

## WP Newspapers awarded tender for commuter publication



**By Cecilia Hume**

WP NEWSPAPERS has once again been awarded the tender to publish the PRASA/Metrorail commuter publication, *Blits*. This weekly rail commuter publication consists of three editions, North, South and Central, that are distributed to Metrorail commuters at stations on the three respective railway lines every Thursday. *Blits* currently has a print order of about 80 000.



Photo: Carina Roux

Mr Russel Wolmarans, general manager of WP Newspapers, and Rebecca Setino, supply chain manager of Metrorail, signs the contract between Metrorail and WP Newspapers after the tender for the railway commuter publication *Blits* was once again awarded to WP Newspapers

It has been part of the WP Newspapers stable, which includes *TygerBurger*, *People's Post* and *City Vision*, for the past three years. WP Newspapers was awarded the three-year publishing contract on tender for the first time in 2006. It was previously published by *Die Burger*.

One of the few tenders awarded during tough economic times which is an indication of the value of the publication to the commuting public.

Mr Russel Wolmarans, general manager of WP Newspapers, said the success of WP Newspapers' bid is thanks to the collective effort of team members who all worked on the tender as well as the key editorial staff members that played a vital role fostering the relationship with Metrorail over the years.

He said Metrorail noted the level of information in the *Blits* tender and the quality of the overall offering, had been impressive and had placed the WP Newspapers' bid at a higher standard than that of the competitors. Metrorail also commented on the value it places on its relationship with WP Newspapers, saying it had played a pivotal role in its decision.

Ms Riana Scott, marketing and communications manager of Metrorail Western Cape, said *Blits* is a unique product that creates a forum for interaction between Metrorail and its commuters, allowing Metrorail the chance to communicate first hand information to its commuters.

"It is an established and bona fide information channel that has been aimed specifically at railway commuters since its establishment. We are looking forward to the next three years during which we are once again going to improve the product."

*Blits* currently publishes information on train schedules, rail services and innovations, as well as editorial content geared towards engaging the different groups of commuters. Various new ideas and initiatives will be implemented over the next couple of months that will add more value to the publication for both readers and advertisers.

The first focus will be on better editorial segmentation and focus on each of the three editions which will allow for local content more specific to the line the respective editions are distributed on.

Other content currently in the planning stage includes articles focused on the 2010 Soccer World Cup, a classifieds section, monthly safety tips, government notices, coupons and competitions, and columns aimed at improved reader interaction. *Blits* will soon also launch its own website.

WP Newspapers are also looking into ways to increase branding and visibility to allow commuters better access to the publication at the various railway stations. The company will also be joining hands with Metrorail and advertisers in joint corporate social investment (CSI) projects.

WP Newspapers, the Cape Peninsula's community newspaper publishing arm of Media24, publishes four titles – *TygerBurger*, *People's Post*, *City Vision* and *Blits* – with a total print order of 773 000 across its 27 editions every week.