



General Entertainment (GE)



MultiChoice remains the largest producer of original content on the African continent. While international streamers and broadcasters are slowing down or stopping local content production, we have prioritised the creation of African content for over three decades.

By producing in excess of 6 500 hours of local content, which speaks to people in their own languages and reflects relatable aspects of their everyday lives, we continue to entrench ourselves in the communities in which we operate, developing local markets, talent and producing African stories, for Africans by Africans. Through our strategic partnerships and long-term global relations, we continue to buy some of the best international titles available, to enhance our offering.

Shaka Ilembe

Six years in the making, *Shaka Ilembe* launched on Mzansi Magic on Sunday 18 June to rave reviews, becoming Africa's biggest TV show. Spanning 12 episodes and with viewers applauding the powerful casting, performances, symbolism and authenticity of the production, the star-studded series took over Sunday night television and Catch Up for the following three months.

Shaka Ilembe represents the best of African storytelling. Created for the local market by BOMB! Productions, the series tells an epic tale on an epic scale. Filmed entirely on location in South Africa, *Shaka Ilembe* featured the country's abundant natural wonders, providing breathtaking backgrounds and majestic locations for the faithful retelling of the history of King Shaka. Over 8 000 people contributed their skills to bring this epic story to the screen.

We had incredibly high hopes for *Shaka Ilembe* and our faith in the show and the long wait for its debut was duly rewarded. The premiere episode attracted over 4m views and was simulcast on our GE channels across Africa. It was comfortably ranked as the year's top-performing show performing well across our DStv, Showmax and GOtv platforms and obtaining an audience share of over 45% in its time slot.

In-house productions

The past year saw the strengthening of the in-house productions department, with the team assuming responsibility for post-production services, including trailer creation, online and offline editing, final mix and subtitling.

Content optimisation is a key aspect of the In-House Productions department's work. The dubbing services for the group were centralised to leverage our existing library of produced assets, enabling easy content sharing across our linear channels and the Showmax platform. Across South, East and West Africa, the In-House Productions teams dubbed content into Kiswahili, isiZulu, Amharic, English, Afrikaans, Luganda, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo.

Co-productions

Our ongoing focus on international co-productions allowed us to take more African stories to the global market during the past year. Our ability to blend local and international production expertise, talent and writing to produce quality content continues to receive global recognition.

The three successful co-productions that led the way on M-Net included *Reyka* season 2, *Devil's Peak* and *White Lies*. These were produced in collaboration with our international partners at Fremantle; Canal+; Abacus Distribution and BBC Studios-owned Lookout Point.

Devil's Peak, the crime thriller based on the best-selling 2004 novel by Deon Meyer and produced by Lookout Point and Expanded Media Productions in association with M-Net and BBC Studios, continues to garner international attention. The series was sold to Fox's Tubi video-on-demand platform for exclusive streaming in the US and Canada in January 2024.

White Lies is an eight-part drama co-produced by M-Net, Quizzical Pictures and Fremantle, starring award-winning actress Natalie Dormer (*Game of Thrones*, *The Hunger Games*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*) and Brendon Daniels (*Four Corners*, *Skemerdans*, *Trackers*).



SHAKA I L E M B E



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The GE content hub also delivered three co-productions that performed admirably on Showmax in the past financial year – *Spinners*; *Original Sin: My Son, the Killer and Catch Me a Killer* – growing the platform’s local content slate ahead of a local and international boost with its relaunch in February. *Spinners*, a co-production between Showmax and Canal+ became the first African series selected in competition at Canneseries and won three awards at Dakar Series, including ‘Best TV Series’. *Catch Me a Killer* was the first South African series to be selected for Series Mania, a key trade conference that takes place in France.

M-Net

M-Net Channel 101 continued to serve Premium subscribers the very best of Hollywood blockbuster movies, record-breaking international co-productions and the biggest US and international prime-time dramas.

We are the African TV home of Warner/HBO and carry the best content from NBCUniversal, as well as the titles from Paramount and the Paramount Plus service, not to mention our range of independent movies and series. The channel is also home to the biggest reality formats in the world.

While the US actors’ and writers’ strikes delayed studio productions, M-Net’s share of viewing grew YoY, thanks to strong selections, robust scheduling and loyal prime-time audiences. M-Net content was also a notable driver on DStv Stream, with titles such as *Carte Blanche* – one of the most-watched shows in the Premium space – still performing in its 35th year of uncovering the truth.

From NBCUniversal, *Fast X* – the 10th iteration of the *Fast* franchise – skidded into pole position over the Christmas holidays and captured the spot as the year’s top-rated movie title. *Devil’s Peak* became the top-rated drama of the year, while *Reyka* and *White Lies* delivered as binge-able suspense thrillers and increased *Catch Up* viewership. The channel could not have delivered such a strong performance this fiscal without US network procedurals from our partners at NBCU and Paramount/CBS.

M-Net rounded off the television year with the new Sunday early evening family drama *Summertide*, filmed on the Cape Peninsula.

In August, South Africans paid their respects to veteran investigative journalist Derek Watts. He led one of the longest and most storied careers in SA journalism and M-Net is proud to have been his home for 35 years.

South African local channels

kykNET

Viewers continued to demonstrate their allegiance to kykNET, with the channel solidifying its leadership as the most-watched channel among Premium subscribers, delivering more than 1 400 hours of fresh content in FY24. A gripping drama slate and even more drama in our reality shows pushed kykNET audiences’ average viewing time to a historic high: 80 minutes per day among Afrikaans viewers and an average of 70 minutes per day among all Premium subs. This is because kykNET offers content in every genre in prime-time, from lifestyle to reality to scripted and a successful current affairs slate.

FY24 was bookended with the first and second seasons of the hilarious family comedy *Magda Louw*, and in *Taktiek* we bore witness to the shenanigans of a below par security company patrolling “South Africa’s safest town”. The best performing drama was kykNET’s first medical procedural *Hartklop* while titles such as *Hougaard: Liefeling van Loftus* and *Laataand by Rian* grew the viewership during the Tuesday 9pm slot by more than 50%.

Our first breakout success in reality was the first local version of global hit *The Bridge*, which debuted as *Die Brug* on kykNET in October 2023. This reality show drew record live and *Catch Up* audiences. Building on the momentum created by *Die Brug*, the third season of the internally developed dating show *Op My Eish*, delivered ratings that rivalled kykNET’s most successful reality formats of all time.

The daily dramas on the kykNET channels continue to retain viewership as the backbone of our prime-time offering. *Binnelanders*, now in its 13th season, is viewed by almost 40% of Afrikaans Premium subscribers. *Diepe Waters*, now in its second season, continued to pull in strong numbers, while *Suidooster* remains the biggest Afrikaans soap

in the group, with blockbuster daily audiences on both kykNET and kykNET&Kie.

On kykNET&Kie, the gritty studio talk show *Sê Jou Sê* cemented its status as an iconic part of the brand that allows audiences to engage with real people and real issues in a space where almost anything can be said.

Local Entertainment Channels (Mzansi Magic, Mzansi Wethu and Mzansi Bioskop)

The offering of our middle and mass segment channels was firmed up, with measured investment in the content strategy leading to re-energised viewership. In FY24, our content seamlessly integrated successful themes from the past, while exploring stories that reflected many facets of South African life. This encompassed a focus on traditional themes like rites of passage and cultural practices, while exploring how youth culture was evolving.

Telenovelas such as *Umkhokha: The Curse and Gqeberha: The Empire* simultaneously met regional preferences, while making positive contributions to the local communities where they were set and filmed. As part of the strategic approach of introducing fresh telenovelas that explore new worlds, *Champions* launched in February 2024 and ushered in a brand-new era of high-octane action drama and added to the prime-time viewership slot.

Monday night drama series on Mzansi Magic entrenched viewership among younger female-skewed audiences with titles such as *S’phiwo* – which sees first-year students who received the calling applying their sangoma skills to solving a campus murder. Other notable titles include *Izingane Zes’thembu*, and the dramedy *Icala*.

We bade farewell to the multi-award-winning *The River*, which was a mainstay of the channels for six years. The show demonstrated its flexibility with





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regional adaptations in Kenya, Angola and Nigeria, where it was well received having been localised impeccably. We continue to optimise our IP and extend its lifespan by localising them in different territories – examples being *Gomora* and *Salem* in Kenya, as well as *Dirash* in Ethiopia.

Exclusive to Mzansi Wethu was the Nguni news – *izindaba Zethu/lindaba Zethu* – which celebrated a year of broadcasting on 27 February. The daily news has empowered communities and helped add a regional voice to the national news conversation. Sitting alongside the news centrepiece, *Sibongile & The Dlamini's* averaged an audience of over 1m Access viewers per month, from October 2023 to year-end.

Mzansi Bioskop remains the top-performing movie channel in the Access market, with viewership numbers particularly notable on weekends as people tune in for a dose of escapism, entertainment and family-friendly titles. This year's annual themed festival 'Young Blood' celebrated emerging talent that is creating stories for and about young audiences.

Rest of Africa Channels

The last year saw consumers throughout our markets facing rising inflation, higher interest rates and tough socio-economic conditions, making for a challenging year. General entertainment met those headwinds with renewed vigour, doubling down on our commitment to delivering best-in-class local content.

We consolidated efforts and optimised our channel offering to build new viewing repertoires. Our customers across the continent were kept entertained by new formats, new genres and refreshed existing channels. MultiChoice also extended its focus on local channels, by introducing Maaddii Abol, Pearl Magic Loko and Maningue Magic Kool, expanding our local language offering to include the fourth most widely spoken African language, Oromo and a mass-market offering in our Portuguese and Ugandan markets.

2023 marked the 20th Anniversary of Africa Magic, launched as a single channel and later evolving into a cluster of seven specialised channels over two decades. This milestone is a tribute to MultiChoice's investment in developing the television production and broadcasting industry across the continent. The milestone was celebrated with customers with a

supercharged content offering throughout the year; beginning with the ninth edition of the *Africa Magic Viewer's Choice Awards*, followed by *Big Brother All Stars* (the ultimate showdown of the biggest stars) and culminating in the grand unveil of the refreshed Africa Magic channels, accompanied by an open window period.

We delighted our customers with access to more channels in October and introduced over 20 new series and movies, including the high-quality action series, *Slum King* and a more comprehensive indigenous language production offering with *Kariya*, *Apo* and *Kadara*. New formats like anthology series *Love and Light* and new genres like sci-fi drama *Refuge* are proving to be great successes. In March we premiered new local films every day with the *Movie A Day Unleashed*.

To keep customers enticed, our Ghana channel offering was ramped up to offer a new series, every month – introducing new genres in *Nana Akoto*, *Ahenfie* and *One Tough Question* – and delighting customers with over 10 new local movies.

Our East and Southern African customers were thoroughly entertained with a riveting slate of celebrity realities and authentic local stories like *Mutale Mwanza*, *Divas and Hustlas*, *Kampala Crème*, *Kuga Munu Unscripted*, *Zari*, *Junior Drama Club*, *Damalie* and *10 Tamanga* as we expanded our stories beyond urban centres to unearth stories across all regions, to create more relatable, even more compelling local content.

Third-party channels

Our comprehensive slate of third-party local and international channels continues to deliver on our promise to bring a diverse, high-quality mix of entertainment and education to our audiences.

The DSTv platforms are now home to 112 third-party channels (excluding Free-to-air (FTA), Community and Radio), which saw over 400 new titles launched in the past year alone, between them – over and above the more than 400 returning seasons on Catch Up, often with box sets included.

Our major partners include BBC, Disney, NBCUniversal, Paramount and Warner Bros. Discovery, making us the home of the biggest selection of entertainment channels on the continent.

On the local front, our partnerships with NNG (Newzroom Afrika, PlayRoom and Movie Room) our leading local enterprise development partners and Siyaya TV (producers of *Moja Love* and *Moja 9.9*) continue to supply the 'realist' reality shows, news and local stories.

We also added to an instant top performer in Zee Zonke, dedicated to isiZulu-dubbed Bollywood telenovelas and Playroom, a kids' channel featuring locally-produced isiZulu content.

Our mix of children's channels remains popular across all ages – our platform is home to Cartoon Network Africa, Cartoonito Africa, the Disney channels, Moonbug, DreamWorks, Playroom and the Nickelodeon suite of channels.

