

## Is this the world's first plastic bag billboard?

A total of 2000 plastic bags were collected and woven together by seven self-employed crafters to create a 40m² 'canvas' on which Nedbank and its advertising agency partner, Net#work BBDO, could spread a message of commitment to the preservation of the environment. It took six weeks to produce and was a challenge to the crafters who had previously not made anything larger than a door mat.



Used to weaving nothing larger than a door mat, crafters get to work weaving more than 2000 plastic bags into a 40m² billboard.

This is the third in the bank's series of billboards that aim to be environmentally friendly. The first was the solar panel billboard that powers up a kitchen in Alexandra and won the top international honour at the 2006 Cannes Advertising Awards. The second was a solar billboard with a wind turbine. This was placed at the Cape Mission School in Cape Town. This supplies power to its kitchen, security lights and geysers, saving hundreds of rands in electricity each month.

According to the agency's executive creative director, Rob McLennan, it has become fully focused on making a social difference while building its clients' brands.

"In this case, we could really see the potential of the humble plastic shopping bag to make landmarks of positive change. The billboard has created jobs, married advertising with social conscience, showcased our local artistry and has removed some of the country's non bio-degradable rubbish."

He says, "If this billboard can help to create more awareness of the country's plastic problem and the positive impact that recycling can have - then Nedbank will have further entrenched its reputation as the nation's truly 'green' bank."

Greg Garden, the bank's divisional executive group marketing said the 'plastic' billboard is a unique way to reuse discarded plastic and it is another example of the bank's commitment to doing things differently. "It is an extension of our already well entrenched culture of conservation and environmental awareness. A culture that recently saw us become the first SA bank publicly commit to energy reduction targets, throughout our business via our climate change position statement," he says.

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