

# Bernice Samuels new FNB head of media

Bernice Samuels has been appointed head of media, First National Bank (FNB) announced this morning, Tuesday, 22 June 2010. Formerly head of marketing and corporate affairs at MTN South Africa, Samuels replaces Gisele Wertheim-Aymes, who left earlier this year to join her family's premium medical and bioceutical company.



Bernice Samuels, newly appointed FNB head of media.

Samuels will be responsible for the cohesive management of FNB's media strategy across the various segments within the group.

Said Derek Carstens, FNB brand director, "We are delighted to welcome Bernice to our team. Her knowledge and experience gained at MTNSA as head of marketing and corporate affairs, as well as her sound experience across various business sectors, will assist FNB to keep abreast with the latest in media and branding strategy and methodology.

"Our brand promise of helpfulness - How can we help you - is at the core of everything we do, and we are excited to start witnessing Bernice's enthusiasm to bring this to life."

Commenting on her appoint, Samuels said: "FNB is a well-respected market leader and I look forward to the opportunity to manage a cohesive media strategy for the group. The role will enable me to exert my local and international experience across FNB's South Africa and Africa footprint, as well as to ensure synergies across the group in an attempt to effectively communicate and position the bank in the market."

## Fifteen years of experience

With more than 15 years' experience in business and marketing strategy development and implementation, Samuels has been a key driver behind developing well-known corporate brands in SA and Africa. Her professional career spans large multi-nationals within the telecoms, broadcasting, information technology and brewing sectors.

Samuels' career at MTN started in September 2001 as GM strategy and marketing communications, before being promoted to GM: Brand MTN. From 2005 - 2009, she served as head of marketing and corporate affairs at MTN, responsible for the design, implementation and facilitation of the corporation's annual marketing plan.

Having joint responsibility with various business units in achieving customer numbers and revenue resulted in success that included the repositioning of the MTN brand, where the "Go" campaign resulted in MTN entering SA's favourite brands for the first time ever. She also directed negotiations on FIFA World Cup 2010 and formulated MTNSA's strategic approach and budget in this regard.

Samuels conceptualised and directed the implementation of key marketing campaigns, including the MTN Big Y'ello Sale, MTN Y'ello Freedom and integrated MTN Y'ello Summer.

## **Employed at M-Net**

From December 1996 until August 2001, Samuels was employed by M-Net, first as head of strategic development, and later as CEO of Channel O and CEO of New Media. As the latter, she played an instrumental role in launching M-Net's online presence, [www.mnet.co.za](http://www.mnet.co.za). She also developed the e-media business plan and project managed the technical aspects, infrastructure, design and commercialisation of the Big Brother website, [www.bigbrothersa.com](http://www.bigbrothersa.com).

Samuels' academic background includes winning the Bennie Slome Full Scholarship to Wits Business School for an MBA, 1992 - 1994, as well as a SAB scholarship at UCT, 1986 - 1989.

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