

PRESS RELEASE

Making good on your promise

We speak to Hans Hanekom, CEO of leading manufacturer and supplier to the building industry, Swartland, about the five building blocks of an effective brand promise.

28 February 2019, Johannesburg: A brand promise is an essential part of any successfully branded business. While a strong brand evokes emotion - inspiring people to feel connected to a business - a strong brand promise assists in solidifying the relationship the business has with its customers.

Hans Hanekom, from leading manufacturer and supplier to the building industry, Swartland, explains: "A brand is a name or symbol that identifies the goods or services from a particular business as distinct from other businesses. A brand promise on the other hand, is the image or emotional feeling that people associate with a business. As such, a brand or customer promise is what helps a customer recognise a brand, even without the visual aid of a tangible product, logo or slogan."

Swartland is a successful third-generation family-owned business that has been operating for over 67 years. In that time it has undergone many changes, but up until now, it has never had a brand promise. So why now? Hanekom explains: "Swartland is built on world class manufacturing principles and one of its fundamental pillars is to strive for continuous improvement. Over the years, Swartland has never had a customer promise - we have stated what we do as a business, communicated about our products and the company's expansion into products other than windows and doors. Now, the time has come to move the business into the world of customer promises and set expectations for our customers. This will give the company something to live by, and something that we can be held accountable for."

Hans says that Swartland's new brand promise – "Experiene Quality" – gives it a clearly distilled statement of purpose to relate to its internal and external community: "A brand promise should define your entire business and should enhance every aspect of your company. Swartland's 'brand promise for example, affects every single aspect of the company, both internally and externally. It represents the company's eternal quest for achieving excellence in everything it does – from where we source our materials, to our manufacturing processes, choosing other products to add to our ranges, distribution, and client service. Any time there is an interaction with Swartland, the person should walk away feeling that that was a quality experience."

Creating an effective brand promise can be quite a difficult exercise, as you have to distil the essence of what the company does, how it does it, and what makes it unique. However, it is an imperative part of any marketing strategy as it is the brand promise that connects your brand with your customers and your employees, says Hanekom: "By ensuring that you consistently keep your brand

promise, you will be able to develop a deep and lasting positive relationship between your company, its customers and its employees.”

So now that we know why it is important to develop a brand promise, Hans provides an outline of the five building blocks that need to be considered in order to create an effective brand promise:

- 1.) **Short and sweet:** A brand promise is not a mission statement – it should not be long-winded, but rather short and catchy, and it should reinforce the essence of what your business stands for.
- 2.) **Credibility is essential:** Creating a brand promise can be difficult, but ensuring that it is consistently reinforced and present throughout every aspect of a business can be challenging. Remember, every time a customer’s experience does not live up to a brand promise, the brand will be weakened.
- 3.) **Stand out from the crowd:** Don’t blend in with your competitors – discover what makes your company unique and communicate that. This will go beyond mere products and services, to the heart of the company and its employees.
- 4.) **Make it memorable:** A brand promise should impact every aspect of the business, and in order to do this, it needs to be memorable enough for all your employees to embrace and enforce it.
- 5.) **Motivate and inspire:** An effective brand promise will establish an emotional connection by inspiring and motivating people in a positive way. Never promise anything that you can’t guarantee you will be able to deliver.

ENDS

Released on behalf of Swartland (www.swartland.co.za) by The Line (www.theline.co.za).