

Content demand in Africa fueled by TV series, animation

As the African/MENA regions continue to grow as the world's most coveted entertainment and media marketplaces - encompassing 70 countries with a combined population of 1.5 billion - DISCOP markets remain the go-to events for face-to-face meetings, insightful and educational discussions, as well as for ever critical deal making.



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Taking place from 14-16 November 2018, DISCOP Johannesburg is the leading content, adaptation rights and project market dedicated to Africa and the Middle East and this year, TV series and animation content continues to dominate demand.

With increasing internet connectivity, fast-growing smartphone reach, the ever-falling cost of data, DTT, and streaming platforms, video entertainment is more readily available and has put hundreds of millions of potential customers in play – with 75% of them under the age of 25. Whilst these markets can seem overwhelming and sometimes impenetrable, DISCOP continues to offer both buyers and sellers of content the most reliable and direct access to decision makers, movers and shakers, and industry thought leaders.

DISCOP Johannesburg promises once again to be the largest and most respected content market of its kind with an unparalleled reputation for consistency and return on investment for participants and exhibitors.

This year will be no different, with the continued exponential growth of the market continuing with over 1 500 delegates attending the event at the Sandton Convention Centre from 14-16 November. Guests will include over 400 acquisition and development executives representing broadcasters, premium cable channels, mobile operators, and streaming platforms from across Sub-Saharan Africa. DISCOP Joburg will also attract 200+ global and regional distributors who will be showcasing their latest offerings and seeking new representation deals.

DISCOP's NEXT GEN program is meticulously curated to focus on the most important topics and issues relating to Africa and the Middle East. Some of the industry's most influential professionals and decision makers take part in lively and interactive sessions that provide critical insights for anyone wanting to understand these lucrative markets.

This year's topics are particularly on point with a strong focus on animation and TV series. With all the rapidly changing platforms available for content distribution, both animation and TV series are still far ahead of any other type of content in relevance and viability.

African animation highlights

Over the last two years, the African Animation Network (AAN) has partnered with Annecy International Animated Film Festival & Market (the premiere animation event globally) and DISCOP Markets to host the Annecy - MIFA Pitches Animation du Monde in Africa.

In 2018, DISCOP Markets and AAN, launched DISCOMICS in partnership with ICON Comic & Games Convention (South Africa), NAICCON (Kenya) and Lagos Comic Con (Nigeria)- the three longest running pop culture events in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa.

As a result, Annecy - MIFA Pitches Animation du Monde was run across five territories in Africa including Abidjan, Johannesburg, Zanzibar, Nairobi and Lagos. The 10 finalists, two from each territory, will descend upon DISCOP Johannesburg to compete in the continental final. The two winners of the continental final, identified by the panel of international expert judges, will then go on to represent Africa and compete against their global counterparts at Annecy International Animated Film Festival & Market 2019.

The 10 finalists are:

Leshika Manue (Congo Brazza) presenting *Koka Kitoumbou*
Ouassila Kharoune (Côte d'Ivoire) presenting *Étincelle/The Spark*
Nildo Essa (Mozambique) presenting *As aventuras dos Pestinhas*
Mike Scott (South Africa) presenting *Da Bes Band*
Khanye Mfeka (South Africa) representing *My Friendly Tokoloshe*
Mike Scott (South Africa) presenting *Hiraeth*
Shadrack Munene (Kenya) presenting *Nini*
Salim Busuru (Kenya) presenting *The Next Rainbow*
Ridwan Moshood (Nigeria) presenting *Garbage Boy and Trash Can*
Dami Solesi (Nigeria) presenting *The Makerbolts*

Nick Wilson, head of projects and content at AAN, has this to say of the 2018 program: "We're really excited about the expanded footprint in 2018 having received 28% more submissions than we did in the previous year. It's allowed us to access more talent on the ground and provide them with opportunities to further develop their projects and find potential investment.

As validation for what we've been trying to achieve; one of the winners of the competition in 2017, Ingrid Agbo, secured a pre-sale from Gulli Africa for her project *L'arbre à Palimpseste* at the finals at Annecy in 2018."

A host of animation studios from across Africa have taken advantage of the offer to be part of the DISCOMICS Umbrella at DISCOP Johannesburg, these include:

Zeropoint Studios (South Africa)
PIXCOMM (South Africa)
DreamlifeTV (Nigeria)
Trueways (Kenya)
Lekholokwe Media Services (South Africa)

Smids Animation Studios (Nigeria)
The Tsunami Studio (Kenya)
Whitchcraft Design (South Africa)
Naota Studios (Kenya)
Basement Animation (Nigeria)
Assmo-Alliance of Slum Media Organization (Kenya)
Crossroads Digital Multimedia (Uganda)
5Seven Seven6 Entertainment (South Africa)
Africa Games Week (South Africa)
Monument Creative (Ghana)
Buni Media (Kenya)
The Hidden Hand (South Africa)
ICON Comic & Games Convention (South Africa)
NAICCON (Kenya)
Lagos Comic Con (Nigeria)

TV Series

With the recent announcement at MIPCOM that South Africa's Known Associates Entertainment has optioned the rights for *Ugly Betty*, there has been much attention focused on the TV series format, but for those who have been paying attention to the African market will know that this is just the latest announcement that highlights the ongoing popularity of TV series across the continent.

Throughout the three days there will be sessions focused on the role and importance of public broadcasters, each day a leading public broadcaster will be invited to discuss their creative and business strategies to lead their organization into a digital and mobile future. These broadcasters include Radio Television Ivoirienne, British Broadcasting Service, and the Canadian Broadcasting Service.

DISCOP Markets general manager Patrick Zuchowicki explains further, "DISCOP Johannesburg 2018 will be an opportunity for broadcasters, premium cable channels, SVOD platforms and mobile operators to find for the first time a great choice of international TV series projects initiated outside Africa, in an advanced development stage and where Africa takes centre stage."

**For more information on DISCOP Joburg please visit www.discop.com.*

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