

The Auto Magic Story

The story of a man, an idea and the magic that followed.



Hein Scheffer

Founder

Automagic, South Africa

Once upon a time

The history of AUTO MAGIC as we know it today, reads like a fairy tale, but it is built on the hard work, sweat and sometimes tears, of Hein Scheffer and his dedicated crew.

Scheffer – a humble yet intrepid business adventurer – embarked on the AUTO MAGIC journey in 1982. Having for some time nurtured the idea that he did not want to sit behind a desk at one of South Africa’s big banks and advise clients on the best ways to manage their businesses for the rest of his life, Scheffer ventured into the glass replacement and repair industry. At this time, he successfully secured, launched and managed the Novus windscreen repair franchise in South Africa.

This successful foray invariably led to exposure to the **panel beating** industry and, in 1997, Scheffer identified a market niche and with the support of Jan Kachelhoffer and other business partners, he began formulating the business strategy that would eventually grow to become the benchmark for non structural repairs, we now know as AUTO MAGIC — found all over the country.

In 1999, Scheffer took the mobile repairs business to a fixed location with an expanded scope of work, which essentially covered what is today often referred to as non- structural repairs. This business operated for a period of two years and during this time the management team refined repair processes until Scheffer was satisfied that it could turn a profit and be successfully franchised.

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Electronic management systems were critical to the success of the business and the team focussed on developing these systems. These would eventually define all repair procedures and manuals as well as support and training programmes. A defined scope of work and standard facility criteria were also developed and refined during this phase.

One becomes many

During 2001, the AUTO MAGIC concept received substantial attention and support and the first franchise opened its doors in 2001. This filled the gap between so- called chip repairers and full service repair shops, or panel beaters, which promised excellent service and turn-around times on repairs.

Scheffer needed substantial capital to take the franchise to the next level. This capital was eventually sourced from franchise partners and during this time Hein met Philip Vosloo. At the time, Vosloo was head of Absa franchising and joined the AUTO MAGIC® Group in 2005. He currently holds the position of COO for the group.

Between 2002 and 2005 four AUTO MAGIC franchises were opened.

Having achieved this measure of success, Scheffer was finally able to convince the insurance industry that AUTO MAGIC® could deliver cost- effective service on non-structural repairs and the first of a number of business relationships was cemented. The broker and insurer business partnerships formed in the early years still exist today and are a testament to the group’s ability to deliver what it promises.

Making magic

During the next few years, the focus shifted to increasing brand awareness. This led to an increase in applications from aspiring franchisees and the opening of more outlets in 2006, four in 2007, three in 2008, six in 2009 and five in 2010.

In 2009, Scheffer expanded the management circle to assist in driving the goals of the AUTO MAGIC® Group and employed Richard Green, who at the time was national director of SAMBRA (the South African Motor Body Repairers Association).

This year, AUTO MAGIC celebrates its 10th anniversary and has 30 operating franchises and numerous agents across the country. New franchises are imminent and will bring the total footprint in South Africa to 40 within the next few months. From its humble beginnings, the AUTO MAGIC Group now employs more than 700 people at its head office in Benoni and at **franchises nationwide**. With the use of an advanced electronic platform (unique in the South African motor body repair industry), effective customer service programmes and highly skilled artisans and technicians, it is no wonder AUTO MAGIC has endeared itself to insurers, brokers, vehicle manufacturers and a growing private client base.

Mission statement:

“We will delight all our franchisees, customers and partners with the level of service and personal attention, which will reflect the extent of their value to AUTO MAGIC and how important they are to us.”

Giving back

AUTO MAGIC® is serious about taking up the banner of social responsibility and has a dedicated team that manages an annual budget to aid local communities in need.

OUR VALUES

Auto Magic believes in open and honest business relationships with clients, partners and suppliers. We will continually strive to honour all commitments with the utmost trust and respect and Auto Magic® will endeavour to deliver uncompromised value and magic service.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Hein Scheffer

CEO

Philip Vosloo

COO

Richard Green

General Manager – Coastal

Lein Schutz

General Manager – Northern

Piet Nawn

General Manager – Central

