NIGERIA'S NO. 1 BRAND & MARKETING MAGAZINE

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Issue 75

SPECIAL REPORT

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SPECIAL FEATURE

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Nigeria: Rising Beyond Gloomy Times



October is always a special month for every Nigerian. At the stroke of midnight October 1, Nigeria clocked 61, marking a year plus six decades of its independence. Rather than celebrate a country coming out of the 'woes' of colonialism, it seems as though Nigeria and Nigerians are stuck in a ditch of despondency; a level of despondency akin to the one captured by Lenrie Peters in his poem, "The Panic of Growing Older."

Taking a close examination, 61has become an age of anxiety, with most steps of Nigeria's socioeconomic progress painting a picture of a nation in great distress. Nigeria's economy has been largely stagnant, growing at less than 1% cumulatively during the past six years, far below the population growth of over 3.6%. It also has about 40% of the population of over 200 million living below the poverty line.

The fact that the country is equally beset by security and political challenges does not ease the despondency. Boko Haram insurgents still operate in the North-East. In the North-West, bandits are overwhelming the security forces. In North-Central Nigeria, deadly clashes between farmers and herders continue. And separatist and irredentist agitations resonate in the South-East and the South-West of the country. This myriad of unnerving socio-economic and security challenges has made October 1 a day for retrospection rather than celebration. Viewpoint, the column on the last page of the publication anchored by our Editor delves retrospectively into attempts made to create a respectable country brand out of Nigeria.

Regrettably, the Integrated Marketing Communication Industry in Nigeria is also not invulnerable to the boomerang effect of what is happening to the polity. For one, it is always the worst hit as the marketing department has always been the first to receive the hammer when it comes to cutting budget. Worst still, the COVID-19 pandemic which swept across the global landscape like a colossus doubly ensured that the industry has had more than a fair share of challenges to contend with. Despite all these, the industry has survived and even thrived through the years.

So, it becomes an interesting coincidence at this period of retrospection, to celebrate and spotlight brands and agencies that have risen above the gloom of the times and the challenges of the present economy to build an industry worthy of commendation. From Fintech players, top notch sponsors of BBNaija and many others players in the economy we have featured diverse sectors of the economy to your reading delight in this bumper independent month edition.

A careful observer will readily note that the terms 'gloom' and 'boom' were "borrowed" from AAAN's AGM/Congress theme for this year.

In a series that began with the experiential subsector of the industry in our last edition, we beam the spot light on top creative agencies in the Nigerian market that have risen above the challenges posed by the present economic environment.

It is exciting that we a good number of agencies we can X-ray the level of influence they have been able to exert in their space as well as brands in their portfolio. From an initial shortlist of a sizeable number of agencies, we further pruned down the current list using such criteria as agency billing, global impact, core operational values and philosophies, and quality of clientele to arrive at the top agencies we beamed the spotlight on in this edition.

There is a special segment in this publication no advertiser and agency can afford to ignore. It is our special focus on the new Advertising Industry Standard of Practice (AISOP). APCON is strongly maintaining her focus on the vision of promoting responsible and ethical advertising practice, as the conscience of society in matters of commercial communications, and as a watchdog for consumers

Asides the above, this edition also specially focuses on the just concluded Big Brother Naija 'Shine Yas Eye' Season 6 edition. We spotlighted top brands that took part in Africa's biggest reality TV show, highlighted their activities within the Big Brother House, looked at their engagement with the consumer and evaluated their overall performance.

Also in this edition are our regular pages-Brand News, Industry Watch and Global Ad News. On the lighter side, we featured the sensationally curvy comedienne, Datwarripikin on out Celebrity Profile Page. By the way, did you know that she attempted suicide and landed in the hospital in 2018? We also serve you the juicy news making the headlines as far as entertainment is concerned on our Brandtainment page. Also get to find out who has moved from what organisation to the next in our 'People on the Move' page, get the best of CSR reports as well as our regular brand, industry and foreign stories.

All these and much more have been packaged for your memorable reading delight in this bumper edition.

Happy reading!

Joshua Ajayi
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief



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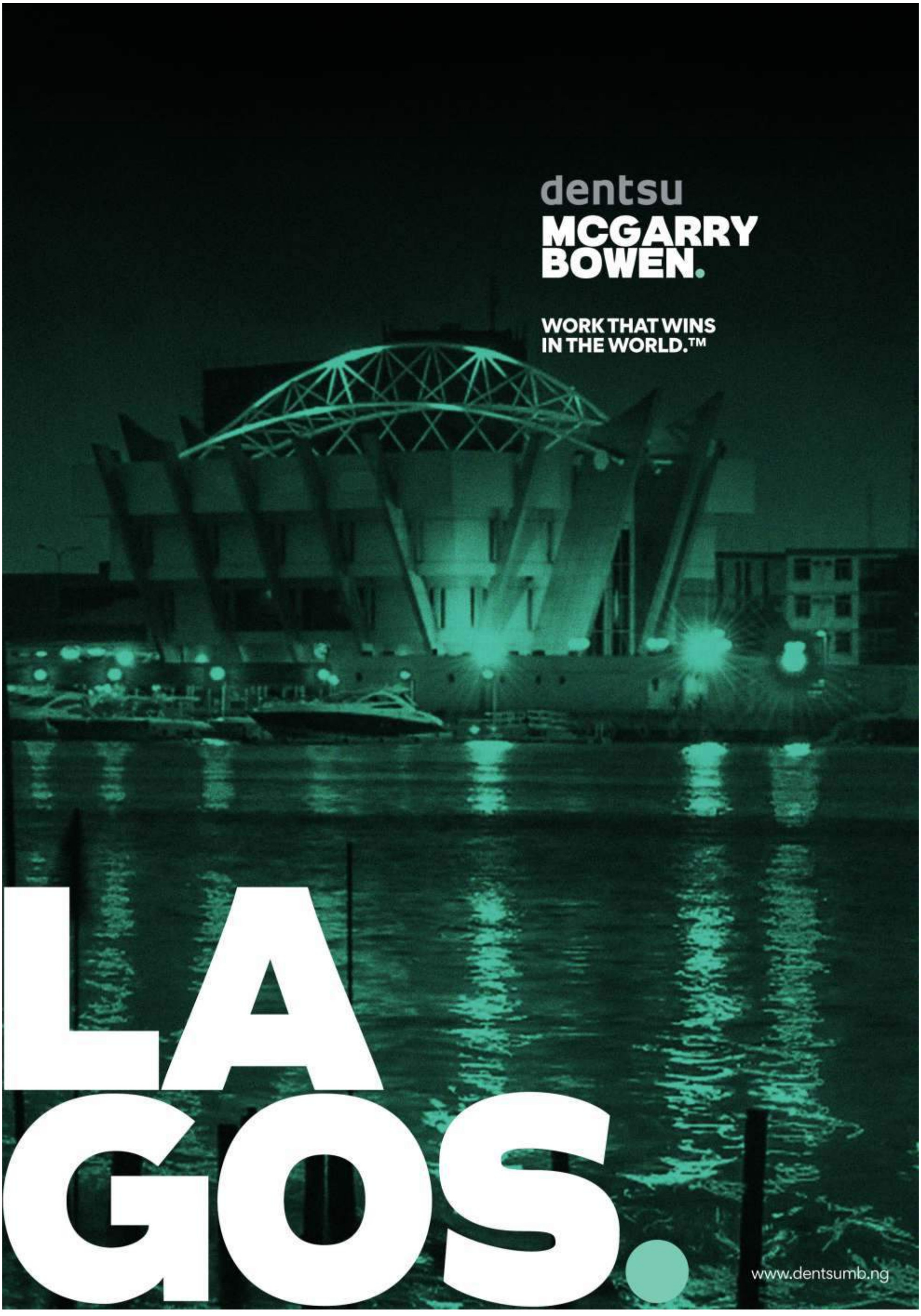
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Brand Communicator
is published monthly by
Awesome Communications

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Access Bank Launches Campaign On E-Banking Fraud



Access Bank Plc has launched a campaign to sensitise customers on measures they can take to protect themselves from e-banking fraud.

The campaign, themed 'Banks don't ask', focuses on three key activities that account for most fraud incidents in Nigeria, phishing, SIM card fraud, Automated Teller Machine (ATM) fraud and Point of Sale (POS) fraud.

From all indications, the rates of phishing, SIM card fraud, ATM fraud and POS fraud has tripled in the past few years.

Also, the sophistication with which these activities are carried out has evolved, resulting in unsuspecting customers being highly susceptible to these criminal activities.

Access Bank's Executive Director Retail Banking, Victor Etuokwu, stated: "In the past few years, there has been a significant increase in the rate of internet-based and technology-perpetrated fraud.

"We want to ensure that our customers are not only protected but are also aware of the tactics employed by fraudsters. Access Bank will never request for personal banking information such as your 16-digit card number, password, Personal Identity Number, Bank Verification Number, Card Verification Value/Code (CVV) or One-Time Password (OTP). So, customers are advised to never share this information with anyone even if they claim to be from the bank".

MABISCO Receives SON's MANCAP Certification



MABISCO team members (on red) receiving the MANCAP Certification from SON officials.

Mayor Biscuit Company (MABISCO) Limited, a world-class Nigerian confectionaries and foods company that produces, markets and distributes freshly baked biscuits across Nigeria, has received the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON's) Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme (MANCAP) certificate for producing goods that meet set standards of quality.

MANCAP introduced by SON in 2006, is a mandatory product certification scheme designed to ensure that locally manufactured products meet the relevant quality standards. The award of the certification is usually a culmination of a series of regulatory inspections conducted by SON, including a production facility tour, on-line sample collection, on the spot analysis of samples collected during inspection to check compliance to SON standards.

Other aspects of monitoring visits before the awarding of the certificate include, compliance to Good Manufacturing Practices within the production environment, as well as the availability of relevant food safety regulatory documentation of SON processes, which are sighted on inspection, and taken with records.

A statement from MABISCO revealed that the receipt of MANCAP certification from SON is a confirmation to the fact that MABISCO as a company produces truly Nigerian biscuits for Nigerians at the topmost quality.

The Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme is a useful Government requirement for both exporters and importers. The product certification scheme was implemented by SON since 2006.

Harpic Collaborates with FG, Lagos State to Celebrate 2021 World Toilet Day, Donates Toilets to Lagos Communities



L-R: Engr. Sulaimon Hussein Adamu, Honourable Minister of Water Resources; Cassandra Uzo-Ogbugh, External Communications and Partnership Lead, Reckitt, Sub-Saharan Africa; Engr. Hassan Musa, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Environment and Mr. Tanzim Rezwan, Marketing Director, Reckitt Sub Saharan Africa at the 2021 World Toilet Day Commemoration event in Abuja.

Harpic, Nigeria's leading toilet cleaning brand manufactured by Reckitt has celebrated the 2021 World Toilet Day with a joint commemorative event in partnership with the Federal Ministries of Water Resources and Environment, and the Lagos State Ministry of Environment with the refurbishment of five public toilets which were donated to different communities in Lagos State.

World Toilet Day is an official United Nations global observance day celebrated annually on 19 November to inspire action to tackle the global sanitation crisis. The theme for 2021, 'Valuing Toilets' is aimed at drawing attention to the fact that "toilets, and the sanitation systems that support them, are underfunded, poorly managed or neglected in many parts of the world, with devastating consequences for health, economics, and the environment".

The United Nations states that 3.6 billion people worldwide do not have a toilet and this has increased the global hazard of open defecation, with an estimated 46 million people still practicing open defecation in Nigeria. The danger of open defecation also greatly affects various economies, with the economic impact of poor sanitation in Nigeria, estimated at N455 billion lost annually.

The Toilet refurbishment and product donation by Harpic is in line with its brand's purpose which is to help Nigerians get access to hygienically clean toilets. The newly refurbished public toilets are located at Lagos Island, Mushin, Bariga/ Iyana Oworo, Iyana Ipaja, and Iyana Isolo within Lagos State.

Speaking on the donations, Marketing Director, Reckitt Sub Saharan Africa, Mr. Tanzim Rezwan stated that "When some people in a community do not have safe toilets, everyone's health is threatened. Poor sanitation contaminates drinking-water sources, rivers, beaches, and food crops, spreading deadly diseases among the wider population. It has been said that eliminating open defecation can be done by changing social behaviour and building basic and well-managed sanitation systems in poor communities. Over the years, Harpic has been a champion in providing access to hygienic sanitation solutions in Nigeria, and it is the reason our communication has been on education on the importance of toilet hygiene and sanitation to drive behavioural change.

He continued, "It is our aim that the toilet refurbishment will impact the lives of people and the environment in the community. It is also about taking action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030. We appeal to the communities where these toilets are situated to preserve and look after the toilets because it relates to their health".

Speaking at the 2021 World Toilet Day commemoration event in Abuja in collaboration with Reckitt and other key stakeholders, the Honourable Minister of State for Environment, Chief Sharon Ikeazor, represented by the Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Engr. Hassan Musa commended the effort of the private sector in the provision of toilet facilities across the country. He further challenged them to do more to prevent diseases that come with open defecation.

Also in his keynote address, the Honourable Minister of Water Resources, Engr. Sulaimon Hussein Adamu highlighted the progress recorded so far in the 'Clean Nigeria: Use the Toilet Campaign.' He appreciated development partners and asked them to continue to strengthen the collaboration with the government to ensure Nigeria is Open Defecation Free (ODF) by 2025 or before.

Also speaking in his address during the world toilet day and toilet commissioning event in Lagos, the Honourable Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Mr. Tunji Bello, represented by the Special Adviser, Drainage And Water Resources, Engr. Joe Igbokwe, applauded Reckitt for it's continued for its continued collaboration with the state government. "Ladies and gentlemen, as we commemorate this day, I want to thank our main sponsor, Reckitt for its continued collaboration with the state government on this annual event and also other partners for their support." He said.

Over the past 5 years, Reckitt through its Harpic brand has taken the responsibility of driving awareness on hygienic toilets through the Door to Door program that educates consumers on the need for proper sanitation, training them on how to ensure a clean hygienic toilet and has also driven access to the products by selling it at a discount, in addition, they have also donated over 150 public toilet units to communities in Nigeria as a commitment to driving safe sanitation awareness.



John Ugbe, CEO, MultiChoice Nigeria

MultiChoice Unveils New Offerings, Shows Ahead Of Festive Season

MultiChoice Nigeria has unveiled a lineup of new shows, series and other content offerings coming to its DStv, GOtv and Showmax platforms ahead of the festive season and well into 2022. The content unveil was done at the 2021 MultiChoice Showcase event which took place on Thursday, 21 October 2021.

MultiChoice Nigeria's Executive Head, Content and West Africa Channels, Busola Tejumola who spoke at the event alongside other company executives and partner channels' managers, talked about the new shows coming to Africa Magic Showcase, Urban and Family, and those coming to Akwaaba Magic throughout the rest of the year and the first quarter of 2022. She also shared there will be a channel that will showcase live festivals and events across West Africa.

Existing shows and series like 'Turn Up Friday', 'Owambe Saturday', 'Music Buzz', 'Unmarried', 'Date My Family', 'Judging Matters', 'Shoot Your Shot', 'Love Come Back', 'The Flatmates', 'The Johnsons', 'My Siblings and I', and more will return with new seasons. On the other hand, brand new shows, 'Movement Japa', which will air on Africa Magic Showcase and 'Rishante', which will air on Africa Magic Urban, will both premiere in November 2021.

In addition, brand new shows are coming to MultiChoice's on-demand video platform, Showmax, this month and early next year. The first Nigerian-produced comedy series on Showmax, 'Ghana Jollof', will premiere on Friday, 22 October 2021, while 'The Real Housewives of Lagos' will premiere in January 2022. 'The Africa Magic Viewers Choice Awards' will also return next year.

Rashineh Ifoh, Lead Content, Pop Central TV, also talked about new shows coming to the channel this year and early 2022. He broke their top offerings into six shows, including a discussion show, reality series, and other formats. One of them, 'The Rush', speaks about the 'testament of the reality of winning, where the finalist walks away with N15 million.' They also have a show featuring former Big Brother Naija couples – BamTeddy called 'Uncut With BamTeddy'. Their other shows include 'Phenomen-ally', 'Another Angle', 'Story Africa', and 'Side Men'.


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FrieslandCampina Celebrates 150 Years of Operations

FrieslandCampina is celebrating its 150 years of operations of producing nutritional products across the world.

In Nigeria, the company is known as FrieslandCampina WAMCO Nigeria Plc and it is the country's foremost dairy company and an affiliate of RoyalFrieslandCampina of the Netherlands. The entity is one of the largest dairy cooperatives in the world, a well-known milk brands with many extensions that have become household names namely: Peak, Three Crowns, Coast, Olympic, Nunu among others.

The company held a glamourous event in Nigeria to commemorate the milestone.

With great excitement, the company declared; "FrieslandCampina celebrates its 150th anniversary! For the past 150 years, we have managed the entire chain. From the grass the cows eat to delivering dairy products allover the world. As part of our 150th anniversary celebrations, we will be sharing stories of the people making it all possible," .

Congratulatory messages poured in from friendly organizations and well-wishers. One of such was from X3M Ideas, a frontline advertising agency, "We join FrieslandCampina Wamco,



markers of Peak Milk in celebrating 15 decades of innovation and quality from grass to glass. Cheers to 150 more years of global nourishment."

Noteworthy, The FrieslandCampina cooperative was established in 1871. That year, 20 enterprising farmers from Hollandsche Wieringerwaard region in the province of North Holland took a decision to join forces to deliver better nutrition.

150 years later, the brand has delivered dairy based products to nourish families all over the world. Today, there are 17,000 farmers and 11,000 farms all over Europe, Asia and Africa. Every day, as a Cooperative partnering and collaborating with passionate professionals in 38 markets (across the world, it is living the dream and holding on to the pledge made by the 20 farmers a century and a half ago.

The company also remains committed to Nourishing Nigerian Children with Quality Specialised Nutrition Dairy Products.

In recent times, one of the company's laudable initiatives is the Dairy Development Programme (DDP). The success of the initiative is a testament to FrieslandCampina WAMCO's sustainable business approach. Long before the Central Bank of Nigeria initiated the backward integration project to support and promote local dairy content, FrieslandCampina WAMCO was already at the forefront, working with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for the local sourcing of milk.

Glo TV Unveiled, Set To Redefine Television Viewing

In a bold step to redefine television viewing experience for all Nigerians, Globacom has announced the launch of Glo TV, an innovative TV streaming service for watching live linear TV, Video on Demand and catch-up contents.

The service which is powered by the reliable Glo 4G technology and is accessible through Android, IOS and web platforms was launched at the company's headquarters in Lagos recently.

Globacom said that Glo TV will positively alter the television landscape in Nigeria as it will stream highly sought-after television content to millions of subscribers via their desktop and mobile handheld devices.

According to the company, "Glo TV brings engaging, interactive and premium entertainment content through a rich bouquet of offerings including hundreds of live entertainment programmes, music, documentary, news, original shows, fashion, lifestyle, kiddies' interest channels and over 1,000 videos as the company



Senior Manager, Events, Globacom, Sola Mogaji (left); Head of Tertiary Institutions Data Sales, Osagie Esangbedo; Senior Manager, Events/Special Project, Jumobi Mofe-Damijo, and Head, Web Sales, Ugochukwu Ibe, when Globacom unveiled Glo TV, an innovative television streaming service in Lagos…recently.

continues to partner with content providers to address the needs of more customers across social strata".

Globacom expressed excitement and confidence over the roll-out of the service, stating that, "with the launch of Glo TV, our network will cater to the content preferences of Nigerians across different socio-economic groups and offer them an exclusive opportunity to experience best-in-class TV content."

For instance, subscribers who are news lovers and want to follow international news as it breaks can catch up with news-on-the-go channels including Aljazeera and France24, while subscribers who have interest in documentary channels can watch CGTN and RT Documentary, among many others.

Children's interests are also well taken care of by Glo TV. Regular kiddies' channels such as ZooMOO, English Club TV and Lollykids are on offer to give healthy entertainment and robust education to children of all ages. This will ensure that they are not only acquiring new knowledge, but that they are also adequately entertained in line with the best practices of television viewership.

Subscribers of all ages will have access to movie channels including Nolly Africa, African Movie Channel and Legacy Network, among others. Glo TV will also offer exclusive content and premiers to the delight of its viewers. All they are required to do is visit myglotv.com to register and download the Glo TV app free of charge till September 30th, 2021.

Facebook Evolves To New Corporate 'Meta' Identity

Social networking giant Facebook, Inc. (FB) has announced that, as of Oct. 28, 2021, its parent company has been renamed and rebranded as Meta. According to CEO Mark Zuckerberg, the new name is supposed to reflect the company's ambitions to be a leading player in the metaverse, which he says will be the future of the internet.

Zuckerberg says that he has been thinking about changing his company's name since acquiring Instagram and WhatsApp in 2012 and 2014, respectively, but he finally decided to make the change earlier in 2021. "I think we're basically moving from being Facebook first as a company to being metaverse first," he had hinted earlier.

According to a press release by the company made available to Brand Communicator, at the Facebook's Connect 2021 conference held earlier today, CEO Mark Zuckerberg introduced Meta, which he says, "brings together our apps and technologies under one new company brand. Meta's focus will be to bring the metaverse to life and help people connect, find communities and grow businesses.

"The metaverse will feel like a hybrid of today's online social experiences, sometimes expanded into three dimensions or projected into the physical world. It will let you share immersive experiences with other people even when you can't be together — and do things together you couldn't do in the physical world. It's the next evolution in a long line of social technologies, and it's ushering in a new chapter for our company," Mark shared more about this vision in a founder's letter.

"I'm proud of what we've built so far, and I'm excited about what comes next — as we move beyond what's possible today, beyond the



Mark Zuckerberg, Co-founder and CEO of Meta Platforms

constraints of screens, beyond the limits of distance and physics, and towards a future where everyone can be present with each other, create new opportunities and experience new things. It is a future that is beyond anyone company and that will be made by all of us.

"Right now, our brand is so tightly linked to one product that it can't possibly represent everything that we're doing today, let alone in the future. Over time, I hope that we are seen as a metaverse company, and I want to anchor our work and identity on what we're building toward," Mark said.

Facebook reportedly has been investing heavily into building a metaverse, which can be described as an expansive, immersive vision of the internet. Its investment in such development work is estimated to be at least $10 billion in 2021 alone. Part of the project is supposed to include introducing a unified account system that will include all the company's social apps, the Oculus Quest headset, Portal, and future devices.

Accompanying the announcement, Zuckerberg released a detailed letter. Highlights of his comments on the metaverse is captured thus: "The next platform will be even more immersive—an embodied internet where you're in the experience, not just looking at it. We call this the metaverse, and it will touch every product we build.

"The defining quality of the metaverse will be a feeling of presence—like you are right there with another person or in another place."

"In the metaverse, you'll be able to do almost anything you can imagine—get together with friends and family, work, learn, play, shop, create—as well as completely new experiences that don't really fit how we think about computers or phones today."

"In this future, you will be able to teleport instantly as a hologram to be at the office without a commute, at a concert with friends, or in your parents' living room to catch up."

"Your TV, your perfect work setup with multiple monitors, your board games and more—instead of physical things assembled in factories, they'll be holograms designed by creators around the world."

"You'll move across these experiences on different devices—augmented reality glasses to stay present in the physical world, virtual reality to be fully immersed, and phones and computers to jump in from existing platforms."

"From now on, we will be metaverse-first, not Facebook-first. That means that over time you won't need a Facebook account to use our other services."

"Our hope is that within the next decade, the metaverse will reach a billion people, host hundreds of billions of dollars of digital commerce, and support jobs for millions of creators and developers."

Zuckerberg's letter also has a section bearing the title, "Our Role and Responsibility." Highlights are quoted below.

"The metaverse will not be created by one company."

"Our role in this journey is to accelerate the development of the fundamental technologies, social platforms and creative tools to bring the metaverse to life, and to weave these technologies through our social media apps."

"As I wrote in our original founder's letter: 'we don't build services to make money; we make money to build better services.'"

"The last five years have been humbling for me and our company in many ways. One of the main lessons I've learned is that building products people love isn't enough."

"Privacy and safety need to be built into the metaverse from day one. So do open standards and interoperability. This will require not just novel technical work—like supporting crypto and NFT projects in the community—but also new forms of governance."


The Future Belongs To The Curious
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X3M Ideas' 'Suicide Note' Clinches Gold At Luum Awards

African creative powerhouse, X3M Ideas has once again, placed Nigeria's name on the global creative stage, having won Gold Medal at the prestigious Luum Awards held recently. The agency which is one of the few agencies on the continent that had a good showing at Luum Awards received the Gold for its work 'Suicide Note' created for the Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative (MANI).

The campaign was created with the objective to help people dealing with mental health issues in Nigeria.

Taking to his social media pages to write on the award, Steve Babaeko, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Creative Officer of X3m Ideas noted, "#Advertising is a powerful tool and with that power comes the responsibility to use it for good and to create positive social change.

"Congratulations to the amazing team @x3mideas and our partner in progress @mentallyawareng we did it!"

For years, X3M Ideas has been churning out global-award-winning social impact works that have had wide-reaching impacts globally. The agency is also the force behind the viral groundbreaking Nirvana Water 'Headline of Innocence' campaign that broke out at this year's International Children's Day campaign. The campaign which has been featured on the prestigious 'Ads of the World' and 'AdForum' has generated so much talk and traction for passing a sensitive message in a simple but very effective manner.

Just last year, the trailblazing agency, won bronze at the Lisbon Advertising Festival for its International Women's Day press campaign, 'Make History Equal For Women.' X3m Ideas was the only African agency to win an award at the festival and one of the 17 bronze winners in the international competition. The bronze-winning work 'Make History Equal For Women' was selected as one of the 62 ads from across the globe for the 2020 Great Ads For Good Exhibition; and has been celebrated lots of times in the advertising community.

The agency also scored three finalist entries which included 'Mum Hotline' – its breath-taking integrated campaign for Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative (MANI) and 'Forgiven' – X3M's widely acclaimed social media campaign for Easter, all selected by an executive jury consisting of high profile, global creative leaders such as David Kolbusz, the Chief Creative Officer of Droga5.



In 2018, the agency's self-sponsored anti-depression social service advertising tagged 'Look Beyond', done in support of Lagos State's effort at fighting the sudden increase in the rate of suicides in the country, also won a remarkable grand Cristal at the prestigious Cristal Awards held in Marrakesh, Morocco.

The campaign, which featured a series of ads, including online film, is one of the agency's deliberate attempts to be a social contributor and dependable voice in supporting the Lagos State Government to ensure a safe society for all. The campaign, which won a Grand Cristal, an equivalent of a Grand Prix in the social/CSR category, was a major voice that permeated the social media, youth-focused TV channels to drum up support for the Lagos State government's battle cry against suicides in the state and the country at large.

I'll Support LAIF, Other Marketing Communications Programmes in Lagos - Sanwo-Olu



Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Governor, Lagos State

The Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu has pledged full commitment to the expansion of the Lagos Advertising & Ideas Festival (LAIF) and other Marketing Communications projects that can project the Lagos brand in a strong and positive light.

The Governor said this when he was awarded the Political Brand Icon of the Year Award by the Board of Marketing Edge magazine, a brand and marketing publication in Nigeria.

The Award ceremony took place last Friday at D'podium International Event Centre, Ikeja, Lagos.

Speaking at the event, Governor Sanwo-Olu said, "I know about LAIF Awards; for adding Lagos to the name of the festival, we will support it and make it even bigger to expand and showcase the pride of Lagos. We will equally support other noble programmes in your industry that can project the Lagos brand to the rest of the world"

LAIF Awards is an annual recognition event and festival organized by the Advertising Agencies Association of Nigeria (AAAN). In recent years, the organisers have been making efforts to elevate the event to the level of other reputable festivals across the world. However, many observers still feel there are so much room for improvement of LAIF.

The governor also acknowledged the transformation recorded in the industry, which, he said, has been occasioned by the injection of funds into the creative sector to support the growth of local advertisers.

He equally pointed out the contribution of government to the growth of the profession as the state has sustained investment in requisite infrastructure that would create a resilient economy and city in which the Brand and Advertising industry would thrive.

The outcome, Sanwo-Olu noted, has ended the period when advertising practitioners needed to fly to Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg in South Africa before shooting good television commercials for their clients.

He said: "Today is for celebrating ourselves, our craft, and achievements as marketing communications professionals. Over the last five decades, the marketing communications profession has evolved remarkably to become a window for the world to see the creativity that resides within us.

"The story has continued to change with improvement and global visibility. Let me assure you, it can only get better from here.

"The infrastructure we are creating are gradually giving you the scenic settings you require for great Television Commercials that can earn more prestigious laurels from across the world."

SO&U, Globacom Part Ways After 8 Years

Information reaching Brand Communicator has it that one of the longest agency-client relationships in this market has come to an end. The partnership between one of Nigeria's foremost second-generation agencies, SO&U and one of Nigeria's telecommunication giants, Globacom, came to an end recently after about eight years. Within this period, the two companies churned out award-winning creative works locally, continentally and globally.

Though information on why the relationship between the two parties came to an end is still sketchy, sources close to both parties suggest that it was a mutual affair.

Taking to its social media page to make the announcement yesterday, SO&U through its @sounigeria Instagram handle wrote: "What a ride! Thank you Globacom. Thank you for an unprecedented 8 years of partnership.

"It was fun while it lasted and we did some outstanding work together. But nothing lasts forever. We wish you the very best," it prayed.

So far, SO&U is the agency with the longest standing relationship with the company and has received recognitions for working on the brand. One of such recognition is its declaration as winner of an Emerald award in the Main – Continental – Awards category for Glo's 'Grandpa Goes to London' campaign at the African Cristal creative festival held in Morocco some years ago.

The campaign was one amid a cluster of advertising materials produced by the agency for Glo, and it demonstrated the agency's ability to tell compelling and moving stories in a way that resonate with consumers across the different market demography in the telecoms market.



Ogilvy Africa Names New Leadership Team For Zambia Office

Ogilvy Africa has announced a new leadership team for its agency in Lusaka, Zambia. The move aims to further its network by strengthening its market leadership and operations in Zambia.

The new line-up includes the appointment of country business and creative leads. Ethel Kandiwo joins as Deputy Managing Partner to run the office, while Ibrahim Musoke has been appointed Creative Director. Both Ethel and Ibrahim will work closely with Ogilvy's Africa leadership team to deliver world-class competencies in the country.

Speaking on the appointments, Ogilvy Africa CEO Vikas Mehta said "Zambia is one of our smallest operations in Africa, but one of our fastest growing. We're making a step-change in our approach to Zambia as a priority market, and the new leadership team represents just that. Under Ethel and Ibrahim's leadership, we look forward to bringing the best of Ogilvy to the market in communication, content, experience, PR & Influence, and media to our clients."



L-R: Ethel Kandiwo, Deputy Managing Partner; Ibrahim Musoke, Creative Director.

Ethel is a Marketing expert with over 14 years' experience in the media and advertising industry. She has a strong record of creating and delivering effective, high-impact content and communications programs for some of Zambia's most renowned brands in sectors such as Telecommunications, Insurance, Banking & Finance, Mining, Agriculture, FMCG as well as the Not for Profit sector. She brings in nearly a decade-and-a-half in experience having worked across industry verticals and brands with companies such as Black Dot and Giraffe Creatives.

"I am very excited about my new role and very eager to roll up my sleeves as I take up more responsibilities. I am very passionate about what I do and I look forward to great team work and support from my colleagues" Said Ethel.

In her new role, Ethel will be responsible for leading the agency's teams across disciplines and growing the network's presence in the market by partnering existing and new clients.

As Creative Director, Ibrahim Musoke will have creative oversight of all the creative work from conception, implementation, and development of strategies for the various clients across the agency in Zambia.

WIMCA 2021 Conference Charts Course on Marketing to Females, Smashing Glass Ceilings That Impede Women Empowerment

Experts in the business of brands and marketing communications in Africa gathered recently to chart a new course for businesses targeting female consumers, on how best to reach and engage them in this challenging times. They also proffered solutions on how the female gender can maintain a work-life integration in their quest to smash the glass ceiling that seem to prevent them from reaching their peak in their different fields.

These were the key talking points at the annual Women in Marketing & Communications Conference/ Awards (WIMCA) held last Wednesday at the MUSON Centre, Onikan, Lagos. The theme for this year's conference, "Women in Leadership: Building a strong Professional PIE (Performance, Image, and Exposure)" was crafted in line with this year's theme of the International Women Day (IWD): "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world".

The event which is in its fifth edition, is powered every year by Brand Communicator, a leading Brands and marketing publication in Nigeria. In his welcome address, the convener of WIMCA and publisher of Brand Communicator, Joshua Ajayi stressed that, "'women have been acknowledged as some of the most effective leaders during the pandemic, even when they remain woefully under-represented at all levels of decision-making worldwide."

He added that Forum Research has revealed the efficacy of the 'role model effect' which is helping to close the gender gap. It is with thisgoal of expansion that platform will soon become pan-African.

His words: "Indeed, we are planning to expand this platform beyond a yearly one to a pan-African platform that will create a sustainable community that members can interact daily. Details on this plan would be released soon."

In her presentation, the keynote speaker, CEO of Dentsu, Sub-Sahara Africa, Dawn Rowlands spoke on "Engaging Female Consumers in Challenging Times" . She stated that the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges have forced many businesses to evolve and look for better ways to connect with their consumers.

She explained that because of the pandemic, many women work from home, combining multiple roles from work and taking care of their family. She called on brands that understand this reality to look for suitable means to engage women creatively at this time.. She equally urged brands to allocate a reasonble chunk of their budget to gender balancing and women empowerment.



L-R: Bukola Shobowale, Business Director, Insight Publicis; Iquo Ukoh, Managing Director, Entod Marketing; Dawn Rowlands, CEO of Dentsu, Sub-Sahara Africa; Joshua Ajayi, Convener, WIMCA and Publisher, Brand Communicator; Ayodele Otujinrin, Head of Marketing, West Africa, Godrej; Ilyas Kazeem, Group Marketing Director, Eat 'N' Go Africa; and Charity Ilevbare, Category Lead (Life Care), Seven Up at the Women In Marketing and Communications Conference/Awards (WIMCA) held recently.

She added that women will be the greatest activists for change, and brands need to be on the lookout for ways to deliberately engage them.

The panelists who spoke in the session attested to the power of storytelling in engaging women and also revealed how their brands have keyed into trends to further arrest the attention of women.

The panelists are Ayodele Otujinrin, Head of Marketing, West Africa, Godrej; Iquo Ukoh, Managing Director, Entod Marketing; Ilyas Kazeem, Group Marketing Director, Eat 'N' Go Africa; and Charity Ilevbare, Category Lead (Life Care), Seven-Up Bottling Company and Bukola Shobowale, Business Director, Insight Publicis.

In the second segment , Victor Afolabi, GCEO, GDM Group who spoke on the sub-theme "Maximising work-life integration in the new norm and creating a personal brand beyond smashing the glass ceiling" said the world is faced with a 'double disruption scenario, with automation and COVID-19, according to the World Economic Forum.

He explained that the barriers for work-life integration are lack of management support, the flexibility stigma, the presentism culture among others. To achieve work-life integration he advised that organisations should "prioritise, co-create, and compartmentalise personal time and delegate"

He added that "To progress beyond the glass ceiling in the workplace and into senior management positions, you must be intentional about who you are, what you do, and who you do it for. You must have extreme value in yourself that is, having a brand that elicits demand."

Other speakers who equally shared insight during the session are Steve Babaeko, CEO, X3M Ideas; Adebola Williams, GM Marketing, UAC FOODS; Mr. Adebola Williams, Group CEO, Red For Africa; Funmilayo Falola, Head, Marketing Communications & Investor Relations, Wema Bank; and Tokunboh George Taylor, Managing Director, Hills+Knowlton Strategies.

In line with its culture of recognizing and rewarding deserving brands and female professionals in the IMC industry who have distinguished themselves in exemplary leadership, professionalism and contribution to the sector, WIMCA also recognised some outstanding ladies in the industry.

Olubunmi Oke, CEO of LadyBird Limited who was a former President of the Advertisers Association of Nigeria (AAAN) and Pioneer Managing Director of 141 Worldwide (now NITRO 121) was given the Lifetime Achievement Award for her many contributions to the IMC industry. Similarly, consummate marketing communications professional, Folake Ani-Mumuney, Chairman, Board of Directors of FBN Insurance also received the WIMCA Lifetime Achievement Award. The amiable Folake who also leads the marketing and communications function of FBN Holdings globally was also awarded for her contributions to the IMC sector over the years.

Nneka Onyeali-Ikpe, MD/CEO of Fidelity Bank also bagged an award for the CEO of the year at WIMCA. Access Bank's sustainability Amazon, Omobolanle Victor-Laniyan who is Head of Sustainability for the Bank and Chima Afe, Group Head, Retail Marketing and Analytics for Access Bank were also recognized and awarded for their contributions in their various spaces.

Other individual awardees include Caroline Oghuma, Executive Head, MultiChoice Nigeria; Ayodele Otunjinrin, Head of Marketing, Godrej West Africa; Bridget Oyefeso, Head Marketing and Comms., Stanbic Bank; Cherry Eromosele, Group Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, Interswitch; Sade Morgan, Corporate Affairs Director, NBC and Tolulope Adedeji, Marketing Director, Ab 'In' Bev, among others.

Aside individuals, deserving brands and organisations also had different recognitions as far marketing to, and impacting women to leadership is concerned. These brands and organisations include Access Bank, Mediafuse Dentsu International, Darling Hair, Knorr, FirstBank, LAPO Microfinance Bank, Molped, Mamador, Morning Fresh and Sunlight detergent.

Lagos NIPR Embarks On Re-Certification, Set To Flush Out Quacks From The System



Comfort Nwankwo, Chairman, Lagos NIPR

The Chairman of Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Lagos State Chapter, Mrs. Comfort Nwankwo has disclosed that plans are in place to stop quacks from practicing public relations in the state.

She explained that this will be done in conjunction with the national body to ensure that quacks are flushed out totally from the system.

She added that the chapter will continue to support members with training and retraining including re-certification to expose them to trends in PR practice. "We have laid down rules, codes, ethics and guidelines in the practice. What is the use of guidelines if there is no compliance, and how can people comply if there is no enforcement? There are many people practicing PR today and they don't know anything about PR."

She added that "In conjunction with the national body of NIPR, we are going to flush the quacks from the system. We need professionals to handle PR jobs to ensure positive paradigm shift in our sector because if professionals are doing the job, you are going to see the difference in the quality of the jobs done and in the quality of counsel given to organisations."

She urged organisations to hire professionals not only during crises management because they will see the difference, adding that it will continue to expose its members to training opportunities.

"It's not only in crises management that organisations should go looking for professionals. I want to say that for the people that are in, we will continue to support them with training and retraining to expose them to trends in PR practice. It is an ongoing thing; the practice will get bigger and better. But these are some of the areas we must look into: flushing out quacks, encouraging re-certification, retraining of professionals and even affiliating them to other bodies of like functions in other to balance out what they are doing."

In addition, she explained that it will first embark on enlightenment with companies before taking legal action, knowing that practicing PR without registering with the institute is a crime.

"For instance, very soon we are going to enlighten them on the implications of employing non-members of the Institute as PR officers in their organsations.

"We thought of publishing the names of such organsations but being relationship menders, we are doing letters to them first. So, if you are not a registered member of the Institute and you are practicing PR, know that it is a crime to do so.

"The Institute has made membership registration very easy and cost effective to enable members legalize their practice. If they fail to do so we are working with the ministry of justice so that such will be prosecuted. If you are interested in your brand, we encourage you to stay out of trouble and do the needful by ensuring that people who work in your communication department are certified," she said.

Professionals Urge Media Organisations To Explore New Business Models

Communication professionals under the auspices of the Association of Communication Scholars & Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN) have urged media organisations to explore new business models to address the challenges of funding.

The association gave the charge at its eighth Annual Conference held in Port Harcourt recently, and themed 'Media and Citizens Participation in Governance for Accountability and Peace in Society'

In a communiqué released and signed by ACSPN General Secretary, Prof. Nosa Owens-Ibie, the following observations were made: "Journalists are the only professionals given a role in chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution to hold government accountable to the people; the media have the duty to promote peace in the society; that while it is important for the media to hold government accountable, it is necessary to note that there is a decline in societal or national value; new media technology is key to facilitating citizen participation in governance; the media have the responsibility to always examine the facts before reportage; media portrayal of women is often not favourable to the course of women; women participation in media is low and there has been a failure to utilise the media even when the opportunities are available."

Continuing, the participants also observed that poor implementation of the Freedom of Information Act is affecting media role in holding government accountable; journalists lacking in upholding and promoting professional ethic, which affect media credulity; the problem of safety of journalists affects media ability to hold government accountable; journalists are deficient in peace journalism skills, thereby affecting their ability to promote peace.

X3M Ideas Marks 9th Anniversary, Renovates Science Laboratory In Lagos School

A Nigerian pan-African creative advertising Agency, X3M Ideas has revamped the science laboratory at the Oregun Junior High School in Lagos in commemoration of its ninth anniversary.

The agency known for its communications campaigns for Glo, DStv, Peak Milk, La Casera and Conoil unveiled the newly revamped science laboratory on Thursday September 30.

X3M Ideas founded by Nigerian advertising and music executive, Steve Babaeko commissioned the renovated lab for the use of students and teachers of the co-educational school, to further their STEM-related interests as part of its student-based Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts.

The World Bank says the number of scientists and engineers in sub-saharan Africa are very low compared to more industrialized countries. The region only has 91 researchers per million inhabitants compared to the world average of 1,083 researchers.

Steve says, "Over 40% of the roughly 200 million residents in Nigeria, Africa's most-populous country, are youths. Confident, fervid and enterprising, they want to chart their own course and are hopeful for the future of the nation. Considering how important STEM is to the growth and development of Nigeria, the number of graduates in scientific disciplines is horribly low. We're aiming to drive a change in this regard by enabling the science-related dreams of the students in Oregun Junior High."

For nine years, X3M Ideas has consistently delivered impactful social intervention projects. By renovating classrooms, office blocks, sick bays, libraries and donating computers, UPS devices, air conditioners, internet modems with unlimited data and unique wash hand stations and disinfectant tunnels, the X3M team have over time shown their unrelenting dedication to support students in their immediate communities.

Allianz Media Commissions Alausa Scenic Garden To Promote Environmental Sustainability

As part of the effort to promote environmental sustainability, Allianz Media has commissioned the Alausa Scenic Garden to promote beautiful and greener Lagos while at the same time creating an avenue for advertisers to place their advert in an eco-friendly environment.

The project which also serves as a CSR and giving back initiative of Allianz Media has the support of Lagos State Signage and Advertising Agency (LASAA) and Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency (LASPARK). The events had the General Manager of LASPARK and the Managing Director of LASAA including their members of staff in attendance at the commissioning of the garden in Alausa, Ikeja held recently.

Dr. T.O.E Ekechi, Chairman, Allianz Media explained that "Protecting the environment is among the biggest governmental imperatives globally. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprints, one of the most important ways to protect the environment is through the planting of trees.

"Lagos State, Nigeria's economic capital and centre of excellence is unsurprisingly at the forefront of efforts to protect our environment. Yet, the challenges that governments everywhere face are well known to us all. With government resources stretched, the case for public-private partnership (PPP) is strengthened.

"The need to play our part as responsible corporate citizens is thus what inspired our adoption of the ecologically diminished area adjoining the Lagos Television perimeter. Before our humble effort to regenerate and beautify this corridor, it had become overgrown with weeds and unsafe for residents and members of the public alike.



L-R: Nnodim Ambrose, General Manager, Marketing and Media Ltd; Dr. T.O.E Ekechi, Chairman, Allianz Media; Adetoun Popoola, GM, LASPARK; Prince Adedamola Docemo, MD LASAA; Ngozi T.O.E Ekechi, Group Executive Director, Allianz Media; and Adeyemi Adeshina, General Manager, Allianz Media at the commissioning of Alausa Scenic Garden.

In addition, he said "Interestingly, one way to make this type of collaboration sustainable for all parties is the opportunity to explore the use of these spaces for advertising. Government and the public get ample green areas, advertisers reach their target group in an eco-friendly way. Everybody wins! That is why we are pleased to have not just the Managing Director of LASAA in attendance but our key advertising agency partners as well. Possibilities abound and we are more than happy to create and co-create with you environmentally friendly out-of-home advertising products."

The MD of LASAA, Prince Adedamola Docemo applauded the company for the initiative and urged them to replicate the gesture in other areas, assuring them of the agency's support and collaboration.

"On behalf of LASAA, I want to extend our heartfelt congratulations on this wonderful and laudable project. We are happy about this project that has indeed transferred the corridor and will transform the state and the city alike. We also encourage you that such a project should be replicated in other parts of Lagos."

He added that "We are ready to work with all parties in exploring the advertising opportunities available within the corridor and hope that this will be a catalyst for more opportunities in days ahead."

Similarly, LASPARK GM, Adetoun Popoola commended the contributions of Allianz Media to ensuring a greener Lagos and making the state beautiful, adding that it is a testimony to a strong partnership among the private and public sectors.

"It is also a testimony to the power of collaboration between the Allianz Media, LASPARK, and LASAA. Allianz Media are not in the business of beautification but they are taking responsibility to contribute to Lagos State, the society, and the community.

"Am very proud of what we have done and hope that this space will be used to good use and the people within the community will enjoy the space has it has been setup. They have committed a lot of financing to this and this tells us there is so much we can do together."

The General Manager, Allianz Media, Adeyemi Adeshina on his part explained that advertisers will benefit from the project, "We can help advertisers reach their target in an ecofriendly way. Today everybody is talking about reducing their carbon footprint, talking about protecting their environment. If we put nature-based advertising it would have less carbon footprint and it would protect the environment. It is a win-win for everybody."

Stanbic IBTC To Give Scholarship To Tertiary Institution Students

Stanbic IBTC Holdings PLC, has concluded plans to give scholarship to tertiary institution students valued at N40,000,000.

In respect to the gesture, the financial institution has therefore called for applications for its 2021/2022 scholarship programme. The programme is now in its second year and it is aimed at encouraging hard work and academic excellence among Nigerian undergraduates.

Students who participated in the 2021/2022 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and have gained admission into any of the tertiary institutions in the country can apply for the scholarship scheme. It is structured to cater for academic expenses across a period of four years and will be disbursed to each successful applicant in tranches of N100,000 per academic session. Disbursements from the second year will also be dependent on the maintenance of a minimum of a second-class upper CGPA and good conduct of the beneficiary student as referenced by the university.

Dr. Demola Sogunle, said the organisation recognises the importance of education and its impact on the lives of Nigerian youths, adding that it would continue to support the dreams and aspirations of youths through its various educational programmes. "Education plays a critical role in societal development as it empowers and encourages Nigerian youths to prepare for the future while navigating current challenges.

"It is an important recipe for the growth and development of any organisation or nation, thus forming the rationale for the implementation of the Stanbic IBTC scholarship programme."

The organisation, he noted, has continued to demonstrate that education is one of the core pillars in its Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiatives and has reflected this stance in its various activities.

Coca-Cola Partners LAWMA On Plastic Waste Recovery

The Coca-Cola Company recently partnered with the Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) and Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance (FBRA) to recover plastic waste from the beach front of Ilashe.

The Coca-Cola Company in Nigeria is a pioneer member of FBRA. FBRA has a team of responsible and forward-looking companies united by a shared concern for the environment and committed to promoting the sustainability of our environment by driving a self-regulatory post-consumer packaging waste recovery within the food and beverage sector.

As part of the effort, over 1.4 tons of post-consumer PET bottles were recovered from the beach to mark World Cleanup Day.

Amaka Onyemelukwe, Director, Public Affairs, Communications & Sustainability at The Coca-Cola Company disclosed on her Linkedin page said, "It was such an awesome time today across all locations. Imagine what we can achieve when we all come together? Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) under the leadership of Ibrahim Adejuwon Odumboni and Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance had a fantastic outing harvesting plastics at the beach front of Ilashe.

She added, "Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance is a producer responsibility organization for food and beverage companies committed to driving environmental sustainability for food and beverage packaging waste. What started as a self-regulatory coalition by only 4 companies have now evolved to a 20-member PRO enabling the recovery of food and packaging waste. The Coca-Cola Company in Nigeria is a pioneer member and taking leadership to ensure we achieve our World Without Waste Ambition.

"Thanks to everyone who came out to make a difference. A total of over 1.4 tons of post-consumer PET bottles were recovered. Now the Ilashe community fully understands that the plastics present in abundance in their environment can be turned to wealth."

It is noteworthy that Coca-Cola has been quite concerned about environmental sustainability through its foundation 'the Coca-Cola Foundation',. One of its numerous activities recently was partnership with S.W.E.E.P Foundation Ng especially in Surulere community, Lagos. A total of over 120 recycling receptacles have been deployed in various locations that helps households separate their post-consumer PETs and CANs. Also, so far over 50tons of PET and 100 youths have been engaged under this project.

Another initiative early this year was a clean-up exercise at the Yaba Market in partnership with Lagos State Government and African Clean-up Initiatives (ACI).

Onyemelukwe said that the foundation believed in a world without waste.According to her, plastic bottles are not wastes but are resources.

"Used bottles can actually pay somebody's school fees. As a company, Coca-Cola will continue to partner with NGOs in ensuring that our environment is clean and sustainable," Onyemelukwe said.



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Call it one of the biggest and most watched Reality TV series in the world and you are right on target. Call it the Superbowl of Nigerian advertising…doubly right. Big Brother Naija has just successfully concluded its sixth season-the 'Shine Ya Eye' edition and has earned all the bragging rights it can muster. And why not? As at the last count, more than thirty brands have made a varying impact at the sixth edition of the show-from massive engagements, to 'impressive digital impressions' among other metrics and analytics recorded.

For weeks, these brands jostled for top spots in the mind of the consumer as well as the share of their pockets and wallets.

For instance, the headline sponsor of the show, Abeg Technologies, saw users of its Abeg app soar by 7000% following its sponsorship of the reality TV show, which ended earlier in October. The growth of the Abeg app, which offers users the flexibility to receive and send money using cash transfers, exploded after it was announced headline sponsor of BBNaija in July 2020. The growth is expected to continue due to its association with the reality TV show.

In fact, according to Patricia Adoga, the COO of Abeg Technologies, the popularity of the BBNaija show, rubbed off on its business as users of the Abeg app rose from 20,000 before BBNaija season 6 to 1.8 million users during the show.

"Our aim to introduce our brands to the market has been very successful. The show has brought a lot of traction to us and we have been very grateful for everything that has happened. Abeg grews from 20,000 users to over 1.8 million users, which is actually a 7,000% growth in just three months," she said.

Abeg, an app similar to Cashapp, a mobile payment service in the US and UK and founded by three young Nigerians, Muheez Akanni, Michael Okoh, and Dare Adekoya is also a peer-to-peer (P2P) social payments platform. It allows users to send or request money from another Abeg user without the exigencies of bank details. But despite its promise to change how regular people think about payment technology, Abeg had much lower popularity among the young generation until it became the headline sponsor of the BBNaija show.

Its partnership with BBNaija became a huge boost for the fintech platform, and figures of users released by the company confirm that there are more beneficiaries from the show than the contestants.

For Patricia, an alternative payment solutions company that facilitates the easy use of cryptocurrencies for everyday transactions, this is its second time returning to the show. Following the traction it got from its sponsorship last year, it returned as an associate sponsor of the show. Between last year and this year when it participated in the show, Patricia has been largely responsible for the sheer acceptance, recognition, and product trials that cryptocurrency is currently enjoying in Nigeria. This is despite strong reservations by the Central Bank of Nigeria.

Rotimi Ogunwede, Chief Marketing Officer for Patricia, said as much when he explained during the price giving a presentation to the winner of the show recently that before the advertisement of their brand on the show, cryptocurrency wasn't mainstream. However, he noted that Patricia's engagement and advertisement on the show changed the narrative and brought traction across Nigeria, the UK and other African countries to the brand's many offerings.

Also making a return to the show is Darling Nigeria, makers of premium hair extensions dedicated to giving women the trendiest styles and the highest quality of hair at the best possible price. The brand made a strong statement celebrating 'Black girl magic – the beauty, boldness, and all-round resilience of women in Nigeria and beyond, with a bespoke commercial and campaign using the BBNaija platform.

A company like SevenUp Bottling Company (SBC) whose presence on the show for the past few years has been nothing short of phenomenal as its Pepsi, 2Sure, Lipton Ice Tea, Supa Komando and even its water brands have had commanding presence on the show. Remarkably, barely two days after the show began, a look at the Nigerian trends table on microblogging site, Twitter, shows that despite the intense focus on BBNaija, the Housemates of the show and their drama, Supa Komando, a vibrant energy drink brand from the company's stable was the only brand among the top ten trending conversations on microblogging site, Twitter. The brand occupied

"Big Brother Naija has just successfully concluded its sixth season-the 'Shine Ya Eye' edition and has earned all the bragging rights it can muster. And why not? As at the last count, more than thirty brands have made a varying impact at the sixth edition of the show-from massive engagements, to 'impressive digital impressions' among other metrics and analytics recorded."

an impressive seventh position with over three thousand tweets…a feat for any brand on such a day! The only second brand to make it to the trends table is yet another brand from its stable-Pepsi, a global cola brand. The brand occupied an impressive 12th position on the trends table.

With the echoes of Airtel Nigeria's 444 remarkable commercial still within memory's 'earshot' from the 'Lockdown' season five edition of the show, the telecommunications giant appears to have an affinity for cutting through the clutter of brand messages with TV Commercials that resonate. Airtel's return to the show this season with the relatable 'Ghost' commercial.

Closeup, Dano Milk, Eva, Buypower.ng, Tecno, 2Sure Sanitizers, Guinness Smooth, BoomPlay, Pepsi, Darling, Baileys, Munch It, Smirnoff, RevolutionPlus Properties, Glover, Innoson Motors, even Bigi Drinks, among other brands have created commercials, games, engagements, and other activities as part of their participation within the show.

In fact, data released by ID Africa, a media and technology company, revealed that the show had over one billion in audience impressions as at Monday, September 27, 2021, a day after the Sunday live eviction show with over 240,000 posts from audiences across Africa and around the world.

So, whether you are home and tuned in on the show to catch the latest happenings in the Big Brother Mansion or take a detour to briefly log in to streaming platform, Showmaxx while on the move to follow Live Eviction show or whether you just want to catch a quick highlight on social media, you cannot but interact with some of the advertising materials of sponsors or advertisers on the show as well as their branding materials.

It is either you catch housemates on Sunday using Darling Hair to beautify themselves or you see Housemate Cross in the garden taking a sip of Supa Komando, Saskay having a Dano Milk branded cup in her hand sipping tea, Liquorose on the dining table eating her lunch with a bottle of chilled Pepsi or General Pere wearing an Abeg shirt discussing his 'Abeg Naira' palaver with another housemate or you see Whitemoney cleaning the kitchen area with 2Sure Sanitizers. Biggie's Pepsi branded Chiller in the Kitchen is definitely something you cannot miss as long as you are watching the show.

Alcoholic brands like Guinness, Gordons', etc are also visible during the wild Jacuzzi and Friday Night Parties in the House, not forgetting the wonderful performance pulled off by singing sensations, Ayra Starr and Rema, both brand ambassadors of the Pepsi brand. Across digital channels, SBC brands were also carrying out massive engagements with followers, garnering an



BBNaija S6 Living Room

unprecedented number of impressions, comments, and likes from followers.

What of its TVCs on the show? From Airtel's 'Ghost' commercial, Supa Komando's action-packed commercials featuring former Housemate Erica Nweledim, DO2tun, Poco Lee and Faje Koshope; to the hilarious and brilliantly executed Patricia commercials, to OctaFX's sensationally inspiring TVC; to Pepsi's international commercial which stars the world's best across football and music including Leo Messi, Paul Pogba, global superstar Becky G and Pepsi Nigeria ambassador and jinx -breaking Grammy Award winner, Afro-fusion musician Burna Boy; to Arla Dano Milk's, to 2Sure's Aunty 'To Sure's family moment and Ebuka's modeling in the introduction of 2Sure antibacterial soap, all of the brand's on sponsorship had the chance to reach millions of viewers that watched the show.

Media and Market Impact

The impact recorded so far by brands and organisations on the Big Brother Naija platform this season is not unrelated to the fact that it is no doubt, one of Africa's biggest reality shows. Industry analysts say that the show is arguably the biggest Big Brother franchise in the world right now as well as the most-watched.

Indeed, between July 19 and September 23, 2020, the show generated over 55 billion media impressions, with 7.7 million Twitter users posting the word "BBNaija" over 20 million times on Twitter alone. In fact, it is estimated by ID Africa that after 49 days of airing, the show reached a milestone of 1.2 billion audiences, including 24.3 billion digital expressions created on social networks in the first one month of airing. Little wonder why the trend table on Twitter crashed the day the winner for the 5th season was announced. In 2021, the show aired in 48 other African countries besides Nigeria, to an average audience of 309 million viewers according to DSTV media sales figures. With peak viewing at the start of the programme, some eviction shows, and the finale.

As a premium entertainment offering from MultiChoice Nigeria, BBNaija has always remained steps ahead in terms of the opportunity for massive engagement which goes well beyond the eyeballs, conversations, and general awareness generated. That is why it has continued to thrive every season without fail. For instance, in the fifth season, the platform afforded brands the opportunity to engage with the Lockdown housemates and the viewers divided across various spectrums of fandom including 'Ninjas,' 'Elites,''Wayagangs,' 'Ícons,' Éxplorers,' 'Royals,' among others. This was achieved through different tasks, games, activations and parties in the Big Brother House, TV commercials and social media engagements. This much is seen in the robust mentions, awareness, increased sales, etc., enjoyed by current and previous sponsors of the show. The top-of-mind-awareness, share of mind and share of voice BBNaija offers partners makes it a top choice for many smart brands. Little wonder, the show always never fails to attract top Nigerian brands every season.

So, call it Nigeria's Super Bowl of advertising, and you are not wrong. Just as the American Super Bowl commercials are a cultural phenomenon of their own alongside the game, the Big Brother Naija reality TV show curated by pay TV giant, MultiChoice Nigeria has become a truly remarkable Nigerian media, marketing and social phenomenon!

For one, commercials on BBNaija are becoming even more deliberate. Brands take the opportunity offered by the platform to break campaigns, unveil brand influencers and ambassadors as well as massively engage the consumer.

The reason for this may not be unrelated to the show's target audience which cuts across Boomers, Generation X, Generation Z – from 65+ to 15-year-olds. With an estimated 75% of its viewers with good purchasing power, it is safe to say the show is every advertiser's goldmine.

The fact that the production of its sixth season alone cost about N4.3 billion while it also amassed over 1.3 billion votes is a testament to the show's popularity. Since the reality show made its debut, it has proven to be a major part of Nigeria's pop culture and captured the hearts of many of its audience. It has also created several celebrities and influential figures in the entertainment industry.

From George Orwell's Pen To The Lockdown Season

Big Brother Naija is the Nigerian version of the reality TV series created by John de Mol Jr's Endemol, a Dutch TV network. It is a popular reality show in which contestants live in an isolated house and compete for a large cash prize. The winner gets all the cash by avoiding being evicted by viewers and housemates. It is always packed with lots of activities, including parties and group tasks. The Big Brother franchise named after the "Big Brother" of George Orwell's dystopian 1949 novel 'Nineteen Eighty-Four,' was first broadcast in the Netherlands in 1999 with a record 4 million out of 15 million Dutch people watching the final episode on 30th December 1999. The production format was sold across different countries where it has been adapted to local cultural nuances, norms, and production codes with varying degrees of success. However, the theme of the show still relates to the Orwellian influence of mass surveillance, and Big Brother's absolute power.

In Africa, the reality TV show started with Big Brother Africa (BBA), which first premiered in 2003 and based in South Africa. But then, this was a bit different from other Big Brother versions around the world given that housemates in Big Brother Africa were selected from 14 different African countries. Ideally, this setup made the show quite popular within and even outside the 14 participating countries.

When Big Brother Africa put a halt to production, Big Brother Nigeria debuted in 2006 to fill the void. With its return in 2007, Big Brother Nigeria took a walk. Big Brother Africa eventually got canceled in 2014 with organisers citing funding as the reason. This development set the stage for a much revamped and better packaged Big Brother Naija in 2017. That season's edition, Se Gobbe, laid the foundation for what would become the most-watched reality TV show in Africa. Since then, the show has been recording improved participation from both the viewers and sponsors due to the growth in acceptance.



John Ugbe, MD/CEO, MultiChoice Nigeria

The first-ever season held from 5 March to 4 June 2006 and at the time was called Big Brother Nigeria. The show was hosted by Michelle Dede and Olisa Adibua and saw a then 26-year-old Katung Aduwak emerge winner. He took home the $100,000 prize money. He has gone on to do well for himself as he went bagged a directorial degree from the Digital Film Academy in New York. He is now a filmmaker; he produced and directed the movies "Unwanted Guest" and "Heaven's Hell." He also directed a number of music videos for Chocolate City, Styl Plus, Gabriel Afolayan and starred in EbonyLife TV's 'Desperate Housewives.' Worthy of note is the fact that the host of the show for the past five seasons, Ebuka Obi-Uchendu was a housemate in that season.

Over a decade after the first season of Big Brother Nigeria held, the show returned entitled Big Brother Naija. It was themed "See Gobbe" and premiered in January 2017 and saw 22 contestants vying for the N25 million grand prize with Efe Ejeba emerging winner. Following his emergence as winner of the show, he moved from Jos to Lagos to kick-start his music career. The rapper released an EP called "Lagos EP." He also collaborated with superstar rapper Olamide on the song "Warri." The graduate of the Faculty of Economics has released other songs like "Based on logistics" and "I love you."

The show returned for its third run on 28 January 2018 and was themed "Double Wahala.' Ebuka returned as host for the 12 weeks that the show aired. 20 housemates competed for N25 million cash prize. At the end of the season, Miracle Igbokwe from Imo State carted home the grand prize. He was presented with a brand-new Hyundai Tucson SUV, a N25 million cheque, home appliances worth N3 million and a trip to an exotic location for two to total N45 million worth of prizes. Miracle also won N1 million cash prize from Payporte Arena Games and N200,000 from the Final Wager. He also won the Pepsi Refresh Your Mix, which fetched him N1 million and a trip to Dubai for the One Africa Music Fest, and a year's supply of Pepsi and Aquafina. After winning the show, he left for South Africa to an Aviation school to pursue his dreams. In 2019, Miracle obtained his certification as an "Instrument Rated" pilot.

The fourth season of Big Brother Naija launched on 30 June 2019 and was dubbed 'Pepper Dem.' Unlike previous seasons, the show was held in Nigeria and aired for 99 days. The viewers watched 26 contestants vie for the N60 million worth prizes. For this season, Bet9ja Coins were introduced as a new house currency. Mercy Eke emerged as the winner of the show and became the first female to win the reality TV show. She carted home a total prize worth N60 million, including N30 million cash, N25 million worth of Innoson Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV), a trip to Dubai and other prizes. The video vixen and entrepreneur on March 14, 2020, received the Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Award for Best Dressed Female. She also bought a house in Lekki, Lagos. She and her love interest during the show, Ike had gone on to launch their own reality show "Mercy & Ike." She also launched her own real estate company, Lambo Homes.

The fifth season was held for 71 days. It produced Olamilekan, 'Laycon' Agbeleshe who gathered over 60% percent of the total votes-as verified by Deloitte- for the last eviction gameshow, as the winner. Aptly termed the 'Lockdown' edition, the show held at the time people are strictly observing social distancing protocols brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic which has placed many cities in the world under lockdown. As expected, the show kept Nigerian and global viewers entertained during this period. Layton who said he was just in the House to promote his music career ended up carting home the grand price of N30,000,000; a two-bedroom apartment on the Island courtesy RevolutionPlus Properties; a brand new SUV car from Innoson Motors, among other mouth-watering prizes valued at a total N85 million!

This season's Big Brother Naija 'Shine Ya Eye' edition which concluded recently had Housemate Whitemoney as the winner. As usual with each succeeding edition, the prize reward is always significantly higher than the last. Whitemoney beat 26 other housemates to walk away with 90 million naira worth of prizes at the grand finale. He won 47% of the votes with Liquorose behind with 22.99%. It's also worthy of note that, viewers voted in the final week of BBNaija season 6 as follows: Whitemoney: 47.00%, Liquorose: 22.99%, Pere: 14.77, Cross: 5.44%, Angel: 5.37%, and Emmanuel: 3.43%.

With the huge increase in Internet penetration and Satellite TV that can be accessed via smartphones, the reach of Big Brother Naija is beyond Nigeria. Recall Big Brother Africa debuted during the early days of Internet penetration (cybercafe period) in Nigeria, with a fewer number of subscribers. Big Brother Naija, on the other hand, returned to meet a welcoming population armed with the amplifying power of social media, as well as a 90% increase in the number of Nigerians with internet access since Big Brother Nigeria's initial debut.

Beyond An Advertiser's Goldmine, A National PR Treasure

Studies show that BBNaija is a soft power resource. When effectively deployed, it can be a useful tool in projecting Nigeria's Africa-centred policy objectives. According to these studies, the show also confers respect on Nigeria via the subconscious association of the 'Big Brother' with Nigeria, there is a subtle affirmation of Nigeria's 'big brother' honorific status in the hearts of viewers across the continent. The show also represents another avenue to counter negative stereotypes about Nigeria. It is a useful re-imaging tool for the country. The platform like the Nigerian creative industry in general offers a platform for Nigeria to retell its story to Africa and the world.

One such study was done by Olusola Ogunnubi and Akinlolu Akinola, each Research Fellows at the University of Free State, Bloemfontein and the Obafemi Awolowo University respectively. Titled 'Big Brother Naija': Nigeria's unlikely public relations campaign?' the researchers investigated the benefits of BBNaija for Nigeria, beyond its entertainment value and tested how it has improved the portrayal of Nigeria's image abroad. Their findings suggested that the show promotes Nigeria's culture, and ultimately the foreign policy goal of fostering the goodwill of people in Africa and beyond. According to them, the popularity of BBNaija abroad is enough for it to be considered one of Nigeria's most effective public relations campaigns. This is because, for the duration of the show, international viewers are drawn in by the drama, while receiving exposure to local cultural elements. From music to lifestyle and the intersections between pop culture and other sectors, everything is laid bare.

Relatedly, Nigeria's music industry is a major beneficiary of BBN's policy of playing only Nigerian music during the show's tasks and events since its inception in 2006. Entertainment mogul, Obi Asika in an interview with Pulse magazine, said as much: "I think Big Brother Nigeria produced that seminal moment for Nigerian urban culture, for Nigerian youth culture." Obi who was the CEO of Storm 360, the producer of the groundbreaking reality show. "There was an attitude all over Africa that Nigerians were threatening, people were afraid of us. These are the kids with the most swag, the most attitude, the most personality, they've got hot music, hot fashion, and hot personalities but it was not known"

"Following the traction it got from its sponsorship last year, it returned as an associate sponsor of the show. Between last year and this year when it participated in the show, Patricia has been largely responsible for the sheer acceptance, recognition, and product trials that cryptocurrency is currently enjoying in Nigeria. This is despite strong reservations by the Central Bank of Nigeria."

recalls Obi Asika about Nigeria's image problem. "We knew that our content had value, our music, our legacy, our culture but nobody had given ordinary Nigerians this level of window to the world. One of the biggest things that happened was that it provided a window into the hearts and minds of our people and Africa fell in love with us and long may it continue" Obi Asika explains.

Thanks to a strict 'Nigerian songs only' rule on such a popular show, Nigeria's music industry always had a continental promotional outlet. Millions of African BBNaija viewers are frequently exposed to Nigerian music. Many are converted to fans. International viewers are drawn in by the drama, while receiving exposure to local cultural elements. From music, to lifestyle and the intersections between pop culture and other sectors, everything is laid bare. By showcasing this culture, the show has helped in promoting a positive image of Nigeria to the rest of the world.

Analysing data from social media posts on Twitter and Facebook, as well as secondary sources of data including newspaper publications, journal articles, and more, the Researchers were able to come to an understanding of the popularity and acceptance of BBNaija among young people on the continent. They examined comments posted on Twitter and Facebook during the live airing of the show. They also tracked conversations via the #bbnaija hashtag and others. These conversations reveal a common pattern: Tweets about #bbnaija and other related hashtags are among the top trending topics on African Twitter every time the show is aired.

These tweets occasionally break into the global Twitter trend list, powered by viewers in Nigeria and across the continent.

For nationals of other African countries, the allure of following BBNaija was always deeper than campaigning for their favourite housemates to avoid eviction. Foreign viewers absorbed other cultural elements of the country. Many regularly tweet by incorporating Nigerian slang and phrases into their posts to reflect cultural assimilation. Based on the spread of the show via social media, formerly obscure BBNaija housemates often attain celebrity status and command a huge fan base across the continent. Before their appearance on the show, these housemates lacked this level of visibility. Their meteoric increase in Instagram and Twitter followers serves to measure growth in their fan base. In addition, the country records gains from the popularity of the show's former housemates who become influential celebrities with fans and supporters from all various parts of the continent. If ever Nigeria needs celebrity diplomacy, BBNaija has a pool of candidates for that.

A Major Boost For The Economy

MultiChoice's erection of a BBN house in Nigeria at the cost of N2.5 billion is a form of capital inflow into the country. The multiplier effect is the creation of job opportunities for the builders and fitters. MultiChoice also pays tax to the government of Lagos State, and that adds to the fiscal buffers of the state. DJs and artistes are invited to perform at the Saturday night parties- They are lodged in hotels and are flown from other parts of the country in some instances, to perform. This has a positive impact on the hospitality and transport sectors. Jobs are also created for PR agencies, broadcasting firms and TV stations due to the heavy advertising campaigns run on the show by the different sponsors. The impact is increased flow of money in form of revenue and prompt payment of taxes by the firms involved. The job opportunity is created for the crew members, the make-up artists, fashion designers, and so on. This has a net positive effect on employment. Overall, the addition of the monetary value of all the value-added activities lead to the injection of an estimated amount of N8 billion into the Nigerian economy.

During his opening remarks at the BBNaija Season 5 Winner's Presentation, John Ugbe, Chief Executive Officer, MultiChoice Nigeria gave a breakdown: "Big Brother Naija has changed the way we define employment and relevance. In addition to participants being instant celebrities and influencers, other industries have been significantly impacted by the show and its participants. An emerging trend is having social media page handlers who drum up support and affinity for their favourite housemates through their social media handles. That's immense round-the-clock work!

"Furthermore, many associated businesses have launched; from bloggers who gain followers during the show, to analysts, business managers and even stylists. These associated businesses continue to thrive long after the show wraps. Many Lounges have gained popularity after hosting former Housemates at welcome parties!

"The ripple impact of Big Brother Naija has touched not just the creative industry, but other industries as well. Over 1,000 people, directly and indirectly, supported the production of the Big Brother Naija Lockdown edition. Cumulatively over the years, Big Brother Naija has provided over 10,000 jobs for fashion designers, content creators, interior decorators, logistic companies, prop makers, make-up artists, photographers, housekeepers, carpenters, caterers, and many more. The entire team worked tirelessly to maintain the usual quality and standards that have come to be associated with the show."

Adding, he said: "The creative industry contributes immensely to the nation's GDP. In 2016 alone, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced that Nigeria's creative industry accounted for approximately N239 billion of the nation's GDP. The role of Big Brother in this cannot be discounted. The cost of bringing the show live and uninterrupted to our viewers for over two months and sometimes three, sits at over N3.5 billion and it encompasses the design, fittings, furnishing for the house, as well as salaries, equipment and other various production costs. We are proud of the significant role MultiChoice Nigeria has played in moving the industry forward through this platform."

Housemates were also empowered with a total of about 46.5 million naira, split amongst housemates as a reward for their participation in tasks presentations and games, a breakdown shows



The winner of BBNaija S6, Whitemoney, receiving his cheque as Multichoice Nigeria CEO, John Ugbe (extreme right) looks on

the following: Dulux Paint: N2 million, Guinness: N3 million, Travelbeta: N2 million, Airtel: N2 million, Hawaii: N2 million, Tom Tom: N2 million, Indomie: N8 million, Kuda: N2 million, Revolution Plus: N2 million, Johnnie Walker: N3 million, Oppo: N2 million, Amatem Soft and Gel: N1 million.

Darling: N5 million, Waw: N1 million, Flutterway: N1 million, My Paddi: 1 million, Lipton: N5 million, and Patricia: Gift coin worth of $500 for a total of 18 housemates and $1000 worth of bitcoin for three housemates. A total of $12,000 or N4, 566,000. This is just considering cash prize alone asides the Betway Trivia games. There are a ton of other non-cash incentives such as all-expense paid trips to Dubai, all-expense-paid trips to Abuja, an Innoson car worth N4.5 million, appliances, one-year free supply of a few products, and more. The trickle-down effect of this on the HouseMates businesses on the economy is obvious.

Additionally, small and medium-sized business owners who are contracted as vendors to supply necessities like food, wearables, cosmetics, toiletries to the house during the show have also seen exponential growth in their businesses by associating with the show. Many of these businesses run online shops, by exposing their brands on the show to over 40 million viewers across Africa, their hitherto small businesses have received a higher degree of patronage from Nigeria and other African countries. For instance, in October 2019, House of Lunettes, a brand that makes eyeglasses announced that it sold out its products a few hours after Tacha Akhide became its brand ambassador. Such is the power BBNaija wields.

Just like it did in the fifth season, 30 millionaires were created by MultiChoice in a bid to reward fans of the show. At the start of the season, viewers and customers of MultiChoice were allowed to lock in their favourite housemates and win big. The effect of this on the economy is not lost. Many of these millionaires will scale up their businesses, set up new ones or empower other Nigerians in the country's ecosystem. These among other initiatives are getting the wheels of the economy to move even faster.

A Culture of Producing Celebrities

The BBNaija show follows a 'winner takes all' format, but aspiring housemates don't mind as they know that even if they only spend a few weeks in the house, their careers are as good as made. Participating in the show gives housemates a once-in-a-lifetime chance to sit in the spotlight, which opens the doors for business deals, brand endorsements, and diverse career opportunities with the potential to set them up for financial stability in life. It is no surprise, therefore, that over 30,000 Nigerians auditioned for a chance to be a part of this year's BBNaija show. But there is a reason thousands of young Nigerians jostle for the opportunity to audition and land a highly coveted spot in Biggie's house.

They have seen repeated examples of how participating in the Big Brother Naija show has transformed the lives of participants.

Over the years, MultiChoice through BBNaija has continued to churn out talent taking over the creative scene – Gideon Okeke, Bisola Aiyeola, Ifu Ennada among many other past contestants have made names in Nollywood. Tobi Bakre, a popular finalist in season three of BBNaija worked with brands such as Amstel Malta, Lord's Dry Gin, Novarick Homes, Delta Soap, etc. Being a former BBNaija star has also opened other doors for him – he has scored some acting jobs, including a lead role in Hustle, an Africa Magic show.

Though it's still too early to say, Whitemoney, Michael, Saskay, and some other housemates in the sixth season appear to be headed for musical stardom following their stay in the Big Brother House. This is reminiscent of a previous winner, Laycon's explosion into the music space following his stay in the House.

Mike Edwards a brand ambassador for Nigeria's family of Japanese automotive manufacturers, Mitsubishi; and many others are also making good use of the fame the platform brought to register their names in the creative scene. Natacha 'Tacha' Aikido was disqualified from the 2019 edition of the show after spending 89 days in the house, painfully missing out on the finish line. But since her time in the BBNaija 'Pepper Dem' house, Tacha has bagged various brand endorsements, inking deals with brands such as House of Lunettes, GetFit, and several others. With the popularity gained from her antics in the house, she currently has more than 1.2 million followers on Instagram, which also attracts advertisers to partner with her.

Besides bagging the 30 million Naira BBNaija prize money, Mercy Eke, the 2019 winner of the show has been on a roll. Since the show ended in October 2019, she has secured a series of brand endorsements, notably signing deals with brands like Unique Motors, Ciroc, Mr. Taxi, Just Furniture, and several others. With her winnings from the show, she has also launched her own real estate business – Lambo Homes – and has even secured a reality TV show with MultiChoice based on her relationship with Ike Onyema, her boyfriend from the BBNaija House.

Ebuka Obi-Uchendu was one of the more popular housemates from season one of the show. After his time in the house, Ebuka continued to win a series of brand deals and endorsements with brands such as 2Sure, Intel, H2Oh!, Gulder, Betway, etc. He also secured a series of TV hosting gigs that set the foundation for his present status as the continued host for the BBNaija show. Bamike 'Bam Bam' Olawunmi, an ex-housemate from the third season of the show has also gotten her fair share of fortune, notably partnering with brands such as Fayrouz and phone brand, Oppo.

No doubt, the Big Brother Reality TV show is a national, continental, and global asset. Brands and companies coming into the Nigerian market have used it to penetrate the market and acquire good market shares. Existing brands have solidified their positions and boosted their bottom-line while others used it to massively engage their consumers. The platform benefits both brands and pop culture and brands have leveraged this platform positively to this effect. Just as Nigeria's entertainment and media industry is expected to rise from $4.46 billion in 2018 to $10.5 billion in markets by the end of 2023-as disclosed in a PwC's Entertainment & Media Outlook report, MultiChoice is positioned to be a major part of this through its many projects in that sector and the Big Brother Naija platform.



Outdoor of BBNaija S6 house



BBNaija S6 Diary Room

Arla Dano In BBNaija House

Robust Engagement With Zeal And Passion



By Ntia Usukuma

The Dano brand has always been a regular feature in Africa's biggest reality show, Big Brother Naija (BBN). The premium milk brand has consistently churned out creative ideas, leveraging the show to extensively engage its teeming followers across all its social media handles. The Lockdown edition of last year was particularly memorable for consumers though the brand did not organize tasks for the BBN housemates. It however had a robust engagement with followers on social media.

Throughout the 71-day duration of the programme, Dano milk and other 'sister' products from the stable of Arla Group were being consumed regularly by Housemates at the BBNaija house. This, beyond any advert, means that millions of eyeballs could see housemates enjoy the nourishing milk at different times each day for 71 straight days!

This year, the impact was almost immeasurable as the brand decided to organize a robust task for BBNaija housemates.

The first task was around the flagship milk brand and, the housemates were to watch the latest Dano milk advert encouraging them and every milk consumer to 'Go for it! '. They were to follow it up with a drama relating to the video they watched.

In the next stage, they were grouped in fives with four groups emerging namely Team Cool Cow - (Whitemoney, Yousef, Saskay, Emmanuel, and Jaypaul); Team Full Cream- (Liquorose, Boma, Nini, JMK, Jackie B); Team Dano Choco - (Cross, Maria, Queen, Tega, Saga); and Dano Slim- (Angel, Pere, Peace, Sammie, Micheal)

Each team was required to blindfold a member, while another member directs him/her on how to reach the finishing point on an already arranged path with different obstacles, without hitting any of the obstacles. At the final stage, each team presented their 15-minute drama and song.

At the end of the nerve-cracking game, Team Cool Cow emerged the winner (Whitemoney, Yousef, Saskay, Emmanuel & Jaypaul) and was given N1.5m to be shared amongst all members and a year supply of Dano milk Products. Every other housemate also got a year's supply of Dano milk products.

"This year, Dano Milk is equally leveraging on the trends on the BBNaija show to keep up conversation on the ongoing show, the housemates and its brand. On a regular basis, the brand was dropping engaging questions on its social media platforms for interactions with its teeming followers. Asides its engagement with the consumer, the Dano Milk brand has always been resolute in its drive in pushing the dairy conversation with effective campaign messages. These campaigns are always the subject of talkability, memorability and awareness for the brand and its consumers."

It was quite exciting to see how the housemates decoded the new Dano Milk advert that projects zeal and courage to make theatrical presentations that depict the theme 'Go For It'. The activity inspired the housemates to dig deep into the "bottom-pot" of their creativity to come up with an exceptional presentation that included playlets and songs. At the end of the day, the winning team had quality rewards for putting up a remarkable show.

Last year, although the brand had no exclusive game for housemates, Dano kept consumers engaged via social media.

The brand had the #SpotAPack challenge at the beginning of the fifth BBN Lockdown season. Here, viewers of the reality show are to spot any Dano Milk variant, Arla Spread, or Arla Butter in the #BBNaija house, take a picture of it and upload it on their social media handles with the #SpotAPack hashtag to stand a chance to get rewarded. In this challenge, viewers were expected to take the picture of these products not in use by housemates. The massive engagement that followed after this challenge ensured that Dano Milk was a regular feature on Twitter and Instagram trends during and after the show ended. Winners were always announced for this challenge periodically.

Another innovative initiative it introduced to engage viewers of the show was the #DanoMVP challenge. Here, viewers were expected to take a picture of their favourite housemate using Dano Milk. Again, they were to share this picture on their social media handles using the #DanoMVP hashtag. After a long drawn out 'contest' among housemates with their fans utilizing every opportunity, they could find to ensure their favourites win, the brand announced Nnegi as the winner.

This year, Dano Milk is equally leveraging on the trends on the BBNaija show to keep up the conversation on the ongoing show, the housemates, and its brand. Regularly, the brand was dropping engaging questions on its social media platforms for interactions with its teeming followers.

Asides its engagement with the consumer, the Dano Milk brand has always been resolute in its drive to drive in pushing the dairy conversation with effective campaign messages. These campaigns are always the subject of "talkability", memorability and awareness for the brand and its consumers.

Playing in the Plain and Flavoured powder, UHT, and Kids nutrition categories, Dano has steadily and speedily built brand equity, awareness, and affinity among dairy lovers over the last three decades culminating in it becoming Nigeria's second most loved dairy nutrition brand. Being a constantly exciting, engaging, and ever-innovative brand, they have evolved in both products and processes to stay ahead of the curve.

Dano Milk is owned and produced by Arla Foods, a farmer-owned company based in Denmark. Over the years, the Dano brand has evolved tremendously and today, it remains locally relevant and benefits from its international footprints across an array of markets in the Middle East, Africa, Bangladesh, and parts of Latin America. Dano was launched in the early 1980s and remains one of the fastest-growing milk brands in Nigeria.

Arla Foods parade an extensive range of dairy products across different categories, from Milk Powder and UHT to the Chilled and Frozen category. While Dano milk powder is present in both traditional and modern trade outlets in Nigeria, Dano UHT, Arla salted and unsalted butter, spreadable, cheesy spread, whipping and cook-ing cream can be found in only modern trade outlets giving consumers no choice but to make their mealtimes exciting times. These and many more have endeared the dairy brand to consumers and customers, fans and followers alike as they continually inspire consumers with healthy, natural, good quality dairy nutrition from cow to consumer every day, invariably, making them the dairy nutrition of choice for millions of consumers across Nigeria.

Activities from the Arla food stable were not limited to just the milk range. There was a coking competition that focused more on the brands serving different culinary needs in the food segment.

The task which took place on day 53 (week eight) of the show, involved two activities and the housemates were divided into three teams: Team Arla Cheese, Team Arla Butter, and Team Lupark Butter. Arla Nigeria sponsored the task, and it was a







promotional task by the Housemates as team members were asked to create a promotional task in the arena for the Arla.

Team Lurpark Butter had White Money, Liquorose, and Cross. Team Arla Butter had Pere, Nini, Emmanuel, Queen while Team Arla Cheese had Yousef, Angel, Saga, Saskay

Just before the quiz started, all three teams spent 30 minutes huddled in different sections of the House studying brand product guide in preparation for the quiz. Turn by turn each team asked each other questions five questions till the quiz came to an end. Team Arla Butter went first followed by Team Lupark Butter and Team Arla Cheese.

The next activity was a riddle Task and the Housemates had a fun time solving food-related riddles. The interesting twist was that the answers to the riddles were some of the ingredients the Housemates ended up using for their main cooking Task.

For the second team task, each group was asked to prepare a full course meal and render poetry to spice up the food presentation.

Before the main cooking contest, the Housemates were asked to proceed to pick their recipe cards and ingredients before picking any other ingredient from the Arla marketplace and the Arla chiller. Upon watching their video guide, the housemates proceeded to cook in turns. Team Arla Butter and Team Lupark Butter went first, and Team Arla Cheese went last.

They all seemed to know their way around the kitchen and took their individual roles seriously as they worked tirelessly to dish out delicious-looking meals. Done with their dishes, the Housemates were also tasked to compose a poem and infuse Arla's theme in it. Their presentation was absolutely fantastic, unfortunately, they had to give Biggie a little time to taste their meals to decide which team becomes the eventual winner.

At the end, Biggie announced that Team Arla Cheese were the winners of the task. Members of the winning team are Saga, Yousef, Saskay, and Angel, and they all have N1.5m to share amongst themselves, as announced after their performance.

The connection and passion generated by Arla's activities reflect a brand with a sincere and long-term commitment to brand Nigeria.

Arla Foods is building a state-of-the-art commercial dairy farm in Northern Nigeria where it will also train and support up to 1,000 local dairy farmers as part of that long term commitment to public-private partnerships that support the development of the Nigerian dairy sector as part of the country's efforts to increase local food production.

Located in Kaduna State, the 200-hectare farm, scheduled to open in 2022, will have housing for 400 dairy cows, modern milking parlours and technology, grasslands and living facilities for 25 employees.

The facilities and expertise provided by Arla will ensure a first-class opportunity to train young local dairy farmers to improve milk yields and quality, animal welfare, and farm profitability, contributing to the country's aims to develop local milk production.

In addition to providing training and support, the farm will also showcase modern commercial farming in Nigeria. Over time, the farm is expected to produce over 10 tonnes of milk per day, which will be processed by Arla's dairy plant in Kaduna State, to supply locally produced dairy products to Nigerian consumers.

Nigeria is among the fastest growing nations in the world. Its population is set to reach close to 400 million people by 2050 and there is already growing consumer demand for affordable dairy nutrition in the country. The Nigerian dairy sector is, however, currently only able to supply less than 10 per cent of the country's demand for dairy products, a gap that is expected to grow in line with the growth of its population.

"There is a great need for nutritious food and dairy products to satisfy the growing demand from Nigeria's fast-growing population. This requires a complementary approach where imported food is crucial to ensure food security while also supporting the government's long-term agricultural transformation plan to build a sustainable dairy sector in Nigeria.

Since 2017, Arla has been the lead business partner in a partnership to develop a sustainable dairy value chain in Nigeria together with The Danish Agricultural and Food Council, Danish Agricultural Knowledge Center Seges, Care Denmark, the Nigerian pastoralist organization CORET, and the dairy farm cooperative MILCOPAL. The Milky Way Partnership programme is supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 2019 Arla scaled-up its commitment to develop a sustainable dairy sector in Nigeria with a new public-private partnership with Kaduna State government. It is the first of its size and offers 1,000 nomadic dairy farmers permanent farmlands. Arla is the commercial partner that will purchase, collect, process and bring the local milk to market.

More recently, last year, working with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through ALDDN (Advanced Local Dairy Development Nigeria) with SAHEL Consulting, Arla is also helping to support more than 600 small scale households to create better livelihoods by developing a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable dairy market in West Africa.

Arla Foods is a Danish multinational cooperative based in Viby, Denmark, and the largest producer of dairy products in

"Arla Foods is building a state-of-the-art commercial dairy farm in Northern Nigeria where it will also train and support up to 1,000 local dairy farmers as part of that long term commitment to public-private partnerships that support the development of the Nigerian dairy sector as part of the country's efforts to increase local food production."

Scandinavia. Arla Foods was formed as the result of a merger between the Swedish dairy cooperative Arla and the Danish dairy company MD Food

The brand is the 4th largest dairy company in the world, with major footprints across several categories such as Cheese, Butter, Milk Powder, UHT, Evaporated Milk, and Yogurt. Some of its prominent brands include Arla, Lurpak, Castello, Puck, Apetina, Cocio & Dano.

Arla Foods has a dairy cooperative, owned by over 13,500 farmers. Its philosophy of producing natural, healthy, and high-quality dairy products for Nigerian consumers dates back to the 1880s when dairy farmers in Denmark and Sweden joined forces with one common goal – to produce and provide the best dairy products. The company's quality assurance programme for its farm is called Arlagarden and it is an important part of Arla Foods' strategy. Arlagarden specifies the requirements for milk production on farms that supply milk to Arla.

For a flagship brand like Dano Milk, it should be noted that engagement is beyond a buzzword or a fancy marketing term to be bandied around. A trip across its social media handle will reveal the fact that it has various celebrities as ambassadors among other feats, among other initiatives prove this fact. Worthy of mention is its remarkable setting of a world record in the prestigious Guinness Book of World Records, based on the engagement of over 650 participants to achieve the longest drinks-pouring relay using Dano UHT Milk held on June 1, 2018, at Muri Okunola Park, Victoria Island, Lagos, in commemoration of World Milk Day. Dano's successful effort broke the existing record for a similar feat carried out by 550 participants on November 9, 2013, in Caracas, Venezuela.















Excitement, High Engagement From A First-Class Toothpaste Brand

By Ntia Usukuma

Understanding diverse segment of the consuming public is absolutely critical for all discerning brands in the 21st Century. This propensity allows companies to formulate an effective marketing strategy that speaks to, captures, and retains their core and vast market space. For most consumer goods, the youth market is extremely lucrative and influential demography of consumers in today's marketing firmament.

This highly influential marketing mix creates a dialogue among other young consumers to facilitate brand awareness and product preferences onto other individuals because the youth market is an essential determinant of consumer behaviour.

In a nutshell, the marketing communication phenomenon called Youth Marketing is designed to target youth between the age of 14 and 35 by capturing their interests and making them important stakeholders and ideal customers.

Researchers and indeed trend analysts in Nigeria, are yet to recover from the startling statistics which emanated from the EndSars movement. As was evident during the protest, when push came to shove, it was the mass population of the Nigerian Youth demography that berth the most successful protest in Nigeria's socio-economic history. We move!

According to population projections by the United Nations for 2020, about 43 percent of the Nigerian population comprised children 0-14 years, 19 percentage 15-24 years and about 62 percent are below age 25 years. By contrast, less than 5 percent is aged 60 years and above. This makes Nigeria a youthful population very potent since 70% of the Nigerian Population is under 30.

Youth by their very nature are conditioned to evolve and berth new ideas. More than anyone, they are the only ones having the most consistent buying power. They are the early adopters and quickly get attracted to new trends. But at the same time, they are not sold promptly because they do not just buy stuff, they buy stuff only keeping in mind what benefits them. No doubt, they are the trendsetters, but they are aware of what they are sold.

Therefore, capturing the attention of this multi-media generation is no easy feat.

The youth market is critical because most of them have buying power influencing the spending of their family members.

In addition to being a major stakeholder within the consumerist climate, they also influence their friends by choosing specific products very close to their hearts. The Youth market has grown as the digital generation who grew up with the internet at their fingertips by continuously adapting to new changes.

Since this type of marketing creates a dialogue among other young consumers, this will influence brand awareness and product preferences onto other individuals because the youth market is an essential determinant of consumer behaviour.

At the core of its brand essence, the Closeup brand has been constantly positioned for the youth and young at heart. The reason for this is not far-fetched. Closeup is ingrained in the marketing dynamism of guiding anyone seeking closeness on the path to a fresher self with the power of its high-caliber products. With Closeup, the possibilities are quite endless.

Since its advent 50 years ago, the Closeup team has been committed to continuously improve the quality of its products. While there are now several red, green, and differently-colored gels out there, no one can beat its value propositions. Closeup's bold flavors, vibrant colors, and commitment to making caring for the mouth exciting and enjoyable.

Closeup was ready to rest on its oars and it came up with the #readytominglewithcloseup Challenge. On this battleground, conservatism is a red flag. Brands that are willing to mine gold in the Nigerian marketing landscape must show grit and bridled dynamism. Hence, it is commendable that the Closeup brand has always weaved its marketing ideations around themes that celebrate love, relationship, health, and living well. How can a brand ever go wrong with this ideation?

Closeup is the world's first gel toothpaste and has been serving Nigerian families for over 50 years. With her proud heritage, the brand is committed to delivering oral care products that give people the confidence to get closer, as well as meeting their oral care needs.

Recently, the brand launched our new Triple Fresh Formula as part of our commitment to delivering superior oral care products to Nigerians.

The new Triple Fresh Formula with its unique combination of Deep Cleaning Gel, Antibacterial Zinc and Ice Cool Crystals delivers three benefits: Cleans up the mouth deeply for whiter teeth, Fights 99% of bacteria and Cools intensely to give long-lasting fresh breath, keeping you protected and fresh all day long.

Thanks to Closeup's new Triple Fresh Formula you consumers are protected and fresh and have the confidence to get close and create new memories with this Closeup task.

Nigerians were reeling from the several Challenges that have been put up at Big Brother Naija Shine Ya Eye

Each team was made up of two people of the opposite gender.

The task was in two parts s to come up with a photo story that interprets the Closeup advert showing how Closeup gives users the confidence to get closer.

Housemates had 45 minutes to rub minds and decide on a theme for their team story, and what poses they will strike in the Closeup photobooth, to tell their stories. Creativity was key for this task.

At the photobooth each team had 7 minutes to take photos in the Closeup photobooth and At the end of the photo sessions, each team had 7 minutes to present a slideshow of their photos to tell a story of how Closeup gives you the confidence to get closer

The task was successful as it helped increase awareness and engagement for the brand online. Amplification for the task started 24 hours before the task date which led to organic engagement from consumers. The task ideas (photo booth session and pick-up lines) were well received by the audience as they were different from the norm.

The social quiz deployed received a lot of responses from the fans on two major social media platforms- Facebook and Instagram.

The total reach on the platforms was 29,700,680, while the total impression was 30,767,248 and total engagement was 1,404,936.

The audience expressed excitement across each post and this led to high engagement in the posts before and during the task. The evidence is in the huge no of engagement on the posts, especially on Instagram.

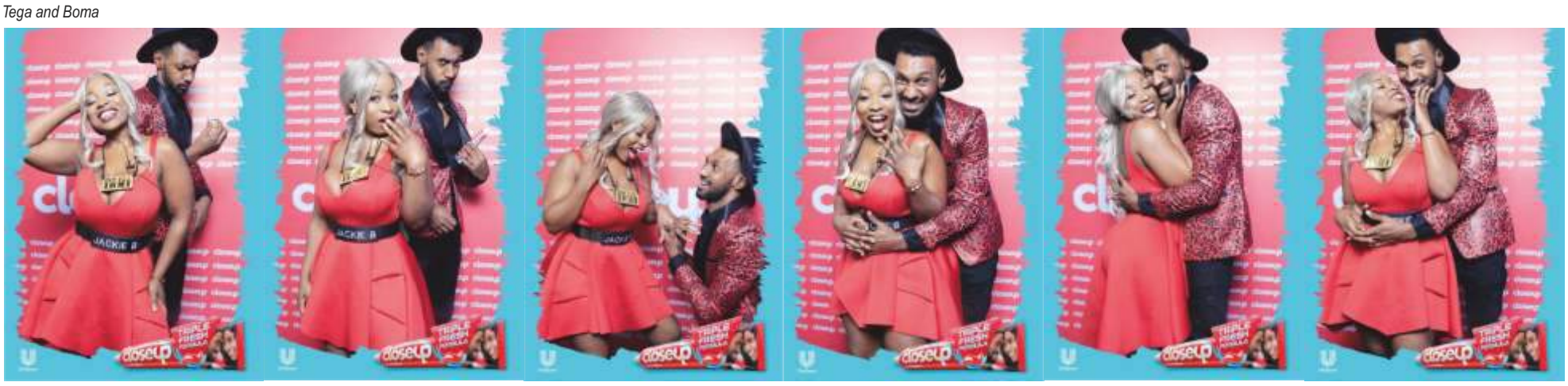
Page Growth Summary **FACEBOOK** *16M Accounts Reached 16M Impressions 517+ New Followers* **INSTAGRAM** *2.4M Accounts.*



Cross and Nini



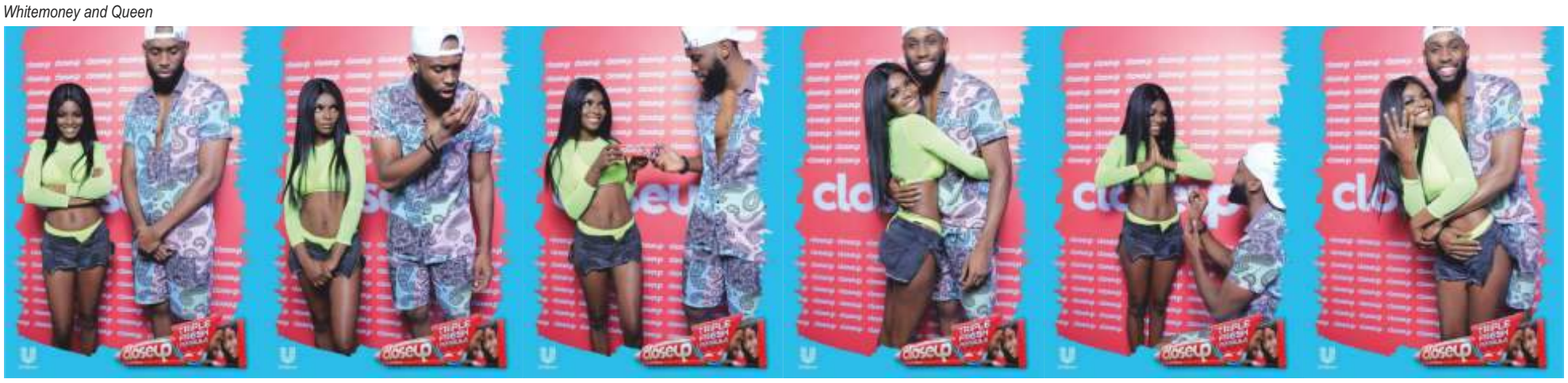
Tega and Boma



Yousef and Jacki B



Whitemoney and Queen



Emmanuel and Peace



Saga, Jay Paul and Liquorose



Pere and Angel



Michael and Saskay

The list of housemates who won and the amount they won during the task

. Best story concept - Team Triple fresh (Liquorose, Jaypaul and Saga) - 600k
. Best photos - Team Red Hot (Pere and Angel) - 400k
. Best dressed - Team Deep Clean (White Money and Queen) - 200k
. Best pick up line - Michael & Saga - 100k each
. All housemates will be getting One year Supply of Closeup

Celebrating The Resilience Of African Beauty At BBNaija

By Azeez Disu



African women are known for their glowing skins and beautiful hair, the gender remains an asset, making the world a beautiful place to live. Asides from the popular, "Black is beautiful" mantra, women have shown immense resilience in today's changing world.

A brand in Africa celebrating and showcasing the beauty of the continent's women is Darling Hair, a hair extension brand, from the stable of Godrej Nigeria. The brand has successfully established itself as a trendy brand helping African women find their beauty with amazing-looking hair.

Recently, it leveraged the popular reality TV show, Big Brother Nigeria (BBNaija), its sixth edition as a sponsor to promote the beauty of Africans and Nigerians in particular. The brand remains a leading maker of premium hair extensions dedicated to giving women the trendiest styles and the highest quality of hair at affordable prices. It is also one of the most consistent sponsors of the BBNaija show.

It is noteworthy, that the brand also recently produced a television campaign (TVC) tagged "Darling Black Girl Magic" which is an adaption of Nigerian Reggae-dancehall singer and songwriter, Patoranking's hit song "Black Girl Magic" celebrates the beauty and diversity of the African women. The 45 seconds commercial is an element of great storytelling. It is entertaining yet short but makes you want to watch over and over again.

For the Hair extension brand, the Darling Black Girl Magic is a mantra that has come to stay. It showcases what the brand stands for and connects with her target market which is women. The Shine your eye housemates of the BBNaija sixth edition showcased the beauty embodied in using the Darling brand when they embarked on the Darling task.

Leveraging On BBNaija

Taking a look at the snapshot of the task given to the Shine your eye housemates as part of the ways the brand is leveraging on the reality show. It is noteworthy that the housemates were tasked to create unique Hair stories using darling hairstyles to portray the black girl as bold, daring, unstoppable and beautiful, while also showing how a queen's magic is incomplete without a Darling Hair on.

Basically, as part of the tasks given to the housemates, they were grouped into four teams for the Darling task and the group include team empress, team natural, team crotchet, and team braids.

They were also told to use the Darling Salon to make different hairstyles with Darling products.

Each of the groups was asked to feature in three activities including, telling a story about the different hairs they were wearing. A representative from each team was nominated to do that.

Apart from storytelling, the team members were asked to display their hair look in a modeling session. The third activity given to them was a choreographed dance performance with the Darling Black Girl Magic theme song, which was played intermittently after they finished styling their hairs.

The task was broken down into two stages: The first stage was called Find Your Beautiful which will happen in the salon. The second phase of the task was simply called "BLACK GIRL MAGIC" and it featured three different activities: Storytelling, modeling, and dance performance.

Meanwhile, each team made different hairstyles to showcase their team's name and was given 90 minutes for that. The final stage was the hair story presentation involved telling a story about hair, runway pageantry, and dance routine.

After collation of the result, Team Braids which included Liquorose, Michael, Queen, JMK, and Yousef emerged victorious with a reward of N750,000 each. In another vein, every Sunday, the housemates find they are beautiful in the varying range of Darling hair extensions to the awe of millions of viewers.

"Reinforcing this passion for celebrating black women, Darling Nigeria decided to challenge the Big Brother Naija Shine Ya Eye housemates, the brand concluded its task with a fashion choreography of the Darling x Patoranking "Black Girl Magic" theme song which was launched recently."

Similarly, the initiative aligned with the brand's effort to support small-scale salons owners and hairstylists to help grow the beauty industry. Recall last year, as part of its Corporate Social responsibility (CSR), it set up a relief fund to help alleviate some of the economic tolls the pandemic has taken on small hairstyling businesses. The relief fund catered to five hundred hairstylists, to assist with the purchase of basic amenities.

Celebrating Black Girl Magic

Darling Nigeria is renowned for celebrating black girl magic – the beauty, boldness, and all-round resilience of women in Nigeria and beyond. They have achieved this by offering trendy hair products and styles to help women find their beautiful, every day.

Reinforcing this passion for celebrating black women, Darling Nigeria decided to challenge the Big Brother Naija Shine Ya Eye housemates, the brand concluded its task with a fashion choreography of the Darling x Patoranking "Black Girl Magic" theme song which was launched recently. For the Hair extension brand, the Darling Black Girl Magic is a mantra that has come to stay and showcases what the brand stands for and connects with her target market which is women.

Overall, from the concept to execution to the quality of the video, the choice of artiste and song, the Darling Black Girl Magic TVC shows a high level of professionalism. Also, the collaboration between the brand and the artiste is in the right direction which many other brands will possibly emulate soon.

Speaking on what inspired the commercial, Ayodele Otunjirin, Marketing Lead - West Africa, Godrej Consumer Products Limited said "Darling Hair, Nigeria's foremost hair brand, believes the African woman is phenomenal and in a challenging world, she is a pillar of strength in the society. With the many obstacles on her way, Darling believes keeping her confidence intact is key to forging ahead and going for her dreams. With this in mind, the brand is focused on accentuating the beauty of the African woman through quality hair extension ranges in Weaves, Crochets, Braids, Natural and so many other styles."

Meanwhile, the 'Black Girl Magic 'is another song originally from Patoranking's album project tagged 'Three' released on the 28th Of August, 2020. It is about 3:22 minutes and for the commercial, some lines are packed inside it.

Remarkably, Darling has been making beautiful statements consistently in hair, fashion, and pop-culture in recent years and this strive has made it continuously engage its target market and earning it one of the most preferred brands in its space. Known to stand for beauty and transformation of the African woman through quality hair extensions, the brand has revamped with innovative new hairstyles, superior product benefits, and richer colours.























PATRICIA

Bridging Crypto Knowledge Gap, Empowering Young People At BBNaija



By Azeez Disu

A country like Nigeria has more of youth population with diverse talents than any African country. Meanwhile, entertainment and empowerment initiatives serve as a source of engagement for the young people. Youth empowerment is regarded as social innovation and a great measure to make a better society. Excitingly, when brands embark on it, it is often applauded by all and sundry.

In line with this, one popular reality show that is mostly watched by even the old is Big Brother Nigeria, a show that showcases Nigeria's talented youths and also serve as an avenue for brands to engage their customers and sensitise them on their initiatives.

A brand at the heart of championing the cryptocurrency knowledge and charging young people to invest with the intent to lift them out of poverty in a country that has a growing unemployment rate is Patricia Technologies, a reputable fintech company. The brand is leveraging massively on the BB Naija reality show as The Associate Sponsor. Interestingly, Patricia on BBNaija tasked consumers to trade, invest and make money while also empowering the housemates with different tasks. Aside this, it has also expended its presence to Europe and other African market asides Nigeria. It is noteworthy that it recently relocated its headquarters to Europe.

According to the company, the global movement is set to strengthen its relationships with marketers and agencies in the global crypto markets, whilst also positioning the brand as the leading cryptocurrency trading company in the globe. In another vein, the company recently marked its fourth year of operation which was celebrated in grand style.

Basically, Patricia entrance into the Crypto space, paying utilities bills, purchase of airtime, data and perform other day to day activities using Crypto is now seamless for all. The company also further disrupted the market with the launch of Africa's rst-ever Bitcoin Debit Card, a product that allows users to spend their Bitcoin (BTC) with ease daily.

Empowerment Though BBNaija

Big Brother Naija season 6 housemates have been involved in several tasks organised by the associate sponsor, Patricia. For their first Task, the Housemates were asked to divide themselves into teams through a lucky dip. Each team had to compose a thematic jingle for Patricia. The title of the jingle was "My P is for Patricia" and it had to be three minutes long and not exceed five minutes. Meanwhile, just like every other task, it had three categories and the housemates were divided into four groups; Team Grey, Team Black, Team White, Team Green. Team Grey consist: Saga, JMK, Sammie, Emmanuel and Liquorose and Team Black consisted: Jaypaul, Saskay, Angel, Cross, Pere. Meanwhile, Team White comprised: Yousef, Maria, Whitemoney, Nini, and Peace while Team Green comprised: Michael, Boma, Tega, Jackie B, Queen.

After splitting up into teams, they went their separate ways to get started since they only had 60 minutes to create the jingle. It wasn't easy at first, but it didn't take them long to find a rhythm to match with catchy lyrics.

In the first part of the task, the housemates were quizzed on their knowledge of the brand and Bitcoin. The quiz session was divided into two rounds, and in each round, each team was required to answer one question. One representative was nominated from each team to read the questions to their team, and they only had 15 seconds to answer each question. Team White answered their two questions correctly and won the round with a total of 20 points, while the other teams ended with 10 points apiece.

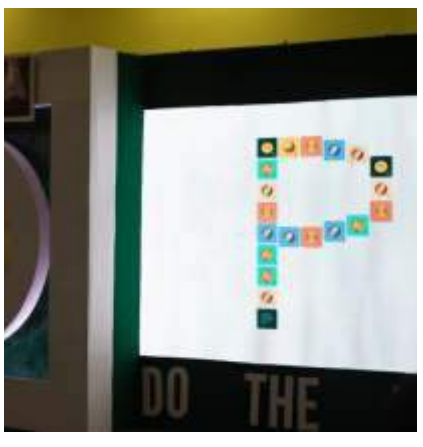
In the second part of the task, each team had to recreate the image of the Patricia logo displayed on the big screen in the Arena by arranging the blocks on the marked spot. Each team was given two minutes to study the image when it displayed five minutes to rearrange their blocks. Team Grey was the fastest to complete their arrangement, finishing at exactly one minute, ten seconds. That victory earned the team 25 points.

Lastly, each team had to compose a jingle for Patricia. The title of the jingle should be "My P is for Patricia" and it was three minutes long.

Team green went first creating a funky fuji jingle while the ladies were impressive with the dance steps. Team Grey went next and opted for afro hip-hop sound to showcase the Patricia brand. Team Black was a bit more soulful as their melodic voice echoed through the Arena just before Cross dropped some solid dance moves. Last but not least was Team White who had the Arena jumping with their jingle. Team White and Team Grey were tied as winners for this round. They both earned 20 points each for their outstanding presentation.

In a nutshell, after the second Patricia task, Team Black had 20 points, Team Green 20 points, Team White 40 points and Team Grey 45points. Conclusively, Team Grey consisting of Saga, Liquorose, JMK, Emmanuel, and Sammie won the Patricia Task and were rewarded with $5,000 worth of Bitcoin.





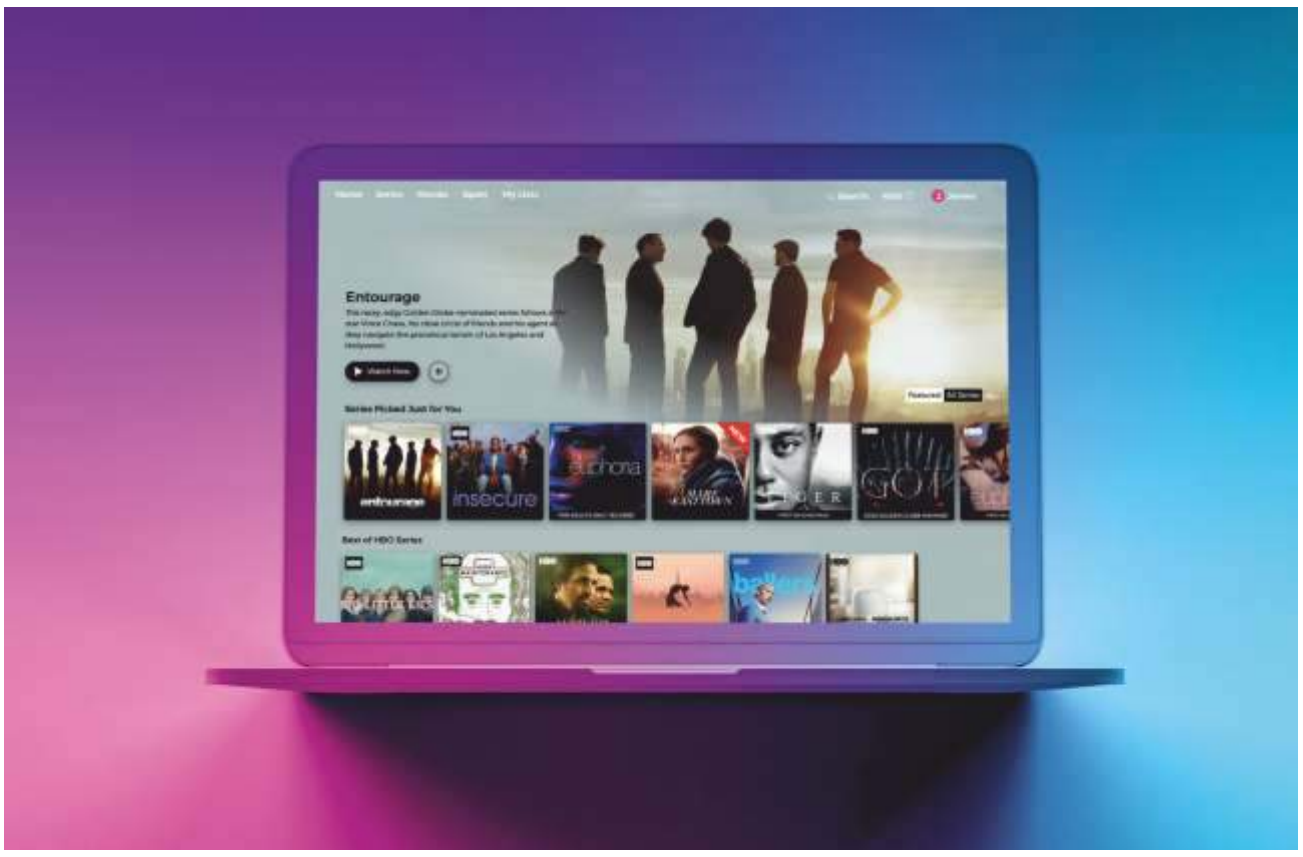






Climaxing The BBNaija Experience With Superb Storytelling

By Usukuma Ntia



For decades, Africa has remained a recipient of Hollywood and Bollywood films, TV dramas and series set in other continents, telling stories of other people in other languages. The continent's answer to this challenge came with Showmax, a brand that sets out to tell African stories in African settings and African languages.

Although Showmax can boast quality features content from the major foreign studios and platforms, what sets it apart is the local African content. In the process, it is of course creating a vast filmmaking industry, nurturing acting, directing, scoring talents as well as technical expertise in cinematography, set and costume design, editing, etc.

Currently, the brand works with local talents to produce local language content in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda, Angola, and Mozambique. Showmax has content in English and many other African languages.

In Africa, the Showmax catalogue consists of Hollywood, British, Kenyan, Nigerian, South African, and other African content. Outside Africa, it consists of Showmax Originals, kykNET International, M-Net, Mzansi Magic, and Via content, targeted primarily at external audiences.

It has premium children's entertainment provided by The Walt Disney Company Africa, ViacomCBS Networks EMEAA, BBC Africa, Warner Bros. Africa, and more. It is also the only streaming platform in Africa on which to view HBO content such as Game of Thrones.

With the ability to take vernacular content, from Nigerian and other African countries to audiences within and outside the continent, the digital world has really opened up multiple cross-border and cross- continent opportunities for local contents.

It was in this growing light that at the start of the new season of Big Brother Naija, the streaming service announced that they were making the show available in the UK for Showmax subscribers. This means that for the first time, fans in the UK can watch the show legally 24/7.

Candice Fangueiro, Head of Content at Showmax, confirmed this development earlier: "Big Brother Naija has always attracted a large following outside Nigeria and Africa as a whole. This year we decided to make the hugely popular show available to fans in the UK - whether they're part of the Nigerian diaspora or are among the many fans of this addictive reality series format."

Also, during a press briefing in Lagos, Brand Marketing & Partnerships Manager, West Africa, MultiChoice Connected Video, Tobi Adeola, said, "This season is special, and we are about to even take it a step higher by giving not only the African audience but also the fans in the UK access to watch this exciting show. For as low as N1,200 Nigerians at home can stream BBN 24/7 throughout the 72-day duration of the show; while in the UK, Showmax subscriptions start at £4.49 a month and will give fans all access to BBN as well as other exciting content that we have on the platform."

From fights to budding relationships, several twists, and engaging and thought-provoking tasks, Showmax has been doing good work and helping to streamline the gist, reshaping how audiences experience Big Brother Naija. This is indeed the act of superb storytelling.

Aside from the 24/7 live show, Showmax also allows fans to take in content from the show in bits with their weekly updates of its staple activities. Such activities include the nomination show, daily highlights, and Head of House challenge shows. This allows avid viewers who are too busy to stay connected to the official channel 24/7 to still enjoy the show, albeit in bite-sized pieces.

As the icing on the cake BBNaija on Showmax created a unique and exclusive show just for this season. Hosted by award-winning media personality, Toke Makinwa, "The Buzz" is a carefully curated breakdown of weekly happenings in Biggie's house. A new episode of the show is released every Tuesday (covers events of the weekend) and Saturday (covers weekday events). It also features a segment that only Showmax subscribers can access - the secret diary sessions.

These secret sessions allow housemates to rant about any and everything, and some of the juiciest details are revealed here. People discuss who they like, who they want to be with, those they can't stand and more. To make the show even more interesting, Toke Makinwa has at least two guest stars join her every episode. So far, ex-BBNaija finalists Mercy Eke and Dorathy Bachor, comedians Chigul and Senator, influencers EfeWarri Boy and Enioluwa, and superstar rapper, Ice Prince have joined Toke on the show.

While Big Brother Naija is undoubtedly a relatable show, it can get a little overwhelming, especially if you are the type of fan that loves to know everything happening in the house. You can get a little bit edgy when you miss something vital. Showmax creates the perfect avenue for you to stay updated and never miss anything.

Interestingly, there are lots of other types of content on the platform, aside from Big Brother Naija. For just N2,900, viewers get access to all the live football and other sports content they can dream of. They also access a bank of HBO shows, original Showmax content, the best of Asian programming, Nollywood films, original Africa Magic shows and more.

"From fights to budding relationships, several twists, and engaging and thought-provoking tasks, Showmax has been doing good work and helping to streamline the gist, reshaping how audiences experience Big Brother Naija. This is indeed the act of superb storytelling. Aside from the 24/7 live show, Showmax also allows fans to take in content from the show in bits with their weekly updates of its staple activities. Such activities include the nomination show, daily highlights, and Head of House challenge shows. This allows avid viewers who are too busy to stay connected to the official channel 24/7 to still enjoy the show, albeit in bite-sized pieces."

There's so much to enjoy on the app, but prospective viewers might never know what they could be missing if they don't, at least try it out.

During last year's BBNaija lockdown show, housemates had the opportunity to display their acting skills as Showmax, held a Talent Show.

The housemates were provided with costumes and required to reenact scenes from some of the biggest international shows available for streaming on Showmax.

They were judged based on six criteria including creativity, teamwork, showmanship, Naija-ness, staying on brief, and Showmax messaging. Team Game of Thrones eventually emerged victorious, winning a smart television and a one-year Showmax subscription. Vee also emerged as the overall best performer. She was rewarded with a trip to Cape Town, South Africa with any loved one.

The Showmax brand is really for those in the mood for more entertainment. The platform commands diverse international films, current affairs, and news programmes, including the BBC. In essence, this video-on-demand streaming service (based on internet transmission) rolls out a plethora of international, locally produced and co-produced drama, serials, telenovelas, reality shows and even bundles sports in some markets. All its contents are mobile phone friendly, given the preponderant access to mobiles in Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

Showmax covers over 70 countries, 45 in Africa; and the diaspora communities in some countries including Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. Programmes are broadcast in over 17 languages

Apart from making the BBNaija show available in the UK for Showmax subscribers this year, Showmax also allows fans to take in content from the show in bits with their weekly updates. As stated earlier, this allows avid viewers who are too busy to stay connected to the official channel 24/7 to still enjoy the show. The icing on the cake that Showmax created is hosted by irrepressible media personality, Toke Makinwa, "The Buzz" is a specially packaged bundle of weekly happenings in the BBNaija house.

Showmax provides streaming video on demand service every consumer will want to savour. What sets Showmax apart is a unique combination of hit African content, first and exclusive international series, the best kids' shows, and live sport from SuperSport. For a single monthly fee, you get unlimited access. Start and stop when you want. No ads. You can stream Showmax using apps on smart TVs, smartphones, tablets, computers, media players and gaming consoles. You can manage your data consumption using the bandwidth capping feature. And download shows to smartphones and tablets to watch later offline.

While many may focus largely on the electrifying content that we most enjoy, many observers may tend to forget that Showmax is a microcosm of the big MultiChoice system. Thus, it is quite obvious, with Showmax's world-beating combination of advanced technology, exceptional content and brilliant management, the brand is really a chip of the old block.


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SPECIAL REPORT

Top Creative Agencies Booming With Ideas



By Ntia Usukuma

For all advertising players that created time to gather at the last annual congress in Ibadan, the story was very clear. Despite the gloomy days that extended from 2020 to 2021 the industry still had many reasons to smile and celebrate.

The President of the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria, Steve Babaeko, in his welcome address titled "The Power of Us" made it clear that the fears were palpable in the minds of all his executives and members when he came into office almost two years ago.

In Babaeko's words, his fears were: "When the dust of the pandemic settles, would we still have an industry or business? With everyone struggling to stay afloat would our members be able to rally around …to push … forward?"

About a year and almost six months after, The AAAN President had realized that only were his fears unfounded, the sector has grown stronger and more resolute.

"I am a living witness to the size of the mountain we all have moved just by working together as a team," he stressed.

Little wonder the theme of that last congress was: "DOOM, GLOOM, BOOM! WHERE DO WE SIT?"

At Brand Communicator, as a careful observer and expositor of this great industry, we can visualise where everyone is sitting. This is why we have taken time to dissect and spotlight those leading and exceptional agencies that have proven themselves to be outstanding in their space amidst different challenges from the glooming days of the past 12 to 15 months.

We have taken pains to dissect those innovative initiatives they deployed for their clients in delivering excellent service from the end of March 2020 to August 2021.

As we do this we are encouraged by mails and phone calls we receive periodically from various groups, rating agencies, and organisations across Africa and Europe. One clearly told us recently that our publications and website are part of the vital tools used to gauge and x-ray the condition of Nigeria's IMC sector on a quarterly and yearly basis in their recommendations and decision making.. Quite encouraging to know from our little curve we can create valuable impact as we dissect the philosophies of agencies, their winning works, and innovative campaigns in reports we churn out every month.

One thing has been very clear, the Integrated Marketing Communication Industry in Nigeria has been quite vulnerable to the boomerang effect of the past two years. The COVID-19 pandemic which swept across the global landscape like a colossus doubly ensured that the industry had more than a fair share of challenges to contend with. Despite all these, the industry has survived and even thrived through gloomy days.

So, it becomes an interesting and vital goal to spotlight brands and agencies that have risen above the gloom of the times and the challenges of the present economy to build an industry worthy of commendation.

The series began with the experiential subsector of the industry in our last edition. In this bumper independent edition, we are beaming the spotlight on top creative agencies in the Nigerian market that have risen above the challenges posed by the current challenging economic environment.

In this edition, we have Nitro 121, an agency that has utilized the "formula one" principle with incredible results. The agency provides creative marketing communication, brand strategy, experiential marketing, digital marketing and multimedia technology solutions for leading companies and brands such as GOtv, Bajaj, BAT, Arla Dano, M-KOPA, Total, First Bank, Molped, British Council, Trophy stout, Honeywell and Afrissance amongst others.

Nitro 121 ideates when it creates. Developing themes and stories that draw from concepts around the brand. Ensuring that a simple story is exactly that - Simple. With simplicity the brand communicates a brand's strategic vision, ensuring that at the heart of brand communication is the business of connecting people to goods and services.

Also showcased is Ogilvy Nigeria, a full-service agency that lives and breathes the philosophy of borderless creativity that utilises data, creativity, and insights to create content that reflects diverse cultures that bring consumers closer to brands. This has helped the agency to win the portfolio of some of the world's leading brands.

In the Nigerian advertising market, the creative powerhouse known for disruption is TBWA\Concept. This highly respected agency is featured in this special spotlight. The company speaks succinctly of its creative instinct. "Like pirates, we take risks but don't take ourselves too seriously. We rewrite the rules and come up with brave and disruptive ideas that take on conventionally-steered ships."

Also on our spotlight is X3m Ideas, a full-service marketing communications Agency, built 100% on ingenious ideas and the people, is one such agency that has been a beehive of activities before, all through 2020 and beyond. In fact, in the last two years, the agency has popped up at several award arenas across the globe with several nominations and wins for some of the outstanding works it has created for its many clients' brands.

Its Mum Hotline project was a finalist at last year's Loeries in South Africa, won a silver at LAIF Awards in Lagos, and made Caples 2021 shortlist. Its revolutionary and viral social intervention aimed at addressing the rising issue of suicides in Nigeria, 'MANI Suicide Notes' made a shortlist to the 2021 New York Festivals. Additionally, the agency's inspiring International Woman's Day ads won a 2020 Loeries Bronze, a 2020 Lisbon International Bronze, and a Silver and Bronze at the LAIF Awards. La Casera's Superheroes, a campaign that has come to be seen as a highlight of brand's activities in the Nigerian market, was a work from the agency; and it was a Finalist at the 2020 Loeries.

There is no way our spotlight would miss Insight Publicis, one of Nigeria's largest but extremely nimble agencies. In 1980, Insight Publicis was founded under the vision to develop leaders of the Industry, whilst creating great work consistently.

Today, under the leadership of its Group MD/CEO, Dr. Ken Onyeali Ikpe, the organisation prides itself in its strategic approaches to drive business transformation initiatives for its clients as well as deliver innovative solutions for sustainable business acceleration.

It is exciting that we have a good number of agencies to X-ray their level of influence within their space as well as brands in their portfolio. From an initial shortlist of a sizeable number of agencies, we further pruned it down to the current list using such criteria as agency billing, global impact, core operational values and philosophies, and quality of clientele to arrive at the top agencies featured in the spotlight on in this edition.

The work of our research team is ongoing and there is a possibility of the second part of this packaged in our subsequent editions this year. It is part of our responsibility to ensure the steady growth of the marketing communications industry for a better future for the Nigerian economy.

"As we do this we are encouraged by mails and phone calls we receive periodically from various groups, rating agencies, and organisations across Africa and Europe. One clearly told us recently that our publications and website are part of the vital tools used to gauge and x-ray the condition of Nigeria's IMC sector on a quarterly and yearly basis in their recommendations and decision making."

Nigeria's Creative Powerhouse Reaching For The Zenith



Funke Adekola, Client Business Director

By Jeremiah Agada

Brand Communicator's special feature on creative agencies in the Nigerian market who are 'blooming' in times of 'gloom' and 'doom' will be incomplete without the inclusion of a young agency which has pulled its weight in this market, even much more beyond its age in this market. Just like other players in business, this agency has equally scaled through the worst of the coronavirus pandemic, an economic downturn and a suffocating economic sphere to emerge a creative powerhouse reaching for the zenith.

The agency is Dentsu McGarryBowen, DMB for short. It is a borderless creative agency skilled for crafting brands through storytelling, design, and strategic prowess to build quality customer experiences for its clients. A fully owned agency of media and digital marketing communications network - MediaFuse Dentsu International, the young agency is one of the creative powerhouses from the MediaFuse-Dentsu International Network in Nigeria.

In 2020 while the world was still going through the throes of the coronavirus pandemic and the IMC market reacting to it, this agency was churning out innovative campaigns and avant-garde creative works. These works and campaigns have been subject to peer review and has received several accolades and recognition within and outside the Nigerian market. These campaigns have also helped the brands they handle win where it matters most- the hearts and pockets of the Nigerian consumer.

Some of these awards include two gold medals, one silver and a bronze medal clinched at the 2020 edition of the prestigious Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival (LAIF) Awards, for its works on Suntory's Lucozade brand. Suntory Nigeria had launched an integrated campaign for Lucozade to position the brand in a new light, as a brand that provides the much-needed energy (mental & physical) that is required to get through tiring situations. A specific breakdown of how it performed at the different categories shows that the campaign won two golds in the radio segment, winning Non-Alcoholic Beverage and Craft - Best Use of Music categories. The campaign also made the shortlist for the Pitcher Awards Best Use of Music category.

Also, Dentsu McGarrybowen's work for Diageo Nigeria's Orijin's brand in 2020, launched as an Independence Day campaign to mark the landmark event, really rekindle the spirit of hope in Nigerians and gave the citizens something to look forward to. It was really a reference point for the Independence celebration, creatively delivered to create a platform through which Nigerians can pour out their hearts to other Nigeria.

Orijin as a brand that prides itself on being close to the earth, the culture and the people of any nation, so naturally they wanted an approach to Nigeria's 60th anniversary that would not only stand out from the expected clutter of other independence messages and campaigns, but also be impact and resonate with the current mood of Nigerians.

Due to years and years of failed promises, corruption and mismanagement, Nigerians were in no mood for a celebration. Rather, there was a lot of tension and anger… and no real outlet. But with the Orijin Independence Day campaign, the agency magically change that. It decided to present a platform for the average Nigerians, a platform on which they can elevate their quiet murmurs to a level where they could finally get heard and maybe even breed national discourse.

Ahead of the Independence Day, it gathered several Nigerians from various walks and gave them the opportunity to address the country as though it were a person. There were expressions of anger, optimism, pain, hope and overall, there was truth.

The video and supporting materials were deployed across various mediums, along with a microsite where others could join the discourse. The results were stellar. The campaign sparked extensive conversations across the country and was soon supplanted by national discourse hashtags like #Sorosoke which means "speak up", and then came the #EndSars movement to combat police brutality. The campaigning ended up garnering two silver medals at this year's Pitcher Awards in the Design and Film categories.

The agency has also executed campaigns for global On-Demand Video giant, Netflix. As the world's leading entertainment streaming service, Netflix prides itself on pushing product innovation and delivering the best entertainment from around the world.

As a new entrant into the Nigerian TV & film market, they wanted to do something uniquely different with their initial launch of Nigeria's highest grossing movie, Kemi Adetiba's King of Boys (KOB)-The Return of the King.

Moving KOB2 out of the cinema to an entertainment streaming platform was quite the task. It was imperative to deliver the same excitement expected from a big cinema movie in Nigeria on an entertainment streaming platform that would now be seen across the world, albeit on smaller screens and devices, as well as drive downloads for Netflix.

The agency created a campaign that simply took the audience into the world of the movie and made them a part of it. It created a campaign title that is iconic enough to resonate with superfans and set the tone for the sense of the emotion the agency wanted to evoke among audiences.

The response from the audience was astounding. Within two months, KOB 2 – The series garnered the highest number of app downloads for a single title since the launch of the Netflix service in Nigeria. On release, KOB2 and KOB1 went straight to the number one and number two spots on Netflix Nigeria and both remained on the top 10 table till a few weeks ago. In addition, KOB2 became the most watched title in the country since the launch of Netflix Nigeria.

These campaigns are just few of the numerous others that has effectively established Dentsu McGarrybowen as an agency to watch in the Nigerian market, despite its relatively short foray in the market. The agency in its communications has explained that its strength comes from its ability to strategically execute briefs and anticipate clients need. "We consistently find new ways to interact and open possibilities in connecting our clients with their intended community.

"We deploy creative capabilities with our in-house strategy, creative and production teams to deliver a fully integrated campaign of any size. From gathering data to strategy formulation, execution through designs and storytelling, as well as measurements. We delight in helping our clients build and maintain a successful image through effective and targeted communication that impacts their bottom line.

"The same ingredients, but never the same recipe; our approach adapts to our clients' needs. Together with our clients, we've been able to turn effective strategy into ground-breaking creative campaigns. We service clients in a variety of industries namely; alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage, FMCG, entertainment streaming services, cab hailing services to mention a few.

Before now, Dentsu McGarrybowen was known as Dare Create, before the organisation rebranded. The reason for rebranding to DMB followed a 100% acquisition of the company by MediaFuse-Dentsu International in Nigeria.

Certainly, the sky for this young agency appears to be the beginning as industry observers are quick to opine that DMB's emergence in the creative space and its unprecedented ranking as Nigeria's fifth most creative agency in 2020 at the Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival portends a positively disruptive force for the industry by the agency.

"In 2020 while the world was still going through the throes of the coronavirus pandemic and the IMC market reacting to it, this agency was at optimal peak of performance, churning out creatively innovative campaigns and avant-garde works."

SPECIAL REPORT

isobar Innovative Creative Agency Winning With Outstanding Campaigns



Marie Awolaja, Client Service Director, Isobar



Joshua Riebelle, Deputy Creative Director, Art, Isobar



Sandra Ebulu, Deputy Creative Director, Copy, Isobar



Lola Akinyele, Associate Director, Isobar

By Azeez Disu

The COVID-19 pandemic has extensively disrupted the business terrain, forcing brands to rethink their strategy for advertising and marketing campaigns.

Even during and after the lockdown of the economy across the world due to the outbreak of the virus, campaigns like the Black Lives Matter in America and #EndSar campaign in Nigeria and others broke out further disrupting business landscape. Amid the challenges, only a few creative and innovative agencies and brands were able to weather the storm.

Remarkably, there are few agencies that were able to rise to the challenge, deploy creative and innovative marketing strategies that helped their clients navigate the tough times.

One of such leading creative agencies that helped brands steer the tough times with innovative creative campaigns is Isobar Nigeria, a global brand from the stables of Denstu.

Isobar is Dentsu's global creative agency focusing on building a differentiated offering around Strategy and Innovation, Product and Experience, Brand Design & Systems, and Communications & Content.

The agency crafts distinctive brands and innovative experiences for a connected future. It solves complex business challenges through digital marketing, ecosystems, and products, driving digital strength and brand loyalty.

According to Isobar, "We employ a brand-led approach to product and experience design. Our teams and capabilities are configured around client requirements and we apply a design-led approach with a collaborative mindset to craft products and experiences that create brands for a connected future.

"We invent and incubate new possibilities for our clients, communities, and society to develop new products, services and design the change management programmes needed to ensure they grow and thrive.

"We service clients across various business sectors and industries such as Carbonated and Soft Drinks, Beauty Care, Brewed Beverages, Dairies, FMCG and many more. "

"We employ a brand led approach to product and experience design. Our teams and capabilities are configured around client requirements and we apply a design-led approach with a collaborative mindset."

Deploying Innovative Campaigns

"Innovation is the unrelenting drive to break the status quo and develop anew where few have dared to go, "Steven Jeffes, Marketing & business expert once said.

The above quote aligns with the tenacity and innovative thinking coming from the stables of Isobar. Excitingly, the agency remains one of the leading creative agencies deploying innovative campaigns for clients, even amidst global pandemic, economic challenges and changing consumers' behaviour.

It has numerous clients who are leaders in their various marketing spaces. The brands continue to capture a larger share of the market courtesy of their partnership with Isobar.

One of such laudable campaigns for one of its clients' brands is for Budweiser tagged "King of Beers Campaign". Budweiser launched into the Nigerian market and entrenched itself as the King of Beers in a category saturated with long-standing/multiple beer brands.

To differentiate them and launch the brand, it leveraged popular culture to reach its audience distinctly and all KPI's set for the launch campaign were surpassed. The campaign not only built equity for the brand it also made Budweiser not just a beer, but a lifestyle in Nigeria.

"Taking a cue from Game of Thrones, (one of the most-watched TV series by our TA), we created a King's hand character who heralded the arrival of the King in Nigeria. Using disruptive videos for the first time in Nigeria, the King's Hand directed people to the King's website, kingishere.com, to take a King's test that would prove their worthiness to attend the King's event (the Budweiser launch event).

"Few days before the launch, we had a Royal cavalcade with vintage American cars tour major streets in Lagos to announce the King's arrival in Nigeria. We also took over two popular radio stations and renamed them, King FM, in the days preceding the launch. All this culminated to Bud Hotel, the event itself where the arrival of the King was celebrated with 800 guests," the agency disclosed.

On another note, through the "Banter Better with Coca-Cola campaign", the Coca-Cola Nigeria brand, was able to further disrupt the carbonated soft drink (CSD) market. Through this the brand achieve bespoke consumer engagement.

Essentially, Coca-Cola tasked Isobar with a unique challenge which is to activate its Premier League sponsorship package in a way that was different from others of its kind.

On how it was able to achieve the top-of-the-mind awareness for the brand, the agency revealed that "For a sport affiliated with beer, how could we turn EPL viewing occasions into Coca-Cola consumption moments? To achieve this, we tapped actively into fans' culture of using banter to navigate their clubs' high and low moments. We invited Nigeria to Banter Better with Coca-Cola.

"We introduced the campaign by posting creatives that teased the highs and lows of iconic up Premier League clubs to engage their fans. Core fans rushed to the defense of their clubs while tagging opposing fans to join in the banter. Next, we took to the streets to capture organic fan insight to the question: "what does banter mean to you?". The result was a serialized vox pop that earned over 1.5 million views.

"And as they prepped for the next week's games, we targeted sports sites that hosted pre-game squad lists and used them to deliver our message reminding fans to "stock-up" their fridges with a bottle of ice-cold Coca-Cola.

"As a product, Coca-Cola has strong intrinsic credibility of providing upliftment and refreshment to millions. And as a brand, it has served as an enabler of social connections. By bringing these two together for this campaign, we were able to invite Nigeria to Banter Better with Coca-Cola.

In another vein, an outstanding campaign was also that deployed for Nivea Nigeria. The title of the campaign is "Clear the Air".

Noteworthy, in 2020, NIVEA Nigeria launched an integrated campaign to tackle body odour using humour with its range of Dry Deodorant.

The campaign kicked off with the announcement of the brand's partnership with popular Nigerian artist, Skiibii known for his hit, Daz How Stars Do, and multi-talented actress, Beverly Naya. The campaign which ran for 4 months drove conversations around body odor across different touchpoints.

It also partnered with 3rd party media platforms to engage the brand's audience and hit the streets to educate consumers about body odor, this was amplified online and generated a lot of buzzes. It also launched a video series online featuring two of the hottest Instagram Comedy influencers to highlight different relatable scenarios you can encounter someone with body odor. In less than a month, it had hit 1.8m organic reach on one of the online video series.

According to the statement from the agency, reeling that other data and the milestone achieved for the brand within the short period, it said, "We were able to keep the NIVEA Dry products as top of mind when it comes to tackling body odor throughout the campaign. With the #ClearTheAir campaign, we were able to reach 2,300,253 + people organically, drive over 2,272,026 social engagements, and generated over 25,000 new social followers."

On a global scene, recall, creative and strategy part of the 'Draw The Line' for Malaria No More UK was done by Isobar. Isobar Amsterdam, with Dentsu media agencies iProspect and Carat collaborating to drive media planning across multiple African markets including Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zambia as well as target donor markets including the UK, USA, Japan, and Australia. The digital platform was created by Isobar in collaboration with Firstborn.

Dentsu worked with the non-profit organisation Malaria No More to create a global brand, campaign, and movement that would raise awareness, galvanise communities, and influence world leaders to take action to deliver the UN Sustainable Development goal to end malaria by 2030.

Remarkably, since launching in Africa in February 2021, 'Draw the Line Against Malaria' has continued to build momentum with a supporting animation voiced by Grammy Award-winning Nigerian Afropop singer, songwriter, actress and activist, Yemi Alade, on World Malaria Day in April this year. Isobar UK and Malaria No More UK also launched a new interactive tracker in June to help Commonwealth countries review progress against their commitments in the fight against malaria.

Winning Awards

Vince Lombardi, American football coach, once said, "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing."

The above quote also applies to agencies like Isobar who go all out to make a difference. Its winning streaks align with the above quote, clinching notable industry awards and recognitions.

For example, in 2020, the campaign it ran for NIVEA went on to win big at Pitcher Awards.

Noteworthy, NIVEA Nigeria launched an integrated campaign to tackle body odour using humour with its range of Dry Deodorant. For the campaign, it won Bronze for the Integrated Campaigns category and also won Bronze for Use of Media category.

Similarly, in 2020, Coca-Cola launched the Banter Better with Coca-Cola Campaign. This campaign went on to win at Pitcher Awards, winning Silver in the Social Media Campaigns category and Silver in the Use of Media category.

Also, the campaign won at LAIF Awards, clinching Silver in the Digital Craft - Best use of Digital & Social Media Content category and Bronze in the Press - Non-Alcoholic Beverages category.

In 2020, it also won other medals at the LAIF Awards making it one of the outstanding agencies on the medal table. For the innovative launch of Brewed for Naija Kings Campaign for Budweiser, it also won Silver in the Film Craft - Best Film Editing category.

Other medals won at 2020 edition of the awards are: Silver: Radio - Alcoholic Beverages, Silver: Radio Craft- Best Casting & Performance, Bronze - Film Craft - Best use of TV Animation, Bronze - Radio Craft- Best Use of Music, and Bronze - Radio Craft- Best Use of Copy.

Leo Burnett | Lagos

Resilient "HumanKind" Agency Disrupting The Creative World



Tunde Shonbanjo, COO/Head of Business



Esosa Osagiede. Creative Lead



Emeka.Obia. Lead, Strategy & Planning



Fagbemi Osinuga, Head of Experience

By Azeez Disu

At a time, COVID-19 disrupted the business landscape, forcing many brands and agencies to rethink their strategy. Some regrettably had to close shop. Amazingly, only a few outstanding companies were able to weather the storm effectively.

For example, in Nigeria, despite the challenges, some companies turned out stronger and very innovative because of their resilience.

In Nigeria's creative advertising space, there exist some innovative agencies churning out top-notch world-class campaigns for brands, even in these challenging times. One of the leading agencies disrupting the creative spaces is Leo Burnett Lagos.

The exploits of Leo Burnett Lagos, a humankind company and a leading creative advertising firm based in Nigeria and handling global accounts speaks volumes about its leadership. Interestingly, its scintillating story is that of resilience, creativity, and innovation.

Its ability to use the HumanKind™ playbook to mind map the creative thinking process into crafting original, disruptive, transformative ideas is rooted in a deep understanding of human behaviour.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the agency, Babatunde Shobanjo, gave the trajectory of the agency, "We started as TheThinkShop and very quickly we were able to shake up the industry to do some impressive and impactful work for big brands like Konga, Heritage bank and a few others. Our mantra had always been to outthink and not to outspend competition. We then evolved to Leo Burnett Lagos, hence becoming the second full Leo Burnett agency in Africa.

"The affiliation enabled us to maintain steady growth leveraging global tools and best practices to deliver value for clients such as Nestle, World Bank IFC, CDK, and several other brands.

I'm grateful to have been part of this growth curve from the beginning and even more excited to be leading the challenge to take the Leo Burnett brand into the next phase of growth as the COO. I'm super proud to have a young, brilliant, and committed team on this journey with me," he said.

It is noteworthy that the agency was recently appointed as the creative communications partner for one of the world's largest quick-service restaurants (QSR) chains franchise, Burger King Nigeria, franchisee of Allied Food & Confectionery Services Limited. Also, in addition to winning the account of American financial technology and service company, Wahed Invest.

According to the agency, its success story is its commitment to professionalism and dedication to best practices in the advertising business.

From all indications, Leo Burnett is one agency to watch out for, one of the booming agencies in these gloomy times, poised to bring ground-breaking innovations into the industry.

Thriving in Challenging Times

In assessing the creative advertising landscape in the country, especially with the effect of Covid-19 on most businesses, Shobanjo said, "Clients will be increasingly looking for consolidation of their marketing spending with fewer partners - for cohesive messaging and better efficiency. For companies like Leo Burnett Lagos that have capabilities from long-term brand-building and traditional advertising to digital and experience, 2021 will be full of opportunities. We are focused, working closely with our clients, partnering with them in their digital transformation journey, and in the process, opening up many new revenue streams for ourselves.

"The 'new normal' has created some behavioural shifts. One thing we can probably all agree on is that the media industry may never be the same, and we're experiencing a sea of change both in how content is produced and consumed - and intelligent advertisers are stepping up and adjusting to the quickly evolving times.

"The exploits of Leo Burnett Lagos, a humankind company and a leading creative advertising firm based in Nigeria and handling global accounts speaks volumes about its leadership. Interestingly, its scintillating story is that of resilience, creativity, and innovation."

"The new norm in the Creative Advertising practice demands self-direction and a thirst for making big decisions quickly. Digital capabilities have to be a watchword for all practitioners," he said.

He added, "With the pandemic still around and the economic outlook in Nigeria gloomy, we owe our clients the responsibility to help them find creative solutions to the problems they face. Beyond being agile to react to ever-changing competitive environments, we must stay conscious of the broader trends taking place as the pandemic influences the way consumers behave by ensuring our engagement activities are relevant.

"We have also supported our clients through content reimagination. For us, it was about what content could we help clients refresh, reuse, repurpose or re-imagine?

"We have also realized the priceless value and importance of partnerships. Overall, collaborating effectively, with trust and respect, has been the foundation for success."

Operational Philosophies and Competition

Operational philosophies guiding the operations of the agency over the years are around deploying distinct and engaging communications strategies that help clients share their campaign messages with the target audience in the most effective manner.

"At Leo Burnett Lagos, we believe that creativity is the most powerful business today - and the pandemic further validated this thinking. In an increasingly commoditized world, creativity is the most significant competitive advantage for our clients and their brands. Our ability to use the HumanKind™ playbook to mind map our creative thinking process into crafting original, disruptive, transformative ideas is rooted in a deep understanding of human behaviour.

"This proprietary tool challenges old thinking by framing key issues to help us solve them. It's what we bring to every business problem. We started life as an advertising agency, but we've completely transformed our business. We embrace technology as a critical enabler of creativity. We're continuously innovating to build new services and capabilities to deliver unique solutions for our clients, especially in these difficult times," Shobanjo pointed.

He explained further that "The HumanKind™, philosophy which guides our company today, is a direct manifestation of Leo Burnett's view of people and ideas.

"We are currently positioned as a boutique agency, differentiating us from the traditional full-service agencies - we're now focusing a lot more on niche clients, offering specialized services to suit their specific needs.

"We're constantly leveraging "Humankind" - our DNA and platform for Consumer Marketing, Strategy, Experience Design and Implementation which are our key levers for differentiation."

Creative Innovations

"Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower," Steve Jobs once said.

In line with the above quote, one of the creative innovations the agency has deployed is its recently launched Leo Burnett Experience. It has helped the agency deliver superior ROI.

"We strengthened our capabilities and recently launched Leo Burnett Experience, a unit that allows us to create a landscape of technology-enabled experiential solutions that enable consumers to interact and engage with brands to increase competitive advantage and offer superior ROI. LBX offers Events, Activations & Experiences; Shopper marketing, trade marketing, and promotions. We have also deepened our digital experience capabilities leveraging the best talents, tools, and best practices to deliver compelling brand experiences online," Shobanjo disclosed.

He explained further that the innovations from the agency have also helped grow its relationship with clients helping them grow their business. "These innovations have allowed us to build stronger relationships with clients, and deliver impeccable, effective, relevant, and measurable results for our clients in real-time," he said.

On leveraging digital, he stated that "As a global agency, we are blessed with great tools from around our global network. It's by bringing technology and creativity together, that you get some things that no one else can bring. So, I'd say that we are taking on the role of modern marketing agencies.

"I think that in a few years, modern marketing practices will get internalised as just marketing, and if we continue to solve business problems, then as an industry we'll go back to the glory days of having a seat at the CEO and Board's table, as partners of the CMO."

Also, Leo Burnett has spearheaded some of the best industry-changing campaigns, as it moves towards becoming the world's best creator of ideas that truly move people. These include the Chivita Active Zest Launch Campaign; Nasco's Whole Flaked Sustenance Campaign, Nivea's Beauty Month Campaign, as well as the launch campaign for Lipton Ice Tea, and the relaunch of Philip Morris International in the Nigerian market, among others.

Recognitions and Future Projection

While many might buckle under the pressure, highly decorated Leo Burnett is more than capable of succeeding based on past achievements and campaigns. As the record shows, in 2019, at the Brandcom Festival in Lagos, they were conferred the Young Advertising Agency of The Year award. At the 2019 Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival (LAIF) Awards, Leo Burnett was awarded one gold, three silver, and four bronze medals.

Commending on future projection and what the agency is planning, "We are building and strengthening our proprietary assets to enable us to deliver immense value to our clients, and we have recently been attracting technology companies, whose needs are unique and personalized - so we are constantly deepening our capabilities and creating customized consumer experiences solutions to help these companies in their pursuit of growth and, integrated consumer experiences.

The future looks bright and promising and we are well armed and positioned to take it head on!"

SPECIAL REPORT

Sixteen Years Of Innovatively Revving Brands Performance

Nitro121, a through-the-line brand building company formerly known as '141 Worldwide', was founded in 2005 on strong and long cherished values of Responsibility, Integrity, Gusto, Harmony and Transparency which spell out the acronym 'RIGHT'.

The agency provides creative marketing communication, brand strategy, experiential marketing, digital marketing and multimedia technology solutions for leading companies and brands such as GOtv, Bajaj, BAT, Arla Dano, M-KOPA, Total, First Bank, Molped, British Council, Trophy stout, Honeywell and Afrissance amongst others.

Nitro121's cutting-edge solutions that are adaptable across channels of communication and driven by being strategic, insightful and creative whilst being cost-effective, have helped clients grow their businesses significantly.

The Nitro121 brand identity of being high performing, connecting, unfettered, enterprising and youthful is hinged on its pit-stop philosophy inspired by Formula One (F1) car racing. Nitro121 is positioned as a pit-stop where brands and businesses come to, and their performance improves.

Over the past 2 years, the Agency has been involved in marketing communications with top reality shows including Big Brother Naija for GOtv and Dano, The Voice Nigeria for First Bank and Trophy Extra Special Band for Trophy Stout.

Between 2020 and 2021, Nitro 121's strategic input and marketing communication helped client Bajaj rebrand its RE 250 3-wheeler and smash sales records to overtake competition after 3 years. Bajaj Auto Limited delivered this by engineering an upgraded, more superior, durable and reliable 3-Wheeler model that has now become the most sought after brand in the 3W category in the Nigerian market (especially in Lagos) with the core needs of the Nigerian rider in mind. This was communicated seamlessly by Nitro 121's marketing campaign which helped Bajaj RE 250 to hit a huge milestone of 10,000 vehicle unit sales mark within 6 months of the pan-Nigeria launch and significant growth of Bajaj Auto market share.

High level of brand awareness was generated using all forms of media blitz, and the strategic signing of Jay Jay Okocha, Nigerian football legend, as brand ambassador resonated with a passion point connected to the target audience; their love for discussing and watching sports.



Lampe Omoyele, MD, Nitro 121

With Arla Dano, the success at what one could consider a tedious pitch process was just the genesis of the birth of another compelling campaign. The Arla Dano GO FOR IT message speaks to individuals and the Nation at large, to GO FOR IT despite challenges.

The team had two months to deliver on the campaign materials i.e., TV commercial, Radio Commercial & Jingle and OOH concepts– it took sleepless nights, countless meetings and pressure from all stakeholders involved on what eventually became a well-received TVC within the industry which is being celebrated with immense positive reviews. This is a testament which shows the Agency's hard work and creativity behind closed doors. During the daily commute around the Lagos metropolis, at some point you will find eye catching, bold and engaging RED billboards which communicate "ARLA DANO - GO FOR IT" visually led with the Dano product range or a young-looking genius boy with a message "MAKE YOUR DREAM A REALITY...GO FOR IT!"

Nitro 121 has also received commendation from Hayat Kimya Nigeria for helping to place the company on the global map as a centre of excellence for digital execution with its digital marketing campaign for Molped.

In addition to supporting businesses and brands, Nitro 121 also supports causes such as the Nitro 121 street-to-school campaign where the Company sponsors the education of indigent children and provides food items to those in need.

"Nitro121's cutting-edge solutions that are adaptable across channels of communication and driven by being strategic, insightful and creative whilst being cost-effective, have helped clients grow their businesses significantly. The Nitro121 brand identity of being high performing, connecting, unfettered, enterprising and youthful is hinged on its pit-stop philosophy inspired by Formula One (F1) car racing. Nitro121 is positioned as a pit-stop where brands and businesses come to, and their performance improves."



Display of a impressive creative by NITRO 121

Deploying Innovation, Creativity Without Borders For Brands

By Azeez Disu

The advertising landscape in Nigeria is growing in momentum as creative works from the country are now showcased across the world on international award platforms.

As a result, the country is now on the global map as one of the best destinations for creativity, the reason many international advertising agencies are striking affiliation deals with reputable Nigerian creative agencies.

According to a PWC report, Nigeria is one of the largest advertising markets in Africa with total advertising revenue of $483 million (N193 billion) in 2020. Excitingly, one of the leading innovative creative advertising agencies contributing to the growth of the industry is Ogilvy Nigeria.

Ogilvy Nigeria, a full-service agency, lives and breathes the philosophy of borderless creativity by utilising data, creativity and insights to create content that reflects diverse cultures that bring consumers closer to brands. This has helped the agency to win the portfolio of some of the world's leading brands.

It also dives into Ogilvy's network of expertise and tools in search of the strongest, most insightful, and relevant creative ways to bring value to its clientele. This has helped the agency to create world-class content and campaigns.

Ogilvy Nigeria Trajectory

Ogilvy Nigeria was birthed on the 5th of July 2018 after WPP, a British multinational communications company, acquired a 24.9% stake in First Primus Group.

Meanwhile, First Primus Group founded by Otunba Seni Adetu is home to Ogilvy Nigeria as well as Algorithm Media which is in partnership with GroupM/WPP media network agencies such as MediaCom, Wavemaker and Mindshare.

Ogilvy Nigeria became the 24th Ogilvy office in Sub-Saharan Africa. It had an official opening ceremony on Friday, September 28, 2018, at the Landmark Event Centre, Lagos.

Since then, Ogilvy Nigeria has been operating as a full-service creative agency. And in just three years, Ogilvy Nigeria has won over 8 new local Accounts ranging from FMCG to Fintech. Ogilvy Nigeria is also in partnership with multinational accounts such as Mondelez, Philips, Kotex, American Express, BMGF and NBC Universal.

It is currently ranked amongst the top 6 creative agencies in the country based on its wins at the Lagos Advertising & Ideas Festival (LAIF) Awards last year. And its strongest assets remain its people and extensive network.

Award-Winning Works

The agency has run a series of award-winning works and campaigns for brands and in the last two years, one of such is the "Mama Di Mama" campaign for Coca-Cola.

This was its first major campaign as an agency and it started as a simple launch campaign of the Coca-Cola 1 litre bottle, however, it ended up as one of the most talked-about bottle launches at the time and even won an award for the Best use of music.

There are many aspects of the campaign that resonated with the target audience. However, the thing that resonated the most was the portrayal of the Nigerian mother and how gifted she is in bringing her family together by sharing her time with them and sharing the things she loves like a bottle of Coca-Cola with her family.





"In just three years, Ogilvy Nigeria has won over 8 new local Accounts ranging from FMCG to Fintech. Ogilvy Nigeria is also in partnership with multinational accounts such as Mondelez, Philips, Kotex, American Express, BMGF and NBC Universal. It is currently ranked amongst the top 6 creative agencies in the country based on its wins at the Lagos Advertising & Ideas Festival (LAIF) Awards last year. And its strongest assets remain its people and extensive network."

Noteworthy, Coca-Cola Nigeria released the hip-hop remix of the 'MamaDiMama' soundtrack. The remix was produced by and featured music icon, Tuface. Tuface's remix of the song celebrates the hero in his beloved Annie.

In a nutshell, the soundtrack featured in the MamaDiMama advert reinforces Coca-Cola's commitment to inspiring and celebrating intimate family moments. The remix gave Tuface the chance to share his appreciation for Annie's role in creating intimate moments within the Idibia home and with his adoring fans.

Interestingly, it was this music that earned Ogilvy Nigeria a silver award at the 2020 LAIF Awards.

The agency also helped the Schweppes brand which is known for its "impactful simplicity" to achieve a greater result with its award-winning campaign tagged 'Schweppes Character Required".

Another laudable initiative is the Coca-Cola/AFCON campaign. This campaign spurred a fresh narrative about how, just like the players in the Super Eagles, every Nigerian has a role to play in keeping Nigeria united. The campaign ran just after two major political parties went head-to-head at a national election. This narrative is true to Coca-Cola's brand purpose which is centred on bridging divides.

Another great thing that happened in that period was how it succeeded in shooting the scene of the Super Eagles players and the entire coaching crew in their locker room.

Commending the accomplishment, Ogilvy disclosed "We then found out that we were the first agency to accomplish this, we are so proud to be working in an agency that's full of people who have an immense drive to accomplish such feats. We won a silver award for this work."

The execution of the Telemundo Betty in New York brief also showed mastery and professionalism from the creative agency.

Telemundo which is owned by NBC Universal reached out to Ogilvy about using the launch of the Betty in New York Season premiere to increase the passion of the brand among its Nigerian fans.

In executing the campaign, it did something that sparked excitement among the fans. It gave fans the power to ask actors and actresses in the show to say certain Nigerian slang and speak in certain Nigerian languages as a way to connect to their Nigerian fanbase. The success of the campaign didn't only win the confidence of the Global brand, it also won the agency gold at the 2020 LAIF awards.

Another great feat was its collaboration with other agencies to create the "Banter Better with Coke" campaign which was created to announce Coca-Cola's EPL partnership. The idea was centred around a very popular but often ignored activity around football and its fans – banter.

"The message was simple; You love to talk, brag and bond before, during and after every game of football, do it better by staying refreshed with a chilled bottle of Coke.

"Since "banter" involves verbal communication and sound cues, we spent a lot of our time interpreting our Banter Better idea on radio commercials. It wasn't easy capturing spontaneous and humorous banter moments the way true football fans enjoy it, but we did it and were rewarded for it. The radios got us two gold awards," the agency disclosed.

The agency also won Bronze for the Coca-Cola Stay Safe campaign for Ads That Never Ran at the 2020 LAIF awards. Recall, at the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic a lot of brands came up with creative campaigns to educate their beloved consumers and fans about the Pandemic. This was done to prevent panic and confusion, to advise and inform them on ways to stay safe and ultimately inspire them to take certain actions that ensure their safety. The agency created a simple ad with the famous Coca-Cola visual identity but unfortunately, it didn't get to publish it.

Innovative Campaigns And CSR

The agency continues to be a leading creative powerhouse in the country, deploying innovative campaigns for clients and brands like Cadbury, TomTom, Coca-Cola amongst others.

Remarkably, between 2020 and 2021, it leveraged the Cadbury equity to justify, the brand's premium pricing of its Hot Chocolate Drink with a campaign stirred from the insight that "In an increasingly selfish world, a little goodness can make a huge difference." The campaign resonated with the consumers and helped the brand achieve great marketing success.

Similarly, the agency created an appealing campaign for Bournvita that deepened the brand affinity and drove sales. The insight that drove the campaign was "Strength from within that gives Strength to Dream."

The TomTom 'Breath for It' TVC, is one of the latest works of Ogilvy Nigeria. The insight behind the TVC according to the agency was that "Consumers in the brand's target market are enthusiastic about their passion and want to be recognized for what they are doing." This truth combined with creative craft breathed this dynamic TVC that combines poetry and brand truth in a simple and yet captivating way.

Asides from the brands mentioned earlier, Ogilvy Nigeria also works for accounts such as Flour Mills Nigeria, 5alive amongst others.

One of the most popular campaigns in its archive is the Golden Penny, "your way is best" campaign. People like to get creative when preparing their pasta because it's fun to eat. That's why the campaign encouraged the target audience to be creative with their pasta and enjoy it their way because Golden Penny which is made with Durum wheat, allows them to make and enjoy pasta just the way they like it.

As regards deploying innovative Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), on Valentine's Day the agency saw it as a perfect time and opportunity to spread love to strangers by donating blood and championing the campaign on blood donation, so it decided to be part of the Lagos State Blood Transfusion Committee drive. This was held to encourage blood donation in Lagos state amongst young professionals.

In essence, the agency continues to innovate by shaping the advertising landscape through creativity and by helping brands irrespective of their target market to connect to consumers whose behaviours and preferences are changing by the day while at the same time contributing to humanity and creating a better world.



SPECIAL REPORT



It is said, the Lion never roars after a kill.

*But sometimes it's good to make small noise sha...

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Sustaining A Legacy Of Creative Excellence

By Jeremiah Agada

It's been a hectic two years for businesses. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in late 2019, the momentum it gathered in 2020, and the evolution of different variants have affected almost every sector of the economy. As one of the worst human health and economic crises ever experienced, the impact on the creative industry has been devastating.

With the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, several countries induced complete lockdown to prevent the spread of the infection. The widespread travel restrictions and temporary business closures triggered creative agencies to battle the new challenges presented by Covid-19. However, creative agencies are no strangers to economic downturns. Learning from experience, they can successfully sail through recession, political scenarios, and economic pressures.

The ongoing crisis has not only presented the world with unprecedented challenges, but also opened up various opportunities for creative brands to disrupt and grow in the market. Many businesses continued to count on creative agencies to formulate innovative strategies to help them thrive in adversity. This is not unrelated to the fact that creative agencies have remained the driving force behind brands' visibility and growth.

To help brands stay ahead of the competition during the crises, forward-thinking agencies and creative professionals began to quickly invest resources in elevating in-house capacity and skills. With rapidly changing marketing needs, there was more demand for hybrid skills and versatility.

These uncertain times have also meant shifts in consumer spending to necessities, deeply affecting the way people live, work and buy products. Consumers now consider health as the utmost priority, ensuring the financial and medical security of their families.

As a result, managing a creative agency amid the pandemic has been all about managing these nuances. The better the execution of a retention strategy, the higher the chances of forestalling customer attrition. Right after the announcement of the lockdown, many creative agencies lost clients – temporarily and permanently. However, the key to surviving in the market has been effective communication and trust-building. To keep a valuable relationship with the client during such a crisis, creative agencies have worked to present innovative ideas for new campaigns, execution, budget, messaging, and other aspects of building brands.

Only the creative shops that have successfully achieved these have been able to survive, thrive and even 'boom' in what has been described as 'gloomy times' for the entire integrated marketing communication industry in Nigeria.

Conversely, this special Brand Communicator feature project, showcasing creative advertising agencies thriving in the Nigerian market despite the times, has chosen to spotlight one such agency. The agency in this edition's spotlight has churned out many groundbreaking works and campaigns, such as the 'Be the Spec' 2Sure Antibacterial Soap Campaign, launch and work in the energy drink space with the disruptive Supa Komando, Pepsi's 'For the Love of It' campaign, the relaunch of the Gulder brand, as well as the resurgence of the Gulder Ultimate Search reality TV Show, the Keystone #MakeItHappen campaign, among others.

These campaigns have been described, among other things, as worthy of reference and emulation. Quite unsurprisingly, these great works and campaigns come from the stables of one of Africa's biggest creative powerhouses, domiciled in the ever-bustling city of Lagos - Insight Publicis (formerly known as Insight Communications). In 1980, Insight Publicis was founded under the vision to develop leaders of the Industry, whilst creating great work consistently.

Today, under the leadership of its Group MD/CEO, Dr. Ken Onyeali Ikpe, Insight Publicis is a part of the Insight Redefini Group. The organisation prides itself in its strategic approaches to driving business transformation initiatives for its clients, as well as delivering innovative solutions for sustainable business acceleration.

In 2015, Insight Publicis became a part of the 3rd largest global marketing communications network – Publicis Groupé - a partnership that allows Insight Publicis to adapt to global best practice and innovation for campaigns across markets in Africa, as well as beyond the continent. The vision is to ensure that Insight Publicis operates with clients at the center of service delivery. This approach to work has overtime become a fertile ground for memorable and innovative ideas, some of which we all love and have used in advertising schools as case studies.

With a strong heritage serving local and international organisations, the company has contributed to the growth of its many clients' brands across industries and sub-sectors,



Dr. Ken Onyeali Ikpe, Group CEO, Insight Redefini

delivering a range of services from Strategic Planning, Brand Management, Creative Content Development, Digital Marketing, and Advertising. Insight Publicis' trajectory, as defined by recent initiatives, points to diversification in platforms, e-commerce, tech-based solutions, and business value chain optimization.

Just last year, the company celebrated its 40th anniversary. Fondly referred to as Nigeria's advertising university, Insight Publicis clocked 40 on January 2, 2020, marking the milestone with a campaign it termed #Still Foolish. The campaign was a celebration of the idea that every single groundbreaking invention was termed foolish when it was first pitched. The anniversary was built around a 'foolish joke' that started in 1980, when a young Biodun Shobanjo ditched a high-paying job to embark on a journey with a capital of N128000, a debt of N104000, and a business worth N15000, alongside 18 people, has today become a multibillion-naira business.

Over the years, Insight Publicis has received national and international acclaim for exceptional work delivered with major brands, such as SBC, Pepsico, Nigerian Breweries, Dufil Prima, Friesland Camprina, First City Monument Bank (FMCB), Nestle Nigeria, Visa, amongst others. It has also been associated with excellent creative thinking, launching some of Nigeria's most viral campaigns, such as Miranda's "Three Orange men", Pepsi "Long Throat" Bottle, Nestle Milo's "Clap", Peak Milk's "Milk at its Peak", and Bank PHB's "Cars Will Run on Water".

"To provide clarity on its efforts to ensure relevance and sustained growth, Dr. Ken clarified that the strategy has always rested on four timeless pillars which seek to focus on product creation, quality delivery, speed to market and return on investment."

On the milestone, Dr. Ikpe had noted: "We are celebrating 40 years of the audacity of one man who took the decision to weave in the spirit of never-ending thinking and the character trait of disruption into the fabric of the organization. We are celebrating determination, innovation, dynamic business models and reward for tenacity."

To provide clarity on its efforts to ensure relevance and sustained growth, Dr. Ken clarified that the company's approach has always rested on four timeless pillars, which seek to drive product development, quality service delivery, speed to market and return on investment. He said, "Our transformational vision, which has been in operation for three years now, is to de-emphasize a focus on downstream services and elevate midstream refinement and design thinking, which would further propel us to achieve our long-term plans to operate upstream - where decisions on major business trajectories are made".

Now in its 41st year as the behemoth birthed out of 'foolishness', the company, guided by the Group Creative Director, Sinmisola Hughes-Obisesan, has not relented in churning out work and campaigns that make Insight Publicis the toast of numerous clients who trust it to meet their marketing needs.

We present to you, in this package, six selected salacious campaigns dissected to draw out deep thinking applied in crafting such successes, as well as present an insider perspective on the juicy Insights that led to some of the most revered African campaigns in recent times.

The Birth Of The 2Sure Brand

Barely 24 hours after Nigeria recorded its first case of Covid-19, scarcity of sanitizers and other antibacterial products hit the country. Sanitizer prices skyrocketed, and fears spread like wildfire. This was certainly a big problem that required an immediate solution. SBC, in its usual approach to meeting consumers' needs, was the unlikely hero that 'belled' the proverbial cat. Engaging Insight Publicis, the company gave what may appear to be a very simple task: "We want to provide Nigerians with premium, yet affordable and easily accessible hand sanitizers."

Knowing that the gap in the Nigerian market for affordable, premium hand and surface sanitizers had to be filled quickly, it was important for SBC to be innovative and stand out. It made sense to not do the ordinary. And so, Nigeria's first hand and surface sanitizer was developed and introduced to the market with a strong campaign proposition.

For the company, Nigerians needed to be double sure they could be protected from germs and live well. More importantly, affordability and accessibility became the watchwords. The message was clear: 'Be too-sure of your safety from germs and other infectious microbodies'.

How did Insight drive this message? It began by leveraging influencers - influencers provide an authentic and relevant voice that audiences crave. So, the company switched things up by creating a fresh brand character to not just drive home the 2Sure brand message, but also be the face of the 2Sure brand.

This decision birthed "Aunty 2Sure", an iconic persona that would be relatable to all Nigerians. Aunty 2Sure stood for care, protection, assurance, authenticity; all key characteristics representative of the 2Sure brand. As the brand advocate, she would not just represent the brand, but fully embody and express what it means to stop germs and live well in an emotive, caring way.

Aunty 2Sure was personified by delectable Nollywood actress, Dakore Egbuson. Her creative introduction as the face of the brand began with actor Timini Egbuson's hype of Dakore as his 'Aunty Toh Sure' on his birthday. This generated an #AuntyTohSure trend, from which other '#AuntytohSures' arose. Dakore herself stepped into the fray to reveal that she is not only an "Aunty Toh Sure", but also Aunty 2Sure, the face of 2Sure hand and surface sanitizer brand. Tweets like, "Our time together becomes special when we are 2Sure about protection from germs. #Be2Sure #Aunty2Sure", from her page, ensured that the brand reached consumers online.

By leveraging the strong Aunty 2Sure persona, Insight Publicis was able help SBC communicate the effectiveness of its newly found product to consumers, making the brand even



more accessible.

As a brand that was created during a need, the 2Sure brand has certainly delivered on its promises, positively impacting millions of Nigerian lives when it truly mattered. It has created such an impact that, when sanitizers are mentioned in Nigeria today, consumers often think 2Sure! With strong brand recall, the 2sure brand has not only become a household name, supermarkets and corporate organisations nationwide now stock their aisles and offices with the 2Sure hand and surface sanitizer.

More importantly, 2Sure has evolved from being associated only with sanitizers to birthing an extension of other home and personal care products that equally fulfill Nigerians sanitation and hygiene needs.

'Be The Spec; Be 2Sure' Campaign

Across the world, good hygiene is fundamental for good health, social and economic development. However, in Nigeria, millions of people do not have access to quality hygiene products that can help to reduce the transmission of diseases and improve their quality of life daily. With increasing health concerns and gradual recovery from a global pandemic, the demand for effective yet affordable premium products have become a critical need for all.

Following a successful introduction into the Nigerian home and personal category in 2020, with its Hand and Surface Sanitizers, 2Sure has evolved to address the growing demand for premium affordable hygiene products. This demand gave birth to the 2Sure Antibacterial range of soaps, a premium quality and affordable soap that offers maximum protection for you and your loved ones against germs and infections. It is available in 3 variants - 2Sure Original, 2Sure Cool and 2Sure Herbal Moisture Plus.

Now, to bring the brand's essence to life, the 'Be The Spec (Be 2Sure)' campaign was developed by Insight Publicis to create awareness of the prevalence of germs and the importance of having clean, healthy skin as well as to introduce and establish the essence of 2Sure antibacterial soap.

The campaign was built on the insights that grooming and meticulous styling has become the trend in an increasingly hygienic world and men who do this as a way of life become 'The Spec'. The Spec, in this regard, believes that ensuring he looks good is a sign of respect to the people around him. He takes care of himself as a sign of respect to everyone around him; understands that self-care is vital; and invites others to follow his lead in taking care of themselves.

With this insight, the mega-agency set out to encourage Nigerian men to stay stylish by caring for their skin. This onerous task required the careful balancing of the traditional Nigerian man mixed with ambiguous sexuality and topped up with a hint of narcissism. Not too much to create an ego-filled monster, but just enough for men to feel secure in their masculinity while still striving to look good for themselves and others.

The biggest challenge in developing the strategy had to be choosing the right ambassador to spearhead the campaign. He had to be somebody Nigerians looked up to for style and hygiene guidance - someone that could embody 2Sure's brand essence.

The agency found its Spec in Ebuka Obi-Uchendu, a media personality well-known for hosting the reality show, Big Brother Naija, and other top TV shows. Famed for his innate sense of style, he had been credited with originating multiple trends that have swept the country. Successful not only in his grooming but also in other areas in his life, he personified who 'The Spec' ideally is.

With Ebuka fully onboard, it was then left to develop a contemporary, clutter-breaking campaign that would excite the target audience and have the product flying off the shelves. Collaborating with the client, Insight Publicis made a team decision on its campaign strategy, and then came to the creative execution "Be the Spec, Be 2Sure".





The 2Sure team

With Big Brother Nigeria (BBN) being a national phenomenon with millions of viewers tuning in every day, especially during the Sunday night eviction shows, it is understandable that the host, Ebuka, receives such attention and why the team at Insight Publicis wanted to capitalize on it. With that rationale, it set out to launch the campaign on one of the most-watched eviction nights of the BBN show - the week before the grand finale.

To ensure the successful penetration of the campaign, the agency went all out to adopt a 360 campaign that connected at every point of the consumer journey. The campaign was strategically amplified on ATL and BTL channels, across digital, TVC, radio, out-of-home, print publications and point-of-sale marketing.

The campaign went viral as social media lit up. With millions of impressions and positive comments, in addition to earned media, we can say 'To Be the Spec, You've got to be 2Sure' might just be the next style and hygiene trend in Nigeria.

Supa Komando's 'Girl On Fire'

One of the biggest, most engaging, and perhaps the most memorable brands that have come alive in recent times is the premium energy drink brand, Supa Komando. Insight Publicis holds the bragging rights for working with the Seven Up Bottling Company (SBC) to drive awareness, engagement, and patronage of this brand.

"For a brand that speaks of energy and unalloyed action, Supa Komando boasts of having energy-personified individuals as brand influencers and brand ambassadors. They include the much-acclaimed energy gad, Do2Tun, Nigerian on-air personality, and video jockey; Erica, delectable queen of the Elites and former BBNaija housemate; Poco Lee, professional Nigerian dancer, and Kashope, professional Nigerian photographer."

Engaging the agency, SBC had tasked it with three things: Disrupt the Nigerian energy drink market; intrigue Nigerians; and drive consumers to the shelves!

To achieve this, the company decided that giving Nigerians their first love- entertainment - was a great way to go! This it sought to do by blending pop culture, influencer marketing, social media campaigns and a movie-style advert that will not only lead to purchase, but leave mouths gaping!

A quick look at Supa Komando's target consumers revealed that they were everyday people who loved to operate on an extra rush. This insight allowed the agency to explore everyday situations that required energy, excitement and buzz.

For execution, a party was organized that can, at best, claim the party of the year award. Held at HardRock Café, on the 12th of March, 2021, the party provided a better definition to the words glamour, glitz and blitz, which are hallmarks of every well-planned occasion. Fire eaters, masked figures who blended perfectly with the background, nature and action-themed sets, a life-like powerful logo of Supa Komando's powerful biceps with a jolt of thunderbolt, good music, great performances, plenty to eat, and lots of energy to go round, all worked together to make the launch an unforgettable experience for all.

In attendance were A-list celebrities including Supa Komando Brand Ambassadors - Erica Nwedelin, Queen of Elites and former Big Brother Naija Housemate; Poco Lee, professional Nigerian dancer; Kashope, professional Nigerian photographer; and D02tun, world-renowned energy gad. Others include former Big Brother Housemates, Frodd and Elozonam, and other distinguished guests.

Why did Insight Publicis leverage influencers and choose these ambassadors? In today's consumer-driven world, it is increasingly more common for advertisers to engage brand influencers who align with their brand objectives to achieve their marketing objectives. These influencers help brands engage and connect audiences to brands.

For a brand that speaks of energy and unalloyed action, Supa Komando boasts of having energy-personified individuals as brand influencers and brand ambassadors. They include the much-acclaimed energy gad, Do2Tun, Nigerian on-air personality, and video jockey; Erica, delectable queen of the







Supa Komando team

Elites and former BBNaija housemate; Poco Lee, professional Nigerian dancer, and Kashope, professional Nigerian photographer.

These individuals exemplify real everyday super commandos. They are heroes in their rights who are daily taking on challenges to rise in their careers. These are not just people that are known in that big space. They are also people that live energetic, charting a course in their space.

Iwe Pascal, better known by the stage name, Poco Lee is an energetic professional dancer whose contemporary dance style and youthful disposition have endeared him to many. Poco Lee who is the crooner of the viral 'Poco Dance,' is also one of the fastest-growing hype men in Nigeria. He came to the limelight when a video of him dancing to Zlatan Ibile's 'Zanku and Legwork' at an event in the Lagos State University, LASU, went viral. The dance is an archetype for energy and action and, thus his choice as an addition to the for Supa Komando TVC is hailed as ingenious.

Celebrity photographer, Faje Kashope's picture took on the world literally in 2019 when Cardi B came to Nigeria. He first got global acclaim when his works on the Mercedes Benz auto brands in Nigeria got the attention of the manufacturers. Some of his images have been used in global magazines. Kashope is a young man who decided to be a 'Supa Komando' in his own space of photography, epitomizing every single Nigerian that walks the street from Lagos to Kano, Benin to Port Harcourt.

Another super ambassador for the brand is the irrepressible Oladotun Ojuolape Kayode, an on-air personality, video jockey, actor and media entrepreneur, popularly known as Do2Tun. His energy is infectious. His style is electrifying and his moves, smooth, eclectic! He is called the energy gad across circles and this is not just rhetoric. Anyone who followed the Pepsi/Africa Magic Turn-Up shows that were held at the peak of the lockdown last year, would have gotten a peek into his non-stop pulsating energy.

Erica Nweledim is another Supa Komando ambassador who exemplifies the commando never-say-die spirit, the Naija never-give-up-even-the-chips-are-down-attitude. She typifies strength, consistency, positivity, perseverance and determination. Despite her time in the Big Brother Naija Lockdown House, which saw her evicted from the show, she has grown to become one of the most sought-after faces in brand ambassadorship. With qualities that resonate with the Supa Komando brand values, it was only fitting that the energetic queen of the Elites became the face of Supa Komando!

These individuals lent some star power to the Supa Komando 'Fire On' campaign. What else provides that adrenaline rush than a good action movie featuring your favourite celebrities, plot twists and fight scenes? Supa Komando!

The agency chose to create a Hollywood action-movie-style short film as a TV commercial. The 60 seconds action-packed TVC featured Erica, as an unexpected heroine and Do2tun as a co-lead. This ad sought to keep consumers at the edge of their seats and encourage them to #FireOn with Supa Komando.

As part of the success recorded, social media mentions of the brands reached an all-time high. As at the 17th of March 2021, #Supakomando, #FireOnWithSupakomando, and #GirlonFire were the top three trending topics on Twitter Nigeria!

Before the Supa Komando brand came on the scene, energy drinks were almost an exclusive preserve of some consumers. The market was positioned as a premium and brands in cans denominated by higher price points, cutting a stereotypical image and impression of what the energy drink space was - premium, unpromised, sometimes in-store, high-value HORECA-driven. Even when the value brands were launched, the expansion experienced in the energy-drink segment was little as there was a change only in the package - can to PET.

However, Supa Komando did something different. It changed all of that by democratizing the space and taking over - commando style, offering premium quality energy drinks in different SKUs at different price points that allow for inclusiveness in consumption. In doing this, SBC met the energy needs of the Naija consumer in a way that connected and resonated, appealing to their wallets while delivering on the intrinsic value of taste. With this energy drink, SBC has delivered accurately on what many consumer analysts have come to refer to as 'premium economy.'

"The campaign, strategically launched during the Big Brother Naija (BBN) season 6, has certainly thrilled Nigerians. Each one, in its way, offered its target audience the classic Pepsi stamp; cool vibes, drip, street cred, refreshment cues, and of course hit music. The electrifying personalities aligned with Pepsi's overwhelming pop-culture appeal."

Pepsi 'for The Love Of It'

No doubt that Pepsi is synonymous with Nigerian pop culture, as the brand has consistently leveraged Naija's love for music, lifestyle, entertainment, and the arts. Pepsi Nigeria has always been at the forefront of collaborations aimed at providing entertainment for its numerous consumers, as well as availing them the opportunity to interact with their favourite cola brand. For instance, at the height of the lockdown imposed by the Federal Government to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, this brand keyed into Nigerians' love for music, dance and fun to deliver a weekend starter-groove that allowed Nigerians socialize without breaking social distancing protocols. Its "Turn Up Friday With Pepsi", a special music programme, aired on Africa Magic Urban consecutively on Fridays, until it ended. The TV show was also curated as a DJ Jam session where viewers who missed the club scene could tune in to be entertained by the in-house DJ.

The Insight Publicis team decided to amplify this love for entertainment with a campaign tagged "For the Love of It." The Agency guided in the decision to introduce new additions - Rema and Arya Starr - to Pepsi's star power list of next-generation music stars as brand ambassadors. Having strategically unveiled these two ambassadors, these two would go ahead to give a show-stopping performance live at the Kingsize eviction gameshow of BBNaija. Not only did they take advantage of the opportunity to showcase these ambassadors, they also got them to perform in branded merchandise and briefly amplify the brand to millions of viewers across the world, at prime time!

Not leaving lifestyle personalities and Instagram sensations out of the mix, it partnered with popular faces in Nigerian entertainment, like Toke Makinwa, Nancy Isime, Kiekie, Mr. Jollof, Don Flexx, BBN 2019 Contestant- Alex, and DJ's Spinall, Xclusive and Obi, to deliver nothing but positive vibes and love to the Naija community.

These faces from the world of entertainment typify what the Pepsi brand emboldens and promotes, as well as what many have come to expect from the brand. Specifically, for the love of Gbedu #ForTheLoveofGbedu had DJ Spinall; For the Love of Style #ForTheLoveOfStyle featured the sensational Toke Makinwa, and For the Love of Drama #FortheLoveofDrama had actress, model, and media personality, Nancy Isime, as the face.

Others include, For the Love of Dance #FortheLoveofDance which had former Big Brother Housemate Alexandra Asogwa-Alex Unusual and dancer Don Flexx as the face; the hilarious Kie Kie and funny Mr. Jollof are the faces of For the Love of Gbas Gbos #ForTheLoveofGbasgbos; DJ Xclusive for, For the Love of Groove #FortheLoveofGroove, and DJ Obi For the Love of Vibes #FortheLoveofVibes. All these trends were anchored around the intrinsic value of the that Pepsi has to offer-taste-with the #ForTheLoveofTaste campaign.

The campaign, strategically launched during the Big Brother Naija (BBN) season 6, has certainly thrilled Nigerians. Each one, in its way, offered its target audience the classic Pepsi stamp; cool vibes, drip, street cred, refreshment cues, and of course hit music. Bang on trend and ahead of the pack with this campaign, Pepsi remains the great-tasting cola in touch with not only the sound, but also the taste for this generation. For the love of it, one consumer even posted "When I drink Pepsi, I feel so cool, love you guys!"

Now that's pretty cool.

The Pepsi For The Love of It campaign was not the first Insight Publicis had deployed for the Pepsi brand. Over the years, it has deployed campaigns that remain memorable, with groundbreaking results for Pepsi. One of such campaigns is the Pepsi Long Throat campaign, which resulted from the need for Pepsi to respond to the campaigns and initiatives from the competition as it looked to strengthen its equity and offering to Nigerians.

Leveraging its formidable experience as a leading agency in the West African integrated marketing communication industry, Insight-Publicis developed a compelling campaign strategy that enhanced the Pepsi image with consumers. In developing the campaign, the agency capitalised on the ambitious nature of the markets – the need to have it all – and localised it for a market that was hungry to embrace its culture once again. Thus, the Long Throat campaign was created and birthed.

To create brand loyalty among the consumers, both old and young, the agency employed a world-class 360-degree campaign. Knowing fully well that the consumers may misinterpret the words 'LongThroat,' the agency embarked on an aggressive, yet systematic top-of-mind awareness teaser to capture consumers' emotions while driving conversation, loyalty, and buzz around the Pepsi brand, to eclipse competition.







Pepsi team

The right context was set for Long Throat to guard against negative feedback and backlash. Consumers were inspired to participate, create their own content, interact with their idols and the Pepsi brand. The agency leveraged the excitement generated online and created a new social movement to ensure wider reach, and memory retention. The online teaser campaign, driven by key online influencers and Pepsi brand ambassadors Wizkid and Tiwa Savage, created a buzz, running for two weeks with hashtag #THINGSILONGTHROATFOR before breaking on TV.

Another memorable campaign the agency executed for the brand is the 'Naija All The Way' campaign in 2018. The integrated campaign took the entire country by storm, creating a new fever of patriotism reminiscent of Nigeria's soccer golden era of 1994 - 2000. It remains arguably the most engaging campaign of the World Cup season in Nigeria, for that period. The theme and objective of the campaign were as striking as they were simple: reawakening the 'Naija Spirit'!

Pepsi has always been about the voice and choice of a new generation. It is not just about using the biggest stars of the time. Let's be honest; who uses Disk Jockeys, DJs for ambassadors? Nobody. The Pepsi brand decided they were going to use DJs for ambassadors. Why? Even though the stars are usually the musicians, the DJ brings the music to the people. They are the livewire of the party!

"The GUS series is also the very first 100% local content reality television programme in Nigeria. The survival-driven reality programme highlights the human survival instinct, as contestants (10–30 persons, depending on the reference edition) compete in the wild in search of a hidden treasure, with eliminations that bring the last person standing instant fame and fortune. The Winner of the last season in 2012 took home a 10 million naira cash prize and an SUV."

Gulder Ultimate Search- 'The Game Is On'.

"Please when will they bring back #gulderultimatesearch ?? I miss dat kparampam, kpararam soundtrack"- @awhireogo



This is a sample of the questions lovers of the Gulder Ultimate Search Reality show kept asking, especially as the unexpected global Covid-19 pandemic left Gulder Nigeria addressing the difficult questions, such as how best to engage with consumers via digital mediums and launch its latest innovation-craft beer without seeming tone-deaf to the requests of its audience.

The challenge was how do you sell an innovation that the average Nigerian knows nothing about.. The brand sought to chart a new course by introducing craft beer to the Nigerian market. Insight Publicis' task was therefore researching craft beer and innovative ways to engage and educate the brand's target audience.

Knowing this target audience has tonnes of free time and needs to be entertained. Insight Publicis realized the need to resuscitate Gulder's paused reality TV show- Gulder Ultimate Search, which according to the brand's media mentions, at the peak of the pandemic, revealed that the audience's interest in the show remained high.

So, the simple solution was to give Nigerians what they had been demanding for years... a.k.a Gulder Ultimate Search! The Insight team gathered relevant data, customer feedback and insights to show that Gulder Ultimate Search was the best way to entertain consumers and educate them on craft beer.



Gulder Ultimate team

To begin, the Team at Insight Publicis engendered nostalgia by bringing the ultimate experience to digital platforms. In April 2020, the team launched a rerun of 10 episodes themed around the show's past seasons. It worked. Lovers of the show were ecstatic. They shared nostalgic tales of their favourite episodes, curling up with family and friends to enjoy thrilling adventures of Gulder Ultimate Search.

The team leveraged the buzz around the season re-runs to announce, on digital and TV platforms, the relaunch of the show in September 2021 One can only imagine the level of engagement, sales and a love for the Gulder brand.

Few days after announcing the season re-runs, media companies. such as MultiChoice contacted the brand to run the campaign on its platform. In fact, this went a notch higher as it led to a partnership between the brewery giants and pay TV leaders in the country. This partnership was announced at the unveiling of Gulder's new look and the 2021 edition of the show, at the Eko Hotel and Suites.

The Marketing Director, Nigerian Breweries Plc, Emmanuel Oriakhi, during his speech, had said, "Nigerian Breweries and MultiChoice Nigeria are iconic brands that celebrate the youthful, resilient spirit of Nigerians" while the Executive Head, Content and West Africa Channels, MultiChoice Nigeria, Busola Tejumola, commended Nigerian Breweries on the return of the popular reality television show that celebrates the tenacity of young Nigerians. She said, "To ensure that we deliver the best local content and retain our customers, we continue to push the envelope and embrace partnerships with content producers that share the same goal. We remain committed to delivering quality and entertaining locally produced content on our DStv and GOtv platforms and with GUS, viewers can expect the same stellar production qualities that we are renowned for," she said.

This year's show will have 2010 GUS winner and top Nollywood actor, Kunle Remi as a taskmaster.

So, from Saturday 16 October to Sunday, December 19, viewers can enjoy the action and thrills of Gulder Ultimate Search which will air on Africa Magic Showcase (DStv channel 151), Africa Magic Urban (DStv channel 153) and Africa Magic Family (DStv channel 154 and GOtv channel 2) on Saturdays and Sundays from 8 p.m. till 9 p.m.

Apart from the partnerships the brand secured, over 13,000 applications, to participate in the show, were received in less than a week from the announcement while over 30,000 individuals followed the official Instagram page of the campaign in just four days.

Launched over five decades ago in 1966, Gulder was first introduced in a brown bottle with unique label designs and has since gone through several modernization processes to keep up with the times, even as it provides unmatched offerings to excite the taste and appeal of its diverse consumers.

The GUS series is also the very first 100% local content reality television programme in Nigeria. The survival-driven reality programme highlights the human survival instinct, as contestants (10–30 persons, depending on the reference edition) compete in the wild in search of a hidden treasure, with eliminations that bring the last person standing instant fame and fortune. The Winner of the last season in 2012 took home a 10 million naira cash prize and an SUV.

Widely received since the premiere of its first season, in 2004, the show has enjoyed 11 seasons on air and contributed to the discovery of several stars in Nigeria's entertainment industry. Some of the past winners are Kunle Remi, 2010; Dennis Okike, Season 8, and Chris Okagbue, Season 10, who all went on to build a successful career in Nollywood. Remi, who was 22 years old when he won in 2010, starred in the Africa Magic series Tinsel, Forbidden, and several other critically acclaimed Nollywood movies like Sin City and Gold Statue. Dominic Mudabai, the winner of the fourth edition, has also appeared in numerous TV commercials for several multinational brands.

Now in its 12th, it is making a return in 2021 with the theme, "The Age of Craftsmanship". We can't wait to see what this season holds for its participants!

Keystone Bank: How To #Makeithappen

Banking adverts in Nigeria are typically boring, repetitive and monotonous, so much so that you can hardly differentiate one from the other. This is why when Keystone Bank approached Insight Publicis in 2020, with a task to create a credential campaign that will communicate the brand key message, (the use of cutting-edge technology to solve the everyday banking needs of consumers), project it as an innovative consumer-centred digital bank and increase its share of voice in the Nigerian market, the Insight team did not hesitate to say yes.

Based on the brief, the Insight team researched to find out more about Keystone's target audience, current industry trends and ways to best communicate the brand's message.

The team's research presented the following insights: that the banking industry in Nigeria was moving towards products with Artificial Intelligence, and that consumers needed a bank that was hassle-free, human-centered, trustworthy and innovative.

These insights enabled the Insight team to develop the Keystone #MakeitHappen Campaign with the objectives to communicate Keystone Bank as a leading Consumer and Digital Bank in Nigeria, increase brand recognition and top of mind awareness and increase the market share of voice (customer base).

What better way to sell an innovative brand than with an innovative television commercial? The team sought to forge an emotional connection with the brand's target audience and convey Keystone's brand message.

The television commercial, which had a simple storyline, showcased a young boy named Junior forced to partake in unnecessary activities by his parents. However, through the use of advanced technology, he finds an innovative way to solve this problem. The commercial utilised the elements of drama and intrigue to convey a simple message: "Keystone bank is the bank that makes things happen through innovative banking solutions."

It also ran multiple campaigns via radio, print and digital platforms to increase the brand's visibility. Giveaways and influencer marketing were also utilised on social media to generate a buzz around the brand.

Following the launch of the #makeithappen campaign, Keystone bank has gained about 46,000 mobile app installations, 37% growth in engagement, 14.6 million consumers reached via television between April and December 2020, 3.2 million trend impressions and 3.9K mentions of #makeithappen.

The banking brand also got 96,412 video views, 22,000 followers across Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn and 90.8 million tweet impressions.

In addition, the brand got the best share of voice on television and the #makeithappen campaign has increased Keystone's followership and the brand is now associated with technology, innovation and creative solutions.

With these many campaigns, you can rest assured that Insight Publicis is here for the long haul. No matter the industry or the creative communications challenge, the team of versatile creatives, strategists and project managers seem to always be ready to deliver solutions head on!



"Following the launch of the #makeithappen campaign, Keystone bank has gained about 46,000 mobile app installations, 37% growth in engagement, 14.6 million consumers reached via television between April and December 2020, 3.2 million trend impressions and 3.9K mentions of #makeithappen. The banking brand also got 96,412 video views, 22,000 followers across Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn and 90.8 million tweet impressions."



Keystone team

Frontline Agency Redefining Advertising And Entrepreneurship Development

By Azeez Disu

Creating disruptive ideas and campaigns that help brands connect with their customers and grow their market share will forever not be forgotten in a hurry as it helps position a brand to continue to remain relevant irrespective of the times.

In creating the disruptive ideas or innovations, brands and creative agencies work together to proffer solution to marketing challenges by creating creative advertising solutions.

In the Nigerian advertising market, the creative powerhouse known for disruption is TBWA\Concept. The company states it succinctly "Like pirates, we take risks, but don't take ourselves too seriously. We rewrite the rules and come up with brave and disruptive ideas that take on conventionally-steered ships."

When two young 'captains' –Lere Awokoya and Kayode Idowu- set out to sea in 1984, they did not know they were setting sail on a journey that would last two decades and counting. Today, TBWA\Concept is a crucial part of a worldwide advertising network, the carrier of Afri Cannes's treasure, and home to some of the industry's brightest stars led by the visionary captain, Kelechi Nwosu.

Some of the brands it has worked with to launch world class campaigns are: MTN, Pladis, Kates Associated Industries, SMOOV, Stanbic IBTC, among others.

The agency asides from its creative advertising duties for brands, it is also contributing to the socio-economic development of the country through its series of initiatives targeted at SMEs, Movie industry and others.



Kelechi Nwosu, Managing Director, TBWA/Concept

"In the Nigerian advertising market, the creative powerhouse known for disruption is TBWA\Concept. The company states it succinctly 'Like pirates, we take risks, but don't take ourselves too seriously. We rewrite the rules and come up with brave and disruptive ideas that take on conventionally-steered ships.'"

Contributions To SMEs Growth

Last year, TBWA Concept in collaboration with Ford Foundation trained 10,000 SMEs in a bid to encourage entrepreneurship growth in the country.

The project is one of the many Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) driven initiatives of the agency which is aimed at boosting the economy and empowering Nigerians.

Another laudable project was in Aba, the commercial capital of Abia State, Nigeria. The businessmen and women of Aba struggled to stay afloat due to one simple paradox, there was the potential to create jobs through entrepreneurship in key areas like leatherwork, shoemaking, and fashion design. But poor infrastructure and little governmental support mixed with negative perceptions hampered their growth. The general belief was that products and goods made in Aba were of substandard and inferior quality.

Basically, the agency empowered the major manufacturing and trade clusters and stakeholders in Aba and its surrounding area to build an identity which serves as a symbol for its export quality around the world known as Proudly MADE IN ABA.

So, the "Proudly Made in Aba" campaign emerged like a submarine amidst a fleet of canoes to propel the overlooked enterprise, resilience, craftsmanship and availability of skilled labour in Aba to the world stage. The campaign which was also sponsored by Ford Foundation went viral on social media, generating over $150,000 worth of media mentions, placing Aba under the nation's microscope as the centre for economic growth.

Meanwhile, the government has now developed initiatives to help empower the entrepreneurs in the region and has adopted the iconography TBWA\Concept developed as the official icon for all made in Aba initiatives, all thanks to the effort of the agency.

According to the agency, "The future of Proudly Made in Aba is more important than the past. Next steps – To create awareness of Aba through an area brand such as 'Proudly Made in Aba'. The success of the previous campaign suggests this platform can be further developed and sustained. Attract both government and private partnerships to opportunities in the region. Create a platform that will grant market access and catalyse business opportunities within the region."

In another vein, COVID-19 was a Kraken that reared its ugly head with long-reaching tentacles that affected Nigerian businesses in a myriad of ways, including the lockdown, reduced demand for goods and a disrupted supply chain. To slay the beast, TBWA\Concept captained by its esteemed Business Director George Onukwu, set up SME Shop to help small and medium enterprises grow by providing specialised strategic brand and marketing support that is tailored to their business needs.

The SME shop offers affordable business, strategic, brand marketing support; consultation, LIVE sessions and more. Truthfully, there are plenty fish in the sea in terms of online business tools that claim to proffer business solutions in the vein of SME Shop. But none have quite the contextual precision of SME Shop. SME Shop's lectures are delivered by the very people Nigerians look up to in business, comprising leaders in fashion, tech, advertising, agric, and almost every industry you can conceive of. Beyond the virtual lectures, SME Shop provides consultations for MSME's with one-on-one guides for entrepreneurs on how to steer their business successfully.

Promoting Local Cuisine

The premise for Oriri Ndu was simple, to preserve, promote and interrogate the Igbo culture by curating, producing and broadcasting entertaining and educative content, majorly centred on the culinary and eating experience of its food. If that was a mouthful, simply recall that Oriri Ndu is Igbo for food is life. As of this writing, Oriri Ndu has engaged over 6000 Igbo food enthusiasts across Nigeria. The Foodie culture is strong amongst the youth demographic, but unlike in music and comedy where local nuances reign supreme, foreign delicacies still hold sway over the segment.

Gbemisola Aleke, the Deputy Director of Account Management & Strategy after intensive research discovered that the problem wasn't that no one had a taste for local cuisine, the problem was that no one was bringing it to the table. And that is precisely what TBWA\Concept has accomplished with Oriri Ndu.

On social media handles, @oririndung on Instagram and Facebook, several contests have been organised which has further drawn attention to the campaign and it continue to excite Nigerians and others from across the world.

Boosting Movie and Entertainment Industry

According to trade.gov, Nollywood industry accounts for 1.4% of GDP according to International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports. Nigeria produces around 2,500 films a year with a projection of US$22 million by 2021 for total cinema revenue.

TBWA is contributing to the development of the movie and entertainment industry in the country especially with a new movie set for launch. Detour doesn't just bring the brightest stars of Nollywood together for a poignant movie about the sins of a father and the intrigues of a daughter, it shows the extent of what is possible in Nigerian cinema when the full force of a globally recognised advertising agency is behind it. Anchored by their Executive Creative Director and Head of Innovation, Ranti Atunwa, TBWA throw its weight behind the movie starring Kanayo O' Kanayo, Jemima Osunde, Olumide Oworu and many other A-list actors and actresses.

The movie which was made in conjunction with Afribold Capital, is set to release on the 5th of November. Detour follows the story of Tari who has uncovered a secret she can't remember, as Olumide races against time and corrupt corporate forces to save her. The film's promotion is set to begin soon and promises to be the gold standard of marketing in Nollywood.

The agency has also ventured into movies, documentaries, web series and TV shows.

Awards and Resilience

TBWA's creative and professional voyage with Creative Director, Oyindamola Fakile, serving as a compass has led to a plethora of awards over the years, their most recent accolades being 2nd overall at the 2020 LAIF Awards and 2nd in Nigeria at the continental Pitcher's Awards 2021.

In a country where many are reluctant to leave the comfort of the lands they know, into the fog of an ocean they fear, TBWA\Concept sails courageously on, redefining what it means to be an IMC advertising agency in Nigeria.

The pandemic may have forced many organisations to shake things up, but that's merely a reactive measure. In just two decades, TBWA\Concept has been the harbourer of creatives and businesses that seek growth and are brave enough to do the unconventional to get it. TBWA doesn't want to rock the boat, they want to sink it, because they believe there's an infinite world of possibility to be discovered under the sea.



Nigeria's Creative Powerhouse Booming Despite Gloomy Times

By Jeremiah Agada



Steve Babaeko, CEO / Chief Creative Officer - X3M Ideas

Among many other effects, one of the Coronavirus pandemic's overarching effects was accelerated digital transformation across the economy and society. A steep increase in the number of retail sales transacted digitally buoyed digital ad spending last year and boosted digital advertising's long-term prospects. The shift in advertising nairas towards digital—including email marketing, social media, and programmatic ads gave rise to high growth of digital marketing agencies; however, there are traditional advertising and creative agencies who had warehouse some form of digital competence or the other; and found adapting to the digitally-focused landscape rather easily.

To them, the 'gloom' that hung over the world during the heights of the pandemic and the subsequent 'doom' that followed with lockdowns, restrictions, cuts on budgets on traditional advertising as well as the consequent socio-economic doldrums like economic downturns and recessions did not affect them adversely. Instead, these creative agencies have seen an uncharacteristic 'boom' in activities, which clearly shows their dynamism, proactiveness, and ability to ride the tide, despite the times.

X3m Ideas, a full-service marketing communications Agency, built 100% on ingenious ideas and the people, is one such agency that has been a beehive of activities before, all through 2020 and beyond. In fact, in the last two years, the agency has popped up at several award arenas across the globe with several nominations and wins for some of the outstanding works it has created for its many clients' brands.

Its Mum Hotline project was a finalist at last year's Loeries in South Africa, won silver at LAIF Awards in Lagos, and made Caples 2021 shortlist. Its revolutionary and viral social intervention aimed at addressing the rising issue of suicides in Nigeria, 'MANI Suicide Notes' made a shortlist to the 2021 New York Festivals. Additionally, the agency's inspiring International Woman's Day ads won a 2020 Loeries Bronze, a 2020 Lisbon International Bronze, and a Silver and Bronze at the LAIF Awards. La Casera's Superheroes, a campaign that has come to be seen as a highlight of brands' activities in the Nigerian market, was a work from the agency; and it was a Finalist at the 2020 Loeries.

Asides works that win in the arena, the agency has also deployed some innovative campaigns that have helped clients' brands win in the market, impacted lives and improved bottom-lines in the long run. One of these campaigns deployed within the period under review was for the Nirvana table water brand. The campaign called 'Headlines of Innocence' was a viral heat that generated a lot of conversation around professional circles and on social media because of the sensitive issues of child sexual abuse it addressed. The highly emotive but simple, and straightforward campaign also riveted the ads world as it was featured on some global ads platforms including the prestigious Adforum-a platform that represents the collective voice of the advertising industry, which includes a Creative Library featuring more than 200,000 campaigns, partnerships with leading awards shows, and unparalleled global influence with offices in New York, Paris.

Other innovative campaigns it deployed include an Independence Pack Design for the Jameson brand, 'Headaches' for Evans' Baroque Algafen, MANI: Body and Mind and yet another innovative one, Escape 2020 which was curated and executed by the X3M Ideas team. In this campaign, the agency went beyond the normal, at the end of the year, to create a board game it sent to its existing and prospective clients instead of the usual greeting cards.

In the game, the agency captured the entire 2020 with all its high points and low points locally and internationally. These include the coronavirus pandemic, #BlackLivesMatter protests, #EndSars protests, the discovery of and looting of relief items to ameliorate the impact of imposed lockdowns, Beirut blast, bush fires across Europe among other disasters. The board game which served as a dramatic way to end the year was curated to help people relive the horrors of 2020 by reliving it.

X3m Ideas did not just rise to the prominence it currently enjoys within the African hub today, neither is the 'boom' around it accidental. When it commenced its journey nine years ago on the 1st of August 2012, the agency had one goal in mind – to redefine advertising in Nigeria. With a team that consisted of seven exceptional individuals that time, the agency has grown exponentially with an enviable team strength dedicated to consistently deploying award-winning campaigns for its clients.

Under the leadership of its Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Steve Babaeko, the agency has lived true to its vision having recorded extraordinary success while transforming the Advertising landscape in Nigeria. Currently, the agency's diverse portfolio of clients includes brands in the Telecommunications, FMCG, Broadcasting/Pay-TV, and Financial sectors of the Nigerian economy; and it has shown that it is not keen on resting on its oars as it has shown fearlessness in taking on new challenges.

Over the years, the agency's works have garnered recognition and accolades both locally and internationally; it has been consistently ranked amongst the top advertising agencies in Nigeria at the prestigious LAIF Awards. In 2019 It clinched the most coveted award at LAIF-the Grandprix-to emerge Nigeria's most creative agency. X3m Ideas is also a recipient of several local and international awards from the African Cristal, Marketing World, Lisbon Advertising Festival, and Nigeria Brand Awards among others.

Through its wealth of expertise, talent diversity and consistent delivery of quality work, the agency has been able to build and support the growth of some of the biggest brands operating in West Africa. In 2018, X3M Marketing Ideas Limited started operations in Zambia intending to revolutionize the South-Central marketing communications space. Since its inception, it has been able to successfully execute marketing campaigns and premium brand experiences for brands like Chivas, Beefeater and Jameson in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Botswana.

With the current trajectory of the agency, given its antecedents and current projections by industry observers, the agency's goal becoming become one of the leading pan African Advertising Agencies delivering excellence one region at a time, is only a matter of time.

X3m Ideas ties its many successes around the environment it operates and therefore does not forget to take its immediate community along in its journey to greatness. Its strong emphasis and commitment to corporate social responsibility in the area of education and wellness places it worlds apart from other players in its space. At X3M Ideas, the belief that continued collaboration with the Government, through Corporate Social Responsibility projects will go a long way in providing an enabling environment for students, and ultimately advance the growth of the Education sector in the nation, is strong.

In 2020, despite the peculiarity of the year, the agency was never relentless in its CSR drive. It built a contactless hand sanitizing station for the Opebi Grammar School, Ikeja in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. With that, the agency hopes that the facility will further enhance the recommended safety measures put in place by the government and the school; and also promote general hygiene amongst the students.

Babaeko who has been profiled by Forbes Magazine explained why CSR is a 'sacred' culture at X3M Ideas: "I am convinced that to be making money out of a community and not giving back is criminal, that is my personal belief. Once I am convinced about that, there is nothing else you can tell me. If you make money from a community, you need to put something in there. We have a wonderful community around us that supports us, supports the dream, and supports the vision. We are not doing this for fame or for clout; if we are, we would have stopped after one or two. Not even in this year of COVID-19," he had explained.













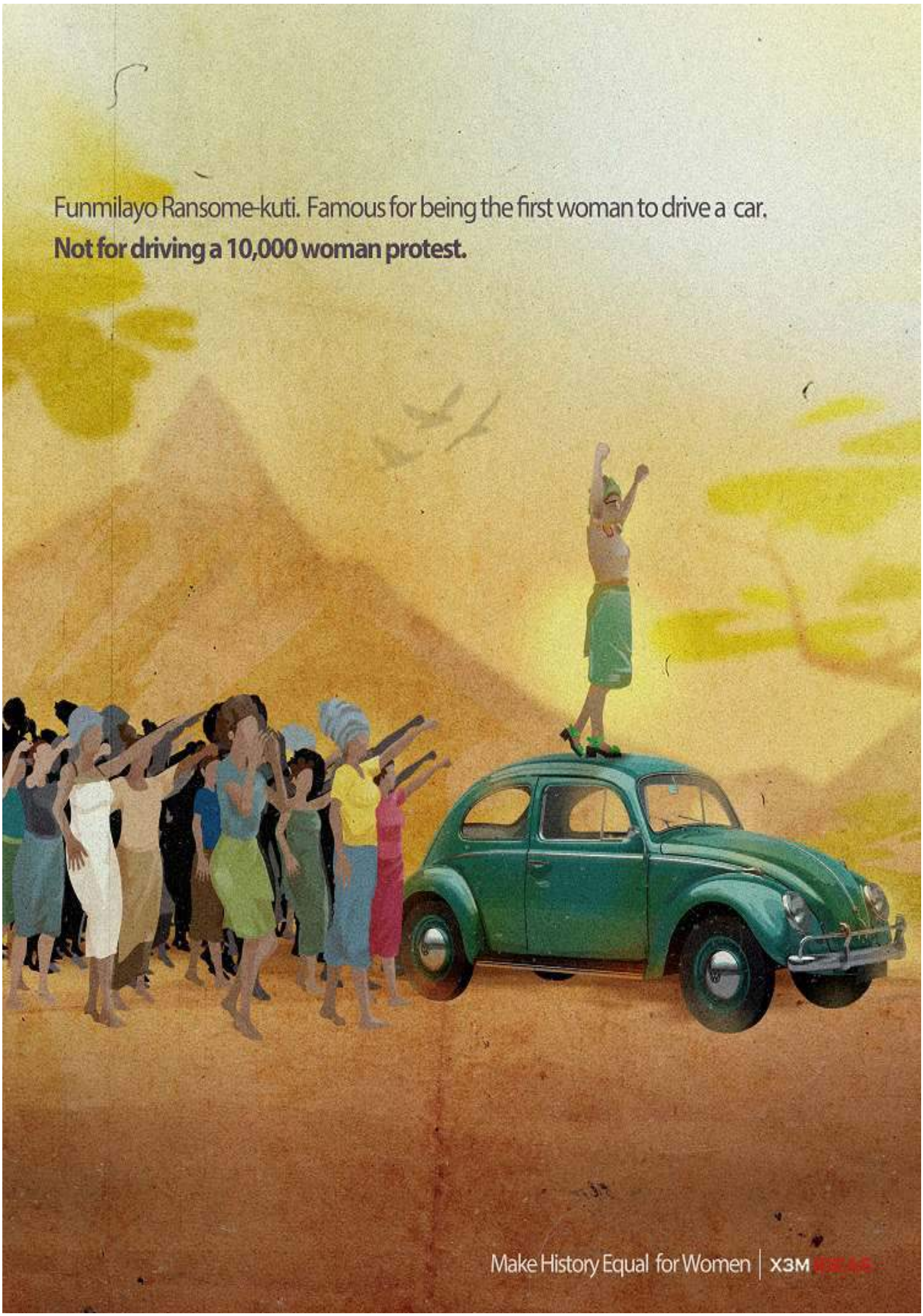











Funmilayo Ransome-kuti. Famous for being the first woman to drive a car.
Not for driving a 10,000 woman protest.
Make History Equal for Women | X3M



Top Players In Fintech & Digital Payment Solutions In Nigeria

By Jeremiah Agada

Despite the revolution that the global banking sector had experienced over the years, there are still more than 1.7 billion underbanked people globally, the majority of which are from emerging markets. For them, accessing loans can be difficult, which is a problem fintechs try to solve.

In Nigeria, banking is still like a gold mine, with over $9 billion in value pools, but despite high levels of competition, the vast majority of consumers are underserved. This has created an opening that financial technology (fintech) companies have been quick to take advantage of, with many stepping up to develop enhanced propositions across the value chain to address issue.

Fintech, the use of advanced technology to provide financial services to consumers and business has grown, is growing and over the years, will boom bigger than it's current status. Aided by easy-to-use digital applications, Financial Technology (FinTech) is run by players, whose profession is about developing apps for online transactions. Of course, its propositions are clearly outlined. FinTechs are developing innovative driven propositions across the financial services chain to address customers' needs. Its value propositions vary in products as Payments, Savings, Lending, Services and accounts and sub-categories such as wallets, MSME lending, retail landing, wallets, wealth management, amidst others. These days, companies, banks, business and eCommerce strive to maintain transactions with their customers. This entails introduction of digital services, wallets, etc, all to replace and perform the functions of traditional, physical transactions.

Fintech is said to have found a home in Nigeria, a country with a youth demographic of Nigerian population, increasing smartphone penetration, and a focused regulatory drive to increase financial inclusion and cashless payments, are combining to create the perfect recipe for a thriving fintech sector.

Over the past five years, the industry in Nigeria has evolved in significant ways, leading the remoulding process of companies towards a customer-centric business and making it find places across a plethora of small companies, big companies and established firms all over the world. With either a joint or a stand-alone approach, financial services companies and tech companies have worked together to surge each other's markets while also progressing with ground-breaking and innovative schemes in an ever-growing business landscape.

In fact, Nigeria is now home to over 200 fintech standalone companies, plus a number of fintech solutions offered by banks and mobile network operators as part of their product portfolio. Between 2014 and 2019, Nigeria's bustling fintech scene raised more than $600 million in funding, attracting 25 percent ($122 million) of the $491.6 million raised by African tech startups in 2019 alone—second only to Kenya, which attracted $149 million.

These figures are staggering, considering that the Nigerian Fintech Industry was in its introductory stage a few years ago, but has matured to become a major player in Africa. However, Nigeria is still classified as a developing Fintech economy compared to its more mature global peers such as the UK, Singapore, Australia, Sweden and India. It is estimated that Nigerian Fintech revenues will reach $543million by 2022, driven by broader internet access, increasing smartphone penetration and the inclusion of the unbanked population. In 2019, Nigeria officially recognized its first Fintech unicorn, with Interswitch achieving a valuation of $1billion based on a $200million investment from VISA.

In as such, the Nigerian Fintech industry is gradually gaining international recognition, attracting domestic and foreign investments and increasingly embraced by customers with stronger collaborations in place between Fintechs and other key players in the financial services value chain.

The Coronavirus pandemic that ravaged the world, in part, played a significant role in the growth of this space. It's also worthy of note that, the pandemic has successfully thrown the economy of several nations into abyss. In Nigeria However, the financial technology (fintech) has been having a good run with positive results, making Nigeria, Africa's largest country by GDP and population, the sector's leader with a lively crop of start-ups and a growing suite of digital offerings from mainstream banks.

Also, the COVID-19 pandemic, with its attendant consequences on global economy, has pushed both foreign and domestic players to develop opportunities in the fintech space, thereby emerging as one of the top gainers.

Additionally, the strength of the Nigeria Fintech ecosystem is underpinned by individual and interconnected strengths across some of the following key attributes; first of all is Capital outlay; as access to capital (both domestic and international) has improved markedly since 2018. Despite the considerable increase in investment, there are indicators that access to late stage and growth capital remains a challenge for start-up Nigerian Fintechs.

It is important to note the wider ecosystem in Nigeria supports FinTech in the country. For instance, in terms of regulations, in addition to the CBN and SEC, other players include the Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), National Insurance Commission (NAICOM), Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) and National Information Technology Development Agency, are not left out.

By no means are these factors alone responsible for the bludgeoning growth of fintechs in Nigeria. Others include the lack of access to financial services, especially in rural areas; issues of affordability; poor user experience. Not to forget the times and tides we live in, customer education, increasing smartphone penetration and the general pressure to get involved in e-transactions. All these created an opening FinTech have been quick to dive in, with applications, providing services and addressing problems of clients.

Also, fintech in Nigeria has seen an increased adoption of digital financial services with the heightened growth in the quality of service and talent in the sector, The quality and volume of Fintech talent in Nigeria is growing and standardised; having integrated the usage of cutting-edge technologies which are tailored for specific functions and tasks towards enhancing ease of usage and customer satisfaction.

The sector has continued to attract and retain top talents which has buoyed the expansion of Fintechs in Nigeria. Some progress has also been made in creating a supportive environment for Fintechs through government policies and regulations aimed at deepening financial inclusion and acceptability.

However, there is still a unique opportunity to improve the Nigerian Fintech policy landscape and make it a leader in Africa. The pandemic and its impact on the Nigerian economy unwittingly created a gilt-edged opportunity for Fintechs to grow exponentially and speed up economic growth. The industry has harnessed that golden opportunity and is on the trajectory of continuous upscaling, but it is important that key players are able to innovate, adapt and continually improve their value propositions towards delivering on Nigeria's Fintech potential.

The role of referrals can't be underestimated too. Savings, e-wallets and accounts mostly rely on the power of referrals to spread the reach to a wide audience. A promo code could be seen as the new order of the day, offering discounts on prices and added benefits to first time users. A user refers a friend. That friend refers another. The other refers a group. The group turns into a crowd. A crowd, into a multitude. All, from a single referral.

Asides the ease of transactions, FinTech to a point, attempts to relate with their customers on their day-to-day activities. For example, OPay focused on offering transportation and food, which account for roughly 50 percent of spending at discounted prices by customers. Such and many more by OPay and other FinTech giants show to an extent, the esteemed recognition and value offered to their customers, those with plenty, and others in need.

"Fintech in Nigeria has seen an increased adoption of digital financial services with the heightened growth in the quality of service and talent in the sector, The quality and volume of Fintech talent in Nigeria is growing and standardised; having integrated the usage of cutting-edge technologies which are tailored for specific functions and tasks towards enhancing ease of usage and customer satisfaction."

Flutterwave

Championing Financial Inclusion Beyond The Flutter Of Hope



Olugbenga Agboola, CEO of Flutterwave

What's better than secure, fast, convenient ways to make purchases for products and services from any location and any device? What's better than having the confidence to perform transactions through digital payment solutions, knowing you're safe, assured and insured? Absolutely nothing.

And that's where the relevance of financial technology reveals itself. FinTechs are developing innovative driven propositions across the financial services chain to address customers' needs. Its value propositions vary in products as Payments, Savings, Lending, Services and accounts and sub-categories such as wallets, MSME lending, retail landing, wallets, wealth management, among others. These days, companies, banks, business and eCommerce strive to maintain transactions with their customers. This entails introduction of digital services, wallets, etc, all to replace and perform the functions of traditional, physical transactions.

Clearly, there has been a significant growth of players within the FinTech space over the years. Nigeria now houses over 200 FinTech standalone companies, not to forget banks and mobile network operators offering FinTech solutions as part of their product portfolio. Patricia, Remita, Kuda, Fairmoney, Paystack, OPay, Eyowo, E-Transact, SystemSpecs.

At present, FinTech companies like Paga, OPay, Cellulant, Interswitch's QuickTeller are competing with mobile banking applications for send-and-receive transactions and payments of bills, with the former gradually taking the lead. Asset management FinTech such as Chaka, RiseVest, and Bamboo are live, offering users a chance to invest in International Stock Markets, amazingly from their local currency account through their apps.

One would see PiggyVest and Cowrywise targeting young professionals and millennials, offering to save for them with higher interest rates on their savings in comparison to a traditional bank system (10 to 13 percent versus 4 to 6). Nothing beats the impact of these new technologies on the financial services industry.

Flutterwave is not excluded in this list. Flutterwave is a payment technology company, founded on providing seamless and secure payment experiences to customers across Africa and beyond. It was founded in 2016 by Iyinoluwa Aboyesi, Co-founder Olugbenga Agboola and a team of FinTech experts, comprising of ex-bankers, entrepreneurs and engineers. The founder, Aboyesi came up with the idea of Flutterwave because of the challenges he faced while sending money to Africa while he was involved with Andela, a global engineering organization.

An online payment solution that allows merchants to make and receive payments, it strives to resolve problems associated with online payments and in general, traditional methods of financial transactions. Its core focus? To simplify payments for endless possibilities, and over the years it has grown to become one of the fastest growing payment companies in the world.

Over the years, Flutterwave has deployed innovative marketing initiatives and campaigns to better its services and satisfy the needs of its ever-growing customer base. It augmented its core payments business to speed up the launch of Flutterwave Store, a portal that allows African merchants and SMEs to create digital shops to tell online.

Earlier this year, Flutterwave raised $170m at over $1billion valuation, the funding to be used in expanding its customer base on existing and international markets, and for developing new FinTech products. Through innovative solutions like the Flutterwave donation links and checkouts, the brand made receiving of payments seamless for businesses and individuals. This tool, amidst others came in handy, especially during the thick of the lockdown and the disruptions experienced during the pandemic.

The FinTech Giant has its achievements to show. According to the company, it has processed over $2.5bn payments in more than 100m transactions. It has also been able to raise over $20 million in investments. In it's 2018 review, Flutterwave announced it witnessed a 550% growth in the customer base of Flutterwave for Business (Rave), which is now 26,000 strong. It also retained key partnership with Flywire, Arik Air, Uber, and Booking.com. All these achievements and more made it to win the Best Payments Company award at the prestigious Ghana e-Conmerce Awards ceremony.

The FinTech Giant's validation shifted to an excess of $1billiom after the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift towards digital payments in Nigeria. With its latest valuation, Flutterwave joined the ranks of Africa's other heavyweights, Jumia and Interswitch as an heavyweight valued at over a billion dollars.

Respect for people, society and the environment is a major building block of Corporate Social Responsibility, a principle Flutterwave follows to the core. Under CSR, Flutterwave partners with Afropolitan to promote African Value and heritage by organizing entertainment events among Africa and Africa in diaspora. To help solve the issue of restricted movement, which during the lockdown, affected business owners and workers, Flutterwave introduced Flutterwave Store. That was an avenue for businesses to upload their products and start selling online, thereby eliminating the tiresome delivery and payment process. Flutterwave is now live in 20 African countries and it's payments infrastructure is present in over 33 countries.

Financial Technology, otherwise known as FinTech has come to stay. Modern innovations to the financial system, they tender to the everyday needs of individuals and businesses. Modernization and the new normal has compelled all businesses, including commerce and banking to go online, thus ensuing the use of apps and algorithm developed by FinTech companies. To an extent, these innovations have eased the flow of businesses, lessened the strain of transactions, and assured customers that all would and will be well in their dealings, at home and away.

It takes nothing to understand how Financial Institutions work, only one's willingness to adapt to trending technologies, and an open hug to the services of FinTech firms, which would propel rapid development of the Nigerian digital economy. Also, Financial Technology leads to improved ICT infrastructure, reduce the number of the unbanked population, and foster increased due diligence and protection of citizens' data.

Speed. Less costs. Faster Rate of Approval. Customer Services and Revenue. Efficiency. Greater convenience. World class compliance and security. Accessible information. Consumer benefits. All these synchronize with the term "Financial Technology". Gone were the days one had to go several miles to get to a financial institution to perform transactions. Gone were the days complaints due to errors in transactions were in vogue. The new era is here. An era of digital transactions, using apps and other avenues set up by FinTech companies. The future is here. Indeed, the future is now.

"Flutterwave is a payment technology company, founded on providing seamless and secure payment experiences to customers across Africa and beyond. It was founded in 2016 by Iyinoluwa Aboyesi, Co-founder Olugbenga Agboola and a team of FinTech experts, comprising of ex-bankers, entrepreneurs and engineers. The founder, Aboyesi came up with the idea of Flutterwave because of the challenges he faced while sending money to Africa while he was involved with Andela, a global engineering organization."









X-raying the Exploits of Fairmoney in Emerging Markets

By Godwin Anyebe

Nigeria, Africa's largest economy with a population pegged around 200 million—40 percent of which is financially excluded—offers significant opportunities for financial technology (Fintech) companies across the consumer spectrum, notably within the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) and affluent segments and, increasingly, in the mass-market segment.

To meet the financial demands and needs of this vast population, FairMoney was founded in 2017 by Laurin Hainy, CEO, Matthieu Gendreau, CTO and Nicolas Berthozat – product co-founder with the vision of being the first mobile bank for emerging markets. With a little over four years of existence, FairMoney already has technology centres in four locations across the globe: France, Nigeria, Latvia and now India.

This startup started its journey in Nigeria about four years ago with digital lending where they provide loans to those kinds of borrowers who are normally bypassed by the traditional commercial banks and in the most friction less manner. The goal is now to extend their offering to full-fledged mobile banking services with FairMoney current accounts, cards, saving products, payments etc.

FairMoney, which describes itself as "the mobile banking revolution for emerging markets." is a licensed online lender that provides instant loans and bill payments to underserved consumers in emerging markets.

Three years after launching its mobile lending service in Nigeria, the company set up shop in India, Asia's second-most populous country, in August 2020. Before expanding, FairMoney experienced exponential growth in Nigeria in terms of loans disbursement. In 2019, it disbursed a total loan volume of $93 million, representing a 128% increase from 2019 and a staggering 3,189% growth rate from its first year of operation in 2018. As it stands, the company is projecting a $300 million loan disbursement volume by the end of 2021.

FairMoney has come a long way since its Nigeria launch in 2017. In its first year of operation, the company had little over 100,000 users. Now, it claims to have 1.3 million unique users who have made more than 6.5 million loan applications. FairMoney offers loans from N1,500 ($3.30) to N500,000 ($1,110.00), with its longest loan facility standing at 12 months. Annual percentage rates fall within 30% to 260% — the high APR, Hainy says, is due to higher default rates in Nigeria. That said, FairMoney also claims to have an NPL ratio lower than 10%.

According to the CEO, data-driven insights was behind the choice to expand to India. The Indian market is quite similar to Nigeria's. In the Asian country, only 36% of adults have access to credit, leaving an untapped market of about 141 million people microfinance banks do not serve. But unlike Nigeria, India has

"FairMoney has come a long way since its Nigeria launch in 2017. In its first year of operation, the company had little over 100,000 users. Now, it claims to have 1.3 million unique users who have made more than 6.5 million loan applications. FairMoney offers loans from N1,500 ($3.30) to N500,000 ($1,110.00), with its longest loan facility standing at 12 months. Annual percentage rates fall within 30% to 260% — the high APR, Hainy says, is due to higher default rates in Nigeria. That said, FairMoney also claims to have an NPL ratio lower than 10 percent."



Laurin Hainey, CEO and Founder, FairMoney

better unit economics for the lending business and a more friendly regulatory environment.

"If our ambition is to build the leading mobile bank for emerging markets, we need to start with very large markets," Hainy said. "We tested our products in 10 different markets checking out for things like what the yield economics is like, NPLs, cost of risk, customer acquisition cost, cost of infrastructure and India stood out to us."

The Lagos and Paris-based company raised an $11 million Series A in 2019. Between now and the time it will get a commercial bank license, Hainy says the company would've raised its Series B round to position itself for that task.

Following its expansion six months ago, FairMoney claims to have processed more than half a million loan applications from over 100,000 unique users. This number trickles down to 5,000-6,000 loan applications per day, with APR standing at 12-36%. Hainy says the company has achieved this with zero ad spend or marketing.

Because of the daunting logistics behind international expansions, it's challenging for an African-based startup to expand outside the shores of the continent. Although a rarity, there are a couple of startups to have undertaken such a task. Last year, Nigerian fintech Paga with 15 million users and a network of over 24,000 agents acquired Ethiopian software company Apposit to fast-track its expansion into Ethiopia and Mexico.

FairMoney is on a similar path, as well. And with over 100 staff spread across Nigeria, France and Latvia, the company hopes to build an engineering and marketing team in India.

Recently, it hired the services of Rohan Khara to become its chief product officer (CPO) and facilitate the expansion. Khara is the former head of product for financial services for Indonesian super app Gojek and held senior roles at Microsoft, Quikr and MobiKwik. Hainy says with Khara's wealth of experience building consumer products in large emerging markets — India and Indonesia — FairMoney is poised for massive growth in Nigeria and India.

"We both share the vision that financial services in emerging markets need fixing and for us, Rohan brings the expertise to see FairMoney scale from almost a million users to 10 or 20 million users."

In India, the company is starting off with what it does best: providing loans with amounts as low as Rs 1,000 and going all the way up to Rs 50,000 to those needy sections of the populations who still remain untouched by the traditional financial institutions.

All this is entirely done through a mobile app. Leveraging advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, FairMoney is able to give loans in a matter of minutes to customers who would traditionally struggle to get approval from traditional banks. The result: a seamless, paperless and end-to-end 5 minutes experience for the users.

Given FairMoney's experience in Nigeria, it is very keen to replicate this in India starting with digital lending.

After India, which emerging market will FairMoney expand to next? There's none in sight at the moment, the CEO says. The company plans to move from a credit-led value proposition to a full financial service provider, deepen its verticals and replicate Nigeria's growth in India for now.

The company which has its 100 odd employees across the locations of Paris in France, Lagos, Nigeria, Latvia and now India believes in inculcating a similar culture across all its places of operation. As this fintech startup is trying to solve the whole challenge of financial inclusion, it believes in creating a strong sense of company values.

The key theme for FairMoney with regard to employee engagement rests on the philosophy "there is no lower voice than another". This means that everyone's ideas can have a high impact on shaping the company and product future.

No wonder why one of the core values at FairMoney is: "Own, don't rent."

FairMoney is keen on two counts: growing the business with a strong metric-driven mindset while allowing every talent in the company to personally grow and achieve his career goals.

This is achieved by FairMoney as it does not believe in hierarchy and this even gets extended to its hiring policy where it looks to onboard people based on their skill set and talent, rather than mere experience.

This fintech startup is also deeply engaged with the most advanced technologies like machine learning, data science, analytics giving the opportunity to employees to work on these areas as well as learn. In short, it is all cutting edge technology. The company has also laid down plans in increasing the headcount in India to over 50 by the end of this year. The aim is to build a Centre of Excellence (CoE) teams across Engineering, Product, Data Science verticals.



SPECIAL FEATURE

Interswitch

Financial Service Payment Solution At The Speed Of Light

By Biodun Obisesan

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the world in an unprecedented manner. Undoubtedly, this "New Normal" dispensation has put breaks on how we conduct most of our economic activities. More importantly, it has forced most consumers to opt for digital payments. With social distancing becoming the new normal in times of COVID-19, consumers have no option other than going for contactless and digital modes of payments. Moreover, governments and startups on the continent are implementing measures to shift a greater volume of payment transactions toward mobile money and away from cash — which the World Health Organization flagged as a conduit for the spread of the coronavirus.

Some financial experts opine that this is an option facilitated by the boom in fintech that has occurred in Africa over the last decade. By several estimates, the continent is home to the largest share of the world's unbanked population and has a sizable number of under-banked consumers and SMEs. By and large, the payment landscape in Nigeria and by extension, Africa has continued to evolve. From manually processed cash transactions to seamless and convenient real-time electronic payment solutions driven by innovation and advancement in technology.

Today, consumers and merchants in Nigeria are surrounded by a variety of payment options that offer them both safety and convenience and the acceptance has been heartwarming. Contactless payment is growing rapidly especially in the COVID-19 era. Card payments' progression started with the magnetic stripe cards, now down to virtual cards and tap-to-phone functionality, available in markets like South Africa.

Interestingly, Nigerians are showing that they are equally ready for this innovation, especially in this era of social distancing. During the lockdown, a huge number of people avoided shopping at a physical store. More than ever, merchants and consumers all over Nigeria are looking for newer, safer, and more convenient methods of payments with virtual cards and contactless solutions as exciting prospects for Nigeria's digital payments ecosystem.

As players in the Nigerian financial digital climate continue to adjust to more efficient and robust means of upending payment solutions, it is pertinent to state that Interswitch's broad network and robust payments platform have been instrumental to the development of the Nigerian payments ecosystem and provide Interswitch with credibility to expand across Africa.

Today, Interswitch is a leading player with critical mass in Africa's rapidly developing financial ecosystem and is active across the payments value chain, providing a full suite of omni-channel payment solutions. Driving by a vision berth a prosperous Africa and fastrack seamless exchange of value and commerce, Interswitch offers the largest system integration in e-payment services in Nigeria, with a broader presence across Uganda, Gambia, and Kenya. Our SDK integration to all application types is seamless and we offer the largest System Integration of Banking Applications in the Postilion World.

Interswitch's payment processing solution underpins the switching and processing of card schemes between issuers and acquirers. The platform is scalable across multiple channels (ATMs, POS and e-Commerce) as well as card types (Debit, Credit and Prepaid).

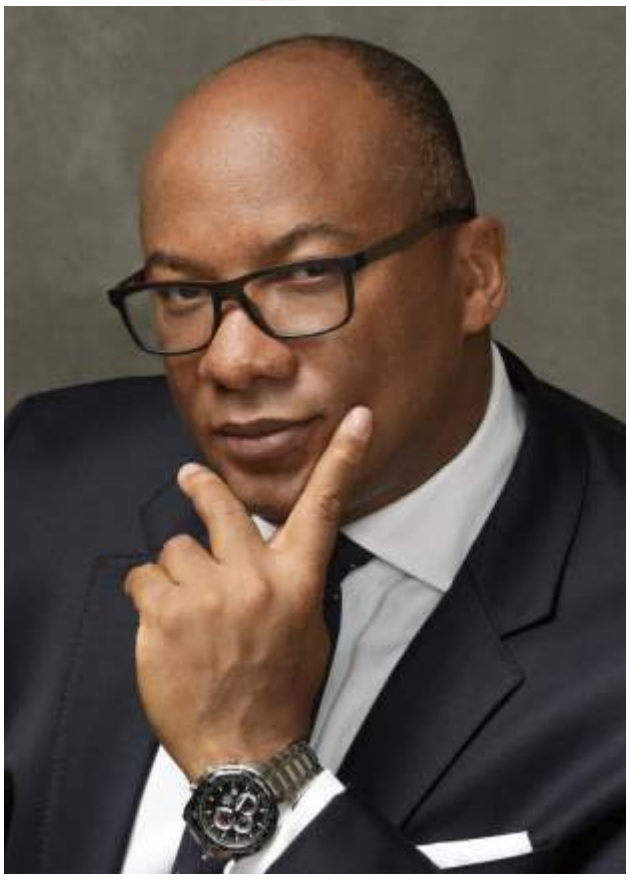
Interswitch has ensured that its brand essence of creating technology solutions that connect and empower individuals, businesses, and communities will make financial payment easy for Nigerians and inspire Africa to greatness through innovation, value creation and excellence.

Interswitch is a leading technology-driven company focused on the digitization of payments in Nigeria and other countries in Africa. Interswitch's vision is to make payments a seamless part of everyday life in Africa, and its mission is to create transaction solutions that enable individuals and communities to prosper across Africa.

It began operations in 2002 as a transaction switching and electronic payments processing business, building and managing payment infrastructure, delivering innovative payments solutions, and driving transactions across Nigeria and other African markets. They also provide security solutions and services that facilitate convenience and real value for consumers, businesses, governments, and other organizations, helping to reduce costs, improve operational efficiency and drive sustainable revenue growth.

Despite the huge operational advantage that e-payments have to open up to Nigerians, the use of digital payments has also brought with it the fear of digital payment frauds. COVID-19 has created a situation of panic in many parts of the world. This situation causes lower confidence levels and higher anxiety thus making the consumer more susceptible to these frauds.

Be that as it may, Interswitch has broken the problematic fraud barrier and is reinforcing customer confidence in its ability to issue a variety of cards across different card schemes. The system leverages a secure intelligent e-business transaction-processing engine designed for high speed, high volume, and round-the-clock availability. A real-time reporting system combined with a transparent portal that enables users to easily interface with the platform, providing access to live insights.



Mitchell Elegbe, MD/CEO, Interswitch

All solutions are in adherence to global security standards e.g., the platform is PCI DSS compliant and EMV enabled, ensuring users safety and security when using the platform. As the largest domestic card scheme in Africa, Verve offers chip + PIN payment cards providing issuers, cardholders, and organisations with high quality, customised suite of physical payment card products and solutions.

Making money is hard work, making payments should not be. Embrace a lifestyle of seamless and convenient payments across a diverse range of accessible and convenient digital platforms. Verve eCash is a virtual card that works just like your regular debit/ATM card on Quickteller and other digital platforms. The more often you repay your loan on time, the more your credit rating increases. Your credit rating determines the amount you can borrow.

With regards to the financial empowerment interchange in Nigeria, Quickteller Paypoint, a service under Interswitch Financial Inclusion Services (IFIS), has continued to live up to its billing. Recently, the brand visited several locations in Lagos – Agege, Alimosho, and Ikorodu to recruit more Quickteller Paypoint agents in a market activation drive targeted at cities across Nigeria.

The objective of the market activation is to recruit new agents who will be gainfully engaged and empowered to generate income, provide financial services and grow to empower others subsequently. The activation also seeks to increase digital payment touchpoints for Nigerians where they can easily carry out regular financial transactions such as bill payment, funds transfer, cash deposits, cash withdrawals, insurance, and airtime recharge, etc.

Speaking on the market activation, Olawale Akanbi, Group Head, Growth Marketing, Merchant and Ecosystem at Interswitch stated that the ongoing agent recruitment further demonstrates the company's commitment to enhance Nigeria's access to financial services. He added that: "Quickteller Paypoint is designed to empower Nigerians by creating income-generating opportunities for unemployed Nigerians and increase streams of income for employed Nigerians thereby facilitating business in both the rural and urban parts of Nigeria.

"This activation by Quickteller Paypoint is looking to onboard new agents on the Quickteller Paypoint platform. By so doing, we are not only empowering Nigerians to earn income, but we are also providing them a platform with which they can provide meaningful services to their communities and eventually grow to employ and empower others," he said.

The recruited agents and other potential agents are onboarded by registering on the Quickteller Paypoint platform. Required documentations include; passport photograph, recent utility bill (electricity, waste, or water bill) that shows the location, a valid ID card (National ID, Voter's card, driver's license, or international passport), and business registration documents (if the business name is CAC registered).

After registration, the agent is required to fund his/her wallet with at least N1000, this qualifies him/her for a free android POS and starter kit. The starter kit contains a free banner, power bank, and daily journal to document transactions.

In addition, Quickteller agents enjoy competitive commissions and stimulating incentives such as travel opportunities, training, business support, etc. helping them grow and scale their businesses faster. Quickteller Paypoint platform is a service of Interswitch Group enabled to support the financial inclusion agenda of the federal government. Currently, Quickteller Paypoint has over 35,000 agents spread across the country.

Quickteller Paypoint is the trade name for Interswitch Financial Inclusion Services (IFIS) Agent locations. It is a one-stop-shop robust consumer service platform for convenient airtime recharge, funds transfer, and bill payment.

Quickteller is Interswitch's online payments platform for consumers and businesses. It enables payments to be made across various channels (ATMs, Web, POS's now) with the use of debit or prepaid cards issued by any member bank on the Interswitch network. Quickteller services include airtime recharge, bill payments, (utility & non-utility), funds transfer, and remittances.

On the partnership front, Interswitch also raised the bar in berthing cutting-edge technology with the strategic partnership with Codebase Technologies (CBT), a leading global open API banking solution provider, to accelerate the digital banking transformation across the African continent.

With a shared vision of helping Africa's financial institutions and customers make the transition to digital banking, Codebase Technologies' award-winning Digibanc™ SaaS platform is the perfect complement to Interswitch's existing payments and digital banking offering, and together the partnership will help broaden access to financial services for Africans, driving greater financial inclusion across the continent.

Digibanc™ SaaS, hosted by Interswitch, will enable financial institutions in West and East Africa with full front-to-back SaaS capabilities through a rapid and cost-effective deployment model, allowing true economies of scale. Working with the Codebase Technologies team will help In-terswitch to broaden its current digital offering, whilst leveraging Interswitch's brand recognition to increase the reach and visibility of Digibanc™ SaaS in Africa.

The partnership will also enable banks, fintech, and other corporates, to take advantage of new, leading technologies, so they can continue to meet the evolving market and customer demand. In turn, customers will be able to access an extensive range of innovative banking and payment products that meet their existing and future needs.

Interswitch's Divisional CEO for Digital Infrastructure & Managed Services, Jonah Adams commented, "Africa is at the forefront of digitization, with the fintech market across the continent rapidly evolving. There is also increasing consumer demand for new, more accessible products and services, and for Interswitch, continuing to innovate and enhance our product propositions is critical. We are excited to partner with Codebase Technologies, bringing with them next-generation technological capabilities and expertise, as we continue our mission to increase access to financial services and drive financial inclusion across Africa."

Codebase Technologies' Commercial Director and Africa MD, Paul Nilsen, stated: "We look forward to working with Interswitch Group and launching this new, cutting-edge technology that will redefine user-centric, financially inclusive financial services and help spur innovation, economic growth, and increased access. This partnership will capitalize on the Interswitch Group's in-depth knowledge of the current needs and direction of financial institutions across the Continent, as well as the progress they have made in the banking and financial services space."

Interswitch Group, the organizers of the InterswitchSPAK National Science competition, has announced the release of the results of the National Qualifying Examination for the InterswitchSPAK Nigeria 3.0 which was held nationwide recently.

The InterswitchSPAK National Science competition is an annual pan-African contest aimed at re-igniting and incentivizing the study of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) subjects among secondary school students.

A total of 18,274 students registered for the national qualifying examination but 10,502 students wrote the examination. The South West had the most turnout of candidates with 50%.

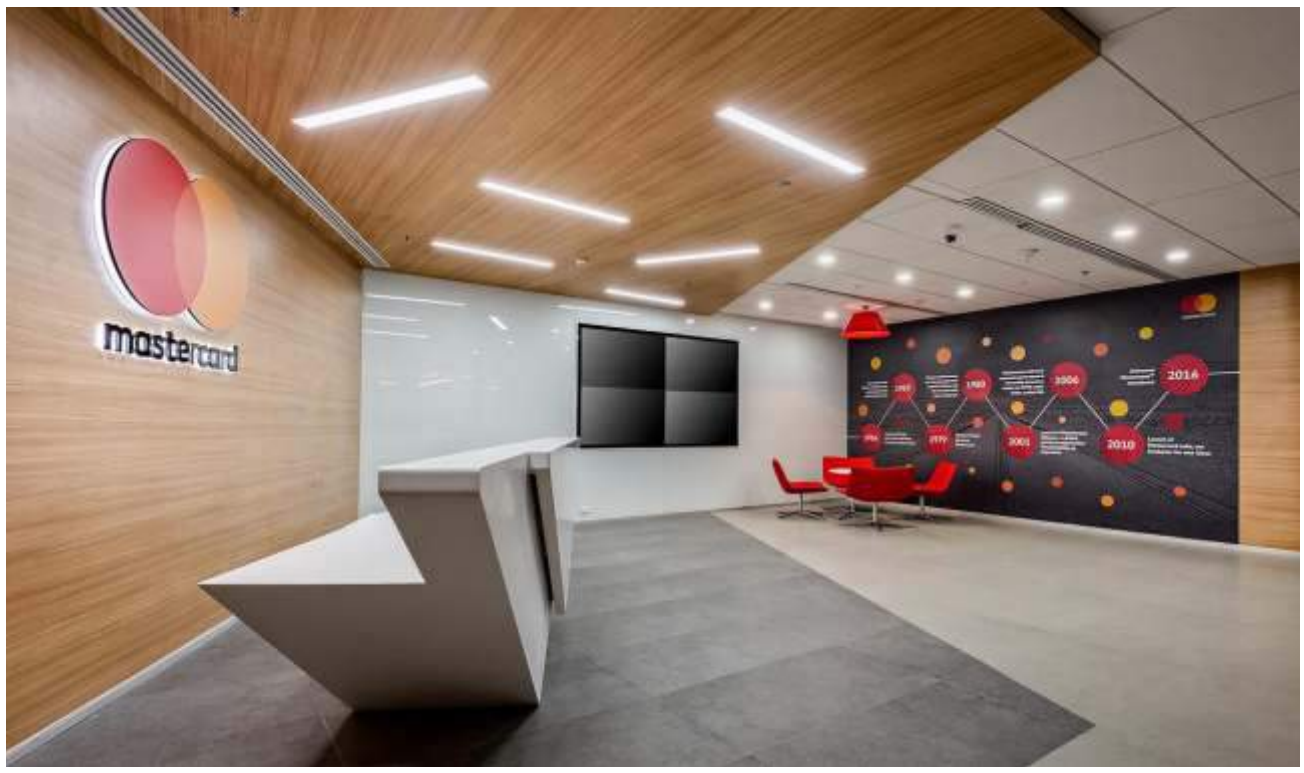
About 35% of the registrants came from public schools, while 65% of the students were from private schools. 15-year-old Alao Oluwateniola from Divine Step College, Lagos State had the highest score of 93%. The second highest score was 92% by 15-year-old Okoro Halimah from Taidob College, Ogun State.

The Group Chief Marketing and Communication Officer at Interswitch, Cherry Eromosele, has expressed her excitement about this year's edition. "It is impressive to see the level of participation at this year's edition of InterswitchSPAK. Despite the pandemic which led to the deferment of the competition last year, I am particularly excited to see that students and schools have adapted to the new normal of virtual learning and online classes. This year's qualifying examinations was written online, yet, we recorded a high rate of participation from both private and public schools. This just goes to show that truly, the only thing constant in life is change", she said.

This is the third edition of the InterswitchSPAK Nigeria competition. The competition, tagged 'InterswitchSPAK SWITCH-A-FUTURE' is a CSR initiative of the company. The second edition was concluded in February 2020.

Interswitch is connected to all commercial banks in Nigeria and has a growing presence across select African countries with access to 24/7 customer support to respond to customers' inquiries.

Mobilizing Against Climate Change Directly Through Its Business



Each day we all grapple with the effects of climate change which manifests itself in different ways, ranging from rising temperatures to soaring sea levels and a marked increase in heavy precipitation. Unfortunately, it is developing countries that have the least resources to offset the impact of climate change and are always one of the worst affected.

These extreme weather patterns are a direct result of human activity and the considerably increased usage of fossil fuel such as coal, oil and gas to generate electricity, run cars and other forms of transport, and to power the manufacturing and industrial sector. Our planet is paying dearly for rapid industrialisation as it is becoming increasingly uninhabitable for future generations.

Many of us contribute in one way or the other to the degradation of the environment. This happens each time we put on the light, drive our cars, toss waste out of car windows or simply buy goods packaged in plastic containers, which are notoriously non-biodegradable.

So, what are companies with such an expansive footprint as Mastercard doing to mitigate the impact of their operations on the environment?

This special edition of Brand Communicator focuses on brands that have made headway in adopting innovative and environmentally conscious practices to offset or minimise their carbon footprint, Mastercard is one such company which has used its operations to reduce its impact on the environment and offers consumers the opportunity to do the same. It has meant creating pathways to foster inclusive growth for underserved communities around the world.

Mastercard is giving consumers tools to measure their own footprint and make donations to the Priceless Planet Coalition (PPC). This is borne by the company's quest to give consumers the opportunity to make a positive difference, in line with the company's mantra: doing well by doing good. Mastercard launched PPC last year to unite the efforts of consumers, financial institutions, merchants, and cities to fight climate change through the restoration of 100 million trees by 2025, together with climate science and forest restoration experts.

Recently, Premier Bank, an Islamic financial institution in Somalia, has joined the PPC as a strategic partner. Premier Bank and Mastercard share a commitment to support efforts that encourage consumer action, support reforestation efforts and drive positive impact on the environment. PPC now features over 70 partners globally, including Expo 2020 Dubai, Network International and Emirates NBD.

Mastercard is activating their technology, expertise, global partners and network of nearly 3 billion consumer and corporate cardholders to take collective action to preserve the environment. The brand is mobilizing against climate change directly through its business, as well as by committing to net-zero emissions by 2050 and supporting their suppliers' decarbonization efforts.

The company believes that it needs to lead from the front. To that end, Mastercard has tied its executive compensation to the attainment of ESG goals in 2021, including carbon neutrality, or the 100% offset of its operational CO2 emissions.

This amply demonstrates the company's unwavering commitment to live up to its promises to slash its greenhouse emissions and develop innovations that regenerate natural resources.

Being a responsible and caring corporate citizen, it is imperative that Mastercard not only scrutinizes the impact of its operations on the environment, but by extension, to also leverage its footprint and brand to foster de-carbonization efforts throughout its operation and to promote the attainment of net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 across its value chain.

Taking an innovative and collaborative approach to supplier sustainability has made Mastercard a leader in the field, as demonstrated by the "A" rating for Supplier Engagement the company has maintained since 2018 from CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project).

Mastercard's pledge to reduce its carbon footprint is not empty rhetoric - the company has made, and continues to apply its technology, products, services, insights and partnerships, along with its people, to address urgent social, economic and environmental challenges on a commercially sustainable basis. This is geared at ensuring that people can reach their full potential, that economic growth is inclusive, and that the planet can thrive.

Mastercard operates 175 facilities around the world, and each of these facilities, including those that are leased, are run in an environmentally responsible manner. All owned properties in the world have Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, which is a globally recognised symbol of sustainability achievement and leadership.

In addition to this, two-thirds of Mastercard's data centers have on-site renewable energy in keeping with the 100% renewable energy commitment. In addition to investing in renewable energy sources to power its operations, Mastercard has also entered into long-term renewable energy arrangements in key countries that will contribute to its global net-zero ambitions. These agreements are envisaged to also provide ancillary co-benefits such as the creation of pollinator habitats.

This fastidious commitment to green working spaces translates to nearly 90% of global workspace meeting regional or international green certification standards.

Through its employee-led Environmental Action Teams at nine locations worldwide, Mastercard is continuously working to increase environmental awareness. By encouraging double-sided, black and white printing in its offices, Mastercard has reduced the number of pages printed by 33 million since 2009.

Mastercard has embedded sustainability into the fabric of its business. To that end, Mastercard has developed products, services, and experiences that enable consumers to make sustainable consumption choices that are better for the planet.

The use of single-use plastic products is regarded as one of the biggest contributors to climate change and the pollution of the world's oceans. Mindful of the far-reaching impact of plastic in the environment, Mastercard worked with global industry players to develop a sustainable card programme for all card issuers globally.

The sustainable card offerings are available to consumers in over a dozen countries globally and more than 60 financial institutions have issued cards with approved materials made from recyclable, bio-sourced, chlorine-free, degradable and ocean plastics. To date over 10 million cards have been produced for issuance since 2018 with approved sustainable materials using Mastercard's Sustainable Card Materials Directory.

Aside from working with like-minded partners to develop industry leading solutions that reduce carbon emissions, Mastercard also leverages its footprint, products and services to address issues of social and economic inequality. Mastercard expanded its worldwide commitment to financial inclusion, pledging to bring a total of 1 billion people and 50 million micro and small businesses into the digital economy by 2025. As part of this effort, there will be a direct focus on providing 25 million women entrepreneurs with solutions that can help them grow their businesses.

Recently, Mastercard successfully floated a $600 million Sustainability Bond at a fixed rate of 1.90%. This milestone further supports the company's work to build an inclusive and sustainable digital economy through commercially sustainable social impact.

The 10-year bond will pay interest semi-annually at a fixed rate of 1.90%. Mastercard expects to allocate the net proceeds from the Sustainability Bond to qualifying and worthy initiatives.

Michael Miebach, Chief Executive Officer at Mastercard, summed up the company's commitment to sustainability succinctly when he said: "No matter where you work or live, we are all in the sustainability business; the future of people, our planet, and the economy are inextricably linked."

"Aside from working with like-minded partners to develop industry leading solutions that reduce carbon emissions, Mastercard also leverages its footprint, products and services to address issues of social and economic inequality. Mastercard expanded its worldwide commitment to financial inclusion, pledging to bring a total of 1 billion people and 50 million micro and small businesses into the digital economy by 2025. As part of this effort, there will be a direct focus on providing 25 million women entrepreneurs with solutions that can help them grow their businesses."

SPECIAL FEATURE

PATRICIA A Gladiator Disrupting The Crypto Space

By Azeez Disu

The Crypto market is still a mystery to most people, both young and old. Some see it as a scheme for a few tech-savvy individuals, while others see it as a fraudster's new metric of carting away people's hard-earned money. However, the narrative is fast changing in many parts of the world, and lots of people are keying into the opportunity that the Crypto space offers.

Amazingly, the global cryptocurrency market size was valued at $1.49 billion in 2020 and is projected to reach $4.94 billion by 2030, growing at a CAGR of 12.8% from 2021 to 2030, according to data from Allied Market Research, leading market research, and advisory company.

In essence, what is crypto or cryptocurrency all about? An exposition from a research firm, states that Cryptocurrency is known as virtual currency. It is a form of currency that exists digitally only and has no central issuing or regulating authority above. It uses blockchain technology to authenticate transactions. Blockchain is a decentralized technology spread across many computers that manage and record transactions. Furthermore, it does not rely on banks to verify the transactions but is used as a peer-to-peer system that enables users to send and receive payments from anywhere in the world.

In Africa, Nigeria specifically, like many other countries of the world, didn't gain crypto acceptance in the early stage, as fear of the unknown erupted the decision to take advantage of the platform. However, today many people have fully evolved from students to capitals of industries, thanks to the sensitization and thought leadership of some organizations.

In line with this, Nigeria ranks first as the leading P2P Bitcoin trading country in Africa in terms of the volume of bitcoins traded according to data from Useful Tulips, a website that provides data on cryptocurrency. It is followed by Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa. Between January and March (Q1 2021), Nigeria posted a P2P Bitcoin trading value worth $99.1 million, surpassing Kenya's $38.4 million, while Ghana and South Africa rounded up the top 4 with $27.4 million and $25.8 million, respectively.

One of the leading organizations that have made this happen even for Grandma's to understand what Crypto is all is Patricia Technologies Limited. The organization simplified all the processes and deployed technology to make the process seamless just by following simple steps.

Attesting to the gap it is bridging, the company disclosed that "There is a lot of chatter around Crypto but not enough people are adopting it as fast as it could be adopted, why? The idea of Crypto is complex, it's almost as if it is reserved for a select few."

With Patricia's entrance into the Crypto space, paying utility bills, purchase of airtime, data, and performing other day-to-day activities using Crypto is now seamless for all. The company also further disrupted the market with the launch of Africa's rst-ever Bitcoin debit card, a product that allows users to spend their Bitcoins (BTC) with ease daily.

Patricia remains a force to be reckoned with within the tech space, making it one of the top players in the fintech and digital payment solutions space in Nigeria and Africa.

Brand Trajectory

The story of Patricia is similar to the kick-off of many tech giants like Facebook, Google, Microsoft, and others which had its founders taking the bold step to disrupt the market at a time the future of how far the idea or business would go was uncertain.

In a small corner of Southwestern Nigeria lived a young man, who many years ago identified a consumer pain point and took it upon himself to solve it.

In 2015, Fejiro Hanu Agbodje - Patricia's Founder and CEO, had an uncle who sent him Giftcards whenever he came visiting from the United States. He had no present use for them and decided to trade them. But hard as he tried, he could not get value for these Giftcards, locally and internationally. This made him realize that many other Nigerians and Africans like himself have a hard time exchanging their Giftcards for value. This birthed the dream to create a trusted ecosystem for users like him, known today as Patricia Technologies.

Specifically, on August 16, 2017. Patricia Technologies kicked off operations in a small corner office (Boys Quarter) in the Lekki suburb of Lagos, Nigeria, with a team of two employees, the ambition to service 80 clients, and an NGN 80,000 (Naira) ($200) capital.

According to Patricia's Founder and CEO - Fejiro Hanu Agbodje, "Our first transaction did not happen until the 21st of August 2017. About a year and some months after this mean feat, we launched our first ever Patricia website which we intended on using as a tool to usher Africa into its digital age, as well as foster the growth and era of crypto education within and outside Africa.

"With time the business evolved from simply trading Bitcoins to being a Tech start-up. And so, we armed ourselves with the vision to improve user experiences in the crypto and tech space, we made sure to consistently evolve our product offerings. So, in 2019, we went back to the drawing board, which gave rise to innovative new products and partnerships to serve users within and outside Africa.



Fejiro Hanu Agbodje, Founder and CEO, Patricia

We did not stop here, as we went on in 2020 to launch Africa's First-ever Bitcoin debit card, a product that allows users to spend their BTC with ease daily.

"We gained momentum pretty quickly, earning us over 300,000+ unique sign-ups within a year, and over 10,100,000 unique transactions across all products and services, with offices in Ghana, United Kingdom, USA, UAE, and Asia."

Amazingly, today Fejiro Hanu Agbodje currently leads a team, whose goal is to not just build a system that will change the world but ensure the growth of each team member as the first step in changing the world.

Similarly, the brand's corporate philosophy is to make Crypto easy for all. "Our goal is to make crypto easy for the world. We have successfully done it in Africa, 60-year-old Nigerian Mothers use Patricia to send money via crypto to their kids in Europe and other parts of the world. Infusing Crypto into the day-to-day lives of people brings crypto from its high horse and levels the playing field. Activities such as withdrawing Crypto from ATMs worldwide with the Patricia Bitcoin Debit card, paying electricity bills, TV subscriptions, sports betting, buying gift cards all using crypto, show that there's a lot we can do with crypto if we open ourselves up to it," the company stated.

Innovative Marketing Initiatives and Campaigns

The brand has launched series of marketing initiatives and campaigns to engage its consumers and these have helped it retain its leadership in the crypto market in Nigeria, Africa and as well positioned it as a force to be reckoned with in the world.

Some of the campaigns and initiatives it has thrown its weight behind include: The Evolution Campaign launched May 2020, Patricia @ 3 Campaign launched August 2020, Bitcoin Made Easy on September 2020, BBNaija 2020 - Lockdown Version held July - Sept 2020, and the current BBNaija 2021 "Shine your eye" version of which they are the Associate sponsors.

As a business that is set to show and teach people the no-brainer ways of learning, using, and making money with crypto, marketing has been one of its tools for achieving that and it has continuously run awareness campaigns and has also built credibility and brand affinity.

According to the company, "Our core message has always been 'Crypto Made Easy' and this was what we set out to communicate to our target audience when we initiated 'The Evolution Campaign 'in May 2020 and being featured on BBNaija - Lockdown version. Using a strategy of retaining', opportunities have been opened to us here in Africa and the world in general."

The company added that its strategies have been more of storytelling and it has also created an easy-to-use platform which has further made its marketing easy and believable.

"At every marketing touchpoint, inclusive of our thematic campaigns, we used strategies such as storytelling, paid marketing, social network, and viral marketing, email marketing, direct selling, point of purchase, Influencer marketing, and others to show everyone that we recognize the global potential in terms of blockchain, e-commerce, cryptocurrency, decentralized finance, and Capital Development. So, we've set out to create the easiest platform; a safe, secure, seamless, and interactive space for both experts, merchants, and the world at large."







paystack Success Story Of A Growing Fintech Leader



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By Gbenga Adeosun

Among the key players in Nigeria's glamorous Fintech industry is Paystack, a leading innovator and pacesetter firmly established in the digital payments solution ecosystem which has helped launch a new era for technology revolution in Nigeria's financial sector.

Founded in the commercial city of Lagos in Nigeria, Paystack has become an inspiring African story designed and built by a global team of innovative, dynamic and smart people. Paystack was founded in 2015 by Shola Akinlade and Ezra Olubi, software developers and long-time friends. After witnessing the inefficiencies of payment processing in Nigeria, Ezra Olubi saw the potential for a disruptive online payment platform. The computer enthusiast met the cofounder, Shola Akinlade, at a software exhibition while they were both studying at the university. More than a decade later, they teamed up to form Paystack and they soon became the first Nigerian Fintech start-up to be accepted into the Y Combinator program in November 2015.

With over 60,000 businesses in Nigeria and many others in Africa using Paystack to accept local and international online payments with its secure payments gateway, Paystack prides itself as a growth engine for modern businesses in Africa. Paystack builds technology to help Africa's best businesses grow from new start-ups, to market leaders launching new business models. By providing an integrated and efficient online payment platform, Paystack allows businesses in Africa to accept payments from anywhere in the world via credit card, debit card, money transfer, and mobile phone.

They make it easy for businesses to accept secure payments from multiple local and global payment channels, and then provide tools to help retain existing customers, and acquire new ones. As makers and business owners themselves, the company is inspired by a vision of millions of exceptional businesses across the continent who're profitable, resourceful, and loved. With the belief that businesses in Africa will routinely go toe to toe with the best companies on the planet, and compete favourably.

In December 2016, Paystack raised $1.3 million from local and international investors including Tencent, Comcast Ventures, and Ventures Platform. In July 2017, for the first time, Paystack processed over 1 billion Naira in a single month. In that same month, Paystack introduced the ability for customers to pay with only a bank account number. In February 2018, Paystack Starter Businesses was launched, a platform which allowed businesses who aren't yet formally registered to get started with online payments with Paystack. In August 2018, Paystack raised $8 million in the Series A funding round led by global payment giants Stripe, together with Visa, and follow-on investment from Tencent and Y Combinator. In October, 2018 Paystack recorded another major milestone of processing 10 billion Naira in monthly transaction value for the first time while it also expanded its operations into neighbouring country, Ghana.

In June 2020, Paystack announced the launch of Paystack Commerce, a combination of free tools to help African brands sell more physical and digital products online. With the Paystack Commerce toolkit, African brands have access to a simple, high converting products page and seller tool called Product Link. The tool helps brands create an alluring and beautiful page called Storefronts by designing an attractive product detail page with custom background colours, photos, videos, animated GIFs, customized URL and also add detailed product descriptions.

While Paystack Commerce helps businesses sell their products through the product link, another new product feature called Paystack Merchant app was also introduced to help businesses manage their Paystack account from their phone. Merchants can easily know when they receive orders through Paystack Commerce as the merchant app provides push notifications for new orders.

"The core tech focus of Paystack is based on simple and easy payments towards delighting customers with a seamless payment experience and an assured transaction success rate. It is geared towards giving customers the gift of modern, secured, frictionless, and smooth payments."

Before the launch, Paystack's payments platform had several tools like payment pages, invoices, and subscriptions features every month to power sales. that help the business perform payments and complete transactions online. However, the new Paystack commerce toolkit underscored that the company was making a significant push into the e-commerce sector.

The core tech focus of Paystack is based on simple and easy payments towards delighting customers with a seamless payment experience and an assured transaction success rate. It is geared towards giving customers the gift of modern, secured, frictionless, and smooth payments. Paystack is firmly integrated to the following payment systems: ATM Cards, Bank Accounts payment, Bank transfer, USSD, Apple Pay, Visa QR, Mobile Money and plans are in place to adopt the POS method of payments also.

The Apple Pay payment channel was recently adopted by Paystack and it is a new payment channel that lets users accept international payments quickly from millions of Apple Pay users on its platform. The development made Paystack the first payment gateway to support Apple Pay in Nigeria. Apple Pay is a mobile payment and digital wallet service provided by Apple Inc. The service allows customers to authorise payments with Touch ID or Face ID, instead of manually filling long payment forms.

In furtherance of its tech prowess, Paystack also enables users to build custom payments experiences with well-documented application program interface (APIs). Among its features are; collecting one-time and recurring payments from app or website, making instant transfers, retrieving all transaction and customer data and verifying the identity of customers.

The stellar success rate of Paystack is backed up by some factors which includes Direct Bank Integrations which directly integrates the platform into most of Nigeria's largest banks, ensuring a near 100% success rates for many card transactions. Another is Intelligent Routing, a feature which dynamically routes transactions through different gateways and processors, ensuring optimal payment pathways, and high success rates. There is also Smart Error Resolution which comes into play on rare occasions that a transaction fails, Paystack proactively suggests alternate payment channels to the customer, so they can try paying through a different method. For example, if the customer's card fails, the Paystack Checkout Form might suggest to the customer to try paying through QR code instead. They also have in place a responsive and efficient customer service system that can be accessed via mail, telephone or through the company website.

By October of 2020, Paystack was acquired by Stripe, a US-based Fintech giant, in the biggest Merger & Acquisition deal in Nigerian tech space and one of the biggest in Nigerian corporate history. The acquisition statement disclosed thus: "In order to help grow Africa's online GDP, Stripe has entered into an agreement to acquire Paystack, a technology company based in Lagos that makes it easy for organisations of all sizes to collect payments from around the world. Today, more than 60,000 businesses in Nigeria and Ghana use Paystack to securely collect online and offline payments, launch new business models, and deepen customer relationships. Incredibly, Paystack already processes more than half of all online transactions in Nigeria and has ambitious plans to expand across the continent."

Before acquiring Paystack, Stripe had added 17 countries to its platform in 18 months, but none from Africa; hence Paystack was its first attempt in the African online commerce market.

Committed to giving back to the society, Paystack in October 2020 partnered with Google for the Economy Recovery Program for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Africa. The program was about offering free professional assistance to over 500,000 SMEs in Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa towards restarting, recovering and digitising their businesses with new tools, financial support and training. Google partnered with Paystack to help more businesses bring their ideas to market and grow their online sales using Paystack's collection of simple and powerful commerce tools.

In May 2021, Paystack announced the expansion of its operations to South Africa, as it began launching its foothold in other markets. Speaking on the expansion, Shola Akinlade said, "South Africa is one of the continent's most important markets, and our launch here is a significant milestone in our mission to accelerate commerce across Africa".

With projections and forecasts into the operations of the system high over the next few years, the outlook for the Fintech industry in Nigeria looks generally auspicious with the continuous opportunities for growth inherent in the system. The Stripe investment has further strengthened the resolve and commitment of Paystack towards becoming a global giant and it is in the right direction towards achieving that objective. The trust and confidence it enjoys among users, its reputation as an efficient payment solutions provider and its devotion to seeing tech start-ups grow in Africa has further endeared many private individuals and large corporations to its philosophy while also drawing more investments into the industry as a whole.

APCON
Advertising Practitioners Council Of Nigeria
(Established by Act No. 55 of 1988 CAP A7 LFN 2004)

ADVERTISING INDUSTRY STANDARD OF PRACTICE (AISOP)

In line with the Federal Government's reformative plans aimed at accelerating the pace of economic recovery post pandemic era, enhance gainful employment, overhaul the Institutional and regulatory framework for the Nigerian Advertising Industry, the Hon. Minister of Information and Culture Alh. Lai Mohammed has approved the implementation of the Advertising Industry Standards of Practice (AISOP).

The AISOP provides a minimum standardized commercial terms for agencies, advertisers, media houses, advertising services providers and stakeholders, in matters relating to the business of advertising and marketing communications in Nigeria.

AISOP is a business framework that seeks to improve mutual respect, eradicate unfair advantage, unethical competition, and inequitable policies between relevant stakeholders in the advertising and marketing communications industry in Nigeria.

HIGHLIGHTS OF AISOP

a. Parties involved in an advertising and marketing communications must establish a contract. All contracts shall be in writing and duly signed by the parties.
b. Parties to advertising contract shall ensure that confidential or proprietary information belonging to the other party is not disclosed to a third party unless consent covering the disclosure is first obtained in writing from the other party. Parties may sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement to protect confidential or proprietary information.
c. All parties shall abide by laws governing copyright protection in Nigeria.
d. An Advertiser may invite one or more advertisement agencies to pitch for any or all its advertising and, or marketing communications services provided that the agency invited for such pitch shall be entitled to a pitch fee as stipulated in AISOP.
e. No term or condition by a party or all parties in an agreement shall constitute a waiver for pitch fee.
f. Payment for advertising services shall be made within 30 days; On no account shall payment be later than (45) days from receipt of invoice.
g. Where invoice is received and payment is not made within 45 days, interest shall accrue on the sum at the prevailing Central Bank of Nigeria's approved interest rate.
h. All payments shall specify the particular invoice being paid. Payment on account must be discouraged to avoid reconciliation challenges.
i. Agency Remuneration shall be made according to industry guidelines stated in AISOP.
j. Media rates may be increased at any time provided that at least 30 days' notice is given prior to implementation.
k. Disengagement of advertisement agency is done in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the contract of engagement and in line with the provisions of AISOP on disengagement protocol.
l. Media monitoring, audit bureau of circulation and audience measurement covering: Broadcast, Out-of-Home, Print and Digital shall comply with respective relevant policies set out by APCON and the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.

The Advertising Industry Standard of Practice takes effect from the 6th day of October, 2021 and shall so become enforceable by APCON. Copies of the AISOP can be obtained from APCON offices nationwide.

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AISOP

Raising The Bar of Advertising Practice In Nigeria

FEATURE STORY

AISOP: Raising The Bar Of Advertising Practice In Nigeria Industry



By Azeez Disu

The emergence of the Advertising Industry Standard of Practice (AISOP) has set new dawn in Nigeria's advertising industry. This step would forever be remembered in the country's IMC history, that the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON), a government regulatory agency, led a force to transform the advertising industry, to put the country on a global map.

The new AISOP is expected to create a standard operating system that will galvanize advertising practice and the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) landscape as a whole.

Meanwhile, having a standard operating system is vital for any country's advertising industry and helps it operate within global best practices. Countries like South Africa and Kenya already have it in place and it has further positioned them as some of the destinations of quality advertising practice.

Remarkably, Nigeria's population is projected to reach 263 million in 2030 and 401 million in 2050 according to United Nation. Little wonder that it has been the centre of attention of global brands who are entering the market en masse.

To save the advertising industry, stakeholders have often called for self-regulation like it is done in some other countries already enjoying the dividend of its implementation.

The drum rolls, literary as stakeholders applaud APCON leadership led by Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo for breaking the jinx and taking the industry forward, involving all stakeholders to decide in the future of the advertising and by extension contributing to the growth of the economy.

Advertising- Now Not Business As Usual

The Advertising Industry Standard of Practice (AISOP) defines advertisement as " A notice, announcement, exposure, publication, broadcast, statement, announcorial, informercial, hype, display, town cry, show, event, logo, payoff, trademark etc to promote, advocate, solicit, showcase, endorse, vote, support, etc a product, service, cause, idea, person, organization, etc with the intention to influence, sway, actuate, impress, arouse, patronize, entice, attract etc people by an identified sponsor irrespective of media, medium, platform, etc."

The above definition of Advertisement by AISOP is all-encompassing and speaks volumes of the power of advertising.

With AISOP, advertising has been given yet another attention and a deliberate move by APCON to help further grow the industry and grow the economy.

Looking at revenue generation to the economy, according to Statista, Nigeria is one of the largest advertising markets in Africa: in 2017 Nigerian ad revenue reached 425 million U.S. dollars. The only two countries that generated more ad revenues that year were South Africa and Morocco – 2.7 billion U.S. dollars and 820 million respectively. However, markets such as Algeria, Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania, and Tunisia all ranked below Nigeria's results.

Before AISOP, issues around the standard of practice within the industry have been on the front burner and unresolved, leading to court cases. Engagement team, pitch fee, payment terms, debt issues, and others were some of the issues that rocked the advertising ecosystem.

"The new AISOP is expected to create a standard operating system that will galvanize advertising practice and the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) landscape as a whole."

APCON maintains a strong focus on its vision of promoting responsible and ethical advertising practice, acts as the conscience of society in matters of commercial communications, and as a watchdog for consumers. It also manages the needs and interests of stakeholders in Nigeria's advertising industry.

APCON aligns with the sectorial associations in regulating the conduct of their member organizations to ensure a socially responsible practice. By insisting on pre-exposure clearance of all advertisements, APCON strives to check all forms of abuses such as misleading statements, spurious testimonials, visual and verbal exaggerations, misleading offers, suggestions, or pictures offensive to the public decency, etc.

APCON worked with the Committee on Standard of Practice chaired by Mr. Funmi Onabolu, a former member of the APCON Governing Council who also worked with all the sectoral groups including the Heads of Advertising Sectoral Groups (HASG) to make the AISOP a reality.

The HASG members comprise of Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN), Experiential Marketers' Association of Nigeria (EXMAN), Media Independent Practitioners Association of Nigeria (MIPAN), Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAN), Advertisers Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) and Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria (BON).

Answering a question, that may arise from some quarter on why the industry needs a standard of practice, Communications Authority of Kenya, a market that already has a standard of practice answers on its website.

"Codes of Practice are normally considered when: Government regulations are unlikely to occur or are inappropriate for the specific section of the market, Overarching legislation exists and the objective is to assist in ensuring compliance through the development of controls to improve industry standards"

Also, there is widespread acknowledgment that there is need for, and commitment to, the development of controls to improve industry standards and the objective is to provide customer-focused benefits beyond the minimum standards.

Explaining, the Role of Codes of Practice, it states that Code of Practice as is a form of industry self-regulation (encourages industry self-regulation), Advances/improves consumers' confidence in Industry and organizations that subscribe to the Code of Practice and Promote good business practices.

We also have the sectoral groups which come together to form the HASG-Heads of Advertising Sectoral Groups.

The HASG is the highest self-regulatory organisation in the industry. The relationship between APCON and HASG is more of a supervisory role. If there are issues that are not resolved by the self-regulatory bodies, these are brought before APCON which then intervenes by bringing the law to bear to this effect.

Issues in the IMC Industry

It is important to state that issues of pitch fee, debt recovery, payment terms, rules of engagement, audience measurement, and others are some of the challenges confronting the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) industry.

Sectoral groups are Like AAAN and EXMAN have been calling on brand owners to pay when their members are invited for a pitch because they spend a lot of resources in research and ideas which go into the presentation made to the client. For example, EXMAN stated that organisations inviting their members for pitches should prepare to pay N500, 000 as a rejection fee to the agencies not picked.

Audience measurement is also a major issue affecting the industry, affecting the activities of OAAN to Media Independent Practitioners Association of Nigeria (MIPAN).

In another vein, the rising profile of media debt owed by multinational advertisers which have overstayed agreed working grace period of 90 days and 180 days in some quarters, has led to acute liquidity crisis in the industry. This has also created some operational challenges. The hardest hit is the electronic and the print media, and OOH advertising.

On Media Debts, Dr. Fadolapo explained "Fortunately for

me again, I have sat on different advertising industry debt resolution committees in the past. The last one was the one that was set up by Mr. Chris Doghudje during his tenure as Chairman. We called the committee ASCOMDi. The issue of debt has been a major challenge in this industry. While I am not holding brief for advertisers and agencies, I believe that all players are culpable as far as this issue is concerned.

"Many advertisers have taken agencies for granted. There are situations where agencies have also taken the media for granted. There are instances where the media has taken agencies and advertisers for granted. Now, what do we do? Before now, there are three mediums of this business: we have the print media, outdoor and the electronic/broadcast media. The print media, newspaper houses have been able to resolve the bulk of their problems as many are now doing prepayment.

"Now, for the Outdoor business, there is a major problem as far as this issue is concerned. We are talking with OAAN as part of the Industry Standard of Practice and business framework that will improve the Out-of-Home advertising practice.

"Now, for the broadcast media, we are in talks with the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation and we are at the verge of signing an MoU. The aim of the MoU is zero tolerance for debts, meaning that, you cannot owe NTA and move your products to Channels or owe Radio Nigeria and move your product to Radio Kwara. We want a situation where everyone can see that there is sanity in the industry. A situation where the advertisers, agencies, and media can sit down to do proper reconciliation and all players will respect the terms of trade and engagement. Within the next few months, we will come up with an industry business framework that will guide relationship as relates to payment policies and industry debts."

Recall last year in a move to ensure standardization of its operations, OAAN in association with the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) entered into a partnership arrangement intending to develop a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to guide the business of Out-of-Home advertising practice in Nigeria.

According to OAAN, the objective behind the operating procedure is targeted at developing and maintaining a suitable standard for outdoor advertising practice in Nigeria and also to establish a definite protocol for controlling the practice of outdoor advertising to achieve a desired standard of practice.

Self-Regulation and Other markets

"In Nigeria, we still act sometimes as if we are confused. The business leg of the advertising profession has been left largely under-developed. So the Committee on Standard of Practice was established to look at our industry and what we can learn from what is dome to bring it to standard in other climes" Fadulapo told guests at AAAN AGM held recently.

According to responsibleadvertising.org, Advertising self-regulation does not replace statutory legislation but complements an existing framework of law to provide robust and proportionate consumer protection with advantages for consumers, businesses and governments.

In the few cases where this is needed, provisions for a legal backstop ensure that companies can be taken to court if in continued breach of a self-regulatory code. Effective self-regulation offers consumers a double layer of protection.

On top of the legal backstop, advertising self-regulation includes stringent sanctions for advertisers in breach of codes. These comprise 'naming and shaming' (publication of decisions), the withdrawal of the advertisement, obligatory copy advice for future campaigns, and withdrawal of trading privileges.

In South Africa for example, as a form of self-regulation, it has the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa. According to the Advertising Standards Authority Of South Africa (ASA) on its website, The Code of Advertising Practice is the guiding document of the ASA (THE ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA). The Code is based upon the International Code of Advertising Practice, prepared by the International Chamber of Commerce. This is internationally accepted as the basis for domestic systems of self-regulation. It forms the foundation of this Code in which the basic principles laid down in the International Code are related to the particular circumstances of advertising in South Africa. The Code is drawn up by the ASA with the participation of representatives of the marketing communications industry and as amended from time to time to meet the changing needs both of the industry and of our society.

This Code is supplemented by individual codes, which are determined by the various member organisations or negotiated with governmental institutions. These individual codes are reflected in the Appendices to the Code. All such codes conform to the general principles laid down by this Code and differ only in detail where the individual needs are to be met.

In 2008 ASA ruled that a television advertisement by GloMobile featuring Jeff Dunham's character Achmed the Dead Terrorist was offensive to Muslims and ordered GloMobile to withdraw the advertisement.

Similarly, in Kenya, its standard of practice is called the Advertising Standards Body of Kenya or "ASBK" which is an independent body set up by the marketing and advertising



Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo, Registrar/CEO, APCON

industry, charged with the responsibility of regulating the advertising industry in Kenya.

APCON : Breaking The Jinx

'I Want To Leave APCON Equated With The Status Of CBN To The Banking Industry'

"Meanwhile, having a standard operating system is vital for any country's advertising industry and helps it operate within global best practices. Countries like South Africa and Kenya already have it in place and it has further positioned them as some of the destinations of quality advertising practice."

The above quote was made by Dr. Fadolapo, when he had a chat with Brand Communicator a few days after he resumed as the head of the regulatory advertising body. He has not failed on this promise judging from the successes and milestones he has recorded within a short period in office.

Since he assumed office, he has been working on how to bring the sectoral groups to work together, in the interest of having an industry all can be proud of, and within a short time in office, he has been able to actualize it.

On self-regulation and standard practice, he said "In other markets, it is purely self-regulation. The sectoral groups come together, outline best business practices, sign an MoU and it becomes a law, but in Nigeria we always find it difficult to conclude such processes.

The Registrar has been making efforts to reposition the council, he revealed that when he assumed office in the first interview he had with Brand Communicator.

In his words, "The problem has always been about APCON's positioning in the past. For example, we are the government agency that licenses advertising agencies. We are the regulatory body for advertising business in this market. How have we been able to engage government parastatals, agencies, and ministries to encourage them to use APCON licensed organizations? Immediately after I assumed office, one of the things we have done is that we have engaged all relevant government agencies. For example, I met with the DG OF NBC, DG OF NPC, DG of Public Service Reforms. We pitched to them that they cannot be doing reforms without having the right communication professionals onboard. Fortunately, this has yielded impressive result as the DGs has promised to collaborate with us.

"This means that, if they are doing public sector branding/public sector business, they are going to patronise APCON licensed advertising agencies. It may also interest you to know that there is a procedure through which government businesses are given out. There is an agency that is empowered to issue out government projects, and that is the Bureau for Public Procurement. We have reached out to them and any moment from now, we will be able to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with them. They will soon give APCON recognition the way they recognize the NBA, ICAN and other professional institutes and associations. What this implies is that if you are not an APCON licensed business, government business will not be given to you."

AISOP Industry Presentation

Excitingly, after years of persistent calls for a regulatory framework that stakeholders can collectively key into, the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) unveiled the new Advertising Industry Standard of Practice (AISOP) that would guide and regulate the business of advertising in Nigeria.

The Registrar/Chief Executive of APCON, Dr Olalekan Fadolapo during the Public Presentation of AISOP held on Wednesday, October 6, 2021 at Sheraton Hotel Ikeja Lagos disclosed that AISOP will provide minimum standard in terms of commercial activities of agencies, advertisers, media houses, advertising services providers and stakeholders, in matters relating to the business of advertising and related areas of marketing communications in Nigeria.

In his words, Fadolapo said AISOP is "A business framework that seeks to improve mutual respect, eradicate unfair advantage, unethical competition, and unequitable policies between relevant stakeholders in the advertising and marketing communications industry in Nigeria."

He added that it specifically provides a regulatory framework of critical areas of concern to stakeholders, the areas include: engagement policy, payment terms and method, media rates and commission, remuneration model, disengagement protocol, returns on advertising investment and measurements, dispute resolution and other related business protocols.

According to the regulator, AISOP takes immediate effect from 6th of October, 2021 and shall become enforceable by APCON in the bid to ensure standardized operations, in line with global best practices.

He added that the Stakeholders Committee that drew up the framework was chaired by Funmi Onabolu, a former member of the APCON Governing Council. The committee also had a representative from the Advertisers Association of Nigeria (ADVAN), Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN), Broadcasters Organisation of Nigeria (BON), Media Independent Practitioners Association of Nigeria (MIPAN), Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAN), and Experiential Marketing Association of Nigeria (EXMAN).

Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo explained that the execution of the guideline will put the country on a global map as one of the best destinations where advertising and marketing communications practices are done professionally.

"It is expected that with the implementation of this guideline, Nigeria will be placed among the most progressive advertising and marketing communications industry across the globe."

He, therefore, urged stakeholders to support the initiative



Steve Babaeko, President, AAAN



Femi Adelusi, President MIPAN



Bunmi Adeniba, President, ADVAN

and abide by the standard of practice in the interest of growing the industry, creating jobs, and growing the economy.

"Stakeholders and industry players are implored to support this guideline and to ensure the success of this effort. We trust that the faithful application of the Advertising Industry Reform in Nigeria will not only grow the business of advertising and marketing communications but will also create well over 100,000 jobs directly and indirectly in the next 12 months."

"We are not oblivious of the fact that the AISOP may generate different degrees of sentiments but we are confident that the guideline serves to protect the best interest of the Nigerian advertising and marketing communications industry in particular and that of the general public.

"APCON is committed to constantly improving the practice and business of advertising in Nigeria and shall always welcome productive ideas that will enable the council to deliver the best conducive business environment in Nigeria in line with her mandate."

Funmi Onabolu on his part said that although they have always been advertising regulations, they have never been a single codified rule of engagement among practitioners, so AISOP serves as that instrument of self-regulation. The main reason is to avoid unfair practices. He explained further that AISOP is in line with global best practices and has input from various industry associations and other stakeholders. With this document, he believes everyone in the industry is protected.

"We do believe that with the kind of spirit that went into coming up with the guideline we should be able to as an industry and move forward and safe all stakeholders the headache and the challenges they are facing."

The event had in attendance the Heads of Advertising Sectoral Groups (HASG) members from ADVAN, AAAN, MIPAN, OAAN to EXMAN including other stakeholders from the advertising industry.

Key Highlights Of AISOP

In line with the Federal Government's reformative plans aimed at accelerating the pace of economic recovery post-pandemic era, enhance gainful employment, overhaul the Institutional and regulatory framework for the Nigerian Advertising Industry, the Hon. Minister of Information and Culture Alh. Lai Mohammed has approved the implementation of the Advertising Industry Standards of Practice (AISOP).

The AISOP provides a minimum standardized commercial term for agencies, advertisers, media houses, advertising services providers and stakeholders, in matters relating to the business of advertising and marketing communications in Nigeria.

AISOP is a business framework that seeks to improve mutual respect, eradicate unfair advantage, unethical competition, and inequitable policies between relevant stakeholders In the advertising and marketing communications industry in Nigeria.

Other Major Highlights

a. Parties involved in advertising and marketing communications must establish a contract. AIL contracts shall be in writing and duly signed by the parties.
b. Parties to advertising contract shall ensure that confidential or proprietary information belonging to the other party is not disclosed to a third party unless consent covering the disclosure is first obtained in writing from the other party. Parties may sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement to protect confidential or proprietary Information.
c. AIL parties shall abide by Laws governing copyright protection in Nigeria.
d. An Advertiser may invite one or more advertisement agencies to pitch for any or all its advertising and, or marketing communications services provided that the agency invited for such pitch shall be entitled to a pitch fee as stipulated in AISOP.
e. No term or condition by a party or all parties in an agreement shall constitute a waiver for the pitch fee.
f. Payment for advertising services shall be made within 30 days; On no account shall payment be later than (45) days from receipt of Invoice.
g. Where an invoice is received and payment is not made within 45 days, interest shall accrue on the sum at the prevailing Central Bank of Nigeria's approved interest rate.
h. AIL payments shall specify the particular invoice being paid. Payment on account must be discouraged to avoid reconciliation challenges.
I. Agency Remuneration shall be made according to industry guidelines stated in AISOP.
j. Media rates may be increased at any time provided that at Least 30 days' notice is given before implementation.
k. Disengagement of advertisement agency is done under the terms and conditions stipulated in the contract of engagement, and in line with the provisions of AISOP on disengagement protocol
I. Media monitoring, audit bureau of circulation, and audience measurement covering: Broadcast, Out-of-Home, Print, and Digital shall comply with respective relevant policies set out by APCON and the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.

"Before AISOP, issues around the standard of practice within the industry have been on the front burner and unresolved, leading to court cases. Engagement team, pitch fee, payment terms, debt issues, and others were some of the issues that rocked the advertising ecosystem."

The Advertising Industry Standard of Practice takes effect from the 6th day of October, 2021and shall so become enforceable by APCON. Copies of the AISOP can be obtained from APCON offices nationwide.

Scope of AISOP and Importance to Brands and IMC

The AISOP establishes a dispute resolution mechanism to achieve amicable settlement of disputes arising from transactions conducted within the agreement entered into by parties, and under the AISOP rules.

The AJSOP proposes a mutual and binding undertaking that shall improve mutual respect and eradicate unfair advantage unethical competition and inequitable policies between relevant stakeholders in the advertising and marketing communications industry.

According to APCON, "The AISOP shall be binding on all advertisers, advertisement agencies, advertising services providers, media houses, and agent or organization to agent or organization that engage in advertising and/ or marketing communications business is exposed to, or directed at the Nigerian market."

The scope of AISOP include: Business terms of engagement, Pitching for business/engagement protocol, payment terms, payment method, method rates/discounts/commissions, Advertisement agency remuneration model, and protocol for disengagement.

Others are return on advertising investment/measurement, Resolving business disagreements, and Alternative dispute resolution.

Business Terms of Engagement

In the document, in the section on Business terms of engagement, there is the emphasis on the need for proper documentation of the agreement of the parties involved.

It states that "Parties involved in an advertisement, advertising and marketing communications must establish a contract. All contracts shall be in writing and duly signed by the parties."

He stated further that "A party to a contract shall ensure that confidential or proprietary information belonging to the other party is not disclosed to a third party unless consent covering the disclosure is first obtained in writing from the other party. Parties may sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement to protect confidential or proprietary information."

Also, "All parties shall cooperate and abide by laws governing copyright protection in Nigeria."

"Upon cancellation of a project, the party canceling shall pay the other party all direct fees and cost for services performed before the cancellation. The canceling party shall reimburse the other party all future non-cancelable obligations to third parties made known during the subsistence of the contract. Subject to the agreement of the parties, any fund held by the other parties which are unearned at the date of cancellation shall be returned to the canceling party.

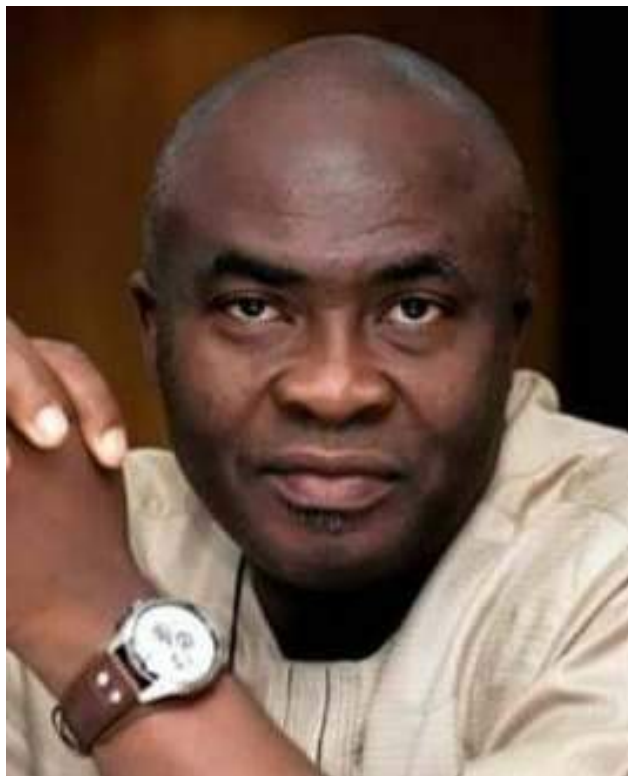
Pitching For Business/Engagement Protocol

The section addresses the long clamour from various sectoral groups like EXMAN and AAAN on pitch fee from clients judging that they spend a lot of money on research and developing the creative content that is finally presented to the client.

Categorically, "An advertiser may invite one or more agencies to pitch for any or all of its advertising and, or marketing



Funmi Onabolu, Chairman, Committee for Advertising Standard Practice



Emmanuel Ajufo, President, OAAN



Tunji Adeyinka, President, EXMAN

communications services provided that agency invited for such pitch shall be entitled to a pitch fee as stipulated in AISOP."

It adds that "Subject to periodic review by APCON, the minimum recommended pitch fee is listed below: Creative and, or strategy presentation-one million Naira, Media Strategy-one million Naira, Experiential/Activation strategy-one million Naira."

Also, it states that in the number c, d and e that "It should be noted that Credential Presentation is free. No term or condition by a party or all parties is an agreement shall constitute a waiver for pitch fee.

"No part of a document in a pitch may be used or reproduced by the other party by any means nor modified, decompiled, disassembled, published or distributed, in whole or in part or translated to any electronic medium or other means without the written consent of the presenting agency.

Payment Terms And Payment Method

Payment terms are some of the most discussed issues by stakeholders because of the diversity of policies, as some clients pay their vendors 90 days where others pay 180 days.

However, according to AISOP, "Every payment is encouraged to be made within 30 days; however, on no account shall payment be later than (45) days from receipt of invoice (including reconciliation) end to end (media owner-agency-advertisers-agency-media owner/other contracted third party).

"Where parties agree to payment terms for a period less than 45 days, the parties shall remain committed to those terms.

"Where prepayment is required and agreed upon in a contract, such payment may be made in advance.

"Where an invoice is received and payment is not made within 45 days, interest shall accrue on the sum at the prevailing Centra; Bank of Nigeria's interest rate."

Also, on the issue of payment method, it was outlined and stated that where payment is received from the advertiser by an agency, payments due from agency to media house and/or advertising and, marketing communications service providers shall be made within 4 working days.

Media Rates/Discounts/ Commissions

On this issue, AISOP states that "Media rates may be increased at any time provided that at least 30 days' notice is given before implementation.

"No party shall unilaterally dictate or impose discount commission on another party except as may be mutually by the parties.

"Any discount or commission not mutually agreed upon by parties at point of contract shall not be demanded at the point payment." advertiser

Advertisement Agency Remuneration Model

According to the guideline, the commission for Creative Agencies is 20% volume, media Agencies is 10% Volume and Experiential Agencies is 20% Volume while the fees should be as agreed.

Furthermore, it states that "Where an agreed to a combination of fee commission, the rate of the commission may be mutually agreed by the parties."

Others

Other guidelines are on the protocol for disengagement which states that "Where it is established that the disengaged agency owes a media house or any third party, the disengaged agency will ensure it obtains clearance from the media house to whom it is indebted within seven (7) days of notification by the disengaging party."

On Certification, it declared that "For all purposes of engaging the advertising and marketing communications services in Nigeria, only APCON licensed organizations shall be recognized as providing advertisement, advertising and, or marketing communications services under AISOP."

Another is Return on advertising investment/measurement, it explained that "All sectors must adhere to monitoring and measurement tools as set out by APCON, and this should be reviewed as technology advances."

Also, "Media monitoring disputes to be resolved within 30 days after execution."

In another vein, issues of resolving business disagreements are also critical, the guideline explained that "An aggrieved party should report to the sector in she operates which will ensure resolution within 30 days of the receipt of a complaint.

"If the matter is unresolved by the sector after 30days it should be reported to HASG which will ensure that the matter is resolved within another 30days.

"If the matter remains unresolved at HASG level after the 30days it should be presented to APCON."

Meanwhile, on Alternative Dispute resolution, it states that "In the event of failure to reach an amicable settlement within 30 days of the date of the letter of notification, such dispute may be submitted to Arbitration before the Advertising Arbitration Panel.

"The Arbitration Panel shall be responsible for effecting prompt settlement of any dispute arising between parties."

"APCON worked with the Committee on Standard of Practice chaired by Mr. Funmi Onabolu, a former member of the APCON Governing Council who also worked with all the sectoral groups including the Heads of Advertising Sectoral Groups (HASG) to make the AISOP a reality."

The Future

The APCON Registrar disclosed that "Going forward we will ensure we encourage improved local content in advertising materials to the extent that agencies must respect their contract with the voiceover artists, with the models and the local production houses."

He, therefore, explained that if there are issues, they can be directed to APCON to help resolve them. He pointed that recently some issues were brought to the council and it was resolved immediately.

"Everybody involve in this value chain has a role to play and what we are trying to do is to develop a framework that we make the industry a better one and that would make all the parties involved in this value chain be responsible and that is what we will keep doing," he said.

Femi Adelusi, HASG Chairman, commended the Registrar for all the works that he has taken on within a short time.

"First I will like to commend the Registrar of APCON, Dr. Fadolapo for the work that he has taken on in this short time, it is very progressive for the industry and we will continue to provide all the support that is required. Let me also commend the works and all the sacrifice that has been made by the committee that sat down for several weeks or months to review advertising standard of practice, particularly appreciate the work of the chairman, Mr. Funmi Onabolu, and his team.

"Let me also reinforce the fact that all our sectoral bodies were ably represented including all the sectors under HASG were fully represented in the committee."

He explained further that every sectorial group agreed on what would be in the best interest of all. He added that the standard of practice is the benchmark that is supposed to guide the industry.

He pointed that the new guideline will accelerate growth and development. "We are positioning the advertising industry in a way that we attract businesses and will encourage the industry to grow to the rightful place."

He added that "From a regulatory standpoint, I think it is safe to say that, APCON has done the right thing in leading this change but I think as practitioners also we need to abide by this. Yes, we compete but when we compete we must be guided by the standard, don't trade off payment terms or guidelines that are already laid down.

Similarly, Steve Babaeko, President of AAAN, congratulated the registrar of APCON for a great job, "These are not just new problems that are generational problems that have roll over up to now, he is tackling them one after the other and we are very supportive of his effort and will always work with APCON."

Conclusively, Dr. Fadolapo said "We need each and every one of us, we need the media, we need everybody that this Advertising community for us to succeed. We should understand one fact that the .primary principle of this AISOP is in the best interest of this industry.

"If we check it very well it is just for us to have a well-regulated industry. So, I want to appeal to everyone of us to ensure we support AISOP and ensure that it is successful."

He urged all the sectoral groups and their heads to start policing the enforcement of the guideline from their end and fully support it in the interest of growing the industry.

He added that "Self-regulation is more successful than government regulation, so if all sectorial group buys into this and they ensure compliance from their end, it would be a lot easier for us."

TRIBUTE

Martin Mabutho: The Virtues Of A Visionary Marketing Genius



Late Martin Mabutho

It was legendary English Poet, John Donn who made some daring efforts to demystify 'death' in one of his thought-provoking poems titled: Holy Sonnets: Death be not proud. Quoting sparingly from his deep-lined thoughts, he states that, "Death be not proud, though some have called thee Mighty and dreadful, for thou are not so; for those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow... One short sleep past, we wake eternally, and death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die".

John Donne's intellectual reaction towards the subject matter of death seem to summarize the disposition of most Marketing communications eggheads on the passing away of Martin Mabutho, The Chief Customer Officer of Nigeria's leading media and Entertainment Company, Multi- Choice Nigeria.

Born on September 25, 1973, in Mafikeng, a border town between South Africa and Botswana, Mabutho was the first of his parents' children. His family moved to Lobatse, in southeastern Botswana, when he was very young.

"I was born in Mafikeng; then we moved to Lobatse, where I spent my formative years. My love for football and music came out from my formative years in Lobatse," he told Botswana's Sonny Walebowa on the show 'Shining The Light' in November 2020.

"He loved Michael Jackson's music so much to the extent of winning a trophy at primary school for imitating his moves," one of his uncles said at his funeral service.

Mabutho was educated at Lobatse Secondary School. At LobSec, he played football and was on the school's winning team. He was a passionate fan of Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs of South Africa.

He bagged a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Botswana in October 1998. In 2014, he added an MBA in International Business from Henley Business School, University of Reading, United Kingdom, to his academic qualifications.

Geoffrey Mothooagae, Mabutho's colleague at the University of Botswana and the President, Manchester United Supporters Club of Botswana, said Martin was always a jolly person, full of jokes and laughed a lot.

After graduation, Martin Gaone Mabutho did not hid his desire to become a diplomat. After series of fruitful efforts, he eventually settled for life in customer service. It was a career that spanned more than 20 years. He subsequently rose up to become one of the most influential sales, marketing and customer service persons in Africa's media and entertainment sector.

For more than two decades, he used his experience to educate, drive sales, inspire sales teams, and open new markets across Sub-Saharan Africa, and left footprints in 28 of the 54 African countries.

'Sounds' as his friends call him in Botswana and MM as they call him in Nigeria, Martins was charming, generous, ready to help others get better through ideas and other support, and an inspiring leader who drove his team with unfathomable suave and vigour.

He died at 47 in the early hours of Tuesday, August 24, 2021, a month to his 48th birthday.

A statement by MultiChoice Nigeria, where he was the Chief Customer Officer for three years until his death, said he died in Cape Town, South Africa, after a brief illness.

"Martin was not just a colleague but a very close friend and most trusted adviser. He was well-loved by everyone for his energy and hard work," says John Ugbe, CEO, MultiChoice Nigeria. "His warmth, good humour and the creativity and positive attitude he always brought to the team. He will be greatly missed."

His friend, Lungi Tsotsi, who spoke at his funeral service on, September 1, 2021, said Mabutho was on holiday with his family in Cape Town when he became ill and was taken to the hospital where he died.

"They arrived in Johannesburg on Wednesday and flew to Cape Town on Friday. On Friday he felt a little bit nauseous after dinner and on Saturday he wasn't feeling well, he was admitted at the hospital on Sunday where they ran several tests and was discharged with medication," Tsotsi says.

"When he wasn't feeling well on Sunday, he was taken back to the same hospital by ambulance and at 5:25 am on Tuesday I got a call that he had died of malaria complications."

Mabutho said in 2020 that his job as MultiChoice Nigeria's Chief Customer Officer "is to inspire the team to see the endless opportunities that the market offers, while doing our possible best to keep satisfying our customers and partners, by giving them so much more."

As an undergraduate, he pursued his love for entertainment and worked with some of his friends to form a popular music group in Botswana called 'Tribal Monks'.

From the time he left university until his death, he never worked for any other organisation. From 1999 when his journey started at MultiChoice, he rose through the corporate ladder to become Brand Manager at MNet Africa in South Africa from 2003 to 2007; DStv Mobile's Sales and Marketing Manager for Sub-Saharan Africa and Head, Marketing and Sales. He would later become MultiChoice Nigeria's General Manager of Sales and Marketing and Chief Customer Officer in October 2018, five years after moving to Nigeria.

"He was one of the most visionary enablers I have ever met, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to build capacities in any creative enterprise. He was generous and always personable. He loved Nigeria and to many of us, Martin is family. He was a giant of a man with giant-sized ideas. He contributed immensely to the success of the Multichoice Talent Factory teaching and mentoring our students."

As MultiChoice Nigeria's CCO, Mabutho was responsible for driving the customer group strategy, which covers customer value management, sales, marketing, customer experience and care.

"Every morning by 4:30, I need to be up to see what happened the previous day," he said in an interview. "Of all the countries I've been to, I love Nigeria the most. Nigerians are very warm people. They remind me of home, and there's a certain warmth, generosity, and welcoming spirit that I've been exposed to here."

He was part of the team that launched Africa Magic in 2003, the Big Brother Africa show, Big Brother Naija, Idol West Africa and several other shows on Dstv.

In his comment on Mabutho exit, The President of Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria, and CEO of X3M Ideas, Steve Babaeko, said "Our heartfelt condolences go out to the family and friends of Martin Mabutho; as well as the staff and executives of MultiChoice Group".

He stated further that "Martin was a valued client and a champion of everything X3M Ideas. His drive for excellence and out-of-the-box creativity inspired us to constantly expand our thinking. We'll terribly miss his genius, and the light with which he brightened the lives of everyone who came in contact with him. We are sending our love to his family at this difficult time and we pray that his soul finds rest".

Cerebral filmmaker Femi Odugbemi and pioneering Academy Director of MultiChoice Talent Factory (MTF) West Africa has glowing memories of Mabutho; "innovation and inspiration for me and many entrepreneurs in the creative and digital industries. He was one of the most visionary enablers I have ever met, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to build capacities in any creative enterprise. He was generous and always personable. He loved Nigeria and to many of us, Martin is family.

He was a giant of a man with giant-sized ideas. He contributed immensely to the success of the Multichoice Talent Factory teaching and mentoring our students. He was a genius in designing the technologies that connected consumers and viewers to richer content all the time. It's a huge loss and we can only pray for God to give comfort to his family and his friends and colleagues across the continent."

CEO of BHM, Ayeni Adekunle in a statement described him as a visionary marketing genius "who loved his brands, their users, and all the ideas that bring excitement and action. It was an honour to have been able to work with and learn from him…His big personality, brilliance, warmth, enthusiasm, humour and positive energy which he brought to every room he entered will be sorely missed."

Similarly, John Ugbe who worked very closely with Martin said, "When I went to see Thato, I said 'it's you and I'. Martin was my brother and this is tough. It's very strange to be talking about Martin in past tense. But, if there's one thing that gives me joy it is that Martin lived a lot of lives. It's really strange that he's just 48. He lived a life that will take people several lifetimes to live and that's why everyone has much to say about him."

Shumani Gereda, a close friend of Martin's and a colleague at MultiChoice also had many great things to say about Martin, calling him an 'eternal optimist'. He said, "Martin was full of energy, full of life. Just an all-round very happy person. Looking at the life he lived, we can all agree that Martin was indeed a good man. The family he raised, the love he gave freely, and received in abundance from his family and friends. His was clearly a life worthy of a celebration of this magnitude. It was not an ordinary life."

In a career spanning more than 20 years at MultiChoice Botswana as a Customer Service Supervisor in 1999, and was later appointed Brand Manager at MNet in 2003. He led the Marketing and Sales effort for DStv Mobile in Sub-Saharan Africa before being appointed in 2013. He led the Marketing and Sales effort for DStv Mobile in Sub-Saharan Africa before his appointment as MultiChoice Nigeria's General Manager, Sales and Marketing in 2013.

Before his demise, Brand Communicator magazine gleaned from Martin Maputo's professional and thorough approach to work during an exclusive interview he granted; and this piece would be incomplete without making references to immortalize the brand communication guru. During the interview he cleared the air on issues related to consumer enquiries. He had stated that "When we receive customers' complaints, we ensure we attend to each one by one. Granted some take longer than normal to tackle. We come across some on social media and we handle them within 24 hours and get families viewing their channels again. Some come back to say thank you for the job well done and that's always encouraging. There may be some issues where the person did not go to social media and did not call but just lodged complaints through CPC, or media or print. We follow them up and see them through. I am proud to say we sorted out most complaints well within the stipulated time frame and some of them are work-in-progress. I think what this has done is to help us remain more customer focused".

So, it didn't come as a surprise when the organization under the leadership of Martin got the most amazing reassurance from the SERAS. It was an award that celebrated Multi-Choice as the Most Improved Customer Service Company

We grow and involve br@nds in modern ¢ulture

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Creator of the Proudly Made in Aba initiative

tbwaconcept.com

Joko Oni Joins Sterling Alternative Finance As Brand & PR Manager



Fast-rising award-winning marketing communications professional, Joko Oni has joined the services of Sterling Alternative Finance (SAF)- the non-interest banking division of Sterling Bank Plc, as Brand and Public Relations Manager.

Joko who is a skilled marketing communication professional with a proven track record of executing award-winning campaigns that drive growth and market share for diverse brands in Nigeria is saddled with the responsibility of boosting the brand's visibility, ensuring a strong brand positioning for Sterling's non-interest banking, designing efficient internal and external communications plans, and driving thought leadership conversations for the brand to educate Nigerians on the un-tapped benefits of non-interest banking.

Over the years, she has established herself as an articulate and capable professional skilled in Brands, Media, Consumer & Market Research, Product Development, Public Relations and Media Innovation.

Joko started her career in media planning and strategy at OMD Nigeria where she quickly rose through thranks, managing a cross-functional team to develop creative brand campaigns for award-winning clients like Airtel, Virgin Atlantic and Ecobank before joining OVH Energy Marketing- Oando licensee as a Brand, PR & Digital supervisor.



John Ugbe, MultiChoice Nigeria CEO, Elected BON Chairman

The Chief executive officer (CEO) of MultiChoice Nigeria, John Ugbe, has been elected the chairman of the Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria (BON).

Ugbe polled 63 votes to defeat Godfrey Ohuabunwa, CEO of Multimesh Limited and former BON vice-chairman, who got 35 votes.

The election, which was held at the coronation hall of the Kano government house was part of the 75th general assembly and 20th annual general meeting (AGM) of BON.

According to information from the organisation's website, "the Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria (BON) is a broad coalition of public and private broadcasters as the nation's umbrella Union of Terrestrial Radio Television (Tv) Direct-To-Home (DTH) Digital Terrestial Television (DTT) Multimedia Distribution System (MMDS)".

BON is said to have been established in 1973. It has over 100 members and they collectively own over 250 radio and television stations with a vision "to foster a future-proof environment for radio, TV and new media broadcasters to serve their audiences and contribute to the development of our society".

RedWolf Elevates Omokehinde Thomas As Deputy Business Director



Fast-rising digital and marketing communications professional, Omokehinde Thomas has been elevated to the position of Deputy Business Director by leading Lagos-based digital media agency, The RedWolf Company.

In her new position, she will be responsible for leading the team at RedWolf, managing relations between RedWolf and other businesses within the Ark group, organizing and coordinating operations in ways that ensure maximum productivity, among other duties.

Omokehinde who attained her current position after over two years at the agency as Team Lead is a seasoned professional with over a decade of experience in the integrated marketing communication industry. Over this period, she has built a cross-industry experience in sectors such as Pay TV, Telco, technology, NGO and Government, FMCG and other sectors working on various brands such as Three Crowns Milk, Nokia, Maltina, Airtel, GOtv, Mr. Chef, Payattitude, Maggi, Supakomando, among others.

Prior to moving to The RedWolf Company, she was at Noah's Ark Communications where she rose steadily in rank over an 8-year period to the position of Account lead, Digital in Noah's Ark Communications and was part of the team that worked on evolving the Digital Department into a full-fledged Agency.

BHM Appoints Enitan Kehinde To Lead UK Operations



Enitan Kehinde, General Manager/Team Lead, BlackHouse Media, UK. BHM Qomms, the UK operations of BlackHouse Media has announced the appointment of a general manager and lead consultant.

She is Ms. Enitan Kehinde, a CIPR and PRCA member who currently leads the company's FMCG portfolio in Nigeria, BHM's home country.

Kehinde will return to the UK five years after she finished her master's degree in Public Relations at Sheffield Hallam University.

She joined BHM in 2016 as a graduate intern and quickly rose to become a lead consultant in one of the firm's more rapid growths. She worked on ICT and telco brands, supporting Interswitch and MTN, before moving to lead the FMCG portfolio which houses Coca-Cola, Shoprite and Heineken/Nigerian Breweries.

In the UK, she will report to CEO Ayeni Adekunle.

"I'm looking forward to returning to the UK and driving everything we have planned for BHM, the industry, and our clients", says Enitan Kehinde.

Ayeni has said that the company will look to support British organizations looking to make sense of Africa, while helping African brands explore UK opportunities.



Nengi Akinola Joins FairMoney As Head, Marketing & Branding

Former OPPO Nigeria's Marketing Manager, Nengi Akinola has joined the services of fledging fintech company, FairMoney as Head, Marketing & Branding.

In her new position, Nengi will be expected to provide the marketing direction and support for the FairMoney brand, actively participate in the organization's strategy, communications, brand management as well as event planning and coordinating, among others.

These functions may not appear daunting to the versatile marketing Amazon who boasts over 10 years' experience in brand strategy, marketing communications, advertising, digital marketing, media management and corporate communications; having worked across multiple industries on big brands and clients like Diageo, Unilever, Nestle, PZ, Unified Payments, RB, GSK, Suntory, Pfizer, Vitafoam, FMCL, and Government campaigns such as Tradermoni & Sanwo-Olu Governorship election.

In her last position as Marketing Manager for the global OPPO Mobile brand in Nigeria, Nengi was directly responsible for the successful launch and sustenance of over 18 products in two years. She was also at the forefront of record-breaking marketing campaigns and penetration strategies that have revolutionized the mobile phone landscape and delivered threefold marketing objectives for the OPPO business within review period.

Gbolahan Sanni Quits Coca-Cola, Moves To Airtel As VP Brands & Communication



Seasoned marketing communication professional, Gbolahan Sanni has quit the services of The Coca-Cola company Nigeria where he was Marketing Director to pitch tent with telecommunication giants, Airtel Nigeria as Vice-President, Brands and Communication.

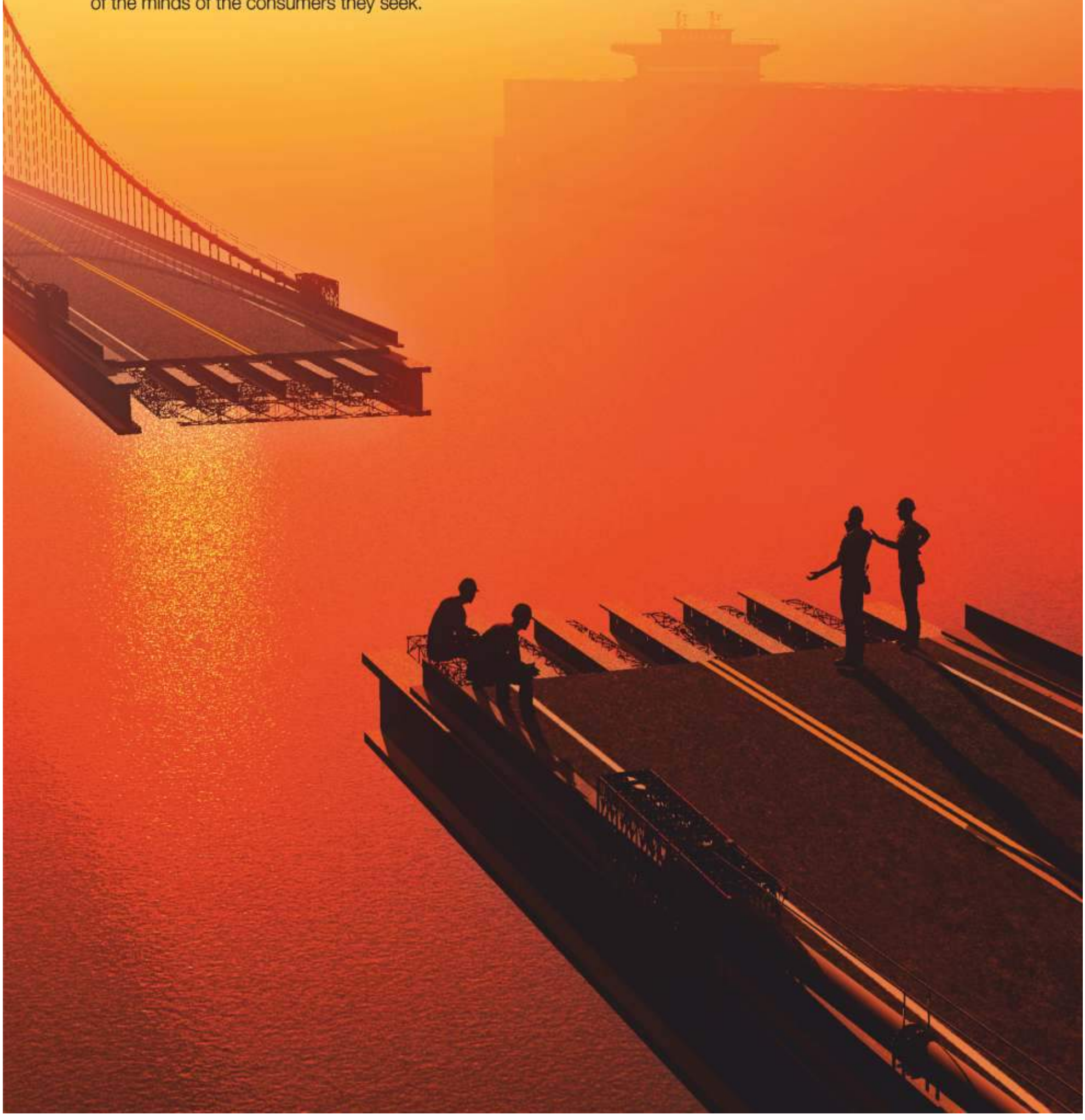
In his new position, Gbolahan will be expected to spearhead the development of Airtel Nigeria's communication strategy directly managing communications activities that promote, enhance, and protect the organization's brand reputation and be responsible for the development, integration, and implementation of a broad range of public relations activities relative to the strategic direction and positioning of Airtel Nigeria, among other functions.

The trajectory of his over 20 years' professional journey shows that he started his career as Salesman-Market activation team member at Unilever Nigeria where he was on NYSC internship. After that he joined Bates Cosse as an Account Executive.

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BBNaija Cost Us N4.3bn – MultiChoice

Organisers of Big Brother Naija, BBNaija season 6, MultiChoice has revealed that the reality show cost N4.3 billion to produce thde show this year.

At season 6 winner's prize presentation, John Ugbe, CEO, MultiChoice Nigeria said "We employed 12,000 persons for this show, it cost us N4,3billiom to air this show this year

"We use BBNaija to enrich lives and contribute positively to society. We hope to continue to do so."

The organisers also revealed that one billion votes were recorded this year from the viewers.

Ebuka also announced that during the finale week, the show had over 300 million votes.

WhiteMoney defeated Liquorose, Pere, Cross, Angel and Emmanuel, the top six BBNaija housemates, who contested for the 'Shine Ya Eye' season this year.

He walked away with the N90m worth of prizes after scoring 47% votes.

Whitemoney Opens Up On Difficulty In Finding True Love



The winner of the Big Brother Naija, 'Shine Ya Eye' edition, Hazel Oyeze Onou, popularly known as Whitemoney, has disclosed that women are now running after him following his victory at the reality show.

Whitemoney said it was now tougher to find true love since he won the N90m grand prize. He added that since 2015 he has not had any serious relationship or girlfriend.

According to the BBNaija winner, women are now claiming that they were there for him when he had nothing.

Whitemoney in an interview said, "My singleness is now worse because many women are now telling me oh Whitemoney you know I was there for you when you had nothing.

"With the way things are currently, am ready to buy love if I see anyone in the market.

"I have been single since 2015 and I haven't had any serious relationship or girlfriend since then.

"My stay at the Big Brother house helped me to learn how to know and talk to women better."

Whitemoney, who also noted that he was flattered by the love Nigerians showered on him, said, "I was flabbergasted by the love which came from the north, west, east, and south. It was my first-time seeing Nigerians come together for just one person's success. I was wowed by the love I received from Nigerians from every region of the country. I didn't see it coming, and that was why I couldn't scream when I was announced the winner of the show."

I Want To Reopen My Salon, Write Books – Liquorose



Big Brother Naija Shine Ya Eye first runner-up, Roseline Afije, popularly known as Liquorose, has said she will re-open her beauty salon and explore the music, movie, and literary industries in the months to come.

The popular dancer told a radio station during an interview that, "I have done some short films in the past; I have recorded some contents for my dance crew which have yet to be released, but most people only knew about my dancing career before I participated in the Big Brother Naija show.

"I applied to be on the show to unveil my talents because Big Brother Naija is a big platform where one could promote themselves. That was why I showcased some of my other talents which also helped me win so many games in the Big Brother House. I will soon bring to light the other talents that I was unable to display on the show since I'm now out of the house. I write poems and songs, so I'll unleash my music talent – make movies, and write books. I'll also restart my salon which I lost sometimes back."

When asked if she learnt hairdressing from anyone, she said, "I didn't learn hairdressing from anyone, I started practising by braiding my grandmother's hair when I was about six years old."

Liquorose who braided hair for several housemates while on the show further said she mastered the skill for survival and started making money from it by braiding her neighbours' hair.

She said, "I was broke and living with a friend, and I was not getting enough entertainment gigs at that time."

Joeboy Urges Fans To Desist From Harmful Challenge



Popular Nigerian singer, Joseph Akinfenwa-Docus, popularly known as Joeboy, has warned Nigerians against pouring harmful content on their bodies.

The 24-year-old singer's new song ' Alcohol ' released on the 24th of September has been trending on Tiktok and other social media networks since its release.

This led to a viral challenge where fans were seen pouring harmful content like bleach on their bodies with some even going to the extent of drinking Dettol.

Joeboy, who seemed displeased with the videos, urged his fans to desist from the challenge.

He, however, thanked them for their unwavering support for his songs.

On his Twitter page, he wrote: "I appreciate the love alcohol is getting but stop pouring stuff on your bodies.

"You're welcome to keep learning the lyrics by the way."

Mr. Eazi of the record label "emPawa Africa" discovered Joeboy in 2017.

In 2020, Joeboy won the Headies award for song of the year and Best Pop Single.



AY Reveals Why His Nightclub Business Failed

Ace comedian and actor, Ayo Makun, popularly known as AY, has opened up about his failed nightclub, MVP Lagos.

Speaking during an Instagram live interview, he stated, "I once entered a business that I did not understand. I am very open, there is nothing to hide. There was a time I opened a nightclub. I opened a nightclub with the thought that 'My name is AY', I do shows at Eko Hotel, six thousand people attend. If I do my show in Abuja, thousands of people will also come. So I asked myself if I open a beer parlour, will I not be able to gather two hundred people in a weekend? I did not understand that it's a different calling. That I can gather six thousand people at Eko Hotel does not mean I have the capacity to gather two hundred people on a Friday night."

He added that the lesson he learnt from his experience was that every individual should know their strength.

He added, "Because I did not understand how the Friday night business works, it was a fundamental failure; money was lost. What is the message here? I also have two of my friends who were solid in the nightlife business. They decided to have a show at Eko Hotel. It was a disaster. The message here is for everyone to know their strength. Know where you can function, know what you can handle."

Adekunle Gold Set To Launch Fourth Studio Album



Award-winning singer, Adekunle Kosoko, popularly known as Adekunle Gold, has announced that his fourth studio album would be unveiled soon.

The Afrobeats singer took to his verified Instagram page to reveal that his album would soon be released.

Alongside the big reveal, Adekunle Gold also thanked his fans as he concluded his international tour.

Adekunle Gold shared screenshot of his e-note dated October 9 2021 at 3:02 am, which read, "Tonight, I performed at Pittsburgh, the final show of the #AGBabylnYaCity tour.

"It's been an absolute pleasure watching y'all sing my songs back to me. I had so much fun meeting and singing my heart out to y'all.

"Thanks for rocking with the boy. I'll be back next year and it'll be much bigger. Also, my 4th studio album is coming soon! Get ready for my best work yet! All my love."

The just concluded tour began in August and the singer visited different cities in the United States during the period.

Some of the cities he visited included Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Charlotte, and Atlanta.

Since Adekunle graced the music industry scenes in 2014 with his first single Sade, the Afrobeats singer has released three studio albums.


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Dentsu, Publicis, Others Pledge To Promote Responsible Influencer Marketing Of Alcohol

A dozen agencies — including Dentsu, Havas, McCann and Publicis — have joined the pledge to adhere to new global standards for influencer marketing of alcohol and to promote more responsible depictions of drinking, especially to prevent minors from being exposed to it.

The initiative, organized by the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD), include leading beer, wine and spirits marketers. It include the following steps to promote responsible influencer marketing of alcoholic products:

A set of five specific safeguards that apply to any content involving influencers who work with the leading beer, wine, and spirits producers.

Tools and videos that support all alcohol brands and influencers to follow robust responsible marketing practices when creating content.

Clear commitments to market responsibly, including not making health claims, promoting illegal or excessive consumption, or positioning abstinence negatively.

The initiative follows previous actions by IARD members to safeguard alcohol advertising online, including its Digital Guiding Principles, as well as agreements with YouTube, Facebook, and Snapchat to improve age screening, enabling users to opt out of alcohol marketing, and allowing content creators to "age-gate" their posts.

Credit: Media Post

Omnicom Wins Consolidated Global Mercedes-Benz Marketing Account

Mercedes-Benz has consolidated its global marketing and communications assignment with Omnicom after a formal review.

The car maker spends an estimated $890 million on measured media according to COMvergence. Publicis Groupe also participated in the review.

As part of its effort to win the account Omnicom is creating a dedicated global entity to service it. The unit will create ads, orchestrate media placements and data analytics. Development of one-to-one people targeted marketing and PR are also part of the remit.

Omnicom will establish international hubs in the U.S., Europe, China and other regions that mirror the company's recent consolidation of its own in-house performance marketing activities.

According to the car company, the six-month review focused on digital transformation and the development of digital and data-based media, as well as brand and performance marketing activities. Additionally, the client said it strived to simplify its global marketing operation.

Under a multiyear agreement, the new agency unit will commence operations under the name 'Team X' in January 2022, and will have responsibility for a large number of Mercedes-Benz business units in more than 40 markets worldwide.

To help optimize the new agency's operations, Omnicom is acquiring two agencies that have been on the Mercendes-Benz roster including Berlin-based digital agency Antoni, which started in 2015 with Mercedes-Benz as its founding client. Omnicom said the agency would have a "leading role" in Team X. The acquisition is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2022.

Omnicom has also agreed to acquire German PR firm OSK which will operate as a standalone agency within Omnicom's PR division and also have a leading role in Team X. The agency offers PR, social media and other marketing services.

"By bringing together a new, fully integrated unit, Mercedes-Benz is re-orchestrating all of its communication content across all channels to deliver a data-driven, personalized and seamless brand experience for customers at all touchpoints worldwide," said Britta Seeger, head of sales for Daimler AG and Mercedes-Benz AG. "Our goal is to build the most desirable cars in the world - we also want to convey the desirability of our products as well as our esteem for our customers in every contact with our brand," added Seeger.

John Wren, Chairman and CEO of Omnicom Group added, "Mercedes-Benz was looking for a holistic agency partner that could help deploy a sustainable and globally consistent luxury experience for the company's brand promise around the world for the first time. Our newly formed 'Team X' delivers on that goal, creating a streamlined global structure with clear single points of contact as well as innovative data and analytics connected in every layer.

M&C Saatchi Proclaims 'Turning Point' With Return To Growth

Embattled communications network M&C Saatchi has proclaimed a 'turning point' in its performance after posting better-than-expected interim results for the six months to June 30.

A steady stream of bad news in recent years has been punctuated by a 14.7% rise in gross revenues to £171.2m from the same six-month period a year before, with net revenues rising 14.2% to £118.1m.

On a like-for-like basis the group's performance, which counts 2,400 employees spread across 24 global locations, was even more impressive, jumping 21% once the impact of recent acquisitions and sales are discounted.

Headline operating profit meanwhile rose to 10.5%, up from 4.1% in the first half of 2020, with profit before tax weighing in at £10.5m, an impressive 420% uptick on the paltry £2m generated a year prior.

M&C Saatchi cites operational changes for helping to fuel the turnaround in its fortunes, including an embrace of digitalization and the launch of data consultancy Fluency.

The group has also been able to retain its clients through the lean times, with the likes of Reckitt, GSK, Lexus and Sonos remaining on board. Old hands have been joined by new clients including Uber, Delonghi and Franklin Templeton.

Chief executive officer Moray MacLennan said: "These results mark a key turning point for M&C Saatchi. We have returned to growth with H1 profits not only substantially ahead of 2020, but also surpassing 2019. Our focus on simplification and control has continued to strengthen both our operating margin and balance sheet, which enables us to successfully pursue our strategy for growth."



M&C Saatchi's newfound sunny disposition extends into the second half, with recent momentum likely to propel the organization further through the next six months.

Should this come to pass then full-year profit before tax and earnings are likely to be 'substantially' ahead of the forecast consensus.

A heavily-laden war chest will see M&C Saatchi invest in organic startups through the second half, including digital transformation and ESG consultancies and the SaaS content creation platform for SMEs.

This follows M&C Saatchi's 'unhappiest year ever' following a litany of accounting problems and the departure of its founders.

YouTube Brings Performance To CTV Ads

YouTube introduces shoppable CTV ads that open URLs on second screen. YouTube on Monday introduced an option for performance advertisers that allows them to drive and measure conversions on connected television (CTV) by increasing the ability for viewers to shop from the messages in the ads they see on the screen.

Now, for the first time, performance advertisers can take advantage of YouTube on CTV to drive and measure conversion through the expansion of Video action campaigns.

The improvements - the ability to connect that leap from CTV to desktop and mobile digital -- are intended to help advertisers drive more online sales and leads.

Recently, Google announced that beginning in early 2022, TrueView for action campaigns will automatically upgrade to Video action campaigns.

When a viewer sees a Video action campaign on their TV, they can type the URL at the bottom of their screen into a browser on their mobile device or desktop to continue shopping on the brand's website from their desktop or mobile device, all without interrupting the viewing session.

About 120 million people in the U.S. stream content from YouTube or YouTube TV on their TV screens, and more than 25% of logged-in U.S. YouTube CTV viewers watch content almost exclusively on the TV screen, according to internal data.

The hope is that eventually the manual process of having to type in a URL will become automated, but a YouTube spokesperson declined to provide details or a timeline.

"Our vision is to have fully interactive ad experiences tailored to the connected TV context," a YouTube spokesperson told Search & Performance Marketing Daily. "This launch is the first step to this vision, and we will continue to build on the experience. We're exploring other ways to further enhance interactivity."

For instance, users often interact with their mobile phone when they're watching. And as part of today's launch, viewers using their smartphone to cast to connected TVs will be able to take action on ads directly from their phone's YouTube app.

There are barriers to overcome that connect the IP address for the television to the mobile device and/or the desktop within close proximity.

"It's important to be thoughtful about the nature of connected TV," the YouTube spokesperson said. "Unlike desktop and mobile, taking action on the screen isn't seamless today and a one-size fits all approach won't work."

Video action campaigns today use Google's skippable in-stream and video discovery ad formats. Videos should be at least 10 seconds long and should include a call to action, headline, and description. Advertisers can add extensions like sitelinks of lead forms or product feed to the campaign to help influence conversions, per Google.



Advertisers can also use Conversion Lift beta on TV screens to gain actionable results in real-time.

Conversion Lift measures the impact of YouTube ads on driving user actions, such as website visits, sign ups, purchases and other types of conversions.

Video action campaigns on TV screens are available globally through Google Ads.



RECOGNIZED BY THE INDUSTRY | TRUSTED BY BRANDS | DRIVEN BY INNOVATION

Dentsu Launches New Gaming Service

Dentsu has launched an integrated gaming offering for brands, Dentsu Gaming, which seeks to help clients explore the increasingly lucrative channel.

The Dentsu Gaming 'solution' will offer clients of Carat, Dentsu X, iProspect, Isobar, dentsumcgarrybowen, Merkle and the Content Business Design Centre access to specialists in strategy, creative activation and IP development in gaming.

In recent years, advertising in video games has increased significantly. Video game advertising in 2021 has seen $421.2m of spend so far, according to recent figures from Mediaradar.

Keiichi Yoshizaki, executive officer, Dentsu Inc, said: "Our philosophy is that gaming is more than just advertising – it is about creating, amplifying and adding momentum to culture and the industry at large. With Dentsu Gaming, we do this through our own in-house gaming studios, innovative business ventures, investing in gaming startups and through strategic partnerships at global scale, and this sets us apart from all others.

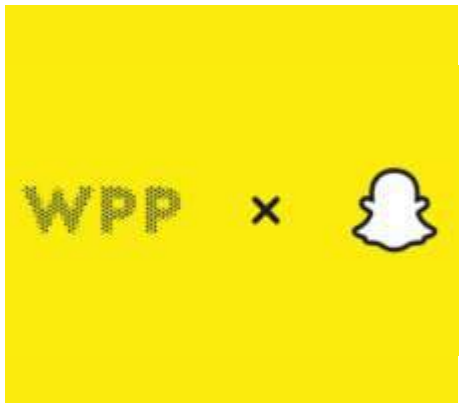
"Our unique gaming heritage in the Japanese market, coupled with the global scale of our international business, ensures Dentsu Gaming is the ideal way in which we're able to make authentic and meaningful progress for the betterment of the gaming community, our clients, our partners and of course our people and their passion for gaming."

Dentsu Gaming will combine expertise and staff from both its international network and Japan business – a rare crossover for the holding company, which typically keeps its domestic and international businesses separate.

The announcement is the latest development in Dentsu's gaming interests. Late last year it launched DGame, a division of Dentsu UK & Ireland, which has produced bespoke gaming content for Cadbury and Kellogg's. According to a Dentsu spokesperson, that division will be part of Dentsu Gaming from this point onwards.

Peter Huijboom, global chief executive officer, media and global clients, Dentsu International, said: "We have a truly integrated and borderless business model at Dentsu, which ensures a seamless sharing of insights, deep knowledge and specialisms to benefit our clients, regardless of their geography – Dentsu Gaming is a perfect example of this.

"Bringing together the exceptional talent and deep gaming expertise from across the group, this new global solution makes it easier for clients and partners to leverage the potential of gaming for business growth through local market Dentsu agency brands they already know and trust."



Snap Forms 'AR Lab' Partnership With WPP

Snap Inc., the camera company behind Snapchat, this morning announced a global partnership with agency holding company WPP to create a lab to test and develop how augmented-reality applications can help the agency's brand-marketing clients build and deliver more "immersive experiences" for consumers.

The aptly named "AR Lab" will draw on Snap's state-of-the-art technology, as well as WPP's capabilities across creative, media, commerce and technology to learn how AR can drive meaningful business results via Snapchat's platform.

As part of the agreement, Snap will hand over its AR technology -- "end-to-end" -- to WPP and its clients, as well as creative production and measurement resources.

A recent Snap study, which included 15,000 international respondents, found AR campaigns are significant drivers of business, with 94% of people expecting to use AR for shopping as much or more in 2022 compared to 2021.

In addition, brands were 40% more likely to be considered by consumers if they have an AR experience, and Snapchat users were 20% more likely than non-users to share a brand's AR experience with friends and family.

"AR has a major role to play in the future of marketing and commerce, from virtual try-on to immersive digital experiences," said Sanja Partalo, executive vice president-strategic development & partnerships at WPP. "Snap has built an impressive AR platform and we are delighted to partner with them to ensure our people can access Snap's latest AR technology and in turn develop richer, more innovative commerce solutions for our clients and their customers."

Under this new partnership, WPP and Snap plan to collaborate on new products and tech, like the Snapchat Trends tool, which helps teams in using data and proprietary insights to inform creative and campaign development.

WPP will gain an "AR Lab Strategy Guide," as well, which informs creative development using Snap's AR, and ensures that branded AR experiences can be brought to market more seamlessly than before.

To generate more effective campaigns, the partnership will implement a co-developed custom optimization scorecard for WPP clients.

WPP said it adopted AR tech early and has thus led the market by investing in "AR capability and partner ecosystem." GroupM, WPP's media-buying arm, has doubled its 2021 social AR investment over the past year, continuing to lead the way for AR and commerce media activations.

Lastly, the AR Lab Academy, an industry-first training program centered on AR tech and products, will help the partnership further develop WPP's AR capability.

The program hopes to certify at least 1,000 WPP employees by the end of 2021.

Snap will also sponsor a quarterly AR production competition for WPP clients, which will focus on clients in key markets — Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, the UK, and the U.S. Winners will receive Snap funding to bring their innovative campaigns to life on Snapchat at scale.

"Over 200m Snapchatters engage with AR every day," said David Roter, vice president-global agency partnerships at Snap Inc. "This partnership will help brands reach that community through the camera in ways that are engaging, impactful and drive real business results. We are thrilled to debut this initiative with WPP and look forward to driving this important frontier in marketing and commerce together with their clients around the globe."

Facebook Losses $79m In Ad Revenue To Outage

Facebook is counting the cost of an unprecedented outage that took it and sister products Instagram, Messenger and WhatsApp offline in a global failure.

Believed to be the most severe failure in the company's history, the crash has hit advertisers hard.

A rough calculation provided by fact-checking website Snopes suggests that the social media giant hemorrhaged $79m in ad revenue during six hours of downtime – though this is caveated by some assumptions on the consistency of spend.

Nevertheless, the financial damage can be counted in the millions, but it is the reputational hit that may prove to be the most costly aspect for the business in the long run as marketers realize that Facebook's reliability cannot be taken for granted. Many businesses rely on this infrastructure to operate (80% of its income comes from SMEs, many of whom will be all in on FB products). And then there are less connected nations that are reliant on Facebook's connectivity on an existential level.

Forrester principal analyst Renee Murphy points out that the outage was rumored to be a Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) problem. "It might be really hard to get into a router and change the route tables from outside the organization, but inside it's a piece of cake. If it really is a BGP problem, that is a big problem. This is not something that should ever happen at a company this sophisticated with this much data."

Explaining what steps brands must take to ensure continuity of presence during such events, Aaron Goldman, chief marketer at advertising technology platform Mediaocean, takes the opportunity to remind brands of the importance of an omnichannel marketing strategy.

With Facebook's mishap demonstrating the folly of placing all of your eggs in one basket, Goldman states: "The key is taking an omnichannel approach and ideally having that strategy in place before any one particular platform goes down. The same way consumers don't rely on any one app for all their media consumption and interpersonal communication, brands cannot rely on any one app for all their marketing.

"We like to say that marketers need to market the way consumers consume, which means moving seamlessly across channels and screens. To execute on an omnichannel strategy, brands need a centralized platform that connects with all the various media and advertising channels. Marketers can use automated tools to handle budget planning, audience definition, creative personalization, bid management and campaign measurement. So if Facebook is down, or just not performing well, the spend will move to other media partners and come back when the issues are resolved."



Reminding advertisers that times of crisis often bring with them new opportunities, Goldman adds: "At the end of the day, brands can turn challenges like a Facebook outage into an opportunity to connect with consumers in other ways. But in order to execute, brands need to have an omnichannel approach to everything, from advertising to content to commerce."



WPP Wins Unilever's $3.3 Billion Media Review

Unilever's $3.3 billion media account has been retained by WPP's Mindshare with an expectation that there will be a growth in focus on ecommerce by the British multi-consumer goods producer.

The retention of the contract follows a six-month review and will see Mindshare continue to work across all markets including the U.S., the U.K. and Ireland, Netherlands and Belgium, Nordics, Italy, Eastern Europe, South Asia—including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka—plus Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and China (excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan).

WPP chief executive Mark Read told Adweek, "We are absolutely thrilled to continue as Unilever's most important media agency, particularly given the thoroughness of the review and the way they tested new areas, particularly our ecommerce abilities."

According to COMvergence, the U.S. portion of the review represents $822 million of spend, 48% of which is spent on digital. The EMEA regions account for $1.8 billion in spend, with 24% being spent digitally.

At the same time as the review was undertaken by Unilever, WPP introduced its global data company, Choreograph—formed using the resources of GroupM and Wunderman Thompson—to help clients optimize the use of first-party data effectively and ethically across creative and media operations. The service offer is a competitor to Publicis' own data-division Epsilon and consultancy Accenture's.

In a July Adweek cover story, Read said WPP's new data philosophy "is to use as little data as possible to have the maximum ROI possible with the data," which contrasts with the previous strategy of gathering as much as possible, and figuring out how to use it. When Choreograph launched in April, WPP counted Walgreens Boots Alliance as its first customer, an account the holding company won in October of 2020. This is the biggest account WPP has won since the launch of Choreograph.

The company has introduced a new marketing philosophy based on three principles: 'Get Real,' which focuses on data and empathy to solve real-world problems; 'Do Good,' which continues the need for each of its stable of brands to serve a purpose that drives positive change; and 'Be Unmissable' that spurs them each on to be culturally relevant.

Meanwhile, in a statement, Luis Di Como, evp global media for Unilever, explained, "The rapid digitization of consumer lives—accelerated even further by the Covid pandemic—has driven the convergence of media, commerce, entertainment and shopping, offering exciting opportunities for our brands. In this context, it's great to be continuing our journey with existing and new partners, many of whom have worked with us collaboratively over many years."

Other agencies featuring on Unilever's roster that will support Mindshare include Omnicom Media Group across Canada, Germany, Switzerland, the Middle East, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Taiwan. IPG will work across Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Latin America and Greece, while Havas Media will operate in France and Spain and ADK in Japan.

ART OF TECHNOLOGY LAGOS 3.0

THEME

FUNDING
- AND A -
CONNECTED LAGOS

GUEST SPEAKERS



CHIEF HOST
Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu
GOVERNOR, LAGOS STATE



GUEST OF HONOUR
Dr Isa Ali Pantami
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL ECONOMY



GUEST OF HONOR
Babatunde Raji Fashola
Honourable Minister of Works & Housing

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Alshah N. Ahmad
Deputy Governor, Financial Systems Stability, Central Bank of Nigeria



Tomi Davies
Collaborator-in-Chief, TVC Labe



Ola Williams
Country Manager, Microsoft.



Olukayode Pitan
MD/CEO, Bank of Industry



Kola Aina
Founder, Ventures Platform



Andrew Nevin
Chief Economist, PWC

PLENARY SPEAKERS



Parminder Vir OBE
Former CEO, Tony Elumelu Foundation



Dr. Ola Brown
Founder, Flying Doctors Healthcare Investment Group



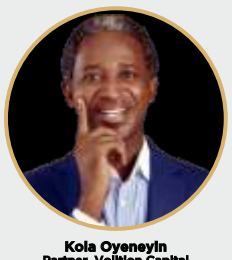
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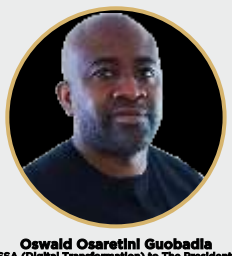
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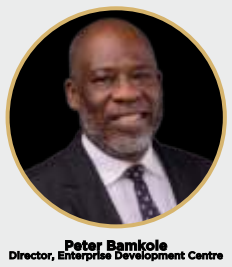
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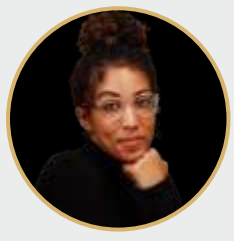
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Ayrar starr

"In August 2018, Starr was signed with Quove Models, a modeling agency based in Lagos. From there, she modeled for such companies as Mazelle Studio, Complete Fashion Magazine and Esperanza Woman. In 2019, she began posting covers of songs by artists like Andra Day and 2Face Idibia online where began to stir awakening to her personality."

Though she is just 19, her eclectic style of music finds resonance with people of all ages and styles. Recently, she joined the ranks of A-List artists from Nigeria which includes Wizkid, Teni, Grammy award-winning Burna Boy, Davido, Tiwa Savage and Tecno- to be made brand ambassador of global cola giant, Pepsi.

This teenager with the voice of a nightingale and the vivacity reminiscent of Game of Thrones' fiery teenage character, Arya Stark. This rave of the moment is a singer, songwriter and model. She is born Oyinkansola Sarah Aderibigbe, but fans know her as the sensational Ayrar Starr!

Ayra Starr achieved mainstream recognition with her eponymous debut extended play and its hit track "Away" which spent two consecutive weeks at number four on Nigeria's TurnTable Top 50 and went to number 17 on US Billboard Top Thriller Global, paving the way for the release of her first full-length studio album, "19 & Dangerous" in August. Categorized mainly as Afropop and R&B, the album has been met with favorable critical reception.

It spawned two top forty hits in Nigeria. The lead single "Bloody Samaritan" peaked atop the Top 50 chart, becoming the first solo song by a female artist to reach the number-one position. Ayra Starr debuted on Pandora Predictions chart, and on 28 August 2021, she ranked number two on Billboard's Next Big Sound.

Early life

Born Oyinkansola Sarah Aderibigbe on the 14th of June 2002 in Cotonou, Bénin, Ayra Starr grew up in Coutonou and in Lagos. Having been raised in a music-loving family, her interest in singing comes mostly from her family. At the age of 10, she sang in a high school choir and began writing songs with her brother.

According to her, during her college years, she was often bullied by her classmates because of her age and appearance. To counter the feelings she experienced from being taunted, she would turn to music. "I would listen to Nicki Minaj on my way to school, and I'd feel like the second Nicki Minaj."

In her interviews for local and international media, she stated that throughout her childhood, she had a wide range of musical influences, including 2Face Idibia, Wande Coal, Angélique Kidjo, Lijadu Sisters, and Tope Alabi, and in college, Nicki Minaj, Justin Bieber, Sia and Tiwa Savage. She credited Shakira as her biggest influence vocally along with Beyoncé, Rihanna and Miley Cyrus: "It was just the power I would feel listening to their music. We didn't get a lot of Nigerian female singers singing strongly about things like them, not as we do now." Lyrically, she admires Asa and has said that she "wrote so beautifully [and] was one of one of those people [she] would listen to just to learn how to write properly."



Career

In August 2018, Starr was signed with Quove Models, a modeling agency based in Lagos. From there, she modeled for such companies as Mazelle Studio, Complete Fashion Magazine and Esperanza Woman. In 2019, she began posting covers of songs by artists like Andra Day and 2Face Idibia online where began to stir awakening to her personality. She appeared in the music video for Eri Ife's song "Dear Future Wife." In December 2019, she uploaded an original song called "Damage" on her Instagram page. This was heard by thousands of people including label executive Don Jazzy and led to her first recording contract with Mavin Records.

In 2020, she started recording at Mavin Studios in Lagos with producers Louddaaa and Don Jazzy. Her self-titled debut extended play was released on the 22nd of January 2021 through Mavin Records. The album which merges elements of R&B/neo-soul with Afropop percussion, according to the star, was intentional to make music that would resonate with both the young and old.

The mixing and mastering of the EP were done by Ikon, Louddaaa, and Johnny Drille. Starr wrote one of the songs on the EP alone and co-wrote the remaining four with her brother Dami. Shortly after its release, the EP became the number-one album on Nigeria iTunes and Apple Music. As of March 2021, it has reached the same position on Apple Music in 4 other countries, racking up over 15 million streams across Spotify, YouTube and Audio Mack.

On 11 July 2021, Ayra Starr performed for the season finale of Nigerian Idol. Shortly after been unveiled at the Big Brother Naija 'Shine Ya Eye' House as Brand Ambassador by Pepsi, the singer went on to dazzle millions of viewers with her sensational performance at the show's Kingsized eviction show.

On 6 August 2021, her debut studio album, titled 19 & Dangerous was released. For the album, she worked with her previous collaborators Louddaaa and Don Jazzy, both of whom contributed production on her EP Ayra Starr, and new collaborators, London and Andre Vibez. The album marked her first time recording alongside guest artists such as Fousheé and Ckay.

Although musically diverse, Ayra Starr's sound has predominantly been categorized as Afropop and R&B. Her voice has been described in the media as "silky", "cozy", "delicate", "sturdy", "arresting" and "soulful", with music critics noting the dynamic nature of her range and emotional delivery. Her lyrics are a mixture of English, Pidgin English, and Yoruba, often exploring contemporary topics such as love, relationship, empowerment and freedom.

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TOPIC:

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HOST



FEMI ADELUSI
MIPAN President

SPEAKER



MR. TAIWO OYEDELE
Africa Tax and Fiscal Policy Leader.
PricewaterhouseCoopers Nigeria.

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"At the time I only had trap songs, so when [D'Prince] put me in the studio with an Afrobeats producer I was scared. But I just mixed my trap vibes in and didn't force it. D'Prince took the music to his elder brother, Mavin Records founder, Don Jazzy, and Rema became the powerhouse label's latest signee."

His ready smiles, the boyish looks, and the contented demeanor he projects may readily deceive one into thinking he was born with a silver spoon. One look at him and it will appear as though the road to his stardom was paved with easy money from dotting parents, quick access to vital connections through family cronies, or plain ol' mother luck shining on him.

But rave of the moment, Rema, did not have it easy working his way to stardom. He worked his way up the ladder, building his talent. And when preparation met opportunity, the rest, as they say, became history.



Early Life

Born Divine Ikubor, Rema grew up in Nigeria's bustling Benin City, Edo State. He attained his primary and secondary school education in Ighile group of schools, Edo State.

He was forced to mature early on after his father died from asthma-related issues when Rema was only 8 years old. Then, in 2015, his older brother passed away as well. He was forced to go to get a job to help out his mom, who worked as a trader of wholesale goods. "I was lost after losing my brother," says Rema, during a recent interview he granted. "I had to change the way I talk, the way I act and fight to make it in society."

He fell in love with music at his church, which took a split service approach—adults went to one session and teenagers another. He used that freedom to start a rap group, enlisting some of his fellow young churchgoers. "We had to do it all on our own because the adults weren't ready for that yet," says Rema. Slowly, the grownups came around to his group—but only after he added certain elements. "Everyone just listens to Afro beats here, so we had to attract them with costumes and dance moves," he says. "It's where I learned that if I want to impress someone, I have to do what they like plus what I like." He had said.

Career

In what can be best described as when preparation meets opportunity, Rema posted a viral freestyle on Instagram in 2018, to D'Prince's track "Gucci Gang". The post caught the attention of D'Prince who flew him to Lagos and offered him a record deal.

The post got around, and Rema soon received a DM from D'Prince himself. Rema who was then a teenager was quickly flown to Lagos to sign a record deal with D'Prince's Jonzing World, a subsidiary of Mavin Records, in 2019.

"At the time I only had trap songs, so when [D'Prince] put me in the studio with an Afrobeats producer I was scared," Rema explains. "But I just mixed my trap vibes in and didn't force it." D'Prince took the music to his elder brother, Mavin Records founder, Don Jazzy, and Rema became the powerhouse label's latest signee. "I was screaming 'Yes, oh my god yes!" Rema recalls, looking like he's about to burst into tears of happiness all over again. "The biggest label in Nigeria wanted me," Rema had reminisced.

He released his self-titled debut EP "Rema' in 2019, which peaked at number 1 on Apple Music Nigeria. On 21 May 2019, Jonzing World, and Mavin's released the music video of "Dumebi", a major breakout song from his self-titled EP, featuring a cameo appearance from Diana Eneje. The video was directed by Ademola Falomo and currently has 44 million streams on YouTube. His is meteoric rise to prominence continued with the release of the song "Iron Man", which appeared on Barack Obama's 2019 summer playlist.

Recently, Rema released a follow-up EP that offers polished versions of his trap-leaning Instagram freestyles, displaying his effortless composure when faced with any style of beat. It quickly shot to the top of his home country's Apple Music chart; as of this writing, four of the Top 10 most-streamed songs in Nigeria are Rema songs.

In May 2021, Rema announced he will be calling his sound "Afrorave", a subgenre of Afrobeats with influences of Arabian and Indian music.

By September, Rema was unveiled as a brand ambassador for the popular soft drink Pepsi alongside his label mate Ayra Starr. He joins the exclusive 'club' of A-List stars on Pepsi's exclusive lineup of stars which boasts Wizkid, Teni, Grammy award-winning Burna Boy, Davido, Tiwa Savage, and Tecno, among others.

Awards

On 19 October 2019, Rema won the Next Rated act and was nominated for Viewer's Choice at the 13th edition of The Headies. On 12 January 2020, he received the Soundcity MVP Awards for the best new artist. On 15 June 2020, Rema was nominated as Best Viewers' Choice: International Act on the 2020 BET Awards. He was nominated on the awards alongside Burna Boy and Wizkid, they were the only Nigerian artists nominated for the awards edition of 2020.


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Brand Nigeria: Changing The Narratives Of Duplicity And Disintegration



Ntia Usukuma

With the gradual easing of the Covid 19 pandemic globally, most countries, cities and brands have intensified the struggle for the limited share of the world's resources that include investible capital, pockets of the consumers, and a growing number of tourists ready to take an early plunge.

With the availability of so many budding options in a crowded global marketplace, the only antidote against falling is to stand for something.

Simon Anholt, a renowned policy advisor to many governments and cities of world, on issues of branding in public diplomacy and economic development had provided a lot of insight when he evolved the popular concept of "Nation Branding".

While the task of promotion, positioning and reputation management on a global scale has been a familiar one in the business world and corporations , many countries and cities, especially those in Africa are yet to fully grasp the relevance of this powerful competitive tool and agent of change

The underlining fact is, just like companies exist to make profit, nations also exist to ensure "profitable" lifetime and welfare for all their citizens. After 61 years of statehood, how well has past and current governments in Nigeria, as well as the citizenry handled the issue of projecting Nigeria positively as a country brand.

In the last two or three decades, communication scholars, diplomats and information managers have come to accept Nation branding is a field of theory and practice which aims to build, manage and measure the reputation of nations. In this field, commercial brand management practices are applied by nations, in an effort to build, change or protect their international reputations. This is based on the observation that the "brand images" of nations are just as important to their success in the global market place as those of products and services.

Looking at the last two decades, it has become obvious that nations are becoming more aware of the importance of defining how they want to be perceived by investors and other third parties; and the need to improve and leverage their unique assets. While tourism is often the most visible manifestation of a country as brand, it is clear that the image, reputation and brand values of a nation impact its products, population, investments opportunities and even its foreign aid and funding.

This intense competition under globalization requires that nations communicate their uniqueness, values and advantages as a memorable brand. So all responsible governments, in conjunction with their people, their institutions and their companies, need to discover what the world's perception of their country should be, and then develop a strategy for managing it. It is a key part of the job of every normal government to lead in the effort of building a reputation that is fair, true, powerful, attractive, genuinely useful to their economic, political and social aims, and honestly re ects the spirit, the genius and the will of the people. This huge task has become one of the primary skills of governments in the twenty- rst century.

For instance, when the Caribbean nation, Trinidad and Tobago, decided to brand itself formally, she must have realised that most countries with successful rebranding history, also promoted their unique products or services to effectively steer their reputation. Being an island with strong sea voyaging links, the country realized that their best promotional elements would rest largely on the foundation of the country's shipping and port development sectors. Globally, not just within the Caribbean region, the importance of the shipping industry has been massively under-estimated in the context of nation branding. A country like Trinidad and Tobago, which has well- established shipping industry, promptly leverage on that asset as a key component of their nation branding strategy.

Elements Of Nation Brand

Brand scholar, Dr. Keith Dinnie of Temple University, Tokyo, Japan opines that there are four key elements in nation branding: export promotion, investment attraction, tourism promotion, and public diplomacy. However, history has revealed that very few countries have been able to achieve quality balance of these four key elements. While a few like Trinidad and Tobago was majorly targeting investment attraction, in most other cases, countries focus most of their nation branding efforts on tourism promotion and neglect the other elements of the nation brand.

Nigeria's First Branding Effort

The success stories of some rebranding activities of some countries at the turn of the century must have propelled Nigeria in 2002 to embark on "The Heart of Africa" Project. According to Alder Consulting, handlers of this project, the primary objective of this maiden campaign was to promote Nigeria's national brand assets, while strategically tackling the brand eroders confronting the nation such as Advance-fee fraud, drug trafficking and others. Nigerians in the Diaspora were remarkably carried along through a number of meetings and discussions with the information minister at this time, Mr. Frank Nweke Jnr. Officials from Nigeria co-opted various embassies and consulates in the cities where the Project was launched.

However many critical analysts were prompt to point out that the "Heart of Africa" project spent a lot of tax payers' money on



placing irrelevant multi-million dollar adverts on CNN and other expensive foreign media outlets to promote Nigeria. Probably to impress some foreign audience.The perceived culture of waste, corruption and patronage must have been one of the many reasons that truncated the success of this campaign.

Even the then minister for information, Frank Nweke Jnr agreed that although the 'Heart of Africa' project, to all intent and purposes, was a lofty idea; the eventual success can best be derived differently from the activities, attitudes, actions and inactions of the leaders at home and the premium they place on the moral and social adjustment within each Nigerian citizen.

Second Rebranding Effort

It was probably that awareness that charity should begin at home that prompted the next campaign handled by a former Information Minister, Dora Akunyili to create some conditions in which the public interest could be secured to some extent.

The date was Tuesday, 17 March, 2009 when the then Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan unveiled and launched the logo and slogan of the "Re-branding Nigeria" campaign. The slogan was "Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation". It was complemented by a logo designed around the word "Nigeria" and the map of the country.

Performing the ceremony in Abuja, the Vice President who represented The late President Yar'Adua challenged Nigerians not to perceive the campaign as another ceremony or exercise in sloganeering. He said that it should be perceived as a genuine attempt at making every Nigerian have a renewed commitment to the regeneration of the country.

He noted that if Nigeria must meet its Millennium Development Goals and actualise the Vision 20-2020, the nation must put the requisite institutional and structural frameworks in place. This, he said, was for national reorientation toward fostering a positive perception of Nigeria at home and within the international community.

Enters "Fascinating Nigeria"

Interestingly even the man who represented the President at the unveiling of the second rebranding campaign did not sustain the campaign when he took over as President some months later.

Instead what was unveiled was a new tourism brand identity for the nation's tourism sector to drive the promotional activities of the government in the culture and tourism sector.

Speaking to journalists in Abuja on the issue, the Minister of Tourism Culture and National Orientation at that time , Chief Edem Duke noted that a brand identity for Nigeria's creative sector was long overdue given the huge tourism assets which Nigeria is known for in Africa and beyond.

The new identity, 'Fascinating Nigeria' which replaced 'Good People, Great Nation,' received the nod of the Federal Executive Council.

Duke said the new identity will put Nigeria at par with countries like South Africa with 'It's Possible' as its brand identity, India's 'Incredible India' and Malaysia wit 'Truly Asia'.

According to the minister, the offici... brand Identity "will unravel several windows that make Nigeria truly fascinating, from her weather to her resilient people, the beautiful landscape, extensive cultural diversity and literature which Nigeria is known for".

Regrettably the fascinating Nigeria campaign did not catch fire as expected.

From that period till date, no central government made any bold effort to rebrand the country although some state governments have taken remarkable strides in trying to reposition themselves in the marketplace.

Even agencies like The National Orientation Agency (NOA) that should be championing national behavioural rebirth is either flagging off colourless campaigns or always in the news for the wrong reasons. Recently, the agency was summoned by the national assembly to explain why billions of naira was shared as palliatives to selected staff when such funds were not budgeted initially.

However, despite various sincere efforts, why have past rebranding efforts in Nigeria and some other African countries failed to yield the desired fruit? Why are Nigerians increasingly thinking negatively about their country?

In the words of an industry analyst, Akonte Ekine Lead Strategist at Absolute PR, "When different bodies, agencies, ministries, special interest groups, NGOs speak and act at cross-purposes, when different bodies - of cial and unof cial, national and regional, political and commercial, send out con icting and even contradictory messages about the country, no consistent picture of the country can emerge, and its overall reputation either stands still or moves backwards".

Many analysts feel Nigeria should focus more on the issue above before venturing into a naira-spinning campaign. Far more can be achieved if the work of stakeholders are coordinated and harmonised to an overall national strategy that sets clear goals for the country's economy, its society and its political and cultural relations with other countries.

Competitive Identity is the term used by scholars to describe the desired synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy and with trade, investment, and tourism and export promotion.

The problem with attempting to 'market the nation' directly – as several African nations like Nigeria have been doing in recent years, sometimes wasting millions of dollars of donors' and taxpayers' dollars in creating attractive but futile television spots on international TV channels – is that products can be sold through marketing communications, but countries aren't products.

This naïve belief that a lifetime's negative prejudice – much of it founded on hard evidence – can be annihilated by an instrument as "feeble" as advertising or PR is one of the most worrying tendencies of African governance including Nigeria in the last ten or twenty years. Geniune cohesion must be achieved before communication and media razzmatazz are deployed

What really makes a difference is when a critical mass of the businesses and organisations in a country becomes dedicated to the development of new things

No nation's reputation was built just through communications, and none can be changed through communications. Building Competitive Identity isn't just through advertising, design or public relations exercise, although, of course, these techniques are essential for promoting the things that the country makes and does: its tourist and heritage attractions, its companies and their products and services, its music and art and other cultural products, its sport, its people, its investment and employment opportunities.

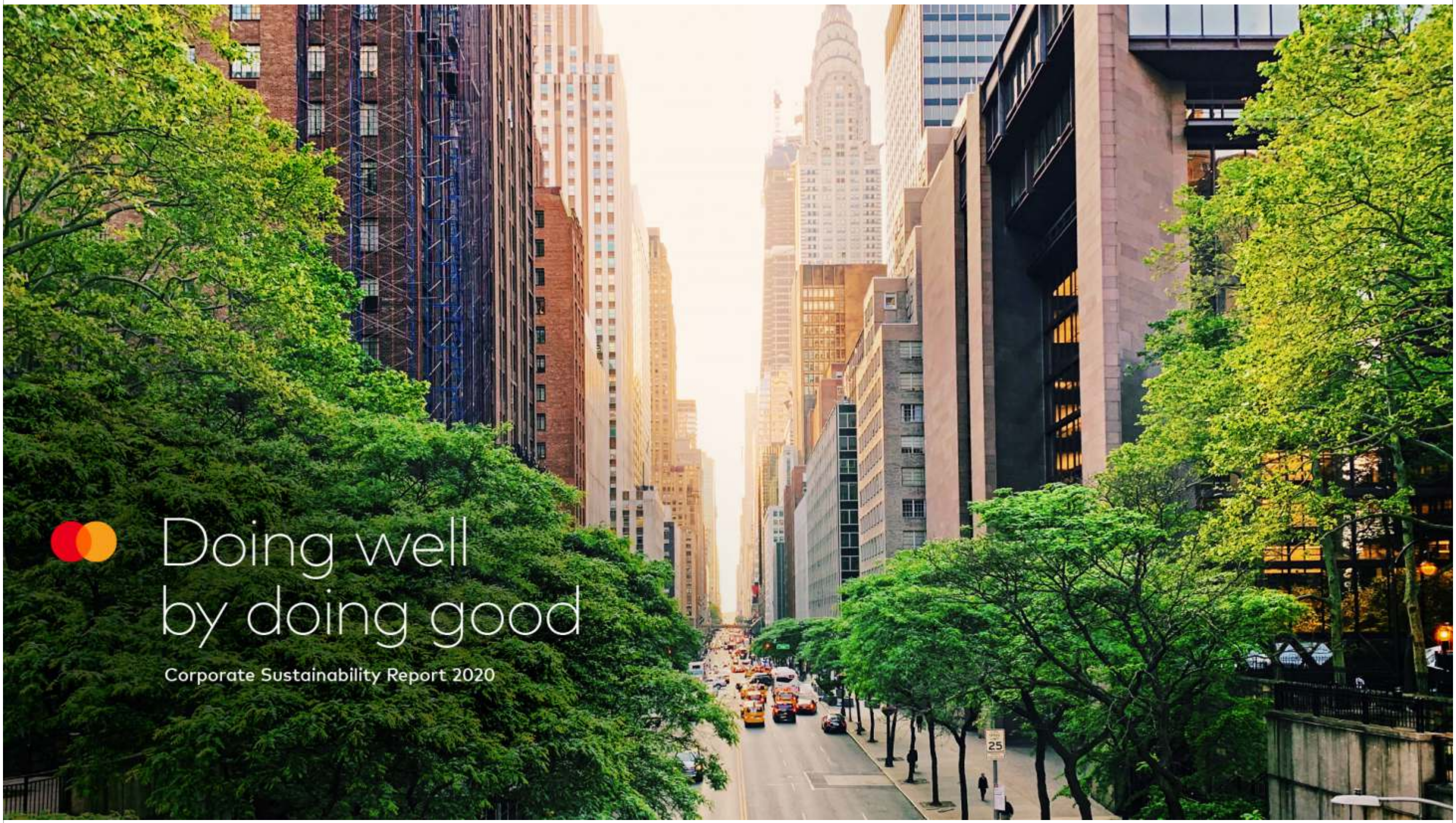
The quality of the marketing done by all of these stakeholders, and the consistency between the different messages they send out about the place, is an important factor in the way a country builds up its reputation – and of course good advertising often plays a major part in creating the positive tourism brands that many countries enjoy today.

Creating more harmony between the way all of the country's companies and organisations and people do business and sell their products and services is an important part of the process of building Competitive Identity: if they are all telling the same powerful, believable, interesting story about the country, then the country has started to achieve some control over its international image.

The place produces a buzz, people start to pay attention, and prepare themselves to change their minds

But getting everybody in the country to speak with one voice, and do it well, is a major part of the solution that can lead to the enhancement of the national image. However what provides the quantum leap is when a critical mass of the businesses, groups and organisations in a country becomes dedicated to the development of new things: new ideas, new policies, new laws, new products and services, new businesses, new buildings, new art, new science, new intellectual property; and when those innovations seem to be proving a few simple truths about the place they all come from, the reputation accelerates.

The place produces a buzz, people start to pay attention, and prepare themselves to change their minds. The key issue in country branding is basically a collective effort to reflect, rethink and effectively change the existing mindset.


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