

The Woodford Group hits new heights

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Earlier this year, the Woodford Group mapped out a plan for taking their offering to the next level via a comprehensive suite of services based on the concept of mobility. Six months later, we look at how far they've come with their plan.



When the Woodford Group's CEO, Owais Suleman, speaks about mobility, it sounds more like a way of thinking and philosophy than a noun. "Mobility means a lot to us when it comes to what we want to achieve. Simply, it's about movement and keeping people moving so they can grow, but on a deeper level, it's also about what we can do to ensure that this becomes a reality," he says.

In March this year, Suleman outlined a roadmap that would see the Woodford Group's divisions innovate and improve by asking the question: "How do we keep people moving?"

This was a question that permeated throughout the company and prescribed key objectives and principles to aspire to.

For its car rental division, for instance, Woodford Car Hire – South Africa's largest independent agency – aimed to contribute to the goal by not only taking its fleet to new customers whilst also improving its offering, but also by committing to a goal of zero complaints from customers.

Its vehicle subscription division, WhyBuyCars, set a target of taking the service to the broader market with an online process that cuts out red tape and turnaround time. Its auction website, Woodford Bid, was tasked with encouraging everyday people to list their vehicle on the platform and benefit by selling to registered dealers only at the price they set, and not a cent below.

The gauntlet laid down followed a strategy that looked at both internal and external tactics within the Group, with both minute and mammoth tasks set. Everything – from using less water when washing cars to doubling the size of the fleet – became part of an overall plan to reshape the company.

So how has Woodford fared six months later?

Unbelievably, each division has hit all of their respective markers, and are all well on their way to achieving their annual targets.

Woodford Car Hire, for example, launched a customer service excellence campaign that promoted ethical behaviour and a commitment to promises. The campaign addresses all the negative sentiments around car hire and aims to rectify them. Overall, it's been a resounding success, with almost no complaints received, either directly or on review platforms. The effect has been simple, but the process has seen an overhaul of training programmes and better use of technology and systems. Woodford Car Hire's market share has been steadily growing as well – increasing to 8% in the past year and adding to that month-by-month.

The division also said it would bring car rental to where people are with branches within popular centres or hubs. Mid-October saw the opening of the fourth such branch. Customers can now find Woodford in Umhlanga, Springfield (Durban), Hatfield, and Sandton. More branches are on the cards in 2023.

Increasing the fleet to meet the demands of the market and get more people to make use of Woodford was no mean feat, but since the beginning of the year, Woodford has purchased more than 1,000 cars and has increased its marketing footprint exponentially.

Woodford Bid has launched a separate weekly auction to encourage private sellers and dealers, WhyBuyCars can get you behind the wheel in under 24 hours from application to collection, and the overall team of staff has grown month-by-month.

The subsequent effect is that more people than ever are making use of Woodford – either on a short- or long-term basis, or even engaging with them to see what solutions they can offer or how they can partner with the company. This mission has most recently seen the announcement of a partnership with Enterprise Holdings – the world's largest vehicle rental business – that will see Woodford operating Enterprise Rent-A-Car, National Car Rental, and Alamo Rent A Car at all Woodford locations and across Southern Africa in 2023.

As Suleman explains: "This vision of mobility drives us, and we want to keep our promises of coming up with service and solutions that allow people to thrive. This means leaving no stone unturned when it comes to mobility and what we can do with people. There's nowhere we won't go."

The Group shows no signs of letting up, even with its successes over the past few months. The company is enjoying unprecedented levels of growth and revenue, with forecasts being achieved and surpassed.

"We refuse to stop," says Suleman. "We're going to take things to the next level when it comes to mobility." For Woodford, that means becoming the leading mobility provider not only in South Africa, but in the SADC region as well.

Follow Woodford's progress by visiting any of their brands to find out about their solutions:

www.woodford.co.za

www.woodbid.co.za

www.whybuycars.co.za

- ° **A world-class experience with Enterprise** 10 Oct 2023
- ° **Woodford Car Hire - The very best in hospitality** 28 Sep 2023
- ° **Long-term rental to suit your lifestyle** 6 Sep 2023
- ° **ECR's official mobility partner** 11 Aug 2023
- ° **Enterprise Rent-A-Car South Africa and the Sunshine Tour announce partnership** 26 Jul 2023

Woodford Group



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