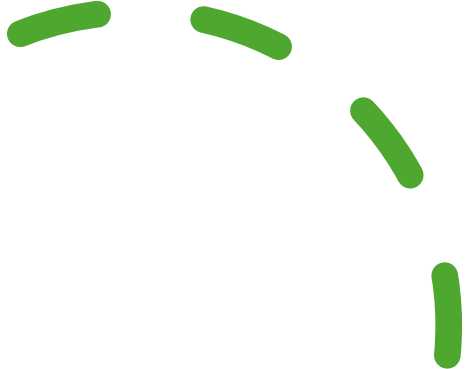


BIG IDEA

Presented by
RETAIL TITANS



Agenda

- 
- 
- INTRODUCTION
 - THREE BOXES SOLUTION
 - BOX 1 MANAGING THE REALITY
 - WEAK SIGNALS
 - BOX 2 SELECTIVELY FORGET THE PAST
 - IMMERSION INSIGHTS AND THEMES
 - WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO SOLVE FOR

Introduction

The Whole and Retail Sector is **evolving** through digital innovation and change & shifting consumer trends.

Growth is happening despite high unemployment & skills gaps.

Retail has **strong potential** for entry-level job absorption however it is not seen or perceived as a viable long-term career .Mason et al (2017)

Retail needs a shift through skills development geared towards jobs of the future .

The Three Box Solution

BOX 1

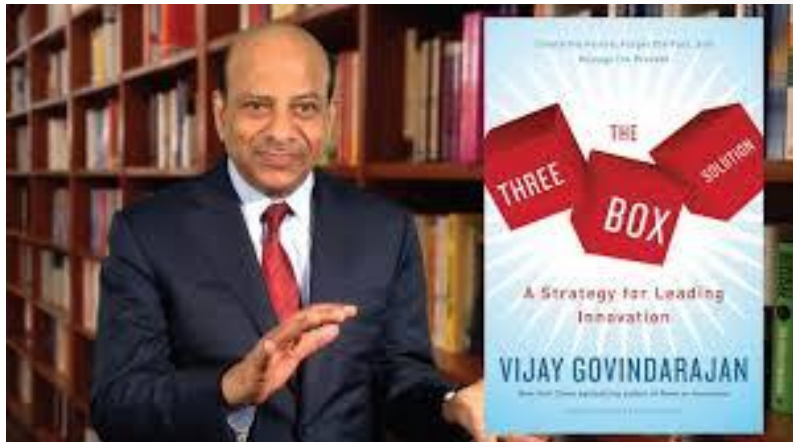
Manage the
Present

BOX 2

Selectively
forget the Past

BOX 3

Create the
Future



A weak signal in this context refers to emergent changes or indicators of future trends that are not yet clear or strong but warrant attention and further investigation.

Box1 Managing the Reality

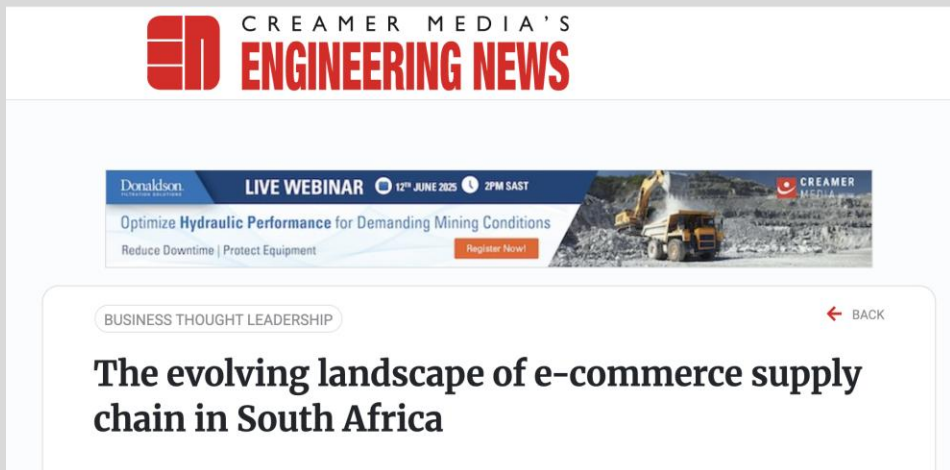


Weak Signals



The 4th Industrial Revolution is Looming...does SA have the skill set?

(Admin, 2021)



(Van Biljon, 2024)

Opinion **The FT View**

The great AI jobs disruption is under way

Automation will reshape tech work, and spark new opportunities

THE EDITORIAL BOARD [+ Add to myFT](#)

(The editorial board, 2025)

2025 Trends | BizTrendsTV | [View newsletter 1](#), [View newsletter 2](#), [Previous years](#)

#BizTrends2025: E-commerce fuels surge in last-mile delivery demand

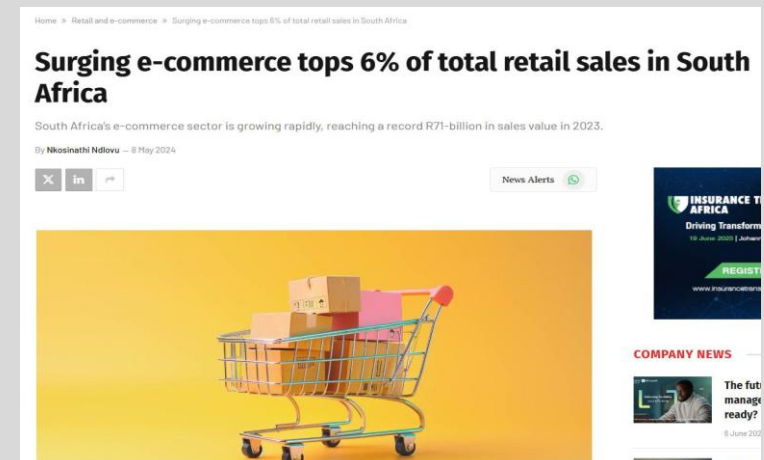
RETAIL TRENDS
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E-commerce has surged in popularity over the past decade, with the Covid-19 pandemic accelerating its growth. Since then, demand has remained strong, driving the need for faster, more efficient last-mile delivery services.

(Velayadum, 2025)



(Ndlovu, 2024)

Box 2 Selectively Forget the Past

Retail as a “Dead-End” Career



- ☐ Entry-level retail jobs are seen as temporary and low-value.
- ☐ Youth lack awareness of long-term career paths in retail.
- ☐ Clear progression plans are missing.
- ☐ A career ladder with training and mentorship is essential.

Skills Mismatch



- ☐ Major gap between in-demand skills and workforce readiness.
- ☐ Rural and informal workers lack training access.
- ☐ Digital exclusion limits rural youth in retail growth areas.

Missed Youth Pathways



- ☐ Youth programmes focus on short-term jobs with no growth.
- ☐ Broader support tools, capital, mentorship is needed.
- ☐ E-commerce offers new careers, but many youth are unaware.

References:

(Broadbridge, 2003)
(Hoteit et al., 2020)
(Liang et al., 2024)

References:

(Ngene et al., 2021)
(Prince, 2003)
(Sanwal et al., 2016)

Immersion Insights



ADDIS ABABA

Exposure to emerging market realities, infrastructure gaps, and community-driven solutions.



DUBAI

Insight into regulatory landscapes, ethical governance, and the interplay between tradition and innovation.



ROME

A fast-paced economy balancing growth with future-forward, sustainability-focused development.

Developed ethical and strategic thinking

Learned to navigate diverse business environments

Strengthened understanding of globalisation's local impact

Gained practical tools for sustainable value creation

Insights – Ethiopia

Local Impact & inclusive growth



YANET

Inclusive supply chain model creates meaningful economic opportunities and **fosters skills development** by integrating local farmers.



UNILEVER

Demonstrated how multinationals can foster sustainable retail development by **investing in inclusive talent pipelines**.



WILLPOWER SOLUTIONS

Highlighted the critical role of **mentorship and hands-on training for youth** in digitally under-served areas.

Insights – Dubai

Tech-enabled technology & innovation



QUIQUP

Illustrated how leadership agility and **investment in people** drive retail transformation.



EMIRATES LOGISTICS

They transformed **entry-level logistics** roles into **skilled digital careers** within the Retail sector



DUBAI COMMERCITY

Is a leading e-commerce zone focused on strengthening the digital economy. They have partnered with key **stakeholders** to launch a dedicated **e-commerce academy**.

Insights – Rome

Structured pathway and aspirational retail



itssix**ellence**
UN PERCORSO IN EVOLUZIONE

ITS EXCELLENCE

Highlighted the **skills mismatch** and the urgent need for **digital literacy** in the retail sector.

CONFIMPRESSE
LE IMPRESE DEL COMMERCIO MODERNO

CONFIMPRESSE

Exemplified how **cross-industry collaboration** can elevate the retail ecosystem.

E A T A L Y

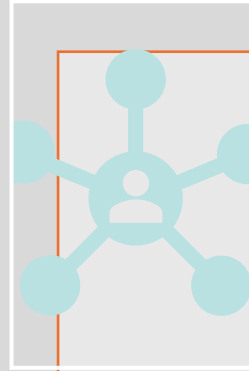
EATALY

Leadership program launched for aspiring leaders focusing on **mentorship and development** plans.

Consolidation : Emerging Themes



Skills Development and Career Pathways - Strong emphasis on upskilling, mentorship, continuous learning, and enabling career progression.



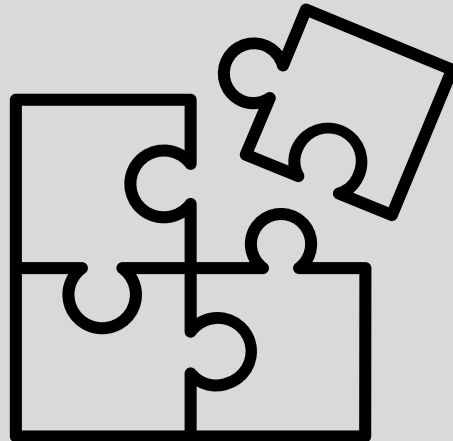
Digital transformation highlights the need for digital literacy in Jobs of the future.



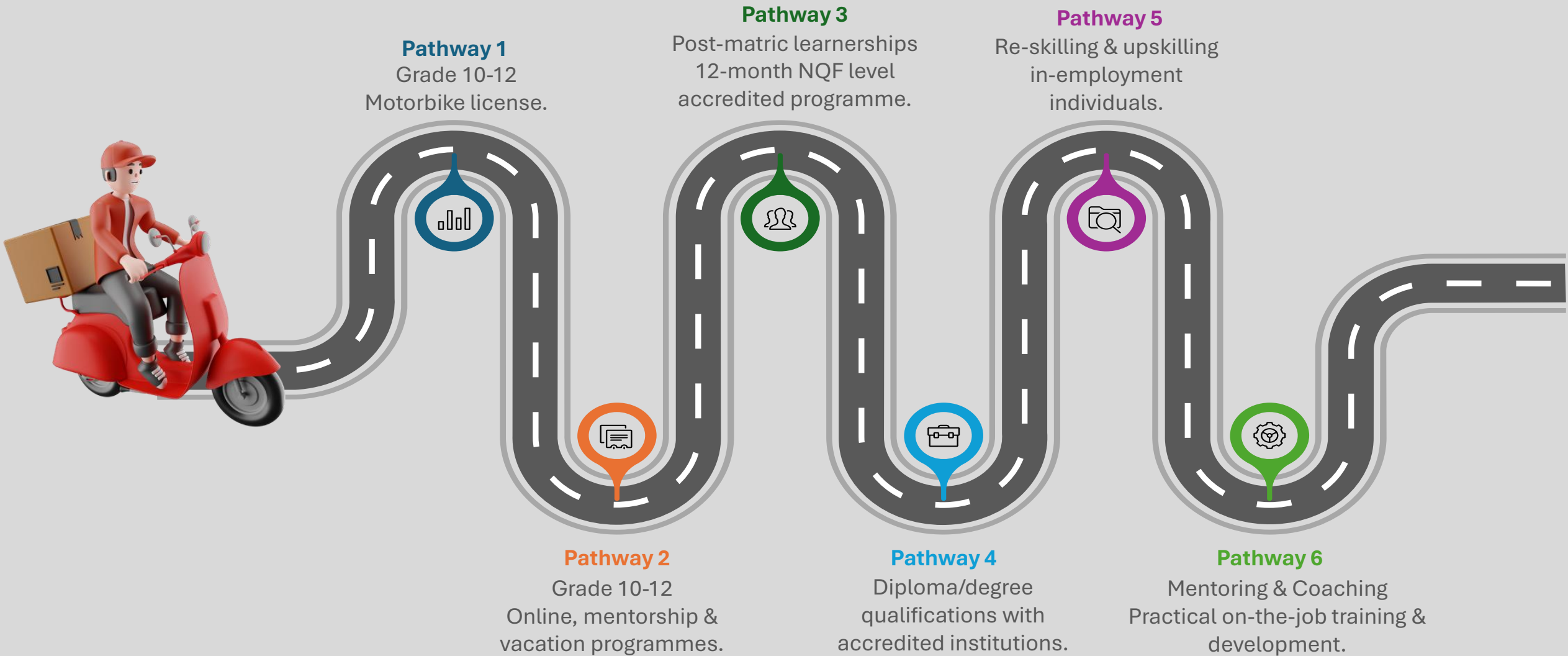
Collaboration and inclusive talent pipelines to strengthen the retail ecosystem.

The Challenge

How can the Wholesale and Retail industry,
through the W&RSETA's intervention,
facilitate skills development for careers of the future?



Box 3 Creating the Future



The Opportunity



- Is in Grade 11
- He's a go-getter
- **Pathway 1:** Attains motorbike riding skills & license
- Becomes a delivery driver after matric
- **Pathway 3:** Post-matric learnership to become a logistics coordinator
- Becomes a logistics coordinator for a retail giant

The Opportunity



- Cashier – several years
- Understands that digital transforming will be here and action is needed
- **Pathway 3:** Attains a digital marketing learnership
- Becomes a digital marketing assistant. Customer service knowledge
- **Pathway 4:** Attains a digital marketing diploma
- Becomes a marketing associate

Box 3 Creating the Future

RETAIL IS EVOLVING – SO MUST OUR WORKFORCE

- **Shifts reshaping retail sector.**
- These shifts demand **new skills, new roles and new mindsets.**

SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

- **The proposed model is not a once-off intervention, it is a scalable system.**
- Starts with accessible entry points (e.g., motorbike delivery).
- Builds toward high-value roles (e.g., logistics manager, AI technician).
- Integrates feedback loops (e.g., learner tracking, employer input).
- Aligns with national infrastructure and digital transformation goals.

ALIGNMENT WITH W&RSETA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **The proposal aligns with 4/7 W&RSETA's strategic priorities**
- Contribution to programmes that will alleviate youth unemployment.
- Addressing Hard-to-Fill Vacancies and critical skills.
- Stakeholder engagement.
- Supporting the national strategies and plans.

It also supports the **National Development Plan, Digital Economy Strategy, and Budget allocations** towards skills and infrastructure advancements

Recommendation

Engage Stakeholders

- Host a multi-stakeholder roundtable
- Include W&RSETA, retailers (e.g., Shoprite, Takealot), DBE, TVETs, NGOs, and youth representatives.
- Define roles, responsibilities, and co-investment opportunities.

Secure Funding & Resources

- Apply for W&R SETA funding for skills development and training
- Align with national strategies (e.g., National Youth Policy, Digital Economy Strategy).
- Leverage the R5B digital infrastructure budget and R61.4B digital skills development fund.

Pilot the Programme

- Select 2–3 provinces with strong retail and logistics activity (e.g., Gauteng, KZN, Western Cape).
- Recruit learners from Grade 10–12 and unemployed youth.
- Implement training through accredited providers and local partners.

Conclusion

- Retail must evolve ,**launchpad for future-ready careers.**
- A **bold transformation** is needed.
 - Digital transformation.
 - Inclusive talent pipelines.
 - National development priorities.
- **Powerful engine** of growth and dignity
- Bold, **Scalable**, and Urgent!!!
- A Revolution in how **talent is developed, valued, and elevated**