

Sandton City introduces the integration of AI in *Future Icons* campaign

In 2022 Sandton City launched its "City of Icons" campaign, profiling iconic fashion staples such as the little black dress, denim, trench coat, hoodie and suit, with shoes, sunglasses, handbags, and lipstick, all must-haves for any fashion forward shopper.



Sandton City spearheads the integration of AI in "Future Icons" campaign. Source: Supplied.

Now, the shopping centre has taken the campaign to another level, inviting shoppers to imagine what the city of icons will look like, in the future, featuring these iconic items, tech-nified.

Future fashion

Driven by a futuristic vision, tech savvy shoppers will be delighted to see artificial intelligence (AI) generated iterations of these items, and others, crafted in the same approach, that propel the imagination on a futuristic journey.

Generated using a Midjourney Bot on Discord, a generative artificial intelligence program, the campaign aims to help visitors to the centre envisage incorporating these essential items into their future fashion routines and to imagine future possibilities, where technology and icons integrate.



The technology-driven communication elements will naturally reside in the digital space, adorning the screens throughout the centre. The messaging will be amplified on Sandton City's social media by "friends of the brand," such as Naqiyah Mayat, Kyle Clark, Zoe Msutwana and Victoria Duckitt, as well as by thought leaders in fashion, beauty, accessories and technology, including Nafisa Akabor, Angie Detsikas, Europa Art Group's director and Buyer Melina Lambrakis and Dior South Africa's general manager Armine Anders.



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Sandton City will also be producing a futuristic docuseries featuring these individuals, that takes shoppers on a behind-the-scenes journey to unveil how the AI was leveraged. The six-part series, to be showcased on social media, also gives insight into how different retailers in the centre are embracing AI technology to improve and personalise the retail offerings in the centre.

Imagination

This forward -thinking campaign, not only rises to the occasion, but simultaneously showcases the future of retail marketing. An AI model, ChatGPT, was leveraged to script the centre's social media component of the campaign, whilst an AI text to speech generator enhanced the voice over recorded for the videos. By leveraging this iconic technology, the ambition is to enhance its relationships with visitors to the centre, and play a role in the future of their imagination.

A social media competition will invite shoppers to vote for their favourite futuristic brand elements, by commenting and engaging, using the #FutureIconsSC. Participants stand in line to win a pair of Apple AirPods Max, valued at R12, 700.

"Pioneering the evolution of retail through cutting-edge innovation is a key priority for Sandton City," said Dimitri Kokinos, general manager of Sandton City. "By continuously pushing the boundaries, we aim to remain ahead of the curve and to inspire our shoppers with the belief that the future is an exciting space, filled with limitless possibilities for all of us" he added.

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