

If you aren't selling online, why the hell not?

Covid-19 lockdown was an unexpected and major disruption to businesses of all sizes and I sympathise especially with small and medium business that are family-run or that create much-needed jobs in tight-knit communities. This presents an opportunity for change, importantly, that change need not be that hard to make given the right tools.

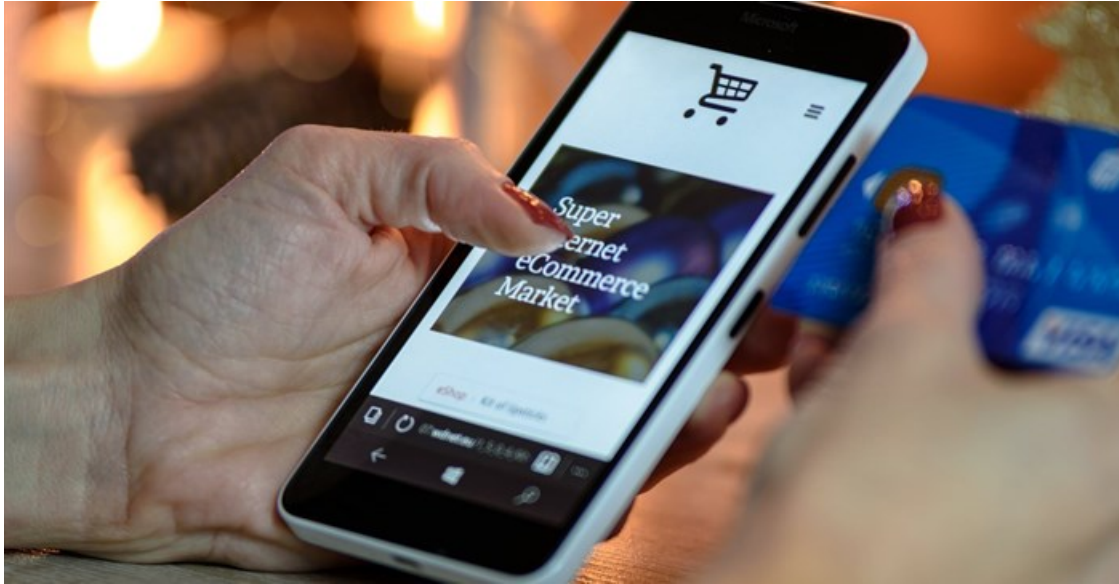


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I use the word 'thanks' begrudgingly knowing how much hardship the pandemic has caused, but thanks to lockdown, South Africa experienced a 47% increase in internet usage during Level 5 and Level 4 – that equates to an extra 2.8 million unique daily users.

Technology is no longer the barrier

Specifically, there was a 53% increase in internet usage within the 55-59 age bracket and 49% within the 50-54 age bracket. These are age groups that have largely been ignored online, but they are now ready to be engaged. And, even more importantly, there was a 19% increase in people shopping online. That's right, the e-retail market just grew by a fifth in two months.

These are compelling reasons why any retailer – in fact, any manufacturer or producer of consumer or bespoke goods, or any goods that can easily be delivered – should add an online store to their distribution mix.

And as the consumer has matured online, so has the technology to make selling online simple. Technology is no longer the barrier to entry it used to be.



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Grant Lapping 28 May 2020



Platforms such as Shopify and Woocommerce offer relatively easy-to-setup functionality, as well as pre-defined marketing platform integrations. Your site, too, will be optimised for mobile responsiveness and loading speed. While some may still want to bring in a developer to assist with set up, the cost will be nominal compared to commissioning a fully customised, bespoke e-commerce site.

Making shopping seamless

But, if you are still not convinced, Facebook and Instagram have got you covered. Always about connecting you to what you love (friends, families, puppies, kittens, food, motorbikes, surfing spots and so on), they have evolved into effective marketing channels that can increase your brand's awareness and drive sales.

And now, there's Facebook Shops. The goal here is to make shopping seamless and empower anyone from a small business owner to a global brand to use Facebook and Instagram to connect with customers. That 'anyone' could be you.



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Maroefah Smith 22 Mar 2019



Take the time to explore. Facebook Shops makes it easy for businesses to set up a single online store accessed via Facebook and Instagram. It's free. You can choose the products you want to feature and customise the look and feel that showcases your brand. This means any seller, no matter their size or budget, can bring their business online and connect with customers wherever and whenever it's convenient for them. Hell, why not?"

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