

Press Release  
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**Nestlé Professional: Focused on Solutions**

Creative food and beverage solutions that allow customers to entice consumers and grow their own businesses, is the foundation of Nestlé Food Services re-launch this month to Nestlé Professional.

"This is a pivotal and exciting moment for us," said Barend Minnaar, Nestlé Professional South Africa's Country Business Manager. "It is more than simply a name change. We are changing the mindset of the business to focus on our customers, partnering with them and applying our international knowledge and expertise to provide food and beverage solutions that will grow their business," he said.

According to Minnaar, Nestlé World Wide identified the 'Out Of Home Industry' as one of the four growth pillars of their international business last year and they have been preparing for the changeover to Nestlé Professional ever since. "The biggest benefit to our customers is that Nestlé Professional now gets direction and support directly from our 'Out Of Home' specialists based in Switzerland."

The change to Nestlé Professional has come with substantial changes to the operational aspect of the business both from a global and local perspective.

"On a global scale we have access to support functionality from Nestlé specialists around the world. In particular the Beverage Centre in Switzerland where specialists design solutions specifically for Nestlé Professional to service the 'Out of Home Industry', some of these solutions are five to ten years ahead of their time," said Minnaar.

"We have access to dedicated Research and Development Centres and Innovation and Renovation teams around the globe," said Minnaar.

Nestlé Professional also has access to Regional Culinary Centres worldwide, the biggest being in Canada, as well as over 100 professional chefs employed by Nestlé. The company has visible operations in 97 countries, employing 10 000 people, he said.

"Nestlé Professional is also part of a very flexible manufacturing organisation with a footprint of 15 dedicated Nestlé Professional manufacturing facilities worldwide, and shares in another 148 Nestlé factories. We also have direct access to selected contract manufacturers and co-packers."

"Locally the transformation journey started two years ago, we understood the scale of Nestlé Professional and what was coming so we started to shape the business accordingly, focusing on our core activities."

Non-core activities were outsourced, said Minnaar. The technical team supporting and maintaining the company's vending machines were outsourced to 'Vending Technical Services', a team almost exclusively dedicated to Nestlé Professional. "Their core business is technical maintenance, and now they supply a more focused and dedicated service to our customers," said Minnaar.

The telesales teams underwent major change in the transformation process. According to Minnaar telesales accounts for 80% of turnover and previously were situated around the country. "We have centralised the telesales team in Johannesburg in July last year. We've enhanced the team by developing them into two separate functions, inbound and outbound calls. Inbound calls are customer service related while outbound calls are focused on customer relationships and sales.

According to Minnaar, Nestlé has realigned the business to focus on a channel approach with direction directly from 'Out Of Home' food professionals in Switzerland.

The company has restructured the Head Office team creating a more flexible and more focused team with better speed to market.

"Training our field sales team has also become a focal point of the business and this year. We will expand this training to include the telesales team, ensuring better customer service.

"Our training materials have been developed by Nestlé for Nestlé in order to capture best practise around the world and to ensure better relationships with customers."

Minnaar said that there are currently various improvement projects in place to further improve the company's flexibility and agility with regards to providing a better service."

Minnaar said that 'Nestlé Professional' as the name underpins the fact that there had to be change in the business, internally, from a people perspective and externally, with relationships with our customers. "Professional is associated with 'best in class' and that is the kind of expectation we would like our customers to attach to our brand," said Minnaar.

At the same time as Nestlé Professional's official launch, the company introduced a new food solution, Maggi Mash. This product comes with a dispensing machine creating a viable and healthy food solution for our food customers, said Minnaar.

The solution guarantees customers consistent quality and convenience, adding value to the customer and ultimately our consumers. Maggi Mash is a unique instant product that has a very realistic buttery mash taste and has a lot less fat than traditional French fries.

According to Minnaar Nutrition, Health and Wellness are a core focus of Nestlé Professional. "Consumers have become more aware of nutrition and health aspects and therefore we are providing our customers with healthy options."

Minnaar said that the company had employed a qualified nutritionist to work on the nutritional values of Nestlé Professional products. "We will provide more nutritional information and define healthy portion sizes on products that may be considered less healthy if not consumed in moderation."

"Nestlé Professional was brought to life in January this year and by January next year will have full financial responsibility, meaning it will be a global business with a direct reporting line to a zonal office of Out of Home specialists in Singapore," Minnaar said.

"Our strategy for success is to apply our global expertise, product technology and knowledge of consumer habits to enhance your business and entice consumers," he said.

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