

# Retail pioneer, Raymond Ackerman dies



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Retail legend Raymond Ackerman (92) has died. Pick n Pay, the retail group he founded, announced on Thursday morning.



Raymond Ackerman and his wife, Wendy. Source: <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/>

"With profound sadness, we announce that Pick n Pay founder Raymond Ackerman has passed away," the group said in a short release.

"A visionary entrepreneur, humanitarian and a great South African. Our country has lost a brilliant patriot who always saw a positive future for South Africa."

According to [Business Day](#), Ackerman was born in Cape Town in 1931, he was the son of the Ackerman's clothing group founder, Gus Ackerman, and was educated at Bishops Diocesan College. He studied at the University of Cape Town (UCT), where he was taught about the dangers of monopolies and the importance of the customer in economic relationships. These principles formed the foundation of the policies he adopted as a retailer.

In 1951, he started working as a trainee manager at Ackermans. Ackerman accepted a job in Johannesburg when rival

Greatermans acquired the group, where he convinced the business to build stores that sell food. He was tasked with starting the Checkers supermarket chain in 1955, and by the time he was 35, he was in command of 85 Checkers locations.



### A message from Raymond Ackerman on his 90th birthday

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With the help of investors, he acquired four Pick n Pay businesses in Cape Town in 1967. Several years later, he opened South Africa's first hypermarket in 1975, a 22,000m<sup>2</sup> store in Boksburg, and the chain soon grew.

According to [Reuters](#), by the time Ackerman retired in 2010 and handed the chairman's reins to son Gareth, Pick n Pay was operating 20 hypermarkets and 402 supermarkets across South Africa, with a group turnover of almost R50bn.

Today it generates 106 billion rand in annual turnover and owns more than 2,000 stores across South Africa and seven other African countries.

Ackerman is survived by his wife, Wendy, children Gareth, Kathy, Suzanne, and Jonathan, his 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Ackerman was known for his retail sayings “doing good is good business” and “poor people need low prices, rich people like low prices”.

“From the outset, he lived by the core values that the customer is queen, that we must treat others as we wish to be treated, and that doing good is good business. These values have guided the business for over 56 years, and today, the Pick n Pay Group serves millions of customers in more than 2,000 stores across South Africa and seven other African countries,” the statement said.

Tributes have been pouring in across social media...

“ *With profound sadness we announce that Pick n Pay founder Raymond Ackerman has passed away.*

*A visionary entrepreneur, humanitarian and a great South African. Our country has lost a brilliant patriot who always saw a positive future for South Africa.* [pic.twitter.com/lo0uunYhAJ](#)— Pick n Pay (@PicknPay) [September 7, 2023](#) ”

“ *A South African legend, pioneer and giant has passed.*

*Raymond Ackerman made an exceptional contribution to our beautiful country and her people, in so many powerful and positive ways, that his impact and legacy will be always be felt and remembered.*

*Few people fight for their...* [https://t.co/VrvegPH6Pi](#)— Mike Abel (@abelmike) [September 7, 2023](#) ”

“ *My sincere condolences to the Ackerman family and to @PicknPay on the passing of Raymond Ackerman. My thoughts go out in particular to Mrs Wendy Ackerman.*

*He was a truly great Capetonian! Raymond leaves a huge legacy in the economy of our country and the civic life of our city.* [pic.twitter.com/lqj1lm6JFM](#)— Geordin Hill-Lewis (@geordinhl) [September 7, 2023](#) ”

“ Raymond Ackerman is Pick n Pay [#RIPRaymondAckerman#ChampionSouthAfrica](#) [pic.twitter.com/hsHhhupNqw](#)—  
Ashraf Garda (@AshrafGarda) [September 7, 2023](#) ”

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