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**Jumaiyah Mahathir**  
Co-founder, Halal Food Hunt

Hi, I'm Jumaiyah Mahathir. I co-founded Halal Food Hunt.

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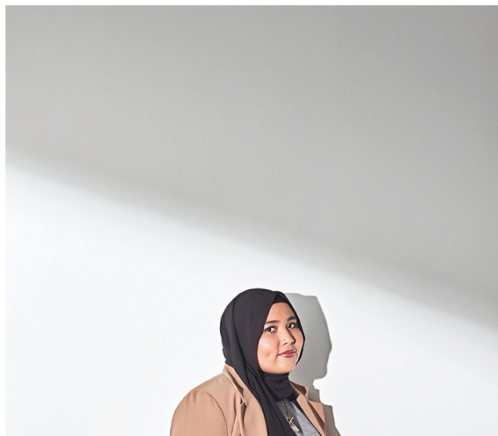
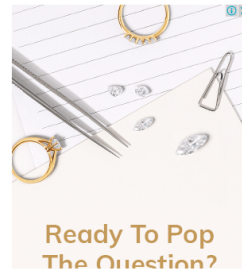
## #HerWorldHerStory: She Successfully Built A Platform For Halal Merchants By Bootstrapping

Jumaiyah Mahathir, co-founder and CEO of Halalfoodhunt talks us through her journey and her advice for startups struggling with funding

BY SANDHYA MAHADEVAN / MARCH 8, 2021

The inspiration to start Halalfoodhunt came from my first job as a halal auditor at Warees Halal Limited, which is part of Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS). My job was to research various ingredients and examine the validity and authenticity of halal certifications. The experience really opened my eyes to the world of halal. It also made me realise that all the information I was privy to was very industry-specific and not available for consumers.

That was the premise we started Halalfoodhunt with in 2014. The objective was to create a safe space where consumers could gain information on the halal versions of foods they love. This allows them to discern for themselves if a certain food is suitable for them, and not depend on the certification as their sole guide.





MAKEUP Angel Gwee  
*Blazer & pants, Violeta by Mango. Top, Koton. Headscarf, Hijabii. Necklace, Mango. Bracelet, stylist's own*

Over the years, we have been able to promote many small Muslim businesses that do not have the means to get a formal halal certification. We make them sign a declaration with us, and also keep complete documentation of their businesses in our system.

This includes home bakers. In fact, they were the first ones who trusted us when we had nothing to show. I remember knocking on their doors and explaining our concept about creating a community for buying and selling for Hari Raya. Seven such bakers agreed to work with us for Hari Raya 2015. Things just snowballed after that. Word spread, and today, we have 49,000 followers. Suffice to say, Halalfoodhunt was built on the backs of home bakers.

Last year, with Covid-19 restrictions, we had many people visiting our portal for their Hari Raya food needs – this in turn helped vendors, who were otherwise struggling, get exposure. We also organised a Sponsor A Family campaign and raised \$100,000, supporting about 247 families that were challenged by the pandemic.

“

*Don't let the roadblocks ahead discourage you.  
Get past them, prove yourself, and be an  
inspiration to the next generation of women  
entrepreneurs.*

”

We've come a long way since 2014. As a woman in a start-up space, it has been challenging to be taken seriously when it comes to funding. We had to bootstrap, and design and build our app all by ourselves. To other women out there who are facing similar challenges, don't let the roadblocks ahead discourage you. Get past them, prove yourself, and be an inspiration for the next generation of women entrepreneurs.

Being in business has also taught me to manage my own expectations about being a mother. I believe that as women and mothers, we need to cut ourselves some slack. Do and be your best – that's more important.

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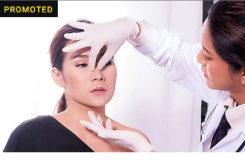
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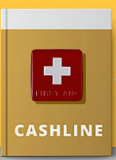


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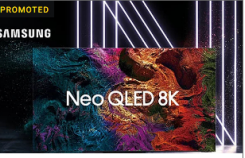
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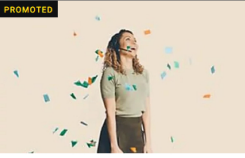
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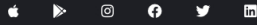
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