

How to create impactful township marketing campaigns that deliver

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Almost half of South Africa's urban population lives in townships, representing billions of rands in spending power. But marketers still find it challenging to truly understand and reach the township customer. Janine Rebelo, CEO of township-specialist digital media channel Think Digital, shares some insights into how to curate meaningful, cost-effective campaigns that genuinely engage this target audience.



- **Collaborate with marketing partners who are experienced operators in this market.**

Seasoned operators have a clear understanding of the drivers and behaviours of these shoppers and, by leveraging their experience and expertise, brands can gain important insights and apply them accordingly. For example, Think Digital was created out of Google Station in 2019 and has half a decade's experience in – and intimate knowledge of – this market. This means that we're able to offer guaranteed delivery to a hyper-granulated population of more than a million users per month.

Think Digital's free WiFi platform, ThinkZone's unique signing-in process offers brands a unique, immersive marketing opportunity. Users aren't required to sign in with phone numbers or email addresses: instead, they follow a journey where they engage with targeted advertising in exchange for free Wi-Fi and access to the internet. It's a positive, engaging experience with a high propensity to generate action, clicks and sales.

- **Create campaigns that speak to the specific needs and concerns of the township consumer segment.**

Breaking through the mundane and giving township consumers an enjoyable, relevant experience builds excitement and interest in your brand. To illustrate how this looks, I'll use the example of our collaboration with a leading broadcaster to promote a diverse range of television shows. With a focus on reaching and engaging with specific target audiences, we executed multiple distinct campaigns that featured short teasers of the television shows being promoted, each tailored to resonate with the broadcaster's demographic profile.

Through strategic planning and execution, our partnership with the broadcasting client yielded remarkable results in terms of engagement, reach, and cost efficiency. By leveraging free Wi-Fi provision, targeted messaging and thrilling teaser

clips, the brand successfully connected with the desired audience segments, driving interest and viewership of its television shows. Across all campaigns, there was a consistent pattern of high engagement rates, with click-through rates well above 50% (around thirty times the industry average of 1,9%), and there was a steady increase in unique users reached across the four campaigns, indicating a growing audience base and expanding reach over time.

- **Build a relationship with the township community.**

Authenticity and a genuine commitment to driving positive change and improving the lives of your audience resonates with these consumers and, by building a positive relationship with the community, you can create a sense of trust and goodwill that will make your marketing campaigns more effective.

A prime example of this kind of content is a recent campaign we hosted for one of South Africa's largest banks. In South Africa, financial literacy remains a critical challenge, particularly in underserved communities where access to traditional banking services is limited. Recognising the need to bridge this gap, the client embarked on a mission to educate consumers in these communities with essential financial literacy skills and promote the usage of online banking services through an engaging series of culturally relevant educational videos. Topics covered in the video series included digital banking basics, effective budgeting, understanding interest rates, and managing debt responsibly. Leveraging insights from market research, each video was crafted to deliver clear and actionable advice in a visually compelling format.

The campaign metrics demonstrate its effectiveness in capturing audience attention and driving engagement. A click-through rate of 43.5% and a video view-through rate of more than 75% indicate strong audience interest and receptivity to the campaign's message. These impactful results not only contribute to addressing financial literacy gaps but also foster greater financial inclusion and empowerment across South Africa.

These are just two of the many campaigns on which we've partnered with blue-chip clients and household brands. These brands have been attracted to Think Digital's marketing platform as it offers an innovative way to reach an 'unreachable' customer market. Our more than 400 ThinkZones or WiFi hotspots are located throughout South Africa's townships and shopping malls. This enables brands to connect one-on-one with their customers in a meaningful way and provides an unrivalled footprint in the heart of the township.

If you or your clients would like to join the growing number of brands taking advantage of the unmatched marketing platform offered by [Think Digital](#), please contact info@thinkdigitalmedia.online or + 27 87 159 6444

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