

SA, Africa's most valuable nation brand



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South Africa has emerged as the most valuable nation brand on the African continent in 2011, scoring a value of US\$149.7 billion, distantly followed by Egypt (US\$79.2 billion) and Nigeria (US\$56 billion) in third place, while MTN is voted Africa's most valuable corporate brand, according to a UK-based Brand Finance study's findings released today, Wednesday 25 May 2011, in Johannesburg by the Brand Leadership Academy.



Morocco (US\$39.9 billion), Algeria (US\$39.2 billion), Angola (US\$23.8 billion), Tunisia (US\$19 billion), Ghana (US\$13.3 billion), Kenya (US\$13.2 billion) and conflict-hit Libya (US\$13.2 billion) are the remaining countries listed in the Brand Finance top 10 index.

Africa's 38 countries involved in the study represent a mere 1% of the world's brand valuation and 2% of the world's GDP.

Fundamentals of the brand

"Building a nation brand is not only about changing logos or flags, but what matters the most is changing the fundamentals of the brand," said Brand Finance founder British-born David Haigh. Speaking at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), Haigh said the most critical message of branding is the high quality of the brand and the development of its reputation.

Today is Africa Day, and while billions of Africans would probably wonder how the continent will solve its 'eternal' problems, which include armed conflict, dictatorship, poverty and human rights violations, Brand Finance's most valuable brand list reflects the continent's competitiveness, growth and reputation - three key factors to move any brand forward.

The study's methodology includes the scope, data and brand profiling. While brand profiling includes brand strength determined using the World Competitiveness Yearbook and the World Economic Forum global competitiveness index,

another aspect of brand profiling includes infrastructure and efficiency, brand equity and economic performance.

MTN, most valuable corporate brand

Africa's biggest cellphone company MTN (brand value US\$4.9 billion) has been voted the continent's most valuable corporate brand, followed by Standard Bank (US\$2.3 billion) and ABSA (US\$1.9 billion) - two of SA's biggest-four banks. MTN is the only African brand listed among the world's top 500 most valuable corporate brands. The African list also includes FNB (US\$1.5 billion), Nedbank (US\$1.3 billion), Investec (US\$1.2 billion), Telecom Egypt (US\$0.5 billion), Telkom South Africa (US\$0.4 billion), Guaranty Trust Bank (US\$0.4 billion) and Mobinil (US\$0.4 billion).

The world's 2011 top brands include Google, Microsoft, Walmart, IBM, Vodaphone, Bank of America, Apple, Well-Fargo and AT&T. The world's 10 most valuable nation brands are US (1), Germany (2), China (3), Japan (4), UK (5), France (6), Italy (7), Canada (8), India (9) and Brazil (10). Despite this list being dominated by developed nations, BRICS nations have also begun making an impact in this category, Haigh said.

Brand SA is ranked the world's 41st strong brand in 2011, according to Brand Finance, with Brand Sweden (1), Brand Australia (2) and Brand US (3) among the top three. France (40), Portugal (42) and Italy (49) have also made the top 50 cut.

Accepting the award on behalf of SA, Anitha Soni, chairman of the International Marketing Council (IMC), said: "This honour underlines the progress the country has made. It is due recognition not only for SA's brilliant soccer world cup tournament but builds on its acceptance into the BRICS nations.

"This is a further recognition of SA as an important emerging country in its own right."

For more information, go to www.brandleadership.org.

ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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