5 African freelancing startups to watch

By Gabriella Mulligan

20 May 2016

Many African countries are grappling with escalating unemployment figures. But in the meantime, the continent is home to an ever-increasing number of highly skilled, and highly motivated young people, who are raring to go.

Image by 123RF

Enter the continent's tech startups looking to make freelance work an efficient and lucrative reality for Africa's work-seekers. Here, *Disrupt Africa* showcases five of Africa's freelancing startups that we will certainly be watching…

Kuhustle

Kenya's Kuhustle claims to be the Freelancer for Africa; with chief operations officer Beverly Mbeke saying the startup has made important adaptations to the model to tailor the service to African markets.

These modifications include a lower price-point, partnering with knowledge partners for technical skills, and providing training for users on the soft skills needed to deliver jobs.

Funded by the Cheetah Fund and the Nailab incubator, Kuhustle is based in Kenya, but has already attracted developers and clients from Nigeria and Uganda; and says it is experiencing overwhelming growth.

Asuqu

Representing Nigeria on our list, Asuqu is hoping to tackle Africa's unemployment challenge by enabling freelancers; with a belief that traditional recruitment is on the way out, to be taken over by outsourcing and project-based employment models.

The platform places heightened importance on creating a strong profile and portfolio for listed professionals.

"Getting someone to work for you is about competence in today's workforce. How do you know someone is good? Portfolio. We have provided an online portfolio for our freelancers to showcase their works, a professional profile and a review system to get information from other customers about a freelancer before hiring is done," founder of Asuqu, RJ Musah says.

Hooros

South African startup Hooros launched in September last year, as an online marketplace aimed at disrupting the local freelancing market by connecting businesses with freelancers capable of executing on projects.

While Hooros – the name of which is derived from the Egyptian sky god Horus – started life as a more traditional freelancing platform, with clients able to browse through profiles and portfolios of freelancers and hire individuals or teams depending on their project needs, last month Disrupt Africa reported the startup has pivoted to a new model.

The startup has now begun vetting the developers, designers and copywriters that list themselves on the site. Users are no longer able to post profiles before the vetting process is complete. Hooros says the change has allowed it to provide a more efficient service to customers and has already boosted monetisation.

Mintor

Also from South Africa, Mintor is looking to disrupt the model adopted by freelancing platforms in order to make it accessible to students and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

In many ways a freelancing platform much like Elance or Freelancer, Mintor is specifically tailored towards students on the supply side and SMEs on the demand side, and looks to marry the talent pool with businesses with needs in a mutually beneficial manner.

In August 2015, the startup battled against three other startups at the #PitchVinny event held in Cape Town, and won, taking home US$4,000 in funding from angel investor Vinny Lingham.

Crew Pencil

South Africa's Crew Pencil is today's wild card; with its platform connecting production companies with qualified crew members. The platform also automates the whole process of taking crew members on and managing shoots.

Crew subscribed to the platform create and manage their own profile, listing all relevant information regarding designation, rate, contact details, CV, gear and showreel. Production companies are able to search and book crew – whereby crew are notified via email regarding any pencils and confirmations.

Crew and production companies communicate directly via a messaging system, while invoices are automatically generated by the platform. Crew can manage their own diaries on Crew Pencil, while production companies can manage their booking sheets.

Crew Pencil launched a minimum viable product (MVP) in October last year, and has seen strong uptake, with over 420 crew and 120 production companies already using the platform. The startup is already planning rapid expansion on the

continent and worldwide.

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com