

## Shoprite Checkers hits 1000th store milestone

With yesterday's opening of the Checkers Zevenwacht, located in the Shoprite Checkers' newly developed shopping centre, Langverwacht Plein, in Kuils River, the group celebrated reaching the 1000 mark in Africa.

This supermarket is one of the 129 new supermarkets that the group will open across Africa between July 2013 and June 2014, 20 of which will be outside of South Africa's borders.

Commenting on this significant milestone, Shoprite Group CEO, Whitey Basson said that it is fitting for the 1000th supermarket in the group to be branded Checkers, since he regards the acquisition of the ailing Checkers chain of 170 supermarkets in 1991 to be one of the biggest challenges in his career in retail that spans four decades.



L - R Whitey Basson, Mrs South Africa, Chané de Kock, entertainer Nataniël.

## Acquisition trail proves successful over three decades

"The eight Shoprite supermarkets we purchased during November 1979 were only the start of the development of what today is the largest supermarket chain in South Africa and the African continent. We realised that to fast track the group's growth trajectory, we had to embark on a series of acquisitions and turn those businesses into profitability fast. We also wanted to be the supermarket group with the lowest prices in the country.

"This strategy has paid off for us. It placed us at the forefront of supermarket retailing in Africa and in a business with over 1460 outlets on the continent consisting of supermarket brands serving consumers across all income groups, furniture stores, liquor stores and a growing fast food chain."

## Accolades mark success

Thirty-four years after that first acquisition, the Shoprite group is receiving one accolade after another. Recently its flagship brand, Shoprite has once again been honoured in the Times / Sowetan Retail Awards with the Grand Prix award as top retailer overall in South Africa for the fifth consecutive year. The chain also claimed the award for providing the best Overall Customer Experience.

According to the latest AMPS research (July 2013) 70% of adults in the country now shop at Shoprite Checkers, serving the largest customer base in South Africa with 26 million shoppers.

With the provision of opportunities for people to make something out of their lives and create a future for their children being close to his heart, Basson also commented on the scale of jobs that the group has created.

"We built a company with a turnover of R93 billion and a market capitalisation of R100 billion. However, what is more gratifying is that we were able to save the jobs of thousands of people in those companies we took over and create so many more opportunities for people to earn a living and in turn provide a future for generations after them.

## **Record job opportunities**

"During the last financial year (to June 2013) the group created a record number of new job opportunities in one year; 9201 and today it employs more than 114,000 people in total. Checkers Zevenwacht has seen some 190 new job opportunities created," he concluded.

Langverwacht Plein is the group's own property development and will also be home to the planned 209th liquor shop in the group.

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