

Share books for free with Tunisian startup YallaRead

 By [Tom Jackson](#)

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Launched in May, Tunisian startup YallaRead has gained quick traction by allowing users to share books for free. The idea behind YallaRead is simple. It is a book-sharing online platform that allows users to exchange books with other users for a limited period of time.



YallaRead

Users add their own books to their virtual library on the website, identify books listed by others to read, and sends an exchange request to the owner. The users can then meet offline to facilitate the exchange.

Sounds simple, but the concept has taken off. The website only went live on May 3, but already has more than 800 subscribers. Chief executive officer (CEO) and co-founder, Ahmed Hadhri, told Disrupt Africa that YallaRead is the first and only book-sharing platform on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

“We launched YallaRead because we witnessed a problem in accessing books, and many barriers to reading,” he said. “These include the expensiveness of books compared to purchasing power in Tunisia, the unavailability of some books, and the absence of Amazon.”

Thanks to YallaRead website, people are no longer obliged to have money to read, and no longer required to visit a bookshop to identify items of interest.

“They become part of a community in which they can exchange ideas and meet people who share with them the same interests,” he said.

A nice idea, but one YallaRead is also looking to monetise through monthly or annual subscriptions over and above its freemium model; advertising space for bookshops, authors and publishers; and commissions from online bookshops for every book bought after borrowing.

The startup is seeking funding, and plans to expand to other MENA countries, such as Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, shortly.

ABOUT TOM JACKSON

Co-founder @DisruptAfrica. Tech and business journalist in Africa. Passionate about the vibrant tech startups scene in Africa, Tom can usually be found sniffing out the continent's most exciting new companies and entrepreneurs, funding rounds and any other developments within the growing ecosystem.

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