

PRIME VISION MEDIA GROUP

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ESSENTIAL BUSINESS GUIDE · 2025 EDITION

WHY YOUR BRAND NEEDS A MARKETING BUDGET

Insights, Strategy & South Africa's Top Brand Spenders

*"Your brand is what people say about you when
you're not in the room."*

— Jeff Bezos, Founder of Amazon

01 | THE CASE FOR A MARKETING BUDGET

Brand strategy is a long-term investment that shapes perception and drives sustainable success. Yet one of the most overlooked aspects of brand strategy is the commitment of a dedicated, planned marketing budget. Without financial allocation, even the strongest brand vision remains unrealised.

WHAT IS A MARKETING BUDGET?

A marketing budget is the total financial allocation a business sets aside specifically for promoting its products, services, or brand identity over a given period. It covers everything from digital advertising, influencer partnerships, print media, and outdoor billboards to content creation, events, and brand activations. It is not an expense — it is an investment in the perception people hold about your business.

A BUDGET IS NOT OPTIONAL — IT IS STRATEGIC

South Africa's most recognised and valuable brands — from Shoprite to FNB — did not achieve their market positions by chance. They achieved it through disciplined, consistent, and strategically planned marketing investment over years and decades. A marketing budget is the engine behind brand positioning, differentiation, and long-term direction.

"Brand strategy is a long-term investment that shapes perception and drives sustainable success."

— Prime Vision Media Group Brand Strategy Guide

6 REASONS YOUR BRAND NEEDS A MARKETING BUDGET

1

Ensures Consistent Brand Presence

A budget guarantees your brand stays visible across channels without interruption.

2

Drives Measurable Growth

Planned spend enables you to track ROI, test campaigns, and scale what works.

3

Attracts & Retains Customers

Continuous marketing nurtures leads, builds loyalty, and reduces customer churn.

4

Outpaces Competitors

Brands that invest consistently maintain top-of-mind awareness versus silent rivals.

5

Builds Long-Term Brand Equity

Every rand invested compounds over time — great brands are built over years, not days.

6

Enables Strategic Planning

A defined budget allows you to plan campaigns, hire talent, and time market entries.

02 | BRAND STRATEGY PILLARS & BUDGET ALIGNMENT

Every element of brand strategy requires financial support. The four pillars identified in the Prime Vision Media Group Brand Strategy Guide each have direct budget implications:

PILLAR	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET APPLICATION
POSITIONING	Define target audience, market category & value proposition	Market research, audience analytics, SEO & paid search
DIFFERENTIATION	Superior quality, customer experience & compelling brand story	Content production, PR, influencer marketing & storytelling
VISIBILITY	Continuous market presence across all relevant touchpoints	Paid media, TV/radio, OOH, social media advertising
CONSISTENCY	Aligned visual identity and messaging across all channels	Brand guidelines, design systems & creative production

03 | HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU SPEND?

There is no universal answer — but industry benchmarks provide useful guidance. The rule of thumb is to allocate a percentage of your projected or actual revenue to marketing. Below are guidelines by business stage:

BUSINESS STAGE	% OF REVENUE	ESTIMATED MONTHLY SPEND
Startups & SMEs	5% – 12% of projected revenue	R5K – R50K / month
Growth-Stage Brands	10% – 20% of revenue	R50K – R300K / month
Established Brands	5% – 10% of revenue	R300K – R5M / month
Market Leaders	10%+ of revenue	R20M+ / month

04 | SOUTH AFRICA'S TOP 15 MARKETING SPENDERS

The following table ranks South Africa's biggest brand marketing spenders from highest to lowest estimated annual spend. These figures are derived from industry reports, annual financial disclosures, and market research data. Monthly figures are calculated as approximately 1/12th of the annual range. All amounts in South African Rand (ZAR).

#	BRAND	SECTOR	EST. MONTHLY	EST. ANNUAL
1	Unilever SA	FMCG / Consumer Goods	R100M – R108M	R1.2B – R1.3B
2	Shoprite / Checkers	Retail	R80M – R100M	R960M – R1.2B
3	AB InBev / SAB	Beverages	R65M – R80M	R780M – R960M
4	Clientele Life	Insurance	R50M – R60M	R600M – R720M
5	Pick n Pay	Retail	R50M – R65M	R600M – R780M
6	Vodacom	Telecoms	R45M – R55M	R540M – R660M
7	MTN	Telecoms	R40M – R50M	R480M – R600M
8	Standard Bank	Banking	R35M – R45M	R420M – R540M
9	MultiChoice / DStv	Media	R30M – R45M	R360M – R540M
10	FNB	Banking	R30M – R40M	R360M – R480M
11	Woolworths	Retail	R30M – R45M	R360M – R540M
12	Absa	Banking	R25M – R35M	R300M – R420M
13	Nedbank	Banking	R22M – R32M	R264M – R384M
14	Capitec Bank	Banking	R20M – R30M	R240M – R360M
15	OUTsurance	Insurance	R20M – R30M	R240M – R360M

* Estimates based on Nielsen AdEx reports, Brand Finance SA 2025, The Media Online industry data, and published annual reports. Figures are ranges and may differ from actual spend. All amounts in South African Rand (ZAR).

05 | KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR YOUR BRAND

- 01 INVEST CONSISTENTLY**
The brands at the top of this list did not become household names overnight. Consistent, year-round investment builds cumulative brand equity that compounds over time.
- 02 START WHERE YOU ARE**
You do not need R80M a month. Even a structured R5,000/month marketing budget, spent wisely on digital channels, delivers measurable returns for smaller brands.
- 03 ALLOCATE ACROSS CHANNELS**
Spread your budget across digital (social media, SEO, email), traditional (radio, print), and experiential (events, activations) based on where your audience lives.
- 04 MEASURE AND OPTIMISE**
Set KPIs before you spend. Track cost-per-lead, brand recall, and revenue attribution. Redirect budget from low-performing channels to high-performers every quarter.
- 05 BRAND STRATEGY FIRST**
A budget without strategy is wasteful. Define your positioning, differentiation, and long-term direction before allocating a single rand — just as this guide prescribes.

CONTACT US

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