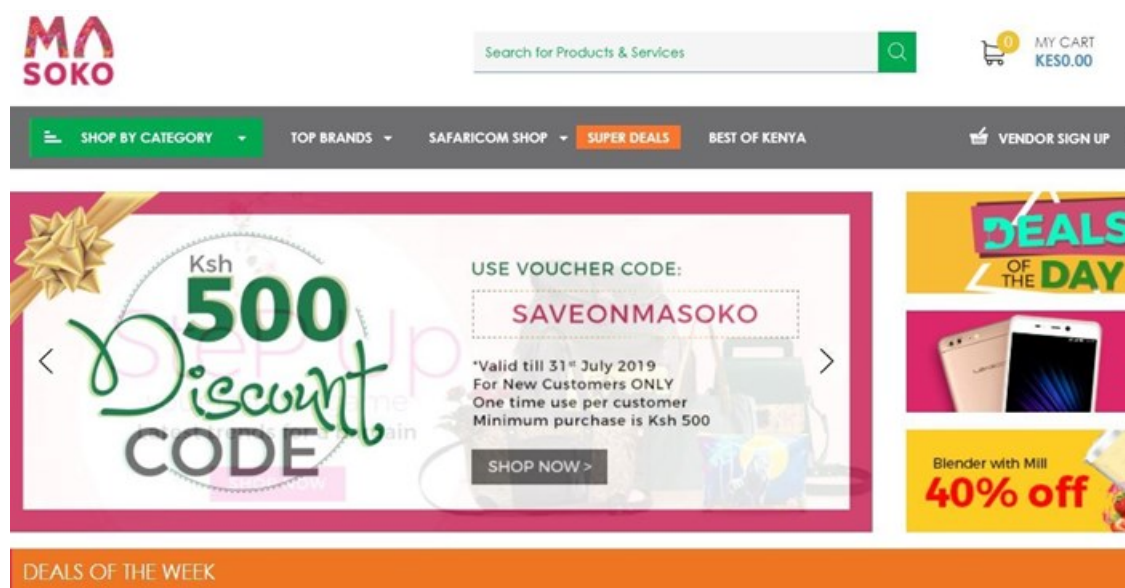


Safaricom to expand e-commerce presence in Southern Africa

By Jenna Cook

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On Wednesday, 17 July 2019, Kenyan telecoms operator Safaricom announced plans to expand e-commerce platform, Masoko, within Southern African by 2020. The announcement was made at the inaugural Afro-Asia FinTech Festival in Kenya.



“As a digital telco, we see endless possibilities for business beyond borders. We are currently reviewing our e-commerce proposition Masoko to ensure that we are positioned ready to take off,” says Safaricom CFO, Sitoyo Lopokoityit.

“Through the mobile phone, and with its penetration in Kenya at 100%, most families have access to at least one mobile phone, making it possible to use these devices as powerful tools for social and economic development.”

According to Lopokoityit, the plans are in line with the expected growth of smartphones saying that by the end of 2020 more than 525 million devices will be in use in Southern Africa. He did not, however, specify which countries the expansion would target first.

Safaricom’s ambition for the Masoko platform is to bring the market to small businesses wherever they are and to give access to opportunities presented by the rapid growth of e-commerce across the globe.

“As a telco, we are purposed to transform lives by investing in technology and knowledge that will widen the reach of the possibilities they have witnessed in the last two decades to reach right across Africa, using that pocket-sized gadget,” added Lopokoityit.

[Last] week’s expansion announcement follows the March partnership with Chinese-run online store AliExpress.com, which alls under the Alibaba Group.

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