

Kenyan e-commerce startup Sokowatch raises \$2m seed round

 By Tom Jackson

30 Jul 2018

Kenyan B2B e-commerce startup Sokowatch has closed a \$2 million seed round to further expand its customer base across East Africa while also piloting additional value-added services for shops.



Launched in 2016, Sokowatch allows store owners to order fast-moving consumer goods at any time through SMS or mobile app for same-day delivery. It has already delivered over 100,000 orders to customers Kenya and Tanzania, and has been growing rapidly.

The \$2 million seed round is led by 4DX Ventures, a prominent Africa-focused technology investment firm whose early-stage investments include Andela, Flutterwave, and mPharma. They are joined by San Francisco-based venture capital firm Village Global, Lynett Capital, and other Africa-focused venture funds including Golden Palm Investments and Outlierz Ventures.

Early investors Impact Engine and Chandaria Industries, East Africa's largest hygiene products manufacturer, also followed on with additional investment.

Sokowatch will use its investment proceeds to further expand its customer base across East Africa while also piloting

additional value-added services for shops.

“With over 10 million informal retailers stores across urban Africa alone, we are excited for the work ahead of us”, said Daniel Yu, chief executive officer (CEO) and founder of Sokowatch.

“With over 90% of retail sales across Africa happening through informal retailers, we believe that there is a huge opportunity to formalise small businesses. Because the African continent has a median age of only 19 but is already the world’s second largest population, we expect new tech-enabled solutions to leapfrog the traditional models of malls, banks, and delivery companies when it comes to providing retail, finance, and logistics services for the African mass market.”



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Peter Orth, co-founder and managing partner at 4DX Ventures, will be joining Sokowatch’s Board of Directors.

“We believe that Sokowatch has the potential to transform informal retail across Africa,” he said.

“They help bring a key distribution channel into the digital age, resulting in better access to goods and cheaper products for a large segment of the population. This is a big mission and we’re excited to join Dan and the rest of the team for this journey.”

Village Global co-founder and partner Erik Torenberg said he believes Sokowatch will be a game-changing business in Africa.

“This is our first investment on the continent, and we’re very excited about the region’s potential. We are thrilled to partner with Dan and team, as well as 4DX Ventures given their strong track record backing winning companies in Africa,” he said.

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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