

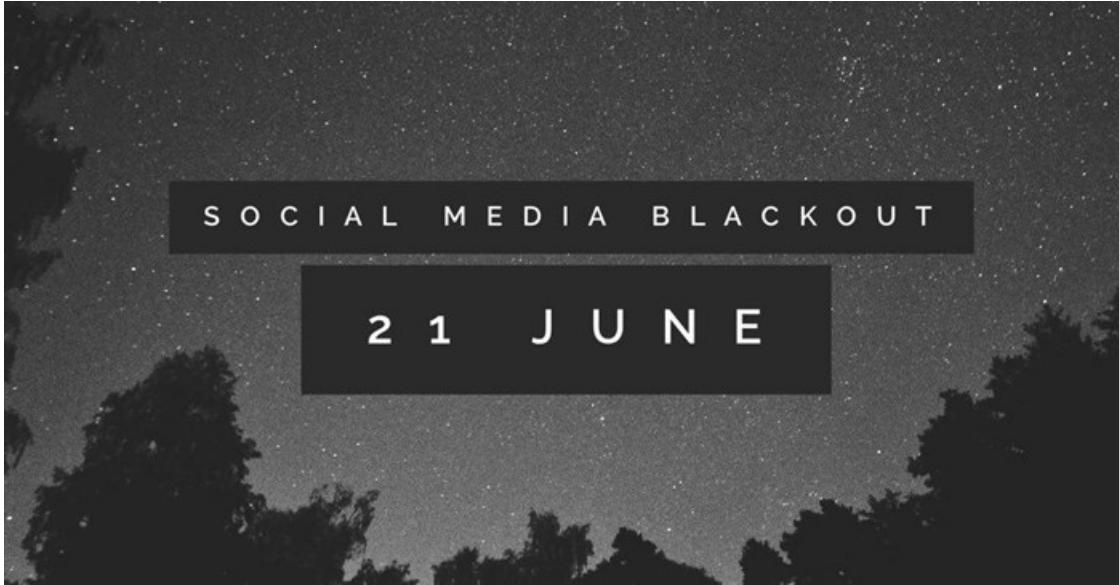
#SocialMediaBlackout pressures network providers to lower data costs



Bylse van den Berg

21 Jun 2017

NEWSWATCH: Today, Wednesday, 21 June 2017, South Africans are encouraged to join the [#SocialMediaBlackout](#) campaign to pressure network providers to lower data costs. The public is urged to avoid buying data bundles and keep off social media platforms.



To give some perspective if you're wondering what the hype is about, for 1GB of data, MTN users pay R160, Vodacom users pay R149, Telkom users pay R99, and Cell C users pay R149.

“ 11 rand pic.twitter.com/sDlhScHrW3— Sivuyile Mangxamba (@Sivuman) [June 20, 2017](#) ”

Following the [#DataMustFall](#) campaign last year, MTN began offering its subscribers free Twitter access. As of this month, however, things have changed. The mobile telecommunications company announced it would offer 500MB to users to access Twitter and once you hit the cap, you will be charged normal data rates.

“ This war is no different to June 16.....our right to information is being violated . pic.twitter.com/Nzc9hg5IMf— #Abanandaba (@ntsikimazwai) [June 20, 2017](#) ”

“ Guys in case I tweet on the 21st of June 2017, just know I'm connected to Wifi at the hotel. [#SocialMediaBlackOut](#) [#DataMustFall](#) pic.twitter.com/0LboxnBP1Q— Mveli Masilela (@mwelimasilela) [June 20, 2017](#) ”

“ My sister [@ntsikimazwai](#) just sent me this...here's a chance to do something about those crazy data costs! pic.twitter.com/esrmxTkuYo— Untomb'iya dlisa (@thandiswamazwai) [June 20, 2017](#) ”

Will this work and will it make a difference?

Good question... I'm wondering the same thing.

The two main things I can think of is a) not only will the network providers lose thousands of rands due to no one (or, let's be realistic, *fewer* people) buying data, but b) they are also likely to lose out on some big bucks they make off social media advertising if no one sees those ads for the next three Wednesdays.

I will be keeping an eye on social media today (connected to Wi-Fi, of course)...

For more:

- [South Africans urged to join #SocialMediaBlackout](#)
- [#SocialMediaBlackout – Don't buy data bundles and stay off Facebook tomorrow](#)
- [High data cost back in the spotlight](#)

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work [here](#) and [here](#). Contact Ilse through her website [here](#).

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