

# Social media

## Your first steps online to increase your store visibility and grow your sales



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**B**y 2025, the number of social media users in South Africa is expected to grow by 30% to reach a total of 40 million. 80% of them visit Facebook or Instagram daily and 56% say that when they buy online, their choices are influenced by social media.

With this rise in user numbers and its importance in shopping decisions, setting up your social media accounts correctly becomes key to convert those users into new customers for your supermarkets or wholesale stores and to grow your sales.

In the previous article, we explained how your store can benefit from the rise of eCommerce. Today, we will explore social media to understand how supermarkets and wholesalers can use them to bring visibility to their brand and to grow their sales in-store.



Image courtesy of Kerde Severin, Pexels

### Three free online tools

**[Get a strong online reputation for your stores on Facebook page,](#)**  
**[WhatsApp Business and Google My Business.](#)**

There are dozens of social media channels but the most efficient to start with for supermarkets and wholesalers are Facebook and WhatsApp as they are the two most used social networks in South Africa. Over 95% of Internet users are on WhatsApp and over 85% are on Facebook.

“ As you grow your online audience, you will learn more about your followers and can grow your online presence on other social media networks they use like Instagram, YouTube or Twitter. ”

Each of these networks has specific characteristics that you will need to adapt to in order to grow the visibility of your store and attract potential customers.

Lastly, Google remains the leading search engine and is used by a majority of Internet

users. Registering your store on Google is a very efficient way to show up in online searches about grocery shopping in your area.

In the next paragraphs we will share with you our best tips to setup your accounts on Facebook, WhatsApp and Google.



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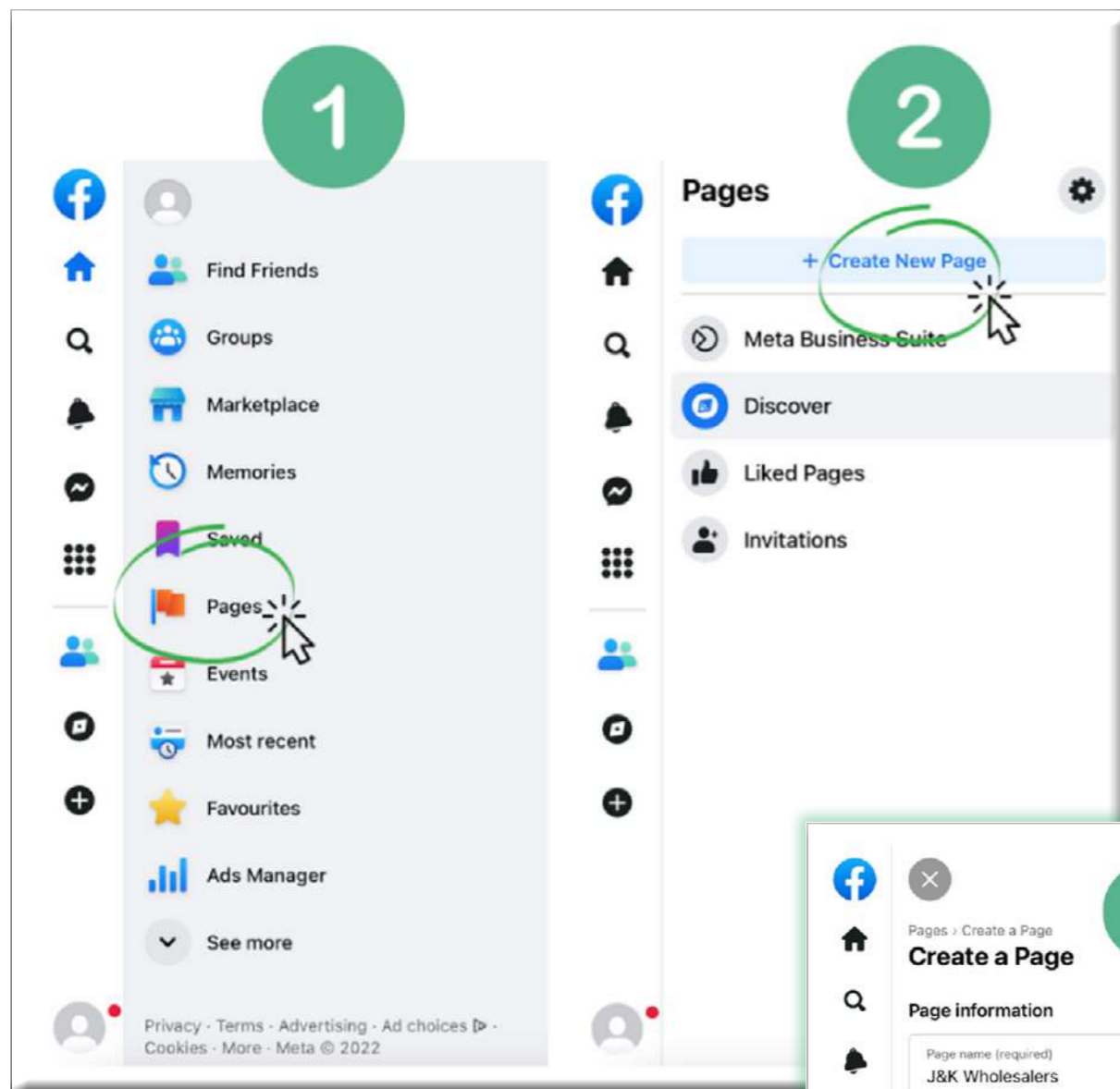


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Contact us to find out more about HR Support and how it will benefit your business.





### Step 1. Create your Facebook page

Creating a Facebook page for your business is free and will take you less than five minutes.

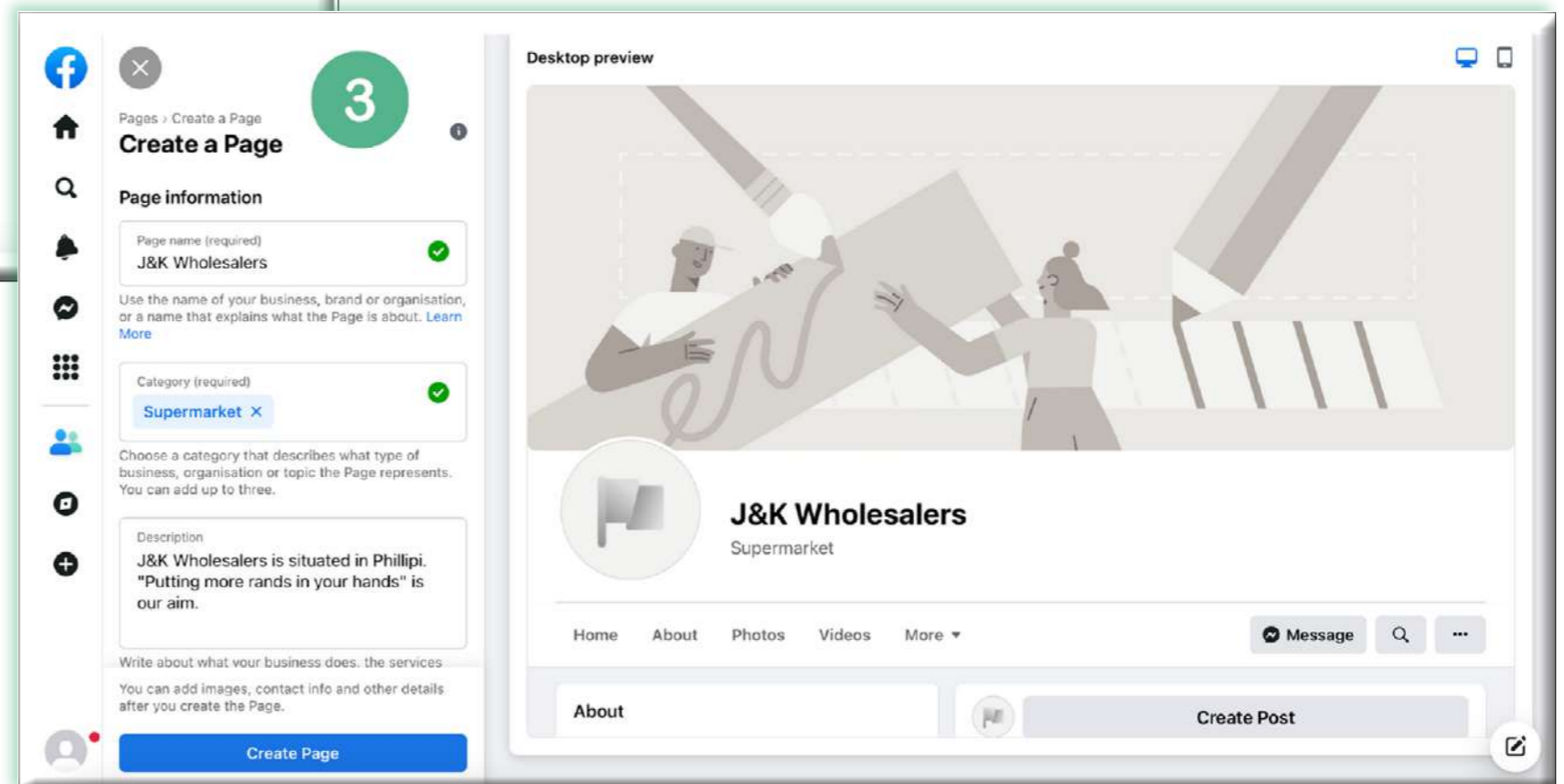
First, to create a page on Facebook for your business you must have a Facebook profile. Every Facebook page is linked to at least one Facebook profile. You can use your personal profile if you have one or you can create a specific profile that you will only use to create your Facebook page.

Once you are on your Facebook profile, follow these three simple steps to create your Facebook page:

- 1 Click on 'Pages'
- 2 Click on '+ Create a new page'
- 3 Fill in the page name (the name of your stores), the category (select the most accurate) and write a short description of your activity.

### Get your store on a Facebook page in 10 minutes

Facebook is used by more than 27 millions South Africans today and this number is expected to increase by 40% in the next three years. Building a strong Facebook community will be an asset for your business. Here is some advice to easily launch and run your Facebook page.



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## Step 2. Setup your page to be recognisable and useful

Once your page is created, add your logo as a profile picture **1** and a good quality photo of your store as a cover photo **2**. This will bring a strong brand identity to your Facebook page and make it easily recognisable by Facebook users.

Fill in all the practical information that will enable potential customers to visit the store or get in touch with you: opening hours, phone number, WhatsApp number, email address, physical store address, etc.

Finally, once your page is setup, start posting information (your specials for example) and answer every comment or message **3** that you receive on your page to build engagement and loyalty from your followers.

The screenshot shows the Facebook Business Page for J&K Wholesalers. The page is set up with a cover photo of a supermarket aisle, a profile picture of the J&K logo, and a bio that reads 'J&K Wholesalers @JKWholesalers - Supermarket'. The left sidebar shows the 'Manage Page' section with 'Inbox' (18 new comments) and 'Meta Business Suite' options. The bottom navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Groups', 'Events', 'Reviews', 'More', 'Promote', and 'WhatsApp tools'.

- 1** Profile picture: Click on the camera icon to change it.
- 2** Cover picture: Click on the 'edit' icon to change it.
- 3** Inbox: Click on it to see all the messages and comments you receive

## Use WhatsApp Business to connect with your customers and to start selling online

Only 21% of emails and SMS are ever opened but an impressive 98% of WhatsApp messages are read by their recipients. This makes WhatsApp the most efficient tool to communicate with your customers.

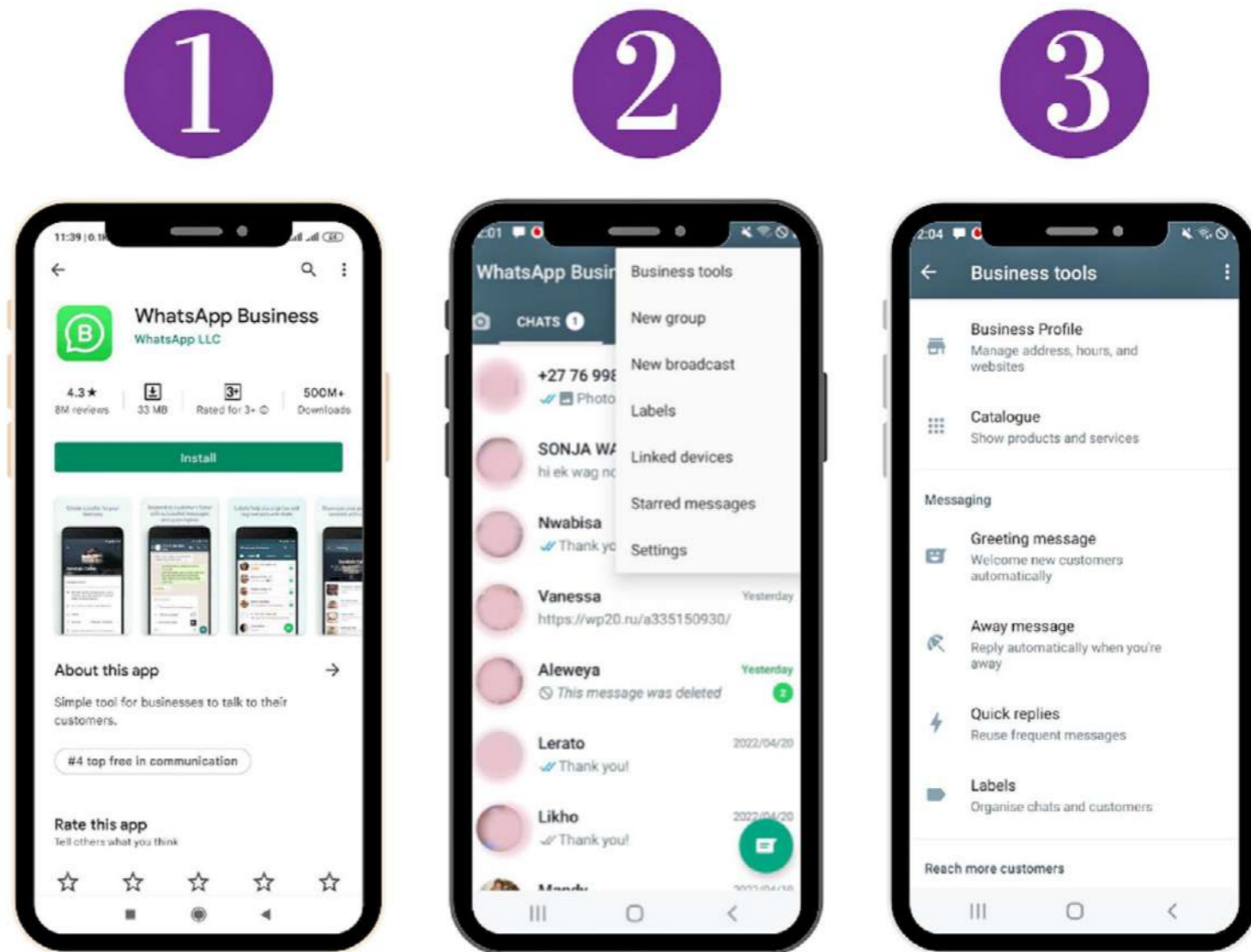
WhatsApp Business is a free tool that you can download and start to use in minutes. You can use it to communicate with your customers, send them your specials and even start selling online.

Here is how to easily get started:

**Step 1. Get a dedicated phone number** and download WhatsApp Business app. Use it on a phone or your laptop (using WhatsApp Web). Make sure to add your logo as a profile picture and to use your store name as your WhatsApp profile name.

**Step 2. Share your WhatsApp number everywhere:** add it on your Facebook page, on your Google Business profile, add it on your promotions leaflet and on your till receipts for example. Make it easy for your customers and potential customers to find it and get in touch with you.

**Step 3. Be reactive and answer all the messages you receive regularly.** Prepare template replies to answer the most common questions you receive (on your opening hours, on prices of best sellers, or on your promotion dates for example).



**Step 4. Ask your contacts to save your WhatsApp number** in their contact list and save their numbers in your contact list. This step is key for you to use the WhatsApp broadcast list feature: it enables you to send a message to over 250 contacts at once. Broadcast messages are the perfect tool to send your specials to your customers.

**Step 5. Create a WhatsApp catalogue** to start selling online and highlighting your best specials.

## Make your store visible on Google by registering on Google My Business

Google is the most visited website worldwide and it is still the default search engine for most Internet users.

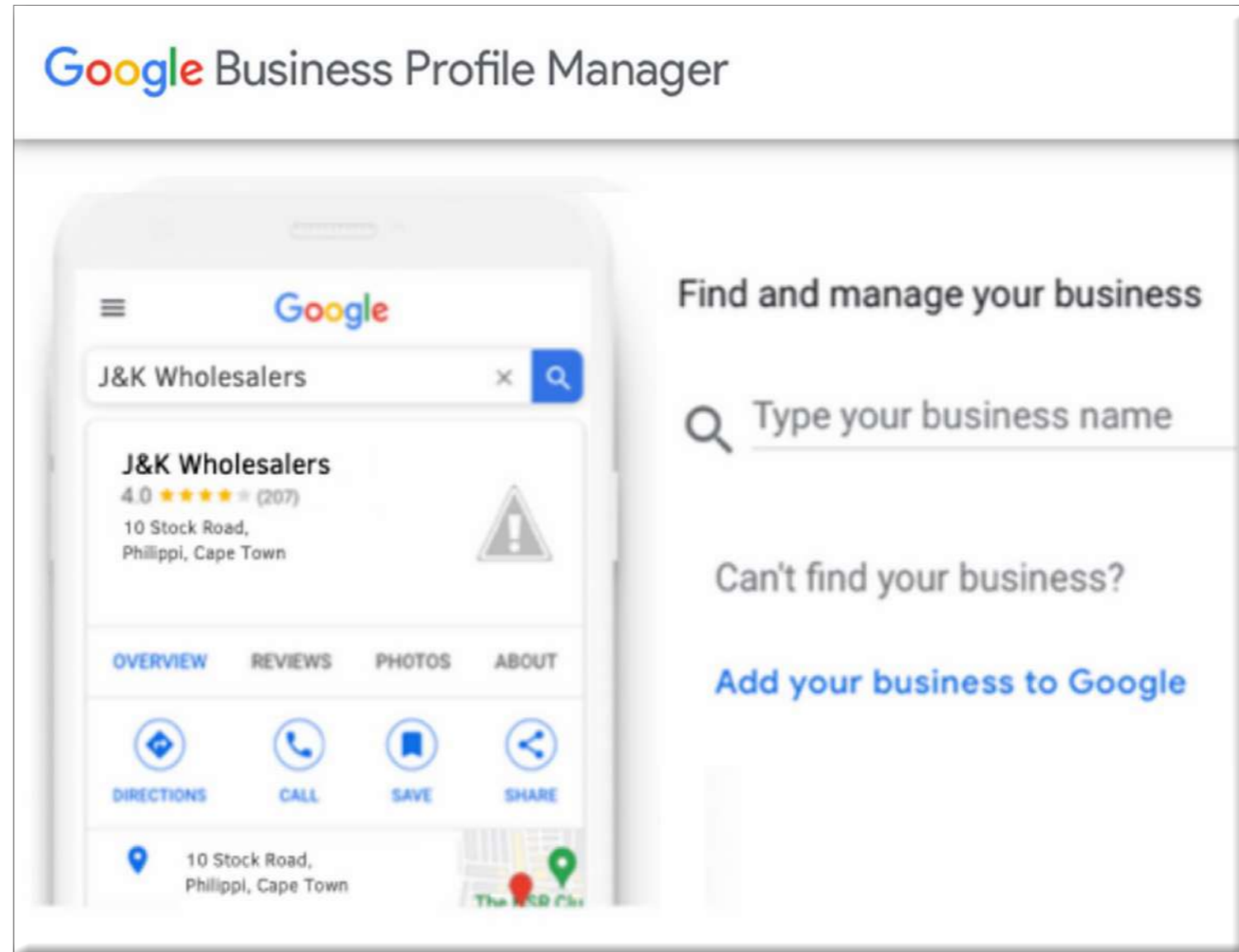
What do your potential customers find when they google the name of your business or when they do a grocery related search in your area? To make sure that your store appears in these search results, you can register your store on Google My Business.

The Google My Business registration is free and only takes a few minutes. Once validated, your business will appear in the local establishments corresponding to the user searches. It will give your business both visibility and credibility. A completed Google My Business account gets four times more clicks to their website (that can be your Facebook page), phone number or directions to the shop.

**Step 1.** To create your account, you will just need a Google email address (a Gmail account). You can use your personal Gmail address or create a specific one for your store.

**Step 2.** Once you're connected to your Gmail address, visit the Google Business Profile Manager (<https://business.google.com/create>). Click on 'Add your Business to Google' and follow the steps. It will only take less than five minutes to finalise your business registration.

And voilà! Your business is now highlighted on all the Google searches that correspond to your activity and location.



**Shop-it** offers turnkey and managed online stores to supermarkets and wholesalers in Africa, as well as digital marketing services to grow your sales.

## Your store is online! Now it is time to build a community

Creating a Facebook page, setting up a WhatsApp Business account and registering your store on Google My Business is free and only takes a few minutes. It already creates tangible value for your business as it increases your visibility and enables you to start building a community of customers.

The next step will be to engage with this community by creating content that they will share with their network, designing online campaigns to attract new customers, and starting selling online. We will deal with these topics in our next article next month. **SR**



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# Increased convenience offered by frozen ready meals

## Rising availability to propel market growth

The global frozen ready meal market is set to witness growth at a CAGR of 8.2% and top a valuation of USD 89.7 Bn by 2032.

In recent years, ready-to-eat food has emerged as one of the most diverse divisions of the worldwide ready-meal market. A rise in convenience patterns, as well as a simultaneous increase in need for customised meal options, has resulted in strong desire for frozen packed meals. The frozen food and beverage industry is perceived as a yet another shop for consumers on the go, with everything from frozen desserts to appetisers and meals available.

Because of its microbiological and fungal-free qualities, frozen ready meals are in high demand in developed countries. Frozen packaged food manufacturers are now incorporating nutrient advantages alongside taste to appeal to a broader clientele seeking health and flavour.

Advances in technology to conserve frozen and partly prepared food, as well as substantial changes in the retail business, all promise positively for market players in the near future. The frozen ready meal industry would be worth more than USD 89.7 billion by 2032.

Frozen convenience meals sold by food supply chain companies remain a major source of income. Convenience stores are expected to extend their



frozen ready meal range in the near future, while online sales will tap into previously undiscovered market opportunities.

In industrialised nations, where demand is higher than in other countries, frozen ready meals are now becoming incredibly common. The spike in the number of individuals working in rising economies such as China and India, and the trend toward longer and more unpredictable working hours, has led in a gradual shift away from the traditional model of daily cooking. Frozen ready meals are likely to grow in popularity in such countries as a result.

Convenience meals are growing in popularity in the packaged food industry due to its easy and portability. Organic convenience foods are also becoming more famous as they are certified natural things that may be used to substitute a full meal and are better than normal ready meals due to component differences.

### Key takeaways from market study

- The frozen ready meal market is expected to expand at CAGRs of 5.4% and 6.2% in US and the Middle East & Africa, respectively, through 2032.
- The European frozen ready meal market is currently pegged at 25.2% share of total market.
- The frozen ready meal industry in Asia – pacific region, except Japan, is predicted to increase at a healthy 4.7 percent.

