

The future is DOOH: The renaissance of the OOH industry

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The global advertising industry is currently experiencing a renaissance in the out of home (OOH) media arena - or rather the digital OOH space, to be specific - and while Covid-19 may not be the sole instigator, it has certainly been the accelerator.

The numbers don't lie. According to a December 2020 [report](#) by global media investment and intelligence company Magna, DOOH was found to be making the loudest boom in the digital media explosion, with an expected increase of 14% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) between 2022–2025; pegging it far ahead of the anticipated growth of other mediums such as mobile, video and social media. This juxtaposes the expected declines in competitor mediums, such as radio, TV, newspaper and magazines.

As for the African market, PWC's Insights from the Entertainment and Media Outlook [report](#) (2019–2023) states that by 2023, 45% of all OOH bookings will be for digital inventory - an increase of 33% from 2018.





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In an uncertain new world where whole industries can be shut down, borders can close and products can be banned with a single presidential address, it is no surprise that advertisers are desperately seeking channels that allow them the flexibility to adjust campaigns at a moment's notice – and DOOH is the solution they're looking for.

Historically, data has not been as readily available in the OOH space as with other advertising mediums. OOH has typically been a fairly complex medium to book with its myriad of locations, creative sizes and oftentimes laborious planning and booking process. Added to this, is that for a long time the industry was chugging along without audience figures or footfall counts, and if you consider how other mediums are bought, this put us at a significant disadvantage as we were not able to present accurate or compelling data to our clients. The first sign that things had started to shift was the introduction of the Out of Home Measurement Council (OMC), a non-profit joint industry committee that provides OOH buyers with a currency and survey that allows for efficient and accurate media planning. Since then, the demand for data has grown, and the rise of DOOH has made it that much easier to access, breaking down many of these barriers that advertisers used to face when investing in OOH.

With the global debate around advertising fraud in the traditional digital space, advertisers need full confidence that their ad spend is not only reaching the right consumer, but that their adverts are being seen by the very audiences that they are paying to have access to. The entire media industry is being reviewed and OOH is not exempt from this scrutiny, and thus we've had to adapt to remain relevant, by investing in new data verification data metrics that will establish greater trust with our clients.

And so we're seeing DOOH level up even further. Through leveraging new technologies, we're now able to offer advertisers increased accuracy, automation, efficiency and measurement.

It's too easy to assume about our audiences, when the data could present a very different picture. Take lockdown as a prime example. Previously, it was assumed that business decision makers were mostly to be found in places such as airports or central business hubs. However, thanks to real time data, we saw that during lockdown, these decision makers were actually a lot more dispersed, as many were working remotely from far flung locations, where they had holiday

homes. This new pattern we've seen emerge drastically impacts our placements, and being able to inform clients of these types of trends is critical.

The fact that we, as an industry, are now able to justify and report on audiences is a great win. These tools ultimately help our sales teams do their jobs better, and provide more value to our clients. It's given them a competitive edge, which - in the current saturated market - is key.



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One new development in this arena that is set to change the game is the overlay of mobile data with DOOH. We're now able to observe and track devices that move in front of digital screens, making us privy to the locations that consumers frequent. Through accessing this data, an algorithm will then serve an advert for a competitive brand to the consumer when they are in sight of the targeted screen, and measure whether their behaviour was influenced.

Other new developments include the emergence of platforms that plug straight into DOOH networks, allowing brands to create campaigns in a fraction of the time that it typically used to take, thanks to automation. This, coupled with greater tracking features, allows a brand to be very targeted in who it wants to speak to. Campaign reporting is also moving into a real-time space; meaning that strategists are able to change the dynamics of the campaign, as new threats and opportunities emerge.

In the future, we can definitely expect to see more integration with other channels. That advert that you see on a DOOH screen will follow you onto your mobile phone or television. It's all about better data, refined targeting and increased integration, which allow for more holistic, results-driven campaigns.

It is critical that we don't underestimate the role of education in this paradigm shift.

In short, if we do not have an in-depth understanding of the benefits that technology can offer to our clients, we cannot expect them to buy into it. Constant learning and education are key. We need to lead our clients on this journey alongside us, if we want to see this category continue to grow.

About Tractor Outdoor:

Established almost two decades ago, Tractor Outdoor is a national Out of Home (OOH) media owner, which specialises in connecting brands to consumers through its network of traditional and digital inventory, as well as its transit networks and ambient platforms. Tractor Outdoor owns one of the largest Digital OOH networks in South Africa, and is a member of Outdoor Measurement Council (OMC), the Out of Home Media South Africa (OHMSA) and the Interactive Advertising Bureau South Africa (IAB SA).

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