

MARK SOUTER
GROUP MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION MANAGER
SANDBOX HOLDINGS

Company: Sandbox holdings was created as a family business that had potential to grow. Paul Wootten saw this as an opportunity and approached investors and bought out the company, which grew from 6.2million turnover to over 300million. Sandbox holdings offerings were technology, from switching on a light to the exchange of money and chips monitoring software at a casino.

Group: Sandbox Holdings, Sandbox projects, SVS, Optipro, Protion, Sandbox Mining, Sitronix, Sandbox 360, Sandbox SE, Click and Comply, Media One, Command and Control, GES.

Date: April 2010 – November 2013

Responsibilities:

- Increasing and restructuring of existing marketing team
- Management of marketing team:
- Developing research strategies that yield general market information and specific data elements relative to our subsidiary target markets.
- Filtering and creating marketing and sales plans with the obtained information relative to the subsidiaries offerings
- Presenting the resulting analytical output in a concise manner that is most informative to the CEO, Board of Directors, EXCO and the MD's of the subsidiaries
- Planning of marketing budgets through subsidiaries relative to GP
- Strategizing ATL, BTL and TTL campaigns throughout the subsidiaries
- Presentations of marketing campaigns to sales teams
- Rollout planning of marketing roadmap relevant to subsidiary marketing budget

I started at Sandbox in 2010 as Group Marketing and Communications Manager. I was nervous as I had been in marketing before but not at this level. When I started with Sandbox there were 7 entities adjoined to Holdings. Our turnover at that stage was at 100million with a staff compliment of over 250. I was tasked with one mission, increase turnover throughout the group.

The marketing department consisted of a very small team that provided the necessary items on request. First things first was to redo all the websites and update old data. The thing is I didn't just want a website for the sales teams and operations, I wanted the website to be an online CRM and ERP system where a request for documents and reports didn't have to be sent by email but could be pulled off the website.

I worked with our researchers to get enriched data from prospective clients by creating a line of questions where we knew if they were prospective or not in the opening questions. I then analysed the data and compiled it into a Marketing report that would outline prospective clients to our subsidiaries with the necessary contact details. Sandbox's CAGR was projected at 33% which meant new companies, organic growth, projected sales budgets and increased market penetration.

With all the new changes, we were still able to steer marketing in the right direction in achieving our main function, increase turnover. Through working with my team, copywriters, designers, tender captures and researchers. We were to help increase the 100million turnover to just over 300million. Sadly, the equity shareholders wanted a sell out and the group was broken up as was marketing.