PWM 25 YEARS

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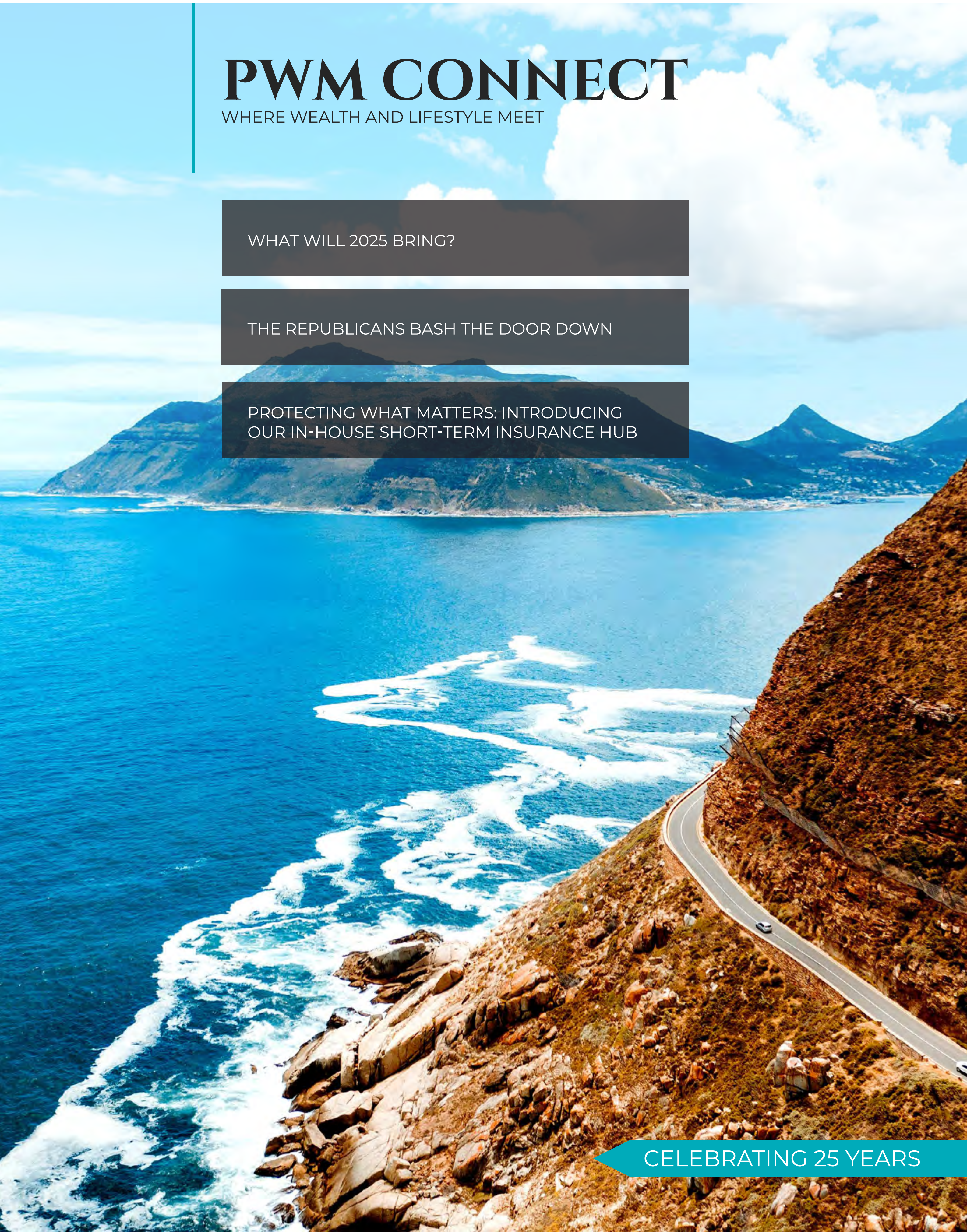


CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

WHAT'S INSIDE

A WORD FROM PIETER

Welcome to the last edition of our newsletter for 2024.

As we approach the end of another year, it is time to pause and reflect – not only on where we are personally, but also on how we are doing in terms of the financial goals we set for ourselves to achieve.

Regular review meetings with your financial planner will make it easier to review your financial plan and the progress you are making on your financial journey. On this note, I would like to thank you, our valued clients, for your trust and for allowing us to guide you in growing your investments towards achieving your dreams and goals.

This year marked a special milestone for us as we celebrated our 25^{th} anniversary. We could not have reached this point without your trust and commitment towards PWM. We feel incredibly honoured to have such a dedicated community of clients who have been an integral part of our story.

The holiday season offers a unique opportunity to step back and evaluate your financial plan, setting new or refining existing goals and aspirations, and how we can continue to support you in making them a reality. This is also a good time to ensure that your finances are in order before you take a well-deserved break to relax and spend time with family and friends.

We look forward to helping you achieve even greater success in the coming year. Wishing you a holiday season filled with joy, relaxation and the warmth of loved ones, and may 2025 be a prosperous and fulfilling year.

Kind regards

Pieter Bester
CEO

WHAT WILL 2025 BRING?

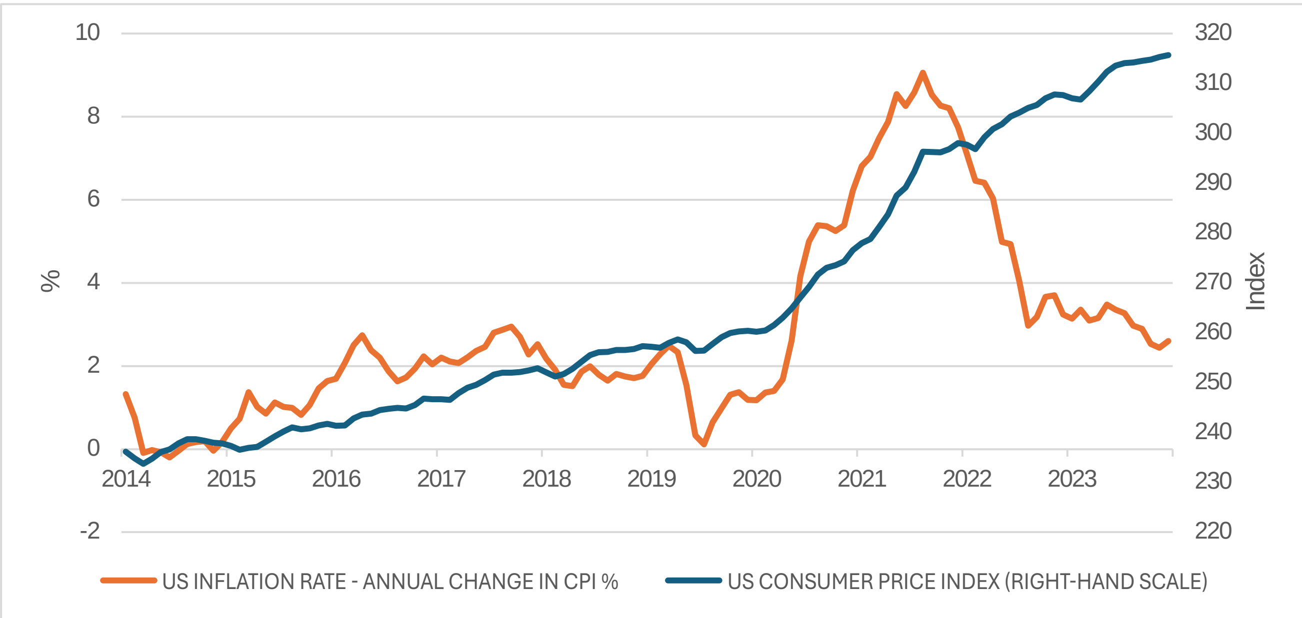
By Izak Odendaal | Chief Investment Strategist | Old Mutual Wealth

At the start of the year, we braced ourselves for a record number of worldwide elections. In fact, there were even more than expected, since France and Japan called unscheduled votes. The results were the same as almost everywhere else, with the incumbents losing substantial ground. Japan's ruling LDP joined the Tories in the UK, the BJP in India, the ANC in South Africa and many others in shedding a large percentage of voters. To this list, most notably, we can add the Democrats in the US.

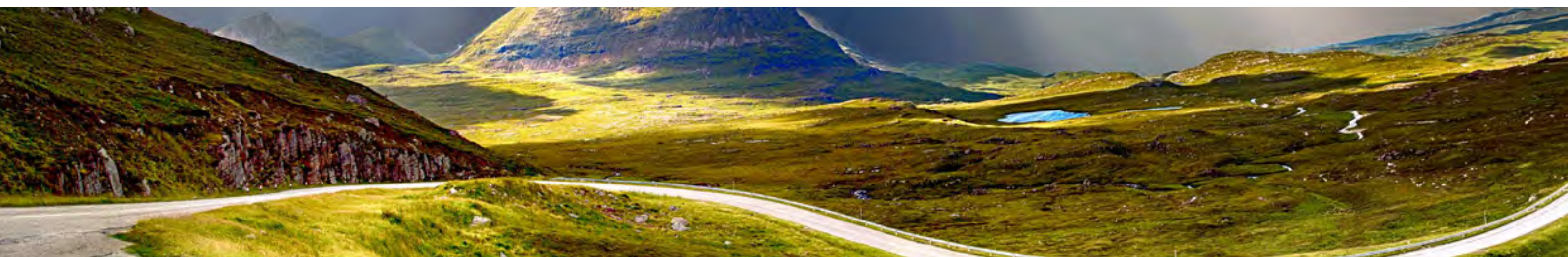
Each country has its own political dynamics, but there is an underlying theme. Voters punished incumbent parties for the cost-of-living shock they experienced over the prior two years. Exit polls in the US confirm that "inflation" was the number one concern for voters, and fairly or unfairly, they blamed President Joe Biden and his Vice President Kamala Harris for it.

There is a big difference between how analysts, like me, and normal people think about inflation. Technically, inflation is the rate of change in the broad price level, usually captured by the consumer price index, over a fixed time period, usually 12 months. When inflation falls, it means the consumer price index is rising at a slower pace. Most people don't care about these technicalities, but rather think about where the price level is.

CHART 1: INFLATION VS THE PRICE LEVEL



SOURCE: LSEG



While the big jump in prices in 2021 and 2022 was not sustained in 2023 and 2024 – the inflation rate slowed down – these prices were not reversed either. You can have high prices and low inflation at the same time, and that is one of the reasons why voters punished politicians in 2024.

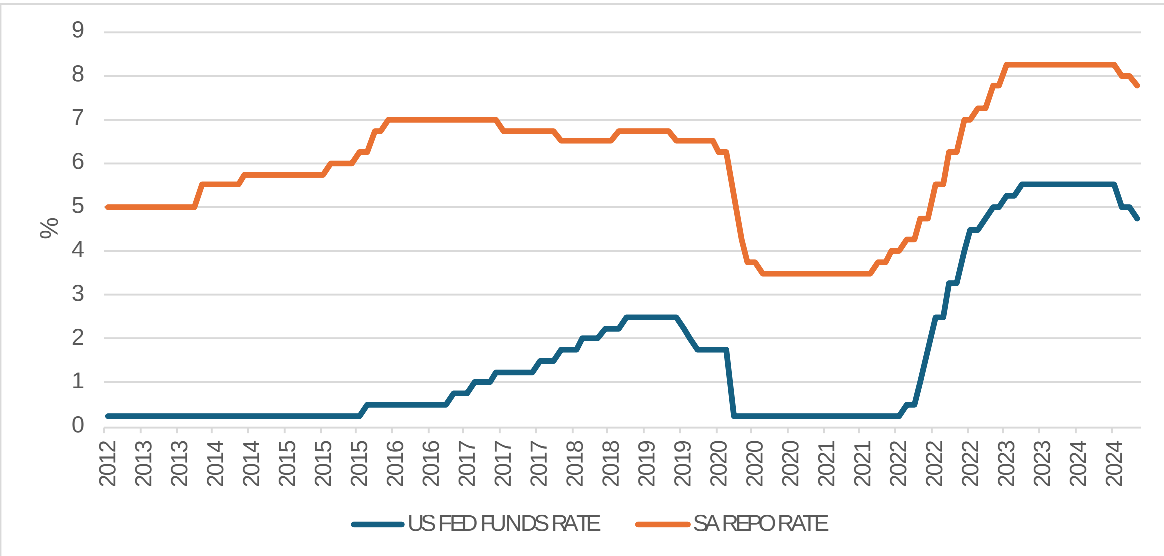
Ironically, incoming President Donald Trump's policies could end up causing more inflation through raising tariffs on imported goods and restricting the inflow of migrant workers. This would count as cost-push (supply-side) inflation. Trump's plans to cut tax rates could further stimulate an economy already running quite hot, potentially stoking demand-pull inflation. Much will depend on the extent to which his campaign promises are implemented.

Inflation is, of course, also something that we speak about regularly in financial planning. Inflation doesn't have to surge as it did worldwide after the pandemic. Even a relatively low inflation rate will eat away at your purchasing power over time. An inflation rate of 3% per year will see prices double over 25 years. A 4.5% inflation rate – the South African Reserve Bank's inflation target – will see prices double every 16 years.

Speaking of inflation targets, what does all this mean for central banks? The US Federal Reserve (Fed) will pay close attention to inflation risks emanating from the Trump administration's policies. However, the Fed is in an awkward spot. It knows something is coming but cannot set interest rates based on the impact of policies that have not been implemented yet. Trump will only be inaugurated in late January, and then there are political processes to be followed to execute many of his policies. The impact could only materialise in 2026.

So, in the meantime, the Fed is likely to keep cutting rates heading into 2025 but will proceed cautiously. The market has already scaled back expectations for rate cuts in 2025 by a full percentage point since late September. US interest rates will therefore probably settle at around 3.5% to 4%, a much higher level than the pre-Covid average.

CHART 2: POLICY INTEREST RATES IN THE US AND SA



SOURCE: LSEG

In South Africa, the Reserve Bank is likely to continue cutting the repo rate as domestic inflation is set to remain on target during 2025. Of course, our central bank will keep a close eye on what the Federal Reserve does and is also likely to be more cautious. But so far there is no reason to scale back what have been already conservative assumptions about the path of South African short-term interest rates. The repo rate still seems likely to settle around 7%.

Much will obviously depend on the rand/US dollar exchange rate. On the one hand, there is a broad consensus that Trump's policies point to a stronger dollar, though ironically, he favours a weaker dollar to support American businesses. Indeed, the rand fell by about 4% in the week after the election. On the other hand, the rand should benefit from a better domestic growth outlook and growing foreign investor interest in South Africa as the country makes ongoing progress in structural reforms. It should also be noted that the dollar is already strong while the rand is already on the weak side. This limits the potential upside for the former and downside for the latter. Importantly, the rand never moves in a straight line but is still likely to zigzag its way to a firmer level over the medium term, supporting the outlook for lower interest rates.

Needless to say, however, there is considerable uncertainty in all of the above. From our experience of his first term, we know Trump can be unpredictable and that his mood swings can impact market sentiment. It will require greater patience on the part of investors, and the ability to look through the noise to focus on fundamental changes. Ultimately, long-term returns depend on fundamentals, not sentiment. It also means diversification will be our best friend in 2025, as we expected the unexpected.

OPINION PIECE

THE REPUBLICANS BASH THE DOOR DOWN

By Andrew Whitewood | Managing Director | PWM Wealth Management

The US election was billed as a "tight" election, with the Democrats and the Republicans thought to be neck and neck. The Republicans and Trump however won convincingly with the Republicans controlling the White House, the Senate as well as the House of Representatives.

In the week post the election result outcome, US markets rocketed and the JSE slumped. Why? Mr Trump has been very vocal about making the US great again. He wants to cut taxes in the US and implement or apply tariffs to all imported goods, and he is very much anti-immigration.

WHAT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR US TO UNDERSTAND IS THE FOLLOWING:

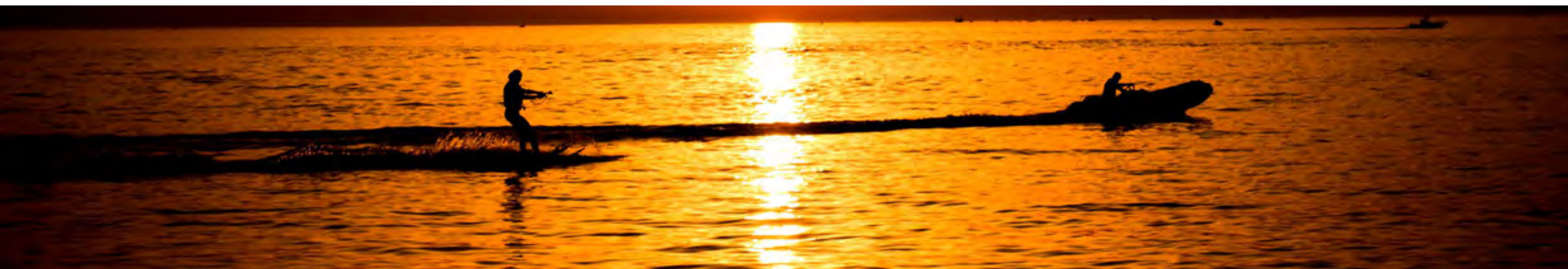
1. While Trump has served as president before, he is not an unknown factor like the first time.
2. He can only see out one more term, so this will be his last.
3. What he says and what can actually happen over the next four years, could be totally different.

The immediate concern is that, in general, Mr Trump's policy is inflationary. This means inflation will increase, and so will interest rates, shortening the current cutting cycle. Higher interest rates are not a good thing, and the word recession is being thrown around again. It is going to be a very fine balancing act for Mr Trump, as he doesn't want to put the US into a recession and a scenario where jobs are being shed. However, he needs to deliver on his promises to his supporters.

As we did previously, we are going to experience noise in the markets, and see short-term volatility based on the incoming president's actions and reactions! But historically, and under presidents from both parties, the US markets have trended upwards, like other markets – obviously, just not in a straight line.

Life is complicated, the world is complicated, and I believe in simplifying things. We need to focus on what we can control as investors. The one free lunch in investing is diversification, and it is therefore important to ensure that the portfolios that you are invested in are diversified. Then we need to save as much as possible and invest appropriately from an investment strategy point of view. In retirement, we need to stay committed to our investment strategy and manage our expenses. When it comes to staying committed to one's investment strategy, investor behaviour is fundamentally important to the success of an investor's financial plan.

In closing, expect noise, expect controversial statements from Mr Trump and expect short-term volatility in investment markets. Your investment strategy should be based on a long-term plan and. not the next four years under the rule of any US president!



FINANCIAL PLANNING

"ADVISER ALPHA" – UNMASKING THE UNSEEN VALUE OF A PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL PLANNER

By Rudolph Bosch | Financial Planner | PWM Pretoria

Imagine planning a hiking trip in the Drakensberg mountains navigating dense forests, steep cliffs and unpredictable weather to reach a beautiful hidden waterfall. You have a map, some basic tools and equipment. You could attempt the journey alone – however, the trail is challenging and unmarked, with many twists, turns and potential hazards.

Now imagine yourself attempting this hike with an experienced guide, who is familiar with the terrain knowing the mountains inside out, and who possesses hiking tools and equipment you've never seen or even heard of. As an avid hiker with numerous multi-day hikes completed in the Drakensberg, I understand the value of an expert local guide by my side. Similarly, a skilled financial planner acts as your trusted guide on your financial journey, helping you navigate and plan the best route through the unknown, changing financial landscape, and avoid dangerous financial pitfalls.

The added value that the guide brings is often referred to as the Adviser Alpha. In simple terms, Adviser Alpha is the additional value that a professional financial planner brings to your financial planning journey. It's the expert guidance, strategic insights and personalised advice that help you reach your financial goals more efficiently while avoiding the pitfalls. Adviser Alpha goes beyond the return or growth you see on your investment statement at the end of the month: it extends far beyond the obvious and is sometimes difficult to quantify.

In this article, I will demonstrate just a few of the many, and sometimes overlooked and invisible, benefits of professional financial planning.

PROTECTING YOU FROM YOURSELF (BEHAVIOURAL BIASES)

Those who have experienced the Drakensberg mountains will understand that the weather can be unpredictable and change in a matter of seconds. Similarly, investment markets can be unpredictable and turbulent. An experienced financial planner will effectively manage a client's emotions in this scenario and prevent hasty decisions that can be costly, such as panic selling during market downturns or overconfidence when markets start to run. A skilled financial planner acts as a rational voice, helping clients stick to their long-term financial plans whilst also avoiding emotional pitfalls.

TAX-EFFICIENT INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND TAX OPTIMISATION

The benefits of tax-efficient strategies often go unnoticed because they are not always immediately visible, unlike investment returns, which are easily quantifiable and can be tracked. The tax savings and long-term cumulative benefits of these strategies are more subtle. For example, determining the optimal way to withdraw from retirement savings can be complicated. Professional financial planners are able to structure sophisticated withdrawal strategies that balance tax efficiency, longevity risk and lifestyle needs.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Quantifying the exact value added by risk management is challenging, because it involves assessing what didn't happen. The value of these precautions might not be immediately evident. For example, on a sunny day with no incidents it might seem like the guide's efforts were unnecessary. However, their preparation and expertise are crucial elements in preventing potential problems that could have occurred. You might not notice the storm you missed or the landslide you avoided, but these precautions significantly improve your safety.

Similarly, in financial planning, it is hard to measure the precise benefit of avoiding a significant loss thanks to careful investment portfolio diversification, or the peace of mind resulting from proper cash flow planning and provision for sufficient emergency funds.

FINDING YOUR "WHY"

Simon Sinek's "Find Your Why" principle helps to identify the core purpose, cause or belief that inspires you. This "why" serves as a compass for making decisions and setting goals. In the context of financial planning, it means that financial planners help clients to identify and understand the deeper motivations behind their financial objectives.

Professional financial planners understand how to align financial plans with a client's "why", and its value is often subtle and not immediately visible. It manifests in the form of increased satisfaction, peace of mind and a sense of purpose by creating personalised financial plans that help clients keep on track to achieve their financial goals.

LEGACY PLANNING

The benefits of legacy planning are often not seen immediately, because they are only realised after the client's death. The peace of mind that comes from knowing your affairs are in order, knowing that your wealth is preserved and will be transferred efficiently and that loved ones will be taken care of, is significant but intangible.

ONGOING FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Just like the environment changes on your hike, from forests to valleys to mountain peaks, the financial landscape is constantly changing and evolving, introducing new products, regulations and strategies. A good financial planner serves as an educator, keeping clients informed about relevant changes and new opportunities. This ongoing education enables clients to make better financial decisions by empowering them with knowledge and confidence.

Vanguard, a leader in the investment management industry, has conducted extensive research on Adviser Alpha. In their paper "Putting a value on your value: Quantifying Vanguard Adviser's Alpha", they believe implementing the Vanguard Adviser's Alpha framework can add an additional 3% in net after-fee returns per year for clients.

When considering whether to work with a financial planner or not, it is crucial to look beyond the explicit costs and consider the potential hidden value. It's important to note that this value isn't always reflected in higher investment returns. Much of the value comes from **cost savings, tax efficiency and avoiding costly mistakes** etc. This Adviser Alpha, whilst not always easy to quantify, can make a substantial difference in achieving long-term financial goals and having peace of mind.

RETIREMENT ANNUITY FUNDS AND TAX-FREE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS: TAX PLANNING

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR RETIREMENT ANNUITY FUND AND TAX-FREE SAVINGS ACCOUNT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE 2024/2025 TAX YEAR

Now is the perfect time to make sure your contributions towards your retirement annuity (RA) fund still meet your retirement goals, and to take full advantage of the current tax deduction regime.

The 2024/2025 year of assessment ends on 28 February 2025. This means you only have until the end of February 2025 to make additional (tax-deductible) contributions to your RA fund, or to make a lump sum (tax-deductible) contribution to a new RA fund if you don't already have one.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to maximise your tax deduction and boost your retirement savings.

WHAT IS A RETIREMENT ANNUITY FUND?

A retirement annuity fund is a type of private pension fund funded by individual policies.

RA funds offer you an opportunity to provide for a shortfall in retirement savings whilst benefiting from tax deductions at the same time. Retirement from a retirement annuity fund is allowed from age 55 onwards (with no maximum retirement age), which encourages disciplined savings. Tax is only payable on the cash lump sum elected or on the pension income received in retirement, as an investment in an RA fund does not attract tax on its growth during the investment period (before retirement).

ADVANTAGES AND FEATURES OF RETIREMENT ANNUITIES

RA funds have a number of significant benefits and features, including:

- A tax deduction (discussed below) for contributions, within certain limits.
- Contributions in excess of the allowable tax deduction are carried forward to future tax years and contributions for purposes of the allowable annual deduction. Contributions not yet allowed as a deduction at retirement may be utilised to decrease the taxable portion of the lump sum at retirement, or as an exemption against compulsory annuity income received after retirement.
- Compound growth and build-up of capital without any capital gains tax (CGT) or income tax levied before retirement.
- Prior to retirement, you will have access to the savings component **once** per tax year. A minimum savings withdrawal benefit of R2 000 per tax year is allowed. Such a savings withdrawal benefit will be added to your gross income and taxed as normal income and will not affect the tax liability on lump sums received from any retirement fund on retirement.
- The first R1 155 000 taxable portion of a cash lump sum taken at retirement is effectively only taxed at 12.4%,

and no CGT is payable. It is important to bear in mind that these tax tables are cumulative.

- Cash lump sums on retirement are restricted. As a general rule on retirement, the full remaining value in the savings component and a maximum of one third of the vested component may be taken as a lump sum, whilst a minimum of two thirds of the vested component and the full retirement component must be used to purchase a compulsory annuity (income). There are however certain exceptions to this rule – speak to your financial planner for more information.
- No estate duty (levied at 20% on the first R30 000 000 of the dutiable estate and 25% on the dutiable amount exceeding R30 000 000) is payable on the investment value in an RA fund upon the death of a member. Where you made contributions to retirement funds that have not been allowed as a tax deduction or exemption on death, there will be an amount included in your estate as deemed property for estate duty purposes if your dependants or beneficiaries elect to receive the all or part of the benefits as a lump sum.
- Investments in retirement annuity funds are protected against creditors and insolvency in terms of the Pension Funds Act.
- A choice of investment portfolios are offered.

ALLOWABLE TAX DEDUCTION

The allowable deduction per tax year for contributions made to retirement annuity funds is 27.5% of the greater of “remuneration” or “taxable income” (as defined in the Income Tax Act). The 27.5% deduction is limited to the amount of taxable income excluding any taxable capital gain, and further subject to an annual maximum of R350 000.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

Let's say you earn an annual salary of R750 000, a bonus of R150 000, and both you and your employer are making a monthly contribution of R4 600 each to your pension fund (in addition to your contribution).
If you are currently also contributing R1 200 per month to your RA fund, your annual contributions are as follows: (R4 600 + R4 600 + R1 200) x 12 = R124 800. As your maximum allowable deduction would be R262 800, as calculated below, you could consider making a lump sum contribution before the end of the tax year to obtain the maximum allowable tax deduction for the year of assessment.

Here is an example of the tax payable with and without an additional RA fund contribution:
:

	TOTAL AMOUNT	SUBTOTAL
Remuneration/Taxable income (in this example, the value of remuneration and taxable income is identical)	R955 200	
Salary		R750 000
Bonus		R150 000
Fringe benefit employer contribution to pension fund		R55 200
(Less): Allowable deductions	(R955 200 x 27.5% = R262 680, but limited to the actual contribution of **124 800)***	
RA fund: own contribution (R1 200 x 12)		R14 400
Pension fund: own contribution (R4 600 x 12)		R55 200
Pension fund: employer contribution		R55 200
Taxable income	R830 400	
Tax payable (2024/2025 tax year)	**R223 298** (R179 147 + 39% of taxable income above R673 000, minus primary rebate of R17 235 for persons younger than 65)	

	TOTAL AMOUNT	SUBTOTAL
*Maximum deduction: 27.5% x the higher of remuneration or taxable income Remuneration and taxable income are the same in this example = R955 200		R262 680
Subject to a maximum of R350 000. Therefore, the total contributions can be deducted as they are less than the maximum above.		
Additional allowable RA fund deduction	R137 880 (R262 680 maximum allowable deduction minus R124 800 that was actually contributed)	

	TOTAL AMOUNT	SUBTOTAL
Revised taxable income (R830 400 – R137 880)	692 520	
Tax payable (2024/2025 tax year)	**R169 524** (R179 147 + 39% of taxable income above R673 000, minus primary rebate of R17 235 for persons younger than 65)	
Tax saved due to additional RA fund contributions	**R53 774 (R223 298 – R169 524)**	

To maximise the tax saving by utilising your full retirement fund tax allowance, consider a lump sum top-up prior to the end of the 2024/2025 tax year as per the calculation above. The additional RA contribution of R137 880 will result in a tax saving of R53 774.

This example is purely for illustration purposes. Each individual's financial plan should be based on their unique circumstances, taking into account applicable legislation at the time. Furthermore, tax savings should not be the sole reason for contributing to an RA fund, and a full needs analysis is important.

TAX AT RETIREMENT

Annuity income received after retirement is taxed as normal income at your marginal tax rate (where contributions made were not previously allowed as a tax deduction or exemption, an exemption will be applied against the compulsory annuity).

Generally speaking, a maximum of up to one-third of your vested *component and the full value of your savings component may be taken as a cash lump sum. No portion of your retirement component may be taken in cash on retirement, unless the full value of the retirement component plus two-thirds of the value of the vested component does not exceed R165 000, in which case the full retirement component and the vested component may be taken as a cash lump sum.

Lump sums accruing from a retirement fund on retirement are taxed as follows:

TAXABLE INCOME FROM LUMP SUM BENEFITS AT RETIREMENT

TAXABLE INCOME BRACKET	TAX RATE
R0 – R550 000	0% of taxable income
R550 001 – R770 000	R0 plus 18% of taxable income > R550 000
R770 001 – R1 155 000	R39 600 plus 27% of taxable income > R770 000
R1 155 001 and above	R143 550 plus 36% of taxable income > R1 155 000

Please note that prior lump sums taken upon withdrawal or retirement, as well as severance benefits taken or received on or after certain specified dates, have a cumulative effect on the above table, and are therefore taken into account when the tax on the lump sum is calculated.

*If you have vested rights in respect of provident fund membership before 1 March 2021, you will be entitled to receive a bigger portion of the vested component as a lump sum where there was a transfer from a provident fund or provident preservation fund to your retirement annuity fund on/after 1 March 2021.

TAX-FREE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

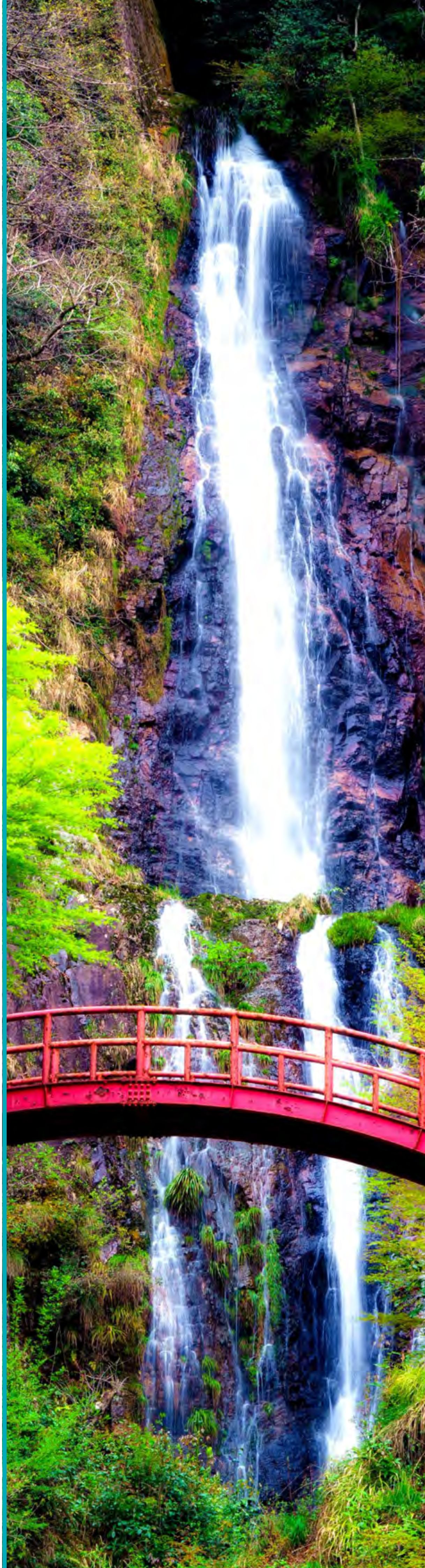
Tax-free savings accounts were introduced in South Africa on 1 March 2015, to encourage South Africans to save more. They offer a very low pricing structure, and no dividends tax, income tax or capital gains tax is levied on these products. A further benefit is that you can access these funds at any time. However, these products should be viewed as long-term investments to take full advantage of their tax-free nature, bearing in mind that there are legislated contribution limits, as discussed below.

Currently, you are permitted to contribute a maximum of R36 000 per tax year, with a lifetime contribution limit of R500 000 – if you exceed either of these two limits, the excess contributions are taxed at 40%. The deadline for contributions in the 2024/2025 tax year is 28 February 2025, but bear in mind that product providers may have cut-off dates before the end of February.

The benefits can be considerable over time and a tax-free savings account can be a valuable and flexible addition to your retirement income.

Your PWM financial planner is best placed to conduct a personal lifestyle financial needs analysis to help you meet your retirement goals.

Disclaimer:
This communication is for information purposes only and does not constitute financial advice in any way or form. It is important to consult a financial planner to receive financial advice before acting on any information contained herein.



RETIREMENT PLANNING – AN ESSENTIAL PART OF EVERY FINANCIAL PLAN

By Enver Archari | Financial Planner | PWM Durban

Retirement is a time many people look forward to, but without proper planning, it can also be a time of stress and financial uncertainty. Retirement planning is the process of determining your realistic retirement income goals, and the actions and decisions required to achieve those goals. This process is made easier by partnering with a financial planner. In this article, I discuss the importance of retirement planning, the steps you can take to create a retirement plan, and some tips for making the most of your retirement savings and enjoying your golden years.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RETIREMENT PLANNING

Retirement planning is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it ensures that you have enough money to maintain your desired standard of living and lifestyle in retirement. Retirement can be a long period, often spanning decades, so it's essential to have a financial plan in place to support your expenses.

Secondly, retirement planning enables you to prepare for unexpected expenses, such as medical bills or home repairs, which could otherwise drain your retirement savings. Finally, retirement planning can help you reduce your tax liabilities, increase your savings and leave a financial legacy for your loved ones.

STEPS TO CREATE A RETIREMENT PLAN

Creating a retirement plan involves several steps, including:

Determining your retirement goals: The first step in retirement planning is to determine your retirement goals. What kind of lifestyle do you want in retirement, and what expenses do you expect to have? Answering these questions will help you determine how much money you need to save for retirement.

Evaluating your current financial situation: The next step is to evaluate your current financial situation, including your income, expenses, assets and liabilities. This will help you determine how much you can afford to save and invest for retirement.

Calculating your retirement income needs: Once you have determined your retirement goals and evaluated your current financial situation, you can calculate your retirement income needs. This involves estimating your living expenses in retirement and the sources of income you will have, such as employer pension or provident funds, retirement annuities and investment income.

Developing a retirement savings plan: Based on your retirement income needs, you can develop a retirement savings plan. This plan should include a target retirement date, the amount of money you need to save, and the investment strategies you will use to achieve your savings goals.

Monitoring and adjusting your plan: Retirement planning is an ongoing process. You should regularly monitor your plan and adjust it as necessary to ensure that you stay on track to meet your retirement goals.

TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR RETIREMENT SAVINGS

Once you have a retirement plan in place, there are several tips you can follow to make the most of your retirement savings:

Start saving early: The earlier you start saving for retirement, the more time your money has to grow. Even small amounts of savings can add up over time, thanks to the power of compounding interest.

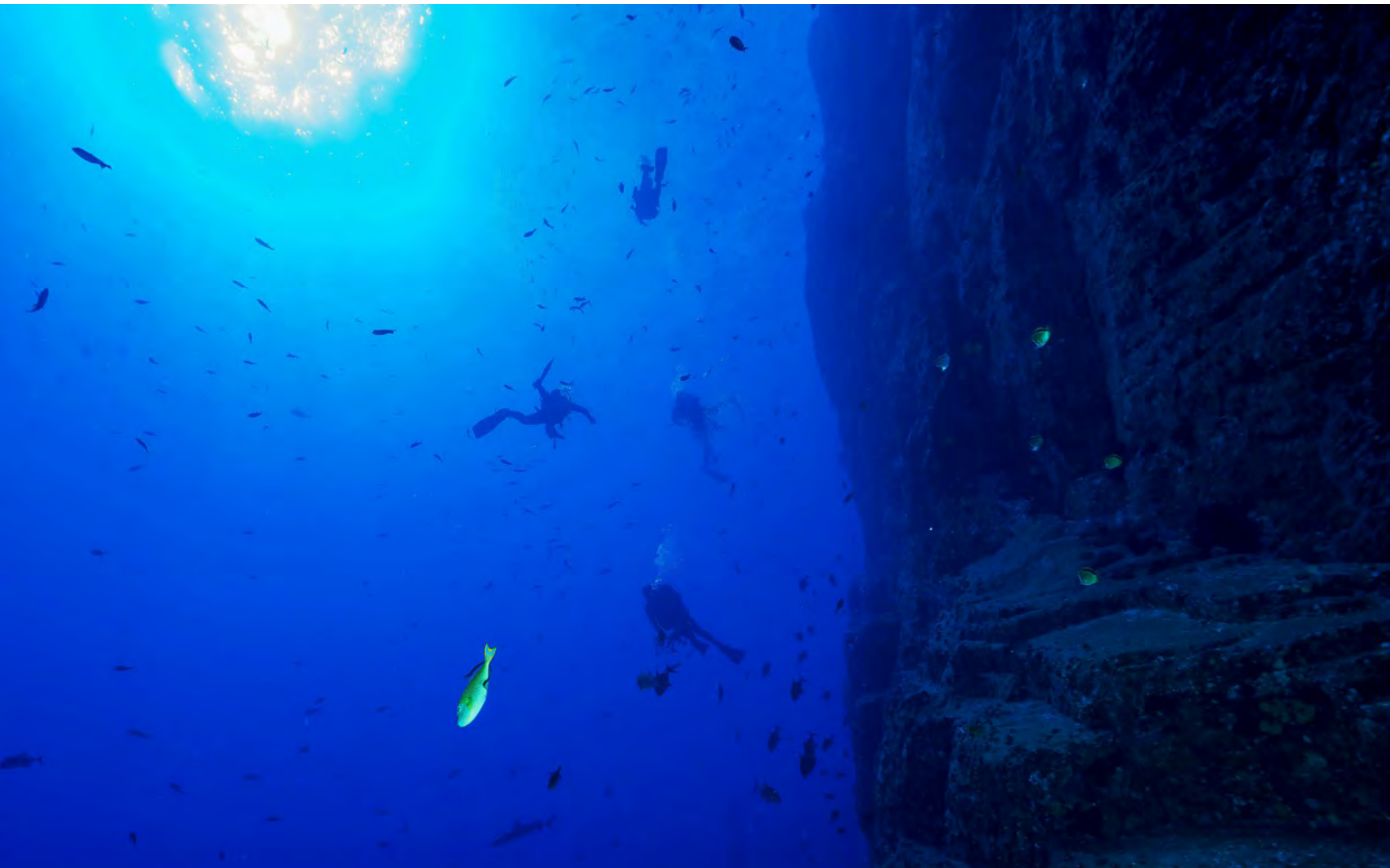
Maximise your contributions: Take advantage of retirement savings plans, such as retirement annuities, and try to contribute as much as you can afford. Consider increasing your contributions each year to maximise your savings.

Diversify your investments: Diversifying your investments can help reduce your risk and increase your returns. Consider investing in a mix of shares, bonds, property and other assets – locally and offshore – to achieve a well-diversified portfolio.

Plan for longevity: People are living longer than ever before, so it's essential to plan for a long retirement. Consider how your retirement income needs may change over time and plan accordingly.

Get professional advice: Retirement planning can be complex, so it's a good idea to seek professional advice. A financial planner can help you develop a retirement plan that is tailored to your needs and goals.

In conclusion, retirement planning is essential to ensure a comfortable and secure retirement. By following the steps outlined above and making the most of your retirement savings, you can achieve your retirement goals and enjoy a happy, stress-free retirement.



PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS: INTRODUCING OUR IN-HOUSE SHORT-TERM INSURANCE HUB

By Henri Gryzenhout | Financial Planner | PWM Rustenburg

It is that time of the year when most of us will take a well-deserved break and spend some time with our family and friends away from home. Unfortunately, this is also a time when crime rates, particularly in relation to break-ins, increase. As part of our holistic approach to financial planning and looking after the financial well-being and assets of our clients, PWM has created an in-house Short-Term Insurance Hub, designed to complement our offering.

Providing expert guidance and tailored insurance solutions, we make it easier for you to safeguard your assets and protect your financial future. Whether it's insuring your home, car or other valuables, our short-term insurance team is here to provide personalised support. Our hub has access to various short-term insurance providers to ensure that you have a wide choice of cover options to suit your specific needs. Speak to your financial planner for more information and let us help you integrate your short-term insurance needs seamlessly into your overall financial strategy.

Here are some safety tips to consider when leaving your home this holiday:

HOME SECURITY

- **Keep everything locked:** Ensure all doors, windows and garages are securely locked.
- **Test your alarm system:** Ensure your alarm system is tested with your alarm company.
- **Install a timer for lights:** Use timers to turn lights on and off to make your home appear occupied.
- **Secure valuables:** Store jewellery, important documents and other valuables in a safe or safety deposit box.
- **Set up security systems:** Activate your home alarm system or install cameras for real-time monitoring.
- **Keep your plans private:** Avoid sharing holiday details on social media until after you return.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AWARENESS

- **Inform a trusted neighbour:** Let a neighbour know you'll be away and ask them to collect your mail or keep an eye out.
- **Hold mail delivery:** Pause mail or package deliveries to avoid revealing you're away.

FIRE AND ENERGY SAFETY

- **Unplug appliances:** Unplug non-essential electronics to reduce the risk of electrical fires.
- **Turn off water supply:** Shut off the water supply to avoid leaks or flooding.

PET AND PLANT CARE

- **Arrange care:** Ensure pets and plants are cared for by a neighbour, friend or professional service.or flooding.

INSURANCE AND DOCUMENTATION

- **Check insurance policies:** Confirm that your homeowners insurance covers potential risks while you're away.
- **Keep important documents accessible:** Have copies of key documents stored securely or backed up digitally.

GOING ON HOLIDAY

- Do you require a border letter when you are travelling to another country?
- Do you require travel insurance?

Christmas is a time for friends, family and gifts. Please remember to list the valuable gifts you have received during the holiday season to ensure you have comprehensive insurance coverage.

We're here to ensure that every aspect of your financial journey is taken care of, from building wealth to protecting it. Ask your financial planner to put you in touch with the Short-Term Insurance Hub and find out how our comprehensive short-term insurance solutions can protect your assets.

GET IN TOUCH – EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

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COMPANY NEWS

By Michelle Matthews | Portfolio Manager | Old Mutual Wealth Private Clients

Visa delivered strong full-year 2024 results that exceeded management's guidance. With minimal impact from the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the group achieved solid growth across its key markets. Management observed stable consumer spending patterns across most regions, which bodes well for the group. Payment volumes rose by 8% over the year, consistent with recent quarterly growth. Cross-border volumes, which drive higher-margin international transaction revenues, remained strong at 15%, despite a normalisation in international travel. Visa benefits from the megatrend that we are seeing globally as payments move from being cash to electronic and card based. The key drivers of this trend are an increase in the number and size of transactions. We expect Visa's reported metrics of these drivers to continue to grow both in developed and emerging markets. Visa has also invested significantly in its payment network, VisaNet, which has seen the network report high reliability, security and speed – all of which are critical within the electronic payment industry. We believe that the strength of VisaNet, coupled with Visa's symbiotic relationship with financial institutions, presents a high barrier to entry for new entrants into the electronic payment platforms.

Within a challenging operating environment, Clicks Group reported a solid set of 2024 full-year results, with diluted headline earnings per share (HEPS) up 14.3% over the period. Group revenue rose 9.2% and operating margin strengthened by 50 basis points to 9.2%, exceeding its medium-term target, which has now increased to 9% -10%. The results were largely driven by robust demand in the beauty and personal care segments and private label, the ongoing success of the Clicks Clubcard loyalty programme and the group's expansion efforts. Over the past year, 51 new stores and 9 pharmacies were opened. The number of pharmacy openings was below target, affected by the pause on licences being issued (as a result of the now-resolved Unicorn pharmaceutical matter), which has recommenced and will support Clicks's expansion strategy moving forward. Looking ahead, the consumer environment, while still constrained, is expected to improve, supported by an improving macroenvironment. Clicks is well positioned to defend and capture its share of wallet, with effective promotions and expansion of higher-margin private labels. Clicks will also continue to focus on expanding its footprint and enhancing its existing stores and infrastructure as it aims to reach its target of 1 200 Clicks stores.

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