

Dr Andrew Golding of the Pam Golding Property group

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

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Established in 1976 by the late property and real estate icon Pam Golding, the Pam Golding Property group has since achieved world-class status, covering the full spectrum of the real estate market in Sub-Saharan Africa and internationally.

According to its current brand custodian, Dr Andrew Golding, who also serves as its chief executive, the core values of the brand, ingrained since its inception, remain integrity, professionalism and empathy. We chatted to Golding to find out more about his role in developing and growing the brand, what it means to be a proudly African brand, and how the group is embracing sustainability and a greener future.



Dr Andrew Golding, chief executive of the Pam Golding Property group

As brand custodian for the Pam Golding Property group, what does your role entail?

Dr Andrew Golding: Firstly, my role as chief executive of the Pam Golding Property group is to manage and direct a team of senior managers and executives and lead the business in a professional ‘corporate’ manner - but with a distinctly family business feel and ethos. This requires strong and, hopefully, inspirational leadership. Our aim is to mix a strategic blend of the best of a corporate and a family culture. Much of my role involves developing, nurturing and enhancing relationships both inside the business with all our internal stakeholders, management, agents and staff as well as externally, mainly with clients – as well as developers and suppliers - but also with other stakeholders within the industry.

Maintaining the integrity and reputation of the premium nature of our premier brand remains extremely important as the significance not only of values but of reputation and credibility in the marketplace and the world at large cannot be underestimated.

“ It is almost impossible to place a value on brand equity – this coupled with strong client relationships is what makes clients return time and time again. ”

Building a successful brand requires significant and ongoing investment in the high calibre and abilities of its staff and agents, as well as a business – excellence in everything it does and everything it is – its people, the properties it markets,

its strategic business partners and business principles. Currently the group has over 300 offices in Southern Africa and internationally, and over 2,000 agents and staff.



#BehindtheBrandManager: Natasha Mkhize, brand and marketing manager at Curro

Shan Raddcliffe 14 Apr 2021



■ **What are the top three words that best describe the brand?**

Golding: The core values of the brand, and behaviours of the business, which have been ingrained since its inception, and remain so today, include integrity, professionalism and empathy. These are synonymous with our family values and ethics. We provide a service rooted in knowledge, namely expert knowledge of all aspects pertaining to the buying and selling of property, and care of our clients.

“ We understand the importance of having a passion for the business and a client-centric approach. ”

Coupled with this is our commitment to playing a leadership role in the marketplace and in the industry. From the outset, the company has consistently set new benchmarks in terms of professional, world-class standards within the South African and African real estate industry, and continually remains at the forefront of innovations in the marketing of real estate both locally and internationally.

Over the years we have built up a globally recognised brand, and the group is the recipient of 59 international property awards, as well as being awarded 'Superbrands' status. Competing against real estate companies from around the country, this is the 14th year that Pam Golding Properties has received the prestigious five-star award for 'Best Real Estate Agency in South Africa' (over 20 offices) in the world-renowned International Property Awards. Open to property professionals from around the globe and judged by an independent panel of approximately 100 industry experts, focusing on key criteria such as service, innovation, quality, design and originality, the International Property Awards celebrate the highest levels of achievement by companies operating in all sectors of the property and real estate industry.

Receiving this globally recognised and acclaimed accolade as Best Real Estate Agency in South Africa is testament to our ongoing commitment to providing clients with differentiated, world-class service excellence, coupled with high technological and marketing innovation as we constantly strive to set new benchmark standards in the industry. This award further differentiates us in an increasingly competitive, dynamic industry, particularly as we move forward into a post-Covid-19 economic recovery.

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At the heart of our success lies our customer-centric approach based on fostering long-term relationships with clients – including both sellers and buyers – with agents playing a key role in applying their negotiating and inter-personal skills in concluding successful property transactions across all regions and sectors of the market. In this kind of retail environment, the Pam Golding Properties brand has major impact, serving to gain the attention of the customer and draw him or her 'inside', then it's up to the agent, the main point of contact with the client, to do the rest, naturally with the help of marketing and full-service back-up from the organisation, to ensure the whole experience is a memorable one. This is where the agents themselves can provide a vital differentiation from competitors.

■ **How is being a proudly African brand incorporated into the Pam Golding Property group's operations?**

Golding: The Pam Golding Property group has a network of over 300 offices in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as a number of international offices. It also has a strategic alliance with one of the world's largest property groups, Savills plc, and has access to its prestigious network of over 600 offices worldwide. On the African continent, we currently operate not only across South Africa but in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Namibia, Swaziland, Botswana, Mozambique and Nigeria.

As one of the founder members of Proudly South African, one of the cornerstones of the Pam Golding Property group's ethos has always been to promote South Africa and South African property first and foremost to South Africans themselves – as well as to the broader global market. There's also no doubt that owning a property on South African soil is a key factor in instilling pride in one's own country. Many years ago – and through the very nature of our business - we realised the tremendous synergy between tourism and property investment, and have as part of our marketing strategy undertaken a huge selling job in terms of promoting property – and thereby investment - in South Africa and in Africa at numerous overseas property expos through our associated offices worldwide and on our website.

“ Through building our group internationally, marketing our brand and forming worldwide links and associations, we have made it our mission to position South Africa and the African continent as a globally competitive player with a globally competitive product that attracts foreign investment - so vital to building our economy. ”

■ **Can you share with our readers any recent brand campaigns run by the group and the rationales behind them?**

Golding: When the pandemic first came about and we were in hard lockdown, we (i.e., the industry) were not able to host any in-person show days. During this time, we launched the iShow concept which enabled potential buyers to view homes they were interested in via videos played on Facebook Watch Parties, while our agents were online in real-time to respond to any queries. This proved very successful and, in fact, we are still running them today as a number of buyers like to view a video of a home before visiting in person.



#BehindtheBrandManager: Sonja Jansen van Rensburg, chief communications officer, Zutari
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■ **What have been the most successful channels for sharing the Pam Golding Property group's brand message in the market?**

Golding: With the average South African spending over nine hours a day online, our cutting-edge digital marketing offering means we make use of an omni-channel strategy across all the digital platforms in order to reach the right profiles of buyers for our clients. This includes email, mobile marketing, social media, YouTube, Google Search and Display.

■ What have been some of the vital tools and trends of your trade?

Golding: Building a successful brand requires vision and a consistent investment in innovative marketing strategies, as well as a commitment to maintaining an exceptionally valuable referral network. A dedicated team of digital communication strategies have been put in place to optimise marketing via digital media, while our website is one of the most advanced property databases in the world.

Digital disruption, fast-tracked due to the unprecedented lockdown when the real estate industry ground to a sudden halt, has precipitated an urgent and pressing need to enable our business digitally and remotely in all respects. This was both from an agent's perspective as well as from more traditionally office-bound employees, namely administrative, managerial and other staff. Very rapidly and with the assistance of technology - much of which was essentially already in place, we were able to pivot the entire business to this new and dramatically different way of working.



#BehindtheBrandManager: Hawa Moya for Werksmans Attorneys

Shan Raddcliffe 13 Apr 2021



Our exclusive mandate offering, backed by a strong head office support system, is a tool no other South African real estate company can offer and this is complemented by experienced and knowledgeable agents who serve our clients with personal dedication and successful results. In light of the severe lockdown restrictions, the trend to move toward almost full remote and digital interaction, engagement and transaction has catapulted the industry into the frontline of the digital age.

“ Having the advantage of a central services support system, we were able to take the lead in offering a bouquet of innovative and interactive tools and platforms. ”

■ Consumers, particularly the youth, are increasingly favouring sustainable brands that consider their environmental and socioeconomic impact. How is the Pam Golding Property group embracing sustainability and conveying this to consumers in its brand messaging, if at all?

Golding: Firstly, as far as the youth are concerned, the predominantly young age profile of residents of South Africa and much of Africa presents a huge opportunity and positive underpinning for the market, as there is a long-term structural demand and appetite among buyers for housing.

Many years ago, we identified the fact that droughts, load shedding by Eskom and rapidly escalating costs of electricity and water have made energy- and resource-efficient homes increasingly appealing to home buyers and, as estate agents, we support and endorse eco-friendly, sustainable living. However, this is a long-term goal across multiple complex levels.

As a result, we partnered with the Green Building Council of South Africa in their capacity as the 'green' custodians of the built environment to drive a better understanding of value in the residential property market with regard to a home's green credentials. Fundamentally, this has a positive impact on the running costs of any home, while at the same time serving to preserve the world's scarce resources as well as reducing the impact on the environment.

“ Our vision is to reach a point in the hopefully not-too-distant future, where this becomes integral to a home's specifications when selling and that buyers understand the value of this versus 'less green' homes. ”



#BehindtheBrandManager: Charmagne Mavudzi of Volvo Car South Africa

Imran Salie 13 Apr 2021



Furthermore, with rapidly rising energy and water costs (and shortages) homeowners and home buyers are becoming more and more aware of the need to reduce these costs as well as help to conserve the country's natural resources. As a result, sustainability is rapidly becoming a key imperative for both home owners and businesses alike. We commend the GBCSA for the superb content in their book, developed through the ground-breaking My Green Home project with its ["Guide to Saving Money by Going Green"](#) which we made available to Pam Golding Properties clients.

The fact is, energy- and resource-efficient homes are increasingly attractive for home buyers – to the extent that properties listed with 'green' attributes such as recycling, energy- and water-saving features, among others, receive considerable attention.

“ In future we expect to see an even greater emphasis on living off the grid as people seek to become more self-sufficient, with their own electricity, water and even urban food gardens as a means of affording a measure of relief, independence and security in these uncertain times. ”



#BehindtheBrandManager: Thobile Tshabalala, head of Brand at Old Mutual

Jessica Tennant 13 Apr 2021



📌 As brand custodian, what's the best part of your job?

Golding: As current brand custodian, I consider it a privilege to be holding the baton at present, but the best part of my job is to tackle head on every day the challenge (together with the current members of my 2,500-strong team) to grow and enhance the reputation of the brand in a purpose-led way towards the ultimate goal of passing that baton on with significant positive forward momentum towards a genuinely sustainable and worthwhile business for future generations of shareholders, staff and agents.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

Sindy Peters (@sindy_hullaba_lou) is a group editor at Bizcommunity.com on the Construction & Engineering, Energy & Mining, and Property portals. She can be reached at sindy@bizcommunity.com

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