

Zimbabwe: Ad agency in dire straits

One of the country's biggest advertising agencies, Imago Young & Rubicam (IY&R), has fallen in trouble after failing to pay for President Robert Mugabe's re-election campaign advertisements.

By [Sam Hungwe](#) 13 Jan 2009

Advertising industry and media sources said local newspapers were turning down advertisements from IY&R due to its huge debts to the industry.

“The whole industry is owed money from the ZANU PF adverts,” an official from one newspaper group said.

The involvement of IY&R in Mugabe's campaign had resulted in global ad agency, Young & Rubicam (Y&R) selling its 25% stake in the Zimbabwean company, demanding IY&R drop Young & Rubicam from its name.

IY&R has not yet officially rebranded to drop the name.

Industry players said IY&R had been deserted by most of its major clients, who were now booking their advertisements through other agencies.

“They have lost key staff as a result of this development, among them Sapi Bachi, the MD, Jacky Ndlovu, the client services director. Their media manager also left in a huff,” an insider said.

Efforts to contact CEO, Sharon Mugabe were fruitless as the company's phone numbers went unanswered. The company was reportedly moving from its spacious offices in Harare's northern suburbs.

ABOUT SAM HUNGWE

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