PRESS RELEASE

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The Fresh Face of Outdoor Advertising

What would Time Square be without the flashing adverts or Piccadilly Circus without the neon lights?

Outdoor advertising has been claimed as the oldest form of advertising in the civilised world. Thousands of years ago, Egyptians used papyrus posters and stone obelisks to advertise laws and treaties, whilst more commercial messages and political-campaign displays have been found in the ruins of Pompeii and ancient Arabia. Yet another key indicator of its roots is the wall or rock painting that can still be viewed in many parts of Asia, Africa and South America. By the time the lithographic process was perfected in the mid 1700's wall space and shop-front windows were becoming the ideal platform to advertise products and services.

While the format has changed to coincide with advertising trends, outdoor still remains as one of the most popular methods to reach the desired audience fast and effectively. In fact, since 1998, Outdoor revenue has increased by 66%.

"Everyone who leaves the house is exposed to Outdoor advertising," says Henk Smith, Director of Insight Outdoor. "Unlike any other medium, you don't have to 'turn it on', 'tune in', 'dial it up' or 'turn over the page' to see it – it's just there...and it's free to the consumer."

No matter where you are; reading a magazine, surfing the internet, listening to the radio or driving your car, the consumer is constantly bombarded with messages and advertising. To make a marketing strategy effective, one needs to cut through the clutter. Outdoor is a proven medium in the mainstream media mix, delivering impact and awareness in a short amount of time – catching the attention of those who do not have access to the more mainstream advertising channels. It sits easily with what consumers are doing when they're out and about.

"Outdoor is engaging and impactful," remarks Smith. "Research shows the public has a very positive attitude towards Outdoor Advertising. It is seen as colourful and informative and a vehicle for introducing humour and fun to our lives.

When it comes to demographics, Outdoor, with its mix of product types and dedicated locations, can reach specific markets throughout the spectrum, whilst still remaining the most

cost-efficient of all the mainstream mediums. “As a flexible communication tool, Outdoor is without equal,” continues Smith. “With television audiences continuing to fragment under the onslaught of the new digital services, advertisers are increasingly using Outdoor to reach mass audiences quickly.”

So what makes Outdoor effective? Outdoor provides:

- Broad market reach and high frequency
- Strong market penetration. 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week exposure
- Cost-effective alternative to traditional media platforms
- A perfect strategic add-on/extension or stand-alone advertising vehicle
- A reminder medium when other activity tapers off

What makes outdoor unique is that there is a myriad of new methods of communicating the message through funky executions that are still be explored today. Besides the creative imagery and clever copy lines, creative’s are exploring new cut-out methods, and using uncommon vehicles such as disposable coffee mugs and shopping bags to promote the message. “The range of available Out of Home advertising opportunities is vast – from huge high impact banners, special builds and large format roadside billboards right through to advertising opportunities at stations, in trains, bus shelters, on taxis, buses, in leisure centres, on plasma screens and postcards, and in shopping malls and supermarkets. Consumers can be reached as soon as they step out of their home right to the very point of purchase,” explains Smith. “The Outdoor industry is constantly introducing fresh ideas. In addition to introducing new formats it is eager to involve itself with new technology. Be it digital, SMS, LED, sound or even intriguing smells – if it helps our customers talk to their customers in new and exciting ways then we'll be there,” Smith concludes.

South Africa is certainly adding to the industry and has been credited with a number of innovations.

Solar-powered billboards: Nedbank forged the way in South Africa through its installation of a solar-powered billboard. Not only did this achieve a Grand Prix in the 54th Cannes Festival, but it feeds the local community with electricity as a result.

Recyclable: Nedbank further innovated with a billboard made entirely out of recycled bags – a world first.

Digital billboards: Primedia Outdoor’s digital billboard platform the first large-format, high-resolution digital outdoor billboards in South Africa.

Over the years, outdoor advertising has evolved from just advertising, to literally works of art. With each generation, comes a new way to reach the target market:

Building wraps: Used to disguise unsightly construction works or to make full use of available space, this outdoor medium is an effective method to attractive audiences in strategic areas.

Graffiti: Though the jury is out on the legislation of “public art” washable “green graffiti” is providing a great alternative. Sprayed logo’s and messages, using non-permanent paint, onto cobblestones walkways and pavements provide an interesting form of advertising

Mobile and Walker Billboards: Take the mountain to Mohammed, by making your message moveable on either the back of a van, bicycle, and trailer or even on people, outdoor advertising is reaching more people in contained areas such as shopping malls.

Blow-up Billboards: flexible, versatile and moveable, inflatable billboards are proving a hit.

THE OHMSA AWARDS 2009

Now in its third year, OHMSA is calling for creative entries in the 2009 OHMSA Awards. Aimed at awarding local creative talent, the OHMSA awards seeks to promote an appreciation of excellence in outdoor advertising. The medium itself has grown year on year, with a plethora of creative work which is highly visible and truly deserves the recognition that an OHMSA Award gives. Categories include:

- Best of Show (Overall winner)
- Billboards
- Internally Illuminated Billboards
- Electronic Billboards
- Airport Advertising
- Retail / Street furniture
- Mobile Media
- Ambient Media
- Africa's Voice Award (best creative advert outside of South Africa's borders)
- The Student Award (brand new category)

The Best of Show overall winner will win a fully paid trip for two to attend the International Outdoor Advertising Awards event (The OBIE Awards) in New York on 6 March 2010. The winner of the student award will receive a cash cheque of R 10 000 towards their future studies.

Entries close on 18 December. Don’t delay, go to www.ohmsa.co.za, click on “Creative Awards”. Download the entry form and follow the instructions.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About OHMSA

Out of Home Media SA (OHMSA) is the officially recognised trade association for the Out of Home Media Industry in South Africa. Its 23 members provide media channels across the entire spectrum of Out of Home Media from ambient or alternative media through airport advertising to the giant billboards and wall wraps. As a non-profit organisation OHMSA seeks to promote and to protect the interests of the Association and its members whilst serving the needs of consumers, advertisers, and the public*. This is achieved through co-operation between its members and affiliated associations and government and local*

authorities. OHMSA aims to uplift the industry through skills investment, the eradication of unlawful practise and to encourage fair and free competition in the Out-of Home Industry. To become a member of OHMSA, go to www.ohmsa.co.za.

Issued by Stone Soup on behalf of Out of Home Media SA (OHMSA).

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