

: Brand Communication

 By [Jason Stewart](#)

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In a recent conversation I was told, "Just because I am poor, it doesn't mean I have to look poor." We know that township aspirations are very high. Ask anyone in Gugulethu or Khayelitsha what brands they prefer and you will most likely hear the likes of "Gucci, Armani, Fabiani, Country Road etc." (video)

If you ask the same question in a different area, for example on the Cape Flats, you will most likely have a different answer with brands such as "Edgars, Converse, Mr Price etc." being mentioned. Such aspirations are more reasonable and most likely based upon economic challenges and barriers.

However, in the so-called 'black townships', there are fewer economic barriers and many people have transcended their circumstances and enjoyed a proverbial 'rags to riches' scenario. People know that everything is possible and they aspire to driving a Maserati and living the high life. Some fortunate few have actually made this happen. If it means drinking cheap whisky at home, and sharing expensive whisky with friends in public, it will happen.

The appreciation of this point is important, not only to understand purchasing behaviour, but also brand communication. Many brands develop communication that they believe is targeted at the 'Township Market' and in order to make it relevant believe it suffices to merely throw in a few "jo, jo, jo's".

This communication type and placement based on the LSM is totally incorrect since purchase ambitions are highly differentiated from purchase abilities. Consumers will always make a plan and we need to start treating such consumers not as residents of Thembisa, for example, but rather residents of the City of Gold - where their hopes, dreams and aspirations reside - nested snugly with their purchasing behavior.

What we advertise in Sandton we need to advertise in Soweto.

ABOUT JASON STEWART

Jason Stewart is the co-founder and MD of HaveYouHeard (www.haveyouheard.co.za), a communications agency immersed in culture to influence it. With 11 years' trading experience and offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town and London, HaveYouHeard uncovers unique insights to create innovative ideas that influence the audience by bringing the brands it partners with to the centre of culture.

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