

Capturing the spirit of Africa for 2010

Shot entirely on location in South Africa, with virtual countries being built in dusty markets, on top of a uranium mine and in derelict buildings, MTN's first television ad for its 2010 FIFA World Cup campaign is the brainchild of the DDB SA team, led by executive creative director Gareth Lessing. The ad launched internationally last week. [video]

File size 3.8MB

The worldwide advertising campaign to attract football lovers to South Africa also aims to bolster MTN's position as the first and only African company so far to be the global sponsor of the FIFA World Cup.

With the payoff line "One spirit. One game. One African sponsor", this is being touted as the most ambitious advertising campaign by any African company and will be carried in the world's largest television channels, radio stations, magazines, billboards and newspapers in Arabic, English, French, Greek and Portuguese.

Reflect the whole of Africa



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It took seven days to capture the spirit of Africa across 21 countries and bring it home to Greenpoint stadium in Cape Town. Portraying a young man - dubbed the 'hero boy'- running through various countries, collecting the spirit of Africa to bring it to South Africa for the 2010 games, the television ad, directed by Keith Rose of Velocity Films, needed to reflect the whole of Africa.

"That's where we started and how we began to package the idea," says Lessing. "We know that football transcends culture and language, but this ad had to work across many cultures and many languages; it had to be iconic and speak passionately to all football lovers."

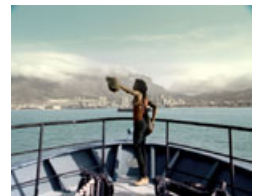
DDB SA CEO Glen Lomas says the starting point was tapping into DDB's vast African network of agencies: "We called all of our agencies across the region and asked them what they were most proud of; what they wished to show off about their country to the world. This is when one truly appreciates the diverse nature of the markets within which MTN operates.

"Tangible demonstration"

"In many respects this was therefore a simple project because we had so much support within the region, but with that came a huge responsibility to represent our markets with authenticity as we attempted to capture their 'spirit'. I am very pleased with the result. It is tangible demonstration of how successfully the DDB network works together across Africa and the Middle East"

Executive director: MTN Group Santie Botha says the chance to host the world cup is both the greatest compliment and opportunity for SA: "For us as a brand, this is where we started; our roots are here and we want to support something that's going to make this continent come alive.

"This campaign is about the spirit of Africa, and about making the 2010 World Cup the greatest success the world has ever seen. I truly believe that."



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The MTN Group's sponsorship of the 2010 FIFA World Cup affords the multinational mobile operator exclusive mobile content rights for Africa and the Middle East, as well as global marketing rights.

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