

Riaan Wolmarans



By [Louise Marsland](#)

5 Nov 2015



Riaan Wolmarans has returned to the Times Media stable after a couple of years exploring the world of advertising, as TML's Head of Audience Development. He will be reporting to Lisa MacLeod who has also just been appointed as the Head of TML Digital.

Q: What is your new title all about?

A: TML is very focused right now on doing digital in the best way possible. The company has a range of websites offering a range of content to huge variety of audiences and the time has come to focus properly on what we are producing, so there is an audience for everything we do. And to make sure we communicate with our audiences on the right channel, in the right way. Coming from a newsroom myself, I know the online editorial staff are performing miracles every day in pushing out content. We need to maximise the audience for that content,

Q: What will be your business focus?

A: I will be analysing traffic we get on social media and our website traffic. Those are the basic tools of my trade - all the insight, analytics, figures and stats we can get for every digital channel we have, linking that back to content, and what analysing what causes traffic or lack of traffic. I'm looking forward to having the time to do so. We have to start working smarter. There is no magic new source of staff and money waiting out there. At this stage, no matter which of our titles it is, we have to make sure everything we do counts, not only in making readers happy, but that we learn from every interaction.

Q: What is your main business challenge?

A: To set up a coherent content strategy for each and every one of our digital channels. Study all the hundreds of sources of data and come up with a blueprint for what works well on each of the properties.

Q: Most important attribute needed to do your job?

A: A supreme sense of organisation and logic. A lot of detail - the devil is in the detail. There are good things hiding there, it is a matter of finding them.

Q: The biggest trend to note in your industry?

A: This job is a good combination of what I did in the media, my content background, and the skills I got to try out in the advertising industry - using content to build audience and the commercialisation of content. We can't pump out story after story, we have to think about what we are doing and how to provide value and get value.

Q: How will you make an impact?

A: I hope that what I do will take some of the burden off the web editors and staff in terms of what they do best, which is providing the actual content we need.

Q: What does 'content' really mean in today's industry?

A: Some media owners out there are not tech savvy enough to realise how the articles produced every day in print, becomes the product being sold online. It is a bit of a different way of looking at it. Online, the focus shifts to every article individually: how can you make it work online, win over five new readers with that one article, advertise a subscription - it is a lot more fragmented, but a lot more interesting to try. From where I'm sitting now, amazing work is being done every day across all the TML titles - how we can lift that online to help build an audience and earn some money from it, is a good challenge.

Q: What inspires you?

A: Excellent journalism. If we produce amazing work, then I will happily spend many hours making sure many people get to read it.

Q: Tell us something about yourself not generally known?

A: As a *Star Trek* fan, the biggest news of the week was that the series is coming back to TV.

Q: At the top of my 'bucket list' is...

A: Antarctica!

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

Louise Burgers (previously Marsland) is Founder/Content Director: SOURCE Content Marketing Agency. Louise is a Writer, Publisher, Editor, Content Strategist, Content/Media Trainer. She has written about consumer trends, brands, branding, media, marketing and the advertising communications industry in SA and across Africa, for over 20 years, notably, as previous Africa Editor: Bizcommunity.com; Editor: Bizcommunity Media/Marketing SA; Editor-in-Chief: AdVantage magazine; Editor: Marketing Mx magazine; Editor: Progressive Retailing magazine; Editor: BusinessBrief magazine; Editor: FMOG Files newsletter. Web: www.sourceagency.co.za.

■ Teaching trade: the importance of empowering the female entrepreneur - 17 Dec 2019

■ New monetisation models for media are needed - 16 Dec 2019

■ #AfricaCom: The many VOD markets - 25 Nov 2019

■ #AfricaCom: TV content future will be shaped by OTT - 20 Nov 2019

■ Africa's growth rests on economic empowerment of women - 1 Nov 2019

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>