

Turner reveals content plans for Africa 2018/19

Global media company, Turner, has revealed a new line up of programming, content and partnerships for its African markets, as well as a brand new look, slate and local partnerships.



Turner Upfront, South Africa.

Turner operates six channels across Africa's 54 English, French and Portuguese speaking countries. These include CNN International; Africa's favourite kids' channels: Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Boing and Toonami; as well as recently relaunched blockbusters destination, TNT.

Not only has this year seen Turner actively evolve its portfolio, but the broadcast giant has focused on creating relevant and authentic local content in Africa to expand its footprint, and resonate with its local audience.

It also recently relaunched TNT, Boomerang's channel refresh, greater local initiatives through brand partnerships, local productions, local dubbing of content, the launch of Turner content on Showmax and advertising, as well as sponsorship business growth.

"As Turner, our audience needs are becoming more pertinent and we're constantly challenging ourselves to be more innovative and creative in our offering to keep attracting and entertaining our loyal fan base, on-air, on-line and for-real.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to providing the best service and high-standard content to our fans," said Jaime

Ondarza, senior vice president for Turner Southern Europe & Africa and chief executive officer of Boing SpA.

“We are benefiting from high awareness and a great level of brand recognition with our brands in Africa. CNN International is widely known to be the most trusted source for news and information on the continent while our kids’ channels, Cartoon Network and Boomerang, have been leading and gaining market share within the pay TV kids industry for almost four years in a row,” added Ondarza.



New leadership for Turner Africa

5 Feb 2018



Turner Africa launched the modern TNT Africa channel in September with a brand positioning of being the reference for ‘the best American blockbusters’ and in only one month, the channel has seen a 45% boost in ratings*. TNT has lined up blockbusters such as *The Illusionist*, *Crank*, *Robin Hood*, *Gladiator*, *The Island*, *Jurassic Park* and *King Kong*.

Local partnerships

Turner has strengthened its footprint in Africa over the past few years, not only with the distribution of global content, but through meaningful and sustainable partnerships with local content creators, talent and distributors as part of its commitment to a localisation strategy based on the cultural differences of the African market.

These initiatives include *CN Creative Lab*, an African creative competition where the winner and runners up will be given the opportunity to get their project produced as a pilot with Cartoon Network Africa which will premiere in 2019; *Pop Up Party* season 2, where we see local kids expressing themselves through some incredible dance challenges; the launch of *Mike and Rob*, a series show-casing two witty microbes making jokes with local reference voiced by local comedian, Trevor Gumbi; and African magic will take center stage in Boomerang’s new exciting local production set to hit screens in 2019.

Local brand initiatives

Beyond searching for local talent and producing original African content, Turner has focused on tone of voice, and image, to resonate with its fans, increasing its local collaborations with artists and brand ambassadors such as Toya Delazy, Africa’s very own Powerpuff Girl, and Bafana Bafana’s midfielder, Reneilwe “Yeye” Letsholonyane, connecting Ben 10 fans to the FIFA World Cup. The campaigns engage with the realities of African children, while also contributing to a greater cause.

The PPG Awards, launched in August, celebrate and empower young girls in Africa, offering them a platform to showcase their super-powers. These girls are ordinary little girls, with superhero skills, who have great ideas to change their world.

The winners in the fields of technological innovation, social responsibility and bravery; and art and creativity will each receive \$1 500 to help bring their award-winning entry to life with the help of a dedicated mentor.

Audience connections

Turner has invested heavily in qualitative market surveys and research to better understand its audiences and provide actionable insights to ensure its brands deliver locally relevant content, as well as packaged tailored experiences.

“Plans are underway to produce original digital productions to further localise our online platforms and engage with our fan base. We are currently in discussion to produce an exclusive local version of our YouTuber, Toony, for our African digital platforms. We are also increasingly strengthening our presence on the ground. For the upcoming season we will be activating the Johannesburg Zoo 8-9 December and will tour the Kwazulu-Natal coast for 10 days with Cartoon Network and

Boomerang's Beach Tour," said Julien Borde, head of channels for Africa.

Content partnerships

Turner has distribution agreements with main African TV platforms in all key regions including pan-African players such as MultiChoice, StarTimes, Orange, SFR/Altice and Canal Overseas, as well as region specific distribution players including mobile streaming services such Black-Cell C and Maroc Telecom.

With some entertainment and news channels already available on Cell-C's OTT service Black, and DStv Catch Up/DStv Now services, digital roll out continues to be a major priority for Turner. Its new distribution deal with African OTT Subscription Video on Demand platform, Showmax, owned by the MultiChoice group, makes Adult Swim accessible to its millennial audience from mid-November. Rated the #1 cable network in the US for almost a decade, Adult Swim offers an epic mix of animation, stop motion and live action comedy. The service will also have a dedicated kids' corner with Cartoon Network and Boomerang content.

Furthermore, Turner and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) struck a deal to broadcast Ben 10 in South Africa, enabling Turner to bring the series to a wider audience across South Africa by tapping into the extensive reach of the public broadcaster.

Commenting on this, Guillaume Coffin, VP head of commercial and business development said, "Partnering with the SABC reflects our strategy to expand our brands' presence in South Africa. We are thrilled to bring *Ben 10* to new fans and audiences across more screens and in new languages. Turner is dedicated to a localisation strategy that adapts to the cultural differences of its African markets.

Implemented in recent years, this effort has helped Turner address the gap in locally-relevant content, drive programming that resonates with African audiences, and boost brand value across the continent. This collaboration allows new local audiences to engage in the Cartoon Network brand."

Advertising

To further diversify its revenue stream and business offering, Turner has expanded its advertising business in key African markets through the appointment of advertising representatives, Mediamark, in South Africa beginning of 2018; and Greenworld Communications in Nigeria last September. These two partnerships are a strategic move for Turner which will bring its channels' value to advertisers in Africa.

"Our wide portfolio allows us to target a large array of segments from families, to kids, through to young adults; we can offer our client fully integrated advertising offerings from non-linear to linear and on-the ground events. We are aware that clients are looking for fully integrated advertising package which Turner Africa is able to now do in South Africa and Nigeria" said Coffin.

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