



Transformation: The Need for Black Owned Broadcasting

businesses:

Sounds Divine Studios started as an post production facility all because we were solving the need for black owned high end post production facility but it was when a business consultant named Jonathan, who made me aware that we need to work on our value chain, but I will explain later, for those people who don't know what post production is, let me explain now, get ready....

Post Production:

It is the process within the film value chain, whereby after the video or film has been shot, it goes through editing, subtitles, grading as well as audio final mix and within the operations, you have a post-production co-ordinator who facilitates this process to have successful outcome.

About Sounds Divine Studios

How Sounds Divine Studios was founded by Themba Mtsali, alongside Radimeko Tladi and Maggie Motsaathebe, we wanted to build a business whereby we wanted to exercise innovation all because most Studios are one man shop and so we wanted to change the landscape, from owning a job to owning a system-run business. Our game plan is to get into broadcasting all because we want to make sure we build our brand presence based on our vision, which is to become Africa's Storyteller Globally.

Why Broadcasting?

Here is the story that will interest you.... I was born, on the outskirts of Vereeniging, Gauteng(Emagusheni) and now it's dilapidated. I was born as a boy with a speech deformity problem. I was problematic, hyper, naughty as well as handsome, intelligent, and a visionary. I went through different speech therapists and after a while, a miracle happened. I finally spoke. Thank God.

I want to broadcast my story and express myself through Sounds Divine Studios. Hence my existence in the business space. I don't want people to feel sorry for me because I am black but I am good at what I do. I feel that there is a need for black owned broadcasting businesses even during recession. As it stands, content is up for grabs by Netflix Africa and with M-Net producing their own TV series, we do not have a black owned business that can disrupt this broadcasting industry. People used to say that "this is the big league", but here at Sounds Divine

Studios, we are the champions of African content and with the small decrease of South African TV series, in terms of interest but in terms of production, there is an increase of local production, it is time the stakes should be high. With High End Production alongside, great storytelling, we have the abilities to be on par with international TV series. It is not that the Film and TV industry is not contributing GDP of SA, but we need more players. We also need to create an investment culture within the industry and as for Broadcasting, the same is applicable. There was a case where Multichoice was accused for being monopolistic and SABC was going through the financial management matters, and there was the issue of sports broadcasting rights and so this is important to see why it is important to have more broadcasting businesses and we should not rely on the big four. There are too many discrepancies and it reemphasized the need for black owned broadcasting businesses and also the need for black owned broadcasting ecosystem. ICASA alongside the Competition Commission need to encourage new entrants within the Broadcasting industry, with the need for OTT service, though it's been perceived as an expensive exercise but the likes of Netflix are taking advantage because of the support of financial muscle, which goes back to the creation of the investment culture and this would make all companies, whether you are in a TV and Film (Audio Visual) to focus on creating bigger value chains, encourage new players who will push the existing players to push harder and faster. We need to have more opportunities to grow the size of this industry's market, and that way, the bigger the size of the industry's cap, the bigger budgets should be introduced and that we have Blockbusters in our country. We need to ante up the game. We do not have animation studios in Johannesburg, we do not have the funds for the Hollywood kinda studio facilities and we need them to drive the numbers so that investors can be encouraged to invest in the industry.

Market Access:

To be honest with you, the audio visual industry is hard to enter and it is small in terms of size. What would make this happen, it would be discrepancies that I am referring to like for example, if you look at how it has been structured, it is complex.

There is a need to address this market Access and we cannot have SENTECH and ICASA, both government-run institutions to regulate as this creates the issuing of licenses to take decades for new entrants to gain market Access and since this industry is capital intensive, there is lack of the existing ecosystem that can facilitate the new entrants to the industry for the efficiency as well as facilitation of the industry.

To bring everything into new perspective, we need more than one player as this would increase the size of the industry market and also gives people more options to get their content commissioned. As discussed with you, it is important to note that we are lucky to have IDC who are encouraging this notion of the book and we cannot be discouraged. We are extremely aware that we have rich African content as well as events such as DISCOP, which addresses the need for content distribution all over Africa, it is important to take into account that with the distribution channels in place, we need more players in the distribution space. So until we

address the market Access, it is going to be a problem that won't go away.

The Need for black owned broadcasting businesses:

We all need new participants, particularly black owned broadcasting businesses which are being built from the ground up and even though the odds have always been against this, it does not necessarily wipe away the need for black owned broadcasting businesses. We also believe that with those businesses, there is a need for world class programming, as well as content production and distribution, so that healthy competition can be promoted fairly. We also encourage more investment opportunities as this would make us prioritize in producing world class entertainment. We need black owned cinemas, we need more black owned distribution businesses and this is not about race but more importantly, it is about encouraging entrepreneurship within this industry.

The crazy thing is that, there's a pool of talented people but there are no formation of companies as well as no specialization and so we need more Blockbusters, we need to make a decision on the need for black owned broadcasting businesses as well as broadcasting ecosystem.

My dream would be for us to produce African content and for us to grow bigger, as rapper JR said, "**make the circle bigger**". We are the catalysts for the South African economy (Small businesses) and we want to create sustainable employment opportunities, so that we make the film and TV graduates become employable and gain 21st Century skills that would make them compete at a global market. We cannot be afraid, we need to fill gaps where we can contribute towards the unemployed crisis.

The emergence of small businesses in the Broadcasting industry:

There is a need for entrepreneurs who need to invest in the value chain of the broadcasting industry so that in a few years, we do not need to rely on the China's manufacturing companies for them to sell TV and Film equipment at a high price to which it comes with subsidy and shipping tax plus having to wait forever to get the equipment. The strangest thing is for us not to see something wrong with this picture. I am not saying let's not build an ecosystem with China involved but if you look at the software we use as well as the live streaming apps we use, America had this one right, they owned the ecosystem but because we have BRICS with China, we need more entrepreneurs who can enlarge the Broadcasting value chain. We also have a challenge whereby independent filmmakers end up suffering to get funding for their movies as well as distribution. Again, we need more black players in the distribution sector, and we need investors within the industry who can be part of the ecosystem. The crazy thing is, we do not have enough players within the live broadcast industry as well and this indicates the fact that, it is expensive to run your own live broadcast company but it is achievable. Expensive is the new innovation and it is important that we all contribute towards building the value chain of the Broadcasting industry and we open more regulations for new players within the Broadcasting industry and that includes the streaming side so that there's fair competition.

Content is up for grabs, but the creation of content, as part of the value chain, we need ownership at which we are working on and here is our story" ever been in a social gathering where your presence is questioned even though the conversation is about what you are strong at but because you are overwhelmed with your own anxiety, it gets difficult to express yourself and even though you do, you get ignored immediately. How do you solve this matter? Practice assertiveness. That's what Sounds Divine Studios stand for. We are not small businesses that can be pushed back and whenever we express ourselves, we are told we do not amount to anything. We are businesses that will not take your nonsense of "not being enough as well as not ready" for doing business in Africa, because we are here. We are businesses who were once told that "You are playing with the big boys" little do they know, we are businesses who are big boys in our niche market. We do not follow them but we are all about owning our market.

We need more players in our field and we as Africans need to work on the distribution so as to be able to get other African movies as well as telenovelas on our own catalogues as the need for all of us to take part of the value chain and so it is important for our actors and actresses to be part big now, for our sound studios to get bigger budgets, as for our production companies to write the best content that our audience we can relate with, without comparing our own "Billions" in America with Uzalo. I know it's funny.

Why I am writing this book?

How many people have you tried to give value to and yet no response? This book addresses diplomacy in terms of your willingness to assist your clients to achieve their objective, something that I once lacked as a business owner and now I got the lesson right. I remember when I got in trouble for blurting out my mouth in front of people and eventually got hammered with phone calls from my siblings and ended up being an insensitive person, a case study worth looking at, all because in business, we do have clients who are like exhibit A, even businesses who market themselves aggressively that they end up overbearing. The solution is subtlety. Subtlety wins as well as assertiveness are our own values as well as agility band servitude. We want you to work with us, big contracts, tenders and long term relationship in exchange for a peace of mind and feeling good about yourself from what you buy from us and about yourself. We are not a one sided relationship builder where everything we do, but we are a company that values strong foundation to a fruitful relationship.