

Filmspace connects property owners to filmmakers



By [Johannes Masiteng](#)

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With the local film industry expanding at a competitive rate and South African entertainers gaining global recognition, a local tech startup company aims to make the industry more accessible by connecting professional filmmakers to property owners.

Filmspace, the brainchild of Blanche Franken, is an online marketplace platform that allows for easy listing and renting of film-friendly locations. Property owners can list their properties on Filmspace at no cost, and filmmakers can easily discover, book and secure these budget-friendly locations hassle-free.



Blanche Franken, founder of Filmspace

Franken tells us more about Filmspace.

Please tell us a bit about Filmspace

Filmspace is a marketplace that seamlessly connects professional filmmakers and property owners.

Our platform allows everyday property owners to list everything from residential homes to commercial spaces, unique vehicles and even professional photography studios, totally for free and with no strings attached.

Filmmakers then browse - at no cost - a wide range of popular as well as undiscovered unique locations, and book directly through the platform. This means that no matter if you're stuck at a family braai or shooting in the Kalahari, with Filmspace, you're able to list or scout anywhere, anytime, all from behind a screen. This has never been more important as the world adapts to remote-working.

So, from making extra cash by renting your property to easily finding your next film-friendly location, Filmspace benefits both parties. Property owners gain a second income, and our vital film industry becomes more accessible to newcomers and pros alike.

“ Howzit, molo & sawubona to all property owners! We're [#Filmspace](#) and we want you. Like, a lot! Follow the link to find out how you can help shake up South Africa's film industry while making up to R30,000 a day! <https://t.co/jUvGs47H4n> pic.twitter.com/s9wQePx6De— Filmspace SA (@Filmspace_SA) [February 7, 2020](#) ”

■ **How did the name Filmspace come about?**

Being a two-sided marketplace, we needed to incorporate both sides of our audience into the brand, filmmakers - film, including stills, and property owners - space represents all the unique and wonderful properties on offer while not singling out a specific property category.

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

While studying film, I saw so many projects just never leave the ground. Production is expensive. I wanted to create a platform that would not only allow property owners to make extra money, but to also make the industry more accessible.

From the idea being sparked in late 2018 to the platform launch in mid-2020, we spent endless hours developing our platform, researching best practice, getting input and buy-in from the film industry and conducting market research with property owners.

My team and I started Filmspace with the vision to create an accessible, inclusive and streamlined location scouting industry that promotes creativity and economic opportunity for filmmakers and property owners alike.

■ **What are some of the challenges you have faced so far?**

As a start-up that launched during the Covid-19 pandemic, we had to quickly adapt to regulations which put a pause to filmmaking in general. But on the flip side, this allowed us precious time to refine and work on our platform and service while also gaining additional insight from industry and property professionals.

We have, however, been very fortunate with the response that we have received from the hosting and filmmaking community.

■ **What measures have you put in place to ensure that both filmmakers and property owners adhere to the lockdown regulations and keep safe amid the Covid-19 pandemic?**

We have made it our responsibility to educate both our hosts and filmmakers on how we can create safe filming

environments that allow the cameras to keep rolling while keeping every cast and crew member's safety the number one priority.

We have rolled out several guides to hosts and filmmakers regarding protocols that need to be followed pre-, during and post-shoot, all of which can be accessed on the Filmspace platform. These guides also accompany every booking made through the Filmspace platform.

■ ***The pandemic has accelerated the transition of consumers and businesses to digital platforms. What would you say to those who are still sceptical to adapt to the new technology?***

For businesses, I would say don't snooze. The pandemic has changed the world almost overnight, and this includes everything from how we engage with friends and family to our everyday working life.

Like with everything in life, it's the early adopters who stand to benefit the most. Now's your chance, don't let it slip by.

■ ***What is the future of the South African film industry?***

Innovation, innovation... And innovation.

“ *The film industry is home to incredibly hard-working, solution-driven creatives who are able to quickly adapt to almost any scenario, be it the exponential shift to digital or crises like the Covid-19 pandemic.* ”

We'll also continue to see the rise of award-winning local productions. With Netflix and other streaming platforms heavily investing in series and films, the industry will only expand and thrive.

■ ***Where would you like to see Filmspace in the next five years?***

At Filmspace it has always been our aim to become the foremost marketplace destination for the global entertainment industry's location needs. We love Mzansi and our aim is to truly strengthen the film industry in South Africa, whether that be rolling out a wider range of products or expanding throughout South Africa.

We listen to what our users need, and we build innovative solutions based on what we believe will make the greatest impact on the industry.

Find and book your unique film-friendly locations at <https://filmspace.co.za/>

ABOUT JOHANNES MASITENG

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