

# The emancipation of Standard Bank

By  Issa Sikiti da Silva

4 Apr 2006



From 'Simpler. Better. Faster.' to 'Inspired. Motivated. Involved.' and a brand new logo, Standard Bank - South Africa's biggest bank in terms of assets - comes of age, aiming to forge ahead in its bid to make a real difference and stay relevant to the societies in which it operates.



The

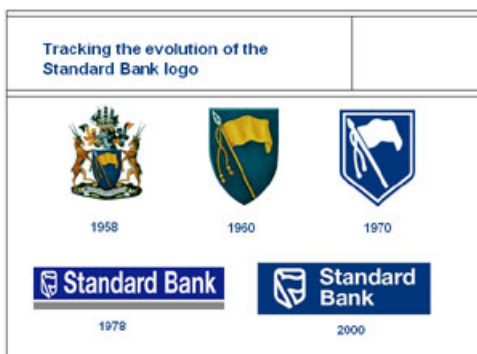
Sarah-Anne Orphanides - Standard Bank group marketing director

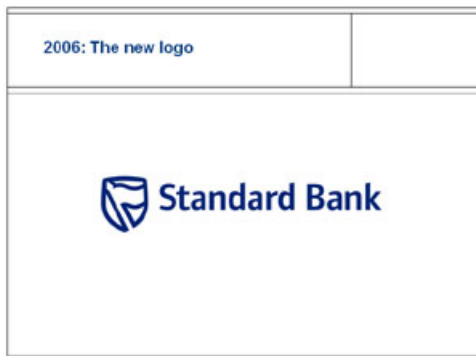
changes were announced by Sarah-Anne Orphanides, Standard Bank group marketing director, at the company's executive dining rooms in Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, yesterday, Tuesday April 4, 2006.

The process comes from the results of lengthy research and feedback from customers, staff and stakeholders in South Africa, as well as in several African countries such as Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda - to name only a few - where the company does business. In fact, Standard Bank's new image is the culmination of a systematic renaissance process, which started in 2004 when its business units were re-aligned under a monolithic brand and saw Stannic become Standard Bank.

Launched in 2005, the group's vision and values clearly provided directions and set the stage for the bank to gallop away in its quest to become the continent's most reliable financial institution.

## Redesign





The bank's first logo was designed in 1958 and it looked more like a colourful coat of arms. The whole of it was changed in green in 1960 with a yellow flag in the middle. The logo's current blue and white colours only came about in 1970. Since then, it was redesigned twice, in 1978 and in 2000. And six years later Standard Bank has just adopted a new logo.

'You Can Bank on the Standard' was the first pay-off line introduced in 1967. Eight others have come and gone since, and each has successfully given the bank the status it needed at the time, it says. 'Inspired. Motivated. Involved.' now replaces 'Simpler. Better. Faster.' which was born in 2000 and became a blessed omen during the bank's most critical period: the Nedcor's failed take-over bid.

These changes, Orphanides explains, are meant to explore new frontiers and re-align the group's overall business strategy in order to reinforce stability.

She says: "'Simpler. Better. Faster.' served us extremely well for many years and is a strong slogan, but it must be remembered that in an environment where customers' need are continuously changing, Standard Bank as an organisation needs to consistently evolve. Our new pay-off line - 'Inspired. Motivated. Involved.' - encapsulates the essence of what we are and what we would like to be for our customers, our people and our stakeholders. We are striving to make a real difference."

Brand marketing director Nikki Twomey concurs: "We are a customer-focused entity that consistently needs to keep in touch with its customers, staff and stakeholders. So this new pay-off line reflects these values."



Nikky Twomey - Standard Bank director: brand marketing

indeed the real essence of a bank which "understands what life is like". That is why it is emancipating and reinventing itself to stay ahead of its rivals and be able to meet all sorts of unforeseen challenges associated with the complexities of the emerging markets.

Orphanides diplomatically denies that these changes are related to competition. She told Bizcommunity.com: "We have a customer-centric strategy and we are mostly focusing on our customers, making sure they are happy with our service delivery.

"Of course, one has always to keep an eye on what the competitors are doing, as we are operating in a highly competitive environment. But the changes here have nothing to do with competition. Instead they are related to our customers' needs, where our organisation is currently positioned and where it is moving to so that we can marry all these two together."

## Strategy

This people-centered strategy can be seen by the way the company decided to manage its new image's advertising campaign. 'Real' people have been used instead of paid actors and no professional make-up or styling and approved scripts were involved during the filming.

With representation in 38 countries across the world, including 17 in Africa, the Standard Bank ads, radio scripts, messages and media channels have been refined in accordance with media consumption habits in each region to ensure relevance in markets outside of Southern Africa.

Established in 1862 in Port Elizabeth, Standard Bank has stood the test of time, braving competition, meeting technological advances' challenges and dutifully fulfilling social responsibilities, becoming one of Africa's most sustainable and trustworthy financial institutions. Voted the best financial services brand for the past 11 years, its assets are now worth R786 billion, according to its latest financial reports. "Which makes us the country's biggest bank in assets," investor relations' Vanessa Byers says.

## ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

- Angola tense as journalists, protesting youth targeted by government - 1 Nov 2011
- Managing promotional resources: are TV broadcasters getting it right? - 1 Nov 2011
- Mbalula vs the media: privacy, dignity vs public interest - 31 Oct 2011
- Multimillion-rand Motorola Razr marketing campaign - 28 Oct 2011
- [Tech4Africa] Power failures, low bandwidth? Try cloud computing - 28 Oct 2011

[View my profile and articles...](#)