

SA's biggest DOOH solar powered billboard is coming this February

On 1 February a solar-powered mega-format Digital Out of Home (DOOH) screen on Johannesburg's N1 highway will switch on. It will be the largest roadside LED in South Africa.



Image supplied. SA's largest roadside LED will be live at the beginning of February on Johannesburg's N1 highway

Bigger than two tennis courts, the property was specifically designed by Epic Outdoors to accept advertising and at 400m².

"The engineers' drawings have been approved and construction has begun", says Rene Hedley, director of Epic Outdoor.

"Digital installation has begun and N1 motorists will see the face of the building being dismantled and replaced with the new subframe. Once the 40 tech panels have been installed, Epic will begin populating them."

Catering for modern OOH creative techniques

The international-standard LED is a concept is similar to screens in London, New York, and Dubai, but those billboards target pedestrians predominantly. This is a massive roadside digital LED, on a bespoke building that has a run-up of more than 800m.

The LED screen is able to cater to all modern Out of Home (OOH) creative techniques, including deep motion and

anamorphic 3D. Additionally, the screen can be segmented into smaller panels allowing for the creative use of multiple simultaneous creative displays.

This is great for campaigns where brand and product appear together or collaborative campaigns, for example, a network provider and a cellular phone company. All the traditional OOH metrics are amplified by the combination of the size and positioning of this screen.

“It all adds up to a site with incredible impact. The site ticks every single box, it’s unique in the South African context,” says Hedley.

Impact Hedley explains, is the measure of how quickly or likely the audience is to receive the campaign message. “It can be created by relevance, timing, or in this instance by sheer scale of the advertising platform.

“It is inconceivable that anyone could ignore a screen of this size for the full duration of the 800m+ run-up, particularly as this stretch of highway is notorious for routinely being highly congested.

“The dominance of the site creates the impact, thereby virtually guaranteeing higher campaign awareness.



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Ben Harris 9 Jan 2023



The problems with the growth of OOH – and the solution

OOH advertising in South Africa is growing at a rapid rate. Since early 2020 approximately 200 new screens have been installed in SA taking the number of roadside LED’s to just under 500, with most being installed in Gauteng.

In 2023 it is set to explode, says Hedley. “You only have to look at what’s happening locally, and the increased adoption in the West - to see how this medium will continue to grow, and grow at an increasing rate within SA.

Whilst this growth is good for the industry, it raises issues that have up until recently not required attention: "

- With so much competition how do you ensure that your advertising campaign is seen?
- The ever-increasing frequency of load-shedding, and the consequential impact of screen downtime.

Sustainable energy sources

To combat the audience dilution that loadshedding creates, the site will be powered by a large solar farm, installed on the property behind the screen, and providing over 95% of all the screens energy requirements.

This is the first billboard of its type in South Africa to be powered by sustainable energy sources.

“The technology used is of the highest quality, and the board is able to operate very efficiently,” says Hedley.

The 830kw of power required per day will be supplied by 270 540-watt panels installed on the large field behind the property. The solar and battery farm is complete and will supply 95% of all energy needs (the billboard can draw power from Eskom when required).

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