

# Soccer Laduma takes engagement to the next level

Keeping its readers in mind, Soccer Laduma has adopted a non-traditional hiring strategy by appointing some of its readers to senior roles in the publication. Vuyani Joni, one of the first loyal readers of Soccer Laduma newspaper and one of its first appointees, has been appointed as the new editor.



Vuyani Joni

Soccer Laduma newspaper was founded in 1997 and has since grown to be one of the world's largest soccer publications and South Africa's second most-read newspaper. CEO and founder, Peter du Toit, says this success is mostly due to the close relationship that the publication maintains with its readers.

After losing money in the first 18 months of business, du Toit turned away from 'industry experts' and experienced journalists and hired readers instead. This increased the publication's sales by 13,000 copies.

"Those first readers we hired have been essential to our growth. Their work displays the passion they have for soccer and this passion has helped us create a product that readers respond to," says du Toit. "Joni is proof of that. He was a reader and he takes that with him in every task he has as editor."

As editor, Joni knows that this success comes directly from reader engagement. "We pride ourselves in that close relationship. We make sure we know what they are experiencing in their lives, their dreams and passions. The relationship goes beyond soccer—readers ask us and each other about all aspects of their lives – from insurance and budgeting advice to education and their careers," concludes Joni.

Read more about Joni [here](#).

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