

Avusa acquires stake in Airport Media

Listed media and entertainment group Avusa has purchased a majority stake in specialist airport advertising business Airport Media. The deal, concluded last week, will see Airport Media become a key part of the significant set of brands in the Avusa stable.



The purchase received Competition Commission approval this month and spearheads Avusa's strategic move into the out of home market.

“We have for some time signalled our intention to enter the out-of-home market and Airport Media is the perfect entry point for us,” said Prakash Desai, Avusa group CEO.

Airport Media was established six years ago at the then Johannesburg International Airport (now OR Tambo Airport) by co-founders Suzanne Roberts and Debbie Lea. The two between them have over 30 years of outdoor experience, both having worked in the UK and South Africa.

Where previously airport advertising was widely considered as one of many “out of home” media options, Roberts and Lea have made a significant contribution towards turning airport media into a niche category of its own. Their highly successful business has consistently pushed the boundaries of airport advertising with its smart and impactful campaigns.

Large pool of customers

With a large pool of potential customers jostling about the airport, the list of possible clients is endless, as are the opportunities for those looking for advertising with a difference. Clients range from blue chip companies such as Standard Bank to internationals such as Audi, Airbus and Nokia.

“Airport media works well for so many businesses and industries,” explains Roberts. “We have a multitude of options and mediums available and, of course, an ongoing supply of prospective targets.”

In addition to airport advertising, the company also owns the rights to the landmark Ponte site occupied by Vodacom.

“We are very excited to have partnered with Avusa,” says Lea. “It’s a company renowned for embracing change and encouraging innovation and that matches Airport Media’s philosophy perfectly.”

Management

The company will form part of Avusa Media, headed by Mike Robertson.

Lea and Roberts will retain management control of Airport Media, covering OR Tambo, Cape Town

International, Lanseria, Durban and Port Elizabeth airports. Desai has joined Airport Media's board as chairman and Enver Groenewald, Avusa Media's GM of advertising revenue and strategic communications has joined the Airport Media board.

Andrew Gill, group executive responsible for business development, says the deal is one of a range of initiatives aimed at entrenching Avusa as the premier media and entertainment group in the country.

“Our recent acquisitions in the digital and out-of-home markets reflect our strategy of developing the business in high growth segments of South African media.”

Avusa recently acquired the balance of leading recruitment site Career Junction and bought majority stake in digital agencies Amorphous New Media and Amorphous Corporate.

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