



# INVESTING FOR TOMORROW TODAY

*Now more than ever, GraySwan has to adjust to changing global investment conditions, while never losing sight of the trust of its clients or the importance of giving to those in need.*

LEGACY is defined as something of value handed down by a predecessor or by you. Its lens gives you a view of your life from a generational perspective, where you become aware of the desire to live beyond yourself, making a difference in the lives of others and giving back. The legacy you leave is the life you lead and therefore legacy is the residue of a life well lived.

GraySwan is a story of a family that, being passionate about investments, decided to not only live well, but also help others to implement and manage long-term investment strategies that would enable them to leave a lasting legacy.

Founder and chief executive officer Duncan Theron and his partners Tania Theron and

Gregoire Theron, the head of wealth and chief investment officer respectively, have built one of the most respected independent investment advisory and wealth management businesses in South Africa. GraySwan provides tailor-made investment solutions for institutional clients, family offices and high net worth private clients. Its track record is proof of a remarkably successful and robust investment process that has been refined since the company's founding more than 10 years ago.

"When we started the business, we wanted to do something different," says Duncan. "We believed there was a gap in the market to provide an independent, high conviction

advisory and wealth management offering. But more importantly, we wanted to build a business that performs as well as cares. We always want to do the right things for the right reasons and therefore became a signatory to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI), only the second advisory company in South Africa to do so. We incorporate best-practice responsible investing principles into our advisory and wealth-management approach and are able to bring our clients superior risk-adjusted performance at low cost."

When asked what the name of company means, Duncan explains that 'black swans' describes events that are random, unexpected and have extreme consequences, but can be rationalised in hindsight. "Our name GraySwan was inspired by our ethos, which is to actively manage risk for the purpose of minimising adverse impacts on our clients' investments. Although 'GraySwan' events are also random, unexpected and have extreme consequences, they can be foreseen or identified in advance and can be avoided or managed

where necessary. This means that protocols can be put into place to minimise or control their adverse impact."

## FAMILY OFFICE APPROACH

GraySwan's investment advisory approach recognises that the preservation of wealth across generations requires engagement from both the family in question and the advisers entrusted with managing its wealth. It's a strategic and confidential long-term partnership.

How affluent families manage their affairs and control their wealth is changing. Increasing complexity, endless global investment options and new regulations are just some of the reasons why many are turning to independent investment advisers who can offer an institutionalised and high-quality global offering to help them build and retain a lasting legacy.

"Being appointed as a financial confidante is a responsibility we take very seriously," says Tania. "We earn our clients' loyalty by repeatedly proving that our value proposition is not just lip-service, but the pinnacle task we set ourselves. Our clients Sleep Well At Night (SWAN) while we regularly burn the midnight oil looking after their wealth. We're about trust; we're about performance and service excellence," she adds.

## WHY ENTRUST GRAYSWAN WITH YOUR FAMILY'S WEALTH?

Gregoire clarifies further: "The core of our investment team has been working together for more than a decade. Our collective investment experience exceeds 150 years of advising institutional clients and managing the assets of high net worth private clients in South Africa. Not only have we successfully consulted to most of the country's largest institutional investors, but we have also managed many of these clients' offshore alternative assets. Our wealth of experience over the past two decades in both investment consulting and wealth management enables us to understand and manage each client's unique and sophisticated needs and performance objectives."

Gregoire emphasises that investors need to think differently. "Buying the market will no longer do the trick," he notes. "Traditional long-

term thinking will not work going forward." The business models of 35% of S&P 500 companies in the USA alone are under active attack. Disruption of these companies and their business models is happening at a faster pace than ever before, so a paradigm shift is needed to deliver superior returns going forward. Investors will have to diversify their portfolios across developing global megatrends to be in the best position to source future opportunities.

"Our clients are invested across such megatrends," continues Gregoire. "For example, we have constructed global equity disruption and healthcare innovation portfolios at low cost as we use only low-cost exchange traded funds. Even now, we're building a blockchain and cybersecurity global equity portfolio and a different thinking global commodity portfolio for clients who want to invest in the future today."

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

GraySwan has shown that it cares by partner-

ing with its clients in long-term investment thinking and by forming the GraySwan Charitable Trust as proof of its philosophy to make a living by what it gets and make a life by what it gives. Since its inception, the company has channelled between 5% and 10% of its net profit into various organisations via the trust. "It's in our DNA and part of our journey," says Duncan.

Walk with a Purpose is a shoe donor initiative started by the GraySwan Charitable Trust ([www.walkwithapurpose.co.za](http://www.walkwithapurpose.co.za)), which partners with non-profit organisations that are skilfully managed to steward resources while adhering to principles valued by the company. The GraySwan Charitable Trust helps to make a tough situation for the less privileged more bearable and motivates children to improve their lives by envisaging a better future and taking steps to make it happen. By giving them a pair of shoes, it helps them to take those steps with dignity: to walk with a purpose. **V**

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*GraySwan is the story of a family, passionate about investments: founder and chief executive officer Duncan Theron, and his partners – Tania Theron, the head of wealth, and Gregoire Theron, chief investment officer.*