

How general election impact Nigeria IMC industry



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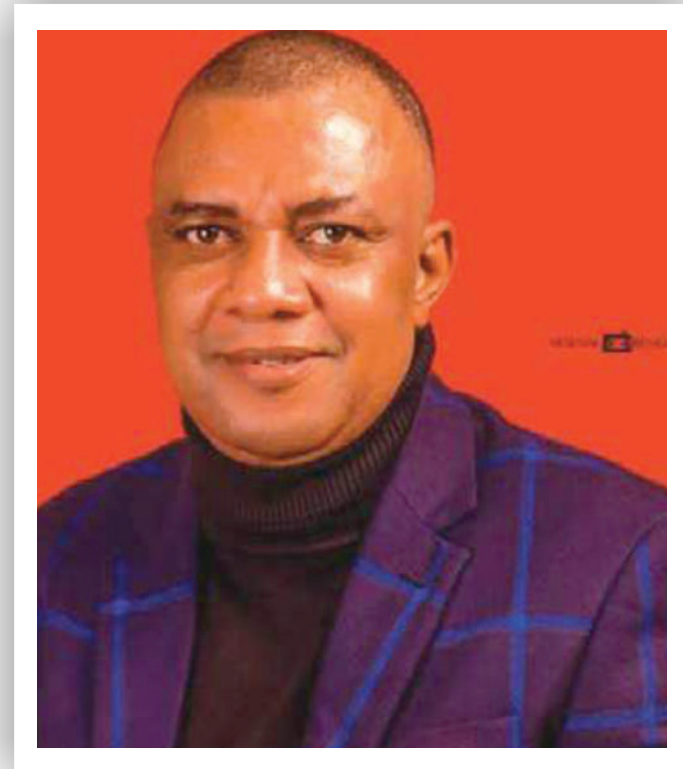
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The Industry Summit/Awards: Mission ps possible

Contrary to the series Mission: Impossible, a series of American action spy films based on the television series of the same name created by Bruce Geller. The series is mainly produced by and stars Tom Cruise, who plays Ethan Hunt, an agent of the Impossible Missions Force (IMF). The films have been directed, written, and scored by various filmmakers and crew, while incorporating musical themes from the original series by Lalo Schiffrin.

Starting in 1996, the films (taking place starting six years after the events of the previous TV sequel series) follow the missions of the IMF's main field team, under Hunt's leadership, to stop an enemy force and prevent an impending global disaster. The series focuses on Hunt's character, as opposed to the television series's ensemble cast structure, although some characters, such as Luther Stickell (played by Ving Rhames) and Benji Dunn (played by Simon Pegg) have recurring roles.

The series was positively received from critics and audiences. It is the 18th-highest-grossing film series of all time, earning over \$3.5 billion worldwide, and is often cited as one of the best action franchises to date.

That is the story of Mission: Impossible but ours is Mission: Possible. It is so because it has been achieved before it commenced.

When I started out with the preparation to host the fourth edition of this event, I didn't know what to call it because the first three editions were straightforward and easy. The fourth wasn't easy because I didn't have sponsors but because I did not know what to call it.

For this year's event, I started out pretty early and well because I did not want the excuses I had with brands in the first three editions. It started well but my father told me while growing up that most things that start early and well, always end up badly and I didn't know how until this year's event.

While that series tagged its film Mission: Impossible, I chose to tag this Mission: Possible you are here. It is possible. I have seen my colleagues host events in independent venues, Kudos to MarketingEdge and Brand Communicators. They have well as progenitors in media brand marketing publications. I can't eat their glory, they are exemplary.

We are here today not because of my ingenuity but because of God's Grace. I have thought of canceling this event a hundred times but thanks to Dr. Felix King, Mr. Emmanuel Oriakhi, Mr. O'Tega Ogra, Mr. Richard Oshinibosi, Mr. Llyas Kazeem and numerous friends whose biggest hearts won't let me have my way.

There is no task too difficult to achieve if you believe. This event has taught me many lessons and I am here before you because there is no MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE. Every mission is possible brother and sister.

FEEDBACK

For opinion, right of reply, articles and feedbacks to our articles, kindly reach us via theindustry.ng@gmail.com, whatsapp: +2348028424987



FBRA 1 - L-R Oluayomi Banjo (National Programme Coordinator, UNIDO); Nishio Nahomi (Project Manager, UNIDO); Mr. Ryosuke Arai (Sales Manager Recycled Plastics, RECOTECH); Agharese Onaghise (Executive Secretary, FBRA); Sakoto Takenoshita (Technical Advisor, UNIDO) and Victoria Uwadoka (Corporate Communications & PR Manager, Nestle Nigeria).



Dangote DSC 4701 Pix 1: L-R : Chief Executive Officer of FMDQ, Bola Onadele Koko; Group Managing Director, Dangote Industries Limited, Olakunle Alake and Chief Executive, Stanbic IBTC Capital Ltd, Funso Akere, during the Listing Ceremony of the Dangote Industries Funding Plc's Bonds at FMDQ, in Lagos.

FBRA partners with UNIDO to train recyclers and manufacturers of plastic in Abuja

The Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance (FBRA), in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), held a seminar to raise awareness of the Promoting Sustainable Plastic Value Chains Through Circular Economy Practices for Recyclers Project in Abuja. The aim of this collaboration is to contribute to Nigeria's inclusive and sustainable industrial development and to reduce leakage of plastics into the environment.

The problem of plastic pollution has continued to grow in tandem with the increase in the use of plastics, necessitating the application of measures to help mitigate the problem by ensuring a circular economy. One of such measures is the awareness raising seminar targeted towards promoting circular economy principles and practices to ensure resource efficient production for plastic value chains in Nigeria.

Participants in the training included relevant stakeholders across the plastic value chain in Abuja and other states in northern Nigeria. Also in attendance were representatives from FBRA's member companies, Plastic Waste Value Players: Waste pickers, Collectors, Aggregators, Recyclers

and Off-takers, representatives from UNIDO, NESREA and the Federal Ministry of Environment were also present.

Amongst topics discussed during the technical sessions are Resource Efficient, Cleaner Production and its Benefits, Circular Economy, and Plastic Packaging. Nishio Nahomi, the UNIDO Project Manager, emphasised the importance of Promoting Sustainable Plastic Value Chains Through Circular Economy Practices for Recyclers project for Nigeria. Recommendations include the demonstration of Circular Economy through Resource Efficiency and Cleaner Production (RECP) assessments, adoption of innovative technology and partnership with pilot companies committed to exploring Japanese improvement options.

Mr. Chukwudi Nwabuisiaku, Assistant Director, Plastics Waste Control at National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), spoke on the need to adopt circularity within the plastic value chain. He also reassured the participants of the NESREA's unwavering...

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Dstv Prestige: MultiChoice unveils new super exclusive subscription package



MultiChoice, the leading provider of video entertainment services in Africa, announced the launch of a new subscription package with exclusive benefits for subscribers today March 30, 2023 at the MultiChoice Studio, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria. The new package, 'DStv Prestige' offers subscribers access to a range of exclusive channels and value-added services.

DStv Prestige is an ultra-premium offering designed to provide the ultimate entertainment and lifestyle experience for customers who demand nothing but the best. It is a testament to DStv's commitment to providing exceptional customer service and ensuring that customers always have access to the very best in entertainment and lifestyle benefits.

Sample of the DStv Prestige Bouquet

The package is an annual members-only entertainment package that offers a world of exclusivity and unrivaled lifestyle benefits to subscribers, including access to an annual Premium subscription with access to first in class entertainment like Formula 1, Tennis grand slam, over 20 High-Definition channels, unlimited streaming on Showmax, Box Office movies, free PVR access, the DStv App, invitations to partners' exclusive events, deals and community, raffles for invitations to special events (i.e. AMVCAs, movie premieres), exclusive travel Concierge service, and more.

Furthermore, Prestige members will gain exciting members-only events, lifestyle benefits including applicable discounts from over 25 most sought-after brands across fashion, hospitality wellness & beauty,

household essentials and others. Prestige members will have access to the exclusive VIP Desk for support and queries, quality check visits and installations, a limited-edition Gold Explora decoder and remote, priority customer service with an assigned account manager.

Speaking on the new package, Chief Executive Officer at MultiChoice Nigeria, John Ugbe, said, "It's a great honour to be in such esteemed company, as we - MultiChoice/DStv - announce a new version of our heritage product for our premium subscribers. DStv Prestige is an ultimate subscription package for you - our high-value customers who want - and I would say deserve - an ultra-premium viewing experience that has the added benefits of access to exclusive lifestyle activities and services."

Commenting on his new status of being the first DStv Prestige customer, Collins Onumajuru said, "I'm really glad to be a part of this journey. I have been an ardent customer of DStv beyond subscriptions and packages for quite some time now. I consider this privilege a great honour. Without you being aware of this, MultiChoice and I have had a long-standing professional relationship and I'm honored to be the first member of the prestige club without any compensation. With this opportunity, I look forward to more entertaining experiences with MultiChoice/DStv."

The DStv Prestige subscription package is available to new and existing DStv Premium subscribers and can be purchased on the website

Airtel commissions largest Primary School in Gombe State

Leading telecommunications network, Airtel Nigeria has commissioned its 7th adopted school, Government Day Primary, as part of its corporate social responsibility initiative, 'Adopt-A-School'. The project was commissioned by the Emir of Gombe, alongside other notable guests, on the 24th of March, 2023, in Pantami, Gombe State.

The commissioning follows the renovation of 12 blocks of 37 classrooms and a total of 17 toilets which have now been upgraded to modern toilet facilities for the pupils and teachers.

Dangote lists N300b series 1 and 2 largest bonds on NGX, FMDQ

Dangote Industries Limited (DIL) has formally listed its N300 billion Series 1 and 2 bonds issued under the Dangote Industries Funding Plc during a grand listing ceremony at both the FMDQ and the Nigeria Exchange Limited (NGX) in Lagos.

Olakunle Alake, Group Managing Director of Dangote Industries Limited told investors during the listing ceremony that the bonds were primarily for part-financing the Group's 650,000 bpd refinery project.

He explained that the decision of the Company to issue bonds to raise the required capital for part-financing the refinery project was to encourage the participation of Nigerians in the financing of the project. He noted that the bonds remain the largest aggregate local currency bond issuance within a calendar year by any corporate organization in the history of the capital markets.

Mr. Alake noted that following a very rigorous internal assessment, the management concluded that tapping the local capital markets was inevitable, considering the sheer scale of the project being developed, as well as the existing market volatility. He said that while the Dangote Group is not new at raising funds in the local capital markets, being a

first-time issuer at the holding company level presented a fresh challenge for the Company. However, the challenge was one the management was willing to embrace to ensure the desired outcome was achieved.

According to him: "Today, we are delighted to have successfully completed the largest aggregate local currency bond issuance by a corporate in the Nigerian capital markets within a calendar year. The proceeds from the Series 1 and 2 bond issuances were dedicated to part-financing the Dangote Petroleum Refinery Project which is the initiative by the Group to establish an Integrated Petrochemical Complex, and the largest Single Train Petroleum Refinery in the World."

Alake recalled that the DIL recorded another first through the N187 billion series 1 bonds (under the N300 billion programme), being the largest corporate bond ever issued in the history of the Nigerian capital markets and the management was pleased to have set the remarkable milestones, showcasing the depth, resilience and liquidity of the domestic capital markets, whilst reflecting the strong credit quality of the issuer, despite the current global market volatility.

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Zenith Bank grows gross earnings by 24% to N945.5 billion in 2022

Zenith Bank Plc has announced its audited results for the year ending December 31, 2022, achieving an impressive double-digit growth of 24% in gross earnings from NGN765.6 billion reported in the previous year to NGN945.5 billion in 2022. This is despite the persistent challenging macroeconomic environment and headwinds.

According to the audited financial results for the 2022 financial year presented to the Nigerian Exchange (NGX), the double-digit growth in gross earnings was driven by a 26% year-on-year (YoY) growth in interest income from NGN427.6 billion to N540.2 billion and a 23% year-on-year (YoY) growth in non-interest income from NGN309 billion to NGN381 billion. Profit before tax also grew by 2% from NGN280.4 billion to NGN284.7 billion in the current year. The increase in profit before tax was due to the significant growth in all the income lines. Impairments grew by 107% from NGN59.9 billion to NGN124.2 billion, while interest expense grew 63% YoY from N106.8 billion to N173.5 billion, respectively. The impairment growth, which also resulted in an increase in the cost of risk (from 1.9% in 2021 to 3.3% in the current year), was due to the impact of Ghana's sovereign debt restructuring programme. The growth in interest expense

increased the cost of funds from 1.5% in 2021 to 1.9% in 2022 due to hikes in interest rates globally.

Customer deposits increased by 39%, growing from NGN6.47 trillion in the previous year to NGN8.98 trillion in the current year. The growth in customer deposits came from all products and deposit segments (corporate and retail), thus consolidating the bank's market leadership and indicating customers' trust.

The continued elevated yield environment positively impacted the bank's Net-Interest-Margin (NIM), which grew from 6.7% to 7.2% due to an effective repricing of interest-bearing assets. Operating expenses grew by 17% YoY, but growth remains below the inflation rate. Total assets increased by 30%, growing from NGN9.45 trillion in 2021 to NGN12.29 trillion in 2022, mainly driven by growth in customer deposits. With the steady and continued recovery in economic activities, the Group prudently grew its gross loans by 20%, from NGN3.5 trillion in 2021 to NGN4.1 trillion in 2022, which increased the Non-Performing Loan (NPL) ratio modestly from 4.2% to 4.3% YoY. The capital adequacy ratio decreased from 21% to 19%, while the liquidity ratio improved from 71.2% to 75%. Both prudential ratios are well above regulatory thresholds.

Airtel commissions largest Primary School in Gombe State

Speaking during the event, State Business Manager, Airtel Nigeria, Moses Adejo, said, "Airtel is committed to improving the system of education in Nigeria, and we love to identify with basic school education where the nurturing starts from. This is because we truly believe in the saying that children are the future of this country".

Also speaking at the event, The Emir of Gombe, represented by Falakin Gombe, Alhaji Kabiru Tshon, applauded Airtel for their support towards education in Gombe, as he expressed his delight to be a subscriber to Airtel Network.

"Thank you to Airtel Nigeria for this wonderful intervention which is the first of its kind in Gombe state. I am delighted to find out that Airtel can do so much to support education in our state. I am one of their subscribers, so I am pleased to say that my Airtel is making an impact in Gombe", he said.

According to the Head Teacher, Government Day Nursery and Primary School, Sani Abubakar, Airtel is the first to carry out the such intervention in the school and the whole of Gombe state.

[Read more on www.theindustry.ng](http://www.theindustry.ng)

Campaigns that shaped 2022, how they manage the murky waters of ad industry

As far back as Ancient Egypt, advertising has served a critical purpose in the business world by enabling sellers to effectively compete with one another for the attention of buyers. Whether the goods and services your company provides are a necessity, a luxury or just a bit of whimsy, business owners can't rely on a one-time

announcement or word-of-mouth chatter to keep a steady stream of customers. A strong commitment to advertising is as much an external call to action as it is an internal reinforcement to your sales team.

Advertising practitioners across the world always ensure they create top of the mind advertising content to woo customers. So far, a lot of

practitioners have done so much in 2022 by creating the most creative advertisements for their clients via tv commercials, radio jingles, newspapers ads, billboards among others. To this end, the Industry Newspaper, one of the leading business newspapers in Nigeria critically looks into some memorable ads for 2022.



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Budweiser: "The World Is Yours To Take"



Budweiser, produced by Anheuser-Busch InBev (AB InBev), launched its FIFA World Cup campaign in 70 countries, making it one of the brand's largest initiatives, per information shared with Marketing Dive.

"The World Is Yours To Take" features soccer superstars Lionel Messi, Neymar Jr. and Raheem Sterling. The campaign kicks off with a hero ad featuring the three athletes running with fans from around the world through the player tunnel onto the field.

The 45-second video ad opens with an overview of the significance of the player tunnel. Then, Messi, Neymar and Sterling are seen leading fans of different ages, nationalities, ethnicities and abilities through the tunnel as a remix of Tears for Fears' hit "Everybody Wants to Rule The World" plays. Flags from various countries were waved as well as the LGBT Pride Flag. Its presence in the commercial stands out, as Qatar had come under scrutiny for its persecution of LGBT people.



Coca-Cola: "Believing is magic"

Coca-Cola, ahead the 2022 world cup released a tv commercial ad "Believing is magic". The ad is intended to show how it feels to be a football fan imagining the journey to victory. It opens with a girl buying a bottle of Coca-Cola and walking out into the street where she takes a swig of the beverage.

As she looks up, a cloud of red

smoke appears, a single piece of confetti flutters down into her hand and faint cheering can be heard in the distance. The street is then filled with people celebrating their team's victory as she imagines how it would feel for her team to win the tournament. A dramatic, feel-good montage shows fireworks, music, street parties and parades spreading the magic of the World Cup.

"The Coca-Cola Fifa World Cup 2022 campaign, 'Believing is

Magic,' celebrates and enhances authentic and simple moments of connection for football fans," Brad Ross, vice-president of global sports and entertainment marketing at The Coca-Cola Company, said. "A global community of fans will come together to cheer, pass down rituals and join in the belief that this will be the year their team is crowned winners of the Fifa World Cup." The film is supported by three digital 30-second spots called "Tattoo", "Shave" and "Run", which explore football fans' devotion and the promises they make to their teams.

Guinness: "Brothers Miracle / Abidemi"

"Brothers" celebrates the relationship between Miracle, and his brother, Abidemi who are united by their shared passion for football. There are some excellent agile camera moves which bring viewers from a fantasy realm where Miracle is a football commentator in a round sports arena, a type of street game, to sitting in a popular sports bar where Abidemi is telling Miracle about everything happening on the screen.

The ad tells that it is 'sports bar' and a Nigerian football viewing center, and these public viewing centres are an extension of stadiums in many African cities. They are now a popular destination for weekends and some midweek evenings during the European football season to bring people together and share their passion for the game. Also, in the ad, Miracle is actually



blind, but football isn't all about what you see, but what you feel. And Miracle is one enthusiastic fan.

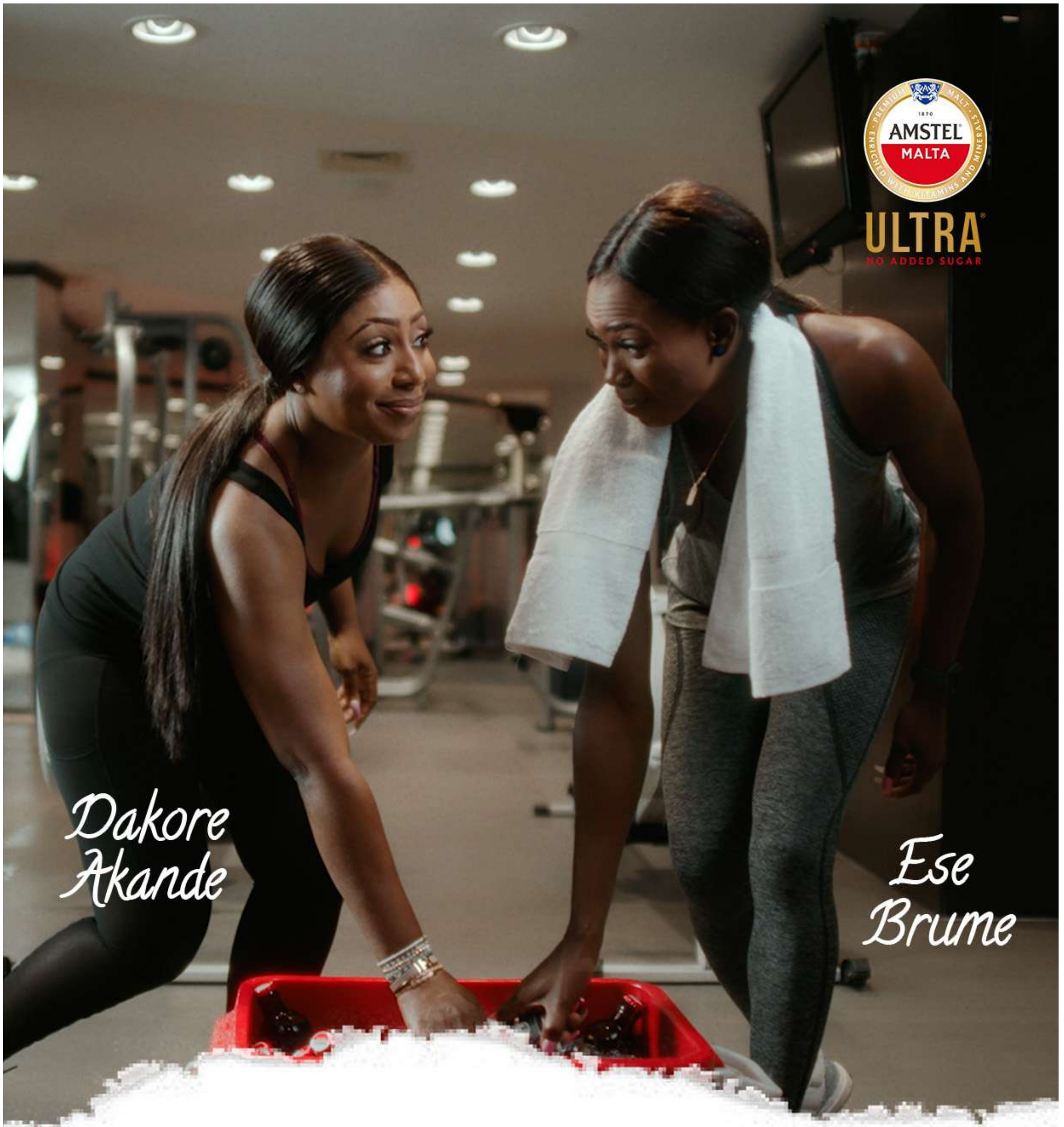
Heineken: "Cheers to All Fans, Men Included,"

Heineken, in 2022, unveiled a new TV and digital campaign celebrating female soccer fans and addressing gender bias that affects both fans and players. The campaign, "Cheers to All Fans, Men Included," features female soccer fans across a variety of teams, ages and ethnicities enjoying the game in bars with a glass of Heineken, or even during intimate situations. In one scene during the 90-second spot, a woman leaves a date to watch the game in the bathroom on her phone. In another, a woman slow dances with

her partner, watching the TV over his shoulder.

As part of the initiative, Heineken has partnered with former Arsenal player Alex Scott as the brand's first female soccer ambassador. In one shorter ad, an announcer is celebrating the career of an Arsenal football player who led the team to victory. Viewers are made to believe it's Thierry Henry, who is also featured in the ad. In the end, viewers discover the announcer is talking about Scott, to whom Henry raises a bottle of Heineken.





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Ese Brume



***Real luxury is choosing your way to live~ Dakore Egbuson
I choose to run towards things, not from them~ Ese Brume***

With Amstel malta Ultra, I get to choose my way to live. The no added sugar in my Amstel Malta Ultra means that I can enjoy a great tasting drink, but at the same time, not feel guilty. Talk about enjoying the best of two world's right? Yes, I'm Living my life to the fullest and also enjoying a healthy journey at the same time. So, I invite you to come join our wellness journey, it begins with aerobics everyday at Eko Hotel. See you there!



New ARCON law protect imc from losing N120 billion capital flight annually



The new advertising regulation law, which transformed the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) to Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) has been applauded by some practitioners in the country as one of the best

initiatives by government to the advertising industry in Nigeria. One of the leading practitioners in the industry and chief executive officer of Lilvera Group, Mr. Buchi Johnson in a recent chat with the media stated that the new law setting up ARCON has prevented a capital flight in the

tune of N120 billion.

According to him, "The law provides that, with effect from January 1, 2023, advertisers must use a cumulative 75% of local content in all ads and marketing directed at the Nigerian market. This is exciting because the country has been losing about N120 billion annually due to capital flight in the sector where ads targeted at Nigerians were produced externally creating jobs in other economies but not in the targeted economy, Nigeria."

Mr. Johnson said, this law is expected to create over 500,000 jobs annually. So, this will lead to more multinational brands using Nigerian talents, agencies, and producers in commercials targeted at the Nigerian market.

"On a personal note, I look forward to Lilvera playing a key part in ensuring that the quality that these multinational brands get from local agencies is at par if not even higher than the quality they would get elsewhere," he said.

Speaking on Lilvera's audacious moves to make giant stride in the industry, the CEO of Lilvera mentioned that the agency has designed an effective tool to aid its execution and implementation of clients' briefs.

On the potency of this tool, Mr. Johnson said "Our focus is to continue to deliver on the 5Rs that drive Integrated Marketing Communications such as Responsiveness: ensuring rapid and high-quality response to clients' needs, Relevance: keeping our client communications highly targeted and relevant, and Receptivity: maintaining open communication lines with clients".

He further stated that "Recognition is about prioritizing brand building and distinction to keep Lilvera the preferred brand for integrated marketing communication in the Nigerian market for multinational and local businesses and Relationship: we are nothing without the key

relationships we have with our team, vendors, and clients so this is a vital area of focus for us in 2023 and beyond."

Highlighting some landmark accomplishments of the agency, he said perfection eludes humankind yet we strive for it and will accept nothing less than the perfection that is within our reach at Lilvera. "So, we deploy every resource within our capacity to ensure the very best outcomes for our clients and our business. Our achievements in the last year are testament to the hard work and creativity of our team, the trust of our clients, and, of course, God's grace and favour. We acknowledge Him as our helper and source for everything, even the inspiration that we receive to deliver a great experience to clients."

He stated that "One area where we definitely need to keep growing is customer relationship management. We have built great client relationships in the past years of our business that we must continue to deepen, and we look forward to building new relationships that we will nurture, grow, and blossom. Our clients are at the heart of our business so we will continue to focus on this area to ensure the very best experience for them as they continue to choose us for their integrated marketing communication projects," he added.

The integrated marketing communications industry particularly, the agencies take pride the awards they have won or the recognised given to them during the course of doing business for their clients. Johnson believes that Lilvera deserves every bit of the accolade showered on it and it minders.

According to him, it does feel great to be recognised by notable organisations both locally and internationally. Some of the awards we received in 2022 are the Most Client Focused Marketing Agency of the Year - Africa by Global Business Awards; the Industry Influencer Award for Experiential

Marketing at the Industry Summit Awards 3.0; and the African Prize for Leadership Excellence under the Experiential Marketing Personality Leadership Prize Category.

"We are grateful for these awards and see them as propellers for our business because they challenge us to keep setting the pace, raising the bar, and bringing value to the industry. For us, the way we project ourselves is important to our productivity which is why we take first impressions seriously as this sets the tone of the relationship that follows.

Our team of highly trained professionals understand this too. So, we showcase our intelligence, professionalism, and confidence in how we handle businesses from the first meeting, earning your trust. As you know, trust is the new gold. Then, beyond that first meeting, our strong commitment to building value for our clients ensures that we maintain a high standard of excellence and professionalism in every aspect of the services we render."

Though the election is come and gone, Mr. Johnson who spoke about the impact of Central Bank of Nigeria cash swap policy and general election on imc industry said that "We understand that the policy is designed to move the country forward in terms of managing inflation, reducing fraud, and stabilizing the economy. To this end, we support the move and enjoin the government to ensure a smooth transition to the new cashless society that we are building."

Data plays some key roles in taking marketing decision and according to Johnson, data is so vital to the IMC industry. He said, "I see its impact being far reaching in how stakeholders plan and execute campaigns" adding that "Without the right data companies would be unable to take full advantage of existing opportunities.

Read more on www.theindustry.ng

Heddydecor: Innovative offerings that define event industry

As an emerging market with a population of over two hundred million people, Nigeria remains a center of attraction for different events. In fact, events vary for different occasions and purposes in Nigeria, most big events require the services of professional event managers or organizers in order to deliver on promise.

To achieve this, an event management company like Heddydecor is a company to beat. Heddydecor is one of the growing and impactful brands that ensures others around it grow and impact the world at large.

The brand was selected among top Nigeria event planners' delegates to represent Nigeria and Africa at the Dubai Global excellence wedding award 2023 which took place in January 2023, and also awarded among top fastest growing 100 SMEs in Nigeria by BusinessDay newspaper.

Also, the brand was part of the top Nigeria planner who visited Ghana in 2022 to discuss how Ghana and Nigeria event sector could foster relationships and development among so many other awards he has received, In 2019, the brand was nominated for the award of best event decorator of the year by the professional event planner's association, and also awarded as the event management brand of the year 2021 in the Entrepreneur Africa Awards a feat that put the brand on its toes to ensure that it continued to stay ahead.

Despite the fact that, 2022 was described as a tough year for event business in Nigeria due to heightened inflation on goods and services, Chief Executive Officer of Heddydecor, Adefila Titus Adebola said, "Because of the vision of the brand this encouraged us to forge ahead and invest more into several



businesses also expanding our scope into the media arm which led to an exponential growth for the company at large in both local and international market'.

While speaking on the events the company handled last year, Adebola stated that the life celebration of Pa Eboda the father of the founder of Harvest House Christian Centre, and also events of renowned people in the city of Ibadan and Lagos state.

While highlighting on the company's expectations for 2023, the Heddydecor boss said, "Simply put is for a better country, that would encourage young entrepreneurs like myself to be better and invest more into the Nigeria economy and also encourage foreign investors to come into the country so that the manufacturing and production sector can function well."

By this, he said that 'It would have a positive impact on our economy. Also, we hope we would have a good leader who would take development as priority in the country thereby making all of the youth who have left the country come back to be a useful tool in the country's development.' Adebola added.

For him, the event management landscape in Nigeria is quite competitive, as there is always

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For him, the event management landscape in Nigeria is quite competitive, as there is always

and customers to understand that the price we offer give the best output, but since we are known for quality and premium service delivery, the competition is not a major problem for us as we just ensure we get our clients satisfaction in all of our deliveries so this has helped us to stay ahead of our competitors.

"Heddy Decorations and Event Planning Services is into everything, we mainly decorate and plan events for our clients. We handle seminars, weddings, funerals, birthdays, rentals of event properties, lighting, screens and 360booth etc." He noted.

FestivAfrica' beach festival inaugurates new brand, consumer engagement in Africa

The unveiling party for FestivAfrica, the first African-themed beach festival, held late last year was an unforgettable experience for several guests.

The event which was attended by top Nigerian brands and high net-worth individuals is posed to be an annual celebration of colorful African dynamics, Lifestyle, Talents, and beach culture. FestivAfrica will be migrating from city to city across Africa and other continents where there are African footfalls.

The maiden festival is planned to take place in the United Kingdom in the summer of 2023 while the second show will take place in Nigeria winter of 2023.

The purpose of the unveiling party was to provide a sneak preview of the packed experience that FestivAfrica will offer to brands, investors, and limited, paying audiences.

FestivAfrica is the first African-themed beach festival. An annual celebration of colorful African dynamics, FestivAfrica will be migrating from city to city across Africa and other continents where there are African footfalls.

FestivAfrica will spread the unique vibes of African fashion, music, lifestyle, and vibrant heritage mixing them with the best performances in entertainment, art, games, and other trivia. It is a parade of the very best of Africa.

The initiative is open to all; young, old, family,

individuals, love birds, and other fun seekers; a fusion of the most diverse groups united by the taste for quality fun, it is indeed, the ideal festival for rediscovery for Africans in the diaspora.

Speaking on this development, Mrs. Opeyemi Odeyale, Head, Business Development and Projects for FestivAfrica disclosed that, "FestivAfrica is a new entertainment brand, an all-African Themed beach festival, all African in the sense that it celebrates the African beach culture, trends, lifestyle, talents, and acts while using the most opulent locations, and not just in Africa alone but in global cities where there are African footprints."

According to her, "the simple fact that we are celebrating African beach culture and replicating this globally is one unique element. We are taking it a notch higher by touring with A-list performers who are known to be well celebrated and have continued raising the African flag in their various playing fields."

Speaking on partnership, she said; "We are looking to onboard partners and sponsors who key into our objectives and long-term visions for the project as we prepare for the maiden edition which is to be held this summer in the UK. Brands that have footprints across Africa and beyond, and brands that welcome and open to innovation."

"Even though there are lots and lots of amazing beach festivals around the world, I wouldn't say they can find this type as there's



something that makes FestivAfrica different and unique, something I like to call 'our magic formula' something we would be showcasing to the world very soon," she added.

While describing the unveiling of FestivAfrica in Lagos, she pointed out that, "the unveiling party was an experience; it was thrilling with amazing acts and familiar industry faces. Attendees were able to experience our ambitions and aspirations toward the upcoming main events



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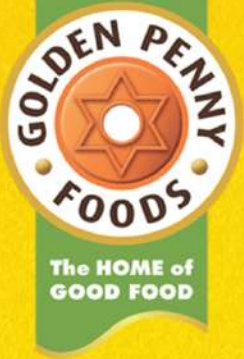


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ARCON acts against 'booming' advertorial skit making industry

The online comedy in Nigeria is a new goldmine or should we say 'oil'. Several unemployed youths but talented have found a new way of creating jobs and contributing to the gross domestic product of the nation. This, many believe has solved a problem but because it has continued unchecked to be a menace and unprofessional, Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) has waded in to provide direction.

In November 2022, ARCON announced its preparedness to regulate and enforce online advertising citing abuse and unprofessionalism, and in February, the regulatory body wielded the big stick by announcing its full implementation and enforcement.

The Director General of Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON), Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo has reiterated that the apex advertising regulatory body is not interested in vetting fees as insinuated in some quotas but concern about the health of young people as well as set a new threshold for advertising in the new media space.

The DG revealed this at the media parley to announcement the beginning of enforcement for the skit makers, influencers, vloggers, bloggers and other online content creator in Nigeria in Ikeja today.

The enforcement, according to Dr. Fadolapo commences on March 1, 2023.

The Director General of the apex advertising regulatory body, stated this during an interactive stakeholder's session with bloggers, skit makers and other digital content

creators at the Leola Hotel, in Lagos. The session focused on how to efficiently carry on with advertising business while ensuring compliance with advertising laws in Nigeria. He revealed that the laws are not regulating the digital space, but advertising contents exposed alongside skit contents on the platforms of various content creators.

"There are two types of adverts that these skit makers expose on their platforms; one is self-produced adverts. For example, a skit maker can produce an advert for himself and expose it on his own platform or it can be a third party advert for exposure; either way, the advert must be vetted before exposure. We want everybody to understand that we are all gatekeepers of advertising," he said. Dr. Fadolapo reaffirmed that every reform introduced is to ensure responsible advertising on digital media platforms and also to sustain the business of advertising for sustainable growth.

"The business has moved from traditional media space to the digital media space. New skills are now available, new businesses are being done in that space. This is not an attempt by the federal government to regulate freedom of speech in that area because there are a lot of activities in that space. There is information, entertainment, which is also called infotainment, comedy, and other the activities of the skit makers, including OAPs.

"What we are saying is that there is a line and space called advertising. If you cross that line and move your skit or comedy into the advertising space as defined by law, then you are moving into a regulated space, and

your activities in that space will be regulated," he said.

In order to bring everyone to speed before the commencement of the new law, the boss of the regulatory umpire, therefore, invited Charles Odenigbo, a legal practitioner who gave a detailed explanation on the provisions of the law as it pertains to advertising regulations and the consequences of breaching it.

Odenigbo recalled the re-enactment of the law in 2022, which came with 63 sections and in various parts while taking a look at the community of laws and regulations that will oversee the activities of the content creators on their platforms.

He also enlightened them on the need for their materials to be vetted by Advertising Standards Panel (ASP) before being exposed or published through Article 24.

"Except for public service announcements, goodwill messages, obituaries and vacancies, all advertisements, advertising and marketing communications shall be presented for vetting and must obtain the approval of ASP. It is mandatory for all advertisers and agencies to obtain ASP certificate of approval and for media houses to demand the ASP's certificate of approval in the case of direct media buying before placing any such advertisements.

"Under ARCON Act, we have offences under section 34 and section 54; [Read more on www.theindustry.ng](http://www.theindustry.ng)

X3M Ideas boosts literacy in Lagos with new reading hub

On the heels of its 10th anniversary celebration, Nigerian international creative agency, X3M Ideas has demonstrated its commitment to the reading culture among youths with the establishment of a reading hub for the students of Ilupeju Secondary School, Lagos, Nigeria. Launched on January 26, 2023, the reading hub is yet another community-centred CSR initiative by the creative agency.

In the past decade, X3M Ideas has consistently delivered impactful social intervention projects. Some of these include renovation of classrooms, office blocks, sick bays, libraries and donating computers, UPS devices, air conditioners, internet modems with unlimited data.

In response to the pandemic, X3M Ideas donated unique wash hand stations and disinfectant tunnels to select schools in 2020. To commemorate its first anniversary in 2013, X3M renovated a block of five classrooms at Opebi Senior High School, Opebi- the neighbourhood where the agency's Lagos office is domiciled.

Given this backdrop, X3M Ideas is keeping up with its culture of service to its community.

At the unveiling, the CEO, X3M Ideas, Steve Babako, reiterated his commitment to changing the reading culture among young people, stating,

"X3M Ideas will not waver in our effort to support Nigerian children, especially those in the public school system within our locality. We will consistently deliver impactful social intervention projects to the benefit of the students. This reading hub is modern, convenient and equipped with a library to make books accessible in order to groom these youths with ideas that can reshape

the world."

The Principal, Ilupeju Secondary School, Mr Ayobami Masheyi expressed his gratitude for the act of goodwill, saying,

"We are always so grateful to X3M Ideas for their contributions to the benefit of our students year on year. This year, we're especially grateful for the contribution to building the knowledge economy by donating a reading hub to our school, for our students. A good reader makes a good leader. We want to also encourage our students to take advantage of this new facility to improve their reading culture."

In this same vein, a representative for the Lagos State Commissioner for Education and Director, Lagos State Ministry of Education, Mrs Grace Akinfoyewa remarked,

"In this era of social media, school children are easily distracted. But this reading hub will make it easier for them to renegotiate their time for studies and leisure in order to become knowledgeable youths and ultimately future leaders."

Others present at the commissioning of the reading hub include the Founder and CEO Smooth Promotions, Ayo Animashaun and representative from the Education board Paul Legbeti among others.

Advertising regulator seeks to bridge practices, academia yearning gap

The Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) will on Thursday this week commence an annual colloquium targeted at higher institutions of learning and the marketing communication industry as a move to bridge the knowledge gap between professional practice and theory.

The colloquium will also enable higher institutions to understand what is going on in the industry



and how to tailor their curriculum to suit practice.

Olalekan Fadolapo, Director-General, ARCON told newsmen that the advertising industry colloquium, AIC will assist to negotiate a nexus between the town and the gown in advertising practice. "There is a situation where some graduates don't fit into the industry due to the knowledge gap, there is a need therefore to bridge the gap", he said.

Also speaking, Rotimi Olatunji, Chairman, Advertising Industry Colloquium and Academic Journal Committee of ARCON, the colloquium is a one-day event organised by the marketing communication industry sectoral groups and powered by the ARCON.

He said that the primary objective of the AIC was to provide a forum for academics and students of Mass Communication, Advertising and other components of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) to interact.

Olatunji said they would interact with professionals in advertising/other components of IMC; media practitioners, policy makers and regulatory agencies.

Dentsu deepens with clients, partners in Nigeria



L-R: Dentsu Africa's Chief Executive Officer, Dawn Rowlands, and the Group Chief Executive Officer of dentsu Nigeria, Emeka Chris Okeke.

During the one-day Dentsu Procurement Academy programme, clients also expressed confidence in Dentsu Nigeria. Some of the clients who spoke at the event commended the company for quality delivery, according to a press statement by Dentsu Nigeria's Corporate Communications Manager, Sodiq Oyeleke, on Thursday.

They also hailed Dentsu Nigeria for cost-effective campaigns and expressed satisfaction with the company's result-oriented approach.

Speaking at one of the sessions, Dentsu Africa's Chief Executive Officer, Dawn Rowlands, assured the clients of amazing deals that would help drive business growth. Rowlands who spoke on 'How to Measure Brand Performance in Media, Digital and Creative and the Value of Integration', said, "With your collaboration, we can drive inspiration and efficiency together.

We'll use integrated skills to promote your business and give you a massive impact on the entire business, and meet set values and success measurements," she added. She also noted that Dentsu's Consumer Connection System would be of great benefit to their businesses if they keyed into it. According to her, Dentsu has one of the best procurement systems in the world.

On his part, the Group CEO of Dentsu Nigeria, Emeka Chris Okeke, emphasized that MediaFuse-Dentsu would not relent in ensuring optimal value in every deal.

While boosting the client's confidence, he said, "We are more interested in building a long-lasting working relationship with you. As our business partners, your growth is our priority, and we will not relent in ensuring that you see value for every money spent."

Also, Global Managing Director, Programmes and Change

Management, Paul Hughes, said that Dentsu has a robust and dependable structure for transitioning.

He said, "We got a really clear process through our hierarchy so that we can find out what's going on about a brand and the action (s) needed. We have a strong reporting hierarchy that mitigates risk. We coordinate in a flexible and scalable manner."

Also, the Managing Director of Dentsu Location Services in Nigeria, Chike Oputa, and Dentsu Transformation Director, Elizabeth Akinyele, urged clients to leverage data to develop their brands.

"Leverage the power of data to drive growth. Data powers businesses and accelerates business performance," Chike added.

Akinyele explained how data could be used to increase consumers' experience of brands. [Read more on www.theindustry.ng](http://www.theindustry.ng)

Controversy trails LASU bread launched as FCCPC kicked

There is a push back for what looked like a masterstroke by the Vice Chancellor of Lagos State University, Prof. Ibiyemi Olatunji-Bello new initiative, LASU bread. The University recently joined the frenzy bread market with LASU Bread and the ivory tower has been criticized for breaching the competition law.

After the launch LASU in its official Twitter handle @LASUofficial wrote "Accolades for the VC, Prof. Ibiyemi Olatunji-Bello, mni, as LASU Bakery opens for business. The bakery is part of her administration's drive to increase IGR. The LASU Bread will henceforth be the only bread on the university main campus, Ojo."

The twitter featured the VC posing with three loafs of LASU bread with a smile but the accolade suddenly turned into criticism as the chief Executive officer of Federal Competition and

Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), Babatunde Irukera came down hard on the school for alleged stifling of competition.

In an apparent disagreement with LASU, Irukera tweeted, "I am afraid this presents a potential violation of competition law. Under the FCCPA, it's an offense to limit competition in this manner, LASU is not exempted because govts are also subject when they engage in commerce. I assume this statement doesn't convey what it says."

The law permits any institution-private or public to engage in a commercial venture after all a federal government agency, NNPC is the sole importer of refined petroleum product into the country and LASU may have borrowed a leaf from this practice.

However, Nigerians have started criticizing LASU for the decision to make LASU bread the only sole bread in the campus which

apparently goes against the competition law of FCCA.

According Olalekan Adebayo, an advertising practitioner in Lagos, LASU has no right to bare any brand from it premises as long as it is legal and legitimate product. "What LASU has done is like saying no Ojo indigene would attend another university but LASU. If you wish to join commercial venture you must be ready to compete with other legitimate businesses."

A student, who pleaded anonymity said that the school management has erred because you cannot force a product on consumer because 'decreeing' that only LASU bread is allowed in the school premises tantamount to forcing consumer to only one choice."

The mixed reactions according to the inside sources who confided in The Industry said that the university management maybe considering the decision to bare other

'Kenya and Nigeria are proving themselves to be major creative powerhouses'

Nnamdi Ndu, Chief Executive Officer of Pitcher Awards isn't a small fry in the creative industry in Africa. He is one of the few in the business who invests everything he's got in the creative advertising. The founder of Pitcher Awards and other creative initiatives that hones raw talents in the integrated marketing communications spoke to our editor-in-chief, **Goddie Ofose**, on the level of the creativity in Nigeria and other issues. Excerpts...

How would you describe the creative industry in the last 6 months?

There is a greater sense that things are coming back to normal after the pandemic. However, the creative industry is not immune to the other crisis plaguing the world currently, mostly resulting from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We are seeing high inflation rates, soaring energy costs, currency devaluation and stock markets tumbling.

Take us back to the last Pitcher Awards? How was it in comparison to previous years?

Pitcher Awards is a passion project. It is something that I had wished for a long time that it existed. That was before I asked myself "if you don't do it, who will?" I then accepted the challenge to make it happen. We had the fifth edition this year and it has been such a blessing to see it increasingly gain acceptance by the industry across Africa. We started with entries from just Ghana and Nigeria, but today, we see entries from several Africa countries. Pitcher Awards is open to works created or implemented in Africa. So, it has been the entry criteria that materials created anywhere in the world for purposes of implementation in Africa are free to enter, but we never saw that happen until this year, with entries from France, Singapore and UAE.

Since the festival commenced in Nigeria, what has been its impact in the industry with verifiable track records?

Pitcher Festival was set up from day one as a regional festival to showcase the creativity of Africa. In the first 2 editions, when we were still testing the waters, we only accepted entries from West Africa. It was in 2020 that we opened it up to the whole continent. The problems facing the industry in Nigeria are no different from those in other African countries. The feedback we are getting from everywhere is that finally, there is a truly African festival that is transparent, credible and judged by our friends and colleagues in Africa that we know and respect. So, we are not just promoting African stories, we are also promoting our people and showing that they are just as good as their peers elsewhere.

We are also big on youth events like the Future Creative Leaders Academy, which prepares university students for careers in marketing communications. It has also been a pathway for participation in the Cannes Lions Roger Hatchuel Student Academy and the Google Campus program in Mountainview, California. The Young Professionals Academy is a career acceleration program for professionals under 30, and provides the platform for competing in the Global Young Lions Competition.

The first post pandemic Cannes International festival was held in June. Kindly share your experiences of the event.

Everyone was pleasantly surprised to see so many people attend this festival. I knew it was going to be packed because months before the event, most of the hotels in the city were already fully booked for the festival period. You can always trust Cannes Lions to organize the best events, but even beyond that, people were just so happy to once again be able to meet friends and colleagues from all over the world in-person.

As the Cannes Lions representative in Nigeria, I was delighted that we were able to send a student in the name of Oyinkansola Epedi from Ajayi Crowther University to participate in the Roger Hatchuel Student Academy. She was the only student in her class from the whole of Africa. We also presented 6 teams to participate in the Global Young Lions Competition, the largest that we have had in recent times. Four of the teams participated online, while the teams from Noah's Ark and Media Reach OMD were in Cannes in-person. We also had the honor to invite a Nigerian, for the 4th



Our mission is to equip, train and celebrate Africa's creative industry. We started by partnering with global leaders to achieve these goals. We partnered with Lürzer's Archive and Thames and Hudson to equip our community with industry books and reference materials

consecutive year, to join the Cannes Lions global jury.

So, generally, I can say we made a good showing at the year's festival, and the experience was great. A few delegates attended, but we just hope that the economy improves, so that more Nigerian agencies can be better positioned to participate and send in entries.

Why has Africa not been able to have a united creativity festival in the continent?

That is the problem that the Pitcher Festival is solving. I must state that it has only been 2 years since we became a pan-African festival. So, we are still gathering momentum. Having said that, we see that Nigerians are taking ownership of Pitcher Awards is the same way as the Ghanaians, Kenyans and Senegalese. In the first year of the awards, the Agency of the Year went to Insel Communications Ghana,

Noah's Ark Nigeria held it for 2 years, and the following year, it went to King James of South Africa. This year Dentsu Kenya became the Agency of the Year. So, you can see why nobody will feel left out.

The industry recently launched the Advertising Industry Standard of Practice (AISOP) and now, changed from APCON to ARCON (Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria). What are your expectations?

I think the new name helps to focus on the regulatory role which is perhaps the primary function of the council. I have not studied the Advertising Industry Standard of Practice, so I cannot give an informed opinion at this time. Generally, I am for any idea that helps to make the industry more creative, more competitive and more prosperous. I want to caution though that if you're not delivering value and you want to hide under a protective law, it never really works for long.

How would you rate Nigerian creative industry vis-s-vis South Africa, Kenya etc.?

These are the three vibrant African markets that are unrelenting in their efforts to create great campaigns. South Africa has been in that space for a long time, obviously, because of its longer connection with the West. However, both Kenya and Nigeria are proving themselves to be major creative powerhouses. For instance, at Pitcher Awards this Year, One Language by X3M Ideas was praised for the level of craftsmanship, which the jury president described as world class. Rainmaker by Noah's Ark was praised for its

authenticity in telling the African story. If you go to Kenya, campaigns like, Draw the Line Against Malaria, won big at Pitcher Awards. Ogilvy Africa, Kenya also won three gold lions this year in Cannes for Lesso Lesson.

So, I think the only challenge in Kenya and Nigeria is that we don't have many agencies consistently producing work at this level. We have seen grand prix ideas from Caractere, Senegal and very impressive campaigns from CIRCUS! Mauritius. So, it's a tough call to say this country or that country will produce the agency of the year in 2023. All the markets have the capability to produce the next big winner.

What is CHINIAfrica's next week?

Our mission is to equip, train and celebrate Africa's creative industry. We started by partnering with global leaders to achieve these goals. We partnered with Lürzer's Archive and Thames and Hudson to equip our community with industry books and reference materials. We partnered with Miami Ad School to provide world class training and we partnered with Cannes Lions to share the ultimate winning experience. Today, we have also developed our own brands, including CULTURECODE to offer in-depth training; and Pitcher Festival to celebrate the best of African creativity. Tomorrow, we will still be doing the same things in a bigger and better way.

2023 general election is approaching, what do you expect to see creative-wise, and how can it be well executed?

The major political parties have already assembled their creative teams, and are waiting for the INEC whistle to blow. The big budget campaigns will be the ones that they have had more time to work and have distilled elements of their manifesto. These campaigns are likely going to have greater production values. But the true test of the creativity of their communications managers will show in their ability to respond quickly to attacks, jump on trends and defuse unfavorable tension.

Creative-wise, what does the remaining part of the year portend?

Politics will dominate the media spaces. However, the cycle for Pitcher Festival 2023 will begin in November with the opening of entries and registration for the Youth Academies.



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Omnicom's lead independent director to relinquish the post at year's end



Omnicom Group's Lead Independent Director Leonard Coleman is stepping down from the post at the end of the year. Coleman, 74, will have held the post for eight years when he steps down. The former president of MLB's National League indicated he plans to remain a director. Omnicom disclosed the news in its 2023 proxy

statement and noted that a process is underway to identify Coleman's successor. Nine of the ten Omnicom board directors are independent—the exception being company Chairman and CEO John Wren. The company has made an extra effort in recent years to make the board more independent and diverse. Six current members are female, four are African

American and one is Latina.

Omnicom's annual meeting this year will be held on May 2 at Jekyll Island, GA.

There's one shareholder proposal mentioned in the proxy statement to separate the chairman and CEO roles at the company. Both titles are currently held by Wren. The proposal also states that whenever possible it would be best if the chairman were also an independent director.

"The roles of Chairman and CEO are fundamentally different and should be held by 2 directors, a CEO and a Chairman who is completely independent of the CEO and our company," the proposal states.

Omnicom encourages shareholders to vote against the proposal. "Omnicom has engaged extensively with shareholders on our Board leadership structure, and we continue to receive strong support for our

flexible approach, our current leadership structure, and the strength of our Lead Independent Director role," the company asserted.

Wren, 70, was the highest paid executive at the company last year with total compensation of \$20.7 million, a little above the \$20 million he pulled in 2021. Chief Operating Officer Daryl Simm was next, earning \$10.7 million versus \$8.7 million in 2021. And CFO Phil Angelastro was third, with \$9.9 million, just a smidge higher than the \$9.7 million, he earned in 2021.



Talon M&A streak continues with purchase of Evolve

Global media out-of-home agency Talon has acquired its second OOH shop in as many weeks with the purchase of Evolve for an undisclosed sum.

Evolve has offices in London, New York and Singapore and its acquisition is the latest step in Talon's global expansion plan.

Last week London-based Talon grew its footprint in Canada with the acquisition of Novus Media Canada Corp.

Evolve will operate under its existing brand and continue to be led by its founder and CEO, Robin Hall, and Danielle Austin, Managing Director. Their remit will be to help strengthen Talon's global presence and align with Talon International, a global planning and buying OOH network of partners serving 100 markets across the U.S., Europe, Asia and Latin America.

Fusion92 taps Fasana to head client services

Fusion92 named Lisa Fasana as EVP, client services. She is charged with overseeing the company's client services team and client engagement across a broad portfolio.

Previously, Fasana spent nearly nine years at Marketing Werks, a Chicago-based, fully integrated agency specializing in omnichannel and experiential solutions. As the SVP, strategic marketing and managing director, she helped grow leading brands, such as Nintendo, Clorox and Keurig. She also managed the integration of four different agencies into one operating structure. Prior to that, she held roles at Arc Worldwide and Bluedog Design, focusing on various



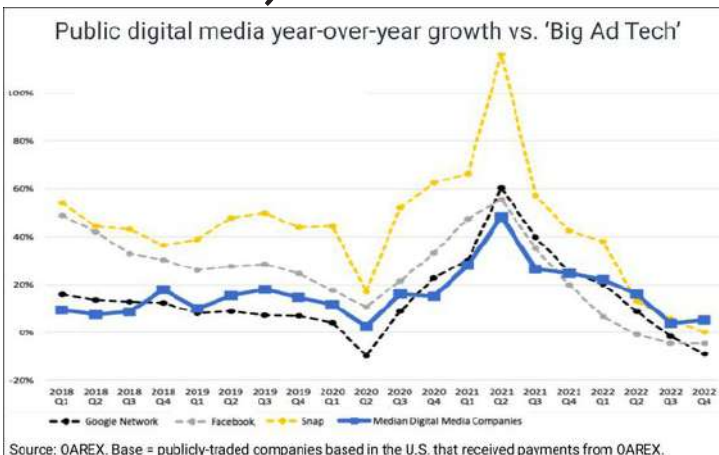
projects and campaigns to ensure brand growth. Fusion92 acquired three different firms in 2022; Fasana's appointment is the latest sign in the company's ongoing expansion.

"We are beyond thrilled to have Lisa join Fusion92, ensuring every client partner has a harmonious team of trusted advisers who are advocates and deliver flawless, growth-oriented execution," said Fusion92 president

Doug Dome. "As Fusion92 continues to grow, we're committed to a client-obsessed culture in an inspiring, curious, safe workplace that empowers innovative ideas from across our talented team."

Fusion92's client list includes H&R Block, Thrive, Rivers Casino, Raymond James and Redbox. The agency has hubs in Chicago, Detroit, Austin and Denver.

Digital tot immune from current Ad recession, falls 2% YTD



While digital continues to expand its share of total ad spending, rising to a 59% share of media buys by major ad agencies in February, it is not immune from the current ad recession, according to an analysis of the first two months of the year by Standard Media Index. The data shows digital ad spending declined 2% during the first two months, which is

healthier than the overall U.S. ad-spending decline (-6.9%), but nonetheless reveals key segments of the digital ad economy are running out of steam, especially digital video, search, general content and social media sites (see above).

"Only a ad networks/exchanges showed lift," the SMI report notes, adding that the 9% decline in ad

spending on video sites likely was influenced by comparisons with February 2022, when NBCUniversal's sites had incremental ad digital video ad sales from their coverage of the Winter Olympics.

"Comcast/NBCU's digital TV network revenue fell by 51%," SMI analysts noted.

OAAA elects clear channel's wells chair

Clear Channel Outdoor Holdings CEO Scott Wells has been named the new chair of the Out-of-Home Advertising Association of America (OAAA). He succeeds Sean Reilly, CEO of Lamar Advertising Co., who served as OAAA chair since May 2017. Newly-elected OAAA

board members include: Ari Buchalter, CEO, Place Exchange.

Bill Lodzinski, President & CEO, WV Outdoor.

Michael Provenzano, CEO & Co-Founder, Vistar Media.

Nathan Young, President, YESCO Outdoor Media.

Rod Rackley, President, OOH Division, Circle Graphics.



How 2023 general elections impacts Nigeria IMC industry



All over the world, the media plays a strategic role in facilitating and developing new techniques in political communication, such as in political advertising. This is because advertising is the most effective way of building and creating images. The contribution of the media to politics and political communication, in particular, is immense because politics, especially, democracy thrives on discussion and communication between the politicians and the electorate.

Furthermore, the media play significant roles in a democratic society in providing information, educating the citizens, acting as a platform for public/political discourse, and publishing government programs. The media also serves as the watchdog of the society, and channel for the advocacy of political viewpoints. In Nigeria, every election year is critical to practitioners in the integrated marketing communication industry because they are the professionals through which politicians engages their various audiences. The 2023 elections have come and gone but the impact the elections had on the industry is critical to its growth and development.

ARCON Intervention

In the buildup to the 2023 general elections, with the increased electioneering activities, the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) urged advertising agencies to adhere to the advertising codes of practice, in order, to maintain peace and decorum in the polity. The Director General of ARCON, Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo, stated that, "Election is not a do-or-die affair. There are provisions of the law that need to be strictly adhered to. We have the limits of advertisement and marketing communications, which means that whether you are doing your campaign below the line, between the lines, or above the line, it must comply with the provisions of the advertising code."

For the 2023 general elections, ARCON vetted 298 advertisements of 16 political parties. These adverts comprise five TVCs (Titled 3 Mandates by PDP), two radio adverts (Tonye Cole and Asiwaju Bola Ahmed) and two TVCs by APC. Two of the TVCs were revised. A breakdown of the adverts approved by ARCON were APC -120, PDP-94, LP-35, NNPP-8, APGA-4, Action Alliance-2, YPP-10, SDP-9, ADP-1, NRM-1, PRP-3, APP-2, ADC-5, Boot-1, APM-1, and Accord-2. According to the advertising regulatory agency, although there were a few that failed to comply with the advertising law, it recorded significant compliance with the advertising law and stipulated guidelines for political marketing and

communication this year, 2023.

Conflict of Interest

In Lagos, it was reported that, the two leading political parties and their candidates fought over campaign billboards. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate, Mr Abdulaziz Olajide Adediran popularly known as Jandor, had raised an alarm. He alleged that the state government was blocking his campaign billboards. According to him, "The moment that that of Afromedia happened in Falomo, I placed a call through to the Lagos police commissioner to let him know what happened. We thought it was the hoodlums who removed it, but after investigation, we realized that it was the state government, through LASAA, that removed it". And the advertisement company told us that it was instructed not to take anything from us, and that it will refund our money. Just like JC Decaux did refund our money."

But the All Progressive Congress (APC) spokesman, Mr Seye Oladejo, described the PDP allegations as the "usual cheap propaganda from the staple of the opposition party." He also said it was "very untrue" that the government stopped outdoor advertisements belonging to the opposition party candidate. Also, the Managing Director of LASAA, Prince Ademola Docemo, said the candidate's allegation did not show an understanding of the rules guiding outdoor advertisement practice in Lagos, explaining that LASAA regulates billboard structures and not advertisement campaigns.

Experts View

Speaking on this issue, a marketing communications expert, Gani Olowu said; "The fragmentation and de-segmentation of the industry really played out when one considers the impact of 2023 elections on the integrated marketing communication. You will discover that social media specifically WhatsApp and twitter played major roles in the orchestration of political messages by various political parties. Those two media were well stretched in selling their candidates and their manifestos."

According to him, "The whole idea of political communication being single-minded and integrated has being eroded. So many campaign themes and varied messages were developed by candidates and political parties to sell themselves. The only missing word in all these campaign themes was 'integrated'". He also noted that, "Fewer and fewer agencies got political communication briefs, as politicians are now engaging Hot Shops and one-man 'Brief Case' advertising firms, thereby eroding creativity, real and

effective synergy of thoughts in campaign planning." To him, "This is a dangerous trend and need to be discouraged. We didn't witness the robust and creative depths in campaign deployment by political parties in this year's elections. I recall with nostalgia the advertising appeal and messaging of SDP versus NRC in the MKO Abiola Hope 93 campaign. Call to action, melodious line, single-minded messaging were conspicuously absent in this year's elections." "Although APC tried to create some level of impact with its "Renewed Hope" campaign, still, there was more cacophony during the electioneering period than clear messages. A simple test will suffice: what can you remember about any of the candidates or political parties and their campaigns? None, I guess." Also speaking, a public relations expert, Akonte Ekine, said: the first thing to note is that the IMC is not in isolation. Therefore, the industry was also challenged in a mixed manner. One is that there were many marketing communications activities from the political class that did not go through as expected, while, on the other hand, the activities of the political class completely dominated the space such that very few brands were able to play. The fight for share of voice was predominantly between the political parties.

He further said that, "While the gains in the industry could be seen from the media billing, there is also some measure of growth for the production companies in the industry. On the side of creativity, when compared with the quality of creativity we had in the past, it was low in the last election. So, the mixed bag is good for the industry and we should look at the good side."

On his part, a brand and marketing analyst, Dan Obi stressed that, "The impact of the 2023 elections on integrated marketing communications is a mixed one in the sense that some aspect of the marketing communication industry benefited from the process, while others did not, as much as expected. Before now, there was this expectation that campaigns of political parties will be lifting levers for the marketing communication industry, but the result, this time, was not so."

For instance, he continued, "PR, creative, media independence, radio and the press did not benefit much; the benefit for television was less than 40%; social media benefited much and outdoor was selective. The reason for the mixed was that political party handlers handled the campaigns by themselves. They did it through rookies, who are none registered practitioners. Also, they relied more on below the line; and believed that they could do it by themselves."

Aina becomes 'Innovator of the Year' in EMEA



Funso Aina, MTN Nigeria's Senior Manager, External Relations, and one of Africa's most decorated media and public relations professionals, has been announced 'Innovator of the Year' in the brands category at the highly respected SABRE IN2 awards.

Awarded since 2013, the SABRE IN2 awards recognise excellent work that highlights the

expanding scope of the PR profession, from content creation to the evaluation process using data and analytics to inform, enhance and evaluate campaign successes across the globe.

Aina's recognition was announced by Provoke Media on February 15, 2023.

The award was presented at the PROVOKE EMEA Summit in Gesellschaftshaus Palmengarten Frankfurt, Germany on Thursday March 23, 2023.

The innovation award is a testament to Funso's trailblazing efforts in media relations, through MTN Nigeria's Media Innovation Programme (MIP): a six-month certificate programme for Nigerian media practitioners to increase the knowledge and skill base of the participants, help them understand the changing media landscape and how to effectively use technology to create impactful media content in the country and Africa at large.

Funso, a member of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), and a corporate communication professional with over two decades of experience emerged top across Europe, the Middle East and the African region (EMEA). He was named 'Most Influential Public relations professional in Nigeria' by the industry regulator, NIPR in 2022. Funso Aina has close to three decades of work experience in journalism, cultural diplomacy and telecommunications. He has various competencies and hands-on experience in public relations, corporate communications, media relations, public affairs and reputation and crisis management. He is a Fellow of the prestigious US State Department's International Visitors Programme (IVP) and the British Commonwealth Press Union (CPU).

[Read more on theindustry.ng](#)

Coca-Cola empowers 20,000 women entrepreneurs

In a bid to increase the impact of African women entrepreneurs, the Coca-Cola Foundation has partnered with Women in Africa (WIA) through the JAMII Femmes initiative to support 20,000 women-led businesses across African countries.

The initiative is expected to boost business creation opportunities by improving access to vocational training, networks, finance and markets.

According to the foundation, the entrepreneurs selected for the programme will be from Kenya, Nigeria and Ivory Coast over the next three years. empower 20,000 African women entrepreneurs Speaking at the launch event held at the University of Nairobi, which hosted participating women



entrepreneurs from Kenya, Vice President and General Manager of East and Central Africa franchise at Coca-Cola, Debra Mallowah, said the company was happy to have Kenya as one of the beneficiary countries in phase 1.

"Women empowerment remains one of our key pillars in driving the sustainability agenda and we are keen to bring on board more initiatives that deliver the desired positive impact in the lives of women in Kenya and Africa," she

said.

She said the Jamii Femmes initiative aims to support the creation of innovative solutions for sustainable development in Africa. She said the first phase is a four-month digital training phase, conducted by WIA's knowledge partner, Honoris

United Universities.

She said in the second phase, selected beneficiaries will have access to grants, adding that in the third phase, selected entrepreneurs will be able to participate in an accelerator programme, after which a special prize of \$10,000 will be awarded per country.

The programme, which had more than 3,000 African women entrepreneurs in the first cohort, is open for the second cohort.

Nwuneli replaces Edozien at Stanbic IBTC



Stanbic IBTC has announced the appointment of Mrs. Ndidi Nwuneli as the new Independent Non-Executive Director following the receipt of all required regulatory approvals.

She will replace Ms. Ngozi Edozien, who retires from the Board of the Company following the completion of her regulatory prescribed tenure in compliance with the CBN's new circular dated February 24, 2023.

The changes were announced by the financial institution in a notice to the Nigerian Exchange Limited.

According to the bank, Nwuneli is an expert in social innovation, agriculture, nutrition, and youth development, with over 25 years of international development experience, and is a recognized serial entrepreneur, author, public speaker, and consultant.

She was the first Executive Director of the FATE Foundation,

which assisted young entrepreneurs in starting and growing their businesses. She founded LEAP Africa in 2002 to inspire, empower, and equip a new generation of principled, disciplined, and dynamic young leaders in Africa. Nwuneli has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Harvard Business School and an undergraduate degree in Economics with honors from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School.

She was a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government and an Aspen Institute New Voices Fellow.

Ademola appointed ED, Unilever Nigeria

In a statement, it disclosed that Mrs Abidemi Ademola was appointed to the role of executive director effective from March 16, 2023.

Ademola is a legal practitioner with an experience of more than 27 years in commercial law and corporate governance practice in Nigeria and West Africa. "Her forte is to proactively identify legal, regulatory, compliance and corporate governance risks to business and develop innovative mitigation to enable seamless business operations and sustainability," the statement reads. She is a graduate of Law from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and holds a Master of Law from the



University of Lagos.

Mrs Ademola has an MBA in Leadership from Walden University, United States. She is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators of Nigeria, a governing council member of the institute and a fellow of the WIMBOARD Institute, a WIMBIZ/IE University, Madrid Executive Education Programme for Women on Boards.

Steve Babaeko now IAA president



distinguished himself in the annals of Nigerian marketing and brand communications.

He has placed the Nigerian ad market on the global scope being the first Nigerian to sit on a panel at Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity in France. He was also recognized by Forbes Africa as one of the two leading marketing communications voices in Africa. For more than two decades, Steve Babaeko has continued to create some of the most iconic marketing works in Africa. He has also worked extensively with top agencies including 141 Worldwide, Mc&A Saatchi & Saatchi, and Prima Garnet Ogilvy.

He has been involved in the creation and development of some of the most outstanding works in Africa and beyond, such as the "Proudly Nigerian" campaign for British American Tobacco, the "Now You're Talking" campaign for Etisalat, "You Need A New Bank" campaign for Diamond Bank and many others.

The IAA is a global association with a tripartite membership which comprises sectoral professionals- advertisers, media practitioners and agencies. Established in 1938 in New York, U.S.A, it has presence in over 70 countries across the world.

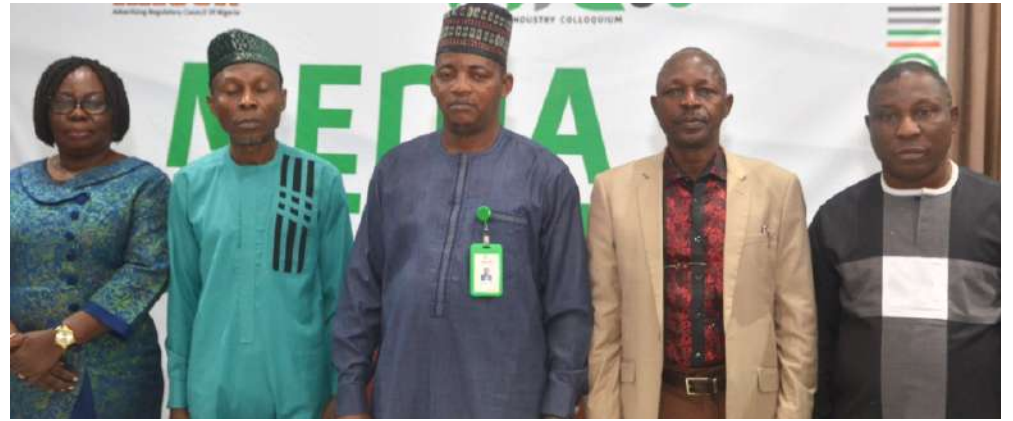
The International Advertising Association, IAA has announced Steve Babaeko, President of the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria, AAAN and Chief Executive Officer of X3M Ideas as the President of the Nigerian Chapter of the global body. The global advertising association made this announcement while congratulating the AAAN helmsman on its LinkedIn page today.

Steve Babaeko is one of the highly respected creative minds in the advertising industry in Nigeria. With more than two decades of experience in the business of brand management and communication, he has

PHOTO NEWS with WALE AKINBUWA



AIRTEL COMMISSIONS THE LARGEST PRIMARY SCHOOL IN GOMBE: L-R: Educational Secretary, Gombe State, Abubakar Baba Abdullahi; Representative of the Emir, Falakin Gombe, Alhaji Kabiru Tshon; Regional Marketing Manager, Gombe State, Airtel Nigeria, Muhammed Buhari; State Business Manager, Gombe State, Airtel Nigeria, Moses Adejo; and Head Teacher, Government Day Nursery and Primary School, Sani Abubakar, during the commissioning ceremony of the newly renovated Government Day Nursery and Primary School, recently in Gombe



ADVERTISING REGULATORY COUNCIL SEEKS TO BRIDGE PRACTICES, ACADEMIA YEARNING GAP: L-R: Mrs Ijedi Iyoha, Director Regulations, Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON); Mr Joe-Eugene Onuorah, Director, Registration ARCON; Dr Olalekan Fadolapo, Director General ARCON; Prof Rotimi Olatunji, Chairman planning Committee, Advertising Industry Colloquium and Mr Wole Odubanjo, Sub Committee Chairman advertising industry Colloquium, at the press briefing on the 2023 Advertising Industry Colloquium organized by Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) held in Lagos.



COLGATE WORLD ORAL DAY: L-R: Director Public Health, African Dental Students Association (AFRODSA), Oduneye Olamide, Dentist, Dr. Adebayo Oluwatemi, Lagos State Coordinator, National Youth Service Corp, Yetunde Baderinwa, National Below-The-Line Manager, Colgate Tolaram, Anthony Amadin, during Community Outreach/Awareness Rally and Free Dental Check activity to commemorate World Oral Day in Lagos.



KELLOGG'S SUPERSTAR SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 4.0: L-R: Executive director media reach, Mr Adeyinka Adebayo, director, basic education services Lagos state ministry of education, Mr Adeyemi Adebayo, winner Kellogg's super stars scholarship award, David Ogiata, marketing manager, Kellogg's Toleam, Darlington Ighabali, senior assistant education officer Lagos state universal basic education board (SUBEB), Mr popoola Ayodeji, during the the presentation of awards to the winners of Kellogg's super stars scholarship 4.0 edition in Lagos.



BOI AND NCDMB MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED: L-R Executive Director, Large Enterprises, Bank of Industry, Mr. Simon Aranonu; Managing Director/CEO, Bank of Industry, Mr. Olukayode Pitan, and Executive Secretary, NCDMB, Engr. Simbi Wabote, during the Bank of Industry and NCDMB Signing of NoGaps Memorandum of understanding, held in Lagos.



BETKING NIGERIA AND IKORODU CITY FC PARTNERSHIP: L-R: Executive Director, Ikorodu City FC, Kayode Badmus, Vice President, Ikorodu City FC, Adesanmi Doherty, Managing Director, Kingmakers Nigeria, Gossy Ukanwoke, Chief Financial Officer, BetKing Nigeria, Oladapo Olosape at the partnership announcement held today between BetKing Nigeria and Ikorodu City FC to promote local sports development in communities....



PDAC CONFERENCE MEETING IN CANADA: L-R: Senior Manager, Business Development and Advisory Services, N1 Solutions, John Febbraro, Economic Development Officer, The Corporation of the Township of Dubreuilville, Chantal Croft, President, CSR-in-Action Consulting, Canada, Bekeme Olowola, Vice President, HR & Communities, Green Technology Metals, Roger Souckey and People Lead, Red Chris Block Cave Project, Newcrest Mining, Uche Okpalugo meet to discuss collaboration around the nexus of sustainability between government, business, and communities during the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) 2023 Conference in Toronto, Canada, recently...



IBPLC INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: L-R: Director, BeerTech Africa, AB InBev, Cesar Robles; CEO, MainOne, Funke Opeke; Managing Director, International Breweries Plc (IBPLC), Carlos Coutino; Legal & Corporate Affairs Director, IBPLC, Temitope Oguntokun, and People Director, IBPLC, Michael Odutayo, at the International Women's Day Fireside Chat by International Breweries Plc.



AFIA FLAGSHIP DOCUMENTARY: L-R: Co-Founder & Executive Director, I-Represent International Documentary Film Festival, Femi Odugbemi, Brand & Business Development Manager, AfiaTV, Vera Chidimma Okoh, Head of consular, Royal Netherlands embassy, Lagos, Michel Deleen, Co-Founder & Director (Programme), I-Represent International Documentary Film Festival, Jahman Anikulapo at the screening of Afia TV's flagship documentary, Oso Afia, in Lagos.



EY ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR: L-R: EY Regional Managing Partner (West Africa) Anthony Oputa; Interswitch Group Managing Director, Mitchell Elegbe—Master Category winner of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award 2023; Minister of Industry, Trade & Investment, Otunba Richard Adeniyi Adebayo; Founder/Chief Analyst, Nairametrics Financial Advocate Ltd—Emerging Category winner of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award 2023, Ugodre Obi-Chukwu and EY Head of Markets/EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award Leader for West Africa, Ashish Bakhshi at the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award 2023 for West Africa Gala Award Ceremony in Lagos....



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AI and the age of artificial creativity

Tim Hurt

If Artificial Intelligence describes a computer's ability to acquire and utilize knowledge, Artificial Creativity could describe its ability to generate new ideas and perhaps make meaningful art.

That technology appears on the horizon like a train approaching the advertising business at 250 mph. We're standing on the tracks and wondering what to make of it. We're wondering about:

What becomes of creative jobs?

How do brands and agencies harness AI for creative expression?

What are the tools we can use to make it work?

All fair questions. Let's take them one at a time.

The Creative Roles

We tend to measure the success of AI in terms of how well it can mimic a human. The problem is that conversation goes straight to how robots will eventually replace people.

Theorists who announce the deaths of things in light of new technology often think that technology runs counter to creative expression. In his *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin described creativity as having an aura which degrades when a work of art is mechanically reproduced.

In the 20th century, technology greatly advanced a photographer's ability to represent ideas and tell stories. It did not replace painters. In fact, cameras spurred new art movements such as Impressionism, Cubism, Abstract Expressionism and Surrealism.

Now, the kinds of things that AI is capable of generating seem like completely new and original works of art. They're not perfect, but they signal progress. AI is a powerful tool that makes human ingenuity more efficient, accessible, and affordable.

Agencies are already taking the opportunity to shape new creative roles in anticipation of future workflows. Team One has used IBM Watson to write, cast and direct a film trailer. BBDO provides Stable Diffusion to its creatives.

New roles might emerge for AI Coders, AI Designers, AI Strategists, and Chief AI Officers. We need these roles to ensure AI is used in a



creative, strategic and responsible manner.

How creative brands and agencies should harness AI for creative expression

One-way creative brands can accelerate brainstorming is to incorporate AI into their workflow: synthesizing images and connecting ideas into a storyboard are part of the process. Visual thinking with AI unlocks new ways to see the world around us.

With generative art, there's a playful science to tweaking inputs to produce desired results, similar to entering keywords in a search engine. The process feels magical, because prompt writing for AI feels new and formulas can cast spells from relatively simple inputs.

Midjourney prompt: A tilt shift photo of a vintage polaroid photo of a house.

Chances are you've already seen Artificial Creativity and not realized it. Sports websites and apps use AI to write game recaps. Food bloggers publish AI recipes. The World Health Organization used an AI influencer to spread information about Covid safety.

Digital services stand to gain the most. E-commerce platforms meet audiences where they are, with greater context and experiences that adapt to a user's specific needs and behaviors. AI can optimize customer service channels.

Tools Do We Need

Freely available tools put content creators on the cusp of rendering complex visuals from simple text prompts. Researchers who are actively developing AI algorithms predict within a couple of years, we will be able to render 30fps, high-resolution video content in real time. Some video software tools even offer AI viewport editing features, allowing text-to-image and image-to-image replacement.

Design-led companies can use AI to validate their decisions. For example, EyeQuant offers a neural network that instantly shows how a person might visually interpret a design, with 90% accuracy compared to costly focus groups and real eye-tracking surveys.

Beyond image creation, writing tools like Jasper help marketing teams author blogs and social content. Chat with OpenAI can generate hypothetical scenarios and dialogue between multiple characters. In a few days since its public release, ChatGPT surpassed one million active users. It took Facebook nearly a year to reach that mark.

AI is being used to translate natural language into working code for simple websites and apps. Some companies are going so far as to build their own AI algorithms or incorporate AI into their applications. Banks have patented natural language processing methods in an effort to improve customer conversations and improve intelligent search algorithms, which all contribute to user experience.

Looking Ahead

Agencies should be excited for AI and its potential to help brands market themselves in more creative ways. But we can't be blind about the possibilities and ethics.

There's evidence that algorithms, if left unchecked, can be discriminative. That's one reason why the Office of Science and Technology Policy has drafted an AI Bill of Rights, to give companies a blueprint for protecting ourselves from unchecked Artificial Intelligence. Ownership of data also presents new hurdles for content licensing.

At any singular moment, AI is only as meaningful as its data and how we manage it. Now more than ever, we need creatives who are trained in AI and who are eager to work in concert with it.

AI revolution in the digital age: What the public relations industry must do to win the robot race

By David Odimegwu

Artificial intelligence is here to stay as the digital era progresses. It is surprising that public relations consultants and practitioners are not feeling the ground shake, as an army of robots kick down the doors of public relations firms all around the world. As an industry, we should brace ourselves for the revolution, and maintain our heads held high. However, data points to insufficient knowledge of AI, a lack of understanding of AI skills, and fear of job losses, in addition to widespread competency within the field. So, what is the solution here? What skills do public relations professionals require to compensate for the reality that many basic PR skills are being automated?

As PR professionals, we spend hours crafting content and use storytelling strategies to bring a brand's story to life. Because we may be writing a speech one day and campaign material the next, no two days are ever the same; therefore, we must be adaptive, as well as imaginative. Some observers, such as Mark Weiner, have even stated that our combination of creativity, empathy, and strategy is one-of-a-kind. The difficulty with such an attitude is that it fails to take into consideration AI's future capabilities.

Surveys, such as the AI and Big Data Readiness Report, provide some illuminating facts about the industry's AI skills, attitudes, and expertise. While 43% confess to knowing nothing about AI, 31% consider 'ownership' of AI as unknown. While few people are using AI to its full potential, the general consensus is that there is an urgent need for more AI knowledge and abilities across the board.

What, therefore, are the good, the terrible, and the ugly?

Let us begin with the positive effects. As Heather Yaxley has pointed out, AI will free up our time and make our lives easier by automating the most routine duties in public relations. Consider that the National Statistics Report in the United Kingdom found 27 percent of public relations occupations, like

content generation, appraisal, social media management, measurement and research, can be automated. This frees up time for PR professionals to focus on the more fulfilling aspects of their jobs. This raises the big question: is it the time for industry to assume that long-coveted seat in boardrooms across the country?

I believe that the new AI communications landscape is a game changer for consultants, who understand how to optimize AI technologies and prevent potential pitfalls. AI could also make humans more efficient. When AI is used, data analysis becomes faster, more accurate, and precise. There are significant benefits to employing AI-generated systems that can perform media monitoring and sentiment analysis, both of which are critical components of reputation management. Moving on to the terrible and ugly, we must overcome our fear of AI: that it will result in employment losses or that machine-generated content will become dominant. 'This whole AI issue is about the partnership of humans and machines, not the supersession of one over the other,' says Amy Mc Geady.

If the PR industry doesn't take ownership of AI, then who will? It is a big responsibility, but if it is left entirely in the hands of an IT and data specialist, where does that leave us? As a result, cross-industry collaboration is required, with Public Relations taking center stage in terms of ethics, language, and content development. This would be a good starting point for the PR sector to stay relevant. This situation is similar to the public relations industry's reaction to the assault of social media in the early 1990s. In terms of the magnitude of its influence, AI is no different, and yet, we appear to be sleepwalking toward it. A suitable starting point would be the implementation of multiple training seminars/customized AI course packages. This could be used to disseminate awareness of the effect, capabilities, and time-saving benefits of AI.

As an industry, we should be shifting toward what MacNamara refers to as a shift from competency to capabilities in his book,

Capabilities of PR Professionals for Critical Activities (2018). While competency focuses on the daily activities of practitioners, capabilities are more responsive to a rapidly changing technological environment. As

a result, practitioners would be able to consider the possibility of acquiring competence, even if, they do not already exist. If the PR sector wants to stay at the top of its game, it will need to continuously learn, in order, to keep up with the AI revolution. It is important to keep in mind that AI is still in its infancy, making this the ideal time for the PR sector to examine its own reflection. There is no denying that hard effort and training may accomplish a lot, but we need to start being open and sincere.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Odimegwu is a Public Relation Analyst, Communicator, Media Practitioner, Brand strategist, and Public Speaker, with over 2 years of experience in the media and communication industry. He has worked with brands that cut across the telecommunication sector, FMCG, sports sector, aviation, and beverages, among others. He is currently a study member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM: UK), having bagged a certificate in Applied Marketing (UK).

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