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Breaking News: Billboards are now self-aware!



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Well, not quite yet, but with the way AI and technology is evolving in the out-of-home industry, we shouldn't be surprised to see this as the next evolution within arguably the most innovative media channel.

Would it really be so hard to imagine a digital out-of-home (DOOH) screen offering dating advice for busy professionals based on their profile, as they commute home from a hard day's work? We have already seen some remarkably innovative campaigns in recent years, from jaw-dropping 3D anamorphic ads to virtual billboards that only exist in your Instagram feed.

So, grab your popcorn and secure your front row seat, because out-of-home (OOH) isn't just advertising anymore — it's a full-blown urban spectacle and both consumers and brands are in for a treat.

What is good Out of Home?

The OOH advertising industry has always thrived on bold, immersive, and eye-catching campaigns, however, in recent years, it has seen a radical transformation, driven by technological advances and shifts in consumer behaviour.

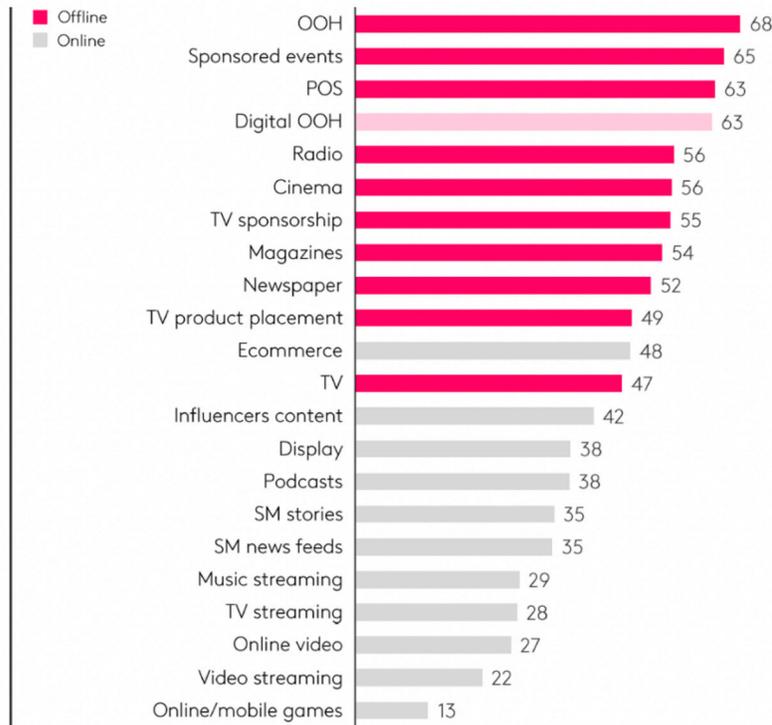
DOOH, along with cutting-edge trends like anamorphic displays and faux OOH, is shaping the future of advertising in public spaces, informing many decisions that are led by data. OOH has had to continually reinvent itself to stay relevant and topical, providing brands with an assurance that consumers really do take

note. This, coupled with the consistent growth in OOH seen over the last decade, proves that OOH is still the go-to media platform for impact, awareness, and priming audiences to take action.

According to a recent Kantar study, consumers prefer to be spoken to through offline channels, with OOH advertising taking the top position. If OOH is therefore the canvas that appeals to such a wide audience in such an impactful and innovative way, then the importance placed on content is paramount to the success of any campaign – yet we still see missed opportunities for brands to deliver improved relevancy and overall campaign effectiveness.

SOUTH AFRICANS PREFER TO BE SPOKEN TO ON OFFLINE CHANNELS

Of the online platforms, ecommerce is most preferred, followed by Influencer content.



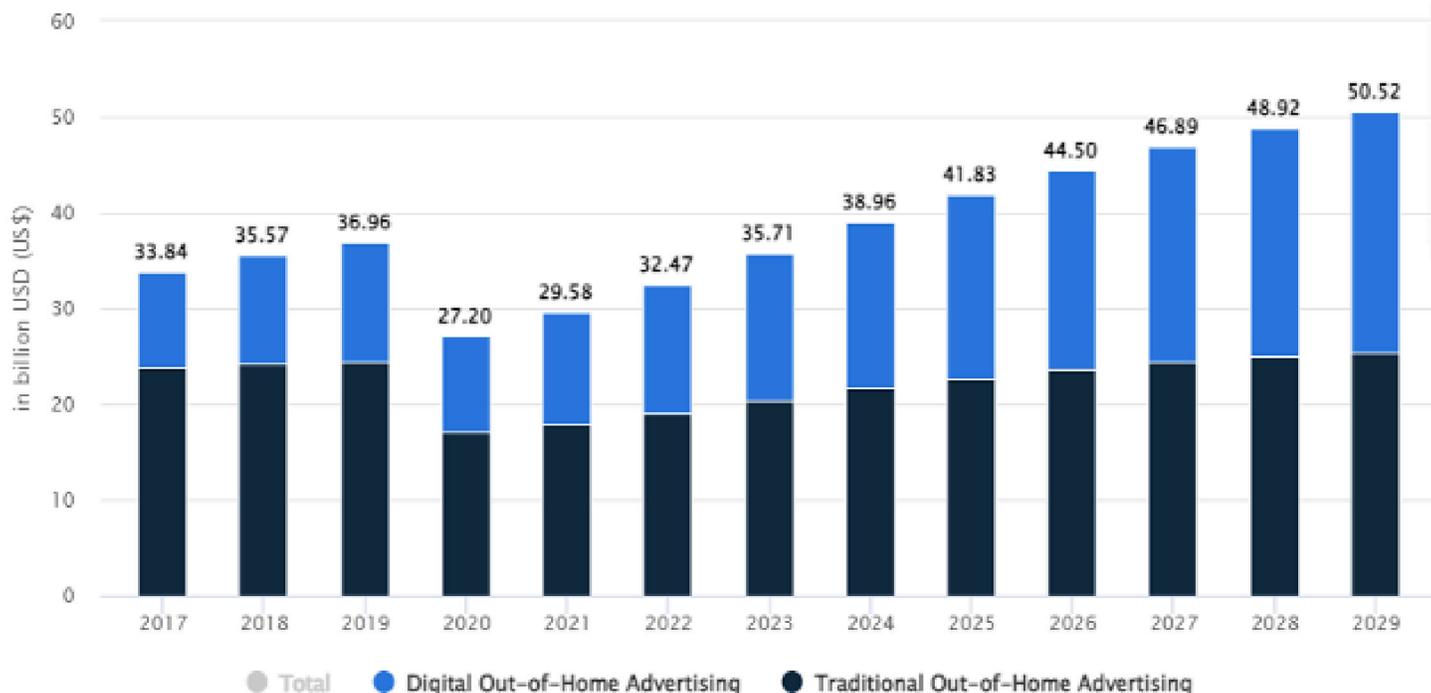
KANTAR

Advertising Equity: Average of 1) Net +ve Ad receptivity (from 5 point scale) and 2) Net +ve Ad attitudes. Base: exposed to advertising on channel. | Ad receptivity: Q. How would you describe your attitude towards the advertising you see in each of the following places? | Very positive, Somewhat positive, Neutral, Somewhat negative, Very negative | Ad attitudes: G. Still thinking about all the different ads you see there, which of these places do you think feature ads which....?

(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Picture-1-3.png>)

Source: Kantar BrandZ South Africa 2024 report

Global investment in DOOH is forecast to reach \$21.5 billion by 2026 and is the key driver of growth across the board for OOH driven by the ability to create dynamic and contextually relevant campaigns.



(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Picture-1-2.png>)

Source: Statista

Attention is not the same as Intention:

The attention economy is the idea that attention is a limited resource, and it describes how brands attempt to reach their target audience more effectively.

But attention does not automatically translate to intention.

Attention, from an OOH point of view, is like going on a blind date. You have little to no information about the person, and (assuming you like this significant other), your goal is to impress and build trust to create a relationship that resonates long after the date ends.

In this example, the brand is on a date, trying to impress an audience that they do not have a relationship with. Here, attention = awareness, and OOH is one of the best media channels that builds trust, awareness, and consideration over time.

The intention however is quite different. Whilst OOH is considered a broad-reach medium, DOOH has transformed this space to one that allows for audience-targeted solutions, led by data, and capitalised on by good creative served at relevant moments in time. Through programmatic DOOH (pDOOH), brands have access to numerous strategic triggers that allow for greater acceptance within a desired target audience, if done right. Put another way, brands have the opportunity to communicate their intention to their desired audience, ensuring improved notability and resonance at the right times.

Intention-delivering triggers to transform DOOH campaigns:

- Behavioural insights
- Demographics
- Location-based data

- Real time triggers

Using these strategic triggers allows your brand to bridge the gap between attention and intention, ensuring that your audience is interested in what you as a brand are trying to communicate.

In this example, attention is a “good looking person” (brand) sitting across the table from a date (audience). But without something genuinely interesting to say, the relationship is highly unlikely to progress to anything meaningful, leaving no lasting impact for the future.

So, there’s no need for Static OOH anymore, correct?

No doubt, DOOH has been the major driver of innovation over the past decade, especially seeing the number of screens across South Africa more than double in the past 4 years. But aside from the advances in technology seen within DOOH in recent years, majority of the innovation in OOH has in fact been dominated by Static OOH.

Living billboards

Inverroche wanted to illustrate the natural ingredients their premium gin has, by creating a living billboard made up of real plants. Spekboom is a South African succulent that is simple to care for, ensuring that this was the ideal plant to use on Epic Outdoor’s large, high impact billboards that would stand the test of time and flourish in the harsh South African sun. And flourish it did, with several key high impact, static sites selected, Inverroche drove awareness over the festive period heading into summer to boost sales and consideration during this crucial time.

Read the full article here: <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/70/244610.html>
(<https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/70/244610.html>)



(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Picture-2-1.jpg>)



(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Picture-1-1.jpg>)

Size counts!

Keeping with the dating analogy, high impact, large format, iconic sites drive impact and fame for brands to do something different and truly stand out, but that doesn't mean that brands can't create impact through creative ideas across smaller OOH formats.

Take Ant-Man as an incredible example showing that, like dynamite, hugely impactful campaigns can come in small packages.



(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Picture-1-2.jpg>)

Source: Time Magazine, Australia

It's all about the data.

Innovation doesn't only come in the form of beautiful creative pieces, LEDs and smoke machines. Great uses of innovation are practical, cost-efficient and tie in with the intrinsics of a brand and the associated campaign objectives. Innovation for the sake of it is like winking in the dark, so it needs to tie in with specific campaign deliverables and measured accordingly.

Typically, there are three things that most brands get wrong when executing a DOOH campaign:

One: Test and learn.

DOOH is a highly cost-effective way to pilot an innovative idea and test which creatives, locations and audience-led solutions are working best.

Two: Not using DCO (Dynamic content optimisation) / Dynamic triggers.

This is a missed opportunity for all brands to ensure the right creative is served at the right time and audience.

Three: Tracking the wrong metrics.

Not considering the incremental ROI that DOOH offers or attributing the campaign success to last-click-attribution only. DOOH success can be tracked against a host of campaign metrics.

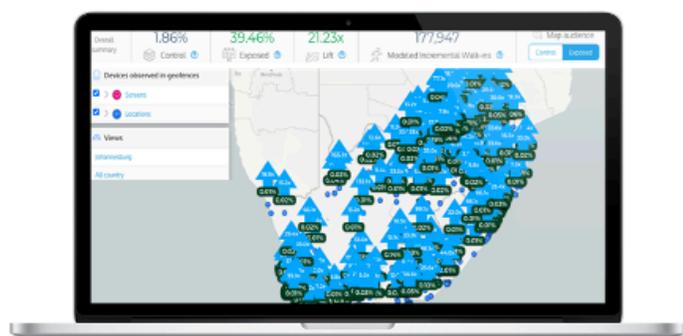
A campaign that Epic Outdoor ran for Doritos proved campaign effectiveness when measuring against the right metrics.

The objective was to drive foot fall uplift into stores by collecting devices exposed to Dorito's DOOH sites across EON (Epic Outdoor Network). Measuring 1,700+ stores across South Africa, the campaign was a tremendous success in that it brought exposed device ID's (potential customers) to stores that ultimately drove sales through the increased foot lift delivered from the DOOH campaign.

- Overall lift = 21,23x
- Cost per incremental visit = R1,40

DOOH DELIVERS GROWTH

Measuring footfall uplift in location visits using exposed & control groups



A LEVEL 2 B-BBEE CONTRIBUTOR

(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Screenshot-2024-10-18-at-11.54.40.png>)

Back to the Future:

What a time to be in the Out of Home space!

With innovation leading the way to improved technologies and creativity, brands have more opportunity at their fingertips than ever before. But with great power comes great responsibility, and this lies with all key stakeholders to get it right.

Embracing innovation with anamorphic and Faux OOH is as much a risk as it is an opportunity, for consumers are savvy, connected individuals that expect a lot from brands these days.

Using Faux OOH to simply have a doughnut rolling down a hill is fun, but I have to ask, "what is the point?"

So, let's unpack the merits of the two hottest creative innovations in the digital OOH space currently.

Faux OOH

Merging the virtual world with real-world advertising, Faux OOH involves creating hyper-realistic virtual ads that are inserted into videos or images that don't exist in the real world. Best amplified through Influencers, the content lives online and has gained momentum across social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube.

By superimposing faux OOH ads into videos, brands can reach audiences in places where they might not physically be, bringing about a host of benefits such as:

- Cost-Effective
- Global Reach
- Creative Freedom

As exciting and innovative as Faux OOH is, it is clear that the future of OOH will be defined by a seamless blend of digital and physical realities.

Advertisers that embrace this new landscape will have the opportunity to create campaigns that not only capture attention, but also leave lasting impressions in the minds of consumers that lives beyond the physical world in a virtual space.

Anamorphic / 3D creative

Offering a visual spectacle that demands attention due to the creative and innovative design techniques, anamorphic / 3D OOH ads give the illusion of depth and motion on otherwise flat surfaces, transforming city landscapes and digital screens into interactive spaces to capture the imagination of consumers.

One of the most famous anamorphic screens is the iconic Times Square digital screen, where brands have used hyper-realistic 3D visuals to create everything from giant animals jumping out of the screen to futuristic cityscapes enveloping the viewer.

Does it work? It sure does

In a sea of ordinary, 3D creative is pushing boundaries of what good DOOH executions should be like.

Why do they work?

- Attention-grabbing
- Memorable
- Shareable



(<https://dooh.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Picture-1-3.jpg>)

Source: Times Square iconic digital OOH screen

Let's get back to dating:

The key to success in this evolving landscape will be finding the right balance between cutting-edge technology and creativity to deliver truly memorable campaigns. A collaboration between creative agencies, clients, media owners and media agencies are crucial if brands want to avoid "winking in the dark."

No matter the brand saliency, all brands should continue to "date" their customers, finding new and innovative ways to connect and engage in meaningful and relevant moments.

Through a host of innovative technologies that already exist, the risk for many brands not yet using OOH effectively lies not in the tech and data themselves, but rather in the commitment to understanding their customers better and serve content that adds real value to their lives.

OOH has the power to deliver on both Attention and Intention, but it starts with a date that customers actually want to be on, and this is the opportunity for brands to stand out, connect and make a difference to drive meaningful results and long-term growth.

About Darren McKinon

With 20 years' experience in the media industry, working for leading global companies such as Clear Channel, INM Outdoor, JCDecaux, WPP, GroupM and EssenceMediacom, McKinon has worked across most leading brands both local and global, and has developed a well-rounded knowledge for the industry across all media channels.

In his current role as the Commercial Director and co-shareholder of Epic Outdoor, McKinon is responsible for driving growth for the business by unlocking new opportunities and providing clients with innovative solutions that deliver on campaign objectives and is known for his collaborative and strategic approach to building a culture of winning.

With over 17 years' experience in Out of Home, McKinon has gained vast knowledge and experience across global and local markets and his vision for Epic Outdoor is to drive growth for the business by offering clients impactful and innovative solutions that stand out.

About Epic Outdoor

Formed in 2016, Epic Outdoor has become a leading out-of-home media owner expert, specialising in large-format, high-impact and bespoke advertising solutions.

Epic Outdoor offers full turnkey solutions, from conceptualisation and site development to marketing and securing of revenue-producing sales that creates client demand and interest.

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