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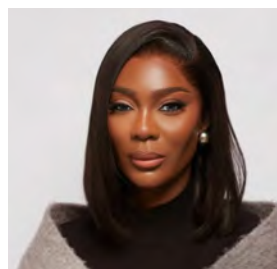
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2025 Midas List: Top venture capitalists betting on the future



EDUCATION

5 alternatives for students with low JAMB scores



INTERVIEW

From Runway to Classroom: Faith Morey's Journey to Impact

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BUSINESS DAY
WEEKENDER

C O N T E N T



5

LAUGHTER IN THE MIRROR



12

INTERVIEW

From Runway to Classroom:
Faith Morey's Journey to
Impact



20

EVENT

From Runway to Classroom:
Faith Morey's Journey to
Impact

25

BUSINESS

From Runway to
Classroom: Faith
Morey's Journey to
Impact

34

EDUCATION

Revamping
Nigeria's
economy through
foundational
education

42

ART INDEX

Inside the Mind
of a Collector: Is
It Love, Status, or
Strategy?

48

BRAND

Inside the Mind
of a Collector: Is
It Love, Status, or
Strategy?

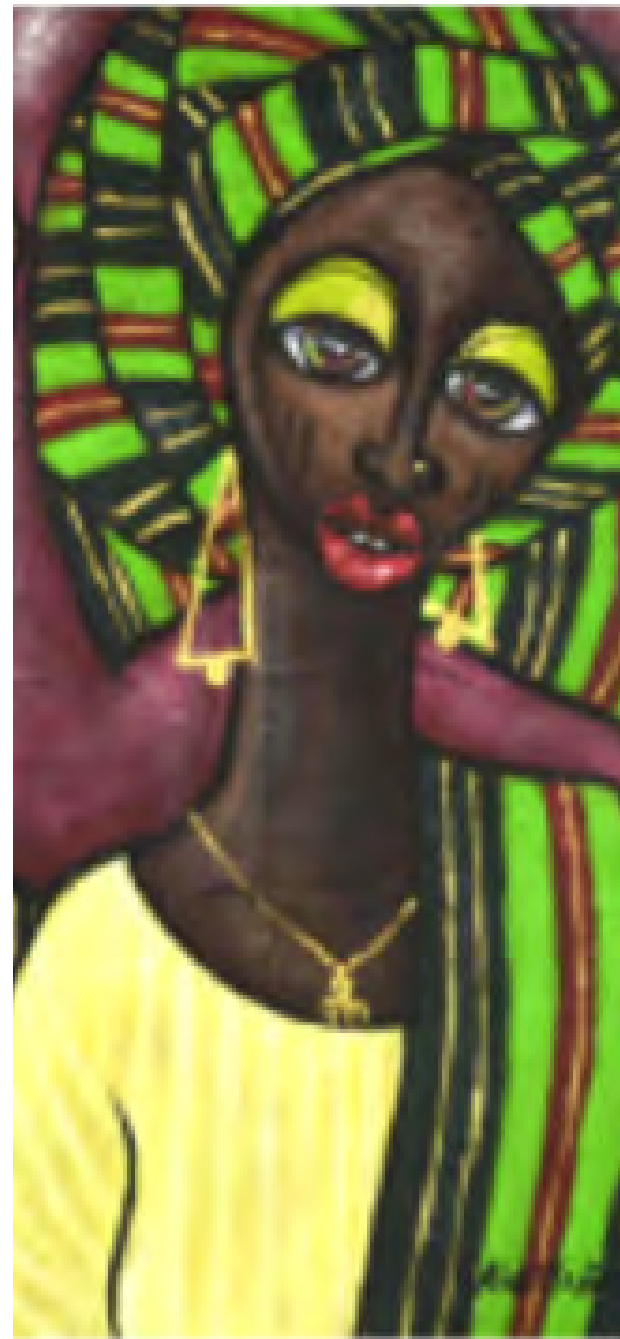
53

BOOK REVIEW

The Brevity of
Beautiful Things

55

MOVIE REVIEW



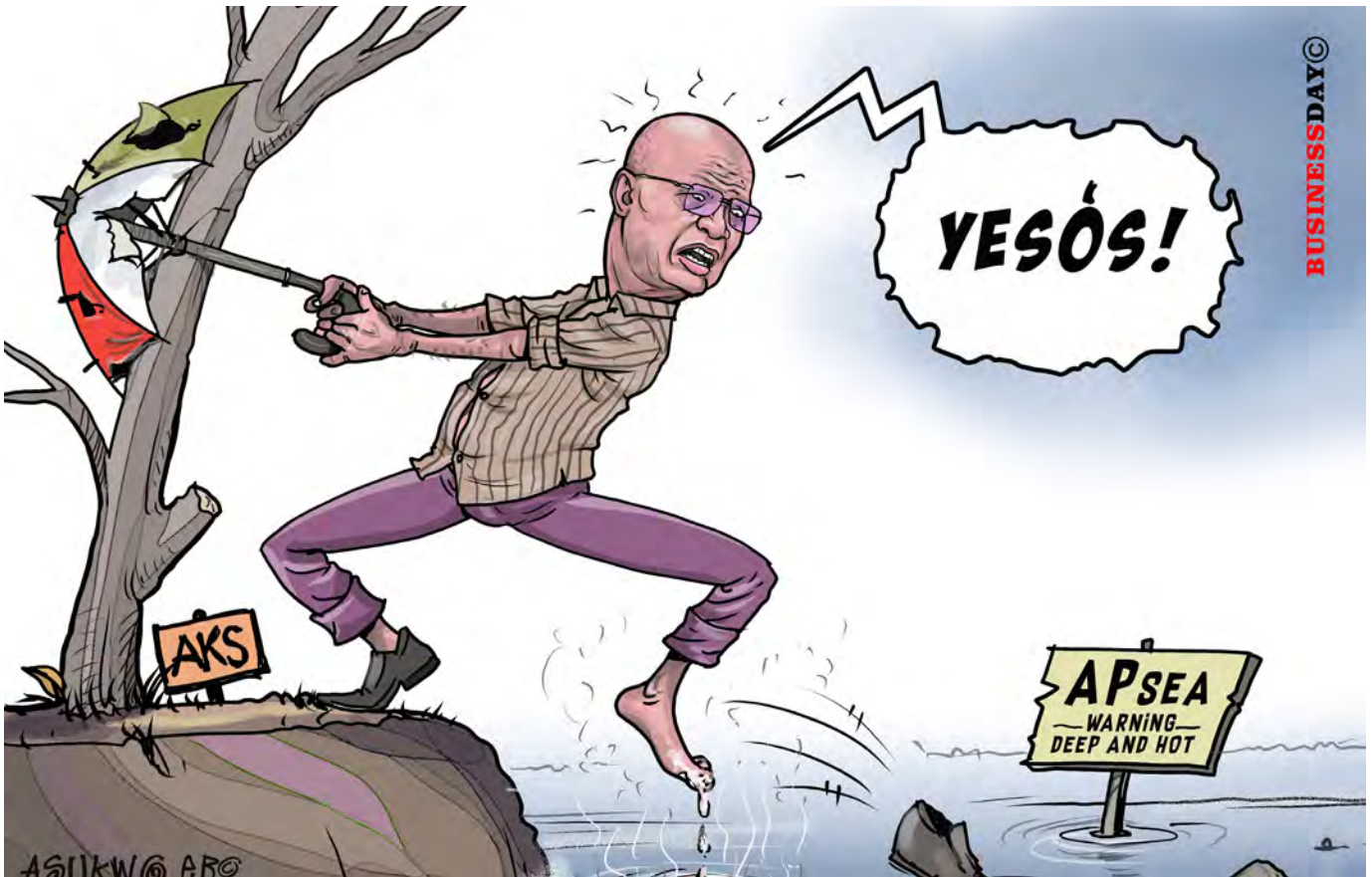
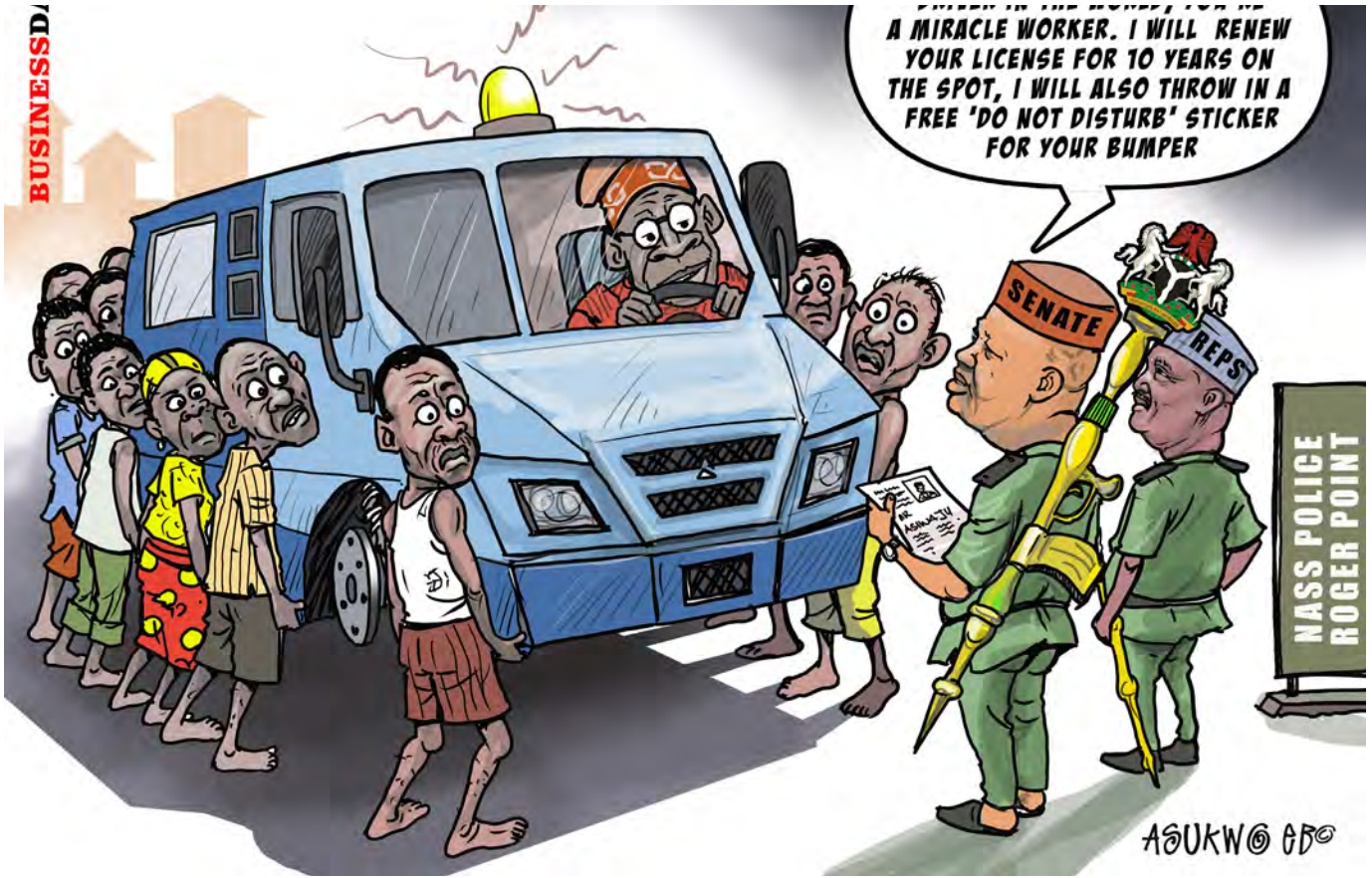
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2025 MIDAS LIST: TOP VENTURE CAPITALISTS BETTING ON THE FUTURE

CHISOM MICHAEL

The 2025 edition of Forbes' Midas List has revealed the top-performing venture capital (VC) investors globally, spotlighting those whose early bets on fast-growing startups have delivered significant returns.

Despite a slow market for public offerings and mergers over the past two years, select parts of the startup ecosystem are experiencing renewed energy, particularly around artificial intelligence (AI), space technology, and defence.

For the second year running, Alfred Lin of Sequoia Capital tops the list. Lin's long-standing investments in Airbnb and DoorDash continue to bring returns, but it is his 2021 investment in OpenAI at a \$14 billion valuation that has provided new momentum.

OpenAI, the maker of ChatGPT, is now valued at \$300 billion after raising \$40 billion in April 2025. This sets a new record for the highest amount raised by a private startup, placing Lin firmly at the top of the venture capital world.

The broader startup scene is also shifting. Companies like SpaceX, Databricks and Anthropic have seen their valuations rise sharply. SpaceX, for example, is now valued at \$350 billion, making it the most valuable private company in the world.

These developments have helped bring eight new names to this year's list, including Shaun Maguire of Sequoia and David Sacks of Craft Ventures. Sacks, known for his role at PayPal, is one of four so-called "PayPal Mafia" members in the top ranks. He joins Reid Hoffman (2nd), Peter Thiel (3rd), Roelof Botha (13th), and Keith Rabois (17th), all of whom played key roles in PayPal's rise.

This year's list shows that venture capital is evolving. Lucas Swisher from Coatue represents large funds entering high-growth deals, while Elad Gil, operating independently, reflects a new model of solo investing.

Gil has made successful investments in defence tech company Anduril, work collaboration tool Glean, and AI search engine Perplexity. His approach, free of investment committees or large partnerships, shows how individual investors can still make a mark.

However, the 2025 Midas List also reveals challenges. After reaching a record number of female investors in 2024, this year only 10 women are featured. With just 11% of VC partners being women, progress remains slow.

As startups stay private for longer and fewer public exits take place, opportunities for qualifying deals among female investors may be limited. The hope is that as the next generation of startups grows, future lists will reflect more inclusive gains.

A few names show continued resilience. Doug Leone and Roelof Botha of Sequoia, Navin Chaddha of Mayfield, and Mary Meeker of Bond Capital have all maintained spots on the list for more than a decade. Leone, who handed over leadership at Sequoia in 2022, may be on the verge of a significant exit through Google's pending \$32 billion acquisition of Wiz, a cloud security startup.

The Midas List is compiled using both public data and private submissions from hundreds of VC firms. To qualify, investors must have backed companies that either exited through IPO or acquisition for at least \$200 million, or doubled in private value to \$400 million or more within the past five years. While both realised and unrealised gains are considered, the ranking places greater weight on realised exits. Credit is typically shared by a maximum of two investors per deal.

The 2025 rankings reflect where capital is flowing: AI, defence, fintech, and space continue to attract attention. As the IPO window slowly reopens and some private companies consider public listings again, names like Figma are being watched closely. For now, the Midas List offers a clear snapshot of those navigating uncertainty and emerging with successful outcomes.

Here are the top 10 midas list investors (2025)

1. Alfred Lin, Sequoia – OpenAI
2. Reid Hoffman, Greylock Partners – Airbnb
3. Peter Thiel, Founders Fund – Palantir
4. Neil Shen, HongShan – ByteDance
5. Micky Malka, Ribbit Capital – Coinbase
6. Vinod Khosla, Khosla Ventures – Commonwealth Fusion Systems
7. Douglas Leone, Sequoia – Wiz
8. Hemant Taneja, General Catalyst – Applied Intuition
9. Fred Wilson, Union Square Ventures – Coinbase
10. Chris Dixon, Andreessen Horowitz – Coinbase

5 ALTERNATIVES FOR STUDENTS WITH LOW JAMB SCORES

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



Scoring below the cut-off mark in the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination can be disheartening, especially for students hoping to secure admission into public universities. With increasingly high competition for limited university spaces, many students find themselves reconsidering their next move. However, education experts insist that a low JAMB score does not mark the end of a student's academic journey.

Below are several pathways currently open to students seeking alternative routes into higher education.

Polytechnics and College of Education

For decades, polytechnics and colleges of education have provided viable academic options. These institutions tend to have more flexible admission thresholds. A National Diploma (ND) from a polytechnic or a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) from a college can serve as the foundation for further studies. Upon completion, candidates may apply through Direct Entry into university at the 200-level.

Distance learning and Part-time programmes

Another viable route for students unable to meet conventional cut-off marks is to enrol in part-time or distance learning schemes. These programmes are run by many federal and state universities and typically do not require JAMB scores. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), for example, allows students to pursue degrees in fields such as accounting, computer science, and education. Though longer in duration and structured differently, these programmes still offer recognised qualifications.

Pre-Degree, Remedial, and JUPEB Routes

Some institutions run internal pre-degree or remedial programmes, designed to prepare students for their first year in university. Successful completion, along with a new UTME attempt, may guarantee admission. In addition, the Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board (JUPEB) offers a one-year programme after which students can gain Direct

Entry admission into 200-level in partnering universities, bypassing the UTME entirely.

Diploma and certificate programmes

Diploma programmes offered by universities provide an alternative pathway into undergraduate study. These typically span two years and may lead to Direct Entry into degree courses. For instance, the University of Lagos and the University of Benin offer diploma programmes in engineering, mass communication, and business administration. Certificate programmes are also available in technical and vocational fields and can serve as a stepping stone into future study or employment.

Skill acquisition or short-term training

With time before the next academic calendar begins, students are encouraged to consider skill-based training. Programmes in digital marketing, software development, graphic design, or fashion design are available through diverse platforms, or locally accredited centres. These skills can become income sources and improve long-term employability, regardless of academic outcomes.

A close-up portrait of Faith Morey, a Black woman with long, straight, dark hair. She is wearing a dark, high-necked turtleneck sweater and a large, round, pearl earring. She has a soft, confident expression and is looking directly at the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

FROM RUNWAY TO CLASSROOM: FAITH MOREY'S JOURNEY TO IMPACT

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



Faith Morey is a Nigerian-American model, reality TV star, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and lifestyle influencer renowned for her elegance, intelligence, and business acumen. A prominent figure in the fashion and entertainment industry, she has successfully transitioned her influence beyond reality tv to establish herself as a dynamic businesswoman and advocate for impactful causes.

In this exclusive interview she takes us through her philanthropic journey, vision for the Nigerian child, plans for the educational sectors and more.

What are your hopes and goals for the foundation in the next phase of its journey?

As we step into the next chapter of the Okachi Charity Foundation, my deepest hope is to deepen our impact while scaling our reach with intentionality. What began as a promise to give back has now grown into a movement one rooted in dignity, driven by education, and powered by compassion.

Looking ahead, our goal is to institutionalize our Summer School Program as a national model for academic support, especially for struggling students. We are also working toward establishing an OCF Learning & Resource Hub a physical space dedicated to innovation, training, mentorship, and creative learning in underserved communities.

Ultimately, my hope is that OCF continues to be more than a foundation. I want it to remain a safe bridge between what is and what could be. Between a child's current limitations and their future possibilities. One public school at a time. One confident child at a time. One story rewritten at a time.

We are not here to impress we are here to impact. And with grace, discipline, and faith, we will keep showing up where it counts.

Who do you consider as role models and how has their lives and achievements inspired your course of action?

One of my greatest role models is Agnes Gund, an art collector, philanthropist, and founder of the Art for Justice Fund. You don't often hear her name in mainstream conversations, yet her quiet power has funded over \$100 million toward criminal justice reform and educational equity. She's proof that you don't need to be loud to be revolutionary. Her story reminds me that lasting change is often built behind the scenes with integrity, with humility, and with deep care for humanity.

In many ways, her path mirrors the mission behind the Okachi Charity Foundation (OCF). Like Agnes, I believe in using what we have our voice, our resources, our access to bridge deep inequalities that many would rather ignore. When I started OCF, it wasn't for applause. It was a promise I made to the little girl I once was a girl who wore the same uniform for two years and studied under leaky roofs. I understood early that charity is not about giving what's left over, but giving with intentionality giving what dignifies.

Role models like Agnes Gund have taught me that impact is not always visible to the public eye, but it is always felt by those who need it most. We may not always trend online, but we show up where it counts in public schools with no roofs, with girls who miss class every month because they cannot afford sanitary pads, and with families who have never had someone simply say, "We see you. You matter."

Her legacy challenges me to stay rooted in service and reminds me that the most powerful work is often the most personal.

As someone who wears many hats, what core values guide both your brand and your humanitarian efforts?

For me, everything begins with integrity, intentionality, and service. These values are not just slogans; they are lived principles woven into both the public image I present and the quiet work I do when no one is watching.

Integrity was instilled in me by my grandmother. She used to say, "A good name will take you where money cannot." That wisdom never left me. Whether I'm walking a red carpet or walking through the halls of a public school in Port Harcourt, I carry that lesson with me. My name, my work, and my presence must reflect something deeper something rooted in truth and purpose.

Intentionality is also a guiding force. I don't believe in doing things for optics. Every outfit I wear, every campaign I align with, and every school OCF adopts must serve a greater vision. When we step into a school, we're not just donating we're creating systems that restore dignity, build confidence, and open doors for children who have been overlooked for far too long.

And above all, there is service. I genuinely believe we rise by lifting others. I didn't come from wealth or access, so I know what it means to feel invisible. I carry that memory into every

boardroom, every classroom, and every meeting with a First Lady or Minister. My brand and my philanthropy may look different on the outside but at their core, they are both about showing up, with grace and excellence, for those who need it most.

These values keep me grounded. They remind me that success without impact is just noise and I was not called to make noise, but to make a difference.

How has your foundation helped or would help amplify the causes you care deeply about?

The Okachi Charity Foundation was born out of conviction not convenience. It is my response to the childhood I lived and the realities I refuse to ignore. Education changed my life, and I made a promise to make that change possible for others, especially those growing up in communities that the world often forgets.

Through OCF, I've been able to give structure to the causes I care deeply about educational equity, girl-child empowerment, and dignity for children in underserved public schools. What once lived in my heart as passion now lives in villages, classrooms, uniforms, books, desks, and clean drinking water.

One of the most defining moments for me was walking into a public school where children sat on the floor, in tattered uniforms, trying to focus in a classroom without light, ventilation, or a functioning board. That day, OCF didn't just renovate a classroom we restored hope. We gave them school uniforms, sandals, books, and a reason to keep showing up.

Another cause close to my heart is period poverty. Many don't realize how many girls miss school every month simply because they lack access to sanitary products. Through our partnership efforts, we've begun distributing reusable sanitary kits giving these girls more than hygiene; we're giving them consistency, dignity, and a chance to stay in school without shame.

OCF amplifies these causes by going beyond charity we create systems, visibility, and sustainable change. We don't just step in. We stay in. We partner with governments, engage private stakeholders, and ensure that our impact is measurable, dignified, and long-term.

At its core, the foundation gives voice and visibility to the forgotten child the one I used to be. And through every intervention, I am reminded that changing the world doesn't require everything just a decision to do something, and to do it well.

How do you balance leadership, personal life, and emotional resilience while being the face and force behind a cause-driven movement?

The truth is balance isn't a fixed destination so some days, I lead with grace. Other days, I lead with grit. But always, I

lead with heart. Wearing many hats from being a mother, wife, entrepreneur, and founder means that I'm constantly pouring into others. And while that's beautiful, it also requires an intentional discipline to pour back into myself. I've learned that leadership without rest, reflection, and boundaries quickly becomes burnout disguised as productivity.

What grounds me most is purpose. The work I do with OCF is not performative it's personal. I come from the very communities I now serve. I was that little girl with big dreams, sitting in a public classroom that lacked everything but hope. So when things get hard and they often do I return to my "why."

I also lean into my support system. My family and close friends has been a pillar of strength, reminding me that I don't have to do it all alone. My son, Ethan, keeps me tethered to what truly matters. And my team at OCF, the ones who do the quiet, tireless work behind the scenes they are my daily reminder that impact is a collective effort.

In the end, I've accepted that I am not just the face of this movement; I am its heartbeat. And like any living thing, I must be nurtured, protected, and honored. That's how I lead. That's how I last.

Who is Faith Morey and how does your personality help define what you stand for?


Faith Morey is a woman shaped by resilience, guided by purpose, and rooted in compassion. I am a mother, a wife, a founder, a creator and above all, a woman who has walked both the runway and the dirt roads of rural Nigeria with equal conviction.

I was raised by strong women in a small Nigerian town, where we didn't have much, but we had dignity. My personality reflects that upbringing grounded, observant, fiercely intentional. I carry myself with grace, but I speak with clarity. I lead with vision, but I never forget where I came from. That duality of strength and softness, elegance and grit is at the heart of everything I do.

Whether I'm in a boardroom advocating for policy change or kneeling beside a child in a classroom in Sangana, I show up the same way: with empathy, focus, and purpose. My personality is not loud, but it is firm. I don't chase trends I build legacy. And that mindset has helped shape the Okachi Charity Foundation into a force for sustainable, human-centered impact.

I believe in the power of intentional living. I don't act for applause. I act because I understand what it feels like to be invisible, to be counted out, and to still rise. That's what I stand for helping others rise with dignity, one step, one school, one child at a time.

So, who is Faith Morey? A woman who carries both her past and her purpose like a crown not for show, but as a reminder of what's possible when grace meets grit.

A portrait of Chisom Michael, a Black man with short hair, wearing a black tuxedo jacket, a white dress shirt, and a black bow tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a solid, warm brown color.

**MENTORING AS A CATALYST
FOR NIGERIA'S WORKFORCE
PRODUCTIVITY AND BUSINESS
GROWTH — ONAIVI**

CHISOM **MICHAEL**



Onaivi Dania is a mentoring strategist and corporate training facilitator passionate about advancing structured, scalable mentoring across Africa. With a solid background in Information Technology, Data Analytics, Business Intelligence, and Human Capital Development, he leads Precepts & Mentors, a pan-African mentoring network with footprints in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, and Dubai.

Starting his entrepreneurial journey at 22 while studying Computer Engineering at the University of Benin, Onaivi founded Xploits Precepts Limited, launching empowerment initiatives that have helped hundreds of young professionals transition into productive entrepreneurs and workplace-ready talents.

Onaivi's approach to mentoring embraces emerging trends, including digital platforms, peer and group mentoring, and AI-supported learning paths, aiming to make mentoring an integral part of leadership and talent development strategies across the continent. Through his ongoing Mentorship Masterclasses, hosted in cities like Lagos, Nairobi, and Harare, he empowers middle and senior managers, educators, and corporate teams with tools to lead confidently in a rapidly changing digital economy.

In this interview with Chisom Michael, Onaivi candidly discusses the challenges facing Nigeria's young workforce, including gaps in education, confidence, and exposure. Drawing from his experience as a mentor, he explains how mentoring evolves from motivation into a structured, measurable tool that develops skills and mindsets. He also highlights the importance of cultural adaptability in cross-border mentoring and how integrating mentoring into business strategies can enhance organisational resilience and growth across Africa. Excerpts:

What core challenges do you see in preparing young people for workplace productivity in Nigeria?

One major challenge is the gap between what is taught in school and what the workplace actually demands. Many young people are smart and ambitious, but they lack exposure to real work environments early on.

Another issue is soft skills- things like active listening, problem-solving or building strategic relationships. These aren't always emphasised enough in our educational system.

Lastly, there's a confidence gap. A lot of young Nigerians underestimate themselves because they haven't had mentors or platforms that can affirm their potential. So, I focus on bridging these three areas: mindset, exposure and skills.

You founded Xploits Precepts while still in university. What gave you the confidence to start that early?

To be honest, I was tired of the status quo. I didn't want to be like my mates. Most of their ambition was tailored towards graduating from school and getting a well-paying job. While that was noble, I felt I had so much potential that I just couldn't wait until I needed to graduate. As for me, I wanted more. I knew I had something in me that the world needed.

I started Xploits Precepts as a personal development company, then later, the company pivoted into a tech business, and I eventually handed over the entire assets of the company to a major investor. That experience taught me a lot about life and creating value that customers would need. It was also a seed that grew into a global impact many years later.

Can you walk us through how your background in data analytics influences your mentoring approach?

I've learned that good mentoring isn't just about intuition or empathy, though those matter immensely. There's something powerful about bringing structure to the process. When someone comes to me feeling stuck, we don't just talk through feelings, we dig into patterns.

But here's the thing- I do not treat people like spreadsheets or dashboards. The numbers simply give us a starting point for deeper conversations. They help cut through the noise of what we think is happening versus what's happening.

Setting goals has changed, instead of vague aspirations like "be more productive," we create specific, trackable milestones. There's something amazingly motivating about seeing tangible progress, especially when you're in the messy middle of growth. Data has made me a more intentional listener. I pay attention to behaviours and patterns in what people say, how they frame challenges, and where their energy shifts. It's helped me move beyond surface-level advice to something more personalised and actionable.

I focus on my core abilities, and then I collaborate with local facilitators who bring cultural nuance I could never fully grasp as an outsider. They help me adjust examples, case studies, and even the pace of delivery.

How do you ensure your mentoring and corporate training programmes remain relevant across countries?

Early in my career, I made the classic mistake of imagining that great content translates universally. I'd travel to a new country with my tried-and-tested material, confident it would land the same way it did back home. Each country has their unique ways of receiving

Now, I approach each new city or region as though I'm learning a new language—not just the words, but the cultural rhythm behind them. Sometimes, I tend to use their accents in a subtle way, I spend time in coffee shops, interact with locals, eat good food, attend local business events, and have conversations that go way beyond work. So, this gives me enough material to break the ice and warm up with my audience.

I've also stopped trying to be the expert on everything. I focus on my core abilities, and then I collaborate with local facilitators who bring cultural nuance I could never fully grasp as an outsider. They help me adjust examples, case studies, and even the pace of delivery.

The content stays current because I stay curious. Every program teaches me something new about what works in that specific environment.

What role does business intelligence play in improving employee performance in African firms?

Business intelligence helps companies move from guesswork to smart decisions. When companies track key performance indicators like sales trends, customer feedback, or employee output, they can see what's working and what's not. This allows leaders to address issues early, recognise top performers and also allocate their resources more efficiently.

In African firms, where resources are sometimes limited, BI becomes even more valuable. It ensures that every decision is backed by insight, not just instinct. When employees know that their work is being measured fairly and used to drive growth, it motivates them to do better.

In your view, how can mentoring be integrated into business growth strategies in Nigeria?

Mentoring should not be treated as a "nice to have"; it is a business tool- a strategic lever. When done right, it helps companies grow from the inside out. In Nigeria, where talent retention and leadership continuity are big issues, mentoring can become the bridge. It's how you transfer knowledge, shape culture, and groom future leaders.

For example, new hires can be paired with experienced staff to shorten learning curves. High-potential employees can be mentored into leadership roles. When people grow, the business grows. It's that simple. The key is to build mentoring into your HR and performance systems-not as an afterthought, but as a working strategy.

Could you share how Precepts & Mentors measures the impact of its interventions?

At Precepts & Mentors, we take impact seriously. We measure in three main ways: before, during, and after each engagement. First, we assess the needs of the organisation, what problems are we solving? Where are hidden opportunities located?

During the programme, we use tools like participant feedback, engagement metrics, and facilitator observations to gauge learning in real-time. But the real test is after. We follow up with clients to track changes in behaviour, performance or outcomes. For example, if we trained a team on Business Presentation or Dashboard Reporting, we want to see how their reports and presentations improve over time. Impact for us isn't just in the delivery—it's also felt in the results.

You've facilitated training for both public and private organisations. Where do you see the biggest skill gaps?

The biggest gap I've seen is not technical- it's in thinking and communication. Many professionals know their job but struggle to communicate ideas clearly or adapt to change.

In the public sector, the challenge is often agility—how to be proactive, not just reactive, while in the private sector, the gap tends to be people skills-collaboration, leadership, and emotional intelligence. And across both, digital literacy is still a work in progress. We need people who can use tools, make sense of data, and work well in teams. Those are the real drivers of productivity today.

How can mentoring be used as a tool for improving organisational resilience in volatile business environments?

Mentoring builds people—and it's people who carry companies through tough times. In a volatile environment like ours, mentoring creates stability. It allows experience to be passed on quickly, keeps morale high, and helps teams navigate uncertainty.

For instance, when junior staff are mentored by senior colleagues, they gain confidence and clarity. That matters a lot when the market is unpredictable. Mentoring also helps retain institutional knowledge, so when people leave or teams shift, the business doesn't lose its footing. It's a quiet but powerful way to stay grounded.


What lessons have you learnt from working with financial institutions like the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Development Bank of Nigeria?

One key lesson is that leadership matters at every level. In both institutions as well as other organisations I have consulted for or trained, I observed that technical skill alone isn't enough—you need people who can think strategically, lead with clarity and manage change.

Another thing I learnt is the importance of structure. These organisations thrive on systems, but they also value innovation, especially now. So, you have to strike a balance between following processes and driving new ideas.

Finally, I have noticed how powerful cross-functional collaboration can be. When departments truly work together, not just side by side, it creates room for smarter decisions and stronger outcomes.



A portrait of Favour Okpale, a Black man with a short beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit jacket over a brown shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a serious expression. His hands are clasped in front of him, and he is wearing a silver bracelet on his left wrist.

**FROM HUSTLER
TO VISIONARY:
HOW ZUBBY
GABRIEL TURNED
ROCK-BOTTOM
INTO ZEDX
ORIGINAL**

FAVOUR **OKPALE**



A collapsed supermarket, one second-hand camera, and an unbreakable belief that “a bad image is bad business.” This is the story of Zubby Gabriel, Founder and Creative Director of Abuja-based fast-rising creative powerhouse.

Sometimes you must lose everything to discover what truly belongs to you!

Nzube “Zubby” Gabriel, a former contestant of the popular talent hunt show “Maltina Dance Hall,” learnt commerce on the blistering streets of Onitsha long before he dreamt of boardrooms and studio lights.

By 2007 he could haggle like a veteran trader; in 2009 he’d danced his way into the Maltina Dance Hall stage, launching BlueBerry Dance Academy and tasting the thrill of building something from scratch.

But life, with its vicissitudes do offer sterner lessons. In 2015 the young entrepreneur opened a supermarket in Gwarinpa, Abuja only to watch it collapse two years later. “Everything crumbled, For a while, I crumbled with it,”he recalls.

However, out of the silence came a single purchase that rewired his future: a camera.

“I wasn’t just taking pictures, I was telling stories. And I realised every brand, every leader, every dream deserves to be seen in its best light,” Zubby said

That revelation crystallised into a mantra “A Bad Image is Bad Business” and, in 2024, into ZedX Original: a media production company, creative hub, and training ground for a new breed of storytellers known as the ZedIcons, building more than content to building a movement.

Operating from Abuja, ZedX Original has already; Produced visual campaigns for emerging fashion labels and NGOs such as Heifer International, Converted its studio into an incubator where photographers, videographers and digital marketers upskill every Wednesday through MindMesh sessions.

Rolled out the ZedX Pro-Creatives model, giving freelance talent clear Terms of Reference and fair revenue splits.

“ZedX isn’t a studio with fancy gear, It’s a platform where creatives, brands and culture-shifters grow together and change the game together,” he added

Nigeria’s creative economy is booming, yet many upcoming talents still struggle with mentorship and professional standards. Zubby’s journey from a hustler, dancer, accidental photographer, now founder embodies the grit and reinvention that define this generation’s creators.

For brands, his rise is a case study in image strategy and authentic storytelling that converts audience attention into business value. For young creatives, it’s proof that failure can be fuel when purpose meets craft.

What’s next ?

ZedX Original is expanding its studio rental programme, launching a two-week MindMesh bootcamp for time-starved adults, and nurturing influencer talents like @girlwithdsign. “The mission remains unchanged” he said

“We create with purpose shaping narratives, empowering visionary leaders, fuelling brands that are here to shift culture.

“So, whether you’re a creative seeking a tribe or a brand that understands bad image is bad business, welcome home. ZedX Original is ready to tell your story beautifully,” Zubby said

A close-up portrait of Ahmed Ogundimu, a Black man with a short beard and mustache, wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a white collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred, warm-toned interior with wooden paneling.

**AHMED OGUNDIMU:
PIONEERING THE
FUTURE OF AI-DRIVEN
EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



In a world rapidly being reshaped by artificial intelligence, few individuals have managed to fuse technological innovation with meaningful educational impact as effectively as Ahmed Ogundimu.

A serial entrepreneur and seasoned product manager, Ogundimu has emerged as a disruptive force in the digital learning landscape, building transformative tools that redefine how students across Africa access and prepare for higher education.

Ogundimu, who serves as the Founder and Lead Consultant of Sigmanox NG and also leads product strategy at Amazon, is widely recognized for his visionary leadership in education technology. Through NGScholars.net—his flagship educational platform which has reached millions of users—he is building bridges between underserved students and academic success. Most recently, he has turned heads with the release of two groundbreaking AI tools: Ace JAMB UTME and AdmitAssist by NGScholars, both custom-trained on OpenAI's GPT architecture.

Revolutionizing Admissions Guidance and Exam Preparation

AdmitAssist by NGScholars is an intelligent admission assistant that delivers personalized, real-time guidance to Nigerian students navigating the complex processes of JAMB, UTME, and Post-UTME applications. What

once required long queues, manual research, or costly consultation can now be accessed instantly via conversational AI—democratizing education one chat at a time.

Complementing this is Ace JAMB UTME, a custom AI assistant trained to solve and explain thousands of past JAMB exam questions using detailed, step-by-step breakdowns.

Designed for both desktop and mobile access, the tool represents a leap forward in personalized exam preparation, empowering students with clarity, confidence, and autonomy.

Ahmed isn't just deploying AI for the sake of innovation, he is using it to solve real, structural problems in Africa's learning systems. These tools eliminate the knowledge gap, level the playing field, and give students control over their academic destiny.

Scaling with Purpose: ExamAce Mobile App

In addition to his AI chatbots, Ogundimu is spearheading the development of a mobile-first learning experience through ExamAce.NG, an upcoming platform that integrates generative AI with curriculum-aligned study paths, mock exams, and gamified progress tracking. Built for the realities of low-bandwidth regions, the app aims to support millions of exam takers preparing for JAMB, WAEC, and other regional qualifications with minimal cost and maximum accessibility.

As a seasoned product manager with experience in global tech ecosystems, Ogundimu brings a rare fusion of enterprise discipline and grassroots empathy. "We're not just digitizing old methods," he explains. "We're rethinking what learning looks like when AI becomes your tutor, mentor, and advisor—all in one."

Recognition and Industry Impact

Ahmed Ogundimu's innovations are increasingly gaining national and international recognition.

His AI-powered platforms are being cited by educators and online platforms for scalable, low-cost learning tools that can uplift entire populations.

Through NGScholars and its spinouts, he is not only filling an infrastructure gap but creating a new category of student support—one that's intelligent, equitable, and always available.

His work aligns with the broader global agenda of inclusive education and digital equity, earning him invitations to review student innovations, consult on edtech growth strategies, and advise non-profits across the diaspora. More than just a builder, Ogundimu is a catalyst for change using AI to drive upward mobility, one student at a time.

SAVORING THE FLAVOR OF TOGETHERNESS: CHIVITA|HOLLANDIA'S 'BRUNCH IN BLOOM' DELIGHTS



In a world where connections are increasingly digital, it's refreshing to experience the joy of coming together over good food, great company, and a shared sense of community.

On May 23, 2025, Chivita|Hollandia brought this joy to life with the third edition of its signature Lifestyle Brunch, themed "Brunch in Bloom." Held at the stylish 360 by Vertigo in Victoria Island, Lagos, the event was a masterclass in blending dairy, creativity, and connection.

Themed "Brunch in Bloom," the event was a sensory celebration that brought together food creators, lifestyle influencers, family advocates, and dairy enthusiasts.

The Chivita|Hollandia team, led by Eelco Weber, Managing Director and Adebola Arotiowa, Chief Commercial Officer welcomed guests with open arms, showcasing the company's commitment to building lifestyle experiences that resonate with modern consumers.

The event hosts, Enioluwa and Simi Sanya, set the tone for the day with their infectious energy, laughter, and storytelling.

As guests mingled and cameras clicked, they were treated to a picturesque brunch spread featuring everyday favorites reimaged with Hollandia's delicious dairy products. Creative takes on brunch classics and refreshing Chivita mocktails and cocktails added to the festive atmosphere.

One of the highlights of the event was the Milk Foam Art Workshop, where guests watched in awe as an expert barista transformed cups of coffee into edible masterpieces.

Many joined in, crafting heart-shaped swirls and patterns perfect for social media. The interactive stations, including a dairy-inspired mixologist booth and a live Chef Cupid cooking experience, showcased the versatility of dairy in both sweet and savory creations.



In her closing remarks, Barbara Onianwah, Marketing Services Manager teased a soon-to-be-launched e-commerce initiative that promises to take the Chivita|Hollandia experience to the next level.

The platform will onboard influencers, providing them with unique codes for consumers to enjoy special discounts. Influencers whose codes generate the highest purchase volumes will be rewarded, fostering a sense of community and encouraging consumer participation.

As the sun set over Victoria Island, guests departed with full stomachs, inspired palates, and highly coveted gift bags.

The “Brunch in Bloom” edition was a testament to Chivita|Hollandia’s ability to create memorable experiences that bring people together. With every gathering, the company proves that it’s not just about the food – it’s about the connections, creativity, and community that come with it.

FUTURE-PROOFING GOVERNANCE: GLOBAL SUMMIT TACKLES AI, ESG, AND DIGITAL COMPLIANCE



“We are convening at a decisive moment,” said Foluso Amusa, Founder of The Morgans Consortium and host of the summit. “Governance, risk, and compliance are no longer technical silos, they are central pillars to sustainable economic development, institutional trust, and global financial stability. The rise of sophisticated financial threats, regulatory reform, and the digitalisation of economies demand new thinking, resilient systems, and diverse leadership.”

The summit boasts a prestigious panel of speakers including Thomas Wan CK, Edidiong Akan, Nicholas Harding, Pietro Odorisio, Benedicta Onanuga , Erin O’Loughlin , Temitope Yussuf, Ezekiel Oseni, Pattison Boleigha and others.

“This year’s theme, ‘Resilience, Ethics & Innovation in the Age of Risk and Regulation’ reflects our mission to move beyond compliance and toward purpose-driven leadership,” Amusa continued. “Our conversations will challenge assumptions, spark new partnerships, and prioritise the ethical imperatives that underpin every effective governance system.”

Key features of the summit include tech demos of AI tools, ESG compliance case studies, global regulatory updates, and a highly anticipated Women in GRC & Financial Crime Prevention Forum , a dedicated space celebrating leadership and gender inclusion.

“The evolution of WGRCFP into an independent UK-registered charity is a defining moment,” said Amusa.

“This move ensures transparency, accountability, and long-term impact in championing systemic change and gender inclusion in sectors where women have long been underrepresented”, Amusa noted.

In a world increasingly shaped by digital disruption and geopolitical uncertainty, governance isn’t just a corporate concern, it’s a global one. That’s the authoritative message behind the upcoming GRC & Financial Crime Prevention Global Mid-Year Summit 2025, convening virtually on June 6 via Microsoft Teams.

Themed ‘Future-Proofing GRC & Financial Crime Prevention: The Convergence of AI, ESG, and Digital Compliance in a Rapidly Evolving Landscape’, this year’s summit draws together lineup of thought leaders, technologists, regulators, and reformers from across the globe.

7 LUCRATIVE CAREERS YOU CAN PURSUE WITHOUT NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY DEGREE

CHISOM MICHAEL



Many Nigerians are turning to skills-based training as an alternative to costly university degrees and limited job opportunities.

With employers increasingly valuing practical experience over formal education, more high-paying jobs now require skills and portfolios rather than certificates. In a country where education can be expensive and frequently disrupted by strikes, this shift is gaining momentum.

While education remains important for long-term development, the growing number of

unemployed graduates has led many to question its immediate value. Some students even go into debt to finance their studies, only to struggle in a saturated job market. As a result, Nigerians are increasingly investing in vocational skills, tech training, and entrepreneurship as more reliable paths to employment and financial independence.

Here are seven jobs that offer strong earning potential without a formal degree.

Web or Software Developer

Web and software development roles are in demand. Many developers today are self-taught or have trained through coding boot camps or online programmes. Instead of a degree, employers often look for what a developer can build. Developers design, create, and maintain websites and applications. Their work supports businesses across many industries. As the demand for digital solutions grows, so do opportunities.

Photographer

Photography is another field where formal education is not a must. With basic equipment and consistent practice, people can build successful careers. Many photographers focus on weddings, portraits, fashion, events, or product shoots. They use platforms like Instagram and websites to showcase their work and attract clients. In Lagos, those interested in hands-on learning may consider photography school or online courses are also available for those who prefer remote learning.

Brand Influencer

The rise of social media has created a new path for income through brand influencing. Influencers work with businesses to promote products or services to their followers. Payment often comes from sponsored posts, affiliate links, or product deals. Success in this space depends on building a strong personal brand and staying up-to-date with content trends. While a degree is not

needed, skills in content creation, marketing, and community building are important.

Freelance Writer or Editor

Freelancing in writing and editing allows individuals to earn from anywhere. Writers create content for blogs, websites, and other publications. Editors refine content before it reaches the public. Opportunities grow with experience and quality of work. Freelancers choose their clients and set their rates. Online platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, iWriter, and Contently are common places to find writing and editing jobs. With strong language skills and consistency, freelance writers can earn well without a degree.

Sales Representative

Sales jobs are performance-based and can offer high rewards. Sales representatives promote and sell products or services. Their earnings often include commissions and bonuses. Strong communication and relationship-building skills are key. Real estate, technology, and pharmaceuticals are sectors with high-paying sales roles. Training is available through Coursera or LinkedIn Learning. Those who work hard and hit targets can grow their income over time.

Social Media Manager



SATYA PATEL: THE VENTURE CAPITALIST WHO SEES OPPORTUNITIES IN

CHISOM MICHAEL



Satya Patel, cofounder of venture capital firm Homebrew, has built a career backing companies many investors initially overlooked. He focuses on startups in “boring” sectors like banking, HR, and defence, applying a strategy he describes as “bottom-up” investing, according to Forbes.

His early-stage bets—such as Chime, Gusto, and Headway—have gone on to become billion-dollar firms, driven by a mix of timing, deep conviction, and clear strategic input.

Patel ranks No. 14 on this year’s Forbes Midas Seed list, an annual ranking of the world’s top early-stage investors. His approach involves identifying promising startups in traditional industries and supporting them with capital and experience as they expand. “Most people don’t find HR or payroll exciting,” Patel said. “But the problems in these sectors are real, and software can solve them.”

A clear example of this philosophy is Patel’s early involvement with Chime, the digital bank now preparing for an initial public offering

(IPO). In 2015, Chime CEO Chris Britt was preparing to launch a feature that would round up transactions and automatically transfer the difference into a savings account. According to Britt, Bank of America warned that it would sue if the feature went live, citing similar patents. Patel advised Britt to go ahead anyway.

“There would be nothing better for a young startup than to be sued by Bank of America,” Patel recalled telling the founder. “And for us and them to make a ton of noise about it.”

Chime went ahead with the feature. The bank never sued, and the feature proved critical to the company’s early growth. Today, Chime is valued at \$25 billion, with 2024 revenue of \$1.7 billion.

Patel’s approach stands out not just for the sectors he targets, but for the type of support he offers founders. “Satya knew when to get into our business and where to push, and where to pull back and let us do our thing,” Britt said. “It’s a fine line.”

In another example, Patel backed online payroll platform Gusto early on. The company is now valued at \$9.6 billion. He also invested in Plaid, the financial services platform valued at \$6.1 billion, and Headway, a mental health startup valued at \$2.3 billion.

His investment in defence technology company Shield also reflects his long-term thinking. Shield, valued at \$5 billion, builds military drones. Patel helped the company raise more capital and expand beyond the seed stage. “Satya just, over and over again, put himself out there, put his reputation on the line to introduce us to top quality investors,” said CEO Ryan Tseng.

Challenges have emerged too. Forbes previously reported an incident involving Shield’s V-BAT drone that injured a U.S. service member. Still, Tseng said Patel’s support has remained strong. “I’ve always felt like he’s had my back.”

Patel’s understanding of technology and science began early. He grew up in suburban Las Vegas, where his father worked at a nuclear test site under security clearance. During university, Patel took a summer internship at Raytheon, the same site where his father worked. “It gave me an early appreciation for science and what science can enable, both the positive and potentially the negative,” he said.

Patel began his career in venture capital at GeoCapital Partners in 1997. Before most startups had websites, he subscribed to hundreds of trade publications and walked conference floors to scout for talent. In 2003, he joined Google and worked on AdSense. He later moved to Twitter as vice president of product but left after the company began slowing its roadmap ahead of its 2012 IPO.

In 2013, he co-founded Homebrew with Hunter Walk, a former product leader he met at Google. Homebrew writes seed cheques between \$1 million and \$3 million. Patel is known for being quiet in meetings, offering short, direct advice. “Satya, I’m going to take five minutes that we don’t have to give this answer. Can you give the better answer in 30 seconds?” Walk said of their dynamic.

Patel also cofounded Screendoor, a fund that backs first-time venture capital managers, alongside Walk and investors like Aileen Lee and Rob Hayes. The fund requires its backers to contribute at least 10% of the capital when raising their own funds.

Chris Britt said Patel’s strength lies in his dual perspective as both a former product executive and experienced investor. “He understands the role of an early stage investor. Sometimes it’s more art than science.”

NIGERIA'S DIGITAL LEAP: EMOSIM REVOLUTIONISES GLOBAL TRAVEL CONNECTIVITY

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



L-R: Elvis Eboma, Chief Operation Officer, EmoSIM, Aditya Khosla, Founder & CEO, TheHouse 48 Inc; Bayo Adedeji, Group Chief Executive Officer, WAKANOW; Tony Agenmonmen, Immediate Past Chairman, National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria (NIMN); Jobson Ewalefoh, Director General, Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission(ICRC); and Umar, Dambatta, the Immediate Past Executive Vice Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Communications Commission(NCC), during the Official Launch of EmoSIM(travel eSIM) in Lagos on Wednesday.

For Nigerian travelers, the pain of roaming charges, SIM swaps, and patchy networks abroad may soon be a thing of the past. EMOSIM, a homegrown eSIM solution launched in Lagos this week, promises to deliver seamless mobile connectivity across 190 countries without the need to change SIM cards or break the bank.

The product, developed by Nigerian tech entrepreneur Jimmy Eboma in collaboration with global telecom giant Tata Communications, aims to tackle one of the most persistent pain points in international travel for Nigerians: affordable and reliable mobile access.

“Connectivity is not a luxury, it is a lifeline,” said Eboma, EMOSIM’s founder and chairman, at the launch event. “This is a Nigerian solution to a global challenge.”

Born from Regulatory Vision

EMOSIM’s launch comes in the wake of major reforms by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), which enabled the licensing of Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNOs). Prof. Umar Garba Danbatta, former Executive Vice Chairman of the NCC, credited the move to a long-term strategy aimed at optimising underutilised spectrum.



Speaking in a fireside chat at the event, Danbatta said “Rather than let spectrum go unused, we opened it up to innovative players like EMOSIM.”

“Today, we’re seeing the impact; affordable, reliable telecoms for everyone, everywhere.”

The NCC, under Danbatta’s leadership, implemented reforms that pushed mobile subscriber numbers from just 500,000 lines in 2003 to over 200 million today. EMOSIM is one of the latest MVNOs licensed in 2022, and must meet rollout benchmarks by 2025 or risk losing its license.

A national and continental advantage
According to Bayo Adedeji, CEO of Wakanow, Nigeria’s leading travel tech firm, EMOSIM is not just a technological leap but a strategic win for Nigeria’s economy.

“Until now, we bought eSIMs from overseas, paying in dollars,” Adedeji told BD Weekender. “Now, with EMOSIM, we retain that value locally and reduce forex leakage.”

Wakanow serves over 1.5 million Nigerian travelers, and Adedeji sees EMOSIM as a product with massive export potential to 28 countries where the company operates. “This is how we stop bleeding dollars and start earning them,” he said.

The solution, he added, is particularly critical for intra-African trade and travel, where language and technical barriers often hamper smooth communication. EMOSIM, with its multilingual support and 600 connectivity profiles, simplifies the experience for the modern African traveler.

A Traveler's Relief

Tony Agenmonmen, former President of the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria, recounted his personal frustrations with roaming while abroad. "Each time I travel, I struggle with SIMs and connectivity," he said. "EMOSIM solves a problem every Nigerian traveler faces."

The eSIM activates instantly upon arrival, providing access to local networks without the need for new hardware or tedious activation steps. For families staying in touch or entrepreneurs managing cross-border business, this is a transformational shift.

Government backing and security promise
The launch event also featured remarks from Nigeria's

Minister of Interior, Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, who lauded EMOSIM for aligning with national goals of secure, digitised mobility.

"The concept of borders is evolving from physical checkpoints to data-driven virtual access points," Tunji-Ojo said in his keynote address.

"Solutions like EMOSIM ensure stress free travel and unbothered telephony service."

The Interior Ministry confirmed that it will continue supporting private-sector innovation that improves commerce, migration, and ease of doing business. The minister also emphasised the strategic role of eSIMs in protecting Nigerian citizens abroad through interconnected data and telecom systems.

Nigeria's tech legacy grows

The success of EMOSIM joins a growing list of innovations from Nigeria's booming tech space, alongside fintech and healthtech revolutions. For many in the industry, the launch is not just about a product but about reshaping perceptions of what is possible from Africa. "Africa does not follow trends, we set them," said Eboma. "Nigeria does not wait for the future, we build it."

EMOSIM, he added, is more than connectivity. "It is about national pride, global reach, and ensuring that "no Nigerian is left offline. With EMOSIM, Nigeria's digital citizens now have a passport to global access, powered by local innovation."



NIGERIAN IMMIGRATION UPDATE: MAJOR REFORMS IN EXPATRIATE ADMINISTRATION AND VISA REGIME

SEUN TIMI-KOLEOLU

Introduction

On 1st May 2025, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Ministry of Interior and the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), launched sweeping reforms to the country's expatriate administration and visa regime. These measures aim to curb abuse of expatriate quotas (EQ), enforce meaningful knowledge transfer, and streamline immigration processes through digitalization.

In this newsletter, we highlight the key changes and what they mean for businesses.

What are the Key Reforms?

1. Digitalization and Process Automation

i. Mandatory Use of the Expatriate Administration System (EAS):

All new and renewal applications for expatriate quotas (EQ) must now be processed exclusively through the EAS. Employers are required to upload key documents such as certificates of incorporation, tax clearance certificates, and organisational charts. The portal aims to enhance transparency and improve processing timelines.

ii. Automated CERPAC Application Process

Residence permit (CERPAC) applications are now to be submitted online via the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) portal. A digital form is to be issued upon successful verification, followed by physical card delivery to the employer's address.

iii. e-Visa System Replacing Visa-on-Arrival (VOA)

The visa-on-arrival system has been replaced by a fully digital e-Visa platform that accommodates individual, group, and family applications. The e-Visa system removes the requirement for a physical visit to the NIS or a visa counter at the airport, enabling applicants to apply for and receive their visa digitally

prior to their journey. VOA approval letters issued prior to 1st of May 2025 remain valid for a limited two-week period.

TWP visas—available in 3-month and 6-month durations—must now be applied for through the NIS portal. Fees are set at \$600 for the 3-month duration and \$1,100 for the 6-month duration. These visas are non-extendable.

v. Centralised Visa Approvals

All visa decisions will now be issued centrally by NIS headquarters in Abuja. While applications may still be lodged at Nigerian embassies or consulates, approval authority resides exclusively with the NIS, ensuring consistency and reducing discretion.

vi. Online Landing and Exit Cards

All travellers entering or leaving Nigeria must now complete digital landing and exit forms. This real-time data collection is designed to improve immigration tracking and reduce incidents of visa overstay.

2. Compliance and Localisation Requirements

i. Stricter Understudy Policy

Employers must assign a minimum of two qualified Nigerian understudies (with Bachelor's or HND qualification) to each expatriate role. These understudies are expected to be trained to assume these roles within 4 to 7 years, depending on industry. A structured and documented succession plan is strongly advised.

ii. Increased Fees for EQ and Business Permits

The Ministry of Interior intends to revise upward the fees applicable to EQ and business permit applications and renewals. The additional revenue will be used to strengthen compliance oversight, including site visits and audits.

iii. New Repatriation Insurance Requirement

Expatriates will now be required to maintain repatriation insurance to cover the cost of removal in the event of immigration violations. The annual insurance premium is expected to range from \$500 to \$1,000, depending on the expatriate's length of stay.

iv. Enforcement of Overstay Penalties

New penalties for overstaying a visa have been introduced and will become effective from 1st August 2025. The penalties range from \$15 per day to 5-year and permanent travel bans, depending on the duration and severity of the overstay.

What are the action steps companies doing business in Nigeria should take?

To ensure a smooth transition under the new framework companies doing business in Nigeria should:

Conduct a full audit of the expatriate workforce and EQ/CERPAC status.

Review and update localisation and succession plans to meet the understudy requirements.

Allocate budget for repatriation insurance compliance. Strengthen internal Human Resource (HR), legal, and immigration processes or seek external advisory support.

Engage proactively with regulators and industry associations to stay informed on implementation details and further guidance.

Conclusion

The government anticipates that these reforms will curb abuse of the Expatriate Quota policy, enforce effective knowledge transfer to Nigerians, and create efficiency in the immigration process. However, the full impact will only become evident as the reforms are fully implemented. We advise that businesses proactively review their expatriate management processes, update compliance frameworks, and seek legal guidance to ensure a smooth transition.

PROFILE OF SEUN TIMI-KOLEOLU

Seun Timi-Koleolu is a Founding Partner at Pavestones Legal, a female-led modern full-service law practice situated in Lagos, Nigeria. Her areas of practice include Corporate and Commercial law, Technology law, Private Equity, Foreign Direct Investments and Data Protection.

She is a highly respected lawyer in the technology industry in Nigeria, renowned for her deep understanding of complex legal issues and her ability to develop innovative solutions for her clients. Her expertise in Fintech, Corporate & Commercial Law and M&A is widely recognized by peers and clients alike. She has consistently delivered successful outcomes for high-profile clients, as well as businesses and individuals. She has also advised and ensured regulatory compliance in both Nigeria and other countries.

Beyond her legal prowess, Seun is commercially savvy and a visionary leader. She is passionate about not just delivering bespoke legal services, but also helping the businesses she advises to achieve growth.

Her clear, strategic and proactive communication style with clients, shines through her sharing of legal updates and newsletters. This fills an information gap in the market,

meeting the needs of not only her clients but also the general public.

Seun is consistently recognized as a leading practitioner in her field. Awarded 'Women Leader in Law' at the 2024 African Legal Awards and 'Partner of the Year' at the 2021 African Legal Awards, both held in South Africa.

Her accomplishments in Fintech and Commercial Law Practice have earned recognitions as a Leading Lawyer in international legal directories including the 2025 and 2024 Chambers and Partners Fintech directory. She was named in 2024 Business Day report as an exemplary woman inspiring and advancing the economy positively.

She has also been recognized in the 2023 Legal 500 EMEA Rankings and also one of the 2023 Most Influential People of African Descent (MIPAD) under 40 in New York.

She currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Technology Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association-Section on Business Law (NBA- SBL), a predominantly male led committee in the past. She sits as a Non-Executive Director on the board of an international Money Transfer Organization.

THE QUIET POWER: CHARISMA, SELF-ACCEPTANCE, AND THE NIGERIAN PERFORMANCE COMPLEX

EYESAN TORITSEJU

Have you ever been in a room with someone who just radiates? It's a fascinating thing to witness true charisma in action. These people function like human magnets, effortlessly drawing everyone into their orbit. It's not about their appearance as they may not be the most conventionally attractive people nor is it about the drawing of attention to themselves by being loud or flashy: It's an almost intangible pull, this sense that they've got something you want, something you need.

the ability to captivate and hold attention by just simply being, they make you feel seen and understood every time they talk to you. It almost feels magical in a way, it's no wonder we also refer to charisma as "charm". And no, it's not about having the "gift of gab" or reciting TED Talks in casual conversation. True charisma is deeper than that. It's the ability to make you feel interesting even when they're the ones talking. It's the subtle art of being present, not performative. These are the folks who can hold eye contact without turning it into a psychological showdown. No squinting, no smirking, no "I'm trying to read your soul" intensity, just honest, grounded presence.

In a culture often characterized by elaborate displays and social posturing, these people I believe really stand out for their authenticity. They don't seem to be engaged in the performance of power; they simply embody it. They are real, in a way that resonates deeply in a society where trust can be hard won because let's face it, the average Nigerian has a PhD in performance.

Our society has taught us to perform respect, perform success, perform happiness, and

sometimes even perform spirituality. You've probably said "it is well" more times this week than you've said your own name. Those unshaken by the need for external validation, project a quiet confidence and a highly rare level of comfort in their own skin. And in a society where many are still figuring out what to believe, what to do, or even who to be, this display of self assuredness is magnetic.

The natural question is this: Is charisma something you're born with, a magical "it factor" that some people just seem to have? Or is it something you can learn, like any other skill? The truth is, it's a bit of both, and the mix is fascinating. Some folks definitely seem to come out of the gate with a natural charm, an easy confidence. Even as babies, they were probably cooing in a poetic cadence and persuading aunties to hand over extra meat at parties. However, for the rest of us, whose main childhood talent was hiding during family functions, there's hope. Charisma isn't magic. It's a skill. And like any skill, it can be cultivated.

The word "charisma" comes from the Greek *charis*, meaning "divine gift", "grace" or "favor." Thinkers like Max Weber viewed charisma as a kind of supernatural authority, a force that lets individuals inspire devotion and command loyalty without relying on formal rules. However, modern psychology has demystified charisma. Studies now show that it's not purely inborn; it can be cultivated. Like a muscle, charisma grows stronger with intentional use. And one of its strongest exercises? Radical self-acceptance.

The Power of Presence in a Country Built on Performance

In Nigeria, charisma isn't just admired, it's often essential. When institutions wobble, when systems are opaque and unreliable, people lean not on structure, but on personalities. We follow people, not policies. We trust a man's voice more than his CV. A pastor's fire more than his theology. A politician's gra-gra more than his manifesto. In the marketplace of influence, charisma is legal tender.

However, it also creates a tension between performance and substance, between style and depth. We've built an entire culture around "packaging," where appearances sometimes matter more than ability. And while that makes charisma a useful tool for mobility, it also turns it into a mask. A way to glide through gatekeeping mechanisms that should require more than a good smile and crisp English.

Still, we can't afford to write charisma off as solely superficial. In a society where opportunity is unequal and trust is fragile, true presence matters. It is reassuring. It anchors. The charismatic leader, when genuine, can unify fractured communities.

The charismatic teacher can ignite a love for learning in overcrowded classrooms. The charismatic youth advocate can hold attention long enough to move apathy into action. In a landscape this uncertain, charisma becomes less of an indulgence and more of a necessary force for progress.

The kind of charisma we desperately need is not the glossy, hyper-curated kind that lives on Instagram reels and panel discussions. It's the grounded kind. The kind that begins with self-awareness and deep empathy. The kind that refuses to perform perfection and instead shows up with integrity and inspires others to do the same.

Self-Acceptance as a Sociopolitical Force
At the heart of real charisma is one thing: self-acceptance. Not the social media kind that says, "Love yourself!" before throwing you into a vat of comparison, but the slow, quiet kind that says, Even if no one claps today, I'm still enough.

In a country like Nigeria, where identity is constantly under pressure: by tribe, class, religion, gender, to accept oneself fully is a kind of protest. To say, "This is who I am" in a space that constantly tries to define you, box you in, or dress you up, is bold, it's also charismatic. Why? Nothing draws people in like someone who is deeply rooted in their own story, yet very importantly, open enough to hold space for others.

We need leaders, creatives, professionals, and everyday people who are not just striving to be liked, but committed to being real. Because once you've accepted yourself, you stop competing with everyone else's image. You start leading from your center. And in a society riddled with performance pressure, that kind of self-possession is magnetic.

So no, you don't need to be the loudest voice in the room. You don't need a British accent or a wardrobe curated by Pinterest. What you need is clarity. Conviction. The courage to say, This is who I am, and to mean it. Because once you embody that, genuinely and not performatively, you don't just attract followers. You inspire leaders.

And in Nigeria, where the next wave of transformation won't come from perfection but from self actualization, we need fewer performers and more people who are deeply, unapologetically themselves.

Eyesan Toritseju is a graduate of Civil Engineering from Covenant University turned serial entrepreneur and corporate strategist. Passionate about society and the cultural ideologies that shape us, he explores how these forces propel or inhibit progress through his writing. In his column, *Cosmopolitan Nigeria*, Eyesan examines how young Nigerians navigate the complexities of culture, religion, and identity in a rapidly evolving world.

REVAMPING NIGERIA'S ECONOMY THROUGH FOUNDATIONAL EDUCATION

CHARLES OGWO



According to Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Globally, education is accepted as a pivot for economic development and progress, and Nigeria is no exception. Consequent to the above, Nigeria's future success is founded on its education system.

Foundational education, which encompasses primary and early secondary education, is crucial for Nigeria's economic development. It lays the groundwork for a skilled workforce, fosters innovation, and promotes overall national progress.

Nigeria's need to invest in children's foundational skills, literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional development is more pronounced now than ever.

Study has shown that seven of 10 Nigerian children do not meet the minimum literacy proficiency levels required by age 10. This is not just a statistic but a stark warning of the looming crisis that could undermine the country's future if nothing is done to change the negative narrative.

After all, Benjamin Franklin once said that an education is the investment with the greatest returns; hence, investing in a child's educational foundation is similar to building a foundation.

Without strong foundational skills, children are ill-prepared for the complexities of life and the demands of the modern economy.

Literacy and numeracy are the bedrock upon which all other learning is built. These essential skills are necessary for children to effectively engage with more advanced subjects and develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Good education works to develop not only a child's understanding of established knowledge but also sharpens his/her mind and enhances their capacity for thinking, creativity, and innovation so they can become active creators of new knowledge.

However, the current Nigerian education landscape grapples with myriad challenges, undermining the nation's human capital potential. As of 2020, Nigeria's Human Capital Index, as assessed by the World Bank, stood at 0.36, positioning it 168th out of 173 countries globally, a marginal improvement from 0.34 in 2018, where it ranked 152 out of 157 nations surveyed.



According to UNESCO, Nigeria has approximately 20 million out-of-school children aged 6-18.

The surging number of out-of-school children in Nigeria negatively impacts the country's economic development by reducing human capital, potentially leading to a shortage of skilled labour, and hindering overall productivity and economic growth.

Busayo Aderounmu, a senior lecturer at Covenant University, Ogun State, speaking on out-of-school in Nigeria, said, "The higher the number of out-of-school children in the country, the higher the level of illiteracy, insecurity, and poverty among others." Aderounmu said the country is faced with a learning and economic crisis, mainly fuelled by the rising number of out-of-school children.

"This implies that the economy will face serious problems in the future if the issue is not curbed in time," she said.

Kingsley Moghalu, president of the Institute for Governance and Economic Transformation, said that education empowers citizens to realise their full potential.

"Functional education inculcates much to learners beyond the prescribed academic curriculum and encourages the development of social behaviour that will be useful to them in the future.

"Well-educated individuals are not only confident to lead fulfilling personal lives but also actively engage in problem-solving within their societal contexts, thereby elevating overall societal welfare and fostering social cohesion," he said.

Children who develop strong socioemotional skills are better equipped to navigate life's challenges, work collaboratively with others, and contribute positively to society.

Investing in foundational skills prepares Nigerian children for the contemporary world, where technology and innovation are key drivers of progress.

Strong literacy and numeracy skills are essential for understanding and effectively leveraging technology in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

A well-functioning education system will equip children with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the global economy, attracting investment, creating jobs, and reducing poverty.

Nigeria can build its economic future through foundational learning by investing in quality education, fostering digital literacy, and promoting skills development in areas like STEM and entrepreneurship.

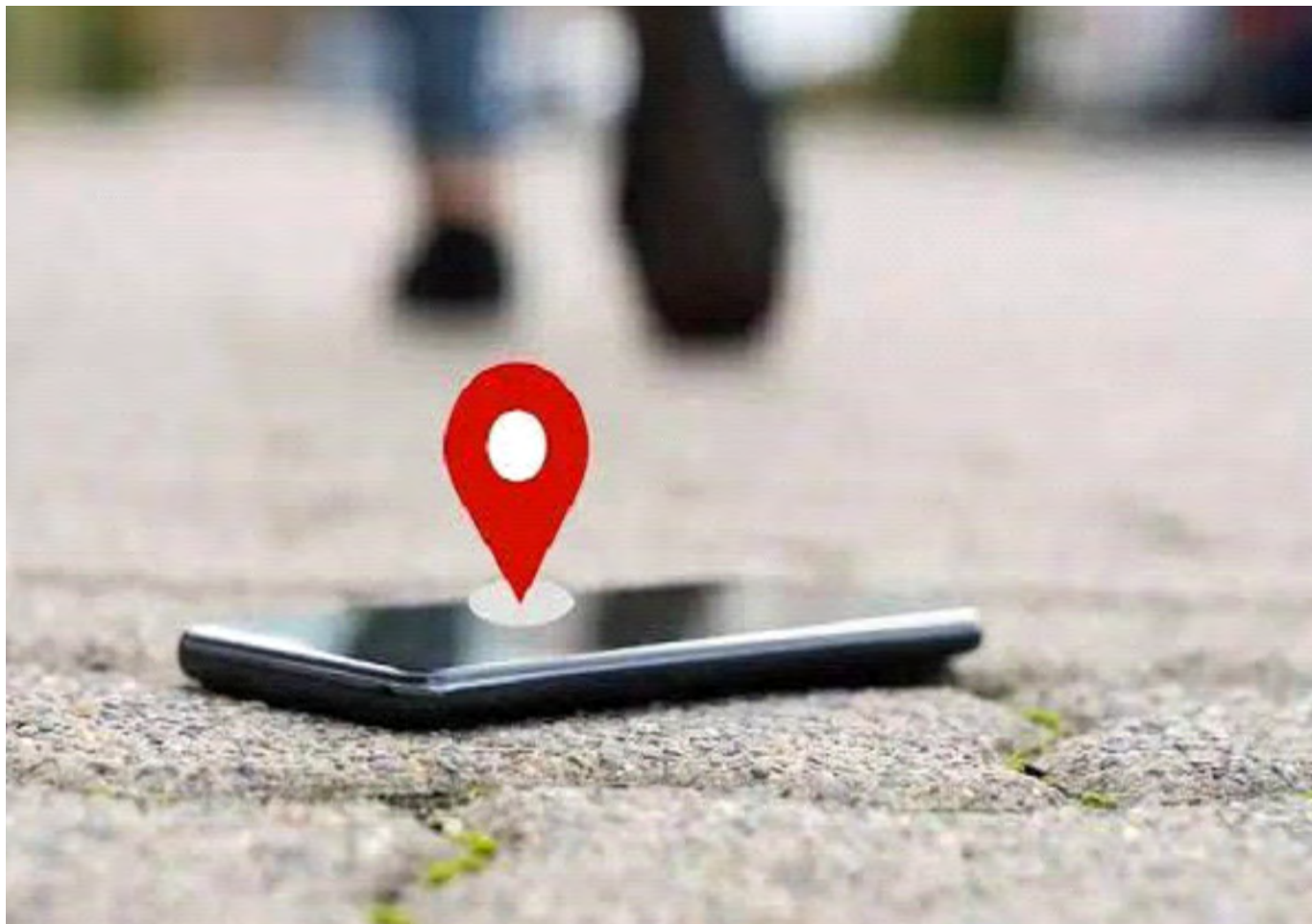
This, experts believe, will create a skilled workforce capable of driving innovation and attracting investment, ultimately leading to economic growth and stability.

As the government proposes a zero percent tax education system, there needs to channel for resources to develop foundational learning because it is essential to ensuring sustainable development for the future.

Drawing inspiration from countries with successful implementation of foundational education, such as South Korea, the Dominican Republic. Nigeria can adopt strategic approaches that promote inclusive growth and prosperity for all its citizens.

7 APPS TO TRACK YOUR MISSING ANDROID PHONE

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



Losing a phone today can be more than frustrating—it can be financially draining, especially considering how expensive smartphones have become. Replacing one often feels like an unplanned investment, which is why knowing how to track your phone when it's lost or stolen is important.

According to a selection put together by Pulse, here are seven apps that can assist you in locating a missing Android phone. While these apps offer useful tracking features, most require access to certain functions on your device, which

may raise concerns about data privacy. If you are cautious about sharing access with third-party services, it might be safer to rely on Google's built-in tools.

Google Find My Device

Google Find My Device is one of the most reliable tools for locating a lost Android phone. It offers three key features that simplify the search process. The "Get directions" function allows you to see your phone's real-time location and navigate directly to it. If you are nearby but can't

spot it, the “Play a sound” feature rings your device, even if it’s on silent. And if you suspect it’s in the wrong hands, the “Secure device” option lets you lock the screen, display a message for the finder, or remotely erase your personal data. As a Google product, it integrates well with your Google account and offers robust security measures.

Life360: Live Location Sharing

Life360 goes beyond just tracking lost phones, it is a full-fledged safety tool. Available for both Android and iOS devices, the app connects users into private groups called “circles,” allowing each member to see others’ real-time locations. If your phone goes missing, you can use a trusted family member’s device within the circle to track it down. Life360 also integrates with Tile, a smart tracking device, and uses GPS to locate registered devices, making it highly effective for phones and people alike. Note that location services need to be enabled on your phone for the app to function accurately. It’s a solid choice if you’re looking for both family safety and phone tracking in one app.

Find My Phone: Family Locator

Find My Phone: Family Locator offers a direct, phone-number-based tracking system. Once you enter the number of the lost device, the app attempts to pinpoint its location. Designed with family safety in mind, the app allows users to create groups where each member’s location can be shared and tracked. However, for tracking to be successful, the phone must be turned on, have GPS enabled, and an active phone number. While the app’s interface is user-friendly, it does come with a subscription plan.

Tracky: Location GPS Sharing

Tracky is another app that helps track your phone using a mobile number. After manually inputting the number or selecting one from your contact list, the app returns detailed location data. One standout feature of Tracky is its ability to maintain a history of past locations, not just

the current one, making it easier to retrace your steps. However, access to location history and other advanced features requires a subscription.

Phone Tracker By Number

Phone Tracker By Number uses a unique method to trace lost phones. When you enter a phone number and click “Locate,” the app sends a text message containing a tracking invitation to that number. Once the recipient clicks the link, their location becomes visible on your app’s dashboard. This technique is simple and effective, provided the phone is switched on and the person who has it is willing to cooperate. While this may not be ideal for theft situations, it is incredibly useful if your phone was simply picked up by a helpful stranger. The app is free with optional subscription features.

Where’s My Droid

Where’s My Droid brings several unique features to the table for Android users. One of its most helpful functions is “Commander Mode,” which allows you to remotely control and locate your phone via GPS. The app also includes a Theft Detection feature that can discreetly take photos and record activity on your phone including the thief’s face. For extra security, the app lets you lock your device remotely or initiate a factory reset through its “Lock setup” and “Wipe setup” options. Perhaps the most unique is “GPS Flare,” which captures the phone’s location even when the battery is critically low. These advanced functions are part of the premium package.

Find My Phone: Find Lost Phone

This app helps you track a lost phone and it includes features like a ringing alert, which plays a loud sound even if the phone is on silent, and a location tracker that helps pinpoint where your phone is. There’s also a “Don’t Touch My Phone” feature, which sets off an alarm, flashes the light, and vibrates the phone to deter potential theft. The app stores location history and comes in a free version with ads or a premium version without them.

10 MOST ANTICIPATED MOVIES OF JUNE 2025



The film scene in June 2025 is brimming with energy, delivering a cinematic buffet that caters to every kind of viewer. Whatever your taste, there is something worth looking forward to.

According to audience engagement data tracked by Diesel Labs, here are the 10 most anticipated movies being released in June 2025

Ballerina

Set in the heart of the John Wick universe, *Ballerina* stars Ana de Armas as a skilled assassin seeking vengeance for the murder of her family. The movie, directed by Len Wiseman, expands the franchise's gritty lore and features appearances by Norman Reedus, Anjelica Huston, and Keanu Reeves as John Wick himself. The action thriller movie is slated for release on 6 June 2025.



Materialists

Materialists is a romantic comedy directed by Celine Song. The story follows Lucy (played by Dakota Johnson), a New York matchmaker torn between a wealthy new client (Pedro Pascal) and her charming ex (Chris Evans). Set against the backdrop of modern relationships and personal identity, the movie blends humour with introspection. It is scheduled to premiere on 13 June 2025.



F1

Brad Pitt speeds into cinemas in F1, a sports drama centred on a retired Formula One driver who returns to mentor a rookie, played by Damson Idris. Directed by Joseph Kosinski and produced with input from Lewis Hamilton, the movie was shot during real F1 races to capture the pulse of the sport. F1 is set for global theatrical release on 27 June 2025, under Warner Bros. Pictures.

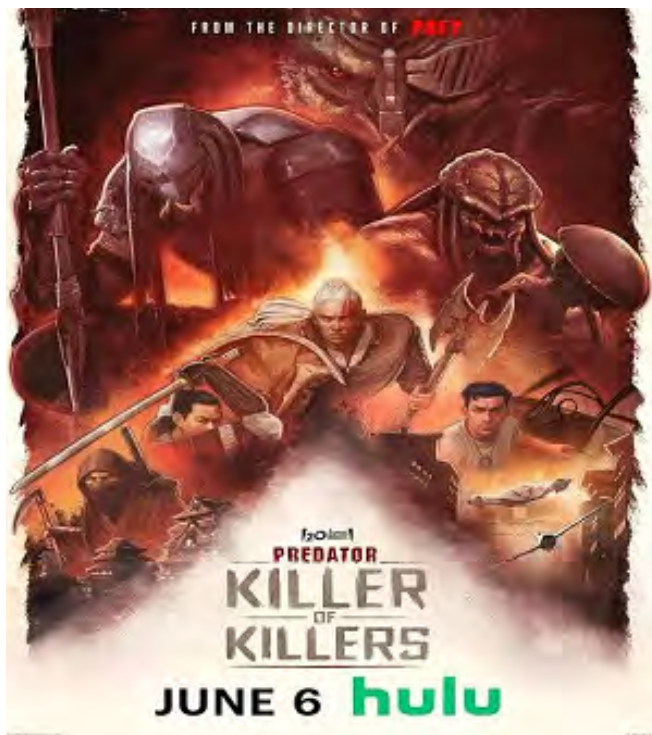
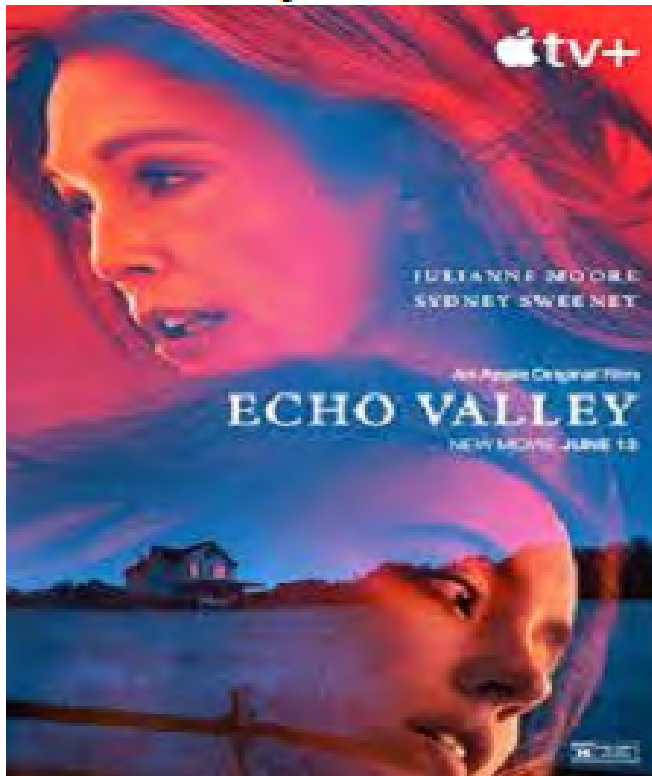
How to train your dragon

This highly anticipated family adventure is a live-action reimagining of the beloved animated classic. Directed by Dean DeBlois—the mastermind behind the original trilogy—the movie brings back the story of Hiccup and his dragon Toothless in a visually stunning new format. Universal Pictures will release the movie on 13 June 2025.



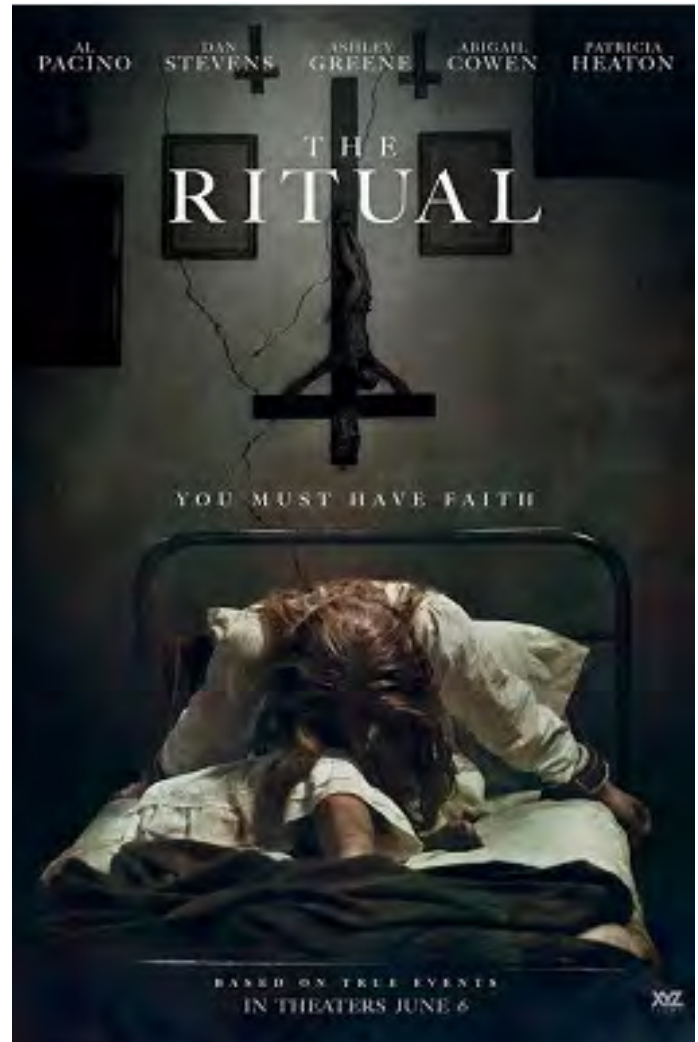
Echo valley

In this thriller, Julianne Moore plays Kate, a woman living in rural Pennsylvania whose world is turned upside down when her daughter (played by Sydney Sweeney) returns home covered in blood that is not hers. As secrets unravel, the story dives into themes of survival, motherhood, and trust. Echo Valley debuts on 13 June 2025.



The ritual

Based on the chilling real-life story of one of the most documented exorcisms in American history, The Ritual stars Al Pacino and Dan Stevens as priests battling a demonic force inhabiting a young woman, portrayed by Abigail Cowen. Directed by David Midell, this movie explores the blurred lines between psychological trauma and spiritual warfare. The horror movie releases on 6 June 2025.



Predator: Killer of Killers

Predator: Killer of Killers is an adult animated sci-fi action anthology movie that pits the fearsome Predator against history's fiercest warriors—including a Viking, a ninja, and a WWII pilot. Directed by Dan Trachtenberg, the movie brings a fresh, stylised twist to the legendary franchise. It will be available on 6 June 2025.

Bride hard

Bride Hard delivers action comedy when Rebel Wilson's character sees her childhood best friend's lavish wedding interrupted by a hostage situation. What follows is a wild blend of bridal chaos and bullet-dodging antics. Blurring the lines between action and comedy, this movie promises big laughs and explosions alike. It hits screens on 20 June 2025.



Elio

Pixar's Elio follows an 11-year-old boy who finds himself mistakenly beamed into space and appointed Earth's official ambassador to a galactic council. As Elio learns to navigate this new world, the story touches on belonging, bravery, and being misunderstood. This animated family adventure releases on 20 June 2025.



Sally

Sally is a powerful documentary chronicling the life and career of Sally Ride as the first American woman in space, and her relationship with Tam O'Shaughnessy. Through rare archival footage and personal reflections, the movie explores her groundbreaking journey, scientific contributions, and advocacy for young women in STEM. It premieres on 17 June 2025.

INSIDE THE MIND OF A COLLECTOR: IS IT LOVE, STATUS, OR STRATEGY?

What makes a collector tick?

When you walk into any collector's home, you will experience more than art. Their stories will come alive. You will get a glimpse into their soul. A collector's collection is a reflection of their journey.

This begs the question: What truly drives someone to collect really expensive items like art? Is it pure passion? A quest for prestige? A calculated investment?

Collecting art is a deeply personal endeavour. For some, it's about love. The thrill of discovering an artist early in his/her career, in discovering a piece that resonates deeply with them. For others, it's a status symbol—a way to showcase great wealth and taste. And then, there are those who see art as a strategic asset class—a tangible investment in an unpredictable world.

Understanding the motivations behind collecting can offer insights into human behaviour. It reveals our desires, fears, and aspirations.

In this digest, we will delve into the psyche of the collector. Is it love, status, or strategy? Or perhaps a blend of all three?

TOP PICKS FROM OUR COLLECTION



Title: Hope 01
Artist: Thabiso Dakamela
Medium: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 12 x 8 in | 30 x 21 cm
Available on Request



This digest is brought to you by Patrons MCAA. Think African art, think Patrons. Patrons is Africa's leading art advisory and dealership firm with deep expertise in African art, helping private and corporate art collectors diversify their wealth through art collection, appraisal, packaging & transportation, storage, insurance, maintenance, and restoration. Purchase or general inquiry? Reach out: art@patronsmcaa.com.



Title: Restless Toes
Artist: Abrifor Silas
Medium: Acrylic, marker and pastel on paper
Dimensions: 20 x 25 in | 51 x 64 cm
Available on Request



Title: Couple Goals 4
 Artist: Alabi Oladimeji
 Medium: Acrylic on textured canvas
 Dimensions: 25 x 25 in | 64 x 64 cm
 Available on Request

The Passionate Collector: Love at First Sight

For many, collecting begins with a spark, an emotional connection to a piece that speaks to them. It's not about value or prestige. It's about the joy of ownership. The pleasure of living with art that moves them.

This type of collector is driven by emotion. They unashamedly let their emotions drive their purchase decisions. They buy what they love, often without considering market trends. Their collections are eclectic, reflecting personal tastes and experiences. According to Carolyn Edlund, the founder of Artsy Shark, "Most devoted art collectors are people who truly love and value the pieces that they purchase."

These collectors often form deep bonds with artists. They attend exhibitions, engage in conversations, and sometimes become patrons. Their homes are galleries of affection, each piece holding a story, a memory, a connection.

The Status Seeker: Art as a Badge of Prestige

In some circles, art is more than aesthetics. It's a social statement. It is a symbol of sophistication, wealth, and cultural capital. Owning a piece by a celebrated and renowned artist can elevate one's social standing. It's about being seen, recognised, and respected.

These collectors are strategic in their acquisitions. They seek works from established artists, often guided by advisors. Their collections are curated to first impress, to showcase discernment and affluence.

For them, art is a networking tool. A conversation starter. A way to connect with elites. Their collections are displayed prominently, signalling their place in the upper echelons of society.

The Strategic Investor: Art as an Asset

Then, there are those who view art through a financial lens. They see potential in the market, opportunities for appreciation. Art becomes a portfolio component, a hedge against inflation, and a tangible asset in volatile times.

These collectors are analytical. They study trends, attend auctions, and consult experts. Their purchases are calculated, aiming for long-term gains.

While passion may play a role, the primary driver is a decent return on investment. They monitor market movements, artist trajectories, and economic indicators. For them, art is both beauty and business.

The Blended Motivations: A Complex Psyche

In reality, most collectors don't fit neatly into one category. Motivations often intertwine. A collector might start with passion, only to realise the status it brings. Or begin with investment in mind, but develop a genuine love for the art. Psychologist Andrew Dillon notes that collecting can be driven by a mix of "identity and esteem". It's a reflection of self, a way to express values, aspirations, and personality. This blend makes collecting a deeply human endeavour. It's not just about objects but about meaning, connection, and purpose.



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

UNITY CUP FINAL: SUPER EAGLES AND REGGAE BOYZ LIGHT UP LONDON

ANTHONY NLEBEM



Nigeria's Super Eagles will face the Reggae Boyz of Jamaica in what promises to be an electrifying final of the Unity Cup Invitational Tournament on Saturday evening at Brentford's Gtech Community Stadium in west London.

Having won the only previous edition of the tournament in 2004, Nigeria will aim to reclaim the Unity Cup title in front of what is expected to be a capacity crowd.

A tournament of unity and celebration

This year's Unity Cup has succeeded beyond the pitch, fostering cultural exchange, sporting excellence, and friendship among diverse communities in the United Kingdom. It has delivered on its promise of creating an atmosphere of euphoria, entertainment, and no-strings-attached camaraderie.

Tough battles on the road to final

Neither Nigeria nor Jamaica had a smooth path to the final. Jamaica saw their 2–0 lead over Trinidad and Tobago's Soca Warriors evaporate before securing victory with a stoppage-time penalty. The Super Eagles also raced into a 2–0 lead over Ghana within 19 minutes, only to struggle in the second

half. Ghana, led by veteran Jordan Ayew, pulled one back through Brandon Thomas-Asante and pushed hard for an equaliser, only to be denied by a crucial late save from Stanley Nwabali.

Saturday's final promises more than just a football match. The Gtech Community Stadium will transform into a vibrant festival of dancing, drumming, high-decibel singing, and competitive spirit. A sea of green and white and yellow and black will fill the stands, with fans celebrating a shared heritage through football.

Familiar Foe

Nigeria's win over Ghana mirrored their 2–0 friendly victory over the same side in Marrakech, Morocco, in March 2023. Remarkably, Cyriel Dessers, who scored the opener back then, was on the scoresheet again, this time with even more composure and control.

Squad rotation likely for Chelle's Super Eagles

Super Eagles Coach Eric Chelle, aiming for his third win in four games in charge of Nigeria, could rotate his squad for the final.

Players like Maduka Okoye, Waliu Ojetoye, Junior Nduka, Saviour Isaac, Tolu Arokodare, Nathan Tella, and Adamu Abubakar, all of whom sat out the Ghana clash, are hopeful of getting minutes. Felix Agu, recently cleared to represent Nigeria, is also in contention, while Benjamin Frederick, a late replacement for Christantus Uche, may make his debut. History revisited

Saturday's final rekindles memories of the thrilling 2-2 draw between Nigeria and Jamaica in Kingston ahead of the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France, a game remembered for its intensity and mutual respect.

This time, however, pride and silverware are at stake as both nations prep



ABIA WARRIORS FACE CAF HAMMER OVER N15.2M PLAYERS' INDEBTEDNESS

...risks expulsion from CAF Confederation Cup

CHARLES OGWO



Abia Warriors Football Club of Umuahia, Nigeria representative in the 2025/26 CAF Confederation Cup may face the hammer from the continental football body over failure to settle more than N15.15 million debts owed players for over 12 months.

The Abia State football club failed to comply with the judgment of Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) Players Arbitration and Status Committee delivered against the club, and this may attract punishment from CAF, which might mean expelling the club from the continental competition.

The judgement delivered in May 2024 by the Players Arbitration and Status Committee mandated Abia Warriors to pay its former players including Imoh Azuibuike N3.15, Julius Obinna N3, Ikedinachi Nwakanma N4, and Alegebe Victor N5 million respectively within 45 days from the date of judgement.

However, the club failed to meet up with the instruction within the stipulated time frame of 45 days from the date of judgement, even after over 365 days, Abia Warriors FC could not settle up to 50 percent of the sum owed players.

Hence, has violated the Players Arbitration and Status Committee ruling and demonstrated incapacity to satisfy the financial requirements in the CAF Licensing criteria before a club can be allowed to participate in CAF Competitions.

One of the conditions for a club to participate in the CAF Competitions is to satisfy the CAF Club licensing criteria which include the following sporting, infrastructure, administrative and personnel, legal and finance.

In all the CAF organised club competitions, clubs are required meet needed standards before it can be granted a license to participate in any of the continental inter-club competitions such as CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup, among others.

Worst still, in a recent decision issued by the NFF Players Arbitration and Status Committee in April 2025 the club was also mandated to pay Aloma Idris N5, and Igweuzo Nnamdi N6 million each, for unlawful contract terminations on or before June 2.

To avoid CAF's hammer, Abia Warriors FC needs to quickly settle these debts before the deadline for CAF



Club licensing which may end by June 30; or prepare to forfeit being cleared by NFF to participate in the CAF confederations competition.

Abia Warriors qualified to represent Nigeria in the second tier of the continental inter-club competition by finishing third in the 2024/25 NPFL table.

At the end of the compulsory 38 matches, the club secured 60 points, winning 18 matches, drawing six, and losing 14, it scored 43 goals and conceded 40, to place third behind Remo Stars, and Rivers United in first and second place respectively.

The Imama Amapakabo coached football club has achieved a great feat by qualify for the continental ticket for the first time, but poor management is set to rob the Abians the joy of seeing darling club participate in the CAF Confederation Cup.

Poor football club management has for years been a clog in the progress of the round leather game in Nigeria, especially at the areas of players welfare. Mozez Praiz, television host/sportscaster at Supersport speaking during a sports conference emphasized that Nigerian clubs can maximise business aspect of sports, pointing out the problem with most sports clubs is lack of knowledge about the business of sports.

“Club chairmanship is given as a political compensation as against professionalism. Most of the club administrators don’t have blueprints on how to grow the clubs,” he said.



Praiz explained that to grow a club, the ideal thing is to start with building the fan base, and that to achieve this, there is a need to give the fans a sense of ownership.

And to build a fan base requires taking care of the players who are the main actors in this enterprise.

Alex Oti, the governor of Abia State and the club chairman of Abia Warriors must rise to the occasion, and the football loving Nigerians the embarrassment.

INSPIRE POSITIVE CONVERSATIONS BEHIND YOUR BACK

FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA

Today, everybody can publicly give a thumbs up or down to each customer experience. Whether you're an Uber driver or a brain surgeon, you have to accept that online reviews are now built into the buying process. While negative reviews can certainly impact business, it's second only to having none at all. When potential customers don't see reviews or any trace of satisfied customers, you immediately fall off the short list.

Since you know customers are already going to talk about you, you want to ensure your business lands on the right side of reviews.

Eight ways you can inspire customers to talk positively about you online:

Highlight the things people love about your business. Your stand-out qualities could be your areas of expertise, location, service, or a special touch that people have come to associate with your business. Develop a list by asking loyal customers to weigh in and share why they frequent your business. Highlight their reasons on your social media profiles, website, and online business listings and directories. This helps separate you from the pack, reinforces your strengths, and drives word-of-mouth.

Create memorable experiences. The customer experience doesn't need to be over-the-top or cut into your profits to be memorable, but it should make an impression and be unique to your business.

After all, customers tend to remember how you made them feel more than what they purchased. Creating a memorable experience can be as simple as the welcome customers receive when they enter your physical or virtual business, recognising their birthday or sending a personalised thank-you note.

Be transparent and authentic. In other words, ditch the pitch and focus on addressing the customer's needs. That requires your conversations and marketing content to inform and steer them toward the best products and services for their particular needs and budgets. When they know that your priority is to help them get the most from their investments, they'll be more inclined to buy from you and recommend you to their friends.

Freely offer your expertise. There is a misconception among some small business owners that if they offer free advice, they would cut into their profits. Nothing could be further from the truth. Of course, I'm not suggesting that you work for free or compromise your livelihood, but you can strike a balance by sharing enough knowledge to establish your credibility and reputation.

Solicit feedback and read between the lines. Nobody wants to be surprised by a bad review, which is why it's so important to encourage customers to provide feedback, even if it's not always what you want to hear.

Along with regularly engaging customers in soliciting their feedback, consider initiating short surveys in your newsletter or on your social media pages. Also, depending on the products and services you sell, it might make sense to follow up a few months after a customer has been using your product for a little while. Along with these overt requests for feedback, pay attention to a lack of response as it can speak volumes.

Share great content. Follow news and trends that are happening locally and in your industry. Specifically, be on the lookout for posts that relate to your customers' interests and present an opportunity to reinforce your value. Along with sharing the content, make the post your own by inserting your views (while giving credit to the original source). This engages your audience, inspires them to share content, elevates your profile, and reinforces what makes your business unique.

Foster an active online community. Use your social media platforms to spark conversations with customers and connect them with each other. You can do this by tossing out a question on social media, sharing content from followers, and spotlighting customers. Fostering an active online community helps quickly spread the word about your business while giving you great insight your audience so you can deliver more personalised marketing campaigns. Not to mention it helps instill brand loyalty.

Shape the conversation to earn great reviews. Every small business owner knows that online review sites are getting more sophisticated at spotting fake posts and preventing them from going live. Yet that doesn't mean you should sit idle and hope for a positive review to magically appear. When customers tell you they've had a great experience, let them know which review sites your business is listed on and suggest they

tell others about it. If you keep the dialogue light, let them know how important their online feedback is to your business, and avoid quid pro quo situations, they'll be inspired to write authentic posts.

Last line

Motivating customers to talk positively about your business starts with providing a positive customer experience, engaging customers with helpful, free advice and consistently asking for feedback to continuously improve the products, services, and experiences you deliver. Then you won't have to worry about those conversations happening behind your back.



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

THE QUIET CONSEQUENCE

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR

Loneliness can make a man do things he never imagined. Things that, in his most disciplined, most morally upright state of mind he would never conceive. I used to wonder and even judge what could possibly make a man cheat on his wife. I had heard stories, shrugged at them and thought, “He must have been weak or unprincipled” until it happened to me. Mine wasn’t lust. It wasn’t lack of love. It was the dangerous combination of loneliness and boredom.

When my bank transferred me out of state to head a new branch, I did the responsible thing. I sat down with my wife Ifedi, and we talked it through like partners. We weighed the pros and cons. The money was good — much better than my current salary. We were halfway through building our dream home and this new position promised to help us finish it faster. We agreed on a plan. I would travel and settle into the new job. I’d come home every few weeks then she would bring the kids to visit during the holidays. It was supposed to be a manageable arrangement.

The first few weeks were fine... busy even. A new team, new systems and a mountain of work kept me distracted. But soon enough, the evenings stretched out in silence. My apartment echoed with it. Video calls with the kids weren’t the same. And the distance between Ifedi and I, though physical began to feel emotional too.

Then came Eka.

She was my assistant branch manager — efficient, sharp-witted and good at her job. She had an easy laugh that was quite infectious. At first, it was harmless coffee in the morning, team lunches, light teasing. Then it shifted. I started looking forward to her presence more than I should. We stayed late at work often, talking. One night, I dropped her off at her place and I didn’t want to leave. She didn’t want me to either. One night turned into several and just like that, I became the man I never thought I’d be. It didn’t feel like betrayal at the time. It felt like escape from the silence at my apartment. But guilt has a way of creeping in quietly, like a slow leak under the door. It doesn’t announce itself.

I ended it one evening. Sat her down, told her it couldn’t continue. That it was a mistake. She listened quietly, eyes unreadable. Then she smiled slightly and said, “Okay.” She didn’t ask any question. She didn’t cry. She didn’t beg. She just went back to work like nothing had happened. That even made it worse somehow but I didn’t let it bother me.

Months passed. We still worked together but the air between us grew thick. Then one afternoon, I noticed something — a bulge beneath her dress. I told myself it could be anything. But week after week, it grew. And my silence grew with it. Eka was pregnant. When the baby boy arrived, I didn’t need a test to

confirm what my eyes already knew. He looked just like me. My nose. My jawline. My blood. But Eka never said a word. Not once. She went about her business like nothing happened. She never asked for support. Never hinted. Never acknowledged the past. So I didn't either.

Shortly after that, I got an offer from another bank — a promotion in a different region. I took it without hesitation. It felt like a clean slate. I resigned, packed my things and severed all ties. I deleted contacts and moved forward. I returned home and gave myself fully to my family. I became a better husband and a more attentive father.

Years passed.

Then came the vacation.

We were planning a family trip abroad, the kids were excited. There was a visa requirement: DNA confirmation was part of the immigration process. "A mere formality," they said.

The results arrived in a sealed envelope, ordinary on the outside but the contents detonated something in my chest. None of the children I raised were mine. Not one. I couldn't breathe. I read the report again. And again. And again. The world around me fell silent. My vision blurred. And when I finally confronted Ifedi, all she could do was weep. But her tears didn't come with explanations that made sense.

"I'm sorry," she whispered, over and over.

She didn't even offer a confession. It's not as if that mattered anyway. She just kept on apologising. The children, all three of them had been born before I ever left town. Before the transfer. Before Eka. Which means our marriage had been built on a lie from the very beginning. The betrayal ran deeper than I could ever imagine.

I packed a bag and left the house that night. Not in anger. Not even in heartbreak. Just a heavy numbness. And for the first time in years, I thought about Eka. About the quiet way she walked away. About the boy who bore my face and name only in blood. I had walked away from one truth only to have another one explode in my face.

I wasn't sure she still lived there. Six years had passed. But something inside me needed to know — needed to see.

So I packed a small bag, booked the earliest flight and landed by noon. From the airport, I flagged down a cab and gave the driver the address.

When we arrived, I stood outside the house for a while. I did the sign of the cross. Then crossed my fingers and knocked. Moments later, the door opened.

Eka stood there in a plain t-shirt and shorts, a faint smile on her lips but the moment her eyes met mine, the smile vanished. Her entire body stiffened. She stepped outside, closing the door gently behind her and folded

her arms across her chest.

"What do you want?" she asked, voice flat.

I opened my mouth, but nothing came out. Every line I had practiced on the flight disappeared. I swallowed hard, then whispered, "I came to see you... and him."

Her eyes narrowed. "Him who?"

"My son. Our son."

A cold, sharp laugh escaped her lips. "You're a joker. You disappear for six years then you show up at my door, spitting rubbish from that gutter you call a mouth? How dare you?"

"I know I hurt you, Eka," I said quickly, "That's why I'm here. To say I'm sorry."

"That's fine. Say your sorry and get the hell out of my house."

"Eka, I'm sorry. And I'm willing to do anything to show you how sorry I am."

"You don't have to prove anything Mr man. Just leave me and my son alone."

"But he's my son too."

She choked on a laugh.

"Your son? Says who?"

"He looks like me."

"And so what if he does?"

"He's mine, Eka and I know it."

She stepped forward, her voice low and cutting. "Only a mother knows who the real father of her child is."

"I want a DNA test," I said.

"You're welcome," she replied coolly. "Get ready to make a fool of yourself."

She turned to walk back inside but then stopped at the doorway and glanced back at me.

"Don't ever come here again. Or you'll be sorry."

The door shut behind her firm and final.

I stood there for a long time, numb.

Her words echoed in my head like thunder,

"Only a mother knows. Get ready to make a fool of yourself."

I walked back to the waiting cab in silence, more

confused than when I arrived. What did she mean? Was it possible the boy wasn't mine either?
 And if there was even a chance she was right — was I ready to face that truth?
 Or would it be better to never know?

The flight back home felt longer than the first. I went to see Eka certain of one thing... that the child was mine but now I was confused. I checked into a hotel near the airport and sat on the edge of the bed, staring into space.
 What if she was bluffing?
 What if she was angry and just wanted to shake me?
 But what if she wasn't?

I thought about the boy again. That picture I saw online. The resemblance was too strong. The nose. The eyes. The shape of his chin. But blood doesn't lie!
 And if I went through with the test... I had to be ready for the truth. One that could either give me a second chance or destroy what was left of my dignity.
 That night, I couldn't sleep. I walked to the window, looked out at the blinking lights in the distance and whispered to myself, "You asked for the truth. Now go and find it."

The next morning, I made the call to a private clinic that handled confidential paternity testing.

"I need to schedule a DNA test," I said.

"Will both parties be available?" the nurse asked.

I hesitated. "Just the child. I'll handle the rest."

It took another week of back and forth, legal clearances and paperwork. Eka never responded to my messages but surprisingly she allowed the boy to be swabbed. No drama. No threats. Just quiet cooperation — the kind that made me even more nervous. Then came the waiting... Two weeks.
 Two weeks of pacing my living room like a man on trial. Of checking my email every hour. Of praying and questioning.
 Then the result came. I sat at the dining table, laptop open. Hands trembling.
 I opened the file. Read the words. Then read them again. Probability of paternity: 0.00%
 I dropped back in the chair. Breathless.
 Not mine. The boy wasn't mine. I could feel the air trapped in my chest. I was breathless. I thought I was going to pass out.

I had barely recovered from the shock of the DNA test with Eka's son when the memory of the first betrayal slapped me again.
 Three children.
 Three children I loved, raised, paid school fees for, lost sleep over. Three children who bore no trace of my blood.

I remembered sitting at the clinic that day waiting for routine vacation clearance. The nurse had said it casually — "It's standard procedure, sir. Just a quick check to confirm you're biologically related, since you're traveling as a family."

I hadn't even blinked. Why would I?
 I had changed diapers. I had rocked those children to sleep. Helped with homework. Nursed them through fevers.
 Then the bombshell.

"There's a zero percent probability of paternity."

I insisted on a retest. A second opinion. Then a third. All said the same thing: You are not the father.

When I confronted Ifedi, she had collapsed into tears. Said it was complicated. That she never meant to lie to me. That she thought the kids were mine. I didn't scream. I didn't even curse.

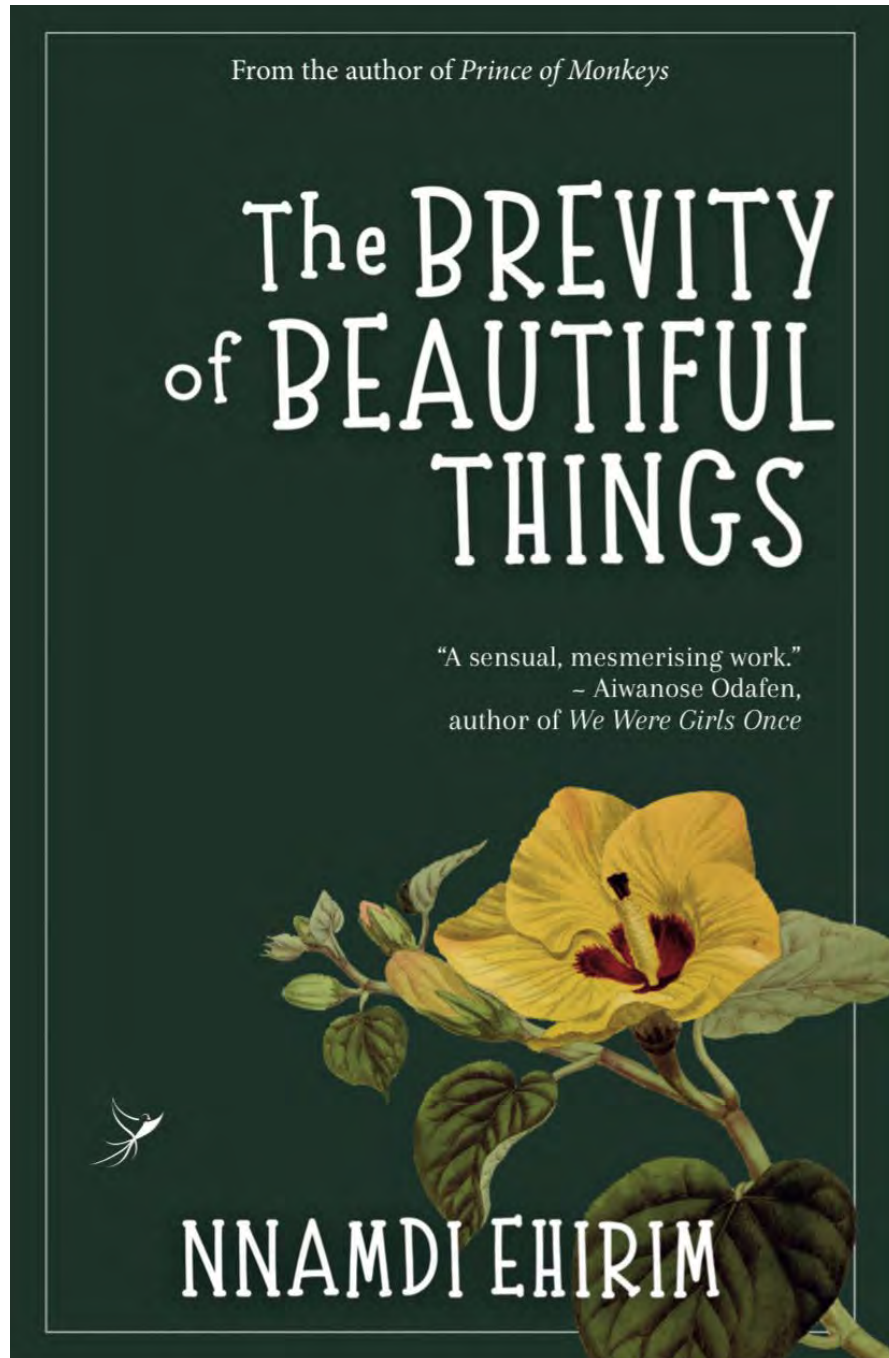
I was just numb.
 And now, Eka too. That child isn't mine.
 Two women. Two completely different lives. Same ending.

"Low sperm count". The doctor's words had confirmed it. This is who I am.
 I stood in front of the mirror that night, staring at the man who had built dreams on quicksand. A man who gave his heart, his money, his loyalty only to realize none of it had roots.



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Plot Twists, Scandals, and Soul-Searching-A Review of Nnamdi Ehirim's The BREVITY of BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Title: The BREVITY of BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Author: Nnamdi Ehirim

Year of Publication: 2024

Number of Pages: 151

Category: Fiction

OPERATION LEGACY: LOOTING AND LOSING AFRICA'S KINGDOMS

TITILADE OYEMADE

Is it a short story? A novel? A collection of short stories pretending to be a novel? Honestly, it doesn't matter because whatever label you slap on *The Brevity of Beautiful Things*, one thing is certain: Nnamdi Ehirim is brilliantly unpredictable.

The way his mind twists, turns, and teases out meaning across these pages will leave you mesmerized. Just when you think you've got a handle on his style, he pulls the rug out from under you again. And again. Prepare to have your mind blown repeatedly.

The title alone is magnetic. *The Brevity of Beautiful Things* sounds poetic, profound and it sets the tone. But the moment you crack open the first chapter, the emotional weight hits. It's overwhelming. You might feel a mix of worry and excitement. Should you lean in or hold back? That tension? That's the point.

Ehirim doesn't just tell stories, he constructs them with deliberate care. The way the opening storyline threads itself through the rest of the book is proof of that. Each connection feels intentional. What looks chaotic on the surface is actually a masterclass in control.

And yes, there's sex. A fair amount of it. But don't be fooled. Beneath the sensuality lies a deeper current of thought-provoking themes: identity, memory, trauma, love, and loss. You'll find lines that stop you mid-sentence, sentences that beg to be reread because they say so much with so little.

Then there are the scandals. Everywhere. Just when you're catching your breath from one reveal, Ehirim drops another quietly, subtly, as if daring you to miss it. It's messy, it's dramatic, and at times, almost too much to take in over just a few pages. But honestly? That's part of the thrill.

One of the book's most striking elements is how the characters are introduced, chapter by chapter, each one arriving with their own storm of madness and trauma. Maybe it's meant to give you space to understand them. Or maybe that's just Ehirim's

signature style. Either way, it draws you in. And suddenly, you're not judging them. You're rooting for them, hurting with them, seeing parts of yourself in their chaos.

You can also tell that Ehirim is a true lover of books. Throughout the story, he casually drops book titles. And it doesn't stop there. His music taste sneaks in too, with song titles scattered across scenes, layering mood and meaning. At some point, you start to wonder: is Ehirim one of his own characters? Because this kind of writing, raw, intense, and all-consuming feels lived.

Nnamdi Ehirim is not just a writer. He's a force. A wild, imaginative, deeply thoughtful force. *The Brevity of Beautiful Things* is messy, beautiful, and unforgettable, just like the best parts of life.



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WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEW

JUST LIKE HEAVEN (2005)

Since Netflix was lacking good action movies, I decided to go back down memory lane, so I will be reviewing way back romantic movies for you, till we get more action movies. So, let's talk about this movie Elizabeth was a very hard working pretty young lady, she worked as a doctor in a very busy hospital, she could work 26 hours non-stop with no break or sleep and yet keep smiling. Her sister was so worried about her and decided to introduce Elizabeth to her old friend's friend. David on the other hand was a young man who moved into a new apartment only to discover that he is being haunted by the old tenant, who didn't want to leave him alone. Well, you will need to go check out the movie to see how David resolved this house ownership issue with the old tenant, the twist at the end will leave you smiling sheepishly. The 108m comedy and romance movie was directed by Mark Waters they featured actors like Resse Witherspoon, Mark Ruffalo. Donald Logue, Dina Spybey-Waters, Ivana Millycevic, Jon Heder, Donal Logue and Ben Shenkman.



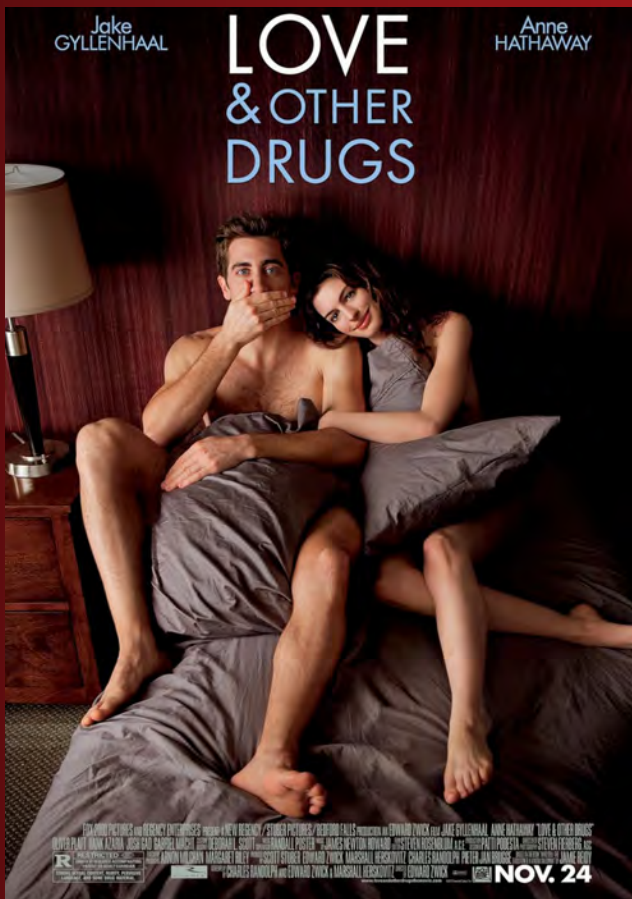
THE ROYAL TREATMENT (2022)

Isabella was a very pretty young lady, who worked with her mom and grandma in their old-time store, where they took care of both male and female clients, they could cut the hair of male clients perfectly as well as female clients even to applying their make-up. One day a client calls their store wrongly thinking they were the top saloon in the city, which was actually their competitor, but Isabella picked the call and took on the job. Her encounter with the famous prince from Alvania changed their entire life forever. You know how you pray for a breakthrough, that one big, gigantic client, that changes your life forever, this one job paid them more than they have ever be paid in their entire lives. You will need to watch the entire movie to see how the unexpected happened and how things turned around for their business. The 97m romance, comedy movie was directed by Rick Jacobson, they featured actors like Laura Marano, Mena Massoud, Julie Edwards, Talia Lesser, Ivan Stojanov, An Xin Chang, James Gaylyn, Kube Jones-Neill and many more.



LOVE AND OTHER DRUGS (2010)

Let's go down memory lane again to 2010, If you missed this movie then, it is coming back again on our timeline; In this movie Jamie worked in an electronic store and after he was caught looting around, he was fired; He decided to take a new role in the drug sales industry. Jamie felt he had the skills and determination to sell any product and since the commission was lucrative, he jumped on the job. During the process of his new job, he met one pretty lady called Maggie who worked in a coffee shop, Jamie decided that she was the target, to get into his bed, but things quickly turned around this time as our great playboy gets played and hooked this time. Do check it out to see how this one lady changes his life forever. The 112min comedy, drama movie was directed by Edward Zwick, they featured actors like Anne Hathaway, Jake Gyllenhaal, Oliver Platt, Gabriel Macht, Judy Greer, Katheryn Winnick, Josh Gad, Hank Azaria etc.



LINDA OCHUGBUA

WEEKEND QUOTES



1

“Rababa” to the one raises
and restores
.....WhispersbyTEN

2

Kneel for the one who is
knowledge himself and kind
.....WhispersbyTEN

3

Crave for the one who is a
covering and a supernatural
connector
.....WhispersbyTEN

4

Exalt the one with
supernatural ease and
elevation
.....WhispersbyTEN