

# It's a brand new world for print

 By [Beverley Klein](#)

23 Sep 2016

Video, native advertising, mobile apps - these were some of the main talking points yesterday at the first day of the Media24 Lifestyle Summit.

Every year the editorial teams, sales representatives and advertising specialists from the lifestyle sector of Media24 join to share their work that is making strides in the industry, as well as listen to thought leaders in the print and digital industry from around the world.

GM of Media24 Lifestyle, Charlene Beukes, started off by stating just how important native advertising is in this day and age, with 80% of international industry leaders saying it can increase your social audience year-on-year.

For Media24 and other magazines, the basis of good journalism and creativity lies in storytelling. This was definitely a strong talking point from all the speakers on the first day, especially as it's a strategy that can engage the millennial market.

## People first

Olivier Royant, editor-in-chief of *Paris Match* came all the way from France to say that there is still power in print. With the fast advancement of digital there has been concern about the future of print, but Royant says that magazines can still surprise the reader and the readers trust the print format more.

*Paris Match* is a weekly publication and, for them, the story is at the centre of what they do. As he says "we are not in the print business, we are in the storytelling business," a strong statement and one he feels is important in this day and age as so many brands are losing their soul, because they try to imitate competitors.



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The digital world is a scary place for print magazines, and it's all about doing it without compromising journalistic values. But it's not all doom and gloom as with digital comes creativity. Video was one of the biggest talking points at the event and Royant was the first to stress its importance. Behind the scenes videos, product teasers and strong visuals were some of the ways he says print magazines can use video to their advantage.

So what's the next wave of digital disruption? Royant says it's virtual reality, "a new frontier". It's an engaging way to put the

reader inside the story, something *Paris Match* recently did by giving a Google Cardboard headset with an edition of their magazine so readers could feel what it was like to climb the Mont Blanc mountain in France, one of the features in that issue.

## Challenges going forward

Jason Orme, editorial director: *Home Interest*, Centaur Media in the UK gave us, at first, a rather bleak view into the world of print and digital, stating that if print publications miss out on the digital revolution they may become irrelevant and slip off the consumer's radar.

He pointed out some of the main issues in print, mainly the legacy print operation; content that is reduced in journalistic values; and digital-savvy start-ups taking over. But there are solutions, Orme says, and they include:

- Audience first – understand your audience
- Your site should be a service – know what your audience wants, and give that to them
- Go niche – tap into markets your competitors aren't and become the go-to site for your readers needs
- Mobile and video – have a strong creative strategy
- Re-energise your content – promote good storytelling
- Make use of DAM (digital asset management) – your story archives are full of new ideas

## Celebrate your brand

Strong brands attract and create communities, says Frances Evans, director: Marketing & Innovation at Burda International. They represent some of the top brands from around the world and Evans emphasises knowing your audience is the first step to success.

Data collection is one of the best ways to really engage with communities, as with that information you're able to make tailor-made products for them. The consumer today is tech-savvy and they want convenience, which means that print isn't always a hit with millennials, but mobile apps, video and creative content is.

Establishing a community is what's important to Evans, creating a trusted platform where your readers can get exactly what they want, but doing this isn't as easy as it sounds. Social media is the one of the best ways to reach out to existing and new consumers, and forms a place for publications to inspire their community to engage with them.

Once the basis of a community is there, publications need to maximise this and get innovative. Newsletters, apps and programmes are just some of the ways to gather data as well as increase monetisation for your brand.

The general motif of the summit was storytelling, and this comes in many forms, whether it be an in-depth article, a photographic series or a 30-second video. This is what consumers of today want, and it's up to organisations like Media24 to provide that.

## ABOUT BEVERLEY KLEIN

Beverley Klein is the editor of the Marketing Media South Africa section on Bizcommunity.com. With a background in journalism and historical studies, she's dived into the world of industry news, curating content, writing and interviewing thought leaders. She's often spotted in a forest on the weekend and rarely seen without a camera. Follow @BevCPT.

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