

Hometaiment and sustainable living: New Electrolux SA MD shares growth opportunities

International home appliances maker Electrolux expects strong demand to continue as a result of the stay-at-home trend prompted by the Covid-19 pandemic.



Source: Electrolux

Helping to capitalise on growth opportunities in the South African market is Murray Crow, the new Electrolux managing director for SA, who has previously held posts as MD of Whirlpool South Africa and Home of Living Brands.

Crow comments, “For so many of us, our homes aren’t just a place to live – they are offices, schools, gyms and so much more. With people spending so much more time at home, we are seeing a lot more interest in home improvements. It is our expectation that locally we will see positive growth in 2021 in terms of volume, price and product mix.”



Murray Crow, Electrolux South Africa MD

Rise of ‘hometaiment’

“Consumers are cocooning and equipping their homes for a ‘hometainment staycation’ because they never know when the next hard lockdown may be enforced,” says Crow. “More people are also cooking as well as entertaining at home more often, revealing an obvious opportunity for growth in the appliance and home entertainment space.”

Electrolux saw this trend evidenced in higher sales in small home appliances like kettles, coffee makers, microwaves and vacuum cleaners, as well as power tools, printers and laptops, once online retailers were permitted to sell these goods online and in stores during lighter lockdown phases.

Consumers want to show off their new cooking skills, and home improvements post lockdown by hosting their ‘safe’ inner social circle. This means for many that the kitchen and television will be the centerpiece of home entertainment shared with family and friends. High-tech appliances are increasingly in high demand.



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Sustainability journey

Another shift the company has seen is a greater consumer focus on health, hygiene and sustainability. Fortunately for Crow, his personal sustainable development goals, which include incorporating solar energy into his own home, sync with the company’s long-held values to protect the planet and provide consumers with health-enhancing options.

Electrolux states it has a "tremendous opportunity" to offer products and solutions that enable consumers to save energy, water and reduce their environmental footprint overall.

In keeping with the times, Crow will lead the South African office’s contribution to Electrolux’s global sustainability programme - which drives the company’s focus on doing business in a way that promotes better eating, better garment care and a better home environment. Electrolux also has plans to become climate neutral in operations.

Working towards the company’s 2030 goal of zero carbon emissions, Electrolux has invested R15m with the introduction of renewable energy at its industrial site in Benoni with various solar panel installations.



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Importance of brand names in SA

In South Africa, Crow said he anticipated that the relaunch of the AEG brand in 2022 would serve to entrench and grow the business's position in the country.

"Consumers want a brand that is recognised by their family and friends, but affordability, quality and innovation are even more important. In addition to the well-known Electrolux floor care brand, AEG will be re-established in its rightful place in the market for major appliances, reinforcing its very strong heritage and position as a premium brand once again," adds Crow.

"We will have hero products across all categories of major appliances, including premium freestanding ovens (mountain range), gas on glass, ceramic/induction hobs and air fryer ovens. ProSteam washing machines and Comfort lift dishwashers are amongst many exciting new product introductions," he concludes.

Electrolux employs 803 people in South Africa producing and selling the Kwikot, AEG and Electrolux brands.

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