

Loyalty in audio consumption

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While it is hard to absorb any learnings from the year that was 2020, any chance to learn something should be met with an open mind if we are to unlock any opportunity for the future. While 2020 was simply dubbed 'stifling', there was a silver lining amidst the dark cloud of Covid-19 for media and, most especially, for radio.

So, what did we learn?

We learned that while everything was falling apart and credible news was hard to come by, among its audience, OFM was one of the few brands that could be relied upon for accurate and credible information related to the coronavirus.

We learned that, in general, radio listening was up by 30% (Kantar) by May 2020 and that 71% of central South Africans listened to more radio than usual, during the then lockdown, across all of OFM's available platforms – radio, mobile and desktop apps.

The absence of the BRC (Broadcast Research Council of South Africa) Rams (Radio Audience Measure) meant that OFM had to further inform itself about its audience and media consumption habits. The last reading pinned OFM's seven-day come at 315,000 listeners. BrandMapp (which independently tracks economically active South African's online activity) pinned OFM's listenership at 479,000. Thus, while the pandemic had a limiting effect overall, this forced the brand's hand to be more insights-driven than ever before. These independent research studies and insights paved the way for more agile products that met a demand that otherwise would have not necessarily have been discovered, such as OFM [Live Link](#) and [BrandMax](#).

But radio is more than an extended aerial with a tuner and speaker. The modern age has given radio the opportunity to expand and meet its audience in cyberspace.

OFM spent much of the last three years aggressively investing in and developing adjacent offerings, like various digital platforms, including social media, desktop and mobile apps, as well as a revamped website and streaming service, OFM Stasie2. OFM's online users have increased almost 2% year on year to 1.745 million online users by December 2020 and a further 260,000 unique online streams. All of the above excludes the ambitious podcasting planned for 2021, which includes an association with leading podcast publisher – Wondery.

What does this all mean?

OFM is creating an ecosystem. A place where the brand and listeners can find and access each other across various and different platforms. Discoveries fast-tracked by the coronavirus.

So, what do we know now?

We know that in 2021, OFM listeners indicated that they are likely to listen to more radio, and streamed audio services, than they did in 2020. Of the little over 1,100 respondents:

- 54% of OFM listeners indicated that they are likely to consume more radio
- 65% indicated that they already listen to more radio between 6am and 9am and that many kept their radio tuned onto OFM from 6am, in the car, at home and at work. An insight, revealed time and time again from the BRC Rams, is that OFM has one of the highest instances of time spent listening over seven days – 20.97 hours
- And 16% indicated that they are likely to consume more streamed audio offerings

“The study indicates the absolute strength of radio and audio consumption, listener engagement and the loyalty OFM listeners have toward OFM. In 2021, OFM turns 35 years young and the station can be proud that radio and audio consumption is getting stronger,” – Nick Efstathiou, CEO of the Central Media Group, holding company of OFM.

This translates to the absolute value of audio. Where there is engagement, there is a prospective solution, and radio sits at the table of this digital revolution. Audio remains inescapable and OFM intends to build on the legacy of its last 35 years in audio.

Who is OFM?

OFM is central South Africa's premier commercial radio station offering a mix of music, news and entertainment.

The station serves the influential SEM seven to 10 market with a footprint across the Free State, Northern Cape, southern Gauteng and North West. The brand is synonymous with the people of central South Africa and covers the full spectrum of listeners: from urban youngsters to pensioners, from working moms and dads to successful professionals, and from rural communities to agricultural producers. OFM offers a number of niche features – including an agricultural programme, agri news twice a day, entertainment and sports features.

Our audience is incredibly loyal and supportive. OFM enjoys one of the highest instances of time spent listening to the radio in South Africa. OFM is part of the Central Media Group with its head office located in Bloemfontein, with a studio in Welkom.

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