

# DIGITAL ECONOMY UNIT

#GoDigitalWC

**Embrace digital technology and move your business online to survive and thrive!**

## #GoDigitalWC Articles

Get tips and learn how to take your business online, click [here](#)

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## #GoDigitalWC Tech Volunteers Initiative

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### Article 14: Bootstrap your Knowledge and Learn Online

#### The gift of learning online

When last did you learn a new skill or read an insightful book or article? Perhaps you have been meaning to look at ways to improve your time management skills but not yet got around to it. There are no doubt critical skills you can learn to improve your business, adopt digital practices or even re-engineer your business into e-commerce.

Practically everything and anything you want to know and learn has been nicely packaged and served up to you through the internet! Learning online has never been easier or more accessible than right now, whilst you are finding ways to maximize your time during the COVID-19 lockdown. Think of this time as the greatest opportunity to sharpen your knowledge and gift your business by adding vital skills to your 'business toolbox' to ensure that you build and sustain a profitable company.

#### Where to begin

So where do you begin, and how do you know what you don't know or need to know? If it is not intuitive to you or your staff and the people closest to you have not mentioned anything, it might be best to complete an online business self-assessment. Many of them are offered at no cost, so search for the most credible options. The '**Jump for entrepreneurs**' platform developed by the Western Cape Government, offers a wide range of digital tools and resources to support growing businesses. One such innovative tool is the **JumpStart** business health check that determines where there are potential gaps in your business, and guidance on how to address them. Visit [www.bizjump.co.za](http://www.bizjump.co.za) or download the free app (compatible with Android and IOS) to complete the Jumpstart assessment today.

#### Advantages of online learning

Once you have a better sense of what knowledge, skills or business gaps exist, you are spoilt for choice on available online courses, webinars, articles and e-books. Many of these have been carefully crafted to align with the 'VARK'

learning styles (visual, aural, verbal and physical) to ensure that you get the maximum benefit to add value in your business after completion.

A big advantage to learning online includes the flexibility in that you can complete them at your own pace and when it is convenient for you, and you save in commuting time and costs, suitable for a busy working business owner. Most content is compatible to multiple devices, be that a PC/laptop, tablet or mobile phone, which gives you technology options, and the opportunity to learn when and where you want.

You will find a vast amount of content available at no cost, however some may incur a cost, usually at a reasonable rate when compared to traditional learning methods. Some programmes are certified, offering some form of accreditation or qualification (degree or certificate) through an assessment or assignment process, whilst others do not. It ultimately depends on what you are looking for, either way knowledge is power and it is best to adopt the principle of lifelong learning and constant yearning for new knowledge to translate into useful skills.

Webinars have become especially popular during the lockdown period and many learning resources can be downloaded for use offline. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Digital Economy Unit have developed the #GoDigitalWC initiatives in an effort to support small businesses to move into the digital age by adopting digital technologies and best business practices. Visit our webpage to find webinars and articles that provide practical information to improve your knowledge and skills in transforming your business, click here to find out more: <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/site-page/godigital>

Many learning institutions, such as Udemy, edX, red and yellow, WitsX and many others, are offering free short courses or considerable cost discounts during the lockdown period. They usually advertise through social media and on their respective websites. This is an ideal opportunity to get access to rich content from reputable organisations.

## What is required

Access to a device and data or WIFI is essential, especially since most people are working remotely. You generally require a good amount of self-discipline and motivation but if you have concerns about being alone in the process, find programmes that offer virtual contact with experts/tutors, a blended approach, or peer to peer connection points. Find a learning mechanism that works best for you and the time you have available to dedicate to your learning journey.

Although it would be practically impossible to provide a conclusive list of all online courses, programmes and multiple media platforms, the following link could get you started in your search: <https://financebuzz.com/10-best-sites-for-free-online-education>

Have faith in your capabilities and embrace learning that could translate into the skills that take your operations and productivity to new heights! Keep your eye on the prize – building a successful thriving business post COVID-19 and well into the future.