

A new online platform for moms, brands and 'momfluencers'

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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MomSays, an online resource for moms who are looking for unbiased, trusted advice from other moms regarding the best product solutions for their families, recently launched its new website.

This data analytics platform was designed to help brands engage with new moms by utilising the collective knowledge of an extensive network of experienced moms to facilitate product testing, brand events, exposure, panel discussions and social media activations. In addition to providing tried-and-tested product information, it also provides a platform for moms and 'mompreneurs' or 'momfluencers' to connect, collaborate and network with each other.

According to global trends and research company Nielsen, first-time moms tend to be unsure about the delivery and reliability of products. They rely on trusted advisors for product recommendations and become averse to trying new products unless otherwise advised. Brands, therefore, have a short window of time to capture and retain their trust and loyalty.

Research suggests that:

- 60% of the 18 million female consumers in SA are the primary buyers in their households.
- 65% of moms trust what other moms buy in the retail market.
- 83% of new moms are millennials of which 46% trust the recommendation of other parents above any other channels.



Shanèy Vijendranath

Not only does the platform give moms and mompreneurs a voice, it connects them with brands and is set to bolster the buying power of moms and revolutionise the way brands approach them.

I interviewed founder Shanèy Vijendranath to find out more about her entrepreneurial journey to get this point, how it started organically through her blog, *You, Baby and I* to where it is now...

When and why did you decide to launch MomSays?

I got married at the age of 20 and became a first-time mom at 21. I quickly realised that motherhood can be a very lonely journey, especially when none of your friends are parents yet – and even if they are, they're so busy trying to figure it out for themselves, that it's tough to find help.

I felt that there just wasn't enough support for new moms, especially when trying to filter through baby products and trying to decipher which are the best options.

I wanted advice from moms who had tried, tested and used the products in their daily life. The internet offered too many choices, but with little real-life data or first-hand opinions, so making the correct decisions were extremely difficult.

Everyone had their own lists, but no one shared what South African moms were purchasing and why, so I began blogging to connect with other moms in the community.

My blog, *You, Baby and I* was named Africa's most influential parenting blog and won Best Parenting Blog in South Africa.

After two years of blogging, I realised that it was more than just a blog. It became a tribe of moms who trusted each other's opinions.

At the end of 2016, I saw an opportunity in the baby industry and decided to launch MomSays to test my theory. After three years of pitching, finally getting funding, going into closed beta, we are live! It was a long journey to get here.

📌 *Comment on the gap in the market or the problem MomSays seeks to solve.*

- Becoming a first-time mom is overwhelming. There are too many product choices! There are a ton of reviews available online, but you're not sure which ones to trust.
- Moms are looking for more authentic conversations with moms who have been through the same journey to help them make the right product decisions.
- MomSays was created so friends, family members and experienced moms can help first-time moms make the right purchasing decisions.
- Many brands have no idea how to market to moms and what they should be saying. We wanted to create an authentic way for companies to connect with moms and understand their need and wants more clearly.
- There's no locally available recommendations platform designed for the parenting industry, specifically in Africa, that targets moms only.
- I think we need more data on South African shopping trends, especially for the parenting market. We assume we know our consumers, but we always compare them to countries like the USA and UK, where there is such rich data. We don't have that here. What works overseas, might not always work here.

📌 *What is MomSays' competitive advantage?*

With the prices of everything going up, people want to spend their hard-earned money on relevant products that they will use. MomSays uses real people experiences to show which products work and to show companies what moms want.

- MomSays uses real relevant data to help moms buy the products they want immediately.
- Brands will get accurate data via our analytics to help them sell and connect better with moms.
- We will be launching a mompreneurs section, which will help small business owners market their business to this specific niche.
- We have a rewards and influencer program for moms who want to work with companies on campaigns.
- MomSays is a community-driven platform where moms help us build the analytics.

📌 *How does it work?*

“ We all know that mom knows best but sometimes mom isn't actually keeping up with the new trends and technology. This is where MomSays comes in. We bridge the gap and give you access to a platform that shows you the trending lists of products based on what your friends, family and experienced moms say, a platform that

rewards you for sharing your opinion and gives you an opportunity to collaborate with some of the biggest brands in the world. ”

MomSays has three parts to it:

1. Help first-time moms build their essential shopping lists based on experienced mom's reviews and opinions.
- Help brands market more personally to 'momsumers'.
 - Support local businesses – specifically mompreneurs who need assistance with research, marketing and product development.

■ ***Comment on the uptake since its launch.***

We've only been live for a week and already have close to 5,000 new signups. We currently have over 10,000 registered moms on our system from beta to now.

■ ***What's next?***

We are already working on phase two, which is adding more features on the platform for our users and introducing companies to the platform, which will give them an insight of what moms are saying about their products and how they can work with moms on campaigns.

We are working with moms to find out what works for them and what they want to know.

We are building a community that cares.

Shanèy Vijendranath is a wife, mom of three and a businesswoman. She is the co-founder of the award-winning parenting blog, [You, Baby and I](#) and is the Chapter Lead for SoGal Johannesburg. Follow her on Twitter [@shaneyvije](#). For more, visit [MomSays.co.za](#) and follow the tribe on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

Jess is Senior Editor: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com. She is also a contributing writer. marketingnews@bizcommunity.com

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