

# SuperSport reigns supreme, DA not so much



By [Brendan Seery](#)

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It sounds trite - but one of the best forms of marketing is to ensure you have a top-class product to sell...and you maintain that standard. If you don't, then you'll find a challenger brand has stepped in to eat your lunch.



When Netflix arrived on the scene, there were many predictions that this would be the end of conventional TV as we know it – and that streaming as a whole would kill off the supposed dinosaurs like DStv.

## Highest standard

That should have been accelerated – at least as far as public perceptions go – by a supposed pushback against DStv because of its declining value-for-money offerings. On top of that, there were a few angry groups threatening to boycott the service, for one silly political reason or another.

How did the corporation respond? By keeping the product offering of the highest standard. Now, to be clear, I am not talking about the channel bouquet as a whole – although I find the non-fiction programming and news channel selection to be superb – but the jewel in the DStv crown, SuperSport.

And nowhere do you see that excellence more in evidence than in that channel's coverage of the annual Comrades Marathon. After the Tour De France, I would rate their coverage as one of the best TV sports productions on the planet.



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This year was no exception and, even though I was working on the day of the race, I frequently keep an eye on things via the TV. While the battles and the record breaking at the front of the field could not have been scripted better for armchair athletes, I found the scenes of those crowds, of the great levelling effect of the race – even the tears and the pain – made me nostalgic for the times when I was one of those crazy thousands taking the pedestrian route between Pietermaritzburg and Durban.

Apart from the live coverage of the race, SuperSport also aired some fascinating documentaries about the race, its history and heroes.

The whole spectacle was worth the price of DStv entrance. And if you needed reminding, there is still a host of other top tier sport on offer, especially as we go through the European summer (Tour De France, Wimbledon, anyone?)

Orchids to SuperSport and DStv for proving that streaming hasn't yet killed the TV star...

## Shotgun marketing

Back in the mists of marketing time, there buzzword phrase was "CRM", which stood for customer, or consumer, relationship marketing. Basically, this was saying that knowing your customer and how to reach them was not only a marketing silver bullet, it would save you billions.

Sadly, what it has turned into is illegal harvesting of your personal information and the subsequent tsunami of spam.

This unsolicited avalanche of ad material can not only irritate people, it can seriously turn them against your brand. And, that is helped along by insensitive, shotgun approaches to potential clients.

One such was pointed out on Twitter by respected ad guru Mike Abel.

He said: "If a company or charity wants to build relationships with their client base, they really need to ensure their data is updated and accurate. I have had four organisations send me unsolicited messages suggesting what I can do with my dad

this coming Father's Day. My first without him. These insensitive suggestions don't exactly build relationships with these companies. They ruin them."

Spot on, Mike. He would no doubt agree that a generalised Onion for all you out there doing this is more than merited. If good taste doesn't stop you, then think about how much you're damaging the product you're trying to sell.

Yet, the move to acquire people's private information at all costs is not just something done by the private sector.

## Spam, spam and more spam

I was alerted to the fact that the Democratic Alliance (either by design or error – and neither is a particularly good look) is going all out to get people's cellphone numbers... presumably so they can spam them. Err. Sorry, encourage them to vote...

## Check your voter registration details

On Election Day, you can only vote at the voting station where you are registered.

In preparation for the national and provincial government elections in 2024, and for any by-elections that may take place to elect a new municipal councillor in your ward, you need to register in the voting district where you live.

Find the answers to frequently asked questions, below.

If you need more help, please email [help@da.org.za](mailto:help@da.org.za) and we'd be happy to answer your questions.

When you go on to the party's site – [check.da.org.za](http://check.da.org.za) – to see if you are registered (a really useful service, one would think), you are required to fill in a number of details. After providing your residential address and ID number, you then go to a screen which asks to you enter your "cellphone and/or email" in order to receive your voter registration information. However if, like a my friend Kathy (and me, too), you don't feel like providing your phone number, and you enter only your email address, you get an "invalid phone number" and "there is a problem with your submission."

Please check that you have correctly filled in your information and completed all the required fields."

But, didn't you say "and/or" when it comes to sharing cellphone numbers? Of course you did, and of course someone would have checked this... so one is left with the feeling that this is deliberate. If it was a mistake, it doesn't say much for DA accuracy, does it?

Anyone who has been spammed with unsolicited SMS message at voting time by the time (and the ANC too) know only too well what these numbers will be used for.

It's disappointing from a party which espouses liberal values, privacy being one of them.

An Onion to the DA – and perhaps you should go and have a look at the Protection of Personal Information Act...or at least drop the pretence of being fair in your data harvesting.

## ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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