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'NAJITE DEDE

EFE IRELE

SHAWN FAQUA



a NIYI AKINMOLAYAN FILM
The House of Secrets

30 JUNE | NEW MOVIE



HOSPITALITY

Lagos Continental Hotel:
Taking the lead as luxury
business hotel, world chefs
champion



INTERVIEW

From runway to empowerment:
Adeola Adele's timeless fashion
vision explored

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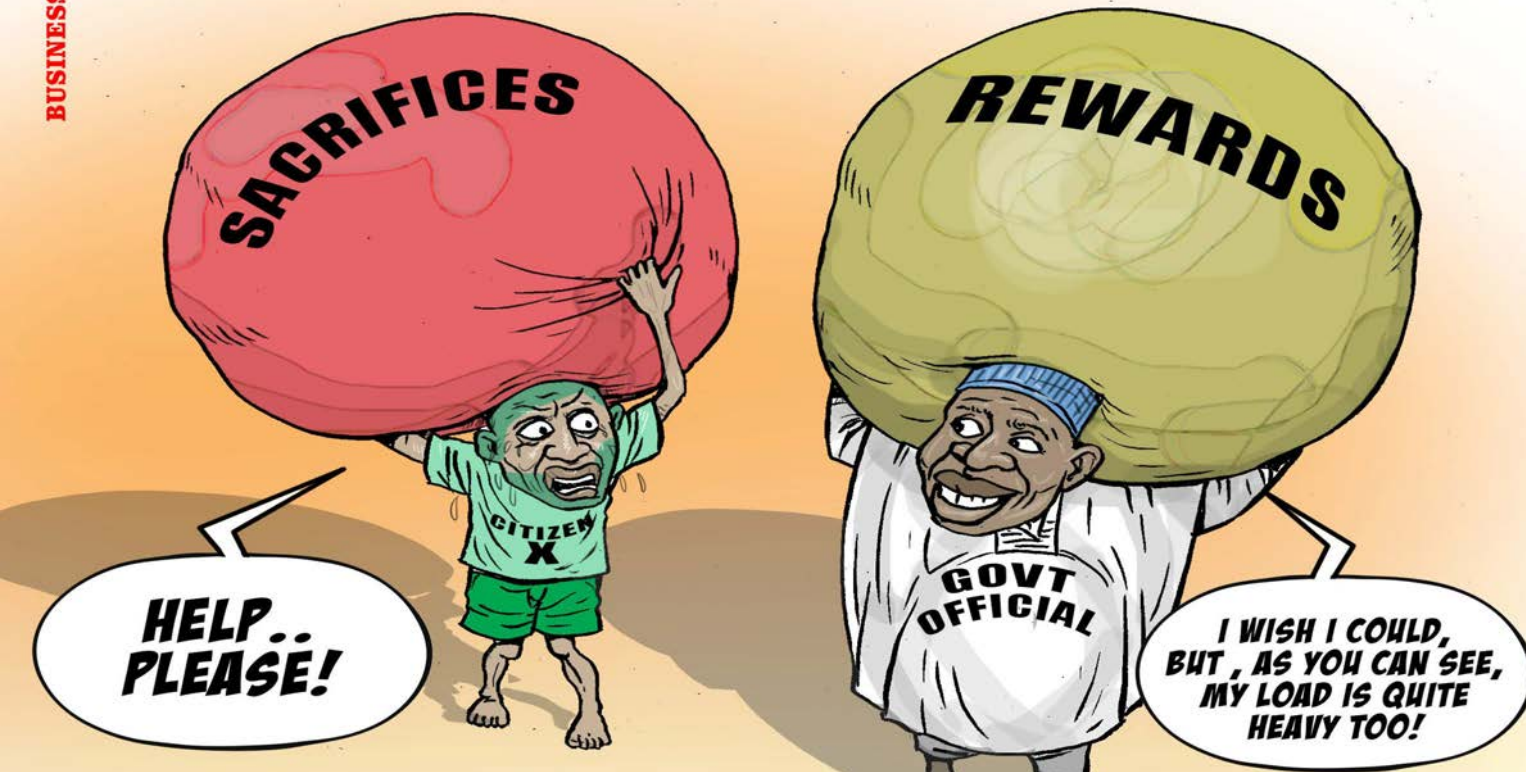
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NIYI AKINMOLAYAN'S HOUSE OF SECRETS:

A journey into trust and life's choices influenced by love

LINDA OCHUGBUA & IFEOMA OKEKE

A sheltered woman's past comes back to haunt her when she's thrown in jail for being an accomplice to her spy lover. Twenty years later, a group rescues her from jail and set up a semblance of her old house to make her remember a secret number her spy lover hid with her.

Set in Nigeria's 1999 military-to-democracy transition days and the present-day democratic landscape of the

country, *The House of Secrets*, a psychological thriller highlights theme of trust, life's choices influenced by love, contrasts in time through the art of flashbacks in dialogue and photography. The past haunts the present within the walls, and lurking secrets come to light. The upcoming movie has been described as a romance drama and film noir, a cinematic term used for movies that are mostly shot in gloomy grey, black, and white.

Directed by Niyi Akinmolayan, in collaboration with Anthill Studios, the movie was released exclusively on Prime Video on June 30, 2023.

Niyi Akinmolayan is also known for movies like Prophetess (2021), The Man for the Job (2022), and Hey You (2022).


The upcoming spy thriller stars Najite Dede, Femi Jacobs, Funlola Aofiyebi-Raimi, Efe Irele, Shawn Faqua, Kate Henshaw, Anee Icha, Emeka Nwagbaraocha, Taye Arimoro, Gbugbemi Ejeje, Moyinoluwa Olutayo, Ekpenyong Bassey Inyang, Ebisan Arayi, Tobi Daniels, Matty Bayelsa and Fiyinfoluwa Asenuga.

Other crew include Oyekanmi Adeniyi – 1st Assistant Director, Tejuola Abrahamson – 2nd Assistant Director, Barnabas Emordi – Director of Photography, Niyi Akinmolayan – Editor, Osemeke Pete – Script Supervisor, Dolapo Adigun/ Niyi Akinmolayan – Screenplay, Ayodele Vinci – Production Assistant, Victoria Akujobi – Producer and Anthill – Executive Producer, Tomi Wale, Creative Consultant.

In an exclusive interview with Niyi Akinmolayan, he took us through journey of The House of Secrets. He explained that as a studio, they're very interested in diverse storytelling, as they want to constantly experiment with genres, find different perspectives to some of the similar issues that he explored in most of the stories that are told.

Akinmolayan however hinted that The House of Secrets is particularly different because it came as a flash of some sort.

"I was in my office doing my regular, going through the internet, looking up stuff and I found a painting by a young artist. This painting had this really interesting visual that looked like there was a couple in a balcony, seen through a window. That's something really striking about that image.



"For a long time, I had casually been doing some research on memory; on things that happened when people lose their memory, how the brain works, and all of that. One of the things that I had read was how the brain has an interesting way of projecting some of your past right in front of you and you would start seeing people that don't actually exist and I started thinking, what if every time someone is staring through that window, what do they see? Is it just a projection of something in their head?"

"The more I thought about it, the more it felt like a fantastic idea to explore. Then I started putting the pieces together. Who are this couple by the window? What is special about them? Who's this person looking through the window? A 50 year old woman? This is a 50 year old woman struggling with something. I also realized from my research that most of the time when we forget something, it's not that the memory isn't there, it's our brain protecting us the way the immune system will try and protect you from viruses, and it locks those parts away but also gives us some keys to unlock them.

"These keys are what medical people call triggers. I started saying, hey, what if there's this memory that is locked somewhere that the body is preventing us from getting?"

"I started thinking about numbers, where else would you hide numbers? I thought about post office codes and it started feeling almost like a spy movie with some sort of secret hidden. I took the idea to different lengths.

"I didn't find a scenario in Nigeria that I am aware of where you have spies' stories. It's really not in popular culture here. The way you have it in America, the British stories about the WWII and all of that. But of course, we have many organizations too, we have the police, so they are definitely spies here too, and it was important to ground it on something that we could connect to.

"Now, I've always been fascinated with the events of 1999 where we switched powers, the entire country was holding its breath that year and everybody kept asking what if something happens weeks after the change to democratic leadership? We all hoped that it worked.



"We all hoped that they were genuinely going to give the power to the democratic government because the greed to take over power was still very, very fresh with some of the military Generals then.

"So that is an idea that stayed for a while, I wanted to find stories around the events before the '99 handover and I just said, okay, fine, let me pull something from these thoughts and put into the story. That's how the idea of the movie came," Akinmolayan explains.

He said he chose the name "House of Secrets" because he thought it was catchy and sexy, but he also wanted a title that already gives people an idea of what the film is about.

According to him, people are already interested in stories about secrets, spy stories, people cheating on people amongst others, and that is probably going to stir people's interest.

"One of the things that we know from film marketing is, if you can get people curious enough with the title, you already have half of the people who hear about it seated in the cinema. We are the only studio in the country that are really doing the Hollywood model for filmmaking: we build a lot of sets ourselves in-house. So we're doing that thing.

"A major percentage of filming are done right there on our sound stages and the rest is done on location. This allows us go deep in production design to own

our stories and the look of it. We knew we wanted a house designed like it's 1999. A major chunk of production design money went to building the house," he stated.

For him, he wants the movie to trigger people to have a conversation, not to end it.

"We don't have black and white characters, it's all good person. There's no bad person, they are just people flowing through life and figuring out their way through it. What we do is we put our characters in situations that helps you as an audience to ask yourself questions."

"What I do, and what this film will be, is ask what memories the audience will remember and will trigger something they don't want to remember," he said.

According to him, there is a subtle reference to the recent Obedient Movement that played around in the film.

He said the film says a lot about what loyalty really means when people follow a populist, how people have done their research to be sure of what is being followed and how easy is it to get people to buy into an idea without even knowing all the detail.

"I like to hear people have discussions when they watch my films. I want them to argue, I want them to defend a character. I want them to fight the characters





but I want them to see this characters as people that can actually exist," he added.

Speaking on what informed his casts and crew, he said usually casting is a tricky thing because there's always the idea of what is the right person for the film, and sometimes this is to a business decision- 'who is the person that will get more eyes to want to see the film?'

Finding that balance is really delicate, there were things I wanted to do with some of the actors who auditioned that I knew would push them, Akinmolayan said.

He said top on his list is finding actors that were going to be really dedicated to the work, people who cared about their crafts enough to put in that amount of work.

"The second thing is because of the movie idea, you don't want to work with actors who also do not understand what you're trying to. There has to be a level of intelligence required to execute at this level and for this film.

"We also want to work with our friends, we want to work with people that we like working with. People that will take work pressures for what it is and nothing personal, every filmmaker wants to at least have those people because it's easier," Akinmolayan said.

According to him, Najite is a fantastic actress (and a director as well) who understood all the nuances and the subtle messages and even the subjects that the film was pushing, so it was very easy to get around.

"Shawn is a fantastic guy, I have seen him audition once so when he came for this audition, he was the guy! Efe has worked with us before so we know what she can pull off. There are certain things you want people to do as a couple in a film, you need to be sure that they are comfortable and professional enough to do it."

He described Kate Henshaw as a veteran, adding that she particularly understands these kind of films in a way a lot of actors don't.

He however noted that it was interesting because she had been called for a different character and while script reading was being done, she was reading for the character she eventually played.

"She got into the calabar woman role easily, she was enjoying it and it hit me — just look at that! This role is yours!

"Funlola Aofiyebi-Raimi of course, fantastic actress from Tinsel, wanted to work with her. It didn't really take much convincing to get her.

"Another person that I was really excited working with is Femi Jacobs, he turned out to be one of my favorites in the film. The first day he was on set and he opened his mouth to talk, we felt like we hit the jackpot!," he said.





LAGOS CONTINENTAL HOTEL: TAKING THE LEAD AS LUXURY BUSINESS HOTEL, WORLD CHEFS CHAMPION

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



A 5 star hotel provides luxurious experience and high-end accommodations. 5 star hotels are known to be some of the most glamorous hospitality locations in the world due to the level of service they provide.

Some of the services guests may find at a 5 star hotel include a personal butler, doorman, designated concierge, around-the-clock room service, valet parking, spas with trained masseuses, gyms with personal trainers, live entertainment, and even child care.

However beyond these, not all of these hotels are deliberate in decisions to always include touch of luxury in almost every section of the facility especially its aesthetics.

Also is the deliberate selection of best chefs globally that would satisfy the culinary delight of the diverse guests that visit the hotel.

For 5-star hotel, what visitors often watch out for are the aesthetics showing evidently some touch of luxury.

Lagos Continental Hotel is taking the lead in this regard as the hotel recently announced its recent double win at the prestigious Hotel Managers Awards and World Chefs Championship 2023 Award.

Lagos Continental has been recognized as the Best Luxury Business Hotel in Nigeria at the 2023 Hotel

Managers Awards, a globally recognized accolade that celebrates and acknowledges excellence in hospitality.

The Hotel Managers Awards attract top-class hotels globally, making the competition fierce.

Lagos Continental distinguished itself among its competitors with its service, luxurious ambiance, state-of-the-art conference facilities and executive lounges, and high-speed internet access for travelers.

In addition, Chef Chua Kong Ngiap, master chef at Soho Restaurant, the signature Chinese restaurant of

Lagos Continental, was awarded the prestigious World Chefs Championship 2023 Award.

Chef Chua Kong Ngiap's dedication, culinary skill, and passion for Chinese cuisine earned him international acknowledgment.

The World Chefs Championship Award is considered the most esteemed honor in the culinary world.

The dual award is a testament to Lagos Continental's reputation for excellence in the Nigerian hospitality sector and its dedication to providing top-notch facilities and services to its guests.

Lagos Continental continues to set the standard for luxury hospitality in Nigeria.

Speaking about the awards, Karl Hala, General Manager of Lagos Continental expressed his gratitude, stating, "We are delighted to be recognized as the Best Luxury Business Hotel in Nigeria at the Hotel Managers Awards, and we are immensely proud of Chef Chua for winning the World Chefs Championship 2023 Award. These prestigious accolades are a testament to the hard work, talent, and commitment of the entire Lagos Continental team."

Lagos Continental says it remains committed to providing the best facilities and services to its guests, setting a benchmark for luxury hospitality in Nigeria.

PARKINSON'S DISEASE IS NO LONGER 'JUST AN OLD MAN'S DISEASE', SAYS PATIENTS ...AS THREE YOUNG DIAGNOSED WOMEN SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

"My symptoms started when I was 29 and I remember it took me almost six years to get a diagnosis even though I lived in the US at the time, and had access to health care, medical insurance, etc, said Omotola Thomas, chair, board of trustees, Parkinson's Africa.

"The last doctor who I saw in South Africa said my symptoms were as though I have Parkinson's symptoms, but we generally don't see this illness in your demographic. You're a young black female, and usually we see Parkinson's, older white male, so I think that was part of why it quite a long time for me to get diagnosed at the age of 35."

Thomas shared her experience to create the awareness that Parkinson's disease is no longer limited to old age. "I want you to also know that there are four young Nigerian women with Parkinson's and we're here to dispel the myths and the misconception that Parkinson's disease is an old white man disease," she said.

"For my coping mechanism, I listen to inspirational audio. Also, the most important thing for me, in terms of my coping mechanism is doing precisely what I'm doing now, which is trying to give back trying to give back to the community, trying to help people because in doing that, I am able to take my focus away from the

challenges, that is Parkinson's disease, and channel that into helping other people," she said

Rachel Agwu, Operations Coordinator, Parkisons' Africa first noticed her symptoms when she was 24 years old and in her final year. She was called so many names. She got diagnosed at 33 years old. "So how do I cope, I take it one day at a time. It all starts from the mind, if you can say you can do it, you can but if you tell yourself you can't, there's nothing you can do," Agwu said.

Empress Priscillia Omoijade, business woman, a 40 years old single mom, shared her symptoms started when she was 38. She went to several hospitals, they never saw it as Parkinson's till she was diagnosed a year, after when she was 39.

"I felt really ashamed among people; sometimes when I go to public place, they will tell me I'm too slow, why am I shaking like an old person; and I felt discouraged until I met Mrs. Omotola and Rachel and I joined ADPF," she said. "I became relieved and now I'm proud to say I have a family, nobody is shaming me anymore and I am no longer ashamed.. How do I encourage myself, I see myself as a goal-getter. I'm not the cause of this, life happened to me; so I take it one day at a time. Anywhere, you see a Parkisons' patient, embrace them and do the little you can for them."

Parkinson's disease, first described by Dr. James Parkinson in 1817, is a chronic brain disorder that gradually worsens over time. The disease mainly affects the part of the brain responsible for controlling movement, but it can also impact other important functions like learning, behavior, sleep, and memory. In Africa, Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurological disorder and is expected to increase in the coming years.

One way to help people with Parkinson's is to raise awareness of the disease. This is what the S.E.E. Parkinson's campaign is doing. The campaign provides educational resources, including a booklet, to help people learn about Parkinson's and how to cope with it.

Another way to help people with Parkinson's is to support events that raise awareness of the disease. The Walking Football Parkinson's Cup is a great example of such an event. It was organised by Parkinson's Africa and Adewunmi Desalu Parkinson's Foundation (ADPF), sponsored by Vitol Foundation and supported by Waka Football Nigeria. The tournament was created to raise awareness about Parkinson's disease, highlight the challenges of living with the disease and display medication, exercise and nutrition as effective tools for pushing back its symptoms.

Speaking on the pitch, Tania Park, executive director, Parkinson's Africa, with background in sport – football; using it as a development tool to help vulnerable people– said "I wanted to find a way to find a safe exercise for people with Parkinson's to keep healthy in the simplest possible way, but also use it to bridge the gap and use it as an educational and awareness tool."

"This is why we've partnered up with Adeumi Desalu Parkinson's Foundation. And thanks to Vitol Foundation, we've been able to really make this a reality where we've developed a program which uses walking football to of raise awareness and education. If you give people book, they may or may not read it, especially in difficult circumstances, but if you show someone a visual representation of for Parkinson's diseases, they will remember it," she said.

Chibuzor Ifeanyi, Vitol Representative in Nigeria, said "We chose to sponsor this awareness because it is a worthy cause and that's why we identified with it. We chose to pull our full weight behind it and from what we can see, we're very happy it's been a success. And I think we are rewarded by the outcome and we encourage other corporates organizations to follow suit."

Furthermore, Omorinsojo Desalu, Chair, board of trustees, ADPF, shared her experience on what it feels like working and with persons diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

"We started the Parkinson's foundation to celebrate the life of my husband, who lived with Parkinson's between nine and 10 years and has since passed," she said. "We decided that journey was not in vain and it was important the family shares what we went through, what he went through and then use that to encourage people living with Parkinson's in Nigeria, and with Parkinson's Africa, be able to share that story in Africa as well."





“Our foundation is one year old; this foundation opened on April 19 last year and we thank God that we’ve been able to impact the lives of people living with Parkinson’s to this point. It was challenging but emotionally rewarding for me because we’ve seen changes. We have people who couldn’t walk when they started coming to the center, who now work. We can see that we’re doing something and as we say, the journey of 1000 miles begins with one step and we’re glad we took that one step.

“As we become an aging population, and there are more and more older people in Nigeria, we will begin to see more and more of Parkinson’s disease in our community. We’re counting on the support of everybody and anybody listening to help us to ask us what they can do and join us. It doesn’t have to be money; it could be your time, it could be just helping one person is more than enough.”

“This is the fastest growing neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer’s and we need to be alert, we need to be awake, the public health system needs to sit up because we are going to grow old and some of us will not be as well, according to Aderemi Desalu, chair, advisory board, ADPF.

“Parkinson’s Disease is a very new disease, not new in its reality but new its awareness, people are not aware of it. It is very similar in his trajectory to HIV, where we started not knowing about it, even though it was with us.

“The issue of Parkinson’s as a very serious one in the sense that it is with us, but people are not aware of it; And people are putting it under so many other headings when it should in the right heading and headings range from supernatural headings to misdiagnosis headings. What we want to really achieve is a situation where; one, we are all aware of it, we recognise it and we can deal with it early. Three, that there are indeed places that can give relief, that may give support that can help people with Parkinson’s,” Aderemi said.

Similarly, he said “Exercise is probably one of the most important thing a parkinsons can do. Any exercise that gets you moving, gets your heart rates up is is good exercise, so there is Walking, cycling, swimming, boxing, dancing; anything that gets your joints, your arms, your legs, your body moving and your heart rate up is good exercise and you know some people with Parkinson’s have mobility issues; they can’t walk properly. Chairbased exercises are good for them.”

INTERVIEW WITH **ADEOLA ADELE**

**From the runway
to empowerment:
Adeola Adele's
timeless fashion
vision explored**

ANTHONY UDUGBA

Renowned Nigerian fashion designer Adeola Adele, the visionary founder of '29byAdelé,' is making waves in the fashion industry with her latest collection of women's suits, dresses, and blazers.

Following a showcase at the exclusive ATFH ECFW S23 in Manhattan New York, Adele's creations have garnered attention for their ability to provide timeless tailored essentials that not only accentuate individual body types but also empower individuals to embrace their unique personal style. With a commitment to inclusivity and self-expression, Adele's designs are redefining the fashion landscape and leaving a lasting impact on those who wear them. In an exclusive interview with BusinessDay media's Anthony Udugba, we delve deeper into the world of fashion and creativity through the lens of the renowned Nigerian fashion designer, Adeola Adele. The interview unravels the inspirations, motivations, and aspirations that drive Adele's visionary work.

It also explores the intersection of fashion, empowerment, and personal style, shedding light on the transformative power of Adele's designs and the impact they are making on the global fashion stage.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A FASHION DESIGNER, AND HOW DID YOU GET YOUR START IN THE INDUSTRY?

Inspired by a personal journey, the creation of 29ByAdelé was born out of a desire for the perfect fit and a passion for fashion. As a young girl with a creative spirit, I have always wanted to be more than a regular girl who could whip up a nice piece and bask in the euphoria of incoming compliments. Being smaller in size, finding clothes that truly embraced my body type was a challenge for me. Determined to overcome this hurdle, I delved into the world of fashion, creating pieces that celebrated my own unique style.

To my delight, whenever I wore my own creations, others were captivated by the designs and eager to have one for themselves so I got into the industry by making Abayas/ kimonos via Adelé collection & after a while, changed to 29ByAdelé, with a vision to provide timeless and impeccably tailored essentials that empower individuals to embrace their own bodies and personal style. Today, 29ByAdelé stands as a testament to my passion, craftsmanship, and commitment to delivering fashion that makes everyone feel beautiful and confident.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR DESIGN AESTHETIC, AND WHAT SETS YOUR WORK APART FROM OTHER DESIGNERS IN NIGERIA?

My design aesthetic is a blend of modern simplicity and timeless elegance. It embraces clean lines, minimalism, and a focus on functionality. I strive for a balance between form and function, creating designs that are visually appealing while remaining practical and user-friendly. The mix of color palettes, subtle textures, and thoughtful attention to detail are key elements of my design style. Ultimately, I aim to create designs that are both visually pleasing and purposeful, bringing beauty and usability together.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE YOUR CREATIVE VISION WITH THE NEED TO MAKE A PROFIT, AND WHAT STRATEGIES HAVE YOU USED TO SUCCESSFULLY MONETIZE YOUR DESIGNS?

This is a tough one for me, still learning but I try my best to understand the audience needs, offer a range of products to cater to different customer segments at different price points while prioritizing quality and craftsmanship and importantly staying true to my artistic integrity.



IN THE DRAMA SURROUNDING FUEL SUBSIDY AND RISE IN COST OF LIVING IN NIGERIA, CAN YOU SPEAK TO THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FACING FASHION DESIGNERS IN NIGERIA, AND HOW HAVE YOU NAVIGATED THESE CHALLENGES IN YOUR OWN CAREER?

Well, fuel subsidy has led to inflation in the price of fuel which in turn has put an upward pressure on production costs generally also affecting some consumer purchasing power. With supply chain and logistics, there are so many delays in delivery/pick-up times which can lead to customer dissatisfaction but I have been able to embrace few sustainable practices and it has helped mitigate cost increases. I am constantly trying to reach a wider audience as well as do more collaboration to strengthen our presence in the market.

WHAT PRICING STRATEGIES DO YOU USE FOR YOUR DESIGNS, AND HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHAT TO CHARGE FOR EACH PIECE?

Pricing is a common challenge many new businesses have. I struggled with that when I started. Let your products speak for itself, if you genuinely believe your prices represent value then you should design your branding, communication & marketing to show value. When it comes to pricing strategies for my designs, I consider various factors such as the complexity of the design, the time and effort involved, the market demand, and the value I believe my design brings to my clients. I aim to strike a balance between fair compensation for my creative work and providing a competitive pricing structure.

For fashion pieces, determining what to charge involves considering factors such as cost of materials, production expenses, labor, and overhead costs. Additionally, market research plays a crucial role in understanding the pricing dynamics within the fashion industry. It's important to consider the perceived value of the fashion piece, its uniqueness, the brand's reputation, and the target market's willingness to pay. You can't watch the level of craftsmanship that goes into making a piece and then question the price. My designs are staple pieces that never go out of style, they are an investment

CAN YOU GIVE US AN IDEA OF WHAT THE AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME IS FOR A FASHION DESIGNER IN NIGERIA, AND WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO VARIATIONS IN INCOME WITHIN THE INDUSTRY?

This can vary widely depending on several factors such as experience, skill level, client base, location, brand reputation, and market demand. Income ranges can also vary significantly within the industry and these are just my estimates; at entry level, a designer can earn between N50,000 - N150,000, at mid level, a designer can earn between N150,000 - N500,000 and at an experienced level, I estimate N500,000 upwards.

HOW DO YOU MARKET YOUR DESIGNS TO REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE, AND WHAT ROLE HAS TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYED IN YOUR SUCCESS?

I consistently establish an online presence by Leveraging social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and TikTok. Regularly share high-quality images and engaging content that highlights my designs and behind-the-scenes glimpses. I engage with my audience through comments and direct messages and importantly something I am keen on doing more often; build a community with email marketing.

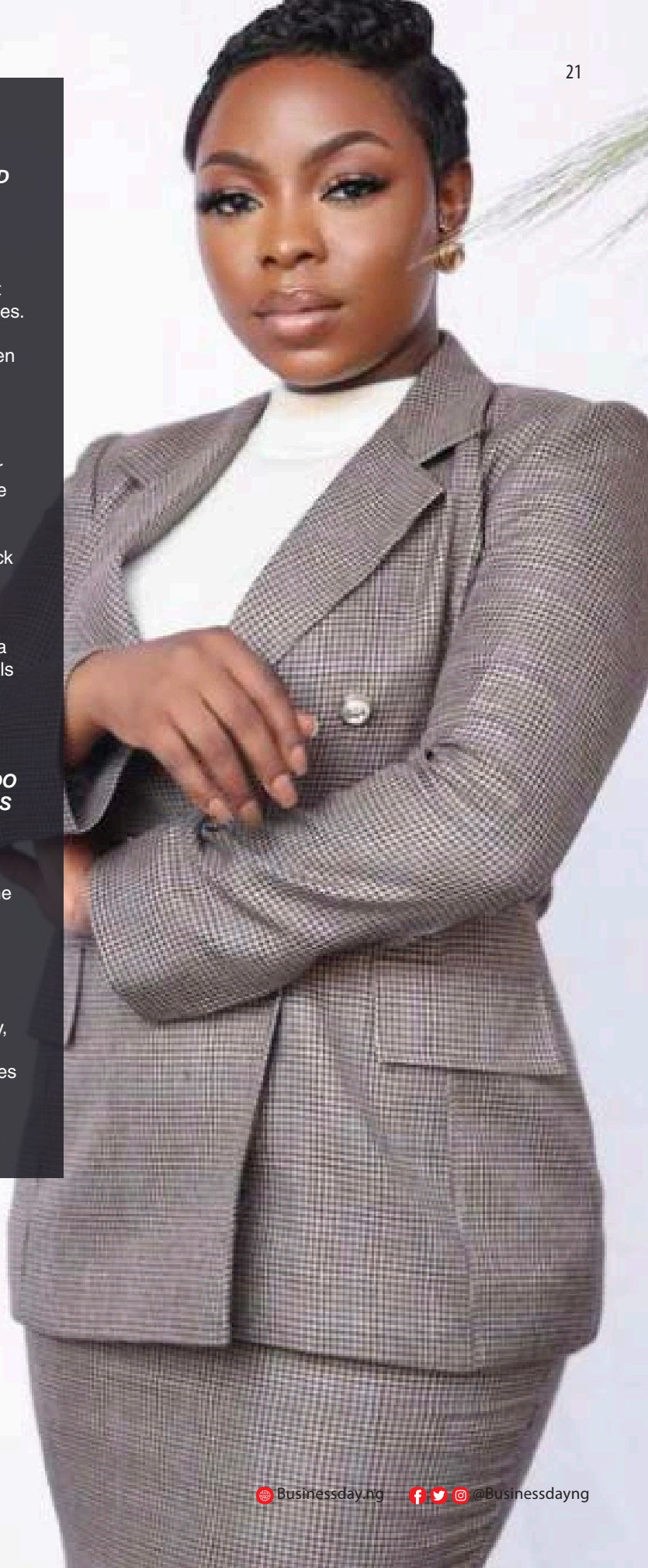
I strongly believe collaboration is a powerful tool to business growth, long-term success and growing our network. Recently I collaborated with a fashion house to showcase my designs, access new markets and gain exposure at the East Coast Fashion week, New York where I received overwhelming positive feedback from audiences & fashion enthusiasts.

Technology has made it easier for me to showcase your designs to a global audience, while social media platforms have provided accessible and powerful tools to engage with potential customers, create brand loyalty, and drive sales.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ASPIRING FASHION DESIGNERS IN NIGERIA, AND WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE KEYS TO SUCCESS IN THIS INDUSTRY?

Build something that is scalable, that can work even if you are on holiday. Plan your finances well, save enough money and make sure you are debt free – the last part is very IMPORTANT!

Success in the fashion industry is a combination of talent, hard work, creativity, business acumen, and a deep understanding of your target market. By nurturing your skills, building a strong brand, fostering relationships, utilizing technology effectively, and consistently delivering high-quality designs and customer experiences, you can increase your chances of succeeding as a fashion designer in Nigeria.



Introducing The Omniverse: Nigeria's Premier Tech and Innovation Ecosystem Platform

The Omniverse is thrilled to announce its official launch from Nigeria as the premier ecosystem platform for tech, innovation and connected industries on the continent, with a vision to empower and revolutionize the continental landscape. The Omniverse aims to build collaboration, connections, community, and content that enables the entire ecosystem to scale investments and share knowledge for positive, lasting impact. The Omniverse is co-founded by Innovation Support Network (ISN Hubs), with support from GIZ/Digital Transformation Center Nigeria (GIZ/DTC Nigeria). We will make further announcements about our community partners in the coming weeks.

The Omniverse will serve as a hub for diverse stakeholders from various sectors, including development partners, public sector entities, regulatory agencies, academia, the startup community, finance and investment professionals, media, entertainment, arts, culture and the creative industries and more. By connecting these stakeholders, The Omniverse will catalyze cross-industry collaboration, shaping a thriving ecosystem that will contribute to driving growth and transformation in Nigeria and Africa.

The Omniverse is excited to announce its flagship event, the Annual Omniverse Summit and Expo, set to take place November 12-16, 2023 in Lagos. This week-long event will bring together global, continental, and local thought leaders, innovators, and influencers in the tech and innovation and connected industries. Participants can expect an immersive experience featuring exhibitions, influencer and expert masterclasses, a gaming league, entertainment programming, insightful conversations, thought-provoking panels, and engaging fireside chats centered around the transformative power of technology.

One of the highlights of The Omniverse's Annual Summit and Expo will be the prestigious Honours Gala, where ecosystem champions, leaders, trailblazers, and future leaders will be recognized for their exceptional contributions. This gala event will celebrate individuals and organizations driving positive change and pushing the boundaries of innovation within the tech and innovation ecosystem in Nigeria and Africa.

"We are incredibly excited to launch The Omniverse and provide a platform where connected industries and cross stakeholders can collaborate, learn, and thrive together," said Obi Asika, Convener of The Omniverse. "Our Annual Summit and Expo will be a landmark event, bringing together the best minds and talents to explore the vast potential of technology and its impact on society. We look forward to creating meaningful connections, sparking innovation, and honoring the visionaries who are shaping Africa's connected future."



"Through the power of cross-sector collaboration, connecting minds and industries, the Omniverse unites a diverse range of stakeholders, in driving transformative growth for Africa. As co-founders of this thriving ecosystem, Innovation Support Network (ISN) is proud to lead the way towards a brighter future." said Charles Emembolu, Director, ISN "Together, we will shape a vibrant ecosystem that propels us towards a prosperous, more inclusive future."

The Omniverse invites the innovation & tech community, development partners, entrepreneurs, investors, students and all stakeholders passionate about driving the tech and innovation ecosystem forward to join their platform and be part of this transformative journey. By becoming members individuals and organizations will gain access to an extensive network, valuable resources, and exciting opportunities to collaborate, learn, and make a difference. Click here to become a member!

For more information about The Omniverse and its upcoming Annual Summit and Expo, please visit www.youomniverse.org or email info@youomniverse.org.



About The Omniverse:

The Omniverse is a global facing Tech, Innovation & Connected Industries ecosystem platform launching from Nigeria with Africa as its primary community. In collaboration with ISN Hubs, and GIZ/DTC Nigeria. The Omniverse brings together stakeholders from various sectors to foster collaboration, connections, community, and content that enable the entire ecosystem to thrive. By providing access to a vibrant network, resources, and opportunities, The Omniverse empowers individuals and organizations to scale investments, share knowledge and scale opportunities for the positive benefits of the entire ecosystem.

The Digital Transformation Center Nigeria (DTC Nigeria) is jointly-funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union (EU) and implemented by *Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*. The project focuses primarily on digital transformation, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Innovation Support Network (ISN) is Nigeria's network of 150+ innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship Hubs across the country. It is the largest organized national group of Innovators in Africa. ISN promotes partnership, Demo Days and Meet the Funders Sessions whilst fostering policy advocacy, capacity building; creating linkages between corporates, academia, funders and development partners, as well as promoting structures that foster innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainability.

June 25, 2023 - Lagos, Nigeria



www.youomniverse.org



@youomniverse



Keeping in Touch:

The key to maintaining connections

Recently, I had a conversation with one of my besties, and we were discussing our strengths while identifying areas where we differ as individuals. Interestingly, she mentioned that I excel at making friends because I have a knack for deep connections and engaging conversations. In response, I pointed out that I am better at maintaining friendships because I actively “keep in touch.” It’s not surprising that over the years, I have developed lifelong friendships, formed partnerships, and even built communities simply by reaching out and saying, “Hello, just checking in on you.”

Keeping in touch is an often overlooked skill when it comes to building relationships, whether they are personal or professional. In fact, it serves as the foundation for successful partnership development and management strategies. If we were to use more formal terminology, we could refer to “keeping in touch” as stakeholder or partner engagement, but why complicate matters unnecessarily?

When discussing partner engagement, we define it as the process of organizing, monitoring and improving relationships with partners. It involves identifying partners, understanding their needs and expectations, and planning and implementing various activities to engage with them. However, the problem arises when we become too formal, only reaching out when we have a specific need and losing sight of the importance of building connections and ensuring our partners feel valued.

Why should we keep in touch?

The most obvious reason to maintain regular contact with your network is that it enhances partnership engagement. However, there are several additional reasons why keeping in touch is important:

Regular communication fosters trust and rapport between partners. By staying in touch, we demonstrate our commitment and dedication to the partnership, showing that we value and prioritise it.

Effective partnerships rely on seamless collaboration, and keeping in touch facilitates this process. Regular communication allows partners to share ideas, align their goals, and address any concerns or conflicts that may arise.

When partners keep in touch, they can identify potential issues before they become major problems and find mutually beneficial solutions, ensuring the partnership remains resilient and successful.

Opportunities often arise unexpectedly, and staying in touch with partners increases the chances of capitalising on them. Regular communication keeps everyone informed and creates a culture of shared growth and exploration.

Partnerships thrive on emotional connections, and keeping in touch plays a significant role in nurturing these connections. Celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, acknowledging achievements, or simply checking in on a personal level demonstrates care and empathy.

A practical guide to keeping in touch:

While many of us understand the importance and benefits of staying in touch with our network, knowing how to do it effectively can be a challenge. Finding the right balance between maintaining contact and not being overly intrusive is key. Depending on the context, it can be a fine line to walk, but it's not as difficult as it may seem. Here are some practical tips for keeping your partner network warm:

INTERACT WITH THEM ONLINE— Are you following your partner organisations on all available platforms? If not, do so now! Ensure you follow your partner organisations on all available platforms. This keeps you informed about any updates or information that can serve as a prompt to reach out to them. Personally, I find setting up Google alerts for some partners helpful in staying up to date.

SET REMINDERS: For the people in your network with whom you aren't able to engage online through social media posts, set calendar reminders every three to six months to send them a quick note. It can be as simple as saying hello!

UTILISE SPECIAL OCCASIONS: Birthdays, anniversaries, events, and holidays provide great opportunities to drop your partners a note. This approach is particularly effective because you have a legitimate reason to reach out to them without asking for anything in return. Personalise your communication. Tailor your communication to each individual partner. Recognise their preferences and communication styles, and adapt your approach accordingly. A personalised touch enhances the quality of interaction and strengthens relationships.

PLAN FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS. While most communication has shifted to virtual platforms due to the pandemic, face-to-face meetings have not lost their appeal. Planning occasional in-person meetings provides an opportunity for deeper engagement and can solidify trust and rapport.

PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING: Effective communication involves actively listening to your partners. During meetings, take note of ways you can assist them, even if it's as simple as providing information they may be seeking or introducing them to someone outside their network who can help them achieve their goals.

Truthfully, keeping in touch can sometimes feel awkward, especially if it doesn't come naturally to you. However, it remains imperative to do so. Yes, sending a "hello" message out of the blue (in addition to your group emails) may seem strange at first, but consider how much that simple message could catalyse further collaboration. If the cost is a little awkward embarrassment every six months or so, then I believe it's well worth it.



Sheila Ojei

is an impact communications strategist specialising in stakeholder management and private-public partnerships.



News Release

Sahil Raina, Public Engagement, World Economic Forum, public.affairs@weforum.org

NEW REPORT FINDS GLOBAL SHOCKS AFFECT ENERGY TRANSITION PROGRESS, WITH SUSTAINABILITY ADVANCING, WHILE EQUITY SUFFERS

□ Major emerging economies with high future energy demand including China, India, Brazil and Indonesia, have made significant improvements on the energy transition, according to the report, *Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2023*

□ As many countries shift their focus to energy security at the expense of equity, a much speedier and more inclusive transition is still required to deliver a sustainable, secure and equitable energy future

□ Sweden tops the Energy Transition Index, followed by Denmark, Norway, Finland and Switzerland

□ The U.S., Germany and the Republic of Korea are among the G20 countries that have made strong progress on the energy transition, despite the global energy crisis.

□ Read the full report □ here.

Geneva, Switzerland, 28 June 2023 – After a decade of progress, the global energy transition has plateaued amid the global energy crisis and geopolitical volatilities, according to a new World Economic Forum report, *Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2023*. The report suggests that while there has been broad progress on clean, sustainable energy, there are emerging challenges to the equity of the transition – just, affordable access to energy and sustained economic development – due to countries shifting their focus to energy security.

The 13th edition of the report, published in collaboration with Accenture, draws on insights from the Energy Transition Index (ETI). This year, the ETI used an updated framework reflecting emerging shifts in the global energy landscape to benchmark 120 countries in two areas: the performance of their energy systems in the dimensions of equity, energy security and environmental sustainability; and the readiness

of the enabling environment for energy transition. This edition also evaluated countries' "transition momentum" for the first time to highlight the urgency of consistent progress on timely and effective transition.

Enabled by increasing volumes of clean energy investments, improving regulatory frameworks, technological innovations and urgency to address the climate crisis, some long-term trends of global energy transition are positive. Over the past decade, 95% of countries have improved their total ETI score, with improvements more pronounced for countries that consume a large amount of energy, including China, India, Republic of Korea and Indonesia.

Broadly speaking, however, ETI scores have plateaued in the past three years. This speed of transition is not sufficient to meet the Paris Agreement targets in an inclusive and secure way. The geopolitical and macroeconomic volatilities that prompted the recent global energy crisis shifted countries' focus to maintaining secure and stable energy supply at the expense of universal affordability and challenge progress observed in the past decade.

Indeed, ETI scores declined for approximately 50% of the countries in the past year, which disproportionately impacted vulnerable consumers, small businesses and developing economies. Moreover, the growth rate of energy access has slowed and, at the current pace, the UN's Sustainable Development Goal of affordable, reliable and sustainable energy access for all by 2030 will likely be missed.

"The recent turbulence in energy markets has exposed how interconnected energy prices are with macroeconomic and social stability. This can, and has, put developing countries at risk of losing their momentum gained before the energy crisis on access

to affordable, sustainable energy,” said Roberto Bocca, Head of Energy, Materials and Infrastructure, World Economic Forum. “It further demonstrates the importance of balancing improvements in energy security, sustainability and equity – at the same time – to enable an effective energy transition.”

When it comes to progress on energy transition, the gap between advanced economies and emerging and developing countries in Asia, Central and Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa has gradually narrowed over the past decade. As advanced economies and large emerging economies such as China and India push the boundaries of energy transition, propelled by ambitious industrial policy packages, progress in clean electrification, technology-intensive solutions for the decarbonization of heavy industries and advanced nuclear, there is a risk of that gap widening again. Multilateral collaboration is more important than ever to ensure an equitable, inclusive energy transition across the world, in which emerging economies are active participants rather than late entrants.

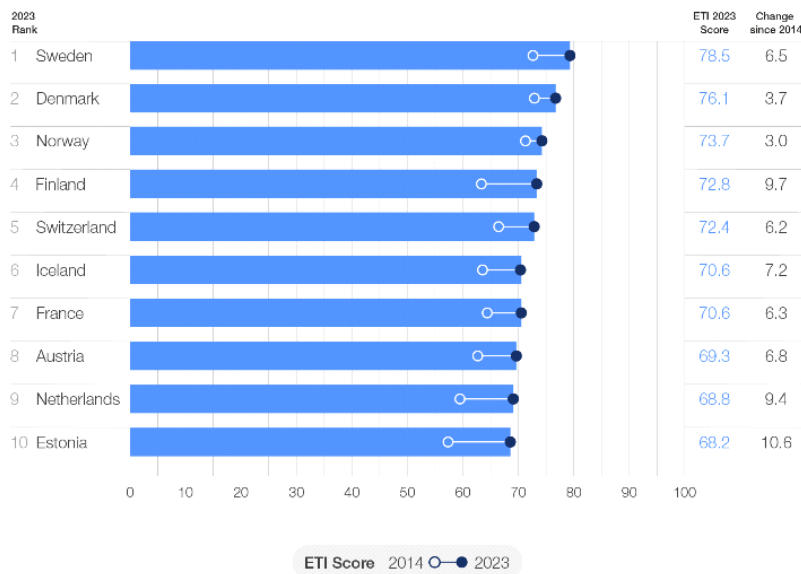
“Over the past decade, significant strides have been made but not at the pace required to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050,” said Stephanie Jamison, Senior Managing Director and Global Resources Industry Practice lead, Accenture. “The focus must shift to helping more populous, developing nations make faster progress, which, while committed to decarbonization, lack the financial and technological capability to fully develop their renewable energy resources. Through greater collaboration and support we can enable a more equitable and sustainable future.”

Muqsit Ashraf, Senior Managing Director and Global Strategy Lead, Accenture, added: “The window of opportunity for reaching net-zero targets is closing and countries must move urgently to cleaner energy systems. Leveraging technology – both physical and digital, including data and AI – will be essential. By pushing the boundaries of disruptive technologies, like generative AI, countries and companies can realize what was previously thought impossible and simultaneously bolster not just sustainability but also better enable energy security and affordability.”

Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2023 Edition



Energy Transition Index 2023: Top 10 countries



Note: The Energy Transition Index benchmarks countries on the performance of their energy system, as well as their readiness for transition to an equitable, secure and sustainable future energy system. ETI 2023 scores on a scale of 0-100.

Source: World Economic Forum, Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2023. Read more at wef.ch/energy23

Sweden (1), Denmark (2) and Norway (3) lead the ETI 2023 rankings and have been the top three countries each year for the past decade. Despite their diverse energy system structures, they share common attributes, such as high levels of political commitment and stable regulatory frameworks, investments in research and development, increased renewable energy deployment and carbon pricing schemes to incentivize investments in low-carbon solutions.

France (7) is the only G20 country in the top 10, followed closely by Germany (11), the US (12), and the UK (13). Strong performance by the world's largest economies, supported by the rapid development of renewable energy infrastructure and rising levels of investments in clean energy, is a signal of progress on the energy transition. Exposure to gas price volatilities is a risk factor to the inclusiveness of the energy transition, as demonstrated by the recent energy crisis and its fiscal and monetary implications, especially for European countries.

Brazil (14) and China (17) are the major emerging economies to appear in the top 20. Due to abundant hydroelectricity capacity and leadership in biofuels, Brazil scored high on energy security and environmental sustainability, accounting for 7% of renewable energy production worldwide. China leads on renewable energy investments and capacity development, supported by mature domestic supply chains, and in the incubation of industries such as electric vehicles and energy storage.

The long-term goals of the energy transition require sustained momentum in the wake of the current near-term volatilities. India (67) and Singapore (70) are the only major economies showing true momentum by advancing sustainability, energy security and equity in a balanced way. For example, despite continued economic growth, India has successfully reduced the energy intensity of its economy and the carbon intensity of its energy mix, while achieving universal energy access and effectively managing affordability of electricity.

Looking at each facet of energy system performance, fuel-exporting nations – Oman (90), Canada (19), Saudi Arabia (57) and Qatar (59) – scored among the highest in equity and inclusiveness, providing affordable energy for households and industries and leveraging the energy sector to empower economic growth. Notably, the US, Sweden, and Israel (28) also score high on this dimension, largely due to cost-reflective energy prices and leadership on trade in low-carbon technology products.

Advanced economies – the US, Australia (24) and Estonia (10) – scored highest in energy security, measuring the resilience and reliability of supply. A

highly diversified energy mix, low dependence on fuel imports and limited interruptions in energy supply were contributing factors. Notably, they were closely followed by an emerging economy, Malaysia (35).

The report revealed that many countries – amounting to over 90% of global emissions – are prioritizing sustainability, focusing on policies and programmes that promote energy conservation, renewable technologies and innovation in energy storage and grid modernization. Latin America led the way, with low levels of carbon intensity in energy supply, low per capita emissions and a high share of clean energy in final demand. Paraguay (34), Costa Rica (25) and Uruguay (23) in particular reaped the advantages of their abundant hydroelectric potential.

“The response to the global energy crisis has opened new opportunities for countries to reduce the energy intensity of their economic growth and increase the resilience of energy systems,” said Espen Mehlum, Head of Energy Transition intelligence and Regional Acceleration, World Economic Forum. “Together with the continued pressure to transform energy systems to respond to the urgent need to address climate change, it provides strong foundations to further accelerate the global energy transition.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

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What Colour Says About Your Brand

FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA

Colour is a critical influence on how we perceive the world. If you're starting a business or rebranding an existing business, and thinking about your brand identity, you should understand how colour impacts consumer behaviour.

How you use colour will be an essential part of your brand strategy, and how you use it in your business can significantly affect how effectively you convert visitors into sales.

Your colour preferences reveal a lot about you. Colour has a strong and often subconscious effect on behaviour. Colour is often used to persuade or influence us. According to a study examining the effect of colour on sales, 92.6% of people surveyed by the Institute for Colour Research said colour was the most important factor when purchasing products. Another study showed that people subconsciously judge a person, environment, or thing within 90 seconds. In 62% - 90% of examples, that judgment was influenced by colour alone.

Colour: truly in the eye of the beholder
The effects of colour on each person can be highly subjective and deeply personal. We can thank Isaac Newton for discovering that colour is the sensation of light bouncing off something and entering our eyes. Newton found that light comprises many different wavelengths, each perceived as a different colour. We have millions of light-sensitive cells, or receptors, at the back of our eyes. Science considers these receptors as an extension of the brain, and for a good reason. Specific receptors are stimulated by the light coming into our eyes, sending impulses to our brain. The brain takes those signals and interprets them as colour. Because the brain interprets the colour, that means that colour is, by nature, a sensation.

THE QUALITIES OF COLOUR

While our perception of colours and what they mean is subjective, there are some essential qualities that we can apply generally. Here are some of those qualities:
Red - Often considered exciting, attention-grabbing, warm, and connected to love, anger, life, and comfort.
Yellow - Seen as adventurous, evoking happiness, enthusiasm, youth, and travel.

GREEN - It is known for its connection to balance, health, sustainability and knowledge.

BLUE - The colour of honesty, high quality, competence, trust, reliability, and integrity.

PINK - This colour evokes love, compassion, romance, gentleness, and sophistication.

PURPLE - Creativity, royalty, mystery, respect, and playfulness are often connected to purple (and violet).

BROWN - Colour of the outdoors and seen as friendly, organic, natural, friendly, and rugged.
Black - It is all about sophistication, intelligence, seriousness, and expense.

WHITE - Known for its order, innocence, purity, cleanliness, neutrality, and space.

GREY - It communicates timelessness, neutrality, refinement and practicality. Culture and context can also influence how colour is interpreted. Therefore, do your due diligence and research your audience so you can make the best choices based on their specific backgrounds.

PICKING THE RIGHT BRAND COLOURS

Research shows that anticipating your consumer's reaction to a colour and its relationship to your brand is more important than the actual colour. Customers want to see that a colour "fits."

Research confirms a connection between a company's brand colours and consumers' perception of a company's personality. The key takeaway here is that it's less important what colour you choose and more that you choose colours that highlight or accentuate the personality you want your brand identity and product to reflect.

How Colour Influences What People Buy
Here is the most critical colour information and how colour influences what people buy.

Remember that branding is about experience and emotion. As we know: a brand is the sum total of the experience your customers and customer prospects have with your company. A strong brand communicates what your company does, how it does it, and at the same time, establishes trust and credibility with your prospects and customers. Your company's brand is, in many ways, its personality. Your brand lives in everyday interactions your company has with its prospects and customers, including the images you share, the messages you post on your website, the content of your marketing materials, your presentations and booths at conferences, and your posts on social networks.

A powerful brand starts with a professionally designed logo. Colour plays a vital role in logo design.

The importance of colour also extends to how you present your products, product packaging and services to consumers. Studies show that choosing colours that make customers feel or think of a certain quality and help guide their actions is key to your success.

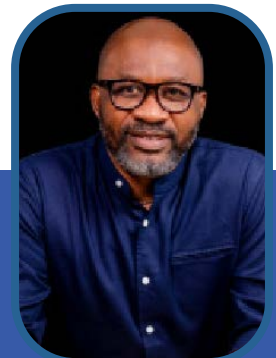
In fact, marketers know that colour plays an important role when it comes to packaging design. Recent trends have designers putting colours to work for their products in innovative, inspiring ways. It may seem like an artistic decision, but the primary colour you choose for your design has a significant psychological impact on how people perceive it.

Studies demonstrate that colours play a significant role in how advertising and signage are read. 42% more signs and advertisements are read when a colour (such as red) is used versus black and white. Comprehension is boosted as well.

So, if you're creating signage or imagery for your store or website, make sure to add a splash of colour to give it a better chance of being noticed and read.

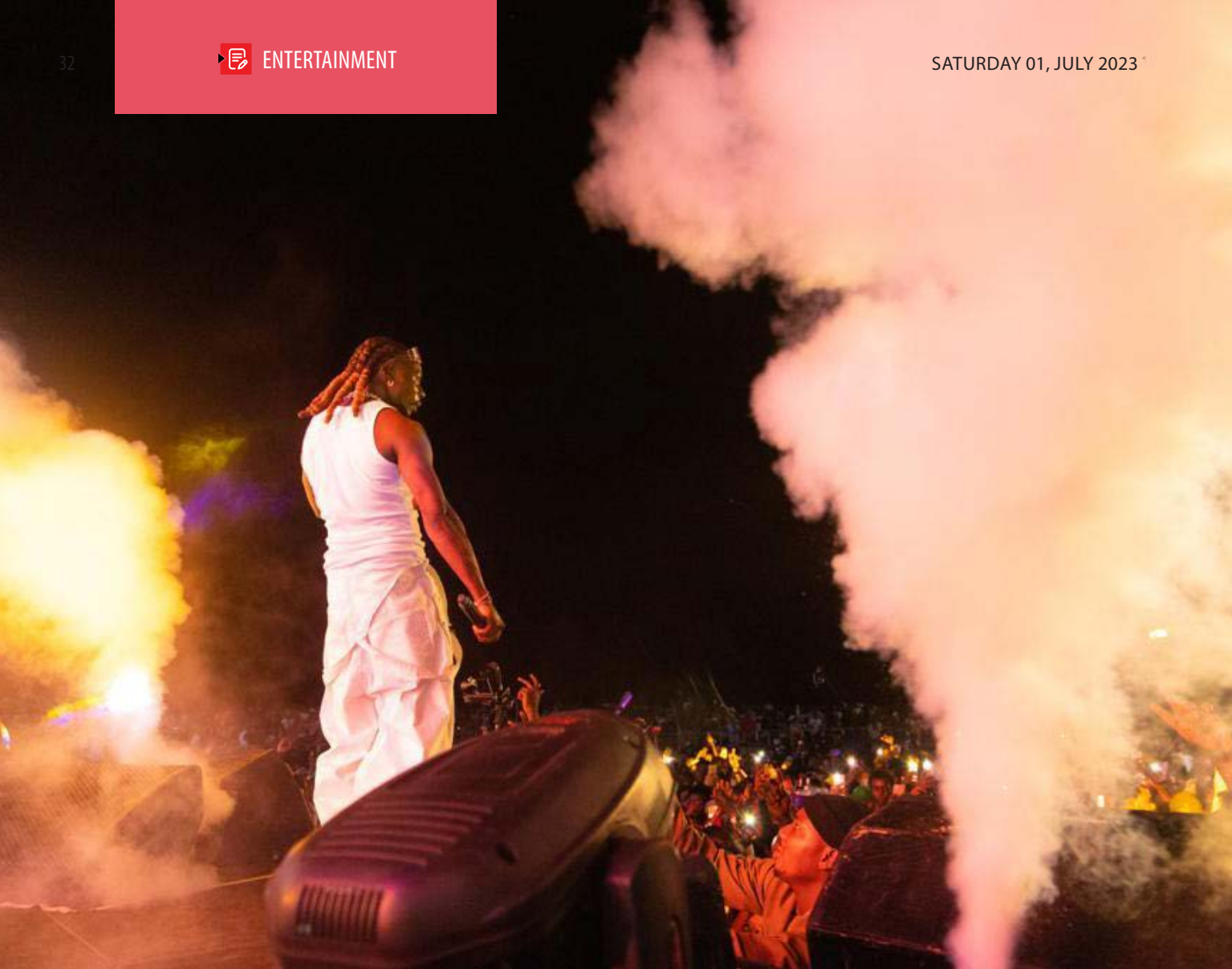
LAST LINE

Be more intentional with how you choose colours for your business. Take into account both the themes that colours represent and the psychological behaviour that specific colours influence. Research what colours best fit your target audience's tastes and needs, and above all, don't be like beige. Don't be boring, nod off.



Feyisitan Ijimakinwa

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




BEER WITH US FESTIVAL TO BOOST TOURISM, PROMISES MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA

BWUFEST takes center stage at Landmark Beach Oniru in Lagos.

There would be unparalleled lineup of sensational performances, featuring the hottest acts of the moment, surprise artists, and a host of DJs.

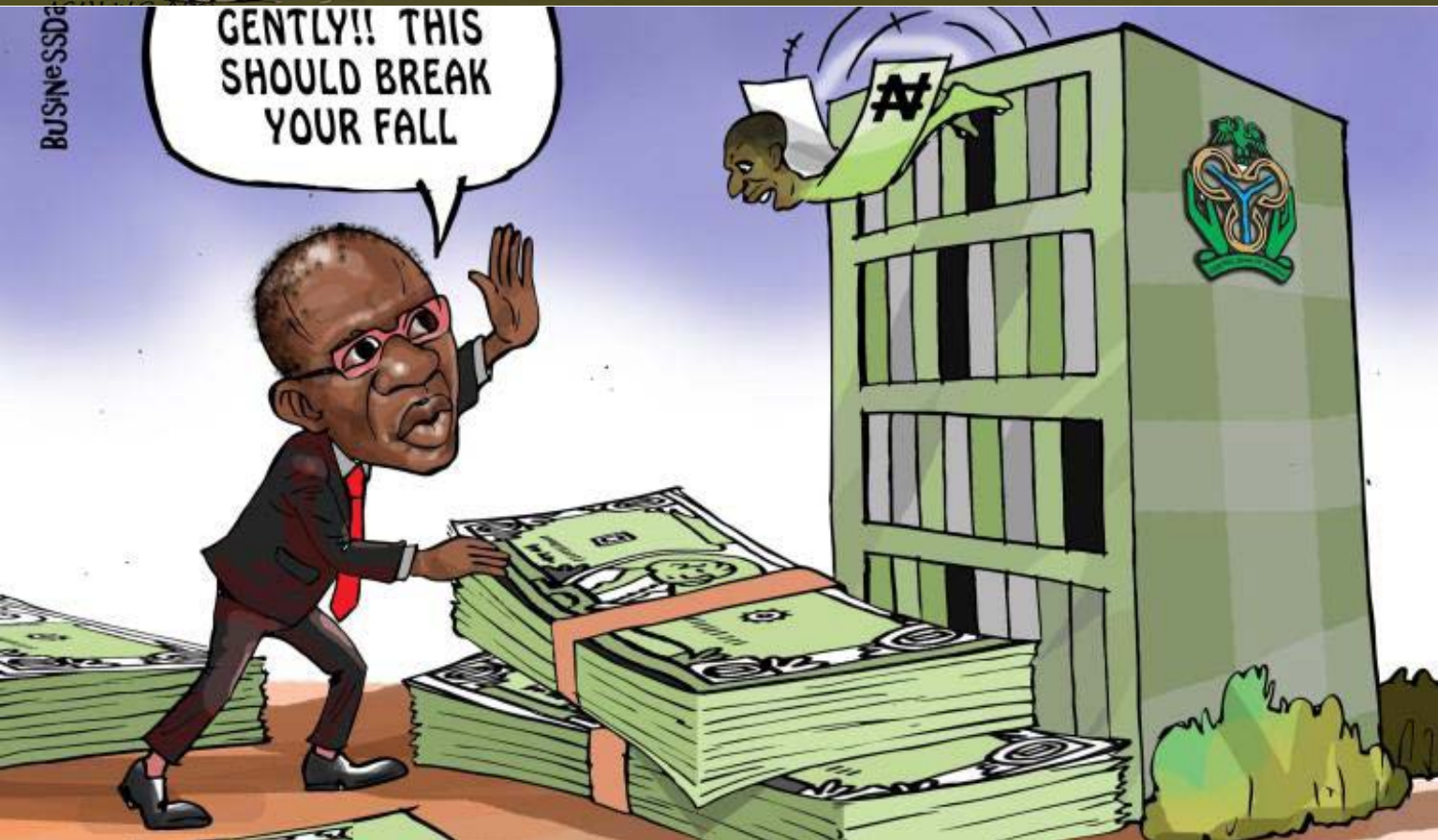
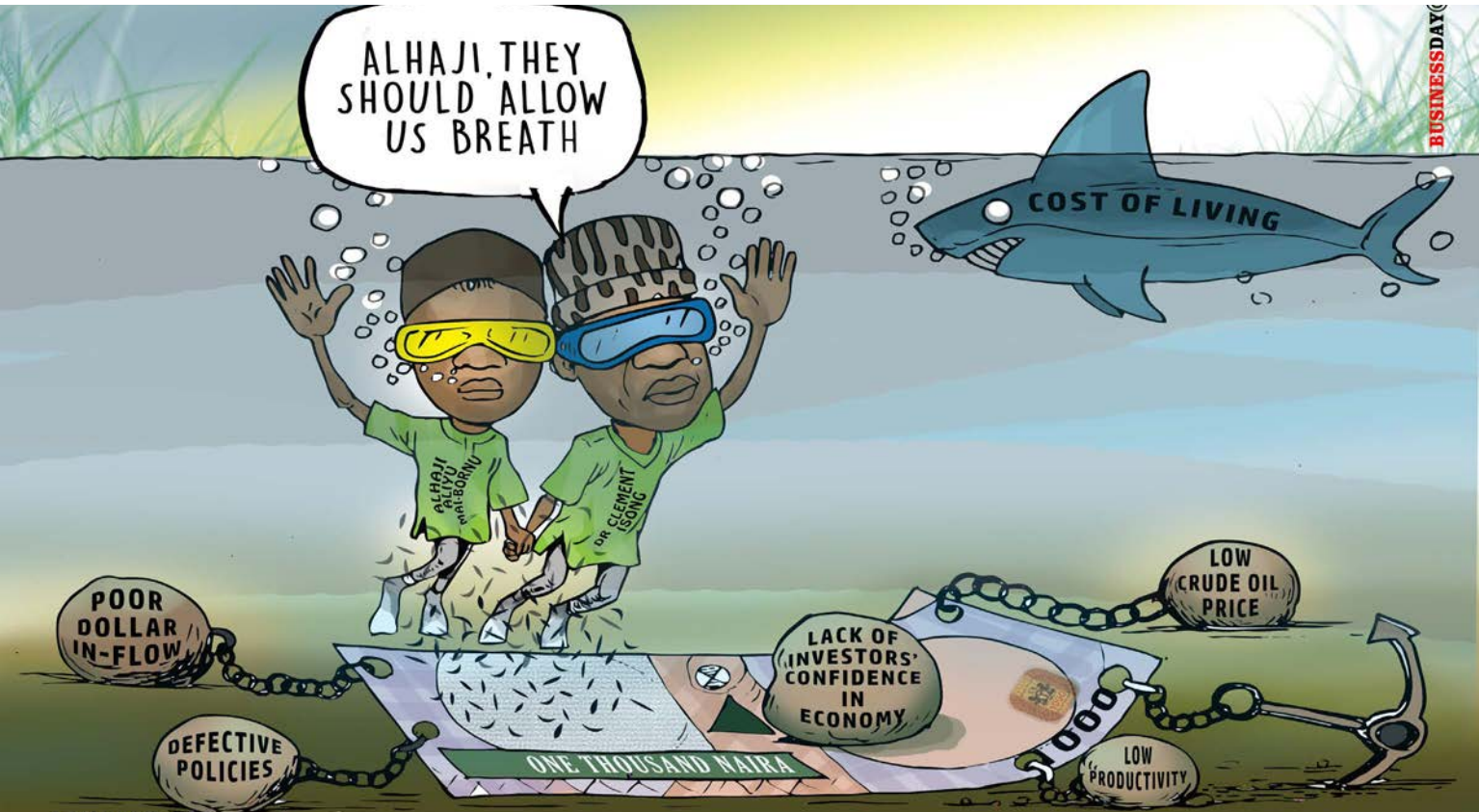
Chiori Daniel Cole and Paul Cole Chiori, esteemed executives at Achievas Entertainment, are spearheading the efforts to deliver an extraordinary showcase.



"The maiden edition left music and beer enthusiasts astounded, with performances by Asake, Seyi Vibe, and Ghanaian sensation Black Sheriff," said Chiori Daniel Cole. "Building upon that success, we are determined to create an even more electrifying experience this time around, filled with surprises that will keep everyone talking."

As preparations for the festival are in full swing, Achievas Entertainment said it is committed to upholding its reputation for excellence by utilizing all necessary resources to produce a top-quality show. Excitement continues to mount as BWUFEST aims to become the most talked-about music festival in Nigeria, leaving a positive and indelible impact on the music scene.

The organizers of BWUFEST also invite both corporate and individual brands to join them in sponsorship and partnership opportunities for the festival. This presents a platform to connect with a vibrant and engaged audience. Tickets are available for purchase through the Landmark Citizen App.





HERCONOMY: DEEPENING MISSION TO BUILD FIRST BANK FOR WOMEN IN NIGERIA

...gets support of Google for Startups

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA

Today, nearly one billion women around the world are unserved or underserved by the formal financial sector and unable to reach their full economic potential. If you brought all of these women together, they would make up the third-largest country in the world.

There is an untapped \$700 billion annual revenue opportunity for banks and other financial service providers if they did nothing more than provide financial services to women at the same rate they are provided to

men. If women participated equally, \$12 trillion could be added to global annual GDP by 2025. Financial inclusion is not just a driver of economic growth, but inclusive growth.

Nigeria continues to maintain its top spot in sub-Saharan Africa's economic rankings and therefore, the narrative is starting to change from Nigeria with the help of Herconomy, a female-focused fintech startup dedicated to creating financial resources for women.

Committed to creating a better economic future for Nigerian women, Herconomy is deepening its effort to building the first bank for women in Africa.





Heronomy, is now backed by Google on their mission to build the first bank for women in Nigeria and then Africa. This opportunity is made possible through the Google's Black Founders Fund, signaling a major milestone in the journey towards empowering women in the African financial sector.

Google for Startups unveiled the 25 African startups selected for this year's \$4 million Black Founders Fund with FemTech Heronomy being named as one of the recipients.

Black founders in Africa disproportionately lack access to the network and capital needed to grow their businesses.

The initiatives benefits include connecting the founders with the very best of google's people, products and practices; up to 100,000 dollars in equity free cash will be awarded to each start-up and help build a global community. At its core, the Black Founders Fund is a global initiative. Selected founders have the opportunity to connect with founders from all over the world.

The Black Founders Fund, now in its third year, aims to help tackle systemic racial inequality in venture capital (VC) funding by providing equity-free grants

and mentoring to early stage Black-led high-growth businesses across Europe and Africa.

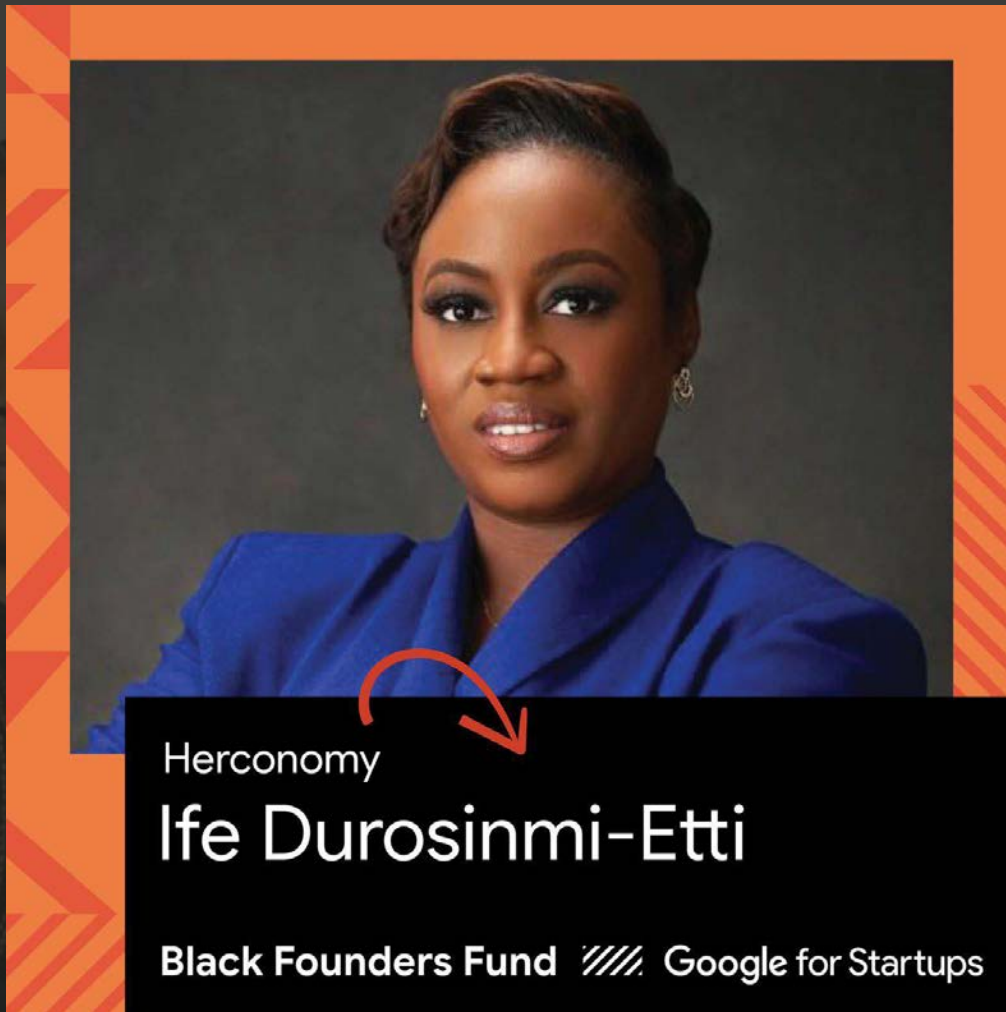
Heronomy has been selected from a cohort of 40 startups from Europe and Africa which includes 25 African startups that embody the diverse entrepreneurial spirit across the African continent.


The Startups led or co-founded by women make up 72 percent of the group, highlighting the role women play in shaping Africa's startup ecosystem. The funding will provide Heronomy with the capital needed to take our venture to the next level and expand to new markets, supercharging economic opportunities and job creation.

Early-stage investment is essential for the success of startups and the African startup ecosystem as a whole. This is crucial for Africa to become a global tech leader.

With the significant decrease in African tech investment in 2023, funds like these could play a crucial role in helping startups in Africa sustain their growth trajectory and bring their innovative solutions to a broader audience.

From accessible healthcare to efficient logistics, to innovative fintech solutions, Heronomy is harnessing



Herconomy
Ife Durosinmi-Etti
 Black Founders Fund  Google for Startups

the power of technology to address some of Africa's most pressing challenges. Herconomy is breaking new ground in the fintech sector with its goal to become Africa's first women-focused bank.

Herconomy has been awarded the fund as well as up to \$200,000 in cloud credits, ad support, 1:1 mentoring by industry experts and invaluable connections within Google's network.

Ifedayo Durosinmi-Etti, Founder of Herconomy, expresses gratitude to Google for selecting Herconomy as a recipient of the Black Founders Fund, saying, "We extend our heartfelt thanks to Google for Startups for choosing Herconomy as a recipient of the Black Founders Fund.

"We are incredibly honored and grateful for this opportunity. The support and recognition from Google

will significantly accelerate our mission to reshape the financial landscape for women in Africa. With this funding, mentorship, and invaluable connections, we are confident that we can create meaningful change and empower women across the continent.

"Thank you, Google, for believing in our vision and supporting our journey towards building Africa's first women-focused bank."

Since its inception, the Black Founders Fund has facilitated over \$205 million in investor conversations, representing a 12-fold increase.

This has sparked significant growth within the participating startups, with their combined monthly recurring revenue now exceeding \$6.1 million, marking a seven percent increase.

HOPE IS NOT A STRATEGY; FAITH IS NOT A BUSINESS\$ MODEL

DISRUPTIVE THOUGHTS
FOR DISRUPTIVE TIMES

MFONOBONG INYANG

*Title: Hope Is Not a Strategy; Faith Is Not a
Business Model*

Author: Mfonobong Inyang

Publisher: WORITAL

Year of Publication: 2021

Number of Pages: 178

Category: Self Help

HOPE IS NOT A STRATEGY; FAITH IS NOT A BUSINESS MODEL

TITILADE OYEMADE

There are a lot of people who are way too quick to spiritualize everything, including their jobs, their businesses, and ways to get better at what they do. It would appear that "Hope Is Not a Strategy; Faith Is Not a Business Model" is Inyang's way of advising people to utilize their senses rather than becoming overly spiritual about everything they do.

The book's title immediately piques your curiosity, but the subtitle captures your attention even more and terrifies a potential reader.

The unconventional title of the book gives the reader a hint about the unconventional way of thinking that the author has, but it also causes the reader to wonder why the author feels the need to repeatedly justify his choice.

The moving and captivating story told in the foreword is the first thing that gets your attention. It is entirely acceptable to disregard the remaining chapters of the book and make do with the information you've acquired from the foreword, as it provides more than enough background to get you going. If you do decide to keep reading the book, you won't be let down in any way by your decision.

As could be expected from a book with "faith and hope" in the title, biblical verses can be found throughout. However, the author is clearly a straightforward individual; he doesn't sugarcoat anything in his writing and avoids excessive spiritualism.

Statements like "Find your work in life, the one that can afford to rest from when you are done creating" and "Stop

hiding behind certificates, job, position, or social media followers" are just a few examples of the author's never-ending stream of advice and inspiration for the reader. These things will spur you on to make some positive changes in your life.

In addition, the author enlightens readers on the significance of being technologically savvy and financially literate, and provides a number of useful recommendations for achieving these goals. The author does not merely offer pieces of advice; rather, he speaks proudly his own success stories about his life as well as his career.

We can call his writing style "serious-minded" because there was no room for humor in any of it. However, the fact that he includes stories in his work makes it significantly more interesting to read.

You will be able to feel the positive energy that the author emanates while you read this book and listen to the author narrate his own experiences.

The author makes references to other writers he has read, speeches he has listened to, poems, tweets, and motivational words from both well-known and unknown persons throughout the various sections of the book. This leads you to the impression that the author possesses a lot of information.

The author's use of quoting other Nigerians makes it more likely that Nigerian readers will find the book relatable.

Titilade Oyemade

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

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

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PRIDE GOES BEFORE A FALL

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR

My wife and I have been married for twelve years and we have four kids. I worked as an accountant in a school while she was a petty trader. She was a hardworking woman and her business grew within a very short time. She had several outlets in strategic areas of our small town.

I lost my job after some discrepancies were discovered in the school's account. Overtime, I was able to cover my tracks until the new school principal decided to invite auditors to check the books. My wife knew about my illegal dealings and she was not happy about it, she had warned me several times to desist from taking what was not mine but stealing had eaten too deep into me like cancer.

She was very upset when I lost my job and she didn't hide it. She diverted all her attention to our children

and to her business and this made me very angry. Getting another job was very difficult because I couldn't get good referrals from my previous employer and this added to my frustration. I was used to having a lot of money, my savings was depleting so fast and my wife wasn't even trying to help me out. Once in a while she gave me peanuts as handouts but I knew she could do more. She was just being unnecessarily mean to me.

She always had gift for the kids then sometimes she would manage to squeeze in a little something for me. I didn't want her gifts, I wanted money instead. I don't know why she was finding it so hard to forgive me. After all I'm not the first man to steal from his employers. What happened to me was a mistake on my path, I should have been more careful. If not for that poke nosing principal, I'd still have my job.

My wife hardly smiled at me but she was the happiest whenever she was with the kids. Her face lit up and she had a sparkle in her eyes when she talked with them. I was jealous of her relationship with the children and I knew I had to do something to stop it.

It's not as if we didn't talk, the problem with my wife is that she only spoke to me when it was absolutely necessary. We couldn't sit down and have conversations like a couple because she keeps on insisting that I owe her an apology for messing things up at work.

Me? Apologise? For what? If she thinks I'm going to apologize to her then she has another think coming.

After thinking long and hard, I decided that the only way to get her attention is to take away the things she loves the most. Call me insensitive. Call me irrational. Call me wicked, I don't care. I have made up my mind and something drastic has to be done.

I was in the picture before the children came so they have no right to take my place. This situation can easily be taken care of with a few drops of rat poison. Herein lies the solution to my troubles. With the children out of the way, my wife will have no choice but to lean on me for love, support, affection and attention.

On my way home from my job hunting expedition one day, I got a bowl of my children's favorite ice cream. I mixed it up with drops of the rat poison that I bought a few days earlier and I made sure I was discreet about what I was doing.

All was set until I realized that I had absent mindedly scooped a few spoons of ice cream into my mouth.

My oldest child rushed into the kitchen when she heard me cussing loudly. I couldn't tell her why, I just tried to keep a straight face. She threw a look at the bowl in my hand and said, "Daddy, ice cream? Really? Why did you get such a big bowl? Didn't you know we're lactose intolerant like mommy?"

My jaw hit the floor. I was shocked.

I could not believe my ears. I have been too busy chasing inconsequential that I didn't notice when my

children stopped taking ice cream. I'm sure there was a lot more I didn't know about them.

I managed to drive myself to the hospital just as the pain began to kick in. I told the doctor how I mistakenly ingested rat poison and I saw the confusion on his face. He's still trying to understand the story I told him but that's his business.

My stomach is on fire and the pain is so unbearable. I'm afraid. I don't want to die. Someone please say a prayer for me.



Udy Osaro-Edobor

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

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WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEWS

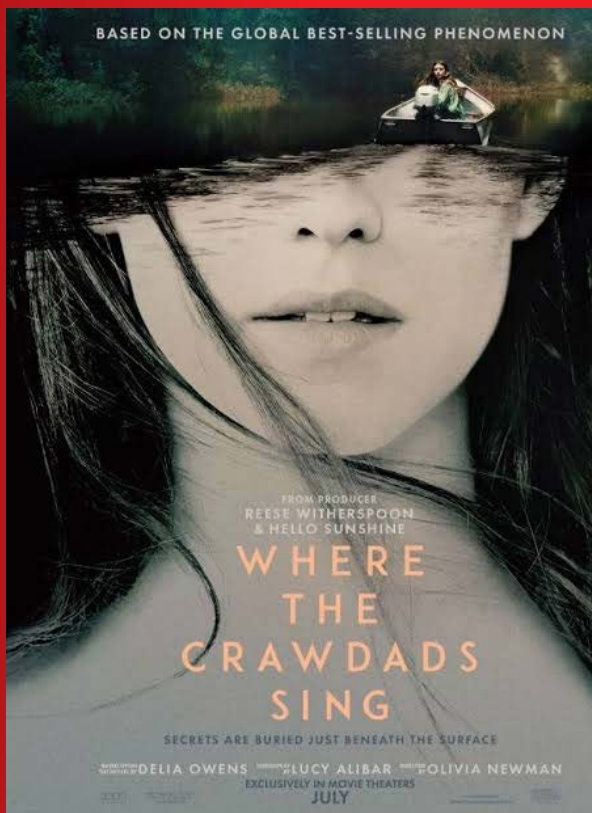
BEAUTIFUL LIFE (2023)

Netflix seems to be dishing out loads of romantic movies, I guess we are stuck with them, welcome to this weekend review and I bring you a sweet romantic movie called a beautiful life, it was indeed a beautiful life for Elliott after all. Elliott was a very humble fisherman, who played the guitar as a backup singer for his crew. One day something goes wrong and he is forced to save the day and that simple act changed his life, he had no clue that there was a famous music producer in the crowd, who decided to take him on, harness his unique skills and change his life forever. In a few months Elliotts life changed totally for good, from being a poor Fisherman to travelling round the globe, one he didn't see coming nor was prepared for. You will need to watch the entire movie to see how fame almost ruined him and how he was able to manage fame, love and old friends who felt he owed them his life. I totally enjoyed and I am sure for the drama, music, romantic movie lovers out there, this is for you. The 99m movie was directed by Mehdi Avaz, they featured actors like Ardalan Esmali, Sebastian Jesse's, Christine Albeck, Inga Ibsdotter Lileas, Christopher Nissen, Paw Henriksen and many more.



WHERE THE CRAWDAD'S SING (2022)

At first I wasn't so sure what to expect from the newly added movie, but as I went on, I found out it was a very good story. Kyanite was a very simple young lady who grew up in dangerous Marshlands of North Carolina, for years she was referred to as "Marsh Girl". Kya grew up in the woods with her dad, as time went on all her siblings and family members including her mum all left the house on different occasions and never came back, they all couldn't live with their father as he was so wicked and I considerate. As she was so little to run away too, Kyanite was stuck with her dad. She struggled through life in woods catering for herself till she became a talented artist and writer, just when she thought she had found love, something terrible happened and shattered Kya life, she had to fight for her life and freedom to make sure she lived her life to the fullest. Make sure you listen and pay attention or else you end not fully understand this beautiful movie. For my drama, mystery, thriller movie lovers, this is a nice recommendation for you. The 125m movie was directed by Olivia Newman, they featured acts like Daisy Edgar-Jones, Taylor John Smith, Harris Dickinson, Garret Dillahunt, Michael Hyatt, Anna O'Riley and many more.



MOTHERS DAY (2023)

Nina was a young talent woman, who left the secret agency to live a quiet and humble life. One day she gets the information that her adopted son has being kidnapped and the cops couldn't find him, Nina is left with no option than the go after the bad guys her self to make sure he is brought back alive and in record time. You will need to check out this brand new movie to see the length she was willing to go to bring him back and no one could stop her, she was absolutely amazing and her defensive movies were cool, kind of reminded me so much of Jennifer Lopez's new movie "The Mother" of 2023. If you love Polish, action, drama, mystery, thriller movie, then this is a good choice thus week. The movie was directed by Mateusz Rakowicz, they featured actors like Agnieszka Grochowska, Dariusz Chojnacki, Adrian Delikta, Joeita Miondlikowska, Ewart Rodart and many more .



Linda Ochugbua