

GaliPods ignite entrepreneurship in rural and peri-urban areas

Galito's GaliPods store format is growing consistently, with a planned expansion rate of six per year. Originally launched by the flame-grilled chicken franchise in 2016, GaliPods are stores built inside fully-kitted containers that can be placed anywhere.



Khutsi Debeila in front of her GaliPod located in Apel, Limpopo.

"Primarily located in rural and peri-urban areas, GaliPods bring a well-known brand into these communities who are delighted to be able to access this food service so close to home, but they work well just about anywhere provided there are enough people in the area," Galito's group marketing executive Caitlin Winson.

"We look for sites close to taxi ranks, bus stops, fuel stations or any area with a high volume traffic – feet or vehicles – and we have some shops in the parking area of shopping malls in urban areas where they also perform well," she explains.



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Encouraging entrepreneurship

GaliPod owner Khutsi Debeila is based in Apel, Limpopo, and wanted her savings to grow faster than in the bank and to have an extra income source. "It quickly became a great adventure totally out of my field of work. Working as a cashier, having to use my humble high school accounting education, working hard for myself... the success of the GaliPod unleashed the entrepreneur in me."

When the opportunity arose recently to move her GaliPod to a location with better visibility, Debeila did so at a total revamp cost of R250,000. Despite the tough economic climate, she is looking at a turnover of R300,000 monthly and will have paid back the revamp fees with a year. "If you take care of the GaliPod, it will definitely take care of you," she says.

Every pod employs approximately six local staff members who train at a Galito's store close to them. Debeila says this is one of the reasons she has stayed in the business. "I could have just put all my capital in real estate but being able to lift others' socioeconomic status gives me a great sense of gratitude. I have also become a good role model to the young ones in my village."



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Set-up costs

Winson explains that the average set-up cost for 2020 is R700,000 and monthly turnover varies from R150,000 to R250,000. "If operational costs are kept to a minimum, however, even a lower turnover can still mean a good profit. Rentals can be on family-owned land or leased from local owners, which eliminates high shopping centre rental costs and amenities cost less with lower volumes. It's a good business model."

If the location doesn't work as well as expected, the pod can be moved. Galito's can also buy back the containers to deploy elsewhere should things not work out.

Winson says many of the GaliPod entrepreneurs go on to open either another store or another business altogether after being empowered by owning their own franchise. "It is easier to access funding or loans with a running business concern. A business where the owner is involved generally performs better and our female entrepreneurs seem to thrive in this business, a fact that we are very proud of."

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