

Hot 91.9FM turns up the heat on Joburg's community radio offering

 By Leigh Andrews

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The saddest moment of my youth? When Sasha Martinengo and Ian F, AKA the best radio team ever, disbanded. Imagine my excitement at hearing they'll be back together soon...



With so much of the commercial and community radio space already taken, you have to bring something special to the airwaves to get people to really pay attention. Hot 91.9FM, coming to Joburg North soon, believes it's cracked the formula by putting together a winning team of well-known DJs and planning ahead for success. New station GM Lloyd Madurai, himself blessed with a golden voice suited to radio, exclusively elaborated on what listeners can expect.

■ ***Talk us through the name selection - why Hot 91.9?***

Hot 91.9 FM: Long before the name was chosen we had a very clear vision for the sound of this station and where it would fit amongst our competitors in order for it to be sustainable and have potential for real audience growth and increased time spent listening. We knew we had to stand out from what currently was on offer by other stations within our footprint. In order to do this we had to have the hottest DJs, hottest programming and, of course, the hottest music on the dial. We decided the name "Hot 91.9" also encapsulates the soul of the overall sound of our 'old skool' and 'R&B' station. Based on all this 'heated discussion', Hot 91.9 seemed the most memorable choice as 91.9FM is where we'll be on the dial.

■ ***Any special reason for launching when you are, at end-October 2014?***

Hot 91.9 FM: It's mainly due to technical reasons. See, Hot 91.9 will be using a circular polarised antenna system in order to get the most out of our low wattage as well as to offer the clearest coverage within our footprint. This was a special order antenna, which had to be manufactured in the US. Once it's delivered, we're ready to rock (and roll).

■ ***Why just Joburg North? Are you trying to keep the station exclusive?***

Hot 91.9 FM: Well, our license application, as well as the spectrum analysis conducted, indicated that on the 91.9 frequency, we would reach Joburg North and surrounding areas from our antenna site. Our research also concluded there was a captive market in the upper LSM (meaning LSM 8+) within these areas for our music format and line up. Our coverage prediction does show that we could get as far as Bedfordview, Midrand and the JHB CBD, but we'll only know our true reach once we install the antenna and turn on the transmitter.

■ ***Any plans to expand the area/reach later?***

Hot 91.9 FM: Yes, definitely. With the help of our audience, as well as our support to community projects, NGOs, NPCs, advertisers and local artists, we can definitely present a strong case to ICASA to extend our footprint. For now though, our terrestrial broadcast footprint gives us a potential reach of over 1.2 million people within the targeted reach. Furthermore, our strongest signal is in the heart of the richest square mile in Africa. But don't worry if you're not in Johannesburg, as Hot 91.9 will also be on streaming audio and we also have plans to launch on the DSTV music channel.



■ ***You've already mentioned the music focus will be on Old Skool and R&B - can you name some specifics on the playlist to whet our appetites?***

Hot 91.9 FM: Listeners can look forward to a blend of 70s disco, Motown, and power ballads of the 80s that bring emotional appeal, from the likes of: Aretha Franklin, Earth Wind & Fire, Matt Bianco, The Temptations, Toto, Swing Out Sister, Santana, Lisa Stansfield, Level 42, Jackson 5, Chicago, Lionel Richie, Mary J Blige, Diana Krall, George Benson, Robin Thicke, Mi Casa, Stevie Wonder, Brenda Fassie, Marvin Gaye, Simply Red, Michael Franks, Whitney Houston, Jamiroquai, Imagination, Crystal Waters, Barry White, Zhane' and more... it'll be a very smooth offering, overall.

You've mentioned the show will be personality-driven but have managed to remain hush about the award-winning on-air team lined up, can you spill the beans to us?

■ ***Hot 91.9 FM: Yes! Here's our weekday line up:***



6am - 9am Joburg's Hottest Breakfast on Hot 91.9 with Darren Scott, John Walland and Andi Leve, also featuring Jeremy Mansfield and Hayley Owen, who will be driving our community projects.

9am - 12pm Gavin Singh & Michaela K (Lifestyle-centric)

12pm - 1pm Ian F & Sasha Martinengo

1pm - 4pm Cleone Cassidy

4pm - 7pm Hot 91.9 Afternoon Drive with Steve Bishop

7pm - 8pm Astrid Ascar (Business) and Simon Hill (Sports Wrap)

8pm - 12am Late Night Love Songs with Treasure Tshabalala

12am - 5am Hot Jamz

5am - 6am Tony Isaacs

It's punted as the hottest breakfast show - can you quantify that? What can your listeners expect?

Hot 91.9 FM: Simple - we'll be featuring the two hottest morning show DJs in SA, Darren Scott and Jeremy Mansfield, on Joburg's Hottest Breakfast Show at Hot 91.9. Listeners can expect double the fun, double the pranks, double the entertainment, double the character... couple all of this with the best music and breakfast radio will

never be the same again.

■ ***How will you measure the station's success?***

Hot 91.9 FM: Stats and listener behaviour shows there's been a definite demand for a shake-up in radio. While we are a community station, what we have done at Hot 91.9 is simply addressed the demand. In doing so, we will deliver on entertaining, fun, world-class radio, targeted to our core market, from an on-air team of true professionals. We will therefore measure the success of Hot 91.9 from our audience interaction, advertiser ROI, the effectiveness of our community projects such as Gift of the Givers, as well as engagement with listeners through social media, events and word of mouth. As [subjective](#) as the RAMS ratings are for now, we should have a clearer indication of ratings in the diary by months 9 to 12 of being on the air.

■ ***Tell us about your social media strategy and how you plan on engaging with listeners.***

Hot 91.9 FM: We used Facebook for the first phase of our teaser campaign. We created a Facebook group for Hot 91.9 and within three days of launch had reached over 1,100 members, mostly from within our footprint and in the upper LSM category, based on the music format and teaser to the launch of Joburg's Hottest Breakfast show, without any mention of the line-up - this article is the first time the DJ line-up is being mentioned. Our Facebook group has been active in posting music and artist requests and building hype. This has helped us not only gauge music needs but also in creating and tweaking the station playlist.

We have also created our new Twitter feed, [@Hot919FM](#), which will be an integral part of our launch phase in terms of keeping followers up-to-date on what we're doing and what we're playing at any given time of the day.

Madurai ended our telephonic conversation with the words: "At the end of the day, we're a community radio station; no-one ever said a community station can't be professional."

The proof will be in the pudding, but for now it seems Hot91.9 is ready for us - are you ready for it? [Click here](#) to join the Facebook group and have your say, and you can listen to the official, exclusive promo below.

Hot 91.9 Exclusive Promo

Date: 14 October 2014 **Length:** 1:05min **File size:** 2.5MB

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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