

Sebenza: Making the taxi commute worth the trip

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As South Africa waits for the national roll-out of free data and internet for all, a new in-taxi digital platform is bridging the technology divide and giving free Wi-Fi and content solutions for those who need it the most: commuters...



Sebenza pride themselves on being the 'internet for the people'. A free Wi-Fi and content platform for South African commuters on South Africa's primary mode of public transport: taxis and buses.

“Sebenza is a way of life. This is where we support local content creators and product developers through deep partnerships that accelerate user numbers, while granting access to information and entertainment...”

– Mayi Tshwete

Aiming to bridge the digital divide, Sebenza is an online ecosystem that keeps commuters entertained with Sebenza TV and Music, enhances productivity and assists people by giving them access to information for financial education.

"Sebenza is a way of life. This is where we support local content creators and product developers through deep partnerships that accelerate user numbers, while granting access to information and entertainment to the user at their fingertips..." says Sebenza spokesperson Mayi Tshwete.

"We use incentivised call-to-actions to reward users with Sebenza Bucks, availing a broad range of value through bandwidth and content to commuters as they engage more deeply on the platform. This makes their commute far more enjoyable. We firmly believe no one should be left behind in an increasingly digital world."

To see how digital inclusion benefits society, South Africa needs to shift its focus to see the benefits of free commuter Wi-Fi. Examples include bus systems in Britain, local flights in the United States and commuter railroads in Spain – Wi-Fi is everywhere, but not yet in South Africa and at the scale the ordinary person needs.

Tshwete also points out the importance of having this market's voice heard through active and meaningful engagement. The

intuitive use of this platform and the mutually beneficial construct between platform, commuters, producers and brands make Sebenza an ideal partner platform for brands.

A major pain point for South Africans is the cost of data. Sebenza has already overcome the data challenge to achieve free-to-commuter communications, along with the creation of products and partnerships that benefit the commuters such as a jobs portal that will be available later this year.



Sebenza's access to an exclusive market is unrivalled and benefits brand partners in meaningful ways, giving them access to a wide range of digital products and services that they can utilise to propel their message. Furthermore, the technology allows for in-depth reporting and demographic feedback, meaning brands can generate surveys that allow them to tailor products and experiences that really meet customers' needs.

Robyn Nel, brand manager at Sebenza, explains: "With integrated location-based mobile advertising and products, commuters are receiving content relevant to where they are at that moment, making it easier to connect to experiences and brands. We also have hybrid opportunities where our team can further brand engagement at taxi ranks through hyper-targeted activations."

Sebenza is available in over 2,000 taxis across South Africa today, reaching 600,000 people per month, and is gearing up to scale the roll out of their technology to over three million people per month throughout 2023.

"It's not about the numbers," concludes Tshwete. "It's about making access to data possible. We look ahead to 2023 with hope and optimism to connect people to digital products and services that elevate their daily commute."

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SEBENZA Connect, engage and grow with Sebenza. The app designed to meet the needs of people on the move. Users can get free access to taxi WiFi by engaging with a wide selection of content.

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