

African fashion gets an online lift

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Fashion is big business and the African Development Bank wants economies on the continent to cash in on the billions to be made.



Fashion veteran Clive Rundle, whose collection is pictured above, says access to funding and a lack of financial know-how are challenges for many designers.

Picture: [Simon Deiner / SDR Photo](#)

For this to happen, Africa's fragmented fashion industry needs to be unified.

Ten top countries in Africa rake in \$2.5-billion in apparel exports, representing only 0.55% of the global figure. In the next decade, the global fashion industry is expected to double, generating up to \$5-trillion, the bank says.

"There's a lot of beautiful crafty fabric that gets developed on the continent but having access to that means you're going to have to go on a fact-finding mission," says fashion entrepreneur and founder of luxury brand the Naked Ape, Shaldon Kopman. "You're going to spend a lot of money to get into those markets."

The launch of the bank's online platform, Fashionomics, should help.

A prototype of the website provides access to research reports, details of design schools, access to funding models and financing sources and lists of jobs and business opportunities.

The free online initiative also provides a forum for industry players as well as online tutorials.

Fashion veteran Clive Rundle says access to funding and a lack of financial know-how are challenges for many designers.

Source: The Times

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