

Instant Articles boost traffic, interactions and revenue

By [Joanne Williamson](#)

16 Jul 2021

Genesis Media Emerging Markets (GMEM) is a news and entertainment company with brands in Nigeria (Legit.ng), Kenya (TUKO.co.ke), Ghana (YEN.com.gh), and South Africa (Briefly News.) With a global audience reaching 24 million unique users a month, a growing social media presence and a booming video viewership, GMEM - who mainly produce content in English, Swahili, and Hausa - is on its way to becoming the biggest online media company in emerging markets.

While the team was testing strategies to increase distribution, audience size and revenue from links, they found that Instant Articles had an incredible impact on their metrics. In 2020 GMEM generated a total of 148M page views – an up tick of 47% year-on-year – making it one of the top-earning brands in Instant Articles across the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey region.

“Our goal is to show the real Africa to the world,” said Yelena Boginskaya, co-CEO at GMEM. “We use a data-driven approach and seek to improve our audience’s lives every day in real time.”

To exemplify the high performance generated from Instant Articles, GMEM provided results from their South African brand, Briefly News.

Results from Briefly News

- 25.7 million Instant Article page views in 2020 (+78% in comparison to 2019)
- 2x growth of monthly interaction rate on linked posts
- 3.7x growth of monthly impressions on linked posts

Results provided by CrowdTangle and Genesis Media Emerging Markets, December 2020 compared to December 2019

As an example, one Briefly news story generated nearly 250,000 page views alone, boosted by the use of Instant Articles. The accompanying revenue the product continues to generate has also allowed the company to hire more staff.

“Using Instant Articles has made a big difference,” Boginskaya said. “It’s changed the way people consume news, making it much more engaging and interesting. And it’s an amazing way to get paid directly for the work you do. Since our revenue increased, this product has allowed us to increase the size of our team.”

Strategy

The team implemented regular training sessions. That helped refresh their Facebook monetisation policy and Community Standards guidelines – encouraging sustainable growth through Instant Articles.

They doubled down on high-quality reporting. By prioritising quality-first, timely reporting, the team were able to add value and exclusives to their Instant Articles – helping to drive page views.

“The first thing we noticed that affected the performance of our articles is their quality,” Kseniia Kit, head of PR and Social Media at GMEM, said. “The timing of when you post, the added value, exclusive content you provide, and understanding the types of content your audience prefers.”

Using Creator Studio insights, they were able to conduct constant analysis. By going through various metrics, the team were able to see what performed the best for the Page – as well as the new trends. In conjunction with content discovery and social monitoring platform CrowdTangle, they could also compare their project’s performance to that of their competitors’.

“We call ourselves ‘analytical nerds’ because every decision is informed by data and analytics,” Kit said. “We track all KPIs and prepare weekly CrowdTangle reports to compare our performance to competitors. We find new strategies to change the direction of our content and deliver more relevant news.”

They developed their engagement and native content strategy. That meant that they began interacting with readers on their page’s article comments, as well as in their inbox and in Groups. That helped support GMEM’s new content direction with the use of Instant Articles, enabling greater page views.

Impact

By honing their Instant Articles strategy, GMEM was able to achieve higher growth and revenue – including an impressive 47% year-on-year hike in Instant Article page views. It demonstrates how essential this native format can be for African publishers – helping to save users time and make the reading experience more engaging.

“Internet penetration is constantly increasing in Sub-Saharan Africa,” Kit said. “180M people use the internet in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and South Africa every day, mostly via mobile devices. 88% use Facebook, and they are young: the median age across our market is 22-24 years old. This is a great opportunity for a media brand like ours.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joanne Williamson, Partner Solutions Manager, News, South Africa



For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>