

Livestream mall launches in South Africa

<u>LiveShopping.co.za</u> has soft-launched in South Africa, bringing an element of 'shoppertainment' to the online retail experience.



Joy Des Fountain, LiveShopping.co.za founder. Source: Supplied

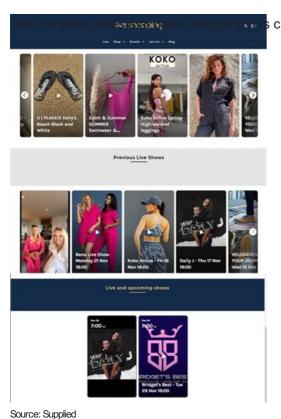
The Macmillan dictionary describes shoppertainment as "an approach to retail marketing that combines shopping and entertainment". Over the course of the pandemic, consumers got used to going online for various activities that were once conducted primarily in person – from fitness classes to cooking courses, concerts, and more. LiveShopping.co.za says that naturally consumers began to crave a convergence of online shopping and entertainment into one engaging interaction, and the 'shoppertainment' trend developed.

The country's first interactive, livestream mall is founded by serial entrepreneur Joy Des Fountain, the South African woman behind global tech brands Twodots and myFanPark.

"LiveShopping.co.za is a combination of elements we have witnessed and researched over the last two years and how it has developed into an important tool for brands to reach and engage with existing and new customers in China. It has steadily moved across the globe and we believe that South Africa is ready for it. Further to this, we continue to hear from brands how the use of social media marketing is becoming more expensive and in many cases, less effective," explains Des Fountain.

"The communities are there, brands have invested substantial money in digital marketing to build these. LiveShopping.co.za now provides a low-risk way of interacting, entertaining and transacting with these communities. We also have long-standing relationships with creators who are niche experts. This is the perfect opportunity for creators to host their own live shows, where everything they talk about is shoppable in video."

Putting interaction and entertainment first



changed very little since it took root in the late 90s. Product detail pages and category pages have only become richer with the addition of imagery and video. It's a transactional space - a customer visits a website, adds items to their basket and checks out.

LiveShopping.co.za is focused on interaction and entertainment first, with commerce as a by-product of positive interaction. Creating content that is entertaining helps brands and creators build authentic relationships with their audiences and helps customers better understand the products that they are buying, the company says.

Nick Dreyer, cofounder and CEO of local footwear company, Veldskoen Shoes, was the first to go live on LiveShopping.co.za. Other brands including Bena Woman and Jeff Lifestyle have followed suit.

"In LiveShopping.co.za shows, Bena Woman will be showcasing our new collections as they come off the factory line. Clients love to see garments on all different body shapes, as well as how one can wear the outfits differently according to the occasion. From a customer perspective, it's also a lovely platform to ask questions and speak directly to the brand, which is not always possible on online shopping," says Xan Fraser, owner of Bena

Woman.

Meintjes of Jeff Lifestyle added, "We believe in the power of empowering, educating and assisting our community to be better versions of themselves. This platform enables them to do so in an effective way, where they have the choice to be involved in the show and where it gives them the ability to interact, tell us what they want and then buy it."

Personalities that can also be found on the platform include television star, businesswoman and socialite Mpumi Mophatlane, best known for her appearance on *The Real Housewives of Johannesburg*.



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In closing, Des Fountain adds, "We are a team of local entrepreneurs, who come with a strong understanding of brands and engagement technology, through myFanPark, we have unparalleled access and direct relationship with admired talent and creators, many of whom will be joining LiveShopping.co.za shows. The combination of these factors is unrivalled. We are making buying easier, more entertaining and allowing a consumer to connect with a brand in a way that they haven't been able to do before in the digital space."

"LiveShopping.co.za will continue to partner with brands and creators across categories. It will be a destination where people can watch, interact, learn, be entertained and shop. Comedian Kurt Schoonraad, fitness and lifestyle brand Koko Active and even the phenomenal DJ Zinhle will be showcasing her timeless fashion accessories, with her brand Era. More than that, I can't say, you'll have to watch as we release new exciting shows."