

Van Schaik Bookstore to launch rewards app

Van Schaik Bookstore has announced it will launch a lock screen replacement android app that has been integrated with the Van Schaik Rewards loyalty programme. Aimed mainly at students studying at tertiary education institutions around South Africa, the app enables students to earn virtual rands and benefit from other deals in an almost passive manner.

Stephan Erasmus, MD of Van Schaik Bookstores, explains, “The youth are engaged in cellphone technology, whether they are engaging in social media, browsing the Internet, sharing pictures or sending messages to their peers, they spend a lot of time on the phone. By turning this engagement into a way of making money, we believe we can offer our customers rewards that are valuable to them.



Picture: Supplied

“When we repositioned the brand in 2011, we introduced ourselves as a knowledge navigator – somebody that students could partner with on their journey to knowledge and future success. We shifted our focus so that it is all about helping students to get ahead, by growing their knowledge, creating opportunities and leading the way.

“With this in mind, we launched our Rewards Card in 2015, a milestone for an academic textbook supplier and a great way to reward our customers. It has been well received and to date our membership numbers have grown to over 100,000.”

Tangible benefits

With the new Rewards programme, students will be able to generate extra income for themselves, get access to free Wi-Fi and WhatsApp and stay informed and entertained. At the same time, the new app offers an innovative and effective way for partners and tertiary education institutions to reach students.

“Mobile has become a vital platform for advertisers but users often bemoan in-app pop-ups and other intrusive display ads. The app can be targeted based on historical and real-time location data, purchasing patterns and in-app usage, presented to the user in a way that gently calls for engagement. Students will be rewarded each time they interact with the app, even if it just to unlock it.

So how does it work?

The new Van Schaik Rewards App makes the lock screen on android phones a source to view and enjoy interesting content and, at the same time, rewards users with points every time they interact with the lock screen, which includes simply unlocking their screen.



Picture: Supplied

The launch of the app will kick off as part of Van Schaik's annual first semester campaign. When customers spend R750 or more, they will get a new SIM card with 300 MB of free data. Current Rewards Members will be able to qualify as well, but without having to make a purchase first – all they need to do is to go into a bookstore and swap their old Rewards Card for a new SIM card. The SIM card will function just like a normal SIM card and they will be able to load airtime and data as they need it.

Once the SIM is RICA-certified and activated, which customers can do in-store, they will be prompted to download the free Van Schaik Rewards App onto their android phones via a link. Once downloaded, each customer will register and create a unique, customised profile by selecting different topics of interest that he or she wishes to receive. This can range from fashion and beauty, to sport, recipes, celeb news, what is on in their area and even info relevant to the courses they are studying.

To unlock more benefits, such as access to free Wi-Fi at all Always On hotspots and free WhatsApp, as well as a selection of other desirable deals, users will have to spend a minimum of R99 on airtime or data during the preceding 30 days. They can do this by purchasing airtime or data in the form of a Van Schaik Rewards Top-Up, which will be available at any Van Schaik Bookstore or Pick n Pay. Alternatively, they can use the points that they have earned and accumulated in their virtual wallet that exists on the app.



Picture: Supplied

Increasing points

Students can increase points in four different ways:

1. Through earning points on purchases at Van Schaik Bookstores
2. By interacting with advertisements on the app. The app will let advertisements appear on their lock screen. If they swipe to unlock their screens and interact with the content or special deals, they will earn more Van Schaik points. Every time they unlock their screens, they will earn more cash
3. They can add money from their bank accounts
4. They can top-up their wallet at any Van Schaik Bookstore or Pick n Pay

New cellular provider in the house

At the same time as the launch of the new app, Van Schaik Bookstore will be launching itself as a mobile virtual network operator (MVNO), aimed at providing cellular services throughout South Africa. It will be providing its own branded SIM card, called the Van Schaik SIM and will be offering competitive rates in the local cellular market.

“In the digital age, staying connected is a vital part of life – our aim is to make connectivity accessible to everybody. We aim to cater to the ‘need for speed’ intrinsic in the youth culture – ensuring that there is no waiting around to accumulate tangible credits before they can redeem them. We will be collaborating with a number of partners to make the content, offers, freebies and deals as beneficial and interesting as possible, as well as being able to offer students the ability to reap the rewards of their interactions with the app immediately. What is more, is that Van Schaik Bookstore will be giving away R5-million worth of free airtime to the first 100,000 students who register,” concludes Erasmus.