

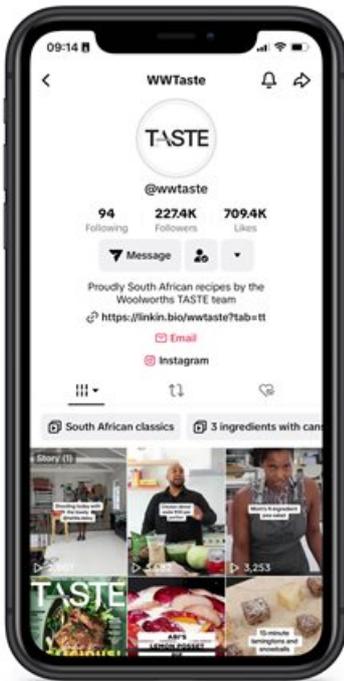
Iconic *Taste* brand embraces a digital-first future

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It's official: Woolworths *Taste* now reaches over one million consumers monthly across all its digital platforms. The reported figures for February 2024 stood at 1,044,002 - a new high for the award-winning retail brand. As a result of this unprecedented growth, Woolworths now intends to expand its efforts in the food content space by increasing, but also consolidating, all its investment into *Taste's* digital growth. This means the 190th issue of Woolworths *Taste*, July/August 2024, will be the last bi-monthly print magazine to be published by the brand.

Elizka Ferreira, head of foods marketing at Woolworths, says: "As a standalone brand, *Taste* is more important than ever in achieving Woolworths' objectives - maintaining our authority in the food industry with an emphasis on quality, innovation and sustainability. We believe this decision will shift the focus from the present to the future, allowing us to connect with even more customers and solve their problems more creatively."



Taste launched its TikTok presence in March last year, for example, and it has become one of its fastest growing channels, with over 225,000 followers and some videos reaching over five million views. Says editor-in-chief Kate Wilson: "We were able to maintain and build on *Taste's* digital success during lockdown and the audience has told us where they are. Now we need to be able to speak to them more often with even more content. That requires a single-minded approach."

Both Woolworths and New Media, which launched the magazine in 2003, remain 100% committed to *Taste* as a multichannel brand. To this end, Woolworths has committed to investing even more of its content and amplification budgets into *Taste's* digital channels. This also means retaining the award-winning specialist food team that has made *Taste* one of the best content marketing brands in the world.

The printed *Taste* magazine will end on a celebratory note. The collectable final issue will be designed as a tribute to the past 21 years - a special, nostalgic edition celebrating the brand's extraordinary history. Wilson says that, while the print magazine itself will undoubtedly be missed, "digital content

has the advantage of being more tactical and more personalised, offering life-enhancing functionality and, critically, the ability to measure success".

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Schwarzwald-spiced roast lamb with fennel salsa (p 11)

58

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New Media CEO Aileen Lamb says: "I feel extremely proud of the *Taste* team's exponential digital growth over the past decade. They are well equipped to make this transition and, importantly, none of the spirit of what makes *Taste* excellent

will be lost.

“This spirit of excellence combined with New Media’s digital solutions capabilities and our recently launched video production division will allow us to continue to create and deliver cutting-edge, data-driven content that resonates with the Woolies customer and showcases Woolworths’ commitment to quality and an exceptional customer experience.

“New Media and Woolworths were pioneers of content marketing in South Africa when *Taste* was launched 21 years ago and, together, we continue to rewrite the recipe for success in this space.”

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