

PSG's FutureLearn acquires Media Works in deal to bolster lifelong education in SA

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Guided learning provider FutureLearn, which is a subsidiary of financial services group PSG, has wholly acquired South Africa's leading adult education and training specialists, Media Works.

The deal, which took effect 1 May 2018, signals the next exciting chapter in both these companies' endeavours to bolster education in South Africa.



FutureLearn provides innovative and accessible education solutions to schools, tutors, parents and learners. Its brands include homeschooling specialists Impaq, on-demand tutoring service Tuta-Me, learning software tools from CAMI, school curriculum and support provider Teach360, and the Arrow Academy school in Centurion.

Media Works is South Africa's leading provider of adult education and training (AET) solutions, having developed a range of adult education and workplace training programmes over the past 22 years.

FutureLearn – which has traditionally targeted school learners and the home schooling environment – acquired Media Works to augment its unique Guided Learning Ecosystem by adding adult education and corporate training to its offerings.

“We believe that our Guided Learning Ecosystem can benefit any learner. This ecosystem aims to improve education outcomes while lowering costs, using a blended learning model. Ultimately, we want to get to a point where we can offer lifelong learning - if you want to learn anything at any point in your life, we can help you with a product or service, and that's essentially why we identified Media Works as a good next step,” says Stefan Botha, CEO of FutureLearn.

“We plan to use our combined knowledge and expertise, which we've built up over many years, to create an even stronger education offering in South Africa. Adult education and training, including Media Works' compelling adult matric solution, is incredibly important for our country,” he adds.

Jackie Carroll, CEO of Media Works, says the deal with FutureLearn enables the company to grow into new markets while also being in the same family as Impaq, CAMI, Tuta-Me and the broader PSG family.

PSG sits behind big South African successes in recent years, ranging from Capitec Bank, PSG Konsult and Curro.

“Media Works will bring the corporate training element to the group, while gaining access to vast educational resources and innovative opportunities,” says Carroll.

“Another very clear point of collaboration is on the technology front. FutureLearn is grounded in effective technology while Media Works is well known for its innovation with regard to online training material and methodologies,” Carroll adds.

Despite having traditionally focused on different markets, the two companies overlap when it comes to using software and similar curriculum content. FutureLearn, for instance, offers Grade 12 level content for school children while Media Works provides the Amended Senior Certificate for adults, which is a Grade 12 equivalent.

By combining forces, FutureLearn and Media Works aim to unlock greater synergies between them and provide more

tailored offerings for the education market.

Media Works' corporate relationships in the adult and workplace training space will also open up new opportunities for FutureLearn, notes Botha.

"This deal means that we'll be able to put together packages that can help the outcomes that learners need to achieve at both the school and workplace level," says Botha.

Commenting on the deal, Carroll further says, "We will be able to bring best practice, to both areas, as we simultaneously develop new markets by maintaining our high standards as well as our innovative use of technology."

A condition of sale is that the Media Works leadership team remain in place. This means that Media Works' current dealings will not change, and that clients will continue to receive the service that they are accustomed to, delivered by the same committed team that they know well.

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