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WINDHOEK OBSERVER



NAMIBIA'S BEST BRANDS 2026

Special
Supplement



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Our impact extends beyond financial products and services. Through the work we do, we help people build brighter futures, businesses invest in growth and retirement funds improve member outcomes. In turn, these contributions support stronger communities and a more resilient Namibian economy.

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Lazarus Jacobs

Chairperson and Convener
Brand Namibia Council

"Together, let us build businesses that earn trust, brands that command respect and an economy that competes through innovation and excellence."

Nations are remembered not only for the resources they possess, but for the reputation they earn.

In the modern global economy, a country's greatest competitive advantage is increasingly measured by the strength of its brands. Brands have become powerful expressions of national identity. They tell the story of a people, reflect the values of a nation, inspire confidence in investors, attract visitors, create employment and build enduring prosperity. They are, in many respects, the modern flag bearers of a country's ambitions.

It is therefore both an honour and a privilege, on behalf of the Brand Namibia Council, to introduce this special commemorative supplement celebrating the 2026 Best Namibian Brands Awards. This publication is more than a record of an awards ceremony.

It is a celebration of Namibian excellence, enterprise and innovation. It is a tribute to businesses that have chosen not merely to compete, but to lead; not merely to produce, but to inspire confidence; and not merely to serve markets, but to build legacies.

The Best Namibian Brands Awards have, over the years, become one of the country's most significant platforms for recognising excellence in business and branding.

They remind us that behind every respected brand lies

an extraordinary journey, one of courage, sacrifice, resilience and unwavering commitment to quality. Every winning brand represents years of investment, thousands of decisions made with integrity and an enduring promise to customers.

Recognition is important because excellence deserves to be celebrated. When we honour our finest brands, we inspire countless others to raise their standards. We encourage innovation. We reward consistency. We affirm that reputation matters. Most importantly, we create role models for aspiring entrepreneurs and future business leaders who dare to dream of building the next great Namibian brand.

This is why these awards matter far beyond the evening on which they are presented. They create aspirations. They elevate standards. They strengthen confidence in Namibian enterprise and reinforce the belief that our businesses can compete with the very best on the African continent and across the world.

For Namibia, branding is no longer simply a marketing discipline. It has become an economic imperative.

As global competition intensifies, nations are increasingly distinguished not by what they produce alone, but by how their products, services and institutions are perceived. Value today is created as much by trust, innovation and reputation as it is by production itself. Countries that consistently produce respected brands attract investment, command premium prices, grow exports and build resilient economies.

Namibia must embrace this reality.

We must consciously build a brand-led economy, an economy where reputation becomes a national asset and where branding is recognised as a strategic driver of economic transformation. Such an economy rewards innovation, protects intellectual property, encourages creativity and enables businesses to compete on quality rather than price alone.

Fortunately, Namibia possesses every ingredient required to build such a future.

We are blessed with political stability, sound democratic institutions, exceptional natural beauty, abundant natural resources, remarkable cultural diversity and a resilient entrepreneurial spirit. From our ancient deserts to our vast savannahs, from where the desert meets the Atlantic Ocean to the

fertile plains that sustain our agricultural communities, ours is a nation endowed with a unique story that deserves to be shared with the world.

But stories alone do not build prosperity. They must be translated into trusted brands.

Our agricultural products should become premium African brands.

Our tourism experiences should become globally recognised symbols of authentic adventure.

Our mining sector should increasingly be associated not only with natural resources but with responsible stewardship and innovation.

Our financial institutions, manufacturers, retailers, technology companies, creative industries and emerging entrepreneurs should proudly carry the Namibian identity into regional and international markets.

When Namibian businesses invest in building strong brands, they are simultaneously investing in Namibia itself. Every successful brand strengthens our national reputation. Every respected company expands our economic influence. Every internationally recognised Namibian product becomes an ambassador for our country. This vision lies at the heart of the Brand Namibia Council.

The Council was established from a simple but profound conviction, that Namibia's future competitiveness depends upon the deliberate development of strong, respected and globally competitive brands.

Our responsibility extends far beyond recognising excellence through awards. We seek to cultivate a national culture that appreciates branding as a strategic economic asset. We aspire to educate businesses, empower entrepreneurs, encourage research, facilitate collaboration and create opportunities that enable Namibian brands to flourish.

In the months and years ahead, the Council will continue championing initiatives that promote brand education, youth entrepreneurship, women-led enterprises, thought leadership, innovation and collaborative partnerships across industries. We believe that the

strongest national brands emerge when business, government, academia, the creative industries and civil society work together towards a shared vision.

Brand building must become a national movement.

It cannot remain the responsibility of marketing departments alone.

Every entrepreneur, every small business owner, every innovator and every institution contributes to shaping the image of Namibia. Collectively, we are all custodians of Brand Namibia. Equally significant is the strategic partnership between the Brand Namibia Council and Brand Africa.



This partnership represents one of the most important building blocks in positioning Namibia within the broader African branding movement. Brand Africa has, for more than a decade, championed the growth, recognition and celebration of African brands through credible research, continental benchmarking and advocacy. It has consistently challenged African businesses to believe in the value they create and to compete confidently on the global stage.

Our partnership allows Namibia to participate meaningfully in this continental conversation.

It enables us to measure ourselves against Africa's best, to learn from international best practice and to celebrate those Namibian brands that continue to distinguish themselves through excellence, innovation and consistency.

More importantly, this collaboration reflects a shared belief that Africa's future prosperity will increasingly depend upon the strength of African-owned brands.

The African Continental Free Trade Area presents unprecedented opportunities for businesses across the continent. Yet these opportunities will belong to those organisations whose brands inspire confidence beyond their national borders. Namibia must therefore prepare today for the markets of tomorrow by investing intentionally in brand development.

I also wish to acknowledge our valued partner, the Windhoek Observer, for producing this important commemorative publication. Throughout its proud history, the newspaper has consistently championed national dialogue, entrepreneurship, innovation and economic progress. By dedicating this supplement to Namibia's leading brands, it reinforces the importance of recognising excellence and documenting the remarkable stories behind our nation's business success.

To every organisation recognised at this year's Best Namibian Brands Awards, I offer my warmest congratulations. Your achievements extend far beyond commercial success. You have become custodians of Namibia's reputation and ambassadors of our national potential. Through your commitment to excellence, you demonstrate what is possible when vision is matched by discipline and ambition is matched by execution.

To those still striving for this recognition, your journey continues. Every iconic brand was once an unknown idea. Great brands are built through patience, consistency, integrity and an unwavering pursuit of excellence.

May this special supplement inspire every entrepreneur, every executive, every marketer and every young innovator to believe that Namibia can produce brands admired not only across Africa but throughout the world.

Together, let us build businesses that earn trust, brands that command respect and an economy that competes through innovation and excellence.

Together, let us shape a future where the words Made in Namibia become synonymous with quality, integrity and distinction.

And together, let us build proudly Namibian brands that reflect the aspirations of our people and are admired by generations to come.



BRAND AFRICA & AFRICA'S BEST BRANDS

Brand Africa 100 | Africa's Best Brands

Recognising the critical role brands play in shaping national identity, global reputation, and economic competitiveness, Brand Africa was founded in 2010 as a non-profit initiative to drive a brand-led African renaissance.

Its flagship initiative, Brand Africa 100 | Africa's Best Brands, launched in 2011, is the continent's most comprehensive, consumer-led and research-based ranking of Africa's most admired brands.

Determining Africa's Best Brands

The rankings are based on a rigorous consumer survey across over 30 African countries; representing more than 85% of the continent's GDP and population, conducted in eight languages from Arabic to Swahili. Research is carried out using user-oriented, market-appropriate methodologies, including face-to-face, mobile, and web surveys.

Led independently on behalf of Brand Africa by GeoPoll and Kantar, two of the world's most respected research firms, the survey is supported by regional partners, with strategic analysis by Kantar and Brand Leadership.

Over the past 16 years, Brand Africa 100 has consistently shown that Africans still rank non-African brands as the most admired in Africa, but African brands have rebounded to 15% of the Top 100.

What Sets Brand Africa 100 Apart?

- Independently conducted by world-class research partners (GeoPoll and Kantar).
 - Entirely brand-neutral – not sponsored or influenced by any brand.
- Deeply consumer-led, capturing authentic African preferences and insights.

Why Brands Matter

A brand is more than a logo or slogan - it's how the world sees a country and how that perception drives its economic and social fortunes.

Strong brands are engines of industrialisation, job creation, investment, trade, and tourism. They reflect a country's competitiveness, shape its global identity, enhance its influence and foster pride and unity across the continent.

WWW.BRAND.AFRICA

Thought Leadership

Thebe Ikalafeng

Founder and Chairman, Brand Africa

Beyond the Rankings

Admiration has always been at the heart of what Brand Africa set out to measure. Sixteen years ago, we chose to ask Africans directly which brands they hold in the highest regard, and why, because admiration is the truest starting signal a market can give: *it tells us where trust already lives, where loyalty is being earned, and where a continent's own institutions are beginning to be seen as equal to the world's best.*

Namibia's results this year are, first and foremost, a genuine expression of that admiration, and they deserve to be read as such.

What sixteen years of this study have also taught us is that admiration is a precise diagnostic instrument, not just a scoreboard. Because we measure it consistently, category by category, year on year, it gives us a firm metric for something far harder to see directly: the gap between the brands Namibians admire and the brands Namibians actually choose.

That gap is not a flaw in the admiration Namibians feel for their own institutions. It is the clearest map available of where the work of turning admiration into preference, and preference into market share, still needs to happen.

That's why I'm excited about the Brand Namibia Council and its purpose: to mobilise Namibian business and industry, across sectors, not just the handful that already dominate consumer recall, to drive brand-led Namibian economic development.

That means bringing manufacturers, exporters, financiers, regulators and brand owners into the same room to ask a harder set of questions than any single survey can answer alone: where is Namibian capital chasing Namibian brand equity, and where is it not?

Which Namibian categories have the raw material, the skills base and the consumer trust to compete regionally, and what is actually stopping them? What would it take for the admiration this study measures every year to show up instead in export

receipts, in regional market share, in Namibian brands that are boardroom decisions in Gaborone, Lusaka and Cape Town rather than only Windhoek?

This year's rankings have also grown to reflect Namibia's economy more completely, and that expansion matters in its own right. We have added Tourism & Hospitality, a sector that is among the largest direct contributors to Namibian GDP and deserved its own lens rather than a passing mention.

We have added Agri-Business, in recognition that food security is a first-order national priority, not a peripheral category. And we have separated Mobile Money & Fintech from Financial Services more broadly, because the impact of this sector on how ordinary Namibians save, transact and access credit has become significant enough to demand its own measure rather than sit inside a wider banking category. Each addition sharpens the picture of where Namibian brand equity is being built, and where it still needs to be.

I would offer three convictions to guide the work ahead, drawn from what this study has shown us, in Namibia and across thirty other African markets, over sixteen years. The first is that building brand equity takes time.

Every Namibian brand that competes convincingly against global names in this year's results has done so on the back of twenty, fifty, in some cases well over a hundred years of continuous presence.

There is no shortcut available to a country that wants more of its brands to compete at that level. There is only the discipline of starting the clock earlier and staying the course longer than most shareholders find comfortable. The second is that infrastructure is brand strategy, whether anyone in the marketing department realises it or not.

The categories where local ownership converts most reliably into consumer preference are, almost without exception, the categories where Namibian business has also built the physical and institutional infrastructure, distribution networks, branch footprints, broadcast reach, to match. Where that infrastructure is thin, so is the loyalty, no matter how much national pride a brand can borrow.

The third is that pride and preference are measured separately for a reason. Namibians, like consumers across this continent, consistently credit African and

Namibian institutions with contributing to a better future, even in categories where they still choose to spend their money elsewhere. Admiration and purchase are different acts, and a market that wants to grow its own brands has to close the distance between them deliberately, not assume it will close itself.

I want to close by congratulating every Namibian name that placed this year. Each has earned its admiration the only way it can be earned on this continent: patiently, and over time – and validated by consumers whose voice made this study possible.



Namibia's Best Brands: Home Ground Advantage

"For the 7th consecutive year of Namibia's participation in the Brand Africa 100, the pattern holds: Namibian brands win where they have built the infrastructure, the distribution and the decades of consumer trust. MTC takes the Grand Prix, Windhoek Beer is the nation's most admired brand overall, and a new Brand Namibia Council has been announced to turn that admiration into market share."

Windhoek Beer is Namibia's most admired brand. MTC is close behind at #2, with Telecom Namibia completing the podium at #3.

All three are Namibian. In a market where continental data consistently shows local brands struggling to break into the top tier of consumer admiration, Namibia's results read almost as a rebuttal: *this is a country whose top three most admired brands, without exception, are homegrown.*

MTC nonetheless takes the headline honour.

It wins the Brand Africa Grand Prix as Namibia's best performing brand overall, a distinction built on leadership across telecoms, sustainability and the *"Good for Africa"* pride rankings rather than on a single strong score. It is a breadth argument as much as a ranking one: *MTC does not simply sell the most, it is trusted the most, across the widest range of measures.*

WHERE THE INFRASTRUCTURE IS, SO IS THE LOYALTY

The 2026 results confirm what six previous years of Namibian data have shown: *brand strength tracks with decades of physical and commercial presence.* Windhoek Beer, Tafel Lager and Namibia Breweries take all three positions in the Beer & Alcohol category, a clean sweep for Namibia's brewing incumbent, with Windhoek Beer's score of 1.90 more than three times Tafel Lager's 0.52.

In Telecoms, MTC leads on 1.72, with Telecom Namibia close behind on 1.11; and TN Mobile trails both on 0.37. Banking tells a similar story, though the final data narrows the Namibian side of that podium to a single name rather than three. Bank Windhoek



is the country's most admired banking brand on a score of 0.61, and it backs that up further down the ranking: **#2 in Good for Africa and #3 in Sustainability among Namibian brands.**

Among non-Namibian banks, FNB leads on 0.30, ahead of Standard Bank/Stانبic (0.21) and Nedbank (0.10), a reminder that even where South African financial institutions have scale across the region, they still compete for a separate podium in Namibia rather than displacing local names outright. Retail is more one-sided than earlier figures suggested.

Woermanbrock is the only Namibian retail brand to register a ranked score this year, on 0.16, while Shoprite/Checkers leads the non-Namibian list on 0.83, ahead of SPAR (0.63) and Pep (0.61).

Consumer staples split more evenly: *Namib Mills (0.70) and Namibian Dairies (0.66) lead locally, against Bokomo (2.66), Nestlé (0.95) and Colgate (0.22) internationally, though Bokomo's score alone exceeds the combined Namibian staples podium.*

TWO SECTORS NOW GETTING THEIR OWN SCORECARD

Tourism & Hospitality earns its place among this year's categories because of what it means to the wider Namibian economy, not only to the brands themselves. The sector contributes an estimated 6.9% of national GDP, around N\$14.3 billion, and is officially recognised as the country's third-largest source of GDP.

It employs tens of thousands of Namibians directly, close to 8% of total formal employment on the most recent government assessment, and international arrivals have rebounded strongly since the pandemic: *more than 860,000 international visitors were recorded in 2023, an increase of over 87% on the year before.*

Against that backdrop, Gondwana, Namibia Wildlife Resorts and Air Namibia lead the Namibian tourism podium, three brands built on decades of physical presence across the country's national parks, lodges and connecting routes, precisely the infrastructure argument that runs through the rest of this year's results.



They set the benchmark the rest of Namibia's tourism sector, much of it small and regionally dispersed, will be measured against as the category matures. *The feature of Air Namibia, though no longer in the skies, shows that brands live in our hearts and memories.*

Agri-Business earns its place for a related but distinct reason: food security. Agriculture and forestry contribute a comparatively modest share of Namibian GDP, around 3.7% in 2024, but that figure understates the sector's importance to the country. Between a quarter and 40% of Namibians depend on subsistence farming and herding for their livelihoods, and recent national vulnerability assessments have identified roughly 340,000 Namibians as severely food insecure, concentrated in the drought-prone northwest, a reminder of how directly agricultural resilience translates into household welfare. Meatco, Olthaver & List (O&L) and AGRA lead the Namibian Agri-Business podium.

Meatco carries particular significance here: *Namibia became the first African country granted market access to export beef to the United States, an achievement built on decades of investment in animal health standards and export-grade processing infrastructure.*

These three brands are less about consumer admiration in the retail sense than about the underlying productive capacity, the herds, the processing plants, the export certifications, that keeps Namibia's food system functioning, and they set the standard the category's newer entrants will be judged against.

WHERE THE ASPIRATION STILL TRAVELS ABROAD

The categories where Namibian brands do not appear, or appear only thinly, are instructive in their own right. Automotive is entirely international: *Toyota (2.07), Mercedes-Benz (1.11) and Volkswagen (0.90) take all three places, with no Namibian manufacturer or distributor brand registering at all.* Two categories new to this year's data make the point even more starkly.

In Technology & Electronics, Samsung (5.68), Apple (3.10) and Huawei (0.93) sweep the podium against a single, barely-registering Namibian entrant, Namene Solar, on 0.08.

In Fashion & Luxury, Ralph Lauren/Polo (1.88), Guess (0.76) and Gucci (0.75) lead internationally, though Namibian names close that gap more credibly than in Technology: *Shilongo Leather (0.86) and Betterdays (0.61) both outscore Guess and Gucci outright.*

Media and entertainment splits Namibian broadcasters, now led by NBC (0.61) ahead of Gazza Music Productionz (0.35) and Beso Media (0.23), from an international list topped by DStv (0.30), Netflix and YouTube (both 0.18 apiece), an echo of the continental finding that African-built media brands are still finding their footing against global streaming and pay-TV platforms.

Sportswear tells the most pointed version of this story. On the Namibian list, Mshasho (0.95) and Relay Jeans (0.78) are the only two entrants, both without a third name to complete a podium. On the international list, Nike (23.80), Adidas (17.09) and Puma (5.86) sweep the category by a margin far wider than anywhere else in the data, precisely as they do across the wider continent.

It is the same *"loyal subjects, foreign kings"* dynamic that defines the pan-African Top 100: *admiration for lifestyle and aspirational categories still defaults overwhelmingly to global names, even in a market where local brands dominate everyday categories.*

SUSTAINABILITY AND PRIDE

MTC's sustainability leadership is worth setting against its wider Namibian competition. It tops the Namibian sustainability list on 0.86, ahead of Namib Mills (0.44) and Bank Windhoek (0.42), while the equivalent international/NGO list is led by the World Health Organization (2.36), ahead of UNICEF/the United Nations (1.48) and the Red Cross (1.31), a category where Namibian consumers are evidently weighing corporate brands against global humanitarian institutions rather than against other companies.

In the Good for Africa (pride) rankings, MTC again leads the Namibian list on 0.71, with Bank Windhoek (0.59) and Woermanbrock (0.35) following. Checkers/Shoprite (1.58), Coca-Cola (1.44) and FNB (1.31) lead the non-Namibian pride list, which suggests Namibian consumers extend continental goodwill to regional retail and banking names even where those brands are not Namibian-owned. The African Rankings category, which asks Namibian consumers to weigh homegrown brands against the continent's best-known global names, is led by MTC on 0.91, ahead of Mshasho Clothing (0.69) and Namibian Breweries (0.56).

Adidas (1.39), Nike (1.15) and Coca-Cola (0.66) head the non-Namibian equivalent. African-brand identification is where Namibian brands come closest to competing with the continent's most admired global names.

RECOGNISING THE BUILDERS

Beyond the rankings, Brand Africa used the Namibia results to recognise individuals and institutions it judges to have shaped

the country's brand landscape over the long term. Pupkewitz received the Brand Africa Heritage and Homegrown Brand Excellence Award, recognition reserved for brands with origins, ownership and operations anchored in Africa that have operated continuously long enough to become synonymous with their community and contributions to economic development. Two Distinguished Leadership Awards went to Sankwasa James Sankwasa, honoured for public service in shaping policy conditions that allow brands and businesses to compete, and David Namalenga, recognised for private sector leadership in an increasingly competitive and non-Namibian-dominated industrial sector.

Dries van der Sandt, Chief Marketing Officer of Windhoek, and Tim Ekandjo, Chief Marketing Officer of MTC, were both recognized among the Top 100 Most Influential African CMOs, placing the stewardship behind Namibia's two strongest brands among the continent's recognised marketing leadership.

A COUNCIL FOR THE NEXT PHASE

The most forward-looking announcement was institutional rather than a ranking at all: *the formation of the Brand Namibia*

Council, unveiled by Lazarus Jacobs, Chairman of Brand Africa Namibia.

Its mandate, as this foreword sets out, is to mobilise Namibian business and industry to treat branding as a deliberate instrument of national economic development, bringing manufacturers, exporters, financiers and regulators into the same conversation as brand owners, rather than to simply inspire and celebrate Made in Namibia names after the fact.

Namibian brands win convincingly where infrastructure, distribution and decades of consumer trust already exist, in beer, telecoms and, more narrowly than earlier figures suggested, banking. They are largely absent from technology, fashion and luxury, where this year's newly added categories show the gap in its sharpest form yet.

The task ahead is not persuading Namibians to admire their own brands more; on this year's evidence, in the categories where local brands compete, they already do.

The task is building the financing, distribution and policy environment that lets that admiration extend into the categories it has not yet reached.

2026 NAMIBIA'S BEST BRANDS RANKINGS

The story of Namibia's brands comes to life in the results that follow. From the country's most admired brands overall to category leaders, sustainability champions and special recognition awards, the 2026 rankings celebrate the brands earning the confidence, loyalty and admiration of Namibian consumers, while highlighting the sectors where future growth opportunities remain.

TOP 3 MOST ADMIRED BRANDS IN NAMIBIA

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Windhoek Beer	Namibian
#2	MTC	Namibian
#3	Telecom Namibia	Namibian

GRAND PRIX

Rank	Brand	Origin
Grand Prix — Most Admired Namibian Brand	MTC	Namibian

MOST ADMIRED ALCOHOLIC BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Windhoek Beer	Namibian
#2	Tafel Lager	Namibian
#3	Namibia Breweries	Namibian

MOST ADMIRED NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Nammilk	Namibian
#2	Oasis Water	Namibian
#3	Rietfontein Guava Juice	Namibian

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Coca-Cola	Non-Namibian
#2	Ricoffy	Non-Namibian
#3	Bonaqua	Non-Namibian

MOST ADMIRED TELECOMS BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	MTC	Namibian
#2	Telecom Namibia	Namibian
#3	TN Mobile	Namibian

MOST ADMIRED MOBILE MONEY & FINTECH BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	MobiPay	Namibian
#2	PayToday	Namibian
#3	MoneyGram	Non-Namibian

GRAND PRIX

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Bank Windhoek	Namibian
#2	Nampost	Namibian
#3	Capricorn	Namibian
#1	FNB	Non-Namibian
#2	Standard Bank / Stanbic	Non-Namibian
#3	Nedbank	Non-Namibian

MOST ADMIRED INSURANCE BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Old Mutual	Non-Namibian
#2	Hollard	Non-Namibian
#3	King Price	Non-Namibian
#1	Bonlife	Namibian
#2	NamibRe	Namibian
#3	Nasria	Namibian

MOST ADMIRED RETAIL & SUPERMARKETS BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Woermanbrock	Namibian
#2	OK Foods	Namibian
#3	Pupkewitz	Namibian
#1	Shoprite / Checkers	Non-Namibian
#2	Spar	Non-Namibian
#3	Pep	Non-Namibian

MOST ADMIRECONSUMER (STAPLES) BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Namib Mills	Namibian
#2	Namibian Dairies	Namibian
#3	Nammilk	Namibian
#1	Bokomo (SA)	Non-Namibian
#2	Nestlé	Non-Namibian
#3	Colgate	Non-Namibian

MOST ADMIRER MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	NBC	Namibian
#2	GMP	Namibian
#3	Beso Media	Namibian
#1	DSTV	International
#2	Netflix	International
#3	YouTube	International

MOST ADMIRER AUTOMOTIVE BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Toyota	International
#2	Mercedes-Benz	International
#3	Volkswagen	International

MOST ADMIRER SPORTSWEAR & FOOTWEAR BRAND IN NAMIBIA

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Mshasho	Namibian
#2	Relay Jeans	Namibian
#1	Nike	International
#2	Adidas	International
#3	Puma	International

MOST ADMIRER TOURISM & HOSPITALITY BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Gondwana	Namibian
#2	Namibia Wildlife Resorts	Namibian
#3	Air Namibia	Namibian

MOST ADMIRER AGRI-BUSINESS BRANDS

Rank	Brand	Origin
#1	Meatco	Namibian

#2	Olthaver & List (O&L)	Namibian
#3	AGRA	Namibian

SUSTAINABILITY | DOING GOOD FOR SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT BRANDS

Rank	Namibian Brands	International / NGO
#1	MTC	World Health Organization (WHO)
#2	Namib Mills	UNICEF / United Nations
#3	Bank Windhoek	Red Cross

AFRICAN BRAND

Rank	Namibian Brands	International / NGO
#1	MTC	Adidas
#2	Mshasho Clothing	Nike
#3	Namibian Breweries	Coca-Cola

SPECIAL AWARDS

HERITAGE & HOMEGROWN BRAND EXCELLENCE

Rank	Brand	Origin
Award	Pupkewitz	Namibian

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Award	Recipient
Distinguished Leadership — Public Service	Sankwasa James Sankwasa
Distinguished Leadership — Private Sector	David Namalenga

Top 100 Most Influential African CMOs

Award	Recipient
CMO, Windhoek	Dries van der Sandt
CMO, MTC	Tim Ekdandjo

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**NAMMILK EARNS
TOP RECOGNITION
AT BRAND AFRICA 100 AWARDS**

We're honoured to have been awarded at the 16th Annual Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands Awards 2026.

These recognitions reflect generations' of Namibians trust in Nammilk.

Thank you for choosing local. Thank you for choosing pure goodness.



IT'S
WHAT'S
INSIDE.

Building a Brand-Led Economy

"A nation's reputation is built one brand at a time."



For decades, Namibia's economic story has largely been told through its abundant natural resources. The world knows Namibia as a producer of uranium, diamonds, gold, fish and beef. It knows us for the towering dunes of the Namib Desert, the haunting beauty of Deadvlei, the wildlife of Etosha, the Skeleton Coast and our remarkable democratic stability.

These are assets of immense value. Yet the global economy has changed.

In the twenty-first century, nations are increasingly recognised not only by the resources they possess, but by the brands they create. The countries that command influence today are those whose brands inspire confidence, whose products are trusted across borders and whose reputation adds value far beyond the cost of production.

The world's most successful economies have long understood a fundamental truth: **brands create wealth.**

A powerful brand commands loyalty.

It creates employment.

It attracts investment.

It increases exports.

It supports tourism.

It builds national pride.

Most importantly, it creates value that cannot easily be replicated.

It is against this backdrop that July 2026 marks a defining moment in Namibia's economic journey with the launch of the Brand Namibia Council, a national initiative dedicated to positioning branding as a strategic driver of economic growth, innovation and competitiveness.

The establishment of the Council signals an important shift in national thinking. It recognises that Namibia's future prosperity will depend not only on what we produce, but on how the world perceives what we produce.



The Brand Namibia Council has been established to champion one clear vision: *the development of a brand-led Namibian economy.*

This vision is ambitious, yet entirely achievable.

A brand-led economy is one in which businesses compete through quality, innovation, trust and reputation rather than price alone. It is an economy where branding is recognised not as an afterthought or a marketing exercise, but as a strategic business discipline capable of creating sustainable competitive advantage.

Around the world, countries that have invested deliberately in building respected brands have transformed their economies. Brands have enabled nations to command premium prices for agricultural products, dominate manufacturing sectors, expand tourism, attract global investors and establish themselves as centres of innovation.

Namibia possesses every ingredient necessary to follow a similar path.

We are politically stable.

We have sound democratic institutions.

Our legal framework is respected.

Our infrastructure continues to improve.

Our entrepreneurs are increasingly innovative.

Our creative sector is growing rapidly.

Our natural beauty remains unmatched.

Above all, Namibia possesses something no other country can replicate—its unique identity. The challenge is to transform that identity into globally respected brands.



One of the greatest misconceptions about branding is that it concerns logos, colours or advertising campaigns.

True branding goes much deeper.

A brand is a promise.

It represents trust.

It reflects consistency.

It embodies reputation.

It tells customers what they can expect every single time they engage with a product, service or organisation.

This applies equally to businesses and nations.

Every interaction with Namibia contributes to Brand Namibia.

Every tourist who visits.

Every exported product.

Every diplomatic engagement.

Every sporting success.

Every entrepreneur.

Every innovation.

Collectively, they shape how the world perceives our country. The Brand Namibia Council therefore seeks to cultivate a culture where excellence becomes habitual and reputation becomes a national asset.



The establishment of the Brand Namibia Council could not have come at a more important time.

Namibia stands on the threshold of significant economic transformation.

The country is experiencing increased international attention through discoveries in oil and gas, expanding mining opportunities, growing renewable energy investments, the emergence of green hydrogen, technological innovation and expanding regional trade opportunities.

These developments present enormous opportunities. But opportunities alone do not create prosperity. Countries that successfully convert opportunity into long-term wealth do so by building trusted institutions and globally respected brands.

The Council therefore aims to become a catalyst for collaboration between government, business, academia, entrepreneurs, the creative industries and civil society.

Its mission extends beyond recognising successful brands.

It seeks to educate.

To inspire.

To connect.

To research.

To advocate.

To celebrate excellence.

Through strategic programmes, workshops, conferences, thought leadership, research initiatives and recognition platforms such as the Best Namibian Brands Awards, the Council intends to create an ecosystem where branding becomes central to national development.



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

One of the Council's flagship initiatives is its partnership with the Best Namibian Brands Awards.

Recognition plays a critical role in raising standards. Businesses invest where excellence is rewarded. Entrepreneurs innovate when achievement is recognised. Consumers develop confidence when quality is celebrated.

The awards have therefore become much more than an annual ceremony. They represent a national benchmark for excellence. Every award recipient demonstrates that Namibian businesses are capable of competing with the very best. More importantly, every winner inspires countless other businesses to improve. This ripple effect ultimately strengthens the entire economy.



LEARNING FROM AFRICA

One of the Council's greatest strengths lies in its strategic partnership with Brand Africa, the continent's leading authority on branding and reputation.

For more than a decade, Brand Africa has championed African excellence through research, advocacy and the prestigious Brand Africa rankings. Its work has consistently demonstrated that Africa must become a creator, not merely a consumer, of globally admired brands. This philosophy aligns perfectly with Namibia's own ambitions.

As Strategic Advisor to the Brand Namibia Council, Professor Thebe Ikalafeng, Founder and Chairperson of Brand Africa, brings unparalleled continental experience in nation branding, corporate reputation and strategic brand development.

Widely recognised as one of Africa's foremost branding authorities, Professor Ikalafeng has spent decades advocating for stronger African brands capable of competing internationally. His involvement provides Namibia with direct access to global best practice, continental benchmarking and invaluable strategic insight.

It also places Namibia within a much broader African movement dedicated to building globally respected African brands.



LEADERSHIP WITH PURPOSE

The strength of any institution lies in the calibre of its leadership.

The Brand Namibia Council brings together respected professionals whose combined experience spans branding, marketing, communications, business leadership, entrepreneurship, media, strategy and corporate governance.

Chairperson Lazarus Jacobs has spent more than two decades building brands across media, marketing and communications. As co-founder of Paragon Investments, Chairperson of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation and an entrepreneur deeply invested in national development, Jacobs has consistently advocated for branding as a catalyst for economic growth.

His vision for the Council extends beyond recognition programmes. He believes Namibia requires a coordinated national branding movement capable of transforming how businesses, institutions and citizens think about reputation, quality and excellence.

Supporting this vision is an accomplished Council comprising Ivawa Victoria Shimweefeleni, Ama Owusu- Agyemang, Rashid Kali, Jessica Uiras and Nrupesh Soni, professionals whose diverse expertise reflects the multidisciplinary nature of modern branding.

Collectively, the Council represents a blend of strategic thinking, creativity, corporate leadership, communications and entrepreneurship. This diversity of experience positions the Council to engage meaningfully with both established corporations and emerging enterprises.



A COUNCIL FOR EVERY BUSINESS

Importantly, the Brand Namibia Council is not intended exclusively for large corporations.

Its vision embraces businesses of every size.

Small enterprises.

Family-owned businesses.

Technology start-ups.

Creative entrepreneurs.

Farmers.
Manufacturers.
Retailers.
Hospitality establishments.
Professional service firms.
Community enterprises.

Every successful Namibian business contributes to Brand Namibia. Every entrepreneur has the potential to create tomorrow's iconic brand. By promoting education, mentorship and collaboration, the Council hopes to ensure that branding becomes accessible to businesses regardless of size.

Strong brands are not created by large marketing budgets. They are built through consistency, integrity, innovation and customer trust.



The African Continental Free Trade Area presents one of the greatest commercial opportunities in Africa's modern history.

A market of more than one billion consumers is gradually opening. Yet access alone does not guarantee success. Businesses that thrive in continental markets will be those whose brands inspire confidence beyond their home countries.

Namibia must therefore prepare today for tomorrow's opportunities. Our products must become recognised. Our services must become trusted. Our businesses must become competitive. Our national reputation must become one of our strongest economic assets. This is precisely the future the Brand Namibia Council seeks to help build.



The Council's work will extend far beyond annual awards.

Its long-term programme includes national brand education initiatives,



youth branding programmes, women-led entrepreneurship initiatives, thought leadership forums, Brand Day engagements, research projects, public awareness campaigns and partnerships with educational institutions and industry bodies.

It will encourage businesses to view branding as an investment rather than an expense. It will promote collaboration across sectors. It will stimulate national conversations around innovation, quality and competitiveness. It will celebrate success while encouraging continuous improvement.

Above all, it will champion the belief that Namibia deserves brands capable of standing proudly alongside the very best in Africa and the world.



Brand Namibia is not the responsibility of government alone.

Nor does it belong exclusively to business.

It belongs to every Namibian.

Every citizen represents the nation.

Every interaction shapes perceptions.

Every entrepreneur builds confidence.

Every business strengthens our reputation.

Every innovation contributes to our future.

The Brand Namibia Council therefore invites every organisation, institution and citizen to become part of this national movement.

Together, we can create a culture where excellence becomes expected, innovation becomes celebrated and reputation becomes one of Namibia's most valuable national assets.

The launch of the Brand Namibia Council is therefore far more than the establishment of another institution. It is the beginning of a long-term national journey.

A journey towards a more competitive economy.

A journey towards globally respected Namibian brands.

A journey towards greater investment, stronger exports and increased prosperity.

A journey that recognises that the most enduring wealth any nation can build is not found beneath the ground, but in the strength of the ideas, businesses and brands created by its people.

If Namibia is to realise its full economic potential in the decades ahead, it must become known not only for what lies beneath its soil, but for what carries its name across the world.

That is the mission of the Brand Namibia Council.

That is the promise of a brand-led economy.

And that is the future now being forged.

PUPKEWITZ

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
SERVICE EXCELLENCE

*Rooted in Namibia.
Recognised by Africa.*

The Pupkewitz Group is proud to be recognised by Brand Africa with the Heritage and Homegrown Brand Excellence Award.

For generations, Pupkewitz has grown alongside Namibia, serving communities, businesses and industries across the country. This recognition celebrates a proudly African brand with deep roots, strong local commitment and a lasting connection to the people it serves.

**Thank you to our customers, employees,
partners and communities for being
part of our journey.**



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Brands and AI

Nrupesh Soni
Founder of Namib.ai

The Future Belongs to the Brands That Think Smarter

For years, brands were told to be louder.
Post more.
Advertise more.
Chase every trend.
Hope people pay attention.

The future of branding will not belong to the loudest brand. It will belong to the smartest one: the brand that understands its customers better, responds faster, communicates with more relevance, and builds trust more consistently.

This is where Artificial Intelligence becomes important. Not because AI can fix a weak business, but because it is changing how brands think, plan, create, listen and serve.

A brand today is not just a logo, slogan, billboard or social media page. A brand is the total experience people have with your business: how quickly you reply, how useful your message feels, how easy your website is to use, and whether your promise matches the experience you deliver.

The mistake many businesses are making is that they see AI only as a content machine. They use it to write captions, generate posters, create adverts or polish emails. That helps, but it is the smallest part of the opportunity. If a brand only uses AI to create more noise, then all it has done is automate average marketing.

The value of AI is not more content. It is better thinking.

AI can help brands understand customer behaviour, analyse feedback, test messages, segment audiences, improve service, automate repetitive work and make decisions based on evidence rather than guesswork. For small businesses this can be a major equaliser. For larger organisations, it can expose disconnected systems.

In Namibia, this matters even more. We are a small market, and many businesses do not have large marketing departments or endless budgets.

Often one person is managing social media, customer service, sales support, events and content. Used properly, AI becomes a productivity tool, research assistant and customer experience layer.

But there is also a danger.

The easier it becomes to create content, the easier it becomes for every brand to sound the same.

We are already seeing it: polished captions, safe corporate wording, motivational filler, and the same "we are excited to announce" tone. Content that looks clean but feels empty.

AI can help a brand communicate, but it can also remove the personality that made the brand worth following in the first place.

This is why brand identity



becomes more important in the age of AI, not less. Before a business uses AI seriously, it must know who it is, who it is speaking to, what tone it should use, what makes it different, and what values must remain human even when technology is involved.

Without that foundation, AI will simply produce generic content faster. A weak brand with AI is still a weak brand. It just becomes weak at scale.

The strongest brands will be the ones that use AI without losing their voice. They will use it to support creativity, not replace it. They will use it to improve service, not hide behind automation. They will use it to understand customers, not manipulate them. They will use it to become more relevant, not more intrusive.

Trust will become the real currency.

Customers are not stupid. They can feel when a brand is being fake. They notice when technology is used to avoid accountability. AI may help businesses respond faster, but speed without sincerity can damage a brand.

A chatbot that cannot solve a problem is not innovation. It is frustration. An advert that looks beautiful but says nothing is not branding. It is decoration.

This is where leadership matters. AI should not sit only with IT or marketing. It should be part of business strategy. Leaders need to understand what AI can do, what it should not do, and where human approval is still essential.

The brands that win will build the right systems, train their teams, protect their data and keep their values clear.

For brand teams and entrepreneurs, this means a shift in skills. We need to understand data, customer journeys,

automation, digital platforms, content performance and prompt design. More importantly, we need to ask better questions, because AI is only as useful as the thinking behind the instruction.

Access to tools is not enough. We still need judgement, discipline, ethics and originality.

For established brands, the question is no longer whether AI should be used. It already is being used, officially or unofficially. Staff are using it to write emails. Agencies are using it to develop concepts. Customers are using it to compare options and make decisions.

The real question is whether brands are using AI intentionally or accidentally.

An intentional brand will create clear guidelines. It will decide where AI is allowed, where it is not allowed, who checks the output, how customer data is protected, and how the brand voice is maintained. It will train people instead of pretending the shift is not happening, and it will not hand over its reputation to a machine.

An accidental brand will copy and paste, hope for the best, and only react when something goes wrong. That is not strategy.

AI will not save a lazy brand. It will not fix a broken culture. It will not make a dishonest business trustworthy. But in the hands of a clear, ethical and ambitious brand, AI can help small teams act bigger, big organisations act smarter, and local businesses compete with more confidence.

The future is not human versus machine. It is human intention amplified by machine intelligence.

AI is not the brand. AI is not the strategy. AI is not the story.

The brand is still the promise you make, the experience you deliver, and the trust you earn.

AI makes it harder to hide when those things are missing.

About Namib.ai: *Namib.ai is a Namibian platform focused on making Artificial Intelligence practical, accessible and relevant. Its purpose is to help Namibians move beyond hype and fear, and use AI responsibly to improve productivity, creativity, learning and competitiveness.*

Victoria Ivawa Shimweefeleni
Brand Strategist and Consultant

Why Namibia's Future May Depend on Becoming a Brand-Led Economy

An exclusive interview between Brand Strategist Ivawa Victoria Shimweefeleni and Lazarus Jacobs, Convener of the Brand Namibia Council.

For decades, countries have competed for territory, resources and markets. Today, they compete for something far less tangible, yet arguably more valuable: *perception*.

Investors choose countries they trust. Tourists visit destinations that they'd love to experience. Skilled professionals relocate to countries that offer opportunity and stability. Consumers pay premium prices for products that carry a reputation for quality.

Increasingly, a nation's competitive advantage lies not only in its natural resources or economic policies, but in the strength of its nation brand.

The concept of nation branding has evolved significantly over the past two decades.

It is no longer viewed as a marketing campaign or a tourism slogan.

Rather, it is recognised as a strategic economic discipline that brings together government, business, culture, diplomacy, innovation and the lived experiences of citizens under a shared national identity.

Countries such as Rwanda, South Africa, New Zealand, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates and Estonia have demonstrated that a carefully cultivated national reputation can transform investment flows, expand exports, attract international talent and enhance global influence.

Namibia now stands at a pivotal moment in its own development.

Our country enjoys political stability, a respected constitutional democracy, extraordinary natural beauty, internationally recognised conservation efforts, abundant mineral resources, growing energy prospects and a new generation of entrepreneurs building businesses that are beginning to compete across Africa and beyond.

At the same time, the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), through the Brand Namibia Initiative, continues to lead a cross-institutional effort to develop and strengthen Namibia's nation brand.

Complementing these efforts is the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology's Nationhood and National Pride (NNP) campaign, *#MyNamibiaMyCountryMyPride*, which promotes patriotism and responsible citizenship.

Together with the newly established Brand Namibia Council, these initiatives are positioning branding as a catalyst for economic growth, national identity, patriotism and global competitiveness.

Far from being competing initiatives, these efforts present an opportunity for unprecedented collaboration between the public and private sectors.

To explore what Brand Namibia could become, and why branding matters far beyond advertising, Brand Strategist **Ivawa Shimweefeleni** spoke to **Lazarus Jacobs (LJ)**, Convener of the Brand Namibia Council.

Q: Lazarus, congratulations on the establishment of the Brand Namibia Council. Many people are familiar with the Best Namibian Brands Awards, but the Council itself is still relatively new. What inspired its creation?

(LJ): Thank you, Ivawa. The inspiration came from a simple observation. Namibia has invested heavily in developing industries such as mining, agriculture, tourism, financial services and, more recently, oil and gas.

We speak often about economic diversification and industrialisation. Yet we rarely discuss one of the world's most valuable economic assets, brands. If you look at the world's largest companies today, much of their value no longer lies in factories or machinery. It lies in intellectual property, reputation and brand equity. Countries are no different. Every nation has a reputation, whether deliberately managed or not. The question is whether that reputation accurately reflects the country's strengths and whether it creates economic opportunities for its citizens.

The Brand Namibia Council was established because we believe branding deserves to become part of Namibia's economic conversation, not merely a communications exercise. Our ambition is to help build a brand-led economy, where strong Namibian brands create jobs, attract investment, open export markets and contribute meaningfully to national prosperity.

Q: You use the phrase brand-led economy quite often. It sounds different from traditional marketing. What exactly do you mean?

(LJ): Branding has traditionally been viewed as the responsibility of marketing departments. That is far too narrow. A brand-led economy recognises that brands themselves are productive economic assets. Think about why consumers willingly pay more for certain products than others that perform exactly the same function. The difference is trust. The difference is reputation.

The difference is emotional confidence. Brand equity influences purchasing decisions every day.

Now extend that thinking to an entire country.

- Why do investors choose Singapore over many larger economies?

- Why does New Zealand command premium prices for agricultural products?
- Why has South Korea become synonymous with technological innovation?

It is because their national reputations reinforce the credibility of everything produced within those countries. That is what we want for Namibia.

When someone sees "Made in Namibia," we want it to immediately communicate quality, authenticity, sustainability and reliability. That is not simply good marketing. That is good economics.



Q: Some people might still ask why branding deserves this much attention.

(LJ): Because branding creates economic value. When consumers trust Namibian products, exporters earn higher prices. When investors trust Namibia, projects happen faster. When talented professionals believe Namibia offers opportunity, they choose to build careers here. When tourists associate Namibia with unforgettable experiences, they stay longer and spend more. Branding influences decisions every single day. That is why economists increasingly recognise reputation as a national asset.

Countries compete on trust. Trust attracts capital. Trust creates jobs. Trust lowers the perceived risk of doing business. Branding therefore becomes an economic development strategy. Not simply a communications strategy.

Q: Some people might argue that branding sounds cosmetic, that it focuses more on image than substance.

(LJ): That is probably the biggest misconception about branding. Branding is not about creating an image. It is about managing reputation.

More importantly, reputation must be earned. No amount of advertising can compensate for poor governance. No logo can repair inconsistent policies. No slogan can hide poor customer service. The world's strongest nation brands have one thing in common. Their external messaging reflects genuine internal strengths. That is precisely why Rwanda has become such an important case study. Thirty years ago, Rwanda's global image was dominated by the horrors of the 1994 genocide.

Today, people increasingly associate Rwanda with efficient governance, clean cities, environmental stewardship, conference tourism and public safety. That transformation was not achieved through advertising campaigns alone. It happened because leadership invested in changing the lived experience first. Branding simply communicated that transformation to the world.

That is an important lesson for Namibia. Branding should never attempt to manufacture reality. It should reveal the best version of reality.

Q: The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), through the Brand Namibia Initiative, is leading an ongoing cross-institutional effort to develop and strengthen Namibia's nation brand. Some observers have suggested there may be duplication between this initiative and the work of the Brand Namibia Council.

How would you respond to those concerns?

(LJ): I actually see this as an exciting opportunity. The two initiatives are not competing. They are complementary. Government has a constitutional responsibility to promote Namibia internationally.

That includes diplomacy, tourism promotion, investment attraction,

cultural diplomacy, public communications and strengthening national identity.

Those are legitimate functions of government. The Brand Namibia Council approaches branding from another perspective. Our focus is the economy.

We ask questions such as:

- How do we build stronger Namibian brands?
- How do we help small businesses become continental brands?
- How do we support women entrepreneurs in building globally recognised enterprises?
- How do we encourage young innovators to understand branding from the very beginning of their entrepreneurial journeys?
- How do we create an environment where Namibian companies compete on value rather than price?

Those are fundamentally economic questions. So while Government builds the Nation Brand, the Council seeks to strengthen Brand Namibia's economic ecosystem.

The relationship is complementary. One strengthens the country's reputation. The other strengthens the businesses that ultimately give that reputation credibility.

Q: Could you expand on that relationship?

(LJ): Certainly. Imagine Government successfully attracting international investors to Namibia. Those investors then engage with banks, law firms, airlines, hotels, telecommunications companies, manufacturers and regulatory institutions.

Their perception of Namibia is influenced by every one of those interactions. Likewise, when companies such as MTC, Namibia Breweries, Pupkewitz, Ohlthaver & List, Tate Diamonds, PSTBet or Paragon Aviation succeed beyond Namibia's borders, they become ambassadors for the country. Their success enhances Namibia's credibility internationally. Government and the private sector therefore reinforce one another.

Strong national institutions create confidence. Strong corporate brands

sustain confidence. Neither succeeds fully without the other. That is why we believe collaboration, not competition, must define the future of Brand Namibia.

Q: Does that mean the Brand Namibia Council would be willing to work alongside Government?

(LJ): Without hesitation. In fact, I believe we have a responsibility to do so. The Council comprises experienced professionals drawn from branding, marketing, communications, media, business strategy and entrepreneurship.

Collectively, we possess decades of practical experience building brands across multiple sectors. If Government believes that expertise can contribute to its own nation-branding strategy, we would gladly assist. This is not about institutional ownership. No single organisation owns Brand Namibia.

Every Namibian does. Government brings policy leadership. Business brings innovation. Academia contributes research. The creative industries contribute storytelling. The media amplifies success. Citizens provide the lived experience.

Nation branding succeeds only when everyone sees themselves as custodians of the country's reputation.

Q: Lazarus, you've mentioned several countries that have successfully positioned themselves on the global stage. If Namibia is serious about nation branding, which countries should we study most closely?

(LJ): Every country has lessons to offer, but it's important that we don't copy anyone. Branding only works when it is authentic.

Namibia cannot become another Rwanda, another New Zealand or another South Korea. Our history is different, our people are different and our economy is different. However, we can certainly learn from how these countries have approached nation branding.

The first lesson is perhaps the most important: nation branding is never just about communications. It is a national development strategy. The countries that are recognised globally did not start with slogans. They started with a vision. The branding followed.

Q: As we continue to build our Nation Brand, what do think should define Brand Namibia?

(LJ): I believe we already possess extraordinary foundations. The challenge is that we haven't yet connected them into one coherent national narrative.

Consider our assets. We are one of Africa's most stable democracies. We have an independent judiciary. We have peaceful political transitions. We enjoy press freedom. Our conservation model is admired internationally. Our landscapes are unlike anywhere else on Earth.

The Namib Desert alone is one of the world's greatest natural brands. We have one of the world's richest marine ecosystems. We produce premium beef. We produce world-class uranium. Our diamonds are internationally respected.

We are becoming an energy frontier through oil, gas, green hydrogen and renewable energy. These are not isolated strengths. Collectively, they form the foundation of Brand Namibia.

Q: How do you connect all those different sectors into one national story?

(LJ): By identifying the values that underpin them all. Every strong nation brand stands for something. Switzerland stands for precision. Japan stands for craftsmanship. Germany stands for engineering. Singapore stands for efficiency.

What should Namibia stand for? I believe our defining characteristics include:

- Authenticity. Integrity. Resilience.
- Conservation. Innovation and Opportunity.

Q: So in your view, would you say successful companies and successful nation branding reinforce each other?

(LJ): Absolutely. Every internationally recognised Namibian business strengthens Brand Namibia. Likewise, every improvement in Namibia's global reputation creates new opportunities for those businesses. It becomes a virtuous cycle.

That is why collaboration between Government and the private sector is so important. Neither can build Brand Namibia alone. But together, they

can create something that outlives both governments and individual companies. That should be our ambition.

Q: Where do you see the Brand Namibia Council making its biggest contribution over the next five years?

(LJ): Our role is to convene, educate, celebrate and inspire. We want to become a platform where government, business, academia and civil society come together to discuss how branding contributes to economic development. Some of the initiatives already planned include Brand Day, where leading organisations share how they have built successful brands.

We will host workshops focusing on youth-led brands, recognising that many of tomorrow's iconic companies have not yet been established. We will place a special emphasis on women-led brands because some of Namibia's most exciting entrepreneurial stories are being written by women whose businesses deserve greater visibility.

We also intend to promote research into branding, encourage better measurement of brand value and strengthen branding as a recognised professional discipline in Namibia. The Best Namibian Brands Awards will continue to celebrate excellence, but awards alone are not enough.

Our ambition is to create a national culture that values brand building as a strategic investment rather than a marketing expense.

Q: If we were having this conversation ten years from now, what would success look like?

(LJ): Success would not be measured by how many logos we have designed or how many campaigns we have launched. It would be measured by outcomes. I would like to see more Namibian brands operating across Africa and in global markets.

We would like to see Namibian products commanding premium prices because buyers associate them with quality and reliability.

We would like international investors to rank Namibia among Africa's most trusted investment destinations. We would like our tourism sector to continue growing by offering authentic, sustainable experiences that reflect who we are.



We would like our public institutions to be recognised for professionalism and service excellence. We would like branding to be taught more widely in our universities and business schools, so entrepreneurs understand from the outset that a strong brand is one of their most valuable assets.

Most importantly, I would like young Namibians to believe that they do not have to leave the country to build globally recognised companies. They can create those companies here and export Namibian excellence to the world. That is the vision of a brand-led economy.

Q: Finally, what message would you like to leave with Government, the private sector and ordinary Namibians?

(LJ): My message is one of partnership. The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology's work on a national Brand Namibia campaign and the Brand Namibia Council's work in promoting a brand-led economy should never be viewed as competing initiatives.

On the contrary, they are mutually reinforcing. Government has the mandate to articulate Namibia's national identity, strengthen our international standing and coordinate the country's nation-branding efforts. The Brand Namibia Council exists to support the development of stronger Namibian brands, encourage innovation, promote branding as an economic discipline and help create an environment where businesses thrive.

Together, these efforts can position Namibia more effectively on the continental and global stage. The Council stands ready to share its expertise, facilitate dialogue and support Government wherever our

experience can add value. Nation branding is too important to be pursued in isolation. It requires collaboration. It requires patience. It requires consistency. Above all, it requires a shared national purpose.

Closing Note

The future of Namibia will not be shaped by branding alone. It will be shaped by leadership, sound policy, innovation, entrepreneurship and the determination of its people.

Yet branding has a unique role: it connects these strengths into a coherent story that the world can understand and believe. The conversation between Government and the private sector should therefore not be about who owns Brand Namibia.

It should be about who will help build it. If Namibia succeeds in aligning its governance, businesses, institutions, culture, exports, tourism and citizens around a shared national promise, Brand Namibia will become more than a campaign.

It will become a strategic national asset, one that attracts investment, expands markets, inspires confidence and creates opportunities for generations to come.

That is the challenge. But it is also one of Namibia's greatest opportunities.

Ivawa Victoria Shimweefeleni is a Brand Strategist and Consultant with a Master of Commerce in Strategic Brand Leadership from VEGA School, South Africa. She is also a Nation Brand Scholar, TV Presenter, and Events MC. LinkedIn: @Victoria Ivawa Shimweefeleni

MTC Cements Continental Brand Leadership

with Five (5) Brand Africa Accolades

Mobile Telecommunications Ltd (MTC) has once again emerged as one of Africa's most admired brands, securing five accolades at the 2026 Brand Africa Awards held on the 24th of June 2026 in Windhoek. Among the honours was the Most Admired Brand Grand Prix Award, which celebrates outstanding purpose-led brand excellence, sustainability, social impact, and a demonstrated commitment to building a better Africa.



MTC was further recognised as the Most Admired Namibian Brand (Telecommunications), Most Admired Brand (Doing Good for Society and the Environment), Most Admired Brand (Contributing to a Better Africa), and Most Admired African Brand.

During the ceremony, MTC Chief Brand, Marketing, Communications and Sustainability Officer, Tim Ekandjo, was also honoured with the Most Influential African Chief Marketing Officer Award.

Commenting on the recognition, Ekandjo said the awards were a tribute not only to MTC, but to the people the brand serves. "We are grateful for this recognition, but these awards do not belong to MTC alone. They may carry our name, but ultimately, they carry the Namibian story," he said, adding that every customer, family, community, and Namibian remains the heartbeat of MTC.

The Brand Africa Awards are widely regarded as a premier continental platform that celebrates Africa's most admired, trusted, and valuable brands.

MTC Namibia's achievement affirms its continued leadership in the telecommunications sector, both locally and across the continent. The recognition reflects the company's sustained focus on innovation, customer experience, digital inclusion, and sustainable development initiatives that support national and continental priorities.

The awards ceremony brought together business leaders, brand custodians, and industry stakeholders to celebrate African brand excellence and purpose-driven growth across markets.

The event also underscored the role of leading brands in advancing socio-inclusion and impact across Namibia and beyond. It reinforced the importance of trust, innovation and long-term value creation in African markets, while encouraging responsible corporate leadership.

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Namibia's Unsung Heroes Are Quietly Conquering the World

When conversations turn to Namibia's strongest brands, familiar names often dominate the discussion. Established companies with decades of history naturally command public recognition, having built trust over generations through consistent delivery and significant investment.

Yet, beyond these household names lies another compelling story, one of resilience, innovation, entrepreneurship and ambition.

THESE ARE NAMIBIA'S EMERGING BRANDS.

They are the unsung heroes of the country's branding ecosystem. While they may not yet enjoy the widespread recognition of their larger counterparts, they are steadily transforming industries, creating employment, exporting Namibian excellence and proving that world-class brands can be built from Namibian soil.

Emerging brands deserve far greater attention because they represent the future of the Namibian economy. They are often agile, technology-driven, customer-focused and willing to challenge conventional business models.

More importantly, they demonstrate that Namibia is no longer merely producing raw materials and commodities, it is increasingly producing brands with international appeal.

One of the most encouraging characteristics of Namibia's new generation of businesses is their willingness to think beyond the country's borders from the very beginning. Unlike previous generations that often viewed the domestic market as the ultimate destination, today's entrepreneurs are building businesses designed for regional and global expansion.

FEW EXAMPLES ILLUSTRATE THIS BETTER THAN PSTBET.

Originally established in Namibia, PSTBet has rapidly evolved into one of Southern Africa's emerging gaming and betting brands.

Its footprint now extends across several countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), demonstrating that a Namibian-developed technology platform and customer experience can compete successfully in highly regulated and competitive markets.

The company's regional expansion represents more than business success, it signals Namibia's growing ability to export digital services and intellectual property.

SIMILARLY IMPRESSIVE IS TATE DIAMONDS.

Rather than competing on volume, TaTe Diamonds has positioned itself within the premium jewellery segment, transforming Namibia's globally respected diamonds into luxury products that appeal to discerning international buyers. Today, the brand reaches prestigious markets including Dubai, London and the United States.

In doing so, Tate Diamonds is changing the narrative around Namibia's mineral wealth by adding value locally instead of merely exporting rough stones. Every piece sold internationally carries with it not only exceptional craftsmanship but also the story of Namibia itself.

ANOTHER REMARKABLE SUCCESS STORY IS PARAGON AVIATION.

While aviation is often regarded as one of the most capital-intensive and complex industries in which to compete, Paragon Aviation has successfully established operations beyond Namibia, including Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The company's expansion illustrates the growing sophistication of Namibian service businesses and their ability to compete across borders in specialised sectors requiring high technical standards, regulatory compliance and operational excellence.

These companies have one characteristic in common.

They have refused to allow Namibia's relatively small domestic market to define the limits of their ambition. Instead, they have embraced the idea that a Namibian brand can stand alongside regional and international competitors if it consistently delivers quality, innovation and customer value.

Equally exciting is the emergence of businesses driven by Namibia's young entrepreneurs.

Youth-led companies are increasingly embracing technology, design and digital marketing to build brands that resonate with modern consumers. Among them is **iPrint Namibia**, an internationally recognised Namibian brand that continues to raise the country's profile beyond its borders. In 2025, iPrint was honoured **at South Africa's Top 16 Youth-Owned Brands Awards** in Johannesburg.

A testament to the company's creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial excellence. This prestigious recognition demonstrates that young Namibian businesses are not only competing locally but are also earning recognition on regional platforms.

Brands like iPrint also remind us that branding is no longer simply about logos and advertising. It is about customer experience, reliability, innovation and creating memorable value propositions.

Young entrepreneurs instinctively understand this, using digital platforms to reach customers while building authentic relationships that foster loyalty.

If supported through access to finance, mentorship and market opportunities, businesses like iPrint have every opportunity to become the household names of tomorrow.

Women entrepreneurs are also playing an increasingly influential role in Namibia's branding landscape.

For many years, women-owned businesses faced disproportionate barriers in accessing finance, networks and procurement opportunities. Yet despite these challenges, a new generation of women-led brands is emerging with confidence and purpose.

Among them is the **Virgin Hair Boutique (VHB)**, a proudly women-led brand that is steadily making a significant impact within the market. Through innovation, quality and a strong understanding of consumer needs, VHB exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit driving Namibia's next wave of business success.

Brands such as Virgin Hair Boutique are not simply participating in the economy, they are helping reshape it by demonstrating that women-led enterprises can compete successfully while creating employment,

inspiring future entrepreneurs and contributing meaningfully to national development. There is every reason to believe that companies like VHB will become dominant players in their respective industries over the coming years.

Their growth reflects broader global trends where businesses founded on authenticity, customer engagement and innovation consistently outperform those relying solely on legacy advantages.

Hannah Nangula Cosmetics is another example of Namibia's emerging entrepreneurial success. The brand has steadily built a reputation for celebrating African beauty through high-quality cosmetic products designed for the modern African woman.

Through innovation, digital-first marketing, and a deep understanding of its audience, Hannah Nangula Cosmetics is demonstrating that proudly Namibian beauty brands can cultivate strong customer loyalty and compete alongside established international names.

It is yet another reminder that some of Namibia's most exciting brands are being built by entrepreneurs who are redefining industries with creativity, confidence, and purpose.

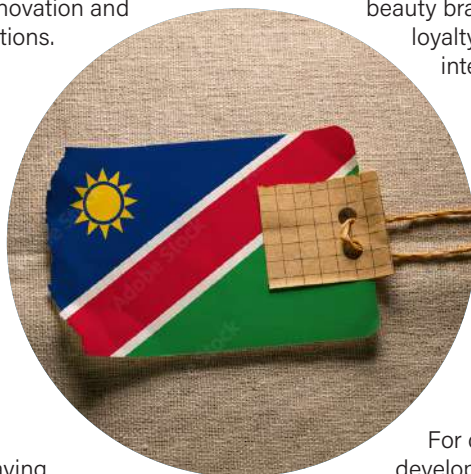
The rise of Namibia's emerging brands also carries important implications for the country's broader economic strategy.

For decades, discussions about economic development have centred on attracting foreign direct investment. While investment remains essential, equal attention must be devoted to nurturing domestic brands capable of becoming exporters in their own right.

Strong national brands generate multiple layers of economic value. They create employment, develop local supply chains, stimulate innovation, enhance tourism and strengthen the country's international reputation.

Every successful Namibian brand operating abroad becomes an unofficial ambassador for the nation. Whether selling luxury jewellery in London, aviation services in Zimbabwe or digital betting platforms across Southern Africa, these companies reinforce the message that Namibia is capable of producing businesses that meet international standards.

This is precisely why emerging brands deserve greater visibility.



Recognition should not be reserved only for businesses that have already become corporate giants. Celebrating emerging brands inspires entrepreneurship, encourages innovation and signals to young business owners that excellence will be acknowledged.

Platforms such as the Namibia's Best Brands Awards have already begun recognising excellence across the branding landscape, but continued support from government, financial institutions, industry associations and consumers will be essential if these businesses are to realise their full potential.

Consumers themselves also have an important role to play.

Every purchasing decision represents a vote of confidence. Supporting locally developed brands helps create jobs, keeps wealth circulating within the economy and provides businesses with the scale necessary to compete internationally.

Brand building is not an overnight exercise. It requires consistency, investment, patience and an unwavering

commitment to quality. The brands that eventually become national icons almost always begin as small enterprises driven by entrepreneurs willing to take risks long before public recognition arrives.



Namibia's emerging brands are writing that story today.

Some will undoubtedly become tomorrow's household names. Others will evolve into regional champions or global niche leaders.

Together, they represent a generation of businesses that are proving Namibian entrepreneurship

has both the talent and ambition to compete on the world stage. As the country's branding ecosystem continues to mature, it is worth remembering that today's emerging brands are tomorrow's national champions.

They are the unsung heroes of the branding family, quietly building reputations, expanding across borders and carrying the Namibian flag into international markets one customer, one innovation and one success story at a time.

Meatco Recognised as Namibia's Most Admired Brand in Agribusiness

Proudly leading Namibia's Agribusiness Sector. As a leading exporter of premium-quality Namibian beef, Meatco remains committed to sustainable production, market excellence, and delivering value to producers, customers, and communities locally, regionally, and internationally. This recognition reflects the trust of our stakeholders and our continued dedication to quality, innovation, and the growth of Namibia's agricultural economy.



Brand Africa Founder and Chairman, Mr. Thebe Ikalafeng, Meatco's Executive: Marketing and Sales, Selma Namututwa and Brand Africa Namibia Chairman, Lazarus Jacobs.

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Top SADC Brand,
Top 16 Youth-Owned Brands
Awards 2025,
South Africa



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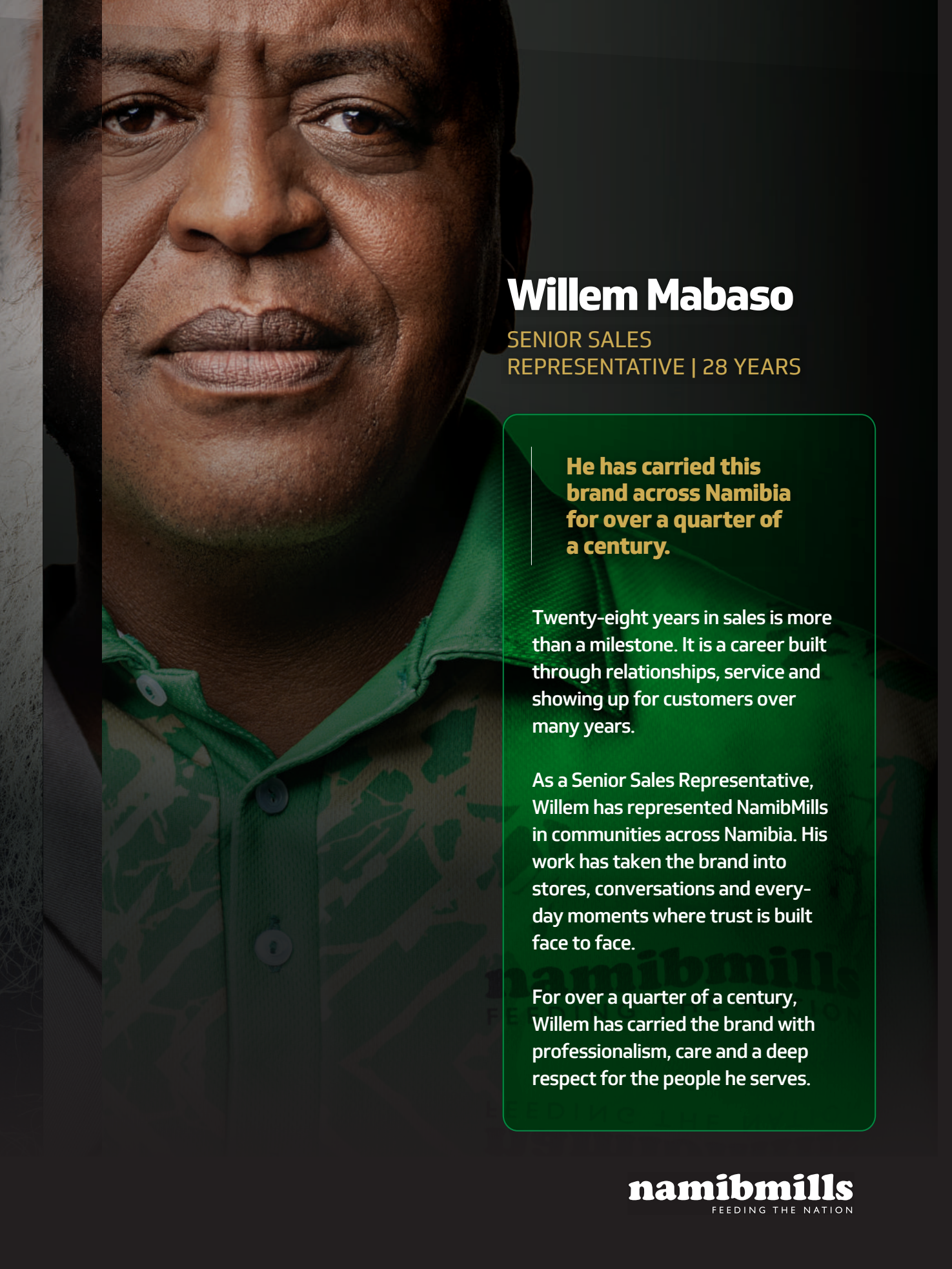
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A close-up portrait of Willem Mabaso, a middle-aged Black man with a serious expression, looking slightly off-camera. He is wearing a green polo shirt with a subtle pattern. The background is dark and out of focus.

Willem Mabaso

SENIOR SALES
REPRESENTATIVE | 28 YEARS

He has carried this brand across Namibia for over a quarter of a century.

Twenty-eight years in sales is more than a milestone. It is a career built through relationships, service and showing up for customers over many years.

As a Senior Sales Representative, Willem has represented NamibMills in communities across Namibia. His work has taken the brand into stores, conversations and everyday moments where trust is built face to face.

For over a quarter of a century, Willem has carried the brand with professionalism, care and a deep respect for the people he serves.

Beyond the Sparkle: Namibia's Story in Every Diamond

"For generations, the world has admired Namibia's diamonds. Now it is time to know the people, the craftsmanship, and the nation behind them."

For generations, Namibia has quietly produced some of the world's most exceptional natural diamonds. Coveted for their remarkable brilliance, purity, and rarity, these gems have traveled across continents to mark engagements, anniversaries, and life's most meaningful celebrations.

et while the diamonds themselves became internationally celebrated, the story of the country that produced them often remained untold.

That story deserves to be heard.

Today, as consumers increasingly seek authenticity, ethical sourcing, and transparency, Namibia stands in a unique position.

Long recognized as one of the world's leading producers of premium natural diamonds, the country has also become an example of responsible resource management, environmental stewardship, and local value creation.

Here, diamonds are not simply luxury products.

They are part of the nation's identity. They represent generations of expertise, thousands of skilled jobs, and an industry that continues to contribute to Namibia's economic development while earning worldwide respect for its commitment to responsible mining practices.

Increasingly, Namibians are also leading the effort to ensure that the country's story is told alongside the beauty of its diamonds.

Few embody that vision more clearly than taShi Shiimi-ya-Shiimi, whose lifelong mission has been to ensure that Namibia receives recognition not only for producing extraordinary diamonds, but also for the people, craftsmanship, and values behind them.



Raised during one of the country's most defining periods, Shiimi-ya-Shiimi witnessed Namibia's transition toward independence and the optimism that followed.

Those years shaped his belief that Namibia should never be viewed simply as the beginning of someone else's supply chain. Instead, it should be recognized as a nation capable of creating internationally respected luxury brands built upon its own talent, innovation, and heritage.

That belief became the foundation of TaTe Diamonds.

Rather than relying on the traditional diamond pipeline—where a gemstone may pass through numerous intermediaries before reaching a jewelry counter—TaTe follows a vertically integrated approach that keeps much of the journey where it belongs: in Namibia.

From responsibly recovered marine diamonds to cutting, polishing, grading, and jewelry design, every stage reflects a commitment to transparency, accountability, and local expertise. The result is more than operational efficiency. It preserves something increasingly valuable in today's luxury market: *authenticity.*

Every diamond retains its story. That story begins millions of years ago.

Carried by the Orange River before settling along Namibia's Atlantic coastline, these extraordinary stones were naturally refined long before they were ever discovered. Only the strongest survived the powerful journey from inland Africa to the ocean floor, creating diamonds renowned throughout the world for their exceptional brilliance, clarity, and fire.

Nature performed the first selection.

Namibia's artisans complete the second.

Inside the country's cutting and polishing facilities, highly trained professionals transform rough stones into masterpieces of precision. Every facet is carefully calculated.

Every cut reflects years of technical training, patience, and extraordinary attention to detail. Behind every finished diamond stands a Namibian craftsman whose expertise plays



an essential role in preserving the country's reputation for excellence.

For Shiimi-ya-Shiimi, these individuals deserve to be celebrated just as much as the diamonds themselves. He believes that every customer should understand not only the technical characteristics of a diamond, but also the journey it has taken, the people who shaped it, and the values it represents.

That philosophy reflects a broader shift taking place throughout the luxury industry. Today's buyers want more than beauty. They seek provenance, transparency, and purpose. They want confidence that what they purchase reflects ethical practices and meaningful stories.

Namibia offers all three.

Its diamond industry has become an international benchmark for responsible sourcing, combining strict environmental standards with careful resource management and long-term investment in local communities. The country's commitment to adding value locally has also strengthened opportunities for Namibian professionals whose expertise now contributes to every stage of the diamond journey.

This sense of national pride extends naturally into design.

Many of TaTe's collections draw inspiration directly from Namibia's landscapes, wildlife, and cultural identity. The upcoming Osino Collection, named after the iconic oryx, celebrates an animal admired for its elegance, resilience, and quiet strength.

Thriving in one of the world's most demanding environments, the oryx has become a powerful symbol of endurance—qualities that mirror both Namibia and the people who call it home.

These are not simply jewelry collections. They are expressions of identity.

Although TaTe Diamonds now welcomes clients from around the world through its flagship showroom in Atlanta, every international success serves a larger purpose.

Each visitor introduced to TaTe also discovers Namibia—its extraordinary marine diamonds, its world-class craftsmanship, and the remarkable people whose work transforms natural treasures into heirlooms that will be cherished for generations. In doing so, every diamond becomes more than a symbol of love.

It becomes an ambassador for an entire nation.

As the global luxury industry continues to evolve, brands built on authenticity will define its future.

Namibia possesses everything required to lead that future: *exceptional natural resources, internationally respected expertise, responsible stewardship, and a story unlike any other.*

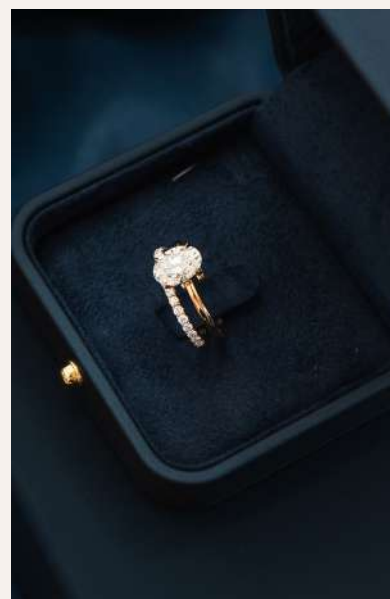
For TaShi Shiimi-ya-Shiimi, the mission has never been simply to build a successful jewelry company. It has always been to help the world see Namibia differently.

To ensure that every diamond reflects not only extraordinary beauty, but also the excellence, resilience, and spirit of the people who made that beauty possible.

Because the world's finest diamonds deserve more than admiration.

They deserve to be recognized for where they come from.

"When people think of the finest diamonds in the world, I want them to think of TaTe. And when they think of TaTe, I want them to think of Namibia." — taShi Shiimi-ya-Shiimi





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Why Building Namibia's Public Service Brand Matters

"International investors, tourists and development partners do not judge a country only by its economic indicators. They also judge how efficiently institutions function, how responsive government is, how quickly businesses can be registered, how transparent procurement systems are and how professionally public officials conduct themselves."

When people speak about brands, the conversation usually centres on corporations, products and services.

We think of banks, retailers, airlines, telecommunications companies or consumer goods. Yet one of the most influential brands in any country is not privately owned. It belongs to the State.

It is the public service.

Every interaction between a citizen and government shapes perceptions about the country itself. Whether applying for an identity document, registering a business, obtaining a licence, receiving healthcare, attending a public school or seeking justice in the courts, citizens experience the Government of Namibia through its public servants.

In that sense, the public service is not simply an administrative machinery. It is a national brand.

Like every successful brand, it is judged on consistency, trust, professionalism, responsiveness and the quality of the experience it delivers. Every civil servant, from the receptionist at a regional office to the executive director of a ministry, becomes an ambassador of that brand. Every interaction either strengthens public confidence or erodes it.

This is why the conversation about branding must extend beyond the private

sector. If Namibia is serious about building a brand-led economy, then the public service must be recognised as one of the country's most valuable strategic assets.

The recently concluded Best Namibian Brands Awards demonstrated precisely this point by recognising Hon. Sankwasa James Sankwasa, Minister of Urban and Rural Development, as one of Namibia's outstanding public sector leaders.

His recognition was significant not merely because it honoured an accomplished civil servant, but because it acknowledged something much bigger: that excellence in public administration deserves to be celebrated in the same way that excellence in business is recognised.

For too long, public service has often been viewed solely through the lens of bureaucracy. Yet behind every functioning government are thousands of committed professionals who ensure that schools open, hospitals operate, roads are maintained, pensions are paid, disasters are managed and public institutions continue to serve the nation.

When these systems function efficiently, they strengthen Namibia's reputation. When they fail, they weaken the country's brand.

International investors, tourists and development partners do not judge a country only by its economic indicators. They also judge how efficiently institutions function, how responsive government is, how quickly businesses can be registered, how transparent procurement systems are and how professionally public officials conduct themselves.

In other words, institutional performance has become part of national branding.

Around the world, some of the most respected nations deliberately cultivate the reputation of their public service as a competitive advantage. Perhaps no country illustrates this better than Singapore. The Singapore Public Service is recognised globally for professionalism, integrity, efficiency and meritocracy.

The country's leadership has long understood that public confidence and investor confidence are closely linked. Civil servants are expected to uphold the highest standards of competence, ethics and service delivery because they are viewed

as custodians of Singapore's international reputation. The strength of Singapore's public institutions has become inseparable from the country's global brand.

New Zealand has similarly invested in building a trusted and accountable public service. Successive governments have promoted transparency, citizen-centred service delivery and high ethical standards.

Public trust is regarded as a national asset, and government agencies increasingly measure success through citizen experience as much as administrative compliance.



The same philosophy can be observed in Canada, where the federal public service emphasises professionalism, diversity, innovation and service excellence. Continuous improvement, leadership development and public accountability form part of a deliberate effort to strengthen confidence in government institutions.

Across Northern Europe, countries such as Denmark and Finland consistently rank among the world's most trusted governments. Their public services are widely recognised for integrity, efficiency and responsiveness. This reputation contributes significantly to their attractiveness as investment destinations and to the confidence their own citizens place in public institutions.

These examples demonstrate an important lesson. Strong public institutions do not emerge by accident. They are intentionally built, continuously nurtured and consistently protected. Namibia already possesses many of the

ingredients necessary to build a similarly respected public service brand. The country enjoys constitutional stability, an independent judiciary, a professional civil service and a tradition of peaceful democratic governance. These are strengths that many countries aspire to achieve.

However, sustaining and enhancing this reputation requires more than sound legislation. It requires a conscious branding philosophy, one that recognises every public servant as a representative of the Namibian State and every government office as a touchpoint of the national brand.



This is where the Office of the Prime Minister has a particularly important role to play. As the institution responsible for overseeing the Public Service, coordinating government administration and driving public sector performance, the Office of the Prime Minister is uniquely positioned to become the custodian of the Public Service Brand.

Brand custodianship should not be understood as a marketing exercise. Rather, it is a strategic commitment to embedding a culture of excellence throughout the public service.

It means defining what the Public Service Brand stands for.

It means establishing clear service standards that citizens can expect regardless of which ministry or region they engage.

It means investing in leadership development, ethics, innovation and customer service.

It means recognising excellence while addressing underperformance. It means ensuring that every ministry, agency and regional office reflects the same values of professionalism, accountability and responsiveness.

Ultimately, it means making the citizen's experience the central measure of success.

The recognition of Hon. Sankwasa James Sankwasa at the Best Namibian Brands Awards provides an excellent foundation upon which to build this broader vision. Individual recognition should become the starting point for institutional transformation.

Celebrating exceptional leaders inspires others to pursue higher standards and reinforces the message that excellence in public administration is both visible and valued.

Recognition also changes culture.

When outstanding performance is acknowledged publicly, it creates positive competition. It encourages innovation, strengthens morale and demonstrates that integrity and professionalism are rewarded. These are precisely the qualities that distinguish high-performing public institutions around the world.

There is also an important economic dimension to this discussion.

As Namibia seeks to diversify its economy through industrialisation, green hydrogen, renewable energy, oil and gas, tourism, logistics and digital innovation, investors will increasingly evaluate not only commercial opportunities but also the effectiveness of government institutions.

How quickly are permits processed?

How responsive are regulators?

How predictable are administrative processes?

How efficiently do public institutions resolve challenges?

The answers to these questions influence investment decisions every day. A respected Public Service Brand therefore becomes a competitive advantage for the nation.

It enhances investor confidence. It strengthens Namibia's international reputation.

It improves the experience of citizens. It supports economic growth.

Most importantly, it reinforces trust between government and the people it serves.

The launch of the Brand Namibia Council presents an ideal opportunity to broaden the national conversation around branding. While much attention will rightly focus on corporate brands, tourism brands and export brands, the public service deserves equal recognition.

After all, governments do not simply regulate economies.

They shape the environment within which every other brand operates.

Namibia's ambition to become a brand-led economy will ultimately depend on the strength of all its institutions, including the institution that serves every Namibian every day.

The Office of the Prime Minister should therefore embrace a bold national vision: to position the Namibian Public Service as one of Africa's most trusted, professional and citizen-centred public institutions.

That vision should be supported by measurable service standards, leadership development, digital transformation, performance recognition and a culture that places citizens at the heart of public administration.

A great nation deserves a great public service.

And a great public service deserves to be recognised, protected and developed as one of Namibia's most valuable national brands. If every ministry, agency and public servant embraces that philosophy, the beneficiaries will not only be government institutions but every citizen, every investor and every generation that follows.

The Public Service is more than the machinery of government.

It is the face of the Republic. It is the everyday expression of the State.

And it is, perhaps more than any other institution, the brand through which the world comes to know Namibia.

Leadership That Empowers a Nation

David Namalenga's Distinguished Leadership Continues to Inspire Dinapama's Growth and National Impact

"To sustain the lives of the Namibian people, we must first get the basics right and that begins with creating decent jobs."

David Namalenga

Managing Director, Dinapama Manufacturing & Supplies

Leadership is ultimately measured not by titles or accolades, but by the lives it transforms. This year, that philosophy was recognised when **David Namalenga, Managing Director of Dinapama Manufacturing & Supplies**, received the **Distinguished Leadership Award – Private Sector** at the **2026 Brand Africa 100 | Namibia's Best Brands Awards**.

His recognition reflects more than personal achievement. It celebrates a leadership journey rooted in purpose, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to creating opportunities for Namibians. Under his leadership, Dinapama has grown into one of Namibia's leading garment manufacturers, earning recognition as one of **Namibia's Best Brands 2026** while becoming a powerful example of how local enterprise can drive national development.



As a proudly 100% Namibian-owned garment manufacturing company, Dinapama has remained committed to producing high-quality garments that meet both local and international standards since commencing operations in 2010. More importantly, the company has demonstrated that manufacturing can be a force for economic growth, skills development, and social transformation.

Today, Dinapama employs approximately **536 Namibians**, with more than **95% of its workforce made up of women**, the majority of whom are young people. For David Namalenga, manufacturing has never been solely about producing garments—it is about creating livelihoods, restoring dignity, developing skills, and empowering families. Every uniform produced represents meaningful employment, hope, and a shared commitment to building a stronger Namibia.



From school uniforms and corporate wear to protective clothing, promotional apparel, branded merchandise, bags, and customised textile solutions, Dinapama continues to serve both the public and private sectors with products known for their quality, reliability, and craftsmanship. Through continuous investment in technology, innovation, and robust quality management systems, the company has consistently delivered products that customers can trust.

At the heart of Dinapama's success is a steadfast belief in the power of local manufacturing. Every garment produced locally strengthens Namibia's economy, supports sustainable employment, and contributes to national self-reliance. Through the guidance of David Namalenga, the company continues to champion a future where Namibia is recognised as a competitive player within the

regional and continental textile value chain.

Being recognised among **Namibia's Best Brands 2026**, alongside Mr. Namalenga's **Distinguished Leadership Award**, is both an honour and a reaffirmation of the values that define Dinapama's integrity, excellence, innovation, and people-centred leadership. These accolades recognise not only the achievements of the business, but also the collective dedication of every employee, customer, supplier, and partner who has been part of the journey.



As Dinapama looks to the future, its mission remains clear: to expand local production, create more employment opportunities, invest in skills development, strengthen local supply chains, and contribute meaningfully to Namibia's industrialisation agenda. Through strategic partnerships, continuous innovation, and an unwavering belief in Namibian potential, the company remains committed to building a stronger manufacturing sector for generations to come.

To our valued clients, employees, suppliers, partners, and the people of Namibia, we extend our sincere gratitude for your continued trust and support. These recognitions belong to everyone who has believed in our vision and walked this journey with us.

Together, we are doing far more than manufacturing garments, we are proudly dressing a nation, empowering communities, creating opportunities, and shaping the future of Namibian manufacturing.





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**NAMIBIA'S MOST ADMIRED
BRAND 2026**



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Namibia's Best Brands Awards 2026 Highlights





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