

# Proposed ban on alcohol advertising affects SMEs most

Commenting on the proposed outright banning of alcohol advertising, Out of Home Media South Africa ([OHMSA](#)) believes this will affect the industry's SMEs ie the billposting companies responsible for flighting the advertisements and companies that maintain the media owner's plant in the field.



"If a ban is imposed - this would have a dire impact on SMEs solely reliant on the outdoor advertising. Hardship, job-losses and liquidations are the realities they face. Ironically the SME sector is the exact target of government's growth and development policies," said Melissa Moore, OHMSA executive director.

OHMSA shows that in excess of 20% of the advertisements placed in the outdoor advertising medium are from the liquor industry. The percentage varies considerably between the larger outdoor advertising companies, whose income from liquor advertising is in the region of 12% to 15%, whereas the SMEs have exposure to up to 40% and above. "It is our submission that it is these smaller companies that will be prejudiced the most if a ban were to be imposed on the outdoor advertising industry," said Moore.

"The consequences for banning alcohol advertisements are far-reaching. Liquor retailers would be prevented from depicting products on the windows or shop fronts of their stores."

Furthermore, OHMSA has drawn on research to show that there is no reliable basis to conclude that alcohol advertising significantly affects consumption and abuse. "In fact, research shows that people drink because of peer pressure, parental example and other social issues."

The numerous problems that OHMSA has with the proposed prohibition have been brought to the attention of government stakeholders. But, the out-of-home media industry should brace itself for the changes in the sector brought about by the alcohol advertising ban, says Moore.

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