

The golden age of content

WarnerMedia's Julien Borde, director of channels for France, French-speaking territories, Africa and Israel, who is based in France, told Bizcommunity.com on a recent visit to South Africa, that this is the golden age of content and trends show that technology is enabling innovation in the industry.



WarnerMedia's Julien Borde, director of channels for France, French-speaking territories, Africa and Israel.

WarnerMedia is a leading media and entertainment company that creates and distributes premium and popular content to global audiences through its consumer brands including HBO, Warner Bros., TNT, TBS, CNN, DC Entertainment, New Line, Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Boing, Adult Swim, Turner Classic Movies and others. The company operates six channels across the African continent in 56 English, French and Portuguese speaking countries which include the internationally renowned news source CNN International, Cartoon Network, Boomerang and Boing, as well as Africa's tailored blockbusters destination, TNT, and Adult Swim, WarnerMedia's brand dedicated to millennials.

1. Golden Age of Content

This is the Golden Age of Content because technology drives it, says Borde. "Someone can have an idea somewhere and bring it to the world. We are in that revolution of content, of peak TV in terms of television series and animation. About 10-15 years ago, television was narrow. Streaming has allowed the scope to broaden. When you are On Demand, you are less constrained, so drama, like in drama and documentaries, you will find very different content, but also dramedies, and action adventure. Now everything is possible. We are at the beginning... VR will become mainstream still."

Content has become more complex and bridges needed to be built between the difference experiences between television and technology. Many future hits will be led by those in the tech industry, Borde predicted.

The gamechangers in broadcast entertainment content in the past decade have been innovative storytelling where the idea stood out, such as *Six Feet Under*; the investment into television series with high production values, such as HBO's *Game of Thrones*; and the diversity of content which in the coming decade, will see experiences become part of the content portfolio with live entertainment, roadshows and expos featuring actors and characters from popular series

2. Importance of authentic stories

One of the core content strategies is that there are difference targets for storytelling as people, including children, consume content far differently. As Borde explains, children have grown up in such a different environment to their parents when exposed to broadcast content. For their parents it was linear television and then YouTube on the internet; for their children, their first screen is a mobile screen, so they are on YouTube and other social media from a young age which has an impact on how they perceive and consume content. They are loyal to content and this has a strong impact on the stories that will be told in the future.

"Stories will be told very differently in the future. Storytelling will be anticipating the needs of viewers. Media companies are more and more consumer-centric. We need to have a very solid understanding of the different target audiences. This is our expertise too. Strong insight and research departments. To stand out you have to be unique.

"The future is now. It is happening for kids now. They do things so differently. Content is also being led by them - kids TV is always a step ahead. With kids you cannot be late. You have to be ahead. We spend a lot of time looking at them and talking to them to see where they are heading. With young adults too."

Borde said today content is becoming a partnership between the audience and the media company.

3. Africa content on the global stage

"For us Africa is very important. There is a whole bunch of new opportunities on the continent and we are the very beginning of it. Africa is unique and Africa is a huge growth market. We look forward to customising new idea and targeting more and more country-by-country. We are here to find the talent and be more local than ever."