

Publik takes over CyberCellar in deal with Silvertree

Publik will take ownership of online retailer CyberCellar, following the signing of an agreement with current owner Silvertree Holdings. The deal includes investment from Silvertree into the new consolidated Publik wine business.



Pictured from left: Peter Allerstorfer (Silvertree Holdings), David Cope (Publik) and David Nel (Publik)

Silvertree will provide Publik with growth capital for the distribution, wine bar and retail operations as well as access to its resources.

The deal will allow Publik to bring a fresh approach to CyberCellar, South Africa's longest-running e-commerce site and online wine retailer. The consolidated business will aim for significant growth in online retail, a marketplace worth more than R14bn in South Africa and growing at more than 25% annually.

“This deal is beneficial in many ways,” says David Cope from Publik. “The most obvious being how we can bring new energy to the CyberCellar brand, provide a more curated offering to their customer base and build awareness for the quality artisan producers that are making waves in the South African wine industry.”

Silvertree Co-MD Peter Allerstorfer shared this sentiment saying, “This is a great opportunity for two strong brands with

different retail channels in the wine industry to come together, realise synergies and leverage off each other's strengths and expertise, with support from Silvertree."

While online accounts for less than 2% of retail in South Africa (compared to over 19% in global powerhouse China), local growth is expected to increase rapidly as internet and particularly smartphone penetration increases amongst the South African population.

Focused wine selection

Launched in 1998, CyberCellar.com will continue to sell South African wine brands as part of a more focused selection that will provide added exposure for smaller independent producers, a collective Publik has championed since opening its Cape Town wine bar in 2013. Publik has since evolved to include a national distribution operation that works with a portfolio of independent producers.

"The fact that we're growing and evolving is a testament to the quality of the local producers in South Africa," adds Cope. "But also to the growing interest in wine. At the end of the day, we're still doing the same thing we've done since day one at Publik: getting people to support some of the most exciting wine producers in the world. We're just finding more ways to do this."

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