

Hi-tech boost to back buy-SA bid

CAMERON ENGLAND



Grant Baker, with Kevin Webb from Spring Gully, is launching a buy-local website. Picture: Naomi Jellicoe



IT will be easier than ever to buy local following the launch of a website.

Spring Gully, Lobethal Road Wines and Kangaroo Island's Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Oil Distillery have already signed up to be part of Borough Markets, which allows anyone from food producers to yoga studios to sell their products online.

By the end of next month, 80 retailers are expected to be signed up to the site, which will be available for public use next week.

But chief executive Grant Baker said the Australian-developed platform provided more than just a marketplace for companies.

It also gave them access to rich data on who was buying their products.

That sort of data was currently used by big retailers, such as Coles and Woolworths, and online giants such as Amazon, to give them an edge, but Mr Baker said small local companies would now be able to have access to similar market insights.

Mr Baker said the platform used machine learning to understand a brand's "perfect customer".

"Borough Markets is all about digital democracy – sharing the power of e-commerce among the little guys who can't afford their own digital platform and in-house expertise to run it," Mr Baker said.

"It's unique because it offers SMEs (small/medium enterprises) online support to sell their products or services ... along with a customised, web-based marketing platform – all backed by marketing and creative teams of real people based in major markets across the country."

Borough Markets, which will initially focus on SA and NSW, is confident it can attract at least 600 SME customers by June.

It is looking to employ up to 18 digital marketing experts and technology specialists in coming weeks. Beloved SA food producer Spring Gully has signed on.

Managing director Kevin Webb said Borough Markets gave them access to tech tools they had not previously used.

"Being such an old, traditional company, we need to move with the times and we're looking at new technology, and how it can drive our business forward," Mr Webb said.

"The Borough Markets platform is going to analyse our business, our sales and our customers in a way that hasn't been done before, and we're going to harness those insights to lift Spring Gully to a new level."