

# Making sense of the city

By  Danette Breitenbach

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JCDecaux acquired Continental Outdoor Media in June last year. At a recent function at the Maslow Hotel in Sandton, Gauteng, Jean Sébastien Decaux, CEO Southern Europe, Belgium and Luxemburg, Africa and Israel welcomed the industry and stakeholders as well as media to this new start.

“Five years ago we started to develop our vision for Out of Home (OOH) in South Africa. We were excited and through this we could bring something to the market. However, it was not to be and we realised that what we had envisaged was not possible and that we would have to find another way,” he told the gathering. This led them to Continental and to change their business model and vision from the inside, by operating businesses.



Jean Sébastien Decaux

However, what we want to achieve has not changed - “a sustainable business model and with high quality products in the public domain that will change the name of the game”. Hugely important in this is that citizens see OOH in a positive light, that advertisers utilise it and that authorities want it, he says.

“We operate where people are and we need to be part of developments such as mobile apps going forward. We must ensure that we add context through data and connectivity through communities and especially in Africa which in the future, with its growing population, will demand better service and more value.”

He adds if OOH operators do not do this, then citizens will view OOH negatively and then the operators will struggle.

## The power of OOH

OOH is resilient says Xavier Dupré, MD Sales, JCDecaux OneWorld, who addressed the audience on OOH as a smart medium. “Not only is it resilient but it is growing and the reason for this is that the world is in an urbanisation phase. “OOH works in these active spaces where people are in the right frame of mind and mood and therefore are receptive to these message.”



Xavier Dupré

The medium does this by being a broadcast medium with digital channels that create packages that suit an audience, and a time of day. This, he says is providing the medium with flexibility. “We cannot only access the consumers when and for what they are shopping as we can schedule most appropriate and relevant content, but we can deliver real time data to deliver new campaign opportunities, and this gives brands the opportunity to be tactical.”

This is the power of digital screens, and together with the mobile this is the way forward as the two engage each other. “Content is increasing on the mobile and OOH acts as a trigger for this as it drives online search. It is no surprise that many of our OOH advertisers are online companies such as Amazon and eBay.”

Television and OOH are also complementary. “We have many mediums coming to us because OOH has the ability to talk to their audience at the moment when they cannot reach them.”

It is about contextual advertising and creative solutions. “Creatively has always been the key to OOH and it still is.”

We are a medium of proximity with nine out of 10 people seeing an OOH poster he adds, but to be a big media you need to be measured. Since 2009 the OOH industry has developed a measurement tool that is now recognised globally. “This measurement is very precise - what you see is what you get - and will be coming to South Africa in a month’s time.”

## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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