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THIS year's World Cup will put South Africa in the global spotlight, but the event itself is unlikely to prompt much direct foreign business investment.

Experts believe the Fifa event will act as a massive marketing campaign for the country, rather than rake in direct investment. This would then pave the way for networking opportunities and foreign business relations.

Wesgro's head of investment promotions Rameez Johaar said that while the World Cup would give the West-

ern Cape for more exposure on the world stage, the event was unlikely to sway the minds of potential investors from abroad.

"When an investment is made, it's purely a business decision, in which the cost and quality factors within a certain location are analysed to determine viability.

"The World Cup lasts for only two months, and no investor will put money into a

hotel or any other industry without looking at the long-term benefits. On the other hand, with the World Cup coming up, there's been huge development in infrastructure, and that is what makes South Africa and the Western Cape more attractive for investors."

Johaar also believed that if the World Cup's exposure did lure foreign investors to the Western Cape, it would probably be in the hospitality and

information communication technology industries – two of the province's strongest sectors.

"Yes, the event will be a catalyst for investment, but in terms of exposure of opportunities, it's an excellent marketing and networking opportunity for the country."

Ernst and Young entrepreneurial director Zanele Xaba was also sceptical about the event luring foreign business

investors.

"There will definitely always be foreign direct investment in South Africa but I'm not sure the World Cup will have any effect in increasing or decreasing that interest.

"What it will do, however, is market the country; it will expose South Africa to the world which could have a long-term impact in terms of business relations."

She believed that foreign

investors, especially large businesses, would not invest in South Africa just because of the World Cup.

"Foreign businesspeople who want to be here are already here. There are already many concerns and issues among local entrepreneurs over how they will struggle after the World Cup is finished."

However, the property industry in particular is looking forward to a pick-up in

World Cup won't be panacea for our financial woes

business this year after at least two years of struggle.

In an online column, Seeff Properties chairman Samuel Seeff said the positive impact of the World Cup may be felt in the property market next year.

He said the exposure may even attract foreign property buyers, recognising our "cosmopolitan lifestyle".

Recently, the agency sold a luxury home in Camps Bay to a European businessman for the highest price ever fetched in the area. The businessman apparently bought the home after a visit to Cape Town during the World Cup final draw.