CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

"The best way is always through"
Robert Frost (1874-1963)

7.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the insights obtained from the in-depth interviews with experienced OOH advertising media specialists on the planning and integration of OOH advertising media were discussed.

Chapter seven will commence with a brief reflection on the objectives and structure of the study. Thereafter, the proposed framework for the planning and integration of OOH advertising media in South Africa will be discussed. This chapter will be concluded with recommendations for future research.

7.2   AIM, OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to explore how experienced OOH advertising media specialists are planning and integrating different OOH advertising media platforms as part of an overall IMC campaign. These insights, together with an extensive investigation into the relevant literature, were used to develop a framework for the planning and integration of OOH advertising media in South Africa, to be presented in this chapter.

Chapter one: The research orientation was discussed by providing the background to the research. The research problem, the aim and objectives of the research project, as well as the significance of the study, were presented and concluded with a brief description of the methodology.

Chapter two: The relationship between the key concepts in the study: marketing, marketing communication, IMC and OOH advertising media were discussed from a

theoretical perspective, in order to identify and apply the key IMC principles that should guide the planning of OOH advertising media as part of an overall IMC campaign.

The focus of the current study was motivated and explained, as the implementation of IMC on a tactical level, or the planning and integration of OOH advertising media platforms as part of an overall IMC campaign-from a media planning perspective.

Chapter three: Some current media planning trends were discussed, specifically: convergence, engagement, creativity and media unbundling. These trends influence the way contemporary media planning should be conducted. Firstly, to follow an audience-driven approach, rather than an inside-out planning perspective. Secondly, to ensure that planning is not done in fragmented silos, but rather to realise the interdependence and potential synergy between planning the message and the media strategy. Thirdly, selecting and strategically combining multiple media in a campaign to achieve synergy, rather than relying only on single-media campaigns. Fourthly, to apply media-neutral planning, or the objective and unbiased selection of potential media options. Thus, all the traditional media, as well as alternative options, should be considered as potential consumer touch-points to connect with consumers, whenever and wherever they are most receptive. Lastly, the application of accountability, by measuring the impact and effectiveness of media plans, not only on attitudinally based market research methods, but also on behavioural and accountability measures.

The major phases in the planning process of general advertising media – from an IMC perspective – were also discussed. These phases are the alignment of the media plan with the overall IMC and advertising plan, planning the media strategy; and lastly, the evaluation and follow-up. This was done to meet the second research objective of the study namely to describe the general advertising media planning process and principles from an IMC perspective.

Chapter four: The analysis of the existing academic and advertising media industry literature in this chapter revealed some differences and similarities with regard to

OOH advertising media. It also revealed the lack of any proper classification scheme for the whole new range of OOH advertising media options in South Africa.

For that reason, a subsequent classification was proposed and discussed. The four major OOH advertising media (outdoor advertising, transit media advertising, street and retail furniture advertising and alternative OOH media channels) comprising eight formats (outdoor advertising on constructions or buildings, free-standing outdoor advertising media, moving transit advertising media, static transit advertising media, street furniture advertising media, retail furniture advertising media, digital OOH advertising media advertising and ambient OOH communication channels) intended to reach consumers outside their home were discussed. This helped to achieve the third research objective, namely to categorise OOH advertising media types in South Africa.

Some international studies on the major OOH advertising media platforms and the key implications for the planning of media were also discussed.

Chapter five: The research design employed in the research study, namely: an inductive approach to qualitative content analysis was discussed. The data collection and the analysis process were discussed in detail. The interpretation and reporting procedures followed to conceptualise and present the qualitative results were presented. An outline of the appropriate qualitative research considerations was given, in order to maximise the reliability and validity of the study.

Chapter six: The qualitative research findings of the in-depth interviews were presented in order to meet research objective five, to explore the planning and integration of OOH advertising media as part of an overall IMC campaign by OOH specialists in South-Africa.

The theoretical constructs that encapsulate the findings were discussed in detail – at the hand of conceptual networks, namely: the alignment of the OOH advertising media campaign with the overall IMC plan; the planning of OOH advertising media; and the evaluation and research of OOH advertising.

7.3 A FRAMEWORK FOR THE PLANNING AND INTEGRATION OF OUT-OF-HOME ADVERTISING MEDIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

Despite the importance of synergy in IMC, it is still not well understood (Naik & Raman, 2003:375). Hence, further research to understand, explain, manage and measure multi-media synergy is strongly supported (Ewing, 2009:104; Grove *et al*., 2007:39; Kitchen & Schultz, 2009:201; Naik & Raman, 2003:375; Schultz, Block & Raman, 2009:4; Schultz, 2006:14; Schultz, 2006:14; Voorveld, 2011:2201; Voorveld *et al*., 2011:69).

A number of studies on synergy, when combining multiple media or marketing communication elements in IMC planning have subsequently been published during the past decade (Chang & Thorson, 2004; Du Plessis, 2005; Lynn, 2006; Naik & Raman, 2003; Grimwood, 2010; Tang & Newton, 2007; Voorveld *et al*., 2011). Some studies have also found positive synergy, when combining OOH advertising media with other advertising media, such as newspapers (Donthu & Bhargava, 1999), radio and magazines (Du Plooy & Du Plessis, 2011).

However, very little has been published in academic journals and textbooks on how OOH advertising media planning and integration across platforms should be done – even more so in a developing country, such as South Africa. Previous studies published on OOH advertising media focussed only on one platform or format in isolation (Berneman & Kasparian, 2003; Du Plooy & Du Plessis, 2011; Eun & Kim, 2009; Iveson, 2012; Lichtenthal *et al*., 2006; Nagel & Louw, 2004; Osborne & Coleman, 2008; Pauwels, 2005; van Meurs & Aristoff, 2009; Veloutsou & O'Donnell, 2005; Taylor & Franke, 2003; Taylor *et al.*, 2006; Wilson & Till, 2008; Wilson & Till, 2011). None of these studies have considered the integration of major OOH advertising media platforms from a media planning perspective, when being planned as part of an overall IMC plan.

When reviewing existing advertising media planning models in the literature (Belch & Belch, 2012:334; Duncan, 2005:424; Katz, 2010:154; Lane *et al.*, 2011:223; Moriarty *et al*. 2012:425; Shimp, 2010: 321; Sissors & Baron, 2010:27), it is apparent that they

are generic and mostly applicable to traditional broadcast and print media. The majority of these planning models do not consider the South African context – with the exception of a few, such as Du Plessis *et al.* (2010:45-46) and Koekemoer (2005:207). These two sources refer to outdoor advertising media; but they do not provide any guidance on the planning and evaluation of the other OOH advertising media platforms.

The proposed framework will address the identified limitations of the existing literature. Firstly, it will consider the potential synergistic integration of different OOH advertising media platforms as part of an overall IMC plan. Secondly, it is not a general advertising media planning model for traditional broadcast and print media, but it is framework tailored for OOH advertising media. Thirdly, it can be used for the planning of all major OOH advertising media platforms in South-Africa, not only for outdoor advertising or billboards.

The framework is based on an extensive investigation into the relevant literature presented in chapters two to four, as well as the insights obtained during the exploratory qualitative phase of the study, as presented in chapter six.

In chapter two the current study was conceptualised as the implementation of IMC on a tactical level or the integration of multiple OOH advertising media types in a campaign. The key IMC principles applicable to OOH advertising media planning and integration in this study were also discussed.

A classification for OOH advertising media in South Africa was proposed in chapter three, consisting of four platforms: outdoor advertising, transit advertising media, street and retail furniture advertising and alternative OOH media channels. Therefore all four these platforms were included in the proposed framework, while other marketing communication elements, such as sales promotion and cinema advertising, considered by some to be part of OOH advertising as support media, were excluded.

The three basic phases of general media planning, based on the literature were

discussed in detail in chapter four, specifically: the alignment of the media plan with the overall IMC and advertising plan, followed by media planning and strategy; and lastly, the evaluation and follow-up.

However, as explained the existing literature doesn't adequately address how these planning phases and principles should be applied to OOH advertising media planning and integration in the South African context.

The phases of the new proposed framework were derived from the phases in the literature. These proposed phases were adopted based on the qualitative insight and applied to OOH advertising media planning and integration in South Africa. This approach was followed for two reasons. Firstly in order to contextualise the findings within the existing literature. Secondly, to ensure that this framework is easy to understand and applicable in practice by media planners and marketers.

The key IMC principles and the major planning phases in this framework (as seen in figure 7.1) will form the basis of the rest of the discussion.

7.3.1 KEY IMC PRINCIPLES AS PRE-REQUISITE FOR THE PLANNING AND INTEGRATION OF OOH ADVERTISING MEDIA

For this framework, OOH advertising media planning, based on IMC principles may be defined as follows:
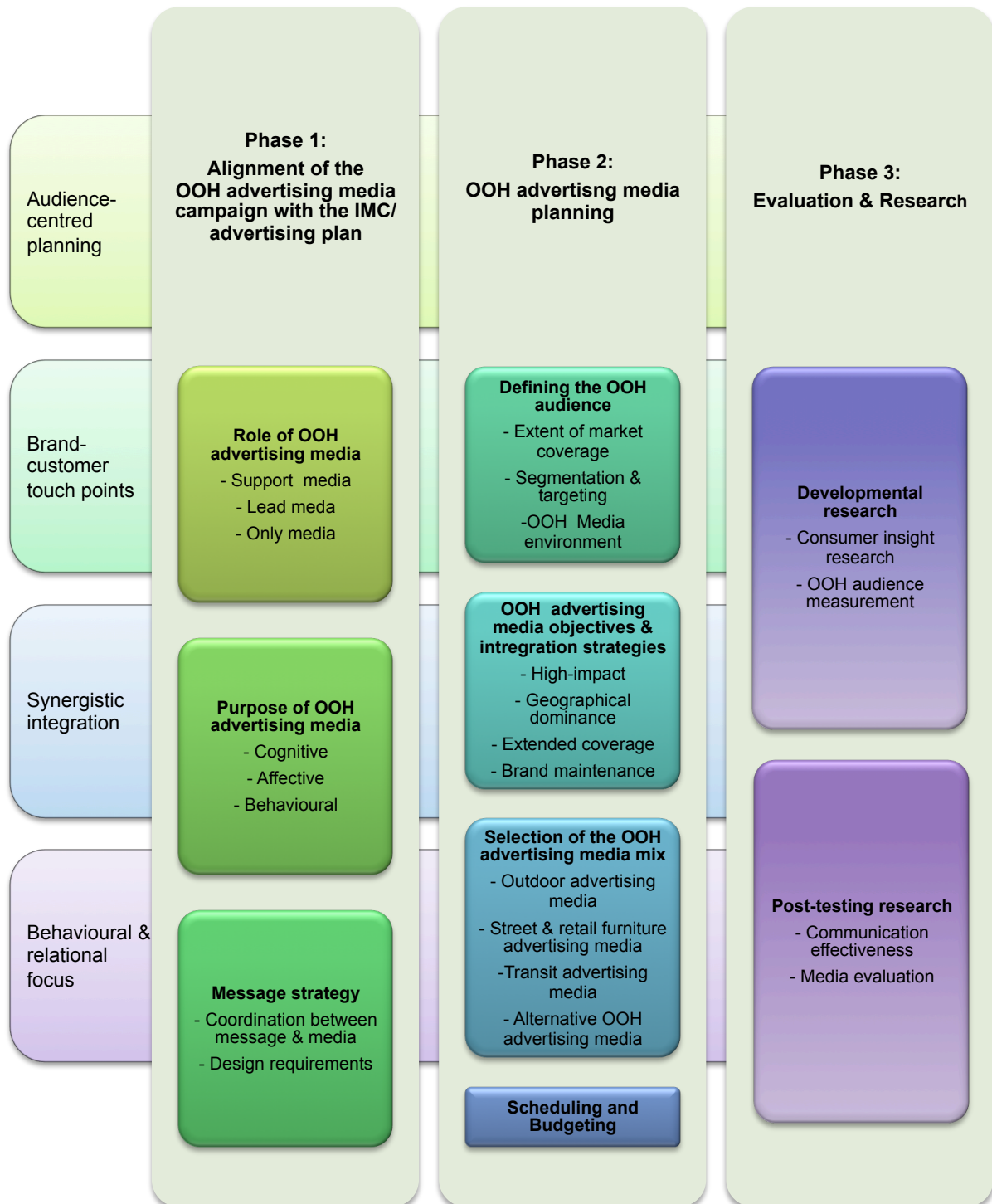
The audience-centred planning, synergistic integration and evaluation of OOH advertising media platforms and formats, as brand-customer touch points in an overall IMC plan.

This definition implies that four key IMC principles, as discussed in the literature (see section 2.4.2): specifically audience-centred planning, extensive view to consider all brand-customer touch points, synergistic integration, as well as a behavioural and relational focus – these are all prerequisites for the effective planning and integration of OOH advertising media, as part of an overall IMC plan.

Figure 7 1: Framework for the planning and integration of OOH advertising media in South Africa

IMC principles	The phases of the OOH advertising media planning process

Audience-centred planning

Brand-customer touch points

Synergistic integration

Behavioural & relational focus

Phase 1:
Alignment of the OOH advertising media campaign with the IMC/ advertising plan

Phase 2:
OOH advertisng media planning

Phase 3:
Evaluation & Research

Role of OOH advertising media
- Support media
- Lead meda
- Only media

Purpose of OOH advertising media
- Cognitive
- Affective
- Behavioural

Message strategy
- Coordination between message & media
- Design requirements

Defining the OOH audience
- Extent of market coverage
- Segmentation & targeting
- OOH Media environment

OOH advertising media objectives & intregration strategies
- High-impact
- Geographical dominance
- Extended coverage
- Brand maintenance

Selection of the OOH advertising media mix
- Outdoor advertising media
- Street & retail furniture advertising media
- Transit advertising media
- Alternative OOH advertising media

Scheduling and Budgeting

Developmental research
- Consumer insight research
- OOH audience measurement

Post-testing research
- Communication effectiveness
- Media evaluation

Source: The researcher

7.3.1.1 <u>Audience-centred planning</u>

Audience-centred planning or inside-out planning of an OOH advertising media campaign is crucial, even more so in the case when it is outsourced to external agencies or media specialists. OOH advertising media specialists can act as intermediaries between the suppliers of OOH advertising media (the large numbers of OOH media companies and owners offering a variety of OOH media formats and vehicles) and users (media agencies and advertisers who employ this medium) to focus the whole planning process on the audience.

All the role players involved in the planning and implementation of IMC campaigns should not work from an inside-out perspective, based on an assessment by internal managers or functions. They should rather employ an audience-focused approach, based on audience insight; and this should involve all the responsible departments, or the agencies responsible in this process (Duncan, 2005:171). The interdependence between different functions required and organisations involved when planning and implementing an integrated campaign are also emphasised in the literature (Katz, 2010:43; Lane *et al*., 2011:665; Moriarty *et al*., 2012:333; Sissors & Baron, 2010:285).

However, in the current study some evidence of an inside-out perspective could be identified. Firstly, the silo approach and the lack of communication or understanding between the media specialists and those responsible for the planning of the message strategy is an indication of a serious lack of customer centricity. Secondly, the lack of trust and concerns raised by media specialists regarding the neutrality and reliability of the OOH audience research published by some of the OOH media companies. Thirdly, the product-oriented approach by some OOH media companies attempting to promote sales of imported low quality digital media products not adapted for South African market conditions, rather than following a customer-oriented approach, is another example.

Different functions, such as the planning of media strategies, the designing of the message and creative strategies, as well as the research or evaluation, should not be

isolated from one another. Successful vertical integration of these functions requires intra- and inter-organisational integration and communication. Furthermore, this integration and communication between all the role-players should be initiated and managed from the advertisers' side.

Audience-centred planning is achieved by inside-out planning, where the information needs, motives, lifestyle, frame-of-mind and behaviour of the target audience(s) are used as a basis to select the most suitable OOH advertising media touch points in an IMC campaign, as opposed to planning that is outwardly-driven by the motives, perceptions and commission or fees earned by OOH advertising media specialist agencies, advertisers, their agencies and research companies, or OOH media companies.

Audience-centred planning should be based on an in-depth understanding and research of the different OOH audiences beyond traditional marketing-segmentation descriptors, such as the demographical and geographical data – to include psychographic and behavioural profiling. When following a marketer-initiated or outbound-planning approach, the aim of OOH advertising media planning was to place a number of seemingly unrestricted messages everywhere – in an attempt to achieve maximum exposure. This result was that the advertising was perceived either as an intrusion, as being invaluable, or else it was simply ignored by the mobile OOH audience.

However, the aim can no longer be to merely obtain media exposure, or to deliver the message to a mass audience; but it should be to deliver quality media exposure to a specific OOH audience. This can be achieved by selecting the most visually impactful, relevant and preferred OOH brand contact points in the most suitable OOH environments, to connect with the target audience, whenever and wherever they are most receptive.

7.3.1.2 <u>Brand-customer touch points</u>

Moving away from just aiming to reach as many potential consumers as possible at as low a cost as possible, towards a more audience-centred view, has led to the increasing realisation that besides traditional mass advertising, there are a variety of other brand-touch points that could shape consumers' experiences and relationships with a brand or company (Belch & Belch, 2012:26; Dunn & Davis, 2004:300; Gambetti, 2010:34; Meyer & Schwager, 2007:118). Several terms, such as alternative media, non-measured media, and non-traditional media are used to describe the wide variety of alternative channels nowadays used by marketers to communicate to consumers. The OOH advertising media are often considered to be part of this alternative or support media, due to the fact that they can reach people in the target market who were not reached effectively by the above the-line-advertising, such as mass broadcast and print media (Belch & Belch, 2012:447).

Contemporary OOH advertising media, in its many shapes and formats in South Africa, can effectively be employed as brand-touch points in an urban or rural environment, in a way that is generally less expensive and more cost-efficient than highly fragmented traditional mass advertising media. It could, in fact, serve as the ideal brand-touch point with a target audience in a variety of OOH environments, by enhancing their relationship and experience with the brand and offering them information, entertainment and distraction.

With the wide range of contemporary OOH advertising media options available, advertisers are now able to reach far more targeted audiences in specific environments throughout their daily routines. For example, public transit advertising and minibus taxi advertising media can reach a captive mass market travelling back and forth to major metropolitan areas on a daily basis. Private car branding, where car owners' lifestyles are matched with the target market of the product or service being advertised, could well be employed as a brand-touch point – with specific audience profiles, such as students on campus, mothers with children in a school in a specific neighbourhood, or holidaymakers at a beach town during high season.

Ambient OOH communication channels are ideal when traditional OOH advertising media types are not available in targeted areas. This medium can then be used as an additional brand-contact point, or when the advertisers have a limited budget available. Digital OOH advertising media advertising can be placed where they would be seen by people on the go, whether this is while business professionals are waiting to catch a flight in the morning, shoppers are waiting in line at the grocery store in the afternoon, or socialites are spending time with friends at a bar or restaurant in the evening. Digital OOH advertising media are ideal in this context, because they allow for interaction with the target audience, such as that via cell-phone devices, short-text messages (SMS) and QR (Quick Response) codes. This makes this medium more engaging for consumers, while allowing advertisers to provide relevant customised content, instead of just one-way static advertising messages.

Furthermore, it is essential that a brand message presented and experienced by consumers through all the various brand-contact points should be congruent with others, because inconsistent messages sent would lead to confusion, and dilute the brand equity in the consumer's mind (Belch & Belch, 2012:300). This does not necessarily mean that the messages transmitted to various audiences or segments via different media should be completely identical (Yeshin, 2006:69; Torp, 2009:199).

Thus, when converting a message primarily or originally designed for other media to OOH advertising media, it must be modified and customised for the specific OOH advertising media format and environment, and not simply done by using messages that were designed for printed media or for television.

An OOH advertising campaign message placed on different formats must also be adapted for the environment, where the audience is exposed to messages to maximise the effectiveness. Environments with a captive audience, such as people waiting at train stations, business lounges at airports, bus stops, taxi ranks, as well as inside transit-media vehicles typically result in more time being available for people to notice and be discerning about their surroundings. These OOH environments result in longer dwelling times, and they allow advertisers to obtain interaction or engagement with a target audience. Roadside environments, where the

message is aimed at fast-moving traffic results in limited dwelling time and requires short copy and a limited number of high-impact visual cues.

Another alternative for advertisers, targeting specific ethnic or language groups in specific geographical areas, is to translate the original copy of the messages into different languages or vernacular languages supported by suitable cultural symbols and visuals, in order to get the targeted audience's attention and support and to create a long-lasting impression.

7.3.1.3 Synergistic integration

Synergy remains a focal concept in contemporary IMC literature (Ewing, 2009:104; Grove *et al.*, 2007:39; Kitchen & Schultz, 2009:201; Naik & Raman, 2003:375; Schultz *et al*., 2009:4; Schultz, 2006:14; Schultz, 2006:14; Voorveld, 2011:2201). It may even be suggested that it is the ultimate goal of most IMC campaigns (Voorveld *et al.,* 2011:69). Synergistic integration occurs when the combined effect of multiple media activities exceeds the sum of their individual effects (Naik & Raman, 2003:375).

The potential of synergistic integration also applies to the wide range of OOH advertising media options available nowadays to choose from, when planning a campaign for the South African market. Not only has OOH advertising media evolved from being mainly outdoor advertising to include other platforms, but each of these platforms is also continuing to develop and expand. Outdoor advertising has evolved from being mainly free-standing outdoor advertising boards on highways, and in rural areas to include super-large formats, such as gantries, murals and wrapping massive buildings.

Transit advertising options now range from those that are ideal for reaching consumers in low-income and middle-income groups, such as advertising on buses, minibus taxis and metro-trains, to the expansive range of opportunities catering for high LSM groups, such as airport media, branded-upmarket cabs in major metropolitan areas, water taxis at the Cape Town Waterfront, private car branding

and the Gautrain. Street and retail furniture advertising formats can now be found in suburban areas, as well as in shopping environments. This allows advertisers far more targeted reach to pedestrians and shoppers.

Digital media at airports, retailers and in shopping centres facilitate dynamic communication content and consumer engagement. Ambient OOH media allow advertisers to reach consumers in unconventional places, and to attract attention, by using them at unexpected times, but also in specific contexts and environments.

This changing OOH advertising media landscape in South Africa requires marketers and media agencies to rethink their way of combining and integrating multiple OOH advertising media types. This wide range of platforms and formats can no longer be regarded as a homogeneous sector sharing exactly the same key characteristics, benefits and limitations as outdoor advertising media, as suggested by some sources (Moriarty *et al*., 2012:369; Katz, 2010:91; Lane *et al.,* 2011:359). Failure to consider the unique strengths and weaknesses of each of these platforms and formats would result in the synergy that could result from combining these platforms, also being neglected.

Synergistic integration is achieved by applying media-neutral planning (Higgs & Polonsky, 2007:1502; Tapp, 2005:133). This implies that the unique quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the OOH advertising media platforms and formats should be evaluated and selected objectively, based on their appropriateness to deliver on the set of marketing communications and media objectives. Selecting and combining the best mix of different OOH advertising media types in a campaign should result in synergy, and be advantageous in increasing the reach and frequency levels of a media plan, to reach different OOH audiences, to improve the recall and learning of an OOH advertising message by reinforcing it in different media, to implementing different message executions, and also to adding more versatility to media strategies by capitalising on the unique characteristics of each medium (Belch & Belch, 2012:342, Sissors & Baron, 2010:273).

These different OOH advertising media platforms should be integrated into an IMC campaign, in order to complement one another. For instance, super-large outdoor advertising formats, such as building wraps or gantries located in prime positions can add brand stature, but they could only deliver a fleeting message to a broad mass market. Internal minibus taxi advertising might not offer the same level of brand status; but it can deliver longer message exposure to a captive commuter market. Street and retail furniture advertising media can only reach slow-moving traffic, or shoppers in suburban areas or local markets close to point-of-purchase, where mass transit and outdoor-advertising media are not allowed; but it might not deliver the same level of impact as massive iconic building wraps or gantries spanning across the road.

Well-designed digital OOH advertising media could be used for the advertising of luxury brands in an upmarket shopping mall, where they could offer prestige value and deliver relevant real-time content to engage with the audience. However, currently this format is still relatively expensive and not available at all locations in South Africa. Ambient OOH advertising media can be more cost effective and offer a surprising element of being found in unexpected places or contexts.

7.3.1.4 Behavioural and relational focus

A behavioural and relational focus implies that the aim of IMC campaigns should no longer only be to achieve intermediate marketing communication objectives, such as to obtain brand recall, awareness, or to create positive brand associations, but should also affect behaviour, such as obtaining referrals, brand-switching, the trial of a new product, repeat purchases; and this could ultimately lead to loyalty (Ewing, 2009:107; Kitchen *et al.*, 2004:23; Shimp, 2010:18). Hence, as explained later (see 7.3.4.2), the measurement of the effectiveness of a campaign should also be based on these levels.

Marketing communication objectives across the consumers' response hierarchy could be achieved by integrating the optimum combination of OOH advertising media options in a campaign to target different audience segments, each at different stages

in the decision-making process. Different OOH advertising media types can be combined synergistically in a campaign to build and strengthen brand relationships with multiple target audiences on different levels. For example, public transit advertising, minibus taxi advertising, or outdoor advertising on highways could be aimed at the broader national market, in order to achieve mass awareness. A few super-large formats, such as very tall buildings, or massive murals at carefully selected locations can be wrapped with powerful brand visuals and icons – to increase the impact and brand stature in the minds of the targeted audience.

Using street and retail furniture advertising with promotional messages at specific locations could reach selected potential buyers, who are already at a shopping environment in a spending frame-of-mind – to get them to buy or try the brand. Ambient OOH media could be used to get in touch with selected groups of individuals by creating an engaging experience for them to relate to the advertising message, or to participate in the event. Digital OOH advertising can be used to deliver dynamic interactive communication and to involve consumers to participate in and experience the brand presented.

Furthermore, the future success and wellbeing of the industry is dependent on the relationship between a number of stakeholders, especially OOH advertising media specialists, advertisers and marketers, advertising and media agencies, the large number and variety of OOH media companies providing different media options, professional market research companies, and the research departments of advertisers or their agencies, regulating bodies – such as the government, town councils and the national road agency, as well as professional industry associations, such as the SARF, local and international OOH media industry associations. All these role players could influence the growth and wellbeing of the industry.

Based on these IMC principles, the different phases of the integrated-planning process of OOH advertising media will now be discussed.

7.3.2 PHASE 1: ALIGNMENT OF THE OOH ADVERTISING MEDIA CAMPAIGN WITH THE IMC/ADVERTISING PLAN

This first phase is an important preparation phase. It directs the rest of the media planning process and ensures that the media plan is aligned with the overall IMC and advertising plan. To align the OOH advertising media plan with the overall IMC and advertising plan, the following aspects should be considered: the role of OOH advertising media, the specific purpose of the OOH advertising in the overall IMC plan, as well as the co-ordination between the message strategy and the media.

7.3.2.1 <u>The role of OOH advertising media</u>

Prominent authors of IMC and advertising planning have different opinions on the position or role of OOH advertising media within IMC (see 4.2.1.1). Moriarty *et al*. (2012:364) regard OOH advertising media as part of the traditional media; however, they emphasise that it is "place-based media", used to deliver messages to consumers in specific places or venues. According to Belch and Belch (2012:446) and Du Plessis *et al*. (2010:107), they are not traditional media per se, but rather support media for large advertisers to strengthen the message sent to the target audience through traditional above-the-line-media. These authors imply that OOH advertising media are still primarily outdoor advertising on highways or main arterial routes, which offers broad coverage and a high level of frequency to a large mass audience; and is not able to target very specific segments.

The extraordinary size and the potential visual impact make these media perfect to use as huge canvases, with simple strong brand messages to remind consumers of the key brand features when they are out of home, and not exposed to other traditional media. These characteristics make this an ideal support medium in an overall IMC plan, to reach a mass market, which can no longer effectively be reached by highly fragmented traditional media, or to remind consumers of the brand when their awareness tapers off.

However, these authors do not recognise the different roles of other platforms, such as street and retail furniture advertising and alternative OOH advertising media to reach more specific audiences. Neither do they acknowledge the leading role that OOH advertising media can play in influencing consumers' shopping behaviour.

Shimp (2010:576) agrees that OOH advertising is not a typical or traditional form of advertising, but proposes that its primary role is rather to influence consumers' brand decisions close to the point of purchase. The focus is thus on the strength of OOH advertising to be used in a more targeted way, and as last reminder, close to the point-of-purchase, in order to influence consumers where other media cannot reach them as effectively.

The findings of this study indicate that OOH advertising media specialists do indeed plan OOH advertising as support media, either to reinforce the theme or message conveyed by the primary media, or to reach certain segments of the market more effectively than the other media. Conversely, it was also revealed that OOH advertising can play a leading role, as a directional medium for national advertisers, as well as smaller local advertisers close to where a brand is actually sold. For these smaller advertisers, OOH advertising is often not a support medium, or a lead medium, but the only advertising media that can be used in that context.

OOH advertising media can thus perform all three roles in an overall IMC plan: support-, lead- or only media. This will depend on the overall marketing communication- and media objectives to be achieved, the size and type of advertiser, and the size of the allocated budget. Outdoor advertising and mass transit advertising media, such as minibus taxi, train- and bus advertising in South Africa can be effective support media for large advertisers aimed at a broad market. They have become viable solutions for advertisers in reaching consumers, spending longer hours on the road, who can no longer effectively be reached by the highly fragmented traditional media. Other smaller formats, such as campaign outdoor advertising as well as street and retail furniture advertising can also play a more prominent and leading role close to the point-of-purchase to influence brand-selection decisions. Smaller or local advertisers with a limited budget can use OOH

advertising as their only medium, when used as a place-based medium to reach their specific audience.

7.3.2.2 The purpose of the OOH advertising media in the overall IMC plan

Marketing communication objectives can be set on three levels, namely: on the cognitive level, the affective level, as well as behavioural levels. They can also be used as guideline when selecting specific market communication elements to be included in an IMC plan (see 3.3.2). These levels are also applicable when establishing the specific purpose of OOH advertising in an overall IMC pan. The study revealed that OOH advertising is mostly employed to create and maintain brand awareness that is aimed at a broad market. Due to the wide variety in different locations and environments, it can also be employed to reach more specific segments and achieve marketing communication objectives on attitudinal and behavioural levels as well.

Some previous international research has confirmed the effectiveness of OOH advertising on the cognitive level (Bhargava *et al.*, 1994; Berneman & Kasparian, 2003; Donthu *et at.*, 1993; Turley & Shannon, 2000), on the attitudinal level (Eun & Kim, 2009; Veloutsou & O'Donnell, 2005), as well as to obtain behavioural response from consumers (Donthu & Bhargava, 1999; Taylor & Franke, 2003; Taylor *et al.*, 2006). Two studies have also reported on the South African consumers' generally positive attitudes towards OOH advertising (Du Plooy & Du Plessis, 2011; Nagel & Louw, 2004).

Thus, the specific purpose of OOH advertising in an overall IMC plan will depend on the marketing communication objectives to be achieved. Based on the findings of the study, Table 7.1 proposes several tactics to achieve different marketing communication objectives on these different levels via OOH advertising media. It also shows that for objectives on a cognitive level, OOH advertising is typically used as a support medium in an overall IMC plan. On the affective level, it can be used in a support role or lead role; while on the conative level, it often plays a leading role. Furthermore different OOH advertising media platforms can be combined

synergistically to achieve different communication objectives across the consumers' response hierarchy, when targeting different consumer segments, each at different stages in the decision-making process, in order to move them across from lower levels to higher levels such as positive brand associations and behavioural responses.

Table 7.1: OOH advertising media tactics to reach marketing communication objectives across the response hierarchy

Role of OOH advertising media	Levels of marketing communication objectives	Marketing communication objective	OOH advertising tactic
Support	**Cognitive**	Create instantaneous awareness for the launch of new brands	OOH advertising media that reach a mass market to create brand awareness, recognition and recall by providing a continuous, repetitive presence of the brand message 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week.
		Maintain top-of-the-mind awareness for existing brands	Employ a simple repetitive message or strong visual branding to remind consumers about the key features of the brand, such as the packaging or the logo.
		Inform prospective consumers about key product features	Convey brief factual information to a broad audience combined with direct response or sales promotion, to drive them to other media, such as a website where more detailed information can be provided or follow-up can be done.
Support/ Lead	**Affective**	Build or enhance the brand image	Use super-large and iconic OOH advertising media formats (such as large building or construction wraps, super signs or spectaculars, sky branding) at carefully selected locations to add importance and project an image of authority for the brand.
		Strengthen positive associations with the brand	Capitalise on the size of large premium OOH advertising media formats – to create a strong visual brand presence in selected areas used in the longer term.
		Improve the brand status or -image and offer a high prestige level	Use the size and impact of OOH advertising, to instil brand preference.
		Affect the feelings and evaluations of the advertised brand positively	Place the brand message in a desirable environment and relevant context. Do not use OOH advertising media types, or advertising in environments that are not complimentary to the brand image of the product being advertised.
Lead/only	**Conative**	Convince the target audience to consider the product or to purchase a specific brand	Target prospective shoppers at the outlets where the brands are actually sold, and select appropriate OOH advertising media formats such as street and retail furniture advertising in close proximity to where purchase decisions are likely to be made.
		Promote immediate response from the audience	Employ persuasive promotional advertising message on OOH media, offering an incentive that draws people's attention and entices them to react.
		Increase sales response	Combine OOH advertising at or close to the point-of-purchase, with below-the-line sales promotion activities at the specific distribution outlets.
		Convince the audience to take immediate action	Utilise a combination of OOH advertising and online or direct response media to obtain feedback, as a follow-up mechanism, such as a competition, promotions, toll-free numbers, CR Codes or website addresses

Source: The researcher

7.3.2.3 Co-ordination between the message strategy and an OOH advertising media plan

The interdependence and potential synergy between the message and the media to work together to create effective communication has been emphasised in the literature (see 3.3.3). In order to put this into practice, the planning of the message and the media strategy should happen simultaneously – when planning the overall or complete advertising campaign (Lane *et al*., 2011:665; Moriarty *et al*., 2012:333; Shimp, 2010:191). If this does not happen, media planners should be informed about the creative strategy before planning the media (Katz, 2010:42; Sissors & Baron 2010:285).

This is not always implemented in practice. The co-ordination and communication between the media specialists and the advertising agencies dealing with the message strategy was identified as a cause for concern in the current study. It seems that the unbundling of the media function can result in losing a unified vision of a clients' advertising strategy, by having too many separate teams from the advertising agency, the media agency, the OOH media specialists, and even the external professional market research companies working on different sections of an account.

This results is a silo approach, with little synergy between the message and media component of a plan. When separate agencies work on the media- and the message plans, this puts a burden on people to communicate properly. Communication between agencies is not always as good as when they are in one agency. Vertical integration and communication between all these role-players are crucial factors in making media unbundling work.

The reluctance of creative specialists in advertising agencies to design messages specifically for OOH advertising due to the lack of prestige and creative awards was another issue identified – and one which needs to be addressed. This is despite the creative potential of the medium, because of its extraordinary size, three-dimensional designs (Belch & Belch, 2012:454; Bernstein, 2005:114; Moriarty *et al*, 2012:366; Shimp, 2010:583), and increasing variety – with several new innovations and digital

options (Gambetti, 2010:37; Wilson & Till, 2008:59). It seems that the OOH advertising medium remains the Cinderella medium of the industry–in terms of the relative creative talent and recognition compared with the numerous prestigious creative awards in other media.

Although creative awards are highly prized by advertising agencies, the real success of any campaign should be measured against achieving the objectives of the advertisers. With OOH advertising media campaigns, the primary objective is often to support the theme of the leading media in an IMC plan. However, the study found that the ineffective conversion of the message primarily or originally designed for traditional advertising media to an OOH advertising message is also a contributing factor to the problem of ineffective OOH advertising messages. The implication is that if OOH advertising, which is supposed to support the lead medium, is not effective, the IMC plan would be ineffectual, and the advertisers would be wasting their money.

Therefore, the creative team must understand that the unique characteristics of the different OOH advertising platforms and environments, such as the dwelling time, the frame-of-mind of the target audience, the format, locations and specifications of the vehicles require different messages designs and appeals than do other media (see 3.3.3.1). Experienced media planners can help to overcome this lack of understanding, by working closely together with the creative team to maximise the creative execution of an OOH advertising design.

7.3.2.4   Guidelines for designing effective OOH advertising

The basic requirements for designing effective OOH advertising, as suggested in the previous studies (Bhargava *et al*., 1994; Donthu *et al*. 1993; Van Meurs & Aristoff, 2009; Wilson & Till, 2008) were confirmed in the findings of the current study. These requirements include the following:

- The "*less is more principle*": This is accomplished by focusing on the most important idea to be conveyed, by using short copy, and by converting complex or detailed above-the-line messages to concise but creative executions suitable for

OOH advertising;

- *Use of appropriate font size, type, and spacing:* so that the messages can easily be read from various viewing distances;

- *Instant brand identification:* by prominent placement of the logo or the product in the advertisements, so that they are clearly visible from a distance for a mobile audience;

- *The use of bright and contrasting colours:* to ensure that do not blend into the background.

Two additional requirements for effective OOH advertising messages not mentioned in the literature, were identified in the current study:

- The *specifications or characteristics of the media vehicles,* such as the size, type, format and number of OOH advertising media vehicles should also be considered. For example, it would be more successful to brand a whole media vehicle such as a minibus taxi or bus than just some part of it; and the impact of the message on larger boards in very busy or crowded environment, such as in busy townships, is greater than on smaller boards. Another option is to capitalise on the mobile nature of outdoor advertising, by telling a story, or by placing different messages on a number of boards in a row. This implies that integrated OOH advertising media campaigns present some unique creative opportunities for advertisers in the South Africa.

- *Vernacular advertising messages or localised message executions* can be used to target specific ethnic or language groups in the multi-cultural South Africa. The lack of a cultural sensitivity for a South African audience and the westernised approach by advertising agencies when creating outdoor advertising messages for specific ethnic groups in South Africa was also raised in a study by Nagel and Louw (2004).

It can therefore be suggested that OOH advertising might have to be tailored when using it on a local level – aimed at specific ethnic groups or local markets by using the appropriate visuals, symbols, and language, in order to be truly effective.

7.3.3 PHASE 2: THE PLANNING OF OOH ADVERTISING MEDIA

This phase entails defining the OOH audience; establishing of the media objectives and design of strategies; and selection of the media to be used in these strategies.

7.3.3.1 <u>Defining the OOH audience</u>

The findings revealed that when defining the audience for an OOH advertising media plan, three central but interrelated issues should be considered: Firstly, the extent of market coverage required; secondly, the audience segmentation criteria and research used in the process; and thirdly, the OOH advertising media environment, in which the target audience will be exposed to the message.

- *The extent of market coverage*

With regard to the extent of market coverage, it was found that OOH advertising media can be used to obtain broad coverage, but also in a far more targeted way to reach more specific audience profiles in shopping and leisure venues and a variety of other places. These places include schools, office parks, public health clinics, medical clinics, business lounges at airports, shopping centres with specific stores, such as travel agencies or certain luxury upmarket clothes and accessory stores, even at beaches, sport stadiums or live events and shows.

This continuum from wide to narrow or selected coverage is in line with the model for the classification of the OOH advertising media in South Africa (see 4.3). Some platforms, such as outdoor advertising and mass-transit advertising are more effective for broader coverage, while others such as street and retail furniture advertising and alternative OOH advertising are better suited for targeting narrow or specific audience profiles.

- *Audience segmentation and targeting*

Understanding and research of the target audience beyond the traditional demographic and geographic descriptors should include psycho-graphical and

behaviouristic considerations (Moriarty *et al*., 2012:153, Shimp *et al*., 2010:322). The specialists who took part in the study applied geo-demographical criteria when targeting a broad market; but they used psychographic and behavioural segmentation criteria when targeting specific audience profiles.

These specialists applied psycho-graphical and behaviouristic criteria in the context of OOH media targeting. They used consumer-insight-research on the lifestyle, activities, frame-of-mind, mobility patterns, media exposure and the consumption of consumers in different OOH environments. This research is then used to make decisions when targeting very specific audience profiles to facilitate the delivery of messages to the audiences most likely to be receptive to the specific message. This means that when matching OOH advertising media vehicles with a target audience, it is no longer enough to reach the appropriate audience (using demographic information) at the right place people (using geographic information) and at minimum cost. But it also requires that media should be planned, so that messages are delivered in the best environment and with the maximum impact.

- *The OOH advertising media environment*

The contemporary view of media planning is that the media should not be treated as merely the passive vehicle through which consumers are exposed to advertisements – simply because they are viewing or reading media content. The actual contact or engagement with the consumer is formed by both the advertising and the surrounding media context (Belch & Belch, 2012:609; Lane *et al*., 2011:213; Shimp, 2010:16).

OOH advertising is not supported by programme or editorial content; but research has indicated that the effectiveness of OOH advertising is influenced by the surrounding environment and the context in which the message is delivered (Du Plooy & Du Plessis, 2011; Eun & Kim, 2009; Turley & Shannon, 2000; Veloutsou & O'Donnell, 2005; Wilson & Till, 2008).

Therefore, media planners should consider the following OOH media environmental issues:

- *Compatibly of OOH advertising media format and the product type or brand image.* For example, external bus or minibus taxi advertising might not be ideal for conveying an appetising image of food advertisements, or to promote alcohol or reputable financial brands. The architectural design and type of the OOH advertising media formats can also impact the image portrayed. For example, a luxury prestigious brand can benefit from advertising on well-designed structures or high-quality digital media in suitable surroundings.

- *The frame-of-mind of the audience in the specific environment* will influence their receptiveness. Locations outside the home introduce the element of mood into of the audience. The audience can be tired, irritable, preoccupied – or conversely, particularly alert and susceptible for relevant messages, during certain times of the day. For example, shoppers browsing in the malls are likely to react to persuasive messages advertising fashion brands. A captive market, such as a minibus taxi commuter sitting inside, with not much else to do, would probably be receptive to valuable information on relevant products advertised on large plasma screen televisions inside taxis, with blue-tooth technology to broadcast tailor-made programmes. Or a driver stuck on the N1 highway facing Johannesburg traffic on their way to work, might not pay attention to a message for a new movie released or alcohol brands. However, while on their way back and closer to home – when seeing an advertisement for an appetising hamburger close to a fast-food drive-through, this might get the attention of the now-hungry driver.

- *The surrounding clutter and competing stimuli in the environment.* This can be an overcrowded entrance to a shopping mall, competing outdoor advertising boards in a township environment, or too many passengers converging at certain locations in an airport. In a busy township environment, using large formats, such as a large construction wrap close to shopping areas with vernacular messages would be likely to have more impact than several smaller campaign outdoor advertisements all over the areas, which would get lost in the hustle and bustle. Placing a message at airports where people are standing in a queue to board the plane would not be noticed. However, placing it in the business lounges or close to duty-free shops when targeting international travellers or high-income

businessmen would render it more likely to get their attention.

- *The specific OOH environment where the message is delivered would determine the extent to which consumers are willing or able to engage with the media.* The difference between a message being delivered to the fast-moving traffic on the highway and to a captive commuter market sitting inside a minibus taxi for a few hours every day would affect the likelihood of the messages being noticed and processed. The relatively short length of exposure time to OOH advertising always requires an efficient and concise creative approach. However, some indoor environments with longer dwelling times, such as at retail, entertainment or transit waiting areas, would allow advertisers to use more copy and expect more engagement than the road side environment with typically very brief exposure to the message. A captive audience is likely to process the advertisement more thoughtfully and thoroughly, while a passer-by may just have time to see the brand name only.

After the target audience has been defined, the next step is to determine the specific media objectives, and to design OOH advertising strategies to achieve these objectives, as cost-effectively as possible.

7.3.3.2   <u>Media objectives and OOH advertising media integration strategies</u>

Designing OOH advertising media strategies requires a trade-off between different media objectives: reach, frequency, budget and impact achieved, just like the planning of any other media (Koekemoer, 2005:204; Shimp, 2010:340).

Four unique OOH advertising media integration strategies not to be found in existing academic literature could be identified in this study, as illustrated in Figure 7.2. These strategies can be classified based on the relative impact and the extent of coverage delivered. The "High-impact strategy" and the "Geographical dominance strategy" can both be used to deliver high impact, but less market coverage. The "Extended-coverage strategy" and the "Brand-maintenance strategy" will result in relatively wider market coverage, but would offer less impact than the other two strategies.

Figure 7 2: Major OOH advertising media integration strategies
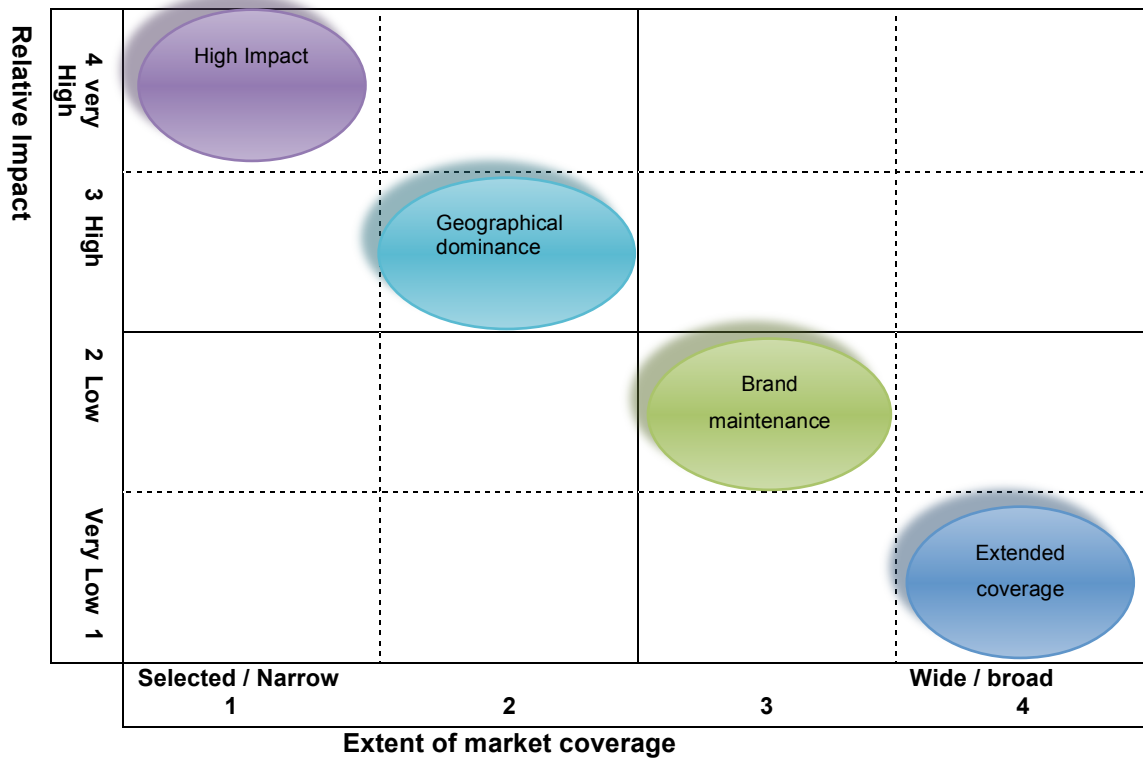
Source: The researcher

- **High-impact strategy**

For this strategy, only a very limited number of carefully selected high-impact OOH advertising media vehicles located in one area are used. For instance, advertising on only one or two super-large, iconic outdoor advertising boards or massive spectacular super-signs at the best location can be employed for effective impact. The "high-impact strategy" will result in more than just basic brand awareness. It can maximise the impact for the brand, by strengthening the positive brand associations on a higher level than just recall of the brand name and recognition of the brand identity.

Using high-impact media formats alone will not necessarily achieve the desired result. These should be supported by an effective creative strategy – with a strong unique creative concept and visual brand icon to convey the brand power and enhance the image of the brand being advertised.

An example of how advertisers have effectively implemented a "high-Impact strategy"

to promote the iconic status of a brand and to sustain the positioning is the Johnny Walker advertisement that wraps the whole Southern Life Centre in Johannesburg with their Striding-Man icon. This was the largest building wrap with a "Striding man" in the world, involving more than 35-floors, and covering more than $11000m^2$ advertising space. This was visible from all angles; and it has become a giant landmark in the city of Johannesburg; and it has also been referred to as the "Johnny Walker building".

This striding man is a symbol of progress; and it plays a significant role in the brand positioning strategy of the Johnny Walker brand, as one of the world's leading brands. The simple, but powerful symbol, used for the creative message on the building wrap and the status conveyed by the media strategy were used synergistically to enhance the brand image.

- **Geographical-dominance strategy**

This strategy offers relatively less impact than the "high-impact strategy", but relatively more coverage. The "geographical-dominance strategy" is used to create strong visual dominance and brand presence in small selected geographical areas referred to as zones. This is achieved by combining a wide variety and number of OOH media platforms and formats, located in prominent visible positions within these zones, such as smaller campaign outdoor advertising boards, street and retail furniture advertising media, transit advertising media and ambient OOH advertising media.

This concentration of brand contact points is then placed in specific zones, in order to form integrated touch points with the brand within these environments. These zones can be an entire street, selected leisure, retail or transit areas – where the target audience congregates. Combining this strategy with some sales promotion activities, such as the handing out of samples, road shows, live events in these zones will lead to an amplified visual brand presence that enhances the personal brand experience for the audience. This positive interactive or personal experience can stimulate stronger emotional connection with the brand, if the audience participates and enjoys the advertised activities.

This strategy was applied by Lipton's iced tea during summertime to promote their various new flavours in the product range: Lemon, Green Tea, Peach and Red in carefully selected areas, and to maintain their brand promise of cool light refreshment for long hot days. Lipton used this strategy to create a strong brand presence and visibility and to provide additional contact points with the brand right there where the purchase decision takes place and at the point-of-purchase. For this campaign, a number of smaller OOH advertising media formats and sales promotion activities were combined in specific zones where targeted consumers were likely to consider refreshments, whilst in an outdoor environment – in this case beaches, golf courses and sport events.

The combination of a wide variety of smaller OOH advertising formats (advertising on life-saver booths, golf-carts, volley-ball courts, dustbins and street-pole advertisements) and promotion-activities (sporting events and competitions, promoters wearing bright yellow Lipton T-shirts handing out samples) in concentrated zones had the effect that consumers associated the yellow brand being present with summertime, refreshment and fun.

- **Brand maintenance strategy**

The "brand maintenance strategy", as the name suggests is used to maintain awareness in a number of existing or established markets in the longer term. This is done by advertising on a large number of OOH advertising media vehicles distributed across the existing market area.

Large national advertisers, such as Vodacom, Standard bank, and South African Breweries often use this type of strategy. They advertise at specific prime locations on the highways or main arterial routes for long-term brand awareness campaigns used primarily to provide continuous reminders to their target audience.

- **Extended-coverage strategies**

This strategy is used when the main objective is to obtain wider coverage for expansion of the current market to a wider market. This can be achieved by advertising on a large number of OOH advertising media vehicles located at positions that can reach a wide mass market, such as on main arterial roads and highways, or mobile-transit advertising media across a wide area. The reach and coverage can be extended even further, by rotating the message to new market areas and locations; for example, by using mobile-transit media or putting advertisements in one area, and then moving them to the next location a few months later.

At the crux of OOH advertising media strategy is the selection of the best media or combination of media to obtain the media objectives. This will be discussed in the following section.

7.3.3.3 Evaluation and selection of the OOH advertising media mix

When designing the media mix, it is important to realise that OOH advertising media is no longer a homogeneous sector. The OOH advertising media have grown from mainly being outdoor advertising in the past, to now including a wide variety of options (Duncan, 2005:372; Gambetti, 2010:35; Lane *et al*., 2011:359, Moriarty *et al*., 2012:364; O'Guinn *et al*. 2000:507; Shimp, 2003:356; Sissors & Baron, 2010:441; Wells *et al*., 2006:227; Yeshin, 2006:328).

This wide variety of OOH advertising media types in South African can be classified in four major platforms, each comprising a variety of formats and vehicles in different environments (see 4.3). These platforms include outdoor advertising media aimed at fast-moving vehicular traffic in roadside environments; transit advertising media aimed at different commuters from minibus taxis, buses and trains, to high-income frequent flyers or business-travellers on the Gautrain; street and retail furniture advertising to target pedestrians and shoppers in urban or shopping areas; and alternative OOH advertising media, aimed at specific audiences in various places or venues, such as at doctors' rooms, public health clinics, banks, golf courses, petrol

stations and restaurants (see 4.2.1).

The results of the study revealed that when evaluating these platforms to be included in an OOH advertising media mix, qualitative criteria and qualitative media values should be considered. This is line with literature proposing that qualitative criteria, as well as qualitative media values, have now become essential considerations in contemporary media planning, and that the framework for making media selection is changing along with the growth of new media options (Koekemoer, 2005:208; Lane *et al.*, 2011:226; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:225).

Hence, it is no longer good enough to select and plan OOH advertising media to deliver the message to the targeted audience, the right number of times, at minimum cost based on qualitative media selection criteria such as the target audience, frequency, reach and cost. Media planners should also consider the impact, image and flexibility of the media options to ensure that the message is delivered in exactly the right OOH environment and at the right time, when the audience is most likely to be receptive to message.

The over-reliance on qualitative media values, such as the perceived image, impact and creative flexibility, when selecting the media mix can, however, might be risky and might sometimes simply be the idiosyncratic perceptions of the media planners. Therefore, qualitative media values must not replace quantitative criteria; but they should be used in combination with quantitative data.

Table 7.2 summarises the key strengths and limitations of the four major OOH advertising media platforms, based on quantitative criteria and qualitative values. This is a general comparison, and the different media formats and vehicles within each platform have to be analysed for each situation.

Nevertheless, the comparison of strengths and limitations can be used as a guideline to evaluate OOH advertising media platforms when planning an integrated OOH advertising media campaign within the South African context.

Table 7 .2:   A comparison of OOH advertising media platforms in South Africa based on quantitative- and qualitative media selection criteria

	OUTDOOR ADVERTISING MEDIA		
	Formats	**Outdoor advertising on constructions or buildings** • Advertising on towers, bridges and rooftops • Advertising painted on walls/murals • Advertising on building/ construction wraps	**Free-standing outdoor advertising** • Super signs • Spectaculars • Gantries • Campaign outdoor advertising
		Strengths	**Limitations**
Quantitative	**Target Audience**	• **Wide coverage of vehicular traffic** when using large outdoor advertising formats on major highways and entrance to major cities • **Geographical targeting** of local markets when using campaign outdoor advertising vehicles at specific locations	• **Not effective for reaching other OOH audiences** such as commuters, pedestrians or shoppers • **Limited availability of large formats** in most up-market suburban areas, townships and rural areas
	Frequency and Reach	• **High levels of frequency and wide market coverage** when using outdoor advertising located on busy highways used by workers commuting daily	• **Potential wasted coverage** to people not part of the target audience
	Cost	• **Cost effective** due to the large number of people reached and high frequency obtained • **Can negotiate discount** when being bought in large national campaigns or longer term contracts	• **Costly when using super-large outdoor advertising formats** or in highly sought after locations • **Expensive production cost** for large outdoor advertising formats especially building wraps and customised creative
Qualitative	**Impact**	• **Deliver strong visual impact for** brands when using super-large outdoor advertising formats • **Offer prominent brand presence** in selected locations when concentrated in one area	• **Environmental- and competitive clutter in the surrounding environment** will reduce the impact • **Brief exposure to message** doesn't guarantee recall and processing of message • **Ineffective creative designs** not suitable for a fast moving vehicular traffic will decrease the impact • **Quick message wear-out** due to frequent exposure
	Image	• **Increase brand stature** when using prominent and extra large outdoor advertising formats	• **Low quality, outdoor structures** that are not well maintained can harm the image of prestigious brands and degrade the overall appearance of a location, a building or the environment in general. • **Environmental pollution** if not properly managed can cause negative attitudes from the public
	Flexibility	• **Large variety** of outdoor advertising available offers advertisers flexibility • **Creative and customised executions** possible due to large size, variety of types and new technology	• **Static nature** of printed outdoor advertising limits the creative options

		Strengths	Limitations

	TRANSIT ADVERTISING MEDIA		
	Formats	**Moving transit media** • Trains • Buses • Minibus taxis • Trains • Cars • Trailers • Trucks • Cars	**Static transit media** • Advertising inside airports • Advertising at railway stations • Advertising at taxi ranks • Advertising bus shelters / terminals
		Strengths	**Limitations**
Quantitative	**Target Audience**	• **Reach different commuter profiles** when using different transit media advertising such as minibus taxis, airport advertising and the Gautrain • **Available audience data of pre-determined and scheduled routes** can be used to match vehicles with the targeted audience • **Up-market commuters can be targeted** by advertising on suitable transit media such as the Gautrain, up-market taxis, branded private cars, and airport media	• **Increasing non exclusivity** of airport media due to cheaper airlines • **Lack of reliable audience figures** on up-market transit media such at the Gautrain
	Frequency and Reach	• **Exceptionally high levels of frequency** and targeted reach due to the mobile and repetitive nature of the medium • **Captive audience** is exposed to a brand message several times during a week.	• **Message wear-out** can occur due to repetitive exposure • **Limited availability** in certain areas
	Cost	• **Low unit cost** on mass public transport and minibus taxis	• **High-priced up-market transit media** especially airport media
Qualitative	**Impact**	• **Captive audience of indoor transit media** result in longer exposure and higher recall of message • **Strong brand presence** in selected area(s) by using a combination of mobile and static transit advertising media vehicles	• **Mood of the audience in crowded environment or hurried commuters** not conducive for information processing • **Competitive stimuli** from other media and personal activities can distract the audience • **Long or complex messages not effective** on mobile transit media
	Image	• **Positive image associated with up-market transit advertising media** can enhance a brands' positioning and status • **Reputable OOH transit media companies** mostly address the problem of reckless drivers and unkempt vehicles	• **Might not be not suitable for prestigious brands or some food product** due the image associated with some mass transit advertising media • **Requires inspection and maintenance** because transit media and minibus taxi advertising are largely exposed to natural elements
	Flexibility	• **Large variety of transit advertising media types** including mass- and up-market, mobile- and static-, internal- and external transit media offers flexible and effective solutions	• **Lack of creative ability and high-impact visuals** due to the smaller size of transport media

	STREET AND RETAIL FURNITURE ADVERTISING MEDIA		
	Format	**Street-furniture advertising media** • Advertising on rubbish bins, telephone booths, bus shelters, benches kiosks • Street poles • City lights • Suburban signs • Litter bins • Benches	**Retail furniture advertising media** • Advertising on escalators • Advertising on or in lifts • Parkade billboards • Hanging banners • Parking lot wheel stopper • Advertising on shopping trolleys • Advertising in restrooms in malls
		Strengths	**Limitations**
Quantitative	**Target Audience**	• **Effective reach close to and at point-of-purchase** of shoppers, decision makers, and pedestrians • **Can target up-market suburban areas and specific local markets** where other OOH advertising options are not available	• **Limited number of pedestrians in up-market suburban areas** in South Africa • **Not as effective for reaching other OOH audiences** such as fast moving vehicular traffic
	Frequency and Reach	• **Rotation** can increase the reach and coverage of a campaign • **Variety of formats** can be employed to create additional touch points for a brand in the environment	• **Limited impact when used for wide coverage** of large market areas
	Cost	• **Economical options available** to use for directional messages and to maximise market coverage when being rotated to other areas	• **Can be expensive** in up-market malls, some up-market suburban areas and prime locations
Qualitative	**Impact**	• **Noticeable brand presence in selected zones** when using a concentration • **Longer potential dwelling time in retail and leisure environment** offers opportunity for longer engagement and interaction	• **Relative lower impact** than larger formats • **Competing stimuli** in the environment can reduce the impact
	Image	• **Large quantities and effective creative message** can enhance the image	• **Associated image not suitable for all type and prestigious brands** such as advertising on street bins or inside bathrooms
	Flexibility	• **Cost effective and creative executions** due to the variety of formats in environments close to where consumers live, work, shop and relax	• **Potential vandalism and graffiti** in some areas mean that it requires continuous inspection and quality control

ALTERNATIVE OOH ADVERTISING MEDIA			
Formats		**Digital OOH advertising media advertising** • Digital media • Electronic OOH advertising media	**Ambient OOH advertising media** • Place-based ambient OOH media • Mobile ambient OOH media • Messages displayed on goods
		Strengths	**Limitations**
Quantitative	**Target Audience**	• **Offer precise targeting abilities** so that it can be directed at very specific groups of individuals • **Longer dwelling times** in environments allow more engagement • **Customisation of content of digital media** to target the specific audience	• **Ineffective for a passive audience or in busy crowded environments** • **Lack of measurement tools** for audience size and effectiveness
	Frequency and Reach	• **Can reach specific segments** in unconventional places where other media cannot be used • **Offer unique coverage** in environments where other media is not available or allowed	• **Not suitable for general and wide coverage of the market** • **Limited availability of digital media** and mostly for indoor use
	Cost	• **Cost efficiency** due to tactical application and shorter campaigns • **Cheaper production cost** and change of messages than outdoor advertising	• **Relatively expensive cost of digital media** in South Africa • **Potential vandalism** of external digital outdoor advertising in South Africa • **Additional cost** if using specialist agencies for digital/ambient advertising
Qualitative	**Impact**	• **Customised and creative executions** can increase create interest and excitement • **Higher levels of engagement** and involvement due to dynamic, interactive and interesting content can increase attention and the emotional impact	• **Not as effective in outdoor environments with limited dwelling time** • **Ineffective if the creative concept** or execution is poor so that it is not able to break through the clutter
	Image	• **Can build or strengthen the positive associations with a brand** when placed in areas and context relevant to the product or service being offered	• **Result of is the creative concept not guaranteed** and might require experts is in the field • **Ambient communication not suitable for conservative and traditional brands** • **Ambient advertising media might be seen as intrusive** rather than providing useful information
	Flexibility	• **Allow very targeted opportunities** by delivering the message in specific places and venues • **Allow creative content and interaction with the audience**	• **Digital OOH advertising media is still limited in South Africa** with varying quality and availability • **Technology not yet optimal developed** for digital OOH media in South Africa
Source: The researcher			

7.3.3.4 <u>Scheduling and budgeting</u>

A number factors influence the optimum length and time period of an OOH advertising media campaign; specifically, the particular aim and objectives of the campaign, the planned media schedule, the impact of the creative message over the campaign period, the available budget, cost-efficiency, the timing of other media, or the promotional elements of the campaign.

The optimal length or duration of OOH advertising media campaigns varies; and it can be between 6 weeks to one year or longer. Tactical short-term campaigns, such as the introduction of new brands, the drive of seasonal sales, or the advertising of promotional offerings are typically shorter; while the continuous brand building, maintenance and positioning require longer periods of advertising.

The time of the actual purchasing decision or the occasions is important, since the closer an advertising message appears to the point of purchase, the more likely consumers would be to recall the message, and hopefully to be influenced by it. Retail furniture advertising media are particularly effective in this regard, as they are often positioned in close proximity to the point of purchase. The effectiveness of putting OOH advertising in close proximity to a store or point-of-purchase to cause increasing traffic to stores, as well the sales of the products advertised, was also confirmed in a study by Taylor *et al*. (2006:21).

7.3.4 PHASE 3: EVALUATION AND RESEARCH OF OOH ADVERTISING MEDIA

Information is the basic ingredient from which all advertising media planning decisions are made. One part of this information comes from formal research. Formal research includes developmental research to guide decisions during the planning of a campaign (Moriarty *et al*., 2012:171; Sissors & Baron; 2010:410) and post-testing research is used to evaluate the success of the campaign after it has been implemented (Belch & Belch, 2001:610; Lane *et al.*, 2011:668).

The participants in the study revealed that another part of the information comes from personal and professional experience and the insight of those responsible for planning advertising media campaigns. When designing any plan, these two sources interact in complex ways.

7.3.4.1 Developmental research

A variety of information sources can be used when planning an OOH advertising media campaign to inform decision-making. These sources include OOH media companies; professional industry associations (SARF, local and international OOH media industry associations); secondary research suppliers of geo-demographical data (such as the Knowledge Factory and Stats SA); professional market research companies and the research departments of advertisers or their agencies.

The problem is seldom too little, but rather too much, information. All the relevant information must, therefore, be critically analysed, and presented in a user-friendly format. Often this is in the form of software media planning tools. However, media planning decisions should not be made, based purely on the numbers generated by the available software or information supplied by all these sources. These decisions require a critical approach and experience from media planners to develop insight based on this research.

Accurately measuring the audience of OOH advertising is a complex matter, due to the mobility of the audience (Moriarty *et al*., 2012:594) and the wide variety of types in different environments (Bloom, 2000:397; Belch & Belch, 2012:397). However, some basic principles to assess the potential impact of the exposure to an outdoor advertising board can be suggested.

Merely counting the traffic passing an outdoor advertising board is not sufficient to define an audience contact; and it does not provide any realistic indication of visibility or impact (Moriarty, *et al*, 2012:594). There has to be an opportunity to see it (OTS); better still, a likelihood of seeing it (LTS). Some outdoor advertising boards are well

positioned for visibility, others less so. Hence, accurate OOH advertising audience measurement should also encompass these aspects too.

Table 7.3 summarises the basic factors that should be taken into account when determining the likelihood of seeing a free-standing outdoor advertising board in the roadside environment, based on the findings of the study.

Table 7.3: Factors to consider when determining the likelihood of seeing free-standing outdoor advertising boards

	OOH environment	External Roadside environment
	Factors	**Potential impact**
Physical characteristics	Relative size and format	Large formats are more visible than smaller formats.
	Extent of illumination	If there is no illumination, the advertisement on the board can only be seen during the hours of daylight.
	The viewing angle or orientation of the board to the road	Boards facing the road are easier to see than those where the passers-by would have to deflect their eyes from straight ahead, in order to see the panel.
	The competitive environment and visual stimuli	Distraction by other features in the visual field, such as trees, buildings and other advertising reduces the impact.
Interaction with the audience	Potential viewing time, based on the traffic flow or congestion	Boards located on roads with slow-moving traffic offer longer exposure than fast-moving traffic.
	The general condition and design of the structure	High-quality architectural designed structures are visually appealing and can increase the overall impact or image conveyed

Source: The researcher

Ideally, a standardised OOH advertising audience measurement system, incorporating all these factors, should be used by all the role-players in the industry. In South Africa, there is still no objective and standard method implemented or accepted by all, despite several attempts to find a solution. Currently, different industry stakeholders, such as large OOH media companies and media agencies, have their own different approaches and models to measure OOH audiences and -impact. This problematic because without accurate and standardised audience data, the achievement of reach and frequency objectives cannot be verified or compared with above the-line-media audience ratings. The ROI (return on investment) on OOH advertising media campaigns cannot be assessed and large advertisers are not likely to spend more on this medium if accountable and measurability are not refined.

7.3.4.2 <u>Post-testing research</u>

Different options can be used to determine whether OOH advertising media campaigns have been successfully implemented to reach the stated objectives. This includes research studies by professional market research companies, typically commissioned by large advertisers to measure the effectiveness of their specific campaigns. Another option is to combine direct-response marketing mechanisms, such as toll-free numbers, web addresses, competitions or promotions with OOH advertising media, in order to measure the behavioural response obtained.

Irrespective of which options are used, the effectiveness should be measured against the specific marketing communication objectives set. Therefore, if the objective to be achieved was on a cognitive level, measurement, such as noting of the advertisement, recall of the brand name, recognition of the packaging, increase in awareness, or the level of media exposure, should be used. If the objective was on an affective level, measurements such as change in consumers' perceptions, brand preference and intent to buy should be used.

Whereas behaviour-based measures should be used if the object was to obtain responses, such as the search for more information online, the trial of a new product, or contacting the company by calling a toll-free number, visiting their store or website, or increased sales (Belch & Belch, 2012:157; Moriarty *et al*., 2012:581, O'Guinn *et al.,* 2000: 225; Shimp, 2010:288).

7.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Any study has inherent and specific imitations; and for this study the following limitations were identified:
- There is only a very limited amount of academic literature available on the planning of the whole range of OOH advertising media types – and even more so in the South African context. This has resulted in the use of mostly international research studies and examples from industry sources and publications. It can be

argued that international studies do not apply to the South African context, and that non-academic sources are not the same as scientific evidence. This further necessitates the need for information on the planning and integration of OOH advertising media platforms from the South African perspective.

- Some of the respondents in the sample were cautious to demonstrate or openly discuss their approaches to measuring OOH advertising media audiences, due to the confidentiality of such information. The approaches, tools and formulas applied also varied greatly. The findings reporting on the measuring of OOH advertising media audiences is thus not necessarily a true reflection of all the respondents' practices.

- The sample for this study only included OOH advertising media specialists, and no other role-players involved in the planning and implementation of an OOH media campaign as part of an overall IMC were interviewed. The problems identified in terms of lack of vertical integration and communication between the role-players are thus only from one perspective; and such findings might thus portray a biased view. Other role- players, such as OOH media companies, advertising agencies and advertisers' views are also required for a true picture.

- The responsibility of the specialists included in the study is limited to planning OOH advertising media strategies for clients and agencies. Their task does not include other important IMC considerations, such as planning the overall brand or IMC strategy, designing the advertising message, or the planning of any of the other IMC elements and media. Therefore, the perspective of other role-players, such as the brand manager, marketing manager, media- and advertising agencies are also required to explore these central marketing and IMC issues that influence the effectiveness of OOH advertising as a branding tool.

7.5   IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has a number of implications for practitioners, as well as for academics.

7.5.1   IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

- *Media planning and integration guidance*

  It is envisaged that this framework for OOH advertising media planning and integration can be used as guideline by media- and advertising agencies when planning OOH advertising media and message strategies as part of a larger campaign. It can also be used by advertisers when considering OOH advertising media as support, lead or only as media.

- *Challenges presented to OOH advertising media specialists*

  The specialists do not always apply media-neutral planning when considering other platforms, such as transit media, street and retail furniture advertising media and alternative OOH advertising media. Traditional outdoor advertising often seems to be the most obvious or preferred choice. This means that their clients will continue to rely mostly on outdoor advertising media, despite the growing number of alternative options in the OOH advertising media landscape in South Africa. Another implication is that OOH media companies not dealing in outdoor advertising might lose confidence in these OOH media specialist agencies, and approach advertisers directly to offer them alternative media platforms.

- *Challenges presented to the OOH advertising media industry*

  Two of the problems identified, namely ineffectual creative OOH advertising message designs and the lack of objective research and audience measurement, constitute a major reason for concern. The relative share spent on OOH advertising media will not grow if advertisers perceive that messages delivered via this medium are not effective; and these messages will not be noticed, accepted or remembered by their target audience, even more so if they cannot measure their return on investment.

7.5.2 ACADEMIC IMPLICATIONS

- *Contributing to a more complete understanding of the whole range of OOH advertising media platforms for South Africa*

  The study has categorised OOH advertising media types in four major platforms and presented the similarities, as well as the unique characteristics of each platform.

- *Providing an IMC planning approach to OOH advertising media*

  The relevant theory on the OOH advertising media is inadequate and highly fragmented. This study has followed an IMC perspective, by considering the alignment of the OOH advertising media campaign with the overall IMC plan, as well as the integration between different OOH advertising media platforms. It also propose how the key IMC principles can be applied in this context

- *Presenting unique OOH advertising media integration strategies*

  No academic literature on integration strategies employed to plan the whole range of OOH advertising media platforms could be found. In this study, four unique alternative OOH advertising media integration strategies, depending on the most important media objectives to be achieved could be identified, namely: the "High-impact strategy", the "Geographical dominance strategy", the "Extended-coverage strategy", and the "Brand maintenance strategy". These strategies were presented on a matrix and illustrated by South African examples.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND FINAL CONCLUSION

7.6.1 Recommendations for future research

Given the nature, planning and integration of OOH advertising media, as presented in this study, the researcher believes that future research in the following areas would contribute to the understanding and application of OOH advertising media planning and integration:

- This study has explored OOH advertising media planning and integration in an overall IMC plan from the perspective of media specialists in the OOH media

industry. However, OOH advertising media planning and integration constitute a complex decision-making process influenced by a number of other role-players, such as advertisers, advertising agencies, creative specialists and OOH media companies. A worthy future research agenda would therefore be to consider all these role-players' perspectives on the value and limitations of OOH advertising media platforms in an IMC plan, and especially the potential barriers to integration on a vertical level.

- The study has explored OOH advertising media from a media planning perspective. However, it would be valuable to launch an empirical study from consumers' perspective – and in particular, their perceptions on the qualitative media values of OOH advertising media platforms, the possible influence when combining OOH media platforms and formats. The OOH media environmental issues identified in the current study from a consumers' perspective is another topic for future research, specifically: the OOH advertising media format and brand compatibly; the OOH advertising media and the mind-set of the audience; the surrounding clutter and competing stimuli in the environment; and the environment in which the advertising message is delivered.

- The focus of this study has been on the major OOH advertising media platforms, in particular outdoor advertising, street and retail furniture advertising, transit advertising media and alternative OOH advertising media. However, other IMC elements, such as sales promotion, cinema advertising, and product placements were also classified as part of this class by some OOH media industry associations and academic sources. Sales promotion was also indicated as a very effective combination with OOH advertising media close to the point of purchase in this study. Therefore, these elements also deserve some further exploration.

- Implemented OOH advertising media campaigns of South African advertisers were not analysed to verify the findings of this study. These planning documents are often confidential, due to the strategic information contained in them. It could be valuable to analyse some of the actual OOH media campaigns implemented in South Africa. This, of course, requires collaboration with the industry to obtain access to advertising campaign documents, or to entries of leading advertising and media awards.

- The study has had a broad focus in terms of how OOH advertising media are

applied across industry sectors, product and service type, and market segments. A worthwhile future research agenda would therefore be to investigate the difference between sectors: for example, financial companies, retail companies, the telecommunications industry, or small local businesses. The effectiveness and application for different product types, such as high versus low involvement products; luxury high-end brand versus convenience products; services versus tangible goods, as well as the effectiveness of different OOH advertising media formats; and the vernacular for different market segments and ethnic groups should also be explored.

7.6.2 Conclusion

The study has explored the planning and integration of OOH advertising media on two levels. Firstly, through an investigation of the literature; and secondly, through an exploratory qualitative phase to explore how OOH advertising media are planned and integrated by specialists in media agencies in South Africa. This has resulted in a number of key findings, and culminated in the design of a detailed planning and integration framework for OOH advertising media.

In conclusion, it is recommended that the planning of OOH advertising media should be done by specialists who understand the requirements of co-ordination and integration on several levels. These are firstly, the alignment between the OOH advertising campaign and the overall IMC plan objectives; secondly, the co-ordination between the message strategy and an OOH advertising media plan; and thirdly, the integration between different platforms and formats used in the OOH advertising media mix.

To optimally achieve integration on all these different levels requires vertical integration and communication between all the role-players involved: the advertisers, the advertising agency, the media agency and the OOH media specialists. Effective integrated OOH advertising media campaigns can no longer be treated as mere add-ons; they should be part of the planning right from the start.