

Starcom Media Perspectives bags Spotify's media account in Nigeria

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Keeping up with the latest marketing trends

If you're a marketer, you've probably experienced the feeling of whiplash as marketing trends continue to shift in the blink of an eye. To succeed in the fast-paced marketing world, and to maintain a sense of relevance with an ever-changing audience, it's important to stay ahead of the curve.

Both B2C and B2B marketers have learned that getting to the point with short-form videos can actually be much more effective. Not only does it take less bandwidth to create a short-form video, but the format aligns well with the fast-paced attention spans of online audiences in a variety of demographics.

Videos create a deeper connection with a brand's potential customer base, and it is easy for brands to repurpose video content into podcasts and text-based content.

According to a recent survey by NP Digital, 56% of U.S. consumers said they bought something based on an ad they saw on TikTok, and 36% said they were willing to.

The survey also found that 53% of marketers are leveraging short-form videos like TikToks, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts in 2024, and 38% are continuing to invest the same as in previous years. Only 8% said they'll decrease their investment.

Gracing the cover of this edition of *MARKETING EDGE's* is Visa, a legacy digital payment technology brand, a global powerhouse processing over 276 billion transactions annually, connecting people and businesses across borders.

Our readers will learn that in addition to digital payment services, Visa provides innovative and empowering opportunities to over 14,000 businesses all over the world with solutions like Visa Direct and contactless payments. Locally Visa has made several steps to improve businesses with a major focus in fintech startups through various initiatives, such as the Visa Everywhere Initiative which has seen two consecutive Global winners from Nigeria and the Visa Accelerator programmes.

Also, our readers will learn more about Visa's sponsorship of FIFA World Cup, AFCON and Olympics, especially bringing the AFCON trophy

The huge market for AI technologies is having the most profound impacts on advertising and marketing. Readers will learn how brands are using machine learning algorithms to analyse vast amounts of data, ranging from user preferences and behaviours to demographic information.

to Nigeria as a powerful showcase of the brand's commitment to African football.

The trophy, which was also hosted at the office of the Governor of Lagos State, presented the opportunity for clients, partners, sports enthusiasts, and the media to experience it firsthand, whilst highlighting Visa's collaboration with key stakeholders to drive digital adoption and financial inclusion within the Nigerian sporting landscape.

This bumper edition sheds light on how AI is redefining all sectors of the economy, including marketing communications, manufacturing, real estate, telecoms, banking etc.

The huge market for AI technologies is having the most profound impacts on advertising and marketing. Readers will learn how brands are using machine learning algorithms to analyse vast amounts of data, ranging from user preferences and behaviours to demographic information.

However, despite the cutting-edge transformation projected in the innovation space in 2024, there is a premium for human-crafted, human-created products because humans still have a major role to play in the creative market. The rumbling in the marketing communications and other sectors of the economy about machines replacing employees doesn't hold as humans basically need to chart a creative and innovative way forward to work with the advancing technology that AI offers.

What's more, in addition to the brands and agencies to watch in 2024, our readers will savour the latest sectoral report and incisive projections in marketing communications and other sectors of the economy in this edition.

The impact of integrated campaigns in the modern age and the strategic role played by out-of-home media in product branding, the effectiveness of outdoor campaigns, survey data and contemporary mobility modelling capable of providing increasingly accurate measurements by drawing detailed information from a number of diverse sources are reported in details in this edition.

Happy reading!



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Starcom Media Perspectives wins Spotify's media account in Nigeria



Jude Odia, MD, Starcom Media Perspectives

After an extensive global and local market media review spanning several months, the world's renowned streaming service Spotify has announced the selection of Publicis Media to manage its media account. As part of this decision, Starcom Media Perspectives, a component of Publicis Media network, will spearhead Spotify's media endeavors within the Nigerian market.

The significance of this development is underscored by the substantial value associated with the global account,

estimated at a staggering \$240 million. This move comes after a prolonged tenure with IPG Mediabrands' UM, which had overseen Spotify's media activities for a notable seven-year period until a review was initiated in 2023.

The competitive landscape of the global review narrowed down to two prominent global media networks: Omnicom, represented in Nigeria by MediaReach OMD, and Publicis Media, represented by Starcom Media Perspectives. Following an arduous contest spanning months, Publicis Media emerged triumphant, securing Spotify's media account both globally and within Nigeria, where Starcom Media Perspectives will be entrusted with managing the media account.

One of the pivotal factors contributing to Publicis Media's victory was the establishment of a specialized team, Publicis OneVibe, dedicated to meeting Spotify's unique requirements. This bespoke unit is a testament to the

Network's commitment to providing bespoke solutions, leveraging talents from across Publicis Media's agencies to fulfill Spotify's diverse media needs.

This media win does not only highlight Starcom Media Perspectives capabilities but also reaffirms its position as a leader in the media independent industry in Nigeria. Starcom Media Perspectives is a digital-first integrated media solutions company renowned for its best-in-market strategy and execution excellence, delivering distinctive outcomes for clients' businesses.

Some of the global and local clients of Starcom Media Perspectives includes but not limited to Mondelez, VISA, Samsung, Haleon, Meta, ARM Group, Union Bank, TGI Group and Leadway Assurance. A tribe of transformational and dynamic professionals with both local and global perspectives, who will continue to set industry benchmarks for innovation and multi-dimensional collaborations.

NCC reports steady growth in telecom subscriptions

By **Ibidunni Banjoko**



The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has revealed a consistent rise in active voice and internet subscriptions, despite a decline in teledensity, according to the latest telecommunications statistical indicators. The metrics have been adjusted

to align with the Nigerian Population Commission's projection, bringing the current population estimate to 216,783,381 as of 2022, up from the previous projection of 190 million people.

Dr. Reuben Muoka, NCC's Director of Public Affairs, stated that with this adjustment, the nation's teledensity dropped from 115.63% to 102.30%, and broadband penetration decreased from 45.47% to 40.85% in September 2023. However, active voice subscriptions witnessed a marginal growth from 220,361,186 to 221,769,883, and internet subscriptions also experienced a slight increase from 159,034,717 in August 2023

to 160,171,757 in September 2023.

In October 2023, the industry saw a 0.19% growth in active voice subscriptions with a teledensity of 102.49%, and internet subscriptions rose by 0.60%. The trend continued in November with a 0.46% growth in active voice subscriptions and a 0.57% increase in internet subscriptions compared to October 2023.

Teledensity, an index prescribed by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) for measuring telephone penetration in a population, dropped as a result of the adjusted metrics. Dr. Aminu Maida, the Executive Vice-Chairman of the NCC, endorsed the adjustment process, emphasizing its role in maintaining data integrity and accurately measuring the Commission's progress in increasing broadband penetration, improving service quality, and expanding population coverage.



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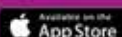


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BOW Oil launches open market activation in Lagos

By Abimbola Mohammed



BOW Oil, a premium refined Soyabean oil from the stable of Boram Foods held an open market activation in Lagos with a view to ensuring deep market penetration of its highly rated Soyabeans cooking oil.

The activation was targeted at making massive consumer awareness of the premium cooking oil while also educating consumers on the need to be health conscious while purchasing cooking oil.

The Bow oil brand activations have been strategically spread amongst key Lagos markets with preponderance of consumers and high foot-falls. Some of these are; Ojuwoye in Mushin Mosholashi Alhaja in Agege Lagos amongst several others.

Commenting on the brand's initiative,

Toyin Olajide, marketing manager, Boram Foods said "Boram Foods Limited as a company remains a force to be reckoned with at least for good reasons in the quest to entrench a culture of good cooking oil intake that would consequently lead to a healthy heart and overall well-being of Nigerians".

Olajide further revealed that the activation is being carried out in line with the mission of spreading outstanding good health around the world such that people can boast of a good diet.

She further added that the company's ambitious target is to make sure that almost all homes nationwide have access to good cooking oil which Bow oil brand represents.

Speaking during the kick off of the activation, Paul Omoimazue, Project Manager, MEDIA EDGE noted that the health challenges facing most people are mostly caused by the kind of food they consume. He added that Bow Soyabean oil which has zero cholesterol, enriched with vitamins and minerals, and Omega 3 & 6 is produced to help build a healthy heart and a healthy living.

"We are happy to work with Boram Foods Limited because of the quality of oil they produce. The product is easy to sell to consumers because it is actually of the reliable ingredient which is used to

produce it."

Our team has strategically positioned the brand in markets around Lagos where we can reach our target consumers, and so far we have been able to spread the good health mission of our client's company through awareness creation and sampling for our targets at the markets we have been to."

BOW Soyabean oil is packaged in different sizes from economy packs of 1 liter, 2 liters, 5 liters, 10 liters and 25 liters which go for affordable prices.

Boram Foods Limited specializes in the production and marketing of BOW Refined Soya Oil. The cooking oil is free from cholesterol and fortified with Vitamin-A which is an essential nutrient for healthy vision and regulating the body's immune system. It is well packaged, labeled, and also available in different sizes to meet various kitchen/ cooking needs.

The company leverages on more than 20 years of experience the founders have invested from their various fields of work. The company is growing at a fast pace as it creates uniqueness in its product and services while delivering at a competitive price. BOW Soya Oil thrives in the sector it operates and has drawn up ambitious plans to win over the vegetable oil market in Nigeria.

Heirs Technologies set to drive Africa's digital transformation

Leading investment company in Africa, Heirs Holdings, has recently launched its subsidiary and technology arm, Heirs Technologies, a world-class digital transformation company, poised to set a new course in the technology sector in Africa.

Heirs Technologies, bound by a vision to drive Africa's digital transformation through innovative and locally tailored solutions, is set to deliver non-transactional value to Africa and the world at large.

In a one-on-one with MARKETING EDGE, Clari Green, the Group Head of Marketing and Corporate Communications for Heirs Holdings, gave insights on the question of Heirs Technologies leveraging marketing and media channels to reach its target audience and cut across the local and cultural nuances.

In her words, "The marketing activities of Heirs Technologies will centre around showcasing the brand and its offerings. The business just launched so at this point it is important to make sure that there

is a clear understanding of what Heirs Technologies is about.

"If you go on Heirs Technologies' social media platforms, you'll see some 'Frequently Asked Questions' answered in the form of a snackable video explaining who Heirs Technologies is and what exactly the company does. This was developed based on questions people have been asking about the business since it was launched. It has been a great tool for sensitising our wider audience, and there is more we have planned in the pipeline," she explained.

Commenting further on the marketing strategies that will enable Heirs Technologies to maximize its reach and impact, she said, "The social media channels will also be used to showcase the organisation's in-house experts who are at the heart of the business. It will also serve as a channel for sharing information on the company's very robust training programme designed to equip young tech enthusiasts with the necessary skills required for career in the tech sector."

Also speaking on the ongoing

campaign for Heirs Holdings, Green clearly emphasised that the campaign was the very first television commercial from Heirs Holdings, where some of the companies within its portfolio are presented. She mentioned that Heirs Holdings has established a reputation for being consistent in creating value while driving Africa's social and economic agenda.

She stated, "In this commercial, we are proud to present our investment portfolio which cuts across several strategic sectors including financial services, power, hospitality, energy, healthcare, real estate and our newest sector, technology. We've been in business for over 13 years, it has been an amazing journey with several impactful milestones. At this stage, it became important to showcase the Heirs Holdings Group and highlight our vast portfolio. The commercial is currently running on CNN International and we concurrently have a digital campaign running right now."

The peak of Heirs Holdings' exceptional year was reflected in the much-awaited debut of its first television commercial on CNN International. This unveiling signifies a significant moment for the company as it enters a new phase of international exposure and interaction.



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Kantar launches strategic consulting in Nigeria as Moroke stresses on UVP

By Felicia Nwosu



It was an insightful and thought-provoking gathering of brand specialists and experts as Kantar announced the launch of its strategic consulting practice in Nigeria, aimed at bringing a new dimension of strategic insight to the brand growth story.

Ivan Moroke, the CEO, South Africa Kantar, during his session in the event held at Marriott Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos with theme: “Brands of Tomorrow making growth real” harped on the need for brands to make meaningful difference in the life of consumers by crafting Unique Value Proposition (UVP).

“Which of the brands in your personal life are you prepared to pay a bit more for? If you are prepared to pay for that, I can challenge you on that because it is different. But we’ve got a brand girl in South Africa. She always says there’s a difference between different and meaningful differences. She says, “if you are different without meaning, you are just weird”. I think it applies to brands as much as it applies to people. You are just a strange individual if you are just different without valuable meaning. You must be different with purpose. The meaning behind this is simply that, the difference is the rocket pool that does growth.

The Kantar boss also explained how Kantar leverages insights to shape brand’s growth across the continent with its diverse portfolios of business strategies which include consulting practice used in positioning brands with a valuable market difference in an ever-changing market environment that demands agility.

“We want to be an indispensable brand partner for you. What that means is, before you make any marketing decision, our vision is to say, we can help you achieve that. We are in a brand planning stage; we are in a business process. We are like that in East Africa, in South Africa, and that’s how we are here. We’ve been talking about how Nestlé has rationalized products in the market. This is what portfolio strategy is. That’s what we specialize in. And we’ve done phenomenal work with Nestlé across the world on geo-portfolio strategy.

“Sometimes, all you might need is category insights. Where is the category going? What are the kind of things we should be looking at or we should be worried about? That’s what we specialize in. If you are not innovating, you are going backwards, period. It doesn’t matter what category you are in. Because if you think about it, and regardless of your sector, have you realized how your competition

is changing? Sometimes, you don’t even see them where they are coming from. Different people are offering different things, which is why they are coming with different innovations.”

He also emphasised the importance of being innovative to revolutionise products with new definitions of value for consumers’ general acceptance irrespective of price.

“Disruption is one of them, but we’ve made a study about disruption. That’s what makes the difference. And it’s based on data about 20%. It’s like shaking things up. Brands that do that get 80% in the way. There’s always a misnomer with marketers. They think the only way to be a bit of a disruptor is to be fintech. It’s not true. There’s a difference between being a disruptor and being a challenger brand. For example, if you think about Apple, it’s not a challenger brand. That’s a main, big brand. But it’s different, right? It’s disruptive in terms of what they try to do and how they communicate it.”

Moroke pointed out that successful brands are not only meaningfully different but also relevant and always strive to create positive changes in society by tackling impactful and meaningful social issues that align with their ethos by focusing on climate change, racial injustice, poverty, war, sustainability and several others.

“What does insight mean for innovation? What does it mean for the position of your brand? It’s about pricing and segmentation. That’s what we specialize in. We do those strategies and it is about creating value. There are different ways we can create value; we can do it with our shareholders, and you can measure some acquisitions, cost cutting, so the problem with that is not sustainable. The only sustainable growth of value is demand-led value. It’s what consumers want. If you can create value by absolutely creating demand from consumers, then it’s far much more sustainable. And that’s what we are passionate about.”

The event showcased Kantar’s blueprint for sustainable brand growth for winning marketers where diverse speakers discussed how to turn insights into actionable strategic plans to achieve results and outcomes that accelerate brands’ growth.

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IMC leaders raise concerns over AI efficiency and job preservation

By Seun Johnson



Striking a balance between Artificial Intelligence and human value has remained one of the heated and inexhaustible topics driving the conversation among industry leaders and major players in the Integrated Marketing Communication landscape.

The fear, agitation and worries that the new technological invention has come to replace human values and render many employees jobless are palpable. This is due to the noticeable efficiencies that are recorded by organizations who carefully and purposely deploy Artificial intelligence to achieve set goals or possibly do human jobs.

While humans work according to the limit of their strength, health, and length of working hours, AI defies all natural limitations to deliver on specific mandates with better efficiency and accuracy. As robots, they do not fall sick, have emotional challenges, or demand pay increments. Their salary and motivation are on energy source and maintenance.

With a strong projection that AI will make a significant advancement globally in 2024, the reality of job loss owing to the efficacy of the emerging technology is speedily crashing down on many employees.

Speaking recently on the efficiency of

Artificial Intelligence and preservation of human jobs, a Tech expert, Olufemi Adeagbo identified those who are competing with the technology as far as job productivity is concerned.

According to him, those who have jobs as researchers are under pressure. Content creators are under pressure. Data entry, manufacturing, financial analysts, stock advisers, psychologists, and legal assistants are competing with AI. Coders and cybersecurity specialists are also in this category. Adeagbo who is the CEO of Comnavig ICT Advisers, stated that he cannot think of any job role that AI can't impact.

"Anything humans can do; AI can ultimately be purposed to do much better and at scale. The extent of impact and sustainability may be an issue to debate. Jobs that rely on repetitive and parameter-bound variables such as manufacturing, and logistics jobs will be impacted too.

"Individuals should also be able to explore all their interests within the confines of the law. The law exists to promote the ideals of normalcy. Unrestrained and unregulated AI can upend social order, decimate values, and disrupt political spaces, and even economies in very profound ways.

"Social media has done its bit and people are divided on whether the net

gains justify the adverse aspects that have seen societies become more divided, zombified in many cases by fake news, and addicted now to all sorts of aberrative behaviour. AI is much more powerful, and a balance must be found in focused, deliberate, and strategic regulation." Adeagbo stated this while appearing on a National TV.

Also giving his professional perspective on the matter, the Chief Executive Officer, Kantar, Ivan Moroke revealed that every progress of technology is real and it has an impact on jobs. In his words, "While Artificial Intelligence has impacts on jobs, it however creates a new set of jobs we can never even have imagined. We will not be sincere to say there is no danger of artificial intelligence on jobs but at the same time, we must realize that new industries get created. So that is the balance because you have to admit that the new technology has made a big difference in terms of improving efficiency and time saving."

According to Stephen Okpara, Product and Quality Assurance Manager, Samsung, the solution is for people to upgrade their technological knowledge and adapt to the new innovation so as to remain relevant in any line of job they are.

"The truth is AI has come to stay and there is nothing anyone can do about it. What you can do in hours, AI will do it in two minutes. It works faster and more efficiently. The whole essence is to help you to be more productive. People have this mindset that the advent of Artificial Intelligence will make people lose their job. That is not true. When computers came, instead of rendering people jobless, it further created opportunities for people to be more engaged and skillful. Today, technology has given people the privilege to expand their knowledge base and increase productivity.

"With Artificial Intelligence, all we need is to upgrade our technological knowledge and adapt to the new innovation. It is only those who are not ready to embrace the new normal that will be rendered jobless in the long run," Okpara noted.



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Victoria Abiola Ajayi elevated as MD, Group CEO of TVC Communications



Victoria Abiola Ajayi

Victoria Abiola Ajayi has been appointed as the new Group CEO and Managing Director of TVC News, TVC Entertainment channel, Max FM, and Adaba FM. Her appointment takes effect 1 May, 2024.

Her appointment comes after Andrew

Hanlon stepped down as the Group CEO after a successful 7 years to pursue new opportunities.

Making the announcement, the Board of TVC Communications said the corporate Amazon has served the organization in different capacities, which led to her last role as Deputy Chief Finance Officer, where she assisted the outgoing CEO in navigating the complexities of the industry and driving the company forward.

According to the group, Mrs. Victoria Ajayi, a seasoned finance leader with over 15 years of professional experience across local and international organizations, brings forward a wealth of experience in not just finance but leadership capabilities.

Commenting on her new role, Mrs. Ajayi said, "I bring a strong educational background that complements my professional expertise. As a Fellow of ACCA with an MBA from IESE Business

School, I come with a unique blend of expertise in not just finance but leadership capabilities that will drive business growth.

"Similarly, as a member of the Institute of Directors and The Society for Corporate Governance, Nigeria, I am committed to upholding the highest standards of corporate governance and ethical leadership in our organisation. Having participated in programmes at prestigious institutions such as Cambridge Judge Business School, Harvard Business School, and BBC, I am fully committed to building upon our past successes and leading our company to new heights of innovation, resilience, and prosperity."

"With the support of our talented team and the guidance of the board, I am confident that we will continue to be a leader in the media and broadcast industry," she added.

SMC to organise Executive Programme in Advertising

By **Seun Johnson**

The School of Media and Communication (SMC) has commenced the 2024 edition of Executive Programme in Advertising, tagged EXPAD-6.

According to the event flyer released by the management, EXPAD-6, which was initially scheduled for November 13, 2023, commenced on March 18 and will run till July 12, 2024.

The programme, which is designed to offer a blended certificate course, accredited by the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria, ARCON, is expected to witness the participation of Advertising Executives, Corporate Communication managers, Public Relations managers, Media and Communication Outfits, business owners and those who are ready to deepen their understanding of the advertising industry.

A practice-centered master class, EXPAD-6 is primarily meant to transfer skills and expertise in one of the most

prominent Media and Communication specialties. At the end of the training, graduate will be awarded "Advanced Leadership Certificate in Advertising" in addition to being accredited by ARCON and also admitted into the alumni association of Pan Atlantic University.

The training will be co-facilitated by Troyka Holdings/Insight Redefini Executives who will bring about practical perspectives to the curriculum and unveil new approach to product management and marketing communication. It will be a blended format of two virtual engagement of two months and physical session that will run for three months.

EXPAD, which has been running consistently for seven years, is said to have produced over 100 graduates while about 25 to 30 participants are expected to key into this year's edition.

"EXPAD is created by SMC with the central objectives to: introduce in the



African Advertising industry a standing top-cadre manpower development bouquet that ranks among the best in the world; to stimulate in African Advertising leadership a new orientation towards unending self and organization improvement in strategy, creativity, management and best practice compliance; to activate attention towards the application of Africa-centered Advertising philosophy, regulation, creative idiom and cultural values; and to emphasize the importance of digital immersion, scientific research and valid metrics as inevitable components of contemporary Advertising," SMC management revealed.

The course is to further advance the critical role of the media and entertainment industries in shaping societal values and cultural life. The School of Media and Communication has continued to contribute immensely to the creative sector of the Nigerian economy.



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VISA unveils exclusive AFCON trophy viewing experience in Lagos

By **Abimbola Mohammed**



Digital giant payment Card Company, Visa has brought the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) Trophy to Nigeria as part of the recently concluded CAF Trophy country tour. The Trophy touched down in Lagos on 14th December as they welcomed lovers of African football in Nigeria for exclusive viewing.

The trophy tour started at the Lagos State Government House and was presented to Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, the state Governor, at the Secretariat, Alausa, Ikeja, by Andrew Uaboi, Vice President and Head of Visa West Africa, who further reiterated Visa's continued support for sports in Nigeria.

Visa also extended the trophy visit to its clients, partners, customers, football enthusiasts and members of the press the following day at the Heritage Place, Ikoyi Lagos.

According to the payment solution company, the Trophy Tour event was preceded by the renewal of Visa's partnership with the Confederation of African Football (CAF), re-establishing Visa's role as the exclusive digital payment provider at all venues for the upcoming 2023 TotalEnergies

Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) tournament in Cote d' Ivoire, including all AFCON tournaments until 2026.

Speaking during the courtesy visit, Mr. Sanwo-Olu said he is grateful to Visa and CAF for choosing Lagos for the trophy tour. "As Lagos State hosts the AFCON trophy, it's clearly a testament to our commitment to sports development.

"We are a city pulsating with sports enthusiasm and we're grateful to Visa and CAF for choosing Lagos for the trophy tour. Our support for sports development continues as the excitement builds for this prestigious tournament. Lagos remains committed to nurturing homegrown football talent and sustaining the fervor for sports."

Governor Sanwo-Olu urged CAF to integrate indigenous skills and expertise into the competition, enhancing its cultural richness. He reiterated Lagos State's steadfast commitment to nurturing homegrown football talent and fostering a sustained passion for sports.

Speaking at the event in Ikoyi, Uaboi said: "We are excited to have the AFCON trophy here; this trophy

symbolizes the aspirations of a lot of players that will be playing on the football field come January. At Visa we recognize the passion that football brings which is why we have extended our partnership with CAF till 2026. What this does for us is that it gives us an opportunity to bring our clients and many people that are present here to share the experience with us."

He hinted that those who use Visa will be sponsoring people that use its card to Cote d' Ivoire to watch the CAF 2024 live.

"Visa will be responsible and working with our partners for some of their card holders will be going to Cote d' Ivoire to enjoy the spectacle of AFCON. Football is something that we hold very passionately because we believe in the ability to unify people. If you are at the AFCON you will see different people, different nations struggling, fighting on the field to win this trophy but for us it is not all about that but the unification it brings."

In the same vein, Seun Adaramola, Marketing Director, Visa, West Africa, noted that Visa is a company that is passionate about how people feel

"Visa is so passionate about connecting with people and leveraging football as a platform in achieving that. That is why we are all gathered here today. As you all know football is a unifier, it cuts across age, gender, religion, culture. As an organization we are heavily

invested in this to help us achieve our goal in terms of connecting with people.

"Today, you have got the iconic trophy here live in Lagos Nigeria; this trophy symbolizes Africa's pride and also reinforces excellence. At Visa we hope that this trophy inspires lots of Nigerians, especially the learned and GenZ that can actually achieve their goal. Most importantly, we want people to believe in the power of small steps."

In a separate interview with **MARKETING EDGE**, Adaramola responding to the enquiry on the feedback gotten from Nigerians and the value Visa as a brand is expecting from the life time experience, she said: "Our goal is to create deep emotional connections by creating a unique and rare moment of them seeing the TotalEnergies AFCON Trophy LIVE. This aligns with our commitment to inspire individuals to celebrate every small step they take toward achieving their dreams."

She added that the trophy will be touring across multiple countries in Africa.

The event featured a football panel discussion where professionals predicted the country that will win the 2024 AFCON trophy.

The ceremony came to an end with an amazing musical performance by Mavin's top-rated artiste, Crayon and an opportunity for guests to experience and take pictures with the Trophy live.



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CONSUMER-CENTRIC BRANDS AND TASKS OF PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE DRINKING

By Felicia Nwosu



For most consumer-centric alcoholic brands, the total well-being of the consumers remains their ultimate goal. Against this backdrop and in the bid to promote responsible drinking habits, several brands have initiated remarkable and strategic steps to ensure that they help their teeming and loyal consumers maintain and sustain their prestige as responsible consumers. They have achieved this feat by introducing informative and enlightening campaigns that caution consumers' drinking habits in a reasonable manner.

Most renowned global brands who understand that excessive alcohol consumption can have severe and detrimental impacts on consumers have continued to warn consumers of the various implications associated with excessive or irresponsible drinking habits.

Apart from promoting moderation, they are also tackling the challenge of underage drinking, drink driving as well as binge drinking.

In Nigeria, many brands are working tirelessly to ensure that they eradicate the menace and dangers associated with underage drinking through various marketing strategies.

Heineken, in its bid to change consumers's attitude to drinking allocates 10% of its total media spend to responsible drinking campaigns. Sampson Oloche, Head – Premium, Portfolio, Nigerian Breweries, had stated in an interview that Heineken has a global mandate of 10% of the beer's media spend. "So one out of every 10 Naira spent in the media has to go into this campaign. There is no regulatory or government regulation on this. This is just us, being a corporate citizen, to say we take 10% of our media spend on promoting this, then we are doing a good job educating people and reminding them that they should stay safe."

Adebowale Bojuwade, the Senior Brand Manager, Seaman's Schnapps, confirmed that Seaman's Schnapps has introduced various initiatives to accelerate the drive for change by engaging consumers through awareness campaigns, enlightenment programmes and partnership with stakeholders such as the Federal Road Safety Corps.

"As a brand, we are very conscious about responsible drinking and we hold our corporate social responsibility highly because we ensure that every communication messages we disseminate

out there will always reiterate our commitment towards the promotion of responsible drinking among our consumers, especially in emphasising the age guidance and control while also stressing the official approved age which is 18 years plus.

International Breweries Plc, also related how it has been involved in a more futuristic campaign in line with global best practices projected to be implemented till the end of 2025. It further explained that the business of International Breweries is more than making a sale, rather, a focal point of making the world a better place and bringing cheers to its stakeholders.

"Our commitment extends far beyond saying "drink responsibly": it spans our Global Smart Drinking Goals, the work of the AB InBev Foundation, the commitments of our brands and the behaviours that we ask our consumers to practice every time they pick up a beer. We recognise that millions of consumers enjoy our products every day, so year-on-year, we continue to work across sectors to disrupt harmful drinking."

Guinness Nigeria revealed that it has been at the forefront of championing a responsible drinking culture for a very long time in its mission to ensure that its consumers are not exposed to dangers.

"We are proud of the role our brands play in the lives of so many Nigerians, but we also acknowledge that excessive or inappropriate patterns of alcohol consumption may cause health and social problems. Our actions in promoting responsible drinking are occasionally greeted with skepticism: why would a brewing company wish to encourage people to consume less of its products? The answer is simple. First, we want to do what we can to ensure that our brands are not a cause of harm in society. Second, if misuse persists, campaigns against the promotion and sale of alcohol beverages may follow, potentially affecting our business. For these compelling reasons, we work to find a responsible, sustainable place for the moderate enjoyment of our brands in Nigeria."

Meanwhile, feelers from MARKETING EDGE's intelligence in Lagos metropolis showed that some consumers, especially young people have not felt the impact of the campaigns.

Damilola Adepoju, a sales representative, said some of the brands are contradicting themselves with their campaign initiatives.

"To me, all these brands are just selling their brands; there is no social responsibility in anything they do as they claim. Most times, they are even contradicting themselves, because



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you are admonishing a consumer to drink responsibly and at the same time, encouraging him to buy two and get one free. What does that mean? How can such a person think of drinking responsibly? After all, awoof, they say, dey purge belle.”

James Dogo, a financial analyst, blamed the unregulated selling of alcohol to lack of stringent and effective law and order among government agencies.

“I don’t know the role that Federal Road Safety Corps plays, because every day, we see hawkers at the bus-stop selling sachet alcohol, whereas the law says don’t drink and drive. Yet they are selling these things at the bus-stops. Who are they selling it to? Of course, drivers and conductors. But you will still hear FRSC officials say they are doing this or that campaign. What is the essence of such campaigns without impact?”

Joseph Ike, a sports enthusiast also corroborated the first respondent by adding that whatever measures brands are putting in place have not been effective enough. He noted that it should not be a one-off measure but a process that will sensitize and sanitize the society off irresponsible drinking habits.

However, Bidemi Odukoya, a restaurant owner noted that brands are playing their parts but that the ball is in the court of consumers to caution themselves.

“I know many brands who carry out adverts endlessly to caution consumers on the need to avoid drinking while driving, some even jokingly tease that if you must drink, then drink water while driving. It is left for an individual to be cautious, even makers of cigarette warning that smokers are liable to die young haven’t stopped people from smoking. Although brands need to still do more, especially by taking such campaigns to our bus-stops because alcohol abuse is worse there. In fact, I will say that is what most of them use to brush teeth in the morning, literally speaking.”

Meanwhile, the umbrella body of the Distillers and Blenders Association of Nigeria, DIBAN, on its part disclosed that as a fulfillment to its corporate social responsibility, it launched a 170 million naira advocacy campaign against irresponsible and underage drinking of alcohol some time ago.

This plan involves the heavy use of radio, billboards and social media to propagate the carefully crafted messages which are expected to cause behavioral changes in consumers.

The Chairman of the association, Chief (Engr.) Patrick Anegbe said: “Our goal is that anyone below the age of 18 years must not drink alcohol and even the adults who want to drink must drink responsibly. We are socially responsible and that is why we are saying the underage must be protected, even if our bottom line is affected.”

INFLATION: DOES YOUR BRAND EQUITY JUSTIFY YOUR PRICE POINT?

By Zion Rufus

—Brand managers must understand that the justification of a price point is not merely a numerical exercise but an intricate connection between consumer perception and the brand’s ability to deliver on promises. Only brands with strong equity can weather the storm of economic uncertainty by upholding the trust they’ve meticulously built.

Now, more than ever, as we navigate the intricate terrain of an economic crisis coupled with inflationary pressures, the need for brands to judiciously justify their price points is a critical aspect that can make or break their resilience in the market.

Once-affordable commodities are slipping out of reach, leading some businesses to exit the country, and others are forced to shut down certain product categories.

During inflationary periods such as this, consumers are also forced to make tough choices about where to allocate their limited resources. As a result, a brand’s ability to maintain price appropriateness becomes a critical factor in retaining customer loyalty; brand managers must also now tread with caution.

“Price is vital,” said Akin Afere, Associate Director, for Nigeria at Kantar, as he shed light on the importance of understanding the intricacies of consumer behavior during economic challenges.

“During times like this, you need to understand the pricing power of your brand and be meaningfully different. What do your customers value most about your brand? You need to understand who your buyers are. You cannot exist, and your product cannot exist without its buyers. So, how predisposed are those buyers to your brand versus other brands in that category? Secondly, you need to understand price sensitivity. We’ve talked about inflation, and we’ll allude to it a lot more as it affects people differently, affecting the way that they make their plans and decisions,” Afere explained, adding that this is where the perceived value, backed by strong brand equity, becomes the compass guiding consumers through the maze of rising prices.

During economic upheaval, consumers scrutinize their spending with a discerning eye, making decisions based on perceived value and brand trust. This is where brand equity comes into play – the intangible yet immensely valuable asset that encapsulates the trust, loyalty, and perceived value consumers attach to a brand.

According to Afere, the key lies in ensuring that price adjustments align with the intrinsic value consumers associate with the brand. It’s not just about passing on increased costs; it’s about preserving the delicate balance between price and value.

“Does your brand’s equity justify the price point? Those are questions we need to ask ourselves. Especially in an environment like this. What you shouldn’t do is say, ‘How do I just get volume and increase my capacity to reach the audience in any way necessary? Or pushing for promotions; you know, it seems like a low-hanging fruit in inflationary times. But we can tell you from studies and research that those short-term gains will not stand the test of time. There are better ways,” Afere continued.

As we find ourselves in an economic crisis, marked by low purchasing power and a surge in discretionary spending due to inflation, consumers are reevaluating their priorities. The very essence of brand equity lies in the emotional connection a brand has fostered with its consumers. It is this emotional tie that influences the perceived value of a brand and, consequently, justifies its price point.

A robust brand equity acts as a shield during an economic crisis, allowing a brand to command a price that aligns with its perceived value. Consumers, even in the face of financial constraints, are more likely to stretch their budgets for a brand they trust and value. This trust is earned through consistent quality, reliability, and a commitment to meeting or exceeding customer expectations.

In essence, the relationship between brand equity and price appropriateness is a symbiotic one. As brand equity builds and strengthens, it provides the latitude for a brand to navigate through economic crises with the flexibility to adjust price points judiciously. Conversely, maintaining price appropriateness during inflationary periods safeguards the hard-earned equity by ensuring consumers continue to see value in their purchases.



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New York Festivals partners MARKETING EDGE on Advertising Awards

By **Ralph Tathagata**



To inspire creativity and excellence on global scale, New York Festivals, the organisers of New York Advertising Awards, is partnering with MARKETING EDGE Publications, Nigeria's leading marketing and brand-centric media powerhouse. In the strategic and global partnership, MARKETING EDGE Publications will be promoting and covering the prestigious New York Advertising Awards.

Expressing her enthusiasm on behalf of New York Festivals in establishing a media partnership with MARKETING EDGE, Gayle Seminara Mandel, VP,

Communications Director/ Executive Director, AME Awards, New York Festivals, said, "We are thrilled at the opportunity to collaborate with Nigeria's leading, brand-centric, authoritative, and award-winning publication.

"MARKETING EDGE Publications has consistently demonstrated its position as Nigeria's premier publication, renowned for its brand-centric approach and authoritative insights. With a commitment to excellence, MARKETING EDGE has garnered the trust and respect of industry professionals, providing comprehensive coverage of developments in brands,

marketing, and advertising both within Nigeria and across the globe.

"We look forward to your talented team of writers utilizing your extensive reach to promote the New York Advertising Awards, capturing the essence and excitement of the award-winning work, and offering insightful analysis and commentary on the most compelling works honored in 2024."

Expressing her enthusiasm further, Mandel added, "We are excited about the opportunity to collaborate with MARKETING EDGE Publications. Together, we will showcase the best and brightest talents in the industry, inspiring creativity, and excellence on a global scale. We look forward to a successful partnership that will mutually benefit both our organizations."

Commenting on the global and prestigious partnership, Mr. John Ajayi, the Publisher and CEO of MARKETING EDGE, said that the Nigerian

leading source of news and insights on brand management business and the business of brand management is elated to partner with New York Festivals.

"The partnership is perfectly in sync with MARKETING EDGE's sole aim of regularly expanding the frontiers of marketing and advertising knowledge, while leading conversations on contemporary and germane issues in the entire Integrated Marketing Communications ecosystem.

"As a platform that champions industry thought leadership in its own right, MARKETING EDGE takes this prestigious partnership with New York Festivals seriously and will use it to drive innovation among industry practitioners, allowing them to compete favorably not just in the Nigerian market but on a global stage like New York Advertising Awards."

Netflix names Expedia Group as first global advertising partner

By **Oluwaseyi Lawal**



Netflix has unveiled Expedia Group as its first-ever global advertising collaborator. The streaming service intends to roll out a multi-market promotional campaign on its ad-supported subscription tier throughout 2024.

This collaboration is

geared towards supporting Expedia Group's worldwide expansion initiatives while enriching Netflix's array of advertising opportunities across multiple countries for marketers and subscribers.

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partner,” stated Amy Reinhard, president of Advertising at Netflix.

She emphasized the importance of the collaboration in delivering ads that are contextually relevant to actively engaged ad-supported members, thereby enhancing the viewing experience and positioning Netflix as a premier global advertising destination.

With years of brand and technology transformation behind us, we’re now leveraging new capabilities to go on the offense globally: winning AI based products, reinvented

brands, and a loyalty construct in One Key that offers customers one travel ecosystem for all their needs,” said Jon Gieselman, president, Expedia Group. “As global consumer habits rapidly evolve, we are always looking for innovative opportunities to showcase our brands and story-tell locally. Netflix’s product allows us to reach a rapidly growing audience. We aren’t afraid to be first and I look at this partnership as just the beginning.”

The streaming advertising partnership commences this month in Japan, with Expedia aiming

to strengthen its presence in the country through a promotional campaign. This collaboration extends to several other markets, such as the U.S., Canada, Mexico, U.K., France, Germany, Australia, and Brazil.

Expedia’s global brand positioning, “Made to Travel,” will be showcased through various ad formats, including 15-second, 30-second, and 60-second spots, created by their internal creative team. Directed by Hiro Murai, the campaign focuses on Expedia’s package price tracking tools and includes localized ads tailored to

specific languages and cultures.

The partnership represents a positive step forward for Netflix, aligning with its objectives for growth and expansion in the ad-supported tier. Netflix’s ad-supported tier has garnered 23 million monthly active users, with additional formats like pause ads scheduled for release in the upcoming months.

This global collaboration follows Netflix’s previous co-branded ad campaign in the previous year, featuring Geico’s Gecko and Netflix’s Leo characters.

Heineken records huge drop in volume sales figures in Nigeria, Vietnam

By Ralph Tathagata



Heineken, the world’s second largest brewer, has recorded a significant drop in volume sales of its beer, as the Dutch brewer’s stocks fell by 6.5% last week.

Heineken attributed much of the decline to the disappointing performance in Nigeria and Vietnam,

with both regions accounting for more than 60% of the volume drop in 2023.

In a statement, Heineken said it expected its operating profits throughout the year to see a “low to high single digit increase”.

Heineken chairman

and chief executive, Dolf van den Brink, said, “We feel good about where the company is going, but we continue to do that in a turbulent world so that’s why we have deliberately chosen a relatively wide range.”

He added that raising the prices of Heineken beers last year had undoubtedly “impacted volumes”, which fell by 4.7% (more than the estimated 4.4% decline) in 2023. van den Brink, however, didn’t rule out further price increases in 2024.

Instead, he hinted that the pace of price increases will be moderate this year, but pointed out that input costs are still rising.

Heineken raised its beer prices by double digits in the first half of 2023, and

again, by single digits, in the second half. The hikes saw Heineken’s average prices increase by 10.2% worldwide.

van den Brink also said, “Strong pricing to offset very high input and energy cost inflation and volatile macro-economic conditions in some key markets affected our volume momentum.”

New tax laws in Brazil (Heineken’s second biggest market) are also likely to impact the company’s bottom line in the coming years, as Heineken will see its global tax rate jump from 26.8% to 29% in 2025.

Analysts called the full year forecast underwhelming as Heineken’s stocks slid in the wake of the announcement.

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WARC forecasts global sports media rights spend to reach \$61bn in 2024

By Oluwaseyi Lawal



The projected global expenditure on sports media rights is estimated to reach \$61 billion this year. However, brand advertisers encounter challenges due to the fragmented media landscape.

In the United States, brands are anticipated to allocate an additional \$2 billion towards advertising during the Paris Olympics, while Euro 2024 is expected to drive €250 million in additional ad spend across Europe. Despite these boosts, they are unlikely to counteract the ongoing decline in TV viewership.

In a time when marketers increasingly rely on sports for widespread exposure, the sector faces fragmentation. Live sports rights are becoming dispersed among various platforms including broadcast, over-the-top (OTT) or streaming services, and mobile apps. Additionally, social media platforms are gaining prominence among fans.

“Sports Media in the Era of Fragmentation,” WARC Media’s latest Global Advertising Trends report, delves into the evolving media landscape of sports, highlighting the challenges and opportunities for brand advertisers. It also

explores how rights holders plan to maintain the economic sustainability of sports in the years ahead.

Alex Brownsell, Head of Content, WARC Media, says: “Sport is one of the last providers of true ‘water cooler moments’, and this year’s bumper schedule of major sporting events, such as the summer Olympics and Paralympics in Paris, the UEFA European Football Championships, and the T20 Cricket World Cup, will provide advertisers with unrivalled means to achieve mass reach.

“However, these enduring qualities are under threat as consumption fragments. In this report we take a closer look at the current state of sport advertising at a time when media consumption poses a dilemma for brand advertisers.”

The WARC report on “Sports media in the era of fragmentation” reveals several key insights. Despite the fragmentation of media, major live sporting events still attract massive audiences. For instance, the Super Bowl LVII witnessed over 115 million viewers across Fox properties, marking it as the most-watched telecast in US history.

Television networks continue to invest significant sums in securing sports media rights. Global spending on these rights is projected to reach \$60.9 billion in 2024, a notable increase of 18.9% from pre-pandemic levels. Traditional broadcasters are intensifying their efforts to retain access to premium sports content.

2024 is poised to be significant for live sports, with the return of major events such as the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics, UEFA Euro 2024, and the T20 Cricket World Cup. Broadcasters and streaming platforms anticipate heightened viewership during these events. Despite the prominence of live sports, linear TV ad spend continues to decline in several regions. In the UK and Germany, linear TV spend is expected to decrease, while France experiences a slight increase. In the US, the recovery in

linear TV spend is attributed more to favorable year-on-year comparisons and upcoming events like the Presidential election rather than sports.

The fragmentation of sports rights poses challenges to achieving mass audience reach. NFL coverage, for example, is spread across various platforms including broadcast TV, cable networks, OTT services, and mobile apps, making it increasingly complex for fans to access all live games.

Social media platforms are emerging as significant channels for sports consumption, particularly among younger demographics. Approximately 93% of individuals aged 18-24 engage with sports content on social media weekly. However, Gen Z fandom tends to be more fluid, focusing more on athletes’ narratives rather than specific teams or competitions.

Programmatic ad spend to hit \$157.35 bn

By Felicia Nwosu



Programmatic ad spending is gearing up in a positive direction

as over \$157.35 billion will go to the segment in the first quarter of the year, according

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to Programmatic Ad Spending Forecast H1 2024.

According to the latest study by Insider Intelligence/eMarketer, a 15.9% growth rate and 91.3% of all ad spending are expected in the segment. The report envisaged that the it will experience a boom in 2025, with programmatic spending expected to total \$178.25 billion. The study, however, showed that non-programmatic will grow at only a third of that rate in 2024 at 5.3%.

According to the Mediapost, cookie depreciation has hit ad spending as programmatic advertisers have been “refocusing strategies around first-party data and investing more heavily in closed and private ecosystems. “This will leave the open exchange with less than 10% market share by the end of 2024,” the report said.

In another revelation, it stated that open exchange ad spending represented 74.5% of the programmatic display market when eMarketer began tracking it in 2013. Ever since, advertisers have invested heavily in private marketplaces and closed ecosystems like social media platforms and retail media networks (RMNs), which fall under programmatic direct.

Citing a survey data from the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), while applauding the immense contribution of measurement, the report recorded, “As signal loss reaches a fever pitch with cookie deprecation, ad buyers and sellers are harnessing their own consumer data for programmatic activation across transaction methods. Six in 10 buyers reported they’d be focusing somewhat or significantly more on ad placements with publishers with first-party data in 2024. November 2023 CTV ad spending was expected to be \$1 billion less than the sum originally predicted.”

Global gin market to reach \$30.1 bn by 2031

By Felicia Nwosu



A recently published report made available by Growth Market Reports valued the global gin market size at USD 22 billion in 2022, and projected it to reach USD 30.1 billion by 2031. It’s also expanding at a CAGR of 4.69% from 2023 – 2031.

Giving an estimation in litres, the report declared that the Gin Market size will reach 0.86 billion liters in 2024, and is expected to reach 1.13 billion liters by 2029, growing at a CAGR of 5.38% during the forecast period (2024-2029).

Providing a holistic view of the market dynamics, the analysis noted that the gin market has experienced remarkable growth in recent years, driven by several factors, including changing consumer tastes, the rise of craft distilleries, and innovative marketing strategies.

Acknowledging that the market reached saturation

point pre-Covid-19 and decimated by the pandemic, the data demonstrated that as a result of this shift, craft gins will struggle to progress, particularly as brands with international recognition move to occupy an increasingly challenging premium space.

The report attributed the upward move to increasing demand for handcrafted and premium gin beverages, which has gradually become a global trend in consumption. Another report disclosed that Gin garnered its popularity through the power of three main reasons which are its taste, versatility and the sheer variety of gins and for its distinctive way of reaching the parts of other white spirits just cannot reach.

Although as of 2023, it was recorded that Ginebra San Miguel was the leading brand of gin worldwide, selling over 37 million 9 liter

cases, while ranking second, Gordon’s sold 7.7 million cases of the distilled alcoholic drink. The report showed that the Philippines tops the list of countries with the world’s highest per-capita gin consumption.

Offering a robust assessment of the global gin market and its mode of key segmentation into various types, the market analysis underscored several brands leading in this category to include brands such as Plymouth Gin, the popular and legacy London Dry Gin, Old Tom Gin and many others

Other key global players are Asia Pacific, North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East & Africa while companies who have remained major players are Bacardi, Davide Campari-Milano N.V., Diageo, Pernod Ricard and others.

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Coca-Cola introduces Coca-Cola spiced and spiced zero sugar

By Abimbola Mohammed

The giant carbonated drink The Coca-Cola Company is adding new flavours to its portfolio by introducing Coca-Cola spiced and Coca-Cola spiced zero sugar, the first permanent offering in over three years.

According to the company, the two new flavour drinks will go on sale on February 19th, in Canada and USA. The drinks will be available in most national retail stores across a variety of sizes and packaging formats, including 12 ounce cans, ten-packs of mini cans, and two-liter bottles.

Despite the name, those sensitive to spicy foods need not be intimidated by the new flavour. In a fact sheet, the brand makes clear that “Coca-Cola Spiced is not spicy,” while simultaneously describing it as “Coke’s boldest tasting brand innovation



yet.”

Rather than a capsaicin-heavy assault on taste buds, the new addition seems to be a blend of the novel and familiar. The

company described the Spiced flavor as blending “the iconic taste of Coca-Cola with a burst of refreshing notes from raspberry and spiced flavors.”

The branding and packaging for Coca-Cola Spiced was designed to be in line with the Coca-Cola master brand’s visual identity, while adding a “swirl made up of raspberry-inspired colors” to the trademark red color long associated with the soda. “Coca-Cola” is prominently featured in bold font on both varieties, in white for Coca-Cola Spiced, and black for Coca-Cola Spiced Zero Sugar.

Coca-Cola developed the new flavour based on insights on evolving consumer preferences. According to the company, there has been a 124% increase among consumers in willingness to incorporate spice in beverages since 2019, as well as a 25% increased interest in raspberry soft drinks over the course of the last four years. The company also cited “over 5 million” raspberry servings poured from its Coca-Cola Freestyle machines just in 2022.

Coke has been exploring ways to get younger drinkers excited about its signature cola.

Global Wine & Tobacco Packaging market to reach \$875.8m by 2030

By Oluwaseyi Lawal



The global Wine and Tobacco Packaging market is expected to reach \$8758 million by 2030 with a Compound Annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.7% this period. The market size was valued at US\$ 5546.7 million in 2023. This is according to world market research platform.

The segment of packaging under review here are glass bottles wine packaging, metal cans wine packaging, paper packaging and aluminium foil packaging. For Tobacco, plain packaging strips cigarette packs of all branding elements, including colours and logos, and mandates that all cigarette packaging be

a standardised colour and display only a brand name in a required font style and format. It is a highly competitive and dynamic industry driven by changing consumer trends and regulatory requirements.

With growing demand in downstream market, Growth is foreseen in the future market for wine and tobacco packaging. Yet, to ensure widespread acceptance, it is essential to focus on product distinctiveness, cost reduction, and supply chain efficiency. Market participants are expected to prioritize investments in research and development, cultivate strategic alliances, and tailor their products to align with evolving consumer tastes. These efforts are essential to fully leverage the considerable opportunities within the wine and tobacco packaging sector.

Many of the materials used in wine and tobacco packaging help to deter tampering and counterfeiting. This has become increasingly important as fraud and counterfeiting of these items has become a major issue in the Global market. Consumers also often consider wine and tobacco packaging as part of the product’s overall appeal, incentivizing manufacturers to come up with innovative and attractive packaging designs.

The growth of the Global wine and tobacco packaging market is driven by several factors, including the increasing consumption of wine and tobacco products, the availability of eco-friendly packaging materials, and the emergence of innovative packaging solutions. The growth of the industry is further supported by the increasing demand for convenience and portability of products, which is driving the demand for packaging solutions. Furthermore, the growing influence of e-commerce and online retail and the increasing trend of personalized packaging are expected to fuel the growth of the market.

The worldwide wine and tobacco packaging sector is anticipated to experience consistent growth in the foreseeable future, propelled by rising consumer interest in diverse wine and tobacco offerings. As the appeal of wine and tobacco products continues to expand, there is a growing requirement for packaging solutions that offer both protection and security. This escalating demand is fueling the exploration and development of inventive packaging materials and technologies aimed at safeguarding products from external environmental factors.

First Bank of Nigeria's Easter Campaign: A blend of creativity and deep customer connection

In the fast-paced world of marketing, where messages vie for attention in an increasingly crowded space, it takes something truly special to stand out. First Bank of Nigeria achieved just that with its recent Easter campaign, a masterful blend of creativity, symbolism, and a deep connection to its audience.

Celebrating its 130th anniversary, the bank's campaign was not merely a marketing endeavor but a heartfelt expression of its enduring presence in the country's financial landscape. What set this campaign apart was its clever integration of the Easter narrative, seamlessly weaving together themes of faith, sacrifice, and redemption with the bank's own journey.

At the heart of the campaign lay the ingenious use of the digits "1-3-0," which served a dual purpose: commemorating the bank's milestone anniversary and mirroring the story of Easter. Each digit carried profound significance, with "1" representing "one man rose after," "3" symbolizing "Jesus rose after 3 days of dying," and "0" signifying "death had 0 power over him." This wordplay not only showcased the bank's longevity but also encapsulated the essence of the Easter story in a relatable and succinct manner.

By drawing parallels between its journey and the transformative power of faith, First Bank struck a chord with its Christian customers, fostering a deeper emotional connection and reinforcing its commitment to shared values. The emphasis on "one man's sacrifice" underscored the bank's recognition of the profound impact of individual actions and highlighted its role as a partner in its customers' financial journey.

Released during the Easter holiday season, the timing of the

campaign was impeccable. Capitalizing on the heightened sense of spirituality and reflection that characterizes this time of year, First Bank ensured maximum impact and resonance with its target audience. Moreover, the campaign's emphasis on inclusivity and diversity was commendable, as it transcended religious boundaries to appeal to a broader demographic, fostering a sense of unity and belonging among its diverse customer base.

The campaign's Ingenuity and alignment with the Easter

season prompted extensive sharing across diverse social media platforms. Crafted by SO&U Advertising, one of Nigeria's most innovative advertising agencies, its clever tone naturally enticed users to interact, leading to heightened visibility and conversation. As the campaign gained momentum, it ignited viral discussions and resonated strongly within online communities.

The social media response further highlights the campaign's impact, with users praising the bank's message: Here are some of the positive comments.

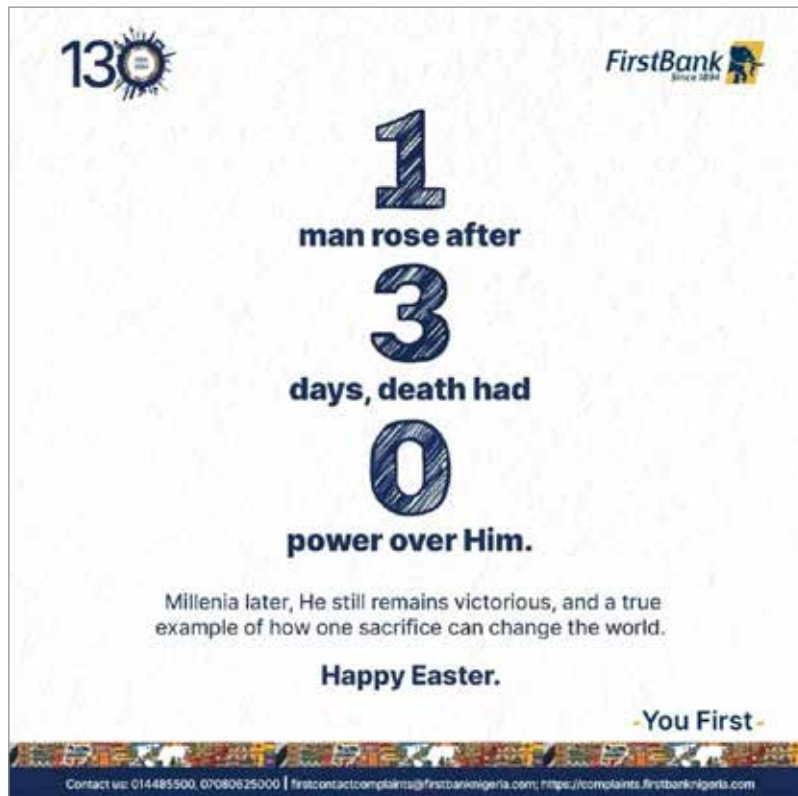
"Iseez_itod: Best Easter message goes to

First Bank. Congratulations on 130 years anniversary."

"Olaolabright: The First Bank Easter message is a classic. Second to none. It's from the heart awesome."

"Iam_Herbie_Amor: This is powerful. I love my bank. First Bank to the world. Cheers."

These comments serve as a testament to the resonance of the campaign and the deep connection it forged with its audience. As First Bank of Nigeria continues to innovate and evolve, its Easter campaign stands as a shining example of effective marketing with a heart, reaffirming its commitment to serving as a trusted partner in the lives of its customers.



HARDEST CREATIVE NUT TO CRACK? 20 PIECES OF ADVICE FOR CREATIVES

By Zion Rufus



Starting a journey in the creative world presents challenges where you'll be required to actively listen, ask questions, absorb knowledge, let curiosity drive your ideation, embrace mistakes, and most importantly, keep your ego in check.

To excel as a creative professional in advertising, it's crucial to be a creative thinker, possess artistic passion, writing or designing skills, and a curiosity for research and learning.

Admittedly, advertising isn't solely for those overflowing with ideas. It's a field teeming with opportunities for planners, doers, and creators, encompassing roles in finance, PR, legal, and more.

Whether you aspire to be a strategist, a doer, or a creative, the key lies in understanding the diverse facets of this dynamic industry.

For proactive individuals with logical thinking, roles such as account manager/executive, project manager, or media director open doors to the business side of advertising. Proficiencies in business, management, ideation, problem-solving, decision-making, networking, listening, and effective communication are essential.

For those who excel in management, roles like account manager, project manager, or production manager could be a perfect fit. Business acumen, networking, problem-solving, and effective communication skills are vital in managing

the business end of advertising agencies.

Creativity knows no bounds in roles such as copywriters, art directors, and designers. Crafting imaginative and compelling content is at the core of these roles, demanding not only creativity but also resilience, adaptability, and the ability to work under pressure.

However, regardless of the chosen role, the ability to handle criticism, cope with stress and burnouts, and navigate ideas being refined or rejected is vital. You can't escape it.

Creative director Rodd Chant shares 20 valuable pieces of advice for aspiring individuals entering a creative career:

Listen: Listening is a potent learning tool. Harness the power of understanding, and you'll uncover valuable insights in your creative journey.

Ask Questions: Asking questions isn't a sign of ignorance but a gateway to enlightenment. Embrace curiosity and seek understanding.

Be a Sponge: Immerse yourself in the agency environment. Understand every process, absorb knowledge, and be a perpetual learner.

Curiosity Is Your Copilot: A curious mind breeds fresh ideas. Stay forever curious, and creativity will be your constant companion.

Embrace Mistakes: Perfection is a myth. Mistakes are part of the creative process. Learn, adapt, and keep moving

forward.

Curb Your Ego: Ego impedes growth. Humility opens doors. Choose the latter; it will serve you well in your creative pursuits.

Be an Explorer: Venture into uncharted territories. Experiment with new techniques and technologies. Innovation flourishes in exploration.

Be Patient: A creative career is a journey, not a sprint. Patience is the bedrock of enduring success.

Imposter Syndrome Is Normal: Understand that feeling like an imposter is common among creatives. Acknowledge it, but don't let it hinder your progress.

Choose Your Boss Wisely: Your boss plays a pivotal role in your creative journey. If your creative leader is not conducive to growth, seek a change.

Clients Are Not the Enemy: Clients can be challenging, but they are not adversaries. Embrace the diversity in client interactions, and learn from each experience.

Policing Bad Briefs: Recognize the impact of a good brief. Advocate for clarity and quality, preventing subpar work and frustration.

Endure Shitty Days: Challenges are inevitable. Accept bad days, learn from them, and let them propel you toward better ones.

Creativity Beyond Work: Cultivate creative pursuits outside your job. Let your creativity flourish beyond the confines of your professional life.

Craft a Unique Portfolio: Your portfolio should be a showcase of ideas that stand out. Zig where others zag, and let your uniqueness shine through.

Find Your Voice: Differentiate yourself. Be bold, be unique. Your voice is your creative signature.

Continuous Improvement: Aim to be better each day, not necessarily the best. Consistent improvement accumulates over time.

Have Fun: Don't take yourself too seriously. Laughter and joy are essential ingredients in the creative process.

Perspective on Career Growth: Understand that every successful creative leader started where you are. Your doubts and uncertainties are part of the journey. Give it time, and the pieces of advice will make sense along the way.

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HOW SHORT FORM VIDEO IS RESHAPING ADVERTISING

By Oluwaseyi Lawal



In the age of shrinking attention spans and ever-scrolling audience, a new form of advertising has emerged: short-form video. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts have captivated audiences with their bite-sized bursts of entertainment, information, and inspiration. And advertisers are taking notice, rapidly incorporating these platforms into their marketing strategies.

But it's not just about grabbing eyeballs; it's about forging connections, telling stories, and leaving a lasting impression in the blink of an eye. Traditional advertising formats often struggle to compete with the endless distractions vying for an audience's attention. Long commercials get skipped, banner ads get ignored, and social media posts get lost in the algorithm. Short-form video cuts through the noise, delivering its message within seconds, captivating viewers before they scroll on.

Studies show that 63% of Gen Z prefers short-form video content, with an average

watch time of 11.5 seconds per video. Even Baby Boomers are getting included, with 34% engaging with short-form content. This highlights the universal appeal of this format, transcending demographics and preferences. Short-form video is about forging authentic connections with audiences. The informality and creativity inherent in these platforms allow brands to showcase their personality, tell engaging stories, and connect with viewers on an emotional level.

The limitations of short-form video is its biggest strength. With limited time, brands are forced to be laser-focused, distilling their message into its most impactful form. This fosters creativity, leading to innovative storytelling techniques, attention-grabbing visuals, and engaging hook. Short-form video advertising isn't a magic bullet. Measuring success goes beyond simply tracking views and likes. Brands need to define clear goals, understand their target audience, and tailor their content accordingly.

Experimentation: Trying different formats, platforms, and content styles to see what resonates with your audience.

Authenticity: Building a genuine connection with viewers by showcasing your brand's personality and values.

Community Building: Encouraging engagement through comments, challenges, and interactive elements.

Influencer Marketing: Collaborating with relevant creators to reach new audiences and leverage their established trust.

Short-form video isn't just a trend; it's a fundamental shift in the way we consume content and engage with brands. As technology evolves and platforms continue to innovate, we can expect even more immersive and interactive experiences. The future of advertising lies in embracing these bite-sized narratives, using creativity to overcome format limitations, and forging meaningful connections with viewers in the fleeting moments of their attention.






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Our new pact with CAF reaffirms VISA's role as foremost digital payments provider

- Seun Adaramola

Marketing Director, VISA West Africa

The TotalEnergies AFCON '23 tournament may have come and gone; but the memories of the various thrilling experiences and excitement will linger for a long time to come. One such experience which Nigerians would not forget in a hurry was the symbolic gesture of bringing the AFCON trophy to Nigeria which was championed by Visa, the renowned global digital payment technology brand. Some weeks into the trophy tour of Nigeria, MARKETING EDGE's Abimbola Mohammed engaged with Seun Adaramola, the Marketing Director at Visa West Africa. The highly accomplished global business amazon reflected on the patriotic gesture and other issues relating to the brand and the market. Below are excerpts from the interview:

What thoughts would you like to share with our readers on your legacy brand, Visa?

As a digital payment technology company, Visa isn't just a familiar name on your debit or credit card; we are a global powerhouse

processing over 276 billion transactions annually, connecting people and businesses across borders. Visa is also more than just a brand for digital payments, but we uplift everyone, everywhere by being the best way to pay and be paid. We go a step further with Innovative and empowering

opportunities provided to over 14,000 businesses all over the world with solutions like Visa Direct and contactless payments. Locally Visa has made several steps to improve businesses with a major focus in fintech startups through various initiatives, such as the Visa Everywhere Initiative



which has seen two consecutive Global winners from Nigeria and the Visa Accelerator programs. We are all about creating access for everyone – both businesses and individuals.

It's been a few weeks since the AFCON trophy landed in Nigeria, what has been the feedback?

Bringing the AFCON trophy to Nigeria wasn't just a symbolic gesture; it was a powerful showcase of Visa's commitment to African football. We announced the extension of our partnership with the Confederation of African Football (CAF) until 2026, solidifying our role as the exclusive digital payments provider for upcoming AFCON tournaments, including the prestigious Women's AFCON (WAFCON). The event presented the opportunity for clients, partners, sports enthusiasts, and the media to experience the trophy firsthand, whilst highlighting Visa's collaboration with key stakeholders to drive digital adoption and financial inclusion within the Nigerian sporting landscape. The trophy was also hosted at the office of the Governor of Lagos.

What value is the brand expecting from this experience and has it been met?

Our goal was to increase the excitement for the TotalEnergies AFCON '23 tournament while building anticipation and support. We have noticed an increase in engagement about the Trophy and the tournament which has led to an increase in visibility and support from Nigerians. We're proud to have provided Nigerians with this opportunity to connect with history and experience the tournament's magic firsthand.

In all, how many countries has this activation taken place?

The trophy visited a total of five countries courtesy of Visa. They include Egypt, South Africa, Morocco, Nigeria, and Cote d'Ivoire.

What makes your company's offerings stand out amidst stiff competition in the market?

Our global network has been instrumental in maintaining our strong position in Nigeria.

The brand is globally recognized, which gives us an edge and makes Visa a trusted choice for Nigerians who travel abroad or do international business. Visa is also accepted at millions of locations worldwide. This extensive acceptance network makes it convenient for





users, thus helping Visa maintain its user base. We continually invest in technology and innovation, and we can implement successful strategies from other markets into Nigeria for example, contactless payments. Our network is built with advanced security features to protect against fraud and cyber threats. This commitment to security makes Visa a preferred choice for consumers and businesses. Our commitment to innovation, security, and financial inclusion, helps us maintain a strong presence in Nigeria.

In view of Payment service solutions being diverse, broad, ever-changing, and extremely competitive, how can marketers make accurate decisions in such situations such as choosing the best marketing campaign, running the right sales promotions, and picking the most cost-effective supply chain?

In the payment service industry, marketers must remain relentlessly dedicated to strategies such as data analytics, market research, customer segmentation, as well as adopting a 'test and learn' approach. Collaborating with stakeholders and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement are equally vital. These strategies have been instrumental in my decision-making process, allowing me to make informed, cost-effective, and comprehensive choices that have significantly boosted the performance of my marketing campaigns and promotions. This holistic approach ensures not just the success of individual campaigns, but the overall growth and advancement of the brand in a competitive marketplace.

What would you underscore as the key challenges in the Nigerian Financial Services sector?

The Nigerian Financial Services sector, like many other sectors globally, is not exempt from the challenge of trust. This lack of trust is a significant hurdle and can be attributed to several factors. Fraud and scams, regulatory issues, inadequate customer service, financial literacy, infrastructure and system failures, and data privacy and security concerns. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach



Seun Adaramola

that includes regulatory improvements, educational initiatives, improved customer service, and robust security measures.

How are payment service providers leveraging technology to effectively identify lost opportunities, new avenues to target; determine the ROI of their field sales strategy and also provide real-time visibility into the workflow system?

Companies that handle payments use technology to improve their work and reach more customers. They use data analysis to learn what customers want and find new business chances, they employ systems to manage customer relationships and check how well their sales strategies are working and use real-time reports to make quick decisions. They use AI to do regular tasks automatically, so sales staff can focus on more important work. Location technology and mobile apps also give sales staff real-time updates, so they can respond quickly to changes. All these technologies help the companies work more efficiently and perform better.

In the dynamic world of digital advertising, what steps can brands take to empower Field Sales professionals to help them deliver information more appropriately?

To empower Field Sales professionals in the dynamic digital advertising world, brands can utilize various strategies. Firstly, equipping the team with digital tools such as CRM systems, or mobile apps can enhance their ability to access

and present information swiftly. Regular training on digital marketing trends and strategies is also crucial for their skill development. Brands can create a digital content library, including product demos or case studies, to aid their sales pitches. Leveraging data for insights into customer behavior can help in personalizing interactions. Encouraging collaboration between marketing and sales teams can ensure alignment with the brand's messaging. Establishing a feedback loop allows for on-ground insights to be shared, refining marketing strategies. Training in social selling techniques can also be beneficial, as it involves using social media to engage potential customers. Lastly, optimizing all materials for mobile devices is essential, as many interactions may occur on these platforms. These strategies can significantly enhance the effectiveness of information delivery in the field sales process.

What do you consider to be the future of influencer marketing; and how effective would you say influencer marketing has been to brands?

I think the future of influencer marketing is likely to be more personalized as we have already started to see. Audiences are becoming savvier; they value genuine recommendations from influencers they trust. Micro-influencers, who have smaller but highly engaged followings, will continue to rise in popularity. Additionally, we might see more focus on long-term partnerships between brands and influencers, as these relationships can lead to more organic and credible endorsements. As for its effectiveness, influencer marketing has proven to be quite beneficial for many brands. It

enables brands to reach niche audiences, increase brand awareness, and even drive sales. When an influencer genuinely aligns with a brand's values and style, their endorsement can feel more like a trusted recommendation from a friend rather than a traditional advertisement. This can greatly enhance the impact of the marketing message.

Which of your marketing campaigns readily come to your mind and which have remained memorable to you in your brand marketing efforts over the years?

"Visa Where you shop Matters". The campaign was targeted at SMEs during COVID to help them take their businesses online by providing free online acceptance, free online advertisements, Visa business card loaded with business offers and digital marketing training programs. We also amplified the campaign with consumers by encouraging them to patronize local SMEs.

How has your professional trajectory been like?

As a Marketing Director, my professional trajectory is focused on continuous growth and development in my role. I aim to lead my team effectively, constantly innovating and improving our marketing strategies to drive our company's success.

My immediate goal is to deepen my understanding of our target market and refine our strategies to better cater to their needs. I'm also focusing on strengthening my leadership skills and fostering a collaborative, creative environment for my team.

In the long term, I aspire to move into a global Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) role. This would allow me to have a greater impact on the overall strategic direction of our company's marketing efforts. I am committed to continuous learning and staying abreast of the latest marketing trends and technologies to ensure I am prepared for this role.

In summary, my professional trajectory involves constant growth, learning, and striving for excellence in my current role as a Marketing Director, while preparing for future leadership opportunities.

How exciting and challenging has it been for you, moving from one rank to another, from one segment; and from one market to another with such grit and verve?

I would say each transition has provided me with new perspectives and opportunities to grow. In each role, I've had the chance to learn and adapt to new respon-

sibilities, which has been both challenging and rewarding. For example, moving from a Senior Marketing Manager to a Marketing Director role required me to shift from a more hands-on approach to a strategic leadership role, which was a significant learning curve.

Transitioning between different market segments and industries has been equally exciting. Each market has its unique characteristics, customer behaviors, and trends. Understanding these nuances and tailoring our marketing strategies to fit these different markets has been a fascinating process. It's like solving a new puzzle each time, which keeps the work interesting and dynamic.

However, these transitions also come with challenges. Each move requires a deep understanding of new market dynamics, customer preferences, and competitive landscapes. It also involves building and leading new teams, which requires adaptability and strong leadership skills.

Overall, the journey has been a mix of excitement and challenges, but I believe these experiences have greatly shaped my career and have made me a more versatile and effective Marketing Director.

What are your expectations for the new year?

My expectations for the new year are multifaceted and focused on growth and innovation.

Enhanced Digital Presence: With the shift in consumer behavior towards online platforms, I expect to significantly enhance our digital presence. This includes optimizing our website, improving our social media engagement, and leveraging digital marketing tools to reach our target audience more effectively.

Data-Driven Decisions: I aim to make our marketing decisions more data-driven. By leveraging analytics and customer insights, we can make more informed decisions that yield better results.

Innovation in Marketing Strategies: I hope to see our team innovate and experiment with new marketing strategies. This could include exploring new channels, trying out different content formats, or leveraging new technologies like AI or VR.

Team Development: I expect to see growth and development within our marketing team. This in-

cludes not only skill development but also fostering a culture of collaboration, creativity, and continuous learning.

Business Growth: Ultimately, all of our marketing efforts should contribute to the growth of the business. I expect to see a positive impact on our key performance indicators, such as lead generation, customer acquisition, and overall sales.

These expectations set a clear direction for our team and will guide our efforts in the coming year.

Who is Seun Adaramola?

Seun Adaramola is a highly accomplished global business leader and currently holds the position of Marketing Director at Visa West Africa. In this crucial role, Seun is responsible for leading a regional team dedicated to promoting Visa's purpose and driving the company's business strategy in the West Africa market. She oversees all aspects of marketing, including consumer, B2B, sponsorship, client/fintech, and merchant marketing.

Additionally, Seun has taken on the responsibility of leading brand strategy, product marketing, sponsorship (FIFA World Cup, AFCON and Olympics), media and agency management across Sub-Saharan Africa since 2021. This role includes marketing research, social and digital platforms, and content strategy. Her exceptional performance in these positions has earned her numerous organizational recognitions and awards.

Seun strives to be a positive influence and believes in helping others become the best versions of themselves. She dedicates her time as a volunteer career and self-development coach/mentor, supporting individuals in achieving their goals and maximizing their skills and potential.



British Council, Prince's Trust International empower eight young entrepreneurs in Nigeria



Eight promising young Nigerian entrepreneurs have been awarded grants of N250,000 each through the joint initiative of the British Council and Prince's Trust International.

These enterprising individuals were announced as the recipients of the Sustainable Entrepreneurship Challenge (TSEC) Programme, marking a significant achievement in youth empowerment and economic development.

Following a rigorous selection process, they emerged as the top contenders from a pool of sixty candidates, aged between 18 and 35 years old. Their innovative business ideas, pitched under the auspices of Nerdz Factory, captured the attention of a panel of five judges, securing them the prestigious grants.

The winners were categorised into two cohorts, each acknowledging different aspects of entrepreneurship.

Cohort One winners were Alero Thompson of Blue Sands Stem Labs for the Most Innovative Business Idea, Zenani Gbadume's Mee Best Foods for the Most Societally Friendly Business Idea, Oluwatosin Rotimi's Hems to Fit for the Most Profitable Business Idea, and Mansueah Shobulo's Ecodey Management Resources for the Most Environmentally Friendly Business Idea.

In Cohort Two, Olabisi Emmanuel's Eco Feet won the title of Most Innovative Business Idea, while Suss Flow, represented by Emmanuel Nnamdi, was recognised for the Most Societally Friendly Business Idea. Emmanuel Nnamdi's Cattle Technology was lauded as the Most Profitable Business Idea, with Buy Scrap Nigeria clinching the title of Most Environmentally Friendly Business Idea.

The Country Director of the British Council, Lucy Pearson, expressed her admiration for the entrepreneurial spirit of Nigerian youth.

"This entrepreneurship challenge is a testament to the British Council's unwavering commitment to nurturing the talents of young Nigerians. We believe in providing opportunities for young people to develop their skills and contribute to the economic prosperity of Nigeria," she remarked.

Pearson commended the Lagos delivery partner, Nerdz Factory, for its



dedication in executing the project successfully, one of the three pilot states.

She also extended gratitude to Prince's Trust International for their invaluable partnership in designing and implementing the initiative.

Ade Olowojoba, the Founding Partner of Nerdz Factory, while congratulating all participants and emphasised the significance of the initiative in realising the dreams of young entrepreneurs, expressed gratitude to the British Council for sponsoring the entrepreneurship challenge.

As Nerdz Factory served as the delivery partner in Lagos, similar initiatives are underway in Enugu and Kano through partners Entrepreneurial Development Initiative (ENDIP Centre for Enterprise Development) and Centre for Information Development and Technology (CITAD) respectively.

This initiative stressed the British Council and Prince's Trust International's commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and driving economic growth in Nigeria. With plans to expand the program nationwide, the organisations remain dedicated to supporting the aspirations of Nigerian youth.

MEDIA FUSE @10: A CELEBRATION OF MEDIA ADVERTISING EXCELLENCE



L-R: The Managing Director of Carat Nigeria, Igwe Okeke; the MD of iProspect Nigeria, Yetunde Adegbite; the Director General of Advertising Regulatory Council (ARCON), Mr Lekan Fadolapo; the Chief Executive Officer of Dentsu Africa, Dawn Rowlands; the Group CEO of MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria, Emeka Okeke and the MD of Dentsu Out-Of-Home (location services), Chike Oputa at MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria 10th anniversary and Dentsu Africa 2024 Summit held in Lagos State, Nigeria.



MEDIA FUSE @10: A CELEBRATION OF MEDIA ADVERTISING EXCELLENCE

As MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria commemorates its tenth anniversary, the agency stands as a symbol of excellence and innovation in integrated marketing communications. Over the past decade, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria has not only carved a niche for itself but has also set new standards, pioneering transformative initiatives and consistently surpassing expectations.

Established in January 2014, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria swiftly

emerged as a leading integrated marketing communications agency, offering a comprehensive suite of services ranging from media planning and buying to creative and content development, digital performance, location services, and public relations. From its inception, the agency has been committed to excellence and innovation, challenging industry norms and redefining standards with its integrated approach to marketing communications.

A pivotal moment in MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria's journey occurred

in August 2014 when it became the first indigenous media agency to attract foreign direct investment in equity participation from Dentsu International, one of the world's largest marketing and media groups. This strategic partnership not only provided access to global resources and expertise but also reinforced MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria's position as a trailblazer in the Nigerian market.

As a proud member of the Dentsu International network, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria leveraged its global expertise and local insights

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As a proud member of the Dentsu International network, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria leveraged its global expertise and local insights to deliver impactful campaigns and drive tangible results for clients across diverse industries. With a client base of over 11,000 across 143 markets, the agency has earned a reputation as a leading force in the industry, consistently pushing boundaries and exceeding expectations.



to deliver impactful campaigns and drive tangible results for clients across diverse industries. With a client base of over 11,000 across 143 markets, the agency has earned a reputation as a leading force in the industry, consistently pushing boundaries and exceeding expectations.

Throughout its journey, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria has remained committed to innovation and client-centricity. The agency became the first indigenous media agency to offer total communication services, encompassing creative services, production, digital marketing, original content development, influencer marketing, data, and technology. This bold move challenged industry norms and paved the way for a decade of groundbreaking initiatives and industry-firsts.

One such milestone was the launch of M1 (formerly Consumer Connection System) in 2016, a revolutionary platform that transformed the Nigerian marketing communications landscape. M1 expanded measurable touchpoints from just four to over sixty, covering more than 20 commercial cities in Nigeria. This innovation significantly

enhanced the agency's ability to deliver targeted and impactful campaigns, driving tangible results for its clients.

The accolades and commendations for MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria's achievements have been widespread. Dr. Lekan Fadolapo, Director General of the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON), hailed the agency as a trailblazer, while Dawn Rowlands, CEO of Dentsu Africa, described its 10-year existence as "incredible." Both emphasized the agency's entrepreneurial talent, growth potential, and scalability, affirming its position as a leader in the industry.

Looking ahead to the future, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria remains committed to driving positive changes in the market. With a focus on deepening its investment in human resources, technology, and data, the agency is poised to chart a new path in customer and brand experience. Embracing innovation, integrity, and client-centricity as its guiding principles, MediaFuse-Dentsu Nigeria is well-positioned to stay ahead of the curve and continue delivering exceptional results for its clients.

MEDIA FUSE @10: A CELEBRATION OF MEDIA ADVERTISING EXCELLENCE IN PICS





Glitz, Glamour and Panache as TVC's MD/CEO, Victoria Ajayi officially launches 'The Precision-Led Woman'

By **Zion Rufus**

Amid an atmosphere of elegance, class and elan, Mrs Victoria Abiola Ajayi, the newly appointed MD/CEO of TVC, has officially unveiled her much anticipated book titled "The Precision-Led Woman – A Definitive Guide to Landing Leadership Positions."

The glamorous event, held at the lush Ebony Life Place in Lagos, was attended by a coterie of high-end top executives, business leaders, and corporate officials. The eminent personalities include: Dr. Rabiul Olowo, CEO of the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria; Yemi Adefarakan, Executive Vice Chairman of TVC Communications; Gbolahan Olalemi, COO of TVC Communications; Mrs. Bola Adesola, Chairperson of Ecobank; and Mrs. Ibukun Awosika, Former Chairman of FirstBank, among others.

As guests arrived, they were greeted by an atmosphere of anticipation and excitement sign-posting the significance of the occasion.

The book, which has already garnered great acclaim from notable executives, reflects Ajayi's commitment to empowering women and positioning them for excellence in leadership roles. With insightful content that delves into strategic thinking and more, "The Precision-Led Woman" is poised to make a significant impact in the professional landscape.

Reflecting on the three-fold inspiration behind the book, Ajayi emphasized its relevance for women, corporations, and society at large.

"I wrote 'The Precision-Led Woman' to remind the world that women are competent and able to lead industries, formulate policies, and champion causes," she stated. "For corporations, the world needs more women in leadership to bridge the gender inequality gap and ensure that decisions are made with diversity and inclusivity in mind."

Speaking further, Ajayi passionately



From left: Dr Rabiul Olowo, CEO, Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria; Yemi Adefarakan, Executive Vice Chairman, TVC Communications; Gbolahan Olalemi, Senior Management, TVC Communications; Mrs Bola Adesola, Chairperson Ecobank; Mrs Victoria Ajayi, author of the book with her husband Mr Ade Ajayi and Mrs Ibukun Awosika, Former Chairman FirstBank & CEO The Chair Centre Group. During the book presentation titled *THE PRECISION-LED WOMAN* by Mrs Victoria Ajayi, new Group CEO/MD of TVC Communications was held in Lagos over the weekend.

discussed the need to inspire young girls to dream big and aspire to leadership roles. By lifting their heads high and embracing leadership, women can serve as powerful role models for the next generation, instilling in them the confidence to pursue their ambitions fearlessly.

Indeed, statistics have shown that having more women in leadership positions is not just a matter of equality but also makes good business sense. In today's dynamic professional environment, aspiring women leaders must equip themselves with the strategies and mindset necessary to navigate the path to success. This is where the concept of precision-led leadership comes into play.

"Being a Precision-led woman means knowing where you want to go as a leader and taking consistent action to get there," Ajayi explained. "In today's corporate settings, precision is essential, and this

book provides a roadmap tailored to each individual's ambitions, strengths, and circumstances."

"The Precision-Led Woman" offers readers a deep understanding of how to position themselves for leadership, whether they are aspiring leaders or already on the path to success. Through relatable experiences, actionable roadmaps, and insights into debunking leadership myths, Ajayi's book empowers women to break through barriers and ascend the leadership ladder.

"As we break more glass ceilings and overcome biases, we pave the way for future generations of women leaders," Ajayi concluded. "With the strategies outlined in this book, we can not only position ourselves for leadership but also help others do the same. Together, we can create a more inclusive and equitable future for all."

FACES @ THE PRECISION-LED WOMAN BOOK LAUNCH



From left: Mrs Bola Adesola, Chairperson Ecobank; Mrs Victoria Ajayi, author of the book, her husband, Mr Ade Ajayi and Mrs Ibukun Awosika, Former Chairman FirstBank & CEO, The Chairman, The Chair Centre Group



FACES @ THE PRECISION-LED WOMAN BOOK LAUNCH





Groundbreaking Kids FM 101.7 launches in Lagos



Serge Noujaim, CEO Cool FM

The media powerhouse renowned for its popular stations Cool FM, Wazobia FM, Nigeria Info FM, and Arewa Radio proudly announces the launch of Kids FM 101.7, a pioneering radio station dedicated to children and their families in Lagos.

This groundbreaking initiative marks the first of its kind in Nigeria, heralding a new era in children's entertainment and education across the nation. Kids FM 101.7 conducted its test transmission on April 1st, with regular transmission slated to commence soon.

According to the CEO Serge Noujaim, Kids FM 101.7 is a revolutionary destination for Fun, Education, and Inspiration. It is conceived with a heartfelt mission at its core. "Kids FM 101.7 is designed to inspire kids and empower parents by bringing out the best of their abilities and providing easy access to

education and entertainment on radio," the CEO said.

More than just a radio station, Kids FM 101.7 is envisioned as a vibrant community where children find a voice and a space that respects their perspectives, nurturing their innate curiosity.

Programming Highlights Include:

- Storytime Adventure: Enchanting tales from diverse local cultures that ignite imagination.
- Little Geniuses: Engaging, educational content covering a wide range of topics to spark curiosity and learning.
- Music Mania: A selection of kid-friendly songs and tunes that the whole family can enjoy.
- Inspirational Stories: Narratives of notable figures to motivate and encourage young listeners.

Kids FM 101.7 extends an invitation to families in Lagos to tune in and discover a world of fun, education, and inspiration.



How Mobil Lubricants keep people and machines moving

In a fairly consolidated Nigeria Lubricants Market, Mobil Lubricants from the stable of 11PLC is one of the major players as the top five companies occupying 68.10%.

Dating back to 1907 when Socony Vacuum Oil Company sold Sunflower Kerosene, the company's name was changed to Mobil Oil Nigeria Limited in 1951 and Mobil Oil Nigeria Plc in 1978. In 2016, NIPCO Investment Company bought a 60% stake in the business and changed the name to 11 Plc (pronounced Double One Plc).

In the lubricants category, 11 PLC's Mobil 1 brand is designed and marketed to keep people and machines moving since before the first gasoline-powered automobile.

From the Wright Brothers' first flight to the launch of the space station, from the first automobiles to the latest Grand Prix cars, Mobil Lubricants have continuously

been keeping millions of vehicles performing at their best.

Mobil 1 also meets or exceeds the latest standards of the global oil industry and vehicle manufacturers. From NASCAR to Grand Prix, Le Mans to Indy Racing League and Formula 1, winning motorsport teams trust Mobil 1 technology to deliver the performance and engine protection needed to meet the grueling demands of the race tracks.

What's more, 11PLC's Mobil Super is the global family of premium passenger vehicle engine oils that provide different levels of protection to match the conditions road users face, so that they can drive with full confidence.

According to a Mordor Intelligence recent report, the Nigeria Lubricants Market size is estimated at 553.40 Million Liters in 2024, and is expected to reach 597.33 Million Liters by 2026, growing at a CAGR of 3.89% during the forecast period

(2024-2026).

The report further stated that power generation is likely to be the fastest-growing end-user industry of the Nigerian lubricants market during 2021-2026, with a CAGR of 5.39%, followed by metallurgy and metalworking (5.2%). The growing vehicle sales and production are likely to drive the consumption of lubricants in the automotive industry in the future.

In all, Mobil Lubricants are maintaining sterling leadership in the Nigerian lubricants market.

As a caring corporate citizen, 11 PLC Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) aims to support health and malaria control, science and mathematics education, youth and women empowerment and other charitable programmes, especially for the less privileged within the immediate community and beyond.

Red Line

inauguration advances Sanwo-Olu's "Greater Lagos Rising"

By **Seun Johnson**



The Greater Lagos Rising Vision of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's administration in Lagos State recently received a big boost with the inauguration of Red Line Rail, by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. The great stride clearly signifies a new era in the state's transport sector.

It would be recalled that "A greater Lagos Rising" is the visionary campaign slogan adopted by the governor during his second term electioneering activities in 2023. It was designed to reinstate and reinforce his vision for the actualization of the mega city project for the Centre of Excellence.

Apt, sublime and quite captivating, the mantra is a lyrical composition that captures the visions of previous administrations, refreshes the memories of residents on the abiding potentials in Lagos and defines the position of the state as a smart city.

From sunrise to sunset, Sanwo-Olu has left no stone unturned in his consistent pursuit of a greater Lagos since the

commencement of his administration in 2019. This, he has achieved by consolidating on the blueprint of former governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu, building on the impressive legacies of Babatunde Raji Fashola, re-activating the dreams of his immediate predecessor, Akinwumi Ambode which consequently birthed his aspiration of "A Greater Lagos Rising."

Through a combination of resourceful thinking, tenacity of purpose and burning desires to achieve impactful administration and leave indelible footprints in Lagos, Sanwo-Olu has in the nearly four years carved a respectable niche for himself as a governor with people-centered policies. All these culminated in his rhythmic campaign mantra of Greater Lagos Rising.

Perhaps, the most empirical proofs of enormous transformations that underscore this slogan and his deliberate attempt to re-position the state is the completion and inauguration of the Red Line rail which is generally described as a cornerstone in the journey to make Lagos a global model city for urban excellence.

The project has the capacity to

facilitate 37 trips and accommodate 500,000 passengers daily.

Speaking at the occasion, President Bola Tinubu reiterated his administration's commitment in improving on the nation's infrastructural development, describing the facility as an intra-state rail service aimed at improving transportation within the city.

Also in his speech, Sanwo-Olu noted that for the first time in the history of the State, there is a system comprising of, and integrating, all three modes of transportation. According to him, every day, the system serves millions of Lagosians, across these three transport options.

While the project has the potential to decongest traffic in the state, it will serve as a critical economic catalyst through the provision of a reliable and efficient mode of transport.

Similarly, it is expected to spur business activities, attract investment and significantly reduce economic shortfall majorly attributed to traffic logjam.

The strategic foresight of the Red Line rail project is a robust testament to the commitment of Lagos State government in not only improving the quality of life for residents but also laying the groundwork for sustainable smart city.

With the celebration of a new dawn in the Lagos transportation sector, the focus has now shifted towards the future benefits of the Red Line rail.

Its success will in no small measure serve as a blueprint for other Nigerian cities grappling with similar urban mobility challenges.

While the journey ahead may be long, the inauguration of the project is a promising step towards a more connected, efficient, and economically vibrant Lagos.

It is a laudable feat that has further explained the validity of Governor Sanwo-Olu's 2023 campaign mantra, "A Greater Lagos Rising."



First Bank Digital Experience Center: Driving future banking today



pinnacle of digital transformation in banking. These fully automated branches, strategically located across key regions in Nigeria, offer customers unrivaled convenience and efficiency, with 24/7 access to a wide range of banking services.

These state-of-the-art facilities combine cutting-edge technology with personalized service, providing customers with a seamless and self-directed banking experience.

At the heart of the DXC is a team of humanoid robots equipped with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Video Banking technology, ensuring customers receive efficient and tailored services round the clock. These innovative robots serve as friendly branch staff, assisting customers with a wide range of banking needs, from account inquiries to card services, in a welcoming and ambient environment.

Mr. Adesola Adeduntan, CEO of FirstBank, highlighted the bank's commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction, stating, "The launch of the FirstBank Digital Experience Centre reflects our ongoing dedication to providing our customers with cutting-edge banking solutions. As pioneers in the industry, we are continuously evolving to meet the changing needs of our customers and deliver world-class banking experiences."

The DXC also offers customers a comprehensive suite of banking services, including self-service kiosks for non-financial transactions, Fast Track (Contactless) ATMs, and interactive smart screens for remote video consultations with bank staff. Customers can also enjoy paperless/electronic forms designed to promote timely resolution of complaints and other essential banking services.

Additionally, the branch is equipped with Teller Cash Recyclers (TCRs), Self-Service kiosks, and Fast Track (Contactless) ATMs, allowing customers to carry out a wide range of transactions independently, without the need for human interaction. The Interactive Smart Screen enables customers to engage with bank staff remotely via video connection, ensuring

Cont'd on pg 67



For some time to come, one critical marketing term that will continue to find relevance and resonance to brand builders and marketing professionals for ages to come is brand positioning. For the uninitiated, we will attempt an explanation of what brand positioning is for a proper understanding. In the words of Samuel Timothy, VP at One IMS.com, an inbound marketing agency, "brand positioning is a process of getting your brand out there and establishing it as something worth thinking about. Its not a matter of what you do, but rather how you do it." When it comes to building a strong brand, a tagline or logo alone wont do the job. You have to think about how you are going to be seen by customers and what will make you different from other businesses offering similar services or products.

In the Nigerian banking sector today, one financial brand that most projects and demonstrates qualities of strong brand positioning with strategic initiatives that are consistent and intentional is First Bank of Nigeria. (FBN) In its over centennial years of existence, First Bank has continued to defy age, tide and times in creating unique appeals to its target audience. It goes without any equivocation that the founders and successive generations of leadership at the top management of

the bank has shared DNA in vision and mission. Aside being the first financial brand to enter the Nigerian market, it has consciously led the pack over the years in being the first to set pace in terms of trends and traditions. The bank which has done extra -ordinarily well by not succumbing to the vagaries in the Nigerian macro and micro- economic sectors have continued to sign- post a beacon of hope and inspiration to other players in the sector. This it has effectively and efficiently done through an enshrined deliberate culture of consistent brand positioning, relaunch and re-engineering. This the bank has done with avant- garde innovation.

First Bank of Nigeria Limited, Nigeria's premier financial inclusion services organization, has continued its legacy of innovation with the launch of the FirstBank Digital Experience Centre (DXC) in Banana Island, Lagos. This state-of-the-art facility marks a significant milestone in the bank's rich history of pioneering digital transformation in the banking sector.

The launch of the FirstBank Digital Experience Centre in Banana Island represents a significant milestone in the bank's journey towards redefining the future of banking and reaffirms its position as the partner of choice for building a secure and prosperous future.

The FirstBank DXCs, now in their fourth commissioning, represent the

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Accelerated Learning Project improves education in Kano schools



Under the auspices of the Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education (PLANE), the Accelerated Learning (AL) project has been making significant strides in enhancing educational outcomes across colleges in Kano.

Launched in April 2020 and slated to continue for nine years, the AL project, funded by Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), has received commendations from educators, mentors, and teachers for its effectiveness in transforming the learning experience.

The PLANE programme is being implemented by a consortium of organisations led by DAI, with the British Council focused on the Accelerated Learning (AL) part of which it implements with Teaching at The Right Level (TaRL) organization.

This year's edition of the AL project in Kano witnessed widespread participation and positive feedback from stakeholders. School principals and teachers lauded the initiative, highlighting its pivotal role in addressing the pressing needs of the education sector.

According to a school principal in Kano, "PLANE Accelerated Learning is one of the greatest things to happen to education as far as my experience and my involvement in the whole project are concerned. Because the accelerated activities is what is needed at this right time."

Moreover, teachers emphasized the collaborative nature of the

project, describing it as a partnership between the British Council and the colleges they work with.

Beyond focusing solely on educating children, PLANE ensures that stakeholders, including teachers and guardians, receive immersive training to equip them with the necessary tools for seamless task execution.

"We attended a series of training. We started with nine days trainings, after which we went for field trips and then for another refresher training for four days pertaining to this programme," shared a teacher, reflecting on the comprehensive training sessions conducted as part of the AL project.

Under PLANE AL, teachers undergo rigorous training and are subsequently tasked with training their peers before engaging with the students directly. This cascading approach ensures that the benefits of the programme reach a wider audience, ultimately enhancing its impact.

"When we get back to our different schools, we start with assessment of my children, divide them into groups; dual language and maths," explained a participating teacher, highlighting the structured approach employed in implementing the AL project.

Assessments conducted during the programme revealed substantial improvements in literacy rates among participating students.

A school administrator noted a significant reduction in the percentage of children struggling with basic reading skills following the intervention.

"Unlike the conventional schooling system, it came with assessing the children, knowing their position at a particular time. And then after the intervention, we see where they are and you find out that we have the baseline whereby you have more than 75% or 80% of children in literacy. They cannot recognise even letters, you know.

"But after the training, after the intervention, you find out that percentage has actually reduced drastically and the same thing for those children who were not able actually to read maybe small sentences, we have found at the story level, which is an achievement which is vividly clear," the administrator remarked.

Furthermore, teachers praised the inclusive nature of the AL project, particularly its use of the dual-language method, which allows them to leverage students' mother tongue before transitioning to English.

"You see, there's something special I love about the Accelerated Learning Project. It is inclusive. So this dual language method employed by the Accelerated Learning project helped me to teach my students using their mother's tongue. And then I later transitioned into the target language, which is the English language," expressed another teacher.

Beyond Kano, PLANE operates at the federal level and in five states, including Kaduna, Jigawa, Yobe, and Borno, with a focus on strengthening education systems and optimizing government expenditures.

The programme's strategic interventions encompass foundational skills development, education in emergency situations, and community-centered initiatives, all aimed at fostering sustainable improvements in Nigeria's education landscape.

Through collaborative efforts with government agencies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, PLANE continues to drive positive change and unlock the full potential of education in Nigeria.

MARKETING EDGE



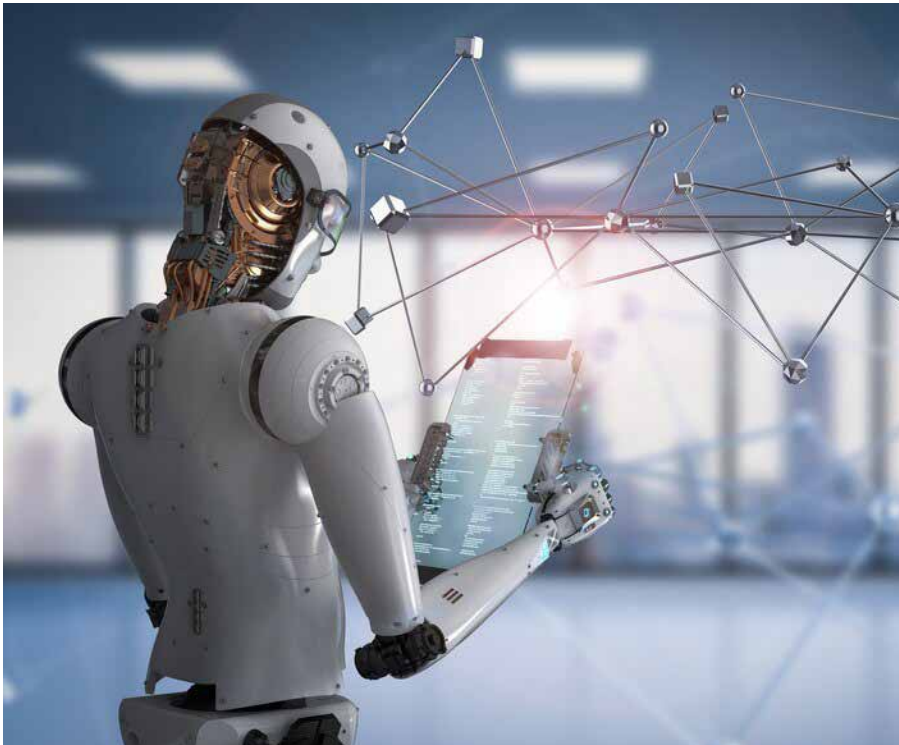
BRANDS & AGENCIES TO WATCH IN

2024



AI is redefining Marcom, Manufacturing, Real Estate, Telecoms, Banking and all sectors

By Ralph Tathagata



The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) means that the future of the creative economy, including marketing and advertising, telecom, manufacturing, construction, computing, banking, and other processes now lie in the collaboration between machine learning technology and humans. With the rise of AI as a significant player, any sector of the global economy that fails to incorporate the technology will be left behind.

In 2023, the huge market for AI technologies amounted to about 200 billion U.S. dollars. According to a recent report by PriceWaterCoopers, over 30% of companies utilize AI in some form already. PwC also estimated that AI will contribute a staggering \$15.7 trillion to the global economy by the end of 2030.

Specifically, one of the most profound impacts of artificial intelligence on

advertising and marketing is the ability to deliver hyper-personalised experiences to consumers. Brands are using machine learning algorithms to analyse vast amounts of data, ranging from user preferences and behaviours to demographic information.

In the context of manufacturing, AI generally refers to the application of narrow AI, involving technologies such as machine learning, neural networks, and robotics. AI can also optimize production processes by predicting and reducing downtime, improving quality control, and enhancing supply chain management. For example, AI-powered machines can detect anomalies in the production line in real time, allowing for swift corrective actions and reducing waste. Additionally, AI can help in predictive maintenance by analyzing data from machine sensors to predict potential failures before they occur.

In the real estate sector, artificial

intelligence embeds high-grade intelligence that helps acquire precise market projections and create smart investment strategies by leveraging big data analytics to process vast amounts of information. From automated property valuations to personalized customer experiences, AI is undoubtedly reshaping the industry with profound tech-driven solutions.

What's more, the influence of AI in real estate is tremendous, with a projected valuation of US \$1335.89 billion by 2029 and a phenomenal Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 35%.

Before now, construction has been suffering from budget overrun. And a recent McKinsey report estimated that large construction projects usually exceed 80% of the planned budget. But, the budget overrun is currently tackled by AI. Some AI startups are solving the problem using robotics, LIDAR imaging and autonomous robots to capture 3D images of construction sites. Thereafter, the AI algorithm analyzes data and turns it into insights, which are used by project managers to tackle any construction project issue.

The global AI in telecommunication market size was valued at USD 661.57 billion in 2024 and is expected to expand at a CAGR of 27.25% during the forecast period, reaching USD 2.96 trillion by 2031, according to a McKinsey report.

Leading regions in the AI telecom market include North America: USA, Canada, Mexico; Europe: Germany, UK, France, Italy, Russia, Turkey; Asia-Pacific: China, Japan, Korea, India, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam; South America: Brazil, Argentina, Columbia; Middle East & Africa: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Nigeria, and South Africa.

With online and mobile playing a huge role in the banking sector, AI has become the most effective analytical solution and method to help customers better and

manage internal purposes. Also, with several challenges such as scams, security, customer experience, and monetary forecasting facing the banking sector, AI promises to proffer the best solution for personalization, customer experience, fraud prevention, professional financial errors, and many more.

However, despite the cutting-edge transformation projected in the innovation space in 2024, there is a premium for human-crafted, human-created products because humans still have a major role to play in the creative market. The rumbling in the marketing communications and other sectors of the economy about machines replacing employees doesn't hold as humans basically need to chart a creative and innovative way forward to work with the advancing technology that AI offers.

According to Laurent Thevenet, head of creative technology, Publicis Groupe APAC & MEA, "Whatever AI tools produce today still needs strong human guidance. I have been playing in this new field since 2019 and the working model remains the same for now. It's about humans and machines working together."

For Cheuk Chiang, CEO of Dentsu Creative, "AI should be used to augment and enhance our teams to increase productivity, efficiency, and return on investment. A great analogy would be generative AI as a sous chef or kitchen assistant. A sous chef helps with the preparation to realize the master chef's vision. AI helps prepare our thinking and craft to realize our creative vision."

In a separate report, while 57% of industry respondents said most software they use will have AI or automation capabilities built-in by 2024, 56% said most people will use a generative AI tool like ChatGPT to assist them in their jobs by the same year in view.

The significant paradigm shift occasioned by generative AI has disrupted how marketers and advertisers deploy their strategy. New AI tools are radically changing how consumers and brands engage with each other. The brands to watch and forces behind them in 2024 will be the ones that acquire a new set of skills and tools to thrive. Also, future-fit agency practitioners in Nigeria must continually evolve their strategies and tactics if they want to remain relevant.

HOW EXMAN SHAPES THE FUTURE OF BRAND ENGAGEMENT IN 2024

By **Oluwaseyi Lawal**



In the realms of modern marketing, experiential marketing, also known as events marketing, has become a cornerstone that transforms how brands and businesses connect with their consumers and loyalists. According to Statista, by 2028, the global value of the experiential and events marketing industry is expected to reach \$2.2 trillion (compared to \$887 billion in 2020). On its part, American Express forecast that 67% of event professionals expect an increase in overall meeting spend in 2024, with 13% predicting an increase of more than 10%.

The experiential marketing agency market faced challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic and still do in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine and Gaza wars in the Middle East. The challenges have left a lasting impact on the global billing and revenue management market landscape. These unprecedented events have introduced a complex set of dynamics with the help of technologies that have reshaped the trajectory of experiential marketing in unexpected ways.

Interestingly, the Experiential Marketers Association of Nigeria (EXMAN) is stepping into 2024 with a renewed focus on education, collaboration, and fostering the next generation of marketing professionals. As the voice of

experiential marketing in Nigeria, EXMAN plays a crucial role in shaping the future of brand engagement by equipping members with the skills and knowledge to create immersive and impactful experiences.

EXMAN is the sectoral trade body for forward-looking experiential marketing communications agencies in Nigeria. As well as serving as a co-operative of the best experiential marketing agencies in Nigeria, it provides support, promotes and defends the interests of over 45 member agencies.

EXMAN is saddled with the responsibility of granting organizations early access to the latest information and developments regarding open standards and best practices, and enabling them to participate in EXMAN's highly influential Forums and Practice Groups. The association is expected to provide a collaborative, vendor-neutral environment where member representatives can Network with a world-class community of peers, experts and industry leader whilst having early access to information on industry developments. This year, EXMAN's mission is no different.

Focusing on student engagement has been a fundamental aspect of EXMAN's executive Committee's agenda, and it appears that the association is now making progress in this area. The University of

Lagos, has indicated a potential date for EXMAN to promote the idea of Experiential and this is set to be finalized in due time. This will enable the association the opportunity to discuss Experiential Marketing and how students can actually kick start a career. It is expected that at least 10 agencies would sponsor at least 5 students during this period as the goal is to onboard at least 50 students per quarter, taking the training through the portal and giving them a taste of what could be as well as the opportunity to intern with or at any of the listed agencies.

EXMAN and Lagos Business School/ Pan Atlantic on Feb 1st, 2024 formally launched an EMMP (Experiential

Marketing Management Programme) aimed at increasing knowledge and awareness for experiential marketing and the association, providing credible and worthwhile on-the-job training as well overall manpower development. The first class will be coming up in May 2024. This is in line with the drive of the organization to ensure that Experiential Marketing is recognized and integrated into all marketing communication trainings moving forward.

In terms of collaboration with stakeholders, EXMAN seeks to strengthen its collaboration with other relevant organizations and stakeholders within the marketing and communications ecosystem.

EXMAN also plans to continue offering various training sessions and workshops to enhance members' skills and knowledge in various aspects of experiential marketing.

EXMAN's 2024 plans reflect their dedication to elevating the experiential marketing industry in Nigeria. By focusing on education, collaboration, and fostering the next generation of professionals, EXMAN paves the way for a future where brands can create truly impactful and engaging experiences that connect with consumers on a deeper level. To stay ahead in 2024, experiential marketing agency practitioners must keep their eyes on the newest tech tools and marketing statistics.

IMMERSIVE INNOVATIONS SHAPING PR INDUSTRY IN 2024

By **Ibidunni Banjoko**

The Public Relations (PR) industry has experienced a significant transformation in recent years, driven by emerging trends and immersive innovation. These advancements have revolutionized how PR professionals communicate, engage audiences, and deliver results for their clients.

Public Relations practice in Nigeria has evolved over the last few decades as the PR industry has also been growing and developing significantly over the years. PR agencies and practitioners in the country are responsible for creating and managing communication strategies for individuals, organizations, and government bodies.

Some of the leading PR firms in Nigeria include CMC Connect Limited (Perception Managers), Hill+Knowlton (H+K) an international PR firm with over 80 offices globally

in more than 40 markets, Media Craft Associates, a full-service Public Relations and Integrated Brand Communications consultancy firm, Caritas Communications Limited, Integrated indigo Ltd and TPT International among many others.

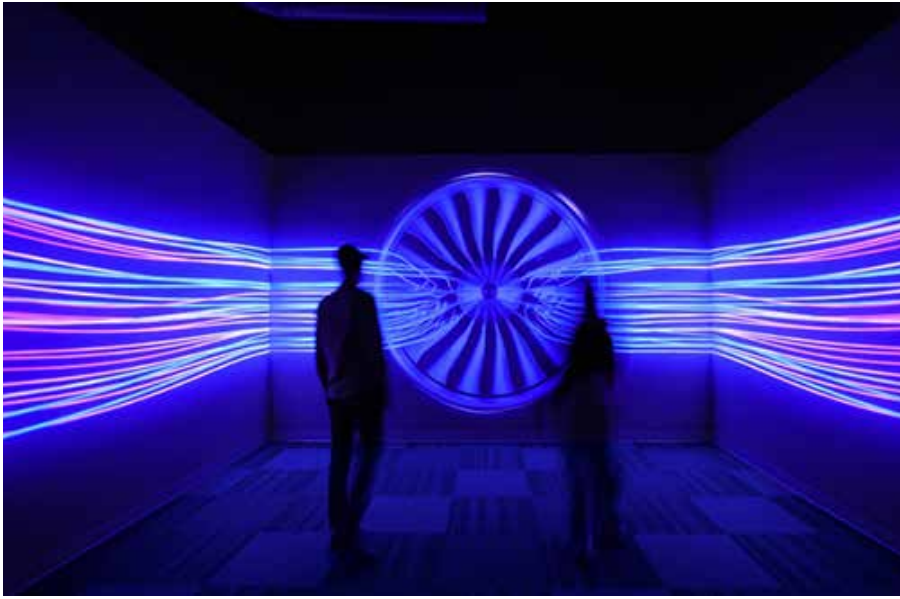
According to The Business Research Company, the public relations market size has grown strongly in recent years. It will grow from \$106.93 billion in 2023 to \$114.1 billion in 2024 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.7%. The growth in the historic period can be attributed to the growing traditional media landscape, corporate reputation management, crisis communication needs, word of mouth and advocacy, community engagement and Corporate Social responsibility (CSR).

The public relations market size is expected to see strong growth in the next few years. It will grow to \$144.28 billion in 2028 at a compound

annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.0%. The growth in the forecast period can be attributed to digital and social media dominance, influencer marketing integration, authenticity and transparency, globalization and cross-cultural communication, data-driven decision-making. Major trends in the forecast period include diversity, equity and inclusion in communications, interactive content and experiences, employee advocacy, regulatory compliance, and collaboration across departments.

Also, Statista, a global data and business intelligence platform reported that the public relations (PR) tools market value is projected to grow to about 14.79 billion U.S. dollars in 2023, with continued growth expected in the coming years. This growth underscores the increasing importance of PR in today's digital landscape.

In this ever-evolving PR landscape, staying informed about emerging



trends is crucial for professionals to remain competitive and effective. As we enter a new year, several key trends are emerging that are poised to shape the future of the PR industry.

Delving into some of the most prominent trends that are shaping the future of public relations industry

Data-Driven PR is one to watch in 2025. Gone are the days when it is hard to measure the results of a public relations campaign that conducted orally through a news channel. Without data, it is harder to prove that your campaign influenced public decisions to favour your brand or your company. But in recent times, PR professionals can record and document PR campaigns conducted by spoken word. Furthermore, public relations experts can collect and analyze the data and present it as proof of a campaign.

Experts now utilizing data analytics to inform PR strategies and measure outcomes have become essential. By leveraging data insights, PR professionals gained a deeper understanding of their target audience, identify trends, and optimize campaigns for maximum impact.

However, **Influencer Marketing** has become a game-changing trend in the world of public relations. With social media becoming an ever-more pervasive part of our daily lives, influencers are emerging as powerful voices with whom audiences can directly engage. This direct line of communication makes influencer

marketing a potent tool for companies to connect with potential customers and ultimately drive sales.

This has made collaborating with influencers emerge as a powerful PR strategy to amplify brand messages and reach new audiences. As influencers continue to hold sway over consumer behaviour, expect to see more partnerships between PR professionals and key influencers across various industries.

Virtual and Augmented Reality (VR/AR) marketing generate buzz. This marketing strategy draws attention to businesses and products or services, which is beneficial for attracting new customers or launching a new product. Plus, AR technology often makes campaigns more entertaining.

The use of VR and AR technologies is transforming storytelling in PR. By creating immersive experiences, PR professionals engage audiences in unique and memorable ways, whether through virtual events, interactive campaigns, or augmented reality experiences.

Furthermore, **employee advocacy** amplifies the always-on content that, in turn, boosts brand awareness. Studies have shown that organizations with employee advocacy programs experience increased brand visibility, improved brand recognition, and enhanced brand loyalty.

Leveraging employees as brand ambassadors on social media is gaining traction in the PR industry.

Encouraging employees to share company content and engage with their networks can amplify brand messages and build trust with consumers.

Purpose-Driven Communication: Consumers are increasingly drawn to brands that demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility and sustainability. PR professionals are incorporating purpose-driven communication strategies into their campaigns to align with the values of today's socially-conscious consumers.

Integrated Content Strategies: Seamlessly integrating PR-generated content with overall marketing content strategies is crucial for maintaining consistency and maximizing reach. PR professionals are collaborating more closely with marketing teams to ensure alignment and cohesion across all communication channels.

Also, **Agility and Adaptability:** In a rapidly changing media landscape, PR professionals must remain agile and adaptable to navigate unforeseen challenges and opportunities. Being able to pivot quickly and adjust strategies in response to evolving trends and current events is crucial for success in the PR industry.

Other PR agencies like Absolute PR Limited Media DNA hinted that they are gearing up to incorporate evolving technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) in order to adapt to changes within the tech space. They acknowledge the significance of data-driven PR, influencer marketing, virtual and augmented reality, employee advocacy, and purpose-driven communication. These trends reflect the evolving landscape of PR and offer new opportunities for brands to connect with their audiences in 2024.

As Nigeria's PR industry looks ahead to the future of PR, the aforementioned emerging trends are poised to shape how professionals communicate, engage audiences, and build brand reputation. By embracing innovation and staying ahead of the curve, PR agency practitioners should continue to position themselves for success in an increasingly competitive and dynamic industry.

HOW NIGERIA'S MEDIA BUYING AND PLANNING BUSINESS EVOLVES

By **Abimbola Mohammed**



The traditional approach of solely providing media buying and planning services is no longer prevalent among practitioners in the media buying industry. Recognizing the need to remain competitive in today's landscape, media buying and planning agencies have expanded their service offerings to encompass a wider range of options.

Such innovative agencies are moving along with the trends while providing solutions and offering value to clients. Some of these offers include content creation, audience segmentation, measurements and even data-driven insight to brands and businesses.

In a report by a research firm Fact. mr, as of 2022, said the worldwide market for media purchasing services is valued at \$69 billion. It is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.2%, aiming to reach an estimated \$125.9 billion by 2032.

While PwC's report on global

advertising sector is projected to reach USD\$1 trillion by 2027, the advertising sector is projected to grow by 7.6% between 2022 and 2023. Africa's advertising spend is projected to grow from US\$10.3billion to US\$11.8billion from 2023 to 2027 at CARGA of 2.8%. The African projected growth rate is linked to availability of mobile technology and internet access.

Example of media agencies that are evolving with current realities are Algorithm Media, PHD Media, Space Universe etc.

Algorithm Media introduced Audience Origin aimed at positioning itself as a one-stop solution for brands and companies looking to get accurate data for their business. Launched in 2022, the agency said the platform is a unique combination of panel-based data, digital data, and client data for deep audience understanding and activation.

Audience Origin in Nigeria stemmed from the growing demand from clients for better quality of data and insights around

consumer attitudes, preferences and behaviour.

PHD Media, one of the world's fastest growing media and communication agency networks, and part of the Omnicom Media Group, launched an innovative proprietary cloud-based media data tool, called 'Ocular' that answers age-long questions that clients have asked around the recency of the data used in the industry.

Ocular, according to PHD media, is the result of two years of continuous research aimed at closing some of the gaps that exists within the current industry tool, with unparalleled features that surpass what already exists within the sector.

Other media agencies around the world are also embracing emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and artificial intelligence (AI) to create immersive and personalized experiences. These technologies allow brands to engage with their audiences in new and exciting ways.

Example of such is Space Universe, when it unveiled the new age of radio advertisement called RadioAdspread, an AI driven global advertisement platform that digitalizes the operation of radio advert while providing real-time report of the campaign.

According to Space Universe, the platform enables business owners, advertising agencies, and marketing managers to easily create and manage radio advertisements remotely and connect with radio stations across Nigeria from anywhere in the world.

As the global media buying and planning subsector moves forward with new tech tools, media agencies are encountering a range of both challenges and possibilities. The continuous evolution of technology will significantly influence the media industry going forward.

Media platforms and content are rapidly changing, but the media buying strategy behind them remains the same. Future-fit agency practitioners are taking a data-driven approach to engage with new media buying platforms and technologies to make sure their clients are captivating their audiences with the right messages at the right time.

To remain competitive, Nigerian media agencies must adjust to these changes and devise inventive strategies for utilizing them to their clients' advantage in 2024.

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HOW INNOVATION IS TRANSFORMING NIGERIA'S OUT-OF-HOME ADVERTISING MARKET

By Felicia Nwosu

Out-of-Home advertising in Nigeria started during the colonial period with West African Publicity Limited, a subsidiary of the United African Company (UAC) setting up to oversee marketing activities in both Nigeria and other West African countries. The company was later renamed Lintas and became an advertising agency with Afromedia as the outdoor arm. The OOH subsector of Nigeria's economy has come to stay since Afromedia spearheaded the development of Outdoor Advertising Contractors of Nigeria (OACN), which later transformed to Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAN) and now Out-of-Home Advertising of Nigeria (OAAN).

Before now, traditional roadside billboard, also known as static billboard, was the predominant form of outdoor advertising in Nigeria. However, the digital age has seen the industry evolve to interactive visuals and audio using LCD and LED billboards. In Nigeria, Lagos and Abuja advertising are leading in the use of large LED display billboards and also account for the largest share of the market.

The global out-of-home advertising

market, which grew at an unprecedentedly strong rate at \$29.8 billion in 2023, is projected to grow at \$31.7 billion in 2024 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.4%. With the industry dynamics and growth in view, artificial intelligence beckons Nigerian professionals for more innovative concepts to expand their horizons as they explore various anticipated trends that unfold with the year 2024.

While offering dynamic, customizable campaign options to clients, the Nigerian out-of-home advertising marketing space is expected to witness a quantum leap this year. Propelled by the rising adoption of strategies by key players, the market is predicted to rise over the projected horizon.

With these rapidly evolving advertising landscape and market dynamics within the Nigerian out-of-home space, and with experts predicting that OOH will move in leaps and bounds this year, agency practitioners now make strategic and innovative moves, fuelled by technology, to maximise opportunities in the sector.

Plural Media, an innovative and tech-driven out-of-home agency, has been contributing significantly to the success of

brands by providing tech-based solutions to boost brand visibility in the integrated marketing communications ecosystem.

The agency recently unveiled an innovative platform tagged Festac Gateway at the popular Apple Junction, Festac Link Road, Amuwo-Odofin, Lagos. The offering is indicative of its market leadership and further strengthens the breadth of its multi-disciplinary attributes.

This creative disruption has also helped Plural Media to expand its major growth strategies and broaden its market penetration. Its messaging tool comes with a dynamic blend of rich heritage and modern designs just like the recently unveiled Festac Gateway billboard.

The industry is also witnessing strategic collaborations as demonstrated in the recent Faux OOH showcasing Maltina on a billboard which has sparked some reactions from consumers. The artwork was created by Noah's Ark Communications, while the OOH campaign is an integration of computer-Generated Imagery (CGI) enabled by the same Alpha and Jam agency, according to a reliable source.

New Crystal Communications, one of the top leading agencies that pioneered digital OOH in Nigeria, has significantly expanded its footprint with effective media impact across the country and other West African nations.

Registered in 1998, New Crystal has become a market leader and a beacon of innovation armed with the capacity to execute and deliver client solutions at the intersection of marketing and technology.

Invent Media, a notable agency in the Nigerian out-of-home subsector, is known for integrating cutting-edge technologies to captivate audiences. The agency is strategically positioned as a one-stop shop for advertisers.

With huge presence in Nigeria and across the continent, Invent Media as an environmentally-conscious agency has embraced some eco-friendly initiatives which have led to the shift towards energy-efficient LED technology and smart lighting systems.

Elev8Media, a powerhouse in Nigeria's advertising industry, has become a beacon for brands aiming to make positive impacts on consumers by redefining outdoor advertising through its innovative strategies.

It has continued to stay at the forefront of the industry with AI-driven initiatives, strategically leveraging artificial intelligence to create dynamic and engaging content on its digital billboards. Elev8Media unveiled "Keeping Up with Elev8Media", which is one of the innovative offerings to watch in 2024.

With the foregoing innovative transitions towards a tech and data-driven out-of-home subsector in Nigeria, the successful creative journey for 2024 has just begun.

Nigeria's advertising Outlook in 2024

By **Seun Johnson**

Advertising businesses in Nigeria has been witnessing a paradigm shift in recent times.

The advertising industry has been also projected to witness exponential growth across the world, a development that is generally attributed to the increasing focus on the regulatory measures of the integrated marketing communication sector.

Advertisers' Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) is the umbrella body for advertisers in the country. ADVAN members comprise of some of the biggest companies in Nigeria with a yearly marketing budget of over N100 billion. The big advertisers include Nigerian Breweries, MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Unilever, FrieslandCampina WAMCO, Guinness Nigeria, Access Bank, Dangote Group, BUA Group, Ecobank, Zenith Bank, and Fidelity Bank among many others.

Major advertising agencies in Nigeria include and are not limited to Noah's Ark, Insight Redefini, X3M Ideas, SO&U DDB Lagos, and Nitro121.

According to a recent Statista report, ad spending in the advertising market is expected to reach US\$1,084.00tn in 2024. The research emphasizes that TV and Video advertising will claim the largest market share with a volume of US\$337.50bn this year. The report further indicates that most ad spending will be generated in the United States of America with about \$240 billion.

Corroborating Statista projection, the World Advertising Research Center, WARC disclosed late last year that Market growth in 2024, will be boosted by the US Presidential campaign which is predicted to reach 15.5bn dollars. The report further highlighted sporting events such as the Olympics and UEFA Men's Football tournament, and improved trading conditions, particularly in China as parts of activities expected to catalyze the growth.

As the sector is set to maintain steady and consistent growth globally in the years ahead, Nigeria, one of the leading Advertising markets in Africa, will also be tapping into the pool of opportunities available on a global stage and turn the sector around with a projected revenue of \$2 billion by 2025.

Densely populated with over 200 million people and bursting with a rapidly expanding economy, the country has over the years witnessed significant growth in the advertising ecosystem both offline and online that has constantly provided a veritable platform for marketers to reach diverse audiences.

Unlike before when product and service advertising were traditionally concentrated on TV, Radio, Newspapers and billboards, brands have now adopted different digital platforms such as online TV, blogs, apps, and social media to connect with their target audience. This has enabled advertisers to understand consumers' behavior and create relevant content in line with their interests.

Similarly, experts believe that the

wide adoption of digital marketing has constituted the major factor responsible for the rapid growth of the industry and a significant driver of ROI leading to about 20 percent increase in Nigeria's GDP based on the current advertising spending of multinational companies.


The digital revolution in the advertising landscape is said to have opened up a vista of opportunities for players to spread their creative tentacles and drive market share.

Recent industry research reveals that ad spending in the Digital Advertising market in Nigeria will reach US\$272.4m in 2024. The report also cited video advertising as the largest market with a volume of US\$115.1m in the focused year.

Also, Nigeria's social media advertising market spending is projected to reach US\$118.6m in 2024. It is also expected to show an annual growth rate (CAGR 2024-2028) of 4.14%, resulting in a projected market volume of US\$139.5m by 2028.

Leaders in the sector, however, believe that the industry is insulated with trends and trajectories that will usher it into steady growth, driven by the shift towards online platforms, and rising utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) to enable precise audience targeting and real-time bidding.

As professionals navigate through this path in 2024, the industry's report affirms that certain factors such as targeted audience, compelling content, SEO, social media engagement, and data analytics will serve as a foundation for successful digital advertising.

Cont'd from pg 56 

First Bank Digital Experience Center: Driving future banking today

comprehensive consultation and assistance.

Services offered at the FirstBank DXC include paperless/electronic forms for complaint resolution, account statements, funds transfer, card services, cheque management, and more. Customers can also book fixed deposits, update their contact information, and block ATM cards seamlessly, all within the digital environment of the branch.

Founded over 130 years ago, FirstBank has consistently been at the forefront of revolutionizing banking in Nigeria. Its legacy of leadership and excellence has earned it numerous accolades, including

being named the "Most Valuable Bank Brand in Nigeria" six times in a row by The Banker Magazine and the "Best Retail Bank in Nigeria" for seven consecutive years by the Asian Banker International Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards.

With a network of over 750 business locations and 130,620 Banking Agents spread across the country, FirstBank serves over 30 million customers, making it the premier bank in West Africa.

The bank has been at the forefront of promoting digital payment in Nigeria, issuing over 10 million cards and having more than 10 million users on its USSD Quick Banking service and over 4.5

million on its FirstMobile platform. This commitment to digital innovation has earned FirstBank numerous accolades, including being named the "Most Valuable Bank Brand in Nigeria" six times in a row and the "Best Retail Bank in Nigeria" for seven consecutive years.

As FirstBank continues to drive innovation and excellence in banking, the launch of the DXC reaffirms its position as the partner of choice for customers seeking cutting-edge financial solutions. With its unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction and technological advancement, FirstBank is truly driving future banking today.



Rite Foods: Great Company, Great Brands



Mr. Seleem Adegunwa
MD/CEO

Call it disruptive, call it innovative, you will be right in describing how Rite Foods Limited, an indigenous world-class consumer packaged goods company, made its entrance into the Nigerian Food and Beverage Industry. This is as true with its sausage business which commenced in 2008 as with its beverage business which took the market by storm in 2016. What you cannot take away from Rite Foods Limited is its entrenched consumer-centricity and an entrepreneurial drive which has enabled the Company to set unparalleled trends in the industry within the relatively short period of its operations in the Food and Beverage Industry.

Indeed, Rite Foods Limited has become a household name synonymous with quality and innovation in the Nigerian market. Perhaps, its success story could be attributed to its capability in thoroughly researching and understanding the Nigerian consumer



Nigerian Idol Season 8 winner, Victory Gbakara with Biola Aransiola, Assistant Brand Manager, Bigi, at the presentation of the cash prize for Nigerian Idol

and changing preferences, which has enabled the Company to create great brands that excite, refresh and cater generally to the consumer preferences. Little wonder Rite Sausage Roll, Bigi Carbonated Soft Drink, Fearless Energy Drink and Sosa Fruit Drink have become leading brands in their categories in the Nigerian market.

“We are a company founded and built on values of Excellence, Integrity, Innovation and Accountability”, says its Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Seleem Adegunwa.

“From the outset, we determined to be the best food and beverage company there could be anywhere in the world. For us, excellence is in our DNA and that is what propels us to work hard to deliver the best products to our consumers.

“Our culture of innovation has ensured that we delight our consumers with great tasting flavours you can get anywhere. Bigi carbonated soft drink has 13 flavours distinctively created to give an experience at every drinking moment. Sosa fruit drink comes in 5 unparalleled flavours, while Fearless Energy Drink has 2 vibrant flavours that have become the toast of consumers at home and abroad”, added Mr. Adegunwa.

From its state-of-the-art factory at Ijebu-Ososa to its Halal certification, Rite Foods prioritises quality at every step. This commitment to be the best has earned the Company numerous accolades, including recently climbing 14 spots to the 30th position in the Top 50 Brands in Nigeria ranking (2023) and accumulating 85 awards for its commitment to quality and innovation. Indeed, Rite Foods is a truly Nigerian Company with global standards.

In a world where sustainability is no longer a buzzword, Rite



Marketing Edge Awards: L-R - Rite Foods Limited Staff - Emeka Kalu, Events and Activation Officer; Adebola Adeyinka, Assistant Marketing Manager; Adedotun Ajibade, Media & Insights Manager; Aderonke Adekunle, Social Media Officer, Sosa & Bigi receiving the Most Outstanding Product of the Year - Juice (2023) award.



Brand Xchange Consumers Value Awards: L-R: Rite Foods Limited - Biola Aransiola, Assistant Brand Manager, Bigi; Olawale Odenusi, Assistant Brand Manager, Rite Sausages; Kanyinsola Sangowawa, Assistant Brand Manager Fearless

Foods demonstrates that it is possible to run a successful business while also prioritising the planet. At the heart of Rite Foods’ operations is the commitment to source a significant portion of its energy from cleaner and greener sources. With an overwhelming percentage of their energy mix coming from natural gas and renewable energy (solar power) sources, the Company is reducing their carbon footprint and reliance on fossil fuels.

Rite Foods believes in responsible growth. They actively support local communities, promote Nigerian talents and entrepreneurship, and implement sustainable practices like responsible waste management and water conservation. Furthermore, their commitment to fair labour practices and responsible corporate governance sets them apart as a true leader in the Nigerian market.

The company boasts of five brands - Bigi Carbonated Soft Drinks, Bigi Premium Drinking Water, Fearless Energy Drink, Sosa Fruit Drink and Rite Spicy Beef and Bigi Beef Sausage Rolls. However, three of its strongest brands, Fearless Energy Drink,

Bigi Carbonated Soft Drinks and Sosa Fruit Drink have garnered an incredible number of consumers across the country leading to brand loyalty.

Imagine a world where every day is a challenge, an opportunity to push your limits and conquer new heights. Fearless Energy Drink is that brand that serves as call to action for the bold and audacious. Little wonder it is the number one energy drink in Nigeria by market share. Since 2019, Fearless has been fueling the fire of those who dare to dream big and chase their goals with unwavering determination.

And now, the unstoppable energy comes in a sleek new 50cl can. It’s a statement that Fearless understands your busy life, but never compromises on the boost you need. It’s your daily dose of courage, empowering you to conquer each day with confidence.

Life can be serious, but it doesn’t have to be. Bigi, the playful and refreshing carbonated drink, injects joy into your everyday. Since 2016, its vibrant flavours – from classic Cola to Apple and the Bitter Lemon – have been spreading smiles and creating lasting memories.

The Bigi brand goes beyond offering drinks, but creating a feeling. It’s the laughter shared with friends, the spontaneous dance party in the kitchen, the simple pleasure of a cool drink on a hot day. Bigi has supported young talents through sponsorship of three seasons of Nigerian Idol and surprising lucky fans with Random Acts of Kindness.

The recent N100,000 giveaway and street surprise are just a glimpse into Bigi’s commitment to spreading happiness. It’s a brand that cares about its consumers’ well-being. With 13 flavours, Bigi offers endless ways to add a touch of fun to your day.

The feeling of pure refreshment? That burst of juicy flavour that washes over you and leaves you smiling? That’s the taste of Sosa, the fruit drink that’s taken the market by storm. In 2022, Sosa burst onto the scene with five vibrant flavours: Orange, Apple, Mixed Berries, Cranberry, and Orange, Passion, and Mango (OPM). But it took a short break, leaving its fans thirsting for more. Today, it is the number two fruit drink by market share.

Sosa has a quality you can trust. Crafted with the finest ingredients, it delivers a refreshing experience without compromising on taste. And the proof is in the pudding, or rather, the award: Sosa bagged the “Outstanding New Product of the Year – Juice” at the Marketing Edge Awards, a testament to its exceptional quality. Consumers have spoken loud and clear, testifying to Sosa’s smoothness, its richness, and variety. The brand resonates with those who appreciate the finer things in life

Sosa’s story is just in its first chapter, proving itself so far as a trendsetter not a follower. It’s the story of a brand that connects with people on an emotional level, creating a loyal fanbase who wouldn’t dream of picking anything else. So, what’s next for Sosa? The future is bright, juicy, and full of possibilities. With its innovative spirit and dedication to excellence, Sosa is poised to continue its upward trajectory, becoming a household name and a symbol of refreshment, quality, and flavour.

Together, these three brands represent a dynamic force in the Nigerian market. Fearless is the roaring lion, the audacious adventurer that fuels your ambition; Bigi is the playful brand that sweetens your journey; while Sosa is the life of the party that turns frowns upside down with every sip. They cater to different needs, but share a common thread: a commitment to quality, authenticity, and connecting with their consumers on a deeper level.

BUA Foods Plc: Committed to its cause of “Nourishing Lives” in Nigeria and beyond



BUA Foods Plc is a leading Food and Fast-moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) business which processes, manufactures, and distributes food produce as well as packaged food.

Our business operations comprise five divisions, including Sugar, Flour, Pasta, Rice and Edible Oils.

With a diverse brand and product portfolio, BUA Foods has consistently delivered strong financial performances, underpinned by its unwavering dedication to quality, innovation, and growth. In the past financial year, revenue grew by 74%, with a PAT (profit after tax) earning of 22%, effecting an increase from N91.3Bn in 2022 to N111.5Bn for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Across the categories in the same year, BUA Sugar recorded an impressive 58% growth in revenue, while IRS Flour achieved an astounding volume growth of 152%. IRS Pasta grew by 54% while BUA Rice debuted with a modest contribution of N2.1 billion from its nascent operations.

This remarkable performance is a testament to our resilient business model

and its agility in responding to market dynamics.

Over the years the company’s brands have grown remarkably in their respective categories and we keep investing to maintain this TRAJECTORY.

As it embraces new horizons, BUA Foods proudly unveils its latest IRS Pasta products: Twist Cavatto and Premium Spaghetti, amongst the nourishing lineup of its other leading products: BUA Sugar, BUA Parboiled Rice, IRS Flour (Premium and Gold) and IRS Pasta (Slim Spaghetti).

BUA Foods’ Vision is to fulfil Africa’s food demand by promoting food security and nourishing lives, in alignment with its Mission to provide high-quality foods with a focus on creating long-term value for all stakeholders. These pillars propel its cause towards ‘Nourishing Lives’ in Nigeria and beyond.

BOW Soya Oil: A cooking oil brand like no other



BOW Soya Oil, a leading cooking oil brand in Nigeria, is produced and marketed by Boram Foods Limited in Ibafo, Ogun State.

Since inception, the company has continued to make impressive inroads in the sector in which it operates; and has set up far-reaching and result-oriented plans to dominate the vegetable oil market, in particular, in Nigeria.

The brand, BOW Soya Oil, is freshly produced from pure and finest soya beans sourced locally, in Nigeria. This (local sourcing) guarantees that the raw materials are not stored for months in warehouses nor do they spend lengthy periods on the

sea as imports. The result is the fresh, quickly processed and high quality cooking oil brand that BOW Soya Oil always is.

Apart from its freshness, BOW Soya Oil is also good for healthy living, because it contains low cholesterol.

According to the company spokesperson, “BOW Soya Oil gives a healthy treat to everyone in the family no matter the eating habit and cooking preferences”; adding, “BOW Soya Oil brings out the natural taste of other food ingredients. No more worries when frying, grilling, cooking, and stewing”.

Again, the product is equally pocket friendly and affordable, thus making consumers to get value for their money while quality is guaranteed.

Among other qualities which make BOW Soya Oil a market leader are the facts that it does not foam or fume; its bottles and gallons covers come with tamper-proof seals.

Significantly too, the cooking oil brand is free from cholesterol and is fortified with Vitamin-A which is an essential

nutrient for healthy vision and regulating body immune system. The brand is also well packaged, labelled, and is available in different sizes to meet various kitchen/cooking and budget needs.

Little wonder that Boram Foods Limited proudly asserts that “With BOW Refined Soya Oil, you will have all of these and more. Your heart and pocket will thank you for it”.

Being a subsidiary of Boram Group, a multi-sector service provider with footprints in FMCG, bottling, and oil & gas services, the company has since inception met numerous needs with touches of perfection. The indigenous enterprise is built to create a difference in the manufacturing and service industries.

The company leverages on more than 20 years of experience, with its founders having invested from their various fields of human endeavour. Thus, the company is growing at a fast pace as it creates uniqueness in its products and services while delivering at competitive prices.

Papyrus Digital Solutions – Impacting African businesses with digital data solutions



Undoubtedly, Papyrus Digital Solutions Limited, as a leading technology solutions provider has made impressive impact in Africa business space.

Many leading and diverse industries use Papyrus’s software and services to track and manage field activities efficiently, and generate timely reports and actionable insights for data driven decision making.

The company’s lofty mission is affirmed thusly, “to use insights gotten through technology to empower management to make informed decisions”.

Papyrus Digital also renders diverse services which include Field Force Management Automation, Enterprise

Resource Planning Solutions (ERP), Retail Audit and Census Management, Outlet Enumeration and Retail Information Management, Brand Visibility Study Time and Motion Study.

The leading digital data firm also deploys its unique and technology-driven assessment tool, FieldMaxPro for its daily operations.

FieldMaxPro is a field force management automation solution used by key players in various industries like Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Pharmaceuticals, Food and Beverages, Telecommunications, Marketing Agencies, Financial Institutions, among others.

The company adds: “We believe all organizations now consider it imperative to incorporate the use of technology to gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. And we see most of our clients moving rapidly in this direction. In the Sales industry, you will hardly see an organization with a

reasonable number of field staff not using some form of field force management automation to manage their field reps. If they don’t, they will find it hard to compete, and to respond to market changes as quickly as their competitors who use technology can”.

Papyrus Digital Solutions Limited readily assists its many clients to see the potential and impact of this technology on their operations, stressing, “so far, we have enabled our clients to schedule and complete over 17 million visits to their customers, create databases of over 1.2 million points of interest geo-tagged across the country, tracked sales of over 3.5 million unique items (SKUs), and reported over 92 billion naira in sales. We are driven to constantly improve our offerings to ensure our customers are well positioned to manage their sales efforts more effectively”.

Media Proximity Limited: Remaining client-centric in OOH delivery



Evidently, since its incorporation on August 27, 2010, Media Proximity Company Limited, has continued to make giant strides as a full service Integrated Marketing Communications agency.

The company prides itself as one which provides “multi-channel communications advice to connect, engage and impact consumers, audience and brands. We create a strategy that envelops the consumer and audience in a constant brand experience.”

The top-notch firm has a legion of clients ranging from global conglomerates to local brands. They include Access Bank, UBA, Wema Bank, IGI, The Tony Elumelu Foundation, Apple Inc, Pfizer, Jumia, Adron Homes, Konga, NACA, ARM, Fan Milk, Notore, FirstBank, etc

The firm further explains why it is a sought-after organization thusly: “we possess the intelligence and talents to provide strategic ideas with result driven experience and media exploitation to connect with consumers and drive an exponential growth for our clients.”

Media Proximity equally anchors its operations on time tested and quantifiable indices that stand it out from the crowd. This creed of sorts anchors on six major planks namely Integrity; Professionalism; Passionate Commitment; Rapport; Painstaking and Family of Professionals.

For instance, on integrity and Professionalism, the company affirms: “we deliver on our promises and maintain high ethical standards, while we thrive on

this consistently to raise the bar. We also believe that doing business should be fun and therefore a close family with clients and people.”

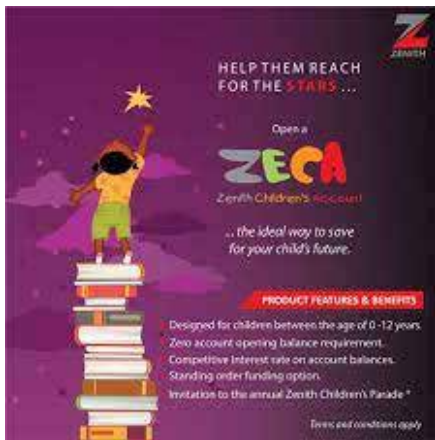
It further adds: “As a family of professionals, we pay attention to details as this is critical success factor in our business.”

The company’s core services include Out of Home (OOH) Media covering Billboards, Transit media and Mobile; Mail, Cinema, Building, internal Branding.

It is also worthy of note that Media Proximity has scored a lot of A’s in pioneering/launching many OOH campaigns. These include Konga, KFC, Domino’s Pizza, Fan Milk, So Klin, Good Mama and Fressia Cool Soap, etc

No doubt, given its upward swing, Media Proximity is on a ceaseless drive to break new grounds by deploying state-of-the-art technology and embracing innovations for excellent and quality service delivery all the time.

ZECA drives growth with tech-driven banking in Nigeria



As part of its zeal to develop state-of-the-art technologies in banking, driven by a culture of excellence and strict adherence to global best practices, Zenith Bank has combined vision, skillful banking expertise, and cutting-edge technology to create products called ZECA (Zenith Children's Account).

ZECA laid out an extensive innovative unique savings account aimed at helping parents save for their children's future. The account is modeled for young children with an overarching objective of making savings fun for them and teaching them financial discipline. ZECA account is designed to allow parents to save in Naira or US Dollars.

ZECA Save is a variant designed to enable parents with inadequate

documentation to open an account and save for their children's future. This innovative product was launched in 2019.

This product also allows parents to get loans to assist with their children/wards school fees as the new school session begins.

The loan offering, which is disbursed directly to the account of the beneficiary's school, comes at a very competitive interest rate and flexible repayment tenors. To access the loan, parents are required to open a ZECA account for their children/wards at any of the bank's branches.

Zenith bank's commitment to world-class service standards has led to several product innovations like the "Zenith Timeless Account", which allows Nigerians aged 55 years and above bank for free, the "Zenith Save for Me", a high interest target savings account and "Dubai Visa Service" on the Zenith Internet Banking Platform, which allows convenient application and payment for visas to Dubai.

The bank remains focused on providing premium financial solutions that create value for its customers and meet their lifestyle needs.

As part of its innovation, the leading bank has introduced an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered Chatbot named ZiVA (Zenith Intelligent Virtual Assistant), which enables customers to perform financial transactions and enjoy real-time customer service from their mobile

phones.

This product provides the convenience for the bank's customers to interact and transact on a 24 hours basis on the encrypted WhatsApp platform.

With this capability to respond to chats/queries anchored on the existing WhatsApp platform, customers will be able to open new accounts, receive instant transaction notifications, check their balances on the go, transfer funds and top up airtime. They will also be able to confirm cheques, pay bills, apply for loans, block their accounts, and request mini statements, amongst other banking services.

Other products offerings from Zenith Bank include The Zenith e, Token App: This app enables customers generate One Time Passwords (OTPs) for authenticating electronic transactions without using a hardware, EaZySave Premium Account designed to facilitate financial inclusion, permitting individuals with minimal forms of identification enjoy a value adding banking relationship, Aspire Account a unique savings account for the Nigerian undergraduate with a distinctive sense of identity. Designed to enhance the lifestyle of the discerning student, the Aspire account provides a platform for its holders to follow their dreams, supporting them as they aspire to greatness and many more.

Ideas Origin Media: Harnessing power of technology to revolutionise creative landscape



For this fast rising agency with a global taste in all ramifications, it is all about originality being carved out with technology, and distinctive creativity that boost brand awareness and also help transform the way brands interact with audiences in the fast-paced creative digital

world of today.

With an unprecedented speed in its growth expansion within a very short period since its inception in August, 2022, Ideas Origin Media through its cutting edge concepts is making groundbreaking waves, revolutionizing the creative advertising landscape, living up to its billing by providing solutions for people and businesses who need unique strategies that helps their branding break through the clutter in their industry.

This remarkable transformation over the past few years is largely driven by its trendy position as an innovative and creative agency offering core advertising

and integrated marketing communication services, creating fantastic campaigns with desired results for its clients, which is essentially what it was carved and created for, ensuring that clients get value for their marketing investments."

As part of its strategic initiatives to improve service offerings in line with the current realities in the advertising and marketing communications industry and also to give legitimacy to what it does best, Ideas Origin Media got inducted by the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria, ARCON. This is to further enhance its brand positioning as a solution provider delivering optimal value to its clients

across sectors and climes

As a testament to its expertise and commitment to delivering exceptional results for clients, the creative hub has fostered client's business growth by embodying itself with a blend of creativity, suave and creative ingenuity, which has further helped to double its creative portfolio of clientele.

This compelling aura and creative prowess have captured the attention of impressive portfolio that includes great strides with global and local brands, such as Jack Daniel's, Jameson, Facebook, DStv, Pepsi/SBC, Access Bank, Etisalat/9mobile,

Globacom, Israel's creative genius and strategic acumen shine through in his contributions to these brands. Also, the record-breaking recognition garnered during the lunch of the Pepsi Max Am campaign, which showcased the talents of some top Nigerian artists still lingers in the memory of many in the industry.

Ideas Origin, as it is popularly called, has continued to be at the forefront as one of the stable agencies whose strong immunity has remained undaunted despite the various economic pressures affecting businesses negatively.

Today, it is still pushing boundaries and

inspiring innovation to deliver excellent creative solutions so as to be reckoned as a beacon of creativity on a global scale. It has achieved this milestone by hoisting its success flag and deepening its presence across the globe, with its expansion to the United Kingdom, a strategic move aimed at connecting with new markets as well as fostering stronger relationships and enhancing collaboration in the dynamic marketing landscape, a testament that in a world where originality and strategic thinking are highly prized, Ideas Origin Media definitely will be there.

Watermark & Victoria: Making a bold statement in Experiential Marketing



Judging from its progressive trajectory and enduring impact in the Experiential Marketing space, Watermark and Victoria stands out as a firm of repute.

Since its inception in 2014, the company has left keen watchers of the Integrated Marketing Communications sector assured that it is cut out to do things uniquely and outstandingly.

And true to its avowed mission as an all-time game changer, Watermark and Victoria has continued to soar with its many technology-driven innovations.

Still, the company makes no pretensions about its vision, core values and competences as it echoes these to all who care to know its modus operandi.

The company amplifies thusly: "At Watermark and Victoria, creativity is the heartbeat of our processes. Inspired by modern design and interactive event technology, we deliver outstanding brand experiences through our approach to activation intelligence".

In its words, "We embarked on a journey in 2014 as a strategy consulting firm, evolving into a dynamic experiential agency in 2017"; adding, "Our commitment to innovation and technology propels us forward as we redefine brand experiences and drive execution excellence. We breathe life into brands through a commitment to Co-Creativity and Collaboration. Operating across the Eastern, Northern,

Southern and Western regions, we've become synonymous with impactful brand experiences for over 50 indigenous and multinational brands".

Indisputably too, Watermark and Victoria achieves this enduring feat by deploying technology driven data tools to reposition its many clientele as market leaders.

It adds: "integrating technology and innovation, our solutions offer real-time analysis nationwide, efficiently monitoring and tracking promoters, sales, and projects".

The agency assures that, "As we evolve, we are transforming into a brand experience & innovation Company that seamlessly integrates activation intelligence and innovative technology to elevate brand experiences and drive execution excellence to consistently deliver memorable moments that resonate with audiences globally".

It stresses that: "Our commitment to creativity and innovation is not just about envisioning possibilities; it's about immersing our clients in the journey. From the initial spark of concept development to the final moments of flawless execution".

Without doubts, the company has a clear-cut idea of what it has set out to achieve from inception. It equally echoes this thus: "our focus with experiential marketing events is to create meaningful connections with customers through wow experiences that bring your brand to life", stressing that "our promise is "winning brands influence the world by walking the brand talk and by being very successful in

business".

Watermark and Victoria has achieved these feats of being an Experiential Marketing company of repute through the relentless and untiring efforts of its youthful, professional, purpose-driven, and technology savvy workforce.

The agency's team is made up of young and dynamic people with a very wide range of skills and superpowers. Thus, Watermark & Victoria is managed by a very experienced and open-minded trio of proven winners in Integrated Marketing; From Events to Experiential to Content to Digital.

There is no contention that Watermark and Victoria has made lasting impacts as a much -sought-after firm, especially in showcasing excellent professional skills in the management of brands.

It flaunts this unique niche, echoing: "From spearheading successful campaigns like the NBC Convention and Pernod Ricard's Beefeater launch to positioning Jack Daniel's through Jack & the Beats, we've left an indelible mark. Its precision in on-trade strategy has grown the Martell brand, creating distinct experiences at different outlets to amplify brand messages.

Beyond traditional event management, the agency has crafted successful experiential marketing initiatives with FMCG brand houses like PZ Cussons, Beiersdorf & Honeywell, with further engagements in Technology, medical & market intelligence.

Castle Lite Beer, bestriding the African beer market



Castle Lite Beer is an iconic brand on the stable of ABInBev, a global leader in the beer industry, whose dominance in Africa has become undisputed.

Castle Lite was first brewed in South Africa in 1994 and within a relatively short span, it became a household brand in other 10 African countries. The countries include: Tanzania, Zambia, Lesotho, Mozambique, Eswatini, Botswana, Uganda, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Nigeria.

The stable affirms, “We are proud to be the biggest premium beer on the African continent.”

The first Castle Lite was packaged in a brown bottle and since then, the packaging has undergone many improvement processes. For instance, in 2000, Castle Lite was re-launched as a local premium brand, in more or less the form it’s in today; a green bottle with a silver and red label.

Over the years, Castle Lite has

undergone a lot of innovation in its production and marketing. In the words of the company, “since the launch of Castle Lite in 1994, this proudly South African brand has become the biggest and fastest growing premium beer brand on the African continent. What began as a lower alcohol volume, lower in kilojoules and carbohydrates alternative to Castle Lager, is now adored here and in 10 other African countries.

In 2009, propelled by the need for an outstanding product, the company introduced the innovative thermo-chromatic temperature indicator on the Castle Lite label, which turns blue when the beer is perfectly extra cold for ultimate enjoyment.

Expatriating further on the brand and its unique offerings, the company states, “Extra Cold refreshment isn’t the only thing we’re known for unlocking. We’re also big on unlocking world-first experiences like Castle Lite Unlocks where we bring you the biggest and best hip hop acts out there, The Republic of Extra Cold, and the African continent’s very first ice bar.”

It adds, “Along with never-before-seen innovations, Castle Lite is known for unlocking world-first experiences, and at the top of that list is Castle Lite Unlocks”; adding that the brand is “passionate about music, especially hip hop, which is why we’ve made it our business to help build and shape the hip hop culture in South Africa.”

It goes on to disclose that over the past 10 years the brand had brought its teeming consumers a hip hop experience that keeps growing alongside what is now the biggest music genre in the world.

Castle Lite Unlocks, the company emphasizes, has evolved into an event that immerses itself in hip hop culture completely through music, fashion, dance, lifestyle and collaborations with both with local and international acts.

It is on record that since 2011, the beer brand has attracted international mega superstars like Drake, Kanye West, Nas, Whiz Khalifa, Timbaland, J Cole, Travis Scott, Bryson Tiller, Chance the Rapper, Meek Mill and Post Malone. And, in 2020, the highly Grammy, BET, VMA & Billboard award-winning hip hop Queen, Cardi performed in yet another of Castle Lite Unlocks extraordinary hip hop experience.

The beer brewers adds: “We’re constantly and proudly collaborating with African artists, ensuring we use our platform to promote great talents and forging connections where possible.

The company further flaunts Castle Lite’s uniqueness, when it states, “Buy Castle Lager Beer Lite Can 33 cl x12... So, on a moisture laden night, when the scent of fresh rain still fills the air. Or on a hot and cloudless day, when your clothes are sweaty and your skin is sticky. Wherever you find yourself, you can always get relaxation and refreshment from a Drink of Castle lager beer. It will tickle your nostrils and leave your tongue laced with an addictive after taste. It will massage your throat linings and leave you asking for more. Get a Can today. Whether you are eating grizzled meat, baked pastries or spicy soups, Castle lager beer will always be the preferred wash down. On a cold and misty night, Castle Lager can deliver the warmth of a sensuous partner to your insides. Whether you are at home or at work. You could even be chilling alone or hanging out with friends. Wherever you find yourself, you can make your moments worthwhile with a chilled glass of this

Airtel Africa builds Nextra data centre in Lagos



Starting with Lagos, Nextra has built one of the largest networks of data centres in Africa with high-capacity data centres in major cities located in strategic points across Airtel Africa’s footprint, complementing its existing edge sites.

The construction of the first facility is

also designed to meet the growing need of African business and its data centre infrastructure will be designed to host the next generation of computing, while providing multi-MW capacity in a phased manner.

With high-capacity data centres in significant cities positioned strategically

throughout Airtel Africa's footprint, Nxtra by Airtel will be one of the largest networks of data centres in Africa, enhancing its current edge sites. This expansion demonstrates the company's dedication to supplying reliable and long-lasting data centre capacity to support the rapidly expanding African digital economy, thereby satisfying the continent's data management needs.

38 megawatts of total power will be delivered by the Nxtra by Airtel data centre in Lagos, which will also house high density racks that incorporate the

most recent best practice construction techniques to attain 1.3 power usage effectiveness (PUE). It is anticipated to go online in the first quarter of 2026.

Airtel Africa plans to establish five hyperscale data centres throughout the continent, the first of which will be located in Lagos. When these 13 big data centres and more than 48 edge data centres are combined, they will have a strong 180 megawatt capacity. Nxtra provides safe and scalable integrated solutions to governments, large African organisations, startups, SMEs, and global hyper-scalers

when combined with Airtel Africa's vast fibre network.

Through locally available data centre capacity, speed to access digital services will improve and the cost of managing data will be reduced, thus helping power increased innovation, while supporting a new generation of African tech talent. Furthermore, Nxtra is enabling customers meet data sovereignty requirements while at the same time enabling more local cloud services to be offered in the countries where Airtel Africa operates.

Wema Bank – Impacting Africa's financial services market with digital innovations



Wema Bank, the pioneer of Africa's first fully digital bank, ALAT, and Nigeria's most resilient bank, has earned an evident reputation for building the future of financial services, embracing technological advancements and constantly innovating to develop uniquely impactful solutions and redefine the banking experiences of Nigerians.

Since inception in 1945, Wema Bank has remained steadfast and unrelenting in fulfilling its vision and mission; "To be the dominant digital platform in Africa delivering seamless financial services. and "Empowering lives through innovation" respectively.

Rising from the former Agbonmagbe Bank, Wema Bank's journey is one that has sparked admiration in the financial services industry. In January 1990, the bank was listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange and by 2009, the bank had become a regional financial powerhouse, further undergoing a strategic repositioning exercise which culminated in a decision to operate as a commercial Bank with regional authorisation in South-South Nigeria, South-West Nigeria, Lagos and Abuja.

Within a short six years from acquiring

its regional banking status, Wema Bank went on to become a national bank in 2015, receiving a national banking license having met the capital base requirements as stipulated by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). Since then, the pioneering bank has experienced expedited growth, maintaining the highest standards of social responsibility, corporate governance and diversity, operating a network of over 125 branches and metamorphosing into Nigeria's most innovative bank in less than a decade. Perhaps the most prominent testament to Wema Bank's innovative capacity is the launch of its digital platform, ALAT by Wema.

ALAT is Africa's first fully digital bank, launched by Wema Bank in 2017 to provide Nigerians across Nigeria with a paperless banking system functional beyond conventional banking parameters and operational 24/7. This unique platform has served as an ecosystem of seamless, convenient and reliable financial services and solutions that cut across diverse aspects of customers' lives, constantly evolving to adapt to the extensive needs of each customer.

This innovative platform, ALAT, has revolutionised the financial services market, redefining the standards of mobile banking in Africa by allowing users access to advanced services like FX conversion, flight bookings, affordable insurance plans, healthcare, deals & discounts, personal and group savings options, expense tracking, loans tailored to the needs of users at different points and much more, all on this unique platform. ALAT has essentially transcended the confines of "mobile banking" to become a one-stop shop for every Nigerian's financial needs. Since its inception, over 4.5 million Nigerians from

across Nigeria and beyond, have explored these unique benefits provided by ALAT, enjoying seamless 24/7 banking at their fingertips. However, Wema Bank didn't stop at the individual level.

In a bid to transform the banking experiences of Nigerians in the MSME Sector for increased operational efficiency, Wema Bank also launched a corporate version of ALAT called ALAT For Business. This app, also available on both the PlayStore and App Store, has been strategically designed to optimise the banking system for business, allowing them to sort all their financial needs without the need for visiting the bank. With ALAT For Business—fondly called "AFB", entrepreneurs can access advances financial services including the bulk payment feature that allows them make simultaneous payments to up to 5,000 beneficiaries in one transaction, 24/7 customer support via dedicated Account Officers, access to a Corporate Debit card for business use, Form Q Initiation, FX transfers, Invoice discounting, Cashflow Analysis, Business Loans and much more, all on the groundbreaking business-transformative app.

Both ALAT and ALAT For Business stand out for their unique abilities to help individuals and businesses fulfil their personal & professional needs and maximise their potential with incredibly minimal effort. However, these are just two of Wema Bank's innovative solutions that have positively transformed the financial services landscape. The trailblazing financial institution has garnered an admirable repute for providing solutions that cut across diverse demographics of Nigerians. For MSMEs, AFB is just one of many different solutions, some of which

include Wema Bank's SME Business School which equips business owners with practical tips and strategies for efficient business growth and management, the Wema Bank POS machine which offers business owners same-day settlement, an advanced contactless payment option called Wema Bank NQR through which customers can simply scan a barcode to make payments to business owners, ALATPay which is a seamless payment gateway that facilitates web-based payments for business owners, and a plethora of other advanced solutions.

One outstanding initiative launched by the bank for MSMEs is the FGN-ALAT Digital Skillnovation Programme, a partnership pioneered by Wema Bank in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria to train and equip two million (2,000,000) youth and one million (1,000,000) MSMEs across Nigeria with advanced, relevant and highly demanded digital skills for optimal employability, accelerated business performance and ultimately, to give them a competitive edge on the global digital landscape. Through this programme, Wema Bank has strategically positioned not just MSMEs

but also Nigerian youth for sustainable success through the marketable digital skills that the programme offers. This way, these business owners and youth will not only gain employment but also potentially become employers.

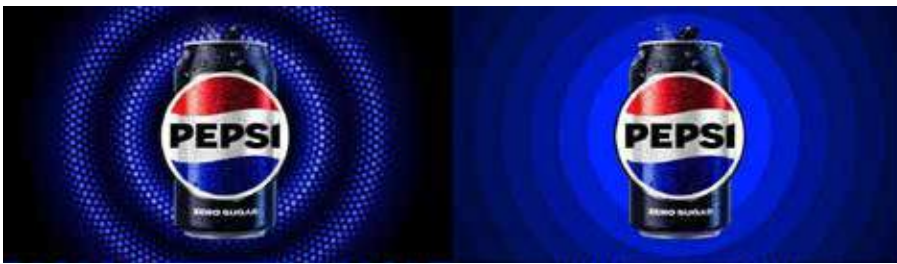
Other initiatives championed by Wema Bank to empower Nigerian Youth include Hackaholics, Wema Bank's youth-focused tech competition designed to not only provide a platform for youth to build their own startups but also provide these youth with the necessary resources; the NYSC-ALAT Accelerator Programme launched by Wema Bank in partnership with the NYSC and Microsoft to provide young Nigerian graduates with resources and opportunities needed for seamless transition to the labour market; the Wema Bank Bankers-In-Training programme through which Wema Bank affords youth the opportunity to make their big break into the financial services industry, and a host of other impactful initiatives.

Beyond the youth, MSMEs and the general Nigerian populace, Wema Bank has also shown an undeniable commitment to empowering women. The bank launched its female-focused proposition,

SARA by Wema, Wema Bank has helped thousands of Nigerian women to thrive in their personal and professional lives through unique solutions ranging from skill acquisition and free professional trainings to financial support, personal and business loans, mentorship and networking opportunities, exclusive events; more recently, the successful execution of Nigeria's biggest International Women's Day Event, the Wema Bank International Women's Day 2024 Event.

One thing is clear, Wema Bank's impact as a financial services provider has permeated the lives of Nigerians of all ages and from different walks of life. Throughout their 78+ years of existence, Wema Bank has evolved beautifully, constantly innovating and introducing strategic products, services and solutions that increasingly deliver optimum value to all its stakeholders. The bank continues to design cutting-edge solutions that solve problems and meet needs and through these innovative solutions, Wema Bank is revolutionising the financial services landscape and redefining the standards of banking and financial services in Africa.

Pepsi: Positioned for continuing dominant presence in Nigeria



Pepsi, a leading cola drinks brand, is not only synonymous with refreshment, but has become an intrinsic part of Nigeria's pop culture. Pepsi is transcending its classic offerings to an innovative leadership position even as it shapes Africa's largest dynamic beverage market.

One of the key factors that has contributed to Pepsi's rise globally and in Nigeria is its innovative marketing strategy. Pepsi has positioned itself as the "Choice of a New Generation," targeting younger consumers who are looking for a more modern and refreshing alternative to other cola brands. This approach has resonated with the youth culture and helped Pepsi gain a strong following among younger

consumers.

Pepsi's use of celebrity endorsements has played a significant role in its rise to prominence. This can be traceable to the 1980s when Pepsi signed a groundbreaking deal with pop superstar Michael Jackson, which catapulted the brand's popularity to new heights. The iconic Pepsi commercials featuring Jackson became a cultural phenomenon and helped Pepsi establish itself as a formidable brand in the global market.

This strategy has been replicated in Nigeria where Pepsi has etched itself into the fabric of Naija pop culture, creating an immersive brand experience that encapsulates the essence of Nigeria's dynamic entertainment landscape. For

over a decade, Pepsi has stood out as one of the leading brands whose relationship with the Nigerian music industry runs deep. From signing brand ambassadors like Wizkid, Tiwa Savage, Davido, Burna Boy, Rema, Ayra Starr, Teni to extending support to renowned DJs such as DJ Cuppy, DJ Obi, DJ Spinall, etc. The brand's strategic collaborations with key players in the Nigerian music industry has not only heightened its brand presence but also reinforced its role as a catalyst for cultural movements.

Pepsi has also differentiated itself from its competition by offering a sweeter and more carbonated taste. This distinct flavor profile appealed to consumers who preferred a bolder and more intense cola experience. Additionally, Pepsi has introduced new variations such as Diet Pepsi and Pepsi Max, catering to the growing demand for healthier and low-calorie options. Pepsi's competitive pricing strategy has been instrumental in attracting price-sensitive consumers. By offering its products at a lower price point, Pepsi has been able to gain market share and appeal to value-conscious customers.

Seven-Up Bottling Company (SBC), producers of Pepsi Cola and its sister brands have leveraged SBC's strong distribution network and brand recognition pan Nigeria, giving Pepsi a significant boost in reach and dominance across the nation. Pepsi's

extensive distribution network ensured that its products are readily available to consumers, giving it a competitive advantage over its rivals.

Pepsi is also investing in sustainability programs, focusing on water conservation and empowering local communities. These

initiatives not only benefit society but also portray Pepsi as a responsible corporate citizen.

Pepsi's focus on local tastes, cultural connection, and responsible innovation positions it well for a continued presence in Nigeria.

Supa Komando Energy Drink: Inspiring Consumers to Keep Firing On



Supa Komando Energy Drink is an exceptional source of energy and inspiration that is refined with quality ingredients.

An energy drink from the stable of Seven-Up Bottling Company, Supa Komando, is produced in Nigeria with the primary aim of providing the required

strength to get through the day.

Inspired by the needs of the consumer, the brand was birthed to encourage its TA to conquer their world daily by overcoming challenges that demand a high physical and mental ability. It is a brand that inspires individuals to push beyond their boundaries.

Supa Komando is the only Nigerian energy drink that is available in 3 SKUs - 25cl Glass bottle, 30 & 50cl PET bottles, and 33cl can. Since its entry into the Nigerian market in 2020, Supa Komando has remained one of the most cherished and sought-after energy drinks, packed with quality ingredients that power consumers to harness their inner 'Komandos'.

In July 2023, the energy drink created a powerful brand resonance through a

creative and compelling 60-second TV commercial titled: "The Jump-Off". The TV ad which provided an opportunity for the brand to connect with its consumers on a deeper level, featured an impressive array of brand ambassadors including On-Air-Personality and hype man, Do2tun, and Ex-BBnaija stars among who are Erica, Saskay, Cross, and Yousef.

With a captivating and enthralling storyline, the TV commercial, filled with a message of courage and determination, has continued to ignite conversations that create a deafening buzz on social media.

Having been made of natural ingredients such as guarana, ginseng, and taurine, the energy drink Supa Komando remains an ideal source of energy needed to tackle any task ahead.

Aquafina Premium Drinking Water: Being Your Padi for a Healthy Life.



Aquafina is a brand that prioritizes the safety, quality, and health of every one of its consumers. Purified through a 7-step rigorous filtration process, Aquafina premium drinking water uses the best technology

available, and can boldly lay claim to guaranteeing purity just as it promises its consumers. It is an accredited and validated process that meets or exceeds government standards and has been verified by independent experts.

Water as they say has no enemy, and with this in mind, Aquafina further taps into the human desire for companionship and connection using the "Padi of Life" campaign. The word "padi" is a Nigerian word that means "friend." The campaign uses the metaphor of friendship to illustrate the bond between Aquafina and its consumers.

In 2023, the brand launched a TV commercial that cemented this campaign, inspiring longlife connections, and

encapsulating the very meaning of friendship and togetherness. This featured its ambassadors, Kate Henshaw, Jide Kene, Jemima Osunde, Munachi Abii, and Egemba Chinonso Fidelis popularly known as Aproko Doctor. The TV commercial also saw the appearance of Hilda Baci, a Guinness World Record holder, and finally, Young John, Nigerian singer, songwriter, and producer, showing the brand's ability to be relevant in this ever-changing landscape. They share stories about how Aquafina has been there for them through aspects of their everyday lives, and how it has helped them to stay refreshed, hydrated, and healthy.

EFCC accuses banks of 70% financial crimes



The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has accused Nigerian banks of involvement in about 70% of the financial crimes in Nigeria. Ola Olukayode, the EFCC

Chairman, made this known recently in Abuja at the 2023 Annual Retreat and General Meeting of the Association of Chief Audit Executives of Banks in Nigeria (ACAEBIN). He specifically described

Nigeria's banking sector as a cesspool of fraudulent activities while mentioning that the ugly development had been raising considerable challenges and concerns to the commission.

Idowu Apejode, the Director of Internal Audit, EFCC, who represented Mr Olukayode, pointed out a need for concerted effort by relevant authorities and professionals, especially audit executives to prevent and tackle issues of fraudulent practices in the banking sector.

In his words, "Broadly speaking, banking fraud in Nigeria is both inside and outside related. The inside related fraud comprises outright selling of customers' deposits, authorising loan facilities, forgery and several other kinds of unhealthy and criminal practices.

"The outsider related ones

include hacking, ATM fraud, conspiracy, among others. And then the absurd one is when both collaborate, that is collaboration among the bankers and the outsider.

"That one is the one that is really absurd because when you do that, that means you are selling out the system. It is estimated that about 70 per cent of financial crimes in Nigeria are traceable to the banking sector, this scenario is disturbing and unacceptable."

While responding to the EFCC's boss, Prince Akamadu, the ACAEBIN Chairman, explained that banks have been working tirelessly to curb fraudulent activities, while pointing out that the banking sector has done more in the area of Know Your Customer mechanism.

FBN Holdings records 127% surge in profit

By **Ibidunni Banjoko**



In a financial revelation, First Bank of Nigeria Holdings, under FBN Holdings, declared a substantial 127% increase in profit at the close of 2023, reaching N309.89 billion compared to N136.17 billion in the corresponding period of 2022. The unaudited

consolidated financial statements, filed with the Nigerian Exchange Limited on Thursday, disclosed significant growth in interest income, rising by 66.27% to N917.71 billion from N551.94 billion in 2022. Additionally, fee and commission income experienced an uptick to

N204.90 billion from N143.98 billion in the previous year.

However, FBNH faced a foreign exchange loss of N350.32 billion at the end of 2023, contrasting with a gain of N22.39 billion in 2022. Over 12 months, the total assets of FBN Holdings witnessed a remarkable growth of 59.73%, closing at N16.89 trillion from N10.58 trillion as of December 2022. The liabilities also saw an increase, reaching N15.19 trillion from N9.58 trillion. In 2023, group entities, including FBN Holdings Plc. and FBNQuest Merchant Bank, incurred penalties totaling N17.26 million for late submission of financial statements and breach of transaction rules.

Interestingly, Barbican Capital, linked to former

chairman Oba Otudeko, has been identified as the largest shareholder in FBN Holdings with a 13.61% stake. This revelation emerged a day after billionaire businessman Femi Otedola, holding a 5.65% stake, was appointed as the new chairman. The acquisition of shares by Barbican Capital prompted reactions from capital market stakeholders, leading minority shareholders to call for regulatory probes. The Securities and Exchange Commission confirmed an ongoing investigation but has not disclosed its findings. The Central Bank of Nigeria removed Otudeko as FBNH's non-executive director/chairman in April 2021 due to non-compliance with regulatory control.

Unity Bank partners firm to empower 1,000 female software engineers

By **Seun Johnson**



Unity Bank Plc has launched a partnership with a tech platform, SkillPaddy to train 1,000 female software engineers.

Known as a 'Count Her In', the training is expected to focus on empowering female beneficiaries with software engineering skills.

In a statement released by the bank, the initiative is primarily meant to bridge

talent supply gaps while providing individuals with the opportunity to meet their training goals and launch careers in the tech industry.

While speaking on the partnership with Skillpaddy, the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Unity Bank Plc, Mrs Tomi Somefun, disclosed that the training programme aligned with the theme of the IWD 2024,

#InspireInclusion.

She added that empowering young women reflected the bank's commitment to driving inclusion, equality and diversity across industries.

She said, "As a bank committed to fostering economic empowerment and gender equality, we are proud to partner with SkillPaddy on this initiative to contribute to the training and empowerment of 1,000 female software engineers.

"Through this programme, we are not only investing in the future of these talented women but also driving innovation and diversity within the tech industry.

By providing access to skills training and mentorship, we aim to unlock opportunities and create a more inclusive

and thriving digital economy for all."

Also speaking on other benefits of the programme, Somefun revealed that about 40 young girls would receive full sponsorship from Unity Bank in the special training initiative, which was conceived as part of activities to commemorate this year's International Women's Day 2024.

She also said all beneficiaries of the programme will be trained on different aspects of software development and provided with mentorship and resources that they need to succeed, including learning life skills like critical thinking, communication, innovation & problem-solving.

CBN raises Customs' FX clearance rate

By **Seun Johnson**



The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has increased the FX rate for clearance of goods at different import points by N18.44 from N1593.84/\$ to

N1612.28/\$.

This was revealed in the latest statement posted on the website of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS).

According to the post, the

new figure for the exchange rate was introduced on March 11, 2024 and mirrors the prevailing market rate on that day. The naira closed at N1617.96 to the USD on the official window on March 11, 2024.

The Comptroller General of Nigeria Customs Service, Adewale Adeniyi, had earlier stated that following the floating of the naira, the NCS will regularly change the FX rate for clearance of goods in line with the figures from the CBN official market rate.

Following complaints

from the business community over the regular changes in the customs FX rate and the resultant confusion while filling the Form M for the importation of goods, the CBN in February introduced a new policy stating that the FX rate on the date of Form M would be used for clearance of goods.

According to the CBN, the move will quell the confusion around different exchange rates and aid planning on the part of both the Nigeria Customs and the business community.

Microsoft Windows inserts pop-up advertisements into Google Chrome

By Oluwaseyi Lawal



Microsoft has warmed up to Google Chrome by embracing Privacy Sandbox standards in

its Edge browser. It's been observed that Microsoft is once again resorting to pop-up ads in Google's browser to encourage users to switch their default search engine to Bing.

Upon accepting the prompt, Bing becomes the default search engine instead of Google Chrome. Some users on Reddit expressed worries that these pop-ups resembled malware, sparking a discussion thread on the platform.

"Just randomly popped up on my desktop today, I couldn't find anything unusual in the task manager and computer is running fine," one Reddit user wrote. "Is it just an ad from Microsoft? Actual popup looked pixelated so wasn't sure. The links for the T&C link directly to Microsoft and did not have redirect links."

Another Reddit user wrote: "Microsoft did put this exact Ad out, but there's nothing stopping malware from copying it. If the links were to Microsoft this was probably legit."

Caitlin Roulston, Microsoft's communications director, informed The Verge that the notification is a single instance offer, allowing users to opt for Bing as their default search engine on Chrome. She implied that this offer is advantageous for Windows users, as using Edge grants them additional chat turns in Copilot if they agree to the notification.

A user shared their perception that both Microsoft and Google are essentially aware and spyware companies.

Interswitch ventures into telecoms market with \$1m MVNO license

By Joseph Ekeng

Interswitch, the Nigerian fintech behemoth backed by Visa, is set to make waves in Nigeria's telecommunications sector. Acquiring a Tier 5 Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNO) license from the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC) for 500 million (\$1.08 million) in May 2023, Interswitch aims to redefine the telecom landscape.

The company's financial report outlines plans for a capital-efficient virtual telecoms model, blending payments and telecoms services for both B2B customers and consumers.

Nigeria, boasting Africa's largest phone market, operates a tiered MVNO licensing system, with Interswitch securing the coveted Tier 5 license. This enables Interswitch to collaborate with one of Nigeria's four major telcos, leveraging existing infrastructure to provide telecom services, particularly targeting underserved areas.



Interswitch's acquisition of the MVNO license occurred in 2023. The licensing system features five tiers delineating MVNO operations. The company plans to offer value-added services through its telco partnership.

This strategic move aligns with Interswitch's goal of bridging the connectivity gap by offering affordable 4G or 5G services, especially in rural regions. It comes at a pivotal moment for Nigeria's telco sector, witnessing its first growth decline in five years due to reduced capital expenditure and waning foreign investments.

In response, the NCC issued 25 MVNO licenses in 2023 to boost competition.

Despite Nigeria's population of 200 million, nearly 40% lack mobile connectivity, with a minority accessing high-speed networks.

Leveraging its extensive customer base—over 50 million debit cards issued through Verve—Interswitch aims to disrupt the telecom industry's incumbents, offering a compelling alternative.

However, thriving in Nigeria's fiercely competitive mobile market, with over 200 million subscribers, hinges on Interswitch's ability to deliver superior telecom services and forge strategic telco partnerships. Innovative approaches and value-added services will be crucial in navigating Nigeria's dynamic telco landscape successfully.

Mobile Ad spending hits record high

By **Ibidunni Banjoko**



Global mobile ad spending surged to a remarkable \$362 billion in 2023, marking an 8% increase from the previous year, according to insights from Data.ai's State of Mobile 2024 report. The growth was primarily driven by revenue generated from short-form video and video-sharing apps. Projections indicate that this upward trend will continue, with mobile ad spending projected to reach \$402 billion in 2024, representing an 11% year-over-year increase.

In tandem with the rise in ad spending, mobile consumer spending also witnessed a significant uptick, reaching \$171 billion

in 2023, marking a 3% year-over-year increase. The report highlights the growing attention towards social apps and the creator economy, which are emerging as new avenues for monetization beyond traditional advertisements.

Moreover, generative AI experienced explosive growth in 2023, with innovations such as AI chatbots and art generators fueling the integration of new features across various mobile sectors.

However, despite these positive trends, the mobile app marketing ecosystem faced unprecedented challenges in recent years. Apple's introduction of the App Tracking Transparency (ATT) framework in April 2021 significantly impacted marketers' ability to measure and optimize their campaigns, shifting the focus from user-level data optimization to aggregate data. Although alternative measurement solutions have emerged, confidence levels among marketers have yet to return to pre-ATT levels.

The Covid-19 pandemic further disrupted the mobile landscape, leading to rapid digital acceleration worldwide due to lockdowns and social distancing

measures. While mobile apps capitalized on aggressive user acquisition campaigns during this period, a post-Covid digital cooldown ensued, with digital usage returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Adding to the complexity, the global economic downturn and rising inflation rates in 2022 had a profound impact on mobile businesses. Many consumer-facing mobile apps responded by reducing marketing budgets and staff, further compounded by the shock to the global economy caused by the war in Ukraine.

These developments contributed to significant volatility in the mobile advertising market. Between 2020 and 2021, Covid-19 and ATT shaped ad spend trends. Despite industry adaptations, the market saw a 5% drop in 2022 following a 40% leap in 2021.

Overall, while mobile ad spending has reached record highs, challenges such as regulatory changes, economic uncertainty, and evolving consumer behaviour continue to shape the landscape, necessitating adaptive strategies and resilience within the industry.

Operators fixing undersea cables to restore full Internet service - NCC

By **Ralph Tathagata**



Following the continent-wide Internet service disruption in Nigeria and other countries, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) said the cable operators have begun repair works and are gradually restoring services.

According to Reuben Muoka, Director

of Public Affairs, NCC, the cable operators promised to work round the clock to ensure that services are restored to the affected countries within the shortest possible time.

It would be recalled that there has been a continent-wide internet service disruption currently being experienced in Nigeria and other West African countries, including Ghana, Senegal, Cote de Ivoire, etc.

According to NCC, a combination of cable cuts, resulting in equipment faults on the major undersea cables along the West African Coast, have negatively impacted data and fixed telecom services in several countries of West Africa.

"The cuts occurred somewhere in Cote

de'Ivoire and Senegal, with an attendant disruption in Portugal.

"Cable companies – West African Cable System (WACS) and African Coast to Europe (ACE) in the West Coast route from Europe have experienced faults while SAT3 and MainOne have downtime," NCC said.

The Commission also revealed that similar undersea cables providing traffic from Europe to the East Coast of Africa, like Seacom, Europe India Gateway (EIG), Asia-Africa-Europe 1 (AAE1), are said to have been cut at some point around the Red Sea, resulting in internet service downtime across these routes.

Global oil and gas market size projects to reach \$9,347.9 billion by 2028

By **Ibidunni Banjoko**



The oil and gas market is anticipated to witness robust growth in the coming years, driven by various factors such as increased investments, technological advancements, and evolving market dynamics. According to the Business Research Company, the global oil and gas market size is projected to reach \$9,347.9 billion by 2028, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.1%.

In Nigeria, the oil and gas market is experiencing significant growth, with production volume expected to rise from 4.60 billion cubic feet per day in 2024 to 4.93 billion cubic feet per day by 2029, at a CAGR of 1.39%. Despite challenges

such as vandalization of infrastructure and price volatility, the market is poised for expansion, fueled by abundant reserves and increasing foreign investments.

One of the key drivers of growth in the Nigerian oil and gas market is the upstream sector, which focuses on exploration and production activities. With significant untapped hydrocarbon resources both offshore and onshore, there is ample opportunity for exploration and production efforts to thrive. Technological advancements in seismic imaging and drilling techniques have further enhanced the efficiency and success rate of these activities, attracting investments and driving revenue for the government.

Investments in natural gas infrastructure are also expected to propel market growth, as Nigeria boasts substantial natural gas reserves. The government's initiatives to promote gas utilization for power generation and industrial purposes, coupled with increasing global demand for cleaner energy sources, are driving investments

in natural gas infrastructure. Projects such as the gas field discovery at the OML 102 offshore oil field by Totalenergies underscore the potential for growth in the gas segment of the market.

Despite challenges such as decreased production due to slow investment decisions prompted by geopolitical conflicts, the outlook for the Nigerian oil and gas market remains positive. The government's efforts to attract investments through policy reforms and infrastructure projects, combined with technological advancements and increasing demand for natural gas, position the market for sustained growth in the forecasted period.

As Nigeria continues to capitalize on its abundant oil and gas resources and invest in infrastructure and technology, the country is poised to play a significant role in shaping the future of the global oil and gas market. With opportunities for expansion and innovation abound, stakeholders in the industry are optimistic about the market's growth trajectory in the years to come.

NNPCL deactivates over 6,000 illegal refineries linked to pipelines in Niger Delta

By **Seun Johnson**



The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, (NNPCL) has deactivated a total of 6,409 illegal refineries linked to the pipelines in the Niger Delta Region of the country.

This was disclosed by its Group Chief Executive Officer, Mele Kyari while receiving Ola Olukayode, Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in his office.

Kyari noted that the move was part of efforts to tackle the lingering cases of oil theft in the country.

According to him, going by the volume of oil stolen daily and the brazenness with which the perpetrators operate, crude oil

theft is the most humongous and virulent economic crime in Nigeria that must attract the attention of the EFCC.

"We have deactivated 6,409 illegal refineries in the Niger Delta region. Today, we have disconnected up to 4,846 illegal pipes connected to our pipelines, that is out of 5,543 such illegal connection points. That means there are a vast number of such connections that we have not removed.

"These things don't just happen from the blues. They happen in communities and locations we all know. As we remove one illegal connection, another one comes up.

"This kind of thing does not happen anywhere else in the world. When we say illegal connections, they are not invisible things, they are big pipes that require some level of expertise to be installed. Some of them are of the same size as the trunk line itself. No one would produce crude oil knowing fully well that it is not going to get to the terminal. That is why nobody is

putting money into the business. So, you can't grow production," he said.

While soliciting for partnership with the EFCC to curb the menace of oil theft, Kyari said that the very purpose of the Commission is to curtail economic crimes, and there is no bigger economic crime than what is happening in the oil and gas sector.

On corruption within the system, the GCEO explained that by law, NNPC Ltd is required to maintain high ethical standards and has put in place structures and measures to curb discretionary actions that fuel corruption, stressing that most processes in the company have been fully automated to discourage arbitrary actions.

In his presentation, Ola Olukoyede, the Chairman of EFCC, expressed satisfaction with NNPC Ltd's commitment to issues of ethics and code of conduct.

He, however, challenged management to ensure that the codes of ethics and regulations were complemented with monitoring and enforcement to enhance

Brands building equity with social impacts

By Felicia Nwosu

Today, people-centric brands that buy into the ethos of present day conscious consumers are striving to sharpen sustainability efforts with eco-friendly solutions aimed at making meaningful contributions to the communities they serve by fostering positive change. The need for brands to sharpen their sustainability efforts has continued to be on the rise as well as the herculean task of embracing eco-friendly solutions that meet these demands.

To attain these feats, lots of brand owners are at the forefront of achieving a sustainable future through various social impacts, utilizing cutting-edge technologies and innovative strategies just to ensure that their names get etched into the positive record book of consumers.

This has gingered diverse brands to wholeheartedly embrace various dimensions of eco-friendly solutions as they realize the necessity to position recyclability at the centre of every action.

To demonstrate its support towards this vision, the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) launched the Planet Pledge initiative to encourage Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) to champion the global Race to Zero campaign both internally within their organizations as well as encourage value chain partners to do the same.

With this initiative, some major global brands have carved out some impactful, memorable actions to champion the global cause when it comes to eco-friendly matters and biodegradable packaging. These include:

Unilever Nigeria

In recent years, Unilever has made a bold commitment to sustainability, with the goal of halving its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2039. One of the key pillars of Unilever's sustainability strategy is its Clean Future initiative.

Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola on the other hand is working with social enterprises, civil society organizations, and agencies with a focus on stimulating a circular economy to deal with plastic waste and contribute to improving a debris-free environment by marshaling initiatives that seek to empower people who may be involved in the collection.

The global beverage company also has other initiatives such as the Coca-Cola Foundation which has partnered with Statewide Waste & Environmental Education Project (SWEEP) Foundation to start off its "Waste In The City" initiative across target communities, as part of its sustained strategy of fostering a "World Without Waste".

The initiative funded by The Coca-Cola Foundation is a community-focused project

aimed at unclogging blocked drainages and canals by extracting PET bottles, cans and other plastic waste, recycling them through accredited off-takers while providing economic empowerment for community youth and women.

SBC

Seven-Up Bottling Company Plc. partnered with Yalo, a leading conversational AI platform and the Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance (FBRA), to redefine how Nigerians perceive waste management, recycling, and environmental sustainability.

This strategic partnership marked a significant milestone in reshaping the country's recycling market through the integration of artificial intelligence and community engagement aimed at achieving environmental sustainability.



Nestlé

Nestlé Nigeria is committed to a waste-free future and has taken steps to promote environmentally sound waste management practices for a clean, safe, and sustainable planet. As part of the Nestlé Cares Initiative 2023, over 400 Nestlé employees cleaned up 12 markets across the country, collecting 6,660kg of solid waste and 79kg of recyclables across the locations.

Aside this, Nestlé has also introduced diverse ways of promoting a sustainable future which includes a professional training programme, in collaboration with Lagos Business School (LBS) aimed at equipping journalists with requisite knowledge in reporting issues that concern nutrition, health, sustainability, and agriculture with relevant information and skills required for database reporting.

Nestlé Nigeria, is taking on this bold step to deliver on the company's global commitment to make 100% of Nestlé's packaging recyclable or re-usable by 2025 to protect the environment

Mastercard

As part of its sustainability efforts, MasterCard, a leading digital service platform announced plans to halt the use of Polyvinyl

Chloride (PVC) Plastic on payment cards by 2028 and make card services available to its teeming consumer with eco-friendly and sustainable materials.

The company revealed that effective from January 1, 2028, its payment cards will be produced from more sustainable materials which constitute recycled or bio-sourced plastics

Nigerian Breweries

Nigeria's leading brewery company, Nigerian Breweries PLC has conducted tree planting exercises across its nine brewery locations in Nigeria as part of activities to celebrate its 75th anniversary and in line with the global mandate to protect and conserve natural ecosystems.

In the same vein, some marketing professionals who spoke on this global trend, noted that more brands that have realized the value of eco-friendly production processes are beginning to do things in the sustainability space to boost both equity and return on investment.

Blessing O., a growth strategist with Kantar, explained that forward-thinking brands should not ignore the immense advantage derived from participating in social Impact initiatives, backing up her claim with a data result conducted by Kantar.

"When we analyze a global top 100 most valuable brands, what we see is the dollar value that sustainability contributes to the total brand value for these 100 brands is almost 200 billion dollars. However, if we become more ambitious and increase sustainability, in line with the nearest competitor, there is going to be an incremental value of 2.3 billion dollars. And then if we increase further, in line with the market leader, we will add 3.9 billion dollars to the total value. This is how we can show that sustainability contributes to brand value. We also have proven records to show that sustainability supports brand growth in the longer term."

Mark Molenaar, Director of Customer Experience, Sub-Saharan Africa, Kantar, called for a more synergized team to enable brands achieve their values as promised to consumers meaningfully.

"We can leverage that synergy that we have between the two meaningfully. It's really about meeting people's needs and feeling emotionally connected to the brand. What does it mean to create a meaningfully different customer experience, so in terms of making meaningful difference, it comes with meeting people's needs and making them feel emotionally connected to the brand. That's being effective, delivering the service that customers are looking for, doing what you promise, making it easy, frictionless in terms of getting what you're trying to do and creating an affinity sustainably."

Redmond steps down as TVC's commercial director, recounts 7 years of success

By Oluwaseyi Lawal



As Ronan Redmond, Commercial Director of TVC steps down from his exalted position end of April, the renowned international media icon has described as successful and eventful the seven years he served in the award-winning media group.

Recall that the board of TVC Communications, owners of TVC News, TVC Entertainment channel, Max FM and Adaba FM, had earlier revealed that Mr Ronan Redmond, will be stepping down, April 30, 2024 after seven years of achieving huge commercial growth for the organization.

Renowned for his significant contributions to the Nigerian advertising industry, Redmond exits TVC Communications with a remarkable legacy and impressive records of outstanding performances.

Speaking on his imminent exit, Redmond said, "I am incredibly proud of the work carried out, along with my colleagues, at TVC Communications as we turned the company into one of the leading commercial broadcasters in Nigeria. I am confident the team is equipped to take the commercial business to the next level."

"Despite the present economic challenges, I remain steadfast in my belief that the Nigeria media and entertainment sector is in the near future."

Key industry figures have also applauded the media czar's substantial influence on TVC Communications and the broader Nigerian media

and entertainment sector through tributes following his announcement. They noted that his dedication to the media industry is widely acknowledged, and his efforts to introduce novel advertising solutions on behalf of brand advertisers in the Nigerian market have been commended by sector leaders.

Paying tribute Redmond, Mr Andrew Hanlon, CEO of TVC Communications said, "I wish to pay special tribute to Mr Ronan Redmond, our commercial director, who will step down on April 30th, after serving with us since 2017. He is, without question, one of the best strategic media revenue specialists in our sector and I am grateful to him for producing outstanding revenue results every year and for his support to me personally"

Similarly, Mr. Yinka Adebayo, Group Executive Director, Omnicom Media Group West and Central Africa stated, "For me, having a good relationship with a man of Ronan's calibre was given after our first meeting. I could immediately sense a man of immense experience & value who is suitably placed to support us in achieving most of our clients' campaign objectives and change the narrative in the media space."

"He is very receptive to new & collaborative ideas geared towards delivering value to Clients. Ronan is not only hands-on; he walks the talk and always strives towards a win-win relationship across board. His desire & ever-ready posture to contribute to the development & growth of the Marketing Communications Industry in Nigeria is worthy of note & commendation."

"Interestingly, Ronan sees in us the positives that many of us do not see in ourselves. Without doubt, Ronan remains an asset to the organization he works for and the industry at large."

In the same vein, the President of the Media Independent Practitioners of

Nigeria (MIPAN), Mr. Femi Adelus, described Redmond's arrival in Nigeria as the "beginning of a transformative journey aimed at uplifting the local media advertising market which he believes holds huge revenue potential."

He further added that "His advocacy for best practices and innovation has resonated within the advertising community, as he has actively championed robust market data, the implementation of new audience measurement

surveys, the integration of ad tech and the optimization of hybrid working weeks."

"Another key milestone in Ronan's mission to boost the profile of the Nigerian advertising market has been his constant and consistent engagements with major advertisers and corporate institutions in appreciating the importance and essence of media advertising. It is in recognition of his professionalism and passion for the Nigeria advertising industry that MIPAN, the umbrella body for all registered media independent agencies in Nigeria, last December, awarded him the "Outstanding Media Partner of the Year"

Loatsad Promomedia Ltd appoints Sophie O. Ejegi as Managing Director.

Loatsad Promomedia, a leading out-of-home advertising company, has announced the appointment of Sophie Ejegi as its new Managing Director. Ms. Ejegi takes over from Mr. Adenrele Olusoga, who recently completed his tenure.

Prior to assuming this role, Ms. Ejegi served as Loatsad's Deputy Managing Director. She previously held the position of Chief Operating Officer at Emotion Advertising Ltd until 2022. Her proactive approach to staying abreast of industry trends through participation in various trainings and conferences underscores her commitment to achieving excellence.

Her appointment heralds a new era of innovation and growth for Loatsad Promomedia and its associated entities, promising to elevate their standing as global industry leaders.

In addition to her professional achievements,

Ms. Ejegi is actively involved in several industry associations, including the Women in Business Association, Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON), and Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAN). Her involvement reflects her commitment to advancing the industry and fostering collaboration within the business community.



iProspect elevates Smith as head of client partnerships

By **Abimbola Mohammed**



In a newly created role, Jason Smith, client partner at dentsu's iProspect, has been elevated as head of client partnerships. He has been with iProspect since the end of 2020 as a client partner.

Smith will work directly with Marcelle Gomez, iProspect managing director, and the rest of the iProspect's leadership team to bring the agency's performance mindset to life for clients.

According to Gomez, Jason

has been an integral part of iProspect as the agency has been on a transformation journey from a pure play digital performance agency to a fully integrated end-to-end media agency.

"Promoting from within and being able to recognise our amazing people with real career pathways brings me joy and is an excellent proof point of our agency's cultural values. It is a real demonstration of our EVP, where the ambitious accelerate the possible."

On his part, Smith said in a time marked by sweeping industry transformation, the imperative to collaborate closely with clients has never been more pressing.

"I'm truly excited to embrace this new role, dedicated to forging additional pathways for delivering business impact to our clients, empowering their growth agendas."

Unilever Ghana Appoints Chris Wulf-Caesar as CEO



In a momentous development, Unilever Ghana has named Chris Wulf-Caesar as its new CEO, marking a return to the company where his journey in FMCG industry began.

This appointment signals a significant milestone for Unilever Ghana and

underscores the company's commitment to fostering talent and driving sustainable growth.

Chris's return to Unilever Ghana follows a distinguished career spanning various sectors within Africa's consumer goods industry. Starting as a Unilever management trainee, he immersed himself in every aspect of the company, spending two years working in every department, including packing soap on the factory floor to cultivating the plantations. His hands-on experience laid the groundwork for his remarkable ascent through the ranks, leaving an indelible mark on every organization he served.

His leadership prowess was evident during his tenure at Accra Brewery Limited (SABMiller/ABInBev),

where he revitalized Ghana's flagship beer brand, CLUB. Additionally, his strategic vision and marketing expertise played a pivotal role at FrieslandCampina Nigeria, where he held senior leadership positions, including Cluster Marketing Director for Sub-Saharan Africa.

Reflecting on his emotional reunion with Unilever Ghana, Chris shared, "I am truly honored and humbled to return to Unilever Ghana as CEO. This appointment is not just a career milestone for me; it's a homecoming." He added, "Unilever has always been a part of my journey, and I am excited to lead the company towards a future of sustainable

growth and positive impact."

With his extensive experience and deep-rooted passion for driving positive change, Chris Wulf-Caesar is poised to lead Unilever Ghana into a new era of success. His appointment has generated excitement among stakeholders, who eagerly anticipate the transformative initiatives he will spearhead to further elevate the company's position in the market.

As Unilever Ghana prepares for this new chapter under Chris's leadership, stakeholders eagerly anticipate the transformative initiatives and positive change he will bring to the organization.

Publicis Media wins Spotify's media job

By **Felicia Nwosu**



Attesting to the new business relationship, a Spotify representative noted that Spotify would continue placing social performance buys through its in-house performance social buying team.

"As Spotify's always-on support, Publicis will assist with global and regional brand media, as well as performance marketing."

Marc Hazan, vice president of Marketing and Partnerships at Spotify, stated, "As Spotify's business and ambitions evolve, embracing change is key to our creative edge as is doing everything we can to connect with an ever-expanding global audience of more than 602 million users in more than 180 markets. We look forward to a new chapter of brand media and performance marketing excellence with Publicis OneVibe."

Global media agency, Publicis Media has added something new to its creative portfolio of clientele with the global media assignment of Spotify. The account was estimated at about \$240M in 2023, and Publicis Media has created a dedicated unit called OneVibe to service the new business.

Publicis' emergence came after a review that began last year, although the deal is currently under Interpublic media agencies whose official handoff is set to take place in June this year.

Jeep Wrangler 2024 offers modern features, advanced technologies



The 2024 model of the Wrangler continues its legacy by offering a blend of modern features, advanced technologies, and enhanced off-road capability. For over 80 years, the Jeep Wrangler has been an iconic symbol of off-road adventure, known for its rugged design, go-anywhere capability, and timeless appeal.

The Jeep Wrangler 2024 features an unmistakable design, with a bold front grille, round LED headlights, and a rugged body. The cabin offers a spacious and functional environment, with durable materials and a user-friendly layout. It is equipped with a

touchscreen infotainment system, smartphone integration, and a suite of advanced safety features.

It is engineered to tackle the most challenging terrain, with features such as four-wheel drive, heavy-duty axles, and high ground clearance. It is available with a range of off-road packages, including the Rubicon trim, which offers features like locking differentials, sway bar disconnect, and upgraded suspension components. The Wrangler is capable of traversing rocky trails, sandy dunes, and muddy paths with ease.

Putting safety as its top priority, the Wrangler 2024 comes equipped with a suite of advanced safety features. These include forward collision warning, automatic emergency braking, lane departure warning, and adaptive cruise control. Additionally, the Wrangler features a reinforced body structure and multiple airbags, providing enhanced protection for occupants in the event of a collision.

The Jeep Wrangler 2024 is an iconic off-road SUV that excels in providing a blend of rugged design, go-anywhere capability, and advanced technology. Whether you're embarking on an off-road adventure or navigating through city streets, the Wrangler offers a refined and enjoyable driving experience. Experience the Jeep Wrangler 2024 for yourself and discover why it's one of the most iconic SUVs on the market.

Tesla resumes operation in German plant after arson attack

Tesla's factory near in Germany is gradually resuming production after being disconnected from the power grid for a week due to an arson attack. German energy network E.DIS confirmed that power has been restored since late Monday, enabling production to resume.

The attack, claimed by a group of far-left activists called the "Volcano Group," involved setting fire to an electricity pylon, resulting in the plant's power supply being cut off early last Tuesday.

According to a report from CNN affiliate RTL, production at the factory is expected to gradually increase, although it remains uncertain when it will return to full capacity, as stated by a Tesla spokesperson on Tuesday. Initially, Tesla had anticipated the shutdown to last until the end of the current week, as reported by the German media outlet.

Nevertheless, the shutdown could prove costly for Elon Musk's company. The substantial factory, situated approximately 30 kilometers (18 miles) southeast of Berlin, serves as Tesla's sole manufacturing facility in Europe and has a current annual capacity of producing 375,000 electric vehicles.

Model Y vehicles, the sole cars manufactured at the factory, have prices starting at €44,990 (\$49,196) in Germany. This implies that a week's worth of output amounts to approximately €324

million (\$354 million) in sales for Tesla.

Analysts had cautioned about a potential impact on first-quarter earnings if the shutdown persisted for about 10 days or longer. However, they noted that the subdued demand for electric vehicles (EVs) in Europe and the likelihood of Tesla compensating for lost production in the forthcoming weeks could mitigate the repercussions.





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