

Quirky branded content finds viewers on the continent

Over 4 million views and 11 films in just two years - Absa's foray into branded content advertising as part of its ongoing Prosper expression campaign has proved successful. Called 'The Pensioners', the latest Prosper film is fast finding favour with viewers across Africa - more than 115 000 views have been recorded since its recent launch earlier this month.



Image by 123RF

The bank believes it has upped the *ante* on authentically crafted content, and introduced a fun, quirky and somewhat eccentric new film that goes to the heart of Absa's Shared Growth commitment – but in a more light-hearted tone.

Human interest stories

Fuelled by its inspirational Prosper philosophy, Absa launched a series of compelling films in 2014, authentic and honest in their narrative, depicting the power of people to realise their dreams and prosper – when enabled by partners, like Absa and Barclays Africa, with the means to make this happen.

These heart-warming stories of real people's lives struck a chord with the public: more than 732 566 views of 10-year-old Afiya's story alone, followed by 444 706 and 418 718 views respectively of the uplifting personal stories of former actress, Gaynor Young and English Premier League player, Victor Wanyama.

Since being posted on 19 July 2016, the remarkable story of Sinanziwe Ndlovu, 'The girl who rewrote her future', has

already garnered more than 785 921 views while the inspiring story of single mom, Deliwe Tibane, has netted 818 155 views since the beginning of July 2016.

“We originally launched the films as proof points for Prosper – visual portrayals of our brand promise to the communities we serve. The more than 4 million views to date is no mean feat for financial services content that is being predominantly promoted in the digital and social spaces,” says Colleen Jackson, general manager: Brand at Barclays Africa.

She adds: “Each of these stories bears testament to the power of the human spirit and demonstrates our Prosper philosophy in action. With the incredible public support these films have received, it’s clear people love a human interest story that pays it forward, inspires and entertains.”

The films have resonated with people from across the African continent. Jackson says online users as far afield as Botswana, Ghana, Zambia and Kenya have responded to the pieces.

“The content is real; it’s unscripted and undirected. Every film is a beautifully crafted true story that brings our Prosper ideology to life. The films are not about our products – they’re simply aspirational stories that we can all relate to in some way,” she adds.

‘The Pensioners’

With the films demonstrating Absa’s proficient use of social media, the brand is now exploring this channel further in an effort to reach a younger target audience. This is not only evident in its recent ReadytoWork and MegaU campaigns, but also in its latest Prosper film titled *The Pensioners*, which pursues the bank’s new light-hearted communication approach.

Hugely entertaining with a fun script, wonderfully whimsical voice-over and visuals that promise to leave viewers smiling from ear to ear, *The Pensioners* showcases three Barclays Nairobi, Kenya, retirees who, instead of putting their feet up, are still actively contributing to society.

John Bonzo, a retired Barclays Kenya telephone exchange operator; Ann Mwai, a retired Barclays Kenya secretary; and Dave Mwangi, a retired Barclays Kenya project manager, continue to do meaningful work in their communities, ensuring their legacies live on long after they have retired.

“This is Prosper as viewers have never seen it before,” says Jackson. *The Pensioners* is quirky and somewhat retro in style, and reflects our 2016 Prosper film strategy of creating content that is different to other films, that appeals to fresh new audiences and that elicits different emotional responses. It’s a delight, but you have to see it for yourself!”

Like ‘The girl who rewrote her future’ and ‘Building a better life’, ‘The Pensioners’ is aligned to the bank’s Shared Growth commitment. Through Shared Growth, Absa endeavours to grow the communities in which it operates, while growing its business as well. The key focus areas are those that will hopefully alleviate some of the most pressing societal challenges on the continent, including education and skills, enterprise development and financial inclusion.

“There is no doubt, Absa’s pioneering Prosper film series has catapulted it to the forefront of branded content communication in the financial services sector. ‘The Pensioners’ will definitely captivate, motivate and inspire all viewers to Prosper,” concludes Jackson.

View *The Pensioners* on [YouTube](#).