

New Bizcommunity.com GM to spearhead growth

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To meet growth objectives and brand consolidation, South Africa's leading online business-to-business media in the media, marketing, advertising and broader communications industries has appointed Robin Parker as general manager.



In the five years since the launch of the brand, Bizcommunity.com has grown at a staggering rate, and is positioned in the top 12 of all South African online publishers measured by the Online Publishers Association (OPA).

Growing at a consistent readership of 1000 new subscribers a month on average, Bizcommunity.com now has over 51 000 subscribers to its daily and weekly electronic newsletters; and over 161 000 unique users on the website every month, who generate over 3.2 million page impressions a month.

Comments Bizcommunity.com MD and founder, Andre Rademan: "Robin has extensive experience in a range of disciplines, including new media, editorial, sales, marketing, new forms of marketing such as mobile marketing, traditional media and years of experience in Africa. Such a diverse background - intimate knowledge of each discipline, knowledge of the South African and African media landscape and passion for media - is rare.

"Bizcommunity.com will benefit greatly from Robin's close involvement in the initial dotcom boom in South Africa as general manager and founding director of iafrica.com, growing it to the largest portal in South Africa at the time."

Brand appeal

Rademan says Parker is ideally poised to take Bizcommunity.com into the future. "It is with great pleasure that we welcome Robin to the team and the wider virtual business community."

Parker is a unique specimen in this industry, having had journalism as well as sales and marketing experience across various forms of media, including print and online, both here in South Africa and inside Africa. He started out at the London School of Journalism and worked as a news reporter for the *Argus* in southern Africa. He was a founder editor of *Motor Industry News Digest* for Ramsay, Son and Parker and a *Cape Times* deputy news editor. He was deputy general manager sales and marketing for the then Times Media, before moving on to control the *Sunday Times* sales and marketing.

His online experience began as general manager and a founding director of iafrica.com. He launched a number of verticals for Metropolis, before heading into Africa where he was group head of marketing and media for the African Lakes Corporation and most recently, CEO of MiContent mobile media, promotions and marketing.

Parker, who now leads the Bizcommunity.com exco - consisting of Rademan as MD; fellow founder and director, Ken van Ginkel; editor, Louise Marsland; and sales director, Dries Badenhorst - says the opportunity to guide Bizcommunity.com in

its next phase of growth is a rare one in the South African internet community and presents an exciting opportunity.

"In my experience of several years of operation in a mix of African and European markets in the Internet industry, Bizcommunity.com stands out as one of the best business models for rapid growth. It has proven that the marketing-orientated community in South Africa is large and influential and has also proven that the concept of vertical communities can work in the SA market given the correct approach," says Parker.

Expansion

"My challenge is to oversee the consolidation of content and sales options of the existing community while expanding the brand appeal. This will ensure the business has a solid foundation for our ambitious expansion plans."

Parker adds that Bizcommunity.com's role among the more than 161 000 unique users of the site - a significant portion of those in the SA industry - as well as the intense interest from Africa for services from South Africa, has made Bizcommunity.com a fantastic facilitator within the various marketing disciplines.

"Bizcommunity.com has been credited with creating businesses. We intend to be around for a long time continuing to do that across multiple channels offering the levels of customer service and immediacy of quality content which has built us to the largest single business-to-business organisation."

Bizcommunity.com, headquartered in the Bandwidth Barn in Cape Town, with editorial and sales offices in Rivonia, Johannesburg, also welcomes the following new appointments to the team within the past few months: Rob Kinman; Simone Puterman; Gee Friedman; Kershin Padayachee and David Francis.

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