

Branding of SA crucial for success of 2010 World Cup, says expert

By BUSINESS WRITER

The branding of South Africa's 2010 Fifa World Cup is crucial to the success of the tournament away from the football pitch, says German branding guru Nikolaus Eberl.

Eberl, the author of *Brand Ovation*, said it was critical for South Africa to position itself as a top brand nation to succeed.

"It makes all the difference," said Eberl. A successful World Cup could have on the economy and business confidence, and foreign direct investments could follow. A successful brand would allow South Africa to attract more tourists, top talent, and investors.

Addressing a University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business distinguished speaker

ers function yesterday, Ebert said South Africa needed to project how it wants to be viewed by the world before 2010.

Eberl said Germany, the previous host nation, had wanted to remove the notion that they were only a nation of engineers with efficient systems – but otherwise unfriendly people.

With the World Cup, Eberl

said Germany had used the 2006 Fifa World Cup to launch international branding that portrayed Germans as friendly people – with their tournament slogan saying: "Time to make friends."

This should be a cause for concern for South Africa, as it had slipped in the nation brand index from 22 to 33.

The problem of crime, and HIV/Aids, said Eberl, could be

some of the reasons why South Africa had lost ground.

Eberl, a partner in the Izicwe Academy, focuses on internal branding aligning employee commitment with the company's brand promise.

In Germany, tourism bookings have since increased by a third and investor confidence is at an all-time high.

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