

THE HOUSE SIGN

**The House Sign
Advertisement Design:
Claims and Specifications**

Licensee: 'Dokun Omojola

FGN/RN:5564

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*Patents and Designs Decree 1970
(1970 No. 60)*

FGN/RN:5564
Licensee: Dokun Omojola
Lagos, Nigeria

**The Commercial Law Department
Federal Ministry of Commerce
Abuja, Nigeria
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LICENSEE'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I express profound gratitude to God for empowering my mind to come out with the House Sign Outdoor Advertisement Sign. I also thank the officials of the Federal Government for finding it novel and registrable and the granting of design certificate.

I strongly appreciate my parents Mathew and Florence Omojola, my brother Dr. Bode Omojola (currently in the University of Cologne, Germany) for their financial and moral support in the course of this project

I also thank my friends Gbenga Adebisi, Emmanuel Emmanuel and Kehinde Ajibade for their suggestions. God bless you all.

ABOUT THE LICENSEE

Dokun Omojola studied at the University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos where he obtained BA (Hons.) in Philosophy (1987), PGD (1988) and M.Sc. in Mass Communication (1991). He wrote for *Daily Times* before joining *The Guardian* as a Senior Writer and Correspondent. He worked as the Country Manager for Deuteronomics Worldwide Advertising Group. Presently, he lectures in the Mass Communication Department at Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

THE House Sign is a completely new medium for outdoor advertising and expression. It has a design format which features three distinct things, namely, *message*, *house number* and *street name*. This message could be in form of advertisement, company logo, trademark, health warning, public service announcement, etc.

The House Sign is the product of an inventive activity which began in 1988 at the University of Lagos. It is invented to be applied in advertising and to revolutionize marketing by offering more mileage for advertisers. It is a medium that could enable advertisers establish their presence in every home throughout the world.

The House Sign is expected to be a universal phenomenon that would enhance the beauty of our homes and environment, as well as guide visitors and passers-by safely to their appropriate destinations and points of call. The House Sign is designed to make Nigerian and indeed the world a better place to live for everyone.

A House Sign can be affixed or posted on the front view of buildings, walls, pillars and columns or any other conspicuous part of a house frontage. It should clearly be seen by those entering the building, passers-by, visitors, owners and occupants of the building.

SECTION ONE

WHY THE SIGN

BUSINESS owners and company executives have a most important basic aim - to make profit. They are, therefore, always in search of cost-effective ways to get their products to the public in order to make a sale. In their bid to reach out, many of them have employed various marketing techniques including branding, direct marketing, awareness advertising etc., using the press, electronic media and outdoor modes of expression. Each of these techniques, no doubt, has its own requirements and ways of presentation, but they are all geared towards making profit and earning a good reputation for the producer of the good and service.

With regards to outdoor advertising, two examples are well known. First, is the billboards which are erected at vantage positions that are conspicuous to the passer-by. They are the commercially available poster sites which are rented out on a specific, regional or local basis to advertisers who have products or services meant for domestic market. Cost here is low and if the boards are placed inside the manufacturer's premises, the advertiser often incurs nothing besides the production costs. Billboards are supposed to offer an opportunity for excellent long-term identification.

In Nigeria, there are many types of billboards, ranging from the 40-sheet roof top to the traffic warden booths¹. Placement of outdoor advertisements depends on various considerations such as location, type form, nature of advertisement, existing government bye-laws, environmental implications or any other useful consideration.

Experience has, however, shown that billboards can be counter-productive. Dusty roads have made many to be eyesore. Vagabonds

have made the poster sheets their bedspreads. Motorized billboards are not being spared either, as social miscreants have turned them into objects to be destroyed at will.

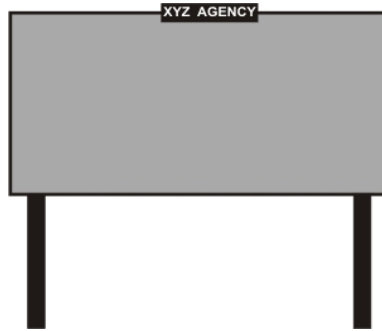


Fig. 1: Problems associated with billboards necessitate the need for cost effective and environment-friendly outdoor medium

Moreover, many billboards are in such places and forms that easily obstruct motorists' sightlines and pedestrians' rights of way, even as mess is made of any existing standardization of outdoor advertising practice. Rooftop billboards are not any better. Many of them have collapsed as they could not withstand the highly potent tropical wind and rain storms due to weak legs, bad mounting, feeble bracelets and bolts which also suffer from rust.

This is why the Lagos State Government got its demolition squad into action in 1991 and bulldozed no ewer than 2,552 billboards erected along Lagos major roads. At that time, government also placed an indefinite ban on the erection of billboards. The result of this unfortunate accident was monumental. Outdoor agencies lost money and clients. Advertisers were disappointed. They began to look forward to a better outdoor medium. This is one of the reasons that informed the creation of House Sign. The directional street sign, made popular in 1991, tried to offset the disadvantages of billboards but it was hardly successful. The directional sign is a vertical pole of 8 inches diameter, bearing two 'street' arms of 3ft x 3ft at right angles with a panel box of

3ft x 3ft or 3ft x 4ft at the top the pole. The pole is 13ft, though when erected, the length crashes to 12 feet. The concept is to educate and inform by way of advertisement as well as point to streets - to show the way.

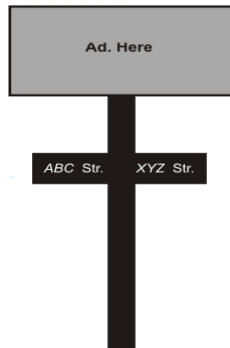


Fig. 2: The Nigerian Street Sign lacks consistency and repetition. It hardly registers in the subconscious mind of the passer-by.

In advertising, whether press, electronic or outdoor, the keys to success are consistency and repetition. Billboards and street sign lack these but the house sign has them to offer, as it creates an opportunity in which the use of the same style of advertising strategy consistently creates a memorable impression that builds long term recognition for the advertised good or service and the advertiser.

Street signs often fail to register in the subconscious mind of the passer-by. The House sign is a universal phenomenon that would enhance the beauty of our homes and environment, facilitate postal service, encourage the system and servicing of local government bills such as tenement rate, water rate, electricity bill etc. The House Sign is out to fulfill a public service. It is designed to revolutionize advertising by offering more mileage for advertisers. It is a medium that can enable advertisers establish their presence in every home throughout the world.

SECTION TWO

DRAWINGS, CLAIMS AND SPECIFICATIONS

The House sign is a completely new medium for outdoor advertising, with a design format that displays principally *advertisement company logos* or *any other form of message*; *house number* and *street name*.

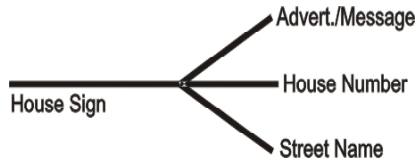


Fig. 3: Components of House Sign

These three elements can be arranged together on a rectangular - shaped or triangular - shaped Sign as follows.

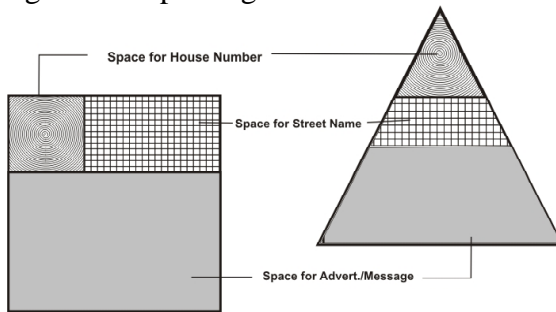


Fig. 4: Typical rectangular and triangular house signs. Note that house sign can come in any shape or size.

Also note that the arrangement of the components depend on individual's preference. For instance, if "CLINTON ST", is the name of the street, the house number '30' and the message "NESCAFE", the

three can be put together on a rectangular or triangular house sign as follows:

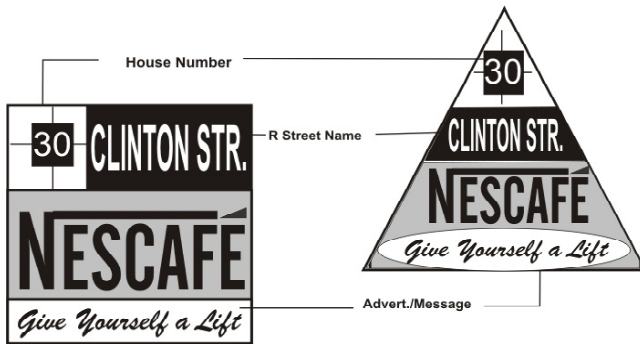


Fig. 5: Two examples of House Sign

However, if the street in question is very popular, the street name can be deleted from the sign. This will make way for bigger space for advertisement (see page 15). The House sign is a call-to-action outdoor advertising strategy that is meant to generate positive reactions from buyers. It is created to open another door to profit - this time, a door that cannot be shut- and conserves the time and energy usually expended by marketers and salesmen. In any situation where a tool is needed for the mass production of sales, the House Sign comes to the fore. It displays the right message to the right people. In the right way and the right place.

An extensive research carried out has also shown that the House Sign is essential and necessary to any civilization based on mass production and mass distribution of goods and services for profit. In other words, when House sign is used intelligently, it becomes a profound generator of sales.

The House Sign features a benefit-driven camera-ready, power design that creates a visual stimulus in which diagram or picture blends with little or no words to create a dynamic selling combination and appeal. As little as it is, it features a balance of education, Information and application that easily arouses the sense of beauty and aesthetics. It

is a no-preaching medium that hits the nail on the head and creates a hookline that cannot be resisted by the people. It is an eye catcher.

Though an excess of options seems to be one of the problems which faces the prospective advertiser, the Sign is an entirely new opportunity that the advertiser cannot resist as its objectives closely relate to those of the producers and consumers alike.

AIMS OF THE HOUSE SIGN

Traditionally, the aim of any form of advertising is to move potential buyers from a state of ignorance (about a product or service) to a state of awareness, where they are told that the good is out for purchase or the service out for patronage. The house sign also has this primary aim. From here, it sets to raise the prospects from a state of awareness to that of interest.

The house sign seriously aims to create in the potential customer a desire to possess the product and even raise such desire to the point where the prospect crosses the decision threshold to actual purchase of the good or service. Many focus of advertising end their strategies here, unlike the House sign which goes further to reinforce the buyer's confidence in his purchase decision. It also prevents the development of any post - decision cognitive dissonance so that he will continue to purchase the product. Essentially, the loyalty of the purchaser is what is needed here.

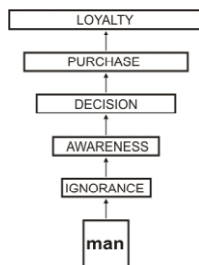


Fig. 6: The aim of house sign goes beyond these five stages. It adds beauty and comes affordable.

By the time these aims are achieved, the advertiser will have realized that his expenditure are justified, by comparing the marginal revenue they produce with the marginal cost they incur, most especially when his main aim is to make profit. But the house sign does not stop at generating profit or enhancing it.

House Sign is environmental friendly. Its eye-catching power design beautifies the building and the street and eliminates the indiscriminate style of house-numbering which is a common occurrence in the developing world. Those companies advertising on the sign are fulfilling a social responsibility. House-numbering takes a toll on local government finances. This invaluable service - house-numbering and the aesthetics this produces - will no doubt enhance the corporate image of these companies. It is also the aim of the house sign to offer cheaper medium of outdoor advertising as opposed to cut throat prices of billboards and street signs.

THE MEDIUM

House Sign is affixed to the frontal wall of a building, pillar, fence or any part in the front view. It should be clearly seen by those entering the house, passers-by, visitors and owners and occupants of the house.

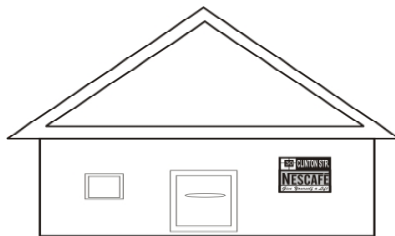


Fig. 7: House Sign is affixed to the frontal wall or any part in the front of a building and should be some space above the ground.



Fig. 8: A triangular House Sign on a column/house pillar

TARGET AUDIENCE

- i. First are the owners and occupants of the building on which House Sign is affixed. If it displays mass-produced and mass-consumer product or service, the House Sign serves as a reminder for those using such, to buy it whenever it has been exhausted. It also attracts potential buyers of such product or service.
- ii. Second are passers-by. The House Sign can easily register in the mind of the passer-by, especially if there are more than one affixed on houses in a street.
- iii. Third is the stranger who has to rely on a number to be able to know and easily locate the particular house he is going to. Visitors are included too.

CLAIMS AND ATTRIBUTES OF HOUSE SIGN

- i. The House Sign is an artistic work. It is not an arbitrary creation. It is designed. It could come in any shape. The contents are also designed.

- ii. House Sign must carry a message or advertisement. It also displays the house number and the name of the street in question is so popular (or for the purpose of producing House Sign in large quantity), it may not be included in the sign.
- iii. It is to be fixed on frontal walls of buildings, fences, pillars or any place that is conspicuous to passers-by and occupants of the building on which it is being fixed.
- iv. The contents of the House Sign could simply be written out, screen-printed on wall panels, engraved or done in any other way possible.
- v. House Sign could be made of any material suitable for that purpose.
- vi. House Sign has at least two colours.
- vi. House Sign is illuminable
- vii. House Sign can also be done on the wall without any material bearing the sign.
- ix. The Sign can come in any shape or size.
- x. It shows the way, the street and the house number.
- xi. It carries a message or advertisement, therefore serving as another medium of expression.
- xii. It is the first of its kind, the newest and latest outdoor medium.
- xiii. It is a fixed, as well as a mobile medium. The mobility is brought about by the frequency of appearance on houses in the street. It is easily registered in the sub-conscious mind of the on-looker.
- xiv. It beautifies the home and the street.

SHAPE, SIZES AND FIGURES

House Sign can come in various shapes (see examples in the following diagrams). The ad agency or anybody licenced to install House Sign has a choice regarding shapes, figures and sizes.

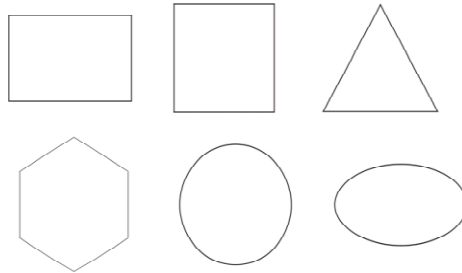


Fig. 9: House Signs come in different shapes.

These figures namely, Square, Rectangle, Hexagon, Egg-shape Triangle were chosen mainly for the purpose of illustration and explanation in this work.

COLOUR SPECIFICATION

One should bear the following in mind with regards to choice of colours for House Sign;

- i. The advertisement that is being displayed comes in different colours which are different from those of any other advertisement.
- ii. The colours of the house number and street names are to be chosen in relation to the product or service that is being advertised. Therefore, choosing colours should be the responsibility of franchise holders of the House Sign, other authorized persons, organizations or ad agencies.

TYPES OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES SUITABLE FOR ADVERTISING

- i. At the first stage of the scheme, it is suggested that public service announcements, company logos and household products should be advertised. Examples are numerous.
- ii. Controversial product: Another research in this regard spanning nearly one year and conducted across the country, showed that some products could be controversial since our medium has got to do with homes. It was discovered that alcoholic drinks including larger beer, wine and brandy could not find any favour in many homes in the northern part of the country; the same thing to beer and cigarettes in some homes in the southern part of the country. Many households in many parts of the country would want cigarette advertised but it must carry the health ministry warning.
- iii. If these products must be advertised, then it is necessary that those installing House Sign carry out individual preferences of different homes. This could take few days. Other products and services that may cause hue and cry are condoms; birth control pills, birth control services, political adverts, etc. It, therefore, is advisable that potentially controversial products and services should be left out in the meantime until circumstances surround their controversy have been resolved.

PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF HOUSE SIGN

Homes

Research throughout the country showed that many houses tend to welcome House Sign for reasons of proper house-numbering, aesthetics and provided it does not display any controversial product. Many houses are not correctly numbered, a situation which often confuses not only the occupants of the house and passers-by, but visitors as well. Besides carrying an advertisement, the House Sign is meant to resolve

this problem and this is surely welcomed by both house owners and tenants. The House Sign should not be administered in a way that is opposed to people's religious, cultural, social and political beliefs. This is important.

Corporate Establishments:

Some corporate establishments welcome the House Sign but would want some rules and regulations to be followed including the following:

- i. The House Sign should have designs that are at least approximately in consonance with the building-especially in terms of colours. There could be some difference but the colours should be compatible.
- ii. The House Sign should be fixed, removed, or replaced in such a way that does not damage the wall or pillar on which it is being fixed.
- iii. The House Sign should not distract the attention of passers-by, officials, visitors or strangers from any other sign, signboard or notice-board that has been installed for the purpose of identification of and for progress of such corporate establishment, unless otherwise approved.
- iv. The advertising agency involved should see to regular maintenance of the House Sign.
- v. The House Sign should respect people's religious, social, cultural and political beliefs.
- vi. Controversial products and services including political advertisement should not be displayed unless otherwise approved by the owners and occupants of the building.
- vii. In case the House Sign is vandalized, the broken pieces should not be neglected to constitute environmental and health hazards and danger to the people.

MEDIA BUYING

The media brokerage service involved here has to adequately protect the interest of the medium owner, advertiser, the consumer and the advertising agency which should have a licence from the patent owner to install the sign. Interest here could mean the quality of services and economy of rates to the advertisers, and target audience on one hand; and income of the medium owner and the outdoor company involved on the other. For such interests to be adequately protected, brokerage service has to be well-organized and this could easily be effected by authorized holders of franchise of the House Sign, supported by the necessary law enforcement machinery.

House Sign should be ordered in bulk. Although, the number of suitable houses in a street should determine the quantity of House Signs to be installed, it is advisable that a unit of 20 should be the least that can be ordered. However, if the House Sign contains only the advertisement and house number (due to high popularity of the street), then the advertisement space could be bigger than that occupied by the number. Therefore, more pieces of the sign can be produced.



Fig. 10: Here the advert and house number spaces are bigger because the sign features no street name.

Also, in the course of research in the northern and eastern parts of the country, it was discovered that on some streets, many plots were yet to

be developed and some buildings yet to be completed. This may decrease the number of House Signs to be installed. However, if an uncompleted building already has the necessary space, the House Sign should be installed on it. It is suggested that any advertisement on House Sign should run for one year, after which it can be renewed or replaced.

INCOME OF THE MEDIUM OWNER

Home owners and/or occupants are the medium owners in this regard. They are entitled to some benefits. These may not necessarily be pecuniary.

Their benefits therefore are in form of:

- i. Beauty of the building which the House Sign offers.
- ii. Proper identification of the house, which is in form of correct numbering. House Signs is meant to put an end to improper and arbitrary numbering which has characterized most of the nation's urban and sub-urban centres over the years. Home owners should not be given money. Councils' responsibilities do not stop at allocating house numbers, they also include writing out them out clearly. All these cost money. The advertiser would be paying for these through the advert agency.

MATERIALS TO BE USED

The material on which House Sign is made could be of tin, plastic, plastic fibre, aluminium, light sheet popularly called wall panel, wood, marble, concrete etc. or combination of two or more of these. It should be fixed to the wall with screw or screws at the centre or at the edges. However, the material found to be most suitable is the wall panel. It is relatively cheap and convenient for screen printing.

For an illuminated House Sign, plastic, iron encasement, electrical fittings and gadgets are needed. The design on House Sign could come in paints or reflective materials

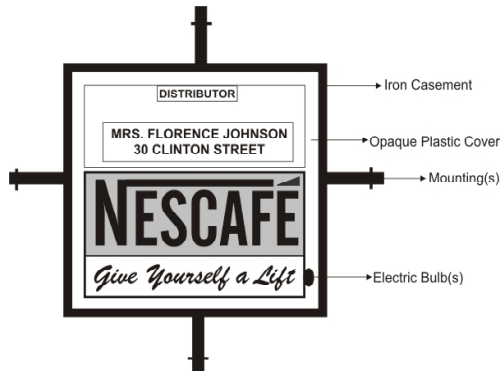


Fig. 11: Special, Illuminated design for distributors, etc.

SCREEN PRINTING

For the purpose of mass production, screen printing is a good method to be adopted here. However, while the background, advertisement and name of the street could be mass-printed through screen printing, the numbers may have to be manually designed, albeit neatly.

REMOVAL, REPLACEMENT OR RENEWAL OF HOUSE SIGN

Since it has been suggested that advertisement should run for only one year before it is replaced, renewed or removed, a substance called THINNER could be used to remove the design on the House Sign that is due for renewal, replacement or removal. It could also be simply scraped off by any other substance, material or tool that is suitable for that purpose before it is used for a new message. Thinner is also useful when the house number changes.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CLEARANCE

Local government authorities have a role with regards to House Sign. Their cooperation is essential to the acceptance of the House Sign by medium owners, especially corporate establishments. Therefore, it is suggested that an approved House Sign should, in addition to the usual

contents, carry the initials of the licenced council authority concerned and the identification number of the licenced agency involved, as shown in the following diagram;



Fig. 12: House Sign with council initials and ad agency number.

HOW TO PREVENT VANDALISM

- i.** In order to prevent vandalism of the House Sign, it should be made on wall panels which can not be easily destroyed or damaged.
- ii.** The screws should be tight, though not too tight to the extent of destroying the wall or getting difficult to loose.
- iii.** It is suggested that each House Sign should be fixed at about six feet above the ground floor. This makes it conspicuous to the eye and keeps it out of the reach of children.
- iv.** It is expected that home owners and tenants will prevent any assault on the House Sign from anyone since it could be said to ‘belong’ to that home.
- v.** Destroyers and vandals should be apprehended and charged accordingly.
- vi.** The assistance of law enforcement agents should be sought in this regard.
- vii.** Monitors should be appointed by licence holders to keep watch over the signs on weekly or monthly basis and report any damage.

- viii.** If in spite of these measure any damage is still recorded, it should be, as a matter of urgency, treated and the sign replaced accordingly.

THE ANATOMY OF NIGERIAN STREETS

There are different types of streets in the country, some long, some short. Some are so long, containing between **300** and **500** houses. Examples are Ikorodu Road, Herbert Macaulay Street, Yaba, Agege Motor Road all in Lagos, Oba Adesida Road in Akure, Ondo State, Iwo Road in Ibadan Oyo State, Sultan Dasuki Road Sokoto, Murtala Muhammed Road, Kano, Welderal Road, Douglas Road both in Owerri, Ikenga Slope, Benin, Benue Crescent Makurdi, Port-Harcourt Road, Aba, Aba Road, Borokiri Road, both in Port-Harcourt and so on. Some streets are so short, not containing more than four houses or longer than 50 metres. It therefore, follows that there will be difference in fieldwork to be done in these streets.

WORK TO BE DONE

The fieldwork in the street involves:

- i The listing of the number of the houses in the street.
- ii. Location of wall surfaces, fences pillars/columns, gates, etc. where House sign can be affixed.
- iii. Recommending the colour of the House Sign that can generally be acceptable to that street.
- iv. Informing the medium (house) owners of the intention to affix House Sign on their buildings.
- v. The compilation of the preferences of individual medium owners.
- vi. The nature of how to produce Dok House Sign and the materials to be used with regard to the street in question.
- vii. Ensuring that the house numbers have been properly allocated by the local government concerned.

- viii. Ensuring that information gathered regarding house numbers tally with that of local government. If any.
- ix. Analyzing these data critically.
- x. Making them available to the advertiser.

SECTION THREE

Public Reactions to House Sign: Advertisers, Advertising Agencies, Local Governments etc.

Reactions from the public¹ have to be considered in two lights. First, the medium of advertising (i.e. the Sign). Second, the advertised product or service. The Sign, being a new form of advertising, will no doubt, drawn some reactions from the people, most especially the owners of the medium i.e. landlords, caretakers and tenants.

Research has shown that there are really four possible reactions to an advertisement or any form of advertising. First is the reaction of Indifference. Here people do not care about the Sign or the good or service advertised thereon. They do not want to be bothered even if anything is hung on their walls.

Second is an unfavourable reaction resulting in hostility towards the Sign and the message it carries. One could also get a favourable reaction leading to an enquiry for more information on the product or the sign and finally, a favourable reaction leading to a better understanding of the medium and the product advertised through the medium.

All these can be seen in varying degrees in the interviews conducted with varied set of individuals comprising landlords, advertisers, ad agency executives, public affairs analysts, etc. They were asked to comment on the pros and cons (but more on the cons) and the likely implications of implementing the Sign. The following are their reactions:

1. **Mr. H.S.O. Chesa** *Manager, Corporate Affairs, Seven-Up Bottling Company Plc, Lagos.*

It's quite good. It's a great idea. I have never seen it before. I believe it is a new creation. But if our product must be advertised thereon, it must not be wordy. If the advert is too wordy, it won't

attract people. I presumed it will be screen printed on wall panel. The role of the local government authorities should be duly recognized.

“Though it is a great idea, our participation will be based on recommendation of our outdoor agency.”

2. **Harriet Chimany Umealu (Mrs.),** *Corporate Affairs Manager, Emily Millionaire Cosmetics, Palm Grove, Lagos.*

“It is the most innovative project I have ever seen. It is really nice. But the permission has to be sought and obtain from the local government authorities. Moreover, to enhance acceptance by the people, community leaders’ advice should also be sought. The sign will make numbering uniform as opposed to what we have right now. Local governments now number houses with chalk and charcoal. But with the new sign, all this shall become a thing of the past.

“I will want a situation where a company takes a whole street or local government area if it can afford it. I also want the full participation of outdoor association (OAA). Any potential misunderstanding should also be ironed out with landlords.”

3. **Mrs. U.E. Aligbe,** *Marketing Manager, Nestle Foods Plc, Ilupeju, Lagos.*

“The concept is good. But does it mean that a company like NBL (Nigerian Breweries Limited) can just come and advertise their Gulder on my house? What if I don’t drink or do not want to encourage anybody to drink beer? “Assuming Maggi or Coca-Cola wants to advertise in all the houses in one local government area, won’t that lead to advertisement overkill? This again brings the issue of over concentration or spread of advertisement in an area. Do you think it is proper to see Maggi fill a whole street only to find that is not existent in the next street? How about the issue of vandalization? I will want a pilot project done first before we can jump to it. It is however, a great idea. It is worth doing.

4. **Mr. Moemeke, Chairman, APCON, (1992)**

“Great creative work. But have you settled with the local government people? Do you want to commercialize it by yourself or you want OAAN’ to handle it? How about the issue of your compensation? How about colour specification and size standardization? Are you sure the local government people will not use the opportunity provided by this to rip people off? Holding a national workshop by APCON or OAAN to enlighten agencies, advertisers and local government is not a bad idea.

5. **Mr. Godwin Nwanze, Marketing Manager, CPL Industries Limited, Mushin, Lagos.**

“This is ingenuity of the highest order. Our company is wishing to participate if it is made flexible. In other words, we want to advertise mainly in houses and offices where there are hairdressers and beauticians as this will always remind them to always buy our hair and beauty products.

6. **Mr. Oscar Odiboh, Research Dept., Lintas Advertising, Ikoyi, Lagos.**

“It will work. But you must ensure you have your way regarding the local government authorities. You need their permission to be able to operate. If OAAN people compensate you appropriately for your creativity, you can give them a go-ahead to handle it because they have the wherewithal and the connections. There could be one or two complaints from medium owners but at the end it will be fully accepted by the people, since it is not going to be too big and since it will enhance proper numbering and identification of houses.”

7. **Mr. Niyi Odulaja, Manager, Servipharm Products, Ciba Geigy Limited, Mushin, Lagos.**

“Good creativity but there may be problems. First, when the landlords discover that it is a multi-million naira project, they will begin to demand for their “rights” unless they are properly educated. Second, the project could be affected by the on-going political instability. For

instance, if the ad agencies had an agreement with an incumbent council boss but his regime is swept aside, the new government can, through same powerful politician, make mess of the first agreement. This creates problems. Third, the issue of flexibility has to be tackled. Some medium owners may frown at a particular product. If they disagree with the advertiser, they may eventually have their way.

“Fourth, the issue of vandalization, and pecuniary demands by landlords in high density areas should be tackled., I foresee a problem with landlords in high and medium density areas. Rich people may not bother.

“Fifth, organized body like OAAAN should be entrusted with the responsibility of administering the new project so that they can approach the local government authorities with one voice.

“Sixth, this sign is best for consumer products especially those that are mass-produced. Seventh, the problem of maintenance, colour specification and size standardization have to be resolved. This is a great work, but I won’t jump at it until all modalities have been firmed up and the road to success clear.”

8. **Mr. Dele Babatunde**, *Promotions Manager (1993), Guardian Newspapers Limited, Isolo, Lagos.*

“This is good. I believe in its viability. We in the promotions department here are prepared to contribute our quota through the organization of workshops and seminars in order to make it work.”

9. **Mr. Demola Adaramola**, *Programme Officer, PPFN Lagos.*

“Let me start by saying that this is a sketch in creativity. As a public affairs analyst, I see it as a paradigm and if things work well, it could be the most successful medium for outdoor advertising. For it to be practicable, the hone owners (medium owners) are the most important factor here. Their confidence in the project has to be secured. Their consent is instrumental to its success. It will require meeting them one by one to determine if they want the sign and how they want it.

“I presume most home owners would want such new innovation on their houses but they need to be informed before the signs are fixed. Going to them one by one is not tasking or hectic as one would imagine. Take a long street like Herbert Macaulay or Ikorodu Road. All you need do is designate as many workers as possible to do the job. When they come back from the field their findings are analyzed. These findings will form the basis for the production of the Dok House sign.

“The next thing is for outdoor advertising agencies to agree among themselves. This is instrumental to the success of the project. I suggest that all members of OAAN should be involved. Because the moment you neglect some of them there will be grumbling and thereafter sabotage. A similar project in Abuja involving a former FCT minister is still fresh in our memory.

“After this has been achieved, the next thing is for advertisers to operate on common ground. Since advertisers now have an association, the job is made a lot simpler as they can easily liaise with the agencies, who, in turn, will liaise with the appropriate authorities, in this case the local government. In essence, what I’m saying is that there should be mutual consent between the government, advertisers, agencies and landlords.

“It is wrong for a medium owner to reject the Dok House sign displaying a competing product. Well, corporate establishments may oppose the advertisement of products that are competing with their own, on their buildings, but it is wrong for tenants to do so. This is because, the products of their company will also be advertised on other people’s houses. It is a matter of give and take and vice versa and it should be treated as such.

“One final question I will like to ask is: ‘who are the beneficiaries of the House Sign Project? Is it the creator of the sign, the agency, the home owner or the advertiser? My answer is that all will benefit and there lies the uniqueness of the House Sign. It is homely, recurrent, and effects behavioural change.”

10 **Mr. Felix Ofulue** *National Advertising Manager, Nigerian Bottling Company Plc, Bottlers of Coca-Cola Products.*

“The project is novel in itself but since you want me to harp more on criticisms rather than commendations I will do just that. “I see problems here. What are the conditions laid down by the patent or right owner? Will the ad agencies cooperate? Even if they cooperate, there will still be problems. First, it is limited in scope. There are some ads that are simply impossible to place on the Dok House Sign, e.g. mortgage services adverts.

“Second, how is the project going to be implemented bearing in mind that our development pattern is not such that allows for proper allocation of numbers and numbering. Moreover, the way we build houses may not make for the success of the project. Even in Abuja where houses are well built and laid out there will still be problems. Third is the problem of competing products. You know that I work with Coca-Cola. If for example you fix a House Sign bearing Seven-Up, on my wall I will just yank it off, especially if I’m the owner of the house.

“Fourth, what is the nature of media buying? Is it going to be street, town or local government area? How will ad agencies and local government authorities agree on this? Will advertising agencies ever agree among themselves?

“Fifth. What kind of materials are you going to use? Is it plate or wood? Are you going to use scorch (reflective materials)? Can the sign be illuminated?

“Coca-Cola does not want to be left out in things that will promote its image and products. But it wouldn’t want to be engaged in any problematic project. However, I commend you on your creative intelligence. You deserves an award.”

11. **Mr. Steve Nwaozuzu**, *Ethical Promotions Manager, Afrab Chem. Ltd., Isolo, Lagos.*

“I am seeing this for the first time. I think it is the first of its kind in the world. My company is highly interested in it. I’m highly optimistic it will work. But two things must be sorted out first, the size of the sign must be reasonable enough. If it is too small, it may not be attractive.

“Second, the possibility of advertising a competing product on a premises should be avoided. For instance, one of our products here is Afrabvite. I can’t imagine people coming to put Chemiron on the wall of my company. I can tolerate the one in my house because I know too that my company’s products will be advertised on other people’s houses. If the ones meant for these competing corporate establishments are skipped the project will work.

“Another thing is that buildings on our streets, are not well laid out. Can this affect the medium? “Anyway, there is no doubt it is a novel idea that will work. Please contact us again when the project finally takes off. But I presumed it is not expensive.”

12. **E. Emmanuel**, *Pastor, Flame of Glory Ministries, Lagos.*

This project is a success. The Holy Spirit has told me. Its a big project, an international one for that matter. However, it is not something you can rush into. The Bible says *No man builds a tower without first counting the cost.* I don’t see the project as only a Nigerian affair. I see the project easing the financial predicament of international organizations like UNICEF, UNESCO, etc. The project is an international affair. The Lord gave you the inspiration to come up with this project. It is a blessing from God for human kind. *The blessing of God maketh reach and addeth no sorrow.* Pr. 24:27. But you must be careful about the kind of products you advertise on this sign. Of course, you can’t come and advertise cigarette or beer on my house. I won’t take that from you.”

13. **Ebenezer Odunayo**, *Landlord*

From the way you described the project and from what I saw on paper, it is a very good idea. I welcome it in my house as a way of

encouraging creative people like you. While I can tolerate Bournvita, Coca-cola, Pepsi or Maggi on my wall, I can be very mad with Gulder or Malboro because it can encourage drinking or smoking habit. So, what I suggest is that a house owner like myself has to be contacted concerning the kind of advert you can place on my wall.

14. **Dan Ahinah, Landlord**

In this period of armed robbery attacks, I will never allow you to place anything on my walls. Because thieves could cash in on this and spy on my building. I'm not interested in your project. I pray others will be interested. But left to me no way. I wish you good luck.

15 **Ass. Secretary (Preferred anonymity) Mushin Local Govt, Lagos.**

"I tell you, any local government will welcome any day, any time, any project that will make the environment neater and more beautiful. Moreso when it will also bring in more money for the council. We have tried this house-numbering, but has not been successful, but with your new dimension it will succeed because we can make companies to sponsor it. We are ready to work with anybody or group to make it succeed. Don't quote me, anyway."

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