

World Design Capital project celebrates a year of business

Shopstar, a World Design Capital 2014 project, celebrates a year of business, following its Beta launch in May 2013. Described by Ventureburn, as one of the top tech start-ups in the country, its first shop to go live was Dear Rae, making its first online sale within 24 hours.

Shopstar is an ecommerce platform designed to allow anyone to create and manage his or her own online shop effortlessly. Developed in Cape Town, by a team of industry professionals, it's a home grown solution for South Africa's ecommerce requirements.



Marketing online

"It has come a long way since it went live last year. The first official version was launched in August 2013 and since then we have had 80 shops going live, with a combined turnover of more than R2-million," says Jens Herf, MD of Shopstar.

"It is our vision to see every young creative and small business in Africa sell and market his or her business online. Working closely with our clients, our mission is to provide a product that allows them to successfully, cost effectively and without much technical knowledge sell their goods and services online."

JGH Internet created Shopstar as part of its commitment to provide a local, homegrown service to explode the marketability of Africa's rich craft traditions. It has been providing internet-related services to the SME market in Cape Town for the past 12 years.

South African success story

"We are continuously developing the platform to add new features but only after careful deliberation and consultation with users of the platform.

"Alibaba, China's number one online store, sells more than Amazon and eBay combined. This company did not exist a few years ago but its growth is phenomenal.

"But we don't have to look to Asia for ecommerce successes: In the past few years, we have seen the introduction of numerous new technologies to South Africa. Online shop usage and confidence is on the rise and the available technologies are improving with this trend. This means that the barriers for small businesses are constantly decreasing.



"The larger retailers entering the online market place will continue to change the mind-set of consumers. We have seen many strong online brands emerge with Woolworths, Yuppiechef, Zando, Kalahari, TAKEALOT, to mention a few. This is good news for the small businesses.

"As South Africans, we are starting to find confidence in our work and products. This is the year to start being proud of what we can do and produce. More specifically Cape Town has a strong design community and with the Design Capital role in 2014, now is the time to take the next step.

"With Shopstar, we seek to develop and simplify the African ecommerce market by providing a platform and management tools to emerging businesses thereby fuelling the much needed economic growth." For more information, go to

www.shopstar.co.za.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>