

Debora Patta to follow her passion for journalism

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e.tv has announced Debora Patta's resignation as eNews Editor-in-Chief, following her decision to focus solely on 3rd Degree. Debora Patta took over as eNews chief in 2005, but stayed on as host and executive producer of her brainchild, 3rd Degree.



Debora Patta

Says Patta: "This has been a very difficult decision, but I believe it is right for me to follow my passion for journalism. Given the pressures of producing an investigative programme and the demanding job as Editor-in-Chief, it would have become unsustainable to do both in the long run. In the end it came down to my passion for journalism and certainty that there are still many untold stories in South Africa."

The announcement of Patta's resignation was made to eNews staffers on Wednesday by e.tv's Chief Executive Officer, Marcel Golding. "Debora's resignation comes with great regret. She has played a pivotal role in the growth of eNews, helped grow the business from a half hour daily newscast to a 24-hour news business and as many as 400 journalists were trained under her leadership," says Golding.

Patta will take on the role of chief anchor, and will continue producing and hosting 3rd Degree as well as train, mentor and develop budding television journalists and news anchors.

Following the announcement of Patta's departure, Golding announced that Patrick Conroy, eNews' current Group News Editor will be taking over from Patta as General Manager of eNews.

Golding says of Conroy's appointment, "Patrick has played a strategic role in growing the eNews service into what it is today. He has been a journalist for more than 15 years and has shown great leadership skills and insight into the way South Africans consume television news."

Since Conroy joined eNews, he helped achieve many milestones, including developing an audience-focused approach to news that attracted 500 000 new viewers and made eNews Prime Time the most watched English-medium bulletin in South Africa. More recently, Conroy played a key leadership role in the multi-disciplinary team that launched the eNews Channel in 2008. The eNews Channel viewership has grown to be the most watched news channel on the DStv bouquet.



Patrick Conroy

Due to the growth of eNews operations over the past two years it has also become necessary to expand the various levels of management overseeing the news business. "In less than two years we have gone from a 30-minute daily bulletin to a 24-hour news broadcaster with international ambitions," says Golding. "This will be the first of more appointments in the near future."

As part of its ambition to grow eNews into a pan-African service, the company employed Chris Maroleng as its Africa Editor. Maroleng now heads up eNews Africa, a news service that will launch later this year focusing on delivering news to the Continent.

Zain Semaar has been confirmed as the National Assignments Editor for eNews, taking over from Layton Beard who now heads up the Pretoria bureau.

Says Golding, “Debora’s decision to step down opens the door for the next wave to start taking control of the business.

“We wish Debora and the managers that will follow in her footsteps every success in the future.”

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