

Kaizer Chiefs - a branding success story

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A brief online search for the number of supporters of Kaizer Chiefs will yield a range of estimates, with figures spanning from over 15 million to more than 20 million supporters.



The club has had a successful branding story. Source: X.

Moreover, a comprehensive study suggests that Kaizer Chiefs boasts a substantial following not only within South Africa but also in neighbouring nations.

Accurate figure

The source reports, "It stands as the most widely supported club in South Africa, as well as in neighbouring countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, among others. In fact, it has been estimated that the club enjoys the loyalty of over 100 million supporters."

It may not be easy yet to provide an accurate figure of how many supporters the team has, but there's overwhelming material on the internet and elsewhere that Kaizer Chiefs continue to gain millions of supporters inside and outside South Africa.

A study of this ever growing brand and clearly the biggest sporting brand in South Africa and in the Southern African

region, has led the Club to be declared as "The Biggest Club" in Southern Africa.

With a revenue of \$25 to \$50m, Kaizer Chiefs employs 100 – 250 people. The Club falls under the Industry of Sports Teams & Leagues, Hospitality.



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As a special part of the Kaizer Chiefs family, being a card-carrying member of the Amakhosi Supporters Club means you get to enjoy a whole host of incredible benefits from insurance and retail among others.

They are the most supported club in the country, drawing an average home attendance of 16,144 in the 2019–20 season, the highest in the league, hence the Club is dubbed "The Biggest Club" in Southern Africa.

The Kaizer Chiefs Youth Development Academy is a programme that is free of charge for all players across the different age-groups. They currently have five age-groups namely our under-13, under-15, under-17, under-19 and the reserve team.

"Our responsibility as a football club is to set and maintain a standard of excellence at the training rounds. We expect extremely high standards of our players, and we expect them to understand that their development starts every day that they walk through the gates of the KC Village.

The KC development houses some of its players at the state of the art KC Village in Naturena where players are under the tutelage of house fathers and mothers. The academy team does not hold open trials as most of our players are scouted around the country, and then invited for further assessment," the Club notes.

Chiefs have made several 'firsts' in local football more than any other club. The first team to have more full time professional players; the first team to have several players campaigning abroad at the same time (Shaka Ngcobo, Ace Ntsoelengoe, Pele Blaschke were all campaigning in the US at the same time in the 70s), the first team to be registered as a company, the first team to have White registered supporters.

It was Kaizer Chiefs who made a history of sorts in 1975 when they brought out former Brazilian international Jairzinho to this country.

The Club continued in the 90s to 'revolutionise' South African football becoming the first local club to have a clubhouse, Kaizer Chiefs Village in Naturena, the Club adds.

Authentic feeling

The Kaizer Chiefs Supporters Club, according to the fans, "Gives us an authentic feeling of belonging as it proves our affiliation to Amakhosi.

As a true supporter we need to attend home games, wear only authentic gear, and have a Kaizer Chiefs Mobile SIM card and a Kaizer Chiefs insurance funeral policy. We also need to buy our monthly copy of the Amakhosi magazine and follow the Club on all social platforms, including regular visits to the website. Our support makes a difference to the team – we are the 12th player on the field and a vital member of this Family."

When Chiefs started, they had their slogan, *Love & Peace* and the brand attracted a 'Hippie culture' while they were winning fans on the pitch with their brand of football.

Most Chiefs players spotted trousers with flares while among the clevers in the township and a majority of ordinary people-trousers had turn ups. Chiefs female supporters also showed traits of more liberalism in their dress sense.

As the Club soldiers on 53 years later, it is hoped that the new generation will match the achievements of some of the legends that turned up for the Club: Patrick "Ace" Ntsoelengoe, Ariel "Pro" Khongoane, Vusi "Computer" Lamola, Johnny "Magwegwe" Mokoena, Teenage Dladla, Lucky Stylianou, Peter B'alack, Johannes "Fetsi" Molatedi, Doctor "Pretty Boy" Khumalo, Lucas "Rho" Radebe and many others.

Kaizer Chiefs has over 7.2 million social media followers. Facebook: 3.6 Million; Twitter: 2.7 Million; Instagram: 916, 000; and YouTube: 54,800 subscribers.

And lastly, Kaiser Chiefs, the British indie/britpop band, was named after the club because Lucas Radebe, a former player of Kaizer Chiefs, captained Leeds United, the team they all supported. Showing us how the brand has crossed international borders.

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