

Educational branding - Tukkies takes up the challenge

Universities are starting to appreciate that branding is a core asset that can transcend categories to sell almost anything. The University of Pretoria has appointed 3D Global Strategic Communications to handle its public and media relations with an emphasis on building an educational brand to be reckoned with.

The appointment came into effect on September 1 and the aim of this partnership is to build awareness of the institution as a top educational "brand" in Africa in the minds of different local and international target markets.

Melissa Powell, MD of 3D Global, explains: "The best universities stand for a single idea, one so simple that it lends itself to transposition in every stakeholder's individual world. This facilitates a sense of complete ownership, which in turn catalyses loyalty to the brand."

Founded in June 1908, The University of Pretoria is a leading South African tertiary institution that is internationally recognised for academic excellence and a focus on quality and local relevance through continuous innovation. The past 10 years have witnessed the institution formerly perceived as "Afrikaner", move on to become a transformed institution highly committed to the development of Africa.

With the recent merger of institutions of higher learning in South Africa, this is a perfect time for the University of Pretoria to take a serious look into its brand. More and more universities are acknowledging the value of their brands, says Michelle Strydom, director of Marketing and Communications at the University of Pretoria.

Institutions of higher learning in South Africa have not generally understood the value and importance of branding... and the present day environment dictates that every institution or organisation take a hard look into its presence in the market place for its survival.

Strydom concludes that with the appointment of 3D Global, her mission is to build a brand that is truly transformed, innovative, deeply rooted in the South African and African socio-economic issues.