



ENGAGE

Voice of the timeshare industry in South Africa



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“

If done right and managed properly, and by adding the after sales component to your business, you have a winning formula. It has certainly worked for us. Don't just invest in your staff and business, invest in your clients too.”

[Daryl Gray]



Meet Daryl Gray

CEO of Futurevest

With over 30 years' industry experience, Daryl has successfully established Futurevest as a foremost timeshare brokerage. He shares his story and some insights into selling timeshare under the current economic climate.

Tell us a little about yourself . What was your first introduction to timeshare and how did working in this industry come about?

I was introduced to the points system while in South Africa on a break after an 18-month working holiday in the Canary Islands and Spain. I could not believe that there was such a flexible system on the market.

In 1989, I made the move from textiles to the leisure industry and went from marketing for two companies to eventually owning my own franchise. In 1993, I entered into a franchise agreement with the Beekman Brothers Group of Companies to launch The Holiday Club product.

It was to be the start of a long and successful journey which has seen Futurevest growing its client base, not just in South Africa, but also in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Lesotho and Eswatini.

Over the years I've grown with the product, and it gives me great pleasure to be able to help the average family get into ownership and take the kind of holidays that most people just dream about.

I am also very proud of our team, which has more than 200 years of combined experience within the industry.

Taking a closer look at timeshare sales, tell us about today's buyer and what they are looking for.

We sell points on behalf of The Holiday Club. The majority of our sales are to existing owners wanting to upgrade their holiday product and around 40% are new sales to first time buyers.

I would say our buyers are mostly the Millennials - 75%, followed by the GenX with about 23% and the GenZ being about 2%.

The Infinity Points and Private Residence options are the most popular. The Private Residence product caters for those who prefer something extra special when it comes to holidays - such as more luxurious accommodation than the usual self-catering holiday option.



Pictured above: Qunu Falls | The Holiday Club

What are your biggest sales obstacles?

In my view, its the climbing interest rates and fuel costs which has an effect on disposable income. In the past I would have said the marketing costs, but since Covid, which forced us to restructure our business, we have been able to reduce our marketing costs by about seventy percent. Another challenge is making sure you have access to new information (leads), which thankfully right now we don't have a problem with. We are also in the process of putting up our own website to further enhance this. The internet has become our "go to" tool and it is certainly paying dividends.

How do platforms like booking.com and AirBnB impact sales?

A very small percentage of clients we talk to prefer the likes of Booking.com, etc. The general cost of accommodation has made selling timeshare a little easier and especially when it comes to international travel. Timeshare rentals have very little impact on our sales.

Today's buyer is looking for a very different type of holiday to the earlier traditional timeshare model. What are your thoughts on finding new ways for buyers to enjoy timeshare?

When I came back from overseas, I only knew timeshare in its old form. It most certainly has been a challenge to create new products with the value-add benefits, but these are definitely a big selling tool. I personally think that to be ahead of the pack it is vital to be involved with a company that is looking to meet the changing needs of the new generation. What worked before, only works for a very small percentage of the market now.

Where do you see the industry in ten years?

Honestly, I see it as a must for most families who want to be able to afford holidays in decent accommodation. I foresee it being in more demand than it is now, based on the costs that already exist.



Pictured above: Royal Wharf | The Holiday Club