

Airtel partners Ogilvy Africa BV

Bharti Airtel announced late last week the appointment of Ogilvy Africa BV as its marketing services partner for Africa. This follows the completion of Airtel's acquisition of Zain Group's mobile operations in 15 countries across Africa on 8 June 2010.



Manoj Kohli, CEO of Bharti Airtel International, said "We are delighted to be partnering Ogilvy Africa in our endeavour to take the Airtel brand deep into the heart of every market we operate in. Given their breadth and depth to support Airtel right across the African continent, we believe we have the right partner to successfully take forward our brand strategy."

Specialist pan-African unit

Ogilvy Africa, part of WPP, marketing communications services provider, has set up a specialist pan-African business unit Team Airtel, which will be exclusively dedicated to Airtel across the continent with its existing network of offices, providing integrated marketing services - advertising, media buying, market research and public relations.

Team Airtel will also include The Brand Union who will be responsible for brand migration, Millward Brown for market research, Hill & Knowlton & Ogilvy PR for all public relations across all markets. The appointment continues and extends Ogilvy Africa's existing relationship with the network, which has previously been responsible for planning and media buying for Zain across Africa.

Long-term brand building

Ogilvy Africa will partner with Airtel to guide its long-term brand building across the continent and will provide overall creative direction and media planning and buying for Airtel's African businesses and executing campaigns in each of its markets on the continent.

Miles Young, global CEO, Ogilvy Group, said, "It is a huge honour for us to support Airtel with its ambitious growth plans for Africa. Through the acquisition of Zain's assets in Africa, Airtel has a very strong platform on which to build. Team Airtel's role will be to bring the Airtel brand to life in every one of its African markets, and we have brought together a very strong integrated marketing team which is dedicated to this task. This deal represents a further significant step forward for Ogilvy and Scangroup in Africa."

Simon Bolton, global CEO, The Brand Union said, "The Brand Union, using its network across Africa, India and London are proud to have played a significant role in 'Team Airtel' and now look forward to the opportunity to work with Airtel to create what will undoubtedly become one of the World's leading brands in the industry."