

Google launches new initiatives to support small retail businesses in Africa

As part of a month-long commemoration of International Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Businesses Day in June, Google has announced new initiatives to support small retail businesses in Africa.



Source: [Google Africa blog post](#)

This includes a one-hour virtual training event and the Shopping Small Business Summit aimed at helping SMB owners develop skills and tools to compete online. Topics will include e-commerce trends and digital marketing and it is open to all who register [here](#).

Google has also partnered with Coursera, an open online course provider, to develop an online career certificate course in digital marketing and e-commerce for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and is offering 1000 scholarships to Africans who wish to attend.

This month also sees the debut of Local Opportunity Finder, a new tool that evaluates a Google Business Profile and makes personalised recommendations for changes that a business owner may make to enhance how their business profile looks to consumers in Google Search. Also, the free, one-week-long Hustle Academy in June will focus on essential skills that will help small and medium-sized retail businesses (SMBs) build the skills they need to grow.



#Google4SouthAfrica: Google SA launches 'Hustle Academy'

Evan-Lee Courie 9 Feb 2022



“E-commerce presents an opportunity for small businesses in Africa to reach new customers and grow. Through the digital marketing and e-commerce career certificates and specialised pieces of training and 1,000 scholarships, we want to be able to assist small businesses in Africa gain the expertise to connect online, expand their customer base and scale up”, says Zeph Masote, YouTube Lead for Southern Africa

Africa’s growing young population and urbanisation present huge expansion opportunities for small retail businesses. South Africa has almost 2,000 shopping malls covering over 24 million square metres. Wholesale and retail are the third-largest contributors to Nigeria's GDP, with more than 90% of the industry made up of informal merchants, while Kenya, with an e-commerce market growth rate of 44% in 2021, has seen a steady rise in the number of outlets over the last five years.

E-commerce markets in Kenya and Nigeria increased by 40% and 30%, respectively, in 2021, while online sales in South Africa increased by 66% from 2019 to 2020, reaching more than \$1.8bn. "As more consumers on the continent continue to search for goods and services online, it is critical that small retail businesses learn how to better harness online tools for growth," Masote adds.

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