

So, you know Gauteng townships?

 By [Tatenda Chiweshe](#)

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When people say "That's unfortunate but somebody's got to do it" I have spent the last two months being that 'somebody'. While you were enjoying the holidays, Media Trace was out in the Gauteng townships finding out who is saying what, where, when, how, who often, and about what in the outdoor space.

Interestingly, a brand unknown to me, First Watch had the most messages on billboards. Spirits are more advertised than beers (including traditional beers like Chibuku) while bottled water (Aquelle) and energy drinks (Red Bull) have made a first, although weak, impression in the market.

ABSA absent?

Drunk from seeing alcohol brands, we were still able to get a picture of financial sector brands that shows FNB getting 'beeped' in the townships by Standard Bank and Nedbank. ABSA was a complete non-entity. How ironic considering that FNB's controversial advertising campaign was based on using kids from townships that they have no billboards in. If you want to hear children from Sebokeng talk about issues, then look for an FNB advert in Sandton because they certainly do not have one in Sebokeng itself.

A 'rip-roaring' success story, in our findings is shared by Selati Sugar, Grandpa, Rennie, Lucky Star and Carling Black Label who have been able to acquire fantastic sites with an ingenious spread across their valued market.

The Telecoms advertising has shown complacency with a one-horse race being led by Vodacom. MTN has a meagre showing and their messaging has been unclear and indistinguishable in comparison.

Visual noise is now on the increase with brands like Nedbank making headway into BTL branding such as shop signage - a domain previously the reserves of the likes of Coca-Cola.

These insights are drawn from an audit of over 1,000 billboard faces in all of Gauteng's townships separated into beverages, detergents, entertainment, financial services, food outlets, foodstuffs, government/state-owned, personal care, retail, social messages and telecoms sectors.

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