dimension data ◮

**OFFICIAL
TECHNOLOGY
PARTNER**

ABSA CAPE EPIC

Absa Cape Epic | South Africa | Sport | Digital infrastructure

Absa Cape Epic connects the toughest *mountain bike race in the world*

At a glance

Which services?
Consulting and Professional Services:
- Strategy and ideation
- Scope definition, design and engineering
- Installation, procurement and logistics
- Programme and project management
- Marketing activations and PR collaboration

Which technologies?
- Enterprise-class 10Gig fibre backbone
- Secure LAN and WLAN
- Location-based services
- Collaboration tools

Which partners?
Cisco, Internet Solutions, Britehouse

Accolades
- 2015 Absa Cape Epic:
  - Best activation by a sponsor
  - Best Debut Sponsorship: Dimension Data
  - Founder's Award: Dimension Data
- Bronze Loerie (2015) – Live events sponsorship category
- Discovery Sports Industry Award (2015)
  - Best new sponsorship

'It's not the physical challenges that set a mountain biking stage race apart. They're the basic reason for riders participating. What separates the ordinary from the exceptional is the ability to connect the world to every second of the race.'

Kevin Vermaak, Absa Cape Epic founder

Why you need a connected race

The Absa Cape Epic is designed to be one of a kind, globally. However, the remote, often harsh African settings, seminal to its uniqueness, create an extreme test of the infrastructure needed to enable the world to interact with the race.

Read more

How connectivity creates a sporting event of global significance

We created a solution that connects everyone involved in the race in real-time. With each one of the thousands of local and international riders using social media, and hundreds of journalists from around the world reporting online, the race automatically becomes a global event.

Read more

What greatness looks like in the field

Connectivity has no limits. So, every department of race organisation, from emergency services to catering, can deliver exceptional service to competitors. The media can delight their audiences. Friends and families can interact live with loved ones throughout the race.

Read more

'What Dimension Data does is embedded in the race. We build what we deliver to the riders on their solution.'

Kevin Vermaak, Absa Cape Epic founder

Why you need a connected race

The Absa Cape Epic is designed to be one of a kind, globally. However, the remote, often harsh African settings, seminal to its uniqueness, create an extreme test of the infrastructure needed to enable the world to interact with the race.

When the race was launched in 2004, founder Kevin Vermaak wanted to create a mountain biking stage race that would capture the world's imagination. He created several unique aspects, including making it the world's first team endurance event, with riders having to race in pairs. The race is also a ProAm, with amateurs competing against professionals. The most visible differentiator, however, was having much of the eight-day race take place in remote locations and wildlife reserves that are often subject to extreme weather conditions.

Most of the 700 km race therefore fell into terrain without infrastructure. An innovative solution was needed to enable riders, UCI officials, Venue Operating Centre (VOC), organisers, caterers, medical personnel, and media to communicate with one another and the outside world. Without connectivity, the race would not be able to take its place on global sporting calendars.

How innovation creates a sporting event of global significance

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From the start, the physical challenges of the event have attracted some of the world's top professional riders. As its reputation has grown, it has also attracted celebrities competing as amateurs – along with other influencers, among them one of the world's richest men and American presidential candidates. With the advent of social media, the thousands of riders participating in each event would use their smart phones and GoPros to communicate their race experience with their own audiences.

By supplying strategic hot spots with high speed, high performance connectivity, we made it possible for them to use their personal devices anywhere, anytime, distributing an extremely dramatic, continuous, personalised narrative about the race to an ever-widening social media audience. Wi-Fi 'bubbles' along the route that live streamed coverage of the event from cameras on the bikes have enhanced both broadcast and social media coverage.

What greatness looks like in the field

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The mobile race hospital is connected to the Mediclinic national hospital network, enabling world class field triage and aftercare treatment. Medical histories are kept on record so that riders who compete again are given pertinent attention. Logistics vehicles and riders are tracked. Fans can see where their riders are on the route, where they finish, and what their ranking is. Riders can upload their own statistics to assess their performance on the go.

Innovation is continuous. In 2015, we included video conferencing with British commentator, Rob Warner, at the course hot spots. In 2016, we expanded to live coverage from the route and on-screen data nuggets. In 2017, a Race Centre app will be deployed, along with a PowerBI tool for real time analytics. Heart rate and power data for the professional riders will be indicated on the race's website.

Technology accelerates digital business

'Ultimately, you want to know how fast the guys are going, who's the best climber, how big the splits were. So, using data analysis to put that information on the screen in real time adds a whole new dimension to the visuals,' says Kati Csak, Former Absa Cape Epic Race Director.