

Bilingual websites for SA shopping malls promote inclusivity

South African property development and services company, Eris Property Group, has launched bilingual websites and chatbots for The Mall, KWT and Platteklouf Shopping Centre.



The websites, conceptualised, designed and developed by Cape Town-based boutique marketing agency, The Blue Room, are meant to celebrate South Africa's diversity and help forge lasting bonds with consumers. As the late President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, once said: "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart."

The first website is an isiXhosa / English [website for The Mall, KWT](#) in the Eastern Cape town of King William's Town. The second website is an Afrikaans / English [website for Platteklouf Shopping Centre](#) – a shopping centre in the Cape Town northern suburb of Platteklouf in the Western Cape. Both malls are owned by Momentum Metropolitan Life Limited and is managed by Eris Property Group.

The Mall, KWT's consumers are predominantly amaXhosa, English or bilingual, whereas Platteklouf Shopping Centre's market is predominantly Afrikaans, English or both.

The websites offer consumers information about the shopping centres, their stores, events and more. It also features a chatbot that communicates in the respective languages.



Diversity without inclusivity is just skin deep

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Conversations with shoppers

Marketing manager, Nobambo Goduka said: "We are always looking for exciting, innovative ways of connecting with our shoppers and we are thrilled about the launch of these two websites. In a diverse country such as ours, which has 11 official languages, it is important that we celebrate these identities in an inclusive manner."

Goduka continued: “The time of speaking at consumers needs to be a thing of the past. Now is the time for us to have actual conversations with them. We need to come together with our shoppers on a human level and what better way than through communicating with them in their mother tongue?”

Commenting on the new websites, founding member and CEO of The Blue Room, Andreana Holmes, said: “We have brought together one of the oldest mediums, language, as well as a newer medium, the internet, to break down boundaries between consumer and brand.”

Project lead, Jono Duguid, who is a digital marketing specialist at The Blue Room added: “Globally, we are seeing a move towards the celebration of diversity through inclusivity – especially online – and it has been really special to create these two solutions for Eris Property Group.”

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