

SA on-demand delivery startup Zulzi to expand nationwide

 By Tom Jackson

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South African on-demand delivery service Zulzi is to expand to Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria in the coming months from its Johannesburg North base after racking up over 10,000 subscribers.



Zulzi, which went live at the end of 2016, started life as an e-commerce business focused on students. It delivered textbooks and entry-level gadgets within three days from the start, but started seeing massive demand when it began delivering within an hour.

“We gained a market share of almost 30% at the University of Witwatersrand, University of Johannesburg and Vaal University of Technology, and that’s when we started asking ourselves questions about what would happen if we offered this on-demand delivery service for everything,” chief executive officer (CEO) Donald Valoyi told *Disrupt Africa*.

Zulzi has since morphed into an on-demand delivery platform which enables anyone to order groceries, liquor and pharmaceuticals, and get their order delivered to their door within an hour. Its mobile app is available on iOS and Android, and allows users to see and order from all the stores within a six kilometre radius.

“Once you have placed an order we have independent personal shoppers who are well trained and also have a mobile app, which enables them to accept orders and pick up the items from the stores,” Valoyi said.

“They are also able to suggest replacement items of products on the app if any of the products that the customer was looking for is not found. Once they are done shopping for the items they handover the order to the nearest driver. We have independent drivers with a Zulzi app which allows them to accept orders and deliver them. These are independent drivers; some of them work for platforms such as Taxify and Uber.”

The wider focus was immediately popular. Though still only available in Johannesburg North, Zulzi has over 10,000 subscribers and is processing orders worth over R1 million (US\$81,000) per month.

“Moms love the app, they are the biggest users for grocery shopping,” said Valoyi.

Zulzi partners with stores, who pay a commission of between seven and 15% per order, and also works closely with Consumer Packaged Good companies who are able to offer coupons and advertise on its platform.

Valoyi said the startup, which is currently self-funded but expects to secure investment very soon, will now start expanding across the country.

“The most challenging task before the launch was to make sure the more than one million products that we have on our system were up to date in terms of pricing. Everything needed to be up to date with the pricing in store,” he said. “We had to build sophisticated systems which enable us to keep in sync with the pricing of all the items in all the different stores. We have now fully automated the process from end-to-end.”

Read the [original article](#) on Disrupt Africa.

ABOUT TOM JACKSON

Co-founder @DisruptAfrica. Tech and business journalist in Africa. Passionate about the vibrant tech startups scene in Africa, Tom can usually be found sniffing out the continent's most exciting new companies and entrepreneurs, funding rounds and any other developments within the growing ecosystem

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