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NEWS



Unified Payments, the Fintech giant at 26

nified Payment Services Limited, Nigeria's premier financial technology service provider, has kicked off celebrations to mark its 26th anniversary with a promise to continue to provide seamless payment solutions to its numerous customers.

Established in 1997, Unified Payments has consistently demonstrated a commitment to innovation, excellence, growth, and customer satisfaction throughout its remarkable journey.

Over the past 26 years, Unified Payments has transformed the landscape of the payment industry by providing cutting-edge solutions that empower businesses and individuals to transact seamlessly, securely, and conveniently. With a strong emphasis on technology, user experience, and reliability, Unified Payments has earned

and payment space.

A statement signed by the Managing Director, Dr. Agada Apochi, said the company has made significant progress by setting the records for many firsts in the epayment sector. Among many firsts, Unified Payments pioneered the issuance and acceptance of EMV Chip+PIN cards in Nigeria, which led a reduction of card fraud in Nigeria by over 95%, enabled Nigerian banks to issue first-ever payment cards to Naira account holders for use globally. introduced the first-ever acceptance of foreign cards at ATMs, a joint acquiring company for Nigerian banks. The company was also the first, EMV third party processor in Nigeria, first processor in Sub-Saharan Africa to process payment or withdrawal with just phone number. First Nigerian principal member of a global payment a reputation as a trailblazer in the Fintech scheme. Unified Payment also pioneered the opportunities for different stakeholders.

multi-bank mobile application and USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) and the use of telephone numbers as digital account numbers.

According to Apochi, "At Unified Payments (UP), "we are very proud of what we have built; thanks to our esteemed customers and the dedicated staff at Unified Payments.

"Our journey over the past 26 years has been a testament to the grit, dedication, and vision of our entire team. We are not resting on our oars. Our resolve to continue to drive innovation, simplified payments solutions and delivering unparalleled value to our customers remains unwavering.

"Our strategy has been defined by crossenterprise alliances, working with different stakeholders including our competitors to create a bigger market thereby increasing



We remain committed to our customers' needs and adapting to the market demands to ensure Nigerians continue to enjoy seamless payment solutions using our platforms"

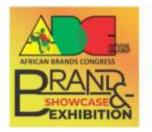
Unified Payments has consistently led the way in leveraging technology to provide secure, seamless, and efficient payment experiences. With a diverse range of offerings, including Acquiring, Issuer processing, Acquirer processing, Payment Terminal Service Provider (PTSP), Switching, Interbank transfer services,

Settlement services, Agency Banking, Online payment gateways, Card services, Value Added Services (VAS) and Solutions, Verification services, Pay with Just Phone Number services, Bespoke services, etc., Unified Payments is dedicated to continuously shape the future of payments. Unified Payment Services Limited is a group of companies with services including Financial Technology, Payment Scheme, Banking, Digital Commerce, Value Added Service, Payment Solutions, and Software Solutions.

Experts Discuss Sustainability

at 2023 African Brands Congress







he Stakeholders in sustainability and corporate social responsibility industry in Africa would gather in Lagos on September 15th, 2023 to discuss the theme of the 2023 African Brands Congress 'Sustainability, CSR And Green Goodness",

The African Brands Congress 2023 (ABC), which comes with brands exhibition and Awards Ceremony, is scheduled to be held at Civic Centre, Victoria Island on the 15th of September, 2023.

According to the Chief Executive Officer of African Brand Congress, Desmond Esorougwe, "This year's congress themed "SUSTAINABILITY, CSR AND **GREEN GOODNESS: An Opportunity for Brands** Growth", will have in attendance experts from Sustainability, CSR, and Green ENERGY to discuss and share insights on the theme."

Esorougwe said, "The 2023 ABC Brands Showcase/ Exhibition seeks to showcase ideas, goods and inventions of various types that are original and creative as well as those with the potential for Enterprises and Return on Investment. It aims to demonstrate brand/company to the audience by showing that your organization is at par with leading organizations. It is also a suitable platform to build and reinforce strategic relationships with customers."

According to him, the Africa Brand Leadership Merit Awards 2023 is aimed at celebrating leadership, innovation and creativity in Africa. "It recognizes the brilliant minds and institutions that deliver positive change and shape Africa's future. It is to honour CEO's Businesses, Brands, Products and Services as well as Public Officers that have excelled and demonstrated uncommon initiative, drive and

leadership in Africa economy." he added.

The winner would have made an outstanding contribution to the development of the continent, the economic aspiration of its citizenry and the transformation of Africa's image in the international markets while displaying a high standard of good corporate citizenship, social and environmental responsibilities.

The African Brands is an initiative that provides visibility for African Brands, Products and Services through its magazine publication where organizations advert their products and services, its annual congress brings together brand experts to discuss how growth can be achieved in Africa, the exhibition/showcase helps brands to display their products and services to their customers and the awards presentation celebrates brands that have exhibited leadership excellence in their respective field, said Goddie Ofose, ED African Brands

Special guests of honour expected at the event included African dignitaries such as, President of South Africa and current Chairman African Union, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Kashim Shettima, President, Republic of Ghana, H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo, President, Republic of Kenya, H.E. Dr. William Samoei Ruto, C.G.H., President of African Development Bank, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, Chairperson, African Union Commission, H.E. Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat, President, Dangote Group, Aliko Dangote, Minister of Trade and Industry of Egypt, Tarek Kabil, President, Afrexim Bank, Prof. Benedict Orama, Secretary General AfCTFA, H.E. Wankele Nene to mention a few.

Big Brother All Stars



ig Brother Naija: All Stars is the eight and All Star season of the Nigerian reality show Big Brother. It premiered on Sunday 23 July 2023 on DStv channel 198 and GOtv channel 29. Ebuka Obi-Uchendu returned as the host for the 7th consecutive time

The 'All Stars' edition featured carefully selected housemates and fan favourites from previous editions of the show which includes See Gobbe, Double Wahala, Pepper Dem, Lockdown, Shine Ya Eye and Level Up. The headline sponsor of the show is MoniePoint and the associate sponsor is HFM Nigeria.

According to the organizers of the show MultiChoice, the winner of the season is expected to win a total of N120 million grand prize.

Speaking on this, Executive Head of Content and West Africa Channels at MultiChoice Nigeria, Dr Busola Tejumola, said, "We are excited to bring you a refreshed season of Big Brother Naija. I am sure you all have noticed the buzz on social media and all the speculations about the eighth season of this well-loved-show – we certainly have- and we can confirm to you all today; YES, the 8th season of Big Brother Naija is the All-Star Edition. We thank MoniePoint Nigeria for joining us as lead sponsors of this promising season in partnership with our lead sponsors, MoniePoint - as we get reintroduced to your favourite housemates. Welcome to Big Brother Naija Season 8."

Moniepoint Nigeria is the headline sponsor for the BBNaija All-Stars Edition and HFM forex and commodities broker is the associate sponsor.

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Rite Foods Calls for Innovative Recycling,

Clears Plastics from Tarkwa Bay Beach

s part of its 'Riteonthebeach' sustainability initiative and effort to protect aquatic life along shoreline communities in Lagos, Rite Foods Limited, Nigeria's food and beverage manufacturer, continued its ongoing initiative of cleaning up plastics from beaches. A recent clean-up exercise was held at Tarkwa Bay beach on Saturday, August 26, 2023.

Rite Foods' sustainability journey is highlighted by its impactful initiative known as 'Riteonthebeach.' This initiative, launched in collaboration with Popbeachclub, an eco-resort in Lagos, focuses on cleaning up plastic waste from beaches. Since its inception in August 2021, 'Riteonthebeach' has effectively removed more than 180,000 pieces of plastic from coastal areas. This vital program extends beyond just cleanup efforts; it encourages local residents to actively engage in plastic collection and establishes systems for recycling as a means of creating jobs and enriching the community. The funds generated from this initiative are used to provide school supplies for the children living along the Lagos shorelines.

Seleem Adegunwa, the Managing Director of Rite Foods, aptly emphasised their shared mission, stating, "We are committed to promoting innovation, supporting sustainability, and creating a cleaner environment through collaborative efforts."

This event shows Rite Foods' dedication to preserving aquatic life and promoting a sustainable environment. This event brought attention to the importance of wetlands in the Ilado area of Lagos State, which play a crucial role in the ecosystem by supporting migratory birds and serving as fish



nurseries. Unfortunately, these wetlands face threats from plastic pollution and sand dredgers.

Mr. Akin Disu, the Founder of Popbeachclub stated, "It is important for people to recognise that plastics are not mere rubbish; they hold value and can be recycled. They should be collected from the environment rather than being disposed of in wetlands to protect the fish and migratory birds that inhabit those areas."

He further highlighted that children in coastal areas bring 22 plastic bottles collected by their parents to school daily. The students with the highest numbers of plastics collected in a term are given scholarships. These bottles are then processed by women in the community as part of a job creation initiative. He called for a widespread adoption of

such practices, not only in coastal areas but also in cities, where separating plastics at their source and recycling them can prevent environmental pollution.

Rite Foods' dedication to cleaning Lagos shoreline communities was praised by Disu, who encouraged other organisations to follow their lead. Beyond their well-known product lineup, which includes award-winning variants of the Bigi carbonated soft drink brand, premium Bigi Premium Water, Fearless energy drink, Sosa fruit drink, Bigi, and Rite Sausages, Rite Foods is playing a vital role in supporting sustainable initiatives. They also organise training sessions to empower recyclers in Lagos to employ innovative approaches to recycling.

Asharami Energy, Sahara Group

Foundation Renovates Police Station in Delta

sharami Energy, a Sahara Group Upstream Oil and Gas company, has commissioned the newly renovated Koko Police Station, in Delta state in keeping with its commitment to enhancing security in Koko and its environs.

Delivered through Sahara Group Foundation, the corporate social sustainability vehicle for Sahara Group, the project is yet another expression of the organization's commitment to making a difference across its host communities.

Speaking at the event, the Director, Sahara Group Foundation, Ejiro Gray said "At Sahara Group Foundation, we are fully committed to impacting lives and livelihoods wherever we operate. Our unwavering commitment to promoting a sustainable environment is reflected through projects like this. The installation of solar panels will facilitate access to clean and reliable energy, helping the police carry out its activities seamlessly."

Gray commended the Nigerian Police Force for their support and collaboration during the renovation process, adding that Sahara Group Foundation would continue to seek avenues for joining forces with well-meaning organisations for the purpose of touching and improving lives and communities.

The newly commissioned Koko Police Station boasts of a range of enhancements, including, structural repairs and aesthetical changes to the building, plumbing works and change of sanitary wares.

Other renovation work done includes a new office block/building for investigative officers, and the installation of solar power.

In his remarks, Babatomiwa Adesida, Head, Stakeholder and Community Relations, Asharami Energy, said the project would help promote sustainable policing in the community and foster economic growth and development.

Adesida stated that "the renovation of the Koko Police



Station reinforces Asharami Energy's commitment to working collaboratively with its host communities to drive sustainable development. Security is a critical requirement for the well-being of any community, and we are confident that the project will support the activities of the Police. improve security remarkably, and give the good people of Koko the confidence to pursue their dreams."

In his address to guests at the event, the Deputy Police Commissioner, Koko Police Station, CSP Offordile Leonard commended both Asharami Energy and the Sahara Group Foundation for the work they have done with the Koko police

He stated that "the renovated Police Station will significantly boost the morale of the officers at the Koko Police Station and support their endeavors towards promoting peace and security within the Koko area, as well as neighboring communities".

The Koko Police Station renovation project is just one out of a series of completed and ongoing renovations of police stations across the country, being implemented by the Sahara Group Foundation.

Other Police Stations to have received full renovations from Sahara Group Foundation includes, the Ijede Police Station, Ipaje Police Station, Omagwa Police Station, Onne Police Station, the MMA Police Station, Trinity Police Station, Ologbo Police Station, and many others.



9PSB, LSETF Roll Out Financial Literacy, Empowerment Campaign

Payment Service Bank (9PSB), Nigeria's digital payment service bank focused on financial literacy and inclusion, in partnership with Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) has taken its financial literacy and empowerment campaign to the residents of Alimosho, Ikorodu and Badagry Local Government Areas of Lagos State.

The initiative is aimed at enlightening and equipping the participants with the required basic financial knowledge skills and leveraging technology to grow their businesses. This reflects the shared commitment of both organisations to drive economic empowerment through job and wealth creation in the state.

Speaking at the event, a representative of the Head of Sales and Distribution at 9PSB, Oladimeji Saka, said, "We have taken this strategic step to bring to you this training and empowerment programme to equip you with the right digital and financial know-how that will immensely help you manage your financial resources daily, be a personal business owner and perhaps expand your small business with the Bank9ja Agent banking services.

"Apart from our agent banking, we have introduced a significant change, an innovation known as micropayment into our banking services. 9PSB is the first bank to bring this on board. As our business partners, every transaction you make at your point will be part of your revenue. "We cannot be everywhere rendering services to customers that are spread



across every nook and cranny of the country. We must have business partnerships with people like you to help serve customers located at different centres by opening accounts, facilitating payments frequently on daily basis thereby earning a certain percentage of income on every transaction completed. This will therefore aggregate to a huge amount of income at the end of the month for every agent who is consistently rendering services to customers," Saka remarked.

This is the first in the series of empowerment

programmes earmarked by the two institutions -9PSB and LSETF -scheduled to take place across the twenty local government areas in the state over a period of five months, as part of the strategic partnership entered recently. Hundreds of participants signed up and have been onboarded on the Bank9ia Agent banking network and are now proud business owners selling 9PSB products and services such as account openings, bill payments, cash withdrawals, transfers, and others.

CWAY Unveils Latest Innovation, Glucose-infused BOXI Energy Drink

WAY Food and Beverages Nigeria Company Limited, a trusted name in delivering top-quality beverages to consumers for over two decades, has officially launched its latest innovation, Boxi Energy Drink (non-caffeinated and non-carbonated energy drink).

Launched at a grand event in Lagos, the addition to CWAY's product portfolio is set to energize the noncarbonated energy drink segment in Nigeria, offering a refreshing and nutrient-rich option for consumers seeking a healthier alternative.

Arun Bhintade, the Managing Director of CWAY Food and Beverages, underscores the company's unwavering commitment to providing reliable consumer-centric solutions to Nigerians. "The introduction of Boxi Energy Drink is a demonstration of our dedication to delivering top-tier products that cater to the diverse needs of our valued customers. Boxi is an exceptional noncaffeinated, non-carbonated beverage meticulously crafted to empower your day, offering a distinctive blend of essential nutrients that enhance physical fitness."

Rohit Prakash Gupta, Director - Group Marketing at CWAY, emphasizes the strategic significance of Boxi's entry into the market. "The non-carbonated energy drink sector in Nigeria has long yearned for a desirable alternative. With the unveiling of Boxi, we aim to present a trusted choice to consumers, granting them an option that resonates with their active lifestyles and healthconscious preferences."

Samuel O. Akinrimisi, Deputy Marketing Director of CWAY Foods and Beverages, highlighted the company's



commitment to supporting the well-being of Nigerians through its products that are both innovative and nourishing. "Nigerians, renowned for their industriousness, require intrinsic energy to consistently excel. They need the vitality to drive their aspirations, and that's precisely what Boxi brings to the table - a significantly rewarding choice."

Adam Olaleye, Brand and Marketing Manager of Boxi, elaborated on the beverage's unique features. "Boxi Energy Drink contains more than just glucose - it's enriched with essential nutrients like Taurine and Vitamin Premix (Niacin, B6, B12, and Inositol), all of which contribute to body fitness and overall performance.

Beyond its refreshing taste, Boxi replenishes lost energy quickly and provides glucose for the body.

"With the proposition of energizing consumers all day, Boxi's tagline, "Power Your Day," encapsulates the core of our promise of providing consumers with the necessary fuel to conquer their daily challenges. We have made it convenient for consumers to access the drink as it is available in a convenient 400ml PET packaging, making it a perfect companion for individuals on the go," he explained.

FG Appoints AAAN Executive Secretary, Fadolapo Registrar, **CEO APCON...Approves Eight Other Agencies**

resident Muhammadu Buhari has appointed Olalekan Fadolapo, the executive secretary of Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria, AAAN as the new Registrar/CEO of Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON).

According to the approval letter, which was conveyed to the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, by Prof. Ibrahim Gambari, Chief of Staff to the President, on Tuesday, Mr. Fadolapo's appointment takes effect from 1 Sept. 2020.

The federal government also approved the appointment of other Chief Executive Officers for eight other agencies under the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture. The appointments will take effect from 1 Sept. 2020 as well.

Prior to Alhaji Garba Bello Kankarofi retirement in 2018, Mrs. Ijedi Iyoha was appointed the acting registrar/CEO to avoid a vacuum in leadership in the regulatory body.

The CEOs and their respective agencies are: Mr. Buki Ponle, Managing Director of the News Agency of Nigeria and Mr. Nura Sani Kangiwa who was named the Director General,



National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism.

Mr. Francis Ndubuisi Nwosu was appointed the Executive Secretary, Nigerian Press Council; Mr. Ebeten William Ivara, Director General, National Gallery of Arts and Prof. Sunday Enessi Ododo, General Manager/CEO, National Theatre.

Others are Mr. Ado Mohammed Yahuza, Executive

Secretary/CEO, National Institute for Cultural Orientation; Prof. Aba Isa Tijjani, Director General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments and Mrs. Oluwabunmi Ayobami Amao, Director General, Centre For Black And African Arts And Civilisation

Recall that for long, APCON has remained without a governing Council or board. Concerns had been raised in the past, with practitioners in the sub-sector raising alarm about the sensitive and pivotal role the Council plays in contributing to the peace and economy of the country.

An active APCON Council comprises of Advertising Association of Nigeria (ADVAN), Association of Advertising Agencies in Nigeria (AAAN), Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria (BON), Media Independent Practitioners Association of Nigeria (MIPAN), Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAN). Federal Ministries of Information and Communication and Federal Ministry of Health as well as universities/polytechnics offering advertising-related courses.

Deadline For 2023 Maltina Teacher Of The Year Competition Entries Extended Till August 4

igerian Breweries Plc, Nigeria's foremost brewing company has announced the extension for the submission of entries for the 2023 Maltina Teacher of the Year competition. The competition's deadline which was initially scheduled to end on Friday, July 21, 2023, has now been extended to Friday, August 4, 2023.

Speaking on the new development, the Corporate Affairs Director, Nigerian Breweries Plc, Mrs. Sade Morgan explained that the decision to extend the deadline was in response to calls by teachers requesting additional time to apply and submit their entries for the competition.

Morgan stated that eligible teachers interested in participating in the 9th edition of the competition are to log on to the dedicated website (www.maltinateacheroftheyear.com) to complete the forms online. Alternatively, they can download the forms, complete, scan and email them to maltinateacheroftheyear@heineken.com.

She disclosed that the 9th edition of the Maltina Teacher of the Year competition is open to all secondary school teachers in both public and private schools in Nigeria stating that the competition remains an effective intervention program geared towards improving teachers' status and the education sector in Nigeria.

She encouraged eligible teachers who have met all the criteria or requirements in both public and private secondary schools to take advantage of the opportunity to apply for the competition.

She restated the commitment of the company to reward outstanding performance of teachers stating that the overall winner of the competition would receive a trophy, a total cash prize of N6.5 million, and capacity development training while the winner's school receives either a block of classroom or a computer laboratory.

"The first runner-up of the competition will equally receive a trophy and a total sum of N1,500,000, while the second runner-up receives a trophy and a total sum of N1,250,000. All state champions will be rewarded with plaques and a cash prize of N500,000 each", she added.

The Maltina Teacher of the Year competition was established in 2015 and funded through the Nigerian Breweries-Felix Ohiwerei Education Trust Fund, which was set up in 1994 to facilitate an active contribution to the development of the education sector in Nigeria in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal, SDG No.4.

Since inception, the Maltina Teacher of the Year competition has produced eight grand winners, Rose Nkemdilim Obi Anambra(2105), Imoh Essien Akwa Ibom (2016), Felix Ariguzo, Delta State (2017), Olasunkanmi Opeifa, FCT (2018), Ezem Collins FCT (2019), Oluwabunmi Anani Adamawa State (2020), Abanika Taiye Delta (2021) and Alaku Ayiwulu, Plateau State (2022).



FCCPC, NB PLC, Others Confirm Participation At The Maiden MediaConsortium Conference

he Chief Legal Officer, Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Council (FCCPC), Barrister Florence Abebe and some industry experts within the Integrated Marketing Communications space (IMC) and allied industries have confirmed participation as panel discussants at the maiden MediaConsortium Conference and Awards (MCCA 2023) slated for Thursday, September

The conference with the theme: Consumer Journey in a Digital Age: Prospects and Challenges, is scheduled to hold at Sheraton Hotels and Towers, Mobolaji Bank Anthony way,

The keynote address will be delivered by seasoned industry expert and be dissected by tested personalities during the panel discussion. Among those who have confirmed participation to drive home the conversation is Barrister Florence Abebe, Chief Legal Officer, Federal Competition Principal PR Executive at Worktainment Limited, a public relations firm and Nelson Ochonogor, a Global Fintech consultant/Digital Transformation strategist and facilitator. Ochonogor is at present the Head Product Management BaaS and Fintech integrations at FCMB Group.

Others are Sandra Amachree, an experienced Human Resource Practitioner, Commercial Excellence Leader and Head of Marketing Communications at Nigerian Breweries PLC and Timothy Ogundele, Head of Marketing/Brands Manager, Checkers Africa Ltd, makers of the Checkers Custard brand.

Ogundele holds years of experience as a PR, media and advertising practitioner and experienced in informing envelope-pushing and effective creative and media

Organized by MediaConsortium, a brands, business and



marketing publication, the conference which is the maiden edition is designed to create a platform of convergence for di erent stakeholders in the IMC value chain to foster the use of digital to address challenges brands face in building better brand-consumer relation and to highlight the process brands follow through with the consumers on this journey. According to the organisers, "the conference will also be an avenue to showcase and celebrate brands, agencies and individuals that have demonstrated and maintained their leadership in promoting brand-consumer cordial relationship."

Collaboration Key to Improving Financial Inclusion in Nigeria - AYo Nigeria Boss, Kayode Odetola

ayode Odetola, the Chief Executive Officer of aYo Nigeria, a subsidiary of aYo Holdings, Africa's emerging microinsurance fintech, has posited that collaboration is critical to deepening financial inclusion in Nigeria.

He made the disclosure during a panel session on 'Nigerian Fintech so Far: Assessing Trends, Opportunities & Obstacles' at the second edition of the Nigeria Fintech Forum, themed 'Reimagining the Future of Financial Inclusion in Nigeria: Examining the Role of Banks, Telcos and Fintechs'.

Mr. Odetola, who emphasised the significance of leveraging technology to empower marginalised communities and bridge the insurance gap in Nigeria, stressed that exploring innovative solutions backed by technology can birth the growth required in bridging the financial inclusion gap especially as about 40% of Africans remain unbanked.

In his remarks, Mr. Odetola outlined aYo Nigeria's vision, in partnership with Sanlam, to empower underserved and vulnerable communities by providing access to a range of tailored insurance products that meet their specific needs.

"Bespoke financial and insurance solutions can become the enabler for underserved communities in our quest to achieve financial inclusion. With this understanding, we partnered with Sanlam to launch a Recharge with Care product that enables Nigerians to purchase Life and Hospitalisation cover for as low as N125 per month. The product offers beneficiaries benefits of up to N2,500 per night payable in the event of hospitalisation due to



accidents or illness, and up to N100,000 in the event of any death of the policyholder," he said.

Highlighting the transformative potential of technology, Mr. Odetola underscored the importance of collaboration and cross-sector partnerships within the technological ecosystem. He believes that combining forces with various stakeholders, including financial institutions and government agencies, can create a powerful synergy that accelerates progress and maximizes the impact of these financial inclusion initiatives.

"Co-opetition will be the rallying point for the

financial inclusion agenda in unlocking the full potential of technology-driven financial services in Nigeria. By working together, we can create an enabling environment for inclusive growth and financial empowerment," Mr. Odetola

Through these strategic collaborations, Kayode Odetola envisions a future where financial inclusion becomes a reality for millions of Nigerians, lifting people out of poverty and enhancing their economic well-being.

Wesley University Appoints Stanley Ihedigbo As PRO

ice Chancellor of Wesley University, Ondo State, Rt. Rev. (Prof.) Samuel Sunday Obeka, has approved the appointment of the Publisher, The Mirror Online Newspaper, Rev. Stanley Ihedigbo as the Public Relations Officer of the institution.

Ihedigbo, the Former President of Pan African Agricultural Journalists (PAAJ) will be henceforth be responsible for strategy formulation and implementation, communications, marketing and brand management of the institution.

The media and Marketing Communication Expert will also be leveraging on multiple platforms and partnerships to amplify the institution's brand and develop appropriate messages to attract students, engage alumni and stakeholders as well as increased public awareness of the University.

Ihedigbo holds a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication from Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu, now known as Lagos State University of Science and Technology. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Christian Religion Studies from Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos State.

He is currently a Master's Degree in Divinity Student of Methodist Theological Institute, Sagamu, Ogun State.

He also holds a Professional Doctoral Fellow of **Certified Institute of Sports Management of**

He has worked with FedEx Red Star, the New Star Newspapers, National Mirror Newspapers, The Union Newspapers, New Telegraph Newspapers before starting The Mirror Online Newspaper.



Communication Department, Eko City Polytechnic, Ikotun, Lagos State and he is into marketing communication activities through his company, St **Bishop Communication Company.**

He was the Founding President of Nigerian

Association of Agricultural Journalists (NAAJ), one time Chairman, Lagos Branch of Nigerian Union of Journalists Agriculture group.

He is a member of BrandJournalists Association of Nigeria (BJAN), Commerce and Industry Correspondents Association of Nigeria (CICAN),

To fully embrace the service of public relations and the dynamics it offers, Ihedigbo has attended numerous trainings, seminaries and courses related to Public Relations, Strategic Communication, and Leadership.

Wesley University Ondo State, is of the Methodist Church Nigeria, with the mission to provide the enabling environment for effective teaching and research for sustainable development. It is also a centre of excellence in knowledge creation, moral regeneration and development.





get more love



Life's Good.

Home is Where the Heart is in LG's Latest Campaign, "Life's Good When You Get More Love"

G Electronics (LG) has launched a new campaign of short videos titled Life's Good When You Get More Love – interweaving the LG family even more intricately into its customers' everyday life, and showcasing those sometimes-unnoticed everyday loving moments experienced in the home.

Just as families care for and rely on each other, so too does LG care about its customers and aims to support and facilitate the ever-strengthening bond between grandparents, parents, children, and extended family members, because Life's Good When You Get More Love.

"LG is a brand that transcends generations and regions, and our innovative products are created not only for convenience, and from a technology leadership position, but to highlight 'Life's Good', and to help customers care, share, and support each other in the home", said IL HWAN LEE, MEA Regional CEO, LG Electronics. "As part of our new brand strategy, this new campaign, Life's Good When You Get More Love, will help LG resonate more deeply with our customers across the region as they see how our products can shape even the smallest of interactions into something loving."

The web series, which includes eight (8) episodes in the style of a modern sitcom, began in July with the teaser video. While each episode includes an LG product-from entertainment to refreshing, convenience, and hygiene-the focus is on the family and how seemingly innocuous everyday situations can breed opportunities for a love gesture in the home.

Getting straight to the point, each 15-20second video will start at the point of everyday tension and deliver a solution: we see a midnight fridge raider getting caught out; discover why siblings are the best partners-in-crime; and learn that sometimes, true love means faking a smile. Each video is





an example of an everyday instance, or potentially troublesome situation, that can be avoided with a little of Life's Good love.

According to the Managing Director LG **Electronics West African Operations, Mr. D.Y** Kim. The Life's Good When You Get More Love campaign will shed light on the wide range of LG products that seamlessly integrate with family life and also give customers an opportunity to virtually explore the home central to the web series, boosting interaction and engagement while striving to add greater vitality to the brand. Customers can also choose their own ending, with alternative conclusions filmed for each short episode that are a nod to our shared experiences.

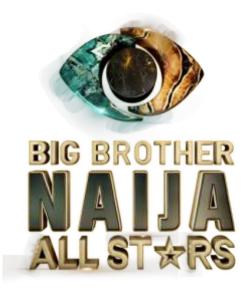
The Life's Good When You Get More Love web series campaign ties in effortlessly with LG's recently unveiled new brand direction and visual identity, which presents a more dynamic and youthful look, while also maintaining and reiterating the brand's core values of 'Uncompromised Customer Experience', 'Human-centered Innovation',



throughout the African and Middle East regions.

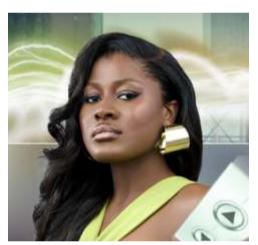
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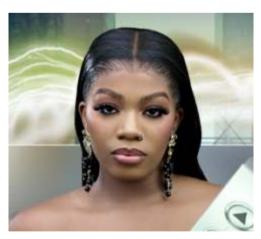
The company is on the path to iconic status, and these short videos highlight LG as an enabler of small love gestures, creating a celebration of family that translates throughout the region.



Meet the Housemates











Adekunle

BB Naija: Level Up reality star, Adekunle, makes his comeback to BB Naija, this time as a contestant in this season's All-Stars edition.

A lot has changed since the last time Adekunle walked Biggie's corridors. For starters, he is now the proud owner of an ear piercing, a 'first' for this charming Lagos native.

Adekunle considers his first time on the show a learning curve that helped him gain a new perspective on life and hopes his experience will take him to the top this time around. "Last season, I was at a point where I was trying to rediscover myself. I was trying to react, relate and adapt to a new environment with new people. This time things will be different."

Adekunle is excited at the prospect of being part of the Big Brother Naija social experiment again and looks forward to coming out tops. "This is my second chance to win the money. Fuel is expensive o."

Alex

The last time Big Brother Naija fans saw Enugu State's Alex in the House was back in 2018 during the Double

The media personality, anti-bullying activist and New York Film Academy alum is back to do it all over again, and this time guarantees her "exceptional self" will be a "breath of fresh air", traits that will help her win the money. Alex reveals a lot has happened in her life since she was last on the show, and she can't wait to share her experiences with her fellow Housemates and Big Brother Naija fans alike.

"I was really young when I was last on the show. I was my happy, very outspoken self and I loved to party. This All-Stars season, I want people to meet parts of me they haven't met yet. Of course I want to have fun too," she enthuses. What's happening with the love life? Alex is as candid as they come; "I'm currently single and searching".

Angel

Influencer and podcaster Angel makes her big return to the Big Brother Naija house as a housemate on the All-Stars edition.

Fans of Africa's hottest reality tv show will remember Angel from BB Naija Season 6: Shine Ya Eye, where she made a splash with her friendly, flirty nature and love for a good time. Now that she's 23, Angel feels she's grown, and she's ready for a second shot at the crown.

Reflecting on her Big Brother journey, Angel says: "I had fun in the house. I made a lot of friends, and I liked Big Brother."

Despite bad experiences with social media trolls upon leaving the show, Angel couldn't pass up the opportunity to be in the house again. "Three months of free food, free electricity and no bills, plus I get to have fun? Sign me

el seeing anyone currently? "Please. I'm single and minding my business," she says with a chuckle.

Ceec

When Biggie calls, you abide. That's exactly why lawyer, filmmaker, and businesswoman, CeeC, of Double Wahala fame has made a swift comeback to Big Brother Naija.

Describing herself as a passionate and ambitious individual, CeeC believes her time in the Double Wahala season was an interesting experience. She has since moved on to create two successful businesses for herself, a feat she is proud of.

When CeeC is not on the latest litigation or running the business world, she unwinds by getting involved in a couple of fitness routines and visiting beautiful tourist spots around the world.













Cross

Cross made his debut on Big Brother Naija in the Shine Ya Eye season where he made Top 6. Describing his time in the house as the best time of his life, the self-acclaimed "Man of Love" says he is coming back to Biggie's house to win, have fun, and educate people about tech.

His mother's surprise appearance at the Shine Ya Eye finale remains one of his high points in life and going into tech as one of the latest developments in his life.

When Cross is not hard at work being a tech guru, he unwinds by travelling, engaging in philanthropic work and working on his fitness.

Doyin

Bursting onto the Big Brother Naija streets in the Level Up Season, Doyin says her time in the house showed her that she was too trusting. She came to the realisation that she has to stop trying to see the good in people, because some people are "just not good".

Describing herself as a young business-oriented and fun-loving lady, Doyin says she is going back into Biggie's domain because she wants more visibility for the projects she is into. She also wants more opportunities that come with the show, as well as to show the world more of the Doyin David brand.

Doyin's favourite ways to unwind include reading, shopping, partying, and chatting with friends. The medical radiographer describes some of her high points as starting a podcast, setting up her mother's business, and buying a new car.

llebaye

With fun on her mind for Big Brother Naija All-Stars, this 22-year-old model and business woman refers to her self and business woman refers woman refers to her self and business woman refers woman refers to her self and business woman refers woman refers to her self and business woman refers womaas unique, nice, fun to be with and playful, traits she hopes will shine through on the show as she takes a second shot at the crown.

For this Big Brother Naija Level Up alumnus, making her first million remains her life's highlight, while losing her brother marked her lowest point in life.

Though she was in the Big Brother Naija house for a short time last year, Ilebaye has been exposed to a lot of great opportunities that she remains grateful for and hopes this will be the year she wins the money.

A proud criminology and security studies graduate, this firecracker loves partying, shopping, swimming and sleeping. She says she is currently single and ready to have fun.

Mercy Eke

"I've decided to come back to Biggie's house because winners never stop winning" is the confident assertion of Big Brother Naija: Pepper Dem winner Mercy, who is back for another shot at the crown this All-Stars season.

Although this 29-year-old media personality has made a name for herself in the television and business worlds following her victory, she admits she couldn't pass up the chance to return and possibly win again.

"I was on the show in 2019 and it was a beautiful experience with some ups and downs. I got the opportunity to meet some wonderful people who I still have connections with today," she says about her eventful time in the house.

When quizzed on her relationship status, Mercy spills the tea: "I'm in a relationship, but I don't know if it's $complicated \ or \ if \ it's \ a \ situations hip, but \ there's \ a \ ship," she \ says \ with \ a \ laugh.$

Neo energy

29-year-old entertainment entrepreneur and Big Brother Naija Lockdown housemate Neoenergy is grabbing his second chance at winning the money with both hands, and he is hoping his "charisma and good energy" will help him achieve this in the All-Stars edition.

A lot of positives have coloured Neoenergy's life since he last called the BB Naija house home, and smashing his goals has become second nature. For starters, he was able to make his acting debut, a feat he is proud of.

"Life has definitely changed, and it's crazy because being on the show felt like being on an all-expenses paid vacation with lots of freebies," the Delta State native says with a smile.

Although he fancies himself a strong believer in love, Neoenergy is still single and searching and hopes love will locate him one day.

Pere

Pere, the Delta State-born Big Brother Naija; Shine Ya Eye housemate who came in as a Wildcard and made it to the finale, is back for another shot at crown - and when he details his reasons why, Pere is as candid as they come.

"I'm back because I want to show the viewers a different side of Pere. I want to have fun. I also want to 'show' those who talked bad about me when I was Head of House, "he says with a chuckle.

The self-confessed "sexy Lagos boy" has been following some new passions since he left the house and his love for

Even then, the qualified nurse-turned-actor remains in hot pursuit of his entertainment dreams and has executive produced his own movie, which will be coming out on a major streaming platform soon and hopes the cherry on top will be a BB Naija: All-Stars win.













Soma

Soma, the 31-year-old multi-talented entertainer from Imo state, is back in Big Brother's house for a second chance to redeem himself.

Blessed with a loving, talented family of entertainers, he reckons his innate gifts come from his mother.

The See Gobbe alumnus enjoyed his time on this season so much so that he rates it as the highest point of his life.

This all-rounder takes entertainment to the next level as he is also a good singer, and you might just catch him indulging in DIY projects and enjoying delicious meals during his spare time.

Soma is confident BB Naija All-Stars will be the season where he takes the crown home.

Venita

Venita earned the nickname "Phoenix" during her time on Big Brother Naija Season 4: Pepper Dem, after Biggie gave her props for "always finding a way out no matter what difficult situation she found herself in". Now, she's back for BB Naija All-Stars with a bagful of AMVCA-nominations and plenty stories to tell.

Reflecting on her time in the house, the UK-born mother of two says coming into the show late sharpened her and helped her develop resilience.

 $\hbox{``Although I joined Pepper Dem halfway, I received lot of support from the fans. I am here to update my people on}\\$ all the good things that have been happening in my life. I am looking forward to the full experience this time around," she says with a smile.

And for all those who are curious about Venita's relationship status; she's single.

Whitemoney

Winner of Big Brother Shine Ya Eye, Whitemoney, made a name for himself in Biggie's house with his kitchen skills and singing abilities.

The multi-talented businessman with all-round good vibes says he is coming back to Biggie's house to promote his brand, his business, and his music.

Speaking about his high points in life, Whitemoney describes winning the Shine Ya Eye season as his biggest highlight to-date and reveals he has learnt a lot about life and grown in knowledge since the last time viewers saw him on the Big Brother Naija stage.

When he is not held down by the rigours of being a businessman, Whitemoney likes to unwind with good music and sometimes takes a drive to clear his mind and recalibrate.

Frodd

Having made the Top 3 on Big Brother Naija Pepper Dem, 32-year-old realtor, club owner and lifestyle promoter Frodd says he's back in Biggie's house to show the viewers that their support from back then has not been in vain.

"I've grown tremendously in business and of course, financially. I'm in a well-defined social circle, I am one of Nigeria's top nightlife business promoters and I own multiple businesses. I got married to a beautiful woman and she is currently expecting our bundle of joy any day now," he says proudly.

Although Frodd has been working on a lot of projects that could benefit from the platform, he is also hoping to get some much-needed rest in the house.

This tech enthusiast and fashionista counts watching his mum go into a coma after a life-threatening surgery as the lowest point in his life. Frodd adds that "The day my wife told me she was pregnant has to be the highest point of my life."

lke

Since leaving Biggie's Pepper Dem house, Ike has made new friends, started a new occupation and bought himself a new car.

He says he had a lot of fun on Pepper Dem and made some new friends, but because he didn't win, he is back for

"Single and searching" on the relationship front, Ike describes himself as honest, confident, intelligent and stubborn, which he cautions is something to note for any potentials out there.

This first born of four enjoys working out, traveling, watching movies and going to restaurants. The highest point of his life? Moving to Nigeria in 2018 - and the lowest; his grandfather's

Kiddwaya

Big Brother Naija: Lockdown alum Kiddwaya enjoyed his time in the house so much it was a no-brainer that he would sign up for another shot at the crown, this time in the All-Stars edition.

"It feels like I have unfinished business. Now, I'm going to win. I'm ready for Round 2. I want to show my fans the new Kidd. They have invested a lot in me all these years and now I'm back to make them proud," he says of his return. Kiddwaya is candid when detailing his time away from the show: "Lockdown was a great time. I loved every bit of my experience, and it felt like I was back in boarding school. However, becoming a celebrity was new to me. I had to navigate that on my own. I'm super proud that I handled it without any scandals."

Apart from winning BB Naija All-Stars, Kiddwaya has many other plans in the pipeline - one of which is the launch of a television show he has been working on.









Princess

30-year-old Enugu State businesswoman and Big Brother Naija; Double Wahala alum Princess is ready to entertain the continent in this AII-Stars edition, and insists the motivation for her comeback is Biggie, whom she has missed terribly. "I decided to do this because I miss Biggie."

Princess looks back fondly at her time in the house and is glad to have made lifelong friends and meaningful connections. "It was such a wonderful experience, I had to do it again," she says.

"Awesome, realistic and passionate" is how she describes herself and where romantic relationships are concerned, she identifies as single even though she's in a relationship, because as she puts it; "Everything is null and void until you are declared married."

Seyi

Former BB Naija: Pepper Dem Housemate Seyi has come a long way since his first foray into the Big Brother house. Not only is he now a happily married man and doting "boy dad", Seyi has also featured in some hit movies that have turned him into a media influencer and businessman.

As a proud family man, the birth of his son was a defining moment for Seyi, and with his return to reality tv, he wants to make both his wife and son proud by bagging this season's winnings.

"I want to do it for them. I would like to show my reinvented self and strategically place myself in the sight of investors." Seyi hopes his "balanced moral compass", as well as his "openness to evolve", will give him the edge he needs to outwit and outplay his fellow All-Stars Housemates.

Tolanibaj

Since her last appearance on Big Brother Naija, Tolanibaj has gained respect as a brand and solidified her position as a celebrity. She is back in Biggie's house to showcase more of her dynamic personality and to make her late father proud. "I won't lie, I'm also back for the love of being on TV," she confesses with a smile.

As a DJ, actress and clothing brand owner, 31-year-old Tolanibaj is no stranger to the spotlight. "I love music, dancing, and surrounding myself with positive energy. I'm big on energy," she stresses.

Tolanibaj is audacious and sees herself as the life of the party and she hopes her jovial nature and the bold spirit showcased during her time as a Big Brother Naija Housemate in the thrilling Lockdown season, will help her win the money.

Uriel

At 33, Uriel has transformed herself from her time on See Gobbe and is now a renowned health enthusiast and advocate. Her journey to a healthy lifestyle was motivated by her own health struggles and right now, no one can come between her and her workouts and love for cooking.

Selling over 30,000 meal plans, which she achieved all by herself, was a turning point in Uriel's life. "It's been so amazing. I'm really proud of myself and I am thankful for the support," she says.

Although she previously left the house in the sixth week, Uriel believes she's still the most relevant housemate from her set and hopes her finely-honed personal talents will give her an edge over her competition. "I wear my $heart on \, my \, sleeve \, but \, l'm \, also \, very \, observant, friendly \, yet \, cautious, \, and \, a \, very \, real \, person. \, "observant" \, also \, very \, observant \, also \, observan$

Uriel is back in the Big Brother Naija house because she has mentally and physically improved, and she hopes that the right man, who must be 6 ft 3 with broad shoulders, will find her on the show.

As Big Brother Naija returns for another season, fans across sub-Saharan Africa and the United Kingdom will enjoy front-row, live-streamed access to all the activities in the Big Brother house on Africa's top streaming service, Showmax. Interestingly, DStv Premium subscribers will get access to the platform for free, while Compact Plus and Compact subscribers get Show for half the cost.

Dstv customers who would like to opt out of viewing the show can do so by sending "Smart Card Number [space] BBOUT" to 30333, while GOtv customers can do the same by sending "IUC Number [space] BBOUT" to 4688. Additionally, customers can activate the parental control option on their DStv and GOtv decoders for viewers younger than 18 years. Viewers can also avoid missing any moment of the show by streaming across the country on the DStv app.

Moniepoint Nigeria is the headline sponsor for the BBNaija All-Stars Edition and HFM - forex and commodities broker is the associate sponsor.





The BBNaija All-Star House is a Stunner! Check Out Photos

t's that time of the year again! The Big Brother Naija reality show is back, and this time, it's bigger and better than ever before. As avid fans eagerly tune in to watch their favourite contestants relive their moments in the house, the spotlight shines on one of the most remarkable aspects of the show - the Big Brother House now officially called the 'Biggieverse'.

It is no doubt that the moment the housemates step foot into the Biggieverse, they will be greeted by a sight that will leave them in awe. The BBNaija organizers pulled out all the stops to create a lavish living space that oozes luxury and elegance. Every corner of the house is meticulously designed, keeping in mind the preferences and tastes of the diverse contestants.

The Biggieverse stands as an architectural marvel, featuring a contemporary design that effortlessly blends modernity and traditional Nigerian elements. The spacious living room welcomes the contestants with plush sofas. The bedroom area is no less impressive. Decked with king-sized beds, luxurious linens, pastel blues and pinks and tasteful decor, it provides a

comfortable retreat for housemates after a day filled with

The garden area boasts lush greenery, creating a serene and calming atmosphere. A sparkling swimming pool serves as the perfect spot for housemates to party on Thursdays at the weekly grill and pool parties and blow off steam from a full week of activities.

No House is complete without a fantastic kitchen, and the Biggieverse delivers nothing but the best. The fully stocked kitchen comes with modern appliances and a variety of ingredients to cater to the culinary needs of the contestants. From traditional Nigerian delicacies to international cuisines, the kitchen is a hub for not only cooking but also bonding and sharing meals.

The Diary Room is a crucial element of the Big Brother Naija experience, and the All-Star's diary room is nothing short of chic and sophisticated. It's the space where the contestants can pour out their hearts, share their innermost thoughts, and seek solace during their toughest times.

The HOH will have their own bedroom, fitted with a grey kitchen, their own games room, gym and dining area. There is also a curious parrot fitted in a part of the room and raising a question - 'what does this mean?'

Whether it's the lavish interiors, the architectural brilliance, or the outdoor extravagance, the BBNaija house sets the stage for an unforgettable journey filled with emotions, challenges, friendships, and growth.

So, grab your popcorn and tune in this Sunday at 7 pm live on DStv channel 198 and GOtv channel 49 to watch your faves move right into the Biggieverse. Never get disconnected from enjoying the 24/7 live coverage. Renew your subscription by simply dialing *288# or through the MyDStv and MyGOtv apps.

This season's All-Star House is undoubtedly a stunner, leaving us all with memories to cherish for years to come!

Check below for more photos!















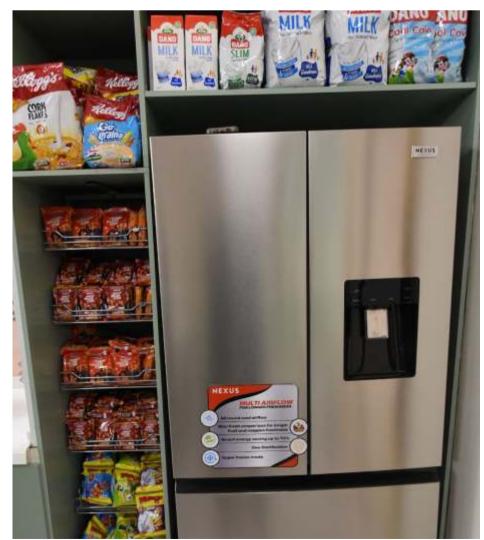










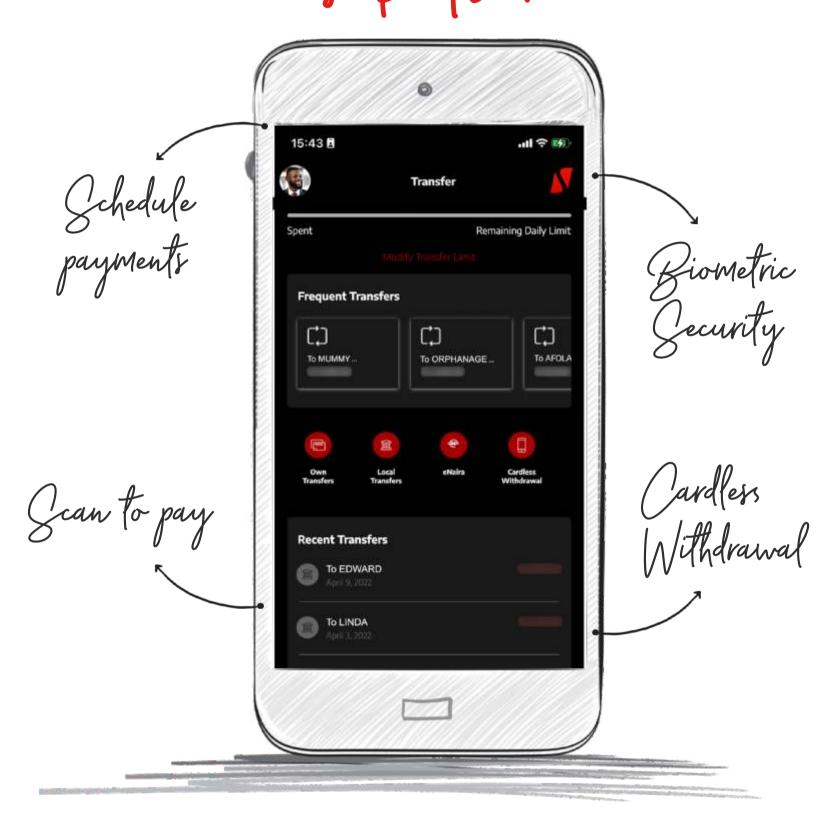








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POWER



WITH A PEAK PROTEIN BREAKFAST

Meta to Expand WhatsApp Channels to more than 150 countries

eta Platforms said on Wednesday it will soon give users in more than 150 countries access to WhatsApp Channels, a broadcast service that enables them to receive private updates from celebrities, sports teams and thought leaders.

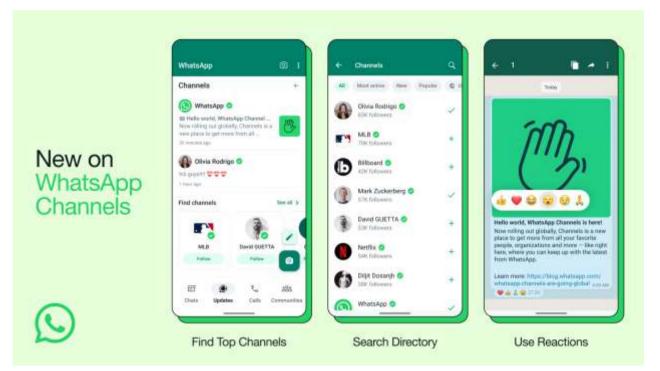
The move comes as Meta makes a push to shore up engagement across its social media apps, positioning them as central destinations where content creators can engage with followers, reports Reuters.

The wider rollout is happening months after WhatsApp Channels was launched in Colombia and Singapore, in June. The Broadcast Channels feature on Instagram was concurrently made available globally.

On WhatsApp, channels are separate from chats and followers are not visible to each other.

Meta said users will be able to see recommended WhatsApp Channels based on region and popularity. Similar to WhatsApp chat, they will also be able to use emojis to react to messages in a channel.

WhatsApp Channels will be available globally in the coming weeks and months. Anyone with a WhatsApp account will be able to create a channel on the app.



'Google pays \$10b a Year to Maintain Monopoly'

oogle is paying \$10 billion a year to Apple and other smartphone makers to keep its position as the world's biggest online search engine, the Department of Justice has said.

On the first day of the biggest tech antitrust trial in 20 years, lawyers for the DOJ said that Google had used agreements with the likes of Apple, Samsung, and Mozilla Firefox to make Google search the default on their smartphones and web browsers.

These lawyers said Google viewed these as"powerful strategic weapons," designed to make it impossible for competitors to break their stranglehold over search - The New York Times reported.

"This case is about the future of the internet and whether

Google's search engine will ever face meaningful competition," Kenneth Dintzer, the Justice Department's lawyer, told the court in comments reported by the AP.

Lawyers for Google denied that the company illegally used agreements to protect its market share, saying that the company's products were simply superior to its rivals and that customers had plenty of opportunities to switch search engines if they wanted to.

The DOJ's lawsuit, which was filed under the Trump administration in 2020, said that Google used anticompetitive methods to prevent others from challenging the dominance of Google Search.

The case poses a major threat to Google's business, and will likely influence the way big tech companies are



regulated for the next decade or more.

Plus, it is just the first of several legal challenges facing the tech giant. Another Justice Department lawsuit filed in January 2023 focused on Google's ad tech business, saying that the company utilized its market dominance to squash competition.

The suit asks the court to break up Google by ordering the search giant to sell key parts of its Ad Manager suite.

Google to Require Political Ads to Disclose AI Creations

oogle said it will mandate that political advertisements on its platforms disclose when images and audio have been altered or created using tools such as artificial intelligence (AI).

The change to Google's ad policy is to take effect in November, about a year ahead of what is likely to be a contentious US presidential election and as fears mount that generative AI will be used to mislead voters.

"For years we've provided additional levels of transparency for election ads," a Google spokesperson said in response to an AFP query.

"Given the growing prevalence of tools that produce synthetic content, we're expanding our policies a step further to require advertisers to disclose when their election ads include material that's been digitally altered or generated."

In June, a Ron DeSantis campaign video attacking former US President Donald Trump featured images bearings markings of having been created using AI, an AFP Fact Check team

The video shared in a tweet at X, formerly known as Twitter, contained photos that appeared altered to show Trump embracing Anthony Fauci, a key member of the US coronavirus task force, with kisses on the cheek, according





Google's ad policies already ban manipulating digital media to deceive or mislead people about politics, social issues, or matters of public concern.

Google requires political ads to disclose who paid for them, and makes information about the messages available in an



online ads library.

The coming update will require election-related ads to "prominently disclose" if they contain "synthetic content" that depicts real or realistic-looking people or events, according to Google.

Entertainment Industry Struggles with 215 Billion Piracy Site Visits

nti-piracy authorities say they have cracked down on the illegal streaming of films and TV programmes, but data suggests the practice is booming, reaching 215 billion illegal site visits last year.

That figure from Britain-based MUSO, which claims the most comprehensive data on piracy websites, shows an 18-percent increase between 2021 and 2022, covering 480,000 films and TV shows.

"It's as easy as it ever was to get illegal content," said CEO Andy Chatterley.

The entertainment industry is not giving

It recognises that previous efforts were counterproductive. Targeting individuals with massive fines for downloading a few movies made them look like corporate bullies, while court orders to block websites were often a whack-a-mole waste of time.

These days, they focus on the big fish — "people buying supercars with the millions they are making out of piracy sites", in the words of Stan McCoy of the Motion Picture Association, which represents Hollywood studios.

It formed the Alliance for Creativity and Entertainment (ACE) in 2017 to coordinate antipiracy efforts with other industry groups globally. It does the legwork to track down big operators and alert the police.

In 2023 alone, ACE has helped shut down operators in Spain, Brazil, Germany, Vietnam, Egypt, and Tunisia, each with millions of monthly users.

The organisation claims clear results, measured in prison sentences for operators and reduced options for users. ACE says the number of illegal subscription services has dropped from 1,443 to 143 in the United States on its watch.

Finding Excuses

But free entertainment is still easy to find.

An AFP reporter took just a few minutes to Google a list of illegal streaming sites and access the latest episodes of hit shows "Succession" and "White Lotus" without any sign-up or payment.

Many are content pirates undeterred by crackdowns.

The r/piracy discussion board on Reddit has 1.2 million members and every conceivable justification for their hobby, from the cost of legal



streaming sites to lack of access in certain countries to vague anti-capitalist diatribes.

Some are disarmingly frank: "I don't have any excuses. I could afford to pay for it all if I wanted, but instead of giving my money to some media company's CEO who makes a thousand times what I do, I'd rather just save the money for my retirement," wrote Reddit user ScarecrowJohnny.

One factor dominates at the moment: the explosion of streaming options, with content now spread across increasingly pricey subscriptions to Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, HBO, and many more.

"I was paying for one or two, but now there's 50 of the damn things and everything in the world costs more practically every day, so I went back to piracy," wrote Reddit user Jaydra.

The watchdogs are unimpressed.

"People always find an excuse for piracy. It used to be there wasn't enough choice — now it's too much," said McCoy.

A lot of progress

Ironically, as the streaming environment fragments, MUSO's piracy data has become one of

the most accurate ways for media companies to measure which films and shows are genuinely

Last year, the top choices were "Spiderman: No Way Home" in film and "House of the Dragon" for TV — and 95 percent of views these days come via illicit streaming, rather than downloads as in the

"Piracy is effectively the largest VOD (video-ondemand) platform in the world," said Chatterley.

"There is no platform bias, no cost bias, no access bias. You see what people want to watch."

"We have clients who see what's popular on piracy websites and then go buy it for their platform."

Since eliminating piracy is unrealistic, perhaps the most important goal for the industry is ensuring it does not become normalised.

"We've made a hell of a lot of progress to make it less easy," said McCoy.

"If people are dedicated to breaking the law, they will do it. But it should be a marginalised activity, not mainstream."

Alex Okosi Becomes Google Managing Director for Africa

oogle has announced the current Managing Director for YouTube in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) Emerging Markets, Alex Okosi, as the Managing Director (MD) for Google in Africa.

Okosi is a seasoned media, entertainment, and technology leader. Prior to joining YouTube, he held the position of Executive Vice President and Managing Director of Viacom International Media Networks Africa and BET International. In his most recent position at YouTube, Okosi played a pivotal role in steering the platform's growth and expansion across Africa, the Middle East, and Turkey.

In his new role, Okosi will be responsible for Google's operations in Africa, including programmes to help businesses and economies on the continent grow, as well as expanding access and providing tools to help the next



billion users get more from the Web.

Vice President, EMEA Emerging Markets at Google, Meir Brand, described Okosi as a proven leader with a wealth of experience in the media and technology industries. He attested that the new MD has a deep understanding of African countries and a passion for using technology to empower people and businesses.

Reacting to his appointment, Okosi said: "I am excited at the prospect of leading Google's team in Africa and the opportunity to be an even closer part of this diverse and dynamic region, which is so close to my heart," said Okosi. "I'm a firm believer in the potential for technology and, in particular, the internet to improve people's lives and to help individuals and businesses in Africa to



PR IS NOT "PRESS RELEASE" But Harnessing Influence, Impact of PR - By David Odimegwu

s I sit down to write this article on World PR Day, my heart is filled with passion and excitement for the transformative power of public relations. In a world where information travels at the speed of light and attention spans are shorter than ever, it is time to debunk the myth that PR is limited to the confines of a simple press release. Public relations is an art, a science, and a strategic approach to shaping perceptions, building relationships, and driving real impact.

Gone are the days when PR professionals were mere messengers, sending out press releases and hoping for media coverage. In today's digital age, public relations has evolved into a dynamic and multifaceted discipline that demands creativity, adaptability, and strategic thinking. It is about weaving narratives that captivate hearts and minds, engaging with diverse audiences across multiple platforms, and driving conversations that shape public opinion.

At its core, public relations is about connecting with people on a deeper level. It is about understanding their needs, desires, and aspirations. It is about crafting stories that resonate, that inspire, and that ignite a sense of belonging. Public relations professionals are the architects of these stories, using their expertise to navigate the ever-changing media landscape and forge meaningful connections in a world saturated with information.

In today's fast-paced and hyper connected society,



trust and credibility are more important than ever. Public relations is the guardian of trust, the defender of reputation. It is about building strong relationships with the media, influencers, stakeholders, and the general public. It is about fostering a sense of authenticity and transparency that resonates with audiences and sets brands apart from the noise.

But public relations is not just about managing positive narratives; it is also about adeptly handling crises and navigating through turbulent times. In the face of adversity, PR professionals must step up, take charge, and guide organizations through the storm. It is during these critical moments that the true value of public relations shines, as skilled practitioners employ strategic communication to rebuild trust, manage perceptions, and restore confidence.

In the digital age, where social media reigns supreme, public relations professionals must embrace the

power of storytelling. They must master the art of crafting narratives that cut through the noise and touch the hearts of their target audiences. It is through storytelling that brands and organizations can connect with people on an emotional level, inspiring them to take action, to become brand advocates, and to drive meaningful change.

Public relations is not a one-size-fits-all approach. It requires a deep understanding of the ever-evolving media landscape, a willingness to embrace new technologies and platforms, and an unwavering commitment to staying ahead of the curve. It is about leveraging data and analytics to inform strategies, to measure impact, and to continuously refine and optimize campaigns.

As we mark World PR Day, let us celebrate the power of public relations. Let us recognize the tremendous impact that strategic communication can have on organizations, on communities, and on society as a whole. Let us embrace the art of storytelling, the science of engagement, and the power of relationships. Together, let us unleash the true potential of PR and shape a world where communication is not just about words, but about meaningful connections and lasting impact.

PR is not a "press release". It is a force that has the power to change hearts, to inspire action, and to shape the world we live in. Let us embrace this power, let us wield it with integrity, and let us make a

David Odimegwu is a PR specialist and writes from



BetCorrect Unveils AI-Powered Online Betting Platform

etCorrect has unveiled an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered online betting platform in Nigeria. Speaking during the launch in Lagos, the Managing Director, Adriano Amadei, expressed the company's commitment to revolutionising Nigeria's online betting landscape, adding that the country's increasing appetite for fintech solutions and its burgeoning population catalysed its intent to play a significant role in its technological evolution, through the new product.

He said with new players regularly entering the market and exiting after hardly moving the needle, in terms of innovation, BetCorrect's strategy underpins its dedication to visionary-thinking and far-sightedness through two core elements, which add Artificial Intelligence (AI) and user experience.

Amadei explained that the Al-powered platform allows for personalised recommendations, anticipates player preferences and ensures a safer and more responsible



betting environment.

He said the company acknowledges that partnerships with industry leaders are crucial to its success, adding that by collaborating with like-minded organisations, it aims to extend its reach, leverage collective expertise and deliver unparalleled value to its customers.

Amadei emphasised the significance of having an exceptional team behind the venture, stating that the strength of the team determines the height of its achievements.

The Head of Operations, BetCorrect, Ozioma Okonkwo, outlined the company's vision to pioneer the ultimate digital betting experience across Africa, offering users a vast array of markets and competitive odds as well as cutting-edge features and services, with the aim of raising the benchmarks in product engagement and user satisfaction.

She said with advanced technology, including encryption and Al-driven fraud detection, the company is prioritising user safety and security, as well as responsible gaming, thereby ensuring a fair and transparent gaming environment.

The Head of Marketing, Adewale Adejuwon, explained that the company's marketing strategy is tailored to its target audience's needs and is rooted in a deep understanding of the audience's demographics, interests, and aspirations. He said Betcorrect is fully registered and licensed by the National Regulatory Commission (NLRC) to operate in Nigeria.

Nike Partners Layerx to promote sneakers in Nigeria

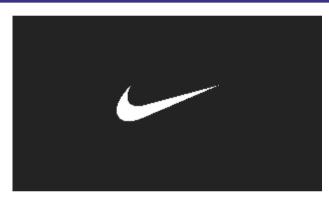
ike has partnered with Layerx to customise on its sneakers to promote Nigerian culture globally and also spread environmental sustainability messages on its products.

Layerx, which was co-founded by Gbadeyan Olaoluwa and Gbenga Adeku, has Bolarinwa Olasunkanmi, popularly known as Ola of Lagos, as its influencer collaborator and its targeted at promoting culture and environment.

Speaking at the launch of the product, Olaoluwa stated that it was important for the world to hear Nigeria's stories, know about their culture and resilience.

According to Olaoluwa, Layerx, a customised Design Company, picked Nike because of its global visibility, "we are trying to spread our culture globally and that is why we chose a global product and brand," he said.

Olaoluwa added that the partnership would further make sneakers desirable to all classes of people; the messages on it would literally resonate with both the older and younger generation.



He said: "Its feels good to have a Nigerian brand on the global stage. Nigeria is a great country; we have a marvelous culture. Nigerians are one of the most resilient people, which is why we chose Nike. Nike's message is 'just do it,' that means just keep it moving. The message makes you believe you are unstoppable. It makes you be positive, regardless of the prevailing circumstances facing Nigerians.

"Nigerians are resilient; we thrive even in difficult situations. Even when the conditions seem against us, we

find our way against all odds."

On his part, Adeku said the launch design started with the Lagos story, noting that there are lots of grass to grace stories and tales of how people's lives turn around pursuing their dreams.

"Ola of Lagos has spearheaded the sneakers culture for many years and it's so surprising that he literally came from nothing to make the most out of himself in Lagos. We are also passionate about people being aware of the dangers of having a decaying environment. So, we pass the message through the customisations on the sneakers. What we are doing is similar to what the Afrobeat is doing, in the fashion sense."

Ola of Lagos explained that he collaborated with Layerx on two pairs, 'Nike Airforce and Nike Blazers,' which was from Jumps to Kicks.

"The idea of jumping on Danfos without sneakers, to eventually get one after a legitimate hustle in Lagos. This is the story of an average Lagosians. With the designs, we are also preaching hard work and giving hope."

Sanwo-Olu Reiterates Commitment to Sports Development

he Lagos State Governor, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has reiterated that his administration will continue to encourage youth participation and sports development to build a sane society.

Sanwo-Olu, represented by the Chairman, Lagos State Sports Commission, Sola Aiyepeku, disclosed this in his address at the final match/closing ceremony of the 15th U-16 Inter-State Emeka Anyaoku Cup 2023 held at the Abalti Barracks, Gbajabiamila Mini-Stadium, Yaba, a statement on Monday said.

The governor stressed that his government "would not leave any stone unturned in terms of using the instrumentality of sports to develop every nook and cranny of the state."

While extolling the major sponsor for his contributions and achievements, he called on him to commit more resources to sports development.

In his remarks, the former Secretary-General of the



Commonwealth and sponsor of the tournament, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, lauded Governor Sanwo-Olu for being a constant supporter of the tournament and urged him to continue to initiate policies geared towards sports development across the State.

He commended all the participants at the event, noting that the standard of matches was very high, just as he applauded Olumo Football Club from Oyo State for defeating Utility Football Club from Kwara State by a 3-1 goal margin.

Also present at the event were the Director General, Lagos State Sports Commission, Oluwatoyin Gafaar; Director of Public Affairs, LSSC, Oshodi-Eko Titilayo, and a board member of LSSC, Damilare Orimoloye.





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Our goal is to connect brands with customers.

Our philosophy is to strategically connect the best, upcoming and most respected brands to the customer in a way that is targeted, relevant and effective.

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BRAND NEW



Grand Oak Launches Korect Bitters

rand Oak Limited, manufacturers of Seamans Schnapps, the Original Number 1 Prayer drink has launched Korect Bitters, a new alcoholic bitters into the Nigerian bitters market with a view to creating alternative choice for the Nigerian consumers. he latest Bitters brand launched recently at a highly attended media event is a perfectly blended bitters made of roots and herbs for consumer satisfaction and enjoyment. It has a smooth taste which is believed to make it unique and different from existing brands in the bitters market.

Similarly, the company has unveiled a veteran Nollywood Actor, Mr. Bolanle Ninanlowo as Brand Ambassador of Korect Bitters with a view to creating a distinctive identity for its brand. Presenting the new brand to a well-packed media audience at Lagos Marriot Hotel, Brand Manager, Mr. John Sinmidele Ogunwale said "Korect Bitters is intentionally crafted to bring out the best in every Nigerian, whether male or female".

Continuing, he said "it is a brand that takes pride in celebrating individuals who go extra mile to ensure excellence is their final output. To us, they are the ones who deserve the accolade; "Korect Guy".

Corroborating these views, Marketing Manager, Mr. Gbemileke Lawal said the essence of introducing Korect Bitters into the market is to offer a quality product at an affordable and competitive price that offers wellness and fun to the consumers in a relaxed atmosphere.

He stated further that the new initiative was launched to ensure Consumers of bitters are given something more unique and different from what they have been used to noting that Grand Oak is renowned for delivering value for all stakeholders through its array of innovative brands and products.

Speaking on the unique qualities that distinguished Korect Bitters from other available brands in the market, Olofin Olubusuyi, Director, Fountain Business Unit, Grand Oak Limited stressed that the energy drink which is made from the best of root fits into every lifestyle.

According to Olubusuyi, Fountain Head SBU, Grand Oak Ltd everything distinguishes Korect Bitters. Apart from being made from the best of roots, the product also



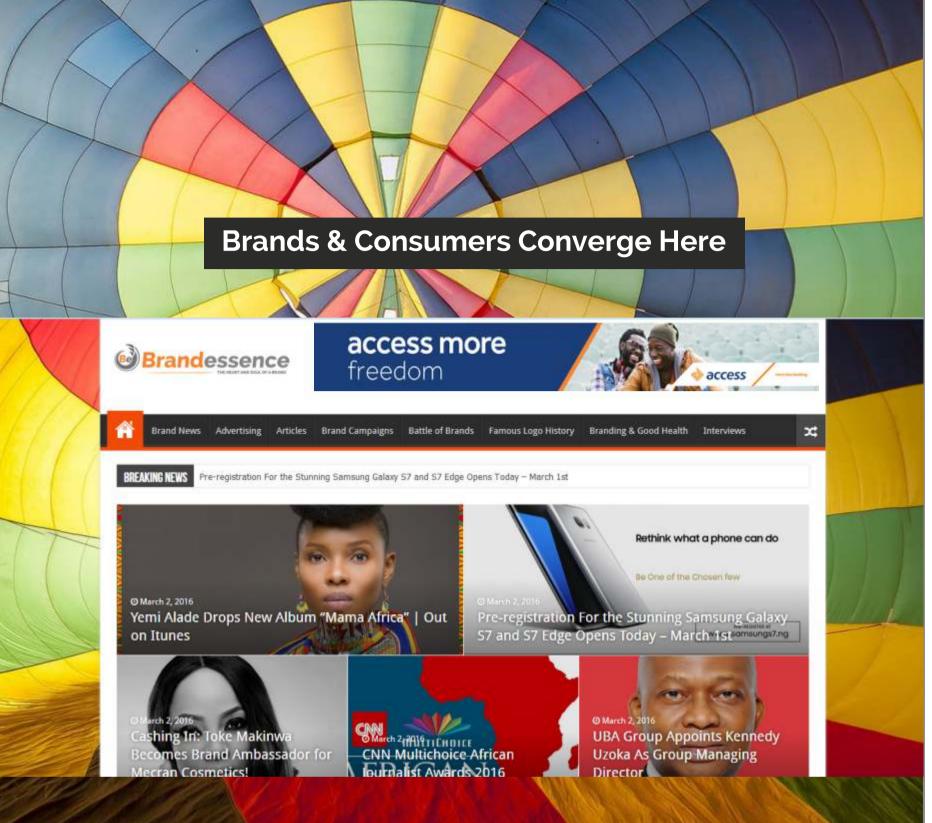


fits into every lifestyle. He revealed that when people buy a bottle of Korect Bitters, they are not just buying the normal bitters, they are also buying a product that fits into their lifestyle.

He explained that Korect Bitters is a brand that promises to deliver in every sphere of life, assuring its consumers of deriving any form of energy that is needed from the product. The unit director also confirmed that the price is friendly, with a unique packaging while the company intends to leverage on its years of distribution experience in ensuring that Korect Bitters gets to the expected consumers.

Also speaking on his unveiling as brand ambassador of Korect Bitters, the Nollywood Actor revealed that he accepted to promote the brand because of the difference between the product and other bitter drinks out there.

Ninalowo confirmed that Korect Bitters tastes good, smooth and awesome. He believes that to be different in the world, one has to make a difference and that is exactly what the product has successfully achieved with its launch to the market.





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