

One year later, 10m viewers visit Zando.co.za

Zando.co.za celebrated one year of business at the end of January 2013 by announcing that 10 million South Africans have visited the site. Originally only offering shoes, it expanded its categories to include clothing, accessories, sports and beauty.



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As part to its growth ensuring that customers enjoyed hassle-free purchases and access to hundreds of brands and thousands of styles, it moved to a 1500 m2 warehouse in Ndebeni, Cape Town.

In the past year of business, the top selling brands (in order of total gross sales) were Utopia, Zoom, LinX, Bronx and Plum. With the shoe category being the highest performing overall, customer's main purchasing interests were heels, boots, sneakers and T-shirts.

"We expected steady growth but we didn't expect it to be this fast," said Manuel Koser (MD and cofounder). "With over 200 employees now, the company has moved its office to larger premises and is now located at 97 Durham Road, Salt River in Cape Town."

Service key to position high online ranking

At the heart of its business model is the high standard of service, free delivery within 5 days, and up to 14 days to exchange a purchase at no cost.

The customer service department reported that in one year it had responded to over 75 000 calls and 47 000 emails. This growth is reflected in online stats:

- Facebook page sitting at over 115 000 likes
- Top 114 website in South Africa (February 2013 - alexa.com)
- May 2012 it reached consistent unique visitor count of 200 000 visitors per week.

The company's YouTube channel accumulated over 55 000 views after launching its TV advert in August 2012. In the same month, it announced a partnership with eBucks, South Africa's leading multi-partner rewards programme.

Investment grows business model

The growth potential and opportunity within the South African e-commerce landscape attracted two key investments, the first from JP Morgan (September 2012) and the second from Summit Partners (November 2012).

Zando.co.za focused on driving its m-commerce in 2012, making it one of the top performing businesses in the space. iOS was top in terms of sales and shoes were the main driving category behind mobile, with the highest conversion rates taking place through tablets / iPhones and iPads.

"By listening to the market, being flexible and innovative with our mobisite and strategy, we saw our best conversion rates in January, despite the expected after-Christmas lull," said Koser. "2013 remains our year to ensure we are continuously flexible for the business' operational growth."

For those customers who have not yet tried online shopping, the site encourages shoppers to select a few items and return the ones that do not fit, "We cover the cost of returns," said Peter Allerstorfer (MD and cofounder). "The company will focus on bringing on board new brands for our customers in 2013, ensuring that we deliver on our promise of variety and access to the latest fashion trends."

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