

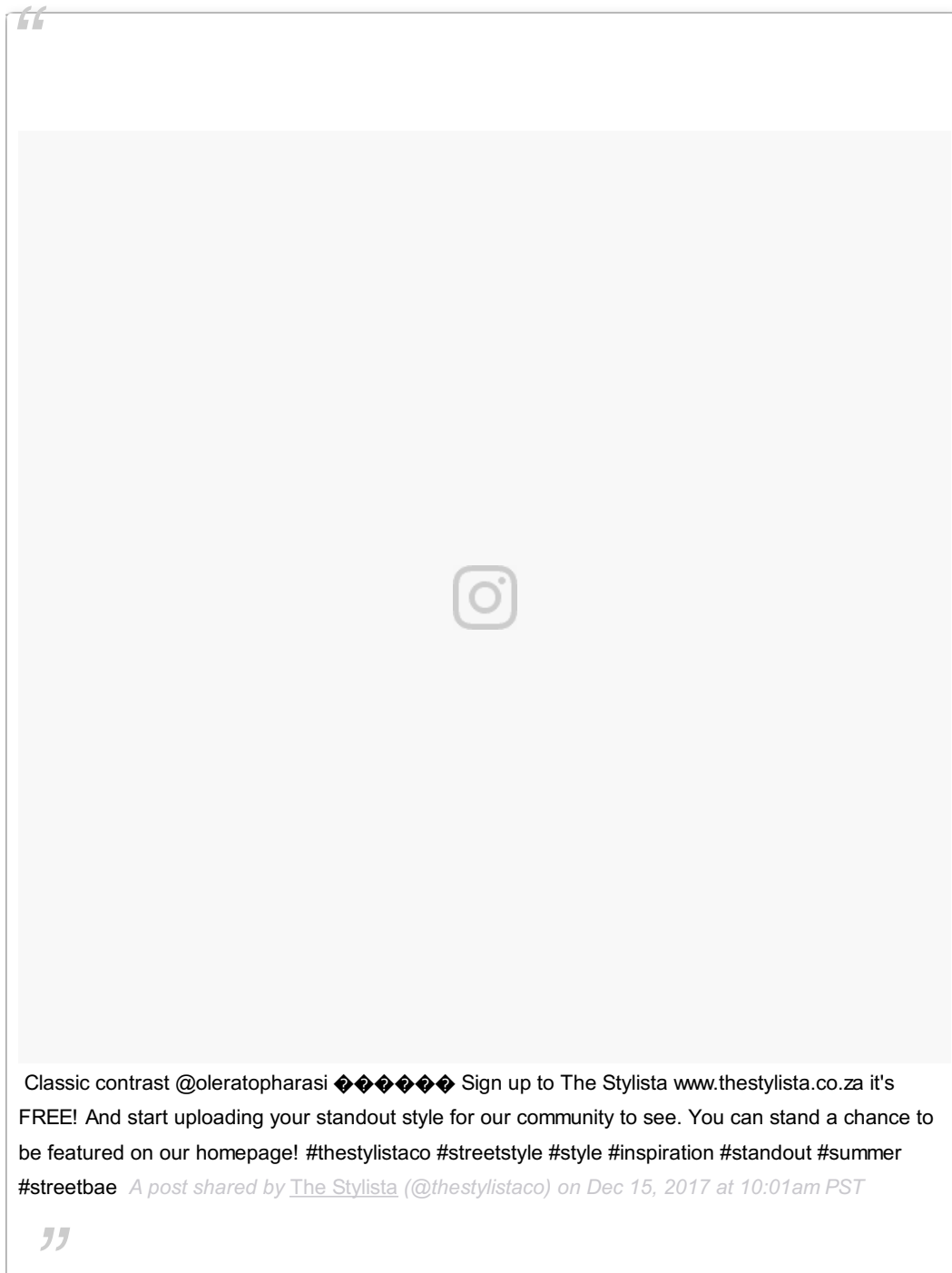
Pinning down real street style with The Stylista's social content

 By [Leigh Andrews](#)

21 Dec 2017

Shh... Word on the stylish digital street is that The Stylista is the place to be. It's a user-generated social media space for those interested in fashion, beauty and lifestyle, with a distinctive SA flavour. MD Tami Ruschin explains the beauty of creating customised content to delight brands and consumers alike.

Browsing through the site, you'll see social media posts of SA's cool kids – 13 years of age and up – in achingly cool threads, posed on the country's most iconic locations.



It's clear from a quick scroll that Stylista's market is aged 18-35, mainly urban millennials comprising 90% black African, 70% women. Ruschin further explains that 88% access the content on mobile, little surprise as this is mobile-first Africa.

What *is* a surprise is that the content is not all advertising. In fact, due to the user-generated aspect, the bulk of those fashion-centric photos come from real people who use the free platform for three reasons:

- To showcase their own personal style through #OOTD 'outfit of the day' posts,
- To be a source of influence amongst The Stylista community, and
- To set the pace for South African street style.

Ruschin explains:

“ We now have a following of over 250,000 users, who are continuously returning to the platform because of the voice and recognition they are given. ”

But obviously, it's not just about those achingly cool fashionistas. Brands like Diesel, Converse and Rimmel have also seen the benefit, as they share and connect with those consumers through video, editorial, and influencer participation-driven campaign content created by The Stylista team, much of which is customised per campaign client, strategically supported by advertisers and sponsors.

Here, Ruschin shares the secret to the hybrid model's success as well as the drivers of the SA social media fashion community and what's next for The Stylista...

■ Tell us why you launched The Stylista and how it has changed since then.



■ Tani Ruschin, MD of The Stylista.

The Stylista was created to provide a space where the local fashion community could meet and share their love of personal style and trends. It quickly developed into a social media platform and from that, we began to create tailor-made content for our audience to keep them inspired and keep them coming back for more.

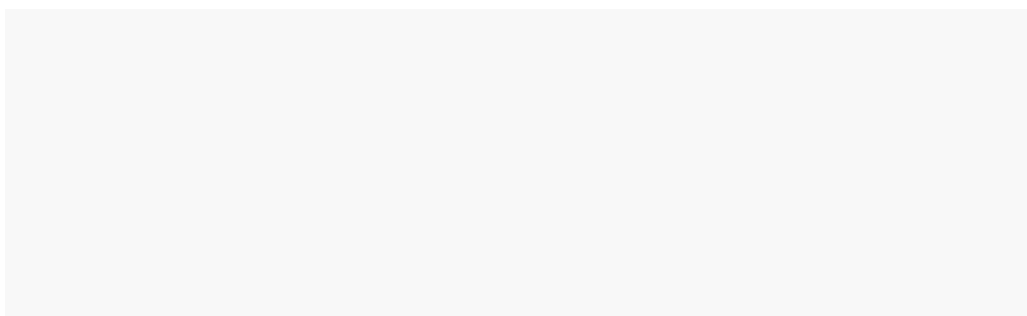
“ We're more than a media platform; we have the audience to substantiate the content that we produce for our users. ”

It was a natural progression to provide customised content to the top brands, because we really understand the millennial and Gen Z market they want to target.

Explain how The Stylista offers value for fashionistas and brands alike.

The Stylista certainly offers great inspiration by way of our editorial content and our users who upload looks, but what's really special is we're giving new fashionistas a platform to create a brand for themselves. We celebrate them by posting our favourites on Instagram every day so that others can be inspired by their style, which in turn motivates users to keep on sharing.

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A touch of magic! ✨@_icollections Sign up to The Stylista www.thestylista.co.za it's FREE! And start uploading your personal style today. #thestylistaco #streetstyle #inspiration #style #fresh #colourful #streetbae *A post shared by The Stylista (@thestylistaco) on Dec 18, 2017 at 9:56am PST*

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Plus we have a new points system, which rewards our active users.

For brands, The Stylista is like no other platform in South Africa. Their consumers are actively engaging every day on our website and social channels and the content we create is specifically designed for our audience, so everybody wins.

■ **Describe the South African social media community – the fashion set in particular!**

The fashion community in this country is so passionate and hungry. That’s really what keeps us inspired behind the scenes. I think what’s interesting is the shift from ten years ago. International trends largely dictated what was being interpreted here, but with every year, and with access to new and better options, we started to see a rise in individualism that confidently stands beside first-world peers.

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A breath of fresh air 💎💎@leeyahs_ #thestylistaco #streetstyle #inspiration #style #fresh #floral #streetbae A post shared by [The Stylista \(@thestylistaco\)](#) on Dec 11, 2017 at 10:43am PST

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There is no describing the South African community because it's made up of such beautifully diverse individuals. This is how we approach our content, because each person requires something different.

■ ***How do you then put your content together? Talk us through the process.***

Our creative team is comprised of amazing individuals who are always keen to push the envelope, in fact, they're the very demographic many of our brands are targeting. This is fundamental in creating the right content for the urban millennial market in South Africa because what worked five years ago in marketing won't work today. Our process is extremely customised to suit each client's objectives.

■ ***In fact, your offering is so customised you don't even have a rate card. How do potential client brands respond to this?***

In a digital space, it's interesting; traditional rate cards don't work here. In order to be agile we can't put limitations on ourselves, so we often think about what's needed and find a way to make it work according to the budget.

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Flashback Friday to @welovesummerofficial festival! Print overload #festivallook #festivalstyle
#welovesummer 💎💎: @thesearethestreets

A post shared by The Stylista (@thestylistaco) on Dec 1, 2017 at 9:30am PST

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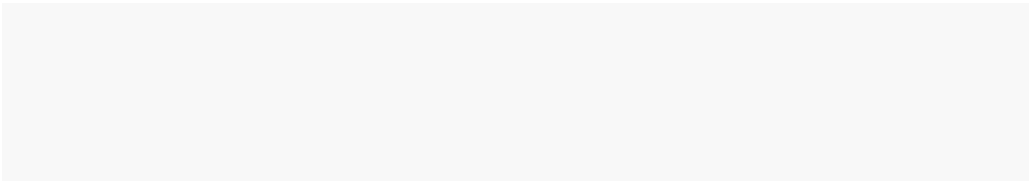
Our clients respond well to this because we treat each new brand as a partnership and we have personal relationships with each of our clients. Of course, we offer a lot of value too, which is never a bad thing.

📺What's next for The Stylista?

The Stylista is the go-to platform for all things content, from fashion, lifestyle, beauty, even travel and art. We are on-the-ground, creating content that speaks to everyone. Content is about lifestyle and that is what we are going to portray to the local market. That means far more experiential content, really treating The Stylista as a content hub and staying abreast of all things trending. What's next, is Africa.

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Cool and classic @uzairbulbulia #thestylistaco #streetstyle #inspiration #style #cool #classic

A post shared by [The Stylista \(@thestylistaco\)](#) on Nov 21, 2017 at 8:25am PST

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Seems it's definitely Africa's time in the fashion spotlight – on social media, at least. We'll be keeping our eyes peeled. You can get involved, either by becoming an active member or by passively scrolling through the content on <https://www.thestylista.co.za/>, downloading the app from the [PlayStore](#) or following The Stylista's latest updates on: [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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