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Telecoms, banking produce SA's most valuable brands

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Finance and telecommunications companies maintain dominance of top 10 in Brand Finance survey of SA's most valuable brands

FINANCE and telecommunications companies still dominate the top 10 of South Africa's 50 most valuable brands, according to a survey by Brand Finance, a brand valuation consultancy.

Mobile operators MTN and Vodacom took first and second place, respectively, in the 2013 ranking.

Sasol came in third, the only energy and chemicals company in the ranking. Standard Bank, Absa, Nedbank, retailer Woolworths, First National Bank, Shoprite and hospital group Mediclinic followed, in that order.

Brand Finance calculates brand value using "royalty relief", which involves estimating the possible future sales attributable to a brand and calculating a royalty rate that would be charged for the use of the brand.

With a value of R43.1bn and an AAA brand rating, MTN maintained its position at the top of the table. It is the only African brand to be ranked in the Global 500, a league table of the world's most valuable brands.

Brand Finance Africa chairman Thebe Ikalafeng said that while the technology sector, with brands such as Google, Samsung and Apple, now produced the most valuable brands globally, South Africa's most valuable sectors were telecoms and banking.

"It's a confirmation that connectivity remains a priority on the African continent," he said.

In the retail sector, Woolworths and Checkers experienced increases of 25% and 19%, respectively, in their brand value. Woolworths was in seventh place and Checkers 39th.

As South Africa's middle class grows, more people are gaining access to private medical care and medical insurance. This is seen in the significant ranking increases by brands such as Mediclinic and Discovery, 10th and 24th, respectively.

Brand South Africa CEO Miller Matola said the survey not only set a benchmark for the top 50 companies but was also a baseline for other brands to guide their development.

The top 10 brands in the survey in 2012 were MTN, Vodacom, Standard Bank, Sasol, Absa, Nedbank, First National Bank, Shoprite, Woolworths and Netcare, in that order.

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