

PRESCIENT CELEBRATES 25-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

*Today, a global financial services provider, the *Prescient Group, celebrates its 25-year anniversary this month after opening its doors in 1998 as a small business located in the stables of the Alphen Hotel in Cape Town.*

Since then, the Group has grown exponentially – and has seen three core businesses borne from a desire to break barriers, innovate, and provide the best service to clients. This desire has seen the vision shared by entrepreneurs, Herman Steyn and Guy Toms, turn into a journey of innovation, entrepreneurship, and excellence that not only gave rise to several successes for the business but also for staff who left and started their own businesses.

The Prescient Group's history is founded within Prescient Investment Management (PIM). In 1999, PIM's client AUM was valued at a modest R1.1 billion; today, its client AUM stands at **R130 billion and counting. Its pioneering move to pursue a systematic approach to investing, which uses data science and big data to interpret and visualise research insights and distinguishes PIM from its rivals, has of late been adopted by other big players in the industry.

Staying true to the Prescient DNA

Reflecting on the past 25 years of the investment management arm's history, Cheree Dyers, CEO of PIM, says she's most proud of being associated with a company that is as an industry innovator, trailblazer and a space where people are given opportunities to grow and develop. It's this ethos that has given rise to Prescient Investment Management's reputation as a leading systematic investment manager with a culture that embraces diversity, learning and autonomy. "Our focus has always been on making a positive, impactful contribution to the future of investing for our clients, staff and the communities we serve," she says.

Prescient Securities (PSec), established a year after PIM in 1999, has also grown into a formidable presence as one of the leading independent stockbrokers in South Africa under the reins of CEO Christopher Craddock. PSec has also recently achieved several milestones including becoming one of the first South African agency-only stockbrokers to begin trading on A2X, an alternative exchange for listed South African stocks that currently provides additional access to 166 listed companies.

PSec was also recently recognised for its top-rated coverage in the 2023 Financial Mail Ranking the Analyst Awards. "We compete directly with the local and global investment banks and punch well above our weight as evidenced regularly in the benchmark industry surveys which corroborates a level of consistency of service that creates confidence for our clients," says Craddock. "We are here for the long run and are committed to offering consistency and value-adding products and service that keeps PSec ahead of the curve in our industry."

The third arm of the business, Prescient Fund Services (PFS), this year saw an ambitious goal set five years ago materialise into over R1 trillion in client assets under administration (AUA).

"We set ourselves an audacious goal in 2018: to reach over R1 trillion by 31 March 2023," says Mockford. The Group has now reached this milestone, effectively more than doubling client assets under administration from R400 billion to R1.014 trillion in just five years. "It was a bold target that required immense determination and hard work from all our staff," he says. "It's an outstanding achievement given the difficult market circumstances we have faced in the past few years."

PFS is a global fund administration and investment fund platform business based in Cape Town and Dublin. Fund administration developed as a core competency within the Group, through many years of offering this service to Prescient Investment Management and its third-party clients. The need by asset managers to access efficient and affordable third-party administration was recognised and resulted in the separate incorporation of Prescient Fund Services and Prescient Fund Services (Ireland).

"Plans are underway to make our service offering and solutions more accessible globally. By partnering with other market-leaders and using world-class technology, our goal is to be the operational backbone of the investment fund industry globally."

Future plans

Prescient Holdings CEO Willem Venter says he's proud of the group's growth and achievements to date. "We have achieved so much over the past 25 years, thanks to the strong leadership and vision of our co-founders, hard work and dedication of our staff (past and present) and unwavering support of our loyal clients.," he says.

Going forward, he believes the Group will go from strength to strength. "We are privileged to have a good balance between experience and dynamic new talent in our global team," Venter concludes. "This is a good foundation to grow our brand and position the Group as a place where people make a difference to the world's challenges through investments and technology."

* Prescient Group includes the following authorised Financial Services Providers: Prescient Investment Managers (PTY) Ltd (FSP no. 612), Prescient Fund Services (PTY) Ltd (FSP no.43191) and Prescient Securities (PTY) Ltd (FSP no.44074)

** AUA and AUM as at June 2023.