

Flock Eventing Platform makes great strides

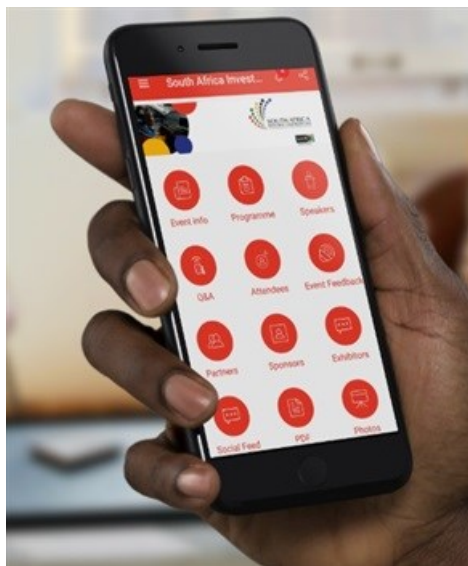
By  Evan-Lee Courie

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Flock Eventing Platform's app proved a hit with delegates at the recent SA Investment Conference, which saw investors pledge more than R290bn in investments into the country.

The SA Investment Conference, which saw investors pledge more than R290bn in investments into the country, has emerged as a massive breakthrough for the Johannesburg-based start-up which built a mobile app for the entire event.

Flock Eventing Platform's app had more than 900 downloads and 120 000 app views throughout the conference – an average of 190 views per minute.



The app played a major role in making the event more interactive through functions like the Live Q&A, which allowed delegates to ask questions to speakers directly through the app. It also provided in-depth event information, including the full three-day programme; details on the speakers; sponsors; partners and exhibitors; a live social feed, which included videos and photos from the event; an event feedback survey; and downloadable PDF documents.

“We’re extremely proud to have been involved in this event. This is the kind of moment every entrepreneur dreams about: where you get the chance to showcase a homegrown solution on a bigger stage. There was such a positive sentiment amongst the delegates, and the President has really revitalised investor confidence. The app we provided was used as a communication tool: it kept all delegates up to date and provided a host of networking opportunities,” said Mike Lysko,

founder of Flock Eventing Platform.



Mike Lysko, founder of Flock Eventing Platform

We chat to Mike Lysko to find out more about Flock Eventing Platform, building an impressive portfolio of work across 25 countries and what the future holds for the local startup.

■ **Can you tell us a bit about Flock Eventing Platform?**

At Flock, we help our customers increase engagement and communicate better with their attendees at events. We provide an online platform on which our customers can build event websites, manage RSVP's, design and send custom branded emailers and publish a mobile app that has over 20 integrated event features.

We are very proud of our excellent service and our affordable pricing allows for events of all sizes to have a digital presence.

■ **When, how and why did you get started?**

“ I started the company in 2013 while working a full-time job, I bootstrapped it to get it off the ground until going into the business full-time in 2015 and have not looked back since. I started the company because I saw a gap in the market for attendees at events to have real-time information at their fingertips and to increase engagement and interactivity via a mobile app. ”

■ **What are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?**

For the first year going into the business full-time, I hardly drew a salary and lived off savings. Time pressure is another thing to deal with as there are so many hats to wear when starting out until the business grows and you can hire a team to assist.

■ **What advice would you give to other aspiring entrepreneurs?**

Hard work pays off, keep doing the basics right and the rest will follow if you are patient, confident and focus on where you want to take the business.

■ **What has been your proudest achievements thus far?**

There are so many things to be proud of from having the opportunity to work in over 25 countries to our latest project, the SA Investment Conference which saw the Presidency, foreign dignitaries and business leaders make use of our event platform and mobile app.

■ **What does the future of entrepreneurship look like to you?**

It is very bright and positive, especially given that technology is providing so many opportunities for businesses to start and flourish on a global level

■ **What is the importance of start-up accelerator/incubator programmes?**

Accelerator and incubator programmes play a vital role in the success of startups as entrepreneurs can learn so much by being part of these platforms from experienced mentors and peer sharing.

■ **What would you like to see changed in the South African startup landscape?**

It will be great to see big business and especially government supporting startups by providing an ecosystem where collaboration can take place, tax incentives for big business to work with small business and an environment that supports failure but allows entrepreneurs to learn from it very quickly to start again.

■ **What do you believe are the traits an entrepreneur needs in order to succeed?**

Definitely perseverance and courage to believe in yourself and get through the challenging times, it takes time and determination to grow a successful business.

■ **Tell us about your biggest struggles as entrepreneurs, as well as some major highlights.**

The daily stress is a big factor as there are so many facets of the business to ensure it grows and becomes successful. Major highlights are having autonomy and freedom to make decisions quickly and it's rewarding to see people grow in your company.



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■ **Why would you encourage someone to become an entrepreneur?**

To think of an idea, see it come to life and change people's lives is such a rewarding feeling that you get from being an entrepreneur

■ **What is the importance of entrepreneurship - especially in a country such as South Africa?**

Given that small business employs 60% of our labour force, entrepreneurship is so important in South Africa and should be encouraged as a subject from primary school level.

■ **Where would you like to see Flock Eventing Platform in the next five years?**

I see the Flock Eventing Platform being utilised by aspiring entrepreneurs looking to start a business in event software but don't have the resources to hire a development team, with our platform they are able to provide event technology to clients with no developer resources needed. The goal is to have 100,000 happy clients across multiple countries in the next five years.

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