

SUBMISSION FOR THE 2018 DOWNTOWN ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS
Category: Marketing & Communication



Title of submission:

THE BEST OF CAPE TOWN CENTRAL CITY 2018 guide

Submitted by: Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID)

We hereby submit for consideration our annual downtown marketing publication – *The Best of Cape Town Central City* guide. The CCID’s entertainment, shopping, sightseeing and culinary guide to what the Cape Town CBD has to offer visitors and locals alike.

To see the publication itself, we would like to refer the judging panel to our e-book version which is available on our website at: <http://www.capetownccid.org/about-ccid/publications/Best-of-Cape-Town-Central-City/59>

This submission is based around our current (latest) guide, which is the 2018 edition; however, previous versions of this publication dating back to 2012 are also available on the abovementioned site. The guide was first published in 2009, and has been published annually since then – the 2018 edition being the 10th.

OVERALL MOTIVATION FOR SUBMISSION

The publication, in its current format, originally grew out of a relationship between the CCID and Cape Town-based media house, New Media Publishing. The strength of the guide initially lay in New Media’s association and close working relationship with the South African edition of the internationally popular *Time Out* guides.

Therefore, for a number of years during the early period of its production, the CCID’s own guide was always “headlined” through its association with *Time Out*, and its popularity rested on the popularity and credibility in turn of the international *Time Out* brand. This opened many doors for its distribution.

However, by 2014, the guide had gained enough traction on the ground as a stand-alone, well-respected and sought-after publication, that when New Media’s association with *Time Out* came to an end, the guide became a stand-alone CCID-publication, funded entirely by the CCID. It is still produced via New Media Publishing – which is also responsible for selling the basic advertising revenue that the guide derives, and which contributes to the overall costs of producing the guide. This also enables the guide to continue to be distributed as it always has been: free of charge.

Each year, 60 000 hardcopies are printed and distributed to venues both inside the CCID’s footprint, as well as to an extensive network of distribution points across the metropole, including tourist centres and popular visitor sites, as well as accommodation venues from hotels to guesthouses. The guide is also extensively accessed online (as per the link above).

Also, of these 60 000 copies, 15 000 are donated annually to *The Big Issue*, to assist vendors on the ground to sell the bumper December “Collectors’ edition” of the locally-produced *The Big Issue* magazine to their clients. The Big Issue Foundation is an international movement, founded in the UK in 1991, which produces publications across the globe. These publications are then sold through a

network of street vendors, many of whom are homeless and/or destitute, to enable them to become entrepreneurs in their own right, upskill themselves to earn a living and eventually regain control of their lives by tackling the various issues that lead to their circumstances in the first place.

The motivation around this submission is therefore two-fold:

- In the highly effective job that the publication does in promoting the Cape Town Central City through its variety of venues and thus helping to market and stimulate the local economy of Cape Town's traditional CBD (the footprint in which the CCID operates); and
- The role it plays as an important social upliftment tool via with the 15 000 copies distributed annually by *The Big Issue* vendors, the primary role of which is to add value to – and therefore assist them - to sell their December issue.

What the guide was designed to do ... and what it does now.

Since its *Time Out* days, the guide has always focused around the five key elements that would drive consumers to the Central City: what to "Visit", as well as where to "Shop", "Eat", "Play" and "Stay".

In its early days, the CCID's on-the-ground, day-to-day operational precinct managers, together with the guide's appointed editor at New Media Publishing, would select between 300 and 330 of the Central City's well-over 1 200 venues to promote or highlight as listings across the 70+ pages of the hardcopy guide.

While this selection was always able to depict the abundance and variety of venues that existed within the CBD (the CCID's 1.62km² footprint), there were obviously limitations in not being able to feature all venues in the Central City: the 300+ venues were a snapshot, but not the entire offering available within the Central City.

In 2014, the CCID revamped its original website, with the overall philosophy that visitors were not coming to the CBD to "see" the CCID in action ... but were coming instead for what the Central City had on offer. To a large extent, the CCID's own presence on the website therefore took more of a background role to enable the venues themselves to shine through a prominent "Explore our Central City" approach – complementing the guide by echoing, on the opening web page (and thus inviting visitors to the site) to explore all that the Central City had to offer in terms of the same features of the guide. But now, of course, to also include all the over 1 200+ offerings available and not just the 300+ that could be featured in the physical, hardcopy annual publication.

Today, *The Best of Cape Town Central City* guide works hand in hand with the CCID's "Explore the Central City" online presence: visitors who peruse the hardcopy are continually reminded to go online for more. The "Shop" section in the hardcopy version invites readers to see at least 70+ venues in the publication, but then pushes them towards the "Shop" tool on the website, where there are 597 retail venues in total listed on the CCID website.

The work of the CCID – and its presence in the CBD, particularly in terms of providing additional urban management and public safety – is also cleverly dotted throughout the guide: tips on how to stay safe when partying at night; information on the CCID's hard-working road maintenance teams that repair roads and pavements and provide essential job creation programmes while uplifting the urban environment; information on how to contact the CCID's 24-hour call centre or other important numbers that visitors (and locals alike) may require.

The popularity of the guide has become such that the 60 000 copies printed annually, and which used to last a full calendar year from one edition to the next, are now distributed in full within the first eight months of the year. By the time the new edition is released each November, it is eagerly awaited.