

World cup: R2bn free advertising bonanza

 By [Chris Mberdyk](#)

7 Jun 2010

If FIFA media coverage estimates are to be believed, in the next five weeks South Africa will get R2 billion in "free" advertising. That's the equivalent of almost 18 000 half-minute TV commercials in Generations, the country's most expensive TV programme, or 4500 full page ads in the *Sunday Times*.



The 2010 FIFA World Cup organisers believe that a cumulative 28 billion viewers will watch the 64 games and during each game official broadcasters have to allow FIFA 14 minutes of airtime. Assuming that only two minutes of this is devoted to promoting South African tourism and investment opportunities, as FIFA has promised, the advertising value amounts to roughly R1.5 billion.

Sweet tweets

Then one needs to add in all the newspaper and magazine coverage, online publicity and, as the head of LOC marketing Derek Carstens told me, the 30-minute opening and closing ceremonies and, most importantly, all the celebrity players who will be constantly tweeting to their millions of fans or updating their FaceBook pages. On his arrival in South Africa, Brazil's Kaka ([@realkaka](#)) sent out a tweet on how great the vibe was here. That kind of publicity, said Carstens, is priceless. I agree.

Just arrived in South Africa .. Amazing atmosphere !!

[less than a minute ago](#) via [UberTwitter](#)



[Kaka](#)

RealKaka

On top of that, major global broadcasters such as BBC World, CNN and Sky have already started devoting considerable airtime not only to the football but also to where the world cup is being played.

Add all this together and one can quite easily end up with publicity value in advertising terms of around R2 billion.

Insight or insane?

But, bear in mind that 28 billion cumulative viewers amounts to the equivalent of every man woman and child on earth, roughly seven billion of them, watching four world cup games. Which suggests that FIFA might perhaps be living in cloud cuckoo land.

Local media experts, veteran Dick Reed and The MediaShop's man in Cape Town Heiner Kuhnel, reckon that *Fortune* magazine probably came up with a more realistic figure of 125 million viewers a game. On that basis they say, the total cumulative TV audience will be in the region of 8 billion at a push, which in turn translates into R432-million-worth of free TV advertising, based on SABC1 ad rates.

Adding in newspaper, magazine, social media and global network coverage, that figure could probably double to about R800 million.

Even this lower number is 10 times the average amount of money that the International Marketing Council would spend annually on promoting South Africa to the rest of the world.

But, a big but

Whichever way one looks at it - South Africa will get a massive dose of international publicity over the next five weeks and in spite of SARS suggesting that the country will not make a profit from this world cup, the long-term effect of this tsunami of publicity for the country will surely be a huge boost in tourism and investment.

But, all of this will depend on the world cup going off without any major incidents. It will depend on trade unionists not using the world cup to blackmail employers. It will depend on our ability to protect visitors from crime. It will depend on SA showing that it is capable of hosting the world greatest event without making the world's greatest cock-up of it.

The country's massive investment in the world cup will certainly, in my opinion, have an eventual positive return if we get it right. Ironically, however, getting it right will depend on our ability to contain those selfish people among us for whom national pride comes a far second to self-interest.

For more:

- Bizcommunity.com: [Post-2010: what is in store for media owners?](#)
- Brandchannel.com: [World Cup Ambush Marketing Score Card](#)

ABOUT CHRIS MOERDYK

Apart from being a corporate marketing analyst, advisor and media commentator, Chris Moerdyk is a former chairman of Bizcommunity. He was head of strategic planning and public affairs for BMW South Africa and spent 16 years in the creative and client service departments of ad agencies, ending up as resident director of Lindsay Smithers-FCB in KwaZulu-Natal. Email Chris on moerdykc@gmail.com and follow him on Twitter at [@chrismoerdyk](https://twitter.com/chrismoerdyk).

- Covid-19 boosts trust in traditional mass media - 21 Jul 2020
- Don't listen to the post-corona marketing hysteria - 17 Jun 2020
- Let's talk about marketing after corona - 15 May 2020
- Will the mass media learn anything from Covid-19? - 28 Apr 2020
- Covid-19: Secure online advice, mentoring and workshop facilitating - 23 Mar 2020

[View my profile and articles...](#)