

Financial return vs. marketing skill - billboards unpacked

 By [Tatenda Chiweshe](#)

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We all know that big guys with big money tend to win bigger, it is no secret that the best way to reap big rewards from billboards in Africa is to start with a battalion of cash. That way you can subsume fledgling enterprises that have great assets but lack volumes to service big brand needs. In the same breath, the brand managers who buy faces have no reason to be attuned to the media owner's investment model and their EDBITDA, ROI, PE multiples and so on.

The media owner's CEO's mind is not directed to growing client's brand share, strategy, tactics, call to action and all those KPI's that their clients measure themselves by 'that is typically the reserve of their account managers'. Their mind is tasked with financial investment issues such as sell out ratios, site growth and other media owner issues that satisfy investors.

In all other ATL media, there are checks and balances in place that enable a strategist and a planner/buyer to be less directed by the to the buyer and seller KPI's. The meeting point between these two groups who have to engage with each other despite their disparate interests actually lies in leveraging if you are the brand manager, or gearing if you are a media owner.

Simply put, a brand manager can increase their effectiveness by knowing the billboard landscape better (imagine Johnnie Walker in the townships versus Three Ships). Better knowledge of their own positioning and that of their competitors is actually marginal from a budget and human capital point of view. Likewise, those same insights are available to a media owner to get involved proactively in client's strategy.

I believe that the long term win will be where CEO's that use data to marry their KPI's as media owners with the KPI's of the brand managers they ultimately serve and not where CEO's merely focus on blindly fulfilling their investors objectives

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