

Chinese tycoon sets up shop in Johannesburg

Tiens enters the South African market

BY ANELLE HAMILTON

CHINESE TYCOON, Li Jinyuan, president of the Tiens Group, opened their first banner store in Africa on 18 July. Scores of people gathered to witness the opening ceremony in Randburg, Johannesburg. According to Tiens, their concept starts a new wave in the South African retail market. *Supermarket & Retailer* went along to the launch to find out more.

The Tiens group

Tiens is a multinational group specialising in retail, tourism, finance, international trade and e-business. The business has



Chinese tycoon, Li Jinyuan, president of the Tiens Group, welcomes the crowd at the opening of the group's first banner store in Africa.

subsidiaries or branches in 110 countries and regions and has established strategic alliances with world-class enterprises from over 20

countries. This includes 500 000 distributors and stockists and 13 branches worldwide, including South Africa. They have 40 branches in Africa and claim to have created more than 100 000 jobs for people on the continent. Jinyuan confirms that there are also plans in the pipeline to launch a second Tiens banner store in Kenya.

The group develops and sells health food, health care, beauty care and home care products to over 16 million consumers worldwide, through a combination of retail and multi-level marketing.

Tiens in South Africa

Tiens has been represented in South Africa for the last eight years, but only through direct selling. The outlet in South Africa is the first Tiens banner store to open and Jinyuan says it is expected to bring new franchise opportunities and help to build better lives for people here. "We believe the Tiens Group is one of many countries that will be investing in the South African



Jinyuan (centre) and other delegates officially open the store after the ribbon cutting ceremony.



Not even the cold weather could keep them away! The queue outside the banner store in Randburg, Johannesburg at the launch.

market," he adds. Kevin Hou, general manager for Tiens Southern Africa, agrees. "We are proud to be opening our first banner store in Africa and to be the pioneers of this new retail concept on the continent."

Health and wellness

The Chinese are renowned for their wellness products as they draw on the wisdom of China's 5000 year-old philosophy of blending natural extracts with high tech processing to formulate products that encourage optimal health and wellness.

The Randburg outlet specialises in health and wellness products and stocks health care products, as well as groceries, household cleaning products and cosmetics. The store combines the concept of direct selling and retailing and focuses on high quality products that meet international quality standards, including the FDA, European Union and the Japanese Health Ministry. All products are also 100% Halaal and Kosher certified.

Tiens is a member of the international Direct Selling Association (DSA), which represents 45 direct selling companies operating in South Africa. Jean McKenzie, association manager of the DSA South Africa, announced at the launch that Tiens is the only Chinese member company of the DSA in this country.



The store stocks grocery items and household cleaning products.



The Chinese are renowned for their wellness products and the shop's main focus is health and wellness merchandise.



The Randburg outlet specialises in health and wellness products.



Giving back

As part of giving back to the community, the group has donated more than \$200m to orphans in Africa. In terms of giving back to consumers, Jinyuan says that the Tiens Group offers 20% cash back for purchases made on products. "No other company offers people such bonus value for cash back. Any Tiens distributors who buy the products in Tiens outlets get bonus points as well," he says.

"This relationship will strengthen the ties between China and South Africa. Money comes at a price but the friendship of the two countries is priceless," he concludes. ■

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