

Meet Marko Stavrou, the 18-year-old co-founder of HustlersGlobal and Stavrou Consulting



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa, Marko Stavrou is a fourth-generation Cypriot whose family has had a great influence on the person and business leader he is today. Stavrou started his business career at the tender age of 13 when he sold over 3,000 packages of sweets to his school peers and traded high-end sneakers.



Marko Stavrou is one of Africa's top teenage entrepreneurs, Gen Z speakers, and podcast hosts. Image supplied by Marko Stavrou.

By the age of 15, he was running his very own podcast and was interning for numerous digital marketing companies in the US where he gained an enormous amount of insight and experience. This led him and a high school friend to start his first real company called HustlersGlobal. At 16 Stavrou decided to leave school to pursue his company and business aspirations while completing Cambridge homeschooling.

Now at 18, he's running HustlersGlobal and a consulting company called Stavrou Consulting. Simultaneously, he's studying at the Henley Business School and is currently the youngest person to ever be accepted globally.

"When I first entered the business world as a young aspiring business owner, I felt totally isolated and incompetent. Whenever I attended business events I was the youngest person there and was forced to spend an absurd amount of impractical money on business coaches, masterminds, and courses as I tried to figure out the ropes of building a sustainable company," says Stavrou.

The idea of HustlersGlobal was formed to solve this exact problem Stavrou was personally facing, which is to help young business owners scale their businesses by joining an accessible, affordable and comfortable process and community.

Today, HustlersGlobal is a platform that offers a free content hub where every week through online publication, newsletter, and social media, insightful interviews, articles, and online events are widely shared.

In 2022, HustlersGlobal launched a practical process in the form of a membership that offers both HustlersGlobal's team and external experts to walk with the young entrepreneurs, providing custom strategy sessions, courses, accountability partners, in-person events, masterminds, and opportunities to build strategic partnerships with similarly aged people and level businesses.

"If only we had a few young people five-10 steps ahead of us who could provide real custom steps, guidance, mental support, and connections, we would've succeeded in a far faster, more profitable, and long-term beneficial manner," notes Stavrou.

Challenges of starting a business

On the challenges faced in starting a business, Stavrou says, "Like most beginning-stage entrepreneurs, the two major ones are time and resources. My co-founder and I weren't working a full-time job, for us, high school inhibited our ability to put in the consistent hours of work needed. Which meant everything took twice as long to do."

The content hub went live only eight months in 2022, which cost the young entrepreneur a lot of time, money, and momentum. At one stage, Stavrou was skipping compulsory school hall announcement meetings, to do sales calls and emails in the school bathroom.

"Every day during break we were working in the library to try to fulfil client projects and post content on our publication. Secondly, the company was totally bootstrapped by me and my co-founder with the little money we had both saved up. Which forced us to keep overhead extremely low, building everything ourselves from scratch and unable to put the basic back-end systems, and front-end strategies in place we knew we needed in order to succeed. There's a difference between having an idea and running a real cash-flow-generating business. That transition for us was extremely strenuous."



Image supplied by Marko Stavrou.

2022 was an incredibly momentous year for HustlersGlobal. "It was the first time both my co-founder and I were out of school and working full time on the business. We posted hundreds of pieces of content online, reaching tens of thousands of young entrepreneurs. We hosted our first in-person under 35 event at the new @Sandton Hotel and launched our HustlersGlobal Club membership and service," says Stavrou.

Moving into 2023 and over the next couple of years, the HustlersGlobal team are looking to help over 100+ Gen Z small business owners drastically scale their business, while building one of the largest Gen Z business communities and content hubs in the world.

Notes Stavrou, "Hence the word 'global', we aim to service entrepreneurs internationally, and currently, our publication reaches 30+ different countries worldwide with our content."

Going forward

As a young entrepreneur, Stavrou would love to see more young business owners being showcased and their stories setting a precedent for other aspiring young entrepreneurs.

"As a nation and entrepreneurial economy, we need to break away from having a scarcity mindset and enter an abundant one. Where strategic collaborations are welcomed and we start accelerating the growth of one another through shared ideas, strategies, and resources," he says. Stavrou would also like to see more access to the internet for more people with access to international tools such as Stripe, and access to a greater amount of venture capital.

Stavrou has some words of motivation for aspiring entrepreneurs:

"Take action! Be brave enough to write down your dreams and goals. But be disciplined enough to actually start working on them. Most young people I speak to don't experience any change or momentum in their life because their just talking about what they could possibly do. The world needs people to talk less and take more effective action. Action in small amounts every day, alongside long-term patience and dedication can drastically change yourself and your family's life forever.

"**Build a personal brand.** The greatest decision I ever made was to start building an online personal brand. Initially, this was me just posting podcast interviews and random business quotes. However, I recommend dividing your content into three different categories; learnings from events, and other people's content, educating your audience with practical insights, and lastly sharing your company, and side hustles offerings and indirect services."

Last, but not least, Stavrou makes a point to **master sales**. To move from the idea stage to an actual business, you need sales and revenue. Therefore, spend the first and last hour of every working day doing sales in the beginning stage of growing your business.

To learn more about Marko Stavrou's companies and how you can work with him, connect with him on [LinkedIn](#), or visit the [HustlersGlobal](#) and [Stavrou Consulting](#) websites.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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