

# African Access named as new headline sponsor for Topco National Business Awards

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African Access has officially been named as the new headline sponsor for the Topco National Business Awards. Established in 2002 by Topco Media, the National Business Awards acknowledges and rewards companies, individuals, industry and Government for outstanding achievements in business.



*From left to right: Richard Fletcher, Chairman (Topco Media); Ralf Fletcher, CEO (Topco Media); Shobana Meakhan, Executive Director (African Access Holdings); Thabo Mpama, Executive Director: Sales & Marketing (African Access Holdings); Seth Phalatse, Non-Executive Chairman (African Access Holdings)*

“Topco Media is delighted about the alliance. We appreciate that African Access, like Topco, recognises the need to reward and support business in South Africa. This alliance allows us to continue to further identify and promote those leading the way in business,” says Ralf Fletcher, Topco Media CEO.

The African Access sponsorship value will run into several million rands over the next three years. Shaun Battleman, Chief Executive Officer for the group, says, “African Access is proud to be associated with Topco Media and we look forward to saluting business passion for excellence in the 2010 African Access National Business Awards. We are especially delighted to be a sponsor of the segment that represents South Africa's Top Businessman of the Year Award, Top Businesswoman of the Year Award and the African Access National Business of the Year Award.”

African Access was a top achiever at the 2009 Metropolitan Oliver Empowerment Awards and has proven to be an example of Black Economic Empowerment at its best, with a multi-million rand turnover and a diverse portfolio offering. Its move to

become the headline sponsor of the National Business Awards seems a natural progression bearing in mind the company's past accomplishments and innovative approach to business.

Richard Fletcher, Chairman of Topco Media, says, “South Africa entered into a new state of democracy in 1994 and then the rules changed - South Africa entered the world stage. When looking at business - performance became a vital benchmark. It's important going forward to acknowledge and reward the companies that have gone the extra mile. This is why the National Business Awards, now called the African Access National Business Awards, was created.”

Companies are either nominated by a third party or they are able to nominate themselves - the main entry requirement is a turnover of R100 million or more for business conducted in South Africa. The entry criteria and the entry process are strictly regulated and overseen by an independent panel of judges which in the past has included Suzanne Ravenall of The Effectiveness Group, Professor Shirley Zinn of Nedbank, Ntaythi Petros of *Business Report* and Judge Thabani Jali of PricewaterhouseCoopers.

“In the last eight years the awards have grown from strength to strength in participation and attendance. The National Business Awards have grown to become South Africa's most prestigious business event. The National Business Awards have created a lot of value not only for people who attend but also for the finalists and winners. This year we have received a large number of entries which will be revealed in the next few weeks. Some of the winners from previous Awards ceremonies include the Kelly Group, Barloworld Logistics Africa, SA Tourism and Nedbank,” says Richard.

Topco Media and African Access' new alliance is sure to be a great success. They would like to encourage South African companies and individuals to participate in this year's awards, which will take place in May.

For more information please visit [www.africanaccessnba.co.za](http://www.africanaccessnba.co.za).

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