

Opening up the VR market

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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With branded headsets and the production of virtual reality (VR) campaigns, VR is a wonderful new, innovative way to reach high-end audiences, and it is here. Launched this week at the official [WantedOnline.co.za](#) events in Johannesburg and Cape Town, Times Media has brought to market a new advertising outlet in VR.



The September issue of *Wanted* will see 16,000 selected *Business Day/Wanted* subscribers receiving Cardboard headsets, but this is only the beginning says Lisa MacLeod, head of digital at Times Media, as they have the ability to reach over 300,000 people.

In South America, at a recent conference that she attended, it was stated that the VR market will become a US\$80bn market in the next couple of years. "There is nothing more engaging than having these glasses on, especially for fashion shows, car models and events. It is a new opportunity for advertisers that is completely different," she says.

"We are able to do the VR production, create the content, supply and brand the glasses and then distribute the content and the glasses, thus allowing more people to experience your brand," she adds.

This innovation is part of a move to offer clients a truly 360 degree offering, from print to web and mobile, of which the launch of [WantedOnline.co.za](#) is only the beginning. The digital platform is a pre-cursor of the broader launch of their new business supersite, *BusinessLIVE*, due for launch in September.

"Wanted Online is proof of concept site, built on brand new technology and with a custom back-end to make it as easy as possible for our staff to manage the site and become more involved with digital. All the new sites we will be rolling out in the coming months will be built on the same tech," explains MacLeod, who joined Times Media just under a year ago.

She describes *Wanted Online* as a lovely product, not only beautifully designed, but built on new technology, not existing

web technology, from scratch.

Wanted Online is hosted on Google PAAS (Platform as a Service) solution - which allows for scalability and consistently faster performance, even under intense traffic. The result is that it is light and easy to use. "It is intuitive. It is about making online as accessible and easy to use as possible. Users will instantly and instinctively know what to do with it."

The layout is lovely and clean, featuring a rich dropdown navigation and a fast search overlay making Wanted Online a tailored experience for mobile, tablet and desktop platforms. It is optimised for speed while preserving the rich visual aesthetic. "It is completely responsive for mobile so if you open on a tablet or on your smartphone it responds to the device."

It also uses a new content management system. "The articles have big pictures and good ad positions and the focus is on them as this is what brings people to the website through search and social channels."

This also enable them to run bespoke sizes and experiment with advertisers to try new things. "The site is built in such a way that we are flexible on style and layout and so it allows for advertisers, either as print partnerships or as standalone campaigns, with a variety of customisable ad positions available and a focus on native executions."

She adds that they are pushing quite hard in that space. "There is no proper outlet for luxury brands in South Africa. Advertisers have been asking, on a regular basis, for an outlet. The site is the answer to that request."

Currently *Wanted* as a print product is only available to *Business Day* subscribers. With WantedOnline the brands will be open to everyone. This, says newly appointed editor, Jacquie Myburgh Chemaly, will expose a new audience to the brand and its content. "This audience is not the audience that subscribes to the print publication."

The site will carry the print content as well as original content from society to motoring and design, technology and motoring – all the leisure pillars will be covered.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from VMts.

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