

Talking video on video with Vidr

 By Leigh Andrews

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In this meta-interview, I chat to Sean Wilson-Smith, founder of Vidr, about the successes on their startup life so far, along with a 5-minute video of our interview if you'd prefer to listen to rather than read his words.



In conversation with Sean Wilson-Smith of Vidr in the Rise space.

Two of this year's top predicted #BizTrends2018 are that of video marketing content and, even scarier for some, live video coverage.



#BizTrends2018: You guessed it, it's the year of video

Gil Sperling 8 Jan 2018



#BizTrends2018: Putting the 'I' in live.

Mike Sharman 11 Jan 2018



One startup that's taken this to heart and run with it – fast – is Vidr.

“ We are creating video content at an alarming rate... crushing the days of heavy, expensive gear, large crews, long hours on-set and prolonged delivery/upload of edits, leaving clients most often disappointed and production results old news. ”

Instead, by using state-of-the-art technology like iPhones, DJI Osmos and iOS filmic/editing apps on-the-go, they film, snap, edit, grade and share engaging content 'now' – we're talking mere minutes. They had the below preview of our video interview up on Facebook mere minutes after I walked out the door.



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I live-chatted to founder Sean Wilson-Smith about why they're the future of video, not only using the nimblest gear and tech apps, but also delivering through platforms of the future, through AI and Blockchain platform worldwide.

Key insights and outtakes also below the video, if you'd rather read it through and let the words sink in...

■ ***When, how and why did you get started?***

Vidr will be a year old on 1 March, as we did our first proof of concept with Design Indaba 2017 with two young filmmakers from Afda. The concept was "shoot fast, edit fast, full focus, engaging bite-sized," video edits uploaded with lightning speed. And we hit it off right away. Ravi and the Design Indaba interactive team were overjoyed, and I knew we had something we

could scale and perfect.

So I focused my energies on gaining traction, and shooting a whole bunch of “categories” from activations to retail stores, global events, mini doccies, Insta-marketing pieces, tattoo parlours and the like worldwide, and found I could shoot and edit anything easily and deliver easily.

“ Video is the way forward for brands, influencers... everyone wanting to say something or market a product and I've found the easiest way to bring this to the masses. ”

No other company I know of is doing this globally as we want to – on a global scale, AI all-production platform, with Blockchain verification and payment rails – that I've seen, so we're onto something big. Never before has video production been so seamless, so enjoyable to create and so fast.

■ **Explain the thinking behind calling yourselves 'Vidr'.**

Vidr is a shortened phrase, obviously with the 'vid' for video, but I also wanted the R for 'run' and 'retail'. And it just sounded good, it sounded right. I've seen a lot of start-ups and tech/app companies shortening their names too, so why not? It just sounded good, it looked and felt good.

■ **What is your competitive advantage or core differentiator over the rest of the industry?**

Well, Vidr is changing the video production industry in many ways. We're filling this white space we've found and growing a marketplace through channels such as Insta, where so many brands we've seen are just not utilising video potential.

“ The brain is getting used to seeing the 'user-generated content' look produced by cellular devices, which makes is more easily engageable and watchable, but still shot cinematically and beautifully by our qualified filmmakers. So we're creating massive potential for so many filmmakers worldwide, giving them the nimble gear they never had (with T&Cs, of course), linking them with clients and producing video at a rate no one else thought possible. ”

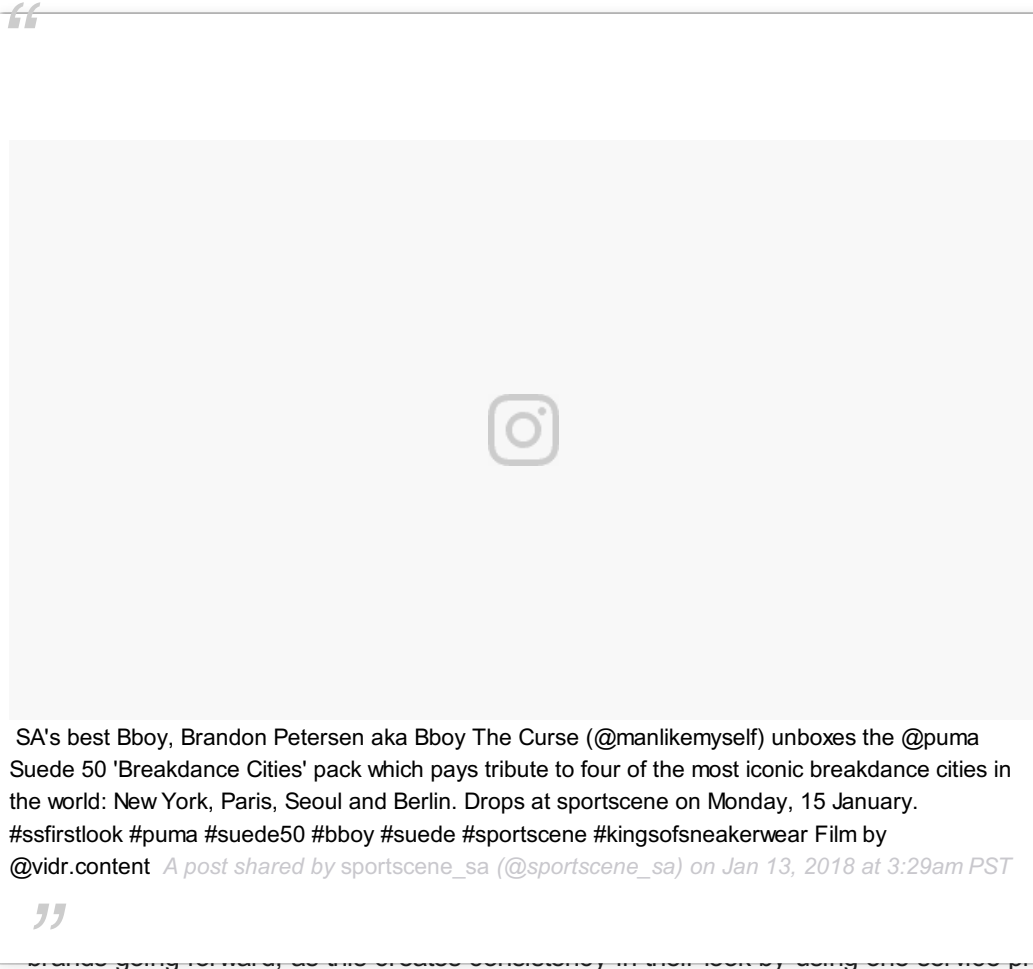
■ **That's for sure. Colour me impressed by what I've seen so far! Share a few of your proudest achievements since startup.**

Our proudest moments are always seeing our content go up and be shared to the world. I'm proud of my filmmakers on an hourly basis, for being focused and for being troopers, and getting the work done quickly, with attention to detail. They are what makes the company run... and there is so much potential in terms of Vidr training these young ones to create such amazing content on the run... editing in cabs, uploading in corners, just being super content creators.



Team Vidr, L to R Ayorinde Okunowo, Roxy Kirsten, Sean Wilson-Smith, and Chaulele Alexander Jana.

But our major achievement has been signing our first annual retainer with Sportscene, out of The Foschini Group. Our new clients have been frothing ever since we started creating for them and are so excited to see consistent content going up at a pace of 11 per month via their Instagram, unboxing the latest in sneakers from around the world as they get released.



gning retainers with many other provider.

❏ **List a few of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out.**

Providing all the gear to screened and approved Vidr content producers/filmmakers has been a huge layout of funds. And the more funds we acquire, the more gear and hardware we purchase and hand over to our talented and hungry creative filmmakers, creating jobs world- and nationwide. So capital outlay of interested venture capitalists and angel investors is what will take Vidr to a global scale.

“ Also, it's a sad truth that clients and brands are sleeping in terms of using video content. This should be done consistently and regularly, sharing at least one content item per day. ”

Brands should know that using video to engage authentically with their consumers or fans started four years ago, but never had the means to rely on “always available,” fully charged and ready-to-go companies like Vidr, who create fast ‘take-away’ content as we do, when they want it, at great rates and delivered in minutes. Consumers constantly consume, so we say you need to meet this need and provide all the time!

❏ **What advice would you give to other aspiring entrepreneurs looking to make a name for themselves in this field?**

Be honest with yourself. If you're not being woken up at 4am with a new budding way to scale or perfect your business churning in your brain, go back to sleep.

“ At this time of life so much is happening, we're in a flux of creation and young, budding startups are pushing hard, but also not being heard. ”

Keep focused. Eat sand, never give up. Keep dreaming. In fact, if you believe you've been funded, if you believe in your heart you've made it already... then it will all show up as you have believed it. Also, get out there. Talk to people. Ask questions. Be engaged all the time. Research, create, be in the firing line. Fail fast, pivot easily. And one last piece of advice: Keep buzzwords to a minimum. Be authentic.

❏ **What does the future of entrepreneurship look like to you, especially in a country such as South Africa?**

“ The future is looking huge. Bright minds are piecing together faster and easier ways of living the lifestyle we all dream of through tech and new ventures and in this country, I can see so much potential. ”

My other company is creating a consolidated platform, where we are bringing the startup life in SA into one space with all the pitch competitions, accelerators, news, acquisitions and resources in SA and Africa. We've seen this spread too, far and wide across many other sites and platforms, so we're bringing it all into one place called startup South Africa. We're just consolidating all industry news into one place.

Sounds like a true startup success to me. Find out more about Vidr from their [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) feed.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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