

Makeovers for Eastern Cape newspapers

The Daily Dispatch, one of the Eastern Cape's oldest newspapers (established in 1872), has undergone a 'nip and tuck'. Canadian-based Tony Sutton, one of the world's leading newspaper design experts, and Stephen Haw, former editor of Sunday Times Lifestyle, oversaw the massive redesign project.

Dispatch editor Phylcia Oppelt says: "The redesigned Dispatch will carry exclusive news from the Eastern Cape; it will investigate, praise and castigate leaders of this province — be they political or business leaders. It will also tell the stories of the people who live in the province, the positives and negatives. There will be a focus on human interest stories, getting inside the hearts and minds of our readers."

The Daily Dispatch will carry columns by Stephen Mulholland (commentary), Enoch Godongwana (commentary), Eddie Botha (business), Allister Sparks (politics) and Jonathan Goldberg (law). The paper also has a revived Sport section, led by Brian McLean, profiles, a detailed TV schedule, Q&As with Eastern Cape personalities and carefully-selected international stories through the publication's partnership with the New York Times and UK's The Times.

The Saturday Dispatch has benefited from an 'extreme makeover', transforming from a broadsheet into a tabloid. Pagination will increase by up to a third. The Saturday product will have a 'weekend read' focus with hard news carried up front.

The rest of the newspaper is dedicated to lifestyle, including travel, food, motoring, finance, television, film and people. It will also include revamped Property and Classifieds sections, along with a 12-page SoccerLife football supplement.

"Its message will be aspirant and middle class, catering for more affluent readers who have disposable income. Its identity is distinctly in the mould of a weekend read."

A month-long media campaign through radio, street posters and newspaper print ads will support the relaunch, which commences with the new-look Daily Dispatch on 1 September, followed by the Saturday Dispatch on 3 September.