

Kenyan firm makes online shopping a reality

A quick solution for Kenyan shoppers is in the offing, courtesy of a Nairobi-based firm that will save hundreds of time-constrained individuals by offering online shopping services.

By [Joyce Joan Wangui](#) ^{21 Aug 2007}

The firm known as 'Stress-Free Online Shopping' comes at a time when many Kenyans, particularly those the corporate fraternity, find it hard to juggle work and shopping.

Bernard Egara, the managing director of the online shopping outfit, says that Kenyans have no choice but to embrace online shopping. His motto is that online shopping is the future of shopping.

Not only does the firm shop for clients but also offers delivery services to the client's most convenient place. He says that to get started, a client has to subscribe at a fee of Sh 1000 (\$14) on the firm's website.

"Once a client subscribes, he or she gets a code that helps the company identify their profiles wherever they send a shopping request. A client then e-mails the codes and shopping lists and then it's upon us to shop and deliver," Egara said.

The city entrepreneur envisages a lucrative business, saying that the growing demand for shopping and delivery services has opened up more opportunities, and prospects are growing as more turn to internet shopping.

Launched in 2006, the firm started out with grocery online shopping, to cash in on the huge demand of homemakers seeking online services. It has now expanded to include other accessories like household items, furniture and electronics.

Egara says that once a client makes a request, the firm goes out and gets the best quotations from retailers and sends the latter to the client to confirm on the products he or she requires.

"We then shop for our client and deliver the goods to the designated location."

The firm targets those clients who spend more than Sh 7,000 (\$100) in shopping. These include companies and up-market residents and also a number of NGOs.

Egara started with a capital of Sh 400,000 but has so far topped it to Sh 1.8 million, which has helped him purchase two vehicles, develop the website, infrastructure and advertising. The firm employs four shoppers, 10 marketers, two drivers and a secretary.

The Stress-free Online Shopping has extended its services to several schools in Kenya. The firm organises two of its staff to shop for school children whose guardians lack time to cook for them.

The firm also attends to school's visiting days where parents living in the far-flung areas pay online and the items are delivered to their children.

Kenyans living abroad have also benefited from online shopping where they pay via the internet and request the firm to deliver goods to their families in Kenya. This has continued to build trust between the firm and

Kenyans in the diaspora.

According to Egara, the most recent business in online shopping is real estate. Buyers who are keen to do business in Kenya will contact online shoppers who then negotiate prices of building materials from suppliers on their behalf. The firm is eyeing corporate clients who often have purchases they want delivered to their offices.

The online shopping idea has gone down well with Kenyans. A cross section of online shoppers interviewed by HANA expressed satisfaction with the service, saying it is effective and time saving.

Even though some clients are so particular on item brands, country of manufacture and favourite stores, the firm has ensured that they satisfy their customers' every need as they are regarded as the most important resource.

Egara terms online shopping as an art and implores all Kenyans to embrace the art of online shopping.

For more information, visit: <http://www.stressfreeonlineshopping.co.ke/>

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