

Provantage Media Group launches Spaza Media

Provantage Media Group (PMG), through its brand activation agency ProActive, recently introduced Spaza Media - an advertising solution designed to foster small enterprise development and job creation within township communities.



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Through BBEEE initiatives, South African corporations are tasked with building more sustainable businesses and playing a greater role in economic transformation. This often presents a challenge: how can a business comply in a way that protects or enhances its competitiveness, while also realising value for its shareholders, customers, value chain partners and the communities in which they operate?

ProActive has identified an opportunity for an enterprise development programme that moves beyond value chain strategies and instead takes a strategic approach that both creates positive social impact and drives business value from other expenditures. The result: Spaza Media.

Rethinking spaza branding

Township economies promote and foster job creation and entrepreneurship, especially in rural, peri-urban and urban residential townships – in other words, where most South Africans live. Informal spaza shops form an integral and vital part of these economies. They are critical contributors of local food security, self-employment and community cohesion.

However, spaza shops often fail to reach their full potential due to a lack of business skills, access to funding, exploitation, and limited regulatory support.

Through Spaza Media, ProActive seeks to transform the township and rural retail market by helping small enterprises like spaza shops flourish into bigger and more sustainable businesses, and by increasing the participation of black-owned SMMEs within the spaza branding supply chain.

“Spazas are really at the heart of the community: people see them every day and shop there every day,” says Makhetsi Phakoa, head of client service and sales for PMG’s ProActive division. “We want to transform media opportunities within these communities, while also bringing them value.”

Typically, spaza branding is cluttered, with multiple brands competing for space and little opportunity for brand dominance. Media owners have little or no relationship with store owners, who receive at best inconsistent remuneration. There is typically only limited maintenance of the branding (if any), and it can easily be removed or vandalised.



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Creating a powerful media space

PMG’s vision is to transform this, drawing on their media expertise and local spaza network. Instead of a storefront cluttered with multiple brands, Spaza Media enters into agreements with owners to create a powerful media space, featuring a single brand, and offering price and promotion opportunities.

In developing this offering, Spaza Media recruits SMMEs to oversee the creation of branding and manage the media rentals paid to the spaza owner. These businesses are also tasked with carrying out bi-monthly or monthly visits to ensure that branding remains fresh throughout a campaign.

The spaza owner, therefore, benefits from sustained income and an improved shopfront, which Phakoa argues should drive incremental sales. At the same time, enterprise development is fostered within the spaza value chain.

And, in keeping with their commitment to sustainable enterprise development, ProActive will help to develop spaza owners’ business skills by providing access to training, as well as branded workshops and conferences, through the PMG Academy.

“It’s an opportunity to be where the people are, support sustainable businesses and to make an impact in the lives of the

community,” says Phakoa.

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