

Let's chat

By  [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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When the official CliffCentral.com launch party took place recently, what was very interesting was its launch platform.



WeChat hosted the physical launch on the evening, but it is also the home of CliffCentral where Gareth Cliff and his team's fans can engage with each other when it suits them through photos, voice notes, podcasts, news, and even a daily opinion poll.

WeChat is a mobile social communication app designed for smartphone users and is claimed to be the world's fastest growing social app with over 100 million registered accounts internationally.

Brett Loubser, MD - WeChat Africa, says CliffCentral was a good fit for both parties. "Gareth Cliff needed a partnership with a platform like ours and we want to promote it as a mobile interactive chat platform."

The days of one broadcast medium is over he says. "WeChat allows real time, 24/7 interaction and makes the broadcast medium a richer content experience. For example the daily opinion poll... Broadcast mediums ask listeners to SMS their vote and then they send out the results the next day. With WeChat the daily poll takes place in real time and the results are instant," he says.

More interactive features in the pipeline

WeChat has been working with the CliffCentral team for only a short period of time and Loubser says so far what they have done with the platform is only the beginning. "We started with elements that the team is used to, but as we progress we will increase the interactive features. Certain features also lend themselves more to radio, for example voice notes."

He explains that voice notes are simple to use. To send a voice note, you just hold down the 'hold to talk' button, and when you let go, the voice note is instantly sent to the person to whom you are speaking. They tap on it to listen.

This is not the first time WeChat has worked with a brand. Last year it partnered with the Loeries. "We created excitement pre the event. During the event we informed people not only of what was happening, but also where it was happening.

It also worked with *Big Brother* and is currently working with *Survivor*. The platform in context to other platforms is relevant, like television. It enables a rich interactive experience with a content partner or brand which provides for powerful engagement.

Augmented content

"We will be launching other initiatives soon. One of these involves football and we believe it will allow people to understand the power of this medium," says Loubser.

This is the future of digital and online marketing, he says. "A brand will run an official account on WeChat giving its audience content. For example CliffCentral provides augmented content that lines up with what is happening on air at that moment. This is the direction we are moving in and this is the future."

He says the platform has positioned itself as the bridge between mobi sites and apps. "For example, location services, push messaging and single sign-on capabilities are traditionally built for the mobile app environment. We have this functionality baked into the application, making it simple for brands to integrate with their web designed customer experience in an Official Account."

[MTN](#) subscribers can also stream CliffCentral free-of-charge via WeChat. CliffCentral.com started broadcasting on Worker's Day, with the Gareth Cliff Show on air from 6-9am during the week. The full CliffCentral.com line-up, which includes some well-known names (including Casper de Vries) and aspiring new talent, will be announced later this month.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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