

Media un-usual

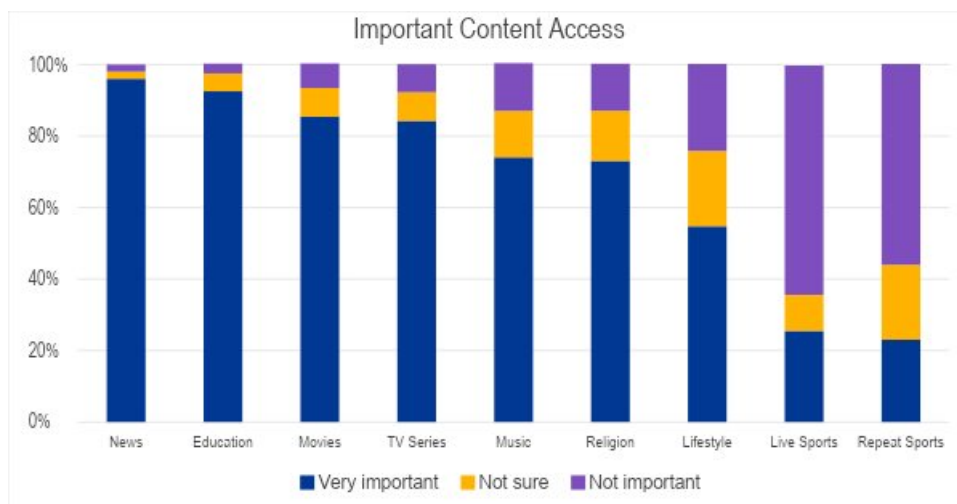
By Jenni-Ruth Coggin, issued by BM Research

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This past month's lockdown has had an interesting impact on how South Africans consume media. Coupled with the millions of South Africans staying home and the need for ongoing information about the coronavirus, South African media expectations have changed. By the end of March 2020, South Africa had a total of 1,353 Covid-19 cases and five deaths. One month on, we enter stage four of the South African lockdown with these numbers soaring to 5,350 cases and 103 deaths.



In partnership with Borderless Access, BMi Research conducted an online survey* to understand how the lockdown impacted media consumption. The survey indicates that the lockdown has changed the content accessibility South Africans expect from their media providers. An overwhelming 96% and 93% claim that access to news and education respectively, are important to them. Media channels that address these needs will receive good viewership over this time. Following news and education, are movies (85%) and TV series (84%), suggesting that many South Africans have time on their hands to be entertained at home, whilst 73% say that access to religious content is important.



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Music content is important to three quarters of the sample, with 64% claiming to actively listen to or stream music online and 62% claiming to actively download music. Conversely the need for live sports (26%) and sport repeats (23%) is low

and deemed to be largely unimportant for now.

With 22% citing that they won't have regular income after the lockdown, one would assume that South Africans might consider cancelling their subscriptions to pay TV and entertainment channels. However, only 4% claim to be considering cancellation currently.

With the lockdown now entering five stages, we may find that citizens reshape their consumption based on the notion that we're in this for the long haul. For the foreseeable future at least, media channels that provide access to relevant and current news, education and entertainment pose an attractive opportunity for media providers and advertisers.

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Contact:

Kevin Kruger: kevin@bmi.co.za or 082 450 2979

Jenni-Ruth Coggin: jenni@bmi.co.za or 076 170 6989

Cindi Collett: cindi@bmi.co.za or 082 821 4971

Danie Botha: danie@bmi.co.za or 083 271 7720

www.bmi.co.za

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Contact:

Bev Tigar: bev.tigar@borderlessaccess.com or 079 572 6233

www.borderlessaccess.com

**The survey was conducted on 12-13 April 2020. Of the 509 panel participants, 100% were South African and living in South Africa during the lockdown. At least 39% were in Gauteng, 23% in the Western Cape and 13% in KwaZulu-Natal. A total of 63% were female, 70% were aged 18-44 years old, 35% were black and 50% were white. At least 93% have Internet access at home. The sample was distributed equally across income groups.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jenni-Ruth Coggin is a Key Account Manager at BM Research

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