

# An FT Group Subscription helps Absa Bank supplement local knowledge with global intelligence

[ft.com/group](https://ft.com/group)



## The challenge

As an African bank with both local and international clients, teams across Absa require quality sources of global market intelligence in order to support decision-making and strengthen client relationships.

## The solution

By making FT content and tools available to staff through an FT Group Subscription, Absa is able to ensure colleagues across all divisions can access the FT's highly-regarded analysis on their choice of devices.

## The benefits

Strategic decisions are backed by trusted information, while client-facing teams can readily showcase their global awareness in client engagements, therefore better positioning Absa as a trusted partner.



The FT is a credible anchor to check either my perspective or someone else's view. It helps me to be more confident in my opinions and decision-making.

**Garth Klintworth**  
Head of Global Markets, Absa Bank



## An African bank with a global perspective

Absa Bank is one of the largest commercial banks in South Africa, and in addressing the unique challenges facing clients on the continent, local expertise is vital.

Therefore a footprint spanning 10 jurisdictions across Africa, as well as the UK and US markets, makes Absa ideally positioned to offer a comprehensive suite of products to respond to client needs.

The Global Markets division at Absa services clients not only in Africa but across the world. Financial institutions, corporates, governments and funds rely on the team for a complete range of advisory, capital raising, liquidity and trading solutions. For participants in the global financial markets, an international perspective is critical.

As much as the macro fundamentals of South Africa and the wider region are impacted by local events, bigger questions such as the strength of the dollar or the price of oil are what's driving the market. Absa's Global Markets team therefore uses an FT Group Subscription to supplement local knowledge with a quality source of international insight.

## Decisions backed by intelligence

Garth Klintworth is Absa's Global Head of Markets and plays an important role in setting the strategic direction of the bank. In a position that spans everything from equities and trading to data analytics and quantitative finance, it's important that Garth takes a big picture

view and has access to trustworthy sources to help inform his decisions.

"Often in the things we're dealing with there's a degree of ambiguity, without necessarily a right or wrong answer," he explains. "The FT provides us as an executive team with an important soundboard to either strengthen our views or consider a different path."

The diversity of thought provided by FT content is also highlighted by Absa's Head of Equities, Quintus Kilbourn.



To my mind, a financial markets professional cannot start their day or do their job, unless they've scoured the FT.

**Quintus Kilbourn**

Head of Equities, Absa Bank



The opinions and views of respected FT commentators such as [Martin Wolf](#) and [Gillian Tett](#) help Quintus and his team enhance their own understanding of what's happening globally.

"I always look at the opinion pieces as the FT has some great contributors and I feel like I always learn something," Quintus says.

"[The Lex column](#) also offers a different slant and another way of looking at things. This is particularly important when your job is to manage risk."

Although time isn't a luxury that the Equities team always has, for Quintus it certainly pays to make room for the FT's market analysis and in-depth commentary.



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**Garth Klintworth**

Head of Global Markets, Absa Bank





## Confident client engagements

In providing risk management solutions to clients in Africa and around the world, it's important that colleagues across Absa's Global Markets division have a view on what's happening globally and how that impacts financial markets.

Saloshni Pillay heads up the Global Markets Sales and Structuring team, which is primarily the corporate and institutional sales business.

Whilst not providing advice to clients per se, it's vital for Saloshni and her team to be able to present solutions to clients in the context of what's happening in the world.

"What the FT gives me is a very good understanding of market fundamentals and political changes that are coming through," Saloshni explains.

"So in terms of my client engagement, it's giving me the confidence to understand what's going on, how to reference it, and that can lead to my perspective on why certain solutions would be applicable and what clients should be thinking about."

Over 8000 organisations globally have an FT Group Subscription, including many institutions on the African continent. George Asante is a Managing Director and is responsible for Absa's sales and trading operations across the continent outside of South Africa.

For George, having a common point of reference like the FT not only gains client trust, but also helps to build more personal relationships.

"If you are speaking to a client in Ghana or Uganda about gold prices, a good starting point is to reference an FT article," George explains.

"A lot of my clients read the FT so it's always a good icebreaker and a way to engage a client in conversation."

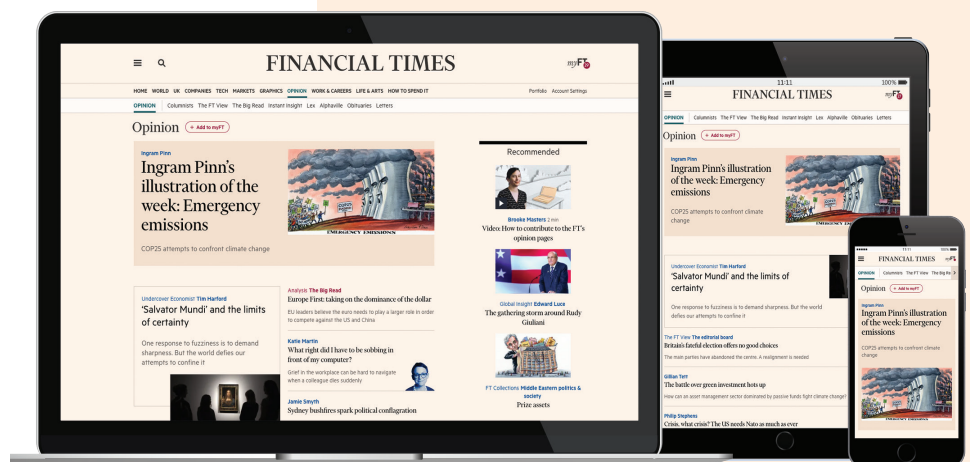


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**George Asante**

Managing Director, Absa Bank



## Spotting trends and new opportunities

Through its connected, global coverage the FT helps to enhance Absa's understanding of the economic and political environment across the world.

While it's important to have this view of the current situation, it's equally key to be able to identify and get a sense of what might be appearing over the horizon and could impact markets and clients.

"Where I also find the FT valuable is in understanding some of the emerging sector themes, in retail for example," explains Saloshni.

"FT pieces on business post-Covid have helped highlight some of the trends that we should be looking for in Africa given the lag we've experienced. That's been very useful."

The huge rise in interest around environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing means banks and other financial institutions have to immerse themselves in this emerging topic and have a firm grip on what it means for their business.

"ESG is the way of the future so you have to start moving in that direction," Garth says. "You have to have a clear view on what you're going to do on ESG because investors will have formed their opinions based on what they're reading in [Moral Money](#) and the FT."

## The benefits of an FT Group Subscription

By making FT content and tools available to staff through an FT Group Subscription, Absa is able to ensure decision-making is backed by accurate, trusted analysis across the bank in its entirety.

In positioning Absa as an African regional bank with a global outlook, George points out this is something that can only be achieved when all colleagues are on the same page.

"We want our teams across the continent to be demonstrating to clients that we understand what is happening with other global institutions and trading on the global stage," he says. "We need information sources of consistent quality, so the FT is critical for us to use on the ground."

From a risk perspective, Quintus explains the trade-off for organisations that don't make high-quality intelligence available across all divisions.

"We've got to help our teams discern between what is accurate and what is rubbish," he says. "You need your people to be informed and sadly, if you don't provide the right access, you're going to have a less knowledgeable workforce."

With an FT Group Subscription, relevant content can be viewed and shared across a whole range of formats and devices, making it easy to embed the FT in people's existing workflows.

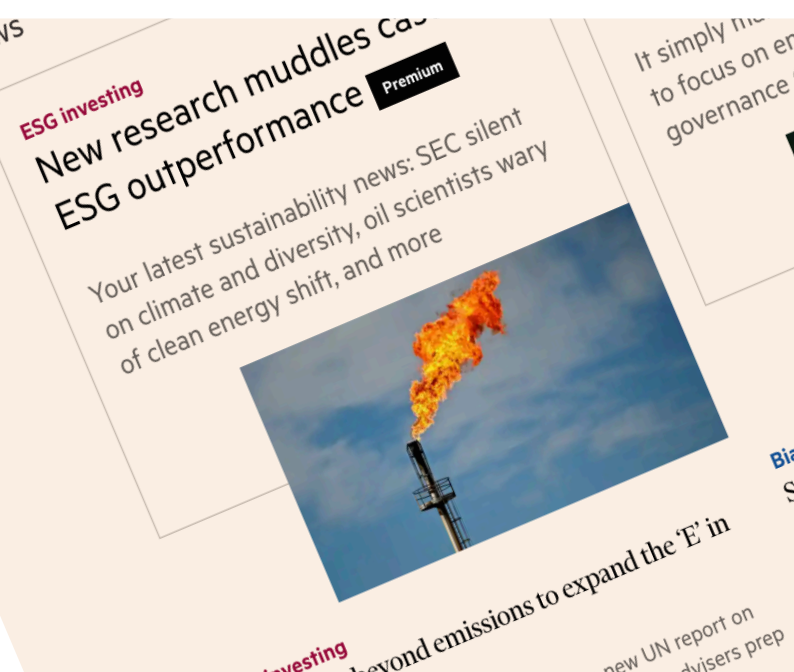
"You need to remove any excuses for not filtering between good information and bad information," Quintus concludes. "That's the great thing about our corporate access. The FT is made easy for people to access whether on a desktop or a phone."



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**Quintus Kilbourn**

Head of Equities, Absa Bank





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