

# Ipsos' award-winning paper emphasises message that radio is still king on the continent

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Nanzala Mwaura, head of Ipsos Connect, was awarded Best Paper at the PAMRO Conference (Pan-African Media Research Organisation) for her talk on “The African Middle Class”. The paper looked at how marketers can define a middle class, across 54 diverse countries on the continent. The African Lions project, conducted by UCT Unilever and Ipsos, in 10 cities across Africa over 18 months. The research encompassed both qualitative and quantitative research waves and has yielded massive amounts of information into this market.

“What is clear from the research is that Africa is not a country,” says Mwaura, “and it is important to keep in mind the nuances and differences in each of the cities we covered in the research. While some of the cities are known for their bold approach to modernity, such as Nairobi and Lagos, others are slow to adopt new approaches and media and so marketing and media campaigns, as well as research itself, has to be customised around these differences.”

## African Lions and media penetration

Given the audience and context, the paper focussed strongly on the media used by African Lions and, there is no dispute that radio is still king, in terms of reach and influence. Television is also still very much in place, together with print.

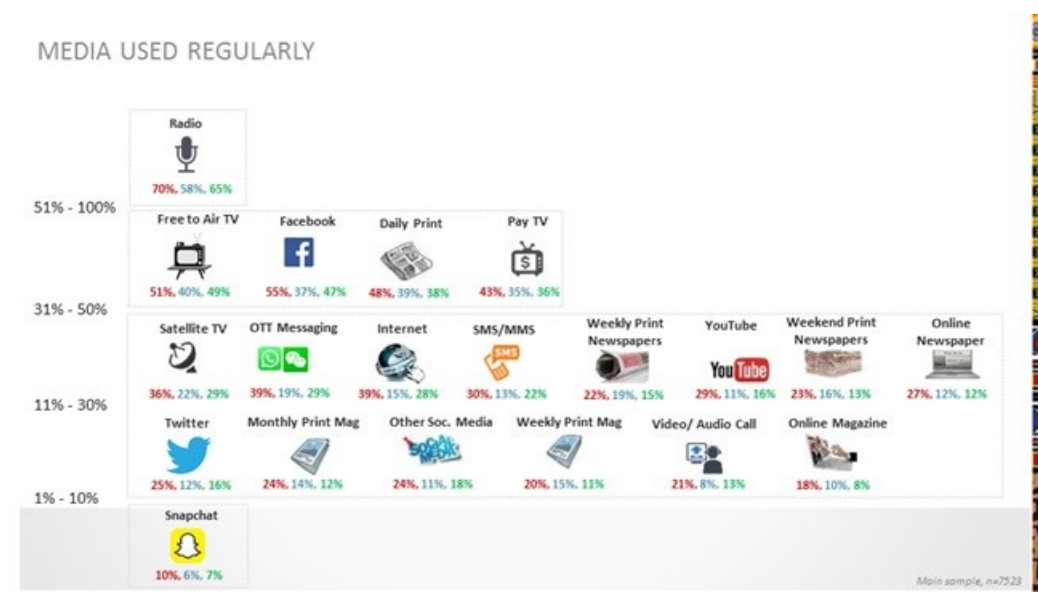


Figure 1 Media incidence amongst the three segments of "African Lions"

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Although the incidence of smart phone ownership is impressive (more than four-fifths own a smart phone), actual internet access is still below half of those falling into the definition of Middle Class in the urban areas. For this reason, social media has not reached the penetration that it has in other markets and is not regarded as the media of choice.

“There are early adopters who represent the continent in the landscape of social media, however this is far from all-pervasive,” states Mwaura.

However, word-of-mouth is a very strong influencer in terms of brand and products, and social media does have role to play from that perspective, to some extent replacing well the traditional conversation over the fence about products and

## Implications for marketers and communication

Mwaura explored some of the aspirations and values within the various segments of the African Lions, but in terms of communication, the message is clear that traditional media continues to be the best bet for reaching the biggest proportion of African Lions. The ground rules of “speak my language”, “keep it real” and “be media savvy” certainly still apply.

For more information about Nanzala’s paper, or about the African Lions study, please contact [Samantha.Payne@ipsos.com](mailto:Samantha.Payne@ipsos.com) or visit our site at [www.ipsos.com/en-za](http://www.ipsos.com/en-za)

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