

PROPERTY^{POINT}

A GROWTHPOINT INITIATIVE

MEDIA RELEASE FROM PROPERTY POINT: A GROWTHPOINT INITIATIVE

April 2016

Entrepreneurial success is celebrated as 10 SMEs graduate from Growthpoint's Property Point enterprise development programme

Ten thriving small businesses have graduated from the rigorous two-year enterprise development incubation programme offered by Property Point: a Growthpoint Initiative.

These companies, which all offer skills and services for the property industry, are: BLK Construction owned by Kabelo and Khomtjo Mopai; Clear Path Projects owned by Xolisile Nkosi; Creative Axis Architects owned by Anil Parshotam and Bhavik Ranchod; Good Future Painting owned by Irene Thembo; Integrico owned by Lettie Ngobeni; Lady T Protection Services owned by Thando Baloyi; Makasela Air owned by Thiyani Khoza; Nopa Cleaning & Projects owned by Pamela Nyingwa and Nokhwezi Boo; SKS Business Solutions owned by Sipiwe Zwane; and Thatego Holdings owned by Thabo and Dorcas Malefetse.

Their success was celebrated the graduation ceremony held in Sandton Central where Estienne de Klerk, MD of Growthpoint Properties, commended the entrepreneurs' hard work, determination and perseverance, and congratulated the companies on graduating from the intense Property Point incubation programme.

He pointed out that Growthpoint itself is no stranger to starting out small.

In 2001, Growthpoint had nine properties worth R100 million and a market capitalisation of R30 million in 2001. Today, 15 years later, Growthpoint is the largest South African primary listed REIT and a JSE ALSI Top 40 Index company. Growthpoint is a FTSE/JSE Socially Responsible Investment Index company and an index component of the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI). It owns and manages a diversified portfolio of 474 properties in South Africa, 57 properties in Australia through its investment in GOZ and a 50% interest in the properties at V&A Waterfront, Cape Town. Growthpoint's consolidated property assets are valued at over R110 billion and it has a market capitalization of R70 billion.

Growthpoint is passionate about helping its partners thrive, especially small businesses.

De Klerk said: "From the outset, we appreciated the property industry's impact goes beyond bricks and mortar. It also effects communities and those living in them. When looking for ways to work with small businesses, create jobs, drive transformation and influence sustainability, we initially struggled to find the skillsets we needed. This is why Property Point was established."

He adds: "It is incredibly rewarding to see the progress of our Property Point class of graduates and the economic stimulation coming out of the programme. In the last year alone, our graduates have achieved 35% growth in revenue, created 134 sustainable jobs and received 557 hours of training. These are the building blocks of success that Property Point grows each year."

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Since its inception in 2008, Property Point has made significant impact by creating financial capital of R429 million worth of contracts accessed by its beneficiary companies. Of this money in the bank accounts of small businesses, R171 million came from Growthpoint's own procurement, with the remaining R258 million of contracts competed for and won in the open market. Two years after engaging with Property Point, beneficiaries companies are reporting a 76% average annual growth rate in turnover.

The 114 Property Point beneficiary companies so far have directly created 1,208 sustainable fulltime jobs.

Shawn Theunissen, head of Property Point and Corporate Social Responsibility at Growthpoint noted the ability of these small businesses to create jobs has exceeded Growthpoint's own. Growthpoint has just over 700 employees.

"Small businesses create jobs, not big business," said Theunissen. "Property Point's goals go beyond growing small businesses to also creating an environment that provides more opportunities for small business."

Property Point's ambitious vision aims to transform the very way we do business in South Africa.

"Working with small businesses can be a high risk. If a business is small and black-owned, the perception of risk can be even higher. Our programme aims to minimise the risk of working with small business, but also the perception of that risk. We do this by building the credibility of small businesses and helping entrepreneurs to build their reputation."

The ten graduating businesses have already proven their success and sustainability, growing their own reputations and that of South African small business.

Rewarding excellence, Growthpoint gave three outstanding graduates a boost for their business.

Integrigo was awarded R70,000 for its business, based on its top performance. Sharing the runner-up position, each winning R25,000 for their businesses, were Makasela Air and Thatego Holdings. The businesses were assessed by an external panel of professionals.

In addition, several special awards were given by Property Point for outstanding achievement. The awards were given to SKS Business Solutions for wealth creation, Nopa Cleaning & Projects for job creation, Creative Axis Architects for innovation and Thatego Holdings for being the best Property Point brand ambassador.

And, the entire property industry stands to benefit from the services of these professional, experienced and innovative business.

While a Growthpoint initiative, Property Point has become a platform for the entire property industry to work together to drive the development of small businesses in the sector forward.

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“The success of Property Point and its beneficiary companies is also the success of our growing base of partners, such as Growthpoint, The Business Place and Attacq,” noted Theunissen.

Keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony, Founder of Headboy Industries Inc. Ludwick Marishane, inspired the graduates with his own entrepreneurship journey. He shared his approach to obstacles and the relentless pursuit of the successes behind DryBath, which he invented while still at school to become the country’s youngest patent-filer.

He encouraged the Property Point graduates to continue run their businesses well and to build wealth and a good capital base.

He also praised them for doing a great service simply by creating jobs. “You can be extremely proud. There are tons of unemployed young people out there and we need to make sure they have something to do,” said Marishane.

Continuing the positive impacts of the Property Point programme, Theunissen believes that Property Point has the potential to partner with even more big property companies and small businesses.

“We build real estate assets, but in doing this we are also nation building. Growthpoint builds beautiful, sustainable developments, but we also build sustainable small businesses for the South African landscape,” said Theunissen.

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