

Travel is back - with brands advertising at airports benefiting

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Travel is back on the agenda for many, and this is good news for advertisers looking to attract customers at airports and keep them engaged. Brands that dominated the airport space pre-Covid are demanding to own their iconic sites again.

Ciska John, advertising manager at Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) says airport advertising enhances the aesthetics and offers entertainment benefits to airport users through activations and creative content. "Mediums such as [Airport.TV®](#) also provides valuable information and newsworthy content to both local and international travellers. We strive to introduce new and exciting formats that rival international trends."



There's been a recent increase in air travel demand in South Africa. According to Stats SA, South Africa welcomed over 260,000 visitors in the first quarter of this year. The South African Government says the country also saw a 147% increase in tourist arrivals in the first half of this year. Experts agree pre-pandemic international travel levels will only fully recover by 2024, however some are forecasting that by mid-2023 we will be ahead of the pre-covid passenger volumes.



What's driving this resurgence?

Leisure and business travel is rebounding, driving the resurgence in both domestic and international flights. This is good news for South Africa's tourism and hospitality industry following the challenges brought about by the covid-19 pandemic. The surge in domestic leisure travel is also reflected in flight passenger volumes, with coastal and inland regional airports returning even more rapidly to their pre-pandemic levels.

It's predicted that approximately 41% of economically active South Africans with access to the internet are planning an international trip in the next 12 months. So, what are airports doing to keep their travellers engaged? ACSA's John says operating without restrictions has been phenomenal. "There has been a move towards pop-up facilities to ensure freshness in terms of the offerings. This encourages travellers to arrive well before their departure and increases dwell times."



How brands can benefit

“The recovery of the industry is underway,” says Mzi Deliwe, head of [Airport Ads®](#) and deputy CEO of [Provantage](#). “This is good news for clients advertising at airports for highly effective branch of out of home advertising – it ranks near the top of several measures, from reach to audience to receptivity.”

Following the pandemic, multiple studies have shown that repeated lockdowns left people with a greater awareness and appreciation of their surroundings. This, along with increased dwell time due to Covid regulations amplified the power of advertising within this space.

Airports offer omnichannel touchpoints: everything from classic billboards and digital media to activations and Airport.TV. Deliwe says the resurgence of travel and the established strengths of airport advertising, are attracting attention not only from brands who have traditionally advertised here, but also from those who haven't.

“We've seen several new brands entering this space,” says Deliwe. “Now is a good time to do so, while there are good deals to be had.”

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