

BUSINESS DAY
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An Exclusive Interview with

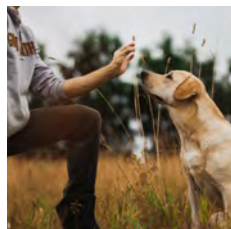
Modupe Ladipo

**From UK to Nigeria:
Pioneering Financial
Inclusion:**



TRAVEL

Africa's most overcrowded country is a popular tourist destination



EDUCATION

7 most unusual study courses in the world

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C O N T E N T S



7

LAUGHTER



16

INTERVIEW

HOW MARY OKON BUILT A THRIVING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS



28

FEATURE

STAKEHOLDERS CHAMPION REGULATORY REFORMS, INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AT FUTURE OF POWER

32

PROFILE

THE BUSINESS OF STORYTELLING: SAM OCHONMA'S JOURNEY FROM ADVERTISING TO FILM

37

OPINION

BEYOND THE HYPE: HOW TO KEEP WINNING FOR WOMEN (AND YOURSELF) AFTER MARCH

43

WOMEN

WHY NIGERIA NEEDS MORE WOMEN'S VOICES IN LEADERSHIP—STAKEHOLDERS

53

UDY'S CHAPTER

MASKED

55

BOOK REVIEW

WHO KILLED NNAMDI

57

MOVIE REVIEW



Business Growth Conference

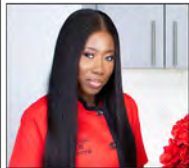
The Stephen Akintayo Effect: Entrepreneurs Share Testimonials On the Business Growth Conference

Ever feel like your business is stuck in second gear while others are blazing down the highway to success? What if the roadmap to explosive growth wasn't some guarded secret, but a proven path paved by those who've already walked it? These aren't just polite nods of approval; they're raw, unfiltered accounts from CEOs and founders who plugged into the power source that is Dr. Stephen Akintayo's mentorship and watched their businesses ignite. From scaling digital empires to conquering real estate landscapes, their stories, shared in their own explosive words, are your exclusive backstage pass to the strategies and breakthroughs that are redefining business success. If you're hungry to break free from the plateau and launch your business into orbit, prepare to be inspired – and get ready to attend the Business Growth Conference, where these very transformations were forged. To attend, visit www.businessgrowthconference.org, or call +2348167901719, +2348155555616



DR. BLESSING EJEDOH GERALD
CEO, Egovas Global Limited

A big thank you to Dr. Stephen Akintayo for the one-on-one mentorship session I had today. It's honestly the best thing that has happened to me this April. He helped me highlight the key areas I need to work on in my business, and I'm truly grateful. Thank you, Sir, for your time and your remarkable passion for business. The way you genuinely want others to grow is commendable. I just know that the second quarter of 2025 is going to be amazing for me and my team. Attending the Business Growth Conference in Lagos will definitely set the tone and straighten the road for us. I don't want to miss it. My team and I are coming over to Lagos to be part of this incredible opportunity. Thank you once again, Sir. I'm looking forward to it.



ADESOLA ADEOSUN
Chief Creative Officer for House of Ziva

I would like to say a big thank you to Dr. Stephen Akintayo. Thank you so much, Sir, for your unwavering interest in raising upcoming billionaires. I truly appreciate the value you're pouring into our businesses and personal growth. Yesterday, I had an incredible session with you, so engaging that time flew by, and I honestly didn't want it to end. We reflected on the first quarter of the year, what I've done so far, what needs to be improved, and the new strategies I should introduce into my business moving forward. One of the key highlights was our discussion on scaling my digital skills. You advised me to hire a videographer and an editor to enhance the quality of my content, making it more impactful on social media and ultimately leading to increased growth and sales.



GASANA HAPPY GODFREY
CEO, Happy Reserve Pick and Drop, Kigali, Rwanda

I'm truly happy and grateful to have had a one-on-one conference with Dr. Stephen Akintayo as part of his well-structured mentorship program. Our journey began when we first met at the CEO Retreat in Lakowe, Lagos. Since then, he has added immense value to my life, especially in the area of real estate. After that retreat, I began investing, and the results have been remarkable. This recent one-on-one session was deeply impactful. Dr. Akintayo taught us about the transition from transport to landmarking as a key part of real estate strategy. He also emphasized the importance of strategic planning as a startup entrepreneur. These insights have given me clarity and direction, and things have only continued to grow from there.



ORUNOR ANDREW ABOHWO
CEO of Temiro Group

I had an enriching and enlightening session with my mentor, Dr. Stephen Akintayo. We discussed key areas such as corporate governance, proper business structuring, and creating an effective reward system for staff. I'm truly looking forward to implementing everything I learned during the session. I want to especially thank Dr. Stephen Akintayo for taking the time to pour into us and for his unwavering commitment to seeing us grow into successful business leaders.



IBUKUNLUWA OLUDARE
CEO, Pine and Ivory Ltd

The journey of entrepreneurship is filled with both learning and unlearning, and one of the greatest assets you can have along the way is a good mentor, someone committed to helping you get it right. Choosing Dr. Stephen Akintayo as my mentor was a very intentional decision, and I have no regrets. He approaches mentorship as a calling and is genuinely invested in our growth and success. Thank you, Sir, for such a powerful session. It was insightful, instructive, and straight to the point. I'm truly grateful.



ENG. MARK IDOKO
GMD DE-MARK GROUP

I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our mentor, Dr. Stephen Akintayo, for everything he has been doing for us. Ever since we joined his mentorship program, we've experienced tremendous growth in both structure and operations. The mentorship has truly been impactful and rewarding. During our recent one-on-one session with him, he gave us valuable advice on managing our staff and recruiting the right people. Optimizing team performance has been one of our major challenges, but through his guidance, we now have clear strategies on how to tackle it effectively. I strongly believe that if we implement all he has taught us, we will achieve highly productive and rewarding results.



BARR. CHIDI AMAEZI
MD/CEO, Senatorch Limited

Thank you, Dr. Stephen Akintayo, for all you do for us. I deeply appreciate the one-on-one mentorship session I had with you this afternoon. It was an amazing experience, and I've learned so much from you. Thank you for your willingness to share your vast wisdom and knowledge. It's always a pleasure speaking with you, as you offer invaluable insights that help in scaling businesses, setting up structures, and understanding corporate governance. I look forward to learning even more at the upcoming Business Growth Conference.



SHOBUKOLA MIUBARAK OLADUN, Showbucks Property Management

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Stephen Akintayo for the one-on-one mentorship session we had yesterday. It was really helpful. I've gained more clarity and confidence on how to rebound and generate more income as a property management company. It also made me realize that I could create more value by mentoring and sharing my strategy as a property management company.



KENE ONYIA
CEO, Kenburger Group

I want to use this opportunity to thank my mentor, Dr. Stephen Akintayo, for the chance to learn from him during our one-on-one session. It was truly an incredible experience. Sir, thank you so much. You are kind, patient, and full of wisdom. You took your time to explain everything clearly to me, answering all my questions and guiding me on what steps to take. Your insights were absolutely amazing, so vital to the goals I want to achieve. I will definitely put everything you shared into action, and I am confident I'll return with success.



FRANK TCHANGOU
MD GERHOLDINGS, Cameroon

I want to sincerely thank my mentor, Dr. Stephen Akintayo, for the amazing session we had during our one-on-one call earlier. The session was nothing short of transformative. It was deep, insightful, and incredibly impactful. Dr. Akintayo went the extra mile to break down every aspect of our business; he highlighted what we're doing right, pointed out areas we're falling short, and gave practical, actionable strategies for improvement. As they always say, a mentor is not someone who pampers you, but one who challenges you to become the best version of yourself. He has lit a fire under us, and we're ready to run ready to ascend to greater heights. Words cannot quantify my gratitude. Thank you so much, sir. I'm truly grateful.



THANDO MATUTU
MD Agripreneur SA, Chief Commercial Officer: SIRindustries

I really enjoyed my session with Dr. Stephen Akintayo, it was very useful and very helpful, the key takeaway was the importance of arranging and perfect partnership. It's not just about extracting from the relationship, it should be mutually beneficial, built over time, where the person you're pitching to can see the effort and value you've put in. He referenced his long-term relationships. I really enjoyed the session with Dr. Stephen Akintayo, who was incredibly helpful. Any business proposal you present should never be one-sided.



DR. ABIDEMI TALABI, CEO, Leverage Seeds Limited

Dr. Steven Akintayo, I want to express my deepest gratitude for the gift of access and your unwavering commitment to my success in business. I do not take it for granted. The insights, concepts, and ideas you shared during our one-on-one session were invaluable. I appreciate the clear strategies you provided, which I am eager to implement right away to achieve my goals. As I mentioned earlier, there were three core areas I sought your guidance on. The first was staying out of indebtedness, the second was scaling business operations, and the third was assessing funding for expansion. After our session, I was truly inspired and motivated, and I feel confident that I now have a better understanding of how to move forward.



DR. YETUNDE TAIWO
ADEKUNLE, YTFOODS

I'm a member of the Elite Billionaire Club under Dr. Stephen Akintayo, I just want to say a very big thank you to Dr. Stephen Akintayo for granting us the opportunity to speak with him and have a strategy session with him last week. The session was incredibly valuable. It provided me with clarity, wisdom, and knowledge for both my personal and business life. I was able to gain insight into areas I wasn't considering before, especially when it comes to studying the value chain and determining where to focus my efforts. This has allowed me to skill up my business and increase revenue, both monthly and yearly. I also learned that I can start gaining profit now and use it to fund my passion later if the passion is not bringing profits at the moment. This is a great sacrifice from Dr. Akintayo, and as a mentor to many, I understand the effort it takes to offer such a session.



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DR. STEPHEN AKINTAYO
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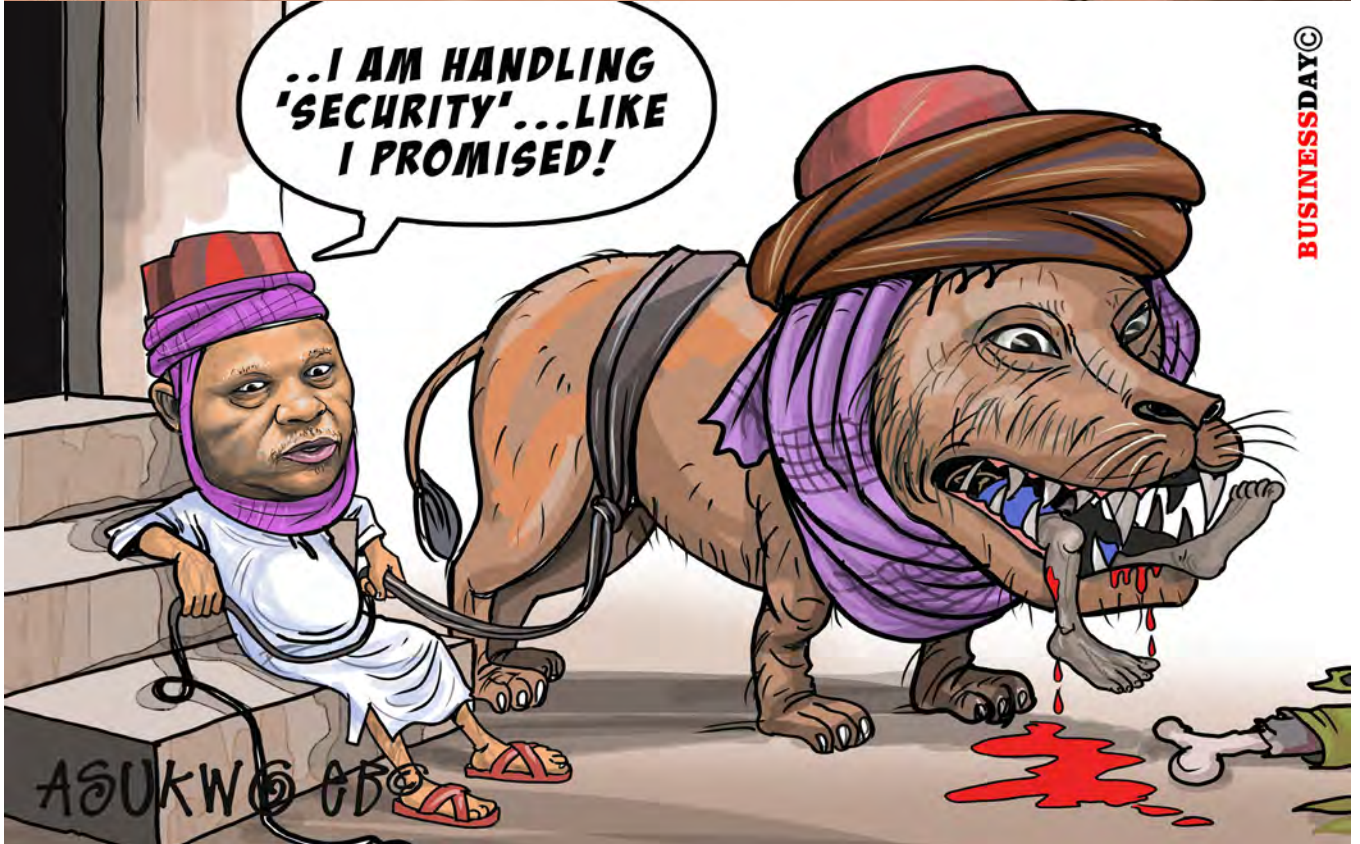
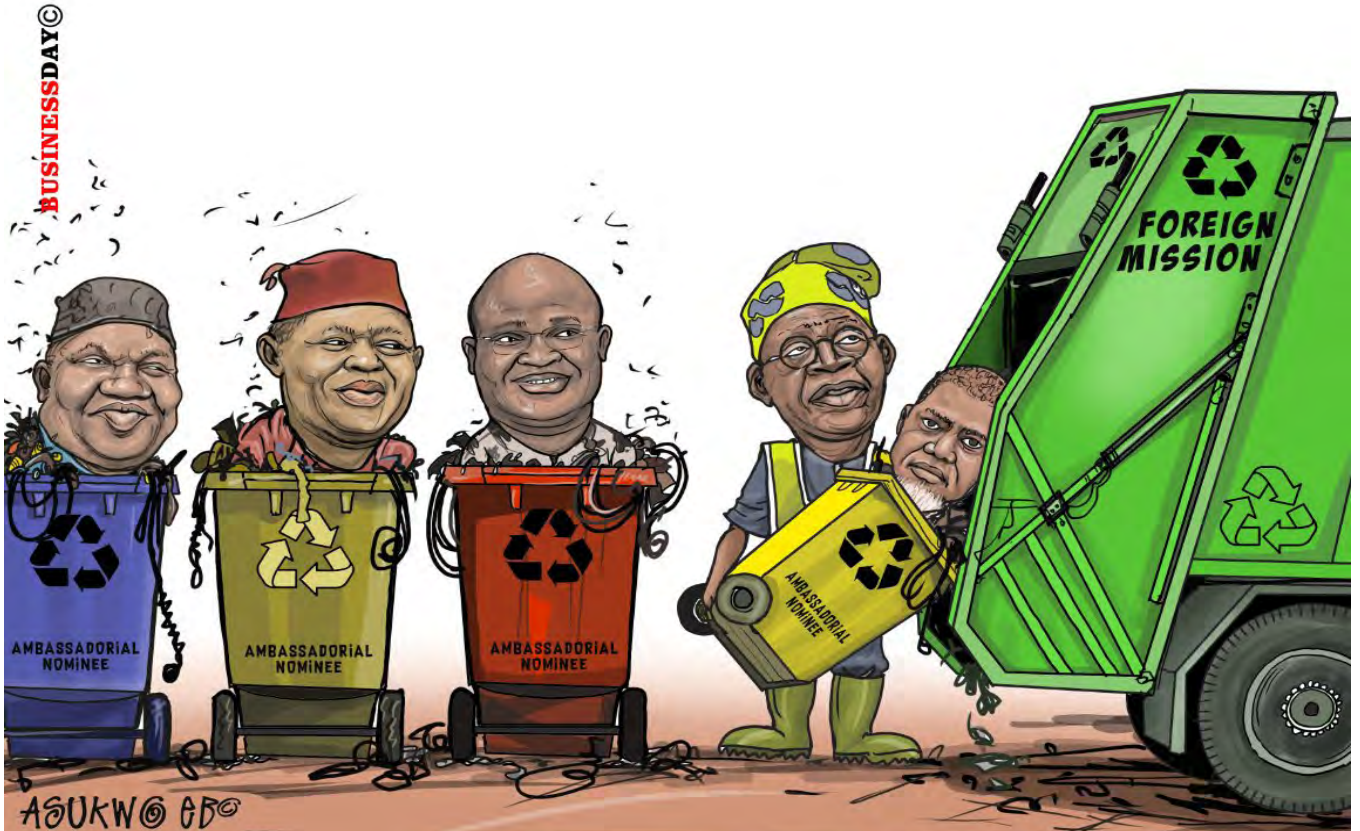
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A professional portrait of Modupe Ladipo, a Black woman with long dark hair, wearing a black blazer over a white button-down shirt. She is standing in a modern office environment with blurred background lights.

From UK to Nigeria: Pioneering Financial Inclusion: An Exclusive Interview with Modupe Ladipo



Modupe Ladipo, a leader with over 35 years of experience in investment banking, capital markets, women's economic empowerment, and financial innovation, stands at the forefront of Nigeria's financial inclusion movement. Throughout her distinguished career, she has focused on advancing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). As the Managing Director of Prosperar Consulting, Ladipo has committed to building inclusive economies in emerging markets by championing access to finance, improving financial literacy, and supporting SMEs, youth, and women-led businesses. Her work aims to ensure that underserved communities, especially women and youth, play an active role in Nigeria's economic transformation.

Before Prosperar Consulting, Ladipo served as the pioneering CEO of Enhancing Financial Inclusion & Advancement (EFInA). Under her leadership, EFInA was instrumental in shaping Nigeria's financial inclusion landscape, driving a remarkable increase in banking

penetration from 21% in 2008 to 45% in 2020. Through initiatives like the EFInA Access to Financial Services (A2F) Survey and the launch of an Innovation Fund, EFInA provided essential financial products to underserved communities, helping lay the foundation for inclusive financial services in Nigeria.

In this interview, Modupe Ladipo delves into her motivations for transitioning from investment banking to financial inclusion, the significant strides Nigeria has made, and her continued commitment to driving economic empowerment in the country.

What motivated you to transition from investment banking in the UK to championing financial inclusion in Nigeria?

After spending many years in investment banking, particularly at the London Stock Exchange, I became acutely aware of the critical role that stock exchanges play in driving economic development. I began to understand how underdeveloped markets—particularly in Africa—could benefit from having stronger capital markets. At that time, Nigeria's capital markets were still quite small, with limited market capitalization and very few companies listed on the stock exchange. This realization sparked a desire to help develop more robust capital markets across Africa.

In 2008, a close friend encouraged me to return to Nigeria, believing my background in capital markets could help drive economic change. Initially, I thought I would join an initiative focused on enhancing Nigeria's capital market. However, I quickly learned that the most pressing need was improving financial access for underserved populations, which included rural communities, women, and SMEs. This shift in focus allowed me to get involved in financial inclusion in a way I hadn't initially planned, but which turned out to be both personally and professionally fulfilling.

The more I immersed myself in this space, the more I realized the transformative potential of finance. I found a deep passion for creating inclusive financial systems that could truly impact people's lives, helping them access the tools necessary for economic prosperity. What was meant to be a short-term return to Nigeria evolved into a long-term mission that I remain committed to today.

Reflecting on your time as the pioneer CEO of EFINA, what initiatives or projects had the most significant impact on advancing financial inclusion in Nigeria?

Reflecting on the start of my financial inclusion journey, my role as the pioneer CEO of EFINA marked a defining chapter in advancing financial inclusion in Nigeria. EFINA's initiatives laid the groundwork for transformative change in the Nigerian financial sector, and I am proud to highlight some of my most impactful contributions:

- I worked closely with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to develop Nigeria's NFIS in 2012, a groundbreaking roadmap to reduce financial exclusion. Nigeria was among the first countries globally to adopt such a comprehensive strategy, setting a precedent for others to follow. I also played a pivotal role in establishing the Financial Inclusion Secretariat, which coordinates and monitors the NFIS implementation, ensuring alignment across stakeholders.
- In 2008, EFINA launched the A2F survey, a first-of-its-kind survey to measure access to and usage of financial services among Nigerian adults. This data has become a trusted benchmark, widely utilized by government, regulators, financial institutions, NGOs, and academics to inform policies and strategies.
- I advocated for the development of evidence-based policies among key regulators, such as tiered KYC, non-interest banking, the cashless policy, agent banking, mobile money, microinsurance, and micropension frameworks. These efforts helped create an enabling environment for financial inclusion.
- EFINA became a trusted thought leader and honest broker, fostering public-private partnerships to drive financial inclusion at scale.
- In 2009, EFINA launched the Innovation Fund to catalyse growth in Nigeria's financial sector by awarding grants to unlock the development of innovative products and digital financial services for low-income earners and marginalised groups.
- EFINA strengthened the capacity of key stakeholders across both the public and private sectors, by providing them with the knowledge and tools necessary to turn financial inclusion into a widespread reality in Nigeria, embedding it firmly into the national dialogue and driving systemic change.

Between 2008 and 2016, EFINA's efforts contributed to a 26-million increase in the number of Nigerian adults participating in the formal financial sector. My work in economic and financial inclusion was recognised in 2022 when the CBN awarded me the Leadership in Financial Inclusion Award, a testament to the enduring impact of EFINA's initiatives and my ongoing commitment to advancing financial inclusion for all.

How are you leveraging your experience as Managing Partner of Prosperar Consulting to deepen economic and financial inclusion in Nigeria, particularly for women-owned/led SMEs?

At Prosperar Consulting, which I founded in 2016, our primary goal is to help build inclusive economies in emerging markets. We work closely with governments, financial institutions, development finance institutions (DFIs), NGOs, and policymakers to create opportunities for underserved populations, particularly women, youth, and SMEs.

Our key focus is empowering women entrepreneurs and SMEs, who have often faced systemic challenges in accessing finance, capacity building, and corporate governance support. We work to provide tailored resources and financial products that meet their specific needs, from microloans and business development services to mentorship and training.

Through our partnerships, we advocate for policy reforms that support the growth of women-led businesses, with a focus on removing barriers such as limited access to collateral, financial literacy gaps, and cultural constraints. One of our significant achievements was developing a Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Strategy for the Bank of Industry (BOI), which has directly contributed to creating sustainable financial solutions for Nigerian women entrepreneurs.

Additionally, we are making significant strides in advocating for and developing digital financial solutions, enabling women to more easily access formal financial services. Financial literacy is another critical area we focus on, providing programs that help women understand and navigate formal financial systems. Our work aims to ensure that women are not only able to access capital but are also equipped with the knowledge to use it effectively.

I aim to collaborate with other stakeholders, including regulators, financial institutions, and development agencies, to build an ecosystem that is not only inclusive but also sustainable. I also want to contribute to strengthening the implementation of policies that will lead to greater financial literacy and empowerment, ensuring that financial inclusion is a key driver of economic growth in Nigeria.

Congratulations on your recent appointment to the Presidential Committee on Economic and Financial Inclusion (PreCEFI). What is your vision for this role and the key objectives you aim to achieve?

Thank you very much! As a member of the Technical Implementation Committee (TechCo) of PreCEFI, my vision is to work towards creating a financial ecosystem that is truly inclusive and empowers individuals, especially those from underserved communities such as women, youth, and SMEs. I believe this is a critical part of Nigeria's future prosperity and a key step towards achieving the broader goals of inclusive economic development.

In this role, I plan to leverage my expertise and experience to help implement strategies that will make financial services more accessible, affordable, and tailored to the needs of marginalized populations. One of the main objectives will be ensuring that financial inclusion strategies not only reach more people but also effectively address the unique needs of women, youth, and small businesses.

Additionally, I aim to collaborate with other stakeholders, including regulators, financial institutions, and development agencies, to build an ecosystem that is not only inclusive but also sustainable. I also want to contribute to strengthening the implementation of policies that will lead to greater financial literacy and empowerment, ensuring that financial inclusion is a key driver of economic growth in Nigeria.

What role do fintech companies play in bridging the gap for underserved communities?

Fintech companies are playing a transformative role in closing the financial inclusion gap, especially in underserved communities. By leveraging technology, fintechs have made financial services like microloans, savings, insurance, and payments more accessible to populations that have traditionally been excluded by the banking sector. For example, mobile banking platforms are now enabling rural women and youth to access financial services without needing a traditional bank account or physical bank branch.

The use of technology also helps lower transaction costs, improve the speed of financial services, and provide a more seamless user experience. Fintechs have also been instrumental in creating tailored financial products that meet the specific needs of underserved groups, such as low-cost remittances, microloans, or savings programs with minimal fees. However, fintech companies must prioritize consumer protection in this growth. Transparent pricing, fair lending practices, and ensuring strong data privacy are fundamental to building trust and ensuring the long-term sustainability of these services. Additionally, fintech companies need to collaborate with regulators to ensure their products are safe, compliant, and meet the needs of their target populations.

How do you envision Nigeria's financial inclusion ecosystem evolving over the next decade, especially considering the rapid advancements in digital financial services and fintech companies?

Looking ahead to the next decade, I am optimistic about the continued growth of Nigeria's financial inclusion ecosystem, particularly with the rapid advancements in digital financial services and fintech companies. By 2030, I believe Nigeria will have a significantly more inclusive financial ecosystem, with a focus on the use of mobile technology and data analytics to deliver more personalized financial services. We are already seeing strong growth in agent banking and mobile payments, which are essential for reaching underserved and rural populations. Digital services will play a central role in expanding access to key financial products, such as savings accounts, insurance, and credit, especially for women, youth, and SMEs. The widespread use of mobile phones, coupled with the National Identification Number (NIN) initiative, will make financial services more accessible to previously excluded communities.

In the next decade, I also foresee greater collaboration between fintech companies, regulators, and traditional financial institutions, enabling a more integrated and efficient financial ecosystem. By using data and AI, fintechs will be able to design innovative solutions that address the diverse needs of Nigeria's population, making financial inclusion a reality for more Nigerians.

Women and youth in Nigeria face a range of barriers in accessing finance. For women, one of the major obstacles is limited access to collateral, which makes it difficult for them to secure loans from traditional financial institutions.

What are the primary barriers women and youth face in accessing finance, and what strategies have proven effective in overcoming these challenges?

Women and youth in Nigeria face a range of barriers in accessing finance. For women, one of the major obstacles is limited access to collateral, which makes it difficult for them to secure loans from traditional financial institutions. Cultural norms and gender biases can also restrict their financial autonomy and decision-making power. Additionally, many women lack financial literacy, which makes it harder for them to navigate formal financial systems.

Youth, on the other hand, often face challenges related to a lack of credit history, underemployment, and limited access to financial products that suit their unique needs. Without a proven track record or steady income, accessing credit becomes a significant hurdle.

To overcome these challenges, we have developed targeted financial products designed specifically for women and youth. For women, this includes designing

loans without the need for traditional collateral, offering microloans, and creating financial literacy programs to build their confidence in managing money. For youth, we've seen success with products tailored to first-time borrowers and micro-enterprise support that help young people start their own businesses and improve their financial literacy.

Blended finance solutions, which combine public and private funding, have also been instrumental in expanding access to credit for these groups. These solutions help reduce the risks for financial institutions, making them more willing to lend to individuals and businesses in need.

Modupe Ladipo's pioneering work in financial inclusion has had a profound impact on Nigeria's economic landscape. From her early days in investment banking to her groundbreaking leadership at EFINA and Prosperar Consulting, she has dedicated her career to bridging the financial divide for underserved communities, particularly women, youth, and SMEs. As she continues to advocate for policies that drive inclusive growth, Ladipo remains steadfast in her commitment to creating a more equitable financial ecosystem in Nigeria. Her work exemplifies the power of finance to drive systemic change, improve lives, and build sustainable economies.

Looking to the future, Ladipo's vision for Nigeria is one where everyone, regardless of gender, age, or background, has access to the financial tools they need to thrive. As she contributes to the development of new strategies through her role on the Presidential Committee on Economic and Financial Inclusion, there is no doubt that her influence will continue to shape the country's financial inclusion journey for years to come.



7 MOST UNUSUAL STUDY COURSES IN THE WORLD

CHISOM MICHAEL



Across the world, some universities are offering study programmes that go far beyond the usual classroom subjects. From dog walking to pop stars, these courses prove that learning can take unexpected turns.

Here are seven of the strangest study courses available

1. Harry Potter Studies – University of California, Berkeley

Students can dive into the magical world of Hogwarts through a class based on the Harry Potter series. The course explores themes, characters, and the structure of the wizarding world, showing how fiction can become a tool for learning.

2. Professional Dog Walking – British College of Canine Studies

This UK-based course trains students in the practical and business side of dog walking. It covers animal behaviour, safety, and how to run a dog walking service—perfect for people who love dogs and want to build a career around them.

3. Death, Religion and Culture – University of Winchester

Offered as a distance learning programme, this course looks at how different cultures and religions understand death. Students explore global traditions, funeral practices, and how death shapes beliefs and identities.

4. Street-Fighting Mathematics – Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

This course teaches students how to solve problems using quick, practical methods rather than formal proofs. It's about thinking on your feet and using mathematics in everyday situations.

5. Sociology of Lady Gaga – University of South Carolina

In this course, students study the life, music, and public image of Lady Gaga. The course uses her career to discuss social issues like fame, gender, and media influence.

6. Turfgrass Science – Penn State University

This full undergraduate degree focuses on grass. Students learn about soil, plant health, and lawn care. The programme prepares graduates for careers in landscaping, sports turf management, and agriculture.

7. The Beatles, Popular Music and Society – Liverpool Hope University

This course explores the impact of The Beatles on music, culture, and society. Students learn how the band shaped public opinion, challenged norms, and influenced generations through their songs.

AFRICA'S MOST OVERCROWDED COUNTRY IS A POPULAR TOURIST DESTINATION

CHISOM MICHAEL



Mauritius, a tropical island nation in the Indian Ocean, has become one of the most visited countries in Africa, attracting tourists from around the world. Known for its beaches, coral reefs, and natural scenery, the island continues to grow in popularity among travellers seeking leisure and outdoor experiences.

Despite images of quiet shores and peaceful landscapes, Mauritius is currently Africa's most overcrowded country by population density. According to data from Statista, Mauritius has 641 inhabitants per square kilometre,

which is more than double the United Kingdom's 279 and higher than Rwanda, the continent's second most densely populated country with 582 people per square kilometre.

Tourism has played a major role in shaping the country's global image. Locations like Le Morne Beach remain key attractions, drawing both local and international visitors. The beach is known for its scenic backdrop and calm waters, making it a popular choice for beachgoers.

A reviewer on TripAdvisor wrote, “The most beautiful beach I have ever been to in Mauritius! Crystal clear water, super quiet, not overcrowded. There are no local buses going to this beach and no ice cream trucks. Great restaurant at the beach ‘Emba Filao’, with reasonably priced meals.”

Another said, “This beach is beautiful with azure blue waters and soft white sand. A fabulous restaurant too. Also toilets, plenty of shade and parking. Ideal for a lovely afternoon on the beach.”

Beyond its coastline, Mauritius offers various activities for visitors including hiking, snorkelling, and exploring forest

reserves. These outdoor options allow for a more immersive experience beyond the tourist-heavy beaches.

While Mauritius continues to receive global attention for its appeal, the rising population density presents new challenges. Managing space, infrastructure, and visitor numbers will be key for the island’s long-term development and sustainability in tourism.

For now, Mauritius remains a top destination, balancing the interests of residents and the growing number of travellers who visit each year.



HOW MARY OKON built a thriving educational institution from humble beginnings





Mary Bertha Okon's journey is one of resilience and vision. Over two decades ago, as a young mother with limited English proficiency, she relocated from Germany to Nigeria and single-handedly established a cr che. What started with just three students has since grown into a thriving educational institution, now serving over 400 students from early childhood to senior secondary school, all on more than 10 plots of land.

Okon is a communicator, author, podcast host, seasoned entrepreneur, and transformational leader. With over 20 years of experience across education, psychology, human resources, financial management, and counseling, she has seamlessly navigated multiple industries while leaving an indelible mark. Beyond education, she is certified psychotherapist, a sought-after speaker, and a media entrepreneur dedicated to shaping narratives that heal and empower. She has mentored, trained, and counseled countless individuals students, parents, professionals, and corporate leaders while pioneering a culturally sensitive Special Educational Needs (SEN) department within my school, providing inclusive education and free emotional support to families in need.

Having lived and worked in Ghana, Germany, The Netherlands, Nigeria, the UK, and Qatar, she brings a global perspective to every space she enters. My multilingual fluency in several Ghanaian languages, English, and German allows her to connect deeply with diverse audiences. In this interview with IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA, she takes us through her struggles through life to building a thriving institution and impacting the lives of many.

Mary, your story is one of remarkable resilience. How did you overcome the challenges you faced as a young mother with limited English proficiency in a new country?

It wasn't just the language I had to adjust to, it was the food, the lifestyle, and the entire environment. Beyond figuring out meals, I had to navigate where to get my hair done, how to dress in a way that fit in, and most importantly who I could actually trust. Were my husband's friends genuinely on my side, or just putting on a show? Everything around me had changed.

I now had an in-law living with me. My daily routine was completely different. Waking up to a new climate, not being able to drink water straight from the tap, basic things I used to take for granted were no longer a given. But despite all the challenges, I knew going back wasn't an option. I was on maternity leave in Germany. I couldn't return to my family because of a failed marriage, that simply wasn't a path I was willing to take. No matter the obstacles, I told myself I would not fail. I was the only girl in my family, the only granddaughter to my grandfather who had always been a father figure to me.

There were high expectations placed on me, and I was determined not to let him, my mother, or my siblings down. After everything I went through to be with the man I married, after all the warnings and the sacrifices, I couldn't go back and say they were right, that I had failed. I wasn't going to give anyone that satisfaction.

Fortunately, a few of my husband's acquaintances, wives of his friends were kind enough to reach out and support me. They guided me through finding food markets, sorting out clothing needs, and even helped me discover salons where I could get my hair done and take care of myself. Some of them went the extra mile to teach me the Igbo language and pidgin.

I did my best to adapt and blend in. Their help was truly invaluable. I was willing to do whatever it took. Even if that meant retraining my taste buds, learning a new language, and embracing a new way of life, I was committed. I wasn't going to return to Germany as someone who gave up on her marriage. I had to make my family proud. I had to make myself proud. I believed there was nothing I couldn't overcome. With God on my side, I knew I wouldn't fail. That inner voice, the one that had always guided me told me I would adapt, that I would thrive. The stakes were too high to turn back. I had already given up so much, my job, my friends, my old life. I had broken hearts just to take this leap, and I wasn't going to let all that be for nothing. I was going to fight for the life I envisioned. Deep down, I knew God was with me. I had seen too much, experienced too much, to believe otherwise. I just knew I wasn't going to give up easily.

Can you share a pivotal moment that defined your journey and shaped you into the leader you are today?

Life has a way of breaking us open, revealing the essence of who we truly are. My journey has been marked by unexpected turns, moments of deep pain that became gateways to profound transformation. There was a time when going to church was simply a social obligation. Raised in a Catholic household, I decided to step into a Catholic church one Sunday, just to fulfill social expectations. I was met with rejection.

An usher told me my tattoo was distracting others and asked me to sit outside. I was stunned, humiliated and heartbroken. I walked away that day, vowing never to return. For years, I stayed away from the church, carrying the belief that it wasn't for me. But pain, in its strange wisdom, often leads us back to what we truly need.

In one of the most challenging seasons of my life, an inner voice began urging me to seek guidance. I resisted. Still, I eventually found myself standing before a priest, not out of obligation, but out of need. He became my spiritual mentor until he passed away. Our conversations went far beyond religion, leading me into deeper truths about spirituality, metaphysics, and purpose. He taught me spirituality and metaphysics for four years. One day, he told me, "Go study psychology." I didn't fully understand why at the time, but I trusted him and I listened. That decision shifted everything. Psychology and spirituality became the bridge between my past and my purpose. The wisdom he shared sharpened my intuition, strengthened my faith, and gave me the courage to show up for others in a new way. With this foundation, I began to understand people, not just their words or actions, but their deeper needs.





I was running a business that had been around for about a decade. Through this lens, I saw my staff differently. I could feel what they needed, sometimes before they said a word. I understood the human experience beyond the physical. And that understanding changed everything. It reshaped me, not just as a leader, but as a person. I became more empathetic, more aware. Psychology gave me the tools to interpret behavior, emotions, and complexity with compassion and clarity. And with that, I stepped into a new kind of leadership, one rooted in presence, purpose, and deep care.

How do you balance your personal and professional life, and what self-care practices do you prioritise?

Over the years, I've learned to put myself first, prioritising my mental, physical, and emotional well-being. I've also worked hard on learning to self-regulate my emotions so that I can be a better person for others. In terms of balancing my personal and professional life, I've built a solid structure over the last 22 years as an entrepreneur. My professional life is well-organised, which makes it easier to balance everything. I've been married for 25 years and a mother for 24 years,

so I've developed routines and systems that help me stay on track with both my personal and professional responsibilities. I make sure to move my body, get good sleep, and eat healthily. For the past 4-5 years, I've also committed to annual health and wellness checkups, including blood work. I practice mindfulness and ensure I stay in the best physical and mental state I can. Because without taking care of myself, I can't be the best version of me for others. All these little things I've done over the years help me stay healthy, focused, and ready to be the best I can for myself and for those around me.

What inspired you to start a crèche, and how did you navigate the challenges of building a thriving educational institution?

I was on the hunt for a nursery for my daughter, but every single one I visited didn't meet the high standards I was used to from Germany. That's when my inner voice spoke up: "If none of these nurseries meet your expectations, why not create one yourself? Show them what 'better' looks like." And just like that, the idea was born. I began asking questions and reaching out to friends for advice. During my visits to other nurseries, I observed everything- the environment, what was provided, and how they operated. I used those observations alongside my experience in Germany to guide me. I collected as much information as I could, and then I took action. I started with whatever resources I had. It didn't matter that I couldn't afford everything right away, I just knew it had to be good, better than what I had seen locally.

I hired professionals because that was crucial to me, people who were not only experienced but passionate about their work, especially in this field. I brought in a qualified nurse, graduates, and caregivers, all experts in their areas. They came at a higher cost, but that was part of my setup budget. I needed to shift their mindsets to match my standards, and it took almost a year before we were ready to welcome children from outside my family.

I started with my own kids, learning from the staff's experiences and feedback. We talked, exchanged ideas, and I carefully considered the suggestions they made, comparing them to what I knew from Germany. I chose the best options to build the foundation of my nursery. It wasn't just my effort, it was a collaboration with friends, family, staff, and the community's expectations. Plus, I had to meet the Ministry of Education's standards. All of these elements came together, forming the foundation of my nursery. That's how my journey as an entrepreneur in Nigeria began.

How do you foster a culture of inclusivity and diversity within your school, particularly with your Special Educational Needs (SEN) department?

Creating a culture of inclusivity and diversity in my school required intentional strategies and a deep commitment to fostering a welcoming, respectful, and equitable environment for all students. Drawing on my background in psychology, I focused on key actions such as modeling inclusive practices with my management team, ensuring our curriculum embraced diversity, and recruiting and training staff to align with these objectives.

What is your advice for aspiring entrepreneurs, especially women, who are looking to make a meaningful impact in their communities?

Financial capital alone doesn't guarantee success in entrepreneurship. What matters is identifying a societal need and solving a problem. You don't need to have all the answers or know everything right from the start. You can hire professionals, learn as you go, or seek guidance from others. As long as you're determined, resilient, and find sustainable ways to keep the business going, you'll be on the right track. It's crucial to stay focused and possess financial literacy.

Passion alone won't grow a business, it's about persistence, consistency, and a drive to succeed. Regardless of how much money you have at the beginning, start with what you can. With resilience, consistency, and passion, growth will follow. Above all, treat people with kindness and respect, especially your staff, as good relationships are essential for long-term success.

What drove your decision to expand into media production with MWTV, and how do you see this platform amplifying your mission?

I aim to encourage a holistic leadership approach, one that recognizes staff as integral parts of a larger system, not just individuals within an organization. Drawing from my experience in psychotherapy over the years in Nigeria, I've seen the urgent need for a platform that promotes, supports, and educates people on the importance of mental well-being. My mission is to remind people to remain faithful and hopeful, even when life seems impossible. I want them to understand that there is so much more beyond what the mind can perceive. With social media at our fingertips, there's





no reason not to use my voice to spread this message. My goal is to collaborate with global media outlets that will share my story, invite me to speak, and provide platforms to inspire a deeper awakening in people. I want to help others realise they have a reservoir of wisdom beyond what their eyes can see or their minds can comprehend and to empower them to tap into that inner strength.

Can you share your approach to storytelling, and how you use your voice to create safe spaces for healing and empowerment?

Storytelling is a transformative tool for fostering healing and empowerment. It helps individuals connect with their emotions, gain deeper insights into their experiences, and find common ground in their challenges. As someone deeply committed to mental wellness, my mission is to ensure people feel seen, heard, and validated in their experiences. I aim to guide them in reflecting on their own journeys, their values,

and the aspects of life that resonate most with them. By sharing my own story, I hope to show that growth is possible and that others can find strength in their vulnerabilities. I may also share stories from those I've worked with (while respecting confidentiality), or draw inspiration from historical figures, literature, or my community, illustrating how they've overcome adversity and healed. While it's essential to acknowledge pain and struggles, my stories are crafted to inspire hope and provide practical insights for healing. I may offer tools or strategies that have supported me or others in managing mental health challenges, such as mindfulness, meditation, therapy, or meaningful relationships. I want to encourage my audience to take actionable steps toward self-compassion, emotional regulation, and healing. Creating a safe space is key, and I'll engage with my audience through empathy. On social media, I hope to invite followers to share their own stories, affirming their experiences and fostering a community of mutual support and understanding.

How do you think media can be leveraged to drive positive change and social impact?

Media has a unique and powerful ability to shape public perception, inspire action, and drive social change. To harness its potential for positive impact, I plan to focus on several strategies:

raising awareness about pressing issues, amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, and providing a platform for their stories to be heard. It enables people to connect with like-minded individuals, collaborate on projects, and mobilize for collective action. Hashtags, viral campaigns, and online petitions can quickly spread awareness and rally support for movements, reaching audiences worldwide. Through my media presence, I can push lawmakers and policymakers to take action on critical issues such as mental health and social justice. With my podcasts, YouTube channel, radio work, and blogs, I aim to provide accessible educational content that empowers individuals to make informed decisions, whether it concerns mental health, social justice, or sustainable living.

What leadership principles guide your decision-making, and how do you inspire and empower those around you?

My leadership principles are grounded in empathy and active listening. I prioritize understanding the perspectives and emotions of the people I lead and collaborate with. By listening attentively and showing compassion, I create an environment where trust is built, and everyone feels valued and understood. I believe that leadership also means modeling honesty and authenticity. By being transparent in my decisions and actions, I encourage others to act with integrity, fostering a culture of openness. I actively promote collaboration, inclusivity, and a growth mindset, encouraging both my own development and that of those around me. I create opportunities for others to grow, challenge themselves, and enhance their skills. I believe in empowering people by granting them the autonomy to make decisions, while always considering the impact on the business. Holding them accountable builds their confidence and fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility within the team. I ensure that my team remains aligned with the larger vision of the business, consistently connecting our daily actions to long-term goals and values. Above all, I inspire them to pursue excellence, not just for the success of the business but for their own personal growth as well.

I recognize that every individual is unique, even within the same culture, and their behaviors and perspectives are shaped by a complex array of factors.

Can you share any insights on how to effectively navigate cultural differences and foster cross-cultural understanding?

Navigating cultural differences and fostering cross-cultural understanding requires intentionality, empathy, and an open mind. To manage these effectively, I focus on educating myself about various cultures, their values, customs, communication styles, and social norms. I prioritise active listening, making sure to hear others' perspectives without judgment, especially when interacting across cultural boundaries. I maintain an open mind and genuine curiosity, and I avoid stereotyping, as it can create unnecessary barriers. I recognize that every individual is unique, even within the same culture, and their behaviors and perspectives are shaped by a complex array of factors. Therefore, I make a conscious effort to avoid assumptions and observe people's behaviors carefully. Nonverbal cues, such as body language, eye contact, and gestures, vary greatly between cultures, so I pay close attention to how my own body language is perceived and remain mindful of these cues when interacting. I approach cultural differences with empathy and a nonjudgmental mindset, understanding that misunderstandings can arise and using those moments as opportunities for learning. I welcome feedback as it helps me become more culturally aware and refine my approach to navigating diverse interactions. Finally, I show respect for cultural traditions, as honoring them helps build trust and strengthens relationships.

How do you see your work contributing to the preservation and celebration of African cultures and heritage?

As someone passionate about mental well-being and cross-cultural understanding, I see my work as a platform to not only promote mental health but also celebrate and preserve African cultures and heritage. By encouraging conversations about mental wellness through a culturally sensitive lens, I aim to highlight how African traditions, values, and communal practices contribute to emotional well-being. This can help shift perspectives on mental health within African contexts, creating space for dialogue that bridges modern psychological practices with indigenous healing methods.

In addition, by collaborating with global media houses and using my voice on social media, I can raise awareness about the richness of African culture showcasing its diversity, strengths, and resilience. Highlighting African storytelling traditions, music, art, and rituals through these platforms offers an opportunity to celebrate the heritage and pass it on to future generations. I

hope my work can inspire others to value and embrace African cultures, fostering pride and unity while contributing to a more global appreciation of cultural diversity.

You recently became an author for the first time- tell us about that journey.

Becoming a co-author for the first time was an exciting and transformative experience that added a new dimension to my journey as both an entrepreneur and a psychotherapist. It gave me the opportunity to collaborate with like-minded women who shared similar life experiences. The process of co-authoring enriched *Her Story: Taking Root, Sparking Change* by weaving together diverse yet interconnected stories of resilience and perseverance, creating a multidimensional narrative.

The journey began when I first learned about the project and decided to approach the team. I was drawn to the concept and mission of the book, *Women Leaders Who Shaped Tomorrow*. At first, I felt a bit uneasy about sharing the spotlight, but I quickly realized that this was an opportunity to contribute to something much bigger than any one individual. It was a chance to connect with other women in leadership and bring together multiple voices to amplify our collective message.

Throughout the process, open communication and collaboration were essential. I spent considerable time reflecting on my own life journey and experiences, as we each worked to define how our individual contributions aligned with the project's goals. It was inspiring to see how each co-author's story, shaped by unique cultural perspectives, professional backgrounds, and personal insights helped bring the project to life. Our differences, coupled with similar shared experiences, made the project truly special.



FROM STREET TO CONTINENTAL DISHES: GTCO redefines Africa's food business for 8yrs



From street food to top continental dishes, Nigeria is gradually becoming a hub for food lovers, especially with the rise of food businesses across the country.

The foodservice market is projected to reach \$19.31 billion by 2030, and the overall food market is estimated to reach \$227.81 billion in 2025. This, in no small way, signifies significant opportunities for both established and new businesses in the food sector.

Stakeholders in recent times have spoken on how important Nigerian food business has become in Africa's development, including foodservice and food production which is estimated to be a large and rapidly growing market. From Outdoor street food, to indoor and outdoor restaurants, swallow, dry and packaged food and Confectioneries; the market is expected to

grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 11.73 percent for the foodservice market and 10.73 percent for the overall food market, according to Statista.

At the heart of this growth is the GTCO Food and Drinks event which has consistently been held for eight years now.

From Nigeria to the world

GTCO Food & Drink Festival is an annual food exhibition and sales event that projects the diverse angles of the food industry by connecting various businesses involved in the production and sale of food-related items to a cosmopolitan audience of food enthusiasts.



With its maiden edition which was held for two days in 2016, the event has grown and attracted food lovers, experts and stakeholders from Nigeria, Africa and the rest of the world.

At the event, buyers connect with sellers in the food and drink industry from different parts of Nigeria and other countries.

Food exhibitors showcase and sell diverse food products ranging from fresh organic groceries to dry foods, confectionery, pastries, consumables, crockery, wine and champagnes.

Besides the exhibition, other aspects of the event include culinary experiences such as food and wine tastings, cooking masterclasses with renowned international and Nigerian chefs, and musical entertainment.

Impact on Food Industry/SMEs

Through the annual event, the federal government and stakeholders have been able to understand that the food industry is beyond just a revenue generator but offers various ranges of business opportunities and employment, including restaurants, food delivery

services, catering, and packaged food production. The growth of the middle class and increasing urbanization are driving demand for convenience foods and dining out, creating opportunities for food businesses, notes Truehost Nigeria.

For eight years, GTCO Food and Drinks Event have continued to support small and medium businesses in the food business with visibility and connectivity that has seen their businesses grow beyond their locality and Nigeria.

Participating businesses gain valuable exposure to a wider audience, helping them build brand awareness and attract new customers.

The festival provides a huge platform for SMEs to connect with new markets and potential investors, fostering growth and development.

In 2022, Temilade Agunbiade, Founder T-Crown Food and Processing, a two-time vendor at the fair, told NAN that the platform had created more patronage and visibility for her brand.

Agunbiade also lauded the company for giving back to society by promoting Small and Medium Enterprises through the platform.

"This is our second time as vendors at the GTCO Food and Drink festival and we are so excited to be part of the business growth venture.

"This is an opportunity to enjoy the ambience provided by the GTCO Food and Drink fair platform alongside our customers.

"The fair has also provided an opportunity for us to meet with investors, increase sales and gain better visibility for our business," she said.

"We witnessed increased patronage for our business following our participation in the 2019 GTCO fair and this year we hope for more reach and to take our brand global. "Thanks so much, GTCO for this opportunity; it is a great way of giving back to society and we appreciate it," Agunbiade said.

Another participant, Edward Ikesa, the founder of Healthy Lifestyle Meals, in 2022 was a first time vendor at the fair.

He commended the company for the visibility.

"Our expectations at the 2022 GTCO Food and Drink fair are to reach out to more people and have a wider coverage while introducing people to healthy meals. "We are so glad to be part of this year's fair, GTCO has been awesome and we hope to see more of this.



"The stands are all free of charge, we do not get to pay anything to display our goods and services," Ikesa said.

Also speaking, the Founder of Mmaabacha, a local cuisine shop, Anita Nwoye, who also spoke with NAN thanked the group for the opportunity to get more investors for her business.

"We provide meal services for local gatherings by serving local cuisines such as abacha, nkwoobi, ugba and palmwine, among others.

"It is our first time at the GTCO Food and Drink Festival and we expect wider visibility for our business through this platform.

"GTCO Food and Drink fair has impacted positively on my business and has opened more doors of opportunity for us.

"I expect to broaden the scope of my business from this outing based on the contact I have started gathering," Nwoye added.

Benefits for other sectors

For eight years, GTCO Food and Drinks have become a critical event with effects trickling down to other sectors of the Nigerian economy.

With Master classes, food businesses and several restaurants being displayed at the annual event, the logistics, aviation, travel and tourism businesses have also benefitted from the events.

With several chefs and speakers being flown from across the world into Nigeria annually, the event continues to boost passenger traffic into Nigeria. With food and commodities being flown and driven into the event annually, the logistics and Air cargo business also has some benefits from the event.

Nigeria's Tourism also benefits from the festival. The event showcases the diversity of Nigerian cuisine and culture to a wide audience, both domestically and internationally, while also boosting the food and beverage industry and its small businesses. The festival attracts food lovers and entrepreneurs, highlighting Nigeria's culinary heritage and creating opportunities for networking and business growth.

The festival's focus on food and culture attracts both domestic and international tourists, who come to experience the vibrant atmosphere and delicious food. The Food and Beverage Industry gained hugely from the event by highlighting the industry and its entrepreneurs, the festival contributes to the overall economic development of the food and beverage sector.



Hosting global renowned chefs

Globally renowned chefs have been featured at the festival. The festival provides a space for chefs to share their expertise through masterclasses, showcasing techniques and flavours from various regions.

In 2022, some of the chefs featured were Aldo Zilli, an award-winning celebrity chef and restaurateur who specialises in Italian, vegetarian, and seafood cuisine; Yui Miles, Chinese chef; Eden Hagos, an Ethiopian-Canadian and a celebrated host, food writer, and founder of BLACK FOODIE; The Albertis, Italian Twins from Manchester.

In 2019, the event featured Luke Whearty is bar operator, restaurant innovator and drink creator; and Tregaye Fraser, a food network star; Matse Uwatse-Nnoli a prolific food blogger and Chef Shota Nakajima, the owner and Chef of Adana, a Japanese restaurant located in Seattle, Washington DC.

In 2018, some of the chefs featured include Tony Conigliaro, a titan of the UK drink scene; Muneera Tahir (Chef Muse), the Chef instructor at Red Dish Chronicles; Scott Winston a highly sort-after food business Consultant with over 20 years' experience in the Luxury Food Retail Industry and Sunny Anderson is a food network personality amongst others.

In 2017 the event featured Raphael Duntoye, an Award-winning Chef based in London; Brian Malarkey,



one of USA's most successful and sought-after chef-restaurateurs and Lerato Umah-Shaylor, a food writer, presenter and leading voice in African cuisine.

In 2016, some chefs featured include Alex Oke, a prominent bi-national Nigerian/Russian chef; Marcus Samuelsson, an Ethiopian-born Swedish-American celebrity chef, restaurateur and television personality and Gbubemi Fregene, a popular Nigerian chef. Looking ahead

As GTCO looks to again hold the Food and Drink festival again this year in May 2nd, 3rd & 4th, the event as always, promises to be a vibrant hub of ideas and inspiration for thriving and aspiring food entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

At the event, participants can explore the latest culinary trends and experience the vibrant atmosphere where food enthusiasts celebrate their shared passion.

STAKEHOLDERS CHAMPION REGULATORY REFORMS, INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AT FUTURE OF POWER AFRICA



L-R: Engineer Jude Nwoko Chinye, Convener, The Future of Power Africa Conference 1.0 and Mrs Kofo Olokun-Olawoyin, Executive Commissioner for Legal Advisory, Registration and Licensing at the just concluded Future of Power Africa Conference 1.0 in Lagos.

Stakeholders and experts in the energy space have said stable and forward-thinking regulations would attract long-term investments in Africa's power sector.

They have also stressed that well-defined regulatory framework is the foundation upon which sustainable energy solutions are built.

Speaking during the inaugural Future of Power Africa 1.0 Conference held on April 2nd, 2025, at The Art Hotel, Lagos,

Anthony Youdeowei, managing director of Sahara Power Group, emphasised the need for stable and forward-thinking regulations to attract long-term investments in Africa's power sector.

Youdeowei who delivered a keynote speech on behalf of Kola Adesina, said: "A well-defined regulatory framework is the foundation upon which sustainable energy solutions are built. Africa has immense potential, but unlocking it requires policies that support innovation, efficiency, and equitable energy access."

In her regulatory address titled 'New Dawn' Kofo Olokun-Olawoyin, Executive Commissioner for Legal Advisory, Registration, and Licensing (LASERC), stressed the importance of evolving policies to keep pace with industry shifts: "Regulatory frameworks must adapt as the industry evolves to foster a business-friendly and investment-attractive energy sector. The collaboration between regulators, investors, and operators is crucial to achieving a resilient and sustainable power ecosystem."

Investment and Technological Innovation

Speaking on behalf of Andrew Knott, Pade Durotoye, managing director of Savannah Energy Nigeria, highlighted how strategic investments and the use of advanced technology can drive Africa's energy transformation. He explored how innovative financing models and regulatory adaptations can unlock new opportunities for sustainable power generation and distribution.



L-R: Oluwaseun Olaniyan, Compere, Future of Power Africa 1.0; Iyabo Soji-Okusanya, Executive Director of Corporate & Investment Banking at Access Bank; Engineer Jude Nwoko, Convener, The Future of Power Africa Conference 1.0; Pade Durotoye, Managing Director, Savannah Energy Nigeria; Anthony Youdeowei, Managing Director, Sahara Power Group, Tola Talabi, CEO, Elektron at the just concluded Future of Power Africa Conference 1.0 in Lagos.

A panel discussion on 'Unlocking Opportunities in Africa's Power Sector' provided insights into key investment strategies, financing models, and the role of advanced technology in enhancing energy efficiency across the continent. Panelists included Iyabo Soji-Okusanya of Access Bank, Tola Talabi of Elektron, Pade Durotoye of Savannah Energy Nigeria, Anthony Youdeowei, Managing Director of Sahara Power Group.

The discussions were focused on practical steps for fostering private-sector participation, strengthening energy infrastructure, and leveraging cross-sector collaboration to enhance power generation and distribution efficiency across Nigeria and Africa.

Driving Actionable Solutions for Africa's Energy Future

Reflecting on the conference's impact, Jude Nwoko, Convener of the Future of Power Africa Conference stated, "The Future of Power Africa Conference has set the stage for meaningful discussions and actionable solutions.

"The insights shared here will drive the next phase of Africa's energy transformation, and it is crucial that we continue these conversations beyond this conference. Collaboration, innovation, and sustained commitment from all stakeholders will be key to turning these ideas into lasting impact."

The hybrid format enabled global participation,

with live-streamed sessions and interactive Q&A segments facilitating direct engagement with the speakers. The conference also fostered valuable networking opportunities, enabling key stakeholders to connect, share insights, exchange ideas, and explore strategic partnerships to drive the energy sector forward.

The event successfully convened industry leaders, policymakers, and key stakeholders in-person and virtually to explore strategies for accelerating Africa's power sector transformation. Themed "Navigating Regulatory Shifts and Unlocking New Energy Opportunities," the hybrid event underscored the urgent need for policy reforms, sustainable investments, and technological innovations to bridge Africa's energy gap and enhance power sector efficiency.

Looking Ahead: The Future of Power Africa Movement .

The Future of Power Africa Conference 1.0 successfully established itself as a dynamic platform for thought leadership and solution-driven discussions, reinforcing Africa's commitment to building a resilient and sustainable power sector. With the success of this inaugural edition, anticipation is already building for the next edition of the Future of Power Africa Conference

MIKANO AND MISS NIGERIA'S NEW ERA OF INSPIRING, CELEBRATING THE NIGERIAN WOMAN



L-R: Omar Karamah - Group Executive Director, Mikano International Limited; Mofid Karamah, Chairman Mikano International Limited; Doris Ogah, 45th Miss Nigeria; Peng Tao, Executive VP, Changan Auto; Tom Yin, Vice General Manager, Changan MEA at the presentation of Eado Plus Luxury Sedan (Changan) to 45th Miss Nigeria by Mikano Motors in Lagos.

It was a celebration of yet another milestone in the Miss Nigeria legacy when Mikano Motors officially handed over a brand- new Changan Eado Plus to Doris Ogah, the newly crowned 45th Miss Nigeria, lawyer and model.

Mikano Motors is not just providing the exquisite automobile for the Queen but has become a partner to the Miss Nigeria Pageant.

Rita Dominic Anosike, Chairman of Miss Nigeria Organisation said the partnership is more than just a corporate support; it is a testament to shared values.

"Mikano Motors and Changan represent excellence, innovation and empowerment - qualities that align perfectly with the Miss Nigeria Organisation's mission

to uplift, inspire and celebrate the Nigerian woman.

"Mikano is not just investing in a Pageant, it is investing in a movement that champions female leadership, cultural pride and national progress. This beautiful car invokes mobility, for our Queen - literally and figuratively. For other young ladies watching, it reinforces that excellence is rewarded and dreams are valid," Anosike said.

She told the 45th Queen that the car symbolises more than mobility; it represents the drive to fulfil your purpose as an ambassador of change.

"Use it to touch communities, inspire young girls and amplify the voices of those who look up to you. I must add that you are the quintessential Miss Nigeria - beauty equally matched with brain power.

"I am very confident that you will represent yourself, our organisation and our partners very well. To Mikano Motors and Changan, your support amplifies your commitment to Nigerian growth and the empowerment of the women," Anosike added.

She hinted that together, they are not just handing over the keys but unlocking great opportunities. The Eado Plus, known for its stylish design and





From L- R; Ego Boyo, Director, Miss Nigeria Org; Omar Karamah, Group Executive Director, Mikano International; Mofid Karamah, Chairman, Mikano International; Doris Ogah, 45th Miss Nigeria; Peng Tao, Executive VP, Changan Auto; Tom Yin, Vice General Manager, Changan MEA; Rita Dominic, Chairman, Miss Nigeria Org; at the presentation of Eado Plus Luxury Sedan (Changan) for the 45th Miss Nigeria by Mikano Motors in Lagos.

advanced features, symbolises the values of innovation and excellence that is synonymous with the Changan brand, an ideal match for the current Miss Nigeria.

Omar Karamah, Executive Director for Mikano Motors expressed his excitement in presenting the Eado Plus to Ogah, who embodies the spirit of Miss Nigeria.

“This initiative is not just about the car; it is about recognizing the iconic symbolism of the Miss Nigeria pageant, from its beginnings in 1957, as a photo contest to what we have now, a pageant that has

produced ladies who have made impacts in various professional fields and with credible accomplishments,” Karamah explained.

He assured that they will continue to support and uplift talents, and trust that the values of Ms Nigeria will shine brightly in the society and inspire the next generation of female leaders.

Joelle Haykal, Group Executive Director of Mikano International stated during a press briefing and the official handover

ceremony said that “This partnership represents our commitment to empowering women and supporting local talent within our communities, in line with Miss Nigeria’s theme for this year, “Cultural Heritage and Community Engagement”. This has always been a mainstay for the Mikano Group and is evident in much of our efforts to give back to the society”.

Tom Yin, the vice General Manager from Changan MEA, said the beauty pageant focuses on the remarkable achievements of Nigerian women such as wisdom, leadership, and cultural advocacy.

Yin said this aligns perfectly with Changan Automobile's global "Her Power" initiative.

He assured that through this collaboration, Changan Automobile aims to inspire a new generation of women to pursue their dreams, shine in their fields, and shape a brighter future.

Expressing her excitement to have won the pageant and receiving the Eado Plus, Doris Ogah, the newly crowned 45th Miss Nigeria, said "Winning the Miss Nigeria title has been a life-changing experience, and I am deeply grateful to Mikano Motors for this incredible gift.

"This car is not just a means of transportation; it represents the journey ahead—one filled with purpose, advocacy, and impact. I am excited for all that is to come and look forward to using my reign to inspire and empower young girls across Nigeria," Ogah said.

THE BUSINESS OF STORYTELLING: SAM OCHONMA'S JOURNEY FROM ADVERTISING TO FILM

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



From Advertising to Film

For Ochonma, storytelling has always been the common thread. “Advertising taught me how to build stories that convince people to act,” he explains. “But filmmaking is different. It’s about creating worlds, evoking emotions, and telling stories that transcend cultures.”

His pivot to film was not an overnight decision. Sam’s first step into the industry came in 2018 when he executive-produced his debut film. The project, a small-budget drama, gained traction and was eventually acquired by Amazon Prime.

“That experience taught me that African stories can compete globally when done right,” he recalls. Since then, he has executive produced three additional films, exploring genres that range from drama to thrillers. The latest project, under The Hook Ent, *Missing Dieko*, a psychological thriller, is slated for release in 2025.

These films mark a deliberate effort to push the boundaries of African cinema. “For long, African films have been boxed into specific genres, often limited by external perceptions of what African stories should look like,” he says.

“Through The Hook Entertainment, we want to challenge that narrative. As we believe that our stories are just as diverse as any other region.”

The Branding Influence on Film

Ochonma’s background in advertising is evident in his approach to filmmaking. “Branding is about precision,” he explains. “Every word, every image, and every frame is crafted to evoke a specific response. We intend to carry that discipline into film.”

Take the most recent project “*Missing Dieko*”, for example. Beyond the story itself, we have been meticulous about its branding, from the visual style to its marketing campaign. “The success of a film isn’t just about what happens on screen. It’s about how the film is positioned to resonate with its audience,” he says.

Over the course of a 15-year career in advertising and communications, Sam Ochonma became known for his ability to craft stories that inspire action.

Whether it was shaping the narrative of Kwara State’s Otoge campaign with The Hook, one of Nigeria’s most groundbreaking political movements, or driving brand growth for giants like Meristem, Oando PLC, Sam’s work has always been rooted in storytelling. Now, with the launch of The Hook Ent, he is channeling this expertise into the world of film, determined to reimagine how African stories are told and experienced.

This philosophy reflects lessons Ochonma learned in his advertising days - combining a compelling narrative with strategic execution.

“In branding, you’re selling a product or idea. In film, you’re selling an experience,” he explains. “But at the heart of both is the ability to connect with your audience.”

Investing in African Stories

Through The Hook Entertainment, Sam is doubling down on his commitment to African stories. “Africa has a wealth of untapped narratives,” he says. “Our histories, cultures, and daily experiences are a goldmine of stories waiting to be told.”

The Hook Entertainment’s approach goes beyond storytelling. The company operates on three levels: film production through The Hook Ent Pictures, talent development via Hook Ent Academy, and investments in creative assets through The Hook Ent. Fund. The fund, in particular, has been a passion project for Sam, ensuring there is available capital and resources for creative stories and film making to thrive in Nigeria.

“There’s so much talent here, but access is a huge barrier,” he explains. “Through the fund, we will bridge the gap between creative ideas and final execution, we’re building an ecosystem that supports the next generation of storytellers.”

Challenges and Opportunities

Venturing into film hasn’t been without its hurdles. “The scale is entirely different,” Ochonma admits. “In advertising, you’re working with campaigns that might last weeks or months. In film, you’re investing years into a single project.”

Financing and distribution have also posed significant challenges. While Nigeria’s film industry is one of the largest in the world, producing over 2,500 films annually, funding and distribution remain persistent obstacles for filmmakers seeking to elevate production standards.

To address these challenges, Ochonma has forged strategic partnerships with both local and international stakeholders. “Collaboration is key,” he says.

“Whether it’s working with established filmmakers or tapping into global streaming platforms, partnerships help us push boundaries and reach wider audiences.”

He adds, “Another critical aspect is investment in distribution, cinemas, multiplexes, community screens,

and more. If in 2024 we had box office numbers around 11.5 billion, how do we grow that to 100 billion? How can the government support an industry with such enormous potential? We have to help ourselves and empower our own.”

Another hurdle is the global perception of African films. “African cinema has often been viewed through a limited lens,” Sam explains. “Part of my mission with The Hook Ent is to show that our stories are as multifaceted as the continent itself.”

The Business of Storytelling

For Ochonma, the intersection of creativity and commerce is where true storytelling thrives. “It’s not enough to make a great film. You need to ensure it’s commercially viable,” he says. This pragmatic approach has guided every decision at The Hook Ent, from selecting stories to establishing distribution deals.

This dual focus on art and business reflects broader trends in global cinema. Streaming platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime have increasingly invested in African content, recognizing its global appeal.

According to a 2022 report by UNESCO, Africa’s film industry could generate over \$20 billion annually with the right investments in infrastructure and distribution.

Ochonma believes African filmmakers are poised to capitalize on this moment. “The world is looking to Africa for fresh perspectives,” he says. “We have the talent, the stories, and the drive. What we need now is the infrastructure to take it to the next level.”

Looking Ahead

As Ochonma builds The Hook Ent, The vision is clear: to position the company as a leader in African storytelling through funding the right projects and to redefine how the world perceives African cinema. With upcoming projects like Missing Dieko and plans to expand Hook Academy’s reach, he is laying the groundwork for a legacy that extends beyond individual films.

“Stories have the power to shape how we see ourselves and the world,” he says. “For too long, Africa’s stories have been told by others. Now, it’s our time to take control of the narrative.”

OPPORTUNITY OPENS FOR NIGERIANS AS AUSTRALIA'S HIRING ACTIVITY RISE IN 2025

CHARLES OGWO



Going by recent development, Australia seems a promising route for skilled Nigerian workers and others looking for global job opportunities, as the country's hiring activity surges once again.

According to the latest 2025 recruitment insights report by Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), hiring activity across the country has surged back to pre-2024 levels. This is obviously good news for skilled Nigerian professionals and skilled workers across the globe eyeing a move across the border.

More than 20,000 Nigerians are living in Australia, and a significant number of them are skilled and educated, with about 82.4 percent of them aged 15 and above possessing higher non-school qualifications, compared to 55.9 percent of the Australian population.

Australia's hiring activity returns

After a seasonal dip in January, recruitment activity rebounded sharply to 49 percent in February 2025, aligning with the same period last year, JSA report shows.

This marks a clear sign that Australia's labour market is picking up speed again, especially in regional areas, where the hiring rate hit 55 percent.

Regional employers are hiring more than those in big cities, meaning rural and suburban Australia may offer quicker job opportunities and potential migration advantages, especially under regional visa streams.

For the first time since February 2021, employers in Australia are finding it significantly easier to fill job roles. The recruitment difficulty rate dropped to 43percent a steep fall from previous years.

Implications to foreigners

Lower hiring difficulty often means less intense competition, faster processing, and greater willingness to consider overseas candidates, particularly if you bring in-demand skills.

Only 36 percent of employers reported that they could not fill a vacancy within a month, a record low. This is down from 54 percent just a year ago, reflecting shorter recruitment cycles and more efficient hiring processes.

Hence, skilled workers, especially those planning to move to Australia on employer-sponsored visas, have an excellent time to apply as companies are ready to hire, and quickly.

According to the report, about 60 percent of hiring was due to replacing former employees, while 28 percent of employers recruited for newly created roles. This means that while workforce expansion is happening, the bulk of opportunities lie in filling essential roles, many of which remain on Australia's skill shortage lists.

Interestingly, only 20 percent of employers expect to grow their workforce over the next three months, down from 26 percent a year ago.

However, this does not mean opportunities are drying up, rather it simply reflects a stable labour market, where current job openings are mostly aimed at replacing staff or addressing ongoing skill shortages rather than rapid expansion.

7 AI JOBS IN 2025 AS DEMAND RISES ACROSS INDUSTRIES

CHISOM MICHAEL



The artificial intelligence (AI) job market is poised for rapid growth, with new data highlighting strong demand across sectors. According to Gartner, the AI software market is expected to hit \$134.8 billion by 2025, growing at a rate of 31.1%—outpacing the overall software market.

A 2024 report from CompTIA shows that 55% of companies are already using AI, while 45% are actively exploring its implementation. This trend reflects the technology's growing role in streamlining operations, improving customer experience, and giving companies a competitive edge.

As adoption rises in industries such as healthcare, finance, and manufacturing, roles

in AI—once considered niche or futuristic—are becoming essential. Small businesses and startups are joining tech giants in the race to harness AI's potential.

The shift is creating a wave of new job opportunities. From customer service to logistics and data-driven decision-making, AI is now part of everyday business operations. As a result, demand is growing for skilled professionals—whether new graduates, career switchers, or those seeking to upskill.

With AI becoming more accessible and embedded in business strategy, the job market is evolving fast, making now a critical time to enter or advance in the field.

According to Harvard, here are 7 AI jobs in 2025 as demand rises across industries

1. AI ethics specialist

As AI systems are deployed across sectors, concerns around fairness, accountability, and data privacy are increasing, and AI ethics specialists play a key role in helping organisations manage these challenges. They develop ethical frameworks, monitor AI systems for bias, and ensure compliance with data protection laws and regulatory standards. As businesses face growing scrutiny from users and regulators, ethical AI practices help build trust and reduce risks. To get started in this role, it is important to study ethics, understand data privacy regulations, and gain knowledge of AI systems, with certifications in responsible AI offering an added advantage.

2. Machine learning engineer

Machine learning engineers design, build, and refine systems that learn from data to perform tasks such as speech recognition, image analysis, and forecasting. Their work is essential as businesses across industries adopt scalable AI solutions to improve efficiency and performance. To begin this career path, it's useful to learn programming languages like Python, master machine learning tools such as TensorFlow or PyTorch, and build hands-on projects to demonstrate your skills.

3. AI product manager

AI product managers connect technical teams and business stakeholders to create AI-driven products that meet customer needs and support company goals. They define product requirements, manage development processes, and ensure alignment with strategic objectives. As AI becomes a competitive tool, these managers are crucial for delivering useful and impactful solutions. Starting out involves gaining experience in product management, understanding AI basics, and strengthening communication and leadership skills.

4. AI-powered marketing strategist

AI-powered marketing strategists use AI tools to analyse consumer behaviour, personalise campaigns, and improve engagement and return on investment. They work with platforms like chatbots, predictive analytics, and segmentation tools to enhance digital marketing outcomes. With marketing becoming increasingly data-driven, this role is in high demand. To get started, one should develop digital marketing skills, understand data analytics, and gain hands-on experience with AI marketing platforms such as HubSpot or Salesforce Einstein.

5. Data analyst with AI expertise

Data analysts with AI skills interpret complex datasets to uncover patterns, forecast trends, and guide strategic decisions using advanced analytics tools. Their ability to extract insights quickly and accurately helps businesses respond faster and make informed choices. Entering this field requires a foundation in data analysis, along with training in AI-powered tools and platforms that enhance data processing and visualisation.

6. Natural language processing (NLP) specialist

NLP specialists create systems that help machines understand and generate human language, powering tools like virtual assistants, chatbots, and translation services. As NLP is adopted in industries from healthcare to customer service, demand for these specialists is rising. To begin a career in NLP, it's helpful to have a background in computer science or linguistics, and to learn how to use frameworks such as SpaCy, NLTK, or Hugging Face.

7. AI trainer

AI trainers help teach AI systems how to respond accurately by preparing training datasets, labelling data, and refining system outputs with developers. Their input is vital for improving the performance of AI tools, especially in areas that require human judgement. Starting out involves developing skills in data annotation, understanding how machine learning models are trained, and gaining experience with the platforms used in your industry.

BEYOND THE HYPE: HOW TO KEEP WINNING FOR WOMEN (AND YOURSELF) AFTER MARCH

RACHEL ONAMUSI



BEYOND THE HYPE

How to Keep Winning for Women (and Yourself) After March

BY: RACHEL ONAMUSI

You know how gyms are packed in January? Everybody is serious, drinking protein shakes, wearing fresh workout gear, posting their “New Year, New Me” gym selfies. Then by February, silence. The energy has vanished, and the gym is back to its regulars, the ones who never stopped and are just grateful to get their space back.

That’s exactly how Women’s History Month feels sometimes. For 31 days, the whole world is hyped. Panel discussions, empowerment hashtags, “breaking barriers” speeches and “aspire to perspire” LinkedIn posts. We are all about women winning. But then April 1st comes, and we’re back to regular programming.

But we can’t keep doing this to ourselves. Stopping is the enemy. If we stop doing the work,

we lose the progress. And when it comes to championing women (or anybody, really), it can’t be seasonal because the challenges we’re trying to resolve don’t come in seasons.

From Moments to Movements

The problem isn’t that we don’t care; it’s that real change takes consistency. It’s easy to create a buzz around a hashtag, but what happens when a trending topic fades?

Women don’t suddenly stop needing support because the calendar moved forward. The challenges that made Women’s History Month necessary in March don’t magically disappear on April 1st. Women still face barriers in the workplace. Young girls still need mentorship. Opportunities are still scarce.

So, what's the plan?

We have to ask ourselves: are we about moments or movements? A moment is powerful, yes. It can spark something in someone. But a movement is what creates real change. And movements require consistency.

From Lip Service to Real Service

For me, this isn't just a conversation, it's action. Which is why I loved this year's theme: Accelerate Action. This life? Thoughts and prayers, hopes and dreams won't sort it. Na action go run am. A good friend is running a training course on Email Marketing Automation, and I committed to sponsoring a few girls who would have been brilliant at this but could otherwise not afford it. I'm doing it because what is a reasonable investment for me can make a difference. I know that access can change everything, and tech can transform lives, so I'm putting my money where my motigbeshional quotes are.

In a few weeks, these young ladies will have the skills to build, create, and carve out opportunities for themselves. This is the real goal: empowerment that translates into independence.

But I should be clear in saying that you don't have to fund scholarships to make an impact. It might just be saying a word in season to ears opened to listen, but we can all do something.

Supporting Yourself: Because You're Part of the Movement Too

And while we're at it, are you also pushing yourself?

One of the most powerful things you can do is self-sponsorship, investing in your own growth, advocating for yourself, positioning yourself for bigger opportunities. We often pour energy into lifting others up but hesitate to do the same for ourselves. Why? If you tell a young girl to be bold but you're afraid to ask for that raise, what message are you sending?

Let's normalise pushing ourselves forward. Take that course. Find that mentor or even just reach out for help when you need it (because, one day, we will talk about how we are self-sabotaging

with "Hard babe, hard babe"). Negotiate that salary. Learn that new skill. The best way to inspire others is to show them what's possible.

Small Actions, Big Wins

You don't have to donate millions to make an impact. Sometimes, the most powerful thing you can do is pass on what you know. Mentorship is free, and it can change a life. The guidance you wish you had? You can give it to someone else. That mistake that cost you time? You can help someone else avoid it. The career advice you had to figure out alone? You can share it. Even if you think you don't know much, trust me, there's always someone who could benefit from the lessons life has taught you. And beyond mentorship, there are other small ways to keep the spirit of Women's History Month alive:

Amplify other women's work: refer them, share their projects, call their names in rooms they're not in.

Open doors for others, even if it's just pointing them in the right direction.

Celebrate people loudly. A simple message saying, "I see what you're doing, keep going!" can mean so much to someone who needs a kind word to keep grinding.

The Real Winning Streak

Let's not be the January gym-goers when it comes to action for progress. The real flex is consistency.

If we keep showing up, we keep winning. And when one person wins, it creates space for more people to win. That's how we go beyond the hype. That's how we make sure Women's History Month isn't just a moment but a movement that never stops. Let's get it.

Rachel Onamusi is the CEO of VN Sync, a UK-based tech company and full-service marketing firm with expertise in all aspects of media and a strong focus on digital strategy development and implementation. Dedicated to creating lasting impact, Onamusi is a sought-after speaker, thought leader, writer and frequent media contributor.

WHY NIGERIA NEEDS MORE WOMEN'S VOICES IN LEADERSHIP — STAKEHOLDERS

.....only 2.7% in Senate, 4.7% in House of Reps

CHARLES OGWO



“When you look at the political space and the tiny percentage of women that are there, and even the ones there, the way they are being treated, it leaves much to be desired,” she said.

To accommodate more women in the leadership space, she said the country must promote gender diversity in leadership roles, get people to feel free by getting rid of impostor syndrome.

Globally the move towards women in governance has yielded much needed results for countries who have adopted this paradigm shift. Women are proving their onus in leadership, but a few of them in Nigeria are empowered to occupy leadership positions in the country.

The country, no doubt is missing out on good governance and development by refusing to implement the 35 percent affirmative female action adopted in the gender and equal opportunities bill.

In the face of this ugly development, many stakeholders are advocating that Nigeria should be deliberate about getting their women to occupy leadership positions at various levels.

Enase Okonedo, first female vice-chancellor at Pan Atlantic University decried the fact that the way and manner things are done in Nigeria, does not encourage women to aspire for leadership positions.

However, Okonedo maintained that women must endeavour to dream big and work towards achieving their leadership aspirations.

“I think for me, the first thing is for women to dream. Women shouldn’t think anything is stopping them. Dream, and work hard to achieve your dream,” she noted.

Amina Oyagbola, founder and chairperson of the Women in Successful Careers (WISCAR), a non-profit organisation focused on empowering and developing professional women to contribute to development and growth in Nigeria and indeed Africa, frowned at women’s low representation in the country’s legislation.

Oyagbola said it is unfortunate that women are not given enough political space in Nigeria, as only Ireti Kingibe, among all the female candidates supported by the organisation made it to the Senate.



Nigeria is one of the countries where a woman has never served as head of state or government in 115 UN member countries.

Margaret Thatcher became Europe's first female prime minister in 1979. A few months later, Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo of Portugal became the continent's second female head of government.

The first elected female head of state in Africa was Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who became president of Liberia in 2006.

"We must note the stark reality of the dismal level of female representation in the legislative bodies, both federal and state. In the 10th Assembly, women hold a mere 2.7 percent of Senate seats (3 out of 109 seats), and 4.7 percent of House of Representatives seats," she noted.

Furthermore, she said, "Over seven general election cycles since 1999, the number of women in the senate has dropped to what it was at Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999.

With the current figures for the 10th Assembly, Nigeria remains at the bottom of the ranking for the number of women in the African Parliament. Sadly, no woman at all was elected in 15 out of Nigeria's 36 State Houses of Assembly."

Mo Abudu, an award-winning media mogul and entrepreneur, emphasised the importance of amplifying women's voices in leadership in her address at a WISCAR event.

"In a world where diversity drives innovation, it is essential to recognise and elevate the unique voices of women," she said.

According to CNN report in 2024, Forty-nine UN member states have had one female leader in the last seven decades. Another 18 countries have had two female leaders, nine countries have had three female leaders, and just two countries, Finland and Iceland, have been headed by four different female leaders.

In 2021, Tunisia became the first Arab country to be governed by a woman when Najla Bouden was appointed prime minister by the country's president.

Research has shown that gender inequality in Nigeria is a pervasive issue, impacting women's access to education, economic opportunities, political representation, and overall well-being, with cultural and religious norms often reinforcing discriminatory practices.

This inequality is compounded by high levels of poverty, particularly among women and girls. Nigerian women remain largely underrepresented in the political space, even though 49 percent of the Nigerian population is women.



WHY I BELIEVE AFRICAN STORIES DESERVE A GLOBAL STAGE

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



In a world that is increasingly interconnected, the narratives that shape our understanding of each other are more crucial than ever. Yet, too often, the stories emanating from Africa are filtered through a lens of outdated stereotypes and limited perspectives.

This is precisely why Elizabeth Miller PR was born – to dismantle those barriers and amplify the authentic voices of a continent brimming with innovation, resilience, and boundless potential.

I've witnessed firsthand the incredible stories that emerge from African entrepreneurs, artists, and changemakers.

Tales of groundbreaking technological advancements, of sustainable solutions to pressing global challenges, of cultural richness that enriches our collective human experience. But these stories often remain confined within their borders, failing to reach the global audiences that would benefit from their insights and inspiration.

We at Elizabeth Miller PR believe that every story, especially those from Africa, deserves a global stage. We are committed to bridging the gap between African innovators and the international media, ensuring that their voices are heard and their contributions are recognized.

We are not just about securing press placements; we are about fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the diverse narratives that shape our world.

The power of storytelling is undeniable. When we share our experiences, our challenges, and our triumphs, we build bridges of empathy and understanding. We break down stereotypes and create space for genuine connection.

By amplifying African stories, we are not just promoting businesses; we are contributing to a more nuanced and accurate portrayal of a continent that is shaping the future.

Let us move beyond borders and embrace the power of diverse narratives. Let us create a global stage where African stories can shine, inspiring change and fostering a more inclusive and equitable world.

Elizabeth Igwe is the Founder of Elizabeth Miller PR, a champion for global African representation.

AFRO WOMEN IN ANIMATION FESTIVAL 2025: EMPOWERING WOMEN, DRIVING CHANGE IN THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



In a bid to help women overcome obstacles and inspire social change in the animation industry, the Afro Women in Animation Community hosted Africa's first ever women-focused animation festival in Lagos on March 22, 2025, concluding a week-long celebration of International Women's Month.

The highly anticipated event brought together top female animation industry professionals and leaders from across Africa, Europe, and North America, drawing over 350 in-person attendees and an even larger online audience.

The festival featured impactful discussions on breaking barriers, animation for social change, and accelerating career growth for women in the industry.

The first panel session, 'Breaking Barriers: Women Leading the Animation Industry,' had inspiring personal experiences and insights on navigating leadership roles as female leaders.

Damilola Solesi, CEO, SMIDS Animation Studio, encouraged staying ahead of industry trends, continuous learning, and collaboration among women instead of competition. Comfort Arthur, Founder, The Comfy Studio, UK, encouraged female animators to start small and put their work out there while also calling on established professionals to mentor newcomers.

Omoyefe Majoroh, Creative Producer, Blac Onyx Studios highlighted the importance of having a strong,



supportive community to navigate the challenges of the industry.

The session was moderated by Ukpeme Uwakwe, Head of Development, Basement Animation Studio. During the second session, "Animation for Social Change: Telling Stories That Matter," the panelists discussed the power of animation in shaping narratives and driving social impact.

Vanessa Sinden, Senior Producer, Triggerfish Animation, South Africa, urged African animators to embrace authenticity. Omotunde Akiode, award-winning screenwriter, Nigeria, stressed the importance of relatable content for African children. And Mounia Aram, founder, Mounia Aram Company, France called for better funding and distribution support from governments and broadcasters for African animation content.

The session was moderated by Zainab Balami, founder Zazou Production Works, Uk. The final session, 'Accelerate Action: Driving Change for Women Across Industries,' focused on leadership, career growth, and key insights for balancing multiple roles while building successful careers.

Panelists Ikpongke Sotiloye, General Manager, HR, Prime Atlantic Limited), emphasized embracing every phase of life and nurturing relationships for long-term benefits; Funto Ibuoye (CEO, Five28, highlighted the need for regular rest and self care as a strategy for maximizing productivity; while Mercy John-Egwu, Head Designer, Chatouiller Pointed out how having well-structured operations and systems allow for scaling, as delegation frees time for core activities.

The session was moderated by Korede Johnson, COO Basement Animation Studio.

Beyond discussions, the festival connected attendees with leading animation studios and training academies such as Basement Academy, Magic Lab Academy, OrangeVFX Training, and Terra Academy for the Arts, offering exclusive discounts on skill acquisition programs and courses.

Creativity took center stage with a spoken word performance by Jessica Udeh and screenings of female-led short films showcasing emerging talent from the continent.

Afro Women in Animation Fest 2025 was more than just an event, it was a turning point for Africa's animation industry, demonstrating its potential on the global stage with women leading the charge.

The festival was in partnership with Basement Animation, Blac Onyx, and Animation Nigeria, with support from the Skills Initiative for Africa - Financial Corporation (SIFA) and the French Embassy.

The Afro Women in Animation Community is open to new members, offering mentorship and access to global opportunities for female animators.



THE STYLE KINGS OF FOOTBALL: Top 10 best-dressed Premier League stars in 2025

ANTHONY NLEBEM



Confined to the pitch, today's footballers are using their wardrobes to express personality, creativity, and cultural influence. As we step into 2025, a select group of Premier League stars have risen to the top of the fashion game, earning their status as bona fide style icons.

Here are the top 10 best-dressed footballers in the English Premier League, setting trends and turning heads with their signature looks.

Trent Alexander-Arnold – Liverpool

Liverpool's homegrown hero has firmly established himself as a standout figure in the fashion world. Whether he's strutting down the runway at Milan Fashion

Week or fronting Guess' latest denim campaign, Alexander-Arnold's style is both refined and forward-thinking. Luxury brands like Prada, Dolce & Gabbana, and Burberry have tapped into his clean, elevated aesthetic, positioning him as a key figure at the intersection of sport and style.

Bukayo Saka – Arsenal

Arsenal's golden boy brings as much flair to the fashion scene as he does to the pitch. Bukayo Saka has become a familiar face at fashion weeks and starred in high-profile campaigns, most notably Burberry's Spring/Summer 2024 collection. His youthful, polished looks continue to define him as one of football's rising fashion stars.

Anthony Elanga – Nottingham Forest

Anthony Elanga made a bold fashion statement early in the season with a custom Louis Vuitton outfit and futuristic eyewear. Since then, the Forest winger has maintained his fashionable streak, regularly spotted in stylish fits including an all-black Louis Vuitton monogrammed jacket, sleek Prada cap, and chunky loafers. Elanga's experimental yet sophisticated style keeps him at the forefront of football fashion.



Callum Hudson-Odoi – Nottingham Forest

Another Forest star lighting up the fashion world is Callum Hudson-Odoi. His standout moment this season? A pre-match arrival in a vibrant checkered fleece set from Louis Vuitton that turned heads across social media. Known for his bold choices and confident flair, Hudson-Odoi is consistently one of the league's most daring dressers.



Ruben Dias – Manchester City

Manchester City's Ruben Dias brings elegance and class to every setting. Whether he's on the red carpet at the Ballon d'Or, attending music awards, or posing for brand campaigns, Dias always looks the part. His taste for sharp tailoring and minimalist luxury makes him one of the Premier League's most consistently stylish figures.



Mason Mount – Manchester United

Mason Mount blends high fashion with everyday accessibility in a way few others can. Known for mixing premium brands with more affordable labels, Mount's approach is stylish yet relatable. His eye for colour coordination and layering ensures his looks always feel intentional and fresh.



Noni Madueke – Chelsea

Chelsea's Noni Madueke brings an edgy, fearless energy to fashion. Known for his vibrant streetwear and trend-savvy outfits, Madueke regularly appears on "best-dressed" lists in London. With a strong social media presence and a wardrobe that balances versatility and boldness, he's become a true fashion standout.



Mohamed Salah – Liverpool

The "Egyptian King" isn't just known for his clinical finishing—his off-field fashion sense is equally elite. Mohamed Salah's collaborations with top fashion publications, including a GQ cover that paired retro Adidas with a statement Gucci coat, highlight his fashion credentials. Add an impressive collection of luxury watches and a keen sense of accessories, and Salah's style continues to shine.



Son Heung-min – Tottenham Hotspur

Tottenham's superstar Son Heung-min is a global icon with a fashion presence to match. Appointed as a Burberry ambassador, Son's polished and minimalist style reflects his calm charisma. His look is sleek, tailored, and always camera-ready—whether in London or back home in South Korea.



Marcus Rashford – Manchester United

A true fashion trailblazer, Marcus Rashford has become a staple in the fashion industry since his 2020 debut with Burberry. His blend of class, elegance, and social awareness makes him a natural fit for major campaigns. Rashford's style continues to evolve, consistently reflecting his growth both as a player and as a cultural



2026 UEFA CHAMPIONS: Can England make history, securing 7 spots?

CHARLES OGWO

England could have as many as seven teams in the 2025/26 edition, if Aston Villa wins the competition this year, but fails to qualify through the Premier League, and if Manchester United or Tottenham win the Europa League.

In the face of ongoing reformations in the UEFA Champions League, teams from the Premier League are guaranteed a minimum of five spots in the Champions League next season after Arsenal's victory over Real Madrid in the first leg of the quarter-finals.

With Arsenal's 3-0 victory over Real Madrid in the first leg of the quarter-finals, it will only take a miracle for the Spanish team to turn the tables. According to the recent arrangement, two extra spots are awarded to countries based on their ranking in UEFA's coefficient table.

Liverpool and Arsenal look set to finish in the top two in the Premier League, and 12 points separate Nottingham Forest in third position from 10th-placed Bournemouth. Chelsea, Newcastle, Manchester City, Aston Villa, Fulham, and Brighton sit between those two teams. Italy is placed second in the coefficient rankings, with Spain and Germany behind.

How countries earn an extra Champions League spot
Each country's league earns a coefficient ranking based on how its teams perform in UEFA's three men's club competitions: the Champions League, Europa League, and Conference League.

Coefficient points are earned through match results, two for a win and one for a draw.

The points earned by clubs from the same domestic league are added up and divided by the number of clubs the league has in Europe.

For instance, if the Premier League had 100 points, that would be split by the number of teams playing in Europe, seven, giving England a coefficient of 14.28.

This season, bonus points are available to clubs playing in the Champions League, which is advantageous to leagues with more clubs competing in it, such as Germany and Italy.

Countries that finish in the coefficient table's top two earn an additional Champions League spot for the following season.

Those spots are awarded to the teams who finish in the first position below the standard Champions League allocation in those leagues.

In England, the top four clubs automatically qualify for the Champions League via league position, so any additional place would go to the team in fifth.

Additional spots for the 2024-25 Champions League were given to Bologna and Borussia Dortmund, who finished fifth in Serie A and the Bundesliga, respectively.

The Europa League winners
England could end up with seven Champions League teams next season, if the country emerges as winners of the Europa League, as well as the Champions League. Under previous rules, any single league could only have a maximum of five clubs in the Champions League. However, that rule has been scrapped.

This season, any team that wins the Europa League or Champions League but does not qualify for the Champions League via their domestic league position will go into the Champions League.

Hence, if Aston Villa wins the Champions League and finishes outside the top five in the Premier League, that will give English clubs another spot.

Similarly, if Manchester United and Tottenham, both languishing in the bottom half of the Premier League, but are in the quarter-finals of the Europa League, either of them wins the tournament, that would mean another team from England will be playing in the 2025/26 season's elite European competition.

FORGOTTEN TREASURES:

Unearthing Africa's Hidden Art Histories

Africa is home to some of the world's most diverse and breathtaking artistic traditions. From ancient rock carvings in the Sahara to contemporary paintings that grace global galleries, African art has shaped and inspired creativity worldwide. Yet, much of this rich heritage remains hidden, either lost in colonial archives, unrecognised in global art circles, or buried under layers of history waiting to be unearthed.

For centuries, African artists have told stories through their works—stories of resistance, spirituality, identity, and innovation. But many of these stories have been erased or overlooked. While European and Western art movements have long been documented and celebrated, African contributions to the global art scene have often been ignored. Thankfully, a shift is happening. Today's curators, historians, and artists are working to bring Africa's forgotten artistic treasures back into the spotlight.

But why were these works forgotten in the first place? And what does their rediscovery mean for Africa and the world?

In this digest, we unearth some hidden African art histories.

TOP PICKS FROM OUR COLLECTION



Title: The Family
Artist: Justine Gaga
Medium: Posca and collage on canvas
Dimensions: 8 x 11 in | 20 x 28 cm
 Available on request



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Title: Untitled
Artist: Fidel N. Oyiogu
Medium: Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 35 x 45 in | 89 x 114 cm
Available on request



Title: Corruption of Eden
Artist: Dipo Doherty
Medium: Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 72 X 52 in | 183 x 122 cm
Available on request

1. The Overlooked Modernists

African modernist artists have long been underappreciated in the global art scene. Pioneers like Ben Enwonwu and Uche Okeke blended indigenous traditions with European modernism, creating a unique artistic language. However, their contributions were often overshadowed by Western narratives.

For years, African modernism was dismissed as an imitation of European styles rather than recognised as a distinct movement. Thankfully, this perception is changing. In recent years, institutions such as the Venice Biennale have begun to showcase African modernist artists, finally giving them the recognition they deserve.

2. Commemorating the Enslaved Through Art

Art has always been a powerful tool for storytelling, and some of Africa's hidden histories are now being told through sculpture and installations.

In Ghana, the Nkyinkyim Museum is a deeply moving example. Created by artist Kwame Akoto-Bamfo, this museum features over 3,500 clay head sculptures, each representing an individual enslaved during the transatlantic slave trade. These sculptures serve as a haunting reminder of a painful past while also honouring those who suffered.

Visitors to the museum describe feeling an overwhelming mix of grief, anger, and reflection. This is the power of art—it allows us to connect emotionally with history in a way that books alone cannot.

3. Repatriation and Cultural Identity

One of the most pressing issues in African art today is the repatriation of stolen artefacts. Many African treasures were taken during the colonial era and now sit in European museums. These objects include the Benin Bronzes, ancient Ethiopian manuscripts, and countless sacred artefacts.

The return of these artefacts is not just about reclaiming lost objects—it's about restoring cultural identity. Filmmaker Mati Diop explores this issue in her documentary *Dahomey*, which follows the return of 26 looted treasures from France to Benin. This is just one example of a growing movement to return African art to its rightful home.

4. Honoring Black Pioneers in Art

In Paris, French street artist Shuck One is using his work to honour Black historical figures who shaped France's history. His installation at the Pompidou Center features portraits of influential figures like Joséphine Baker and Aimé Césaire, bringing their stories to light.

By painting their faces onto public spaces, Shuck One is challenging the erasure of Black contributions in European history. His work is part of a larger movement to celebrate the achievements of Black artists, thinkers, and revolutionaries.

The journey to reclaim Africa's forgotten art histories is about more than just recovering lost paintings or sculptures. It's about restoring a sense of identity, honouring the past, and shaping the future.

For centuries, African artists have created masterpieces that tell the stories of their people. Yet, many of these works were stolen, erased, or ignored. Now that artists, curators, and historians are pushing for recognition and restitution, the world is beginning to listen.



Keturah Ovio

Keturah Ovio is an Executive at Patrons Modern & Contemporary African Art. She is also an engineer and Founder of Dukka, a Fintech startup providing bookkeeping and payments solutions for small businesses. Keturah is passionate about African Art and has been collecting art since her early 20s. Now, she advises, curates, and manages collections for individuals and corporate organisations looking to start or diversify their wealth management through art collecting.

She strongly believes that a fine marriage exists between Art and Technology.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BRANDS AND

FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA

Do you know the difference between a business and a brand? If you think the two are the same thing, you're mistaken but not alone. In fact, that confusion could be the reason many businesses blow off branding and miss tapping into their key differentiator to grow their business.

The difference between a business and a brand is that your business is the services you offer but your brand is the image your business reflects. But of course, growing either is not that cut and dry. Your business is what you sell. It's your products, services, and the industry you're a part of. Your brand is who you are. It's what people think about you and how they perceive your messages.

Branding impacts the business

A hard truth is that businesses don't technically control their brand. Your brand is the image your business projects but it is determined by the way that consumers perceive your company.

Brand name vs. Business name

Consider Proctor & Gamble. What do you think of? Some may have heard the name but struggle to name a product associated with the company, while others may connect the name to several soap operas (or with Satan if they believe every silly urban legend).

While it's a very lucrative business, the Proctor & Gamble name has had a harder time as a brand despite marketing a number of incredibly successful brands — Always, Ariel, Pampers and Oral B.

These are brand names that are not only instantly identifiable but immediately elicit an association or emotional response in consumers. Ariel cleans thoroughly, Pampers ensures peaceful nights and playful days, and Oral B guarantees dental health.

But as a small business, how can you make sure you're growing your brand while growing your business when you don't have access to billions of advertising dollars like Proctor and Gamble?

Growing your business and brand

Growing your business typically means expanding your scope and offering additional goods or services to your customers. This, at the root, is all about bringing in more money.

What is a brand for a company?

As mentioned earlier, you don't control your business's brand narrative — consumers do. Building your brand typically means serving a greater purpose beyond your services and giving your business a heart. So what is the community your business exists in saying? When people bring up your business, what are they mentioning other than your services?

As a barber maybe the brand is all about the best cuts done quickly. If you're looking to get ahead of the narrative and give your brand a more human feel, consider getting out in the community. Be the barber who provides

free haircuts for back-to-school week or one weekend a month to the children in the orphanage.

Is balancing both necessary?

“So, I should focus on growing my brand instead of grow my business?” Short answer — No. The two aren’t quite mutually exclusive; it is possible to have a profitable business with a strong, readily identifiable brand name, but this doesn’t happen by accident. It takes a concerted effort to build your brand alongside your business, and you need to be willing to make sacrifices and concessions when necessary to balance the two out.

It’s all too common for companies to obsess over one while ignoring the other. This leads to either a loss in profitability or a dilution of the brand name. Case in point: Dell Computer Corp.

When Dell Computer first started, it had a niche. They were a business that sold personal computers directly to other businesses. In the first quarter of 2001, Dell was the world leader in personal computers, in both sales and profits, and their name was synonymous with “business personal computer specialists.”

When it was time to grow, the folks at Dell did so with total disregard for their brand. They branched out to offer personal computers to consumers, which meant they were no longer “business” personal computer specialists. Then they widened their focus to consumer electronics, which meant they were no longer “personal computer” specialists. Once they moved into retail distribution, they were no longer “direct.”

They were no longer Dell Computer Corp., but Dell Inc. There’s no denying these changes were profitable for the business, but as business went up, the value of the brand decreased. Their market share fell behind Hewlett-Packard’s in 2007, and they never caught back up.

While it’s likely you’re not running a tech company, there are still lessons service-based businesses can take from Dell’s branding failure. Building your business can yield the results you’re shooting for, but your success will be fleeting without a brand to hang it on. On the other hand, building your brand may earn you the loyalty and adoration of your customers, but they’re going to be few and far between, if you let your business suffer.

LAST LINE

This is why learning how to balance both is important. Build your business in the short term with an eye for your brand identity in the long term. It’s easier said than done, but it’s not impossible.



Feyisitan Ijimakinwa

Feyisitan Ijimakinwa is a Reputation and Perception Management expert. He is a prolific writer and researcher who, at different times, served as Head of Corporate Communications of top brands quoted on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. A versatile communications specialist, he practiced extensively as a print journalist and was variously engaged in the broadcast media, working on radio and television. Feyisitan continues to write on corporate communications, brand reputation and perception management, and brand intelligence, among others. He organises the ‘Brand Intelligence and the Marketplace’ masterclass. Feyisitan advocates a pollution free and sustainable environment

MASKED

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR

Matt and I had been an item for almost three years. He really wanted us to get married but there was something his mother said to me that kept ringing in my head. I had been to her house a couple of times, always with Matt but on this particular day, I was working around her neighborhood and decided to pay her a surprise visit. I had plenty of time on my hands so I picked up lunch for both of us. As we ate and talked, she mentioned that she liked me and wanted me to be with someone who wouldn't give me trouble. She said she had observed my type of person and could tell I was a good woman. Then she added almost offhandedly, that Matt was a chip off the old block. He was his father's son and had the tendency to be abusive just like his father. She didn't need to say more but she held my gaze and in that moment, I understood everything.

I knew Matt's parents were divorced but he had never told me why. He had only insinuated that his mother was not patient enough and couldn't manage his father's "little tantrums." That day, I realized that what he referred to as tantrums had actually been domestic abuse.

As I drove home, lost in thought, I tried to recall all the red flags I had ignored about Matt. Was I ready to spend the rest of my life with someone like him? I didn't realize that I had missed the green light until I heard the sound of a car crashing into me from behind. The impact wasn't massive but it was enough to send me into shock and knock me out completely.

When I opened my eyes, everything was blurry. I could hear voices but I felt too heavy to move. It took me a few seconds to realize I was in a hospital. My body felt intact but my head was pounding. I tried to lift my hand but couldn't. That's when I understood I wasn't fully awake. My subconscious was drifting somewhere between awareness and unconsciousness.

Then I heard Matt's voice. He was on the phone and I was shocked by his tone. He was brash.

"Yeah, she passed out. Just my luck," he scoffed. "In the middle of the game and I had to leave that important game to be at the hospital. I haven't been this upset in a very long time?"

He paused, then laughed. "What do you mean I should be worried? She's fine. The doctor said she'll wake up eventually."

There was another pause before he said in a more irritated tone. "No, I'm not staying here all night. I have to go home and watch the game on replay, besides I have things to do. It's not like she's dying or anything."

I wanted to scream, to tell him I could hear every word but my body refused to obey. Then I heard him speak to a nurse who must have walked in. He was rude.

"What now?" he snapped at her.

"Sir, we suggest you stay overnight. It would be best if she woke up to a familiar face."

Matt scoffed. "I don't see the point. She's asleep, isn't she? Waking up alone won't kill her."

"Perhaps you could call a family member or a friend to stay with her?" the nurse suggested.

"She has no one. I'm all she's got," he said with an air of self-importance. "Besides, everyone else is useless."

Something inside me shattered. Was this the same man I had loved for almost three years? A few minutes later, I heard his footsteps retreating. He was leaving.

When I finally woke up, twelve hours later, I knew exactly what I had to do.

Matt wasn't the man I thought he was, and I would never make the mistake of marrying him. Some decisions don't need a second thought.

Matt returned in the morning and this time he was different. He was all smiles, his voice gentle, his words laced with concern. He held my hand, stroked my hair and whispered how worried he had been. If I hadn't overheard his conversations the night before, I might have believed him. But now his kindness looked like a performance carefully crafted to keep me from seeing the truth.

"You scared me, babe," he whispered. "I didn't sleep at all. I kept thinking about you."

I forced a weak smile. "I'm okay now."

He beamed and kissed my forehead. "That's all that matters."

But it wasn't all that mattered. What mattered was that I had seen behind the mask. I had heard the man he truly was.

Lying there, I realized that the accident was a blessing in disguise. If not for that moment of unconsciousness, I might have walked blindly into a life of misery. But even more than the accident, I was grateful to Matt's mother. She had given me a warning, a chance to escape before it was too late. As Matt sat beside me, holding my hand, promising to take care of me forever, I had already made up my mind. This wasn't a man I could trust with my future.

A week later, I invited Matt to dinner at my place. I served him his favorite meal, poured him a glass of wine and let him talk about his day. I acted like nothing had changed, like I hadn't spent the last few days preparing myself for this moment. Then as he reached for another bite, I casually placed a small, neatly wrapped box on the table.

He frowned. "What's this?"

"Open it," I said.

He unwrapped it and found inside the engagement ring he had given me months ago. His face paled as he looked up at me.

"I can't marry you, Matt."

He blinked, as if he hadn't heard me right. "What?" he screamed

I leaned back in my chair. "I heard everything you said at the hospital. The way you spoke to the nurses. The way you spoke about me. I know who you really are now."

His jaw clenched. "Babe, come on. I was just stressed. You know I love you"

I shook my head. "No, Matt. You love control. And I'm done."

He stared at me, his expression angry. "After everything I've done for you?"

I smiled. "Exactly."

Matt stormed out that night, slamming the door behind him. And within days he had started telling our friends that I had blindsided him, that he had been nothing but a good man to me, that he didn't deserve the heartbreak. I let him talk.

The truth didn't need defending. I had seen the man behind the mask. And that was all the closure I needed.



Udy Osaro-Edobor

Udy Osaro-Edobor is the Content Creator for SoTV (Supernatural Online TV) Nigeria. She is a movie/scriptwriter, editor, and proofreader. She has several stories to her credit which she posts for free on her Ebook called Udy's Chapter. She is currently working on two short movies. Udy is also a wife, mother, and a "serial entrepreneur".

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**A Powerful Story about Truth, Betrayal and the
Complicated Nature of People -A Review of
Ufuomaee's Who Killed Nnamdi?**

**Title: Who Killed Nnamdi?!
Author: Ufuomaee
Year of Publication: 2025
Number of Pages: 263
Category: Fiction**

WHO KILLED NNAMDI?!

TITILADE OYEMADE

Ufuomae's *Who Killed Nnamdi?* is more than a murder mystery. What starts as an investigation into one man's death evolves into a gripping psychological journey, forcing readers to question everything they know about morality, justice, and human relationships.

Nnamdi's death exposes the fractured lives and hidden secrets of those around him. The novel's brilliance lies in its shifting viewpoints, just when you think you understand a character, the next chapter challenges your assumptions. No one is purely innocent or wholly guilty in this morally complex world Ufuomae has created.

The book boldly tackles difficult themes rarely addressed in modern fiction, particularly sexual addiction. This theme is presented with raw honesty yet balanced by the author's thoughtful faith perspective. Readers will find themselves torn between compassion and anger as they navigate the protagonist's deeply human struggles and their impact on his family.

Some may unravel the mystery early, while others will be caught off guard by the twists. But the emotional impact is undeniable when the truth finally clicks into place, forcing reflection on motive, accountability, and truth itself.

Ufuomae's writing stands out for its attention to detail. Small moments of humor lighten the tension, and even minor characters reveal unexpected significance. The story thrives on secrets not just as plot

devices but as windows into the characters' true selves. Each revelation feels both shocking and inevitable, a testament to the author's skillful storytelling.

At its core, *Who Killed Nnamdi?* examines forgiveness, grief, and the emotional toll of unresolved conflicts. The characters' struggles with betrayal and unreciprocated love linger long after the final page.

This is not an easy read, but it is an essential one. Ufuomae has crafted a story that challenges, provokes, and transforms its readers. This is fiction at its most powerful, a mirror reflecting humanity in all its broken complexity. For those willing to confront difficult truths, this novel offers an unforgettable literary experience that will spark discussion and self-reflection.

A gripping mix of suspense and psychology, *Who Killed Nnamdi?* proves Ufuomae is a fearless writer unafraid to tackle tough topics. Get ready to be hooked, unsettled, and deeply moved.

Titilade Oyemade

Titilade Oyemade is a business executive in a leading organisation and holds a degree in Russian Language. She's the convener of the Hangoutwithtee Ladies Event and the publisher of Hangoutwithtee magazine.

She spends her weekends attending women conferences, events and book readings. She loves to have fun and to help other women have the same in their lives.

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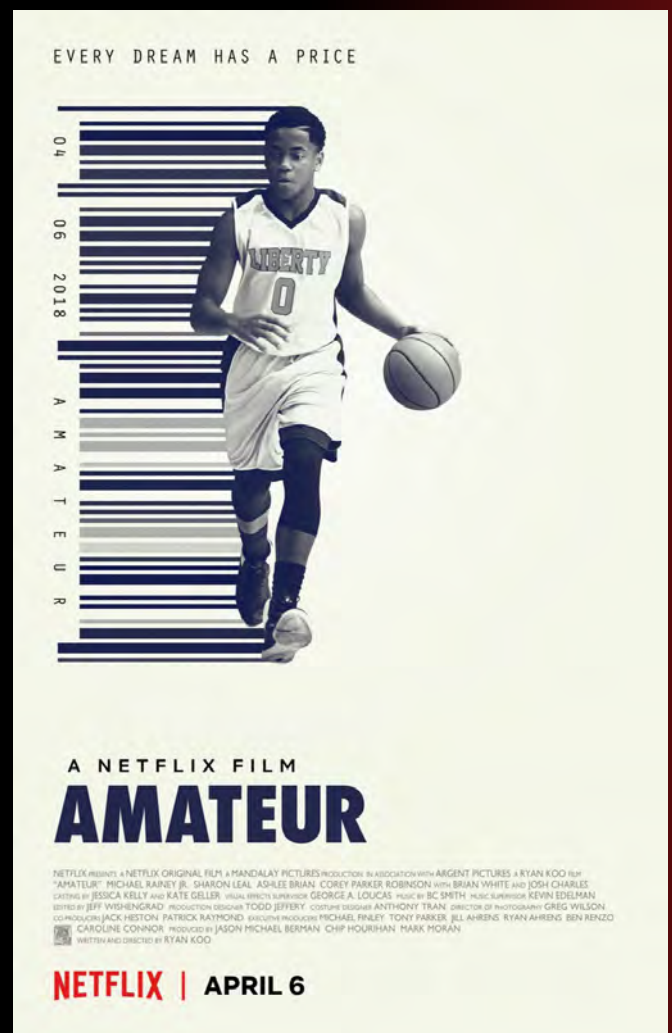


WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEWS

AMATEUR (2018)

Terron was a teenager who exceptionally good at playing basketball, he was so good, he won almost all the matches. His dad was a former coach and desperately wanted him to pay in the professional league that he was willing to do anything to get his son in, when Terron found out he was so disappointed and scattered that he ruined the entire plan for everyone. The major question would be where Terron would return to since he had lost almost everything, you will need to check out this movie, to find out if he was able to get his foot back again on the court. The 96m drama, independent, teen films, sports movie was directed by Ryan Koo, they featured actors like Michael Rainey Jr., Josh Charles, Brian White, Sharon Leal, Ashlee Brian and many more.



GOOD ON PAPER (2021)

Andrea was a young lady, who was a good standup comedian, but was still working very hard to hit her big break in the movie industry. She was very hardworking but couldn't just make it big, one day on her way back from an audition, she met this charming, young eloquent guy, who graduated from Yale, and was a hedge fund manager, at first she was so keen or in love with him but as time went, she began to fall in love with him because of his kindness and care, little did she know that this entire relationship was a fluke, well you will need to go check out the movie to see how the love went from north to south and how Andrea made it out. The 92m romantic comedies, romance, romantic comedies was directed by Kimmy Gatewood, they featured actors like Illiza Shlesinger, Ryan Hansen, Margaret Cho, Rebecca Rittenhouse, Matt McGorry, Taylor Hill Beth Dover etc.



DEATH BEFORE THE WEDDING (2025)

Maja was a very pretty young lady who wanted to settle down and move on, but her dad wont allow her as he would always scare them away. When she finally finished school she made it clear to her dad, she was going to get married with or without him, well suddenly her upset dad turns a new leaf and agrees for her to get married, little did she know that her dad had agreed for her wedding to be planned by the Ceo's wife in order to save what was left of the diary farm, you will need to check out this comedy movie to find out if they continued the wedding or not, when they discovered that they being pawned to save the business. The 106m comedy movie was directed by Tomasz Konecki and Iwona Ogonowoska-Konecka, they featured actors like Agnieszka Suchora, tomasz Karolak, Natalia Sitarska, Gamou Fall and Barbara Garstka.



Linda Ochugbua

WEEKEND QUOTES



1

Being content is easy when you realize that many things are not worth the stress
.....WhispersbyTEN

3

Being vulnerable is easy when you understand that in it you connect deeply
..... WhispersbyTEN

2

Being innovative is easy when you get past mistakes and try again
.....WhispersbyTEN

4

Communication is easy when you understand that the other person is not a mind reader
..... WhispersbyTEN