

OOH, the hero (still)!

By [Livia Brown](#), issued by [Dentsu](#)

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To cover all bases, before getting started, we are living in the most unusual of times. The unthinkable and unimaginable is happening all around us daily, with a constantly changing media and consumer landscape.



- Parents are juggling work and home-schooling their children
- The Army and Police line our streets (You can literally be arrested for leaving your home)
- Women are having to do their own beauty treatments at home. (Piece of advice - soaking off Gelish nails alone takes about four hours and not to mention solo, hair dyeing missions)
- Couples are getting exposure to their other half's work persona (and it's not always pretty)
- Not to mention how much our shopping behaviours have morphed.
 - Bulk buying
 - Panic buying
 - Limited panic buying (pretending we are not panicking, but we are totally panicking)
 - Then online buying from any and all companies who have drivers.

Business unusual indeed!

The burning question now is how long will the lockdown be for?
And when will things return to as "normal" as possible?

I have spent the past few months (apologies it feels as though March had 100 days so I am completely disorientated) so correction, I have spent the last week asking myself and anyone who will accept a Teams/WhatsApp/Zoom/Chime/Skype/House Party call, with me about this exact question.

I have not found the crystal ball with the answers as yet (trust me I am searching for it), but what we can do now is look to learnings from previous global disruptions and how brands in other markets were impacted and how they recovered. What I do know is that Out of Home (OOH) is still the hero.

Despite the current odds being stacked against us, namely limited to the number of people in and around the places where people usually are. Our medium primarily being a broadcast, mass reach medium, now not being able to “broadcast” and “mass reach”.

It might be too early to be making bold statements about the future, but here are our ideas about what the current and future landscape from an OOH perspective could be:

During the current lockdown – Digital OOH is the hero-ooH

The OOH industry is still managing to get the most important messages of thanks and encouragement out to the people of South Africa, who are not isolated in their homes and need our support the most.

Our platform has been used so effectively to foster hope, show unity and provide updates of safety and services in these times.

We have seen brands coming together to support our Health Care Providers by offering free lunches from convenience stores, this messaging is displayed on networks of digital screens across the country.

Thank yOOH.

We've seen communities come together to have their voices heard in this time of isolation to show thanks. These communities are coordinated through countdown clocks being projected onto big buildings in neighbourhoods to #clapforourcareres.

Thank yOOH.

Awareness about safety and free hand sanitiser being provided to our informal and rural markets in spaza shops. These messages are painted on wall murals.

Thank yOOH.

Media partners are coming together as an industry and offering free space on digital OOH networks for brands to advertise messages of safety and awareness about this disease and how to stay safe.

Thank yOOH.

After the lockdown – Static, mobile OOH and digital OOH are the hero-ooHs

Post the lockdown we can anticipate major themes around doing good and being purpose focused, using OOH and media to make a difference.

In some ways this would come to life could include

- Distribution and sampling of basic supplies
- Protective clothing
- Tests and other vital items.

A key focus will be on how to offer support and helping SMMEs and businesses effected by the lockdown.

So, yes our streets, malls, taxi ranks and airports are quieter than ever before, but OOH is doing what it has always done, standing tall and proud, showing agility, endurance and flexibly amidst big changes and serving as a platform to deliver messaging where it matters most.



About the author

[Livia Brown](#) has been crafting her OOH expertise at Posterscope since April 2013 and has shown incredible growth over the past six years. Livia first started as a Junior OOH campaign planner and from there grew into becoming a lead account director in the business. Livia proved herself in her knowledge and skill in location data intelligence, heading up this division in 2017. In 2018 Livia was promoted to the Regional Manager of the Western Cape and is currently Posterscope's General Manager of the Western Cape.

i#clapforthecarers

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