

Our Year in Review

Over the last couple of years, Lightstone implemented an aggressive market expansion and acquisition strategy with 2016 being a year of consolidation and integration of various businesses. During 2016 we embarked on consolidating three different auto focused businesses, into a single unit under the Lightstone Auto brand. These businesses included Signio – our vehicle finance and insurance platform, Wheels Web – our compliance solutions and association management business, and the original Lightstone Auto – which focuses on vehicle information and risk management solutions for the banking, insurance and motor industries. We also disposed of AMP (Advantage Motor Protector) to ensure we remained focused on our core business and to ensure any potential conflict with our partners is removed.

During this time we followed a very rigorous strategic process, which included the creation of a clear organisational purpose, designing new strategies, implementing new structures, reviewing and enhancing product and service offerings and developing fantastic new solutions for some of our target markets.

As a business, which remains committed and focused on the motor industry, I am happy that we have a clear picture of where we want to be in a couple of years and what we need to do to get there. A key starting point is to make sure our core business and product offerings are both strong and sustainable. In my mind, Signio, Autostats, and Dealer Compliance form the foundation of the Lightstone Auto business and it is a key focus of the management team to ensure these businesses fire on all cylinders over the short term.

Operationally, we made significant progress with the implementation of the new Signio system. The conversion to the new Signio Platform Version 5, is an important milestone for the group as it would provide real, cost effective value to the retail motor industry and it will also enable a multitude of other valuable services and products to subscribing motor dealers. I am delighted to confirm that we have one final implementation left which will be completed in January/February after which I am certain our partners and clients will immediately feel a significant improvement in functionality of the Signio platform.

Our new Signio Value Added Product solution is paying dividends as we are delivering a record number of VAPs electronically every month. This provides real value to both dealers and insurers as it improves efficiency and makes accurate reporting and benchmarking possible.

Compliance is an increasing challenge for the industry and it is likely that this will continue. We currently provide a compliance service to approximately 800 dealers and I am very proud of my team who recently underwent an onsite visit by the FSP, and they passed with no exceptions arising. It is our objective to continuously improve our service offering for clients in this challenging area of compliance.

From an analytics and data perspective, 2016 was a solid year, with good progress in our chosen focal areas. The year ahead holds huge promise as we will be introducing some interesting forecasting, segmentation and leads generating products to the market. Also expect to see a lot more of Lightstone in the vehicle valuation space.

Going forward we will be able to offer comprehensive solutions that will make transacting within the automotive industry simple, time saving, digitised, relevant and affordable. We endeavour to help our clients focus on the running of their own business, and improving their bottom line by providing an integrated set of value-adding solutions. We believe that we are now geared to expand and grow within the automotive sector.

Our objectives for 2017 are to ensure that our technology and platforms are stable and reliable, to focus on adding real value to all our clients, and regularly communicating and delivering on our promises. We intend to build our team in to one that is responsive, decisive, innovative and flexible, with a key focus on delivery. The journey ahead promises to be exciting and we look forward to exploring the future potential of Lightstone Auto with you as a trusted partner - not just a client.

To all our clients and staff who have supported us during 2016, I thank you and look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Regards,

Pieter Wessels
Managing Director, Lightstone Auto