

Netcare's values the answer to its brand success

Issued by [Martina Nicholson Associates](#)

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A study on the criteria for successful services brands, published in the European Journal of Marketing, found that an organisation's genuinely felt values played the most important role when building a successful services brand.

Success, this study found, is more likely when everyone internally believes in their brand's values. When management behaviour is based on genuine conviction, shared values are more likely. Through shared values, there is a greater likelihood of commitment, internal loyalty, clearer brand understanding, and importantly, consistent brand delivery across all stakeholders.

A South African example of a successful services brand is that of Netcare, the private hospital group that delivers a variety of healthcare services, and more specifically its well-loved sub brand, Netcare 911. The success of the Netcare brand was recognised in the Sunday Times/Markinor annual Top Brands Survey, with it being stated that "Netcare 911 had helped Netcare to leap to the top of SA's healthcare brands in the healthcare facilities section of Top Brands".

As a company whose every employee embraces the Netcare values, this award comes as no surprise.

"Our core value is care," says Dr Richard Friedland, CEO of Netcare. "From this value flow four others, namely dignity, participation, truth and passion. These values are entrenched in every action, decision and intervention we have with our patients, their families, the wider communities we serve, fellow colleagues and all stakeholders."

Friedland believes the fact that its employees and healthcare partners truly live out these values has led to the company delivering the kind of quality care that only the best healthcare professionals can feel proud of.

"Winning this award is therefore a tribute to our quality of care. It is also a tribute to the skill and support of our dedicated team of doctors, nurses, paramedics, pharmacists and support staff," he says.

Healthcare is probably the most difficult sector within the services industry when it comes to pleasing clients and building a strong, positive brand. Tumi Nkosi, Managing Director of Netcare 911, believes that this is because branding is very much about perception, and people's perception of good service within a healthcare context differs widely.

"In healthcare you deal with people's lives in a much more profound manner than you would in any other sector. Daily you have to confront emotions, life and death situations and heartbreakingly sad stories. Yet you also get to share in moments of great joy and witness medical miracles. By genuinely believing in the Netcare values and living them out on a daily basis, our staff and healthcare partners manage to meet and exceed the expectations and perceptions of those we serve. I am very proud of them all!"

The fact that the 'healthcare facilities' award fell under the Business-to-Business category of the survey also reveals respect for the Netcare and Netcare 911 brand on a corporate level. Key questions posed to the more than 400 top executives of major South African companies revolved around their spontaneous awareness of the name and brand and the trust and confidence the organisation inspires. It also included a measure of loyalty and commitment.

"This is a strong vote of confidence for the brand that is testimony to the trust and confidence that people have in Netcare," concludes Friedland.

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