

Transformation a business imperative for Provantage Media Group

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Proudly South African out-of-home company [Provantage Media Group](#) is 52% black owned and 39% black female owned - but it says transformation is about so much more than ownership.



When leading out-of-home company [Provantage Media Group](#) (PMG) was awarded a [Level 1 B-BBEE rating in 2017](#) – the highest possible assessment – it became one of the largest OOH media companies to have achieved such a rating. It was also one of a small group of enterprise organisations within the marketing and communication sector to qualify as being truly empowered in terms of South African legislation.

PMG has not rested on its laurels, however. The proudly South African company completed an equity transaction whereby it became 52% black-owned and 39% black female-owned and, having renewed its B-BBEE certificate for the third year in a row, it continues to drive meaningful empowerment throughout the organisation – and beyond.

Tshego Sefolo, CEO of [Agile Capital](#) and current chairman of PMG, says the company has proved its commitment to empowerment as an ethos, not a mere compliance requirement. Sustainable empowerment is the core of the company's value and it embraces transformation and the empowerment of others.

“When we partnered with PMG as a shareholder and partner in 2011, we had a very clear idea of what it meant to select the right partner,” says Sefolo. “We were looking for a company seeking meaningful empowerment, not one that wanted to pay lip service to equity. We made the right decision – PMG is an organisation that truly understands what empowerment is and how it can be leveraged to make a real difference in society.”

In an effort to drive empowerment through targeted initiatives, PMG continues to offer intensive learnership programmes accredited by the Services SETA through the [PMG Training Academy](#), which was founded in 2015 by its [ProActive™](#) division. Graduates who complete the programmes successfully receive an NQF Level 4 FET Certificate. The Academy was

established in order to increase the skills level within the out-of-home and activations industry, making it easier for graduates to pursue a career in media, sales, marketing and communications. PMG frequently employs programme graduates within its various divisions, underlying its commitment to broadening empowerment within the workplace.

“For us, empowerment is not just about ownership structures. It’s about building the right kind of organisation – one that actively seeks to create jobs and work opportunities for previously disadvantaged people,” says PMG’s deputy CEO, Mzukisi Deliwe. “We observe that a lot of 100% black-owned media companies are extremely vocal about B-BBEE but focus only on the ownership issue and do very little about changing South African society. It is about committing to developing those sectors of society that require sustained and consistent support. Offering opportunities to a large constituency of black South Africans is what true empowerment is about – not simply enriching a few people. It’s an integral part of our transformation philosophy.”

The fact that PMG scored a total of 119.12 points on the B-BBEE Scorecard – more than the 100 points required to qualify for Level 1 status – is a clear indication of its commitment towards broad-based empowerment. Companies that choose PMG as a preferred supplier can not only rest assured that they are supporting ‘real’ broad-based empowerment – they are also entitled to claim - for their own scorecard - R1.35 for every rand spent with the company, due to its procurement recognition level of 135%.

Another example of PMG’s efforts to economically uplift previously disadvantaged people is its strategic partnership with [MTN](#), whereby it manages more than 2 000 sales agents across four provinces. These sales agents can sell airtime and data to consumers, connect their SIM cards, and port them to the MTN network. This allows the sales agents to earn sustainably while taking advantage of training and mentorship. In addition, PMG is currently employing 236 qualifying individuals as part of the MTN-steered YES4YOUTH programme, which provides individuals with extensive training and workplace experience – a step up to long-term employment.

“We have long been leaders when it comes to transformation in the OOH space,” says Deliwe. “Each initiative we become involved with further cements our reputation as an empowerment engine par excellence, driven to advance the economic interest of previously disadvantaged people across the board. We really want to make a measurable impact and, with transformation a key business imperative at PGM, we believe we can continue to achieve this.”

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