

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder: OOH media drives online sales for local SME

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Earlier this year, Tractor Outdoor - one of South Africa's largest out of home (OOH) and digital out of home (DOOH) media owners - launched its SME advertising fund, with the intention of supporting businesses that were hardest hit by the pandemic.



Through the fund, Tractor aimed to provide qualifying small and medium-size enterprises with free advertising via its extensive media networks, in an effort to help them survive the country's challenging lockdown period.

This weekly video series shares the stories of Tractor Outdoor's SME Heroes, and how they managed to endure the most devastating pandemic in modern history.

For Tanya du Bois of Naturals Beauty, a family-owned business that produces natural beauty products and one of the beneficiaries of Tractor Outdoor's SME advertising fund, 2020 has been about staying power and survival.

As a result of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown, Naturals Beauty found itself facing a steep drop off-in sales earlier this year, following the temporary closure of retail outlets that stocked its products.

To add to its mounting woes, Naturals Beauty's supply chain was disrupted as a result of material suppliers facing severe order backlogs and transport issues, while some suppliers were forced to close their businesses entirely. Despite being recognised as an essential service during the hard lockdown, these challenges meant an uncertain future for the local, women-owned business.

"Covid has forced us to completely relook our medium-term business strategy, says Naturals Beauty owner, Tanya du Bois. "Once we realised that all trade shows were going to be postponed and that we were not going to be able to count on the expected income from our retail stockists, we directed all of our efforts towards driving sales via our e-commerce site, as well as those of our online retail stockists.

"In order to continue to generate revenue, this meant that we needed to increase our brand visibility, as we no longer had a physical presence in stores."

Du Bois notes that she, like many other SME owners, had been reluctant to explore funds that promised relief in the form of loans, as she was unsure of what the future would hold.

However, when she became aware of Tractor Outdoor's SME advertising fund - which offered relief in the form of free exposure via its extensive outdoor media network - she jumped at the opportunity. Not having previously explored any form of OOH advertising, du Bois felt that the fund provided an excellent opportunity to boost brand visibility, while driving customers to online distributors.

"We received 79 digital screens at high-traffic petrol stations, which showcased our product range while also promoting our online stockists, making it easy for new customers to find our products online, explains du Bois.

"Since having the screens up, we've noticed a significant upsurge in sales."

Du Bois acknowledges that while 2020 may not be a year for growth, it has certainly required businesses to remain agile and adaptable. "Ensuring the safety of our staff, keeping our overheads lean, and identifying new avenues to engage with customers have been our focus - and if we can keep our staff on payroll and the lights on - then I believe we're winning."

Remi du Preez, Commercial Director at Tractor Outdoor, notes that outdoor advertising has been shown to complement an online sales strategy. "As a result of the pandemic, consumers are spending more time at home and increasingly appreciate the convenience of online shopping.

"Outdoor media has a positive impact on brand visibility when engaged in conjunction with digital advertising. Given the increasingly cluttered online landscape, studies have proven that consumers are far more likely to interact with a digital advert after initial exposure to the brand via OOH media."

Are you an SME that is interested in exploring opportunities within OOH and DOOH? Get in touch with Tractor Outdoor at info@tractoroutdoor.com

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