

Four reasons that digital sponsorships provide exceptional ROI for SA brands

 By [Mark Botha](#)

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South African organisations are upping their investment in digital advertising, with the total value of Internet advertising growing 16.5 % to R5.14bn in 2017 according to PwC's Entertainment and Media Outlook: 2018 - 2022. As they increase their spending on digital, the question of how to improve return on investment from this channel is top of mind for brands.



Image source: Gallo/Getty.

International practice and research show that marketing and advertising displayed in a contextually relevant, premium environment outperforms the average display ad. A study from the Association for Online Publishing, for example, shows that ads in premium vehicles elicit stronger levels of response in terms of engagement and memory encoding than ads encountered during general free browsing.

This search for consumer-relevant, premium inventory is driving growing advertiser interest in the concept of digital sponsorships. Sponsorships are an opportunity for brands to acquire a portal's inventory for a particular topic (the motoring section or football, for example) or an event such as the annual Budget Speech or a sports tournament.

Here are four reasons that digital sponsorships are becoming a popular option for South African brands that are looking to drive superior returns from digital advertising campaigns:

Exclusivity: The sponsorship package may include exclusive access to all the advertising placements in a section of the website—as well as native content, advertorials, links and so on. Sponsorships can be stretched across web, mobile, social, broadcast (TV and radio) and in-venue channels with the same publisher or media owner, in a minimal timeframe, very little effort and low implementation costs. This is an opportunity for your brand to grow its credibility and positioning as the ‘owner’ of a topic or event on a portal, without having to compete with other brands for the consumer’s attention.

Consumer relevance: What better way to reach your target customers than by addressing them when they’re in a place and frame of mind open to engaging with your content? If you are looking entice car buyers, a motoring portal where they are reading reviews of the latest cars is the right place to find them. And where are you more likely to reach people looking for a retirement annuity than on a personal finance site?

Targeting: In addition to knowing that you are reaching an audience that is interested in topics relevant to your brand, digital sponsorships should offer you a range of ways to understand and target more granular audience segments enabling you to tap into detailed demographic and behavioural data—inferred brand affinity, other interests and engagements to achieve the required personalised targeting.

You can use what you learn about your audiences to reengage with them on platforms outside the sponsored environment, allowing one to reinforce the brand message and build guaranteed frequency, which in turn can help to improve the performance of a campaign.

Value for money: Sponsorships are a cost-effective and scalable way to boost reach and engagement with quality audiences across premium channels. Sponsorships are sold as a package, so, therefore, the advertiser can access additional inventory, frequency and reach across a premium website at an attractive cost.

Exposure to the right audience at the right time

To sum up, the power of a digital sponsorship, it offers a brand access to the right niche audience at the right time and in the right channel. Brands can closely associate themselves with a topic that matters to their audience and becomes part of their digital experience. Then, using the data the publisher offers, they can also measure and optimise engagement with the customers and prospects they wish to reach.

ABOUT MARK BOTHA

Having been in the industry for over 15 years, I have also built and managed award-winning teams and have been lucky enough to work with some of the best people in the industry. I am excited about the future of digital and to continuing my work in this exciting medium

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