

Activating effectively in Africa

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Africa is a burgeoning market for brands wanting to make a significant mark on its target audience. Stephan Botha, Business Development Manager of ProActive™, one of the leading activations agencies on the continent, says that activations are one of the most effective means of getting a brand into the hands of the consumer.



At ProActive™, we operate in 15 countries and have been implementing activations outside of South Africa for over eight years. So, to say that we've learnt a few things is an understatement. With close to 8000 activations under our belts we've overcome the challenges and have discovered the ideal avenues for touching consumers, putting brands into their baskets and turning them into keen brand advocates.

On a continent where word of mouth and social interaction is still one of the key means of communication, having consumers love your brand and having them talk about it to peers is priceless. An effective activations campaign works to enhance and augment this. Through our experience, we've come to understand how to implement campaigns that are strategic, effective and generate brand longevity. Below are some key learnings:

1. **Speak to consumers in their language**

In an activations campaign, using the right language and the right rhetoric can take a brand to a new level in the consumer's eye. For example, while English is the commonly spoken language of Ghana, there are 78 other languages that are still widely used. In some regions, consumers still prefer to engage in a language other than English. Brand ambassadors can bring a brand successfully closer to its target audience by speaking their tongue.

2. **Understand the culture**

Furthermore, having a hands-on understanding and grasp of the culture of a country will add profound insights to how, where and when a campaign should be implemented. This will strengthen a campaign, make it more accessible and ultimately drive objectives. Understanding the culture and knowing which celebrities are loved and despised provides key information when creating the strategy for a campaign. Incorporating an element that is undesirable to the target audience can have an extremely negative effect on brand perception and, as a result, sales. Culture also extends to recreation. Where do consumers go to relax and enjoy themselves? Is nightlife a major part of life or do consumers within a particular age group and in a particular region prefer to spend the day at a place of worship? These are all questions that should be answered right at the inception of a campaign.

3. **Understand shopping behaviour**

Knowing where consumers live, how they live, where they shop and how will ensure that a campaign is correctly targeted. According to The Pan African Media Research Organisation (PAMRO) 2015 country reports, Kenya has a rural population of 63%, so to access these consumers the key is to understand where, when and how often they shop at major retail nodes and also, how they get there. The report also shows that vehicle branding is the second highest accessed out of home medium in Kenya.

Across the ocean, in Mauritius the largest percentage of the population falls within the upper middle class bracket and 68% of them are reached via out of home (PAMRO 2015). Combining information acquired both from experience and other sources will ensure that brands and consumers are seamlessly aligned.

4. **In Africa, consumers spend large amounts of time Out of Home**

One of the reasons that OOH, and activations in particular, are so effective in Africa is because of the amount of time

that consumers spend travelling each day. For advertisers wanting to reach these consumers, adding out of home and activations to the marketing mix will help their brands gain significant traction within these markets. Combining activations with other relevant out of home touchpoints will not only illicit a positive response from consumers, it will ensure that a brand becomes an integral part of their life.

For more information on how ProActive™ can activate your brand in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Rwanda, contact Stephan Botha on 0861 776 826 or sb@provanantage.co.za or go to www.provanantage.co.za or follow [@ProvanantageSA](https://twitter.com/ProvanantageSA)

References

[The Pan African Media Research Organisation \(PAMRO\) 2015 country reports](#)

- " **Provanantage launches SA's first real-time, place-based media audience measurement tool – Protrack** 30 Apr 2024
- " **Provanantage and T+W launch Ant Lion - A full service digital content agency** 10 Apr 2024
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