

# Ebony+Ivory eyes East Africa

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Ebony+Ivory Integrated Advertising Agency, a strategic brand reputation consultancy, aims to enter the burgeoning East Africa market for growth. In an interview with Business Day, MD Nombini Mehlomakulu reveals the company's growth strategy and objectives for 2024.



Nombini Mehlomakulu, MD at Ebony+Ivory

The agency, with a 54-year track record, has historically grown organically, expanding its Johannesburg office and opening a Cape Town branch in response to client demands. Engaging with clients seeking continental expansion, Ebony+Ivory plans to establish a thriving office in East Africa by the end of the 2024/25 financial year, emphasising a strategy rooted in 'growing and developing with our clients'.

To adapt to changing client needs, the agency has invested in digital and social media company Oryx+Crake. The company is exploring additional strategic partnerships through acquisitions or collaborations.

As a medium-sized agency servicing notable clients like Brand South Africa, VW Financial Services and PwC, Ebony+Ivory plans to increase its market share by opening a new office on the continent and exploring expansion opportunities through acquisitions or strategic partnerships.

The industry faces challenges such as shrinking budgets, leading to agency closures and consolidations. Ebony+Ivory aims to address this by fostering a culture that recognises the fundamental role of marketing and communication in business survival.

Quantifying the revenue for marketing and communications consulting agencies is challenging, but Ebony+Ivory has shown consistent year-on-year growth of 25% since 2020. The agency attributes this success to client trust, a well-aligned service offering and a deep understanding of client requirements.

Reflecting on notable campaigns, Mehlomakulu highlights the Sasria brand campaign, which effectively communicated the specialist risk insurance services offered by Sasria, particularly during the July 2021 unrest in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. Learning from each campaign, Ebony+Ivory emphasises the importance of evolving and staying efficient in marketing and communication practices.

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