

24.com revamps free blogging platform

Letterdash, the new name for 24.com's free make-your-own-blog service, which the company claims to be the most popular blogging platform in South Africa, was introduced yesterday, Wednesday, 22 July 2009. The company says the new name was selected to reflect added functionality designed to make it easier to build customised blogs, post updates and interact with other bloggers across the 24.com network.

"With Letterdash we hope to grow our community of bloggers and demonstrate that blogging can be fun, easy and a great way to meet other South Africans with similar interests," says Alistair Fairweather, social media manager at 20FourLabs, 24.com's research and development division focused on Web development and innovation.

Focused on community and conversations relevant to South Africans, the blog platform is designed to give users the opportunity to connect with other 24.com brands' bloggers, including News24, Wheels24, Women24, Sport24, Parent24 and GoTravel24. 24.com bloggers on Letterdash can also join Afrigator (afrigator.com/) - claimed to be one of Africa's leading social media aggregators and directories of online content published and consumed by Africans.

"The revamped platform is very much the result of listening to 24.com bloggers and the kinds of improvements they wanted to see," adds Fairweather. "Based on dozens of meetings of bloggers, and regular suggestions from our different online communities, we have been able to develop Letterdash so that it's easier for new bloggers to get started and for existing bloggers to create unique places to express themselves."

The new look and feel of the blog platform includes simpler, custom URLs (for example, letterdash.com/soandso) and customisable headers and backgrounds, with 15 preset design options from which to choose. Users can also upload and crop their own images to construct distinctive pages. As more bloggers are on-the-go, the service is designed to also include the ability to view blog posts on a wireless phone with the next version of the blog platform offering the option to post on a mobile handset as well.

According to Fairweather: "Letterdash enhances 24.com's blogging platform to make it more competitive both locally and internationally; effectively giving existing bloggers an upgrade and offering those interested in starting a blog a simpler way to get started."

For more information go to: letterdash.com/.