

## Wordpress and Wix not the only ways to build websites

South African internet solutions company, Hostriver has launched a DIY website builder service for small to medium enterprises (SMEs).



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The do-it-yourself (DIY) website building platform affords SMEs the opportunity to take control of their online presence with an affordable and easy to implement professional online web building service.

Founder and CEO of Hostriver, Madoda Khuzwayo, an entrepreneur himself, is committed to assisting fellow Africans get their foot on the digital ladder: "From the get-go, businesses should be able to create and own their own digital architecture presenting it to their audiences with as much professionalism as possible – website, email and all that comes with being operational in a digital world.

"A website is a digital shop window and possibly the most powerful tool any business has to create that first impression and start trading, so it needs to be easy to implement and maintain."



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Being in control of own look, feel, content and operability from the beginning of the business journey is economically empowering. Having the option to build an e-commerce store with a variety of payment gateways from the outset, also takes the website from a showcase to a transactional portal immediately. E-commerce has many benefits for SMEs and the overall economy.

It is also an important job-creating tool. For example, one sale made online positively affects many industries from manufacturing to packaging and shipping. In every stage, it's indirectly creating or sustaining jobs.

"It is therefore arguable that the more SMEs jump onto the e-commerce bandwagon, the better for the economy as a whole," says Khuzwayo.

## Why not hire a web designer?

But why opt for a website builder and a DIY approach instead of hiring a web designer?

“Hiring a web designer is an expensive exercise and more often than not, SME’s are left disappointed at the level of service they get,” says Khuzwayo. As a result, Hostriver believes that the time for outsourcing web design is over. Today’s technology allows almost anyone to create a website that is secure, smart, fast, easy to maintain and one that is certainly more affordable, plus DIY gives SME’s control over their most valuable asset, their online presence.



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A website is either a sales and marketing tool or a transactional e-commerce platform. The skill needed to make it (and the business) successful, is proficiency in digital marketing, not coding. Coding is just a means to an end and with a website builder, the code comes built in. Further, Khuzwayo believes websites that are built on the back of code by IT engineers generally tend to be about the backend technology rather than the front-end usability (although UX is becoming part of the enterprise digital remit).

While data collection and analysis are increasingly important, Khuzwayo believes for an SME, the most critical is to have a website that looks professional and that works.

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