

Claim your digital ID while there's time

The arrival of Summer is the perfect opportunity for young South Africans to log onto the world wide web and claim their digital identities within the dotZA (.za) and dotAfrica (.africa) namespaces.



Lucky Masilela, CEO of ZA Central Registry

“Schools are out and the youth are now able to turn their bright young minds towards implementing what should be their number one digital resolution for 2020: securing their digital identities in cyberspace,” says ZACR CEO, Lucky Masilela.

“Young people helped lay the foundation for South Africa’s democracy and they must now turn their attention to building the digital identities that will be so crucial to their future prospects,” adds Mr Masilela. ZACR is the administrator of South Africa’s .ZA (dotZA) presence on the world wide web.

Future revolutions will be digital which means the youth must prioritise their online digital identities.

“To help build a promising future for South African youth, we need more young people registering dotZA and dotAfrica domain names and then constructing their unique individual digital personas around these expressions of Africa in cyberspace,” explains Masilela.

There are currently some 23,000 registered dotAfrica domains and over 1.25m registered .ZA domains.

“The Fourth Industrial Revolution is being powered by information. It is being brought about by the seamless and rapid access to information that the world wide web provides. Young Africans must fully participate in this new revolution for a new age by being active and visible online while taking advantage of the many opportunities for advancement that the web offers,” Masilela says.

Masilela outlines five key behaviours to building a digital identity that will support young people’s eventual real-world success:

1. Keep it real

Future employers, business partners, financial administrators, educational institutions and even foreign governments will likely be scrutinising your online identity to make potentially life-changing decisions. Be sure that all publicly available information about you is factual and honest. Being economical with the truth will only harm your future prospects.

2. Keep it respectful

We’re building a South Africa for all, a South Africa that respects and protects women and children, guards the disadvantaged and allows for freedom of expression. Be respectful to all people in cyberspace and do not erode the values South Africa fought so long and hard for.

3. Talk to your audience

Keep that better life you’re striving for “top-of-mind” when engaging in cyberspace. Think of everything that you put out in cyberspace and tailor everything you say and write to increase the likelihood of your virtual aspirations becoming real-world realities.

4. Be visible where it counts

Build your digital identity using foundations that will positively contribute to your future plans. Selecting online platforms that boost your visibility amongst the right audience will be tremendously helpful later on. Spending time in cyberspace can be time-consuming, so choose right.

5. Use it or lose it

Consistency is key when it comes to your future success. As a young person, a track record of consistently doing the right things over a sustained period of time is your best chance of securing eventual success. When you start out building your digital identity, you need to maintain your online platforms and profiles and ensure that they are well populated and up-to-date so you're always visible to interested parties.