

Africa trumps Europe

SA's biggest advertising agency, with one of the widest African networks, is gearing up to be the leading communications agency in Africa. Part of Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, owned by London listed communications firm WPP, Ogilvy has a presence in 26 African countries. Its SA operation headed by Nunu Ntshingila, is being used as a springboard.

By [Matebello Mbitloung](#) 29 Mar 2010



The group plans to increase its client footprint in Africa, establish a second centre of excellence on the continent and strengthen partnerships, says Ntshingila. She says the focus is on Nigeria, Kenya, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“Our strategy in Nigeria is to grow our footprint and serve more clients. In the DRC, our investment plans are well into fruition,” says Ntshingila.

Last year, despite difficult trading conditions, Ogilvy was the SA advertising industry's star performer — particularly its Johannesburg office. The agency scooped the most industry accolades, including FM Adfocus Agency of the Year and the African Agency Network awards.

It also secured the most business accounts, including the highly contested FIFA, Coca-Cola, Sun International, Cell C, SA Airways, and SA Breweries accounts.

The firm reported double-digit growth, with income rising 18% between July 2008 and June 2009, and new accounts tallying nearly R400m in billings.

Ogilvy Worldwide CEO Miles Young says sub-Saharan Africa is an essential part of the group's emerging markets strategy, which is also focused on Brazil, Russia, India and China.

Young says Africa's growth prospects have sparked increasing interest among the firm's clients, including global giant Unilever, which it represents across the continent.

According to WPP's recently released interim results, emerging markets now represent almost 27% of the group's approximately US\$13-14bn pro-forma revenue.

Young, who until a year ago was Ogilvy's head of the Asia-Pacific region, says China's recognition of the power of advertising attracts Western agencies to the country. “The Chinese government believes in branding, and that it is essential to how the world sees China,” says Young. “This, of course, is beneficial to the Chinese government because it complements its economic policies, which encourage consumption.”

Last week Ogilvy SA hosted executives from its African continental network to discuss the company's growth strategy. Clients represented across the network include SABMiller, MultiChoice, Zain Media, PPC

Sun International, BP, SuperSport and Unilever.

Last year, Ogilvy SA was voted Ogilvy Worldwide's best agency at the Cannes International Advertising Awards.

Source: Financial Mail

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