

TO ANISA, WHO MADE WALLS THAT OPEN DOORS FOR HER COMMUNITY.



WALL MEDIA: Anisa Kale shows off one of her murals in Soweto

PHOTO: KATHLEEN MUCK MERE

# Township walls can be good brand business

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**S**HE DESCRIBED social entrepreneur Anisa Kale has creatively leveraged the huge market in the township to empower herself and others while adding a dash of colour to townships around the country.

"The middle class in the township is growing and a lot of the money is coming from there," she said.

"And if a brand is in the township, kids will grow up remembering that brand, and parents will identify with that brand. You can have an aspirational brand or a brand that is in a price range that many people can afford," said Kale, explaining the seeds of thought for her flourishing business.

The ambitious Kale, who built her CV from being the personal assistant of an accounts director in the advertising industry, founded and owns Keys Communications, a media agency focusing on hand-painted outdoor wall media.

"Being in advertising exposed me to a whole lot of things and how one has to be cost effective in order to reach the masses.

"Radio works, and it can reach millions of people, but if somebody is not at home or at the office, they have to see some kind of media out

there. That's how the business started," said Kale.

While production is more expensive than a traditional billboard, monthly rental is a lot cheaper. "The walls are hand-painted and the all-weather paint and machines we use are imported, so that's why it's a little bit more expensive. But having said that, the production can last up to 10 years. We obviously don't advise clients to put it up on the wall for 10 years, but that's how good the quality is," Kale said.

The advertising can also be easily directed instead of restricted by the billboard's position.

"In the township, we'll usually go onto the busiest main road and look at the traffic on that street based on commuters, pedestrians and cars.

"We also use the traffic figures from Samral, pick a house and talk to the owner, draw up a contract and agree on a monthly rental. The monthly rental varies from R500-R1 500," she said.

Kale said while there were other players in wall media, her company was unique in doing what she termed "high-definition painting".

Kale said she enjoyed the security of a salary every month until she realised she wanted a better quality of life and to spend time with her two boys. "I'm not saying that having your own

business is easier, but at least you control the hours. So I restructured my life around my availability and my family," said the 36-year-old.

Kale struggled to get financing for her start-up as banks shied away from her service-based business. So she ended up using her savings, but she persevered, and even though she started in 2009, only got her first client last year.

"There have been companies that have done wall murals before and were not happy with the quality. So they are now reluctant to get involved.

"We have to show that what we do is unique," said Kale.

Not oblivious to the financial crunch companies are facing, Kale said she was constantly looking for new business to ensure the cash flow doesn't dry up because she now employs 10 people. She said her company was looking for ways to get involved in the maturing digital phenomenon.

"When companies are under pressure the first thing to go is marketing spend. That is why I am constantly looking for new business. I've got people that I pay salaries to.

"Most of the landlords that you get walls from are old people or single parents and people who really need that money," said Kale.