

# Howzit MSN expands into Africa

[Howzit MSN](#), a web portal in South Africa has expanded its reach into the rest of the continent with the launch of a dedicated channel for Africa. This move is in response to the growing demand of internet users for locally relevant content and from advertisers for advertising inventory that reaches a pan-African market.



The new African channel targets all of the major English-speaking countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Microsoft is redirecting African traffic from its global MSN property to the Howzit MSN African channel ([african.howzit.msn.com](http://african.howzit.msn.com)), allowing users to find localised content across topics such as business, local and international news, travel, lifestyle and technology.

In addition, the African channel will source and aggregate content from a range of top African publishers and news providers including I-Net Bridge, CNBC Africa and AFP. This will give users a one-stop destination for news and information about their countries and the rest of the continent.

## Now is the time

Marcus Stephens, general manager at Howzit MSN says, "The time is ripe for us to expand more aggressively in Africa because the audience for local web content and the advertiser support are growing rapidly as internet access becomes cheaper and more widespread.

"Nigeria alone offers a potential market of 43 million people with some form of internet access - nearly as many people as the entire South African population and up from only 200 000 internet users in 2000. Other key markets, such as Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Ghana are also all gathering a critical mass of millions of Web users."

## Potential in Africa

Stephens says that Africa's economic progress over the past decade has caught the attention of South African and multinational companies who want to market their products and services to the continent's fast-growing middle-class. Howzit MSN is positioning itself to give them a vehicle that is cost-effective, efficient and has a wide reach into the market.

Microsoft advertising and online lead, Nazeer Suliman says that growing reach in Anglophone markets within sub-Saharan Africa is an easy win for MSN, given its position of strength in these markets and the complimentary strength of Microsoft's Windows Live suite of consumer cloud services.

"Howzit MSN will now not only give advertisers a compelling unified access point into South Africa, but into all Anglophone markets within **SA** sub-Saharan Africa where locally relevant content will help drive a highly engaged audience base," said Suliman.

"We see huge potential across the continent, and this is a fantastic platform for our pan-African advertising clients to leverage."

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