

Authentic content skyrockets while language barriers crumble

 By [Tecla Ciolfi](#)

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The music industry suffered through two years of pandemic-induced trauma to be rewarded with 2022, a year that will be fondly remembered as the one where we got back on our feet and were able to attend live gigs the way they were intended- with a drink in hand and not a goddam mask in sight.



Image supplied: Tecla Ciolfi

It's because of the groundwork laid by this glorious year that 2023 looks dazzling. And in an industry where trends come and go faster than you can say live streaming, you're going to need to pay close attention this year in order to keep up.

A moment for the innovators

The music industry is driven first and foremost by creatives. Innovation is born from the freedom to create, so naturally, I look to independent artists to set the tone for the next wave of trends, whatever they may be, and so do the record labels.

My hope is that musicians equip themselves with the knowledge to handle their careers effectively through the various online tools available, whether they decide to stick it out independently or not.

A spotlight on being authentic

Every year on #BizTrends I babble on about TikTok, how could I not? But after hosting two #IndieArtistWorkshops in Cape Town and Johannesburg last year, powered by TuneCore, I realised that what creatives are really concerned with when it comes to TikTok is how to crack that algorithm.

Thing is, there's no golden ticket here, it's simply down to authenticity, or a degree of it. Two months ago SA-born, UK-based musician and producer, Dreamkid, had 1000 followers on TikTok. Now he has over 110,000 and his Instagram is doing similar numbers. His secret? Consistent posting of original, high-quality content.

What language barrier?

I wasn't a bit surprised when I read that there had been a 93% year-on-year increase in K-pop streams in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2022 on Spotify. That's over three billion hours of streaming.

And while SA was the #1 country when it came to this listenership, Nigeria saw a 267% increase, Ghana a 236% increase, and Kenya a 140% increase in K-pop streams. The genre has found a dedicated fanbase in Africa that's only growing, while the same can be said for the prominence of Amapiano in the UK and Europe, as well as Afrobeats in America—so much so that Billboard launched the U.S. Afrobeats Songs Chart in 2022.

In Sync > Nsync

On an international level, sync shone a huge light on catalogue songs in 2022 with Kate Bush, Metallica and The Cramps seeing mammoth success off viral moments from *Stranger Things* and *Wednesday*.

On a local level Zambian-born and Botswana-raised singer, songwriter, and activist, Moonga K. celebrated his first major sync on USA drama series *Queen Sugar*, and as a panellist at the #IndieArtistWorkshop in Joburg, spoke at length about the numerous benefits of sync.

Expect a push towards understanding interactive content like metaverse-style experiences, on top of TV, film, series, trailers and video game sync.

ABOUT TECLA CIOLFI

Tecla Ciolfi is founder and manager of music news website *Texx and the City* and has been a part of the music industry in South Africa for the last 10 years in various capacities, namely journalism, radio presenting, event curation and artist management.

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