

IAB SA reveals the beating heart of digital South Africa

Wishing to know what stories most powerfully attract and engage South Africa's internet users and how brands can find out what these stories are, react to their impact and start interesting conversations with consumers, IAB SA appointed integrated communications agency MetropolitanRepublic to create an attention-grabbing campaign.

The campaign had to demonstrate the power of the South African digital audience to both consumers and advertisers and had to raise the profile of the IAB SA as a vital body representing more than 200 members, including online publishers, brands and educational institutions, creative, media and digital agencies.



Beating heart

The resulting concept is the Pulse, a 3-D, heart-shaped manifestation of the main topics that are fascinating South African web users on IAB SA publisher members' digital platforms. It uses data gathered within the past seven days to show where the buzz is, and plugs into Twitter to analyse South African tweets related to these topics.

"The platform ingests RSS feeds, categorises the content, fetches tweets for those categories, processes the content for sentiment and renders the output as a WebGL-based 3D heart," says

Jonathan Banks, head of technology at MetropolitanRepublic.

The Pulse measures the sentiment expressed in each data source through advanced analytics provided by Lexalytics and its US and Europe text-mining service, Semantria. Lexalytics software and services analyse more than 3-billion documents per day.

How does it work?

1. Go to the Pulse on the website, <http://iabsa.net/pulse>, and select a current topic from the dropdown menu at the top of the page. The Pulse then fetches related news stories and tweets and turns each into a dot on a beating heart. The more dots you see, the more content there is on that topic.
2. Click on a dot to zoom in and see its source. The darker it appears in colour, the more negative the sentiment around the topic (check the legend box on the page for the meanings of specific colours). Click "Zoom out" in the source box to go back to the heart.
3. As the buzz increases around a topic, the heart will beat faster. You can use your mouse to spin the heart around and reach other dots.

There is also a 2D version of the Pulse available on the page, although the 3D model will display in most desktop and mobile browsers.