

Family-owned retailer Kingsmead Shoes braces for expansion

In October 2022, family-owned retail group Kingsmead Shoes celebrated the reopening of its flagship store in Springfield Value Centre, Durban, after the shopping centre was burnt to the ground during the July 2021 riots. The 29-year-old company is now plotting to almost double its store footprint to more than 80 stores within the next five years.



Source: Supplied

Despite the necessary closure of the old Springfield store due to the riots, Kingsmead as a business managed to retain the store's original 25-member staff members by placing them in other Durban stores while shopping centre was being rebuilt.

Whilst many businesses were closing stores during 2020, Kingsmead opened six new stores, growing its footprint to 46 locations nationwide. Owing to these additional stores and the company's strong relationships with landlords, suppliers and other business partners, Kingsmead managed to ensure that the jobs of all employees were not affected during the pandemic. The business in fact grew its staff complement to 450 employees nationwide

"We plan to grow the business to 80-plus stores in the next five years with the vision to be the best shoe store in South Africa," says chief operating officer Ryan Davidson.

According to the company, Kingsmead's focus is on providing an "exceptional customer experience through personalised service and well-designed stores", giving shoppers access to a wide selection of quality products comprising local and

international mainstream popular brands.

The retailer was founded in 1993 in the centre of Durban opposite Kingsmead cricket stadium (its namesake), with an offering of premium shoe brands, including Skechers, Hush Puppies, Ipanema, Spoilt Girls, Cat, Footglove, Jeep, Mia and Soviet, amongst others.

Springfield store sets new benchmark

For the revamped flagship store in Springfield, new digital elements have been included to elevate the shopping experience, including two 86" TVs behind the front desk welcoming customers to the store, and three digital signage points in key departments.

The company notes that marketing trends acted upon by the retailer show that digital boards in-store provide a fresh, relevant touchpoint that can be updated regularly to showcase the latest shoes and value-adds available.



Source: Supplied

The Springfield store sets the benchmark for what Kingsmead Shoes wants to achieve in its store design and it is expected to positively impact the growth of the business, states the company.

“I think Kingsmead covers a one-stop destination for shoes for the whole family where they can expect a wide assortment of quality brands and products within a store that is a pleasure to shop in both look and feel and personalised service that is lacking from a lot of other retailers,” says Davidson.

“I think what makes Kingsmead a proudly South African company is that we aim to make a difference to South Africa by helping build the economy, alleviate unemployment and address the skills shortage in this country by providing meaningful jobs and training for our staff. Every store we open or shoe we sell helps do that,” he adds.