

# Outdoor advertising's 'true potential' revealed by TNS, PwC

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The power of billboards and other forms of out-of-home (OOH) displays should no longer be underestimated and dismissed. A survey, conducted earlier this year by TNS Research Surveys on behalf of Primedia Unlimited, has revealed the true potential of outdoor advertising in South Africa. To contextualise these findings, 'The Outlook' report, published in mid-October by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), says outdoor advertising fared relatively well in the recession of 2009, declining by a modest 0.4% after a steeper decline of 7.5% in 2008.

'The Outlook', which says the industry grew by about 8.8% in 2010 reaching a total of R1.5 billion, predicts that improved economic conditions will in the near future lead to the OOH market's better performance, culminating with an increasing annual of 9.1% gain in 2014 and reaching a total revenue of 2.0 million by 2014.

## Efficiency and performance evident

And this week, the efficiency and performance of this medium was evident to the clients of Primedia Unlimited, when TNS Research Surveys' Neil Higgs unpacked the findings of the 2010 quiz campaign at the Woodmead Country Club in Johannesburg. Prime questions were "Which country is hosting the 2014 FIFA World Cup?" (by TLC), "What is Tiger Woods' real name?" (by Wideopen Platform), and "What are David Beckham's second names?" (by Primall Media).

The billboards 'Tiger Woods' real name is Eldrick Woods', 'Brazil are the hosts for the 2014 FIFA World Cup', and 'David Beckham's middle names are Robert Joseph' later placed in the areas of Sandton City and Menlyn Park, were said to 'irritate' the public who began to ask questions about the true motives of the adverts.

Higgs, who said the results were impressive, especially given the message's cognitive nature of the flighting's short period, lashed out at the 'enemies' of outdoor advertising, stating: "Those who think the billboards fade in the underground are wrong because it is not true."

According to Higgs, the media costs for the tests were as follows: Wideopen Sandton (Tiger Woods) R218 600, Primall Menlyn (David Beckham) R74 000, TLC Sandton and Menlyn (Brazil) R31 000. The estimated message uplift was R485 000, R140 000 and R770 000, respectively.

## More noticeable

The TNS intercept study also found that outdoor displays were more noticeable by the public than other types of media such

as TV, radio, and print.

In terms of noticeability, large billboards scored 61.7, advertising inside the malls 57, TV (SABC) 56.5, building wraps 55.3, mobile billboards 54.9, daily newspapers 53.9, national radio 51.6, advertising in shopping mall parkades 53.8, national radio 51.6, e.tv 51.1 and DStv 50.7.

Commenting on the results, Primedia Unlimited's Ken Varejes said: "The results show scientifically that people absorb and are able to recall even an arbitrary message in advertising in shopping malls and their surrounds."

The TNS study was conducted in collaboration with Advertising Media Forum (AMF).

Some observers believe the TNS Research Surveys intercept study and the PWC 'Outlook' report will reinforce the notion that outdoor advertising - although despised by some for 'littering and obstructing' the environment, 'distracting' drivers on major roads, and 'poisoning' minds (the controversial ones) - remains an effective medium and a vital contributor to the economy.

## ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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