# “IT’S ALL DONE WITH MIRRORS”

## A FEW REFLECTIONS ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEDIA INDUSTRY IN MZANSI 1992-2015

**OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR**

GORDON MULLER

# IT'S ALL DONE WITH MIRRORS

## REFLECTIONS ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEDIA INDUSTRY IN MZANSI 1992-2015

First Edition 2015

ISBN 978-0-620-67009-8

Published by Primedia Unlimited

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# FOREWORD

*When my long time friend and colleague Gordon Muller let me know that he was putting together a booklet that would highlight the journey of media through its most telling changes, it immediately piqued my interest and I wanted to be involved.*

*Gordon is well known as the author of 'Media Planning, Art or Science', which has been used as the prescribed text and reference point for a number of tertiary institutions including the IMM and the AAA School of Advertising. With the gravitas of his knowledge base I know that this publication will also have the benefit of being referred back to again and again, both for educational and day to day work reference points.*

*I started Primedia Unlimited back in September 2004 with just my industry contacts and my cellphone, and having been in the out of home and advertising industry for many years prior to that, media and its ever evolving state has always been close to my heart.*

*Similarly, an interest in education and research has always been on my radar. In my capacity as CEO of Primedia Unlimited, I made it a priority to get my team involved in the lecturing and mentoring of students at the Maharishi Institute, a pioneer of free tertiary education in South Africa. I believe that material such as Gordon's 'All Done with Mirrors' will be invaluable to this cause.*

*On the research front, last year Primedia Unlimited teamed up with GIBS (Gordon Institute of Business Science) to have a closer look at mall shopper behaviour, their intended and actual actions, and the factors that influence them in the last retail mile.  This year, the Primedia Unlimited team are conducting follow up research, which will be released later this year so keep an eye out for it.*

*All of these industry initiatives, the ongoing research, assisting tertiary institutions with study material and the analysis provided by professionals like Gordon are crucial to the advancement of media. Without constantly probing, questioning and sometimes going back in time in order to move forward, our media industry would not have made the advances that it has.*

*I applaud Gordon in his new offering to the industry which reads easily and I'm confident that many people who are or have been in this amazing industry of ours will want to go through it.*

*The wheel of time turns and change is inevitable but what's interesting to note is that many of today's industry issues are not that new. This is just one facet of media that's been highlighted here. It's crucial that we know where we have come from and where we are going from a media perspective. We're living in an extremely fluid media environment and the question is whether you're going to be swimming up-stream or getting caught in the current...*

***Ken Varejes***
***Founder of Primedia Unlimited***

# INTRODUCTION

*My appointment as a trainee media planner almost 40 years ago was founded on the basis of a speech I gave, which had been attended by the legendary media man Frank "FK" Muller. "If you can speak that much crap in public and get away with it" he commented, "then you'll probably do quite well in media".*

*Enthused as I was by the advertising industry's remarkable ability to discern such talent, recognition of which was lacking during my prior years as a schoolteacher, I duly arrived in Johannesburg. On my very first day, I asked what seemed the most sensible question for someone without any obvious qualification in advertising and media: other than the aforementioned ability to get away with talking crap of course.*

*"So what's media planning all about? What's the secret to creating great advertising campaigns?" I asked.*

*"It's All Done with Mirrors" came the singular reply.*

*On the day I was more than a little disappointed by the brevity of this insight. As a schoolteacher I had been hoping for something a little more comprehensive, like a manual, but the wisdom of that observation began to dawn on me over the ensuing years. It's not about being right or wrong. There is rarely, if ever, a "correct" answer in media. "It's All Done with Mirrors". Change the angle of the mirror and you will get a different perspective. Hopefully a better perspective! Even if it means having to change your own perspective in order to get a better outcome for everyone: consumer, client and colleague alike.*

*With apologies to Charles Dickens, when I reflect on the media industry in the years since the 1992 referendum, I am not sure if it's been "the best of times or the worst of times: the age of wisdom or the age of foolishness". What I do know is that right now the media industry in South Africa seems to have lost perspective, or at least the desire to try and see things from somebody else's perspective.*

*Watching the various industry bodies each trying to carve out their piece of flesh from an industry which is rapidly devolving from its once privileged position as the ultimate instrument of social and commercial change into a deep-discounted procurement pacifier is lamentable. I'm reminded of The Economist reporting on the 2013 US Debt Crisis and noting that, "When you are brawling on the edge of a cliff, the big question is not, "Who is right?" It is, "What the hell are you doing on the edge of a cliff?"*

*This book aims to offer some insight into how we've got to the edge of a cliff.*

*With the wisdom of hindsight, some of words and phrases used in this selection of articles might be considered obsolete or even inappropriate in the context of a new South Africa, but I've left the writing largely untouched so that the reader can get a flavour of the language and terminology of the times as they were unfolding.*

*One thing I am sure of though, when I reflect on the media industry today, nobody will be writing a TV series about this generation and calling it "Mad Men". No doubt many new episodes are being written, but I suspect that they are more likely to be featured in a new series of Silicon Valley where, as the HBO blurb puts it, "the people most qualified to succeed are the least capable of handling success." Unlike the world of "Mad Men" where the people least qualified to succeed are the most capable of, if not handling success, then at least promising it to others.*

*But perhaps, as FK Muller said all those years ago, that really is just a question of perspective.*

# Radio and the Wizard of AMPS

## On the deregulation of the broadcast sector

Playing the role of crystal ball gazer in South Africa is a hazardous occupation at the best of times. The task is made all the more difficult for media planners when “The King” has the crystal ball (in the form of the Viljoen* Task Group) hidden in his royal robe and won’t let anybody lift the hem to take a peek. When it comes to radio, we haven’t needed the crystal ball until fairly recently. The degree of market regulation has retarded rapid or erratic market development and essentially, the *Wizard of AMPS* has told us all we needed to know. Radio planning has been fairly predictable.

Listenership to national radio stations continues to decline relative to regional stations and the demand for niche marketing underwrites this trend. Obviously in this respect the Nguni-Sotho service is not a national station, but rather an agglomeration of regional entities.

*“in the 90s we are going to have to think in terms of local or community radio which means de-regulation on a wide scale.”*

What do regional stations know that the nationals don’t? They know a bit about computer technology for a start and particularly the phrase “user friendly”. They know that listeners generally prefer prizes to poetry. They also understand that for many people, the biggest attraction of radio is the opportunity to offload onto the nation those wacky points of view that even family and friends are not prepared to listen to.

Thus far we have viewed radio in terms of the terminology, which we inherited from the SABC i.e. regional or national radio. In the 90s we are going to have to think in terms of local or community radio, which means de-regulation on a wide scale.

Radio has for a long time been the “Spook”** in the South African media mix. Like “Spook”, radio has been incarcerated by the very broadcast legislation which sought to protect it and consequently, radio has not been allowed to develop at the same pace as the market. Unlike “Spook”, radio has not exactly been fed on swill but it is still relatively underinvested. Only 11,2% of national adspend is invested in radio. This is low relative to

* The Viljoen Task Group, headed by SABC Chairman Christo Viljoen was appointed in March 1990 to define the parameters of a new Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

** A reference to a character in Vyfster, an award winning Afrikaans TV series in the 80s.

countries such as Mexico, where similar patterns of massive urban sprawl and low levels of literacy are endemic. In Mexico, 16 percent of adspend goes to radio.

In the New South Africa WTMB* (with apologies to the Natal Mercury Idler) radio will play an increasingly important role, provided the medium is allowed to anticipate and react to consumer needs and desires. Whatever restrictions are placed on the growth of radio in the future, they will not be restrictions contrived by listeners or advertisers, but by those who table the legislation which controls the industry.

There has never been a better time to move toward a de-regulated free market economy and, in advertising terms, radio can lead the way.

The real heroes of 1991 have been, for a change, not pop stars or Hollywood legends. The superstar of 1991 wasn't Boris Becker, it was Boris Yeltsin. Are there any Russian leaders down at the "King's Palace" in Awkward Park?

Right now your guess is as good as mine. So for the moment, it's back to the history books and the Wizard of AMPS.

* Wherever That May Be. A reference to the Natal Mercury Idler column which always referred to Ladysmith in the then Natal as Ladysmith WTMB.

**January 1992 – The Gordon Muller Column: SABC Activate**

**On the launch of Reaching Critical Mass 2**



# Critical Message or Critical Massage?

Despite the congratulations and fanfare surrounding the launch of the latest *Reaching Critical Mass*** report, one can't help thinking that the *Critical Mass* study is a monument to the fact that local advertising planners have reached the point where they are reluctant to make even the most rudimentary decisions without the reassuring massage of media research. What does *Critical Mass* really tell us?

Black consumers, including black radio listeners, are generally more proficient in their own home language than they are in any other language.

Well of course they are. Afrikaans speakers are generally more proficient in Afrikaans and English speakers are more proficient in the use of English. We could probably take a quantum leap and say the same applies to the Greek and Portuguese speaking communities. But have we really got to the point where we actually need research to tell us this?

Don't get me wrong. I'm not knocking the study, only the fact that we needed it in the first place.

** Radio The Outer Limits and Reaching Critical Mass was a series of research reports published by the SABC to highlight the contribution of radio to the media mix in South Africa.

There is a great deal more to the study. An analysis of the micro data reveals all the interesting bits. Perhaps one of the most challenging areas is the apparently low comprehension of non-ethnic radio in urban areas. Critical Mass challenges the widespread assumption that the whole urban market is comfortable with the English language. This does not undermine the growing role of English radio in urban areas but it is a challenge to copywriters to descend from their ivory towers and create commercials in the idiom of the new urban market.

Of course, we must bear in mind that saying that something is not "easy to understand", is not the same as saying, "I don't understand it". Add to this the aspirational element of "I want to understand it" and you may well have a different picture. A picture which begins to explain the phenomenal success of Radio Metro.

It is intriguing that despite *Critical Mass 2* the SABC is leading the charge in the urban market with Radio Metro, rather than an ethnic station. Certainly the continued success of Metro would seem to contradict the broad message of Critical Mass 2, and if we think in terms of a Radio5/ Radio Metro combination and its potential for reaching the youth market, we may just have discovered the golden media buy of 1992.

> *"It is a challenge to copywriters to descend their ivory towers and create commercials in the idiom of the new urban market."*

The success of Radio Metro is not that contradictory though. It is a reminder that the English of Alex and Soweto is not necessarily the English of Parktown and Sandton; that the mellow mood of Mesh Mapethla is not the same laid back prattle of Paddy O'Byrne. You don't have to be vernacular to be user-friendly.

A final word on numbers. The numbers are in themselves irrelevant. It is the people they represent and the relationships those people have with the medium that is important. We need to get to know the people we are communicating with and understand their media habits. Research can facilitate this process. A sort of "paint by numbers" guide to media planning. It should however, never replace the real people.

**January 1992 - The Gordon Muller Column: SABC Activate**

## Radio and the Referendum Blues

March 1992 saw South Africa embarking on what was hopefully the final phase of its transition to mature nationhood. In only the third referendum in South African history, white voters went to the polls in unprecedented numbers to make their mark on history.

Though there has been much debate surrounding the content of the several campaigns, few would contest that mass media played an overwhelming role in motivating people to participate in the democratic process.

The campaign was run almost exclusively in newspaper for two reasons. White household penetration of newspapers is high, and secondly, SABC was not prepared to carry political advertising. Whilst this decision is understandable and not necessarily a hindrance in an "all-white" election, we must all bear in mind that we have participated in what has been billed as "the last all-white election".

South Africa is in the chrysalis of enormous social change and the national broadcaster will have to review its participatory role in this process. Both Critical Mass and AMPS confirm the vast number of South Africans who cannot be reached by any medium other than radio. Newspaper will be totally inadequate as the primary medium for future political campaigning.

If we are to truly open the doors to democratic participation radio is going to have to play a central role. Not only in terms of non-partisan educational programming on the key principles of democracy but by allowing all political parties access to the airwaves. The principle has already been conceded in terms of highly constructive radio interviews and debates, so there seems little reason why it should not be extended to commercial broadcasts.

> ***"If we are to truly open the doors to democratic participation radio is going to have to play a central role."***

It goes far beyond the number of people being reached though. The Critical Mass studies take it one step further. For millions of black South Africans no other medium is "as easy to understand" as radio, particularly vernacular radio. No other medium "keeps you in touch with what other blacks are doing" and "let's you know what is happening in urban areas" like radio does.

In short no other medium has the power to influence like radio and consequently access to the airwaves is central to the issue. In the past referendum both the English independent and radio stations accepted commercial political broadcasts. Further de-regulation will alleviate the problem but until this happens, I believe that the national broadcaster is going to have to re-evaluate its perception of it role and "responsibility to the people".

The power of radio to effect the political affiliations of South Africans is cast. It cannot be ignored or underestimated. Despite all the hype surrounding the referendum print ads, some of the most effect (and creative) advertising was run on radio.

Radio's impact on the referendum was limited only by its relative inaccessibility.

**April 1992 - The Gordon Muller Column: SABC Radio Activate**

## Delivering on Demand or Stand and Deliver?

**On the issue of "Prime-time" bidding***

The emergence of "bidding" in recent weeks has all the potential for yet another surge in "demand driven" rates. I would view any shift to "bidding" on commercial TV in South Africa with alarm, unless three criteria were fulfilled

- Remove the entrenched monopolies and allow free competition for the airwaves. Bidding only works in an open marketplace.
- Bidding should not be in camera where the only voice you can hear is the voice of the auctioneer.

In this instance, by decree, there is only one auctioneer in the land. He keeps putting up the price, but who are you bidding against and what is their bid?

- The quality of audience data is fundamental to setting bid parameters.

The majority of South Africa's TV audience is not even captured on the Peoplemeter database and our diaries are six months out of date.

There are other problems as well. The SABC's inability to sort out its contracts at such short notice for instance, and clients who want to check programme content on every spot rather than accepting AR levels. And of course agencies who struggle with computer software which, although dramatically improved, is far from state of the art.

I'm not against the "bid" system. Far from it in fact. Bidding represents the cutting edge of the TV buyer's commercial discipline.

I just question whether we, as an industry, are ready for it.

**July 1993 - Marketing Mix**

* In its July 1993 TV1 rate card SABC for the first time reflected no advertising rate for two prime time channels and bidding for commercial time on these channels remained open until immediately prior to broadcast.

# Watch out Nero! My fiddle is bigger than yours!

## On the emergence of independent media agencies

Whilst the media industry grapples furiously with its existential quest for self-recognition (I think my job title is "Media Expert" therefore I am one) is inclined to pose the question which Descartes and seemingly many media experts consider de rigueur - "who the hell is minding the store?"

The amount of energy which is being directed into the "integrated agency" versus the "media independent" debate exudes a certain Shakespearean irony and methinks the lady doth protest too much. Both of them. Surely both media options, the integrated agency media unit and the standalone media unit have a place in the industry? Not mutually exclusively but simultaneously. Each serving a particular set of unique client needs.

> *"Surely both media options, the integrated agency media unit and the standalone media unit have a place in the industry?"*

Whilst the debate rages, the various players jockey for position. The high ground has moved from buying power to specialist planning expertise and now seems to have come to rest against the issue of proprietary or agency commissioned research. No doubt such research has its place. It's the nature of all business ventures to seek competitive advantage. But ladies please. What about the knitting? In the face of prohibitive increases in the cost of research, a 0,5% advertising levy, unchanged since the Seventies, is expected to be the panacea for ever-increasing demands for information.

Black peoplemeter data is horrendously overdue. The diary, even the new AMPS main body integrated diary, is little more than useless as an aid to TV buying against black audiences. In the meantime, hundreds of millions of Rands continue to be invested in television without access to valid audience data. IBIS blames SAARF for the impasse and SAARF blames IBIS. SAARF and IBIS collectively blame the political situation and the MDC (Media Directors Circle), which is so hamstrung by competing self-interest, won't blame anybody lest it be accused of actually taking a stance on something.

The RPC (Readers per Copy) issue has never been satisfactorily resolved. Black magazine titles average over ten adult readers per copy.* Ten readers per copy? Really?

* In 2015 a schedule consisting of Drum, Bona & True Love has a combined Average Air Readership (AIR) of 8.6 million adults which equates to an average 35 readers per copy.

These are really crucial issues facing media executives in this country. Foundation issues which, if not firmly resolved, leave any secondary proprietary research looking like a house built on shifting sand.

Are these issues which the media industry should be manipulating for relative competitive advantage or are they not issues of such magnitude that they demand the collective efforts of our best media researchers? Media industry issues in fact. All this is of course very admirable. A quaint notion. Joint industry effort … hmmm? But how will we gain competitive advantage? How will we win new business without bespoke research? By simply making better use of the information that is available to all of us.

*"We will win new business by making better use of the information that is available to all of us, not by producing more information."*

Improving the quality of primary research and the technical skills of the people using it will provide the most meaningful playing field for quality competition. Not generating more research in order to secure competitive visibility.

It would be naïve to expect that the fires of change sweeping through the country could leave the advertising industry untouched. Indeed Viva the difference. Viva! It is nevertheless disturbing to witness, in the absence of a Nero, the endless stream of media gurus beating each other over the head with their fiddles, all in a self-indulgent effort to secure pole-position on the balcony.

August 1993 - Saatchi & Saatchi MediaFact

## The New Broadcast Dispensation - Where's Wally?

### On the proposed privatization of SABC

It's always intriguing to observe the passion of the newly converted, particularly in their efforts to embrace the politically correct. Witness the steady flow of Honourable Members of Parliament as they surged across the floor in an altruistic attempt to make public their conversion to more noble ideals and coincidently, preserve their pensions.

As we, impassioned democrats all, rally to the cry of "alas poor Nelson I knew him well", or "honestly doll my maid's more like a sister to me", one can't help wondering where all the bad guys went.

Where are all the people who actively fought to maintain the broadcast status quo for more years than most of us have been around the advertising industry? Where were the people (who for years told the industry that we couldn't have competing radio stations on FM because the spectrum was full) when the minister handed out a baker's dozen FM signals?

That the broadcast charabanc is in desperate need of a major overhaul does not enter the debate. At its broadest level the IBA (Independent Broadcast Authority) three tier structure (Private: Public: Community) seems to have within it the seeds of the solution. The only debate centres around who gets to drive the car once it's roadworthy again?

In recent years the SABC has made much of its restructuring along business lines. Undoubtedly much has been achieved but this new-found commercial success does not, in itself, constitute an argument for privatisation of the SABC. Or worse still, privatisation of the juicy bits like Radio Metro or 5FM. The so-called commercially viable stations.



This recent commercial success of the SABC has been achieved under controlled market conditions. For example, criticism of massive rate increases in recent years has been refuted on the basis that rates have been "demand driven". What is being ignored is the simple fact that the natural laws of supply and demand do operate where a monopoly exists over the supply channel.

Why now the haste to privatise? From whence this deep commitment to the tenets of the free markets system which will ensure that a future Public Broacaster will not compete with the private sector? Where's Wally?

To a very large degree the SABC is a national asset, built with national funds. The fact that some of the components of the public broadcaster are running profitably does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that they should be sold off.

Who will be the recipient of this largesse even if it is sold off at market rate?

One of the greatest challenges facing a new PBA (Public Broadcasting Authority) will be funding. The IBA specifically recognises the need for such a PBA to run along commercial lines. In order to do this without resorting exclusively to licensing and other unpopular public funding measures such as levies on electricity, it is necessary that the SABC retain its profit centres.

If the playing fields are to be levelled, these commercially viable stations could be operated as business units (as they are now) paying market related rates for SABC facilities such as Sentech and ProSport, or even marketing and administration. It follows that these facilities would be made available to all other broadcasters, at equitable rates, whether they be private or community focused.

Profits (and there need be no embarrassment about the use of the P-Word) from these SABC/Public Broadcaster owned commercially viable stations would need to be repatriated to the shareholders. Who are the shareholders? The taxpayers who built the SABC in the first place. How will this be facilitated? Through better programming and lower licence/public-funding options.

Ultimately the success of any station will depend on programming, not whether it is privately or publicly owned. It is viewers and listeners who will decide whether stations are viable or not.

There does, however, seem to be an alarming perception that public broadcast will become the exclusive domain of education and cultural programming (propaganda?) and that only private broadcasters will be allowed to offer their public, probably concentrated in "commercially viable" metropolitan areas, any real entertainment. This perception needs to be rectified before terminal boredom ravages the platteland.

Public broadcast should not mean suffocation, but social upliftment.

In order to remain viable, commercially or publicly, the SABC must be competitive. It must be allowed to compete on an equal footing with commercial stations for audience.

If the SABC does not compete, or does not have sufficient funding to compete, audiences will gravitate exclusively to private broadcasters. Broadcasters who know enough about marketing to give people what they want, not what some central authority deems necessary as part of a process of corrective action.

> "*It is viewers and listeners who will decide whether stations are viable or not.*"

In this scenario, two things will happen. Advertising rates will rocket as marketers pursue these audiences not firmly concentrated in the hands of a few private broadcasters and Public Broadcast will find itself in a spiral of futility, broadcasting the "good news" to declining and disinterested audiences.

Given the priorities of an incoming government in terms of housing and other capital projects, we need a commercially viable public broadcaster. Central funding and provocative public funding schemes (such as a levy on electricity) will not produce sufficient revenue to extend the footprint to all sectors of the community. That is, a quality footprint which serves all the needs our population. Including the need to be entertained.

Programme sales or the leasing of technological and marketing skills will not bridge the gap. Only good programming can do it. Good programming means good audiences. Good audiences mean commercial viability and competition. There should be only one outright winner in the new broadcast dispensation. The South African public. Not commercial interest and not the SABC or its replacement in name.

And certainly not Wally!

**April 1994 - The Gordon Muller Column: SABC Radio Activate**

# Somewhere over the Rainbow

**Does the "Rainbow Nation" that is the New South Africa hold a pot of gold at its end for advertisers?**

On the occasion of his inauguration, the State President elect Nelson Mandela, referred to South Africa as the "Rainbow Nation", at peace with itself and the world. The concept of the Rainbow Nation captured the imagination of the wider South African population and, on a macro scale, provided a rallying cry for a people seeking to mould a new identity for themselves. On a more humble scale, the phrase also reflects the efforts of advertisers and marketers to find a functional research typology which gives credence to this rapidly increasing reality.

> *"Change in South Africa has led to the development of a new form of segmentation, the Living Standards Measure (LSM) model."*

Historically, market research in South Africa reflected the polarised nature of South African society. Communities were not just socially but geographically and even physically separated. Even now, data is in many instances collated and reported in terms of the four primary racial groupings, Indian, white, coloured and black. As a consequence of this, much of the media activity and much of the media research which facilitated this level of decision-making was focused on each community in isolation.

Change in South Africa has led to the development of a new form of segmentation, the Living Standards Measure (LSM) model: for the first time exploring, not the differences between consumers, but rather those lifestyle criteria which they have in common and which provide the key to shared purchase predisposition.

The typology ranges from the *Rural Traditionalists* in LSM1 (rural communities living a traditional subsistence lifestyle), across the broad emerging market (many in transition, both geographically and intellectually, from a traditional rural society to a sophisticated urban lifestyle) through to *Progressive Affluents* in LSM 8 (the traditional concentration of wealth and buying power).

Within this model however, there are points of consumer divergence as well as points of convergence. Consumption of clear carbonated beer is a point of convergence but consumption of traditionally brewed sorghum beer is not. Skin lightening creams are a clear point of divergence.

At first glance, both radio listenership and TV viewership may be considered points of convergence. Everybody listens to radio and increasingly all segments of the TV viewing public are enthralled by the slickness of American soaps and sitcoms. Closer analysis refutes this observation and, most often, the catalyst which fuels this divergence is language. Not just language as in the spoken word, but language as the primary manifestation of cultural diversity.

Ethnic radio, broadcasting in nine* major black languages, of which Zulu is the most widely spoken, is the only medium which gives any significant coverage of the LSM1-4 band. On the other hand English and Afrikaans radio stations find little appeal outside the LSM 6-8 band: SuperGroup A – *The Established Achievers*. The other SuperGroups (SG) being SGB (LSM 3-4) – *The Emerging Market* and SGC (LSM 1-2) – *The Less Privileged*.

On television, MNet and TV1, broadcasting in English and Afrikaans, exhibit the same inability to penetrate the Emerging Market. This band is dominated by CCV the only commercial TV station to include ethnic vernacular languages in its broadcast format.

In a country where, in recent years, facilitating dramatic change has become something of a national pastime, 1995 is set to become yet another watershed year for the broadcast industry. The newly formed Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA) will now operate independently of government in the granting of radio and TV licences to, not only private sector, but also the national broadcaster SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation).

Balancing the needs of commercial viability and cultural diversity is probably the single biggest challenge to the IBA, as it seeks to redress the historical inadequacies of the local broadcast dispensation. At its broadest level, the IBA's proposed three-tier broadcast structure (Private Sector/ Public Broadcast/ Community) seems to have within it the seeds of the solution.

> “*Balancing the needs of commercial viability and cultural diversity is probably the single biggest challenge.*”

Radio, particularly vernacular radio, is the only medium along with outdoor, which effectively allows advertisers to reach the full spectrum of the market in South Africa. This is reflected in the relatively high level of radio adspend (13,4% up from 11,8% in 1992) and the fact that almost one-third of this investment is on vernacular radio. The SABC has 90% share of this radio investment.

With respect to provision of radio services within the new dispensation then, the ongoing role of a PBS service (probably a reconstituted SABC) will be essential, providing not only a vital platform for communication to the lower end of the market but

* South Africa has 11 official languages. Afrikaans; English; Ndebele; Northern Sotho; Southern Sotho; Swati; Tsonga; Tswana; Venda; Xhosa; Zulu.

also to serve the new electorate as citizens of the New South Africa, not just as consumers.

This scenario will be balanced by the allocation of private broadcast licences for stations serving the needs of top-end advertisers. While most advertisers, particularly local retailers, would welcome creative regional niche opportunities in radio, this in turn has the potential to fragment audiences and make radio less cost efficient.

The current uncertainty is also making the task of media researchers virtually impossible. Radio listenership in South Africa is measured by the diary method, with two diaries being reported annually. This is already down from the quarterly publishing frequency maintained throughout the 1980s. These diaries are already proving themselves hard pressed to monitor the subtleties of change in existing radio stations. The imminent arrival of any number of new regional stations, and the reconstitution of existing stations in the latter part of 1995, will increasingly see radio planning being undertaken without access to reliable data.

As far as television is concerned, the complexity of the situation is further compounded by South Africa's impending entry into the borderless world of global communication and digital technology. Currently television viewers in South Africa are served by TV1, CCV, MNet (a privately owned subscriber station utilising an encoded terrestrial signal), NNTV (a non-commercial PBS station) and TV Bop (a small station formerly under control of the now defunct Bophuthatswana homeland government). In May 1995, the launch of Intelsat in geosynchronous orbit over the Southern Hemisphere could change all of this. Pending IBA intervention of course.

There are two crucial areas of potential development. A profusion of subscriber stations aimed at the affluent SuperGroup A generating increased niche opportunities but also creating further fragmentation of viewership and the inevitable decline in advertising cost-efficiency for mass marketers. Then there is the possible extension of the TV broadcast footprint to all segments of the population, including those communities in rural areas.

In their submission to the IBA, in which the SABC argues eloquently for its continued existence as the national PBS service, the SABC subscribes to several key principles of public broadcasting. One of these is the universal availability of services to the nation, both in terms of geographic coverage (signal distribution) and socio-economic accessibility (the capacity to actually receive those signals) in the home.

The potential extension of the TV signal to serve rural communities is probably the most intriguing development since television became commercial in 1978. Once again the question of language and culture will be of paramount importance. Television advertisers, who have come to expect a certain Euro-centric intellectual appeal in TV advertising, are going to have to come out of their ivory towers and get back to basics.

As with radio however, advertising research may well be unable to keep pace with such dramatic change. The Peoplemeter sample, only extended to black households in 1993, still excludes 60% of the adult population (Over three million viewers even before the extension of the current broadcast footprint). Current funding which maintains the SA Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) via a levy of 0,5% paid on all advertising, will be inadequate to cope with this change.

In 1994 the people of South Africa rewrote their own history books and on 27th April 1994 made a mockery of the crystal ball gazers who had made predictions of terminal gloom and doom in the transition to democracy.

While crystal ball gazing has never been a profession which held much potential in South Africa, advertisers and marketers have learned over the years to deal with one certainty. The certainty of change.

The broadcast industry in South Africa has changed and will continue to change over the next twelve months. Nobody, not even the architect of change itself, the IBA, knows how or by how much. And nobody knows, given the urgent priority placed by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) on housing, health and education, how much money will be made available to facilitate that change.

Marketers in South Africa will have to learn what Baden Powell learned in this country nearly 100 years ago and indeed a generation of boy scouts after him.

Be prepared. Whatever the eventuality.

**Marketing Director International - May 1994**



# Awkward Park and the IBA: His Master's Voice?

**It's time for the IBA to take the lead.**

The time honoured tradition of SABC bashing comes to most media decision makers in the South African market and let's face it, over the past 20 years Awkward Park's heavy handed bureaucracy and canine commitment to HMV (His Master's Voice) has done little to dispel the validity of this practice.

That the SABC should once again find itself in the firing line over the alarming decline in television viewership comes as no surprise to an industry which cautioned against the lack of consistency in the new TV programming line-up.

Despite this scenario however, much of the current wave of criticism directed towards the new SABC may well be washing up on the wrong shore entirely. The Broadcast Act of 1993 sets out very clearly the framework for restructuring the national broadcasting grid into three tiers: Commercial, Community and Public Broadcast. The new SABC has a clear mandate as a Public Broadcast Service (PBS).

Although there is a broad acceptance of the fact that a PBS may include an element of entertainment and that the viewing public need not necessarily be subjected to a lingering death by social and cultural upliftment, the SABC's mandate remains quite clear with respect to its responsibility to the broader South African public.

While a confusing multiplicity of languages, and the less than inspiring production values of some locally produced programmes, may prove an annoyance for well-heeled TV viewers, it is quite simply no longer the exclusive role of the SABC to generate the commercially viable audiences upon which advertising thrives.

> *"It is no longer the exclusive role of the SABC to generate the commercially viable audiences upon which advertising thrives."*

This is however small consolation for advertisers who look at the diminishing returns from TV advertising with intensifying alarm but their ire would be better directed elsewhere.

The Independent Broadcast Authority's (IBA) Herculean efforts at empire-building have so far surpassed any practical contribution they might have made to levelling the broadcast industry playing fields, and to timeously creating viable commercial alternatives to SABC TV.

The IBA's inability to make any kind of real impact on the restructuring of national TV broadcasting must bring into question the ongoing significance of this body*. The SABC's complete rejection of the IBA's recommendation that the national broadcaster be restricted to two channels, given credence by alarmingly vociferous backing at Cabinet level, has made it quite clear that "HMV" is still powering the national gramophone.

The IBA's sortie in the proposed regulation of satellite TV has proved equally ineffective. Multichoice and more recently, the SABC have irretrievably set the ball rolling in terms of satellite broadcast, despite the IBA's protestations. The decision of Bop Broadcasting to challenge the IBA, and the entire constitutional process in this country for that matter, and relaunch Bop TV as a viable commercial TV station is another case in point.

The IBA seems powerless, or unwilling, to take a leadership stance on the real issues facing the TV broadcast industry and, if its discussion paper on the allocation of private (commercial) radio licences is anything to go by, has replaced this crucial macro perspective with an apparent desire to regulate a wide range of commercial broadcast transactions, including inter alia the actual content of commercial messages and sponsorships.

* The Independent Communication Authority (ICASA) was established in 2000 to replace the IBA

Unless the IBA gets on with the real task of creating a viable and vibrant broadcast sector, as a commercial alternative to the SABC*, instead of trying to set itself up as some sort of rival to the Advertising Standards Authority, committed TV advertisers are going to be left with no alternative but to carry the cost of SABC's PBS programming.

* South Africa's first free-to-air commercial television was launched in October 1998

**June 1996 - Mail & Guardian**

# The Lone Ranger of Advertising

**An interview with Mag Focus**

» *What's keeping you busy?*

I'm doing a lot of media planning for clients and consulting on general management issues … so free floating management consultancy in ad agencies. Another component which I'm working really hard on is training. Advertising is a R4,5billion industry and thus far, commitment to training is virtually zero.

» *What prompted you to go it alone?*

I needed a bit of a change. I've been bogged down for a hell of a long time in a very focused environment. I promised myself when I left Saatchi' that, after 10 years of working hard, I'm actually going to work smart and work hard at the same time.

» *What do you miss from the big agency environment?*

Not a lot to be quite honest. If I were to miss anything, I suppose infrastructure is always handy. By the same token though, infrastructure is sometimes its own worst enemy because it lulls you into a sense of false security. If you don't have the infrastructure, one thing is for sure, you tend to get yourself into gear pretty quickly.

» *There seems to be a trend with people moving out of the media department and going out on their own?*

From a macro-perspective, intelligent people world-wide are reassessing the yoke and saying "The yoke is really crushing. I'm not sure I want to put up with this. I'm pretty smart, I work hard, so what's to stop me from doing it for myself?". More and more people are bailing out of corporate life. On a micro scale, I think you are finding that people in media departments have been confronted by exponential change. This has put an undue strain on media departments. The strain that they are carrying is quite simply not being matched by a commitment from management. People are exhausted. I've seen more exhausted people in the last two months than I've seen in the previous ten years. They are getting killed and they're saying "Stuff that, there is more to life than working 18 hours a day. Without thanks half the time".

» *Given the shortage of skilled media planners, would you say as a media professional you're in demand?*

Yes, if you assess the state of the industry right now. You know, a couple of years ago when affirmative action was just about getting people into the industry, you could stick anybody in a position and then abandon them. But affirmative action has gone way beyond that. It is about putting people into a position and getting them to do the job. Without training that doesn't happen.

» *How do you add value to your client's business?*

I think added value is an overworked term. I provide value for money. I like to say it is a case of "what you see is what you get and what you get is what you pay for". What they pay for is what's inside my head applied to their problems, so I think it's quite simple. I'm bloody good at what I do and I think I have a desire and the ability to express that in a way that people can relate to.

» *Do you do consulting at a client level?*

Definitely. A lot of people say there is no talent in our industry. All these young people, they don't know what they're doing. I think that's very wrong. There are actually some very intelligent, very sharp people coming in and I have to say that, pound for pound, the young people coming in today are a lot smarter, a lot sharper than I was at the same phase in my career. But they lack experience and they lack insight. And I think that is the same with brand managers. They're given terrible responsibilities with vast amounts of money and yet nobody, even if they've done a B Comm. degree, has covered media before.

» *Tell me more about your media book.*

The book came about because for the last couple of years we've been lecturing, but without a central text, the courses begin to kind of run away with themselves. By the time it gets to examining, you have no central focal point that you can examine students on. MASA debated this for a couple of years and naively, in October 1994, I undertook to write the book. It proved to be a much more difficult task than I had ever imagined. My respect for copywriters has gone up enormously.

» *Will there be more books?*

Yes. When I say it was hard work, it was. But I enjoyed it. I love writing. I'd love to spin off a book on each of the media types, getting even more focused. I also think it has re-kindled in me the desire to write a book that has no social relevance whatsoever but which is a little bit of fun and reminiscent of 20 years in advertising. I've always urged John Farquhar to write this book and I'm becoming alarmed by the fact that nobody has written it yet. So maybe I will end up writing the damn thing.

» *What are the main media trends now? And what's changed since last year?*

The main trend at the moment is complete utter confusion. Clients are getting tired of being told "we don't know what the hell is going on in the industry". It has been a severe embarrassment for agencies. Choice is going to become key in media planning to a far greater degree, which is going to shift emphasis into the buying areas.

» *Who at the end of the day makes the media decision?*

That is the million dollar question and if there was one answer to that question, I wouldn't tell you because I'd be selling the answer to you. But you've hit on the right question. My big thrust in training is really identifying the decision-maker. I think it varies. Some agencies are driven by creative departments and if the media department tries to provide input they are told to get stuffed. Other agencies are run by account service. The challenge is for the media sales person to find out which agency is being run by which bunch of people.

» *What do you like about magazines as an ad medium?*

Control. I think you are talking to people that you know. I don't really know who the hell I'm talking to on television half the time. I really don't. But if I pick up a magazine, I know precisely who I'm talking to.

» *What should media professionals be doing better?*

Let's talk about what management should be doing. They should be helping their media departments believe in themselves more. They should be creating a climate of confidence and self-assertion which says "under no circumstances do you have to play second fiddle to anybody at all". Remind the media department that they are advertising people first and media people second. If you don't get the first part of it, then you might as well not be in the game.

I've always said that the development of media agencies is a wonderful thing for advertising people who harbour a secret desire to work in the bank.

» *Media has often been accused of number-crunching and not really being in touch with the consumer. Do you think this is changing?*

Yes it is changing. But it's changing for the worse unfortunately. The problem lies in not allowing the media department to be part of the initial strategic decision-making process. One of the most important elements of this is the target market itself. If you hit the target market right, everything else will come right, but if you don't allow them to be involved in the process there is nothing left for them to do, except number crunch.

**MagFocus - November 1996**

# Media Planning - Art or Science?

## Introduction to 3rd Edition 2005

In a country as sports crazy as South Africa, the recent performance on the international stage of our national teams, whether they are Bafana Bafana, AmaBokoBoko or the Proteas should leave us all under no illusion about the rigours of being truly competitive global players. As South Africans we pride ourselves on our competitive edge. On our ability to go "head to head" with the best. We tell ourselves at every turn, and anybody who cares to listen, that we are world class. A world class tourist destination! World class wines! A cutting edge advertising and media environment. We enthusiastically celebrate and bear up as evidence of this fact an ever growing list of achievers. Charlize Theron's Oscar and Benni McCarthy's European Champions Medal for FC Porto. "Lou" Radebe captain of Leeds. Hendrik Ramaala winner of the New York Marathon. Olympic Golds for Roland Schoeman and Ryk Neethling and a Nobel Prize for J.M. Coetzee.

**"*Whatever knowledge you have gleaned today will, by tomorrow, be consigned to yesterday! And what you learn tomorrow will never be the final phase in the cycle of intellectual self enhancement and knowledge renewal.*"**

And in becoming a master craftsman, the most important thing to realise is, that whatever knowledge you have gleaned today will, by tomorrow, be consigned to yesterday! And that what you learn tomorrow will never be the final phase in the cycle of intellectual self enhancement and knowledge renewal.

Advertising is not a career choice. It's a lifestyle statement. It's a commitment to a lifelong study of the human condition and the appropriate marketing and communication response to that condition. Reading this book is not, in Churchill's word "the end" or even "the beginning of the end" of the learning cycle. It's the "end of the beginning". The first piece of Lego.

Mark Twain once observed that "the man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read at all". Whether *Media Planning - Art or Science*? qualifies as a Twainian "good book" is a moot point but what is not the substance of debate is the fact that if it remains, in the years to come, the only marketing and advertising building block on your personal library shelf, then you will never become a truly competitive global player in the media market. No matter how much you want to be!

As children, we all sat in the car pretending to drive to Durban but nobody wanted to be the one who got out to make sure the tyres were inflated and the petrol tank full. When we surf the Web, we only see the Website. It's like being in the Matrix. We don't realise that some nameless person has created the cyber illusion using the most basic information imaginable. We don't see the binary digital code string. We only see the big picture. The big picture is great, "don't sweat the small stuff" and all that, but we have to learn all the elements of our craft. Learn to master the basics before we demand to do the glamorous stuff. When Charlize collected her Oscar, she was asked to what she attributed her success. Her reply was "Discipline … I got spanked hard on the butt when I was a kid. I can't tell you how grateful I am for that". In advertising, you have to take the whacks if you want to stay on the tracks. Everyone wants to be the custodian of the big idea but nobody wants to bear the responsibility for the little ideas. For the baseline disciplines. For making sure audience delivery and budget deployment are optimal and ROI objectives are achieved.

> *"You do not have the right to your opinion in the commercial world, or indeed the world at large. You have a right to your "informed opinion."*

There is, of course, more to media planning than calculating GRPS and reading rate cards but unless you know how to actually do these foundation tasks, you cannot lay claim to being a master craftsman. As media professionals we don't always have to be the ones to come up with "the big idea". Every idea, every time! We also need to develop the disciplines that will help us recognise good ideas and apply them in a professional manner to a given set of marketing circumstances … irrespective of who thought of them. It's a matter of rights and responsibilities.

It's not what's printed on your business card that makes you a great advertising and media strategist but rather what is imprinted on your mind.

At the core of the success of South Africans on the worldwide stage lies the fact that they have met and surpassed not local, but international standards of performance. Increasingly, media decision makers in South Africa are discovering that they are cogs in a vast global communication wheel. Global branding means global media solutions, and is often accompanied by seemingly endless analysis and global reporting. Yes, sometimes that does mean global conformity at the expense of local nuance and creative insight but if that is the only game in town, then we have two options. Either we learn the rules of the game and meet the standards, or we demonstrate that our input is important and insightful. In fact, so important and insightful that it becomes irreplaceable and the global media community amends the rules to accommodate our point of view. Alters the benchmark standard! But here's the bottom line though … nobody ever shifts the benchmark standard downwards.

Arguably our nation's first-attempt triumphs at the World Cup Rugby in 1995 and African Cup of Nations the following year are collectively the worst thing that has ever happened to South African sport. They have lead us into the erroneous belief that all we have to do in order to be winners, is to just pitch up for the game. Our recent sports history has told a different story and it's not easy to listen to … let alone watch.

Madiba magic is just not enough anymore.

If we want to be world beaters then there is only one way to do it … by being better than the rest of the world. If we want to command the respect of our international opponents on the sports field and our global media colleagues and clients, then we have to do more than just show them the titles printed on our business cards. We need to show them that when it comes to media in South Africa and Africa, we know more than them. We need to show them that when it comes to investing advertising funds in this part of the world, there is no substitute for consulting professional media planners and strategists right here in Mzansi.

In South Africa, we have become so preoccupied with our own internal standards and the shape and composition of the local industry that we are very close to losing sight of the real performance issue, which is demonstrating our ability to deliver against increasingly demanding international standards of media planning and strategy. We don't have a right to be listened to when we protest that South Africa is different. That it's important to communicate in all the official languages of the country. That it's important to invest in a particular media sector on the basis of its shareholder structure. We have to prove to global clients that it is in their best interest, strategically and financially

> ***"Here's the bottom line - nobody ever shifts the benchmark standard downwards."***

> ***"Employment is not empowerment any more than buying a pair of running shoes makes you an athlete."***

and that nobody understands this process better than the media planners in South Africa.

It's just the first step that signals your intention. What empowers any individual in the commercial arena is the ability to do the job. What makes world class athletes is natural ability, guts and commitment. Funnily enough, that's pretty much what makes great media planners as well. Enjoy! Work hard! Succeed! Be the best … on any stage! But remember this. Unless you become the master of your craft and in so doing, become master of your own professional destiny, you will be relegated to the bench for all the big games that really count!

**January 2005**

# Is Juniorisation the Word?

**An Interview with *The Media***

» *Undercutting on fees or commissions is cited as a key reason for the shrinking margins of media agencies. What needs to happen before this negative cycle gets reversed?*

Agency margins have been squeezed for the past decade, so it's not a recent development. The problem is that media spend is all too often viewed as a marketing overhead rather than a positive contributor to positive marketing outcomes. We need to demonstrate that the real value is created by sound media planning and investment. To shift the emphasis from campaigns that work on our computers to ensuring that they work in the marketplace. Advertisers will pay for that reassurance.

» *It's been said that brand values are to be carried on corporate balance sheets. Is this happening? If so, are financial directors beginning to appreciate the worth of advertising as a budget item, and thus increasing market spend?*

I believe that most FDs and marketers would prefer to see their brands performing in real terms in the marketplace, rather than in notional terms on a balance sheet. As agencies we need to know how to calibrate the line between great advertising and ROI. Advertising used to be seen as a topline market catalyst not a bottom line marketing cost. As an industry we need to regain that high ground for marketers so they can convince their FDs of the efficacy of advertising.

» *You've been actively involved in education as a solution to "juniorisation" of media agency staff. But how does this help if good staff consistently get poached by media owners?*

"Juniorisation"? I love new words. The problem is that so few companies actually conduct training. If everybody trained there would be no need to poach. Of course there will always be exceptional performers and they will be poached. That's life. Ask Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho. When we start poaching mediocrity though, then we really are on a downward spiral. It's not "juniorisation" that's the problem in Mzansi. It's "mediocritisation"!

» *How do you see day after TV ratings (DAR) changing the face of the industry? Is it a bigger benefit to media owner or client?*

I'm intrigued that the debate seems to have boiled down to a client vs. media owner "celebrity death match". Who stands to benefit most? Clients and media owners alike. They don't necessarily have mutually exclusive expectations and outcomes from DAR. The real challenge is the one facing media agencies, which have to gear up to cope with the inevitable increase in servicing input. Agency margins are already cut to the bone and if it's going to be a "more for less" expectation from clients, then they will not get the benefit from DAR data. At the end of the day, you get what you pay for. These are operational issues though. As a planner, right now I am more concerned about the quality of the data. However frequently the data is made available, we must be reassured that it is reliable and robust. Good data means that everybody wins.



» *We're faced with more instances of media brokers in South Africa who are also media owners. Does this represent an untenable conflict of interest?*

It's an old adage that in uncovering intrigue a good newshound should always "follow the money". I don't blame media owners for wanting to sell their wares. They have businesses to run and shareholders to placate. What marketers should understand is that apart from expertise (mediocritisation notwithstanding), what media agencies offer is a solutions neutral perspective. Few media owners are able to distance themselves from their own product offering to that degree. What we as media agencies are chartered to do is to make sure that the media owner offering matches the client need at a fair price. We bat for the client team when the media owners are bowling.

Who are the media owners batting for when it's time for us to bowl? Follow the money!

**January 2006 - The Media**

# Which came first? Drive-time or the Jock?

**On the issue of drive time radio and available audience**

Any evaluation of the dynamics of drive-time delivery, particularly morning drive, must inevitably stumble against the old conundrum … Which came first? *Drive-time or the Jock?* In order to answer this, we need first to clarify the terms and their application.

Given the broader understanding of the term *Jock*, and the fact that a number of Jock Test websites have qualifying criteria such as "use words of one or two syllables regularly?" and "been embarrassed by your apparent lack of intelligence in public?", it's intriguing to reflect on just why it is that the elite vanguard of radio broadcasters still encourage the wearing of this particular badge of distinction.

On reflection though, the *Jock Test* also includes criteria such as "scratched your crotch in public ... even though it didn't itch?" and "compared genitalia with a member of the same sex?", and so, given the Schusteresque offering of many morning drive shows, perhaps, as a generalization, the term is not that far off the mark.

There are of course obvious exceptions to the *Jock* (if you scratch it they will come) method of audience outreach.

SAfm's AM Live, insightfully presented by John Perlman and Nikiwe Bikitsha, gives the latest breaking news, insight and analysis from across the country and around the world. 702's John Robbie might have been a *Jock* once upon a time but now he is an aggressive, no-holds-barred, talk show host.

So there is no universal definition of what constitutes a Jock and no common platform of delivery which is a guarantee of success in morning drive.

The term *drive-time* is also somewhat misleading, in that it implies a universal practice of listening to radio in the car. Interestingly though, if we examine the morning drive time habits of LSM1-2, where 99% of households don't have a car, and compare them with those of LSM10 households, where 99% do have



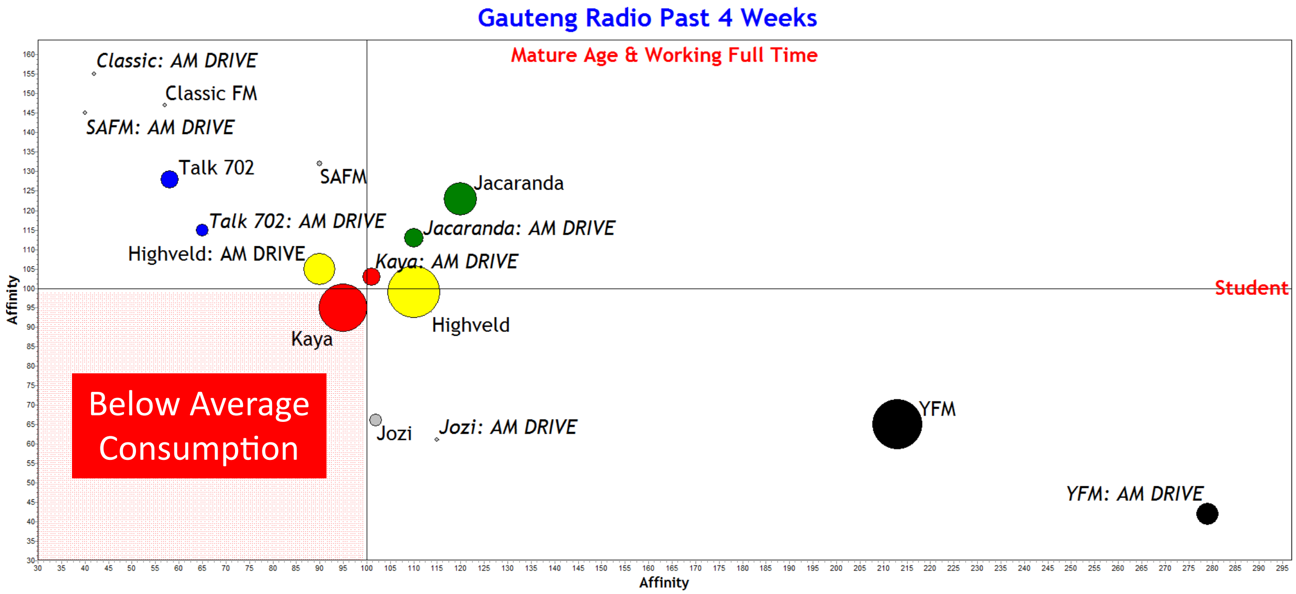



*Figure 1 Gauteng Radio Listenership P4W*

a car, there is no significant variation in the overall listenership pattern. The bottom line is that the overwhelming bulk of listenership to radio, over the time period often referred to as drive time, takes place in the home and not in the car. So if it's not the *Jock* and it's not the car, what does it come down to from a planning perspective?

The initial and primary planning decision in any radio campaign is the broad matching of the radio station to the target audience. If we map out radio listenership in Gauteng (Past 4 Weeks), on a *student: mature age (35+) working full time axis*, we can see two critical points ...

- Station listenership segment itself quite clearly in broad terms
- Drive-time listenership (06h00-09h00) within station does not differentiate itself markedly from the broad station positioning.

From the map we can see that YFM has a strong orientation to students, Classic FM offers the mature market and 94.7 sits somewhere in the middle. These are the hard core adherents to the station and to a large degree they subscribe to the station format, irrespective of the individual Jock. This, in

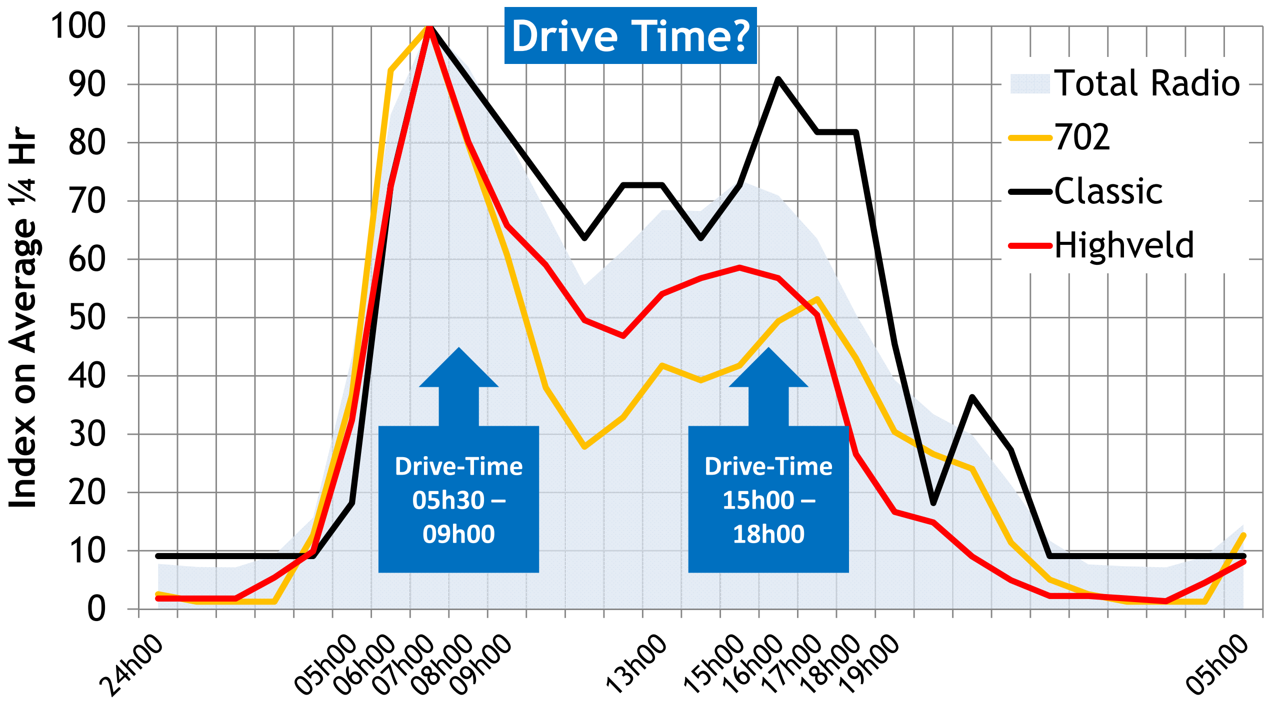



*Figure 2 Indexed Drive-time Listenership in Gauteng*

isolation, is what will whet the planner's appetite for investment.

Over and above these macro listener commitments, radio research also indicates distinct patterns of listenership across an average day.

These patterns are quite consistent across radio stations and determine what is referred to as the "available audience" or "available listenership" at any given point in time. Ultimately this average available audience determines the advertising rate which the planner will pay for commercial exposure at that time. At this point, within the broader positioning compatibility of the station, it's about the number of listeners at the right price.

It is however, in these micro variations that the planner can manipulate the cost efficiencies of rates and available audience and it is the planner's responsibility to assess the "fair price" against campaign delivery. So while YFM has the strongest station affinity and delivery against students, and morning-drive the highest audience yield against this market, it is clear that afternoons also provide a viable communication platform. There is even a mini-peak in the late evening.

The cost implications? Morning drive delivers at a CPP of R496. Afternoon drive at R470, and late evening at R244. Late night exposure is in fact 100% more cost efficient than drive time.

So what's the bottom line? What's the answer to the question of W*ho came first? The Jock or the audience?*

The bottom line is that irrespective of who anchors the morning drive on any radio station, there will be an audience and that audience will be larger than the afternoon audience, or indeed any audience on that station. Every programme, and every *Jock*, is a viable platform, provided they remain within the overall station positioning. Provided they mirror the station's branded promise.

Sorry for you guys but here it is.

It doesn't really matter that Pabi, Thato and Macfarlane anchor the YD Awake show in the mornings and Chilli M and Dineo the Essential Rush in the afternoons. Swop them around and nothing significant will happen. Each show will pick up some new listeners who love the new vibe, and lose some disenchanted listeners who resent the change. But the core will not change because they buy into the station delivery platform.

On the other hand, give John Perlman the mike at the Rude Awakening, stick Jeremy on Classic and give Tony Blewitt a shot at the YD Awake Show and you'll have a riot on your hands. It's all about mirroring the brand image. Few if any media planners attach their brands to a *Jock* personality. They buy the station positioning and they pay for the listeners.

**April 2006 - The Media**

# AMASA: An AMF viewpoint on the future

The formal adoption of the Marketing, Advertising and Communication (MAC) Charter and the impending formation of the MAC Charter Council sometime in 2006, heralds a new era in the evolution of the South African advertising industry.

Central to compliance with the MAC Charter is Skills Development, accounting for 10% of the overall transformation weighting. Indeed, beyond normal compliance with the letter of the MAC Charter, without urgent and ongoing skills transference there can be no functional transformation at the coal face. To this melange must be added the complexity of the industry interface with the formal requirements of the MAPPP Seta and SAQA, in the setting of educational standards and course development, particularly structured learnerships.



Against this backdrop, it is no quantum leap to the realisation that it is an increasingly unrealistic expectation that a part-time committee, or collection of committees, can, with the best will in the world, plan and execute the training vision for the entire media industry. If we consider the wide range of representative bodies that have an active interest in the upliftment of South African media industry standards, and who are themselves signatories to the MAC Charter (bodies such as the ACA, AMF, OHMSA, PRISA, SAARF and the MAPP Seta itself), there seems to be a strong case for consolidation of interests under one expanded umbrella body. A kind of Super-AMASA which could interface with the Mac Charter Council on the practical implementation of skills development, across all industry sectors.

In heralding the achievements of AMASA over the past 40 years or so, the AMF ponders whether the time has not arrived to elevate this body onto a broader and even more significant platform with a permanent executive and secretariat, funded by the industry as the torch bearer for MAC Charter skills development.

**May 2006 - The Media**

# Massive jump in SABC ad rates blamed on X-factor

**On the issue of SABC price hikes**

It has long been advertising folklore that the SABC boardroom at Auckland Park was originally orientated so that it would be possible to make out the Voortrekker Monument looming on the Northern horizon.

The SABC of today might welcome the Gauteng haze which filters out that particular perspective, but an evaluation of their projected rate increases for the fourth quarter of 2007 leaves those media planners who have lived through the recent changes with a strong sense of déjà vu.

Thirty years ago there were massive restrictions on the availability of commercial time on TV and advertising rates were rarely challenged. TV advertising spots were cautiously dispensed by the SABC using a three-dose prescription.

» *Market Share % + Advertising Share of Voice + Factor X = Number of spots allocated.*

Debates about the fair allocation of TV spots abounded at the time. Discrepancies in allocation were explained away by the SABC with reference to the mysterious X-factor. Only years after the system of allocation was overtaken by the growth in commercial TV availability did it emerge that the X-Factor was actually a pseudonym for "at the SABC's discretion". In other words, they pretty much did what they wanted.

Analyses of the projected rates for the balance of 2007 leaves media planners with little option but to conclude, once again, that the X-Factor is playing a significant role in SABC TV's commercial practice,

For the period 2002/2006, linked to the growing penetration of TV sets into the lower end of the market and the subsequent growth in TV viewership (particularly vernacular programming), the SABC restricted real inflation (rates charged in relation to total adult audience delivered) to 14% across its three stations. A pretty sound performance compared to eTV (12%) and M-Net (26%).

The release in April of the SABC's "long term rate card" covering the final six months of 2007 has, however, set alarm bells ringing among advertisers.

Projections of Q3 and Q4 based on the "long term rate card" show an average anticipated year-on-year rate increase of 40-50%. In some key programming environments, particularly "day-after-repeats" which have always provided a platform for affordable exposure, year-on-year rate increases reach 100% and beyond. Days of Our Lives, a popular soap opera on SABC3 has an average YOY increase of 120% in the six-month build up to Christmas.

Working on the assumption that making long-term forward budget commitments is something that is normally rewarded by media owners in the form of lower rates or added value incentives, it is alarming to consider that these rates increases may well represent the SABC's "sweetened apple" scenario.

An additional concern is the prospect that eTV might be tempted to fly its own rate increases just far enough below the SABC radar setting to avoid detection. Indeed, year-on-year predictions for eTV indicate rate inflation of around 39% for the back end of 2007, although projected real (audience-linked) inflation should sit at around 19% due the steady growth in viewership on eTV in recent months.

Against the backdrop of Millward Brown findings that average noting for TVCs has declined by over 40% in the LSM A segment over the past two decades, rate increases of this magnitude must raise serious questions in the minds of media strategists about the traditional role of TV as a medium. Certainly advertisers and their agencies are viewing these developments with growing alarm and key media industry bodies, such as the Advertising Media Forum, have already held meetings with marketers and the SABC to try and resolve what has the potential to become a significant crisis.

While it is too early to think in terms of collective punitive action by the advertising industry, this is an issue on which the advertisers and the media agencies agree. Rate increases of this magnitude go beyond reasonable recovery of increased cost-to-market overheads and leave advertisers feeling a little bit like the udders on the cash cow. One can only ponder the advertising industry's response if newspapers or magazines attempted to pass on such massive increases in advertising rates, rather than the single-digit inflation that characterizes that media sector.

> *"Rate increases of this magnitude go beyond reasonable recovery of increased cost-to-market overheads and leave advertisers feeling a little bit like the udders on the cash cow."*



In March this year the Competitions Tribunal found Mittal Steel guilty of abusing its dominant market position by charging excessive prices for flat steel products. The Tribunal found that Mittal was "no mere dominant firm" but "super dominant" and "for all intents and purposes an uncontested firm in an uncontestable market".

Given the SABC's "super dominance" in the lower LSM market segments, it may be argued that the same finding could apply in this instance.

One technical explanation for the massive rate increases may well lie in the manipulation, deliberate or otherwise, of data from the recently expanded TAMS (TV Audience Measure) Peoplemeter sample which, for the first time, reports on the viewing habits of some five million viewers from the lower LSM groups. The argument that these "new" or "additional" viewers could justify the rate increase is fatuous.

These viewers have always been there and their presence has been factored into TV audience and rate calculations for more than a decade. Trying to charge advertisers for these "new" viewers is a little like claiming that David Livingstone discovered Victoria Falls and then setting up a turnstile to charge the locals an entrance fee.

It certainly has more than a little of the X-Factor about it as well.

**April 2007 - Business Times**

# Never Mind the Quality - Feel the Width

## Getting more for less or just getting less?

When it comes to making the marketing rand stretch further commentators would not be far off the mark were they to observe that, like economists, many media agencies are in acute danger of knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing.

In mitigation of course, agencies would point out that client ROMI (return on media investment) expectations increasingly mandate the view that cheaper media exposure should be the primary outcome of any negotiation with media owners. The bigger the discount, the better the buy!

The starting point for any media negotiation, though, must be the campaign objectives themselves.

*"The starting point for any media negotiation, though, must be the campaign objectives themselves."*

When you need a drink of water in the middle of the desert, getting a discount on a bag of dried dates from a passing Bedouin suggests an admirable eye for a bargain, but doesn't really offer the best long term resolution to your dilemma. In the same way, getting a 25% discount for a FPFC in the Sunday press will add little to your in-market campaign outcome, if you should have really been running radio commercials on youth radio or blogging on Facebook and Flickr.

That strategy should dictate inter-media placement is rarely contested. As McLuhan observed *the medium is the message*. But he didn't stop there. He further directed that t*he content of any medium is always another medium*.

This latter insight drives the intra-media decision which is now the heart of the media plan. It defines the live touch-points where the consumer and the message intersect. Incredibly, 84% of information movement on the web involves UGC uploads rather than downloads. In the digital age, as the consumer, I am the medium and I will determine, when and how I want to be reached.

So why is this critical aspect of the media campaign so often dismissed as a buying issue? The marketing industry's decades long infatuation with big campaigns has led them to conclude that it is all about "reaching more people". "Don't bother me with the detailed schedule, just tell me how much money we saved". Or as Manny Cohen quipped in that iconic 60's British TV series set in the rag trade, "never mind the quality mate, feel the width".

This is not to say that discounts and cost efficiency should be dismissed. Indeed, media agencies have rewritten the bottom line on media savings. Ultimately though, buying media space is just another form of cost benefit analysis, no different from any other procurement process. Aggregating budgets facilitates volume discounts. Managing discount catalysts, such as year-on-year growth and percentage investment on schedule, will yield favourable incentives. Pegging adspend against guaranteed audience delivery and even waving the big stick works on occasion. Ask the SABC about their embarrassing recent turnaround on TV rates.

At the end of the day, you run the numbers and if you get more for less, you go with it.

The question remains though. “More *what* for less”? If the answer is quality, you’ve got a good deal.

If the answer is more nominal, disconnected exposure, then all you really got for your negotiation is “Less for Less”. And not even Manny Cohen would buy that one.

**May 2008 -The Media**

# Who moved my Black Diamonds?



## The Case for 14 LSMs

The media industry’s apparent *laissez faire* attitude to the de facto evolution from 10 LSMs to the 14 LSM model released in AMPS 2008, is either a measure of its complete disenchantment with LSMs generally or of an irrational desire to cling onto a 10 segment model which has been increasingly disconnected from the reality of developments in the South African marketplace.

Aldous Huxley once observed that “the only thing we learn from history is that nobody has learned a thing from history”. In the brave new world that is the constantly evolving South African advertising marketplace, we need to revisit history in order to understand the significance of this latest development in the LSM model.

The realisation in 1997, that the original 8 LSM model was no longer sensitive enough to differentiate the increasingly complex media and product consumption patterns of upper middle class and top end consumers, lead to the initial recalibration of the original LSM7 and LSM8 segments. These segments were split into LSM7 Low/ LSM7 High and LSM8 Low/ LSM8 High. In so doing, LSM7 and LSM8 were effectively reduced to a dull sepia composite of their constituent subsets. It is important to note that these classifications were not based on fundamentally new criteria, but a statistical re-iteration of the existing LSM criteria and as such, all they represented was a different shade on the same LSM spectrum.

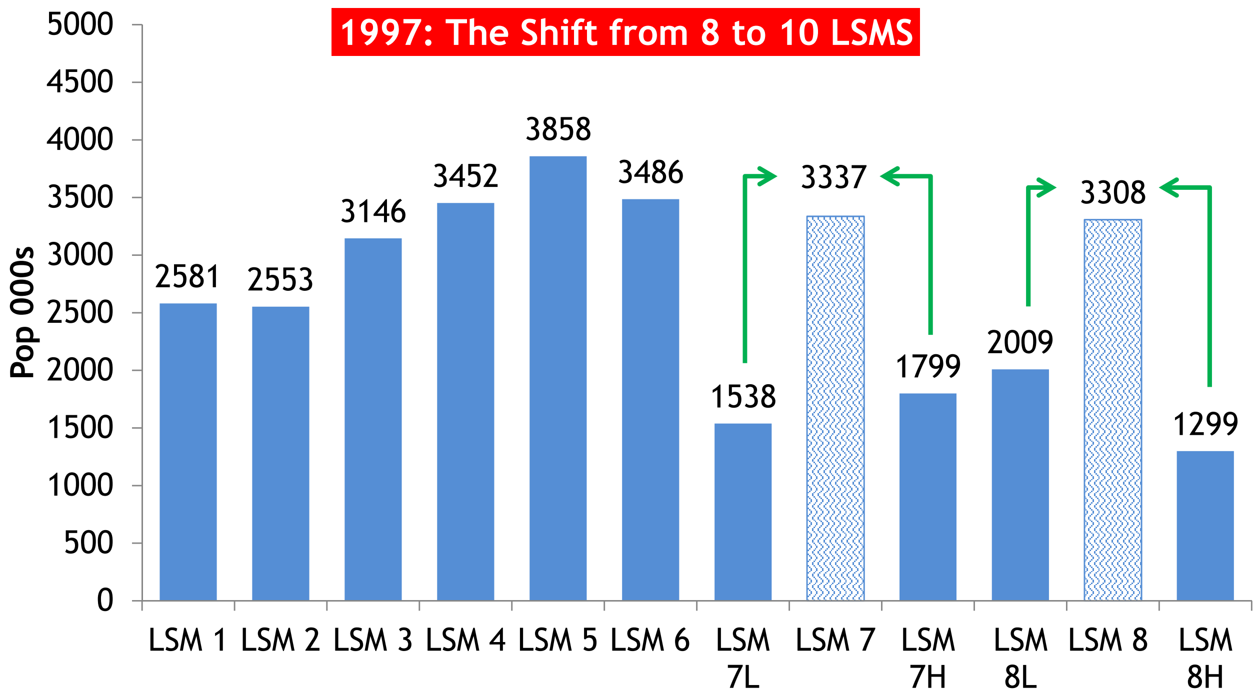



*Figure 3: The Shift from 8 LSMs to 10 LSMS*

By 2001, along with other adjustments in the cluster variables that created the Universal LSM, the industry recognised that what had in effect been created in 1997 was a 10 LSM model and formally acknowledged this by simply renumbering the segments LSM 1-10 (Figure 1). Simple enough and the basis for the model the industry has utilized until AMPS 2007.

From 2001 to 2008 though, accelerated change in the South African market and society at large has essentially recreated the same set of circumstance that precipitated the 1997 split. The top end of the market and the burgeoning middle class can no longer be effectively segmented by a simplistic 10 LSM model.

In *Media Planning – Art or Science* this writer noted in 2005 that

» *As South African society evolves, the SAARF Universal LSM has the ability to be extended beyond LSM10, to LSM11, LSM12, etc. and such groups will be added as time goes by. Similarly, as the lower end of the market experiences economic empowerment and the resultant upward social and economic mobility, so in theory the LSM1 group might fall away.*

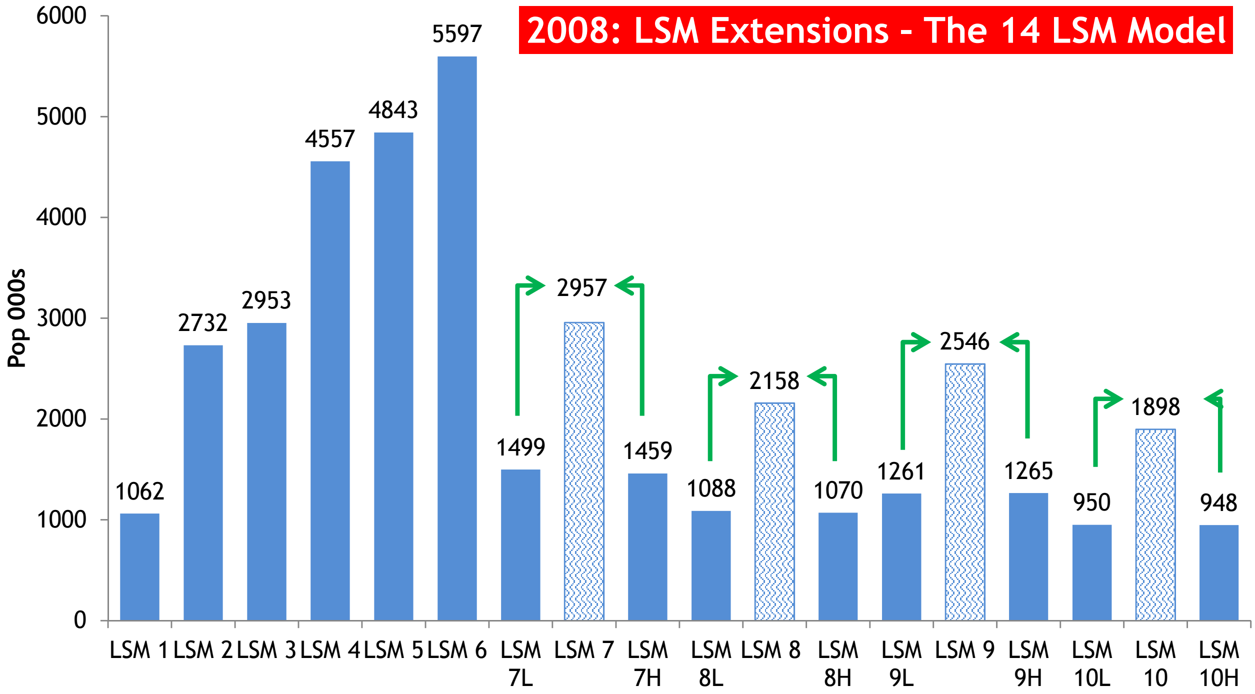



*Figure 4: The Shift from 10 LSMs to 14 LSMs*

The AMPS 2008 LSM splits have essentially realised that prediction. Analyses of AMPS reveals that whereas in 2001 LSM 1-3 constituted 39,5% of the adult population, by 2008 that had been eroded to 21,5%. Correspondingly, LSM 6-10 now constitutes 48,4% of adult population (up from 34,5% in 2001). These facts have presented a clear case for the further sensitization of the LSM model and much credit should be given to SAARF for making the upgrade.

Using the same basic principle from 1997, the split in AMPS 2008 of the LSM 7-10 segments creates an effective 14 LSM model (Figure 2). We can of course wait another 4 years to recognise this fact, talking in confusing "High and Low" jargon while we await the inevitable, or we acknowledge with immediate effect, that the Emperor does indeed have new clothes. And guess what? They are better than the old ones.

At the extremes of the scale it is relatively easy to visualise the points of difference between segments, even on the old 10 LSM model. The difference between LSM1 and LSM10 is manifest and allows for fairly accurate predictive modeling by planners. Media consumption patterns differ vastly, as do retail shopping and brand consumption. Ask those same planners what the difference is between LSM7 High (New LSM8) and LSM8 Low (New LSM9), and explanations will become increasingly subjective and inaccurate.

How then do we make sense of the 14 LSMs contained in AMPS 2008?

It lies outside the scope of this submission to articulate the process of data analysis, but this writer submits a simple macro-segmentation cluster model which is based around a mid-point analysis that withstands substantial scrutiny from many angles. From a pragmatic planner's perspective, scrutiny in this instance simply poses the question *does it differentiate media and product consumption and is it predictive*? The answer is both instances is … Yes!

In simple terms the model suggests the following clusters:

- Traditional Market: LSM 1-3 – 21,6% of population (HH Income Power Ratio ƒ 0,2)
- Transitional Market: LSM 4-5 – 30% of population (HH Income Power Ratio ƒ 0,4)
- Middle Class: LSM6 – 7Low – 22,7% of population (HH Income Power Ratio ƒ 0,9)
- Upper Middle Class: LSM7 High – 10 Low – 22,7% of population (HH Income Power Ratio ƒ 2,1)
- Elite: LSM10 High – 3% of population (HH Income Power Ratio ƒ 3,7)

> ***"The media planner needs to develop target market definitions, making use of LSMs along with other criteria where appropriate."***

It is also worth noting that the model avoids the use of "loaded" terms such as the increasingly outdated and probably offensive *emerging market*. The only term which might require some explanation is *transitional*, a horizontal reference to the geographical transition from a rural to urban lifestyle and the further economic transition from a subsistence lifestyle to active consumer of goods and services.

Few would contest the anecdotal evidence suggesting that AMPS probably under-reports household income (HHI), and definitely under-reports income at the top end of the market. In absolute terms AMPS income levels might be questionable, but claimed household income data still provides us with a very reliable means of relative horizontal segmentation. Average household income (HHI) in AMPS 2008 is R6,536 and the Middle Class segment (HHI LSM 6 – R5,386; LSM 7L - R7,837) straddles this level to create a midpoint axis around which the model hinges. Further, if we calculate the power ratios for each of these segments (i.e. the ratio of population size to gross segment household income) we can see that the *Middle Class* has an almost 1:1 power ratio (ƒ 0,9). As such this represents a bona fide midpoint for the

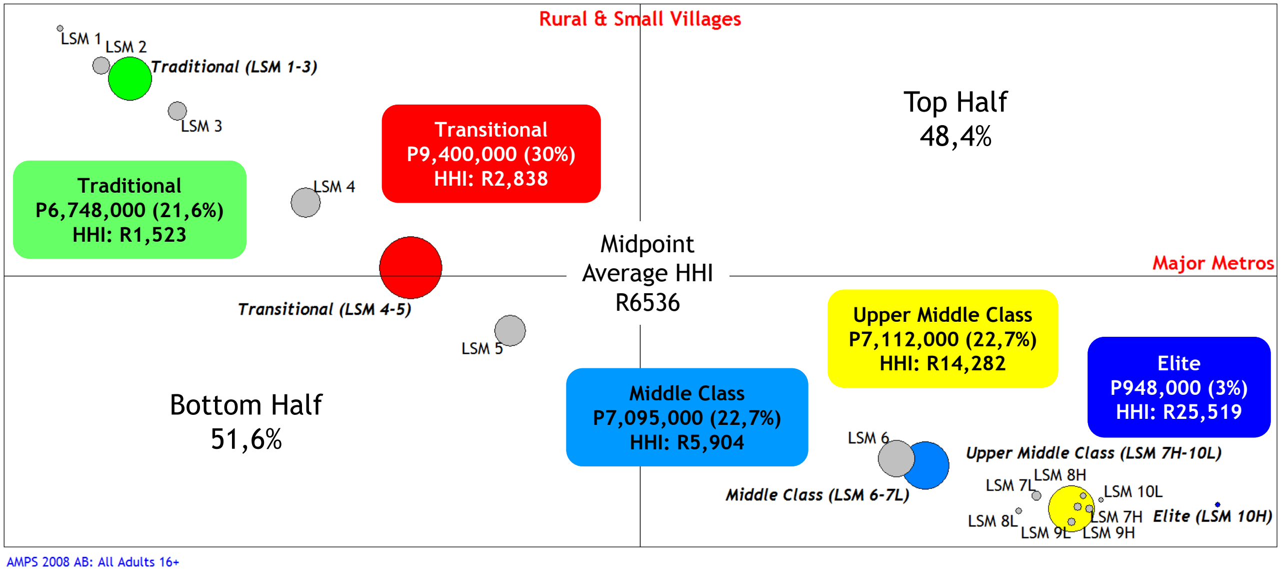



*Figure 5: LSMS The Muller Cluster Model*



AMPS market in terms of potential household buying power.

So, what about the most loaded term of all … so called *Black Diamonds*?

Watching various luminaries around the country claiming to have "discovered" *Black Diamonds* is a little bit like reading history at school in the 60s. When reality finally dawns, it comes as quite a revelation to realise that David Livingstone did not in fact discover Victoria Falls.

There is a huge difference between giving something a new name and discovering it. One can't help wondering what Dr Livingstone might have called the magnificent spectacle had he bothered to consult the local residents and to this point, one can't help wondering whether the industry, in creating the term Black Diamonds, has bothered to consult with the very people it has chosen to name. History will judge but this writer is already digging a hole in the terminology graveyard right next to the resting place of *Emerging Market*.

The first significant efforts to identify black consumers as a homogenous consumer community, with massive buying power, can probably be traced to SAAN (South African Associated Newspaper now reincarnated broadly speaking as Avusa), who introduced the concept of *new consumers* to the marketplace, and to the resultant *AMPS 1981 New Consumer Report*. In essence this model sought to group all metropolitan blacks together as a single market but the simplicity of its approach and more importantly, the general unpreparedness of South Africa marketers, doomed it to failure.

So the search for the *New Consumer Grail* is almost 3 decades old, and whilst all the interesting insights that have been created around *Black Diamonds* have re-nergised the search, planners in South Africa are still no better off in terms of finding a working, commonly accepted, definition of this market segment in AMPS. Describing their attitudes to love, life and everything in between may be very insightful but telling me, as a planner, precisely where to find them is unquestionably more valuable.

The question then is, can the new 14 LSM model and the *Muller Cluster Model* help to clarify this point?

Let's assume diamonds, of whatever hue, are items of significantly above-average value. Simplistically then we can eliminate the *Traditional* and *Transitional* market segments (LSM 1-5) as having below average buying power and also the Middle Class (LSM6 – LSM7 Low/ New LSM7) for their average buying power. Call them Cubic Zirconias if they must have a gemological name.

Black consumers in the *Elite* market segment (LSM10 High/ New LSM14) have an average household income of R29,037 which is even higher than that of their white counterparts (R24, 875) from the same segment. The Elite segment represents only a very small proportion of the population but their extreme wealth and conspicuous consumption makes them more valuable in isolation than simple diamonds, even though collectively they contribute only 13% of gross marketplace value. Let's call them something uniquely African. Tanzanites.

> ***"Claiming to have "discovered" Black Diamonds is a little bit like David Livingstone claiming to have discovered Victoria Falls."***

By process of elimination, all that remains is the Upper Middle Class segment. 23% of total population accounting for over 50% of total market value. That's a pretty valuable contribution. Black consumers represent 36% of this massive economic powerhouse and if the industry is insistent on giving them the name *Black Diamonds* then so be it. The *Muller Cluster Model* hasn't discovered them (they've always been there), nor has it named them but it does provide a reasonable set of map co-ordinates which can show planners where to find them.

Is the *Muller Cluster Model* definitive? By no means, but it's a good place to start making sense of the data by using language and concepts that we can all understand. Is the model statistically reliable at the 95% level of probability? Probably not! But consumers are not waiting around for statisticians to polish the numbers and in any event the only statistical proof that clients require in 2009, is feet through the door.

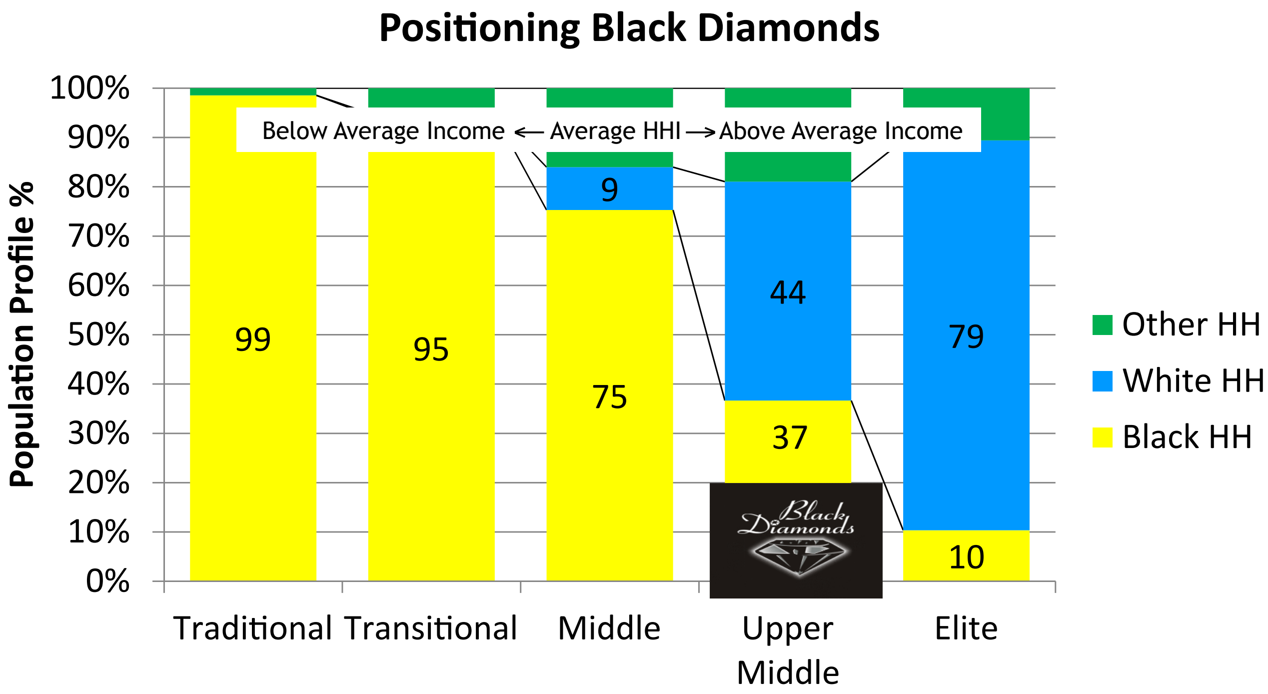



*Figure 6: The Muller Cluster Model & Black Diamonds*

Debate the model. Change it. Refine it. Create your own. Just don't ignore the simple fact that the only way to make sense of, and extract value from, the 14 LSMs in AMPS 2008 is to create clusters that are sensitive predictors of product and media consumption for clients. There is an old media adage which says *there is gold in them thar AMPS but you have to dig for it*! The new 14 LSM model gives the planner the opportunity to do just that. One can of course continue to use the 10 LSM model but then again one can also refer to the Blue Bulls as Northern Transvaal.

This is no fairytale. The emperor really does have new clothes and he's been wearing them for two months already! Let's mine the data and see how well we can make them fit.

**December 2008 - The Media Magazine**

# Black Diamonds & Newspapers

## No room for Yesterday's Heroes

Few global markets have undergone the quantum social and economic change experienced by democratic South Africa over the past decade. Analyses of the AMPS (All Media and Product Survey) LSM database, keystone of advertising and media analysis in South Africa, reveals that whereas in 2001 the low end "Traditional Market" segment (LSM 1-3) constituted 39,5% of the adult population, by 2008 that had been eroded to 21,5%. Correspondingly, in 2008, the LSM 4-9 segments constituted 72,4% of adult population (up from 55,5% in 2001).

That translates into over six million economically active consumers moving into the active product and media consumption zone and is a significant gain for the country, marketers and media owners alike.

In recognition of the fact that this burgeoning middle class, and the elite top end of the market (LSM 10) can no longer be effectively segmented by a simplistic 10 LSM model, AMPS 2008 has released a 14 LSM segmentation model that offers a more sensitive segmentation tool for marketers and media strategists.

One of the key benefits of this new 14 LSM model, is its ability to segment and quantify top end black consumers as a discernible market segment. The so-called *Black Diamonds*.

The first significant efforts to quantify the spending power of black consumers can be traced back to the *1981 New Consumer Report* (Published by the forerunner of Avusa (South African Associated Newspapers - SAAN) and AMPS). In the intervening years, many insights have been created around these Black Diamonds and now, with the 14 LSM segmentation model, media strategists are much closer to creating a commonly accepted, working definition for this market segment.

One such segmentation, is the *Muller Cluster Model* which offers a simple solution and suggests the following clusters …

- Traditional Market (LSM 1-3): 21,6% of Adult Pop (6,4m) contributing 4,4% HH Income
- Transitional Market (LSM 4-5): 30% of Adult Pop (9,4m) contributing 11,9% of HH Income
- Middle Class (LSM6 – 7Low): 22,7% of Adult Pop (7,1m) contributing 19,6% of HH Income
- Upper Middle Class (LSM7 High – 10 Low): 22,7% of Adult Pop (7,1m) contributing 51,1% of HH Income
- Elite (LSM10 High): 3% of Adult Pop (948k) contributing 13% of HH Income

The *Upper Middle Class* segment represents 23% of total population and accounts for over 50% of total market value! They are bench-pressing more than twice their mass and that's a pretty valuable contribution to any advertiser's bottom line. Black consumers, with an average Household Income of R14,368 (National Av. R6537), represent 36% of this massive economic powerhouse and if you need to give them a name, then *Black Diamonds* will do.

Like all *Upper Middle Class* households they are, of course, heavy consumers of most media formats. More interesting than overall penetration levels, though, is the transitional shift in media consumption pattern. For instance, there is only average consumption of SABC TV stations but above average consumption of eTV and significantly above average viewership of DSTV channels: evidence of the success of low cost subscriber offerings from Multichoice, in appealing to these consumers.

Regional stations such as Kaya and Yfm in Gauteng, and iGagasi in Durban, and more cosmopolitan offerings such as Metro FM in particular, offer a more effective platform for radio advertisers wanting to reach these consumers, than do traditional SABC ALS format stations.

That is a fact that political advertisers will not be ignoring in the run-up to elections in April 2009.

One medium which continues to confound the doomsayers and offers a robust platform for reaching this segment, is newspapers. Over 2 million Black Diamonds (80%) read at least one newspaper every week. Even more significant is that, of all the *Muller Model* cluster segments, *Upper Middle Class* black consumers have the highest incidence of both Daily and Weekly newspaper consumption. 56% of *Black Diamonds* read daily newspapers compared to only 52% of Elite consumers. 67% read weekly newspapers (64% for Elites). Whilst that is remarkably good news for publishers and marketers alike, it's even better news for a fledgling democracy building up to an important election.

This commitment to the printed word also manifests itself in an increasingly distinctive pattern of newspaper consumption.

In the Gauteng region for instance, which accounts for 35% of the total *Upper Middle Class* and 44% of *Black Diamonds*, when it comes to daily newspapers Daily Sun (537,000 readers) and Sowetan (370,000 readers) are in clear pole-position with traditionally entrenched "cross-over" titles such as *The Star* (253,000) and *Citizen* (90,000) respectively, slipping off the pace and being read largely by other *Upper Middle Class* consumers.

This strength of regional daily titles in reaching the *Black Upper Middle Class* is a significant theme. In Durban, for instance, *Isolezwe* (97,000 *Black Diamond* readers) is the leading daily in this segment. Once again, far exceeding the readership of traditionally dominant daily titles, *Daily News* (39,000) and *Mercury* (18,000). In East London *Daily Dispatch* (41,000) dominates the *Black Upper Middle Class* whilst in Port Elizabeth *The Herald* (44,000) is the number one daily for *Black Diamonds*. Evidence of the continued role of mainstream newspapers as the instrument of community debate and commercial exchange.

When it comes to newspaper readership, there are of course still major points of “cross-over”. With almost one million *Black Diamond* readers, *Sunday Times* is the most widely read newspaper title, daily or weekly, in this segment and creates a strong argument for a national advertising platform supported by key regional dailies.

One of the key drivers of the Sunday Times’ appeal plays to this market segment’s passion for sport and soccer in particular. *Sunday Times Soccerlife & Sport* delivers 718,000 *Black Diamond* sports fans, with Soccer Laduma (611,000) and Kickoff (315,000) in second and third spot respectively. With Confederations Cup around the corner and 2010 effectively underway, that’s a fact that few marketers can ignore in the coming months.

It is quite clear then, that when it comes to newspapers, black *Upper Middle Class* consumers know what they want and where to find it. That’s good news for publishers who have invested in this market segment and are ready to ride. And bad news for yesterday’s heroes who, in many instances, are still trying to saddle their horses!

**March 2009 - Business Times**

# Bring the House to Order!



## The NAB Levy

Caesar is purported to have observed *ex Africa semper aliquid novi* and when it comes to the media industry on the tip of the continent, he would not have been disappointed. The marketing and media industry in South Africa has survived through some dark times, through a combination of innovation and shared commitment to maintaining professional standards and outputs.

One of the central pillars of this shared commitment to marketing excellence, a pillar almost totally lacking in other African markets, is access to continuous, reliable and valid marketing data. Data like AMPS, RAMS and TAMS.

For almost four decades the media industry has had a love-hate relationship with AMPS. A little bit like the love-hate relationship South African rugby supporters have with John Smit. Sometimes he’s brilliant and sometimes he’s quite ordinary (and AMPS has been through some pretty ordinary phases) but one thing’s for sure … you don’t want to play without him.  And you don’t want to plan media in this country without AMPS.

Most planners in South Africa view the availability of single source data at their fingertips, covering all facets of media consumption, as an inalienable right, enshrined in the constitution of the advertising industry. But the advertising industry in South Africa doesn’t have a constitution, you say. Perhaps not, but then again neither does Great Britain.

What the industry does have, just like Great Britain, is an un-codified constitution: a common code of co-operation which serves the collective need, without compromising individual best practice and interests.

It is this code of practice, in many respects the envy of the marketing world and critical to the ongoing viability of independent strategic media thinking in South Africa, which has funded AMPS for 3 decades.

In recent weeks, advertising luminaries have argued that the industry must rally around in order to save AMPS, and the ASA (Advertising Standards Authority) which is also industry funded. But they have missed a step in the process. What the industry needs to do is save the Marketing Industry Trust (MIT) or, as it is more commonly known, the Levy Collection Agency (LCA).

*"When media owners get to call the shots and act as the gatekeepers for researching the performance of their own medium within the market, it's a little bit like marking your own homework."*

Since inception, AMPS (through SAARF) has been funded by a levy (currently 1%) payable on all above the line advertising activity. Initially, this levy was clearly demarcated as a separate line item on every advertiser's media schedule. Collected by advertising agencies on behalf of marketers, this levy was paid to the LCA, who in turn dispersed the funds to bodies such as SAARF and the ASA.

At this stage, there was complete clarity on the issue of "whose money is it?". The money belonged to marketers and they, quite correctly, were instrumental in approving budgets and deploying funds into industry research, such as AMPS.

More than 20 years ago it was decided to "fix" the system and media owners replaced advertising agencies as the de facto collectors of this levy. In the initial years, the levy was reflected on media rate-cards as an "add-on" to the net cost of the advertisement. No problem. Media owners collected and paid over what agencies have previously collected. But over time this cost was slowly absorbed into the actual rate, to the point where it was no longer distinguishable as a levy.

As a result of this embedding of the levy, many media owners, in particular Print Media SA (PMSA), have argued that over the past 20 years of rate increases and restructuring, the levy has in effect ceased to exist. In other words, media owners are paying over a 1% "tax" on their advertising turnover, rather than collecting an additional 1% "levy" on top of that revenue.

Effectively, that means media owners get to call the shots and act as the gatekeepers when it comes to researching the marketplace and the performance of their own media within that market. It's not entirely unlike marking your own homework.

So who's right? Who gets to rise to the top of the "levy latte"? The coffee or the cream? The danger is that while we are all so wrapped up in analysing the best way to separate the coffee from the cream, we fail to notice that the seasons have changed and the customer has nipped next door for an iced tea.

That's where the British constitution has the upper hand because, unwritten it may be, but it does have two fundamental underlying principles. The Rule of Law, and the Supremacy of Parliament. No such luck for media research in South Africa, and the question remains, "who has the authority to rule on this issue"? Certainly neither the Levy Collection Agency nor SAARF has.

One possible breakthrough in this impasse is the current initiative from the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). Effectively NAB is proposing a joint funding model where rate cards for radio and TV will be revised downwards by 0,5% and that the 0.5% will be added on to the net media invoice as a separate entry. This 0,5% will not generate agency commission and in effect, marketers will once again be directly contributing funds to the MIT levy.

Broadcasters will match this 0.5% with their own contribution, so that the levy therefore remains 1% but is reflected as a joint and equal contribution by broadcasters and marketers.

This model certainly suggests more accountability and transparency but there remain a number of practical issues which need to be resolved. For instance, will the NAB continue to pay the 1% levy on non-agency advertising, or will they effectively bank the residual 0,5%? Wouldn't decreasing the advertising rate by 1% in the initial phase be a more appropriate step? Should the levy be increased to a joint 2%?

Many functional issues will need to be discussed, but there remain two primary barriers to entry for this model.

Firstly, what will happen with all other MIT contributing media types? Creating different collection models for each media type on one media schedule is a major administrative task. If the industry is going to buy into a joint funding model for AMPS then it is imperative that there is universal buy-in from all media owners across the board, not just the NAB.

Finally, whilst the NAB may speak as one body, who may claim to speak for every single marketer in the country and in particular, who can claim to speak for global marketers, many of whom appoint their agencies on the basis of long term global contracts? There is a very real danger that this 0,5% will be seen as "cost to agency" rather than a "contribution from client" and this means that every contract must be scrutinized by both agency and client.

Whilst the NAB initiative should be applauded, and given the scrutiny that it deserves, the proposed implementation date of 1st January 2010 should be cause for alarm. Given that many broadcast rates are published months in advance and that many marketers and agencies are mid-fiscal and mid-contract, attempting to change the terms and conditions for every single client, particularly those on global contracts, is simply not possible in the time frame.

We might not be a parliament but we need to bring the house to order first before we vote on the motion as an industry.

**July 2009 - The Media**

## Somewhere over the Digital Rainbow

Who wins when the irresistible force meets the immovable object? The answer is Japie Swanepoel. After more than 30 years of reach, frequency and GRPS, it takes a lot to get this dyed-in-the-wool media man on a plane for 18 hours to go listen to a conference on digital advertising. But Japie is the digital equivalent of the whirlwind in *The Wizard of Oz* and so, like Dorothy, I wake up somewhere over the rainbow at AdTech Chicago 2009.

So what did I learn?

Why? Because speaker after speaker emphasized the simple reality that digital advertising is all about marketing. Yes the discipline has its own jargon like all media. I mean what the hell is a *widget*? Or the difference between *upper funnel* and *lower funnel* keywords, but if you frame the jargon within the marketing context it begins to make sense.

*“The biggest barrier to embracing the new technologies is not the technologies themselves, but seeing them as some kind of standalone theme park.”*

The biggest barrier to embracing the new technologies is not the technologies themselves, but seeing them as some kind of standalone theme park. You know you can have a lot of fun but you get off the ride wondering where the next “bigger and better” thrill is going to come from.

The real challenge is not creating a closed digital ecosystem that exists apart from the brand, however exciting and engaging that may be, but to integrate digital media applications into the overall brand communication. It’s about achieving the balance between playing with the next “bright shiny object” and communicating sustainable brand values and properties.

Easier said than done. Sure! But that’s the challenge. Too many marketers see digital media as the latest form of direct response advertising. See it only as a mechanism to create short term sales spikes, rather than as a platform to enhance competitive brand positioning. You might not be able to beat the recession but you might be able to beat the opposition.

So that's the top line observation but what's the bottom line takeout? From a media perspective there is a marketing communication jigsaw puzzle. It has a set number of pieces like radio, TV and print. But unless you know where the "digital piece" fits in the puzzle, you won't ever see the big picture.

So next time Japie says "go digital" ... just listen to him. It's cheaper than flying to Chicago.

**September 2009 - Khulumamedia**

# Media Freedom Day

## The Day After

It might be Monday everywhere else but in South Africa, it's Black Wednesday. Media Freedom Day!

When, on October 19th 1977, the Nationalist government banned iconic, opinion shaping newspapers such as *The World*, *Weekend World* and *Pro Veritate*, arresting editors and journalists, and banning several Black Consciousness movements, they forever marked in red (and it wasn't ink) the date on the South African media calendar as *Black Wednesday*!

Media Freedom Day! Man, that really does sound a lot better than *Black Wednesday*. I guess you gotta have a little grey hair to remember just how far we have come along the road to personal freedom of expression in South Africa. Media Freedom Day it might be but we still need to remind ourselves that a great number of people paid a dreadful price for this "free" day.

> ***"Having the right to freedom of expression and failing to express yourself is like slowly dying of thirst when you are lying on the banks of a river."***

So how do we celebrate media freedom? Not just by attending lectures and listening to memorial speeches, important as those speeches may be on the day. But as ordinary South Africans who have inherited a legacy? What are we going to do tomorrow to exercise the freedom that we celebrated today? The day after Media Freedom Day!

Mark Twain, the American author and satirist once observed that *"the man who does not read good books has no advantage* *over the man who cannot read them*". Today, we'd be a little less sotto voce. What this really means is that "*the man who does not read might just as well be illiterate*".

The bottom line is simply that, although nominal literacy rates in South Africa are encouraging, functional literacy is probably on the decline overall. You can lead a horse to paper but you can't make it read. Almost 20 years after liberation, only 29% of adults read a daily newspaper and only 35% a primary weekly title. Magazines fare little better. So much for active participation in our democracy!

You know how we can celebrate the Day after Media Freedom Day? By going out tomorrow and reading a newspaper. Read it online. Read it in print. Download an app and read on it on your mobile. And here's the beautiful thing about living in Mzansi in 2009. If you don't like what they are saying, phone a radio station. Start a blog. Tweet from your mobile. Write to the editor. Just make sure your voice is heard.

Having the right to freedom of expression and failing to express yourself is like slowly dying of thirst when you are lying on the banks of a river.

Happy Day After Media Freedom Day! Have a drink on me.

**October 2009 - Khulumamedia**



# The 2010 Advertising Party

## Seven Steps to being a real guest

My iPhone tells me it's the 24th October but everybody in advertising knows it's the end of the year. 2009 is pretty much done and dusted. Incredible as it may seem though, there are still marketers out there who are asking me "should my brand be advertising during World Cup 2010"? Are you serious? Where have you been for the past four years? Surely this should have been sorted out months, if not years, ago! Ok, got that off my chest!

So, without going into all the legal implications of ambush marketing outlined in the Trade Marks Amendment Act 61 of 2002, the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa Municipal By-laws, and the plethora of explicit FIFA restrictions governing what may or may not be done by advertisers who are not FIFA partners, what is the correct answer? This quick Q&A session should guide you through the decision making process. Good luck!

- » *Question 1: Are you a World Cup 2010 or FIFA partner?*

Answer – Yes: You need to advertise. You can go put your feet up. You're done with this survey.

Answer – No: Go to Question 2

» *Q2: Should my brand attempt a little bit of ambush marketing?*

Answer – Yes: Go to jail. Go directly to jail. Do not pass Go. Do not collect R200. Actually, maybe you should take the R200 with you. You're going to need it for bail.

Answer - No: Go to Question 3.

» *Q3: Wouldn't it still be of benefit for my brand to be there?*

Even though you might manage to fly under the ambush marketing radar and avoid detection, let me give you a clue before you answer. Remember what all-time advertising great David Ogilvy said, "The customer is no fool, she's your wife"! What will consumers think of your brand as a result of you attempting to be involved in World Cup 2010? If you threw a lavish wedding reception and you discovered that I had gate-crashed the party by disguising myself as a guest, eaten your food and drunk your wine, what would you say to me? "A] Push off you little scavenger" or "B] Great disguise G"?

Answer A: You understand that trying to staple your brand onto the World Cup 2010 packaging is not necessarily going to make you look like a good guy. Don't go there.

Answer B: Go to question 4

» *Q4: Do you really need to advertise during World Cup 2010?*

Answer - No: Then don't go there.

Answer – Yes: Then you have you have no choice. Go to question 5.

» *Q5: What media mix should we use?*

That depends entirely on your normal communication platform. Many advertisers seem to be concerned about the possible disruption and decline of media audiences over the period of the World Cup but some media will be impacted by the drama of 2010 and others not.

Problem is of course that given the publishing frequency of AMPS, we'll only get to know what happened months after the event. And even then it will depend whether the fieldwork period for AMPS 2010 actually corresponds with the World Cup. Perhaps we'll never know. Maybe it will remain one of those great South African mysteries like "why didn't Alan Donald run?" or "why can't the Sharks concentrate for 80 minutes"?

That doesn't mean plain old common sense can't supply the answers. So for instance, if you are a major retailer and you are using local newspapers to distribute loose inserts to Bertha Benoni, then there is no reason to stop. 2010 will make no difference at all to the average housewife's readership of local newspapers.

Generally speaking, all media other than Television (see question 6) may well experience a surge in consumption. After all, the World Cup is one of the world's greatest news events. And it's not just about the soccer results. Great news stories will abound. Who's coaching Bafana Bafana today? Which German soccer players were injured because they were not wearing their bullet proof vests? How much does Maradona really weigh? Which soccer team had their belongings stolen by gorgeous girls wearing lingerie? Oops. Sorry about that last one, that's ICC Champions League cricket. But you get the picture!

### » *Q6: Should we still use TV during 2010?*

Many industry pundits are warning clients that they should stay off TV because the TV ad-rates will be going through the roof. Not sure I agree with them because it really depends on which part of the sandpit you are building your castle in. In up-market households with dual decoders, PVRS and multiple TV screens, disruption of viewing patterns should be no different to that experienced last weekend during the Currie Cup semi-finals: 5 straight hours of rugby. The boys will watch what they want and the girls will watch what they want.

Sure the disruption will be going on for 6 weeks rather than just a day, and there will be some erosion of audiences outside of the immediate soccer arena, but as long as the ad-rates are synchronized there's no pricing problem with that.

At the top end of the market, TV rates should not be going up in non-soccer programming, they should be coming down. Watch out for the great packages coming your way. Chick-flick festivals. Patrick Swayze reruns. As long as the TV rates mirror the audience delivery then there's no problem.

If we look at the broad mass of South African consumer households, where there is one TV screen and no multiple viewing options, then it's an entirely different story. One man one TV. Soccer rules! So stay off the SABC unless you really need to be in World Cup 2010 soccer programming. TV rates in non-soccer programming should come down but they will not come down enough to offset the inevitable audience erosion.

Answer - No: Fine. No problem. Use other media to do the job. Go to Question 7.

Answer – Yes: Fine. Just make sure you are paying the correct price. There's no reason to pay a premium, unless you want/ need to be a direct part of the 2010 World Cup soccer screenings. Go to Question 7.

### » *Q7 Can we break through the clutter?*

Answer – Yes.

If you can't spend enough across the entire event to play in the big budget sandpit, then at least execute big on the day.

Big ads and big ideas! Large format ads and longer duration commercials tend to be better noted and break through the micro advertising clutter. It will also make sense to have a singular message, not lots of small divisive messages. Let everything you have come to bear on one thought which can be reinforced. You can't spend enough to beat the clutter across the entire event but you can spend enough to at least be noticed on the days that you do advertise.

So have fun. Enjoy the 2010 party. But hey! Don't be a gatecrasher. Make sure that the consumer believes that you really have been invited.

**October 2009**

# A bowl of Oats in the morning

**Q&A with Oracle Airtime Sales**

» *Thinking of your current client base, what kind of percentage organic growth in budgets are you anticipating in the calendar year 2010?*

It is questionable whether you could refer to this as real growth. More of a steady return to "pre-crisis levels" over the next 2 years. At best a response to media inflation, if there is any.

» *Apart from clients who may have a specific interest in, or affinity with, the World Cup, do you believe others will adopt the view that they should rather avoid or minimise advertising exposure during the period of the tournament? Would this be your personal advice?*

Feelings are mixed. Some clients want to get as close as they can, subject to the FIFA restrictions and others want to stay away. I would advise clients that have no logical involvement in 2010 to stay away. There is no point in paying inflated rates (TV and Outdoor in particular) for audiences that are not primary to your marketing objectives and/or trying to anticipate disrupted TV viewing patterns for the remainder. That doesn't mean that other normal advertising activity should not take place in unaffected media. No reason why Pick n Pay or Clicks shouldn't be doing their normal stuff in local press for instance. Don't force an involvement where it doesn't fit and don't get caught up in the clutter if your product doesn't need day by day advertising pressure.



» *Would you agree with the view that the World Cup will stimulate growth in adspend beyond normal expectations and could you estimate by what extent?*

It will stimulate adspend but it's impossible to estimate because many of the major sponsor budgets will come from overseas budgets. A lot of it will depend on the exchange rate. If the Rand goes for a slide then adspend will pick up. Year on Year (Confed Cup v 2010) it's got to be at least 30% bigger over those six to eight weeks. A lot of spend will go into activations and fan park events at the expense of conventional media exposure.

» *Are you anticipating a change in adspend trends with a spike during the tournament and a lull before and after?*

Certainly a lull afterwards but I'm not sure that there will be a lull before. Adspends should start to build from Afcon Cup in February and peak during 2010.

» *As a massive television event, do you think we will see a shift in adspend by media-type? Do you think TV may gain adspend at the expense of other media?*

TV and Outdoor should gain some share but it's not an open cheque book. Looking at what happened in Europe and Germany specifically, a lot of other media picked up ad-revenue as well. There's got to be a big win for online media as well.

**November 2009**

## A case of "What's yours is yours and what's mine is mine"?

### The MIT Levy



One of the central pillars of the South African market's shared commitment to marketing excellence, a pillar almost totally lacking in other African markets, is access to continuous and reliable marketing data. Data like AMPS, RAMS and TAMS.

Although the media industry has a love-hate relationship with AMPS, only the most jaundiced of viewpoints would contest that, when it comes to making soundly reasoned strategic media decisions, the availability of reliable single source data has placed South Africa in a unique position on the African content.

Since inception, AMPS (through SAARF) and the Advertising Standards Authority of SA have been funded by a levy (currently 1%) payable on all above-the-line advertising activity. Initially demarcated as a separate line item on every advertiser's media schedule, the levy was collected by the placing agency and paid into the Media Industry Trust (MIT). Over time media owners became responsible for the collection process and the levy was slowly absorbed into the advertising rate card, to the point where it was no longer distinguishable as a levy.

This latter point lies at the heart of the so-called "whose money is it" conundrum.

As we seek to balance competing research needs in a fragmented media environment, there is an acute need to resolve the "whose money is it" debate. One possible route through the impasse is the current National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) initiative.

Effectively NAB has proposed a joint funding model where rate cards for radio and TV will be revised downwards by 0,5% and a 0.5% noncommission bearing levy added on to the net media invoice. In effect, marketers will once again be directly contributing funds to the MIT levy and broadcasters will match this 0.5% with their own contribution. So the overall levy therefore remains 1%, but is reflected as a joint and equal contribution by broadcasters and marketers. At this point it is reported that the outdoor industry is considering following suit.

To some this model suggests more transparency and joint accountability but others argue that NAB's sudden "Damascus Road" experience is really nothing more than an attempt to cut media owner MIT contributions by 50% in the current tough economic climate. This latter perspective postulates an alternative suggestion, that NAB cuts the rate card by 1% and then matches the 1% marketers' contribution. Certainly the resultant 2% levy would take care of SAARF and ASA operating shortfalls in the short and medium term and nobody could argue that media owners are merely halving their contribution.

> ***"As we seek to balance competing research needs in a fragmented media environment, there is an acute need to resolve the "whose money is it" debate."***

> ***"If marketers and media owners in South Africa want world class data as the minimum baseline for sound media decision making, then the MIT levy needs to increase."***

Other issues such as "will the NAB continue to pay the full 1% levy on non-agency advertising, or will they effectively bank the residual 0,5%?" are operational, but from a macro perspective, one primary concern is that entrenching the principle of different collection models for different media will ultimately further erode the position of the MIT levy. Already it is clear that within the NAB there are divergent views on the needs of TV and radio, in terms of both the actual levy amount and proposed implementation date.

Creating different collection models for each media type on one media schedule is a major administrative task. If the industry is going to buy into a joint funding model for AMPS then it is imperative that there is universal buy in from all media owners across the board, not just the NAB. In particular, Print Media SA (PMSA) must be brought into the fold.

From a media agency perspective whilst the NAB may speak as one body for broadcasters, unfortunately nobody can lay claim to speak for every single marketer in the country, particularly global marketers, many of whom appoint their agencies on the basis of long term global contracts. Many agencies have expressed the concern that the client portion of the proposed levy-split will be seen as “cost to agency” rather than a “contribution from client” and this means that every contract must be scrutinized by both agency and client.

If marketers and media owners in South Africa want world class data for sound media decision making, then there is no doubt that the overall levy needs to increase. And a split contribution, probably the 1% + 1% option, seems to be the most equitable solution. Given the need to align marketers, agencies and other media sectors besides NAB, the proposed implementation date of 1st April gives major cause for concern.



The NAB initiative is a significant innovation and should be given very urgent and serious consideration. This one can’t wait until the New Year for a decision though. What is required, before the end of 2009, is a gathering of all industry bodies, represented by individuals with the authority to sign off on budgets, because unless there is an immediate and sizeable increase in funding levies, both SAARF and, in particular, the ASA may simply not be sustainable in their current form.

If marketers and media owners in South Africa really do want world class data as the minimum baseline for sound media decision making, then the MIT levy needs to increase. An industry response on the NAB split levy proposal can’t wait until the New Year though. The media industry needs to sort this out before Christmas, otherwise the 2010 Mzansi media stocking is going to be very empty.

**November 2009 - Khulumamedia**

# I shot the Sherriff but at least least I didn’t lose my sanity

**On the issue of Media Consultants**

When last did you have one of those moments that left you feeling like you’re the last sane person in media?

After 30 something years in media, you get to know a bit of stuff. And you get a badge. It’s like a Sheriff’s badge but not as shiny or pointy. And the badge says Independent Media Consultant. Or just “Consultant”. Now the difference between a Sheriff’s badge and a Consultant’s badge is that the bad guys don’t shoot at you because you’re wearing it.

Well, not until this week anyway.

Because, as a consultant, you know stuff, people tend to ask you stuff. You give them answers based on the stuff you have learned in your 30 something years in media. Very often those answers are the difference between a good campaign and a great one: or the difference between a campaign that works, or doesn't work. Or, just the input that makes a good campaign work a little better. So it can be very rewarding for everybody concerned.

Now, when I receive an email from a major group, Decision Process International that reads "why not to outsource your strategy to an outside consultant", you will understand why it's a must read.

So I read on only to discover that "the worst of all strategic crimes is to have an outside consultant develop your strategy"! Now, whilst I'm the first to admit that nobody knows the business better than the client, I'm left wondering how I slipped from trusted business partner to "strategic criminal".

Nevertheless, nobody is above criticism so I figure, "Hey! Take the ego knock and read what they have to say". I click and navigate myself to the website, and this is where I find the part that I love because it reminds that me that maybe I'm not so dumb after all.

» *"Are you outsourcing your strategic thinking? Letting consultants dictate your company's policy"?*

Then you have three clickable options on the DPI website ...

- *I'd like to schedule a presentation*
- *Not ready yet but keep me informed*

And the one I love. The one that made my week

- *I'd like to chat to a consultant*



Sorry what? Chat to a consultant? Another strategic criminal? You've got to be kidding me DPI. Talking to a consultant about your consultants is like hiring a psychologist to assess the mental condition of your psychiatrist.

Go lie down on one of those corporate couches at DPI guys. You need to rethink your eMarketing strategy. Actually, I know one or two guys that could help you.

No wait! They're also consultants. Eish!

**November 2009 - Khulumamedia**

# Being SAARF means never having to say you're sorry!

**On SAARF's reluctance to publish and be damned.**

When you're right you're right and when you're wrong you're wrong. Being told you are wrong is rarely a good experience, but self-knowledge always comes with a price. Accepting the correction graciously on the other hand can be a winning experience both in terms of the knowledge gained and the perception created amongst your peers.

When I was still a babe in the advertising woods, and I became aware that there were people who were marching to a different tune to me, I accused them of being out of step. As my self-knowledge grew, I became painfully aware that when you are the only one going "right left", and everybody else is going "left right", then it is in fact you who are out of step. Not the rest of the squad.

> ***"It's not misuse of the data that's the real problem - it's creation of bad data in the first place."***

SAARF's petulant little press release, about their reluctant release of the AMPS 2009 data, is a case in point.

Last month at an AMASA function, some users of AMPS, speaking not for themselves but on behalf of the vast majority of users of AMPS, made it clear to the management of SAARF that the data that had been paid for by the entire industry, should be released to the entire industry. Not just a chosen few with a vested interest.

This is not a new concept but entrenched in the accepted best practice of SAARF over the past 3 decades. Having introduced a significant change in the AMPS methodology, SAARF was wrong not to release it to the industry and the industry was right to demand the release of that data. This argument must have had some resonance because, within a week, the board of SAARF voted to release the data. I guess someone was listening to their clients.

For SAARF to now argue that the only currency which can be used is the 12 month AMPS database poses two questions. What about all those occasions over the past decade when 6 month data was used with SAARF's blessing? I learned something from watching Floyd on Food. If the wine isn't good enough to drink, you shouldn't be cooking with it in the first place. If the AMPS 2009 data isn't good enough to stand on its own, why is it good enough to fuse into the previous data?

Last year SAARF told us we were incapable of understanding the shift to 14 LSMS. This year we are incapable of understanding the new DS-Capi methodology and we must not misuse the 6 month data. It's not misuse of the data that is the real problem, its creation of bad data in the first place.

Now that the data will be subject to industry scrutiny, we can decide for ourselves. That's what our clients pay us for.

David Ogilvy said, "the customer is no fool, she is your wife"! When you're wrong you're wrong SAARF. Just try being gracious. It's not nearly as painful as you think.

**December 2009 - Khulumamedia**

# Yo ho ho and a bottle of Rum!

**All aboard the pirate ship ABC**

Having just re-entered the mediasphere after the Christmas break, I was stirred and more than a little shaken to discover that the ABC has ratified the decision to amend the "50% rule". The rule which effectively determines that print copies of a published title can only be claimed as paid-for circulation if the publisher has received no less than 50% of the cover price in the sales transaction.

> ***"The ABC decision to amend the 50% cover price rule is a massive step backwards for legitimate publishers."***

There will now be no lower limit to the discounted price a publisher may now claim as "paid for" by an end consumer. This means that a title with a cover price of say R35 can dump additional copies on the market at 1c a copy and present figures to media buyers which imply that these titles have been "sold". At best it's misleading. At worst, it would have induced a knowing wink from Eschel Rhoodie.

What a massive step backwards for legitimate publishers in South Africa. They must be drinking rum and raising the Jolly Roger on every pirate publishing ship south of Penzance. Particularly in the run-up to World Cup 2010.

To watch the print media's continuing mission to alienate itself from the broader advertising industry is deeply concerning. Hopefully by the time the final implosion takes place (and there will be an implosion if the current thinking gathers momentum, make no mistake about that), the only significant challenge facing me every day will be sailing to the other side of Midmar dam, not having to clean up the mess that pirates tend to leave behind. Real pirates that is, not those cute little ones that Johnny Depp likes to play.



Protagonists of this move will point to fair pricing, as supposedly defined by the Competitions Tribunal, but the price constraint argument is spurious. The ABC is a reporting, not a price control, mechanism. There is nothing stopping publishers from giving away their titles for free and motivating audited VFD certificates.

To quote Gordon Patterson, AMF representative on the ABC Board ...

» *"Rather than levelling the playing field, this decision has the potential to flatten it, obscure the truth and create greater opportunities for abuse. [It] will neither achieve nor advance the objectives of the ABC or the spirit of the Competition Act".*

I remain committed to print media as a viable advertising option but no media planner can support a "lowest common denominator" initiative such as this. But then again, I don't run a printing press or distribute a free newspaper. If I did, then I might hold a very different view. In fact, I'd be delighted that two decades after the introduction of VFD's I had managed to devalue the entire currency to the point where legitimate "sold titles" have completely lost their competitive quality advantage over free distribution titles.

**January 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# Make sure your brand can say "I was there"!

**World Cup 2010**

We're standing in the change-room. The stadium is full and the crowd is beginning to shaya iVuvuzela. It's World Cup 2010 and we are all about to run onto the pitch. But you can't play diski without a gameplan. What are we going to do when we get out here and the game begins?

Understandably, the gameplan for most brands, particularly those which have invested vast amounts to be FIFA partners and sponsors, is simply to extract value from the event. For the chosen few that's quite a simple process.

1. Make sure your targeted consumers know you are part of World Cup 2010.
2. Explain to them why you are part of the event.
3. Make your brand accessible during the event.
4. Demonstrate to them how, by consuming your brand, they will benefit from your involvement with World Cup 2010.

It's not enough to just establish an association between your brand and World Cup 2010. That's like Cesc Fabregas or Didier Drogba expecting the fans' devotion just for the mere act of running onto the pitch. That's not the way it works. Sure you get a rousing cheer at first but it's only when you perform on the field that the fans really get to love you. And that's when they buy the T-shirt with your name on it and start singing songs about you.

Obviously there are many brands out there who would rather go dancing with John Sergeant than play in World Cup 2010. Fair enough. If it's not for you, it's not for you. Not too many people play footie in Prada and a Playtex push-up bra.

But for the many non FIFA-affiliated brands that would love to be there, don't be put off by the seemingly impenetrable barrier of local legislation and FIFA regulations. Those rules and regulations are there to prevent unprincipled marketers from trying to sneak into the party uninvited. If you play by the rules there are plenty of legitimate ways to get into the party and demonstrate to consumers that, even though you are not an official sponsor, you share their interests and their desire to place South Africa securely on the world stage.

Of course there will always be irresponsible marketers who try to fly under the ambush radar. But they have failed to understand that gate-crashing a party is more likely to make you look like a scavenger than a good guy.

So have fun. Enjoy the 2010 party. But hey! Don't be a gatecrasher. Make sure that the consumer believes that you really have been invited. Make sure your brand can say "I was there".

At his inauguration speech in 1961 JFK challenged the expectant American electorate, and now you need to ask, not what World Cup 2010 can do for your brand, but what your brand can do for World Cup 2010!

Of course Cicero said it 2000 years before JFK, but that's ambush marketing for you.

**February 2010 - The Journal**

# Muller's Popcorn Principle

## Or which part of "wastage" don't you understand?

When the publisher of one of Mzansi's largest magazine groups tells the industry at a major forum that a reader's relationship with a magazine is, in essence, no different from a housewife's relationship with her chosen washing powder, then it is clear that if the print industry has not already hit rock bottom, the earth is fast approaching.

Time to deploy the parachute guys! Which part of wastage don't you understand?



Like it or not, and I don't, there is a new rule governing the reporting of ABC data. Whether your cover price is R50 or R5, as long as you get rid of your publication for 5c (the lowest legal tender denomination) you can tell the world you have "sold" that publication. And the ABC will give you a certificate to prove it.

As I sat at the JSE last night, waiting for the AMASA forum to begin, I watched Bloomberg channel reporting Toyota's share price decline. A thought occurred to me on the 50% rule. If Toyota manufactured 50,000 new vehicles, sold them at R1 each and then added these to their unit sales figures, would their share price go up, or down? If you print a newspaper with a cover price value of R10 and sell it for 5c, does its value to advertisers go up, or down?

Anybody with half a brain … oops can't say half a brain anymore cause somebody might take me to the Competitions Tribunal … Anybody with a brain, whether that brain be more than 50%, or less than 50% of an average sized brain, provided some discernible portion of the brain can be identified under a microscope, knows the answer to that question.

> *"Bigger isn't always better than smaller because of wastage and diminishing return."*

One of my bright media sales colleagues posed a good question last night, "what's the problem with a bigger circulation? How come bigger isn't always better than smaller"! The answer is, quite simply, wastage and diminishing return. This is the crux of our discussion.

A paper sells 100 copies carrying an ad for popcorn. They charge the advertiser R100 for the ad and it generates 100 popcorn sales units. That's the perfect scenario. Now that paper "sells" 200 copies (100 of them at some arbitrary cover price to a bunch of strangers) and the ad generates an additional 35 sales units. "Why", asks my colleague, "is that a problem? That's more response". Yes it is but the problem is that, when a publication “sells” an additional 100 copies, copies on which they receive no meaningful cover price revenue, they want someone to pay for it. And that someone is the advertiser.

Why do the second 100 copies only generate 35 popcorn units? Because the “readers” lie outside of the defined core target market! It’s called “wastage” and the primary purpose of media planning is to maximise response and minimise wastage. That’s what we do for a living.

So now we have a new scenario.

- Scenario 1: 100 copies @ R100 = 100 units
- Scenario 2: 200 copies @ R200 = 135 units

The first scenario ROI is R1 per unit. The second R1,48 per unit. That’s diminishing return on media investment. This is the crux of the core circulation approach. This is Muller’s Popcorn Principle. You can print and “sell” as many copies of your publication as you wish but I only want to pay for the original 100 because that’s where I get the best return.

Nobody cares about how much nominal reach you can generate against increasingly irrelevant people. That’s called “dumping” and it is last century’s game.

> ***“Nobody cares about how much nominal reach you can generate against increasingly irrelevant people. That’s just called “dumping”.”***

Of course, if you are a publisher with no concern about advertiser ROI, because next year you’re just going to change the title of publication, or better still the name of your company, then none of this if of interest to you. Hoist the Jolly Roger on your Pirate ship and sail off with your treasure.

What’s the bottom line on the 50% rule.

The emperor has new clothes. The emperor thinks the clothes are really phat. Sadly somebody has to tell the emperor the truth before someone tries to steal the family jewels.

**February 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# The Illusion of Demand

## On the issue of media self-promotion

You might ask what has awakened me from a prolonged period of blogolepsy. It would have to be something bad to get me going again, right? Well it is.

A colleague of mine exposed me to a Business Day article and subsequent Marketingweb review published on 23rd March.  In this article a leading media agency reports that adspend in Mzansi reached a total of R36,2 Billion in calendar 2009. Growing 6% over 2008.

Aieesh! I really wish I'd seen the article earlier but I guess it's never too late to settle the record and balance the books. However incorrect the initial reporting. The bottom line is simply this. In 2009 advertising spend in Mzansi did not increase by 6% over 2008. In fact, it declined 0,6%.

The point of confusion stems from the bizarre practice of factoring in media self-promotion when calculating overall adspend. What is media self-promotion as opposed to media promotion?

When a TV station runs an ad in a major Sunday newspaper it is legitimate advertising expenditure, whether payment is by cash or barter exchange. When that same Sunday paper runs an ad on TV, or any other medium for that matter, that represents adspend and is legitimate media promotion.

When a newspaper runs an ad, in its own main body, promoting itself to its own readers, that's media self-promotion. When a TV station surrounds its own programming with interminable station and programme promos, that is media self-promotion. Yes, those things that actually stop you from watching the programme, and turn a 30 minute sitcom into a 60 minute viewing event. Those are them.

> ***"Media self-promotion increases in direct proportion to unsold inventory. If you can't sell the stuff, then you might as well use it yourself."***

We also know that media self-promotion increases in direct proportion to unsold inventory. If you can't sell the stuff, then you might as well use it yourself.

Now, there's absolutely nothing wrong with that, unless of course you'd rather that viewers watch your TV commercials, but there is a problem with calling it advertising investment. It's a little like Edgars buying up all their unsold clothing, giving it to their own sales staff and calling it an increase in retail sales.

In 2009 reported adspend, including media self-promotion, was R36,2 Billion. Up 6% on 2008. Real adspend, excluding media self-promotion, was actually R24,4 Billion. Down 0,6% on 2008. Bear in mind that there was some pretty sharp discounting in 2009 and the decline is probably even more pronounced.

Who are the worst offenders? 90% of all media self-promotion occurs on Television. In fact, 50% of all reported Television adspend is TV station self-promotion. The worst of the worst? DSTV and Mnet account for two thirds of all TV self-promotion.

Why even bother with all of this? After all it's just Nielsen Adex data. Well, here's the implication

- Increase in adspend = increase in demand = rate increase
- Decrease in adspend = decrease in demand = rate decrease

What a wonderful tool media self-promotion is. The more you use, the more you restrict supply and the more apparent demand you create.

So the next time a TV station sends you a "no-avails" for your spot schedule, you might want to check just what is running instead of your commercial.

Of course we all understand why media owners perpetuate this myth but it is a mystery why media agencies continue to buy into it. Or is it?

**May 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# The Cinderella Medium goes to the Ball

## On the MTN Radio Awards

If you can recite, from memory, the sound bite intro for *Squad Cars*, or you'd still trust *Mark Saxon* to save the planet rather than *Dr. Who*, then you will know what a thrill it was for me to be at the Inaugural MTN Radio Awards at Monte Casino on Saturday night. Congratulations to all the winners and finalists. What a great occasion for radio in this country and what a trip down memory lane!

> ***"The key to drive time is available audience but the key to radio outside drive time is voluntary audience."***

Apart from recognising the overall category winners, the MTN Radio Awards chose to induct into the Radio Hall of Fame, some of Mzansi radio's all- time greats. Sadly not all were present on the night. The late DJ Khabzela, iconic radio activist from YFM and the greatest cricket commentator of them all, the late great Charles Fortune, among them.

But many great names of radio were present. Peter Lotis. Dan Moyane, always remembered for making *Shosholoza* the anthem of the 1995 World Cup Final at Ellis Park.  Treasure Shabalala, with a voice that even James Earl Jones would envy, and the effervescent (did I spell that right Kate?) Kate Turkington. And, of course, the irrepressible John Berks. *Jukkel, stukkel, lekker, lekker, lex!*

What a line-up of radio talent.

Seeing one of South Africa's broadcasting pioneers Justice Tshungu, among those honoured on the night, evoked a particular memory for me. I have never forgotten Justice's advice to me as a young media planner, to make more of the advertising journey.

» *"The problem with you whiteys in Joburg is that you are always in a hurry to go somewhere, so that you can get back quickly. You need to slow down a little"!*

Sound advice, sadly more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Understandably, on the night, much was made of the *Best Breakfast Show* category. Big audiences mean big ad revenues. As a media strategist I know that. But as a judge, working through each individually crafted and motivated entry, I was reminded that there is so much more to radio than drive time. So much more than just big numbers!

The key to drive time is *available audience:* the equivalent of TV's prime-time captive audience. The key to radio outside drive time is *voluntary audience*. Each listener is there because they choose to be there. Often in preference to Television! Each programme and presenter offers the advertiser a unique programming and advertising environment. Listenership numbers might be lower but listener commitment is not. Price it right and put it on schedule. You'll get a result.

*"The ultimate test of a radio station is its ability to motivate its own audience community."*



Against the backdrop of this learning, it was disappointing that so few community radio stations took the opportunity to showcase their talents, and those that did walked away with heads held high. Well done *East Rand Radio, Tuks FM* and *Radio Islam* on your well-deserved special commendations and awards.

That's not to say that community radio doesn't have some numbers that would make the average marketer sit up and take notice. Every week almost 8 million listeners tune in to community radio. That's more than *5fm* and *Metro* combined.

Ultimately the highlight of the evening for me was the People's Choice Award, the only award which was not adjudicated by the panel but which was awarded to the station which had the best listener support to an SMS based competition.

Now, you have to figure that the ultimate test of a radio station would be its ability to motivate its own audience community. Right? So it's got to be one of the big kahunas with the really big audience figures.

And the winner was?

Not one of the big players but U*buhlebeshowe. Zululand FM 97.0*. You've probably never even heard of it because you can't find it in RAMS but it had enough clout in its community to mobilise its listeners and put themselves onto the winner's podium. If the role of community radio is in fact to stimulate the community into action, then this is the ultimate accolade.

Well done Zululand FM. You made your listeners the big winners on the night!

**May 2010 - Khulumamedia**

## Does winning radio awards translate into winning radio?

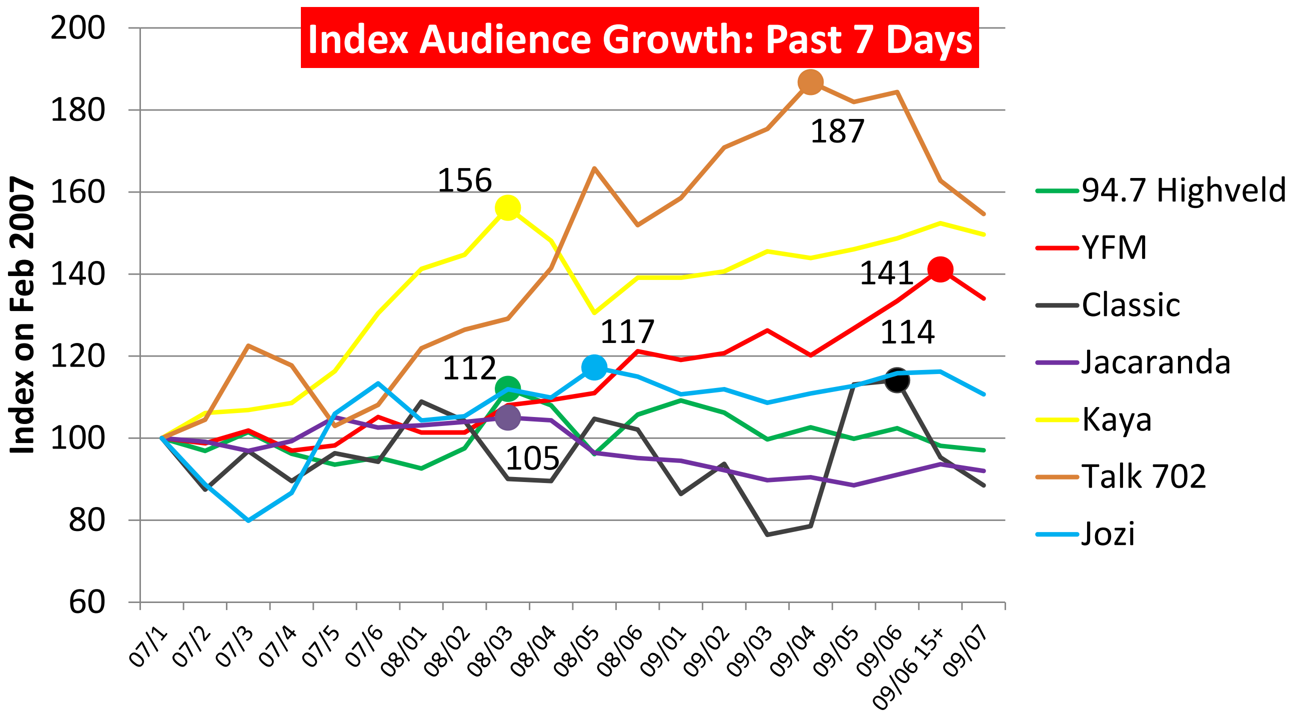
You got to hand it to Talk Radio 702. Last week first on the MTN Radio Awards podium. This week first out the trade marketing starting blocks. Even as an MTN Radio Awards judge, it wasn't until I received this communication from Primedia Broadcasting that I realised the collective weight of Talk Radio 702's achievement. Best radio station of the year. Best daytime show; best night time show as well as best business and news shows. That's a pretty compelling argument if you're wondering where to invest your advertising budget.

Looking at this set me wondering though, does success amongst your peers really translate into success in the marketplace?

At first glance you might be forgiven for saying "no"! After all, if we look at listenership in the past week Talk Radio 702 lies in 5th position amongst Gauteng's finest, just ahead of community station Jozi FM, and leaving perennial under-achiever Classic FM to bring up the rear.

- 94.2 Jacaranda 1,926,000
- YFM 1,576,000
- Kaya FM 1,463,000
- 94.7 Highveld 1,201,000
- Talk Radio 702 531,000
- Jozi FM 492,000
- Classic FM 203,000

Just as size of programme audience doesn't tell the full story when it comes to impacting on individual listeners, size of station audience on any one RAMS diary also falls short of painting the full picture, when it comes to evaluating a station's success in the marketplace.






If we examine the performance of the Big 7 Gauteng stations over the past 3 years (19 RAMS diaries), there is only one station that stands out in terms of long term growth. That's Talk Radio 702. Sure there was a wobble at the back end of 2009 but it looks like that trend is being reversed.

So, does winning radio awards translate into winning radio in the marketplace? Sure looks like it to me.

Of course, looking at the data in some depth and relative to other stations in the Gauteng market, poses another question or two. What do Kaya FM & YFM need to do to be mentioned in dispatches? Another inconvenient truth perhaps? On the other hand Darren Jacaranda isn't exactly in flower right now.

Makes me wonder how Jacaranda 94,2 is going to perform at MTN Radio Awards 2011*?

**May 2010 - Khulumamedia**

* In 2011 Jacaranda - Just Plain Breakfast won the award for Best Commercial Breakfast Show. Arguably the biggest plum in the MTN awards orchard and further proof the consumers don't really care about RAMS data.

# The new SABRE report. That's Ayoba?

**On the release of SABRE 2010**

Released regularly since 1986, SABRE (SA Business Research Evaluation) is an outstanding example of media owner co-operation with the advertising industry and is a very welcome weapon in the South African media strategists' arsenal.

When it comes to media strategy in South Africa, AMPS remains the gold standard for media evaluation and placement for the bulk of the consumer market. Needing as it does though, to encompass the full spectrum of all 14 LSM segments, AMPS does have pockets of sampling vulnerability which limit the media strategist's ability to mine the data.

The AMPS offering is arguably at its weakest at top end of the market generally and in the business sector specifically. The extreme top end of the market, AMPS LSM14 (LSM 10H), represents about 3% of the adult (15+) population. Even though the LSM 14 respondent base is up-weighted to 6% of the total AMPS sample, in recognition of the financial significance of this market segment, the overall respondent base for LSM 14 is only 955.

> ***"As with all media owner research, the principle 'caveat emptor' applies and planners should be aware of the practical implications of any perceived a priori agendas."***

This is where SABRE has stepped into the breach for the past two decades. As with all media owner research, and indeed media research generally, the principle *caveat emptor* applies and planners should be aware of the practical implications of any perceived a *priori* agendas. That point notwithstanding, no media strategists planning a campaign against business decision-makers can afford not to interrogate the SABRE database.

Average personal income for AMPS LSM14 is R15,690 and this benchmark becomes the point of entry for SABRE with a respondent base of 2019 respondents earning R16,000 or more per month. This enlarged sample base allows for robust interrogation of the data and SABRE, used either as an alternative to, or in conjunction with AMPS, provides excellent insights into the affluent business market segment.

A particularly interesting new insight is data on average household income per month. By marrying this data to corresponding household income levels, planners can for the first time get a glimpse of the marketing Holy Grail. A measure of disposable income.

As interesting are some of the new insights which have been included to reflect the changing reality of the South African business marketplace. Questions pertaining to salary review methodologies and company BEE status for instance provide real insights into corporate South Africa. Attitudinal statements allow data users to create their own business confidence measures and insights. In addition to these new qualitative innovations, SABRE provides its usual staple diet of business decision makers and influencers.

In areas where AMPS data has been significantly eroded, areas such as Air Travel and Credit and Debit Cards in the financial sector, SABRE provides superb insights, right down to branded information and attitudinal insights into advertising and product perception.

SABRE 2010 also offers great insights into media usage, beyond the normal readership, listenership and viewership figures. Data on attitudes toward media and actual usage patterns and expectations allows the planner to move into the increasingly significant realm of qualitative media assessment.

Insights into new media applications such as mobile apps and social media are particularly insightful.

The game has changed and SABRE 2010 has changed to accommodate it.

Of course the game this year is called World Cup 2010 and interestingly, only 28% of respondents claim to have, or intend purchasing, tickets. Now that's one thing in SABRE 2010 that's certainly not ayoba! Hopefully there is still time for executives to buy tickets for their staff! That might do a bit for business confidence!

**May 2010 - Khulumamedia**

## Sisonke! It's Football Friday!

For six years I have analysed the World Cup. I've analysed projected audiences and costs. I've analysed opportunities and the legal implications of ambush marketing. I've analysed creative strategies and media strategies. I've analysed outdoor sites and TV programmes. I've analysed new media and old media revitalised. I've analysed budgets and discounts and I've analysed competitors and global trends.

Today it all stops. Today I am going to the game with my three sons and everything else can wait.

In 1995 they said "this will never happen again". "It will never be this good again". Well, they were wrong. It's Football Friday like no Football Friday before! It's the real thing and the spirit of 1995 is alive and well.

Of course we are all hoping for a little Madiba Magic this afternoon but whether the Big Guy makes it to the stadium or not, his legacy will live on.

Viva Bafana Bafana Viva! Ayoba 2010!

**11 June 2010 - Khululmamedia**

## Vuvuzelas and the power of Madiba Magic

Wow. What a whirlwind footie-fest. First round matches wrapped up today and I'm still reeling from the whole experience of the opening day! I can't believe it has passed so quickly. I watched live. I've watched in the pub and on TV. I've listened on radio and been to Fanzones. And now, I can't believe that I am off to watch Bafana Bafana taking on Uruguay in Round 2 tonight. At Loftus Versfeld nogal! The now undisputed home of South African rugby.

From a football perspective it's a make or break game. But whether we make it through to the second round or not, we are all feeling like winners already.

> ***"Football lover and rugby lover alike united for a day. Just like it was in 1995 and 1996. What a day to be a South African."***

Sport in South Africa has never just been about sport.

In 1995, with a little Madiba Magic, we hit the peak at the World Cup rugby final. For many of us, it was the first time we truly felt complete as South Africans. A little more Madiba magic carried us to even further success in the African Cup of Nations the following year. Those were heady days indeed and, for a while, it seemed that anything and indeed everything, was possible for our fledgling democratic nation.

That's a long time ago now. And many South Africans have become cynical about our prospects. Then in 2004 it happened. And once again, a little bit of Madiba Magic was called for during the judging process. South Africa was chosen as the host nation. For 6 years now, we have lived with the naysayers and cynics. “They’ll never be ready in time”. “They don’t have the infrastructure”! “There’s too much crime”. We heard the lot. And we just kept going.

And then came Friday 11th June. Maybe Hemingway or Tolkien could capture the emotion and grandeur of the opening ceremony and game on Friday but it’s beyond my craft capability. In any event, you’ve all seen the pictures! Heard the vuvuzelas in full cry! Football lover and rugby lover alike united for a day. Just like it was in 1995 and 1996. What a day to be a South African.

Of course, sadly, there was no Madiba Magic on the day, but Nelson Mandela’s legacy lives on and will live on whether he is physically present or not. That is his gift to us and our responsibility, as South Africans, towards him.

But it was also about the game and the party. Got there nice and early and was reliably informed by the caterers that I had consumed the first Budweiser of the tournament. I even got interviewed on radio for my efforts. Not sure if it’s true but hey, I’m staking my claim. The good news is that the Buds were cold, and, to my surprise, if you have enough of them, they start tasting pretty good.

Great game. Fair result. And after a week of draws, it’s looking more and more like a good result as well. And maybe because nobody was hurting too much, it was a pretty good night with the Mexican fans. We even got to understand why Mexicans like tequila so much. I guess it’s a bit like Bud. If you have enough, it tastes pretty good.

Not much fun with the Argentinians at Ellis Park on day two though. Mexican fans, it seems, came to watch football and party. Argentinian fans came to watch football. It was pretty intense. I can’t help feeling that Robert Green should be really pleased he’s not playing for Argentina. I’m not sure that “Hand of Plod” jokes would have been enough for Argentinian fans if they had drawn with Nigeria because of a keeper error.

Anyway, I’m going to give the Argentinians another chance tomorrow. Going to watch Argentina v South Korea. Got to see Lionel Messi scoring*. Got to hand it to Messi though, the wry smile on his face on Saturday** told us all that he could see the funny side of having “one of those days”. And, unlike England, he didn’t blame the ball. I wonder how England fans will react if Wayne Rooney has “one of those days” against Algeria?

I guess that’s the difference between South African fans and the other nations. We don’t really expect to win and besides, it’s the African World Cup in South Africa. We’ve got another five tickets to the lottery. I’m not sure who got the biggest blast on the

* He didn’t

** Argentina v Nigeria

vuvuzelas this week. Bafana Bafana or Didier Drogba when he ran on for Cote d'Ivoire against Portugal. As long as there is an African team in the competition, the tournament will remain alive for South African fans.

Maybe a little Madiba Magic can unite us now as a continent. Not just as a nation.

**June 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# World Cup Opening Day

## Delivering more than Vuvuzelas?

Now that the World Cup party is well under way, I guess we do have to go beyond tales of robust socialising and numbers of Buds consumed, and provide some kind of media analysis. The big question of course is, did the national passion for the World Cup which expressed itself in massive supporter rallies and unprecedented sales of South African flags and Bafana Bafana memorabilia, actually convert into real TV audience gains on the opening day?

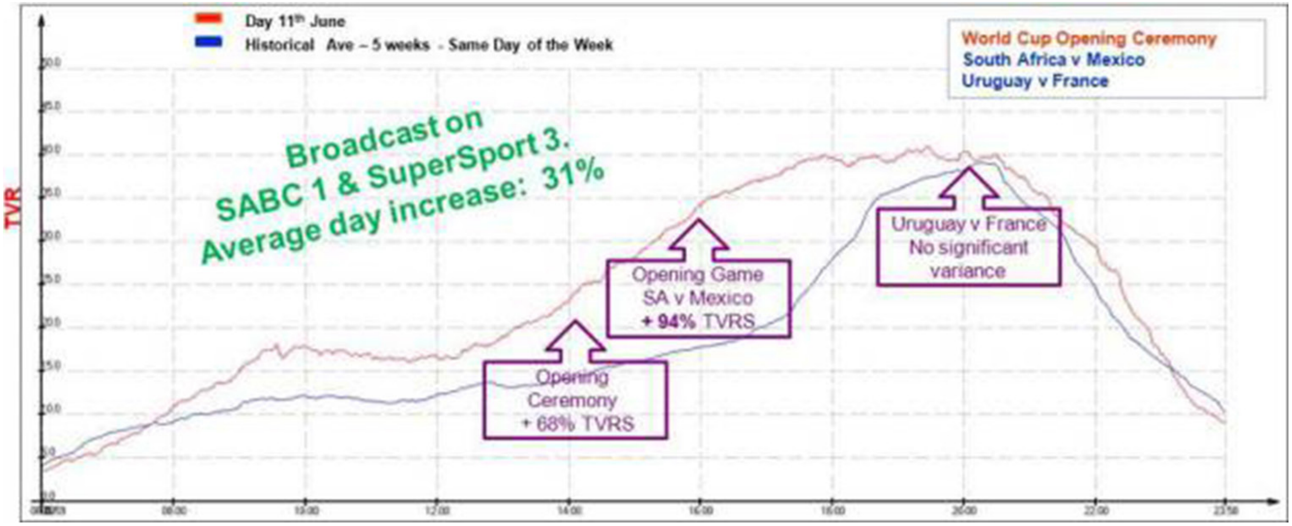
An AGB Nielsen analysis of TAMS data, using Arianna, reveals that the opening ceremony and game created significant increases in viewership. Total TV viewership, all adults, peaked at around 40 ratings during the Bafana Bafana opening game against Mexico. Compared to historical averages, this indicates an overall increase in viewership of 31% over the day. If we factor in "out of home viewership" (which is not measured in TAMS) in pubs and the myriad fan parks which are a feature of the Mzansi World Cup landscape, then it is quite possible that this figure might well have emulated the achievements of Super Bowl XLIV in pushing the 50 ratings barrier!

Understandably, as the conduit to the mass free to home TV market, which is the cornerstone of football support in Mzansi, SABC 1 accounted for the bulk of the increased viewership, with total all adults audiences peaking at about 30 TVRS. An overall increase of some 133% on the day.

Increases in TV audiences for SuperSport3 were equally impressive and although ratings delivery against total adults remains relatively limited, an average delivery of 19 ratings against the upmarket DSTV subscriber base shows the increased pulling power of international football against this market segment, and how effective the Multichoice decoder sales drive into the Middle and Upper Middle LSM market clusters has been.

It is certainly an indicator that without access to top notch football, TopTV is going to have its work cut out if it wants to create critical momentum in these market segments.

Although there is some variance in terms of specific day part ratings, Telmar generated TAMS data shows a fair degree of consistency in terms of the macro perspective for World Cup opening day. Bafana v Mexico generates some 29 ratings on SABC1 whilst




the opening ceremony comes in considerably lower at 15 ratings. Much the same pattern as indicated by Arianna.

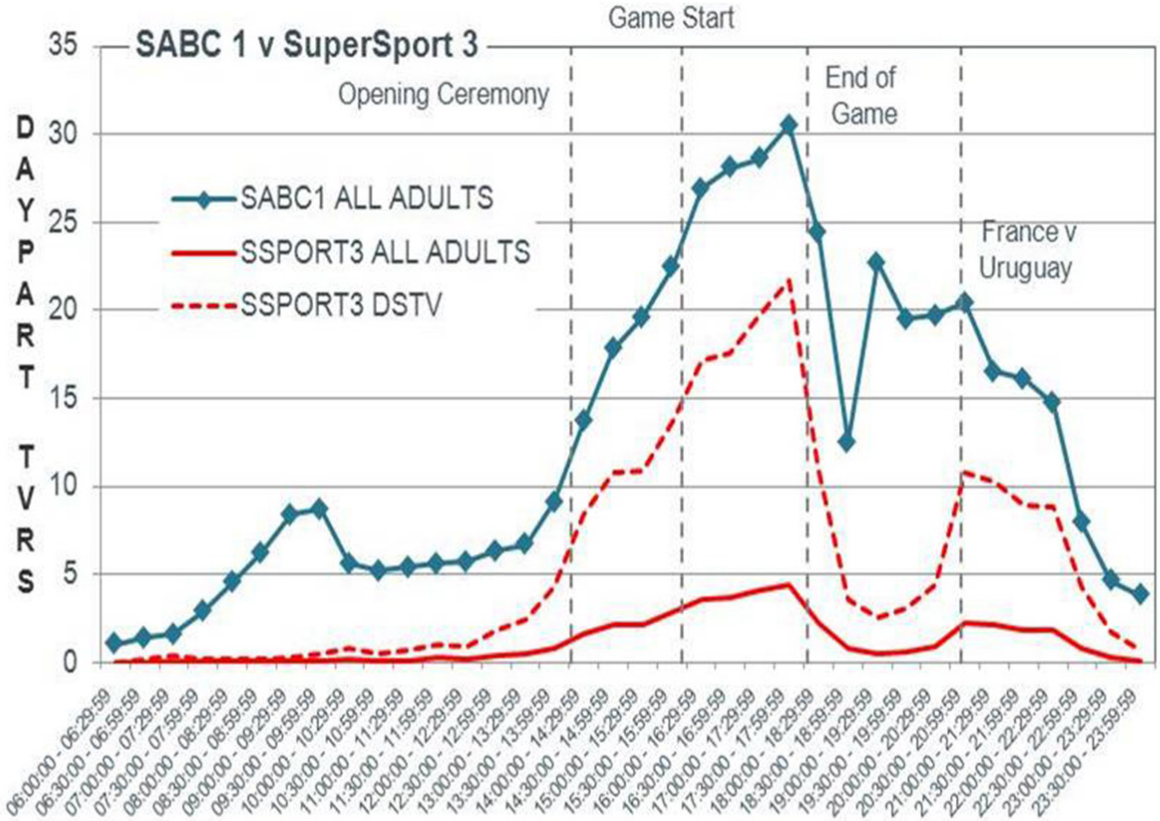


The drop off to 17 ratings for France v Uruguay later that evening is entirely understandable. I guess we are like sports fans all over the world. We'd rather watch our own team than the other guys. But the fact that it still delivers higher ratings than the opening ceremony, is a strong reminder that this is the African World Cup in South Africa, and that most fans have a strong interest in the performance of other African nations in the tournament.

***"It flags the current limitation of TAMS sampling and the need to accelerate alternative and more broadly inclusive, forms of viewership iteration."***

The degree of national fervour expressed in the past few weeks leads one to ponder whether World Cup 2010 hasn't irrevocably shifted the axis of sports interest at the top end of the Mzansi market, in the same way that winning the World Cup Rugby in 1995 changed the destiny of that sporting code in Mzansi for all time.

In terms of the long term shift, the most interesting implications are found amongst total adults in the TAMS DSTV sample universe. Opening ceremony generates some 8 ratings, whilst Match 1 generates 19 ratings. As with SABC 1, ratings drop to 9 for France v Uruguay later that evening. No surprises here.




The really interesting insight is the one delivered the day after lift-off. On Saturday afternoon 12th June, within the South African sporting paradigm, we have a classic clash. World Cup Soccer v Test Match Rugby. The irresistible force meets the immovable object. In terms of the perception of the "typical" DSTV viewer, historically there could have been only one outcome. Rugby rules, right! Well not during World Cup it seems. Argentina v Nigeria generates 9,4 ratings and the Springboks v France 10. The Boks might have pumped France on the day but, overall, I'd call that a draw.

I don't know what this means for the long term future of football in Mzansi but one thing's for sure, DSTV will never be the same again. If marketers are still limiting DSTV to the exclusive "top-end top-up" role which it has traditionally played then it is seriously time for a rethink. Certainly it flags the current limitation on TAMS sampling and the need to accelerate alternative, and more broadly inclusive, forms of viewership iteration.

**June 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# Meanderings of a Media Madala

You know you are turning into a media madala, when the people who come to you with questions about their MBA thesis look like they should be asking for help with their Matric homework. I was recently posed five questions by one of Mzansi media's up and coming Doogie Howser impersonators. And those of you who don't have to Google "Doogie Howser" to know who he is, will understand where I'm coming from.

» *Q 1: In your view, how has the landscape of advertising agencies changed over the last decade?*

The landscape hasn't changed, we've just moved to another planet. Return on investment means that ad campaigns actually have to work now. It's not enough to give your client a statue of a really nice indigenous bird or tell them that they are getting a bigger discount than they did last year. They actually want to make more money in sales or enhanced brand value than they invest in advertising, and that's really annoying. Nothing worse than being checked up on! Why can't they just take our word for it and let things return to the way they were 30 years ago? And as for consumers, what's their problem? Why don't they just borrow money and buy the things we show them? Stuff the global recession! Where's the consumer's commitment to award winning advertising?

> **"*You know you are turning into a media madala, when the people who come to you with questions about their MBA thesis look like they should be asking for help with their Matric homework.*"**

» *Q2: Are advertising agencies, structurally, in a healthy state?*

Agencies, whether creative or media, have a simple problem. Their client's don't have confidence in them anymore. Unfortunately, clients are actually just getting what they pay for. Why is it that when clients buy cheap whisky and second-rate underwear, they are not shocked to discover that their drinks taste crap and they walk around with a wedgie all day, but when they buy cheap advertising, they are absolutely staggered to discover that it doesn't work and that they have, in fact, got precisely what they paid for? So who's going to blink first? If agencies don't gear up they aren't going to get the respect they desperately want.

My father taught me that there are two kinds of people in the world. Those who demand respect and those who command respect! Agencies used to be in one of these two categories. Now they are in the other one. You can work out which.

Is that healthy? Perhaps you could research it? Research apparently solves absolutely everything in advertising!

» *Q3: What are your views on remuneration to agencies in general. Are retainer fees a sustainable manner of survival? Is the agency retainer fee model sustainable?*

Let's see what Chris de Burgh has to say on the matter …

Chris: "Don't pay the ferryman, don't even fix a price, don't pay the ferryman till he gets you to the other side".

Agency: "But there's trouble ahead, so you must pay me now"!

Chris: "Don't do it"!

Agency: "You must pay me now"!

Chris: "Don't do it … until he gets you to the other side".

Fees are sustainable as a remuneration mechanism but not at the current level. It's not the principle of the fee that is the problem but the size of the fee. On the other hand, you can't charge clients for badly reasoned frivolous rubbish. Agencies have to up their game as well.

» *Question 4: Is there a resistance to the reengineering of the advertising industry as a whole? Yes? No?*

Yes, but only by the people who work in the advertising industry and people who don't understand digital and social media! Don't worry about the ANC Media Commission, what we need in Mzansi is a government commission to stop people from fast forwarding through TV commercials and playing about on YouTube.

"The people want UGC", you say? Well, let them eat print!

Mayibuye media planning. Phansi YouTube! Phansi!

And finally, the big question.

» *Question 5: What is your opinion on a future model for a given advertising agency in South Africa?*

You want to know what the future model of a given advertising agency in South Africa will be? Don't ask me, mate. Google it!

**September 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# Signs of Life or back to Square One?

## Meltdown at the SABC

Nobody with any real commitment to the media industry in Mzansi has truly enjoyed watching the meltdown at the SABC. The SABC serves an important market sector and we need the commercial arm to be firing on all cylinders. OK, given the recent developments at Awkward Park , perhaps "firing" is an unfortunate turn of phrase, but you understand what I'm saying.

Well, you can imagine my excitement when the first signs of commercial life came this week in the form of guaranteed audience packages for October. In short "SABC Television will guarantee a specific CPP against a pre-determined target market". There are a few advertisers who have operated on a guaranteed audience/ CPP basis for a while but the broader application of this buying approach signals at least some awareness within the halls of SABC commercial management that the old "take it or leave approach" to inventory management is over.

There are three packages ...

Package 1 (LSM 5-8): R500,000 guarantees TVRS and CPPS as follows:

- 321 TVRS @ R1,558 against all dayparts
- 199 TVRS @ R2,513 against primetime
- 504 TVRS @ R992 against shoulder time

Package 2 (LSM 7-10): R500,000 guarantees TVRS and CPPS as follows:

- 234 TVRS @ R2,136 against all dayparts
- 138 TVRS @ R3,628 against primetime
- 330 TVRS @ R1,514 against shoulder time

Package 3 (LSM 8-10): R500,000 guarantees TVRS and CPPS as follows:

- 156 TVRS @ R3,214 against all dayparts
- 128 TVRS @ R3,914 against primetime
- 197 TVRS @ R2,534 against shoulder time

So far so good. Obviously advertisers will have to check these CPP levels against projected levels for conventional SABC discounted buys (because negotiated discounts don't apply on top of these CPP parameters) but it's a step in the right direction. Right?

I thought so too until I checked the small print.

Terms and conditions include the fact that "contracts exclude the ability to choose specific environments", which in this day and age is no small point. After all viewers call "environments" programmes and programmes are what they choose to watch or not to watch. I've never heard any TV viewers talking about their favourite dayparts.

And of course another relevant fact is that "in the event of SABC TV failing to reach the objectives of the contract for any reason whatsoever, any claim by the advertiser against SABC TV shall be limited to a rebate as prescribed by the advertising code and regulations". So in other words, if the SABC totally under-delivers and the campaign doesn't work, the advertiser will get back only the under-delivered portion of the investment. No small consideration.

Even these clauses advertisers can live with. They are, after all, not dissimilar to the clauses governing OATS packages on DSTV.

The one clause that, sadly, leads me to the conclusion that Fawlty Towers has not really come to terms with its loss of status in the market is that these packages only apply "when a terrestrial or complete television exclusivity commitment is signed". Say what? SABC exclusivity when you are talking to LSM 8-10?

I can't even think of an animal on National Geographic or Discovery Channel that can bury its head deeper than that.

**October 2010 - Khulumamedia**

# DSTV new subscribers, You're my everything

**On the issue of 'self-promotion' on TV**

Given the cost of a bottle of my favourite tipple, I'd probably have to concede that on the Johnnie Walker Green scale, DSTV still represents reasonable value for viewing money on a monthly basis. Certainly, if, like me, you enjoy watching sport on TV, there is simply no other viable viewing option. Unless of course you're really fascinated by cross country snow-skiing or Mongolian nose wrestling, in which case you could subscribe to Top TV.

> *"I can't help feeling that fear of churn amongst existing DSTV subscribers has been totally overwhelmed by the lure of new subscribers and that advertisers are ultimately carrying the cost of this initiative."*

Increasingly though, I can't help feeling that fear of churn amongst existing DSTV subscribers has been totally overwhelmed by the lure of new subscribers. A bona fide case of "there's plenty more where that came from" syndrome. Understandable from a commercial perspective I guess, but I can't supress the growing awareness that advertisers are ultimately carrying the cost of this initiative.

In 2006, Nielsen Adex attributed 32% of measured commercial activity to "station self-promotion". Year to date 2010, that figure has increased to 52%. That's right. More than half the "commercial activity" on TV is not advertising at all, but station promos.

Many media pundits still report that Television in Mzansi now absorbs almost 60% of adspend, but if we eliminate the phenomenon of TV station "self-promotion" that figure falls to less than 50%. In fact bona fide TV advertising constitutes only 47% of all adspend. That tends to paint a much more balanced view of media life in Mzansi.

So who is really responsible for this? Well for once, it isn't Awkward Park. 72% of all Adex reported station "self-promotion" takes place on DSTV. In fact, in many DSTV channel clusters, non-programming activity constitutes the overwhelming majority of so-called "commercial activity". 76% of all reported advertising on SuperSport is station "self-promotion". 76% on BBC programmes and 67% on the primary new channels (Sky, BBC, CNN & ENews).

Against this backdrop, one can't help asking whether the average package on DSTV (+/-R60,000 delivering +/-40 spots) continues to offer fair value. If you can't sell the distressed inventory then why not increase the spot allocation on the average package? Hell, you could probably double or treble it and remain within ICASA commercial guidelines, and still have enough time left over to lure new subscribers into the red eye fraternity.

After all, how many times can you listen to Barry White singing "You're my everything".

**February 2011 - Khulumamedia**



## An invitation from The Media to Rant & Rave

**RANT: Enough with the fake accents an' all!**

When the Truro arrived in Durban with 342 indentured labourers in 1861, few could have imagined the impact the Indian community would have on the destiny of our country. Over the past 150 years, there is no walk of life in which Indian South Africans have not made their mark. Commerce ... Politics … Entertainment … Cricket. And of course cuisine! Basically the lot!

What immutable law of advertising exists then, which prevents the local advertising industry from using real Indians, with real Indian accents, in radio commercials? I mean, even the BBC found a South African to play the role of Ashwin Kumar in the Kumars at No 42.

Personally, I blame fake Indian accents in radio commercials for the carnage on South African roads. There is not a driver in the country that can drive safely, whilst desperately attempting to change channels every time another Michael Naicker wannabe trots out his routine. Unfortunately, neither the Consumer Protection Act nor the ASA, has a code of practice which protects consumers from fake Indian accents in radio commercials, and so the death toll continues to mount. That's why I am advocating that fake Indian accent commercials be legislated under the Road Traffic Offences Act.

I understand that not all radio voices need to sound like Naledi Pandor, but if we don't do something about this problem jaldi jaldi, we'll be on the low road to radio chaos and before we even know it, we'll have a bunch of inarticulate nasal twits anchoring our premier radio morning-drive shows. Hang on? Hmmmm …

### RAVE: What a wonderful … awful … world!

It's been said that baby boomers all over the world can remember where they were the day JFK was assassinated (I was with my mother, listening to the wireless at the Model Dairy in Durban). Of course, over the years, this mental GPS benchmark has shifted to incorporate the changing global landscape. The election of Barack Obama! The death of Princess Di! The release of Nelson Mandela (I was with my mother watching on TV … I guess some things don't change).

But nothing, not even the awful spectacle of 9/11 compares with the sheer mind-numbing memorability of the Tsunami in Japan.

To think that technology has advanced to the point where we can sit and watch a cataclysmic global event unfolding live on TV is truly astounding. To think that countless millions watched these same dreadful images streaming real-time on hand-held mobile devices, as they went about their day-to-day lives tens of thousands of miles away.

As the Tsunami approached the Oshika Peninsula at Sendai I had to remind myself that I wasn't watching some Hollywood blockbuster. To remind myself that the perfectly straight wall of water was not some computer generated SFX visual. Those were real people frantically driving those Dinky cars. Real people standing on the bridge, watching the water rising. I felt like I was watching an Alfred Hitchcock thriller where you want to scream at the victim … Run … Run … can't you see what's coming towards you?

I will never forget where I was that day. I was watching television. I was watching history. And I was watching it real-time. What a truly remarkable world we live in.

I hope I don't live long enough to see anything like it again.

### March 2011 - The Media

# Just a game of COPs 'n Robbers?

**On the need to set professional standards for the media industry**

As Chairman of the AMASA/ AMF discussion forum last week, I was not at all sure what to expect. After all, the subject matter had all the ingredients for the media celebrity death-match of the decade. Do media agencies have the nous and creative talent to survive? Should marketers take their media in-house and should media owners respond to this by abandoning their traditional symbiotic relationship with agencies?

> *In 1996 I wrote a textbook, which I entitled Media Planning Art or Science. Had I written that book today, I believe I might have gone with the title Media Planning Art or Procurement.*



And of course, there is the matter of the media transaction that dare not speak its name. Agency group discounts. Got to be fireworks right? Only there weren't any. One of the panellists did allude to the elephant in the room.

Noting that there is an elephant in the room is, of course, an important first step in dealing with the pachyderm.

Unfortunately nobody thereafter wanted to make eye contact with the elephant, let alone pick up the spade and wheelbarrow that is inevitably required to maintain some semblance of order under these conditions.

So it might be argued that there was no real progress on the night. But then again, it might be argued that when it comes to the challenges facing media professionals in this country, there has been very little progress since the inception of AMASA as a body in 1971. In his opening address at the AMASA Pathway to the Future conference in 1977, past Chairman Frank Muller noted …

*» "I think we are going to have to do something urgent about training young people to become media planners… I'd like to see media planners trained, not just as figure boffins, but trained to understand that they are part of marketing".*

We all … media agencies, media owner and marketers alike, need to recognise that the most important thing we can do right now, is to put the value back into the media planning and purchasing process.

It seems incredible that, 40 years since its inception, AMASA still does not have a Code of Professional Practice (COP), such as the World Federation of Advertisers Media Charter, which governs the buying and selling of media. Without a COP, media agencies and media owners will continue to see the value of their services and their products respectively being even further commoditised. Strip away the value and you strip away the margin and eventually, all you have left is a commodity which can be traded at the lowest common denominator.

Under these end-game conditions, there is only one outcome. Discounts rule.

In 1996 I wrote a textbook, which I entitled *Media Planning Art or Science*. Had I written that book today, I believe I might have gone with the title *Media Planning Art or Procurement*.

In a world where the power of media earned has the potential to overwhelm the collective power of media owned and media paid for, only the profoundly arrogant or the terminally commercially unwise would conclude that this is the time to go it alone in the local market.

When it comes to the future of the media industry, the jury may be out but the elephant is still in the room! And he's not wearing Huggies!

Maybe it's time to call a COP to sort out the mess!

**May 2011 - Khulumamedia**

# Mad Men. What some women want!

I have recently been asked by a leading marketing journal to answer a few questions regarding the media habits of women in Mzansi. "What type of media (newspapers, radio and TV) & programmes are women likely to consume (read, listen to & watch) and why"?

There are two very simple answers to these questions...

» *What types of media are women more likely to consume?*

Answer: Women are most likely to consume media that are available to them and media they are interested in.

» *Why do they consume these media? Answer?*

Answer: See point 1 above.

Let's extrapolate from this simple reality of available audience and personal interest …



Women read newspapers they are interested in. Listen to radio stations and programmes they are interested in and watch those TV stations and programmes in which they are interested. Those who are interested in romance and intrigue watch Generations and those who are interested in news apparently watch SABC1 Zulu/ Xhosa News. At least that's what the number from TAMS tells us. Of course women who are interested in tennis watch Wimbledon (assuming they have DSTV) and those who are interested in crime watch Medical Detectives (assuming of course they have ETV).

In this respect then, women are precisely like men. Men who are interested in rugby read Sunday Times or Rapport and those who are interested in soccer read Sunday Sun. Men who are interested in cinema go to movies and listen to Barry Ronge and women who are CEOs of companies read Business Day or Financial Mail. This is the essence of media planning, if not life itself. Find out what people are interested in and then talk to them about their interests, in a place they find interesting. It is of course very interesting to note that twice as many women listen to John Robbie as listen to Redi Tlhabi on 702. But hey, that's available audience for you!

> *"If there was ever a time when the media industry needed an ombudsman to watch over publishing practices it is now."*

Posing such general questions about the media consumption of women is like watching an American TV ad from the 50s or an episode of Mad Men where female consumers are collectively referred to as "the little woman". You imply some universality of economic and social circumstance, intellect, and of course media behaviour, which I believe does not do justice to the diversity of the role and interests of women in Mzansi. If I posed these questions to some of my female advertising students, I'd be shot down in flames. And so should this perspective on media consumption by females.

Oh, by the way! Females who work in advertising are apparently quite interested in watching Mad Men! Strange isn't it?

**June 2011 - Khulumamedia**

## No ABC … no business!

**Use it or Lose it.**

Many have argued that only a free press stands between the government and an abuse of its powers. Others that commercialism, rather than government control, is the true enemy of the press. Either way, what cannot be denied is that rumours of the death of print media in South African are a Twainian exaggeration.

So why bother with scrutinising ABC data? Hey, it's yesterday's measure! Hi tech solutions rule! We've got all that really sexy AMPS readership stuff right! If you Google it they will come.

Sometimes the allure of technology can leave us feeling a little cynical about established management practices or even lead us to believe that lo-tech solutions are in some way inferior. So it is with audited circulations. Other more sophisticated measures of media consumption don't mean that the humble ABC is an obsolete currency. As a body the ABC has admittedly a reputation for detail … perhaps too much detail … but it is in that eye for detail that the true watchdog of advertiser interests resides.

If there was ever a time when the media industry needed an ombudsman to watch over publishing practices it is now. The growing armada of publishing pirates, offering panaceas for any 2010 advertising ailment, is gathering off our shores. The need to sharpen and sustain the benchmarks for ethical practice in publishing has never been greater. The ABC certificate is the first step in that process.

It seems remarkable the very advertisers who demand "guaranteed audience deals" from TV broadcasters fail to recognise and embrace the same offer inherently embedded in the ABC currency. Buying advertising exposure from a publication which has not subjected itself to due diligence and which consequently does not offer guaranteed minimum delivery is, quite simply, an unsound and inappropriate media planning practice. It has been the mantra of print planning for decades and there is still no sound alternative argument to dethrone it. No ABC! No business!

*"It has been the mantra of print planning for decades and there is still no sound alternative argument to dethrone it. "No ABC! No Business."*

That is not to say that the ABC as a currency has not evolved to accommodate changes in the market place. Over the years, various formats of CFD (Controlled Free Distribution) circulation measures have evolved to accommodate the growth in free distribution titles. A significant recent innovation is the inclusion of a new category of "hybrid" newspapers, which accommodates the inclusion of newspapers with both paid and free circulation.

As with all media data though, it is crucial that advertisers and media planners dissect that data in order to extract real insights. For instance, calculations based on AIR (Average Issue Readership) data in AMPS present a highly inflated best case reach scenario, which includes people who only glance at or read a part of the publication. What chance ad-noting, let alone ad-comprehension under these conditions? That's why print planning increasingly centres on the search for primary readers. Readers who evidence a demonstrable and long term relationship with a title, rather than a circumstantial fleeting one night stand.

Similarly it is crucial to dissect the various levels of ABC circulation measurement. For instance, single copy sales may tell us how many titles are personally purchased, and therefore presumably read, by a targeted individual. Subscriptions are arguably still the best measure of a publication's committed reader base.

From an active planning perspective, perhaps the single most exciting development on the horizon is the prospect that media planning software group Telmar is soon to carry ABC circulation data embedded into the PrintPlan programme.

It is a quantum innovation in making ABC data more accessible and relevant to media planners and serves as a vivid reminder that, in addition to its primary contribution of offering minimum guarantees on circulation, without an ABC we have no way of validating AMPS readership.

If "there is gold in them thar AMPS" as the old SAARF marketing slogan suggests, then the ABC is certainly one of the nuggets. Let's not devalue the currency. To the publisher out there who says "I don't really need an ABC", the only sound business response from a media planner is … "You do if you want to do business with me!"

**October 2011 - Khulumamedia**

## Community Radio and RAMS

**All quiet on the Western Front!**



SAARF has announced they will host a Community Radio Symposium in September. The aim of the symposium is to address issues related to the successful running of a community radio station. Issues such as managing and marketing a community radio station, using and understanding RAMS data, and research that should be conducted by community radio stations themselves.

That community radio has been totally under-marketed, and consequently under-supported, we all understand. According to RAMS, some ten million people listen to community radio every month. That's about one in every three radio listeners. But these same stations pull only 1,4% of annual radio advertising revenue. Not even Pieter de Villiers has a conversion rate as bad as this.

So where does it go wrong?

Even if community radio stations did have the energy and the expertise to market themselves, the question remains: what would they use for information? Experienced marketers and media decision makers don't need numbers to make every decision but the vast majority of media decisions are made by increasingly under-trained and inexperienced media planners and buyers. So, bottom line, community radio needs the numbers. They need numbers that more accurately reflect the vibrancy and viability of daily listenership.

So where might they get that data from? There are two basic options …

» *Source 1: The Main AMPS report which comes out twice a year.*

This is where we get the "big picture data" which consistently confirms that listenership to community radio ("yesterday" or "past 7 days") is huge. So, strategically, the collective weight of evidence is that community radio is a crucial part of the mix. The problem is that when you tunnel into the data at a station level, the samples for each station are really unusable.

» *Source: 2 The RAMS diaries which come out 6 times a year.*

This is where the pencil really hits the paper. This where is planners move beyond the "yesterday" and "past 7 days" figures into the detailed average ¼ hour data which forms the currency for detailed media planning and scheduling. If the samples in AMPS are bad, at implementation planning level the community radio station level samples in RAMS are almost non-existent and essentially unusable. Try as hard as you might, you simply can't extract data out of RAMS which could be used to sell individual community stations.

> ***"The only way community radio will ever get the ammunition they need to sell themselves, is to have a dedicated RAMS diary that comes out annually, with the appropriate sample for community radio."***

AMPS and RAMS data is financed by a levy on all advertising, which is nominally paid by advertisers and collected by media owners, who then pay this over to MAMCA and SAARF. This is of course a moot point and many broadcasters would hold the opinion that this is their money. This issue is currently being debated within the advertising industry. The bottom line on this is that the commercial broadcasters are not motivated to use this levy to promote the interests of community radio stations. In fact, they have a vested interest in ensuring that community radio never reaches its full potential. So we continue to produce 6 diaries a year, where nothing ever happens.

The phrasing of the latest press release from SAARF regarding the release of RAMS2011/ 3 provides the insight …

» *"In a world of ceaseless change, it's good to know there are some things you can still count on. Like radio! The SAARF released RAMS June 2011, with stable listenership once again being the name of the game".*

That's SAARF speak for "ho hum another round of incredibly boring radio data where absolutely nothing new and exciting has happened"!

So what SAARF celebrates as reliable old radio data, is really just designed to entrench the same old "business as usual" approach.

In defence of SAARF, this is not a unique circumstance and highlights the limitation of the SAARF industry-funded research initiative. It is quite frankly impossible for AMPS and RAMS to cover the interests of every single media sector. We all understand that. With newspapers for instance, the AMPS sample does not hold up for scrutiny at a suburb or community level and consequently totally under-reports community newspapers, relative to primary daily and weekly titles.

That's why the Caxton newspaper group pulled out of AMPS and established its own research study called ROOTS, where the sample is specifically structured to highlight the community level readership of local newspapers. AMPS under-samples Soweto and as a consequence, many newspaper titles such as Sowetan and Sunday World are totally under-reported. So, what Avusa has done, in order to better market its own titles, is to produce a study called The Gauteng Wealth Study with a more representative sample in Soweto.

***"When it comes to funding CRAMS, the other we know for sure, is that the NAB and RAB are not going to push for this solution. After all, why would you feed the baby crocodile that is beginning to think your outstretched hand might make a very good meal one day?"***

Sound marketing responses from the big media players.

Well it's the same principle for community radio.

The only way community radio will ever get the ammunition they need to sell themselves is to have a dedicated RAMS diary that comes out annually, with the appropriate sample for community radio.

There is, I believe, quite a simple solution, summed up below ...

» *1] The current 6 RAMS should revert to quarterly diaries.*

Despite the protestations of commercial broadcasters, there is absolutely no value generated by an additional 2 diaries, which endlessly report "all quiet on the Western front", other than entrenching the status quo and protecting existing ad-revenue streams.

» *2] One of the remaining diaries should be dedicated to community radio (CRAMS), with an appropriately constructed sample that will allow individual stations to stake a reasonable claim to exposure on the average radio schedule.*

This would be an annual diary and would form the basis of any future marketing of community radio!

To expect community radio to fund CRAMS out of their advertising revenue is unrealistic. They barely have the funds to run themselves, let alone create expensive research. When it comes to CRAMS, the one thing we know for sure is that the NAB* and RAB** are not going to push for this solution. After all, why would you feed the baby crocodile that is beginning to think your outstretched hand might make a very good meal one day?

So that leaves the MDDA or some other relevant authority with a stake in, or even responsibility for, growing community radio. Without external funding for CRAMS, either from within the advertising industry or externally, community radio in Mzansi will never get off the ground.

What about the second remaining diary? What the industry needs is a radio diary which is dedicated to improving the quality of data in the major metropolitan areas … Gauteng, Durban and Cape Town. (METRAMS) But that's another story, so watch out for the next installment in this gripping tale of radio advertising intrigue.

Or brace yourself for another fascinating celebration of "stable listenership" and "things you can still count on" when SAARF release RAMS2011/4 in a few months.

**August 2011 - Khulumamedia**



* National Association of Broadcasters

** Radio Advertising Bureau. Now defunct.

## Does the magic really live on MNet?

Before you read further, I'd like you to stop and list the primary commercial TV stations in Mzansi, as reflected in AMPS. Quickly! Top of mind!

If your list looks like this … SABC 1, SABC 2, SABC 3, ETV, MNet, DSTV and TopTV … then you're in tune with the vast majority of media planners in this country. MNet still seems to command a place at the main ad revenue table. So much so, that the vast majority of TV schedules aimed at the Upper Middle-Class and Elite markets (LSM 8-LSM14 using the Muller Cluster Model) will include some commercial time on MNet at a massively inflated CPP premium. I'm not talking 5-10% premium here. I'm talking the nasty stuff with an extra zero on the end.

Why would anybody pay at 100%-300% premium to retain MNet on a schedule? What is the magic that supposedly lives on MNet? More importantly perhaps, is why does the magic cost so much and could we find the magic somewhere else at a reasonable price? Here's a clue. This year, MNet celebrated its 25th birthday!

For many media decision makers, the FIBD principle *(First In Best Dressed)* has imparted to MNet some sort of mystical media quality, as if it's still the proverbial viewing oasis in the SABC programming desert, that it used to be 25 years ago. There are even advertisers who still blissfully follow the Carte Blanche and Sunday Night Movie scheduling ritual irrespective of the evidence that clearly shows that, for pay TV households, family viewership no longer congregates around this viewer behavior pattern.

> ***So what is the magic that supposedly lives on MNet and why does it cost so much?***



The release of AMPS 2011BA, and the expanded data set for decoder ownership and pay-tv viewership provides a totally different insight though. Of the 3,1million households that have some form of Multichoice decoder in the home, there are only 116,000 standalone MNet decoder households.

So, here's the question. Despite the fact that AMPS lists MNet as a "commercial TV channel", does data mining really support the view that MNet is a primary TV station? Or is it just another content silo on DSTV? Well so what if it's a channel on DSTV you say, it's still the biggest and the best! Apparently not! Yesterday viewership on DSTV, relegates MNet to 13th position, behind channels such as Movie Magic, MNet-Action, ENews and even Africa Magic.

So what is the magic that supposedly lives on MNet and why does it cost so much? You could of course ask DSTV but they won't tell you because, as you know, a really good magician never gives away the secret of the magic trick.

We all like a bit of magic, but not at any price.

**November 2011 - Khulumamedia**

# No more Media Chocolate for you!

### Overhauling AMPS

When I was recently asked by The Media to participate in an open forum at GIBS Institute, to "Demystify Print Media Research", the proposed title of my opening address was "To be more effective we need to change some of the questions in AMPS".

To my mind that's a little like saying … "In order to lose weight I need to change the kind of chocolates I'm eating"! No Gordon! Stop with the chocolates! I know they taste nice and they make you feel great but the simple truth is they're not good for you. Go find a piece of celery or an apple.

Have you ever wondered why chocolate tastes so good? Apparently chocolate contains more than 300 known chemicals. Scientists have been working on isolating specific chemicals and chemical combinations which may explain some of the pleasurable effects of consuming chocolate. Caffeine is the most well-known of these chemical ingredients. There's Theo-bromine, a weak stimulant. Phenyl-ethylamine is also found in chocolate. It's related to amphetamines, which are strong stimulants.

AMPS is a little like a piece of chocolate. Packed full of interesting facts and marketing stimulants. And every year, or in the case of TAMS, every day, we get more and more slabs of information about the market. So when we turn off the Telmar switch in our brains at the end of the day, we feel really good about ourselves and our information-rich media plans.

However, it is really worth noting that while stimulants contribute to a temporary sense of well-being, there are other chemicals and other theories as to why chocolate makes us feel good. One of the most interesting findings comes from researchers at the Neurosciences Institute in San Diego, California. They believe that "chocolate contains pharmacologically active substances that have the same effect on the brain as marijuana".

*"If you think changing a few questions is all that's required to sustain AMPS world class status then you must either be smoking something or eating too much media chocolate."*

This is my point. If you think changing a few questions is all that's required to sustain AMPS world class status … and it is a world class product … then you must either be smoking something or eating too much media chocolate.

There has been a revolution in media. 20 years ago marketers believed that advertising worked and that all we in media needed to do, was measure the audience and put a price to it. Now clients are asking us "does advertising work anymore?" and we are trying to fob them off by answering, "I don't know, but here's a million readers".

We also need to recognise that the composition of the market has undergone a quantum shift. 20 years ago, if you went down Old Potchefstroom Road … now Chris Hani Road … you would have found a squadron of Ratels … now you can find Maponya Mall. You've been to Maponya Mall right? So here's a piece of media celery for you to chew on! Would it surprise you to know that according to AMPS 2011BA there are only two LSM10 households in Soweto? RAMS 2011/4 tells me there are none.

Not one LSM10 household in the whole of Soweto? So who the hell is shopping at Maponya Mall? That's why I changed the topic of my presentation at GIBS into "To be more effective AMPS needs a total overhaul". Because if you think there are no LSM10 households in Soweto then you must be eating chocolate!

**November 2011 - Khulumamedia**

## AMPS … Taking the Road Less Travelled By

For an industry that makes a living by telling its clients to embrace change and not to be afraid of innovation, we show a remarkable aversion to taking our own advice.

In a recent blog entitled No More Media Chocolate for You, I made the point that whilst AMPS has been, and still is, a world class product, the best way to ensure its legacy is to recognise that the vehicle which drives the media industry in Mzansi needs a major overhaul, not just a routine service and oil change.

Many colleagues have berated me (again) for being a media hothead, arguing that in order to keep AMPS cruising along, all we need to do is "adapt and tweak" a few things here and there.

*"For an industry that makes a living by telling its clients to embrace change and not to be afraid of innovation, we show a remarkable aversion to taking our own advice."*

Watching the intensity of the industry debate around the future of AMPS, and listening to the growing mantra of mutually exclusive media sector interests, one does not get the sense that we have the time to "adapt and tweak" this amazing product.

If anything, one gets a strong sense that we need to be bold and create new benchmarks.

If we had just been content to "tweak and adapt" in 1990 there would be no LSMS and we would still be trying to segment markets using race as a primary differentiator. If South Africans had been content to "tweak and adapt" in 1992 we would still have a tricameral parliamentary system, and not a democracy.

Increasingly media strategy and buying is viewed by marketers as an accountable business activity, not an academic treatise on reliable research methodology. Being content with "tweaking" AMPS so that data is reliable doesn't really help when, increasingly, it is the validity of the data that clients are challenging.

I'm no research expert but I do know that when I take my clients to Maponya Mall and then try to convince them AMPS is correct when it reflects only two LSM10 respondents in Soweto (or none at all if

I use RAMS), then I come away looking a little less than smart.

Obviously there is a great deal more to AMPS than media information, but from a media perspective, we need to acknowledge there has been a revolution in media. And right now, we are sitting at the cross roads. 20 years ago marketers believed, rightly, that advertising worked and that all we in media needed to do was measure the audience and put a price to it. Pricing for advertising success! When the pricing started looking a little less enticing, we went into the media discount business and called it "added value".

Now those same clients are asking us "Does advertising work anymore, at any price?" and we are trying to fob them off by answering "I don't know but here's a million readers". The paradigm in media planning has shifted from measuring media audiences (counting heads) to measuring media effectiveness (penetrating heads). And right now AMPS is in danger of falling behind on this delivery platform.

Let's be proactive. Let's open the debate on what data we need in the coming decade to make better media decisions.

> ***"The paradigm in media planning has shifted from measuring media audiences (counting heads) to measuring media effectiveness (penetrating heads). And right now AMPS is in danger of falling behind."***

For instance, does the radio industry really need to report 6 RAMS diaries annually when they can't even answer the most fundamental questions about the radio listening experience? In the 70s a client asked me whether people really did listen to radio in the office, in the morning, and I was unable to provide the answer. Almost 40 years later I am still unable to provide that answer using AMPS/ RAMS.

Do we really need to sample rural areas in every AMPS survey? Why not have one national AMPS survey and one massive Major Metropolitan survey (MMAMPS)? Surely this is where the vast majority of advertising spend is being directed?

Maybe my colleagues are right! Maybe, in suggesting that it's better to make sound business decisions than to create seamless and predictable data trends, I am being a media hothead. Maybe change and innovation is simply too hard and unpredictable.

But when it comes to making choices at the crossroads, as a media man, I … I have always take the road less travelled by and that has made all the difference!

**December 2011 - Khulumamedia**

# 2012 … The Year of Living Dangerously!

The year 2012 looms over the eastern advertising horizon, just like any other year. Except, it's not like any other year! This is the watershed year which determines whether the local industry continues on the high road of media leadership in Africa or succumbs to the rapacious self-interest of media-owners, each convinced that the other is getting a better deal out of AMPS. Or perhaps more disturbingly, each convinced that they can do the job more cheaply.

The situation is dire. With the initial rejection by PMSA and OHMSA of the central SAARF levy funding principle and the subsequent, and understandable, withdrawal of NAB, de facto MAMCA (the industry body charged with effectively distributing the collected levy to SAARF and ASA) does not exist and must be disbanded.

In practice what this means is that, from January 2012, SAARF and ASA will have to be directly funded by media owners. Or to be more specific, those media owners who are prepared to pay into SAARF and ASA. After all, as Forest Gump says, "cheaply is as cheaply does" … or something like that anyway.

> *"Without direct involvement of local media decision makers at the highest level, we in Mzansi media are all, like the rhino, officially on the endangered list."*

The ASA presents a slightly different conundrum, which I believe requires an objective industry investigation into the scope of ASA activities and its corresponding financial requirements. Somebody has to pay for ASA and media owners say that offensive or noncompliant advertising content is not their problem. After all, argue media-owners, they don't make the advertisements. From their perspective, it is the marketers and the advertising agencies that should pay for the ASA. They certainly have a valid point but it's also a point that has strong contra-indications of a severe bout of Pyrrhic victory.

Unfortunately, for some years now, the senior management of major media agencies has not vigorously participated in the various forums which manage this funding process. This fact, coupled to the reality that the Marketing Association of South Africa (MASA) does not yet have the all-encompassing bite of its defunct predecessor (MFSA), means that media owners will, for the moment anyway, continue to do pretty much as they please.

So, as you reflect on the year ahead, and on the assumption that you still have a sense of the shared burden of responsibility for our local media industry, could I please urge you to visit http://www.marketingsa.co.za and read the document *Pending Industry Crisis*. Without direct involvement of local media decision makers at the highest level, we in Mzansi media are all, like the rhino, officially on the endangered list. The only difference being that we will have deserved to be there.

Happy New Year

**December 2011**

# Have you ever had a media ground-hog day?

## Sometimes you just want to go OOH

Have you ever had a media ground-hog day? When today is a total repeat of yesterday and tomorrow offers all the mystery of last week? Bit like watching SABC or endless reruns of Midsomer Murders on DSTV.

I had one recently! I felt like I'd woken up behind the boerewors curtain in the 60's. When the world was run by men with grey shoes and the latest edition of Scope magazine was the most eagerly awaited social event of the week for the average South African teenage boy.

So what triggered the flashback?

The recently released ASA Statement on *Sexual Imagery in Outdoor Advertising* is based on the proposed British model, which is the outcome of an engagement with the children and parents of Cardiff. Yes, that's the one. Cardiff. In Wales. The new standard, which I am reliably informed will be adopted in South Africa, is "designed to reduce the amount of outdoor advertising that contains sexualised imagery in locations where the children are likely to see it"!

As in the UK, the ASA will take decisions on a case by case basis. This two-tiered approach will inter alia ...

(i) Consider carefully what is likely to be acceptable in outdoor advertising informed by the new evidence from Wales, of the public's view of outdoor images

(ii) Focus on sexual images in locations of particular relevance to children, with a view to applying a placement restriction where appropriate

Now, notwithstanding the fact that all this is happening at a time when TopTV is about to launch three 24/7 porn channels, I am confident that most responsible advertisers would endorse this stance. I certainly do.

It is, however, in the application of these ASA rules that things are going to get really interesting and reminiscent of life with Scope magazine. When considering complaints about sexual imagery on outdoor, the ASA will take into account:

(i) The nature of the product

(ii) The context of the ad and its location

(iii) The audience and the likely response of that audience

(iv) The size of the advertisement

Yes, apparently when it comes to sexual imagery in outdoor, size does count.

In order to assist us with our creative executions, the ASA has very kindly provided us with a series of images which illustrate the critical parameters within which we need to operate. So for instance, in image 1 “the model is wearing a bikini and holding a pose which is unlikely to be sexually suggestive” whilst in image 2 “the woman is drawing attention to her groin area and is therefore sexually suggestive”.

Now, quickly … Shift your gaze between the two pictures. Sexy girl! Not sexy girl! Sexy! Not sexy! Can you see the difference? Good.

For those of you young people in media who are reading this blog without the benefit of adult supervision, it’s important to recall that, back in the day, Scope magazine didn’t even attempt to categorize beautiful women into covertly sexy and overtly sexy. They were all girls in bikinis and worthy of the same undivided attention. Indeed, some were elevated to even more legendary status among teenage boys through the strategic placement of stars.



**1] Not Sexy**

**2] Sexy**

**3] Not Sexy**

Image 3 apparently shows a topless man "whose pose is unlikely to be considered sexually suggestive". Why isn't this guy sexy? Why has he got his shirt off and his jeans around his hips? Answers …

(i) He comes from Upington and the weather there is really very hot?

(ii) He is very poor and can't afford a shirt?

(iii) He only has one nice shirt and his mother is washing it?

(iv) He has a great six pack and wants to look sexy?

(v) None of the above?

Good grief! As a bachelor even I knew that step one in the courtship process was to get your shirt off and I didn't even have a six pack! More a slab of Nestlé that had been left out in the sun a little too long!

So, by now of course, you're getting the idea. Indeed, many of you may already be applying for a position on the ASA "copy advice team". Certainly, in the days of The Groot Krokodil positions such as this were highly sought after at the old Censorship Board.

Of course in media it's as much about placement as it is about content, right! So, because they are not sexy, images 1 and 3 may be placed within 100 metres of a school whilst the offensive image 2, may not. At this point perhaps, like me, you're asking



**4] Sexy**

**5] Way too Sexy**

why 100 metres? Why not 115metres or 95 metres? It would appear that whatever happens to the teenage brain in the twilight zone from 105 metres to 95 metres would torture the unrestrained imaginings of Sigmund Freud himself!

I confidently predict that any sign, projecting an image of a beautiful woman “attracting attention to her groin area”, placed within a 200 metre radius of a boys’ school (let alone 105 metres) will within the first week be integrated into the 1st XV initiation ceremony. By which I mean the inevitable 400m dash there and back between the bell-ringing for class changeover. To protect sensitive readers, I won’t divulge what happens at the sign itself, prior to the return dash!



Of course, some images are so offensive that they may not be placed on outdoor at all, let alone within 100 metres of a school.

The woman in image 4 is shown “both in lingerie and in a seductive pose” and is therefore subject to the “100 metres restriction” whilst the woman in image 5 is acting in a “sexual and seductive way and may not be suitable for general outdoor display at all”. See the difference? Sexual. Not sexual. Sexual. Not sexual.

Now, maybe schoolboys have changed over the years. In my day, clearly we did not have the same level of discernment when it came to the difference between seductive and sexual imagery. The sight of a student teacher’s bra strap was enough to evoke a frenzy of tortured imaginings. The sight of a beautiful woman in lingerie would have brought any lesson to a premature and irretrievable halt. We didn’t have Twitter in those days but if we did it would certainly have trended within seconds.

Upon reflection I am almost certain that woodwork classes were exclusively created for the purpose of such meanderings!

So where do we go next as an industry in an effort to regulate morality in advertising? Stop selling FHM magazine at service stations positioned within a 100 metres of the nearest school? Ban Cosmopolitan? Good grief … there are more clues for a teenage Lothario in the average issue of Cosmo than in the collective sexual wisdom of the entire 6th form!

Come on guys. Ban the stuff outright on outdoor if you have to, but for goodness sakes let’s not go down this route again. Either that or bring back the stars. And if you’re not old enough to know what that means, ask your dad! He’ll tell you all about it.

**March 2012 - Khulumamedia**

# What would I do to really make a difference?

**Conversations with The Media magazine**

I was recently asked by a leading industry journal, what one thing I would do that would really make a difference to the media industry in Mzansi.

On reflection, I would make it compulsory for everyone in media … agencies, advertisers and media-owners alike … not only to read Eugene Marais' classic work *The Soul of the White Ant* , but to pass a practical exam!

The various media industry sectors' growing desire to "go it alone" with respect to the financing of SAARF, shows a lack of appreciation for their mutual interdependence and their shared responsibility for a healthy business eco-system.

> ***"The media industry's growing desire to 'go it alone' with respect to the financing of SAARF, shows a lack of appreciation for mutual interdependence and a shared responsibility for a healthy business eco-system."***

Everybody wants a slice of the AMPS cake but the industry is staring famine in the face because nobody can agree on the size of the slices and who gets the first bite.

Advertisers demand better quality people in their agency but agencies won't gear up because those same advertisers have slashed agency margins to bits. And because agencies are desperate for new revenue streams, unscrupulous media owners step into the gap by offering confidential discounts to agencies to make up the difference! And because the cake isn't getting any bigger, those same advertisers, who invited everybody to the birthday party in the first place, want to know from media owners why media costs are increasing!

And of course nobody trains the next generation because training costs come off the bottom line and the shareholders demand their slice of the cake before we've even finished baking it. 97

So, with apologies to Eugene Marais, the hope arises that there is some purpose in the media industry (nature) whose guiding principle is a psyche similar but infinitely more developed than the soul of the primate.

But sadly, I doubt it! When you pay peanuts, unfortunately, you invariably get monkeys!

**April 2012 - Khulumamedia**

# Which came first? The Daypart or the Programme?

My rare sorties into the realm of watching TV Soapies have lead me to conclude that nothing really happens and that you need only watch one episode a week to keep up to date with events. Until recently, there has been no scientific way to test this hypothesis because in any reputable scientific experiment, we always need a control group to verify the outcome of the findings.

In media, of course, we don't often have the control group safety net and the fuzzy logic of "walks like a duck, quacks like a duck" tends to be the preferred route to decision making (to a large degree, that's why I entitled my book *Media Planning - Art or Science?)*. However, a recent broadcasting error by the SABC has provided an ideal control group opportunity to test my theory that nobody needs to watch every episode of a Soapie.



| Bold & Beautiful Repeat Flighting 30th April - 2nd May | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target Market | Prime-time Flighting | | TVRS | Repeat Programme | | TVRS |
| Women LSM 8-10 | Fri | 18h00-18h28 | 3.3 | | | |
| | Mon | 18h00-18h28 | 4.0 | Mon | 07h59-08h25 | 1.2 |
| | Tues | 18h00-18h28 | 3.4 | Tues | 07h59-08h25 | 1.9 |
| | Wed | 18h00-18h28 | 3.3 | Wed | 07h59-08h25 | 1.5 |
| Women LSM 4-7 | Fri | 18h00-18h28 | 8.5 | | | |
| | Mon | 18h00-18h28 | 10.7 | Mon | 07h59-08h25 | 4.6 |
| | Tues | 18h00-18h28 | 10.8 | Tues | 07h59-08h25 | 5.3 |
| | Wed | 18h00-18h28 | 10.5 | Wed | 07h59-08h25 | 5.2 |
| Women | Fri | 18h00-18h28 | 7.1 | | | |
| | Mon | 18h00-18h28 | 8.9 | Mon | 07h59-08h25 | 3.7 |
| | Tues | 18h00-18h28 | 8.9 | Tues | 07h59-08h25 | 4.4 |
| | Wed | 18h00-18h28 | 8.6 | Wed | 07h59-08h25 | 4.2 |

On Tuesday 1st May SABC re-broadcast the Bold and Beautiful episode from the preceding night (Monday 30th April) and on Wednesday 2nd May re-broadcast the “repeat” episode of Bold and Beautiful from the preceding morning (Tuesday 1st May). The “incorrect broadcasts” are indicated in the chart below in yellow.

Now, given this set of circumstances, you would imagine that even regular viewers of Bold and Beautiful, who have come to accept an alarming degree of repetition, would realise that something has gone horribly wrong and quite simply switch channels. After all, if watching the same episode of a programme offered the prospect of a different outcome, then every Manchester United supporter in the world would be replaying the last 5 minutes of the Manchester City v QPR game for the rest of all time.

Analysis of this event, against three target markets, reveals that re-broadcasting exactly the same programme has no significant outcome in terms of TVRS across a 4 programme period. The data below is from Telmar but analysis of the Arianna data confirms the same pattern.

Now, there are two possible circumstances that produce this outcome ….

Option A] Exactly the same people who watched the Monday primetime episode watched exactly the same episode on Tuesday. And exactly the same people who watched the Tuesday morning repeat watched the same repeat on Wednesday.

Option B] A totally different set of new viewers, blissfully unaware of the programming error, happily watched Tuesday night or Wednesday morning’s rebroadcast.

This provides us with an ideal control group scenario to pose some interesting questions about the value of “available audience” versus the “cherry picking” school of TV buying. In short, we can answer the oldest TV buying conundrum of all … “which comes first, the daypart or the programme”?



**Bold & Beautiful Repeat Flighting 30th April - 2nd May**

| Target Market | Prime-time Flighting | | TVRS | 2 Spot Schedule | | Repeat Programme | | TVRS | 2 Spot Schedule | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Women LSM 8-10 | Mon | 18h00-18h28 | 4.0 | Reach | 6.7 | | | | | |
| | Tues | 18h00-18h28 | 3.4 | Av OTS | 1.1 | Tues | 07h59-08h25 | 1.9 | Reach | 2.2 |
| | | | | | | Wed | 07h59-08h25 | 1.5 | Av OTS | 1.6 |
| Women LSM 4-7 | Mon | 18h00-18h28 | 10.7 | Reach | 17.9 | | | | | |
| | Tues | 18h00-18h28 | 10.8 | Av OTS | 1.2 | Tues | 07h59-08h25 | 5.3 | Reach | 8.9 |
| | | | | | | Wed | 07h59-08h25 | 5.2 | Av OTS | 1.2 |
| Women | Mon | 18h00-18h28 | 8.9 | Reach | 14.9 | | | | | |
| | Tues | 18h00-18h28 | 8.9 | Av OTS | 1.2 | Tues | 07h59-08h25 | 4.4 | Reach | 7.1 |
| | | | | | | Wed | 07h59-08h25 | 4.2 | Av OTS | 1.2 |

Using the "Women universe filter", let's create a hypothetical schedule with x1 spot in each primetime broadcast … the correct broadcast (call it Event 1) and the incorrect broadcast (Event 2). Will the second TVC flighting create more Reach% or will it build Frequency? If Option A prevails, then we would expect Reach% to remain the same as the programme TVR (8,9%) and deliver x2 OTS. If option B prevails, then Reach will double to 17,8% (8,9 + 8,9) and Frequency will remain at x1 OTS.

In practice the answer lies somewhere between these extreme outcomes, and our schedule delivers 14,9% reach @ 1,2 OTS. The same pattern is discernible for all target markets and both repeat broadcasts in this study.



Weight of evidence strongly suggests then, that irrespective of target market, when it comes to Bold and Beautiful, it is the "available audience" that comes first, rather than "programme appointment" based viewing. So what does this mean for TV buying? Conventional wisdom has tended to suggest that, because of viewer loyalty, Soapies are always a great place to build frequency. But overall duplication, across all target markets and broadcasts in this instance, is only 20%. That means only one in five viewers are common to both broadcasts. Of course that also means four out of five viewers to the Bold and Beautiful re-broadcasts were "available audience" viewers.

» *So, it seems you can use a Soapie not just for Frequency but also for building Reach%.*

By the way, did you get the answer to the big question? 20% duplication! That's one in five. Only one in five viewers are common to both broadcasts and that, I argue, means my hypothesis is right. Four out of five TV viewers do only need to watch a Soapie once a week to understand what's going on.

And for the one in five of you who are watching every day and, in this instance at least, seem quite happy to watch the same episode again and again … you really do need to get out more!

**May 2012 - Khulumamedia**

# Are rate cards the ROI of all Media Evil?

There has been quite a bit of debate in recent weeks about a shift to net rate cards. Those in media whose lives are dedicated to completing global reporting templates, rather than actual media planning, say scrap the commission because it's increasingly difficult to administer. And those who understand the mysteries of VAT and cash flow, and who count the real media shekels, not the Monopoly ones you get on Telmar, say it's not that simple. That got me thinking though!

Forget net rate cards. Why don't we just scrap the rate card entirely?

The recent Avusa auction really got industry tongues wagging. As always, some for and some against!

Of course you can't sanction the practice of giving planners an incentive, as Avusa did, to participate in a price sensitive media auction (ask Rael Levitt from Auction Alliance: he's got some interesting stories about stimulating "demand" from the floor) but other than that, a media auction is arguably the best way to establish the true value of a media offering.

You assess the medium and whether it will work for your client and you put a price to it. Isn't that the essence of media planning?

*"I can't help wondering whether rate cards are actually masking the simplicity of the media planning process."*

I can't help wondering whether rate cards are actually masking the simplicity of the media planning process. We hide behind inflated readership figures (listenership and viewership figures too for that matter) and, by using rate cards, ultimately convince our clients, and sadly ourselves as well, that the real value in media is found in discounts and cost efficiency equations rather than in-market response.

Are rate cards the ROI of all media evil? Perhaps not. But it's certainly worth contemplating how the media strategy process might change if we had to focus on getting results rather than just getting rate card discounts!



**June 2012 - Khulumamedia**

## 2012 A Christmas Carol

### The Rewrap!

Incredible as it may seem, 2012 is already looking a lot more like "last year" than it looks like "this year" … and as we approach the silly season, our thoughts turn naturally towards the giving and receiving of gifts. Of course, courtesy of Sarbanes Oxley, we in media frown upon the practice of gift giving, although we still retain something of a latent fondness for gift receiving as an instrument of relationship management.

Now, as an ardent admirer of Dickens' Scrooge, I have over the years learned quite a bit about the principles underlying sustainable Christmas gift planning. The central tenet of Sustainable Christmas Gifting (SCG) is, of course, that the resource itself must be renewable. So not only is the recycling of last year's Christmas gifts very responsible behaviour, from an environmental perspective, it also means you are shouldering your responsibility in terms of the global debt crisis!

In short, don't spend money when you don't have to, or, as Scrooge would have put, "Bah, humbug"! Of course people who don't understand the SCG principle, invariably get themselves into financial hot water. Hence the old Yuletide adage, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts"!

Obviously SCG is not a new concept, as any last born child would know, but there are a few rules of which you should take note when you give away this Christmas, the gifts that you received last Christmas.

**Rule #1**: Don't give the gifts back to the people who gave them to you in the first place!

**Rule #2**: Make the gift look really attractive, by wrapping the parcel neatly!

**Rule #3**: Always use new wrapping paper, because using the same wrapping paper that the gifts came in originally, is a total give away.

*"Tag clouds are Google's way of helping media psychoanalysts highlight Freudian slips in any piece of trade communication."*

So, as a Scroogephile, you can imagine how thrilled I was to receive correspondence this week from DSTV Media Sales, introducing their "brand new" movie channels and offering me inter alia the opportunity to "revisit" some of my most magical movie moments (Showcase: Channel 108) or see some of my "best loved" actors and movies" (Stars: Channel 111).

Now I love tag clouds, almost as much as I love SCG. Tag clouds are Google's way of helping media psychoanalysts to highlight Freudian slips in any piece of trade communication. So take a look at the tag cloud of DSTV's "new channel launch" communiqué. What does it reveal?

Well, not surprisingly, it reveals that we get movies, or more specifically, we get M-Net movies. There's action … drama … romance and comedy … and, of course, films for the family. A glimpse of the best that Hollywood can offer!

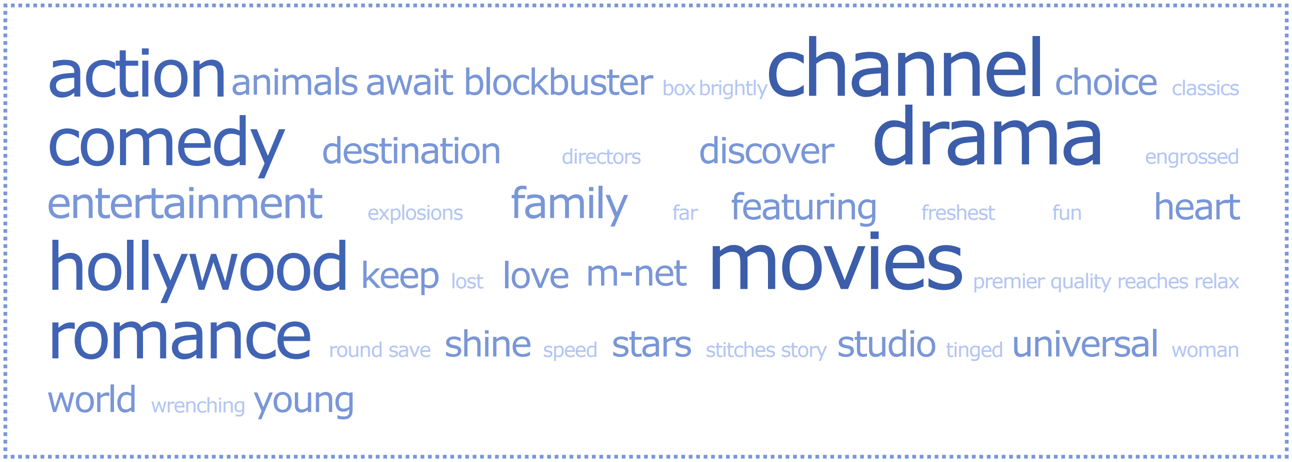
Or, like the Ghost of Christmas Past, does it provide us with a glimpse of the best that Hollywood has already offered a long time ago?

What word is missing in the tag cloud? What's the one word you would expect to find in a communiqué on DSTV's "NEW channel launch"?

You got it … the word NEW!

Here's the thing. You can wrap last year's Christmas present in new paper but it's still last year's Christmas present. And you can package last year's movies in a new channel, but they are still last year's movies.

Given that almost half of DSTV subscriber households are Compact subscribers, who may not have had the opportunity to previously view these movies, these channels may well represent value in that segment. But for the early adopters, who have had the Premium bouquet for some time, one wonders




whether the "new" DSTV Movie Channels mightn't be the best thing that's ever happened to DSTV Box Office?

So, from a media perspective, I guess the question for TV planners is simply … "what kind of premium do you place on a TV rerun"? In Dickens' Christmas Carol, Marley's ghost reminds Scrooge …

» *"It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide …and, if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death."*

I guess the same thing applies to MNet movies!

**September 2012 - Khulumamedia**



## Cinema in Mzansi … Fighting for the leftovers?

Watching the spat between Mzansi's two cinema media sales-houses, over correct levels of reported advertising investment in Nielsen Adex, is a little like watching two Yorkshire Terriers fighting over the pig's trotters, while the Rottweiler walks away with rest of the carcase!

I do know, and indeed subscribe to, the old adage "it's not the size of the dog in the fight that counts but the size of the fight in the dog", but when you control less than 1% of the media market, threatening to pull out of Adex (in the one instance) and refusing to engage with the industry at all (in the case of the other) surely positions Cinema in South Africa as a candidate for the Media Darwin Awards.

Italians, who arguably know a bit about preparing pork, often observe that constantly weighing the pig doesn't make it any fatter. Surely the real challenge facing Cinema is not reporting the existing levels of adspend but trying to grow them? Wouldn't time and energy be better spent in attempting to regain some of the ground lost to other advertising media formats? There is little doubt that digital advertising in South Africa is under-reported, and under-utilised for that matter, but threatening to compound that problem by withdrawing from central industry measures would simply not contribute to growth of the medium. And it is growing. By leaps and bounds.

> ***Cinema threatening to pull out of Adex is like Sundowns threatening to pull out of the PSL. When you're bottom of the log nobody, other than a handful of diehard fans, is going to miss you.***

Cinema threatening to pull out of Adex is like Sundowns threatening to pull out of the PSL. When you're bottom of the log with one point on the board, nobody, other than a handful of diehard fans, is going to miss you. And you don't get new supporters when you've been relegated to the 2nd Division. For the media uninformed, 2nd Division refers the column on the extreme right of your competitive adspend graph which is marked "all others". It's not a good place to be.

If you want to hold Alex Ferguson to ransom when you are negotiating your contract, you'd better make sure you are the MVP (Most Valuable Player) otherwise you are going to get the hairdryer treatment … Ask David Beckham!

Right now Cinema is not the MVP in the Mzansi media mix and holding the industry to ransom seems incredibly short sighted.

Unless of course you're looking for a new hairstyle or MVP actually stands for Management Via Petulance! Eish!

**November 2012 - Khulumamedia**

## Stolen magazines: a reader is a reader is a reader?

I was recently asked to comment on the issue of stolen magazines being sold on the black market and the impact that this might have on ABC figures. The truth is there are people watching TV on stolen sets and people listening to stolen radios. Some people are receiving SMS on stolen mobiles using stolen airtime. Others are surfing the net on stolen PCs or tablets. People have been stealing OOH materials and waterproofing their houses since I started in this business almost 40 years ago. Now there are people reading stolen magazines? So what?

The impact on the ABC figures would, I imagine, be zero or minimal depending on the quantum. What percentage of total print order is being stolen? Half a percent? One percent? At what point in the process are they being stolen? If they're being stolen off the printing presses then it doesn't make any difference to the ABC because it doesn't get reported under distribution.

If they're being stolen during distribution or instore then it doesn't make any difference because it doesn't get reported under sales. If they're being stolen from the returns depot then it doesn't make any difference because returns don't get reported under circulation anyway.

> *"What's the difference between 50 copies of a title being stolen, re-sold and then read by a bunch of consumers and 50 copies being dumped at the airport or a shopping mall and then being read by a bunch of consumers?"*

Besides, what's the difference between 50 copies of a title being stolen, re-sold and then read by a bunch of consumers and 50 copies being dumped at the airport or in a shopping centre and then being read by a bunch of consumers? From a readership perspective, nothing at all: unless of course you include a question in AMPS, "did you steal this magazine?" and then exclude all the bad folks who do.

Of course that would exclude half the media industry. We've been nicking each other's voucher copies for years!



It's a total non-event!

**November 2012 - The Media Magazine**

## Conversation with Freshly Ground Insights about Local Newspapers

» *Is "readership" as a currency in AMPS credible? Please explain.*

It has some credibility but that credibility has been steadily eroded over the years. The readers per copy figures are ridiculously high and are clearly the result of massive over claiming, or a flaw in methodology or both. So for instance Soccer Laduma has a circulation of 289,000 and Kickoff 45,000. But they both have the same readership of +/-2,8million. Soccer Laduma has +/10 readers per copy and Kickoff 62 RPC. I understand the theory and why it might be possible in theory (weekly v monthly title etc.) but 62 RPC is a joke.

Obviously the more planners massage the readership data to include filters such as thoroughness of reading, the more meaningful the outcome.

» *Is anybody actually doing that though? And even if you are doing this, how would you carry it across into PrintPlan? You would have to start using impact factors of some kind.*

Maybe "read all or most" should become the new definition of AIR readership. That would certainly be credible but obviously print media "reach" would halve overnight! Publishers and planners alike would commit mass suicide. And advertisers would move their money out of print into other media or demand a 50% discount. So do we really want credible readership figures, or do we prefer the status quo which leaves us promising clients massive reach and then desperately trying to explain why the "reach" didn't translate into actual results in the marketplace.



» *If you HAD to choose one measurement currency for print, would you choose "readership" or "circulation"? Please explain.*

The answer is "NO"! Not even prepared to enter into the discussion. The mere fact that publishers have asked for this question to be included is evidence of their complete disconnection from the planning thought process. This is like asking me whether I would like DSTV viewership figures or just an audited statement of decoder sales. Each currency has a unique contribution.

Readership figures give demographics and product user information that we can't get from circulation. As a minimum requirement for planning loose inserts we need circulation data. End of debate. If the print industry tried to create a scenario where they would use one or other currency, the only choice the average advertiser would make is to move the adspend to other media.

Part of the problem of course is that circulation data is increasingly regarded with the same lack of confidence as readership figures. Again this is part of the media owners' desperate desire to sell the highest possible readership and/or circulation figure at the highest possible ad-rate. The ABC's resistance to Gordon Patterson's "core circulation" initiative is a case in point. Huge print runs which translate into distribution that amounts to little more than dumping, do not offer value to advertisers.

The whole climate of planning for high reach has shifted. The figures, other than for buying and selling exchanges, are no longer an indicator of in-market success. Sell core circulation and "all or most" readers and you will be selling results.

Selling in-market results, not readers, will be a game changer and the only way print media owners will survive as an effective advertising medium

» *What is your opinion of the media-owner funded research properties "ROOTS" and "COMPASS24"?*

The need to fill in the empty spaces in the AMPS sample is understandable and indeed, necessary. There must however be questions around on methodology, sampling and the same loose definitions of readership which significantly detract from any value derived from the data. I'm not heavily into the retail space so haven't had occasion to interrogate the data in a while. But that in itself tells a story. The databases have got themselves locked into the retail box. In fact, on reflection, I don't even know where to find Compass24 data? It used to be available on a website I think but more recently, my perception is that Media24 does not release the full data set to planners.

If that is the case then (i) it's unbelievable that they still think along those lines and (ii) it would render that data useless. If planners can't manipulate the data for themselves and calculate reach and frequency performance data at the schedule level, then it's a waste of time. Unless of course, as I indicated earlier, you're a retailer but by then you have already defaulted to in-market response, so you don't really care about theoretical data. But if you're a retailer, you're probably using loose-inserts and circulation data so readership figures are largely immaterial.

» *How do "ROOTS" and "COMPASS24" stack up against other research properties such as AMPS, RAMS and TAMS?*

Who cares? We used to say media owner research was questionable because it had been designed specifically to sell newspapers but AMPS was neutral. Now that AMPS readership data is essentially designed by media owners, for media owners, they're both as bad as each other. And the same could be said for RAMS and TAMS to a very large degree. Fix AMPS first and then the other studies will be less relevant. At least AMPS comes out regularly every 6 months.

» *Do you have any sage advice to give to print media owners wanting to play a leadership role in our Industry?*

The first step would be to behave as if there is in fact an industry. I know that's easy for me to say because I don't have shareholders and investors to placate. Roots and Compass 24 could for instance be merged into one study. Why two studies for local newspapers, other than the desire for each media owner group to better frame their titles v the other publisher? It's totally understandable of course and as I've indicated, easy for me to say, but real leaders don't act exclusively in their own best interest. Unless of course your name is Mad Bob!

» *So how do you take a leadership stance?*

Recognise that creating massive readership is essentially over-promising. Inflating circulation by dumping "bulk sales" all over the show is over-promising. The first rule of media sales is "don't promise what you can't deliver".

The flight from print media advertising to other media types is not about cost-efficiency. It's about the simple fact that the print medium doesn't work as well as advertisers have been lead to believe.

Shift the debate from cost-efficiency (which relies on massive readership figures) to cost-effectiveness (which is reliant on in-market results). That's what a real leader would do.

## June 2013 - FGI Research Study into Local Newspapers

# The SAARF-AMPS Debacle

**Stick 'em in the naughty corner … or learn to play darts!**

Having four grandchildren under the age of five is a really interesting experience. As an old media hack, observing their innate creativity, their general disinclination to accept responsibility for any of their own actions, other than those that are rewarded with unconditional praise, and their periodic tantrums, makes me hanker for the old days back in a full service advertising agency. You know, when advertising was a marketing discipline, not just a line on a balance sheet and you could calculate campaign GRPS by throwing darts at a dartboard.

*"The giants of the media industry focus their squabbles on the price of everything, and show little regard for the value of anything."*

In those days, we had as much fun in media as my grandchildren have in the sandpit. Interestingly, the primary emotion that seems to govern the sandpit relationship between my grandchildren, is their constant fear that what they have is not quite as nice as what the others have (Well, not so much the 4 year old because she's quite grown up). But they have no concept of the cost of anything, and every squabble centres on the perceived value of the mutually desired object. A plastic margarine tub has as much nominal value as a battery operated earth mover. Depending of course on who is actually holding the object. Flair-ups over custard are particularly brutal.

The sight of a bunch of grown-ups squabbling over the funding of media data under the SAARF banner leaves me incredulous. Each convinced that they are not getting their "fair share" they would rather pollute the sandpit than let anybody else play in it. Unlike my grandchildren though, these giants of the industry focus their squabbles on the price of everything, and show little regard for the value of anything. And when confronted by concerned onlookers they all point at the other and default to the time honoured IME solution. It Wasn't Me!

With toddlers it's understandable. With adults it's simply called greed. I've no idea what the solution is but at least with grandchildren you can stick them in the naughty corner.

In the meantime, I'm in the pub practising my darts. Mayibuye media!

**July 2013 - Khulumamedia**

# Suppose They Created a Market Segment and No One Came

## The case for 17 LMS

Writing in McCall's about her son's resistance to the Vietnam conflict in 1966, American author and poet Charlotte E. Keyes tweaked a line from a Carl Sandberg poem and posed a universal question: "Suppose They Gave a War and No One Came"? It became a rallying point for Vietnam "Peaceniks", and Keyes and her son Gene were branded as communists and draft dodgers.

I know how she feels.

In 2008 I was branded a media terrorist for daring to suggest that, by creating sub-sets or extensions to the LSM 7-10 bands, SAARF had de facto created a 14 LSM model. Well, they've been up to it again. As from AMPS 2012AB, further extensions have been applied all the way down to LSM4, giving media planners a de facto 17 level split within the LSM template. Now in the past SAARF has suggested I should desist from making such misleading observations because the industry will be confused. So let me just test your level of comprehension.

> *"LSM bands are not airtight pockets and serve to bring together groupings of people into a continuum of contiguous and sometimes slightly overlapping groups."*

» *Once upon a time AMPS sub-divided the South African market into 8 socio-economic segments. Now AMPS divides the market into 17 socio-economic segments.*

Is there anybody who doesn't understand this? Anybody who is confused? You see, as long as I call them segments, everybody is happy. But, when I say that AMPS divides the market into 17 LSMS, then apparently it becomes incomprehensible. Now I'm sure that, other than dilettantish academic interest, there must have been a reason for this additional segmentation, even if it is not immediately apparent. This reason has not, however, been fully articulated to the industry, so I'm assuming the reason they were created is so that planners can use and extract value from them.

Naturally, the LSM bands are not airtight pockets and serve to bring together groupings of people from the total population into a continuum of contiguous and sometimes slightly overlapping groups. The good news is that the 17 LSM splits (sorry I mean segments) invite and allow for a more spontaneous

| LSM Segments AMPS 2012 AB | | Households 000s | Av HH Income | Adults 15+ 000s | LSM Clusters | Households 000s | Av HH Income | Adults 15+ 000s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL | | 14074 | R 8,838 | 34935 | | 14074 | R 8,838 | 34935 |
| LSM 1 | | 311 | R 1,419 | 575 | Traditional | 1937 | R 2,001 | 4168 |
| LSM 2 | | 657 | R 1,930 | 1422 | | | | |
| LSM 3 | | 968 | R 2,237 | 2171 | | | | |
| LSM 4 | LOW | 1060 | R 2,827 | 2412 | Transitional | 4284 | R 3,477 | 10492 |
| | HIGH | 882 | R 3,245 | 2114 | | | | |
| LSM 5 | LOW | 1150 | R 3,582 | 2839 | | | | |
| | HIGH | 1192 | R 4,124 | 3126 | | | | |
| LSM 6 | LOW | 1518 | R 5,161 | 4017 | Middle | 3033 | R 3,034 | 7898 |
| | HIGH | 1515 | R 7,449 | 3882 | | | | |
| LSM 7 | LOW | 801 | R 9,730 | 2088 | Upper Middle B | 2127 | R 11,881 | 5544 |
| | HIGH | 742 | R 11,880 | 1915 | | | | |
| LSM 8 | LOW | 583 | R 14,837 | 1540 | | | | |
| | HIGH | 575 | R 15,995 | 1454 | Upper Middle A | 2317 | R 20,884 | 5843 |
| LSM 9 | LOW | 657 | R 18,636 | 1641 | | | | |
| | HIGH | 641 | R 22,927 | 1637 | | | | |
| LSM 10 | LOW | 444 | R 27,590 | 1112 | | | | |
| | HIGH | 378 | R 34,019 | 990 | Elite | 378 | R 34,019 | 990 |

and logical re-clustering of the overall bands into functional market and media segments. One such approach to clustering the LSM bands is found in the revised *Muller Cluster Model*.

Based on a mid-point analysis using median HH incomes and tipping points in media consumption affinity, such as the transition from SABC ALS radio to other independent commercial radio formats, or the shift from Free to Home (FTH) TV to Pay TV, the model recognises 6 primary market clusters, each with very distinctive media consumption patterns ...

- LSM 1-3: Traditional (11,9% of Population)
- LSM 4-5: Transitional (30% of Population)
- LSM 6: Middle (22,6% of Population)
- LSM 7-LSM8 Low: Upper Middle B (15,9% of Population)
- LSM 8 High – LSM 10 Low: Upper Middle A (16,7% of Population)
- LSM 10 High: Elite (2,8% of Population)

This is not to suggest that the Muller Cluster Model should be seen as some sort of panacea; an invitation to abandon the core criteria which would normally underpin the target market description. The model does however exhibit a great deal of elasticity in media selection and has the additional advantage of improved sample sizes (with the exception of the Elite market).

Is clustering data a sound media practice?

If you are using phrases like “LSM 4-7” or “LSM 7-10” in your marketing plans, then you are already effectively clustering the data. The vast majority of TV planning and buying in Mzansi is done using LSM clusters with demographic overlays. My concern is that these clusters are merely assumed historical conventions with no logical foundation in the data itself. The market has moved on and smart media strategists are not only trying to move with it but actually get ahead of it.

On the other hand, you could carry on talking about 10 LSMS. After all, what’s the worst that could happen if they created a market segment and nobody came?

**August 2013 - The Media**

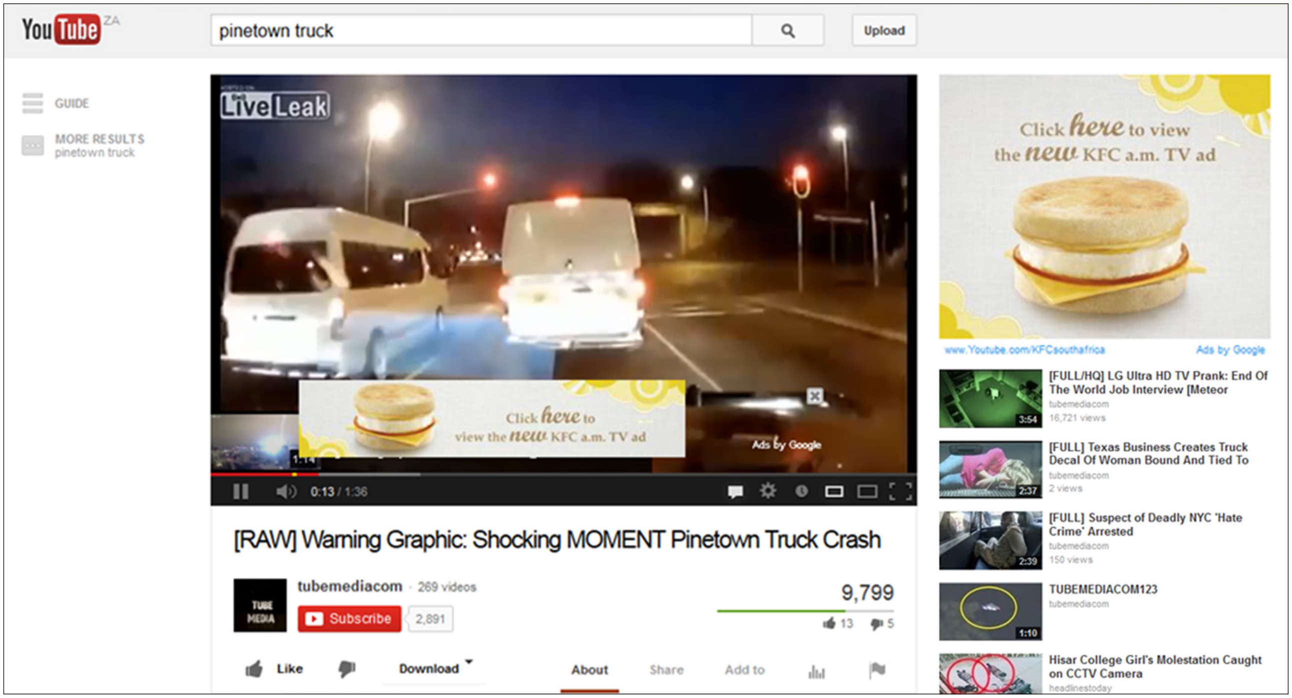
# Could a media algorithm pass the Ogilvy copy test?

More and more people have told me not to bother re-writing my text book *Media Planning – Art or Science?* next year. Apparently the debate is over. Media strategy is a definitely science and by Christmas I’ll be replaced by an algorithm.

I’m told algorithms are much more efficient than media strategists. They unerringly match available media-owner inventory against the best prevailing price and hey presto, more GRPS than you could possibly hope to hope to fit onto a single Excel spread-sheet report. After all media exposure is just a commodity and the cheaper the price, the more cost-efficient the campaign.

Given the explosion of media offerings, I would have to concede that point. Algorithms are better at statistics than media strategists. But I’ve never met an algorithm that could pass the Ogilvy copy test the way media guru, the late Alan McClarty did. Just to prove a point to himself! And of course to prove a point to Robyn Putter. Because if media didn’t contribute to the overall communication and creative debate then Robyn would just send you back to the media department and make you eat worms.

Nowhere are algorithms more superior at media strategy, apparently, than in monetising their “understanding” of consumer search-psychology and click-thru patterns. They will match message to relevant consumer environments with unerring accuracy. And for good measure, from a media perspective, they’ll only charge you for actual






exposure. Page impressions. Unique hits. Likes. Retweets. Whatever you want! You only pay for what you actually get. Zero wastage. Procurement heaven!

So given the incredible insight of even the most mundane algorithm, you'll imagine my amazement yesterday when I discovered that the unthinkable has happened. An algorithm has failed to perform. Well, failed to perform from a human perspective that is, because I'm sure the media cost efficiencies were impeccable.

***"I'm going to rewrite my book and I'm still going to call it Media Planning - Art or Science because I love advertising but I love media a little more."***

Seriously? This is good media placement? Maybe we old media strategists are dinosaurs. Maybe we don't have Google's statistical aptitude but I'll tell you something Colonel Sanders: no media strategist with even half a brain would attempt to sell fast-food at someone's funeral.

By the time I launch this comment into the blogosphere, I've no doubt that there will have been an outbreak of sanity at KFC and this TVC will have been removed. But I know one thing for sure: it won't be an algorithm that has removed it. It will be an intelligent and sensitive marketer. And if it hasn't been removed then my advice is send your algorithm for counselling. After all even The Terminator had a gentle side.

I was recently sent an email from a media company offering me a platform which "uses a real-world algorithm which blends available ad space with the desired target audience reach, frequency, price, budget and asset spread to optimise an online media plan with limited waste."

They claim, "We love maths but we love media a little more."

Well in response to that let me say that I am going to rewrite my book sometime. And I'm still going to call it *Media Planning – Art or Science*.

Because I love advertising but I love media a little more.

**September 2013- Khulumamedia**

# Advertising in the OOH Zone



## Why a Guide to Out of Home Media Strategy and why now?

"Half my advertising is wasted - I just don't know which half". Half the advertising industry attributes this insight to Lord Leverhulme. The other half, to John Wanamaker. Two things are certain though: it doesn't matter who said it and, if you don't know what you are attempting to measure or why, then wasting only half your advertising might be the best case scenario.

Traditionally the primary focus of advertising has been on communicating the brand proposition to targeted consumers in a creative and engaging manner, using broad based commercial media platforms to "reach" as many targeted consumers as possible. A kind of "if you build it they will come" approach to selling. Or to be more accurate, "if you tell enough people that you've built it then at least some of them will come" approach! Of course, in media terms, the gap between "those you tell and those that come" is called wastage and unfortunately measuring wastage is a little like timing the cat to see how long it takes to drink the spilt milk.

Despite this, in South Africa, the most frequent axis for calibration, certainly from a media perspective, tends to remain campaign reach. A cursory evaluation of the AMPS definitions which are used to measure media exposure in South Africa serves to highlights one of the most critical shortcomings of this approach.

- *Readership* means that you personally read or paged through all or part of a copy, regardless of whether that copy belongs to you and regardless of the venue where the reading took place
- *Listenership* means you have personally listened to the radio … it may be all of a programme or only part of it… it doesn't matter if it was your own radio or somebody else's … nor does it matter where you listened to it.
- *Viewership* means you have you personally have watched all or part of a programme - it doesn't matter where you watched it – whether at home or elsewhere.



These definitions are designed to be all inclusive rather than selectively exclusive. To measure anybody and everybody who might have been nominally exposed to the campaign, rather than those for whom exposure to the campaign might have been a conscious or even memorable "aha" experience. We understand why mediaowners love these definitions, after all the bigger the audience the bigger the rate card and of course it goes without saying, the bigger the ratecard, the bigger the media-generated revenue for the agency.

> ***"The growing perception in South Africa that OOH is an under-researched medium is largely due to the industry's continued reliance on quantitative measures of reach, frequency, and ultimately GRPS."***

Interestingly, the AMPS definition of exposure to OOH has a much more direct filter and respondents are required to answer very specifically regarding their exposure to the medium. By way of example, the OOH interviewing process for Billboards is as follows

» *Think about advertising that you see when you are out of your home. When last, if at all, have you seen Billboards carrying any advertisements?*

It could be argued that OOH is the only medium in AMPS to have a built in ad-noting factor when it comes to measuring reach.

Despite this, there seems to be a widespread and growing perception in South Africa that OOH is an "under-researched" medium. This is largely due to the industry's continued reliance on quantitative measures of reach and frequency, and ultimately their desire to reflect GRPS on a spread sheet.

Despite a brief flirtation with GPS tracking, measures of OOH exposure in South Africa do not deliver universal GRPs for all formats and it is unlikely that in terms of available technology and research funding it ever will. In the past, when media strategy consisted of a healthy balanced diet of insight, intuition and statistical reasoning, this would not have been a problem but given advertisers' current obsession with numbers, my concern is that this is actually distorting advertising investment patterns.

I'm not against intelligent use of numbers but I am not in favour of a business practice which dictates media selection on the basis of its performance on an Excel spreadsheet, rather than its performance in the marketplace. Weighing the Christmas turkey every day doesn't make it any fatter.

*"I'm not against intelligent use of numbers but I am not in favour of a business practice which dictates media selection on the basis of its performance on an Excel spreadsheet, rather than its performance in the marketplace."*

The Guide is an attempt to change this perspective by highlighting some of the most recent insights into OOH media. That's why it focuses on posing, and hopefully answering, three questions. Does OOH work? How does it work? What can we do to make it work better?

A shift from deep-thinking and linear media consumption to the hyper-charged state of continuous partial attention has expanded the sensory bandwidth of consumers, enabling them to simultaneously accommodate multiple and multi-faceted media messages. It's more than just multi-tasking. This state of hyper-connectivity allows consumers to remain constantly "wired into" society generally, and the commercial mediaverse specifically, in order to assimilate, assess and respond to commercial messages.

As a result, a new focus on in-market response and return on media investment (ROMI), as the ultimate determinant of the success of any media campaign, has supplanted notional criteria such as reach and frequency as the primary currency of advertising success. Focus on high reach has been replaced by a focus on *thematic message relevance* (the content of the message as it relates to the consumer) and *decision-interval relevance* (the timing of the message at critical points of relevance either in terms of product consumption or product purchase).

No range of media platforms and interventions is better positioned to deliver on these two strategic pillars than those afforded by OOH.

OOH media do not have a conscious or consent-based association with consumers. Magazines may be purchased and radio or TV sets tuned to specific stations, but OOH signage is positioned without the specific consent of the targeted consumers. This does not mean however, that we cannot build up a clear picture of the implied relationship between these consumers and the various OOH platforms to which they are exposed.

Increasingly though, control over advertising message exposure is shifting from the medium and the advertiser to the consumer. Digital remotes and the PVR decoders have become the preferred instruments of commercial message avoidance. The intrusive nature of OOH however, means advertisers can break through this barrier to advertising consent. Tactically positioned to maximise the impact of thematic and decision-interval relevance, OOH not only attracts the attention of consumers but actively engages with them.

There is a general misperception that OOH is not a targeted medium, but this view is increasingly incorrect. Using robust audience data ranging from sophisticated mapping techniques, which incorporate GPS technology and electronic eye tracking devices, to simple vehicular passage and pedestrian foot

**OOH FUNCTIONALITY CLUSTER MAP**



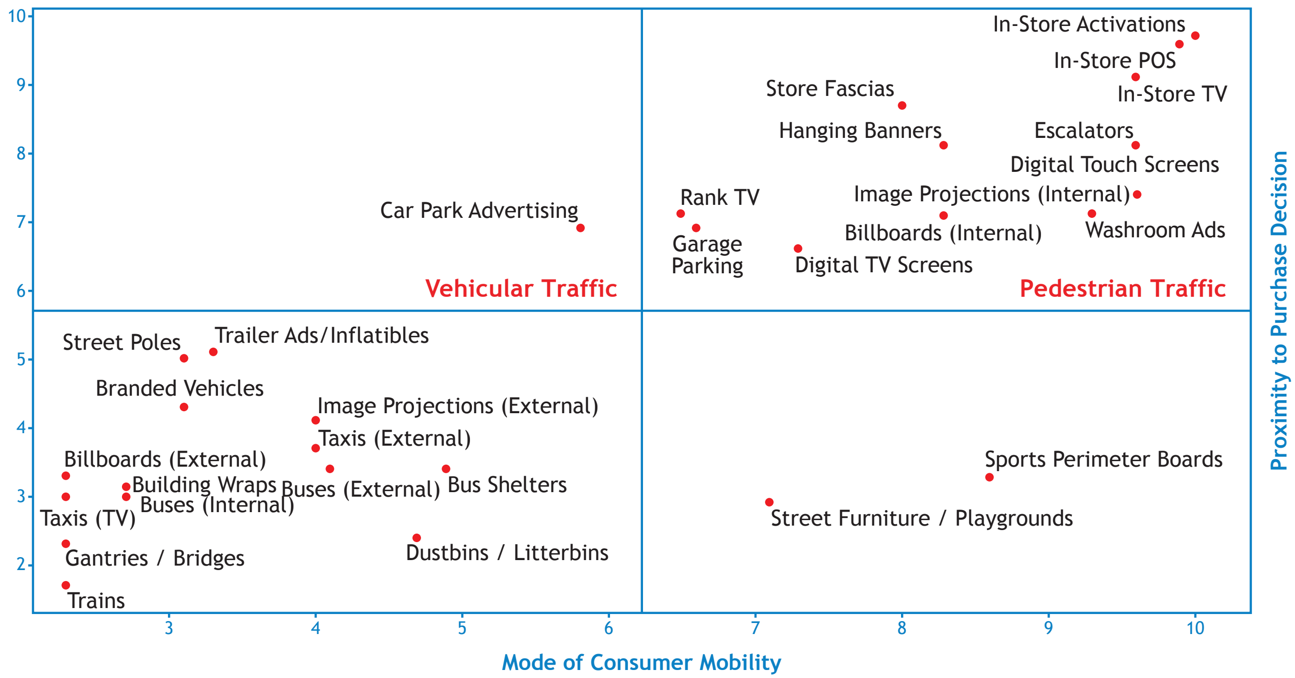



*Figure 7: OOH Functionality in South Africa*

traffic counts, advertisers are increasingly able to pinpoint where their consumers live, work and play.

In researching this text, a number of stakeholders in the South African media industry were asked to consider their own strategic use of OOH against two primary factors … Mode of Consumer Mobility and Proximity to Purchase Decision.

Respondents were asked to rank OOH media in terms of their ability to …

- Reach consumers who are in transit (i.e. consumers who are exposed to the medium while they are using cars, taxis etc.) versus consumers who are pedestrians (i.e. exposed to the medium whilst they are travelling on foot).
- Reach consumers at the actual point of purchase.

This functional analysis of strategic OOH usage confirms that media decision makers in South Africa intuitively view each connection point in the OOH Zone as a unique opportunity to communicate and interact with targeted consumers.

Ultimately it should be the consumer's behaviour pattern, campaign objectives and message content which should dictate the OOH strategy, not obsolete notions and classifications.

Whichever way you look at it though, advertising in the OOH Zone makes sound business sense.

**October 2013 - PRI's Journal of Retail Analytics**



# Start training now – or go live in Orania

In a recent blog *(Stick em in the naughty corner or learn to play darts)* I suggested that the best way to deal with the latest media insurrection would be to take the ringleaders and stick them in the naughty corner. Isolationism certainly works with little kids but unfortunately when you use child psychology on adults it seems to have the opposite effect. It stimulates delusions of independence rather than acting as a socialising agent.

Take Orania for instance.

We all know about the little town somewhere in the Karoo that has been created as a last bastion of Afrikaner identity. But how many of us know that it has its own currency? The Ora! First issued in 2004 the currency is not recognised anywhere outside Orania itself, nor is it sanctioned by the SA Reserve Bank. So basically, the Ora has the same value as Monopoly money. Probably less because if you have nobody to play with, you won't even bother taking the Monopoly board out the box.

So good luck all you exponents of the “Stuff the media industry, it’s our money” school of thought. I hope you find someone to play board games with other than yourselves. Otherwise you might end up celebrating “Bittereinder Dag” on 31st May with the rest of Orania.

For a moment though, let’s just assume that there will be an outbreak of sanity in the coming weeks. That the various industry bodies will play the long game and do what’s best for the entire media economy, and not start printing their own banknotes. Let’s assume some form of unitary single source establishment survey actually survives and that the local market continues to have access to a free media trading currency. That currency is called Data and unlike the Ora you can trade with it globally.

> ***“If you don’t have the right people to interpret the data then all you’ll have is an Excel spread sheet full of numbers.”***

Arguably our nation’s first-attempt triumphs at the World Cup Rugby in 1995 and African Cup of Nations the following year are collectively the worst thing that has ever happened to South African sport. They have lead us into the erroneous belief that all we have to do in order to be winners, is to just pitch up for the game. Our recent sports history has told a different story and it’s not easy to listen to … let alone watch.

Madiba magic is just not enough anymore!

If we want to be world beaters then there is only one way to do it … by being better than the rest of the world. If we want to command the respect of our international opponents on the sports field and our global media colleagues and clients, then we have to do more than just show them the titles printed on our business cards. We need to show them that when it comes to media in South Africa and Africa, we know more than them. We need to show them that when it comes to investing advertising funds in this part of the world, there is no substitute for consulting professional media planners and strategists right here in Mzansi.

In the local advertising and media industry, we need to recognise that we live in a pretty small village … interesting but small … in a vast global community. You don’t have to sit in Durban to plan an advertising schedule for Durban. You don’t have to sit in Johannesburg to plan a campaign for South Africa or for Africa. Ask the media planners in Nairobi and Lagos! Give a professional media planner online access to a database, and the necessary rates and any planner worth their salt, using globally standardised media planning software, can plan for any market, anywhere in the world. That plan will probably lack frontline creative insight but it will get the job done. You can have all the data in the world but if you don't have the right people to interpret the data then you're no better off. All you'll have is an Excel spread sheet full of numbers.

In South Africa, we have become so preoccupied with our own internal standards and the shape and composition of the local industry that we are very close to losing sight of the real performance issue, which is demonstrating our ability to deliver against increasingly demanding international standards of media planning and strategy. We don't have a right to be listened to when we protest that when it comes to media South Africa is different. We have to prove to global clients that it is in their best interest, strategically and financially and that nobody understands this process better than the media planners in South Africa.

Employment is not empowerment any more than buying a pair of running shoes makes you an athlete. It's just the first step that signals your intention. What empowers any individual in the commercial arena is the ability to do the job. What makes world class athletes is natural ability, guts and commitment. Funnily enough, that's pretty much what makes great media planners as well.

So while we argue about AMPS and SAARF and "whose money is it", the industry continues to neglect the biggest challenge of all. The growing skills shortage in media! It is time to put aside the squabbles and start developing the talent. The whole FET SETA set-up has been a dismal failure and as a result, industry initiatives are failing to match the need for skilled media decision-makers. We need an urgent consolidated effort, under one umbrella body to tackle the issue of skills development in the media industry. And we need to make it our number 1 priority.

Otherwise you'll have to take your new media currency and go live in Orania. At least they understand Monopoly money there.

**September 2013**

# Making Media Magic

## A Lecturer's Point of View

You can always tell the difference between those people who have been told that getting into media is a good career move (if they don't know what to do with their lives), and those people who really want to get into media. They both want to win an AMASA Roger Garlick award, but people who really want to be in media realise that they have to acquire a piece of business first. And when it comes to winning media business these days, chances are the GRPs and CPPs were central to the effort.

*"When you learn how to make your client's money work twice as hard, that's a little bit of media magic."*

So here's the bad news folks, whilst we all love touchpoints, channel planning and being relationship architects, we also have to learn how to run the numbers.

And the people who told you "there is no right or wrong answer in media" ain't never had to balance a global reporting template or explain media decision-making to a group of media auditors. If you don't know how to calculate the media numbers then you can't compute the bottom line. That's why that stuff's in the AMASA course. Master it!

When you learn how to win a Loerie, that's creative. But when you learn how to make your client's money work twice as hard, that's a little bit of media magic!

**November 2013 - The Media**

# Jerry Maguire and the media mirror

## A Media TrilOOHgy Part 1

On my very first day in media I asked my Media Director, the legendary Frank "FK" Muller, what I thought was a very reasonable question. "What's the key to media planning"? Without hesitation he replied "it's all done with mirrors". Personally I'd been hoping for something a little more substantial. Perhaps even a manual. But no! That was it. It's all done with mirrors.

And of course after 35 years in the business I now know that he was absolutely right.

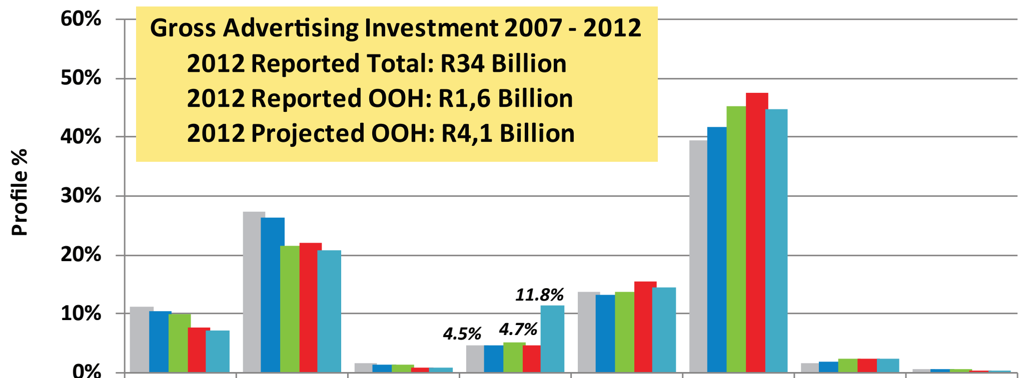
You have to present your thought process and the data in the best possible light in order to sell yourself and your plan. It's a case of shifting the angle of the mirror to create the right perspective on the data. Never to crook the data but to extract new and meaningful insights from the data. That's why I still love the manifesto from my alma mater McCann Erickson ... "The Truth Well Told".

So you have to ask yourself why the OOH industry has consistently chosen to adjust the mirror to reflect itself in the worst possible light.

Nielsen Media publishes the definitive database reporting adspend in Mzansi, called AdDynamix. Now AdDynamix isn't perfect but it is the adspend data benchmark. As a convention, media owners have historically reported their adspend figures at gross rate card level. As planners we know that this is not the "bottom line" in terms of actual media owner revenue but nothing wrong. Just using the mirror to show themselves in the best possible light. The Truth Well Told.

The OOH industry, on the other hand has chosen to report actual "net net" revenue figures. That is adspend net of discount and net of agency commission. This equates to some R1,6 billion annually or 4,7% share of voice. But in order to make an apples-to-apples comparison with other media we need to reweight this figure back up to a nominal gross rate card rate. Assuming a very conservative 10% discount level and 16,5% agency commission, this means that OOH adspend is not R1,6 billion as reported but R2,1 billion.






| | Magazine | Press | Cinema | Outdoor | Radio | TV | Internet | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PRE RECESSION | 11.1% | 27.4% | 1.5% | 4.5% | 13.8% | 39.5% | 1.5% | 0.6% |
| RECESSION | 10.5% | 26.3% | 1.3% | 4.5% | 13.2% | 41.6% | 1.9% | 0.6% |
| WCUP 2010 | 9.9% | 21.6% | 1.4% | 5.1% | 13.6% | 45.3% | 2.4% | 0.6% |
| ADSPEND 2012 | 7.6% | 22.1% | 0.8% | 4.7% | 15.3% | 47.6% | 2.4% | 0.3% |
| ADSPEND 2012 (PROJECTED OOH) | 7.0% | 20.3% | 0.8% | 11.8% | 14.1% | 43.6% | 2.2% | 0.2% |

Of course one of the other problems attached to reporting actual revenues is that many companies don't want to effectively open their book to competitors. And so many OOH media owners don't report adspend. A significant cross section of OOH companies, currently not reporting advertising revenue figures to Nielsen (incorporating OOH platforms such as large format building wraps and stadium perimeter boards, advertising in shopping malls, washrooms, fitting rooms and in-store, some forms of transit media and activations etc.) submitted annual gross revenue figures for independent scrutiny and inclusion in *Advertising in the OOH Zone*.

*"You have to present your thought process and the data in the best possible light in order to sell yourself and your plan."*

These combined adspend figures reflect at least an additional R2,4 Billion in advertising investment, which in turn significantly boosts total OOH adspend to some R4,1 Billion or about 11,8% of advertising investment.

This estimated figure corresponds more favourably with other emerging markets such as Russia (16%), China (11%) and Mexico (9,5%) and what is really significant in local terms, is that it means the OOH sector is bigger than the magazine sector in terms of advertising support.

So how does this help the OOH industry? Once again it comes down to mirrors and the power of normative planning. Against current reported norms, when a planner invests 7% of budget in OOH, clients are inclined to ask "why are you over-investing in OOH"? If the norm is 11,8% then 7% represents an under-investment and is a much easier sell. You double the OOH revenue through simple media mirror-nomics!

If Jerry Maguire was a media strategist I know which figure he'd rather be working with and just what he'd be saying to the OOH industry. Help me help you! Find a way to report the adspend data to AdDynamix. That way you complete me.

**December 2013**



# If you want to milk the cash cow you need to go MOOH

**A Media TriOOHgy Part 2**

The OOH industry is a bit like the Tardis. It's a great deal bigger than it looks from the outside and like the Tardis, nobody, not even The Doctor really knows how it works. From the outside the OOH industry looks like 4,7% of advertising investment in South Africa but when you step inside and start factoring in all the component-players who power the sector, it looks a lot more like 11,8% of total adspend. That's a huge chunk of energy that's not being directed into the engine room. R2,4 billion to be precise.

Historically the OOH industry has presented its face and supposedly its case to the media industry through OHMSA (Out of Home Media SA). The OHMSA name has undergone several iterations over the past 35 years but the focus has remained much the same. In recent years though, OHMSA has lost a great deal of traction in terms of its ability to present a holistic OOH offering to the industry.

To the outsider peering through the door of OHMSA, it would appear that internal dissension has significantly pruned the membership tree and stunted its growth but given the obvious nature of the collective enemy facing the OOH sector, one can only wonder "why"? Surely there is sufficient common ground … sufficient common cause … to direct the co-ordinated energies of the OOH industry into taking on the Darleks (or is that NABleks?) who are trying to take over the mediaverse?

Surely there can be no bigger task than trying to grow OOH share of the pie? And I'm not just talking about improving the reporting, I'm talking about really growing the sector.

A significant part of the problem is due to the historical pre-occupation with legislative and regulatory matters, rather than with stimulating growth. A glance at the Aims and Objectives as outlined in the OHMSA Constitution is revealing. It starts with a stated aim "to promote and to protect the interests of the Association and its members" and ends 13 points later with the need "to enforce expeditiously the strict compliance by its members of the provisions of this Constitution".

In between this Alpha and Omega of stated purpose, there is very little clear reference to actually marketing the OOH sector to the media industry. In fact in over 20 pages of legalese there are only two veiled references to actually promoting the medium…

- to promote and publicize the OOH industry, by way of advertisements, exhibitions and otherwise
- to elevate the skills, knowledge levels and professionalism of employees and users of OOH media



And there hasn't been a lot of either going on of late.

If OHMSA is to once again assume the mantle of OOH champion, shouldn't the focus be shifting from trying to regulate the industry towards selling the efficacy of the medium in the new millennium? That is not to say there should be no regulation but there will always be sharp practice in the industry. Caveat Emptor! Rather train clients on the value of an uncluttered OOH environment than to lambast them for going in where angels fear to tread.

If you want to wash your dirty linen in public, fine, but while all this internal squabbling over "legal" and "illegal" sites has been going on, the Cybermen have stolen what is arguably the most powerful OOH medium of them all, tablets and mobile phones. If there was ever a medium that belonged in OHMSA it is digital but you're not going to draw them in if you start off by throwing the rule book at them.

It's time for OHMSA to change its primary focus and quite possibly its name. It's time to start Marketing Out of Home. If you want to milk the cash cow you need to go MOOH!

**December 2013**

## A billboard by any name would look as sweet

**A Media TrilOOHgy Part 3**

Why all the fuss about the correct way to categorise Out Of Home media? Isn't a billboard just a billboard? Of course Shakespeare said it best … "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." You just have to believe that David Ogilvy and Shakespeare would really have got along. After all, they were both masters of long copy communication.



In terms of reporting adspend, the benefits of creating a more inclusive definition of OOH are obvious and significant. But is there anything to be gained from these machinations in terms of the way we actually use the medium?

The AMASA textbook *Nuts n Bolts of Media Planning* defines Out Of Home as "essentially any type of advertising that reaches the consumer while he or she is outside the home and on the move". This definition certainly qualifies as "inclusive" but, if I may lean once more on the Bard, therein lies the rub. It's too inclusive.

> ***"The global revolution in consumer behaviour and media consumption is challenging many of the accepted fundamentals of media strategy."***

If I choose to read my newspaper on a park bench somewhere, does it suddenly convert from being print to being OOH? When I listen to radio in my car, should that suddenly be classified as Out Of Home Media exposure just because I happen to be in the OOH Zone?

Unlike other media messaging OOH advertising is, or should be, created exclusively to be consumed in the OOH environment where its powers of persuasion do not require the explicit consent of the consumer. That's its primary point of difference from other media formats. That's what we have to teach a generation of digital natives who think that, when it comes to information and creative content, a building wrap is really just a very large website.

The global revolution in consumer behaviour and media consumption is challenging many of the accepted fundamentals of media strategy. The singularity of the couch-bound primetime TV audience, or the car-bound drive-time radio listener, has been replaced by multi-platform access to the "always on" media consumer.

That's why the focus on high reach in media has been replaced by a focus on thematic message relevance (the content of the message as it relates to the consumers' situation) and decision interval relevance (the timing of message exposure at critical points either in terms of product consumption or product purchase).

It's not enough to simply drop your TV imagery onto an OOH format and hope that consumers will make the connection. In order to maximise the value of communicating with consumers in the OOH Zone you need to deploy messaging that is specifically created for the time and circumstance in which the consumer will interact with it.

One of the most futile creative indulgences is for advertisers to take a print ad and use it in the OOH Zone without adjusting the layout and copy elements. Consumers simply don't have the time to try and absorb multiple communication points


*Figure 8: University of Alberta Evian Water Noting (Visuals Amended)*

and long copy. It has long been held that the most important guideline for effective advertising on a billboard, and other OOH formats for that matter, is to ensure that the message is single-minded and succinct.

One of the best studies in this regard was conducted by the University of Alberta for Evian Water. It was discovered that, for every extra message included in the billboard, there was a corresponding decline in effectiveness for the campaign. Awareness declined from 41,1% for the single-message board to 29,2%, for the 5-message board.

When it comes to advertising in the OOH Zone, more often than not, less is more. And that is something that even David Ogilvy knew, but Shakespeare would never have understood.

**December 2013**

# The Secret to Monetising Facebook

**Or Phansi OGFA! Phansi!**

Many media people have commented that I don't blog nearly enough. And it's true. I don't. It's not like I don't have anything to say or that I don't spend time reflecting on new insights on the media industry. It's all about "time" and as we all know, particularly in media these days, time is money. In fact the real barrier to the growth of the digital industry in Mzansi is "time-spent" relative to "money-recovered".

> *"The answer to monetising your digital content is quite simply to charge people for it."*

Ever since I've taken an interest in digital media the primary point of focus has been on the issue of monetization. In particular, how do you get someone who has been consuming your product for free to start paying for it? Greater minds than mine have pondered this issue with little success. Bar one or two notable exceptions of course. So you can imagine how excited I am, thanks to SANRAL, to have found the answer. It's so elegantly simple that I'm actually a little embarrassed at not having thought of it sooner.

The answer to monetising your digital content is quite simply to charge people for it. There you have it. Just charge them for it. And if they don't pay you, hand them over to the eToll Nazis who will collect the money for you. You don't even have to invoice people. You just charge them.

So yesterday, empowered by this brilliant eureka insight, I decided to start charging anybody reading my Facebook page R5 per reading day. So with 388 Friends that's a potential income of around R58,000 a month. Of course that's the worst case scenario because if you factor in "Friends of Friends" and the concept goes viral, the dividend yield is exponential. It makes the average Ponzi scheme look timid.

If of course a Friend reads this message on somebody else's device then the reader is not liable for this amount but they have clearly transferred the liability to the "device supplier". In this instance, the onus is on the reader to provide the details of this 3rd party or accept liability for reading. Simple.

The SAFAMP (Sanral Facebook Monetization Principal) system is as much about the carrot as it is about the stick and the regular Facebook readers are heavily incentivized. If a Friend knows they will be reading my page on a daily basis, then all they need do is pay a once off R7 at the beginning of the week which is an effective 80% discount on the ad hoc R35 weekly charge.

Now cynics amongst you will point out that not every friend will read everything I say every day. Well that's the nice thing about SAFAMP. It doesn't matter. You just charge them anyway and then make them prove that they haven't read it. It's foolproof because in order to prove they haven't read your Facebook page, they have to reply to your comment which means *de facto* they have in fact read it and that they owe you R5. Joseph Heller eat your heart out!

When I say potential monthly revenue of R58,000 I am of course talking RBPM (Revenue Before Punitive Measures).

**January 2014**

# Over-commercialised or Full commercial value?

**On the issue of Sunday Times over-commercialising to survive**

I was recently asked to comment on the renewed advertising investment in Sunday papers and the Sunday Times specifically.

» *Comment on how malleable newspapers have become and the lengths they will go to ensure their survival.*

Why is that when a newspaper "goes big" and accommodates a creative advertising format it's a desperate act of survival, but when radio and TV commercialise every single bit of available programme content (from squeezebacks, stings and product placement on TV to live reads and personalized product endorsements on radio) it's called maximizing commercial value? Once upon a time DPSFC in Sunday Times was a standard format. No big deal.

» *Do you consider page 2 and 3 of a newspaper like the Sunday Times key 'real estate'?*

No more than I would consider actual programme content on a show like Isidingo or the news for that matter as TV "real estate". If I can write an energy drink or a mobile phone into a script or storyline or dress the TV newsreaders, why can't I do the same in print? 20 years ago Rolls Royce did a total buyout of the London Times but it hasn't damaged the reputation of the title. Page 3 has always been a commercially attractive position but page traffic studies don't show a great deal of difference between page 3 and page 5. The real catalyst would be "first news page". If you carry the front page to page 3 or page 5 there would be no significant difference in readership. People who are interested in the lead story will stay with it, regardless of secondary page linkage.



» *Do you think we can expect to see more of this type of advertising from other papers?*

I jolly well hope so. Why not? Would you write an article on somebody running a 120sec TVC commercial, just because the norm is 30sec? No. So just because the norm is 40x7 or 30x5 doesn't make a DPS or DPS+FPFC a desperate act. It's just bloody good business acumen. Well done Sunday Times.

» *Is this what newspapers need to do in order to survive or is it too little too late?*

Don't mix up the concepts commercial survival and survival as a medium. Extracting full commercial value from the medium in its current format has no bearing on the long term decline of the print medium in the face of the growth of digital editions, online news and social media. Two separate issues.

**March 2014 - The Redzone**

# Rant and Rave 2014

**RANT**

I've been battling for weeks to think of something to rant about. But quite frankly it's a struggle. And it's not as if I'm not feeling grumpy. I certainly am. Arsenal and Kaizer Chiefs have both contrived to throw away the season. Jay Z is fighting with Beyonce's sister and Tim Noakes has decreed that eating chocolate, or indeed anything that actually tastes nice, is more evil than Felonious Gru. What's a media minion to do?

Well of course I could rant about the fact that after graduating from the Vladimir Putin School of Relationship Management the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) has decided to annexe their half of the advertising industry in order to protect NAB citizens from other ethnic media minorities. I've done that several time already but when you're ranting into the wrong end of a loudhailer all you can hear is the echo of your own voice.

So I'm going to rant about Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz.

In a world in which every aspect of communication and media practice is undergoing quantum warp-speed change, we in Mzansi are still just cruisin' down the yellow brick road singing "somewhere over the rainbow" to anybody that will listen. Mostly ourselves!

The bottom line is this: AMPS tells us that there are some 34,8 million South Africans 18yrs or older. There are 25,4 million registered voters and 18,6 actual ballots were cast. Despite what you read from the experts that's actually a 53% voter turnout. Not 73%.

I'm blaming the communications industry for this one. You want to know where the other 16 million voters were (give or take a few million African visitors)? Fast asleep. And we put them there. From politicians we expect mediocrity but this 2014 election produced some of the most pedestrian creative work ever seen in this country. If the SABC had just said we won't flight this stuff because it's so bloody boring, they might have had a better public reception.

> ***"If you don't get a measurable business return in excess of the initial amount invested, you're losing money. Irrespective of the discount."***

## RAVE

Well it follows that if I'm ranting about mediocrity in the media world then there is precious little to rave about. It's a bit like being a Manchester United supporter. You know it's supposed to be glamorous but when you're faced with the reality of it week in and week out, it's pretty depressing. Maybe now that David Moyes has a little bit of spare time on his hands, he could come out here and chat to the local industry about the importance of getting results. Measurable results that is. Not pseudo rewards.

So I'd like to rave about those researchers and advertisers who have finally come to understand that Return on Media Investment (ROMI) is just that. An actual return on the bottom line; whether in financial or incremental awareness terms. Not just a discounted monetary amount reflected on a global Excel media-savings report. If you don't get a measurable business return in excess of the initial amount invested, you're losing money. Irrespective of the discount!

Most media discounting in Mzansi offers little more benefit than a typical airline loyalty scheme. No matter how much you fly, you can never get enough air miles to recover the cost of the original tickets.

In this regard I would single out the pioneering efforts of Millward Brown and their pioneering cross-media studies. New insights gleaned from a growing bundle of case-studies mean that advertisers and media owners are now able to optimise channel investments beyond simple calculations of diminishing reach. Optimising reach is good. But optimising in-market response is better.

**May 2014 – The Media Magazine**

# Rant and Rave 2014

## Radio and the Sounds of Silence

On the issue of what constitutes a listener

I was listening to radio this morning. That is actually tuned in and listening as opposed to cruising around with a bit of muzak in the background, dodging taxis and trying to time my lane-changes so as to pass through the Nazi-tolls with my car perfectly centred on the dotted lines. To be honest I don't know if that actually works in terms of confusing the gantries but it's really good fun watching the drivers in your rear-view mirror attempting the tactic once they've figured out what's going on.

So, because I was listening I was really intrigued by the evidence led by acoustic engineer Ivan Lin at the Oscar Pistorious trial today. He reminded me of something truly fundamental about the broadcast industry. Something we've basically forgotten even though Simon and Garfunkel sang about it a long time ago …

*People talking without speaking*

*People hearing without listening.*

The difference between *hearing* and *listening*. You know what I'm talking about.

Hearing is simply the passive act of perceiving sound via the ear. If you are not hearing-impaired then "hearing" simply happens.

Listening on the other hand is something you consciously choose to do. Listening requires concentration so that your brain processes and constructs meaning from words, sound and sentences. Listening leads to learning and is arguably the pre-cursive state for "theatre of the mind" to exist. And as we all know, "theatre of the mind" is the cornerstone of creative radio. Or so the RAB keeps telling us anyway.

When we consider that one the most fundamental assumptions in media planning is that people consume media despite the presence of advertising not because of it, we come to understand that, when we are talking radio, most people are "hard of listening" rather than "hard of hearing".

When it comes to using media research data however, in our desperate desire to win over the hearts and minds of procurement executives, most media decision-makers have become obsessed with the reliability of the data rather than applying their minds to understanding the validity. And if you don't know the difference between reliable research data and valid research data, I'll see you at the AMASA Weekend Workshop next month.

Most of us are so used to accepting the standard definitions of media consumption that we have forgotten to interrogate what they actually mean. If we consider the current definition of radio listenership embraced by the industry,

» *"By listen we mean that you personally listened to the radio. It may be all of a programme or only part of it. It doesn't matter whether it was your own radio or somebody else's. Nor does it matter where you listened to it."*

we have to wonder whether we are not in fact measuring "hearing" rather than "listening".

Of course one of the key advantages of reporting the "*hearership*" of a radio station, rather than some measure of active *listenership*, is that the reported audience figures will remain high. And as we all know, the higher the hearership the higher the advertising rate. It's a grand system. As long as you keep the data reliable (and radio data in Mzansi is reliable to the point of terminal predictability) and control the qualitative variables, you can be sure nobody is going to derail the procurement train.


In fact, it's not dissimilar to the print industry's firm commitment to a definition of readership which has almost reached the laughable point where there is an inverse correlation between circulation and readership.

So when the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) in Mzansi gives the advertising and media industry the middle finger, as they have done, and sets off to create a new audience currency that better suits their commercial needs, you have to question whether it's their intention to continue measuring "hearing" (which will keep those audience numbers and ad-rates nice and high) or whether they intend to catch the ROMI train with the rest of the media world by attempting to measure the actual impact of radio (which is a function of active listening) on any communication plan.

Actually advertisers are beginning to figure this out but many have arrived at the wrong conclusion. Witness to this fact is the almost complete erosion of the traditional 30s radio spot in favour of massively expensive activations. Most radio activations are little more than advertisers paying a premium to convert hearers to listeners, by giving away their margins in order to fund payment for the total audience, which of course includes the hearers the advertisers weren't interested in in the first place.

It's a sad indictment of the media industry in Mzansi that it remains so firmly committed to selling (and I guess buying for that matter) the LCD (Lowest Common Denominator) of so called listenership, viewership and readership at a discount, when they should be taking a leaf out of the digital book and selling the HCD (Highest Common Denominator) at a premium. If the digital industry was run by broadcasters in Mzansi, they would still be trying to flog page impressions to advertisers.

> ***"It's a sad indictment of the media industry that it remains so firmly committed to selling the Lowest Common Denominator at a discount when they should be selling the Highest Common Denominator at a premium."***

But hey! We're all fans of the next shiny thing. It's so much more fun starting something new than it is to polish up the previous, and admittedly tarnished, shiny thing. As Paul and Art sang …

And the people bowed and prayed, To the neon god they made.

*And the sign flashed out its warning,*

*In the words that it was forming.*

*And the sign said, the words of the prophets are written on the subway walls*

*And tenement halls.*

*And whispered in the sounds of silence.*

**June 2014 - Khulumamedia**

# A World without AMPS?

## Maybe. But a world without Fred Perry?

In view of the alarming standoff between the media owners and SAARF, I'm often asked to reflect momentarily on a world without AMPS, as there seems to be a perception in some sectors of the media industry that nobody is actually addressing these issues.

Firstly that perception is incorrect. Interested parties are putting in a massive amount of work behind the scenes to try and preserve the rich heritage of media and marketing information contained in AMPS and I, amongst many others, have been commenting on this for the past two years through this blog.

The problem is that many people, people who should know better, are confusing the need to preserve the information contained in AMPS with attempts to preserve the legal entity which is SAARF.

As I have indicated in several blogs AMPS has not been without its shortcomings. Some of those shortcomings may be directly attributable to the intransigence of SAARF's previous management, others to the inability of traditional research methods to keep pace with quantum change in the manner in which people consume media. Indeed these days the really interesting insights come, not so much from the quantitative evaluation of the consumer's media consumption, but from a qualitative interpretation of their user generated content.

Whatever the case though, throwing the baby out with the bath water is rarely a sound behavioural practice. Certainly it tends to be terminal for the baby and conceiving another baby is very rarely an effective compensation to mother for losing the first one.

The industry needs to fix AMPS and if in fixing it to everybody's satisfaction we give it another name, then so be it. For the moment that name seems to be JES (Joint Establishment Survey). Call it Fred if it makes you feel better. If in creating JES we have also to reconstitute SAARF, to make it more inclusive of stakeholders and make its management more transparent, then let's do that as well. Right now the industry likes the name JIC (Joint Industry Committee) but if it needs a new name, call it Perry.

You remember Fred Perry? He's no longer the last Brit to win the men's singles at Wimbledon but he's certainly the last interesting one.

Speaking of interests, what then do we want? Very simply as data users, responsible for investing hundreds of millions with media owners, we want …

- Unrestricted access to media data.
- Improved and more inclusive sampling
- Valid and reliable data: and this implies media consumption data that is not produced by media-owners for media-owners.

In this latter context, the phrase "publish and be damned" springs to mind. Here's the bottom line for media owners. When it comes to producing audience figures, you can't mark your own homework.

- More transparency in management of data-production and more engagement from both advertisers and media agencies in the process of data creation.

To a very large degree the impasse between media-owners, marketers and agencies can be attributed to the fact that there has been an increasing juniorisation of the participants in industry based market and media research initiatives, to the detriment of both AMPS and SAARF. So for heaven's sakes, put the egos aside for the moment and let the big players sit around a table together. As The Economist once observed "When you're brawling on the edge of a cliff the big question is not 'who is right?' but 'what the hell are you doing on the edge of a cliff?'".

> ***"When you're brawling on the edge of a cliff the big question is not 'who is right?' but 'what the hell are you doing on the edge of a cliff? - The Economist"***

So I can conceive of a world without AMPS and SAARF. In fact I can even conceive of a better world without AMPS and SAARF. But I can't conceive of a world without Fred Perry. I believe in longevity and that even the oldest moth-eaten brands and services can be rejuvenated if they are subjected to intelligent and honest scrutiny. You don't get to stand the test of time (and the AMPS-SAARF model has been around for 40 years) unless the brand has inherent substance. It will need to be refreshed. Sure. Its roll will need to be refined. Sure. But it can endure.

You can of course chase after the latest fad but after Morbid Murray's exit from Wimbledon today, I wonder whether in another 80 years, stylish young people will be aspiring to wear branded Murray gear, as they aspire today to wearing Fred Perry.

When media owners rush off to create their own little Fred Perry clones, or worse still attempt to create their own alternatives to Wimbledon, they should not expect that somehow media strategists will *a posteriori* find a way of putting the pieces together again. That is the stuff of fairy tales. And that is something I do know about because unless we get the egotists off the edge of the cliff I'll be spending the final years of my life in media, not diving headlong into the new and exciting media challenges in Mzansi, but reading Humpty Dumpty stories to my grandchildren*.

Of course we don't really know whether Humpty Dumpty jumped or whether he was pushed. But we do know that you can't put him back together again.

**July 2014**

* See The SAARF-AMPS Debacle: Stick 'em in the naughty corner … or learn to play darts!

# The Future of Media Agencies in Mzansi

## From Spotty Herbert to Spotify

In order to accurately project the way media agencies will operate in the future, the average star gazer (sorry Clem I mean scenario planner) would have to accurately project the future of technology, and if I was capable of doing that I'd start a company and name it after my favourite piece of fruit.

If you had told me when I was still a little Spotty Herbert that my own music consumption would evolve from transistor radios and 7-singles, through cassettes, 8-tracks, CDS and DVDS and that all those things would end up in a box in my cellar, because the cloud would be streaming music to my mobile phone through something called Spotify, I would have said you were daft. I mean … a mobile phone as in "beam me up Scotty"? Get real!

That's not to say I'm incapable of making accurate predictions. Over twenty years ago I confidently predicted that the emergence of independent media agencies was a fantastic development for advertising people who harboured a secret desire to work in the bank. And I was right.

> ***"It is access to data that differentiates and elevates South Africa into its position as the pre-eminent and most sophisticated media market in Africa."***

Despite protestations to the contrary media agencies have to a large degree defaulted to what they know and do best. They do target market assessments and analyse competitive adspend. They calculate reach, frequency and GRPS (more often than not on creative campaigns that were conceived elsewhere), and increasingly they complete interminable spreadsheet reports for nameless global bean counters.

But media agencies do also negotiate fantastic discounts. Buying more exposure for less is almost certainly the best way to land media business but once you've landed it, the entire focus shifts invariably towards making the agency KPI buying targets (see "more for less" above) even if that doesn't really contribute to the ultimate objective of in-market Return on Media Investment (ROMI).

They churn numbers.

Media agencies love Big Numbers and Big Campaigns. The bigger the numbers the bigger the budget … and the bigger the budget the bigger the revenue!

Of course media agencies are allowed to play in the *Big Ideas* arena occasionally and even Cannes, once the exclusive domain of the creative agency, now finds that media is one of the most keenly contested sectors at the awards. David Ogilvy would probably pull the eye patch off the Hathaway man in frustration at the knowledge that these days we even have campaign effectiveness awards at Cannes. In South Africa, the Roger Garlick awards have elicited some excellent work over the years but these campaigns are the exception and most certainly not the rule.

So in the future, will media agencies still churn big numbers for big campaigns? Yes they will. The real questions are "what numbers?" and "who will churn them?".

When it comes to numbers, over the past 5 decades South Africa has justifiably established itself as the leading advertising market in Africa and as the Pan-African benchmark for excellence in media decision making. The catalyst for this competitive positioning is not superior intellect or work-ethic but quite simply, data. It is access to data that differentiates and elevates South Africa into its position as the pre-eminent and most sophisticated media market in Africa. And it is access to independent, reliable and credible data which will define the future of media agencies in Mzansi.

Right now the impasse between media owners (who are determined to create big audience data that best suits their narrow world view) and the marketing industry (basically their clients who are holding out for a centralised co-operative approach) is threatening the very existence of media agencies in this country. And ironically, the existence of the very media owners who are so committed to declaring UDI.

Today we like to call big numbers by another name. *Big Data*.

Media owners in Mzansi are so in thrall to the concept of big data that, under the universal cri de guerre "AMPS under-reads my medium", they have convinced themselves the only way to halt the digital blitzkrieg is to create more data and bigger audiences, so that they can once again entice media agencies into big campaigns with big budgets.

> ***"The real purpose of big data is quite simply to create Big Insights."***

But as James Deaker, VP Advertising and Data Solutions at Yahoo notes, big data is more about the “3Vs” than it is about big campaigns.

- Volume of data that exceeds traditional processing methodologies
- Variety of data types and sources
- Velocity of data flowing in and out of the systems

In the global media industry, big data is certainly a hot topic because each of these 3Vs needs to be addressed effectively to improve the consumer and advertiser experience through better personalization and targeting of digital communication. In fact the inverse rule of big data application is that it produces small campaigns. So small, in fact, that they create a target market of one. The personalised advertising message directed at me, the digital user.

> ***“The media agency of the future will not be required to measure the number of consumers that a campaign reaches, but rather the number of consumers who are reaching out to the campaign.”***

In a recent study (June 2014) conducted for Yahoo by Ipsos, 78% of consumers in the USA indicated that they are open to some form of personalised content. But the study also found a high degree of acceptance as long as personalised content is relevant and delivers efficiency for the user.

Lauren Weinberg (VP Global Research and Insight at Yahoo) noted that it’s about striking the right balance between “giving consumers what they want but not narrowing their world so that they start to miss out on things that are important to them”. Yahoo’s three golden rules for achieving best practice in personalisation are …

- “Know me” (content that targets ‘what I like’ and ‘who I am’)
- “Speak my language” (make ads sound like a trusted brand)
- “Value my time” (people want better ads with more useful information).

The real purpose of big data is quite simply to create Big Insights.

But in emerging markets, it is also necessary to understand all of a user’s interactions not only with web pages, apps and social media but across every media channel that consumers use to access advertisers’ content. That includes radio, OOH print and conventional TV. If media agencies and the media industry in Mzansi are to survive into the future there needs to be significant shift in thinking. Big data doesn’t mean investing millions in large sample research that will produce bigger audiences.

It means investing in smaller and more targeted audiences and bigger and better insights. Bigger insights about individual consumers, not aggregated audiences based on large sample research.

So who will churn these big data in the future? Will it be a trained media strategist with a degree in marketing and communication, or perhaps psychology and consumer behaviour? Or will it be an algorithm which just creates an infinite series of real-time connections between a series of seemingly unrelated bits of data?

In the digital world there is very little discussion on this point. The sheer volume, variety and velocity of data delivery determine that programmatic planning will ultimately prevail. The concept of training individuals to sit at a desk, with a rate card, and using powers of human observation to connect a disconnected set of numbers, is obsolete. Start training wannabee media buyers now about algorithms and programmatic planning, or just close down.



But what happens when it comes to the creative response to these insights?

Sure, media measurement tools will have to improve dramatically but ultimately it's the creative response to big insights that will make the difference. Whether we are talking about VAI (Viewable Ad Impressions), radio listenership or TV viewership, it's not about buying more for less. In fact it never has been. One of the biggest mindset shifts we need to inculcate, if media agencies are to survive into the future, is the need to move beyond measuring campaign GRPS (which is increasingly the currency of procurement), to analysing and understanding the consumer's media consumption profile and even UGC (User Generated Content) and creating an immediate and personalised response to that consumer.

The media agency of the future will not be required to measure the number of consumers that a campaign reaches, but rather the number of consumers who are reaching out to the campaign.

**July 2014 - The Media**

## On the launch of the AMF Charter

» *Are the 10 points on the Charter achievable?*

Of course they are. The AMF (Advertising Media Forum) wouldn't have committed to them if they weren't achievable.

» *What, in your opinion, would it take to achieve this vision?*

A handful of people to swallow their pride and to recognise that at some point they need to act in the best interests of the industry as a whole, not in the short term commercial interest of their media sector.

*» Is the media industry united on this front, or are there still big divisions on the way forward?*

No the industry is not united, but the major media agencies and a growing number of marketers most certainly are. Media owners need to decide whether they want to work with their clients to create a mutually acceptable path forward or continue to ignore the requests of their own clients.

*» Is SAARF worth saving or should there be a whole new organisation?*

It's not about trying to save SAARF as an organization. It's about media agencies and marketers trying save the integrity of media and audience research in South Africa. The charter is quite clear on that point. It's about saving AMPS, or at least creating an Establishment Survey that will be able to do what AMPS currently does. That's not to say AMPS is a perfect business tool. It isn't and the best way to save AMPS is to be critical of it. Nobody has been more critical than me but when my dog is misbehaving I say "bad dog" and then I reward subsequent good behaviour. What I don't do is have him put down.

*» If you could see a year ahead, what would you like to see happen in terms of SAARF, RAMS, TAMS, PAMS?*

Well TAMs isn't part of the discussion. That matter has been resolved with a direct contract between NAB and Nielsen. We'll have to see what the new dispensation yields in terms of reliable TV viewing data. RAMS and PAMS have also put out separate tenders for viewership and ad-noting currencies. What I would like to see is all interested parties embracing an independent Establishment Survey as outlined by the Media Charter and as recommended by Jos Kuper and the AMPS Future Proofing task group.

*» Should marketers pay more money for a consultant to investigate different funding mechanism to fund SAARF in future?*

Nobody is asking marketers to pay more for a consultant. SAARF is funding that out of existing funds. Marketers will be asked to fund SAARF in partnership with Media Owners as outlined in The Media Charter (That is a methodology and establishment survey that is "equitably managed by advertisers/marketers and their agencies, and media owners"). This is the key point. The Media Charter sets out to be inclusive of all interested parties in the best interests of the entire media industry, not just the exclusive commercial interest of individual media-owners.

*» If not, how do you see funding issues being resolved?*

They will be resolved.

» *How does this charter align with other bodies such as PDMSA and the NAB?*

I believe you're misdirecting the question. You should ask the PDMSA and NAB how they align to the principles outlined in the AMF Charter. They are after all modelled on global best practice and represent the views of their own clients with respect to a common purpose and a shared destiny.

» *Any other insights you'd like to share?*

No! We're past insights time. Now it's time to act.

**September 2014 - The Media Magazine**

# 2015 and Beyond

**The end of Media Planning as we know it?**

Compiling this soupçon of my writings over the past 20 years is really the first step in the process of updating my book *Media Planning – Art or Science?* That it has to be updated is beyond question, but if I do update it, what should I call it? The problem centers on an internal dialogue about whether the term Media Planning still has any value.

In fact, I wonder whether media planning still has an effective role to play in advertising and communication beyond 2015?

> *"I wonder whether media planning still has an effective role to play in advertising and communication."*

I'm concerned that as an industry we might just be training people for a job that will most certainly not exist beyond the Groot Digital Migration. Mind you, at the pace at which Minister Muthambi is moving, I'll probably have ceased to exist myself. I mean the last Groot Migration took place in ox-wagons but even they were moving at a faster pace than our Faith, despite the fact that they stopped for a braai every night.

Now the demise of media planning would create a significant problem for me because my Twitter handle @ Mzansimedia describes me as "*Africa's oldest surviving media planner*" not "*Africa's oldest surviving unemployed media planner*". And we all know how important Twitter is, because if you can Tweet it you can write it! I mean at this stage I have posted 3480 Tweets. That's about 487,200 characters. At an average 10 characters per word, that is 48,720 words. Fair enough, make that 20 characters because of grammatical interference and the fact that these days we have to accommodate big words like *programmatic* and *optimisation*, which makes 24,360 words. That's two chapters right there.

But I digress. The point is that if *Media Planning* doesn't exist, what should l call my book?

Stumped for meaningful solutions I took myself off to listen to the self-styled Geek God Aki Anastasiou address AMASA on the recent global CES (Consumer Electronics Show) in Las Vegas. Really fascinating! And as I went from one OMG moment to another, from holograms to self-driving cars, it occurred to me that to leave that forum and continue writing a book which had a separate chapter on Cinema and another on Television, separate chapters on Newspapers and Magazines, and even separate chapters on Radio and Mobile, would be the unthinking act of a supreme Luddite.

The problem with Media Planning is that it implies the place to commence the process, the solution to the communication challenge, is the medium itself. Get the right balance of reach and frequency, add all the media numbers together and you get a result.

> ***"In media today, the Message is the Message and that message is Content."***

It's essentially a throwback to that old chestnut from Marshall McLuhan … *The Medium is the Message*. If the medium is the indeed the message then the answer must be to just get more media exposure: preferably for less money of course.

In a world where media distribution is ubiquitous however, we are increasingly coming to understand that *The Message is the Message* and that *message* is *Content*.

Increasingly the role of the former media planner is to map out the optimal distribution of content across media platforms, whether intuitively or through programmatic planning. Not just to maximise the total number of people exposed to the campaign but in order to maximise the relevance and impact of content delivery at each and every point of contact with the consumer.

From Media Planning to Content Mapping

All this gains traction in the global media industry's relentless drift towards measuring *total audience* as the first step towards computing actual *Return on Media Investment* (ROMI) rather than the value of discount savings. Attribution modelling is the latest shiny thing. Maintaining share of consciousness, rather than a competitive adspend share of voice becomes the yardstick of success. Ironically, at the very time that the rest of the world is trying to aggregate individual media channel contributions into one cohesive entity, the local media industry seems hell-bent on heading off in the other direction. Each media channel seeking to map out its own unique audience, and supposedly maximizing the commercial benefit of improved cost-efficiency. But in the future, trying to sell media based primarily on cost efficient audience delivery will be like running an ad for Dunkin Donuts in a Tim Noakes Banting-diet Guide.

*There should no more be a chapter on digital in any media textbook than there should be a chapter on electricity.*

When we look at it from this perspective, we realise that classifying newspapers and magazines, or cinema and television, as separate media channels is an obsolete way of planning. We need to look at this from the consumer's perspective. Some consumers read (call them reading imperatives). Some consumers listen (listening imperatives). And some consumers are watching imperatives. But the vast majority of consumers do everything. They read. They watch. They listen. They interact. And very often they do it all at the same time or at least with no behavioral consciousness of shifting across channels.

As planners we need to analyse the consumers' content preferences and the media behaviour they exhibit in order to access their priority content.

This allows us to break down the media silos that keep our strategic thinking mired in the past and to overcome the challenges of fusing digital and traditional media in any campaign.

If I am listening, does it make any difference whether I "listen" on a radio or on my mobile phone?

If I am a "reader", with a specific content interest in the news, does it make a difference whether I read the news in a printed newspaper or a digital edition on my computer?

It is not the fact that the source of my news is newsprint, or the App on my mobile phone that is significant, it is the content itself. And the commercial content interface opportunity that this creates. Of course new technology allows me to go beyond consuming content and to actually create content. I don't just read, watch and listen to the news through the media. Technology enables me to create news. User generated content (UGC) means that I am the medium.

The mobile phone is merely a delivery mechanism which facilitates my reading … or my listening … or my watching. It isn't a separate medium. That's why there should no more be a chapter in my new book on digital than there should be a chapter on electricity.

So, when I rewrite my book there won't be a chapter on radio. There'll be a chapter on Listening.

No chapter on newspapers: but a chapter on Reading and within that chapter, sections on newspapers, magazines, the internet and mobile.

No television chapter: but I'll unpack all forms of Watching from television, through cinema and taxi TV, to digital OOH and smartphones.

That's why I may well be going to be call my book *Content Mapping – Art or Science?*

And I'll be changing my Twitter handle to @Mzansimedia - Africa's newest Content Cartographer.



## *Gordon Muller...*

Gordon is an independent media consultant. In an advertising career spanning over four decades he has served on the board of several advertising and media agencies. Gordon is Chairman of the Advertising Media Association of South Africa (AMASA) and a past Chairman of the Advertising Media Forum (AMF).

He is the author of *Media Planning – Art or Science and Advertising in OOH Zone*.

Gordon was awarded the Financial Mail Adfocus Lifetime Achievement Award 2011

***Media planners are often exhorted to 'come out of their Ivory Towers'. There is simply no better time to do it than when planning and buying Out of Home Media.***

*Gordon Muller - Advertising in the OOH Zone.*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