

# The age of social media complaints commission

 By [Cecilia Mohlala](#)

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We have evidence of how powerful social media is to the masses, and in the recent incident of a television programme, it has become even more evident what the rage can do to a reputable institution.

On 29 November, Mzansi Magic aired an interesting episode of the popular programme, *Our Perfect Wedding*, only this time, it wasn't perfect, it was against South African laws and societal relationships.

During the episode, tweeps were not impressed with the groom's way of romanticising 'rape culture,' and the fact that the episode passed the editing gates and was allowed to air on national television, during the 16 Days of Activism against Children and Women Abuse.

## Where do we draw the line?

In a statement released by Mzansi Magic, it said, "Mzansi Magic notes and acknowledges the concerns from our viewers regarding the *OPW* episode aired on 29 November. The premise of the show is to celebrate the love and the journey that the couples take leading up to their wedding day."

So when does a broadcasting institution draw the line between societal views, women or child abuse and a glorified 'perfect' love story programme? It doesn't, social media does.

## The expression and commission phase

It has become a norm that social media expression rules and governs what should and should not be said or televised. And when brands act with 'immediate effect,' over social media rage, then the law of social media complaints commission should come into effect.

- This will determine and govern programs shown on TV to see the possible risks that will be aired by the views of Twitter and Facebook users.
- This law will protect organisations from being apologetic only after the risk.
- This law will also keep the peace between organisations, brands and social network users from public spats.

## The withdrawal phase

As anticipated, we have been waiting for the brand involved in sponsoring *Our Perfect Wedding* to say something and observe its own security from the public rage. And when they released a social media statement that it withdraws its sponsorship with Mzansi Magic with immediate effect, some applauded it for the right decision, while others mentioned that Absa saw nothing wrong with the episode, and had it not been for the social media rage, it would not have withdrawn its affiliation.

In as much as the Mzansi Magic statement stated that it is committed to telling stories that challenge our society to engage in meaningful conversations, this clearly could have been withdrawn from being gloried as a 'perfect wedding' story.

However if organisations and brands see nothing wrong with certain content that goes out of their gates, social media will ensure that such type of behaviour is dealt with.

There are now two types of viewers, and the social media viewers are not to be taken for granted. They can make or break content. Within the social media space, also the saying, "once bitten, twice shy," should always be present.

So, where do we draw the line?

## ABOUT CECILIA MOHLALA

Cecilia Mhlala is a practicing Social Media Community Manager and writer who started out as a journalist and columnist for a community newspaper for two years. She studied Digital Marketing through DigifyZA from Livity Africa. I love writing, content, and thinking. Since giving birth to Digital, I have the curiosity to feed it!

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