

# Dermot Latimer, Point Group's new CEO

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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Dermot Latimer has recently joined Point Group as the CEO, bringing with him a long history of driving the growth of the company's creative and digital divisions. His achievements include developing sustainable revenue streams, expanding value-proposition opportunities with print management clients, and forging strong client relationships. With a talent for introducing new products and solutions, Dermot is set to lead Point Group on an exciting strategic journey.



Dermot Latimer is the CEO at Point Group. Source: Supplied.

## ■ ***What are you excited about in your new position?***

I have worked alongside and within the organisation for the past four years and am truly passionate about what it does. I'm motivated and excited about the opportunity for our team to impact clients' businesses significantly by continuing to deliver work that makes a real difference.

We are a marketing investment partner, and I believe our organisation, diverse and talented people, and expertise are unrivalled. Our focus on driving ROI is unmatched. We're obsessed with customer success to drive achievement, co-create with customers, and become strategic partners in solving business problems clients didn't yet know existed within their businesses, through innovative tech solutions, for example.

I'm confident I can lead the group to unprecedented growth over the next five years, evangelising our marketing investment partner solutions with more clients in more regions.

## ■ ***With your years of experience, what do you think you will be bringing to the position?***

I'll bring a fresh perspective to the position. The ad world is in flux; there's little room for legacy thinking – it's no longer fit for purpose. I'll maintain our focus on both effectiveness and efficiency to provide the strongest ROI for our client's marketing investments.

By that, I mean doing the right things (effective strategy) and doing things right (efficient execution). It's time to bring relevance commercially to what advertising does. Our end-to-end solutions promise an extraordinary impact and massive efficiencies. They are hugely effective in driving down costs while increasing revenue. It's a conversation that everyone should be having.

### ▣ ***What have been the highlights of your career?***

I feel as if I'm on the professional adventure of a lifetime! I've lived and worked in Ireland, Australia and now South Africa. Just a few years after founding Iconic Collective, we were acquired by Point Group, to which I've recently been appointed Group CEO. I'm responsible for a team of over 300 remarkable people, servicing over 250 clients in 26 countries and growing the \$100m+ turnover.

I've proudly led the turnaround of the group's creative and digital businesses, creating new, long-term sustainable revenue streams and generating increased value-proposition opportunities with our traditional print management clients.

### ▣ ***What have been the biggest challenges in your career?***

I founded a strategic and creative agency in 2014 that was fundamentally created to be different, to shift the nature of the industry and its marketing approach. It wasn't easy to navigate as I did not have agency experience other than my exposure to those I worked with in my role in Australia. It was through that experience of frustration with agencies that the ethos of our agency was created. I had sat in many boardrooms with many agencies.



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Karabo Ledwaba 19 Apr 2023



My frustration was that they all clamoured for as much budget as they could secure, with little thought of how they could support our business goals and objectives. I intended to create something fundamentally different, an agency whose core focus would always be to impact our clients' businesses and support their commercial goals.

Other advertising agencies will spend your budgets for effect; with us, you would invest them for impact. And therein lay the challenge. I didn't grow up in South Africa or have an established local network, and I condemned the sector's traditional mindset. However, I realised that being an outsider was helpful and valuable in overcoming these obstacles.

### ▣ ***What inspires you every day?***

Without question, it's the opportunity to make a difference to our staff and clients, both internally and commercially, daily. It's incredibly fulfilling to impact people's lives and businesses.

### ▣ ***What do you think are the biggest problems facing the marketing industry right now?***

The traditional mindset in the industry is problematic. Traditional methodologies in marketing strategies, deployment, channel execution, and category considerations are no longer relevant or sustainable. Agencies tend to push clients into a metaphorical shouting match, and we don't believe it works anymore.

A great example recently was with a senior brand director for Africa. In our conversation, he said the brand had done everything right. According to his agencies, they made a beautiful and emotive through-the-line campaign. His comment was that, as a result, everyone cried, but no one bought any product. So where was the return on that significant investment for that brand and business?



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The post-pandemic consumer doesn't want to be advertised to; they want an authentic experience in their channel of choice, with ease of conversion. Their path-to-purchase is no longer linear, with multiple channel and touchpoint considerations.

We believe the better approach is to invest our client's marketing spend to create deep impact and value through effectiveness and efficiency. Our position as a marketing investment partner means we're obsessed with solving clients problems and transforming their businesses through end-to-end solutions and a deep obsession with their business and brand goals, objectives, and ambitions.

### Any advice for young people who want to have a career like yours?

My advice for young people who want a career like mine is to remember Steve Jobs' quote, "Just remember you can always poke back." It means you should not be afraid to challenge the status quo or push back against obstacles that may seem insurmountable.

It is a reminder that you have the power to respond to difficult situations with resilience and determination and that you should never give up on your goals, no matter how difficult they may seem. Never accept failures as something that happens to you, but rather for you. They can be painful but always rich in education and necessary for you to navigate and redesign your journey.

Essentially, it means never letting obstacles or setbacks prevent you from achieving your dreams. What I've achieved today is something that shouldn't have been possible, but I kept pushing forward and didn't give up. Whatever life you want, you can have it, but you must work hard and be committed to achieving it. The journey may change, but the destination you set for yourself never should.

## ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

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