

20 years of TV entertainment

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Tvplus magazine, one of Media24's stalwart publications in the Lifestyle division, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this October with its 500th cover.



The first edition of *tvplus* hit shelves in October 1999 with a soapie cover of fan-favourites Bo and Hope (Peter Reckell and Kristian Alfonso) from long-running US daytime soap *Days Of Our Lives*, which still features prominently in-book. The magazine has stuck to its magic recipe of exclusive soapie news, TV stories and in-depth TV features, maintaining its marketplace position as South Africa's only dedicated television magazine. *Tvplus* has also grown online with its social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as it entered the digital era with digital copies of the magazine also available for purchase on various magazine platforms including Magzter, Zinio and Pressreader.

Lucia Poolman, current editor of *tvplus*, says, "It's clear that *tvplus* still has a role to fulfil in the market. With television streaming services and web-based programming expanding, the need for a magazine that makes sense of it all is greater than ever. *Tvplus* offers value for money and it is an enhancement to thousands of people's viewing pleasure. We will keep working to make *tvplus* a must-have item in your shopping basket."

The magazine started with a challenge from Koos Bekker, now chairman of media organisation Naspers, who asked the editorial teams from *Huisgenoot* and its sister publication *YOU* to conceptualise a new entertainment-related magazine back in early 1999. It fell on Karen Hart, entertainment editor for both titles at the time, to brainstorm the new magazine. "I literally sat through the night and morning cutting and pasting a mock-up magazine with fake copy. But they wanted something more legit. With my Hollywood contacts and the ones in the local entertainment industry, we pulled together a magazine that pleased the board," she says. The magazine was initially called *Seepbel* (Soap Bubble) before former *Huisgenoot* and *YOU* entertainment writer Pieter van der Lugt came up with the title *tvplus*.

The first team consisted of Karen as editor, along with a string of local and international freelancers and contributors from the *Huisgenoot* and *YOU* teams and their layout department. The first editorial appointment was made in December 1999: journalist Emile Butler-O'Brien, who is still with the title. *Tvplus* started as a monthly, but as interest grew, it went fortnightly

and even emerged in a weekly format in the mid 2000s before returning to its sweet spot as a fortnightly publication.

Minette Ferreira, general manager of Media24's Lifestyle division says, "*Tvplus* has played a huge role in our lifestyle portfolio. Over the past two decades, the title has managed to stay relevant in an ever-changing environment where readers are spoilt for choice and will continue to keep delivering quality, entertaining content."

The 500th cover of *tvplus*, available in both Afrikaans and English, is on sale from Friday, 4 October.

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