

Mail & Guardian Africa launched

M&G Media Ltd has launched Mail & Guardian Africa, a homegrown digital news platform for Africans to tell the African story.



"Mail & Guardian Africa has taken the bold step to report Africa by telling why things do or do not happen, using an evidence-based, non-dogmatic and analytical approach and exploring the new opportunities that technology, social media and crowd-sourcing tools offer to do that in new ways," says Mail and Guardian Africa Editor Charles Onyango-Obbo.

Mail and Guardian Africa aims to be the leading and most important commercially successful contemporary voice on African issues. News analysis, insight, commentary and investigative journalism will be the hallmark of this Pan African platform.

As part of the package, www.mgafrica.com, the digital news and information portal of Mail and Guardian Africa, was activated on Thursday, 1 May 2014. This was followed by the launch of the Mail and Guardian Africa head office in Nairobi, Kenya on Tuesday, 20 May 2014. From this location, Onyango-Obbo will lead a carefully selected contingent of creative and African journalists and editors operating across the continent.

"The aim is to focus on delivering quality African news and information via mobile to, primarily 30-40 year-old audiences with a college education in both Africa and outside the continent. Mail and Guardian Africa will offer a non-paternalistic, intelligent, and enlightened view of developments on the continent without feeling duty-bound to talk up the 'Africa Rising' narrative, or to be stuck in cynicism and a refusal to see progress either. The objective is to make M&G Africa the most trusted and diverse source of news on Africa," says Onyango-Obbo.

"A very necessary addition"

Chris Roper, Editor-in-Chief of M&G Media, describes M&G Africa as "a very necessary addition to the journalism landscape of the continent, and one that knits together the many voices of Africa into a coherent, thoughtful tapestry, rather than the more usual competing narratives imposed on the continent by interest groups."

The M&G Media has appointed Anastacia Martin as Managing Director Mail and Guardian Africa to drive the strategic mandate and ensure commercial viability of the contemporary digital news portal.

Ever-changing dynamics of the media landscape

"Bearing in mind the ever-changing dynamics of the media landscape and matters of sustainable growth, we will complement our editorial vision with interactive thought leadership events and conferences, and partnerships in advertising, sponsorships and multimedia offerings that will help us reach our goal for a world class pan-African news and information platform," says Martin.

Onyango-Obbo, a Ugandan, was formerly the co-founder of Uganda's leading independent title, The Monitor, which became part of the Nation Group in 2000. He was later appointed Executive Editor for Africa & the Digital Media Division of the Nation Media Group operating out of Nairobi and was also a columnist for Daily Nation, The East African, The Monitor (Uganda), and The Citizen (Tanzania), writing mostly on African political and democratic transition issues, the political economy of new technologies, and social trends. He is also a member of the board of directors of the Institute of Economic Affairs, Nairobi, Kenya.

He has a BA degree from Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, and a master's degree in journalism from the American University in Cairo, Egypt. He is also a Harvard Nieman Fellow.

"From our Nairobi headquarters, and with all the social tools we can muster, Mail & Guardian Africa will be home to every African voice imaginable, tackle the continent's failures without fear, and shine the light on its great possibilities intelligently," says Charles.

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