



SA in need of Laduma! jab

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THE STREETS are quiet. There's no sign on the corner. Branding is nowhere to be seen. Most importantly, the man leading the greatest show on earth isn't feeling it.

"What has disappointed me... I'm not feeling this World Cup," said 2010 local organising committee (LOC) chairman Irvin Khoza.

With 296 days to go before South Africa hosts the 2010 Fifa World Cup, the biggest sports show in the world besides the Olympic Games, there seems little evidence of a nation brimming with excitement.

Yesterday, various officials tasked with preparing the country ahead of the World Cup, including Minister of Transport Sbu Ndebele, International Marketing Council acting CEO Paul Bannister and a host of parties responsible

for marketing the country, gathered at the Sandton Convention Centre.

Many of those in attendance looked for ways to get involved, perhaps discouraged by Fifa's strict branding policy around their event.

Nonetheless, the lack of local buy-in to get South Africa excited about the World Cup irks Khoza.

"As we gather here I don't see any branding in the room," he said. "Every street, every corner, you must feel it. You must feel that *the show is in town.*"

Khoza noted that the recent Confederations Cup match between South Africa and Brazil was by far the most watched sporting event in local history, exceeding the 5.2 million people who tuned in to watch the 1995 Rugby World Cup final by more than 2 million.

He called for more positive reporting and said there was a need

to place things in context.

Khoza suggested that traffic congestion and a shortage of accommodation were normal during a World Cup, citing his own experience while attending the event in Germany three years ago.

LOC marketing manager Derek Carstens said the committee did not have the "remit" to do nation-building work and, with a mere R20 million to spend on marketing, it was necessary "to time your budget right". "After the draw on December 4 we'll start pushing," he said.

He called on host cities to start selling their cities ahead of the event, pointing to the recent erection of 1 800 billboards by the City of Joburg and the "Football Friday" initiative by Southern Sun, which sees their staff don the jersey of their favourite team, as examples.