

Behind the station: Tessa van Staden, CapeTalk station manager

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Behind the station:



Tessa van Staden
CapeTalk station manager

CapeTalk station manager Tessa van Staden first stepped into a radio studio at the age of 5 when she accompanied her mother to the live recording of then-popular radio dramas.

The early exposure kindled in her a passion for radio that has shaped most of her career.



Early Career

During her studies at Stellenbosch University she managed the campus radio station and the over 40 volunteers who burnt the midnight oil to keep MFM on air.

Tessa left the Winelands for Joburg where she worked as a producer at SAFM. She then headed overseas when she secured a scholarship to complete her Masters' Degree in Journalism at Columbia University.

She returned to Southern Africa while freelancing for Voice of America, shuttling between SA and Zimbabwe, before finally settling in Cape Town.



Radio Today

The radio landscape continues to evolve and digital is playing an increasing role in the medium's reach, commercial appeal and production creation.

When it comes to online brand clout and reach – CapeTalk is unsurpassed. The station delivered over 1.2 million unique users and over 2.4 million page views in January 2021.

"CapeTalk is interesting because it's a bit of an outlier. Our digital growth has been stellar and it's directly the result of ongoing and close cooperation between our on-air teams and our tiny but tenacious digital crew headed by Barbara Friedman. We have audiences who're engaging with our content online only – that's quite challenging when viewed from a traditional radio perspective."



Team Effort

"Working at a talk radio station is a major team effort that sometimes resembles a sitcom or a chaotic creative factory. Plus you're constantly covering current affairs; which is draining while it is also energizing. Producers, technical producers and presenters work closely together on show teams that resemble a work marriage. For the on-air magic to happen, their communication and planning need to be in sync," says van Staden.

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