

SHOOT, UPLOAD AND CONNECT!

BY NICOLE KLASSEN

It is all about story. The age-old craft and gift of this continent is being rejuvenated through a new platform where it is accessible to all.

I am not a journalist. I am a practitioner in the film, media and creative industries. Mobile is my preferred method of distribution.

It has often occurred to me that in our efforts to survive the creative production-value chain we have forgotten that we are also in fact consumers. We stop paying attention to what people really want when we are so busy struggling, trying with much effort to get our projects financed. Somewhere along the production process we start selling (out). We strip our work of any relevant, cultural expression just for a broadcast deal; pack it up in a hamburger box for distribution and then wait.

Wait and wait and wonder why the people are not coming, why they're not buying, renting or talking about *my* product. Then we decide that the people obviously know nothing.

The glaring reality is that the balance of power has shifted. The power of content creation is now available to the people en masse and the people want to engage, interact and express themselves. They desperately want to connect.

The internet and new devices and technologies provide us with this "connect ability". These new technologies make it permissible for us to explore the restructuring of the value chain and consider a new realm where the consumer is the producer and also the distributor.

A new content creator is emerging, one who has a mobile phone. Shoot, upload and connect!

This new creator lives among her consumers; she is the audience so she creates work that is relevant to her community. She creates work that relies on her own cultural expression and language to convey her message. She is educated, vocal and committed to her community.

A new format is starting to appear, one that is genre-less, opinionated and expressive. This new creator portrays her world as she sees it; nothing is hidden, and she holds to account all members of society. She will compromise on striving for picture perfection if it diminishes the integrity of her story.

It is all about story. The age-old craft and gift of this continent is being rejuvenated through a new platform where it is accessible to all. Accessibility is what consumers want: everywhere and anytime.

This barrier to accessibility, institutionalised by our fear, is the birthing place of piracy. Yes, it is our fault, as practitioners who have forgotten that we wanted to be in this business to make products for people.

We laboriously complain and fund efforts to curb this scourge, this dire problem that is ripping *our* industry apart instead of turning our focus to the inherent opportunity that piracy is in fact presenting: a massive, insatiable appetite for content! This is in fact a very, very good problem.

It's a no-brainer: We absolutely have to get to market faster and we need to get to market at the right price and sometimes, if not always, that price might be free.

We've come to expect that people must pay and

Formed in March 2011, Bozza.mobi is a mobile and technology start-up based in Cape Town, South Africa. The company was founded by Emma Kaye, former co-founder of Triggerfish Animation (AnimationSA.org) and founder of the animation festival for Sithengi, Africa's largest film market. Kaye has also served as CEO of Breakdesign, founder of Gate7 New Media, a mobile media, entertainment and content company and co-founder of Mobfest, Africa's first user-generated mobile content platform.

Aiming to fill the gap for locally generated, contextually relevant content for the African market, Bozza.mobi launched its proof of concept on 24 October 2010 with seven minutes of made-for-mobile video content. Within three days there were 40 000 downloads and within three months this number rose to 170 000 active users. For Kaye, this success proved that users were actively seeking and engaging with local, contextually relevant content.

Aimed at feature phones – with plans to scale to smart phones in the near future – the Bozza application currently features music, videos and poetry from across the African continent. Both the application and the content is free (data charges do apply) and users can enjoy a wide array of comedy, drama, animation, educational, gospel and lifestyle videos, music tracks and written word direct on their mobile phone.

The second version of the application is currently in development and once released (anticipated date November 2012), will offer users the ability to search and discover new products, services and content through friend recommendations, create and join communities based on common interests as well as upload and sell their own goods and services to earn revenue.

Bozza aims to build a mobihood, a mobile neighbourhood, where people can share, connect, trade, learn, engage, exchange, be entertained and belong much the same way as they do in their real world communities.

Download the app at Bozza.mobi.

people must appreciate our work even if we forgot to consider their needs in the process. Regardless of the product we deliver, people must pay and they must show respect.

But we forgot to connect with people during the process. We forgot to share during the process and we definitely didn't communicate or ask for people to contribute. So we deny ourselves the buying power of loyalty.

People will pay, if they feel loyal to you and your work. People know if you are genuinely committed to your craft and they know when you respect them as the people who pay.

The new content creator knows this and exists in her community in a reciprocal enrichment transfer where she is both the creator and the people.

The ship has sailed, so to speak. Mobility and associated technologies are returning us to a place of authenticity, inclusivity and accountability.

A place where we can all be game players and game changers and where Africa has the leading opportunity to be a major player on a frontier that will change our world, forever.

