

## Shifting gears in the second-hand car market

Fuel prices are up, the cost of living is on the rise, and yet your dream car might be more accessible than ever.

Sam de Freitas, managing director of LISACARS, has been in the motoring industry for nearly 30 years. After some soul searching, he founded his company in 2010 with just two employees and now, in 2018, runs a company with 150 staff member across six branches.

So, how has this business mogul brought about consistent growth in a time of constant economic decline? And how has he managed to do it within the motor vehicle industry as fuel prices steadily rise to an all-time high, and lift sharing apps like Uber become more and more reliable?



Sam de Freitas, managing director of LISACARS

Here are three tips for shifting gears in the automotive business.

### South Africans will travel for a good deal

“When you’re looking for the best deal, you’re willing to travel further to save money,” says de Freitas. The fact is, many South Africans are willing to incorporate the price of a plane ticket into their purchase decision. Capetonians, who made up the smallest number of buyers of new cars in March 2018, are willing to fly to Johannesburg to save big money on a car.

It's this insight that encouraged de Freitas to open his latest branch on Route 24, which is next door to the O.R Tambo International Airport, on 1 July 2018.

"A startling amount of individuals step off a cheap flight, grab a cab to the dealership, and drive home. Because the majority of the nation's pre-owned stock is here in Gauteng, it means locals have access to a large variety of vehicles at bargain prices," he says.

## **You want to put some mileage on your dream car**

Unlike auctions, LISACARS allows you to test drive a car before you decide you want to buy it. "A higher-end car really has a knack for selling itself," says de Freitas.

Even outside of the industry, products that have a physical presence in stores and a listing online have had a much higher purchase rate through the web rather than their online exclusive competitors.

"It comes down to knowing a steering wheel feels right in your hands," says de Freitas.

## **Experience is more than a trend**

Over the last 30 years in the automotive industry, it's fair to say that de Freitas has seen more than his fair share of design, engineering and innovative flops.

"You know when a model from a certain year is not going to retain much of its retail value." Whether it's the design choices or other values, it's important to supply what the consumers want. The Volkswagen Scirocco, a once highly popular passenger car, only sold two new units in 2017. In part due to the latest Golf and Polos closing the gap in luxury and performance.

LISACARS has experienced professionals helping to connect buyers with cars by finding innovative approaches to everyday problems.

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