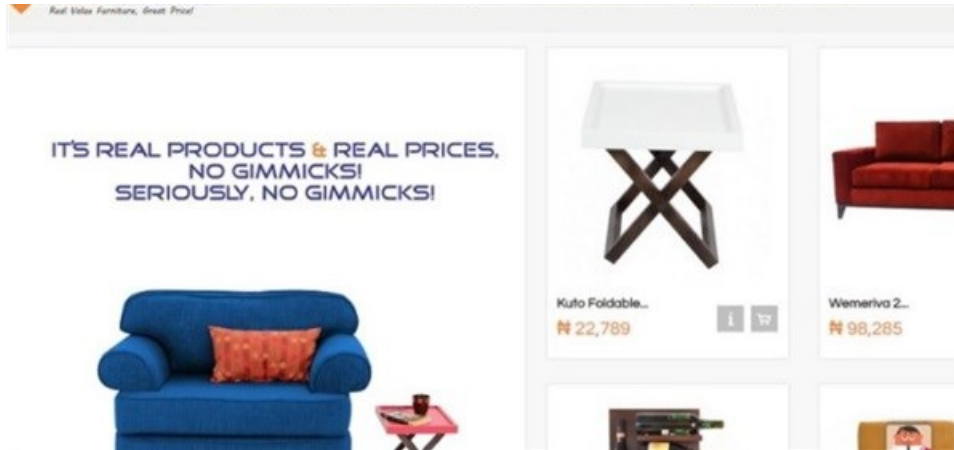


Nigeria's Skarabrand hits 1,000 items sold in 11 cities

By Tom Jackson

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Nigerian online furniture retailer Skarabrand has sold more than 1,000 items and delivered to 11 cities since its launch in 2015.



Skarabrand offers users a curated experience when buying contemporary household furniture, offering a direct-to-consumer model which cuts out all middlemen by designing, manufacturing and delivering its exclusive products direct to the doorsteps of the customer.

"We are leveraging technology to disrupt the traditional furniture industry, by offering a wide variety of quality furniture at reasonable prices, conveniently," Raymond Umeh, chief executive officer (CEO) and co-founder of Skarabrand, told *Disrupt Africa*.

"Traditionally, buying furniture entails finding a convenient time out of a usually busy schedule to visit a brick and mortar stores, with limited variety constrained by space and with products that are usually overpriced."

This is leading to customers resorting to going online, selecting pictures from foreign websites and getting furniture makers to reproduce.

"This resulted in poor quality reproduction, no guarantees and returns policy. This was a huge gap, and no Nigerian online furniture brand existed to cater to that rapidly growing market," Umeh said.

"This clearly showed that Nigerian customers wanted to search for variety and possibly buy furniture at their convenience –

at home, at work or on the go, at the right price. I also realised other key characteristics consumers wanted from furniture, that it be transportable and aesthetically appealing. With all this knowledge, founding Skarabrand was a no-brainer.”

The startup, which is self-funded but always open to backing from the right investors, has seen better than expected funding, Umeh said. The average order placed on the platform is almost US\$350, with Skarabrand having so far sold over 1,000 items and delivered to 11 cities in Nigeria.

“We are happy to have customers who have believed in our offering, and continue to patronise us and spread the word. For instance, our pictures are not “copy and paste”, but of actual products that we have designed and manufactured. So what you see on the website, is exactly what you get,” Umeh said.

Currently, Skarabrand is only active in Nigeria, which Umeh said is a large enough market, with a presence in three major cities: Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt.

“Our mid-term plans are to dominate the Nigerian market with 360-degree home solutions, the one stop shop for everything home, before looking elsewhere. We have pan-African dreams,” he said.

The startup charges a commission per transaction, and has done tens of millions of naira in revenue since launch.

“Traditionally, profit margins in furniture are great, anywhere from 50% to 200% or more,” Umeh said.

Read the [original article](#) on *Disrupt Africa*.

ABOUT TOM JACKSON

Co-founder @DisruptAfrica. Tech and business journalist in Africa. Passionate about the vibrant tech startups scene in Africa, Tom can usually be found sniffing out the continent's most exciting new companies and entrepreneurs, funding rounds and any other developments within the growing ecosystem.

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