

# E-business evolves: complex, diverse market outgrows 'one-stop shops'

By [Wesley Lynch](#), issued by [Realm Digital](#)

2 Aug 2010

**Claims and confusion** The [Digital.co.za/page/portfolio/ e-business provider](#) arena has grown into an enormous, complex industry with numerous specialist areas in the last 10 years. And yet providers continue to claim one-stop shop status and fail to carve out clear niches.

As a result many top-flight projects stutter and fail as teams are forced to hire more help and members flounder in confusion about their respective roles and responsibilities.

## Discrete work areas

Notwithstanding the industry's complexity and differentiation, all e-business projects can be sub-divided into three discrete work streams - [digital strategy](#), [technology](#) and [creative](#).

This segmented view helps with differentiating the three main types of websites, and the providers to whom they can be assigned without undue risk of failure.

- The first major type of [Digital.co.za/page/Realm Digital-services/ e-business](#) project is the common brochure site, populated with information and nothing else.
- The second is a strategic or campaign site, typically created around a product launch strategy with an accompanying marketing message.
- The third entails building full-blown online businesses, including [Digital.co.za/ e-commerce sites](#), online reservation systems, e-banking sites, media portals or other high-complexity online businesses.

The main difference between the first and second types is the digital strategy underpinning both (and, to a degree, the creative thrust). A campaign site has a marketing objective while a brochure site aims merely to inform. The difference between the first two and the third type is enormous - a great big technological leap entailing integration, automation, service intermediation and much else besides.

## The gap

In short, there are huge gaps in the current landscape of e-business development. While these gaps mirror the abovementioned strategic, creative and technological gaps, they manifest in different ways.

Commonly, yawning gaps will be encountered in projects, between:

- The front-office (customer experience) and back-office (technology);
- Creative and technology (the technology work stream might underestimate the complexity of creative's output, while creative may not understand the technology);
- Marketing and operations (from the operational viewpoint, the website's objective is to sell a product, but it may disregard the use of social media, affiliate sales or campaign measurement, which pose different integration requirements); and
- The agency and IT

## Provider types

The abovementioned gaps are further mirrored in the different types of e-business providers entrusted with building sites.

While a regular Web development firm can do the first site, it cannot build the second, as it lacks a marketing company or creative agency's experience in formulating digital strategy. A creative agency, on the other hand, may not have the front-end experience required to pass a usability test.

And neither of these companies has the wherewithal to attempt the third type of site without the help of a back-end integration specialist. Indeed, not even a back-end specialist generally possesses the necessary front-end, creative and strategic experience to attempt a full-scale e-business site by itself.

In short, just as heart surgeons are not paediatricians and architects are not quantity surveyors, none of the above specialists should claim to be anything they're not.

## The real deal

Ultimately, e-business projects don't fail because of incompetence; they fail because gaps are left unfilled, in turn the result of a lack of clarity about the roles of project members.

What is needed to realise your e-business dream is a holistic e-enabler with proven development expertise and an eye on the big picture, obtained through partnerships and project coordination.

Your partner's delivery framework should encompass a proven solution portfolio that integrates into best-in-class [Digital.co.za/page/portfolio/ e-business platforms](https://digital.co.za/page/portfolio/e-business-platforms), lead development capability and comprehensive partner management framework, backed by a solid track record of complex deployments that scale massively. Failing that, crucial tasks will fall in-between the cracks and endanger the project.

By [Wesley Lynch](#), CEO, [Digital.co.za/ Realm Digital](#)

▪ **Why UK businesses are choosing South Africa as their outsourcing destination of choice** 25 Oct 2022

▪ **'The Great Resignation' meets 'The Workforce of the Future'** 12 Jul 2022

▪ **Realm Digital announces 3 strategic key hires to enhance innovative, high-value solutions to clients** 25 Apr 2022

▪ **Realm Digital wins Mail & Guardian digital account** 20 Apr 2022

▪ **Digital services and solutions... One trend to rule them all** 13 Apr 2022

### Realm Digital



Realm Digital is a leading global digital strategy and technology partner helping companies solve problems, unlock value and achieve their vision. We design, build and develop innovative digital business solutions with client experience at the core of everything we do. Our team is made up of experienced individuals who are passionate about technology, digital transformation, and creating intelligent digital solutions.

[Profile](#) | [News](#) | [Contact](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [RSS Feed](#)

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