

Kenya's top ten advertisers in 2008

Amid the credit crunch and global economic downturn, firms are all trying to brace for a tougher future and this may only be achieved through intensive advertising using channels that offer value for money. In the year 2008, 20bn shillings were splashed by local firms on advertising. A big success by any means.

By [Titus Kaloki](#) 2 Mar 2009



Says George Lutta, regional director of Scanad Kenya, "Advertisers will have a hard time convincing client firms that the best defence at such times is going on the offensive." Well, let's see if Kenya's top advertisers will take note in 2009 and outperform last year's spending.

The leading spender is the most profitable company in Kenya, Safaricom. It spent 1.8 billion on advertising. This is a result of competition from fellow mobile service providers who came out guns blazing. In second place was Zain, the second largest mobile service provider with an ad war chest of 1.1 billion. There is stiff competition in the ICT sector especially with fibre optics about to land in the market. The next battle frontiers are on data provision.

Coming in third was East African Breweries Limited with 902 million shillings spent on advertising. The firm is famous for its promotions that offer millions of shillings in prices. Coca Cola came in fourth with 621 million spent. It increased visibility by launching a soft drink, Novida to counter EABL's non-alcoholic Alvaro.

Telkom Kenya, renamed Orange was fifth with an expenditure of 612 million, Unilever Kenya Limited placed sixth with 553 million and seventh place went to Population Service International with 520 million.

The last three places are Reckitt Benckiser, Nakumatt Holdings and Government of Kenya with 477 million, 402 million and 297 million respectively.

So what lies ahead this year? Well, Lutta says most firms will demand advertising that promises instant return on investment, meaning new promotional and activation themes like bargains, special offers and couponing will be the order of the day. There is however going to be a decline in spending from the consumer side, food and household products but ICTs will be unrelenting. With that we close the honour roll and set our eyes on this year's movers and shakers.

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