

# Insights from the 2011 PAMRO Conference

Following the 13th [PAMRO Conference](#) which took place in Senegal in August, Celia Collins, deputy group MD of the Starcom MediaVest Group (SMG), provided some insights into the latest advertising research in Africa.



With the theme, "Harnessing the Power of Research: Lessons from the Continent", presentations on subjects including television audience research methodologies, measurement and status of radio, print, internet and outdoor were made by speakers from Senegal, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ghana, South Africa, the UK, Europe, China and Australia.

Here are some of the insights shared by Collins:

- The latest data predominantly focuses on television and internet research, going forward it is hoped that more attention should be paid to through-the-line advertising across all areas researched. In the countries with active economies, television remains the medium with the highest reach, while in the poorer countries regional radio still dominates.
- The internet is mainly accessed in urban areas, with internet penetration having increased remarkably through the use of mobile phones. In Kenya for example, 70% of people access the internet using their mobile phones. In Zimbabwe it is also interesting to note the decline of internet shops accessing the virtual world, with a significant increase in home 'surfing'.
- Research in Africa still has some way to go, but what has been achieved so far is remarkable and useable. PAMRO aims to be the driving force behind better research in this area. PAMRO has noted significant interest from SES organisations (satellite operators) to partner with research houses - delving into crucial information such as how many TV households exists. This would drive better investment value for clients, however it cannot be achieved without some form of measurement tool in place.
- Due to an increase in mobile subscribers, the medium now represents 95% of Senegal's telephone connectivity and the country is at the forefront in developing Africa's most extensive and modern telecommunications infrastructure.

- Looking at Egypt for example, the Egyptian revolution has captured the attention of the world - said to have been organised using online social communication platforms like Twitter and Facebook. It has also dramatically changed the media habits of the population. Pre-revolution, Facebook users totalled 4 million, however after the event, these numbers increased to 5.5 million users - a significant 27% increase over a period of a few months.
- Advertising clutter has for a long time been prevalent in Egypt, but this too is changing. People are spending more time indoors, internet penetration has increased - especially at home, and TV talk shows have become popular due to more liberal thinking and freedom of speech. This has impacted on newspapers as consumers get the latest news via TV and mobile internet as opposed to waiting for newspapers. Due to government intervention, OOH advertising has become more controlled.
- Many Africans are joining the connected world through mobile phones. Egypt is a prime example of what can be achieved through the use of social networks.
- Some things in Africa will never change; it is large and split into many regions, resulting in increased media costs to reach a large target market. However what is heartening is that there is improvement in the data available for most countries, which will result in more efficient planning and better returns for advertisers going forward.

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