

The cash flow crisis quietly killing South African small businesses, and the fintech solving it

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South Africa's SMEs are caught in a cash flow crisis, with R12.4bn in government invoices left unpaid beyond 30 days and private sector payment cycles stretching up to 150 days, often threatening business survival.

Daniel Goldberg, founder and CEO of Bridgement, is available for interview to speak on one of the most pressing but underreported threats to South Africa's economy, the slow death of small businesses through delayed payments. With hard data, a decade of on-the-ground experience, and a technology-driven solution that is already working at scale, an interview with Goldberg would offer audiences both the stark reality of the SME funding gap and a local success story.



A South African fintech lender providing fast and flexible working capital funding to small to medium

enterprises (SMEs), solves the delayed payments crisis facing SMEs with short- to medium-term business loans of up to R10m. Their funding is approved in 24 hours or less, with their current average being three hours, through an online process that takes around two minutes, offering a simpler and more transparent alternative to traditional loans.

Instead of requiring extensive paperwork, audited financials and multiple in-person meetings, their technology connects securely to a business's bank and accounting data to build a real-time picture of its financial health. This allows Bridgement to make faster, more accurate credit decisions and to price funding in a way that reflects the actual performance of the business.

Addressing the late-payment and cash-flow gaps with revolving credit, term loans and invoice financing for up to 24 months, they ensure SMEs remain financially stable and operational while waiting for delayed payments. Facilities are designed to be reused as customers settle their invoices, helping business owners smooth out cash flow, take on larger orders with confidence, and negotiate better terms with their own suppliers.

The gap this closes

The National Treasury published data in March 2026 confirming that R12.4bn in invoices older than 30 days remained unpaid by government departments alone. In the private sector, payment cycles of 90-120 days are standard. The end-to-end cash cycle for an SME supplying large corporates can exceed 150 days once order times, delivery, invoicing and extended payment terms are factored in.

For a growing business, that gap is often the difference between hiring or freezing headcount, taking on a new contract or turning it down, and in some cases, keeping the doors open.

Technology simplifies SME payments and liquidity

Bridgement is the only SME credit provider in South Africa integrated into the country's three leading cloud accounting platforms – Xero, Sage and QuickBooks. These integrations allow them to ingest up-to-date financial data directly from the tools SMEs already use to run their businesses, eliminating manual uploads and reducing the risk of errors.

By combining banking and accounting data with its proprietary credit-scoring models, they can make faster decisions, tailor limits to each client's actual trading patterns, and offer dynamic facilities that grow as the business grows. For SME owners, this means less time spent on paperwork and more time serving customers and building their companies while effectively overcoming the payment gap.

Key insights:

- **R12.4bn** in unpaid government invoices older than 30 days as at Q2 2025, up 17% quarter on quarter (National Treasury, March 2026)
- **90-150 days** the typical end-to-end cash cycle for an SME supplying a large corporate
- **R2bn+** deployed to South African SMEs by Bridgement since 2016
- **3 cloud accounting platforms** Bridgement is the only SME lender in South Africa with integration across Xero, Sage and QuickBooks
- **Same-day** typical turnaround from application to funding decision
- **Up to R10m** available within 24 hours.

In their own words:

"Waiting three to six months to be paid is simply not compatible with running a healthy small business. Our mission is to give SMEs a funding partner that moves at the same speed they do – using technology to remove friction, paperwork and uncertainty from the process." – [Daniel Goldberg, Founder and CEO Bridgement]

"By plugging directly into the accounting and banking tools SMEs already use, we can understand the businesses in real time and provide the right level of funding at the right moment. That means our clients can focus on winning contracts and serving customers, instead of chasing payments and worrying about month-end." - [Daniel Goldberg, Founder and CEO of Bridgement]

About:

Bridgement is a South African fintech company that provides fast, flexible and fully digital business funding solutions to small and medium-sized businesses, and has been recognised with multiple fintech industry awards, including the Xero App of the Year.

They offer several products including business loans, revolving credit and invoice finance, with funding of up to R10,000,000 available within 24 hours and repayment terms of up to 24 months. Using technology and data-driven credit assessments, Bridgement enables SMEs to access working capital without the complexity or delays associated with traditional bank loans.

Bridgement has been in operation for almost 10 years and has deployed over R2bn to SMEs across South Africa and has begun licensing its technology to banks to enable them to better serve their SME clients. For more information, visit <https://www.bridgement.com/>

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