

## ELECTRONIC SOLUTIONS

## 'An online communication strategy is crucial'

BY Liesl Venter

In the online jungle, those savvy enough to make the most of the offerings are sure to walk away as kings.

In the sophisticated business world in which we operate, having a website is no longer enough, says Phillippa Fox, marketing and administrative executive of the Railways and Harbours Supply Chain Association.

"Online communication is not just about having a website, but rather an integrated presence and most companies should be investing in an online communication strategy."

Fox says many still shrug off this way of communication as they believe they are not delivering a service or a product to the ordinary citizen. "Every business, regardless what type, should be communicating online and looking at the various options of marketing their businesses via the internet."

She says because many don't realise the importance of this type of communication, websites are often not updated, with the information stale and uninformative.

"Ask yourself the questions – where is my business in the online wilderness? If someone were to search for your business would they need to know your name or would a search engine lead them to you? Essentially it is about where you stand in terms of search engine optimisation, ad sense, banners, Twitter accounts, Facebook or slide share to share presentations."

Fox says these are just a few ways to connect with customers. "Online newsletters are gaining popularity while Skype has made a huge difference, along with instant messaging."

She says it is no longer business as usual as traditional marketing methods have changed. "Getting yourself out there using technology is no longer just another option, but rather a must have."

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