CHEAPER THAN OPENING A SHOP

Ms Sarah Yip started a business selling Singapore-made messenger bags with $50,000 of her savings.

Because the bulk of the money went into hiring designers and artists to produce the bags, setting up a shop to sell them was never an option.

Instead, the former foreign-exchange sales officer set aside $4,000 to pay a Web designer to create the Slow Loris website (www.slow-loris.com) to showcase her bags, which are priced from $182.40.

“Going online is a relatively cheap and efficient way to introduce a new brand, and is more practical and affordable,” said Ms Yip, 26, who started her company in 2007.

Still, she understood the need to have a retail presence and approached retailers like Anthropology in Raffles City Shopping Centre. “We see customers checking out the quality in stores and returning ones would visit the website to purchase new designs. They are complementary and help to boost sales for each other.”

Her bags are also available at 77th Street in Tampines Mall, The Heeren and Far East Plaza, as well as Page One in VivoCity.

Last October, she got $50,000 from Spring Singapore’s YES! Startup and is now rolling out a new collection and sourcing for overseas distribution.

But chances are, she will never consider setting up a boutique for her bags.

“The cost of retailing your products is higher compared to just selling online.”