

Best performance of DOOH is seeded by facts

By [Jorja Wilkins](#), issued by [Primedia Outdoor](#)

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Selecting digital out of home inventory for an out of home advertising campaign across South Africa has become somewhat of a mixed bag in the past few years. The advertisers and agencies bank on us, the media owners, to provide facts that guide their decision-making processes. Facts uphold accountability and transparency; fallacies pave the way to poor representation of the outdoor industry as a whole.



Outdoor Auditors reported 459 digital screens across South Africa in August 2022, that's a 227% increase in four years alone. And 64% of these screens are in Gauteng. They are popping up in all shapes; sizes and with variances of product to market positionings. Having options is great, increasing VACS (ROAD 2.0) is even better. But when the decision has to be made on which screen to purchase for a campaign, one needs to ask the question – what am I actually buying here?

I firmly believe a billboard is not just a billboard – and even more so, a digital billboard is not just a digital billboard. Advert lengths differ; there are different loop definitions; there may be a number of flightings of adverts that differ; even the size of a DOOH screen differs from one media owner to the next. Digital screens on the same stretch of road can have price differences that are on opposite sides of the spectrum. We need to ask the question why is this?

With over 400 media owners in South Africa, and over 20 of them selling networks of digital screens – standardisation of DOOH offerings and reporting has become an elusive pursuit. Proposals stack up in buyers' inboxes, with promises of productivity and reach. Some offerings just look so good on paper, how can they not be booked for a marketing campaign? It's time we went back to the basics of selling and buying out of home.

There are a few attributes that are crucial to review when buying a digital billboard or network other than just the price offered. DOOH is magnificent, it is unique in all its glory and deserves to be treated as a gateway that can elevate a brand. The benefits of using DOOH are listed in many a proposal and found in online articles, but these can only be realised if the intended goals of using DOOH, match the actual sale concluded and the delivery of the DOOH campaign.



Posing the critical questions listed below will ensure a DOOH marketing campaign delivers on promises that are supported by facts from media owners and reap the rewards of a successful advertising plan:

1. How many locations are proposed?
2. What is the runup of the screens proposed?
3. What square meterage are the screens?
4. What is the dwell time (attention) of these screens?
5. What is the audience of these screens and how is this audience measured?
6. How many times will the advert flight in a day per screen?
7. Do the screens have back up power when there is loadshedding? And if not what happens to my audience or flightings?
8. What is the average number of adverts displayed in 2/3/4/5 minutes?
9. Can the campaign be reviewed at any time?
10. Will there be a comprehensive post campaign report per screen and of the overall delivery of the bought network?

Programmatic DOOH can answer a few of these questions automatically, and yes, I am a strong proponent of programmatic and of ad server delivery in out of home. However, not all campaigns are delivered through automation and it is imperative that transparency and accountability be upheld not only with the media owner but also with the media buyer, ensuring the advertiser or brand receives the best possible solution on DOOH.

In addition to the above, 3rd party verification has become a hot topic over the past year – here media owners allow an independent company to audit their DOOH campaign delivery for advertisers. Seedooh an Australian company, and United from the UK are both reputable companies that offer this service and allow for standardisation of 3rd party reporting.

Primedia Outdoor has integrated the technology for a POC of both verification companies into our platforms as full disclosure of transparency on what is delivered to an advertiser, along with our own comprehensive post-campaign reports, all the facts as presented before the sale is concluded are available and clear.

The inimitable qualities of this media platform need to be protected. Transactions on this platform shouldn't be done just on one single decisive element. DOOH can be complicated if the specific questions are not asked upfront, or more importantly if the information is not readily available during the buying process from the media owner. Buying DOOH should be a simple process, with no grey areas lurking amongst media plans.

In order to protect the integrity of this great media platform, lay the facts on the table as media owners and ask the relevant questions as media buyers. With comparable facts at hand, standardisation and quality controls are in close reach – ensuring the best possible solution for advertisers.

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