

STORIES OF AFRICA'S MILLENNIAL ENTREPRENEURS

the **BUSINESS DAY**  
ce



THE ENTERTAINER  
THE ENTREPRENEUR

D'BANJ



JULY 2019

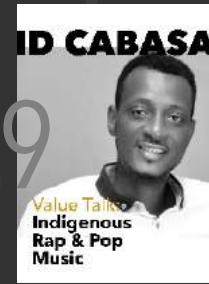




*If a job must  
be **done**, you have  
to do it yourself; you  
have to stay **on top**  
of it.*

**-D'Banj**





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# Lehlé Baldé

Music is something that brings people together. Over the years, It has been heartwarming to witness the evolution of African music around the continent and worldwide. This edition goes behind the music to the business of music. Too many times we hear of musicians not being able to sustain their lifestyles due to poor financial planning and lack of experience.

D'Banj our cover star is more than a musician, he represents the possibility of what music can do for an individual and their future generations. More than a musician he is a business mogul. One that has diversified his streams of income and one that upcoming artistes can certainly learn from.

This edition is jam-packed with individuals that make the entirety of the Nigerian music business.

Happy reading.

Warm wishes,

**Lehlé Baldé** (@lehlalumiere)

Editor





The year is 2004 and we can see a level of excellence coming back into the production of records in audio and video. It was the beginning of another international recognition of what Nigerian and African Music is made of after Fela and Sunny Ade and a some other few did some justice in that regard. Finally, my generation now has something to hold on to and build on in representing excellence from Africa especially after Tuface's "African Queen" on Hollywood's Phat Girls reinforced that hope.

The year is 2019 and in a period of 15 years, the Nigerian and African music scene has laid up bricks in building a global edifice and carved out creativity in ways the world is now attracted to. There are now references to growth and entrepreneurial instances that could spiral into a healthy economy especially with the diverse and energetic nature of the millennials involved in entertainment, either by producing it or consuming it.

A new-age standard reference is seen in D'banj as he exemplifies excellence in both sides of the merge of entertainment and entrepreneurship. Explanation of this is best perceived when you swipe through his interview. I hope he gets to teach in Universities soon.

DJ Jimmy Jatt, ID Cabasa and Bada Akintunde-Johnson went all in with insight the new school should hold on to if we are creating a worthy and meaningful future.

Enjoy every bit the pages and take note of the Legal article.

Never settle,  
**Tomi Wale** (@tomiwale\_)  
Creator & Art Director

**Tomi  
Wale**



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Africa Facts Zone  
@AfricaFactsZone

Davido is the 38th Highest Earning Personality on Instagram according to the 2019 Instagram Rich List by Hopper. He has the most valuable Instagram account in Africa with over 11 million followers. Each sponsored post on his IG handle is worth \$74,000.

		<a href="#">Sign Up</a>	
	38	<b>Davido Adeleke</b>	<a href="#">@davidooofficial</a> \$74,000/post
	39	<b>Felix Kjellberg</b>	<a href="#">@pewdiepie</a> \$70,800/post
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Keep Going!



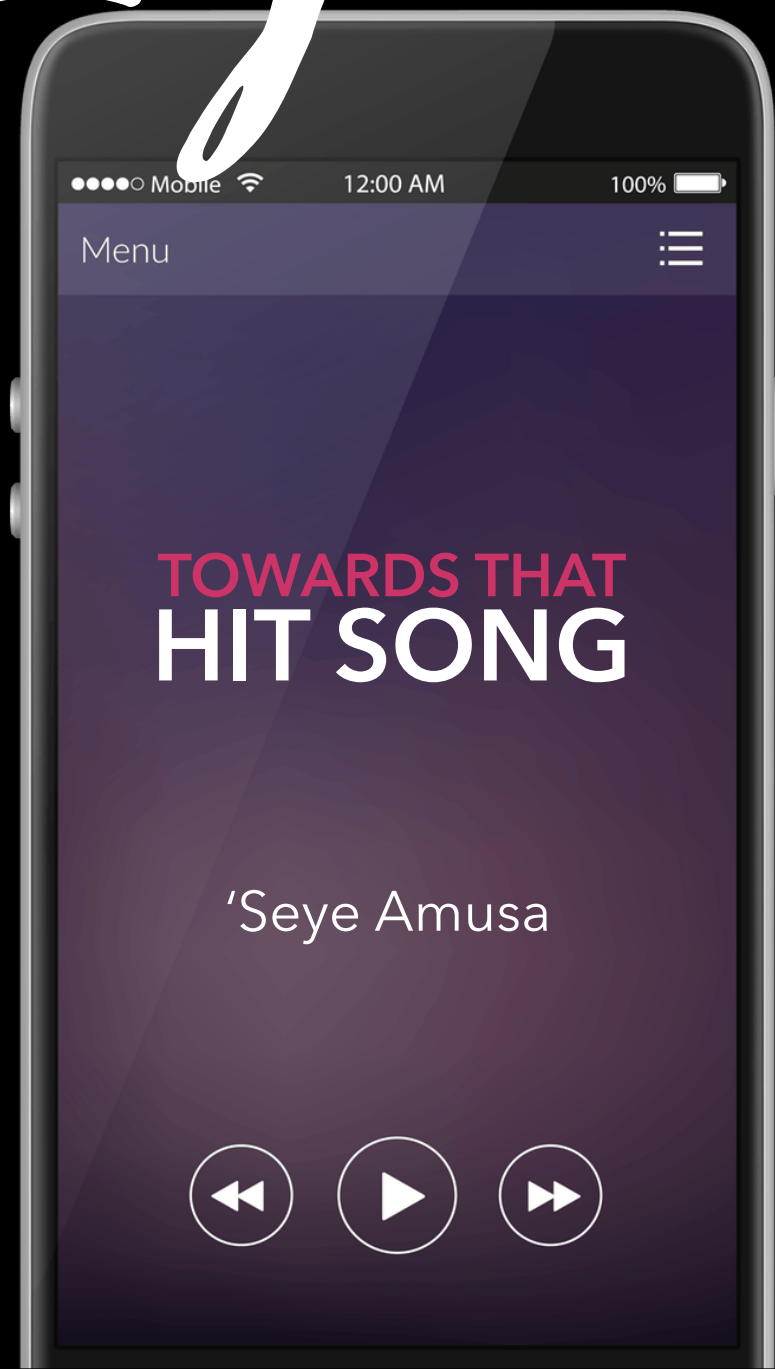
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**Afrofuturism**  
Arclight (@arclight.jpg)

# Legal!







As I watch a clip of Burna Boy perform on Jimmy Kimmel on Twitter, I am full of pride as Afrobeats catches fire all over the world and I just wonder, how is all this working out for Burna Boy?

Let me explain, the Business Model that monetizes music is like a plumbing system, if it's working well it allows easy living, everyone gets water effortlessly, but once it's a faulty system, everyone notices and only few people get water, it also creates cracks in the building and over time will contribute to the building's collapse.

So the question to ask is, when it comes to the Business Model applied to the music industry in Nigeria, is it good plumbing or bad plumbing?



Some will say the building has already collapsed and I can understand. As an Intellectual Property Lawyer who at some point advised PMAN on the creation of a National Music Database and Distribution system that would have created a monetisation channels tied to Government backed royalties, I look back with a little sadness on how an example like this didn't happen. PMAN, COSON, The Ministry of Information and Culture, NIPOST and record labels couldn't work together, too many selfish interests, too many visionless leaders and too many moving parts.

**So, in this type of climate and the trends coming with global attention, here are 10 things you can do to protect your intellectual property and avoid stories that touch in the future:**





**1** Focus on Creating your Music, pay for studio time and do you.

**2** Keep your Music secure; get a lawyer who will have a copy of your original stuff. *how?*

Post the Master CD to your Lawyers office via NIPOST. Make sure it's NIPOST as they represent a federally recognised 3rd Party to copyright materials.

**3** Make sure the Lawyer that receives your Master copy does not open the NIPOST package, he/she just needs to keep it in a safe. The best option would have been to keep it in a NIPOST private Mail Box, but not everyone can afford that.

**4** You can also take your master CD to any National Copyright Commission Office and Register it in their archives.



**5** If you are approached by a record label, note the following:

a. If you already had music produced (remember the Master CD) then it's really just about distribution and profit share, unless they want to re-record your music, in which case they can deduct the cost also.

b. If you are taken in, given a brand name, ushered into the studio to sing lyrics that you didn't write and use beats that you didn't produce, then don't expect the record label to give you more than a salary. If you blow big enough, you may start getting cuts from live shows.

**6** You can make money from songwriting, beat making, back-up singing, live performances, music editing skills, video editing and graphics design if you have the right skill set while you wait for that hit to blow.

*Don't just  
sit down!*

7 If you are a songwriter you can work for record labels either as an independent contractor. You will be paid a fee for the use of your song or a fee for outright purchase; note, they are different things as outright sale cost more. You can take up an appointment with the label for a salary (any song you right is owned by the label).

8 Separate your skills from the content you create with the skills, both can make you money separately i.e. Don Jazzy has many hit songs produced- content created with skill; Don Jazzy is a sound engineer- skill.

9 You can be a one person record label. Understand the business model and push your own stuff (it will cost you).

10 Form a squad, a team has a better chance of rising fast than a lone ranger, you can enter a flexible music group agreement that allows you to do solo projects.



# Legal!

Understanding that music is a business like any other business, if you wish to grow into that global brand, take the legal parts seriously on every level, diversify and gain knowledge on topics, know your terrain and tie every end.

Let's talk more on Twitter  
@hivemaster. Let's do things the right way.

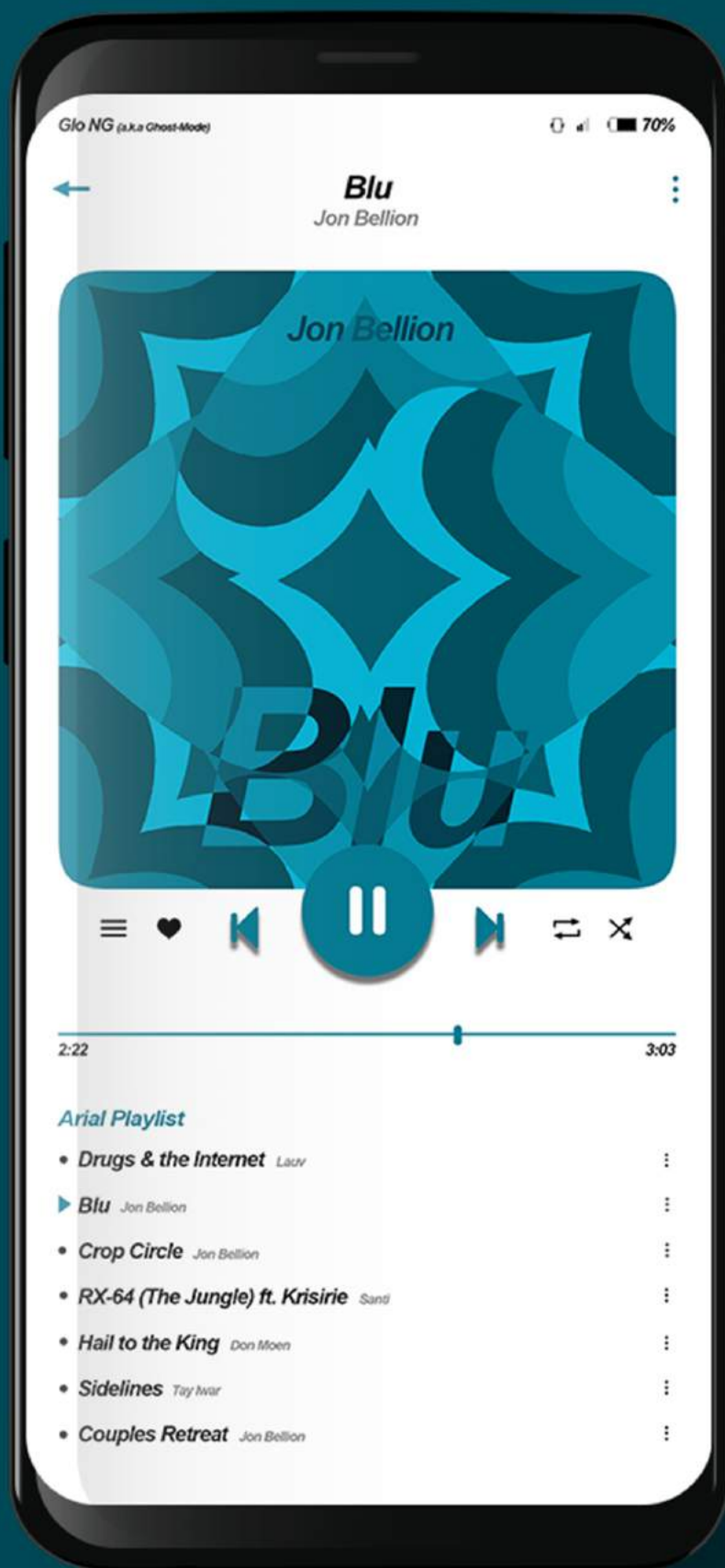
## Good luck!

shèqí owólabí

*Jon Bellion*

**Blue**

## shèyí owólabí





# ID CABASA



**Value Talk:**  
**Indigenous  
Rap & Pop  
Music**

**You were very instrumental in growing indigenous Pop and Indigenous Rap music in Nigeria, how were you able to develop the music and talents on a genre that almost didn't exist at the time?**

Well we saw an obvious but not trendy opportunity which we sensed would be well accepted from the psychological and sociology angle of people.

Hip Hop/rap was seen as a genre for the elites' children back then, but we were looking at how to make it more acceptable by cutting across all radar so the best way to go was to speak the LANGUAGE the masses understand.

Junior and pretty and couple of other guys that rapped in pidgin English set the pace that shows that these things will be acceptable and myself(producer) Lord of Ajasa, 2phat and co followed with pure Yoruba rap music that became a huge market today.



**You invested your resources in time and money in this, how did you know it was going financially rewarding?**

Initially the goal was for people to appreciate the beauty in what we have to offer. The acceptance gave us hope of financial gain.

We had this strong faith that it was going to sell with d demography of people who started falling in love with hip hop because now they can understand what is being said and it always brought to life our local poetry and use of words. So we knew it will sell.



Photo: Kevin O. Obosi

**In positioning a music brand like 9ice to grow as far as performing at Mandela's birthday, can you tell us the principle you put in place for that to happen?**



One of our core values was to be excellently creative. We started a studio to aid us and have more time to create music that will lapse generations.

Another core value was TRUTH in our content. We placed premium on depth of thought and culture just to mention but a few.





## What financial value can you place on the growth of the ever-budding street music?

Technically I can't say there is a figure to the value of what the street music in Nigeria is but from what we can deduce from what it is, I think it is the biggest in the music (and entertainment) industry.



Whatever the masses consume brings in so much money. A recent valuation of the industry goes into billions of dollars. I think a large chunk of it comes from indeginous pop and rap music. Looking at Zlatan Ibile, Olamide, and some rising stars in the core of the streets influencing a lot of attention, this cannot be anything less than a billion dollars worth.





**From Lord of Ajasa to Zlatan Ibile, what is your view of this genre so far? What future do you see on it?**

The genre started majorly with the aim of promoting the Yoruba culture and promoting the Nigerian languages. We didn't just do it, we had Nigga Raw doing the Igbo version of it and 6-foot plus, Ladani doing it for the north. Majorly when we started, it was actually to let people hear our truth and allow people to hear what they youth were going through from languages they understand.

Along the line, I think some of these values have been lost although some are still keeping it. We have reduced the hip hop thing to just entertainment. Music is entertaining and not just entertainment. Music shapes culture, music controls popular culture. A lot of our guys doing the indigenous thing now need

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*The fact that it  
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is inferior.*

to understand that beyond making people happy and jump, once in a while, come to the part of not losing other values that build people to be responsible and build them to know where they are coming from so they won't be lost.

They should put some of these things into storytelling in their songs - your song is inspiring someone to want to do better and inspiring someone to learn about their culture and where they come from. These are some of the things I think got missing. I am glad some guys like Olamide do some songs like Anifowose and some other young dudes doing it. I think more of this should be pushed. That is when you are truly telling our Nigerian and indigenous story.

The fact that it is indigenous doesn't mean it is inferior. For the British, English is their indigenous language. When we speak our truth, we speak our story, I need us to be more truthful.





You can make 'feel-good' type of music but once in a while, let us do songs of value that would make people think. Let us not lose our sense of value. That was what the genre was built on. Rap was supposed to be conscious music where people get to hear happenings about what they are going through. The new guys need to understand that and do more of that.

In terms of financial gain, it has moved far way from where we started from streaming returns, endorsement deals and global collaborations.

*I am glad the guys have moved it to a good level but I want them to put in a bit of sanity so we won't raise a generation we will not be able to take care of.*





*Whatever the masses consume brings in so much money. A recent valuation of the industry goes into billions of dollars. I think a large chunk of it comes from indigenous pop and rap music.*



# TAKE THE MILLENNIAL SURVEY

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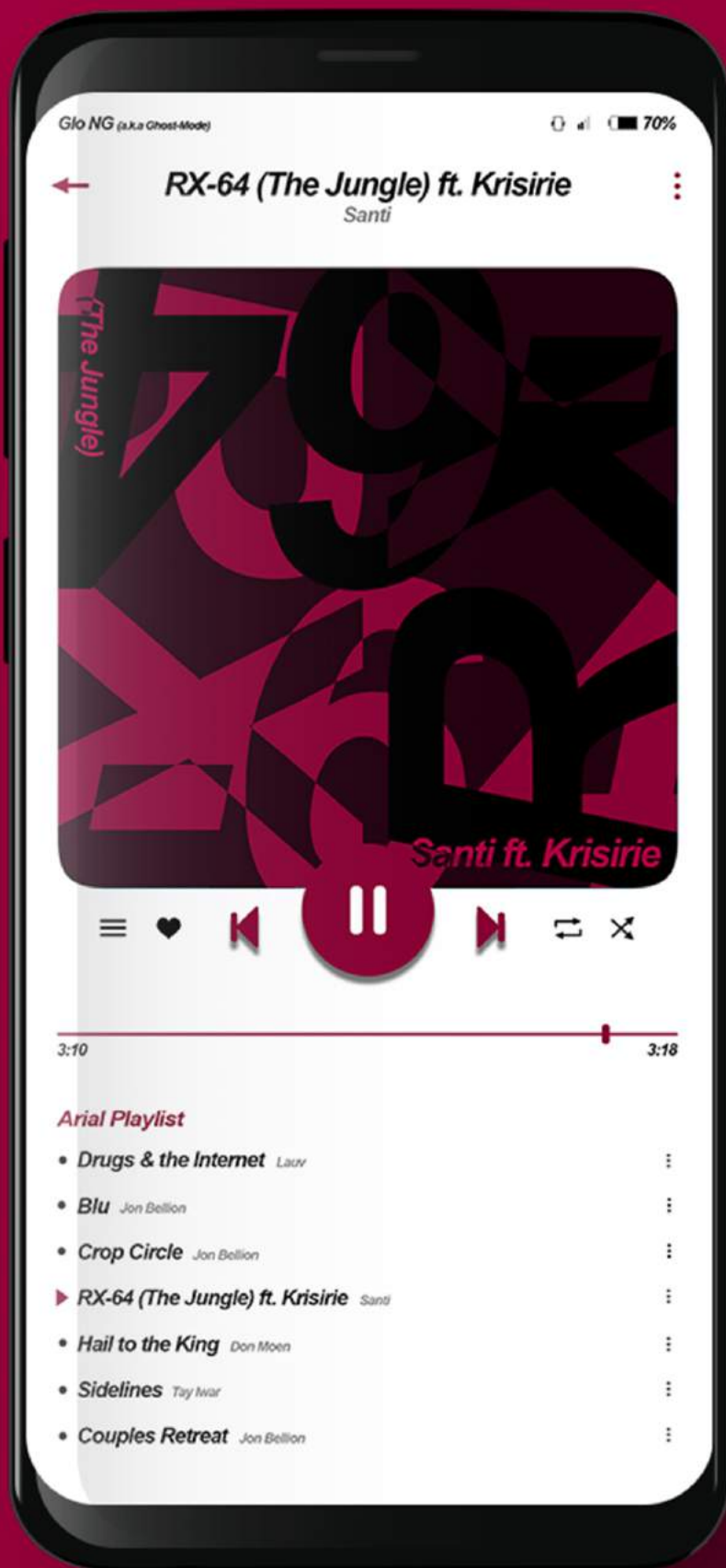


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# D' BANJ

**Oladapo Daniel Oyebanjo**, known by his stage name D'banj, is a Nigerian musician, singer, songwriter, entrepreneur, television personality, and rapper. He has won several music awards, including the awards for Best African Act at the MTV Europe Music Awards 2007, Artist of the Year at the MTV Africa Music Awards 2009, Best International Act: Africa at the 2011 BET Awards, and Best-selling African Artist at the 2014 World Music Awards, Evolution award at the 2015 MTV Africa Music awards

He adopted the stage name D'banj, a combination of his first name, Dapo, and his surname, Oyebanjo. D'banj is currently best known internationally for his 2012 summer hit "Oliver Twist", an uptempo dance fusion of Afrobeat and electronic dance music that topped the African charts in 2011 and was a top 10 hit in the UK singles chart in 2012 reaching No. 2 on the UK R&B chart.

**Tomi:** What inspired you to co-found your first record label in 2004?

**D'banj:** In the beginning, there were very few record labels in Nigeria. When myself and my former partner met in London, we decided to do something about it. We studied and saw that there was just one major record Label, Kennis Music, and they had everyone from Tuface to Remedies. There was Storm Records too.

We had a vision and I remember when we sat down in London and had a conversation on how to portray ourselves when we went back to Nigeria. We decided on Mo'hits, a short version of "More Hits" because we knew that if we didn't do it by ourselves, nobody would. We did all the work on brand perception



and how we should be received.  
We were coming from the UK to a  
new terrain.

We understood the game. We  
had a great producer in Don Jazzy  
who is excellent in delivering  
content and me, a fantastic and  
enthusiastic entertainer. We knew  
what we had to do to knock down  
doors.







*I had to be twice  
as good in order  
to be accepted.*



I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO BE GIVEN GREAT OPPORTUNITIES SO  
I KNOW I HAVE TO DELIVER, **ALWAYS.**

**Tomi:** You have a knack for excellence, what is the background on that?

**D'banj:** For me, it has been a training growing up. I believe in the phrase "dress/appear how you want to be addressed" which means you have to come out ready for the world.

When I got ready to step up & out, I realized I had to be twice as good in order to be accepted. I have been privileged to be given great opportunities so I know I have to deliver, always.

I stay hungry!





**Tomi:** Can you share some measures the company Mo'Hits had in place to maintain the level of excellence it was known for?

**D'banj:** The company is human first. If you employ someone who doesn't see himself as the company then there'll be problems. If the person doesn't share the same enthusiasm with you, it won't work.

You have to make yourself the standard. I hear testimonies about some of the guys who were in the organisation from other people and they tell me "oh this person acts like you, that person behaves like you".

We didn't have a lot of people to look up to back in the day so I made sure I provided that for the organisation. My company policy has always been "If a job must be done, you have to do it yourself; you have to stay on top of it."





*If you employ someone who does not see his / herself as the company, there will be problems.*



**Tomi:** That is a lot of pressure on you. How do you cope?

**D'banj:** It's only pressure if it's work.

I'm a born entertainer and I love what I do.





*It's only pressure if it's work.  
I'm a born entertainer and I love what I do.*



## HUMANITARIAN WORK

# D'BANJ

D'banj is the founder of Koko Foundation for Youth and Peace Development. He is also Nigeria's first United Nations Youth Ambassador for Peace. Dbanj is a ONE campaign ambassador; he released the song "Cocoa Na Chocolate" in support of agriculture investments. 'Cocoa Na Chocolate' featured 18 other African artists and won Best African Collaboration at the All Africa Music Awards in 2014.

In 2015, he was applauded by World Bank Chief, Jim Yong Kim for using his music power and high celebrity status to bringing attention to serious and critical issues in Africa with special focus on agriculture and poverty alleviation. Jim Yong Kim was quoted saying that "I had the pleasure of meeting D'banj last month and seeing him perform. I'm thrilled he is the first artists to take part in our new Music4Dev series encouraging global artist to raise awareness about poverty and related issues."

In 2015 D'banj released the video to "Extraordinary" to raise awareness on gender equality and women's empowerment. World bank endorsed the song as a song for women awareness.



**Tomi:** There wasn't a lot of social media or online streaming platform available back then so how were you able to maintain a good level of distribution?

**D'banj:** A couple of things. First I had a great team - I don't think I'll take that credit alone. There was not a lot of social media then but our team were constantly online, checking on trends.

We also did a lot of leg work. We had connections in Ghana back then so we would send our boys there. I entered every corner, didn't take no for an answer. I knew Alaba well. Even in the UK we went everywhere; from south London to Peckham. We did a lot of free shows just because we were the first to come up with something different. We knew that, by hook or by crook, we needed to get our music in their faces. And we did.



**Tomi:** What do you think about Africa in the global scene right now?

**D'banj:** It's great that the international community is waking up to Africa. It's a dream come true because this is what we've always wanted. We have always been there, our stories have just never been collated. We've not had people strong enough to back it or sell it. Looking at the trends, they say time unfolds everything and I'd say this is perfect timing for Africa to rise. The world is looking to Africa for a lot of inspiration right now particularly in the creative and entertainment industry.







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## ENDORSEMENTS

# D' BANJ

With D'banj's first album came his first endorsement from an energy drink called Power Fist. In May 2013, D'banj was named the Bank of Industry ambassador. In November 2013, D'banj re-signed a multi-million Naira deal with Globacom, the company he parted ways with in 2010. In June 2014 D'Banj secured a deal with Heritage Bank. In October 2014, D'banj was named the official African ambassador for Beats by Dre. In February 2015, D'banj was named the official African ambassador for Ciroc Nigeria. D'banj was made the brand ambassador of SLOT, a popular mobile phone and electronic gadget retail outfit. Dbanj is now among the richest Hip-Hop artists in Nigeria.



**Tomi:** What thoughts do you have for entrepreneurs to leverage on the changes in the global scene in growing their business?

**D'banj:** For the first time entrepreneurs are no longer limited by their geo-location. With the growth of mobile phones and connectivity, one is able to engage with a much broader customer base.

I know it can be painful to grow here but there's no other time to push harder and be firmly rooted and well grounded than now. When the time unfolds, you'll be in the right position for opportunities. Own your product, refine it and make it work.







*Own your product, refine it and make it work.*

## PROJECTS D'BANJ

D'Banj is vastly immersed in the information technology, particularly in the areas of value-added services and Content digital distribution. He owns MCOMM Ltd (Median Mobile Communications Limited, A Value Added Service Content Provider) and D' Kings Men Media Limited (a 360 Media Company), which are responsible for his major digital moves in recent times.

**Tomi:** What do you look out for when going into partnerships?

**Dbanj:** I need to see that our goals are aligned. Not necessarily perfect but I need to see that we share similar goals. I need to be able to see through; to know there's no question of loyalty or integrity. Most of the times you cannot see because you're not God, but try to be a good judge of character, so you don't end up getting played. Eventually, human beings will still disappoint you but you can take people as they are and see if you can deal with their inadequacies.





**Tomi: What's your most successful business story ?**

**D'banj:** About three years ago I had an idea that I started implementing. We launched it exactly on August 1st. All that time I must have flown at least 22 times into Abuja to get the license and everything done.

I avoided all forms of distraction and made sure my team and I devoted six months into focusing on the work. I believed I needed to create a gateway platform because of the amount of issues surrounding the creative sector.

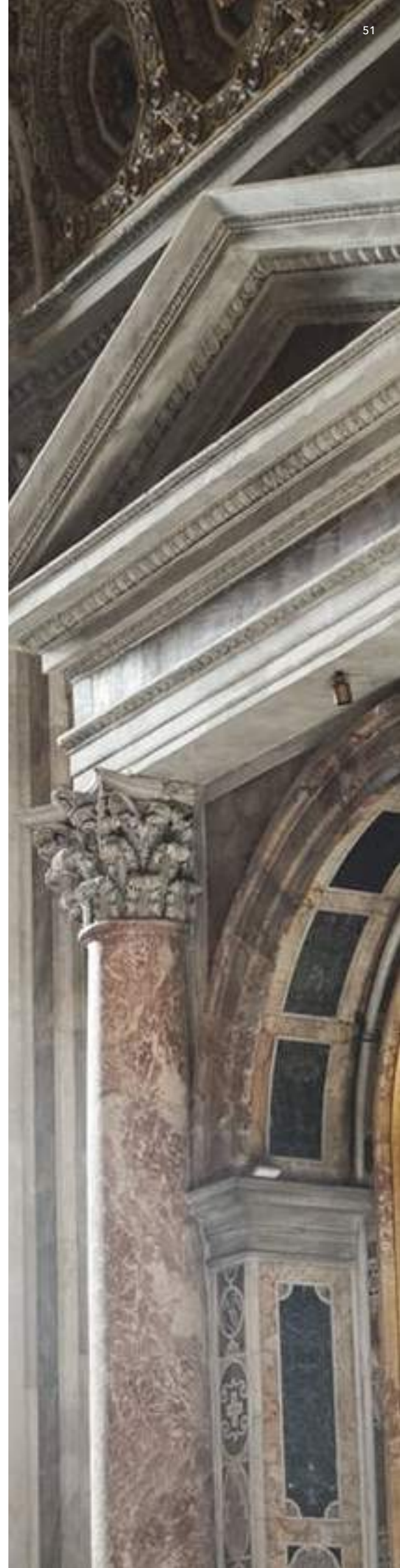
Sometimes the finance is not the problem but rather the platform, the support, the push or just to be seen so that talents can showcase what they've got.



So I had a conversation with my IT guys and we created a platform where one can go to just by dialing a code, uploading your song from anywhere in the world and have access to other artistes to request for collaborations and a lot more. We created a platform that allows you to collaborate with anybody from anywhere in the world.

Most of my mates that made it in the industry had to leave their homes and move to Lagos. I thought about starting another record label but that would have meant I was still limiting myself to one location. Starting a platform instead established me globally while delivering the service of a record label. That was a better positioning.

No one believed, even a part of my management did not believe me. I remember when we





started, we had about 30,000 subscribers through a paid subscription on MTN. My team still had doubts about the income. I also took a N50Million loan from Bank of Industry and within 6 months we were able to pay it back. We generated 3 Million dollars in 9 months and I was mind blown!

One of the biggest songs of 2017/2018, Mr Real's "Legbegbe", came from the platform. It was uploaded in December 2016 then we picked it up and shot the video. We then got him a deal with Sony Music. Being able to dream of something, think up a business model around it, put a team together to achieve a success story out of it is a big deal. A boy who lives in Ikorodu, who I had never met before, got all the support he needed the way a record label would do it just by dialing a code- \*463#. This was all he had to do: dial the code, find categories for





collaborations and showcase, upload his song and once it had been picked, a video was shot and now he has over 10 million views on YouTube! He has become an entrepreneur himself. His life has started on a different note, he has a management and he's enjoying the facility. That for me is one of the more recent and most memorable ones, but the whole journey has been a success story.

This year we got investors and sold a bit of equity from the CREAM platform - an acronym for Creative, Entertaining Arts and Music. CREAM is a gateway platform to the creative hub of Africa. It's a Mark Zuckerberg move for me. We have 4 million subscribers, over 3000 unique songs and content we still have to monetize which just led to our latest partnership with YouTube to help reach more people and give them a platform.





*For the new product, we took a  
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This year we got investors and sold a bit of equity from the CREAM platform - an acronym for Creative, Entertaining Arts and Music. CREAM is a gateway platform to the creative hub of Africa. It's a Mark Zuckerberg move for me.





I want to be an inspiration to my generation and I believe that if you can envision it and think it, you can do it. I always tell my fellow musicians that we're more than the music, that's why it is called SHOW-BIZ. You have to be able to run the show and run the business as well. This is a very good example and I believe that very soon it'll be in the stock exchange books as THE FIRST creative African platform or conglomerate to be listed.

**One of our investors told me that I have a platform similar to one that merges talent discovery, content management and collaboration, called TuneCore, an American company that helps with the distribution of songs for artists.**





We have 4 million subscribers, over 3000 unique songs and content we still have to monetize which just led to our latest partnership with YouTube to help reach more people and give them a platform.

**\*463#**

**Tomi:** You've sustained a very strong personal and global brand for close to 2 decades. What are the major qualities that must not be compromised in sustaining a brand like that?

**D'banj:** You have to stay hungry. You have to put your ear to the ground and listen to people, work with your team and have a good heart.





**Tomi: What are your principles on money?**

**D'banj:** Money is a visitor. Visitors can either extend their stay (and multiply) or leave. The same applies to money. You need to make it comfortable being around you. Keep it warm in investments, create channels for it to be utilized. Make the money work for you. Fuel the engine that fetched you the money in the first place in order for it to be sustainable. A bird in the hand is the only bird you have.





## *Money is a visitor.*

Visitors can either extend their stay (and multiply) or leave. The same applies to money.

Keep it warm in investments, create channels for it to be utilized.



**Tomi:** What do you look out for when building relationships?

**D'banj:** There has to be a connection and I have an open mind. I don't go into a relationship looking for gains. I love people who are trustworthy, transparent and loyal. Loyalty is key.





**Tomi:** Growing a brand as an African in Africa has a unique challenge to it, from lack of infrastructure to quality resources. How do you think millennial entrepreneurs should manage that for the sake of growth?

**D'banj:** You have to be able to stay and function where you are, analyze your situation and see the end game; check if you can get greener pastures; reinvent yourself. Search for funding everywhere and don't rest till you get it. Get a good mentor and find out from people who have gone ahead before you make new moves.

Stay hungry and don't stay down when you get knocked down.

It's okay to take time off to reassess and hibernate but don't just quit and run away, unless you are absolutely sure it's not working out.



**Tomi: Who are you business mentors?**

**D'banj:** I have direct and indirect mentors. I read a lot of stories to see how they did what they have done and how they are doing what they currently do. To mention a few, Arunma Oteh, Prince Aremo Oniru, Aliko Dangote and Femi Otedola.

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**Tomi: Thank You very much. So much learnt here. We can't wait for your new album!**

**D'banj: Yes! You are welcome brother.**



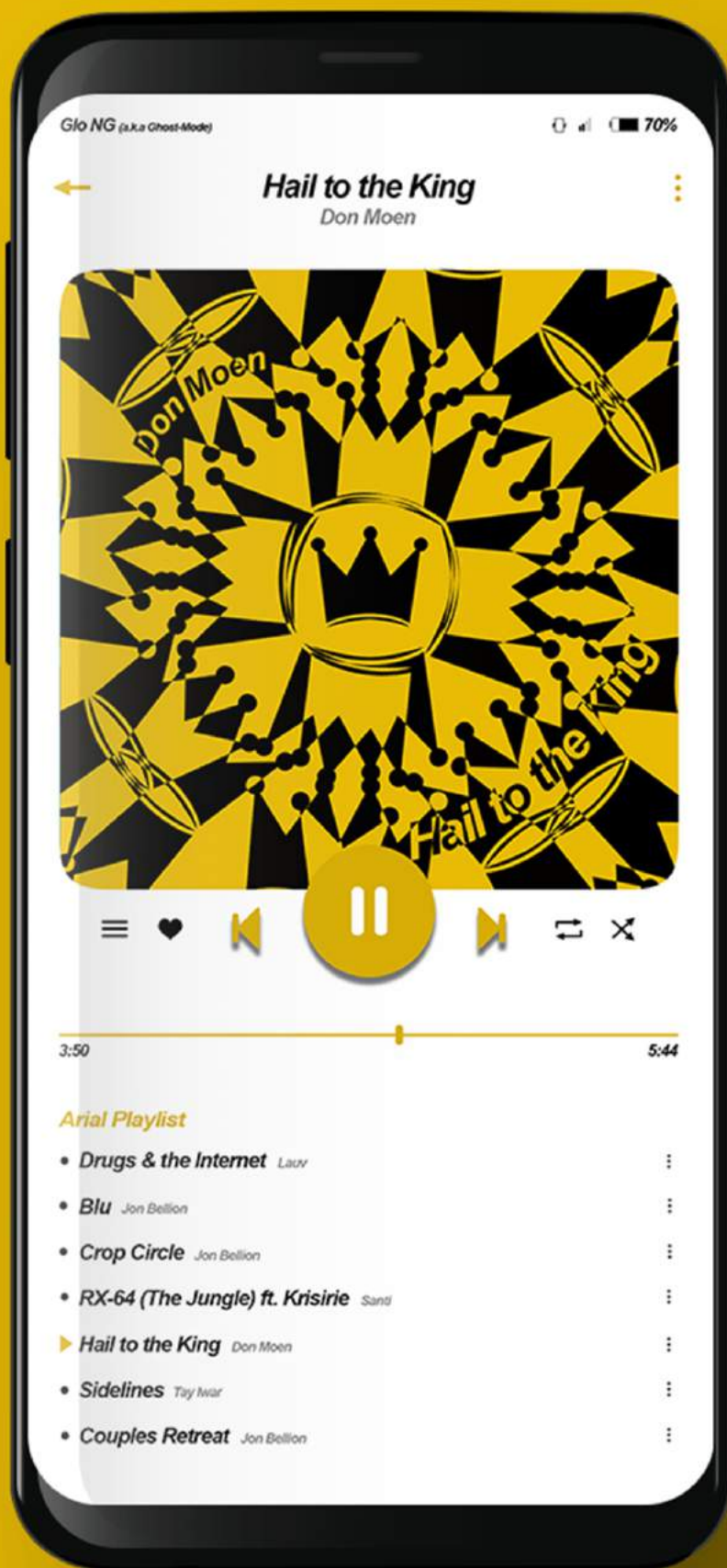


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# shèyí owólabí





# Music Business

*with*  
BADA

**What business  
tips should an  
upcoming artiste  
have?**





It is typically not the business of the artiste to handle his business administration. The most important business tip would be asking them to get competent business manager. What happens in this clime is artistes get friends or family members to be managers and these people are at best booking agents. The role of a manager is to build the brand and monetise that brand.

There are only a few people in Nigeria who have the skill set to manage and add value to talents within the entertainment space. For people who are looking for opportunities within the creative industry, talent management is a key area where people can thrive if they acquire the knowledge of it. Whether you are self-developing along those areas or going to a school to run a program abroad, we need more talent managers. It will make a world of difference to these artistes.

*one*

As an artist, become a talent manager yourself. Know the things the talent manager should know in bringing value to your career. Get books online, read about the exact things a talent manager should be doing for you. If you hire one, you need to know what to expect so that there are fewer conflicts over what sort of engagements to honor to build your brand.

As someone who ran a talent management business myself, that is one of the areas where you have most clashes with your talent. For example, a controversial brand with a negative image offers N2million for an artiste appearance, making an appearance there could have a negative impact on the brand you are building. The artiste wants the money but the business manager would say "NO, this is going to ruin us, what we would lose will be way more than the N2million". There would be arguments back and forth. However, an artiste having acquired knowledge doesn't need the talent manager to convince him into accepting the decisions, he just relates from a knowledge standpoint. On finances, remuneration and structuring, acquiring knowledge will help you know if and when the talent manager deserve the 15%.

*two*

Get your Hustle on. Have a hunger for success. No one should be more passionate about your career than yourself. Build relationships yourself. Wizkid for example built a lot of relationships while he was at EME. He was pushing himself and meeting people that could help build his career. He wasn't drawn away from people, he had interactions and he was liked. He was the guy almost everyone wanted to help. An OAP playing Wizkid mostly likely had some form of emotional connection with the personal brand- Wizkid. You cannot always be locked up in the studio while your manager goes around. If you are absent at concerts, industry events, hangouts and so on, you don't meet people and you expect your manager to do all of that, you are asking too much from other people. If you are lucky to have a manager that has all connects, you will be over-empowering that person because that person knows if they are disconnected from you, you are done. You need to be out there, speak with people, listen to other people's advice on how you can scale your brand. Another dimension to the hustle beyond knowing people in the media or show promoters or OAPs is about creating some visibility for the brand. It goes beyond being on TV and radio. As an upcoming, there would be few occasions where you would actually be on TV but most people who matter would only get to see you or know you when you are at event attending or performing.

# three



It doesn't matter how successful you get, just listen to people! Once people become big or popular, they shut their ears from people and that is when they start to die. Listening is a critical communication skill that is tied to your development. If you don't listen, there is no way you would learn. When people who have seen trends overtime, who understand what's enduring and can add value to your career come with valuable advice, don't throw it away. I see it too many times. You don't have all the knowledge in the world because you have a single and it's blown and you have some millions in the bank. Money doesn't equate or confer wisdom. You've got to put your ears open. Even the Diddys and Jay-Zs of this world have people they listen to. Have mentors and people you trust have your interest at heart.

*four*

Get Financial Education: You need savvy people to help you manage and multiply the money you make. Hire a financial advisor on your team. Hire experts to help you manage your money. Getting a Rolls Royce when you get your first big deal shows you don't have a good financial knowledge or you don't have people with good financial knowledge around you or you are not just listening to them. It is how people go broke quickly. If all you want to do is spend money, you will end up spending much more than you are making especially in a place like Nigeria where your revenue streams are very limited. Get people who can help you manage your finances properly.

*five*

**What measures  
should be in  
place to ensure a  
well structured  
entertainment  
industry?**





Is there a sector thriving in Nigeria that is not regulated by the government or have government involvement at some level? None.

The music industry needs the active involvement of the government to set the structure in place that facilitate growth.

*active  
involvement  
of the  
government*

We talk about potential but it will never be realised if the government doesn't play its role. The government needs to actively incentivise corporate Nigeria to invest in the entertainment industry for instance by offering some tax breaks or waivers to organizations that fund or support entertainment. For example we need more world class concert venues built by corporates . If there are not incentives for being a part of entertainment or sport, corporates wont get involved because for now it's hard to get any ROI.

*some  
tax breaks  
or waivers  
to organizations that  
fund or support  
entertainment.*

The government needs to provide access to funding targeted at the entertainment industry. Young Nigerians need the loans and grants to grow their craft. All these are catalysts for driving growth. It is almost impossible to have an industry without them. There cannot be an industry without a defined value chain or an ecosystem that has value embedded in it. There are a bunch of artists making money but the other allied disciplines either don't exist or are not financially rewarding. You've got to actively encourage entrepreneurs to put their money in this particular sector knowing that they have a chance.

*Young Nigerians need the  
loans and grants  
to grow  
their craft.*



Government must play a role at those levels like enforcing laws to protect intellectual property rights so that someone in Alaba will stop mass-producing someone else's intellectual property. No one else is able enforce laws on behalf of the government.

*enforcing  
laws to  
protect  
intellectual  
property  
rights*

Another example is security when artistes are playing shows. It is not Jay-Z's responsibility to provide security at Madison Square Garden for a concert, that is the government's responsibility. Jay-z only needs to work on his creativity before the concert. Have you ever heard of a Wizkid concert in the core-north? Forget religious issues, security plays a part. Even if feasibility studies show that Wizkid will fill up Sanni Abacha stadium with 40 thousand people, we can't be sure of safety for those numbers. Same for the South South. In a country of 200million people, the biggest artistes just have a small number of shows in a year and a few bookings from brands at corporate events, so how do they make actual money?

*It is not  
Jay-Z's responsibility to  
provide security at  
Madison Square  
Garden*

*Where  
disposable income  
does not exist,  
people won't buy  
music.*

The biggest of all the roles the government has to play is the one that relates the state of the economy itself. The situation where the industry would thrive is when people have disposable income to spend on entertainment. Right now, survival is important; a roof over the head, food on the table and clothes on the back before you think of buying entertainment. Where disposable income does not exist, people won't buy music. That's why 80-90% of music sales are from Nigerians in the Diaspora. The average Nigerian in Nigeria would rather go to 'Not Just Okay', 'Too Exclusive' to get free songs. A Nigerian buying 10 songs he likes means he is giving away money that can buy him breakfast and lunch. So let's imagine an artiste makes N10 from 2million people on a track, that's N200million for the artiste. The biggest revenue source for an artiste are shows and there is barely anything left after separating the cost from the revenue.



**Top of the head, what figure would you put to the value of the entertainment in Nigeria?**



The PWC projects that the entertainment industry would generate about N200 billion per annum from 2016 to 2021 but if I would put a figure to the total value, I would say at least N100billion.

Now, think of what it would be when structures are put in place.



**Artistes go out of trend and some endure time, what other ways can a musical artiste keep his relevance in the industry?**





All over the world, artistes go out of fashion, but for most of them, their music never does. What was popping in the 80s and 90s is what specialised stations play for 24 hours as classic music. These makes guys like 2Pac, DMX, Maze still make money from the media usage of their songs. There are global regulations guaranteeing that and it means the revenue still come in.



In order to continuously be relevant, you need to transcend the space of music. You need to become an entertainment brand. Be an entertainment entrepreneur. Artistes these days need to learn how to use social media so people can relate to their lifestyle. Social media is not necessarily a platform to promote your music but to promote a lifestyle that keeps your relevance. Music has brought you to us, expand your thoughts and use social media to keep being in our faces. For example, 50cent has transcended from music to being a content producer. You need to be an owner of entertainment properties whether content or platforms. The structure of a content rights is helping to cater to writers and producers but without enforcement, they won't get money. Have smart investment advisers around you to plan the money that comes from royalties as collateral to get funds for projects you need to work on.



You need to invest your money properly while you make it now. Build your brand along other lines.

**You\_might\_not\_be\_active\_for\_long.**





# Bada Akintunde-Johnson

Bada Akintunde-Johnson is the Country Manager for Viacom International Media Networks Africa overseeing entertainment brands such as MTV, MTVBase, Nickelodeon, BET and Comedy Central in Nigeria.

Before his current role, he worked in advertising as Creative Director of Globacom running some of the most talked about and most awarded campaigns of the last decade in Nigeria for the telecommunication giants. Over the years he has also worked in the advertising and Media space creating successful advertising campaigns for brands such as Guinness, Stanbic Ibtc Bank, Harp, Malta Guinness, FCMB, Skye Bank, Adidas, ExxonMobil, Lagos City Marathon, Indomie and many other top brands for advertising agencies such as Tbwa Concepts, Centre spread FCB





and SO&U. He was also the Creative Director of Hitv, Nigeria's biggest indigenous pay-tv platform for some time.

Bada is also a popular media personality who has worked extensively as a presenter and producer of radio and television Sports content. He is a respected soccer pundit who regularly features on the live broadcasts of football competitions such as the UEFA Champions league, The English Premier league and the FIFA World Cup.

Bada also co-owned a record label and a talent management company Peaceville Entertainment which managed among many others Vector tha Viper, Dija, Crayon and Protek.

He is passionate about touching lives positively and changing the mindsets that have held Africa back over the years. He is a graduate of Communication and Language Arts from the University of Ibadan, holds a post graduate diploma in professional marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing London and is currently studying for an MBA at the Berlin School of Creative Leadership.





*Connect  
with Bada!*

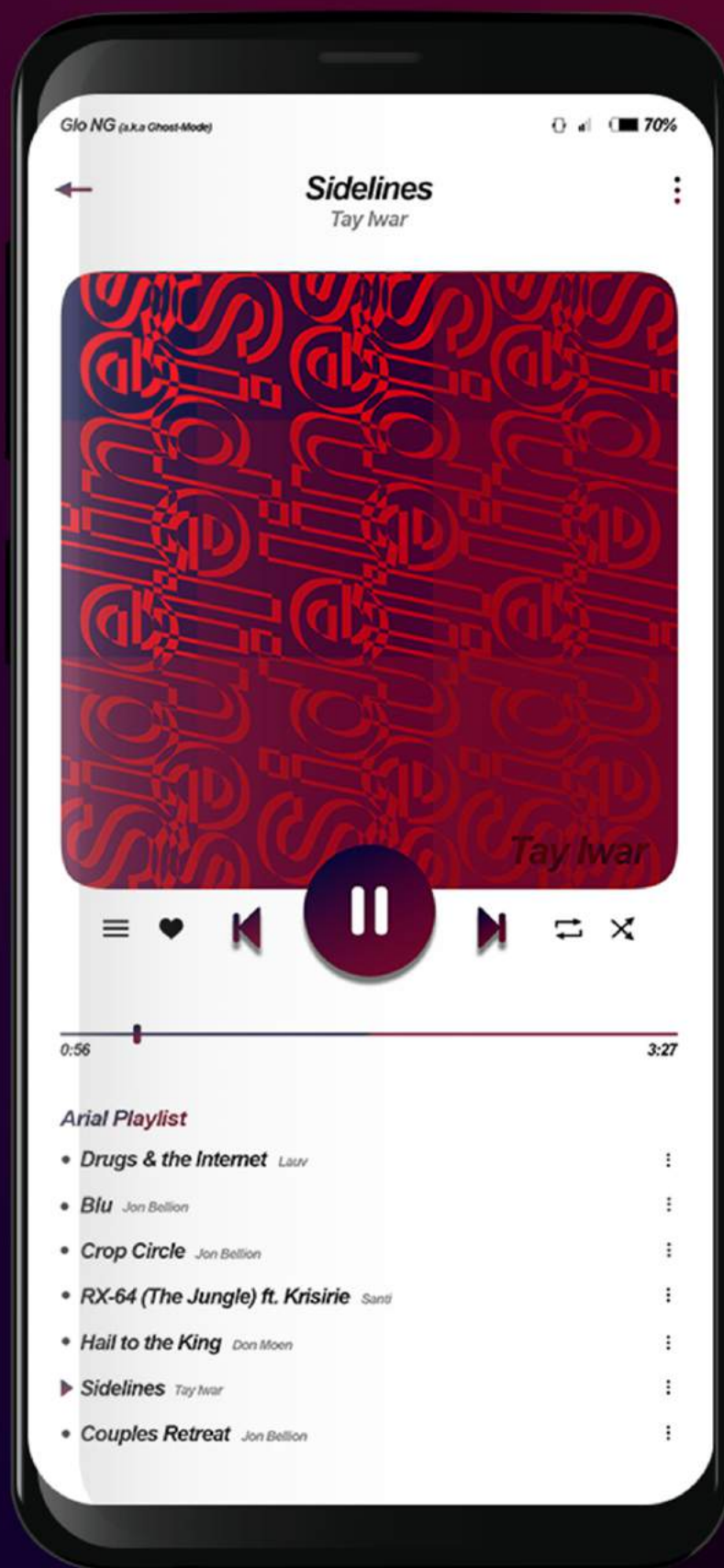


Instagram: @badabyfar  
Twitter: @BadaAkintundeJ

shèyí owólabí



# shèyí owólabí







Daily Pop Facts

@dailypopfacts

💰 | Highest-grossing female artists of the decade, as of July 2019:

1. Taylor Swift (\$910M)
2. Beyoncé (\$845M)
3. Lady Gaga (\$619M)
4. Pink (\$481M)
5. Madonna (\$475M)
6. Celine Dion (\$455M)
7. Rihanna (\$414M)
8. Katy Perry (\$385M)
9. Adele (\$284M)
10. Britney Spears (\$275M)

Keep Going!



Getting here with

DJ  
JIMMY  
JATT

**Tomi:** From your perspective, can you go all in on the development of Afro Hip Hop from when you started to what is happening now?

**Jimmy Jatt:** I want to take it from when I got into it. I have been in the music space in the 80s. I started as an aspiring artiste, I used to rap and do break dance in the early days, made demo tapes I thought I could release. People thought it was too western so there weren't too many spaces for rappers around here. I started DJ-ing, trying to find a space within the entertainment space. While at it, I got some attention and popularity and felt like drawing in some guys I knew had interest doing music but didn't have a platform. This made me start a street event called Road Block, gathering about 5000 or 6000 to come watch the





street talent perform. All these happened back in the late 80s.

As a result of that. Artists like Junior and pretty, Daddy Showkey, Daddy Fresh and the Ajegunle boys, Defo Clan and a whole lot of Festac hip hop heads were discovered from that platform. We felt we could do more by asking some privileged kids to invest in these talents and put their influence behind them. I invited some of them to come watch the next event. Right there, they loved the talent and they were interested in some set of guys like Junior and Pretty who did a popular song called "Monica". That was where the whole idea of independent label started from.

A far as I am concerned, the first independent record label in this country that was created to service these street and budding talents that couldn't be taken to the big record labels like Sony & EMI was created right there in front of my studio in Obalende. That would be Storm Records. Junior and Pretty were the first artistes to be signed. We had cassettes and we sold them off the back of the car at the time. Storm Records was made up of Obi Asika, Olisa Adibua and two other guys who are not in the entertainment space anymore. Storm Records and I started that process and it was highly successful. For every 10 people you talk



“

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to, 5 of them would know about the song Monica. It was the beginning of Afro Hip hop.

By the time Junior and Pretty were due for the second album, the big record labels who were not interested in the beginning now saw them as huge potentials and they got signed unto Premier Music. Based on that experiment, we now knew that the independent approach to produce music could fly. A lot of artistes were discovered from it. Artiste like Daddy Showkey who was just in the military was convinced by me to start doing music, Daddy Fresh, Rough Rugged and Raw and Defo clan came in too and we moved on from there.

By the mid 90s, private licenses were granted by the Federal Government to run private stations for the first time; RayPower became the first indigenous private station. Before then, all media organisations were government owned and they were not supportive of the type of content we pushed out. Kenny and D1 came and leveraged on the platform with RayPower to grow a media power and support the independent approach of





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Kenny & D1  
leveraged on this and  
created Kennis Music.

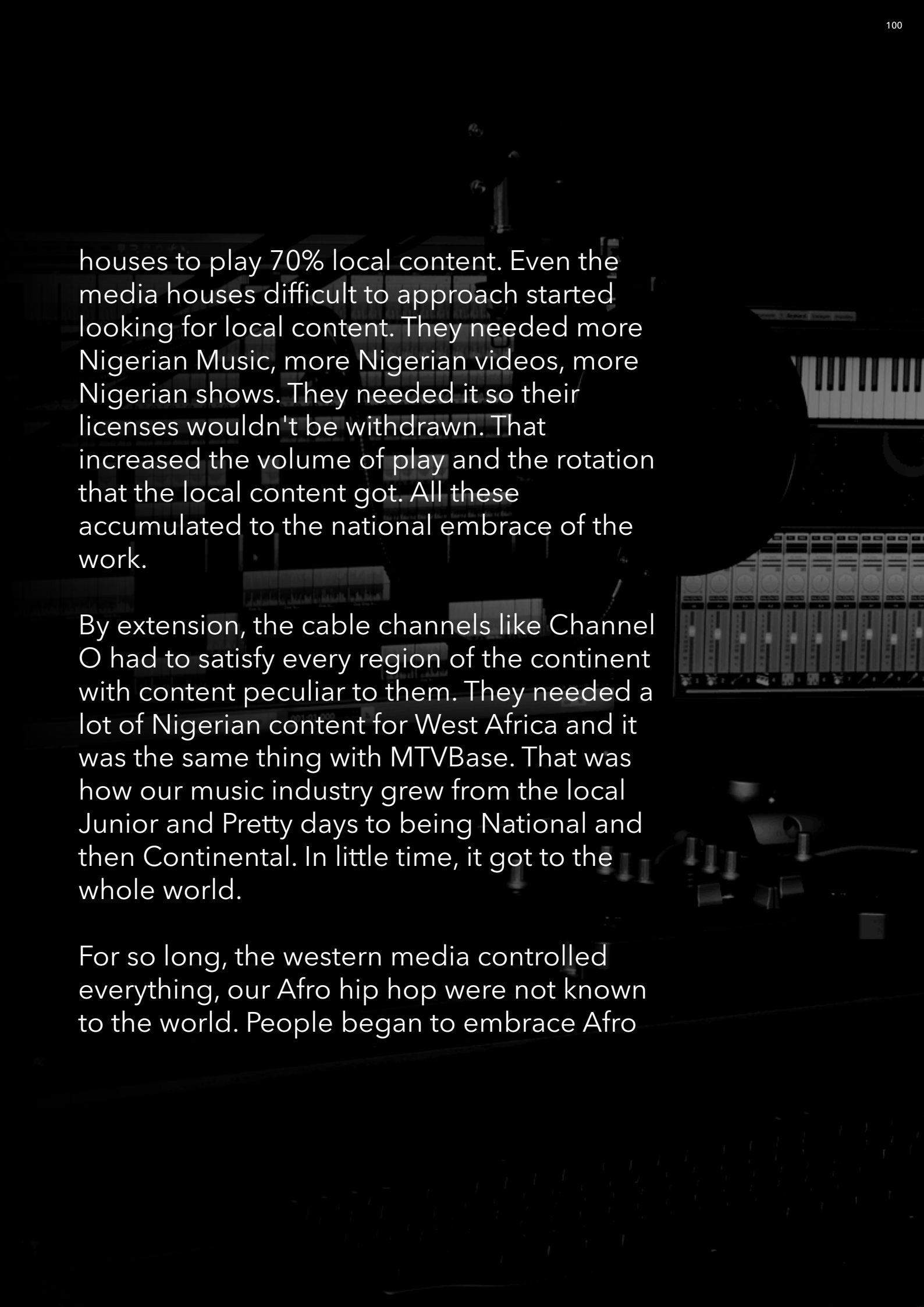
owning a record label. They created Kennis Music which became the second prominent record label in Nigeria, producing and managing Remedies and that was very successful!

In between that, there were Tribes Men and Eldee as an individual did a lot with that even as a young guy.

Cassette players made DJing difficult but with the advent of CD, Nigerian DJing became easier. This also made it easier to infuse Nigerian Music into the party environment, club mixes and concerts. These led to plantation boys and a whole lot of other stuff.

So in breaking down all I have said, I would say from the era of the late 80s to mid 90s was Storm Records, Junior and pretty, Daddy Showkey; Mid 90s were Remedies, late 90s were Plantation boys and by the new Millennium with the inclusion of the internet and technology, Afro Hip Hop went out of Nigeria.

One of the policies the government made helped. They instructed all media



houses to play 70% local content. Even the media houses difficult to approach started looking for local content. They needed more Nigerian Music, more Nigerian videos, more Nigerian shows. They needed it so their licenses wouldn't be withdrawn. That increased the volume of play and the rotation that the local content got. All these accumulated to the national embrace of the work.

By extension, the cable channels like Channel O had to satisfy every region of the continent with content peculiar to them. They needed a lot of Nigerian content for West Africa and it was the same thing with MTVBase. That was how our music industry grew from the local Junior and Pretty days to being National and then Continental. In little time, it got to the whole world.

For so long, the western media controlled everything, our Afro hip hop were not known to the world. People began to embrace Afro



beat because it is fresh. The world didn't have access to our content because we were blocked by policies at different times. Technology and the internet has made the global reach and virality of our content better even if the local stations both at home and abroad won't play your work. Songs like African Queen made that happen, then Mo'hits and PSquare reinforced the Afro hip hop presence. The next set of guys definitely took it from there as you have seen with Davido and Wizkid.

It has been a whole lot of effort from the late 80s till now. I started DJ-ing when you would only play western songs from morning till night. There were Nigerian Hip-Hop songs but it was not finding its space in mainstream till the mid 90's where you could now do 50% of Nigerian songs and now 100% of it.

I feel like a proud Dad because I saw the birth of this and I can see a grown child who is succeeding and doing well. That is not to say all things are in order, there is still a lot of work in the business side of it. Some might think they are making a huge sum of money now but it is nothing compared to what could be made! You could have your top 10 earning millions but this is an industry with millions of talents. A few hundred getting something is not a good look. The ones earning something are not even earning what they should be on. I know we will get there.



There were Nigerian Hip Hop songs but it was not finding it's space in mainstream till the mid 90's where you could now do 50% of Nigerian songs and today 100% of it when Dj-ing.

**I feel like a proud Dad because I saw the birth of this and I can see a grown child who is succeeding and doing well.**



I am hoping that on the business side, things can be done better. I feel that for so long, a lot of business people did not see the value in the entertainment industry. I feel like the money in the entertainment industry is more than what is in oil, I feel so. I think things are beginning to take shape a lot more in creativity and in the business. The artistes are influencing the young ones and the young ones are getting better than the existing ones.



The next generation would be a bit more creative. I am not one of those who say the old is better than the new, I think we should study what is happening, bring the same level of skill and appreciate the freshness. Technology gets better and the production quality of sound and video is now world class.

The quality is increasing and it measures well anywhere in the world right now. There is more access to that technology and the sound is peculiar to us. Our sound is not what people from elsewhere can easily put together; just like reggae is authentically done by the Jamaicans, Africans doing afro beat is authentic.

**Tomi:** You have said so much more than I bargained for, I am glad about this. If I could break this down into bits, there is a whole lot each bit would expand to. I could hear things like “setting yourself up for opportunity” where the federal government now asked for 70% of indigenous content; I could hear a lot of “infrastructure not being in place but creating things yourself”. Entrepreneurs in Nigeria know it is tough to grow in a place with little infrastructure. You wanted something and you created your own infrastructure, you kept doing it and was consistent with it and eventually, something happened that created more demand of what you were doing. Technology came, made things better...

**Jimmy Jatt:** (breaks in) ...which eventually took the power away from the gatekeepers! There were some people who felt like they shouldn't play your songs, then the internet came and now you are not even trying to be local but global in your entry.



There were some gatekeepers  
who felt like they shouldn't  
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but global in your **entry**.



**Tomi:** (continues) Millennial entrepreneurs in the tech, real estate and so on can apply these lessons. Things can look very dark but if they keep hitting, they would eventually break through and position themselves for more demand on their work. This means you need to be prepared for the pressure that comes with the break through, you will need more input at the next level. Now, the global attention is on us after the new level of global break we have.

This leads to the new thought: **We now need to be more intentionally global in everything. The Gift album has opened up a new window for more of that, it is left to us to get into those rooms and bring our A-game into negotiations not asking for the crumbs...**

**Jimmy Jatt:** (cuts in and continues) ...but that's one of the problems around here. Some people don't even know how those things came about. They will go there and still be at the mercy of them, begging for favor meanwhile you have your value! They get glad they got something and you can see that in some of the international deals signed by some of our artistes that did not work out well. Everyone was too excited to say they got a deal with some record label and then you are

'number 950' in their list of priorities.

We need to understand and appreciate ourselves and know the value we bring. We need structure in place and people who would deal from a business perspective. Being a good singer or producer doesn't mean you are a good business person. You need the right people to be in the right places. We shouldn't be too over-excited being the 'first from a community' and end up being naive, signing into some type of slavery. These are the issues we seem to be having now.

We need to go to the war front as ONE. We should go as NAIJA people or AFRICA. When we get in, we can now talk about our different capacities. A lot of times (not every time), one person gets in and then he feels like he would keep it all to himself. It is wrong. For example, when you look at digital distribution of music, a lot of people have been aware of the kind of money that could be made in it and how it works but you will be shocked about how many people don't know how it works. There are people who are privileged to know the functionality of the process but have not taken time to educate others because they just want to be selfish with it. I don't know if it's a black man thing or an African thing or a Nigerian thing and that is not good for the collective.

Royalties go to the artiste so just educate more on it.



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**Tomi:** With this, instead of competing, collaboration will give us the strong hold in rooms, strong holds when it comes to considerations, strong hold when it comes to people who would be on the top 10. Another thing you have said is they don't know how to do it like us. Beyonce doing a song with the Africans is because they made themselves visible.

## **Now, what do you see for the future?**

**Jimmy Jatt:** I think the future is bright no doubt. I always believe in time and event. You might sit here and think this is how things would be in 5 years and then something drastic happens that changes the direction of it. For instance radio stations playing 'god' now ask people to please bring their content because they know these other people have other channels to put out their work. It is going to get to a point where it

**We need to  
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AFRICA.**

**//**

would get easier than it is right now and the understanding and awareness will be more. Every day the internet educates everyone, Google helps a lot these days. A lot of people will become aware of how some new things work and that will always help the development. I feel we are just getting started and people are just discovering our sound. The world is discovering what we have, once they discover it and they get into it, it's an addiction! When I started DJing, people hated when I played Nigerian songs and called it trash but now, all they want is Nigerian. Same with fashion, people were not proudly Nigerian, they called it 'Okirika' (inferior). Same with Nigerian movies and you can see everyone going to the cinema to watch Nigerian movies now.

It's only going to get bigger and better.

The world is a smaller place right





now, there is nothing happening in the world that we don't have access to. Gone are the days people travel and come back explaining some things and we don't get it. Look, if I start disturbing a global artiste with links to my good work consistently through Instagram, one day he or she might just check and get shocked when they see the numbers I am making in views on YouTube and millions of followers on Instagram. Numbers like Davido's followership on Instagram and Yemi Alade's views on Youtube would make you want to check the person out. They would want to tap into that power.

It's a huge future.

**Tomi: Wow, Thank you Jimmy!**







**Afrofuturism**  
Arclight (@arclight.jpg)





**AMPLIFY  
AFRICA**  
Africa to the world

| Los Angeles, CA





## What is Amplify Africa doing in 10 years?

Our plan is to position Amplify Africa Inc to become one of the leading brands in the world representing Africa through entertainment and media.

**There is an increasing attention on Afro content from the world's biggest platforms, what role is Amplify Africa playing in ensuring quality representation in music, fashion, cultural orientation, dialects and individual representations?**

For too long we have seen through the lens of Western Media that Africa has been synonymous to anything ugly, impoverished and unwanted. When we started Amplify Africa 3 years ago, our main goal was to showcase the beauty and excellence of Africa, Africans and Africa diaspora. It is very satisfying and extremely encouraging to see that our vision is gradually becoming actualized and African content is slowly becoming accepted worldwide.



**When we started Amplify Africa 3 years ago, our main goal was to showcase the beauty and excellence of Africa, Africans and Africa diaspora.**



Since inception of the company, we have built multiple platforms for the world to experience Africa. Amplify Africa is a Los Angeles based company and this gives us a vantage position to execute our goals as LA is the world's capital of Entertainment.



Over the past three years our team has successfully built “The Amplify Africa Experience” an event platform through which we have brought African talent, Music, fashion, food and culture to the world. Some of the experiences are Afrolituation, Made in Africa, Afro Music Festival and Afro ball. Afrolituation is LA's biggest African Experience party with 400+ people in attendance monthly. Afrolituation is not just a party but a cultural experience where people have access to mingle, eat suya, get some face painting, listen to African music and dance without being bougie. So far, Afrolituation has featured amazing talents from Africa, DJ Tunez, Nana Kwabena, MrEazi, Maleek Berry, Izzy Odigie, Dj Fully Focus, LAX, Dotman, and many others.





Made in Africa is an African concert and artist showcase in Los Angeles which usually takes place during the BET Awards weekend. In 2018 we recorded over 1200 attendees dubbing it the biggest African concert so far in Los Angeles. Made in Africa has had artists like Davido, Burna boy, MrEazi, Rotimi, Teni, DJ Cuppy and Tarela gracing the stage.





Afro Music Festival is a cultural festival that celebrates Afro music, food, fashion, dance and culture. This celebration is one that encompasses showcase of African, Afro-Latino, Afro-Caribbean and African American cultures.

Over the past year, we have partnered with some of the biggest talent agencies in the world to showcase African movies by organizing special screenings. So far, we have partnered with United Talent Agency (UTA) to do an advanced private screening of Genvieve Nnaji's Netflix original movie "Lion Heart". We also have partnered with William Morris Endeavor (WME) to Screen Stella Damascus and Daniel Ademonikan's "Between" movie. It is an exciting time for African entertainment, and we are very honored to be one of the key players moving the culture from this side of the world.





It is very satisfying and extremely encouraging to see that our vision is gradually becoming actualized and African content is slowly becoming accepted worldwide.





**A very high percentage of entrepreneurs give up within the first 2 years of starting an enterprise, Amplify Africa is 3 years in, tell us some success stories and the motivation to keep building.**

Honestly, it is most definitely very true that being an entrepreneur is quite challenging especially when you transition from a professional career. There are so many times we have questioned ourselves as to if this was going to work out. We are still a work in progress, and we feel we



haven't even scratched the surface of what we intend to do yet, however, I guess they say it's always good to celebrate little successes and milestones. Our main success story is building the company from ground zero. We knew no one in Los Angeles when we both moved here, we had no money to execute any of our projects but through the help of GOD, the company is where it is today.

Another major success story is with one of our event platforms "THE AFRO BALL" Afro Ball is a fashion-conscious Gala where we celebrate and honor Africans who are excelling in various industries and fields. (We like to call it African MET Gala). This event is very special to us because there is no platform in the US that celebrates African





excellence with glitz and glamor. Our goal is to foster great partnerships amongst Africans and inspire the younger generation to aspire to be great. We have been able to bring the greatest of minds from Africa together under one roof to be honored for excelling in their fields and putting the continent on the map.

Also, during this event, The United States Congress through the office of Congresswoman Karen Bass has partnered with Amplify Africa to present special congressional certificate of excellence to all the honorees at the ball. For the past 2 editions, we have seen amazing relationships and partnerships being built, as well as people being inspired by the



stories of our distinguished honorees to be great and put Africa on the map. Amongst the long list of past honorees are Iddris Sandu, a 21 year old Ghanaian architectural technologist who has designed software for Uber, Twitter and Snapchat, Jackie Aina a makeup influencer who was one of the advocates that fought for makeup companies to manufacture products that fit Black skin color and Ade Adesanya, Co-Founder and president of Moving analytics a tech company dedicated to conquering heart disease through digital cardiac recovery programs.







One motivating factor is that we have a burning passion for the growth of the African entertainment industry. We want the world to see and experience all the exceptional talent and greatness that brews from Africa. Another interesting motivation is the fear of failure as an entrepreneur. And this stems from the fact that both of us were in active law practice before going full on to becoming entrepreneurs, we know our parents, friends and family are looking at us with side eye waiting to say " we told you", so we have no choice than to succeed. Another is the hunger to always become the best in whatever we do as Africans especially being from Nigeria, our parents will always ring in our ears.

Also, during this event, The United States Congress through the office of Congresswoman Karen Bass has partnered with Amplify Africa to present special congressional certificate of excellence to all the honorees at the ball.







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**With the age of the internet and increasing awareness for Afrocentric content, can you go full blitz on the opportunities you see for African creatives?**

Technology has played a huge role in making Afrocentric content spread across the world. Access to social media is one of the major players in this circumstance as this has made the world one place where everyone can see. Through social media, several talents have been discovered and several multimillion-dollar businesses have started. Through internet and



**Technology has played a huge role in making Afrocentric content spread across the world.**





social media, one person from one continent can see what is going on in another continent. Prior to this age of internet, it was very difficult to pass messages across from just one city to another, but now within seconds you can get information and receive messages from across the globe.

Having said this, there are a plethora of opportunities that have opened up for African creatives and we can see many are already taking advantage of it. One is a **platform to showcase talent**. Before this age there was no free platform for up and coming talents to showcase their talent, but now social media is free, you can upload whatever you want in the corner of your room and the entire world can see. An example is Teni whose talent was discovered on Instagram and has now become one for the





**...there are a plethora of opportunities that have opened up for African creatives and we can see many are already taking advantage of it.**



opportunity to publish and distribute your work as a creative and make money on there without any special or technical know-how. For example, uploading your content on YouTube or streaming platforms like apple music, SoundCloud, Spotify, BoomPlayetc. can make you money as it is being viewed or listened to.

**Collaborations.** It is very easy and convenient to engage in collaborations with other talents across the globe due to access to internet and technology. Several movies, music and other contents have been created without the creators being in the same room at the same time due to technological advancement. This is a great opportunity for Africans creatives to collaborate with each other regardless of where they are.





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It is hard to cap the amount of opportunities that exist with internet and technology and with the rise in awareness and reception Afrocentric content is getting now, I implore all creatives to take the best advantage of this wave. We must be ready to showcase the BEST quality possible, because this is our chance to show how excellent and beautiful Africa and Africans are. The future of Africa is in our hands and we have a duty to make it right.





//

We must be ready to showcase the BEST quality possible, because this is our chance to show how excellent and beautiful Africa and Africans are.

//

## What projects/events are you currently on and what benefits are in it for potential partners?

We are presently working on the following Media platform. This will serve as a platform for written articles and visual content that showcases the beauty of our heritage through storytelling. The media site is already soft launched but will be officially launched before the end of 2019.





A Global conference for Africans called **"Africon"** a conference that will cover the following topics - Leadership, Entertainment, Media and Technology. We hope to have that conference in 2020.



Africon 2020

**Amplify Africa Foundation:** A non-profit organization focused on a scholarship fund for college kids interested in media and entertainment and a tech incubator for African tech startups.



Amplify Africa Foundation



**Amplify Africa Productions:** Production of African stories/content for sale on major networks and platforms.



Amplify Africa Productions



**Amplify Africa Music:** A management and distribution company for African Music talent. We will cover a wide range of clients ,both individual and corporate clients.



Amplify Africa Music



Our plan is to position Amplify Africa Inc to become one of the leading brands in the world representing Africa through entertainment and media.



[www.amplifyafrica.org](http://www.amplifyafrica.org)  
[@amplifyafrica](https://twitter.com/amplifyafrica)

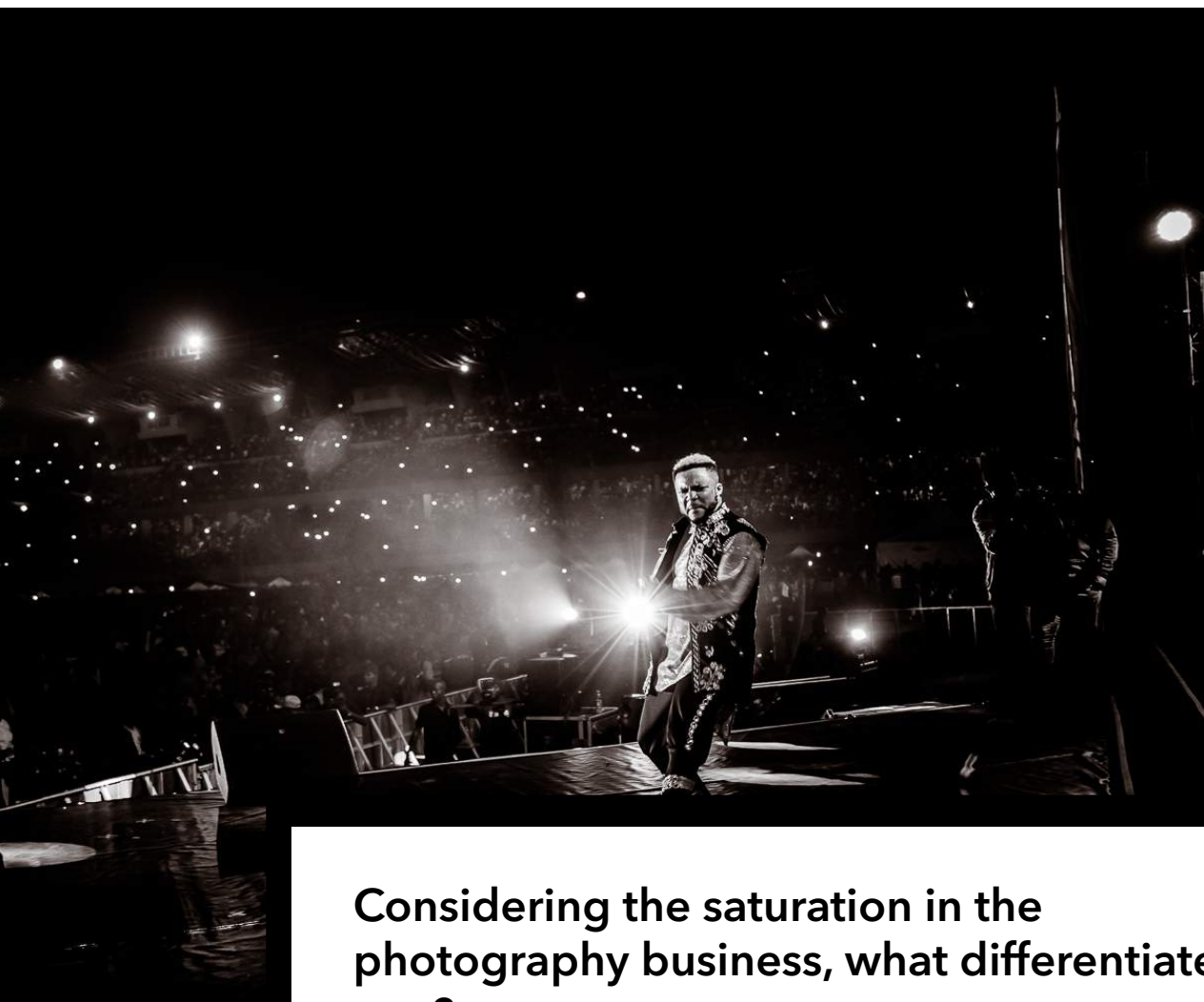


The background of the image is a dynamic stage performance. A person in a bright red and yellow outfit is visible in the lower center, performing on a stage. The stage is lit with various colors, including blue, green, and red. In the background, there are large, colorful, abstract structures that look like giant letters or symbols. The overall atmosphere is energetic and theatrical.

# Religious Photography & Entertainment

Joseph Oru (@sephoru)





**Considering the saturation in the photography business, what differentiates you?**

Photography means a whole lot to me than a few clicks on the shutter button and the razzmatazz that comes with well edited photos.

I photograph to freeze the most priceless thing on earth, which is time. And in those split seconds of freezing time, I document history through art with clicks that brings my mind's interpretation to reality. This is what differentiates my uniqueness from others. MY EXPRESSION.



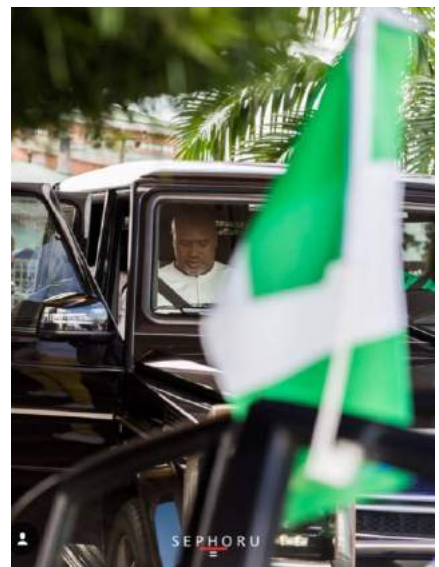
### **Kindly share some of your success stories.**

Leading the team of photographers that covered The African Praise Experience, The Experience Lagos, was one that has left an indelible mark in my career. Due to the caliber of the event, the output had to be excellent and deliverables, beyond perfect. So, imagine capturing life changing moments, managing a group of professionals that are doing same and making sure everyone delivers superbly, it was huge!

Other success stories would be my collaboration with an Australian photographer for a wedding.

Being the official photographer for ONOS. Also, being the Lead Photographer in House on the rock and Photographer for Pastor Paul and his wife and many dignitaries that visit, has been a high point thus far.

being the Lead Photographer in House on the rock and Photographer for Pastor Paul & his wife and many dignitaries that visit, has been a high point thus far.







### **Who inspires you and why?**

Only one person takes this spot, Sephlawless. He is a pseudonymous American-based Photographer, Artist, Published Author, Political Activist that documents the most neglected places throughout America, listening to the compelling personal stories of people who still live in these places. I hope to carry out my own version in Africa soon. Watch out.



**How far are you willing to  
go with your photography?**

Till my time is up on earth.



## What are the key points in ensuring profit as a photographer?

- Photography needs to be treated as a business and the rules are not different. Collaborate with businesses where your target client spends time and money.
- Sell digital or printed copies of your work.
- Sell your photos on stock websites.
- Write a photography blog.
- Most importantly, Invest in your art.





**From your work with gospel artistes and events, what is your thought on the growing wave of excellence in gospel music?**

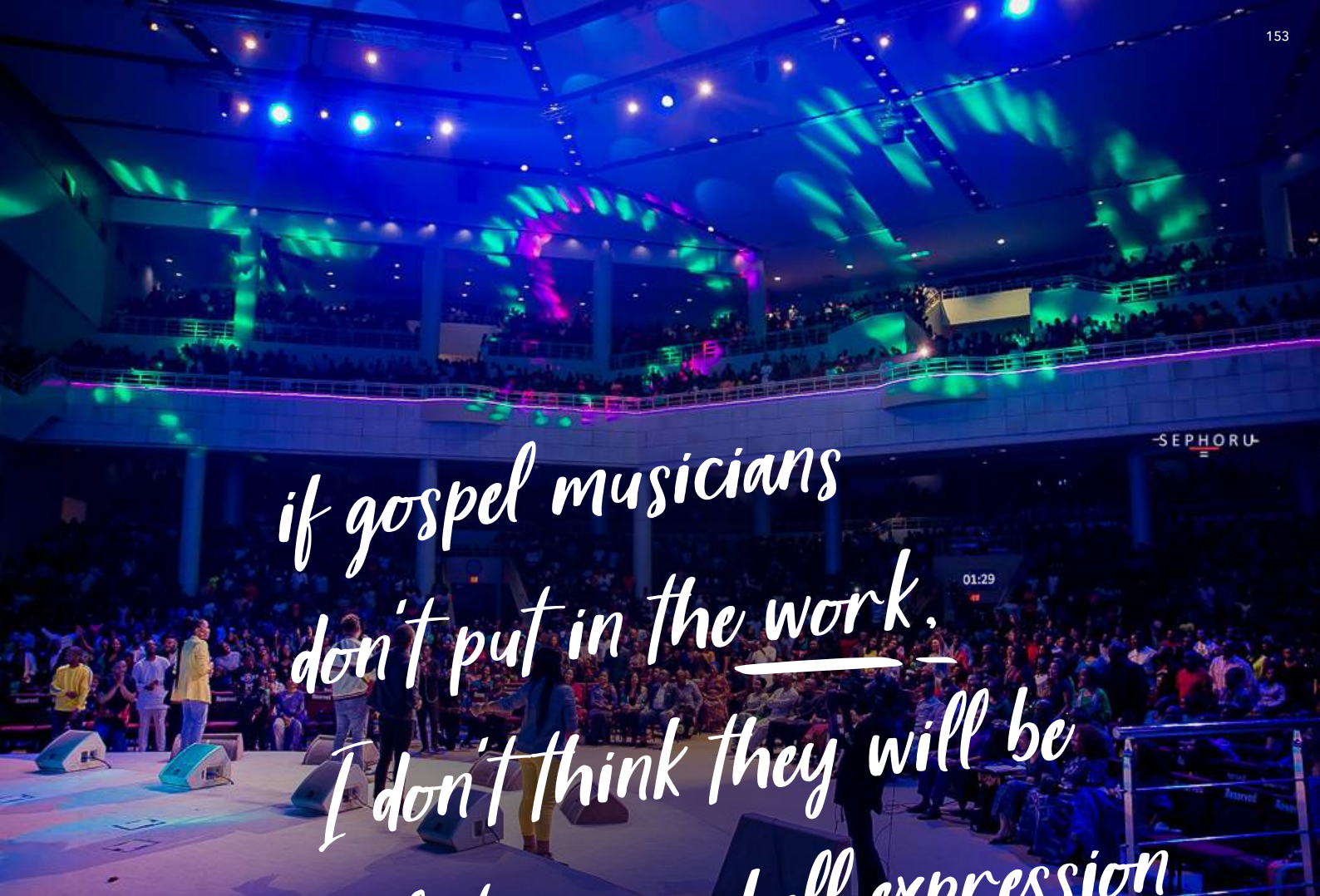
The Gospel music industry is growing but at a slow rate compared to its contemporary.

To me, music is music. People are moved by the beats, the lyrics and rhythm of a song and if gospel musicians don't put in the work, I don't think they will be able to give a full expression of what they have to offer.

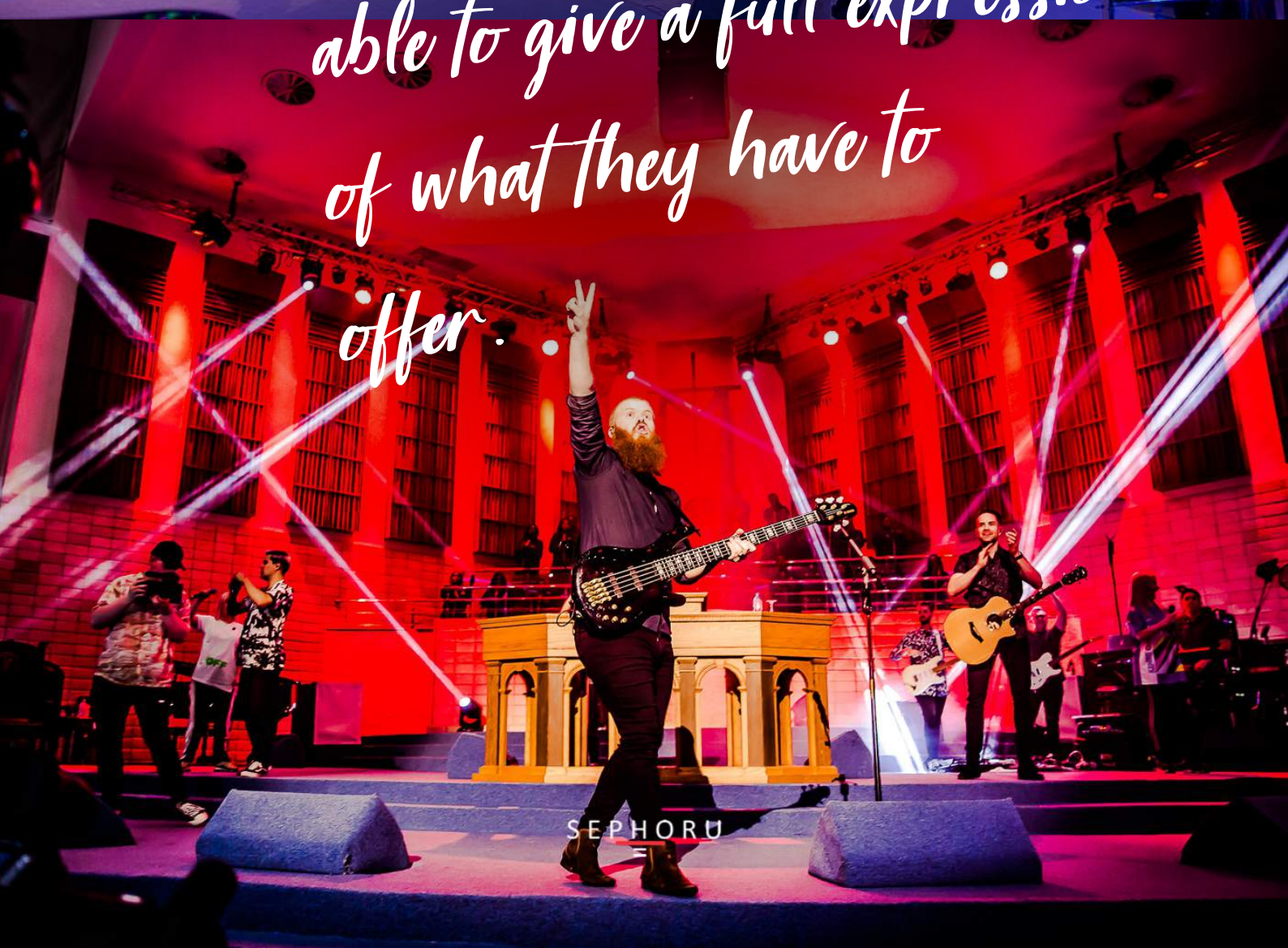
The Experience Lagos, NOW worship and some other amazing concerts have set a standard and have shown that gospel concerts can be as entertaining as a regular concert and still achieve their aim. Also, Tim Godfrey has also shown that music is music and gospel artistes should not be afraid to go for excellence.

So like I said Gospel musicians must put in the work like every other musician.





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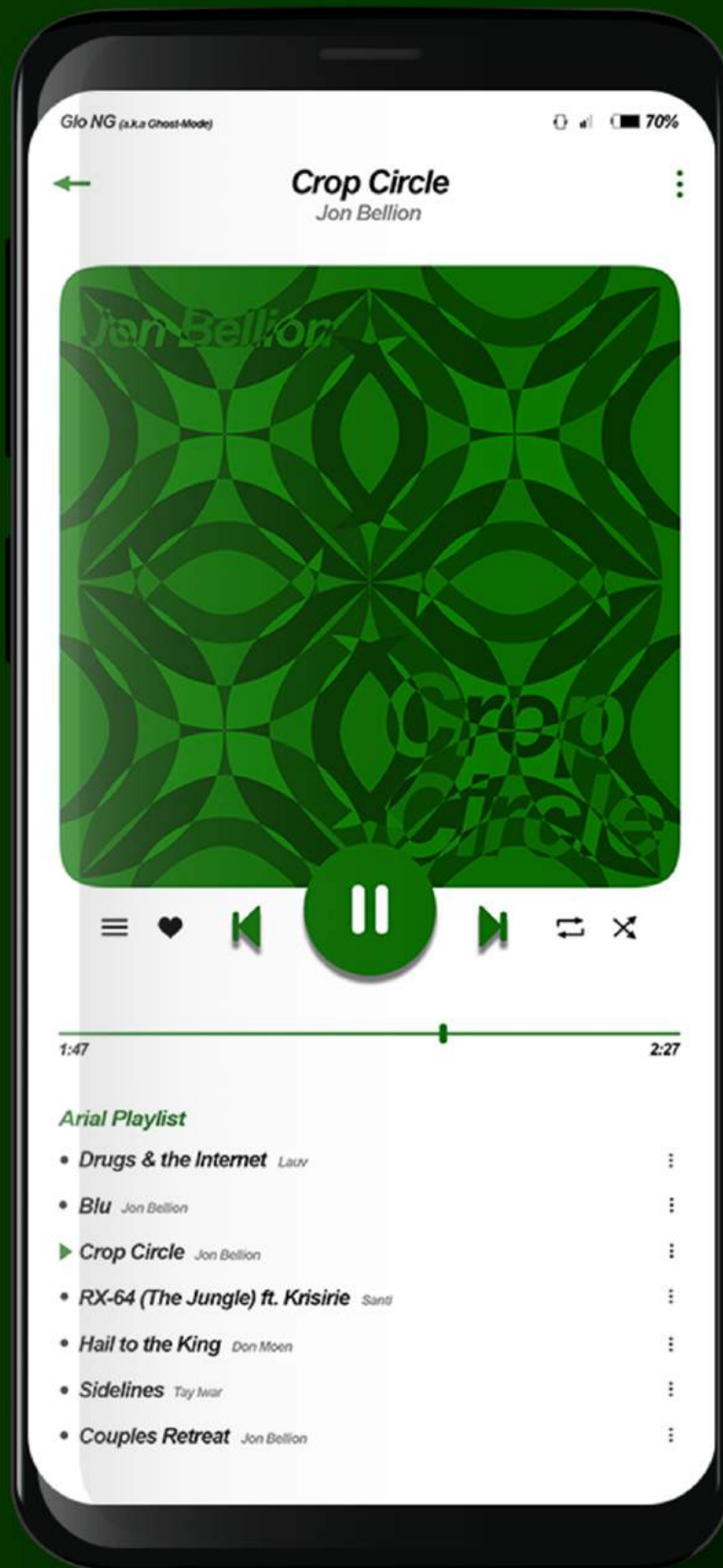


shèuǐ owólabí





## shèqí owólabí





JEPHTER AKAEHIE

## What Inspired your business Greenpower health limited?

When I was about less than 2 years, I was confirmed to have hernia. However, the option my parents were faced with was operating the hernia but my parents were afraid of carrying out the surgery on me as they felt since most of my Male reproductive arteries were still developing as a little kid, it could be risky as it may pose a future challenge on my ability to father a child in the future. The only way out was placing me on herbal medicine treatment. I was told that the hernia dissolved within few months and about two different medical doctors (pediatricians) re-confirmed that. I ask lots of questions. When I found out what solved my problem and gave my parents hope as a little kid, I resorted to deepening my research on herbal medicine.

According to the world health organisation (WHO), 80% of Africa depends on herbal medicine. That's about 1 BILLION people. Looking at the number, I saw a lot of business opportunities. I started looking at how much herbal products were imported into Africa and the question was: what do I need to do to solve health problems using herbal medicine and then take advantage of the demography of herbal medicine users and then reduce importation of herbal medicine since we have very good medicinal plants in Nigeria and other



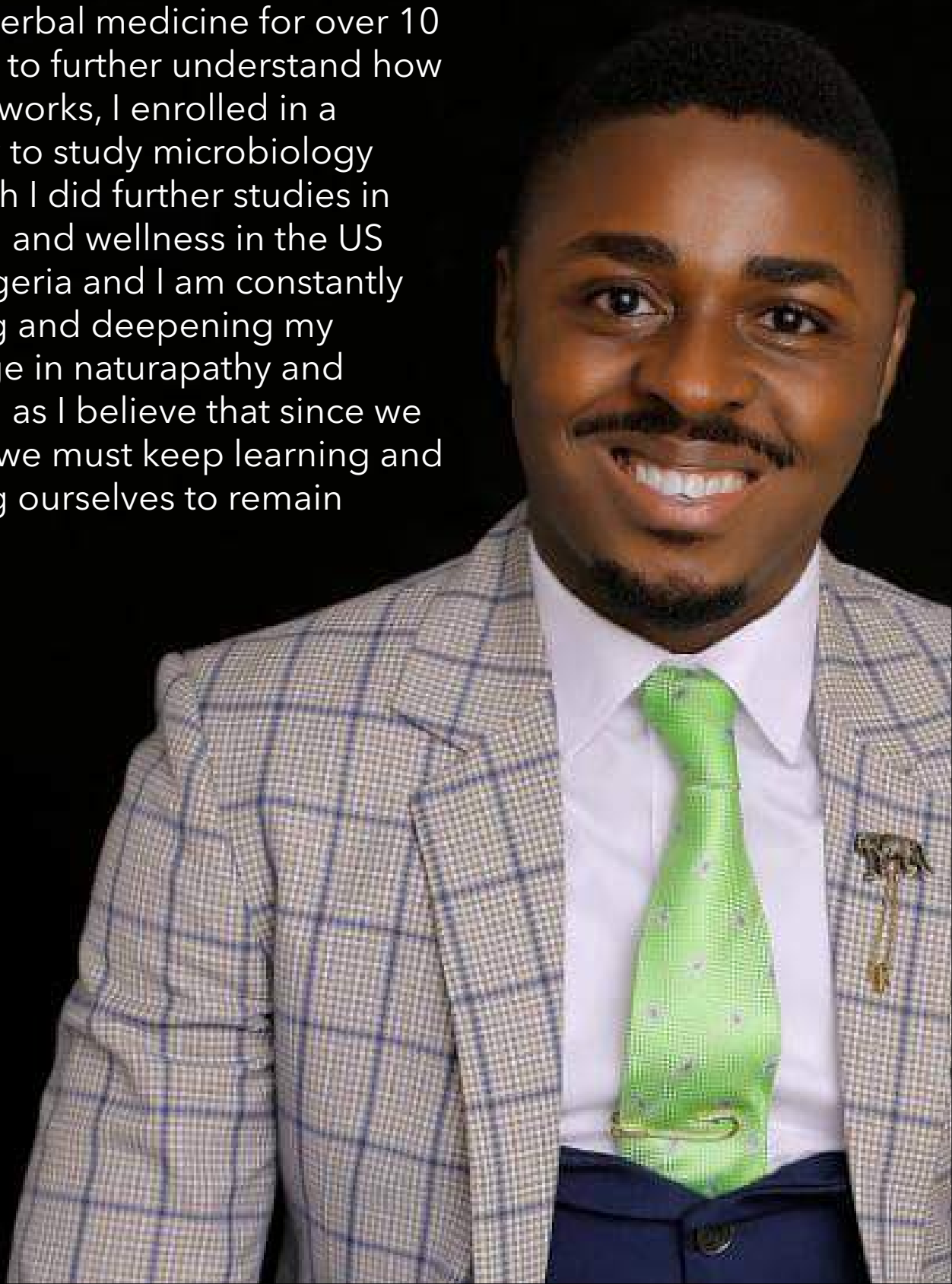
African countries and most importantly, provide treatment solutions at a very affordable cost. To achieve this, I set up a team of researchers which encompassed medical doctors, pharmacists, biochemists and microbiologists and we began to identify medicinal plants, their values, reactions and then subjecting the formulations to modern pharmacological, toxicological and safety tests to create new medicines as well as how best to prepare the formulations to meet international standards and that gave birth to Greenpower Healthcare in 2015.

At Greenpower Healthcare, we focus on bringing herbal medicines to the world in a contemporary form and to uncover the mystery behind the 5000 year old system of medicine.



**How has your professional experience prepared you for this very specific line of business?**

I studied and watched my late dad practise herbal medicine for over 10 years and to further understand how the body works, I enrolled in a University to study microbiology after which I did further studies in herbalism and wellness in the US and in Nigeria and I am constantly improving and deepening my knowledge in naturapathy and herbalism as I believe that since we are alive, we must keep learning and improving ourselves to remain relevant.



## How have you segmented your market?

We currently focus on women of child-bearing age who use our hormonal and fertility enhancement products as well as men who desire to improve their fertility and wellness. We are soon launching new products before December which is for teenagers and then another one for adult males with prostate enlargement.





### Who are your customers ?

Wellness is everyone's business. Our customers are the 1 billion population or 80% of African population who depend on herbal medicine. We are gradually developing brands that meet the health needs of this population.

### With so many gimmick products around, how do you differentiate your product quality and effectiveness?

Interestingly, we are about the only or one of the few herbal medicine manufacturing companies in Africa, deepening researches in medicinal plants and carrying out clinical studies on our herbal products. Our products are backed up with clinical studies by established research institutes like Nigerian Institute of medical research. Our products are also duly registered with NAFDAC and we are also undergoing FDA approval process in Ghana.



### **Are your products made in Nigeria?**

Absolutely! Our products are 100% made in Nigeria. From Nigeria, we ship/export to United States of America, Asia, Europe and other African countries. Currently, we have presence in 6 African countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Togo, Cameroon & Cote d'Ivoire) where our products are sold.

### **Talk to us about the manufacturing process**

Once the required raw materials are assembled, which are usually either plant roots or leaves, we analyse them to be sure they are free from bacteria then wash them and take them to the drying room. After they are duly dried according to our standard, we take them to the milling room, after milling the products, we analyse each of the ingredients to be sure they are still free from bacterial. The next step is compounding, once we are done compounding, we now have a formulation. Next step is encapsulating the raw materials, then packaging, batching and then final testing by the quality assurance and quality control officer to be sure the products meet our requirements before they can finally be released to our consumers across the world.



### **What has been the most difficult aspect of starting and scaling your business?**

Starting a truly innovative business is not easy. It requires a lot of funds to acquire machinaries as well as building a standard production factory that is GMP compliance. However, we are constantly improving on this.

### **With your product line you are bringing back traditional and natural approaches to wellness.**

Sure.

### **What has been the reception or backlash to your all organic product line in the Nigerian market?**

Nigeria as well as the world is tilting towards organic or herbal medicine now. We came up with something old in a new way. Our products are truly well accepted by Nigerians. Healthcare professionals advise and recommend some of our amazing products as we have done clinical studies which back up our claims unlike other herbal products manufacturers. We are getting better day by day.







**GreenPower**  
HEALTHCARE LIMITED

GHANA LIBERIA CAMEROON TOGO NIGERIA

**300+**  
**HEALTHCARE**  
**Practitioners.**

**JOIN  
US**

### Freeflow Women

- Naturally induce ovulation and balance reproductive hormone systems.
- Regulates Menstruation
- Shrinks ovarian cysts  
Enhances Libido In Women.

### Freeflow Men

- Enhances sperm motility, morphology, count and concentration.
- Enhances healthy sperm development
- Supports the Mans overall reproductive health System and prevents it from oxidative stress and bacteria
- Enhances vitality and increases libido for men

### Feloklear

- Eradicates genital tract infections caused by yeast, Candida Albicans and PID (pelvic inflammatory disease)
- Stops abnormal breast milk caused by high prolactin/hormonal imbalance
- Opens blocked tubes caused by infections (Hydrosalpinx)
- Reduces Menstrual pains and boosts enjoyment of sexual intimacy.

**GreenPower Healthcare is flying her flag across Africa**

Join us - call **+234- 8107057055**



**CORPORATE OFFICE:**  
Africa Re Building,  
Plot 1679 Karimu Kotun Street,  
3rd Floor, Victoria Island,  
Lagos, Nigeria

**SALES OFFICE:**  
22/24 Ago Palace Way,  
Isolo, Lagos State.

hello@wearegreenpower.com  
wearegreenpower  
@GreenPowerHealthcare  
@GreenpowerL  
www.wearegreenpower.com



# Conversations with Nola Adetola



**Founder & CEO**

Veritasi Homes and Properties  
Limited

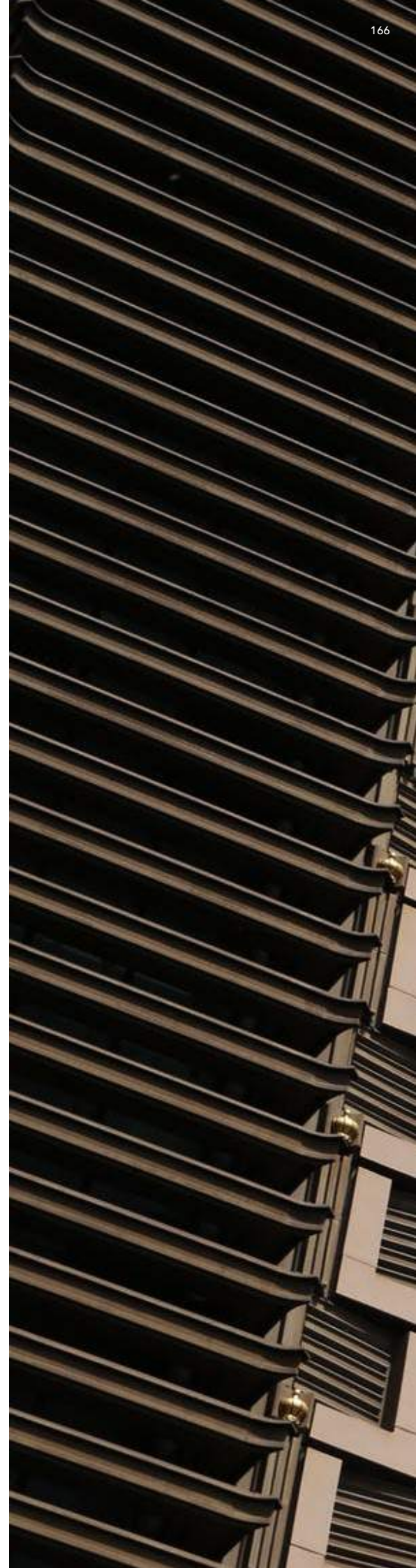
## **Tell us about Veritasi Homes and Properties, and what was your motivation?**

We are a leading real estate development company in Nigeria, working to cross across Africa soon. Aside from our other services, we create affordable houses for low and middle-income earners in Nigeria.

My Motivation is the fact that we have managed to give people, who would never believe they would own properties in Nigeria, an opportunity to do so. We have given market women and other people on the lower rungs of the ladder flexible payments plans that aid them to own properties in choice areas in Lagos. It's not just about the money, it's about helping people and solving problems.

## **What are your challenges, competition and how are you making it work as you build your brand - Veritasi Home and Properties?**

There are a lot of challenges. The first is finance. Real estate is project-based





and difficult to raise money due to the risks involved, especially in Africa. People find it easier to invest in trade finance instead of project finance. Then, the government policies concerning land and houses in Lagos and the Omo onile wahala. We have managed to curb most of the challenges with omo oniles, though.

There's no competition perse. We are arguably competing with ourselves and our vision. When we started there were a few competitions, and we were trying to compete, but right now, we are trying to dominate the industry. And we are just a few miles away from there. Brand building is a marathon, you can't stop. Even when I am tired, I still have to keep going. Branding Veritasi is something we do daily.

### **What are the innovative ideas you have to introduce into your industry?**

We brought a lot of innovation into the market. Marketing wise, we have



managed to introduce the MLM - that's multi level marketing. In six months of projects that would have taken five years, we execute them. We have wonderful ways of selling that aid us to deliver and develop projects easily. We are also bringing better methods into the market very soon.

**What deciding factors do your clients look out for in purchasing a home or property with Veritasi?**

Clients are more comfortable with a company with integrity. Customer satisfaction is our watchword! Because of that, our clients decide to work with us. And because they always know we deliver. They trust us. Also, our brand is great and free from controversy. We have sold over 1500 plots of land, and there's no single litigation, court case or controversy. I feel like we are doing wonderfully well. Of course, not all clients but 95 per cent of our clients are satisfied. We have a good structure, and our brand is great.



**Where do you see Veritasi Homes and Properties in the next 10 years, and how do you plan to achieve the set goals?**

Just like any other business, there are a lot of risks involved in real estate. We have managed to reduce the risks as much as possible. When we buy properties to sell to clients, we come up with a backup plan.

In the next ten years, we would have dominated the industry. I believe that if we implement our deluxe strategies and packages, which I won't like to divulge right now, we would have produced or created hundreds of millionaires in Nigeria and have developed several affordable homes. Real estate is what we have come to do, and we will do it big.





# New price- 2nd Year

Anniversary  
Promotion



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— SANGOTEDO —



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Price per plot (600sqm):

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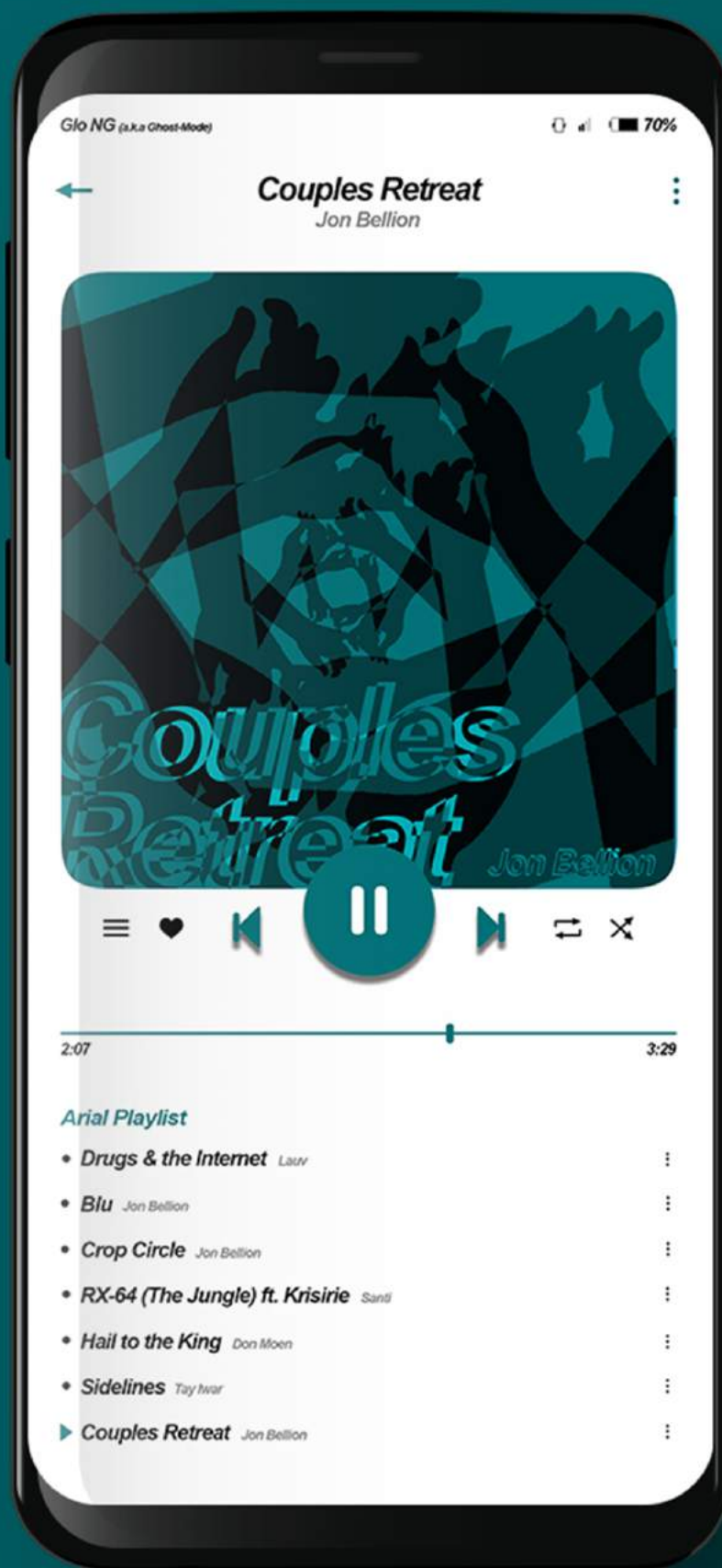


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# *A Hip-Hop Conversation*

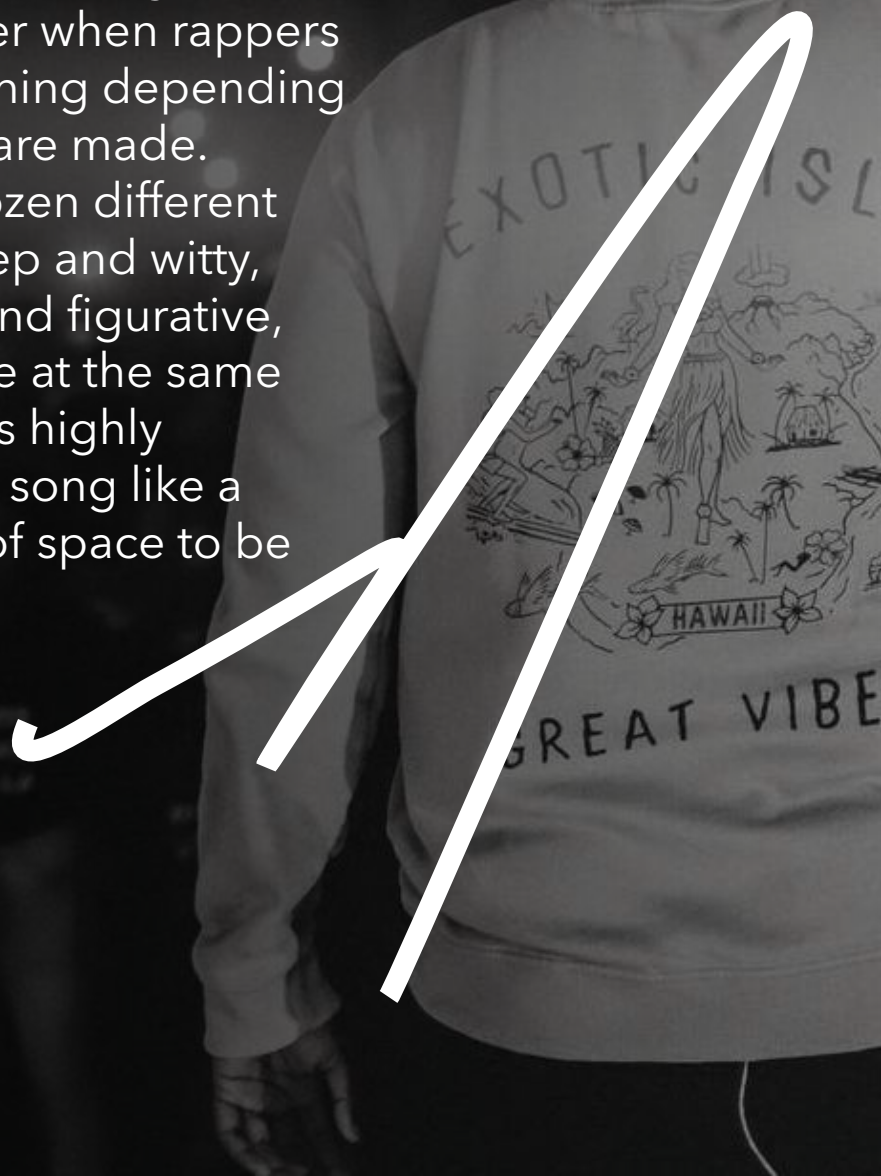


Stanley Osi

Hip Hop has always been controversial. Besides from the fast-heavy flow of words alongside poetic rhymes and metaphors, hip hop has established itself as the most independent and fluid genre of music. Sometimes rappers want to tell stories or play with words, other times they go deep creating thought provoking pictures laced with heavy or mild beats. Either ways, there exist a walking scenery or narrative and an obvious subject matter behind every rap song. Since rap is poetry, the rapper is a poet, but the beauty of every poem depends on how the poets use devices to create clarity and tell his story. A rapper's mission is to make words do more than they appear. The words in use has to work hand in hand with the beats and also provide melodies with hooks and choruses.




A good rap song in most times depends on two things. First, the message it is trying to pass – the reality it is trying to create or re-create. Second, the mechanics involved in its creation. Most times, a good beat can take one farther than its lyrics. A perfect communion is seeing the beat go hand in hand with the lyrics, most music made this way ends up attaining classic status. But great MCing isn't about bursting fast rhymes and filling words into beats, there are other ways to make words do more than they seem to do. Words have layers of meaning and most importantly it is clever when rappers give words their own meaning depending on the surroundings they are made. Words can be read in a dozen different ways: they can appear deep and witty, funny and serious, literal and figurative, naked and closely effective at the same time. Rap as a form of art is highly deceptive and a good rap song like a heavy novel needs an air of space to be digested.





The best hip hop materials have either influenced a culture or depicted a reality that is 100 percent relatable. In the early 90s hip hop grew wings from the stories of numerous rappers who had something to tell about the reality they grew with. Mobb Deep pictured the grimy nature of the streets of New York and put it in a Rap Song (Shook Ones II) and it became an undisputed classic. Nas had Illmatic under his belt and that became an Album that changed hip hop forever alongside pushing a culture of words used till this day. Jay Z, inspired by the Mafia did Reasonable Doubt and the album brewed street knowledge for the average hip hop listener and the Notorious B.I.G had Ready to Die, an album which talked about the metamorphosis of the young and naïve who grew to become the smart and brave drug peddler in order to measure up to the reality they are faced with. Of course, the West Coast

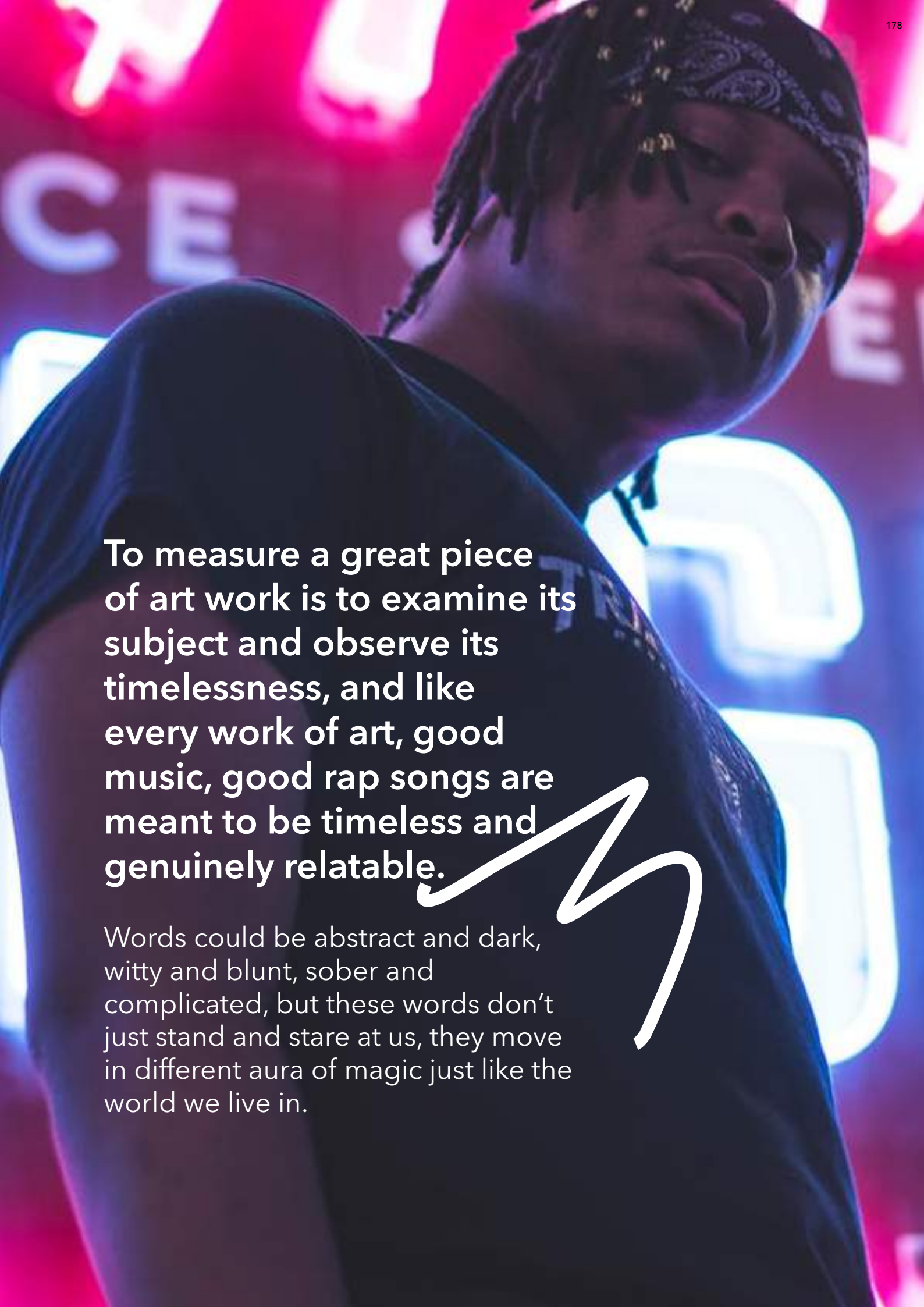




rappers aren't left out of the conversation: Dr. Dre had The Chronic, Snoop Dogg The Doggfather, Tupac already having a lot on his belt, had KILLuminati and Tupacalypse and Eminem give us a picture of his complicated life growing up and devoid of love from both parents in The Marshall Mathers LP. Even in our home front we have rappers who have been vocal about bad government and the unequal scale of the Nigerian society.

ModeNine has always rapped about the unfriendly street life in the ghetto, M.I's album Talk About It had an album titled track which expresses his displeasure at the government and why he won't stop talking about it and there were classics from Rugged Man and also Eedris Abdulkareem who opines that Nigeria Jaga Jaga.



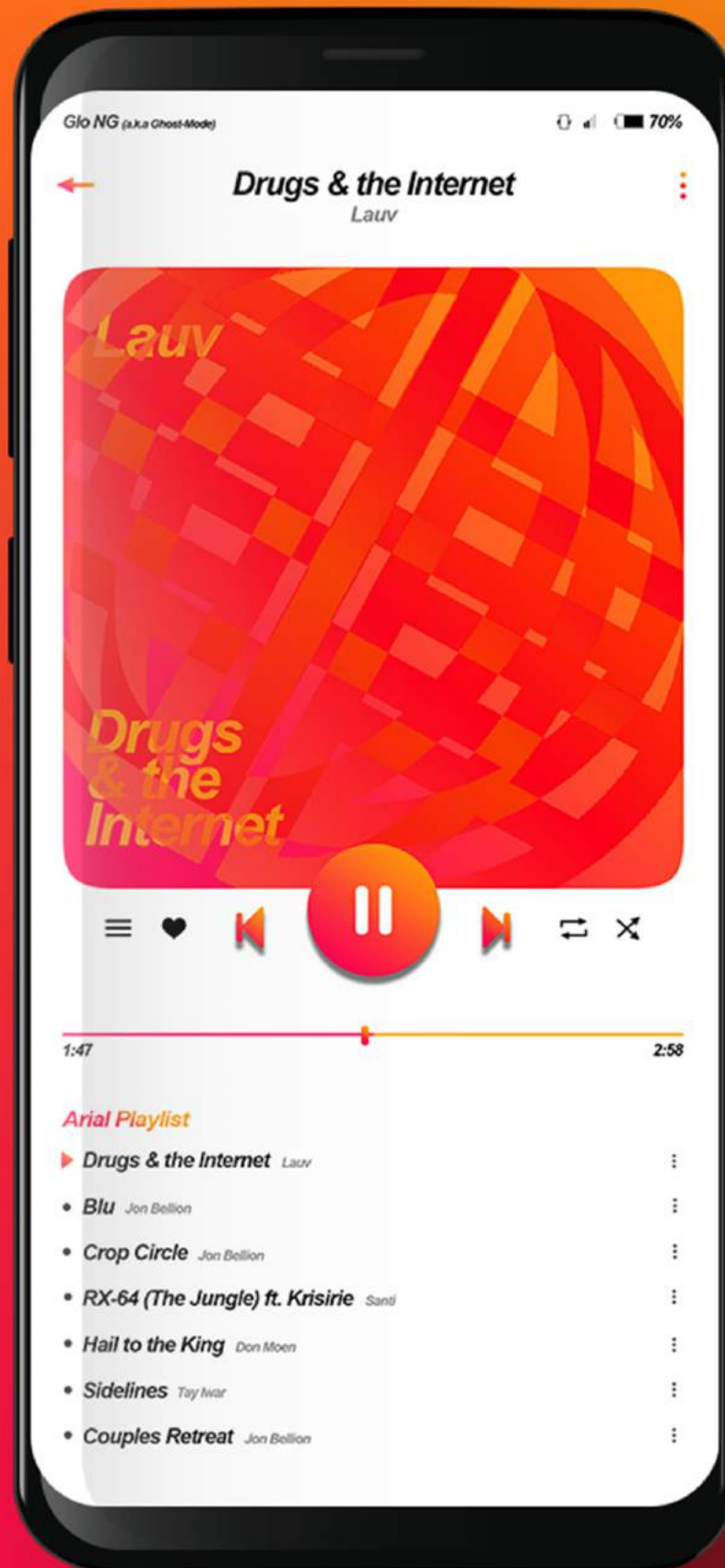


To measure a great piece of art work is to examine its subject and observe its timelessness, and like every work of art, good music, good rap songs are meant to be timeless and genuinely relatable.

Words could be abstract and dark, witty and blunt, sober and complicated, but these words don't just stand and stare at us, they move in different aura of magic just like the world we live in.




# shèqí owólabí



shèyí owólabí







THE PURSUIT FOR A SUSTAINABLE CONNECTION BETWEEN

# THE BRAND & THE CUSTOMER

- DANIEL EMEKA





Every day billions of stories are told, by individuals, celebrities and brands, all these stories constantly vying for the attention of the consumer. Stories that define the perception of how consumers define and relate with your content. This is why it becomes increasingly important to create contents that properly builds the vision of your brand in the mind on your consumers.

## **BRIDGING NEEDS AND BEHAVIOR.**

A brand must stir people's interest, excite them and turn them from just customers to advocates consistently with the use of content, if they have to remain relatable with top of mind recall. This can be done with the use of Emotional marketing.

When you think about it, emotions are 3000 times faster than thought, connecting to the heart rather than the head; like it sounds a lot stronger to say, "the color of your Cartier necklace, brings out the beauty in yours eyes" than saying "the necklace is beautiful". This creates a better experience that allows consumers interact with the brand.

## **OPPORTUNITY SPACE**

Your consumers and followers need to be able to deal with the amount and complexity of the information you send out, so its important to find your opportunity space within the paradigm of complexity and time, ie - what type of content do I push out and to whom and at what time, duration amount of content to push out within a period.

Brands need to constantly probe into this opportunity space and areas of interest independently of the type of consumer to reveal more opportunity for innovative content.

## **EMOTIONAL EQUITY**

Brands need to achieve a message that cut across different audience while hitting a cord at the opportunity space. Emotional equity is understanding is merging the emotional and the logical message and finding a trigger that creates a perception of value in the customer's mind.

This can mostly be achieved by understanding the different customer types and building content, that appeals to them.



# There are 5 main customer types

## TRUST

These are customers. They have experienced your brand and probing for more stronger relationship between customer and brand.

## CONNECTION

These are the prospects. They have a need, know how to solve them, but need a solution that works.

## IDENTITY

These are the new customers. They are mostly looking for a brand that fits their personal preferences based on culture, price and availability.

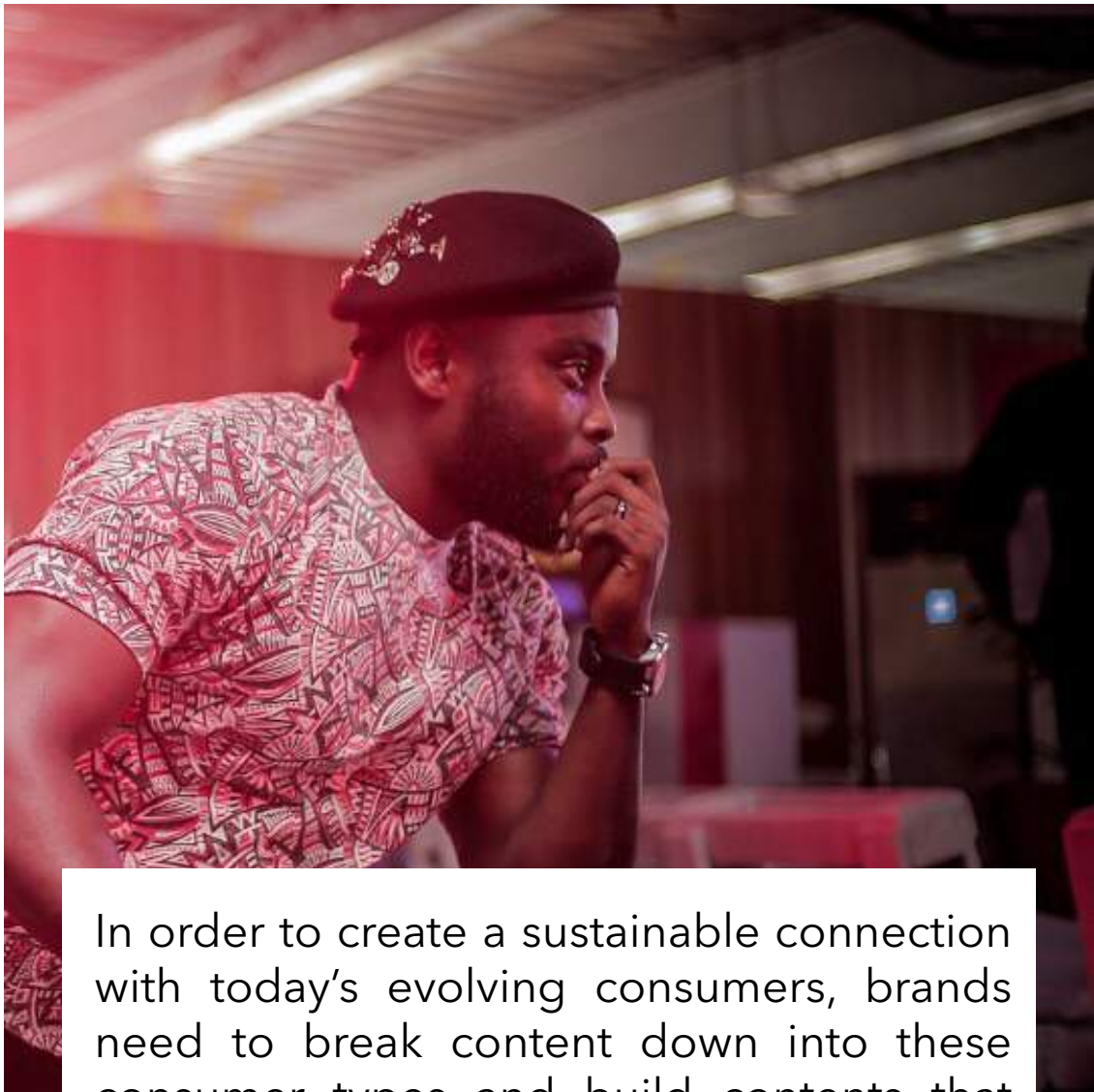
## EASE-OF-USE

These are the loyalist - where brands want all customers to be.

## ASPIRATION

These are the potential prospects. They understand they have a need but don't know how to solve them.





In order to create a sustainable connection with today's evolving consumers, brands need to break content down into these consumer types and build contents that relates to their needs at every stage the find themselves. It is important that this happens as you lose the risk of alienating today's consumers and speaking back to yourself.

**At Surkreo**, we help organizations chart the course from awareness to loyalty in the minds of the consumers. We tend to be surreal with our approach by looking for the best way to solve marketing problems faced by brands today.



# Gideon Jayeola Okuazun

Executive Director,  
The Business Apple

*// What happened was that I discovered a solution, then went ahead to look for a problem it could solve (laughs out loud); the popular thing is to discover a problem, and then find a solution to it. //*

## 1. Give us a bit of history about the creation of The Business Apple.

You know, I know that a lot of business owners can relate to the experience I am about to share, but it is not a typical response to interview questions, especially in big business magazines such as this one. The Business Apple did not exactly come up as a result of any terrible experience I had, neither was it a genius idea, initially. What happened was that I discovered a solution, then went ahead to look for a problem it could solve (laughs out loud); the popular thing is to discover a problem, and then find a solution to it.



So, I remember I was in here my office when the idea came. I even remember calling my friend, and I was sharing the idea with her as it came- at the speed of my thoughts. I had been thinking to create a second business, so I was looking inward to see what other value I could offer a lot of people. With my knowledge and experience in information systems development, I decided that I will create software, but then I had to analyze and validate the idea using some tools. What that helped me to do, was to discover which group of people I would be creating software for, and to find my unique value proposition, among other things. At the end of the entire process, I leveraged on the abundance of very quality computer programmers and business development experts I have access to, I sold the idea to them, and a lot of them were interested- maybe not in the idea itself, I do not know, but I think working with me on an idea must have been a major attraction. I formed a team, and we started working more on the idea, and then on the development of the products and services. We later agreed that we will provide training, intelligence, analysis and consultancy services, alongside. We also agreed that we would introduce and help set up commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) technology solutions, especially considering startups and small businesses that might not be able to afford the custom/bespoke solutions at the beginning.





In choosing a name, we thought about apples and their place in human history. Whether it is Isaac Newton's falling apple, or Steve Job's Apple technology, or maybe even the apple from the garden of Eden, one thing is common: apples open people up to new discoveries, insights, information and possibilities that bring about change. Apples also have good health and heart benefits.

**The Business Apple's solution open businesses up to discoveries, insights, information and possibilities that make them highly profitable. Our solutions are also good for the heart, as they prevent and cure all the heartbreaks that comes with unyielding investments in business. That's it, basically.**

## **2. Can you tell us a couple of success stories from the organisations you have consulted for?**

We have a lot of success stories, especially with small and medium enterprises. I do not know if it is okay to mention the names of a couple of them here. I can remember, when we

started, we took on the job of an educational institution. Interestingly, this one plays in the Early Childhood Education sector. They were just starting out too and they had so much work to do, very few manpower and then few pupils at the beginning. The dangerous thing about not knowing an easy way out is that both the owner, and the team will easily burn out and be demotivated. You never know how a solution as simple as an inventory system can reduce waste of time, thereby increasing productivity, which also impacts profitability. An inventory system is even a bit far-fetched; the common Microsoft Office Suite for the most basic operations, if one does not know how to use them well, it could lead to frustration. So, we understood the need and the budget of this institution I am telling you about, set up their entire information systems architecture, and guess what? Our work there began to speak for us, and opening doors for us. To be honest, we have leveraged on trust and

relationship to secure some bigger deals, but then, that trust itself is born out of our competence and capacity to have delivered in the past, so that too counts, right?

Let me tell you, our most interesting one is one of those we are currently handling in the importation sector. Our company was referred by one individual who I had worked with in the past. Each time we get a new project, for us, it is like starting a new company all over again. We have to consider so many things, like what does the law say about certain things relating to the business. Infact, the truth is, we have to know the business more than the owner. In a nutshell, we took on the project of this importation company, and within weeks, they are already doing amazingly well.

### **3. What is The Business Apple doing in 10 years?**

Ten years from now, The Business Apple would have scaled operations. We want to see startups owned by Africans, especially Nigerians, make the 20th percentile of the Fortune 500 companies. To achieve that we will need to provide technology support. It means more investment will be made in research and development. You know, there is a huge difference between owning and possessing technology. In Africa, we mostly possess technology, we do not own much. To own a technology, you must create the infrastructure. We want to own business technologies that the world will use.

We are also very inspired by what Mr. Tony Elumelu and his team are doing with the TEEF, and we want to do something like that too, providing grants to startup ideas and small businesses. How we however intend to approach it is slightly different, but the idea is basically the same. The truth is, we have a lot of plans for the next ten years-we have it all documented, I can only ask that you keep your fingers crossed and wish us well.

### **4. What opportunities do you think businesses should start exploring?**

There are numerous opportunities for startups, small, medium and even the big businesses; startups in Nigeria and in Africa generally. Startups should begin to leverage on the high number of startup incubators in the country, and there are many benefits to it: reduced cost of operations, access to support, in terms of technology and funds especially. Some of these startup incubators, like the Hebron Startup Lab, even have highly effective structures to hold you accountable for your business growth. For small businesses, there is currently a reduction in the cost of business registration, many financial institutions have products designed to benefit small businesses. I can tell you this for free; what is important for every business owner or CEO is to have your ears to the ground. Have a structure within your organization that will bring you timely and relevant information. Subscribe for Businessday newsletters, leverage on social media, and other sources of relevant information.



## 5. You are involved in tertiary education, what can you say about the general level of education in Nigeria/Africa and its impact on the growth potential of African economies?

First, we must recognize that education is the yard stick for measuring the growth and development of any nation. It is however unfortunate that many African countries, including Nigeria, are not paying enough attention to education. We fail to realize that it is innovation and productivity that drives the economic growth equilibrium upward. The link between education- knowledge, and prosperity is strong. Turning a blind eye is a disservice to ourselves, especially in this knowledge economy. No matter how much is given to a novice, or an idiot, it will finish. It is an educated population that will build the enterprises which will engage everyone, thereby bringing about peace, which is the gateway to prosperity. I am looking forward to when this heavy investment in education already carried out by some individuals and bodies in the private sector will be scaled. Quality education requires heavy investment. You know, so that our large population in Nigeria can begin to favor us, other than work

against us. You just imagine if out of the now over 200 million Nigerians we have, about 50 million of them were Mr. Femi Otedola, another 20 million are like Alhaji Dangote, another 30 million like Mr. Tony Elumelu, 50 million of them like Mrs. Folorunsho Alakija and 50 million like Mrs. Ibukun Awosika and Nimi Akinkugbe. Let me make it clear that education is not necessarily formal and structured education. There is also Technical and Vocational Education and Training, TVET. That too is a very valid form of education; It is the training of the mind. To conclude, because lately, some individuals have been complaining about their investments in sending their children/wards private institutions not yielding returns as expected, I would encourage them to carefully select the private schools (within and outside the shores of Africa) they send their children/wards to. There are only a few with the capacity to deliver quality and world-class education. So, it is not even only about how much you invest now, it is also about where you invest it.

*Thank  
you!*

# HELEN ASIMEGBE

CEO, Stylemark Pro Enterprise Hub

Achenyo Helen Asimegbe is a serial entrepreneur, CEO of Stylemark Pro Enterprise Hub, a capacity development centre, which trains Entrepreneurs, small business owners and start-ups.

She is a member Board of Training Faculty Abuja Enterprise Agency, a World Bank International Finance Corporation/LPI Certified Trainer with a strong background in banking and an MBA. Helen continues to add to her learning through a number of local and international certificate training programmes, including courses at the University of Leeds, University of London & London Business School (Coursera) , Enterprise Development Centre (EDC) Of the Pan Atlantic University.



## 1. In terms of what you are doing now, what will you be doing in 10 years?



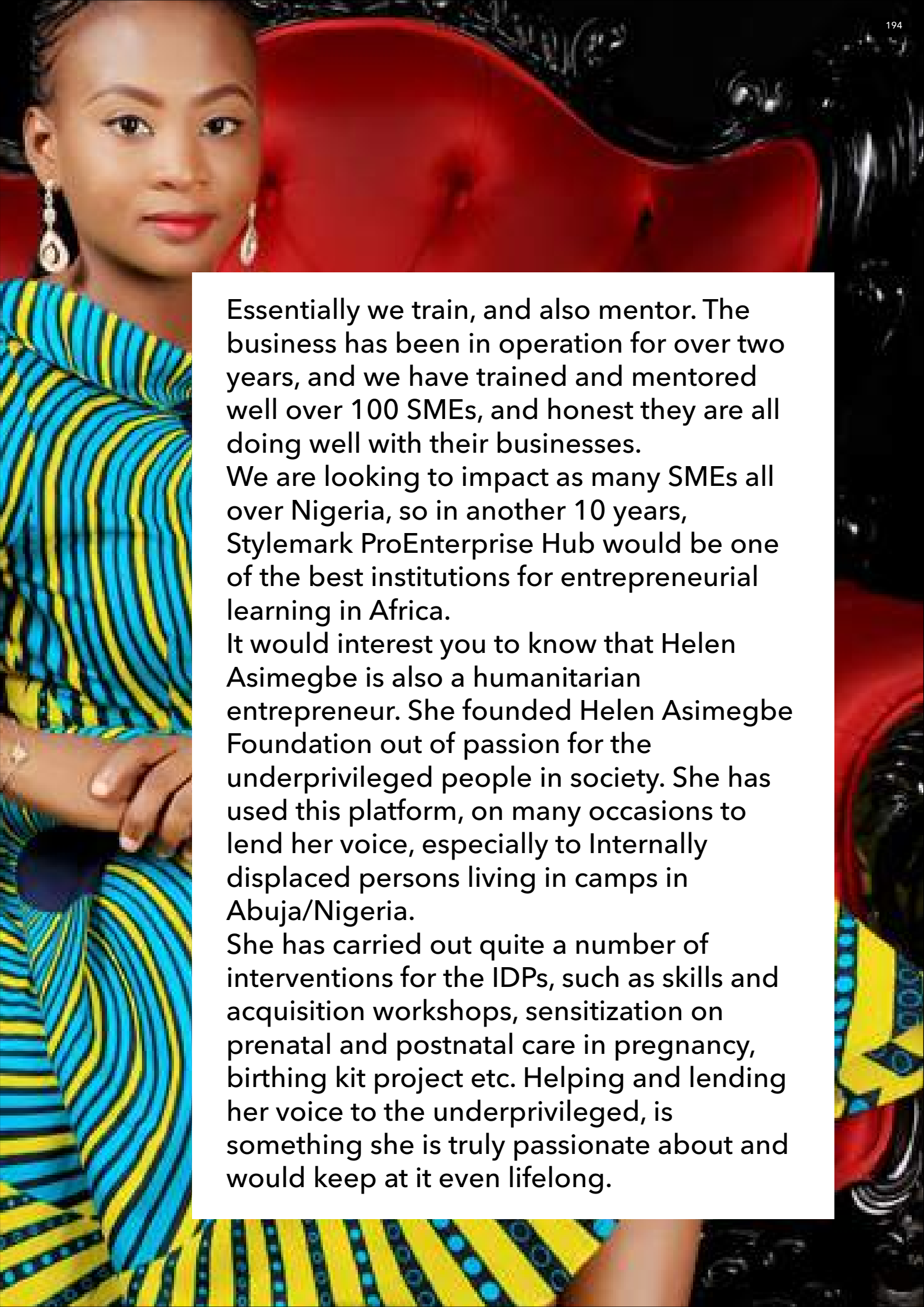
I began my career in banking, and I put in 5 years. Whilst working as a bank employee, I had a goal that I was going to become my own boss before I turned 30. At the point I was transiting from the corporate world, to business. I had the highest assurance that chapter was over.

I established Stylemark Mall Enterprises, which is a unique business that caters to children (We deal in kids clothing and other accessories).

The business has been in operation for four years. So in another 10 years, Stylemark Mall Enterprises would still be here, and most definitely would have launched our kids clothing line, and have our presence in other African countries.

I founded Stylemark ProEnterprise Hub, a couple of years after establishing Stylemark Mall Enterprises. It's a platform we created, to give support to growing businesses.





Essentially we train, and also mentor. The business has been in operation for over two years, and we have trained and mentored well over 100 SMEs, and honest they are all doing well with their businesses.

We are looking to impact as many SMEs all over Nigeria, so in another 10 years, Stylemark ProEnterprise Hub would be one of the best institutions for entrepreneurial learning in Africa.

It would interest you to know that Helen Asimegbe is also a humanitarian entrepreneur. She founded Helen Asimegbe Foundation out of passion for the underprivileged people in society. She has used this platform, on many occasions to lend her voice, especially to Internally displaced persons living in camps in Abuja/Nigeria.

She has carried out quite a number of interventions for the IDPs, such as skills and acquisition workshops, sensitization on prenatal and postnatal care in pregnancy, birthing kit project etc. Helping and lending her voice to the underprivileged, is something she is truly passionate about and would keep at it even lifelong.



## 2. What growth opportunities do you see for the African economy if millennial entrepreneurs in Africa get good support?

Considering how truly saturated the job market in Africa has become, and the glaring fact that unemployment has been on the rise for over a decade, it's a good thing that a lot of youth in Africa are now embracing entrepreneurship and reducing dependence on white collar jobs. Young people on the continent are now more aware of what they can do for/by themselves.

This is already making a huge impact on our nation/continent as a whole. There is a flip side to this conversation. An enabling environment has to be created to help entrepreneurs thrive and ultimately contribute to the nations GDP. Some of the ways entrepreneurs can be supported would be in the areas of Funding, capacity building, Market Access, Business advisory, breaking stereotypes, changing norms, traditional beliefs, but to mention a few.

With full support, our Agricultural sector will experience a boost, because we can now begin to export farm produce in large quantity and different variety of crops. The fashion industry is making tremendous impact, and we still have room for much more. When we decide to support in full, our made in Nigerian brand, our import dependence would reduce, and it would be an opportunity for massive export.

### **3. What areas do you think entrepreneurs in 2019 educate themselves on?**

#### **i. Resiliency**

When starting, most people assume entrepreneurship is super easy, quite frankly, it's not. A good number of entrepreneurs would face challenges at some point in their journey as start-ups. Asides some of the challenges that may come up, most businesses do not make profit until after some months or even years in some cases. Entrepreneurs who have passed through the waters, have come to the point of actually training themselves to be resilience. The rate of businesses folded up has reduced compared to time past.

#### **ii. Communication**

Most entrepreneurs spend most of their time in the company of other entrepreneurs. For each passing week or month, there is some form of event going on, for entrepreneurs. Communication is a very strong tool to help achieve partnerships, collaborations, and also synergies. Statistics in 2019 has shown that most people have learnt not to compete but collaborate. Knowing well how to communicate, is sets an entrepreneur apart.

#### **iii. Risk Tolerance**

An entrepreneur is meant to be able to take risks, and make decisions even when facts are uncertain. This is a great skill an entrepreneur is meant to have. Every decision presents its own challenges, and we all have different ways of approaching problems. So being able to take risks timely is something all entrepreneurs should learn. And we see today that most are embracing opportunities not with fear, but with so much optimism.



#### **4. What are the challenges in what you do? How have you been able to address them so far?**



There were a number of challenges I encountered when I started my first business, I didn't have as much information on how to start and run a business. But thankfully I received a scholarship by the World Bank and was enrolled for the CEM Program by Enterprise Development Centre of Pan Atlantic University, and it changed everything.

I can't rule out the fact that there are still some challenges I encounter here and there, like for some products I launched for instance SME Springboard Trade fair, at first getting vendors to book stands was tough because I was new and they found it a bit difficult to part with their money, but I didn't quit, at the end of the day most of them got value for their money and the fair is in its 3rd edition set to hold Aug 3rd. So I'd like to say, seek knowledge when you need to, keep pushing and don't quit at every challenge, get to a place where you pledge that it's either you win or you win and keep doing all you know to do best.



**“** the first thing I would do is to revamp the curriculum from primary to secondary schools. **”**

**5. If you become the Minister of Education today, what would you do to make the Nigerian educational system have a global standard?**

If I become Minister of education, the first thing I would do is to revamp the curriculum from primary to secondary schools. I would ensure it is changed from just having only subjects that have been inexistence for decades, I will include entrepreneurship even from basic level. Likewise, emotional intelligence would be introduced as a course/subject of study.

Most of the teachers would have to be trained and encouraged to acquire more certifications. I would see to it that quality education is accessible to even children in rural communities.



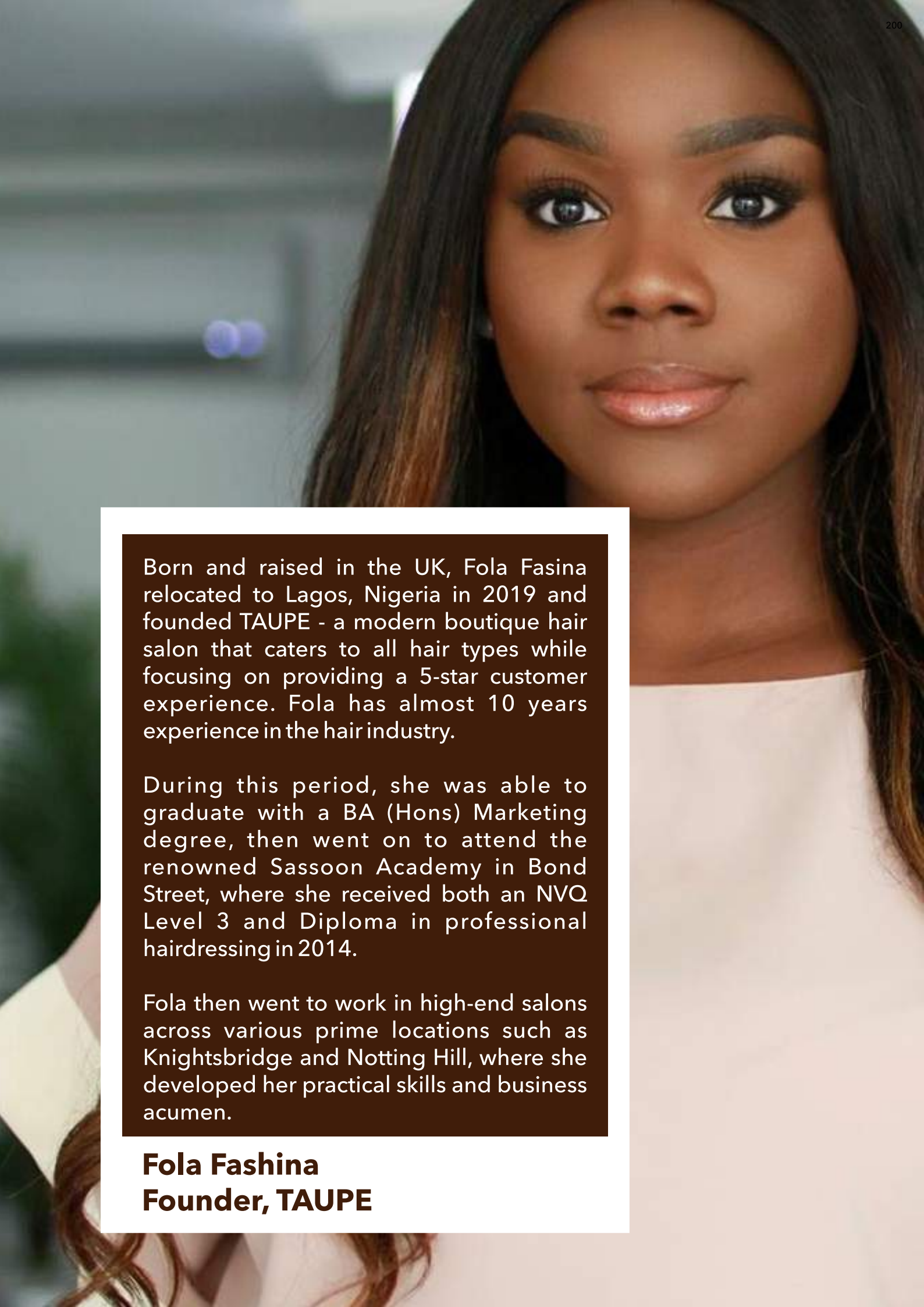


**FOLA**

**FASINA**

**FOUNDER, TAUPE**



A close-up portrait of Fola Fasina, a young woman with long, dark, wavy hair, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a light-colored top. The background is blurred, showing some greenery and a building.

Born and raised in the UK, Fola Fasina relocated to Lagos, Nigeria in 2019 and founded TAUPE - a modern boutique hair salon that caters to all hair types while focusing on providing a 5-star customer experience. Fola has almost 10 years experience in the hair industry.

During this period, she was able to graduate with a BA (Hons) Marketing degree, then went on to attend the renowned Sassoon Academy in Bond Street, where she received both an NVQ Level 3 and Diploma in professional hairdressing in 2014.

Fola then went to work in high-end salons across various prime locations such as Knightsbridge and Notting Hill, where she developed her practical skills and business acumen.

**Fola Fashina**  
**Founder, TAUPE**

## 1. What made you decide to leave your career as a stylist in London to come to Lagos to open Taupe Salon?



As a British born Nigerian, I've always felt at home in Lagos. Although I lived in London for most parts of my life, I spent a chunk of my early childhood in Lagos. I always envisioned returning to Lagos to explore opportunities, as well as other avenues to make a difference by tapping into Africa's great potential. Due to my knowledge and familiarity with Lagos, which was built up over the years through family and regular holiday visits, I noticed a gap in the luxury hair industry. To take advantage of this opportunity, my goal was always to setup a salon in Lagos. However, I knew there were some prerequisite skills needed to make my vision a reality, so I gained accreditation within my sector to put me in good stead to offer the best service to my clients. Post accreditation, I worked in a number of high end and mid-market salons to further hone my practical skills. During this period I met a number of Nigerian clients who after engaging with, complained about the level of service they received in salons back home. This further re-affirmed the gap I spotted in the market & led to my decision to create TAUPE.

## 2. How do you intend to change the hair salon industry in Lagos?

Whilst there have been some progress in the hair industry in Lagos compared to 5/6 years ago, there is still room for improvement in terms of providing customer service - this isn't exclusive to the hair industry by the way. A number of salons and hairstylists (myself included at a point in my career) forget that it is not solely about how good you are at styling etc but also about the 'client experience' - how you make clients feel from the initial booking right through to when they leave your chair. Our vision at TAUPE is built on creating a seamless process that eliminates waiting times. We want to give clients the flexibility of waking up at night, for example, knowing they can easily book an appointment online for the following morning in an environment that is peaceful. An environment where staff are approachable



and helpful, and they are advised on how to take care of their hairstyle at home using recommended products. Furthermore, I'd love to inspire other people to change their perception of the hair industry in Africa and show that you can create a successful, fulfilling career out of hairdressing as there are so many layers to it.



### 3. What kind of services do you offer?

TAUPE offers a range of services for the modern day woman, and we cater to all hair types and ethnicities. So you can easily walk in and see a European lady with blonde, straight hair sitting next to a Nigerian lady with her big, long Afro. That being said, TAUPE offers blow-dry services, Silk Press, colouring services, keratin treatments as well as extension services such as custom wigs and sew-in weaves. TAUPE offers a diverse range of services and specialises only in hair, therefore we don't offer to body/facial treatments etc.



#### **4. What do you want clients to feel when they leave your salon?**

When clients leave, we want them to feel TAUPE. The TAUPE experience is about making clients feel and look great, while ensuring the clients feel they have received value for the money they spent. It is about ensuring clients feel much happier than they were prior to visiting the salon but also to feel they are ready to accomplish anything. One client at a time, I feel I am building a growing community of women in Nigeria who can learn from each other when they are in and out of the salon.





## **5. Who is the typical Taupe woman?**

The typical TAUPE woman is a go-getter. She is ambitious and values her time. She has enormous dreams, and she is on the right path to achieving them all with or without anybody by her side. She is fearless, down-to-earth, and she cares about her overall well-being both physically and mentally; she also wishes to be the best version of herself. The typical TAUPE woman does not see other women as competition and chooses to encourage those around her anyhow she possibly can.



## **6. As a start up, how do you acquire new clients?**

As a start-up, marketing is definitely the most important aspect for me, particularly as TAUPE is a premium brand. Social media has played a huge factor. Instagram has helped in terms of brand awareness. Working with influencers and sending information to people who live locally to the salon has also added to brand awareness. I think the aesthetic of the salon does play a factor - people are so impressed by the look and feel of the salon that I've actually had many people question if the salon does exist because they assume the pictures of our salon is not real (laughing). Having a website helps tremendously as potential clients can find us using search engines such as Google. More importantly, I believe that word of mouth is truly the best marketing we have had. Clients are always so impressed that they refer their friends and their friends refer their friends. In other words, it is somewhat a domino effect.

## **7. Where do you see Taupe salon in 5 years?**

In five years, I would love for TAUPE to have transformed the hair industry in Nigeria - to be viewed as the Apple or Uber of the hair industry in Nigeria. I want our dedication to great customer experience and quality to set us apart from the competition in a manner whereby TAUPE is seen as the number one destination for a luxury hair salon. Furthermore, I'd love to have expanded as that would indicate increasing revenue



# MOVIE REVIEW

A typical movie telling the real story of the life of living and keeping up in Lagos. A clear show off of the who and who that matters in the city of "Eko". That's what we have to deal with in Lagos on a daily. There was something



really nice about this new movie that makes you want to smile all through. Some of the scenes you can connect really, as we are shown just how far people can go to keep up appearances in the public eye.

The honest truth is that there was nothing outstanding or phenomenal about the chosen storyline. It would be difficult to compare it to outstanding movies of late last year that had extremely nice storyline, but then it was just good in its own class, and when you have very good production and cast, they tend to make you close your eyes to the fact that the story was just simple. They told us the story of the 1% percent of the 1 % in Lagos, the LA cream of the LA cream "in Eko".

It was nice to finally see Bolanle Austine Peters produce a proper Nigerian movie and she didn't do badly at all. The movie had a few things going for them like the crisp production, clean editing, nice costumes, good cinematography and scenes, the sound tracks used all through were very catchy and linked with the scenes, songs that will make you nod your head.



The movie started on a very funny note with the first scene where 3 wealthy Lagosians were having a drink and Jide Kosoko was bragging of how he was going to deal with his side chic, unfortunately he ended up dealing with himself. The Holloways played the lead role in this movie; Mr. Akin Holloway was a very successful business man who had ran the family business for years, he was a son of a wealthy man, and the family has had wealth being transferred from generation to generation. Akin was a very lavish spender and he was also cheating on his wife with his best friend's wife, well no one knew about the affair, so he thought till he got busted at the very end, it was so shocking who caught them and how. . His wife Mrs. Holloway, was a more terrible spender, all she knew how to do best was to dress up, look good, travel and throw expensive birthday parties. They were willing to do anything to make sure that no one in the city of Lagos threw a better party than they did. For her 50th birthday party she spent 1m dollars and for her 51st she wanted to spend even more. All plans were in progress until their world came crumbling down with her husband losing all his wealth, it came as a huge shock to them all and they had to fight to survive.

Anyway she did learn a few lessons like how it was important to plan, save and invest wisely especially when the wealth was not in excess. She also learnt what it took to have good friends you could rely on. When the going was good she has friends but when things became tough, she lost most of them. Anyway I guess life teaches us loads of lessons especially at our down times.

**Cast:** Alex Ekuboh, Bamike Olawunmi, Bisola Aiyola, Crazy Broda Shaggi, Helen Paul, Jide Kosoko, Denola Grey, Elvina Ibru, Jimmy Odukoya, Monalis Chinda Coker, Osas Ighodalo Ajibade, Sharon Ooja, Tana Adelana, Toyin Abraham

**Genre:** Drama

**Director:** Bolanle Austine Peters

**Runtime:** 97 minutes

**Release Date:** June 28th, 2019

To my verdict I would score this movie **7/10**, as I said earlier it was a simple basic story but the nice production, cast and editing made up for the other perquisites. So if you are interested in just having a good laugh, then maybe you could give this a try.

Feel free to review any movie of your choice in not more than 200 words, please send us a mail to [linda@businessdayonline.com](mailto:linda@businessdayonline.com) , also please do answer the question of the week on social media and stand a chance to win a free movie ticket.

**Linda Ochugbua**  
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