

OOH media helps give closed restaurant visibility during lockdown

Issued by [Tractor Outdoor](#)

22 Oct 2020

Earlier this year, Tractor Outdoor - one of South Africa's largest out of home (OOH) and digital out of home (DOOH) media owners - launched its SME advertising fund, with the intention of supporting businesses that were hardest hit by the pandemic.

Through the fund, Tractor aimed to provide qualifying small and medium-size enterprises with free advertising via its extensive media networks, in an effort to help them survive the country's challenging lockdown period.

This weekly video series shares the stories of Tractor Outdoor's SME Heroes, and how they managed to endure the most devastating pandemic in modern history.

In the wake of a chaotic year for business, streamlining, remaining lean and agile and seeking support have become part of the SME toolkit for survival. For Grant Isaacs, the owner of Salushi Express in Claremont, support came in the form of Tractor Outdoor's SME fund, which gave his business access to prime advertising real estate at no cost - and at a time when his restaurant was unable to generate any form of income.

Salushi Express, a local Asian Fusion restaurant, had taken occupation of new premises in Claremont in March 2020, with the restaurant scheduled to open its doors in April. However, the advent of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent national lockdown left rollout plans sitting in the dust of a construction site for the better part of four months.

"Without a timeline of when we would be able to generate an income again, we started thinking of pulling out of our lease entirely, admitted Isaacs. "It's been a big wake up call to see how quickly the rug can be pulled out from under your feet.

"When our rental agent told us about the Tractor Outdoor fund, I knew immediately that it was the kind of support we needed. We had closed our previous store very suddenly and - like many independent restaurants - did not have adequate cash flow to cover any form of marketing, which was necessary for us to maintain visibility in a period where we were unable to open."

As a beneficiary of the Tractor Outdoor SME advertising fund, Salushi Express received outdoor advertising space over a three-month period across three prime locations in Cape Town; one in its home suburb of Claremont, as well as a further two billboards in the City Bowl area.

“The team at Tractor Outdoor has been amazing, and very helpful,” confirms Isaacs. “Their generosity and support have allowed me, as a business owner, to focus my energy on taking the necessary steps to keep the business afloat, whilst their media network has allowed us to have a presence in a time where we otherwise would have had none.

“We are confident that our new strategy will pay dividends as things ‘normalise’. We have kept overheads to a minimum, simplified our offering - and thanks to the support of those such as Tractor Outdoor - we will make it to the other side.”

Commercial director at Tractor Outdoor, Remi du Preez, emphasises the importance of maintaining a brand presence - especially when things go quiet. “When a business is in a difficult position and trade has taken a knock, the first instinct is to pull all marketing spend.

“However, this is when it is most critical to remain connected with your customers.”

As a high frequency, high reach medium, OOH affords brands the opportunity to remain top of mind - and, according to du Preez, is more affordable than one might expect. “We offer cost-effective packages for SMEs, which are able to be tailored to your available budget, delivering the most return against your spend.”

Are you an SME that is interested in exploring opportunities within OOH and DOOH? Get in touch with Tractor Outdoor at info@tractoroutdoor.com

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