

Association to guide luxury branding

Florence de Vries

THE RECENTLY launched SA Luxury Association (Sala) intends to provide documentary evidence on the operations of luxury brands in South Africa through intense research on the subject.

Speaking at the launch of Sala at the One&Only hotel in Cape Town last week, Piers Schmidt, the chief executive of Sala, said the association would start a research study soon to ascertain the "behaviour of luxury goods in South Africa".

Luxury experts such as Johann Rupert, the executive chairman of luxury group Richemont, would form part of a group of 60 respondents in the study, he said.

The study would be completed by September.

"We want to know how a brand like Aston Martin must behave in the South African market, while learning more about the local customer of luxury," Schmidt said.

Twelve founder members are

backing the association, which hopes to increase its membership extensively in the coming year. The founder members include: the One&Only hotel group (Cape Town), Hyatt Regency (Johannesburg), Business Day's Wanted magazine, Mœt & Chandon champagne, The Idiom Wine Collection, Gavin Rajah Concept, Shimansky Fine Jewellery, Aston Martin, Pershing, ACG World and the Luxury Branding group.

"Sala is a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting the growth of the luxury and premium lifestyle sectors in southern Africa," said Schmidt.

Founder member Gavin Rajah said he hoped Sala would become a benchmark for luxury groups on how these brands must operate.

"Sala must guard the intellectual property of luxury brands and the collective representation of the association would aid brands in their communication with the government and international parties," Rajah said.

