

Be a start-up success story!



By [Carolyn Holgate](#)

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If you're itching for a new challenge or always fancied yourself a bit of an entrepreneur, why not start your own business? It may seem like a mammoth task, but setting yourself up online to start communicating and selling to potential customers is easier than you think. I will share some of my top five tips on helping you on the road to start-up success.

1. Be online savvy

When it comes to launching a business, the internet is your best friend. Thanks to the World Wide Web and its offerings such as free web hosting; cloud solutions that enable you to access your data from anywhere; and social media, small businesses and start-ups can compete in the market place today.

The internet has closed the gap between big and small businesses, levelling the playing field and making it easier for start-ups to advertise and develop their brand without needing a big budget. With that said, you need to familiarise yourself with social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to really enjoy the business benefits the internet has to offer.

2. Get back to basics

While there are plenty of other online avenues to market your business, you must not neglect your website. This is at the core of any digital strategy, allowing for existing and future customers to learn more about what you have to offer.

If you don't have a big budget, don't panic. MWEB's Uncapped Website Hosting is just R19 p/m and provides small businesses with a free personalised .co.za domain and over 750 website design templates. For website hosting customers, the domain is free and for MWEB ADSL customers, uncapped website hosting is free for the first year. And for those intimidated by all things tech related, the Website Self-Build feature is an easy to use step-by-step tool to help you design your dream website. Building your brand just got easier!

Once your website is up and running, remember to keep it fresh and relevant with new content or products and contact details.

3. Get connected without the cost

Once your website is up and running, you'll need to start building your business by liaising with customers and clients.

While bigger businesses can afford to travel the globe meeting with industry professionals and clients, smaller businesses need to rely on technology to keep them connected.

VoIP (Video and Voice calls over IP) is an affordable way for you to connect with people around the world and expand your business without leaving the office. MWEB's VoIP service, MWEB Talk also offers you the opportunity to set up multiple accounts, and allows users to have free on network calls to fellow MWEB Talk users as well as cheap calls to landline and mobile phone numbers.

4. Get your head in the cloud

If your business is just starting out and your requirements are one to four PC's, an ADSL service and a telephone line is all you need.

The best option to store and access data files such as documents, images and photographs is by choosing a cloud-based system. You won't need your own server which will save you money upfront and it is also convenient as you can upload and access your data from anywhere in the world - all you need is an internet connection and an internet enabled device i.e. pc, laptop, tablet, etc.

5. Keep current

The perk of the internet is that you have a wealth of information at your fingertips - use this to your advantage! Research and learn more about your competitors find out about the latest trends in your industry or line of work and collect ideas that inspire you.

MWEB has a number of products to get your business online. For more, see MWEB's [product offerings](#).

ABOUT CAROLYN HOLGATE

Carolyn Holgate is a part-time tech guru and general manager at leading internet service provider MWEB. She is responsible for the strategic focus of the consumer division that offers Internet access to the consumer and SOHO/SME markets. Follow @MWEBGuy on Twitter.

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