies. Is this interest driven by the commercial value of running a media company? Is it to promote a social good? Perhaps it is designed to channel political interest towards a certain direction? Or all of the above apply?

For the ruling party, the ANC, management control, especially for print media in South Africa is a site of struggle for transformation.

The PDMTTT definition expands further: “it [management control] aims to address certain key issues surrounding black management and control of enterprises. These issues include the representation of black people at executive board level, particularly as executive directors, and the inclusion of black people in driving the implementation of operational and strategic decisions.”

While doing this would be progressive and in compliance with media transformation objectives, does black management control necessarily translate into a pro-black outlook in the media? Does it mean a positioning of the media in accordance with the black government of the day? Does black leadership mean the automatic transformation of values, ideas and perspectives in management and content structure?

Gender also plays a part here. In 2015, for example, communications minister, Faith Muthambi, decried the lack of representation by women within most newsrooms. “As the government,” she said, “we sincerely hope that transformation in our media will also translate in more gender-balanced content and newspaper columns by women. Also, we would also like to see and hear more women voices in media.”¹⁸ This call demands deliberate action and as former City Press editor, Ferial Haffajee, said to fellow editors from elsewhere in Africa in January 2016: “One of the first things I did as an editor was ensure our newsroom had a dedicated female source book, so there was no excuse not to ask for a comment from a woman in finance or politics or health.”¹⁹

By comparison, South African newsrooms fare better in this regard than their counterparts on the continent, although more still needs to be done. “In South Africa, we are extremely lucky that we live in a society in which seeing women in positions of leadership is not a strange sight,” says an editor of an influential weekly newspaper interviewed for this article. “But we still need to ask ourselves how we can reach women better as part of the transformation process.”

Another (former) editor says: “My main approach was to make interventions that led to diversity, in particular, the inclusion of more black women in editorial. So we hired graduates on [a] permanent basis and we affirmed them and other journalists by giving them prominence in the newspaper. We also diversified our sources because policy can be abstract and you have to talk to real people who give you anecdotes and make policy real.”

“The question of what motivates interest in owning media has to be asked...”

Finally, the question of what motivates interest in owning media has to be asked. What also has to be asked is the question of why a democratic government would be wary of the media if, indeed, its broad objective is to develop the State in tandem with majority aspirations? Why would that government take significant interest in the regulation of media and make policy proposals that call for the support of a specific ideological orientation?

Investments made into media companies – especially by large bodies such as the PIC – require that profits be realised. Therefore, pressure is exerted on editorial and advertising departments within media companies to produce products that bring in money and keep shareholders satisfied. Thus, the implications for reporting, for example, on stories that are not received by audiences become quite apparent, especially for privately-owned media.

“In any case,” writes finance and economics journalist, Reg Rumney, “the link between ownership and the ideology of the news seems to be more complex than is commonly assumed, and deprecates the power of news consumers. Can a news outlet build or retain a mass audience if it routinely overlooks what is news to many, or does not supply some need or desire of the audience?”²⁰

Disempowering editors

Against the backdrop of transforming media, the existence of black (and women) editors in big national newsrooms and expanded citizen interest in media operations, are media owners really determining the news agenda and advancing specific social, economic and political agendas? Traditionally sacrosanct lines between editorial independence and revenue-generation are becoming relatively easy to breach, with serious consequences for both the practice and business of journalism in South Africa.

At the beginning of 2016, the South African National Editors Forum (Sanef) identified this as one of the contemporary challenges facing the South African newsroom, and recognised that editors were coming under immense pressure in fulfilling their roles and defending their editorial mandates.

“The consequences of such pressures,” Sanef said in a statement, “have manifested themselves in the form of direct proprietorial/managerial interference in editorial decision-making processes and indirectly through the blurring of the lines between advertising and editorial.”²¹

Such developments, to be sure, are a sign of changing times in media and journalism around the world. And, as the evolution continues, editors are now confronted with the need to adapt, change and innovate. In most cases, these changes are occurring – or have to happen at least – against the backdrop of markedly different perspectives and approaches between editors, executive managers and media owners. Except in cases where there is alignment in perspective and approach – and this is not common – conflict becomes inevitable.

“This conflictual and strained relationship between editors and proprietors/managers,” Sanef added, “has resulted in the resignation of a number of editors over the past two years, an untenable situation that threatens the very essence of media freedom that is crucial to the sustenance of our democracy.”²²

Traditionally, relationships between editors and executive managers are not supposed to pose significant threats to editorial independence and media freedom at large. As best practice, editorial departments are supposed to be afforded space and autonomy to conduct their work with very minimal interference. The business side of a media company is expected to focus only on ensuring the sustainability of the company and maximising shareholder value without necessarily delving into editorial matters.

“Editorial direction should be largely determined by the editor. As an editor, the board appoints you but you should be at liberty to assemble your own team in the newsroom as provided in some in-house instruments such as the Editorial Charter,” says a former editor.

But, in a rapidly changing environment, shareholders might not exercise patience where they would rather be making profit. So, how can editors create space for other marginalised voices in their media products while still meeting targets demanded by shareholders?

“Editorial direction should be largely determined by the editor...”

“In my case, owners believed we should focus only on a particular target market – the big companies and businesses. Yet my view was that the [news] paper is not covering just business, but politics and other social issues as well. This is where the conflict would begin,” says a former editor.

This conflict, the editor added, culminated in him being held responsible for the publication losing its niche market, reinforced by a rapid decline in circulation, even though he was hired at a time when the newspaper was already bleeding. “With the democratisation of media, following the advent of social media, mainstream media have lost some of the authority over public opinion. Our business model has been disrupted. In addition, journalism is still expensive business. Good journalism is expensive,” says a Cape Town-based editor.

And, expensive journalism often means little profit for the owners and in most cases, the latter would like to see journalism being practiced at minimal cost.

Still, across the industry, decline in circulation is usually used as justification for managerial interference, as focus shifts to the bottom line. Further, if drops in circulation figures lead to loss of advertising revenue, then editors often have some explaining to do to both executive managers and owners.

The political economy of news and advertising

“Journalism, especially in our context, is supposed to pursue social justice and most editors appear not to appreciate this fact. In doing so, they neglect one of their fundamental sources of power and end up applying, to their work, no form of consciousness that is consistent with the notions of social justice,” says an editor at a daily.

This thinking bears in mind that South Africa is a country with a complex and diverse social, economic and political landscape. Media exist as part of that landscape and editors’ own personal experiences have a bearing on the choices they make every day. Speaking on a panel discussing media transformation in 2015, former Business Day editor, Songezo Zibi, remarked:

“Media is, in all its forms, always a reflection of the society which forms it. The transformation that needs to happen in society – gender and class – needs to happen in the media as well. We cannot expect it to be an island to provide these things which society is not.”

Yet, as editors bring society into being through their publications and platforms, the process of gathering, editing and finally disseminating news and other features such as columns and broadcast programmes, they can hardly do so without feeling the pressure imposed by advertisers through advertising and circulation departments in media companies. The latter seems to be prevailing over editors and their newsrooms. “Some editors in our company have become de facto advertising executives,” says an editor at one of the largest media companies in the country.

He adds: “Instead of selling space in our titles, we’re now selling content, meaning as editors, we have to sell advertising to clients and usually with a promise of positive editorial coverage. This is a source of deep friction between editors and commercial executives. Editors strongly believe that it should be possible to meet

the challenges of an evolving media business without eroding editorial independence and integrity.”

This possibility, however, can only exist when both editorial and commercial arms of a media company share a common vision and understanding.

“Unless there is buy-in from the owners and commercial managers,” says an editor of an influential weekly newspaper, “some positive editorial changes become hard to pursue if advertising space is not being sold in specific sections of the newspaper, for example.”

“Journalism...is supposed to pursue social justice and most editors appear not to appreciate this fact...”

She adds: “I’m giving prominence to content that speaks to issues such as decolonisation in one section of the newspaper. This is a good thing, given the contemporary issues in the country and I’m proud of the work we’re putting out. However, the advertising department is telling me that certain advertisers don’t want to place their adverts in that section. They say it [the section] is too serious for their brand. What must I do then?”

In situations such as these, there could be a possibility of having ‘positive interference’ from media owners or indeed, management executives, and to get investors and advertisers to appreciate necessary changes in the editorial direction so that media can also fulfil their expected mandate in society.

“In my case,” said another editor; “I have been extremely lucky to have an owner and executives who buy into my vision so there has been no pressure to drop proposed changes in favour of advertising revenue. I am aware, however, that not many of my colleagues can say the same.”

Where owners and managers support editorial vision, conflict is easily managed and advertisers can be encouraged to support strategic changes.

“Without buy-in from big business to support new editorial direction, we’re hitting a brick wall as we include other sections of society,” says an editor who has transitioned from digital to print.

She adds: “Business and the rest of society have to transform with us so that the bottom line is not affected by current changes. Otherwise, we are being forced to retreat from pursuing certain societal imperatives, and that alone is a big threat to media freedom and to the very existence of media in South Africa. It can’t be good for us or our democracy as well.”

Nothing short of a collaborative approach between editorial and commercial sections will inspire confidence. Perhaps native advertising is the early stage of collaboration, with the model possibly evolving over time.

“I think the industry does need to find new revenue streams to subsidise the vital role of journalism. Native and branded content online and in the newspaper as well as in broadcast, is fine as long as there is a clear delineation between the team that produces native advertising and the team that produces independent

“Business and the rest of society have to transform with us so that the bottom line is not affected...”

editorial content,” says a freelance editor. The space to negotiate the uneven terrain between editorial and commercial interests of a media company is usually occupied by the Managing Editor. While a significant number of newsrooms still maintain this position, the challenge highlighted above – of editors becoming advertising executives – means that managing editors are becoming senior advertising executives, if not something akin to the position of managing director or chief executive officer, altogether.

Also, the role of a managing editor is usually seen as a luxury in most newsrooms. As media companies seek to maximise profits by implementing several measures – pre-eminently cost-cutting interventions in editorial – the office of the managing editor has not been spared. So, where it is still possible, certain editors are executing duties that would ordinarily belong to a managing editor. However, a lack of management skills on the editors’ part means that company executives can encroach into the editorial space with relative ease and impunity.

“Most editors don’t know how to create, manage and report on newsroom budgets, for example,” said an editor who has worked in both print and digital newsrooms.

He added: “this lack of knowledge automatically gives executives [managers] power and authority over decisions that have implications on how the newsroom is going to be run. What can you really do if you haven’t come up with a good budget for your team and you have no choice but to accept what you have been offered?”

It is not that editors are not aware of the difficult economic circumstances under which their companies are operating. In fact, there is an appreciation of this, and the need to make media companies both viable and sustainable in a difficult operating environment that is being fiercely disrupted and rapidly changing.

“The squeeze on revenues,” Sanef noted in early 2016, “has spawned new pressures on media companies and industry bodies, including job losses. Of particular concern for Sanef is that the state of affairs is not only unhealthy for editorial departments to fulfil their functions, but that it may also result in increased tensions between editors and management.”²³

Such tensions are outcomes of the continuous battle for media companies to survive and remain relevant. “Media companies are desperate for survival and have become susceptible to commercial influences,” says a senior editor and digital strategist.

He adds: “The pressure is on, and it’s very tough to work in this climate. There is lots of pressure from advertisers to get more prominence over editorial. This is a time for editors to be strong.”

To be strong, however, requires mastery in balancing both the editorial and commercial interests of a media company.

“Editors are in a difficult, delicate fix in that they find themselves having to balance between making their products sustainable on the one hand and also producing quality product that defend the underdog, democracy and take on the powerful,” says a former editor who is now an executive.

“The dilemma,” he goes on to say, “is that being oblivious of the financial sustainability of the media means there will be no newspaper to produce, and democracy will suffer. But neglecting quality journalism has dire consequences for democracy.”

“There is lots of pressure from advertisers to get more prominence over editorial. This is a time for editors to be strong...”

Editorial independence, media and democracy

The link between journalism and democracy is neither coincidental nor overstated. A free press is the lifeblood of a democratic society. Therefore, media owners have a particular role to play in ensuring that their products are making useful contributions towards the enrichment of South African democracy. But, do editors have confidence that the owners of the companies they work for appreciate the role of the media in a democracy?

“Some do not understand the role and consequences [because] they have a short-term view and value their salaries, their top positions and making profits more than editorial independence and the role of media in a democracy,” says a former editor.

Profit-driven journalism that comes at the expense of principles and editorial independence flirts – quite dangerously – with unethical behaviour. And, when this happens, the threat to media freedom becomes quite significant internally. As a result, one of the very first lines of defence against such threats is breached, often without consequence for the protagonists.

“Some media owners in South Africa are exceptionally bad for media freedom,” says a former editor, adding: “where I used to work, the owner was an ethically-compromised individual who did not care about editorial independence or what consequences his actions had on media freedom and democracy at large.”

Attempts by this editor to defend his editorial department by exercising autonomy only served to attract threats of sanction.

“I received more threats from owners and executives than from politicians in my entire term as editor. The people we had to be careful of were the owners. I received more threatening letters from companies than politicians. Owners are the real threat to media freedom,” he says.

In some cases, to be sure, media owners understand the role of media in a democracy. “Yes, fortunately, my managing director is a former newspaper editor and he understands the consequences of crossing that line on the company and the impact on democracy and the country in general,” says an executive who used to be in editorial.

An editor responsible for digital content at one of South Africa’s largest media companies also says he is fortunate to have an executive who appreciates the role of the media in a democracy.

“I have a CEO who understands journalism and editorial independence,” he says, and adds: “Editorial independence makes commercial sense.”

In yet other cases, however, media owners understand the role of media in a democracy but there is a political dimension to how editorial independence is understood, promoted and protected.

“Talk about the media’s role in a democracy is a more useful tool to advance political positions and it overrides simple philosophical notions,” says a current affairs editor at one of the largest broadcasters in South Africa.

“Our newsroom is vulnerable to whichever dominant faction that exists in the ANC at any given time. Most ANC parliamentarians regard us as an extension of the GCIS [Government Communication and Information System] or at worst, a public relations organisation of the ruling party,” he further says.

At the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) for example, evidence of managerial and political interference in editorial decision making emerged via a 2016 parliamentary inquiry. Testimonies given by a group of eight journalists, commonly referred to as The SABC 8, speaks to managerial overreach in deciding the news agenda and strategic focus.

“Our newsroom is vulnerable to whichever dominant faction...exists in the ANC at any given time...”

“We are only eight among others,” said Krivani Pillay, to parliament, adding: “I have been a journalist for 16 years, and 12 of those have been at the public broadcaster. There is deliberate political interference.”

Another editor who was part of the SABC 8, Vuyo Mvoko, told parliament that he had to second-guess himself

because “you’re just not sure”. He also pleaded with parliament to “protect the [SABC] newsroom from political and financial pressure”.

For the SABC in particular, its role as a public broadcaster means it has a crucial role to play in a democracy. Hence, managerial and political interference in editorial with the aim of influencing or defending narrow interests should be interpreted as a threat to democracy itself.

The politics and business behind interference

Some sources of interference can be traced without difficulty. It can be a commercial executive sitting in diary meetings, breaching sacrosanct codes of best practice between editorial and commercial departments of a media company.

“In my previous role as editor, the then new group executive wanted to sit in my diary meetings and also tried to determine the front page lead of our publication,” says a former editor of a weekend newspaper.

Or, it can be the media owner(s) calling editors to order and insisting that certain stories be given less attention because of the potential harm they can cause the owners, or other people linked to them.

“I was fired from my position as editor following front-page publication of irregularities surrounding a contract awarded to a company linked to the owner of the media company I worked for,” says a former editor.

Another former editor who is now an executive says he was threatened and accused of plotting against the owner because of how his publication covered the financial dealings of the same owner.

“He [the owner] threatened to fire me, and raised issues of

“Some media owners in South Africa are exceptionally bad for media freedom...”

trust, making accusations that I wanted to take him out as proprietor. I found this to be preposterous and I resigned in protest,” he says.

In other cases, however, editorial interference occurs at the instigation of political and business actors hiding behind executives or owners, or both.

“Friends of owners, especially those who run big businesses would often complain about not being covered enough or if they are, not being covered in a positive light. They called the owner and then he would confront me with the complaints. That’s interference,” says another former editor.

He adds: “The logic is that if the big businesses are positively covered, they will advertise in the newspaper and revenue will stream in. So, as an editor you have to make sure that the relationship your newspaper has with

such big businesses is good. So, we sometimes had to end up placing positive news stories next to related advertorials as favours to the owner.”

An editor of a regional daily remarked: “You always have to be careful or you risk attracting ire from the top floor. So yes, your main job is to worry about finding your lead for tomorrow but the likely consequences for any mistake don’t escape you; they are ever-present in your mind.”

The editor further remarked: “I make the decisions on the newspaper but of course, there are a few of those odd calls that you receive once in a while if someone is unhappy with what you have reported.”

Legal constraints and confrontations

This unhappiness may lead to protracted battles in courts of law. And editors have faced quite a number of these.

Former Cape Times editor, Alide Dasnois, was, for example, involved in a court battle with her former employers, Independent Media. In May 2016, two days before a hearing at the Labour Court, the company settled with her out of court and acknowledged her editorial prerogatives as editor. She did not return to her job, however.

The SABC 8, mentioned above, are all involved in on-going court battles with their employer. They have told the Constitutional Court of South Africa that the SABC is failing to meet its mandate and that “management repeatedly causes (and continues to cause) the news to be censored”. They have also told the same court that “SABC management [has made it clear] that no criticism, dissent or debate would be tolerated regarding editorial issues...”



At present, South African editors do not have a legal defence fund, so seeking legal recourse in the aftermath of dismissal or other action requiring legal resolution becomes very difficult when costs are considered. The Open Democracy Advice Centre (ODAC) and Media Legal Defence Initiative, for example, assisted Alide Dasnois, in launching the fight against her dismissal. If she had attempted to pursue this on her own, the costs of litigation would have been prohibitive.

“The absence of a legal defence fund for editors,” yet another editor says, “to assist editors who want to challenge some executive decisions which have a bearing on their employment makes the relationship between managers and editors quite complex.”

He adds: “If you’re an editor who is grateful for employment in that role, chances of successfully challenging unjust decisions are quite slim. If you find yourself in that vulnerable position, you’ll easily accept any decisions imposed on you. A legal defence fund might empower editors in this regard, especially those who are likely to lose jobs over their editorial differences with management.”

Although quite noble an idea, coordination, funding and other support for this fund might be difficult to mobilise. However, this is something that Sanef – with its convening power – should consider as a solution.

“But then,” another editor says, “this fund should also assist smaller publications [that] do not have a lot of resources to litigate.”

“As a relatively small publication ourselves,” she says, “the amount of litigation we have to do because of the nature of our journalism (investigative journalism), costs are very high and it puts pressure on our revenue-generating streams. Yet litigation against media is a threat to media freedom. You don’t want a weak media, especially as we enter such charged political times in South Africa.”

She also adds: “By comparison, other media companies have huge legal departments because their share of the market size brings them a lot of revenue. They can afford to take on whoever comes after them. We can’t do that consistently.”

The same editor suggests cross-media co-operation in building a legal defence fund as one of the most pragmatic ways to protect media freedom and fight threats that constantly arise, especially from powerful political and business interests in society.

However, with precedents such as those being set on the regulatory front with Independent Media’s withdrawal from the Press Council, for example, fostering unity on a common objective might prove harder to do for South African media. As a result, and in the interim, options are limited for editors who may feel aggrieved by decisions taken at management level.

Resistance to interference?

How is it possible that editors – as the most senior persons in the newsroom – should find themselves in such vulnerable positions where job security becomes a trade-off with conscience and defending values of journalism?

“Age,” a financial editor says, adding: “Editors have become much younger and nowadays, you would be hard-pressed to find an editor who has edited the same publication for more than five years.”

“It’s not just about respecting older editors but being able to use experience to manoeuvre newsroom complexities, especially those involving executive managers. Youthful editors don’t always have that experience and it puts them at a disadvantage, especially when they face rather ruthless executives,” he goes on.

Does this mean editors are ceding too much power to executives without putting up a fight and asserting themselves, at the very least?

“While the professionalism from editors is a good thing to see, there appears to be some ambivalence on what the responsibility of an editor is, both in the newsroom and society,” an editor of a regional daily says.



He adds: “Editors are like football coaches; you’re only as good as your last edition. You can’t relax.”

“Not many of us have choices,” an editor of a weekly says on the matter. “There is a lot to consider when taking a stance on an issue; some editors have families they need to take care of, children they have to take through school. This has an impact on the decisions you make, especially if it’s likely not to be endorsed by executive management,” she continues.

This is a clear and present danger to editorial independence. As one of the country’s biggest media companies goes through a restructuring exercise, a number of editors have been left vulnerable.

“Of course, the company is well within its right to conduct a business restructure, done within the laws of South Africa. However, what they have done, through the restructuring process, is an unprecedented exercise that has undermined the role of editors in the group and consequently in the South African media,” says a senior editor at the company.

“There are editors at the company who raised their concern at these sad developments (restructuring) but newly-appointed or reshuffled editors have been relatively quiet, out of fear of reprisals,” the same editor further says.

The editor continues: “What editors have been left with are reduced, juniorised newsrooms which are expected to produce high quality newspapers. In addition to the consequences, editors have signed new letters of appointment, which have key performance indicators focused on the commercial health of the titles they edit. Hence, editors are now held responsible for the commercial performance of their publications, a development which introduces a dangerous threat to their independence.”

Needless to say, editors speak among themselves and support each other. Sanef and other media institutions, for example, are often creating spaces for editors to speak with the aim of addressing prevailing challenges.

Towards a free press and an open democracy

In South African society, media occupy moral high ground, given their watchdog role, executed by most media with the tenacity of a bull terrier. In public imagination, therefore, and a time when democratic institutions are being severely tested, the role of editors – as the interface between media products and their audiences – has never been more significant.

“While the professionalism from editors is a good thing to see, there appears to be some ambivalence on what the responsibility of an editor is...”

But, are media owners afraid of their audiences, unnecessarily? A former editor seems to think so. “Owners tend to be afraid of readers unnecessarily. After I left the newspaper I edited, the same people the owners thought they were protecting were actually thinking the opposite. I still find this fascinating in some of the interactions I have with readers. In most cases, therefore, the fears were unfounded. A lot of readers have matured very fast and can embrace positive changes in the media.”

“The public is not stupid,” another editor says.

Increased interactivity, enabled by the Internet, between media platforms and their audiences can only put to rest some of these fears. In certain cases, however, some media have had to shut their online comments section because of the vitriol that ended up being spewed on such pages.

“In all of this,” says the editor who is also a digital strategist, “we have to constantly remind ourselves of the importance of journalism in South African society.” The last word belongs to a former editor who now sits at management level:

“Given the change of the game and terrain, we need to rewrite the rules of the game to avoid unnecessary conflict between management and editors, taking into account the tough economic environment we find ourselves in, and the freedom and independence required for editors to do their jobs. Without change of attitude and rules, we will continue seeing the retrenchments of journalists and closure of newspapers, which negates our belief in a viable free press, open democracy, accountability.”

Conclusion: The need for editorial independence to secure transformation

A sometimes paranoid narrative of anxiety over control has been advanced by a government that senses hostility from the South African press. This narrative, in short, suggests most media are deliberately and unfairly reporting on the government so as to undermine it by mobilising popular opinion against it. They do so, as the justification of the narrative goes, because most influential media have not been transformed and do not, therefore, reflect a changed country and the totality of hopes, dreams and aspirations of ordinary citizens

“Given the change of the game and terrain, we need to rewrite the rules of the game...”

As a consequence, transformation in ownership and – effectively – in ideology is needed. This article suggests that transformation in ownership does not equate to changes in media ideology, and that the real tension lies between the economic imperatives behind selling newspapers and the need for an independent, objective

and progressive journalism. Transformation, in the most progressive sense, cannot occur without this dynamic – as a controlling dynamic – being taken into account.

There have been changes in ownership of the South African press since 1994, albeit gradually. Occurring as they have within the larger media companies, such changes prove commitment on their part to adapt by responding to concerns raised around transformation in the media. But to quote Ron Krabill: “Successful transformation will be achieved when the media reflects in its ownership, staffing and product, the society within which it operates, not only in terms of race, but also socio-economic status, gender, religion, sexual orientation, region, language, etc. This is only possible if access is opened again in ownership, staffing and product not only to the emerging black elite, but also to grassroots communities of all colours.”²⁴ In this regard, community level publishing appears to be in a healthy state, suggesting a vibrant new market of readers, and seems to meet the criteria of progressive transformation.

“The word transformation,” remarked communications minister Faith Muthambi in August 2016, “is often a loaded one in South Africa. It means different things to different people and conjures up all sorts of connotations. At times it has been demonised or resisted; often without reason or just cause...Transformation is about positive change.”²⁵

Negotiating a path of such ‘positive change’ described by Muthambi has become hugely contested in South African media, which are having to deal with this political challenge while also facing many other issues. These include changes of media owners and managers, the retrenchment of senior editorial staff, and declining circulation figures for print media.

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PART 2: /OUTSIDE

IN THE CROSS-HAIRS OF THE HASHTAG

By Ruth Becker

The student protests on campuses around the country have challenged traditional media coverage in many ways. The representation of many different voices may have officially ushered in a different democracy in media. That the “shorthand” for the protests became #FeesMustFall indicates the significance of social media in this coverage, more specifically Twitter.

In October 2015, the media monitoring organisation, ROi Africa, reported that almost 60% of media coverage on the campaign was from social media. NovusOnline, another media monitor, reported that 1.3-million posts on #FeesMustFall were made on social media, 99.3% of these on Twitter.

While comment and observation about the role of social media in general, and more specifically in protest amongst young people, is not new, a summary of these key points here could be useful.

There is an oft-repeated observation that social media allow many points of view and many places for people, specifically students or young people, to express opinion, and they therefore balance the bias of conventional media. There are examples of this emerging from the #FeesMustFall protests. During the 2015 protests at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), for instance, traditional media ran a story on students attacking a motorist.¹ It turned out later that the motorist had deliberately driven into the students before he was assaulted. Symbolically this is suggestive of what many perceive as mainstream media bias, and omitting crucial issues of context.

Other criticisms of mainstream media included a geographic bias to Wits and the University of Cape Town (UCT), based in the same cities as most media houses. Rhodes University entered mainstream media when police went into the residences there.² The University of Limpopo and University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) didn't ‘make the headlines’

in the same way, except when there was destruction of property or confrontation. Students from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University protested outside the *The Herald* against its perceived bias.³

The role of police may have come under greater scrutiny in 2016, possibly due to a more extended period of protest and moments of greater confrontation. The focus of protests shifted to debate about police violence and criticism of universities allowing police, and private security, onto campuses. Several news reports raised questions of “other elements” escalating violence between protestors and police.

But these traditional news values of violence, proximity and the action or inaction of police, arguably put mainstream journalists on the outside of the story. And as the interviews published here show, social media were crucial for journalism to remain relevant.

The journalist Stuart Thomas has commented in *memeburn*⁴ about how instant connectivity helped #FeesMustFall spread – specifically how social media were the main source when protests broke out at Rhodes, as traditional media couldn't get there or wasn't there fast enough.

Jacobs and Wassermann in their article ‘The day mainstream media became old in South Africa’ look at the stereotypes of protestors as irrational, violent and disruptive. As research reflected here shows, social media were themselves disruptive to media norms and processes – and were used in different ways, to mobilise, inform, correct traditional media and give opinion.

They have speed on their side and many people have access. They also allow different groups of people to follow and interact. Academics and parents could follow events on Twitter, for example.

Journalists have also used platforms such as WhatsApp to inform each other of events. Although this may be similar to ways in which journalists have shared information in the past, it may also reflect a different professional solidarity, as well as be indicative of diminishing resources in newsrooms.



Student protesters throw stones during #FeesMustFall protests at Wits University, 10 October 2016.

Photo: Ihsaan Haffejee/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)

Another more recent use of social media has seen media houses using social media to back up their stories. A clear example of this was when Anglican bishop Jo Seoka tried to refute a media house's story that he'd been marching with Wits students to disrupt classes. "He and his church's outrage were halted in their tracks when the media house sent him the video off their social media account."

Journalists on the outside

But the mainstream media remained slow – at least at first – to understand student concerns. "Our coverage was very distinct from what others were doing particularly early on when protests were largely ignored by big media houses or were featured as an inconvenience on traffic reports [on Radio 702]," says Khadija Patel from The Daily Vox. "We were at Wits University. We were speaking to students and allowing the students to articulate their message for a broader audience."

This was a distance from student issues amongst mainstream media that one could argue produced fringes of violence against the normative safety afforded the journalist profession as witness to events.

In 2016, some media carried pieces commenting on attacks on journalists during the protests. The Mail & Guardian, for instance, carried a piece by Glenda Daniels on violence against journalists. This was written in the context of service delivery protests and violence being stitched into protests in South Africa.

Daniels links some of the mistrust to under-resourced newsrooms, noting that journalists do not have time to spend time on the ground understanding the particular issues and interacting with different faces in the protest, including activists who may not trust the media. The article also points to journalists being attacked not only by police but also private security in the more recent student protests.

Of particular concern is the likelihood of photographers or videographers being attacked by students, possibly because people think police can use the footage. This was also noted by younger journalists covering the protests, mainly in Johannesburg. Students at Wits apparently thought it was photographs of protestor Mcebo Dlamini throwing rocks that led to his arrest. This view was echoed by Adriaan Basson in an article titled 'We don't want News24 here. We will kill them here'. He describes one of their reporters, Kaveel Singh, being manhandled and arrested by police at UKZN for covering #FeesMustFall protests at that campus. Basson says Singh's video footage of police strong-arming protesting students was deleted by police.

Basson goes on to describe another incident in which one of their reporters, Lizeka Tandwa, had to be hospitalised after being hit by a brick during clashes between students and police at Wits University. He writes that a colleague reported hearing a small group of students (he says

students) saying they didn't want news24 there and the naked threat of "we will kill them".

Basson lists other assaults on journalists during this time and goes on to write about the threat of self-censorship when covering #FeesMustFall through "either embedding ourselves in one side of the story or working from the far fringes from where we can't see the wood for the trees." His closing comment: "It becomes increasingly difficult to engage with the substance of the arguments when you are being threatened with being 'killed' or pepper sprayed every time you show your press card."

Journalism reflected society's divisions

In October 2016, PEN held an event to discuss coverage of #FeesMustFall. This included the presentation of a paper by Selina Mudavanhu titled 'Baboons, hooligans and revolutionaries'. While specific to UCT, her conclusions speak to the deep divisions in South African society. Also in 2016, gender and feminism divisions within the movement surfaced.



Protester stands in front of burning bus in Braamfontein during Wits #FeesMustFall protests, 10 October 2016.

Photo: Ihsaan Haffejee/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)



Students and staff protest to keep UCT open, 30 September 2016.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)

As various commentators observed, gender struggles within political movements are seldom aired in public.

This draws connections with other movements globally, including Black Lives Matter, decolonising the mind, indigo child, intersectionality, horizontal leadership, “white capital” etc. #FeesMustFall becomes, in this way, a broader philosophical or political movement linking “Fallists” globally.

These are concerns alien to much of the editorial interests of a conservative mainstream media. As Tsholofelo Wesi, a reporter at The Citizen Digital, said in interviews published here, “[i]f it wasn’t for social media I don’t think I would have been so keenly aware of the feminist and queer politics that emerged from the protests. Social media allowed for diversity of voices and forced journalists to look for fresh story angles.”

The use of social media by the students and their allies, as well as by publishers such as The Daily Vox, spoke from the heart of the protests. Professional journalism was somehow caught on the fringes – separate from deep-seated concerns that other alternative media platforms were able to reflect. This separation, at times, spilled over into direct threats to the safety of journalists themselves, not only from the state or private security, but from students too. The mainstream media were caught in the crosshairs of the hashtag, reporting from the outside, feverishly playing catch-up online.

#UNSILENCINGVOICES

By Doreen Zimbizi

There are several schools of thought on how the 2015 #FeesMustFall movement started. However, what is not in dispute is that the protests, which started off as #WitsFeesMustFall, revived student political activism in a way that had not been witnessed in South Africa’s tertiary institutions post-1994 as they evolved into a national movement. During the largely peaceful but distinctive 10-day campaign (October 14-23, 2015) which is the focus of my study, the students used non-traditional media and communication methods, to unite, mobilise and communicate their discontent.

Part of my research interest was the impact of social media on the newsroom – and the extent to which both social media and what I called “alternative media”⁶ gave the students a voice in a way that had not been seen in the past. I focused in particular on The Daily Vox, Independent Online (IOL), TimesLIVE and The Citizen Digital, framing the The Daily Vox as alternative media. What was clear from my research is that social media and other online platforms were effective as alternative sources of information for journalists covering the protests. This in turn had a positive impact on the coverage as students used it effectively in telling their own stories. What follows are extracts from my interviews with journalists who covered the protests.

“...some kind of lunacy”

“Our coverage was very distinct from what others were doing particularly early on when protests were largely ignored by big media houses or were featured as an inconvenience on traffic reports [on Radio 702],” says Khadija Patel, co-founding editor of The Daily Vox. “We were at Wits University. We were speaking to students and allowing the students to articulate their message for a broader audience. From the get-go we sought to understand why the students were protesting instead of dismissing the protests as some kind of lunacy.”

“But most importantly, we had been covering student movements for months before October 14, 2015. We were doing Google Hangouts with student leaders and Vox Pops, so we were plugged in with the student leadership and the student activism that was happening on university campuses. We had a sense that something was happening but we could not predict how it would coalesce and what form it would eventually take. We were best placed to take the story forward. I think [mainstream media] changed to be more sympathetic towards students after the protests outside Parliament.”

“From early in the morning we had been trending on Twitter,” adds Aisha Dadi Patel a senior reporter at The Daily Vox. “The movement itself, as much as it was on the ground, it was a social media movement. So when people were looking for updates on #FeesMustFall, they got links and headlines.

“I think that was when people noticed that our coverage was very different. We had videos, pictures and it was so much easier to interpret or judge [for themselves] what was going on. It’s literally a case of I saw something, took a video and a picture and uploaded directly. I had an iPad with data so I could do it spontaneously. It’s easy to capture a 30-second video, caption and upload it. It started off as #WitsFeesMustFall before it became a national movement on Monday October 19. So when people were looking at what was going on at Wits, they were looking at hashtags and online. So obviously they could see for themselves what the situation was.

We garnered an audience immediately, and because we were familiar with student issues our audience was able to trust us. The response was immense and our website crashed a couple times. We did have a very strong engagement. We were strong on all social networks”.

“You could smell it in the headlines...”

But the use of social media for reporting was not confined to The Daily Vox. Tsholofelo Wesi, a reporter at The Citizen Digital found social media an “indispensable” and very effective news-gathering tool. Wesi sourced stories from students’ and universities’ Twitter timelines and tracked events on Facebook. “It was really a method of getting the bigger picture,” Wesi noted. He also focused on the other intersectional issues such as the LGBT+, queer

and feminists' voices. "If it wasn't for social media I don't think I would have been so keenly aware of the feminist and queer politics that emerged from the protests. Social media allowed for diversity of voices and forced journalists to look for fresh story angles. You could even smell it in the headlines — and the clickbaits".

"I reported what was happening and presented the various students' views as they happened. We were required to tweet updates, photos and video clips. It's a vital tool for reporters," said Gertrude Makhafola, the only news agency (ANA) journalist interviewed for this study.

Adrian Ephraim, digital content editor at IOL, said it was from social media that they understood the emerging narrative of the protests: "Social media was the fulcrum on which the protests shifted between the media and public discourses. I don't think we went into the story with a preconceived narrative. Social media helped us to understand the story better, and the nuances of what was a very important national story. Social media allowed students to become our eyes and ears on the ground." But Dominic Mahlangu, deputy editor at TimesLIVE, admitted that mainstream media was playing catch-up



Keeping cool: UCT #FeesMustFall protests.

as alternative media set the agenda for the coverage. "I first came to the story by following the chatter on Twitter and Facebook," he said. "Twitter was far ahead in terms of covering the story because the students were actually reporting on what was happening on the ground. Yes, students [and social media] set the agenda for how the story was reported. That's why we quoted verbatim what students were saying [on social media]. We took our lead from students on social media. Definitely, we had to up our game. In fact we had to use unconventional methods [such as] monitoring social media, asking questions on social media. We picked influencers, people who were telling us 'I'm inside the meeting and this is what is being said'. We took that information and verified it with the student leaders and in most cases they confirmed it. So it made the story even more credible. That is why we had to listen to the voices on the ground while also talking to vice chancellors and others".

"Social media changed the process of monitoring the situation and finding news," said Devlin Brown, editor of The Citizen Digital.

"We relied on a network of young reporters and interns [tech savvy millennials] who monitored, trolled [student leaders such as Mcebo Dlamini and other influencers] to stay on the pulse of story."

"The angle of our stories was 'team underdog' ..."

"The Daily Vox actually embarrassed mainstream media, not only with the #FeesMustFall (but subsequent stories)," said Mahlangu. "Social media is disruptive yes, but it is a good disruptor because if we [continue to] do journalism in the old way we will be irrelevant to our audiences. Everyone has a cellphone or smartphone through which they get their news. We have to make sure that the news being filtered through those platforms is credible. In fact, TimesLIVE is becoming the platform of choice. People would rather have their stories on TimesLIVE [instead of the print edition The Times] because of the interactivity. The biggest challenge is that young journalists come with the savviness of using all these gadgets but the difficulty is that they might not have the experience [to pick on the nuances and give context to stories]".

For Aisha Patel, The Daily Vox coverage was distinct because the team had context of the protests. "It's not that we said #FeesMustFall is important on the morning of October 14, 2015. We had been covering the tensions on campuses throughout the year. So we could see the build-up into something bigger. We had been listening to students' frustrations, speaking to student leaders and students on the ground about what the [latest] fee increase meant. So when the protest blew up, we knew exactly how to cover the story in terms of practicality and emotions. Our mandate at The Daily Vox is to focus on and highlight stories of those marginalised by society. For example, instead of reporting on violent protesters causing traffic jams, we focused on how starving students were protesting because that's the only way they could highlight their problems and hopefully get commitment to change. Literally the angle (of our stories) from the outset was 'team underdog'. We were looking at what mainstream media was not picking up. There were plenty people to speak to, in the grand scheme of things why are we viewing some voices as more valid, more important than others."

Mzwandile Khathi, another journalist at The Citizen Digital agreed. "[The media] focused primarily on the destruction of university property and omitted the most important part— the legitimate demands of angry and frustrated students who had exhausted all avenues to resolve the crisis." For Khathi, live reports "bore a hint of subjectivity which affected public opinion", with some sources "clearly pushing their own agendas".

Writing into the mainstream...

The Daily Vox¹ has shown that South African news sites that write from the periphery of the “mainstream”, but challenge the editorial preoccupations, biases and conceptions of “what’s news” offered by the country’s big media houses, are able to influence the news agenda and attract considerable public interest in their reportage.

A simple review of how some of the independent websites and other journalist-based initiatives define their editorial missions suggests how they aim to write into the spaces that they feel mainstream sites simply ignore, or are unable to attend. The Daily Vox, for instance, aims to “put the young citizen at the centre of news”. The website states: “Our reporters seek to find, curate and amplify the voices of young South Africans caught between the drudgery of old politics and new protectorates. Whereas the young are often at the periphery of traditional media, they are our priority.”

A similar sense of giving voice to groups that are marginalised by a mainstream news agenda, is found in GroundUp.² Launched in 2012, GroundUp defines itself as a “news agency”, and allows republication of its articles under a Creative Commons licence. “We report news that is in the public interest, with an emphasis on the human rights of vulnerable communities,” it says. “We want our stories to make a difference.”

While Black Opinion³ offers news, views and opinions from black writers, activists and commentators, Workers Media World⁴ pushes a labour agenda, and is part of a broader media training programme, with a strong interest in radio and broadcast. “We are concerned with the state of journalism, both in South Africa and internationally,” its website states. “We have seen increased media monopolies, the

corrosion of good investigative reporting and the downgrading of industrial and labour reporting.” It has a vision of an “informed, organised and mobilised working class acting in its own interests.

Investigative reporting is central to the operations of both Amabhungane⁵ and The Wits Justice Project.⁶ Amabhungane (isiZulu for dung beetles) is a non-profit initiative producing investigative reports in the public interest. “In a purely commercial environment, investigative journalism often struggles to compete with instantly gratifying, fast-food journalism – the kind that sells papers today but wraps fish tomorrow,” it says. While advocating for the “information rights investigative journalists need to do their work” and looking for a “free and worthy media, and open, accountable and just democracy” it aims to “[transfer] investigative skills to other journalists”.

The Wits Justice Project uses investigative journalism as advocacy to promote the rights of prisoners. Like Amabhungane, its journalism is donor funded. Its website states: “The project continues to use the power of investigative journalism to cover miscarriages of justice whilst utilising the media environment to educate and raise public awareness on extensive and systemic problems in the criminal justice system.”

Although it closed in June 2015, the South African Civil Society Information Service (SACSIS)⁷ aimed to promote social justice and to “[seek] answers to the question: How do we make democracy work for the poor?” It had been set up to “channel social justice news and analysis about policy dialogue in South Africa to the media. “SACSIS embraced a “rights-based approach to development, which views poverty as a denial of human rights.” Both the Wits Justice Project and SACSIS show how a number of the editorial missions of independent journalism initiatives make human rights central to their content production.

Like GroundUp, SACSIS defined itself as a news agency. In an article announcing its shut-down, SACSIS stated: “In our seven-year history, SACSIS placed hundreds of articles on the opinion pages of the country’s leading newspapers, engaging with a wide range of current debates related to making South Africa a better place for all who live in it. These articles appeared across multiple publications, reaching diverse audiences who do not ordinarily seek out a progressive perspective.”

Words such as “ethics” and “integrity” are also ways in which a number of these websites and initiatives define their work. Daily Maverick,⁸ which runs with the strapline, *Ipsa scientia potestas est* (knowledge itself is power), offers independent thinking news analysis and opinion. “We’ll do all of that for you, and we’ll do it with the greatest of integrity. Nobody will ever pay for our opinions, no matter the size of the chequebook. We will never sell your private information, or let somebody else dictate our agenda, or conspire behind your back,” it says.

Because these websites are independent, speaking from outside the mainstream does not mean they do not subscribe to ethical codes of journalistic practice. Although not a news site, Africa Check⁹ is a “non-partisan organisation that exists to promote accuracy and honesty in public debate and the media in Africa”. It, in effect, does what journalism used to do – fact-check politicians and other public statements.

Its code of principles is to “adhere to the fundamental operating principles of commitment to impartiality, transparency and accuracy”. GroundUp values “high-quality, ethical journalism”. It says, “We are independent and do not promote any political party. Controversial news stories are fact-checked before they are published.” Similarly, Amabhungane subscribes to the Press Council Code of Ethics.



Private security tried to dismantle the human barrier on Baxter Road, UCT campus, 17 October 2016.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)



Student protesters and police at Stellenbosch University, 10 October 2016.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)



Student protesters at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) Bellville, 11 October 2016.

Photo: Ashraf Hendricks/GroundUp (CC BY-ND 4.0)

NOTES:

1. <https://www.thedailyvox.co.za/>
2. <http://www.groundup.org.za/>
3. <http://blackopinion.co.za/>
4. <http://www.wmp.org.za/>
5. <http://amabhungane.co.za/>

6. <http://www.witsjusticeproject.co.za/>
7. <https://sacsis.org.za/s/>. Its news archive remains online.
8. www.dailymaverick.co.za/
9. <https://africacheck.org/>

Pontsho Pilane, also a journalist at the The Daily Vox was clear on who set the media agenda: “It [social media] was there for students to tell their own stories, especially when they were unhappy with the narratives pushed by mainstream media. For example, students started the #RealWitsStory because they were disproving of the negative narratives [in mainstream media], saying ‘You are lying this is not how this happened. You are misrepresenting us’. It was a huge blessing to have social media. It played that role, making the story alive.”

“There was a definite change because that’s when you saw the state actually clamping down on students,” says Khadija Patel. “Media in South Africa have gotten so used to having the government as the bad guy, so it was a bit difficult and challenging to change or get around that formula. But once you saw the students being repressed by the state, it was something that became familiar. It’s a very controversial thing to say but I am willing to debate this with colleagues. There was so much noise and so much action. Students were being portrayed as belligerent and the state’s involvement was very clear.”

“I guess that makes us alternative media...”

Khadija says, “Social media was absolutely crucial because beyond our own reporting it allowed students to tweet what they were seeing and how they were feeling [about it]. That was crucial because it nullified [negative] mainstream media [narratives] because it allowed students to mobilise and communicate [their messages directly to the public]. Social media has great potential for organising and that was enhanced as well.

Our job is to tell the truth. However, we try to tell the truth from the perspective of students. That’s the way we framed the story, we always tried to emphasise what students were saying because they were ultimately the ones who were leading the protests. Of course we balanced that with other actors like the state and the university management.”

“I believe as a media studies scholar there is always sway in the voice that is prioritised,” added Pilane. “So my reporting was based on student voices more than anything. I guess that makes us alternative media. For some people it is a bias, but it is the nature of the work at The Daily Vox. Our role is to reverse or dismantle the organogram that exists in how we gather news in South Africa. Instead of just focusing on what [university] management and the experts were saying I was also focusing on students and not silencing their voices.

They were the protagonists after all. I did not think the students would successfully shut down the university [on October 14, 2015]. I remember tweeting ‘OMG! Wits University has actually shut down’. I was in disbelief. The whole country was in disbelief hence #FeesMustFall became such a historical moment... it was quite amazing, it was momentous”.

The following tables are research survey findings by Vuyo Mthembu who analysed the impact of social media in the newsroom during the #FeesMustFall campaign. The aim of her research was to examine the ways in which social media platforms influenced news coverage by newspapers, and to consider the implications of this for journalism in South Africa. The research included a content analysis of Daily Sun, The Times and The Star coverage, as well as the survey of journalists working at the media houses.

Did social media change the way #FeesMustFall was covered by the newspapers?

Publication	Yes	No
Daily Sun (journalist 1)		X
Daily Sun (journalist 2)	X	
The Times	X	
The Star		X
The Star	X	
Total	3	2

Did social media as an agenda-setting tool assist the students in effectively voicing their issues through the print media?

Publication	Yes	No
Daily Sun (journalist 1)		X
Daily Sun (journalist 2)	X	
The Times	X	
The Star	X	
The Star	X	
Total	3	1

During #FeesMustFall, was it important who was speaking on the issue using social media?

Publication	Yes	No
Daily Sun (journalist 1)		X
Daily Sun (journalist 2)	X	
The Times	X	
The Star		X
The Star	X	
Total	3	2

Do you think without social media the campaign would have had the same interest from the media and public?

Publication	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Daily Sun (journalist 1)		X	
Daily Sun (journalist 2)	X		
The Times			
The Times		X	
The Star			X
The Star		X	
Total	1	3	1

As a journalist, do you consider social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to be credible sources of news and information?

Publication	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Daily Sun (journalist 1)	X		
Daily Sun (journalist 2)	X		
The Times	X		
The Star			X
The Star	X		
Total	1	3	1

NOTES:

1. A series of photographs were published by the mainstream media showing an overturned bakkie (with a student on top) and the bloodied white driver and his shattered windshield. As Zimbizi points out, what most narratives excluded was how the impatient driver had driven into a group of students blockading the Empire Road exit of the Wits Braamfontein campus. Angry students then chased and caught up with him at a nearby service station. Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) officers intervened before the driver was assaulted.
2. <http://citizen.co.za/news/news-national/1318070/terrifying-facebook-post-recounts-police-brutality-rhodes-university/>
3. <http://www.dispatchlive.co.za/featured/2016/09/29/nmmu-students-protest-outside-pe-newspaper-unfair-coverage/>
4. www.memeburn.com
5. Quote from journalist and Wits mid-career honours student Tehillah Niselow.
6. I wanted to see if online platforms like The Daily Vox behaved in the same way that alternative media did in the past.

APPENDICES

WHY SAPA CLOSED: THE EDITOR'S STORY

Former editor of Sapa, Mark van der Velden, tells the story of the country's longest news organisation's demise.

The sad closure at the end of March 2015, of the South African Press Association (Sapa) wire service, the country's oldest news agency, was inevitable. And there's little doubt it was written on member-owners' boardroom walls long before it was spelled out at the wire service itself. The decision to seal the pipe on millions of newswire stories over 76 years of South Africa's history was not due to a failure of effort by staffers, who in the last years added gritty new layers to the concept of editorial endurance.

Also technically, it was something of a miracle Sapa managed to keep going as long as it did.

For years the headcount was trimmed as costs were cut, and ever deeper efficiencies were sweated out. All along the way, the quality of the news product was eroded. With 'end day' still weeks away, the prevailing sound in our computer room was the ominous squealing of museum-ready hard drives struggling to hold it all together. Staffers, as collectively resilient as they were, were also increasingly exhausted.

With hindsight, there actually never was any real relief in sight, in spite of all the talk of a revamped and recapitalised Sapa to come. It just could not happen. No knight in shining armour to the rescue. This then starts pointing to the real reasons, within the bigger context of the coming bloody newspaper industry battle for survival, why Sapa was in the way and had to go.

To contextualise the hollow convenience of the phrase that "Sapa could no longer be financially sustained", some background on how and why, long ago, it was needed and enthusiastically funded is relevant.

In 1938, English and Afrikaans-language newspaper proprietors put aside differences and agreed to fund Sapa as a non-profit, non-government, news gathering, processing and redistribution cooperative. Each newspaper group became a Member of the Association. They had three objectives:

1. Cost savings on getting a fast, reliable supply of neutral, routine domestic news, as gathered by newspaper members in their areas of the country and pooled through Sapa.
2. Cost savings on international news agency content. Sapa fulfilled a bulk-buy function and then filtered a manageable flow of world news to members. Sapa's domestic news flow was then also sold into the global network.
3. They wanted a domestic news agency without any government or state control, stipulating that it should always operate "in the public interest".

This public interest tag proved vital over the decades in upholding Sapa's valued editorial independence. Sapa was thus funded exclusively via annual assessments on each member's newspaper title. Sapa's additional commercial clients came much later.

At first, Sapa generated little of its own, originally reported editorial content. It was mostly a news processing hub, serving all members equally. Sapa was meant to be only a wholesale provider of content to its members; strictly not retail. That would have made it a competitor to members. Being paid for by the members and not upsetting them was in Sapa's DNA.

Sapa went about its brief for many years as a valued service to its members, until two important events in the '70s: The first was the Soweto uprising. Sapa could not wait for the 'routine' news from members to be shared. Desk reporters were sent out into the townships to report directly. Besides local consumption, this reportage was picked up by global news agencies, which credited the "independent Sapa news agency" around the world. It set the precedent – and demand – for more and more direct own news reporting by Sapa.

The second event was the establishment in 1978 of The Citizen newspaper, later exposed as the government's covert 'Infogate' propaganda project. Until then, the nature of the newspaper ownership network was such that no one member of Sapa was 'scooped' with its own news appearing in a directly competing paper.

There was also a 'gentleman's agreement' that no member would unfairly exploit the Sapa resource by, for example using the wires as a substitute for the newspaper's own editorial resources. Sapa was a supplement, sometimes a back-up, to a newspaper's own editorial production; but never a substitute.

When The Citizen applied to join Sapa, other members were reputedly suspicious, but welcomed it because its money reduced their share of Sapa's costs. But, with barely any editorial staff, The Citizen set about wholesale pasting of virtually the entire daily Sapa news file into its pages. There was no clear rule prohibiting this, but it upset other members greatly.

The Argus in Cape Town, for example, was sending its routine news into Sapa but then finding that its own sister paper in Johannesburg, The Star, was being 'scooped' by

The Citizen because of the abuse of loopholes in Sapa's co-operative system. This was the beginning of the end of Sapa's news co-operative model. It became a punch bag for members as they started holding back on pooling their news through Sapa.

It was a slow process, but pooled content was history by the mid-90s. Over the years, however, Sapa had also been stepping up its own content generation, especially during the violence of the '80s and early '90s. It did so very well, and it suited everyone to pretend Sapa remained a harmonious co-operative.

Running in parallel with this over the years from the late '70s, and probably indicative, too, of the bickering about abuse, it suited Sapa Members' own agendas to drive cost-cutting at the Association. From a head-count of about 125 into the '70s, this reduced to some '80 by 1992. Eventually, Sapa had 48 staffers, 35 of them journalists covering a 24-hour roster.

Sapa's next notable milestone was setting up a radio news wire service, Network Radio News, in the latter '90s, following deregulation of the broadcasting industry. This was a natural extension of Sapa's role and a vital modernisation opportunity. At first, members said no, because they were themselves exploring radio opportunity. When it became clear broadcast cross-ownership was going to be prohibited for newspaper groups, they relented and said OK.

The business model was sound, with great revenue potential. But it was terribly mismanaged, crashing miserably in 1999. Sapa was crippled, with debt of well over R5 million in the form of emergency cash injections from members. Costs were further slashed from around the year 2000 onwards, and debts paid, but recovery came at a cost. Sapa reverted to producing only text content and some photographs.

The Board was opposed to any further investment, and Sapa was returned to its slot as a rigidly controlled cost-centre for content. A good indication of this is that in the recovery decade from 2000, Sapa's annual budget was static, regardless of increasing costs, and rapidly changing needs in the media industry.

Then, around 2010, on the back of finances that were at least stable again, and also with a modest pension fund surplus in the bank, members admitted Sapa would die unless it was rejuvenated to be a multimedia content producer. It also needed a vibrant marketing and product sales arm to break the downward spiral of revenue, while costs rose. But this was in tough economic times, and the investment and capacity was limited, certainly not at the scale required for a real turnaround. Sapa's decline continued.

At the beginning of 2013, the board did away with the structure of a general manager and an editor reporting equally into board meetings on their areas of responsibility. The GM departed and the editor was tasked with more responsibilities. Then the dominos started to fall. In June, the Times Media Group (TMG) resigned its

membership, to take effect at the end of 2013. Its printed titles would no longer take Sapa, although it retained the service for its online platforms.

For the sake of limiting the financial shortfall, Sapa was compelled to accept the farcical notion that TMG's print journalists were not 'seeing' the wires. The remaining Sapa member newspaper groups, Media 24, Independent and Caxton, took stock and agreed Sapa could not continue as it was. It needed recapitalisation and proper commercialisation – somehow by somebody – if it was not to hit the wall. The days of the price setters also being the price takers were over.

The search for that somebody with a solution started. Members still saw value and cost efficiencies in a continued Sapa, but would prefer to simply be arm's-length commercial customers, with no further responsibility for Sapa. After some approaches to and from international news agencies such as the British Press Association and Agence France Presse (AFP) and subsequent due diligence examinations of Sapa's financial state and prospects, the search narrowed on the photo syndication company, Gallo Images.

Simultaneously, fearing liabilities down the line, Caxton gave notice of its resignation, to take effect mid-2014, and Independent Media followed, with its resignation set for end November 2014. So, as the end-game was heating up, this left only Media 24 still a full member, committed to funding Sapa all by itself if need be. Gallo Images' offer, when it came in around August 2014, guaranteed editorial independence, had sound commercial legs and would have continued the Sapa brand with new investment in its core service of fast, neutral and accurate news to complement its photo service.

But Gallo only wanted the best editorial staffers and the 'good' brand assets of Sapa. It felt the members should still pay to wind up the old Sapa with its staff retrenchments and other liabilities. Independent and Caxton were unimpressed. A complication was also that Gallo was 50% owned by Media24, raising fears of a national news agency in effect in the pocket of one media house. So, from a wish to shed responsibility for Sapa, there was now fear of Media 24's possible news agency monopoly.

In a remarkable turnaround, members agreed on an alternative direction for Sapa. They would all stay in the game, but this time around as purely commercial shareholders in a private company. Profits would be low but, as co-owning media houses, they would benefit from a continued cost-efficient flow of news – something they would have to source elsewhere at higher prices if Sapa disappeared.

Simultaneously, invitations were sent to certain 'interested parties' to come in as additional shareholders to widen the ownership pool in a new Sapa. Sapa had previously always been retained as a closed shop for its newspaper members, guarded jealously to the exclusion of other non-print entities.

A separate body blow to Sapa came in the form of a decision by AFP to cut its foreign content news redistribution ties with Sapa. Now with knowledge of Sapa's finances, AFP believed it should extract much more local revenue by going direct.

As these developments and direction for Sapa took shape, Iqbal Surve's Sekunjalo Investment Holdings – somewhat controversial new owners of Independent Media, mostly because Surve himself was seen as closely connected to the ruling African National Congress – offered to 'buy' Sapa and incorporate it into plans for a continental African News Agency.

Surve said he was prepared to put a stunningly big \$50 million into Sapa. That would have been enough to run Sapa at its current levels for another 18 years! Another contender emerged in the form of KMM Review Publishers – led by [former] journalist and businessman, Moeletsi Mbeki. KMMR did not want to buy Sapa. Rather, it wanted to be a part of the new entity to grow it and keep it independent. At the same time, Gallo's limited offer was reversing into wanting only an operational brief to run a newly commercialised and recapitalised news agency. It rejected outright any notion of a partnership with Sekunjalo or KMMR.

A target date of end March 2015 – it being the end of Sapa's financial year – was set for the death of the old news agency in expectation of the birth in its place of a fresh new entity. As all this unfolded, the legitimacy of the existing member groups – as founder shareholders in the new commercial entity – holding on to a 'right' to decide who else could be admitted as fellow shareholders, came under uncomfortable scrutiny.

This ratcheted up as it became apparent that, after all, none of the existing members actually still wanted to be co-owners of a new Sapa. They wanted out of any such responsibility, but still wanted to be commercial subscribers to a functional and effective news agency. Thus they were in effect holding on to the untenable notion they could select the new owners of a reborn Sapa. Growing mutual distrust among members led directors to decide in January that, really, their only task was to close Sapa at the end of March. Tacitly, they admitted their vision was clouded by the notion of shaping also the creation of a new Sapa the way they would want it. That, they conceded, had nothing to do with them. They had no authority or responsibility for it. Instead, they said, it was up to the market to decide what would replace Sapa.

Running deep underneath all this was the uncomfortable truth it was most unlikely Media24, Sekunjalo and Caxton could ever live happily together inside a new Sapa... and that each of them had long been working on their own Plan B. So, Sapa staffers who believed all along they had a chance of jobs in a new Sapa from 1 April were told that, no, everything was to be shut down with total retrenchments and no guarantees of anything.

So, as Sapa set about complying with orders to die on exactly 31 March, the members began announcing their plans for life after Sapa. Independent's Sekunjalo owners

announced the creation of a continental African News Agency (ANA) to take over also the space Sapa left. Its core business model was still long-term subscription partnerships with other media houses, which, it believed, would buy into the positives of African media telling their own positive story of Africa, in contrast to the 'negativity' of Western news agencies.

Then, very soon after this, Media24 announced it too was starting up a news agency, via its News24 digital platform. Its content would be 'free' to all other online platforms – clearly a move to torpedo ANA's subscription model before it was even floated. But, any non-digital media platform that wanted News24 news would have to buy it. Both ANA and News24 recruited key Sapa editorial staffers to help them build their operations.

And then TMG also announced the creation of a third news agency – Rand Daily Mail Newswire – to repurpose its own news content for internal and also external second-tier sale. Fourthly, Caxton – with its single national title, The Citizen, but backed by scores of profitable local community newspapers, has invested in extra editorial capacity and making use of its Caxton News Service. And then there are still the foreign news agencies operating in SA – AFP, Associated Press, Reuters, Bloomberg, and the German dpa – all slogging it out for a bigger slice of a shrinking market.

This news agency-type slugfest, among previously supposedly harmonious partners in Sapa, is yet another symptom of a deeper malaise in the newspaper print industry generally. It's dying, slowly for the moment still, but the momentum will pick up. The market is too small for all its players and nobody yet has the digital business model worked out to start covering declines on old-fashioned print.

On the political and economic terrain, most are also at each other's throats, one way or the other. Caxton takes every available opportunity to haul Media24 to the Competition Commission and Media24 fights back, hard. The CEOs of TMG and Sekunjalo would likely resort to fisticuffs if they met on the pavement. Other previously collegiate and representative bodies of the newspaper industry, such as the publisher's organisation, Print and Digital Media South Africa PDMSA, are fracturing due to pull-outs and funding ultimatums.

Arguably, even the future of the vitally important self-regulatory Press Council's complaints resolution mechanisms is at risk – which may open the way, again, for government's dreaded plans for a statutory media tribunal.

So, in the midst of all this juggling and jostling for position ahead of a final survival showdown in the industry over the next few years, there was – finally – consensus the market no longer had space for a collective co-operative content supplier like Sapa. In fact, if an institution like Sapa were to continue, its very presence as a neutral zone might make the coming ugly, bigger battles even more complicated than things already were. Better to have it out of the way to clear the battlefield a bit more.

So, the inevitability of Sapa's closure, if it did not see re-investment, was already obvious long ago – just not really talked about. Sapa's story should be studied in further detail, but it is history. It cannot and will not be recreated. And the wisdom, or not, of those who agreed to kill Sapa for the sake of more clear-cut bigger battles to come, will be assessed in due course as our media industry history continues to unfold.

This story was published by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's Fesmedia project and is republished here with permission.

Mark Van der Velden joined Sapa as a reporter in 1983 and was appointed editor in March 1992, a position he held until the wire agency's last story was issued.

NOTES:

1. <http://www.fesmedia.org/>

EDITORS OF MAJOR SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS, including race and gender (as at end of February 2017)

1.	Cape Argus: Aziz Hartley- Coloured, male	21.	Isolezwe weekend editions: Sandile Mdadane – Black, male
2.	The Times: Stephen Haw – White, male	22.	Ilanga: Sazi Majola – Black, male
3.	Beeld: Barnard Beukman – White, male	23.	Ilanga Langesonto: Bheki Ndlovana – Black, male
4.	Sunday Times: Bongani Siqoko – Black, male	24.	The Mercury: Yogas Nair – Indian, female
5.	Business Times: Ron Derby – Black, male	25.	Pretoria News: Val Boje – White, female
6.	Sunday World: Abdul Milazi – Black, male	26.	Sowetan: Philani Mgwaba – Black, male
7.	Daily Dispatch: Sibusiso Nqalwa – Black, male	27.	The Star: Japhet Ncube – Black, male
8.	Rapport: Waldimar: Pelsler – White, male	28.	Volksblad: Gert Coetzee - White, male
9.	Business Day: Tim Cohen – White, male	29.	The New Age: Moegsien Williams – Coloured, male
10.	The Herald and Weekend Post: Brett Horner – White, male	30.	Saturday Star: Kashiefa Ajam – Coloured, female
11.	The Witness: (Acting) Kuben Chetty – Indian, male	31.	Independent on Saturday: Deon Delport – White, male
12.	Daily Voice: Taariq Halim – Coloured, male	32.	Sunday Independent: No editor Assistant editor Lebogang Seale – Black, male
13.	Die Burger: Bernie Louw – White, male	33.	Weekend Argus: Wesley April - Colored, male
14.	The Citizen: Steve Motale – Black, male (Dismissed but reinstated by Labour Court)	34.	Mail & Guardian: Khadija Patel – Indian, female
15.	Cape Times: Aneez Salie – Indian, male	35.	Post: Krissy Bisetty – Indian, male
16.	Daily News: Aakash Bramdeo – Indian, male	36.	Soccer Laduma: Vuyani Joni – Black, male
17.	Son and Son op Sondag: Andrew Koopman – Coloured, male	37.	Sake24: Johan van Wyk – White, male
18.	Daily Sun and Sunday Sun: Reggy Moalusi – Black, male	38.	Sunday Tribune: Mazwi Xaba – Black, male
19.	Diamond Field Advertiser: Johan du Plessis – White, male	39.	City Press: Mondli Makhanya – Black, male
20.	Isolezwe: Slindile Khanyile – Black, female	40.	Business Report: Adri Senekal de Wet – White, female

PRESS COUNCIL CASES AND RULINGS

Statistics and case summaries below are as presented in reports to the Press Council. They cover the period from January to the end of December 2016. Note that the summaries of cases provided by the Press Ombud cover the period from August to November, although statistics are given for the year.

1. Cases dealt with by the Deputy Public Advocate for Online Media (Dinesh Balliah):

MONTH	COMPLAINTS	RESOLVED	DISMISSED	OPEN	ADJUDICATION
JANUARY	8	4	3	0	1
FEBRUARY	9	3	4	0	2
MARCH	8	4	4	0	0
APRIL	18	5	12	0	1
MAY	9	1	7	0	1
JUNE	11	3	6	0	2
JULY	11	2	6	0	3
AUGUST	10	3	4	0	3
SEPTEMBER	10	7	2	0	1
OCTOBER	8	3	3	2	0
NOVEMBER	15	0	7	8	0
DECEMBER	7	2	0	5	0

2. Cases dealt with by the Public Advocate (Latiefa Mobara)

Comparison of annual totals:

2013	2014	2015	2016 (End of November 2016)
487	461	591	536

Complaints received from January 1 to December 31, 2016

Month	Total number of complaints received	Resolved	Dismissed	Withdrawn/ Closed	Submitted to Deputy PA	Submitted for adjudication	Complaints open
Jan	46	13	18	3	8	4	0
Feb	67	15	15	6	12	19	0
Mar	36	8	7	3	6	12	0
April	45	5	13	2	16	9	0
May	49	5	15	5	9	15	0
June	41	7	8	5	11	10	0
July	50	13	11	4	12	10	0
Aug	47	6	12	4	13	12	0
Sept	47	8	10	7	13	9	0
Oct	30	3	14	2	7	3	1
Nov	47	6	19	6	6	3	7
Dec	32	7	11	2	7	2	3

3. Cases dealt with by the Deputy Ombud for Online Media (Paula Fray)

The year under review reflected the challenges media are grappling with in the online space including a proliferation of fake news sites. Numbers of online-specific complaints for adjudication remain low but as noted previously, these are expected to grow.

Herewith a summary of complaints dealt with by the deputy ombud from January to November 2016.

1. Eric Mkhunjulwa vs. Ladybrand Rekord (Facebook update: January 2016 Breaking News: Municipal Spokesperson Being Investigated by Twitter for Racial Remarks.) The complaint was that Mkhunjulwa was not contacted regarding the allegation; the report was misleading, untruthful, unfair and biased in that he had not photoshopped a photograph and edited a comment, and that Twitter was investigating him in this regard; and the report was demeaning to him and the office he works in as it incited racial tensions in the area. The complaint was upheld as it is in breach of the Press Code. The Ladybrand Rekord was directed to apologise to the complainant on its Facebook platform and any other platform where the information had been shared. The newspaper must also update the original status to indicate that it is incorrect and therefore retracted.
2. Elaine Boardman vs. Krugersdorp News (Online story February 3, 2016, "Beskerm die hof ons kinders?") Complaint was that the interview makes it easy to identify the complainant's husband despite a court order in place where both parties have been ordered to refrain from publishing or using public platforms to defame one another; none of the information was verified but published as fact; and the report is damaging to his reputation and good name. Given that the newspaper acted to remove any identifying factors, this subsequent complaint was dismissed.
3. Belinda Walter vs. Daily Maverick (Online article 26 January 2016 "SARS Wars: KPMG, SARS and Mashiane Moodley and Monama - who's telling the truth?") The complaint was that no effort was made to verify the alleged Kanyana report that is the source of the story and the complainant was not contacted for comment. The complaint was dismissed.
4. David Malherbe vs EWN (Online article "ESKOM'S EX-MANAGING DIRECTOR FOUND GUILTY OF FRAUD, MONEY LAUNDERING" <http://ewn.co.za/2016/06/20/Eskoms-ex-managing-director-found-guilty-of-fraud-money> published on June 20, 2016). The complaint was that EWN used an incorrect photograph pulled from Malherbe's LinkedIn Account. Mr Malherbe asked for the correction to be published with the same prominence as the original story. The photograph was removed on the day of publication and Malherbe received an apology from EWN editor-in-chief Katy Katopodis. Although the code was breached, the complaint was dismissed as EWN had

already taken steps to rectify the breach in line with the code. It is suggested that EWN review the circumstances in which the error was committed and develop guidelines for reporters on how to prevent such errors in future.

5. Seswantsho Godfrey Lebeya vs. Media24 (“Public Protector Candidate Allegedly has ties with Guptas” [<http://city-press.news24.com/News/public-protector-candidate-allegedly-has-ties-with-guptas-20160711>].) The complaint was that the article which was accompanied by the photograph of the Guptas and published ahead of the shortlisting of candidates, was designed to “raise their eyebrows” as it links him to controversial figures. The complaint that the story linked him to the Guptas was dismissed. The rest of the complaint was upheld. City Press was directed correct its story with an apology on the site.
6. James Kemp vs. BDLive (“Orania likely to fall under EFF council” published on bdlive.co.za on June 3, 2016.) Kemp, in his capacity as the marketing and communications manager of the Orania Movement, complained that the website inaccurately stated that Orania boycotted elections; ignored the difference between a municipality and a district municipality which meant that Orania would still manage itself; and, falsely typified the enclave as being “right wing”. BDLive was reprimanded for failure to seek out the views of the subject of reportage and was cautioned against such actions in future. It should invite Kemp to express his complaint through a letter to the editor and indicate that the letter is part of the sanction for breach of the code.
7. Prince Mokotedi vs. Daily Maverick (“House of Cards: O’Sullivan turns up heat on Gauteng Hawks” [<http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-05-09-house-of-cards-osullivan-turns-up-the-heat-on-gauteng-hawks/#.V8VU5GPww0R>]. May 9, 2016). Mokotedi complained that the article deliberately distorted his activities in law enforcement. More specifically, he complained the story inaccurately stated that he had: perjured himself during the Jackie Selebi trial; been charged by the NPA for allegedly leaking a report on an investigation against Ms Glynnis Breytenbach; been central to the “spy tapes” saga (together with Lieutenant-General Richard Mdluli); and been incarnated as the head of the integrity unit at the NPA and came in from the cold to replace suspended Gauteng Hawks Head, Shadrack Sibiyi. As Mokotedi had not been found guilty of perjury, this complaint was upheld. All other complaints were dismissed. Daily Maverick was asked to publish a correction under the online story that Mokotedi was not found guilty of perjury.
8. Luzuko Jacobs vs The Times (“Parliament faces staff revolt”, published online on July 11, 2016, (<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2016/07/11/Parliament-faces-staff-revolt>).) A version of the story also appeared on the Rand Daily Mail website under the heading, “Mass exodus of senior staff from Parliament”. RDM editor Ray Hartley referred the complaint to The Times response. Jacobs complained that the article: incorrectly stated that a former unit manager in Parliament’s committee section resigned after he was told to submit a list of more than 30 staff who reported to him so that their salaries could be docked for going on strike; that the article was not presented in context and in a balanced way; that the writer was biased against Parliament. The complaints related to the content of the article were upheld. The complaint of bias was dismissed. The Times and RDM were directed to place a correction and apology for Parliament.
9. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge vs Daily Maverick (“Fear and Loathing in the philanthropic world as key appointment turns sour”, published in the Daily Maverick on March 29, 2016.) Madlala-Routledge complained that she was not given an opportunity to comment on it; the heading of the article was misleading and had no correlation to the contents of the article; the use of an historically symbolic photograph with the article was an intentional ploy to get readers’ attention and linking the two separate incidents creates a negative impression of her; the story falsely claimed she was sacked as Deputy Minister of Health for issues related to unauthorised expenditure. The complaints were dismissed.
10. Belinda Walter vs Daily Maverick (SARS wars massive data leak alleges British American Tobacco SAS role in bribery (<http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-08-16-sars-wars-massive-data-leak-alleges-british-american-tobacco-sas-role-in-bribery-and-corruption/#.V7Kn2EJMb8k>).) Walter denied that there is an affidavit with the information cited by the Daily Maverick and said the information in the story was “blatant lying and relying on fabricated evidence”; said the writer had not disclosed her “personal and improper” relationship with Johann van Loggerenberg when writing these articles on his behalf; said she was not given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. The initial story published by the Daily Maverick was, by its own admission, inaccurate in that it reported that the affidavit being quoted was one deposed by Walter. In correcting this inaccuracy, the Daily Maverick needs to clearly state what has been changed and why this has been changed. This complaint was upheld. The complaint relating to an improper relationship was dismissed. Walter’s complaint that she was not given an opportunity to comment was upheld. The Daily Maverick needs to publish an apology and correction under the online story that indicates which elements of the story were wrong and provide a required correction. In addition, Belinda Walter should be invited to a Right of Reply with a published Letter to the Editor of about 800 words or as agreed by the editor.

4. Cases dealt with by the Press Ombud (Johan Retief)

Common issue

I have had several instances where a publication apparently believes that, because the facts they have reported were accurate, the reportage had been fair by default. One can speak half the truth, or refer to something that has been true before, but has changed since. The media need to take this seriously.

Statistics

In 2015 I adjudicated a total of 129 complaints. This year, up to the end of November, this number stands at 113. These findings do not include the rulings made by the Deputy Ombud.

Complaints

A summary of the complaints that I have ruled on since our last meeting:

1. Balmoral College and its principal, Mr Josias Wium vs. The Citizen (19 August 2016, Private school teachers allege abuse, nonpayment). The newspaper was directed to apologise for unfairly stating, without substance and proper verification, that one teacher had died “after several attempts to be granted sick leave so she could seek medical attention, but allegedly to no avail”, and that another had “allegedly [been] dismissed after the principal realized she was pregnant”. They were also not asked for comment on several unsubstantiated, unverified and unfair statements, which caused unnecessary harm to their reputations (insinuating misconduct, unlawful labour practice and intimidation).
2. Emile Coetzee vs. City Press (28 August 2016, White superiority at any price). He complained about the question under the Talk to us segment, which read, “Have you witnessed or experienced this kind of behaviour from white people?” The complaint was dismissed.
3. Mashabela Galane vs. Sunday Sun (18 September 2016, Mashabela has Lebo up in arms). He complained the story falsely stated that he had stolen Fat Brain Ideas strategist Lebogang Mashishi’s proposal for a reality TV show about indigenous food, and that Mashishi had called him. The complaint was dismissed.
4. Gill Moodie vs. Independent Newspapers (various titles, 23 and 24 August 2016, Exposé: The dirty tricks campaign against Independent). The media house was directed to apologise to Moodie for unfairly, and without any proper substantiation or proof, labelling her as a propaganda journalist, a member of a white boys’ club, a virtual plant of the DA in its newsrooms, a racist, and for making allegations against her of malice, aspirations to maintain white control and collusion, as well as its accusations against her regarding misinformation and sabotage against the media house, its executive chairman and associated companies and all its employees; for the extreme harm unnecessarily caused to her reputation by this reportage; and for not asking her to comment on these damaging allegations.
5. Deshi Ngxanga, municipal manager in Upington vs. Volksblad (18 August 2016, Betaal, hoor hoë wat eis los – Regskoste is vermors). He complained that several statements were inaccurate and unverified, inter alia that he had received a claim letter for wasted legal cost from Mr Kenneth Khumalo and that his lawyers had asked two magistrates to recuse themselves – while neither he nor his lawyer ever appeared in court regarding a case involving Khumalo. The complaint was dismissed.
6. South African Security Solutions & Technology et al vs. News24 (20 May 2016, EXCLUSIVE: Gordhan orders Masutha to cancel R378m IT tender; and Battleground 2: Gordhan’s R500 billion tender war, 26 May 2016). News 24 was reprimanded for omitting to state, both in the story and in the column, that National Treasury had denied giving the Department of Correctional Services an order of any kind; and for stating the allegations as fact that SA Fence and Gate had been awarded government tenders worth millions by Eskom, DCS, and the Passenger Rail Agency of SA and that despite numerous deficiencies with its tender, ISS’s bid was the only one considered by the department when it awarded the contract. News 24 was directed to publish a suitable correction to the first issue and to clarify the other one. Other parts of the complaint was dismissed.
7. Dr Abe Seakamela, the former acting superintendent-general of the North West Education Department vs. Sowetan (22 September 2016, Education dept hides from Public Protector – Ghost camps used in scam). He complained that the newspaper did not afford him an opportunity to comment on the statement that he “sat on” a report – falsely implying or suggesting that he had deliberately withheld that document until he was forced to release it, and that it condoned corruption, or even that he had benefitted from it. The complaint was dismissed.
8. Philani Shange vs. Isolezwe (4 August 2016, Drugs are harmful to the future). He complained the article falsely stated that he had been suspended for two years and that his future with the soccer club Chippa United was uncertain; also that he misleadingly insinuated that he had been dismissed from former teams due to a drug problem. The complaint was dismissed.
9. Uzalo, a drama series on SABC 1 produced by Stained Glass Pictures vs. Sunday Times (10 July 2016, Hlaudi’s R167m Zuma TV deal). The newspaper was directed to apologise for creating the inaccurate and unfair impression that the latter’s budget was unrealistically high, and for causing them unnecessary harm in this process. The largest part of the complaint was dismissed.
10. Pastor Chester Swart vs. Son (29 June 2016, ‘n Kerkgeveg – Iede baklei voor hof oor pastoor; June30 , Pastoor oor geld gelooi; and August 22, Leraar ‘wil skik’). An informal meeting was held in Worcester on September 13. The newspaper was directed to apologise to Swart for the

statement that he allegedly had gone abroad with the church's money, that his personal assistant had been his "love", and that he had wanted to settle the matter out of court once he learnt that members of his congregation were going to testify against him. Son was also asked to apologise to Swart's attorney for not asking his comment on the statement that he had been unprepared for the court case; the newspaper was also reprimanded for not stating in the first story that it could not get comment from Swart. Other sections of the complaint were dismissed.

11. Esther Hlambiso vs. Daily Sun (29 September 2016, Rituals denied – Makoti bars family from Alex house). The newspaper was directed to correct the wrong spelling of her name and surname as well as an incorrect year of her grandmother's death. The rest of the complaint was dismissed.

12. The private office of the President of the South Africa vs. the Mail & Guardian (16 to 22 September 2016, Zuma pals score first nuke deal). The newspaper was directed to apologise to Pres Jacob Zuma for unfairly and without the necessary substantiation involving him in its story via its headlines and the publication of the front-page picture, thereby raising concerns about corruption without any proper grounds – and causing unnecessary harm to his reputation in this process. The complaints about tweeting as well as not having been asked for comment were dismissed.

13. Jane Sussens vs. Mail & Guardian (August 12 to 18 2016, A truer reflection on the winelands). The newspaper has already apologised; the issue was whether that text was adequate. It was.

14. Rebecca Tee, the legal head of National Treasury vs. Sunday Times (28 August 2016, Treasury takes Denel to court). There was consensus between the parties that the newspaper should apologise for quoting a source that she had sent letters to Denel – the wording of that apology was the issue. I have proposed a version which was accepted by both parties.

15. Boity Thulo vs. City Press (11 September 2016, 'Boity's house' is on the market). The newspaper was directed to apologise to her for stating as fact in the headline that her house had been on the market and for the all-too-strong suggestion that she had been experiencing financial trouble. The complaints that the disclosure of her address and the estate's name had placed her security at risk, that the journalist did not contact either her or her manager for comment, that the reporter might have had the wrong contact details, and that the journalist should have made more of an effort to get hold of her in time to garner her comment were dismissed.

16. Paul Wisenberg vs. Cape Times (14 September 2016, 'To think the DA laughed at me' – Garnishee ruling benefits millions). He complained that the headline was a "cheap shot" with political overtones, "totally unrelated to the news item which has important ramifications for particularly the poor amongst us". The complaint was dismissed.

17. Vivian Reddy vs. the Mail & Guardian (16 to 22 September 2016, Zuma pals clinch nuke deal). The newspaper was directed to apologise to him for unfairly and without the necessary substantiation involving him in its story via its headlines and the publication of his picture, thereby raising concerns about corruption without any proper grounds, and for unfairly causing unnecessary harm to his reputation in this process.

PRESS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP (2016)

Publication	Media house
Beeld	Media 24
Burger, Die	Media 24
Business Day	Times Media Group
Citizen, The	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
City Press	Media 24
Daily Dispatch	Times Media Group
Saturday Dispatch	Times Media Group
Daily Sun	Media 24
Herald, The	Times Media Group
Mail & Guardian	M & G Media Limited
Rapport	Media 24
Son, Die	Media 24
Sondag	Media 24
Sowetan	Times Media Group
Sunday Sun	Media 24
Sunday Times	Times Media Group
Sunday World	Times Media Group
Volksblad, Die	Media 24
Weekend Post on Saturday	Times Media Group
Witness, The	Media 24
Weekend Witness, The	Media 24
Times, The	Times Media Group

Publication	Media house
African Reporter	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Bosvelder	Media 24
Brits Pos	North West Newspapers
Caledon Kontrei Nuus	Caledon Kontrei Nuus
Capricorn Voice	Media 24
Carletonville Herald	Media 24
Daller, Die	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Die Noordwester	North West Newspapers
District Mail	Media 24
Eikestadnuus	Media 24
Estcourt and Midlands News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Gemsbok Advertiser	Gemsbok Advertiser
Graaff Reinet Advertiser	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
George Herald (Thursday)	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Hermanus Times	Media 24
Inkanyezi	Target Media
Klerksdorp Rekord	North West Newspapers
Knysna Plett Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Ladysmith Gazette	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Letaba Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Lowvelder, The / Laevelder, Die (Tuesday)	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Lowvelder, The / Laevelder, Die (Friday)	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Mid South Coast Mail	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Middelburg Observer, Fri	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Middelburg Observer, Tues	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Mosselbay Advertiser	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Mpumalanga News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Newcastle and District Advertiser	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Northern Natal Courier	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Northern Review Midweek	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Oudtshoorn Courant	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd

Our Times	Our Times
Paarl Post	Media 24
Potchefstroom Herald	Media 24
Representative	Times Media Group
South Cape Forum/Suid Kaap Forum	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
South Coast Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Standerton Advertiser	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Stellalander	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Streeknuus	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Swartlander Monitor	
Talk of the Town	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Tembisan	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
The Courier	
The Mail	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Vaal Weekly	Media 24
Vaalweekblad	Media 24
Vryheid Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Vrystaat	Media 24
Weslander, The	Media 24
Witbank News, Fri	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Worcester Standard & Advertiser	Media 24
Zululand Observer Friday	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Zululand Observer Monday	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Palabora & Hoedspruit Herald	
Rustenburg Herout/Herald	
Randfontein Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd

Publication	Media house
Alberton Record	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Alex News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Algoa Sun	Times Media Group
Barateiro	
Barberton Times	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Bedfordview & Edenvale News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Benoni City Times	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Berea Mail	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Bloemnuus	Media 24
Boksburg Advertiser	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Brakpan Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Breederivier Gazette.	Media 24
Chatsworth Rising Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Chiawelo Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
City Vision (Khayalitsha)	Media 24
City Vision (Langa/Gugulethu)	Media 24
Comaro Chronicle	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Corridor Gazette	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Diepkloof Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Dobsonville Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
East Griqualand Fever	
Echo, The	Media 24
Eldorado Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Express	Media 24
Fourways Review	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Germiston City News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Go & Express	Times Media Group
Goudveld Forum	
Helderpos Gazette	Media 24
Highveld Herald (Highvelder, The)	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd

Highway Mail	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Hilltop	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Ilizwi	
Jabavu Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Johannesburg Eastern Express	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Kempton Express	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Kouga Express	Media 24
Kroonnuus	Media 24
Krugersdorp News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Lentswe	
Maluti	Media 24
Maritzburg Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Meadowlands Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Merebank Rising Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Meyerton Ster	Media 24
Midrand Reporter	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Midweek Rekord	
Maritzburg Fever (formaly Mirror The)	Media 24
Noordkaap	Media 24
Parys Gazette	Media 24
Noordwes Gazette	Media 24
North Eastern Tribune	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Northcliff & Melville Times	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Northglen News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Northside Chronicle	
Ons Stad	Media 24
Orlando Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Overport Rising Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
PE Express	Media 24
People s Post Athlone	Media 24
People s Post City Edition	Media 24
People s Post Claremont/Rondebosch	Media 24

People s Post Constantia/Wynberg	Media 24
People s Post False Bay	Media 24
People s Post Grassy Park	Media 24
People s Post Lansdowne	Media 24
People s Post Retreat	Media 24
Phoenix Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Pimville Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Protea Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Queensburgh News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Randburg Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Randfontein Herald.	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord Central/Sentraal	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord Centurion	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord East/Oos	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord Mamelodi	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord Moot	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord North/Noord	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord Noweto	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rekord West News/Wes Nuus	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Ridge Times	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Roodepoort Record	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Rosebank Killarney Gazette	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Sandton Chronicle	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Sasolburg Ster	Media 24
South Coast Fever	
South Coast Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Southern Courier	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Southlands Sun	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Springs Advertiser	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Steelburger	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Swartlander Monitor	Media 24
Theewaterkloof Gazette (formerly Caledon Kontreinuus	Media 24

Times of Ladysmith	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Tygerburger Bellville	Media 24
Tygerburger Brackenfell	Media 24
Tygerburger Durbanville	Media 24
Tygerburger Eersterivier/Blue Downs	Media 24
Tygerburger Elsie'srivier	Media 24
Tygerburger Goodwood	Media 24
Tygerburger Kraaifontein	Media 24
Tygerburger Kuilsrivier	Media 24
Tygerburger Milnerton	Media 24
Tygerburger Parow	Media 24
Tygerburger Ravensmead/Belhar	Media 24
Tygerburger Table View	Media 24
UD News	Media 24
Sedibeng Ster (formerly "Vaal Weekly")	
Vanderbijlpark Ster	Media 24
Vereeniging Ster	Media 24
Vista	Media 24
Weskus Nuus	Media 24
Zola Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Bonus	
Agri Review	
QwaQwa News	
Stellenbosch Gazette	
Cosmos Gazette	Caxton Newspapers
Eden Express	Media24
Express Eastern Free State (Former Express QwaQwa)	Media24
Express Northern Cape	Media24
Kalahari Buletin (Formerly Kuruman Bulletin)	Media24
PE Express Indaba	Media24
People s Post Mitchells Plain	Media24
People s Post Woodstock	Media24

Roodepoort Northsider (Formerly Northside Chronicle)	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Standerton Ibis	Caxton Ltd
Sunshine Coast Express	Media24
UGU Eyethu	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
Uthukela Eyethu	Caxton Northern KZN Branch
Vhembe Herald	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd
West Side Urban News	Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd

Publication	Media house
Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur Media (Pty) Ltd
Financial Mail	Times Media Group
Finweek	Media 24
Real Estate Investor	Reeal Estate Media
Sarie Kos	Media 24
Heat Celebrity News	Media 24
Drum	Media 24
Huisgenoot	Media 24
Reader'S Digest	Readers Digest Australia
You	Media 24
Landbouweekblad	Media 24
Conde Naste House & Garden	Conde Naste Independent Magazines (Pty) Ltd
Gardener, The	Lone hill Trading (Pty) Ltd
Tuiner, Die	Lone hill Trading (Pty) Ltd
Tuis Home	Media 24
FHM	Media 24
Men'S Health	Media 24
Bike Sa	Bike Promotions (pty) Ltd
Baba & Kleuter	Media 24
Mamas & Papas	Kwenta Medai (Pty) Ltd
Nag Magazine	Wold bean Media pty Ltd, T /A Nag Magazine
Amakhosi Magazine	Back Page Publications
Golf Digest	Media 24
Kick Off	Media 24
Runners World	Media 24
Sa Hunter/Jagter	Media 24
SA Rugby	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Weg/Go	Media 24
Destiny Magazine	Ndalo Media
Elle	Times Media Group

Fairlady	Media 24
Finesse	Carpe Diem Media
Glamour	Conde Naste Independent Magazines (Pty) Ltd
Grazia	Media 24
Ideas/Idees	Media 24
Leef met hart & siel	Media 24
Move!	Media 24
Real Magazine	Media 24
Sarie	Media 24
Soul	Carpe Diem Media
True Love	Media 24
LOOCHA	MIROGRAPH
National Geographic Kids	Media 24
Advantage	Media 24
RISKsa Magazine	COSA Communications
Sa Jewellery News	Isikhova Publishing & Communications
Leadership	Cape Media Corporation
Money Marketing	Media 24
Public Sectors Manager Magazine	Government Communication & Information Systems (GCIS)
Sa Mining	Times Media Group
DIY Trade News	Media 24
Front Shop	Media 24
Dish Premium / Skottel	Media 24
Servamus	SARP Uitgewers
Fresh Living Magazine	John Brown Publishing (Pty) Ltd
Foschini Clubx	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Edgars Club Magazine	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Foschini LivingSpaces	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Foschini Club-	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Foschini Kids Superclub	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Huisgenoot Tempo	Media 24

Your Business Magazine	Infocus Buplisher CC
Eat Out	Media 24
TV Plus / Afrikaans	Media 24
TV Plus / English	Media 24
The Big Issue	The Big Issue
Ridge, The	Media 24
Sarie Gesond	Media 24
Weigh-Less	Weigh-less SA Pty Ltd
Elle Decoration	Times Media Group
Habitat	Index Publication CC T/ A Habitat
Kuier	Media 24
Sa Home Owner	Times Media Group
Sarie Woon	Media 24
Visi	Media 24
Destiny Man	Ndalo Media
GQ	Conde Naste Independent Magazines (Pty) Ltd
Weg/ Ry (Drive Out)	Media 24
Top Car/Top Motor	Media 24
Your Pregnancy	Media 24
Bicycling	Media 24
SA Cricket	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Sowetan Soccer Magazine	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Zigzag	Media 24
Explore South Africa	Cape Media Corporation
Weg Kuierkos	Media 24
Weg Namibie/ Go Namibia	Media 24
Weg/Sleep	Media 24
Women'S Health	Media 24
Fairlady Bride	Media 24
Intiem	Media in Africa
Nubian Bride	Ballyhoo Media
SA Wedding Album	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd

Sarie Bruid	Media 24
True Love Bride	Media 24
Wedding Inspirations	Wedding Inspirations
Saltwater Girl	Media 24
Seventeen	Media 24
Veeplaas	Plaas Publishing
Built	Times Media Group
Earthworks	Young Africa Publishing
Environmental Management	Media 24
Leading Architect & Design	Media 24
Road Ahead, The	
Civil Engineering	SAICE/SAISA South African Institute of Civil Engineering
Concrete Trends	
Network	
Sales Guru	Sales Guru Publishing
Water and Sanitation Africa	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Leaders in Wellness (formerly "Leadership in HIV/Aids")	Cape Media Corporation
LMS	Media 24
Medical Chronicle	Media 24
Mims Guide To Otc Products	Times Media Group
Pedmed	Media 24
Sensitive Midwifery	
Meeting SA	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Sa Conference Directory	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Analytical Reporter	Media 24
Farmlink	Plaas Publishing
Opportunity	Cape Media Corporation
Service (Leadership In Local Government)	Cape Media Corporation
Brainstorm	iTWeb Ltd
I Week	iTWeb Ltd
African Decisions	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Afropolitan	Contact Media & Communications (pty) ltd

Black Business Quarterly	Cape Media Corporation
Business Brief	Business Brief Publishing(Pty)Ltd
The Project Manager	Cape Media Corporation
Prive	Media 24
JSE _	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Mercedes	Media 24
Plascon Spaces(Name Change)	Media 24
Good Taste	Converge (Pty) Ltd
G Tribe	Contact Media & Communications (pty) ltd
Taste (woolworths)	Media 24
Wild	Tip Publishing
Accountancy Sa	SAICA , South African Institute of Chartered Accountants
De Rebus	Law Society of SA
Digest Of South African Architecture	Picasso Headline (Pty) Ltd
Tax Talk	SAIT (S A Institute of Tax Practitioners)
Wits Business School Journal	Contact Media & Communications (pty) ltd
Clicks Club Card	Publishing Partnership, The
AA Traveler/AA Reisiger	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
IMIESA	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Resource	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Inside Mining	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Transport World Africa	3S Media (Pty) Ltd
Africa Geographic	Africa Geographic (Pty) Ltd
Hire SA	Media 24
MDR-MIMS Desk reference	Times Media Group
Mims Fees	Times Media Group
Dish Compact	Media 24
Magic	Media 24
Siyasiza	Media 24
AboutTime	Picasso Headline (Pty) Ltd
Khuluma	
Mango Juice	Media 24

Blue Train The	
JD Group Club Magazines (A)	Quantum Publishers
JD Group Club Magazines (B)	Quantum Publishers
Discovery	John Brown Publishing (Pty) Ltd
Life Magazine	Publishing Partnership, The
Netcare Magazine	
Blue Chip	
Obrigado(Vida Obrigado)	Publishing Partnership, The
Sea Rescue	Publishing Partnership, The
Equinox	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Nedbank Golf Challenge	Publishing Partnership, The
Private Edition	Publishing Partnership, The
Signature	Highbury Safika Media (Pty) Ltd
Bounce / Bankmed	Publishing Partnership, The
Medi Clinic / Family	Media 24
A-Plus	Media 24
Jet Club	Publishing Partnership, The
Lewis Stores Club Magazine	Media 24
“O” Oprah Magazine	Assoc Media
Animaltalk	Panorama Publications (Pty) Ltd
Car	Ramsay Media(Pty) Ltd
Bona	Caxton Ltd
Essentials	Caxton Ltd
Farmer’s Weekly	Caxton Ltd
Food and Home Entertaining	Caxton Ltd
Living and Loving	Caxton Ltd
People	Caxton Ltd
Rooi Rose	Caxton Ltd
SA Country Life	Caxton Ltd
SA Garden and Home	Caxton Ltd

Vroue Keur	Caxton Ltd
Woman and Home	Caxton Ltd
Your Family	Caxton Ltd
Complete Golfer	Ramsay Media(Pty) Ltd
Cosmopolitan	Assoc Media
Engineering News	Creamer Media (Pty) Ltd
Getaway	Ramsay Media(Pty) Ltd
Good housekeeping	Assoc Media
Hotel & Restaurant	Ramsay Media(Pty) Ltd
House and Leisure	Assoc Media
Leisure Wheels	Ramsay Media(Pty) Ltd
Marie Claire	Assoc Media
PC Format	Panorama Publications (Pty) Ltd
Popular Mechanics	Ramsay Media(Pty) Ltd
Skyways	Panorama Publications (Pty) Ltd
Succeed Magazine	Succeed
Think Sales	Think Sales Corporation (Pty) Ltd
Edgars Club Magazine	John Brown Publishing (Pty) Ltd
Road Ahead, The	Cape Media Corporation
Concrete Trends	Cement & Concrete Institute
Network	Wema Investments
Sensitive Midwifery	Sister Lillian Centre Cc
Lewis Stores Club Magazine	Media 24
Vector Journal	EE Publishers (Pty) Ltd

Website	Publisher
news24.com	24.com
sport24.co.za	24.com
netwerk24.com	24.com
fin24.com	24.com
channel24.co.za	24.com
Kick Off South Africa	24.com
Health24.com	24.com
Huisgenoot	24.com
dailysun.co.za	24.com
news24.com/City-Press	24.com
Women24.com	24.com
food24.com	24.com
Wheels24.co.za	24.com
channel24.co.za/the-juice	24.com
Drum	24.com
parent24.com	24.com
You	24.com
voices.news24.com	24.com
son.co.za	24.com
Sarie	24.com
24.com	24.com
Landbou	24.com
Yourparenting.co.za	24.com
tvplus.co.za	24.com
litnet.co.za	24.com
Weg se Werf	24.com
witness.co.za	24.com
tuis.co.za	24.com
truelove.co.za	24.com
media24.com	24.com

News24 - Nigeria	24.com
Movemag.co.za	24.com
kickoffpredictor.com	24.com
kickofffantasy.com	24.com
kknk.co.za	24.com
loseit.co.za	24.com
Minikuier.co.za	24.com
News24 - Kenya	24.com
mthathaexpress.co.za	24.com
news24wire.com	24.com
Kuier	24.com
Real.co.za	24.com
green.24.com	24.com
babaenkleutermini.co.za	24.com
foodandwineadviser.co.za	36 Degrees South [Pty] LTD
entertainmentadviser.co.za	36 Degrees South [Pty] LTD
cnbcafrica.com	ABN Media Group
myclassifieds.co.zw	Alpha Media Holdings
cosmopolitan.co.za	Associated Magazines
goodhousekeeping.co.za	Associated Magazines
marieclaire.co.za	Associated Magazines
houseandleisure.co.za	Associated Magazines
womenonwheels.co.za	Associated Magazines
goodhousekeeping.co.za - English	Associated Magazines
oprahmag.co.za	Associated Magazines
marieclairvoyant.com	Associated Magazines
MarieClaireDating.co.za	Associated Magazines
assocmags.co.za	Associated Magazines
gearburn.com	Burn Media
motorburn.com	Burn Media
capetownmagazine.com	CapeTownMagazine.com
kapstadtmagazin.de	CapeTownMagazine.com

kaapstadmagazine.nl	CapeTownMagazine.com
voelgoed.co.za	Carpe Diem
voelgoedwinkel.co.za	Carpe Diem
citizen.co.za	Caxton Digital
rekordeast.co.za	Caxton Digital
rekordcenturion.co.za	Caxton Digital
lowvelder.co.za	Caxton Digital
fourwaysreview.co.za	Caxton Digital
mobserver.co.za	Caxton Digital
kemptonexpress.co.za	Caxton Digital
zululandobserver.co.za	Caxton Digital
farmersweekly.co.za	Caxton Digital
krugersdorppnews.co.za	Caxton Digital
rekordmoot.co.za	Caxton Digital
roodepoortrecord.co.za	Caxton Digital
georgeherald.com	Caxton Digital
albertonrecord.co.za	Caxton Digital
risingsunchatsworth.co.za	Caxton Digital
looklocal.co.za	Caxton Digital
rekordnorth.co.za	Caxton Digital
bona.co.za	Caxton Digital
sandtonchronicle.co.za	Caxton Digital
getitonline.co.za	Caxton Digital
northcoastcourier.co.za	Caxton Digital
southcoastherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
rosebankkillarneygazette.co.za	Caxton Digital
bedfordviewedenvalenews.co.za	Caxton Digital
benonicitytimes.co.za	Caxton Digital
boksburgadvertiser.co.za	Caxton Digital
witbanknews.co.za	Caxton Digital
highwaymail.co.za	Caxton Digital
northglennews.co.za	Caxton Digital

randburgsun.co.za	Caxton Digital
brakpanherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
southcoastsun.co.za	Caxton Digital
ridgetimes.co.za	Caxton Digital
vrouekeur.co.za	Caxton Digital
newcastleadvertiser.co.za	Caxton Digital
autojunction.co.za	Caxton Digital
rooirose.co.za	Caxton Digital
reviewonline.co.za	Caxton Digital
knysnaplettherald.com	Caxton Digital
ladysmithgazette.co.za	Caxton Digital
randfonteinherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
eyethunews.co.za	Caxton Digital
citybuzz.co.za	Caxton Digital
phoenixsun.co.za	Caxton Digital
springsadvertiser.co.za	Caxton Digital
germistoncitynews.co.za	Caxton Digital
mosselbayadvertiser.com	Caxton Digital
midrandreporter.co.za	Caxton Digital
mpumalanganews.co.za	Caxton Digital
bereamail.co.za	Caxton Digital
alexnews.co.za	Caxton Digital
publiceyemaritzburg.co.za	Caxton Digital
comarochronicle.co.za	Caxton Digital
northeasterntribune.co.za	Caxton Digital
bloemfonteincourant.co.za	Caxton Digital
capricornreview.co.za	Caxton Digital
northcliffmelvilletimes.co.za	Caxton Digital
southlandssun.co.za	Caxton Digital
gardenandhome.co.za	Caxton Digital
southerncourier.co.za	Caxton Digital
oudtshoorncourant.com	Caxton Digital

steelburgernews.co.za	Caxton Digital
roodepoortnorthsider.co.za	Caxton Digital
livingandloving.co.za	Caxton Digital
northernnatalcourier.co.za	Caxton Digital
risingsunoverport.co.za	Caxton Digital
foodandhome.co.za	Caxton Digital
standertonadvertiser.co.za	Caxton Digital
corridorgazette.co.za	Caxton Digital
suidkaapforum.com	Caxton Digital
peoplemagazine.co.za	Caxton Digital
barbertontimes.co.za	Caxton Digital
nelspruitpost.co.za	Caxton Digital
vaalweekblad.com	Caxton Digital
potchefstroomherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
tembisan.co.za	Caxton Digital
essentials.co.za	Caxton Digital
highvelder.co.za	Caxton Digital
vryheidherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
parysgazette.co.za	Caxton Digital
countrylife.co.za	Caxton Digital
maritzburgsun.co.za	Caxton Digital
womanandhomemagazine.co.za	Caxton Digital
africanreporter.co.za	Caxton Digital
sowetourban.co.za	Caxton Digital
risingsunlenasia.co.za	Caxton Digital
estcourtnews.co.za	Caxton Digital
letabaherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
yourfamily.co.za	Caxton Digital
heidelbergnigelheraut.co.za	Caxton Digital
joburgeastexpress.co.za	Caxton Digital
kormorant.co.za	Caxton Digital
westside-eldos.co.za	Caxton Digital

caxtonmags.co.za	Caxton Digital
whiteriverpost.co.za	Caxton Digital
hazyviewherald.co.za	Caxton Digital
carletonvilleherald.com	Caxton Digital
sedibengster.com	Caxton Digital
polokwaneexpress.co.za	Caxton Digital
clubsense.co.za	Caxton Digital
reviewbosveld.co.za	Caxton Digital
makhadoreview.co.za	Caxton Digital
engineeringnews.co.za	Creamer Media
polity.org.za	Creamer Media
miningweekly.com	Creamer Media
m.engineeringnews.co.za	Creamer Media
m.polity.org.za	Creamer Media
m.miningweekly.com	Creamer Media
creamermedia.co.za	Creamer Media
researchchannel.co.za	Creamer Media
mnetcorporate.co.za	DStv Digital Media
binnelandersekstra.co.za	DStv Digital Media
sarugby.co.za	DStv Digital Media
sarugby.net	DStv Digital Media
ng.supersport.mobi	DStv Digital Media
morokaswallows.co.za	DStv Digital Media
bloemfonteincelticfc.co.za	DStv Digital Media
gh.supersport.mobi	DStv Digital Media
fazfootball.com	DStv Digital Media
sufc.co.za	DStv Digital Media
kpl.co.ke	DStv Digital Media
pt.supersport.mobi	DStv Digital Media
usl.ug	DStv Digital Media
binnelandersekstra.local	DStv Digital Media
jetonline.co.za	Edcon

jetonline.mobi	Edcon
electmagazine.co.za	Elect Magazine
onedayonly.co.za	EM Panel
paycity.co.za	EM Panel
entrepreneurmag.co.za	Entrepreneur Media SA
gearheads.co.za	Gearhead Publications
gevaaalik.com	gevaaalik.com
godirect.co.za	GoDiRECT
thegreentimes.co.za	Green Times
m.sarugbymag.co.za	Highbury Safika Media
sarugbymag.co.za	Highbury Safika Media
iab.south africa	IAB South Africa
thebookmarks.co.za	IAB South Africa
idrive.co.za	iDRIVE.co.za
gometroapp.com	IGEN MOBILE Pty (ltd)
puffandpass.co.za	iMust Software Solutions
sabreakingnews.co.za	Incredability
designindaba.com	Interactive Africa
itweb.co.za	ITWeb Limited
iFashion.co.za	ITWeb Limited
defencweb.co.za	ITWeb Limited
hrpulse.co.za	ITWeb Limited
itwebafrica.com	ITWeb Limited
brainstormmag.co.za	ITWeb Limited
iweek.co.za	ITWeb Limited
trainingweb.co.za	ITWeb Limited
itwebinformatica.co.za	ITWeb Limited
liefie.co.za	Kagiso Media Limited
luvstruck.co.za	Kagiso Media Limited
tivvit.com	Kagiso Media Limited
mg.co.za	Mail & Guardian Online

thoughtleader.co.za	Mail & Guardian Online
mgjobs.co.za	Mail & Guardian Online
voicesofafrica.co.za	Mail & Guardian Online
amabhungane.co.za	Mail & Guardian Online
mgafrika.com	Mail & Guardian Online
skysports.com	MCN
discovery.com	MCN
Men's Health	Media24 Magazines
Runner's World	Media24 Magazines
Women's Health	Media24 Magazines
Bicycling	Media24 Magazines
topgear.co.za	Media24 Magazines
TopCar	Media24 Magazines
graziadaily.co.za	Media24 Magazines
The Ridge	Media24 Magazines
blog.mh.co.za	Media24 Magazines
mybicycling.co.za	Media24 Magazines
bellyoff.co.za	Media24 Magazines
mhfit.co.za	Media24 Magazines
whmatch.co.za	Media24 Magazines
mhmatch.co.za	Media24 Magazines
ultimateguysweekend.co.za	Media24 Magazines
whbestbeachbodies.co.za	Media24 Magazines
FrontShop	Media24 Mags B2B
Medical Chronicle	Media24 Mags B2B
Leading Architecture	Media24 Mags B2B
Money Marketing	Media24 Mags B2B
DIY Trade News	Media24 Mags B2B
Hire SA	Media24 Mags B2B
LMS	Media24 Mags B2B
Environmental Management	Media24 Mags B2B

Analytical Reporter	Media24 Mags B2B
moneysmart.co.za	moneysmart
mineweb.co.za	Moneyweb
newhistory.co.za	Naspers Labs
destinyconnect.com	Ndalo Media
destinyman.com	Ndalo Media
eatout.co.za	New Media Publishing
taste.co.za	New Media Publishing
visi.co.za	New Media Publishing
Vodacom Rugby App	New Media Publishing
newsclip.co.za	Newsclip Media Monitoring
fleetwatch.co.za	Newslink FleetWatch
medquote.co.za	Optivest Health Services (Pty) Ltd
veeplaas.co.za	Plaas Publishing
thehrportal.co.za	Portal Publishing
theskillsportal.com	Portal Publishing
ewn.co.za	Primedia Online
702.co.za	Primedia Online
iafrica.com	Primedia Online
kfm.co.za	Primedia Online
capetalk.co.za	Primedia Online
highveld.co.za	Primedia Online
africaweather.com	Primedia Online
exactmusic.com	Primedia Online
EWN iOS App	Primedia Online
exactmobile.co.za	Primedia Online
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lapelle.co.za	Quantum Publishers
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golfclubmanagement.co.za	RamsayMedia
remax.co.za	Real Estate
rubybox.co.za	Ruby Box
samen.co.za	SA Men Digital
enca.com	Sabido
etv.co.za	Sabido
eNCA News Android App	Sabido
eNCA News iOS App	Sabido
getintotheaction.etv.co.za	Sabido
electmag.com	Shape-Shift Media
marketviews.co.za	Sharenet (Pty) Ltd
sharksworld.co.za	Sharksworld
sheqmanagement.com	SHEQ MANAGEMENT
showme.co.za	Showme Online Media
slicktiger.co.za	SlickTiger Industries
soccerladuma.co.za	Soccer-Laduma
sl10.ng	Soccer-Laduma
sabc.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation
rsg.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation
5fm.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation
metrofm.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation
sabc1.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation
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generationsextra.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation
expressoshow.com	South African Broadcasting Corporation
ukhozifm.co.za	South African Broadcasting Corporation

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