

Danilo Acquisto on the online video revolution (Part 1)

By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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Everyone is creating online video nowadays and by doing this, bypassing traditional channels, serving hundreds of millions of people their lively forms of content. [Heavy Chef](#) asked if this is an opportunity or a distraction and invited Danilo Acquisto, TV celebrity and CEO of YouTube-endorsed partner in SA, Special Effects Media, to unpack the secrets of creating successful online video strategies at a recent talk, of which the Cape Town event was held last month at Workshop17 at the V&A Waterfront.



TV celebrity and CEO of Special Effects Media, Danilo Acquisto. © [Heavy Chef](#).

It's such a difficult space to break into and to try and gain traction, says Acquisto. "You're probably wondering how somebody goes about producing content that does well. Well, with digital video you just have to start somewhere."



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Besides presenting the popular television show, *Afternoon Express* on SABC3, Acquisto is also the CEO of Special Effects Media, who with its global partners have almost 9 billion minutes of video and 1.5 billion views on YouTube and a subscriber base of over 7 million. According to him, they work with some of the most creative people in the world, playing around with content and coming up with cool ideas to gain organic traction and to find brands willing to spend money on that.



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Acquisto went ahead and explained to us why digital video is so important and why he started this particular company.

1. Control

“The big thing for me was that creators don't have control over their content in the traditional spaces,” he says. Acquisto wanted to bring control back to the creatives. He says that was one of his biggest reasons why he got involved in digital. “I am also now working with the SABC on multiple platforms and we all know what it's like to work for public broadcasters and even private broadcasters, there are limitations and rights involved. And we must learn to respect those as well. But digital opens up that freedom a lot more. For me, a 27-year-old, I feel I reached my peak in terms of live television. There has to be a new space, a new door to open up and digital was that door that I wanted to open.”

2. Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs was another big reason why he wanted to start this company and he says it's such a vital space to be in. “There is so much that is at stake when it comes to producing video. Young people are taking the risk and they are producing these brands on their own and they making an income out of it and they are doing some amazing things on these platforms. So, I am an entrepreneur myself and it was just something exciting for me telling these stories on digital media.”

3. TV metrics suck and digital rocks

The Nielsen method is the way in which traditional media is measured globally. “We love Nielsen but we also hate Nielsen at the same time,” says Acquisto. The idea behind television shows in South Africa is that 1,000 people in our country have got little black boxes attached to their televisions monitoring their usage and that extrapolating about 54 million people's usage of television in South Africa. So, if they say we've got 2 million people watching a show, are 2 million people really watching the show?



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Acquisto says what's scary about the way that these metrics are operating is that brands are buying into it. “They are really buying into those massive numbers. But how can you really measure that interaction and engagement? I think there is a space for traditional but all I really want to get out today is that traditional is very, very inaccurate. And there is no way in order to accurately monitor your traction and engagement on that kind of platform. Brands that are smart and that are really looking for proper engagement will look towards digital media and digital video to be able to really work out how well campaigns are doing.”

Bottomline? Acquisto says if you're not focusing on digital media, your company won't survive in the long term.

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ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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