



Chaos in the Cathedral:

How Morocco's \$55m AFCON Masterclass

Collapsed into a 16-Minute Shambles



Chain Reactions Reinforces Continental PR Leadership with 10 SABRE Nominations and Gold Win



How Digital Payments Are Transforming Nigeria's Community Nightlife, Moniepoint Reveals



Maureen Ifada Joins Global Elite as Jury Member for SABRE Awards EMEA 2026



NEWS

BRANDING

ADVERTISING

MARKETING

BRAND IDENTITY

BRAND CAMPAIGNS

One Brand, Global Influence

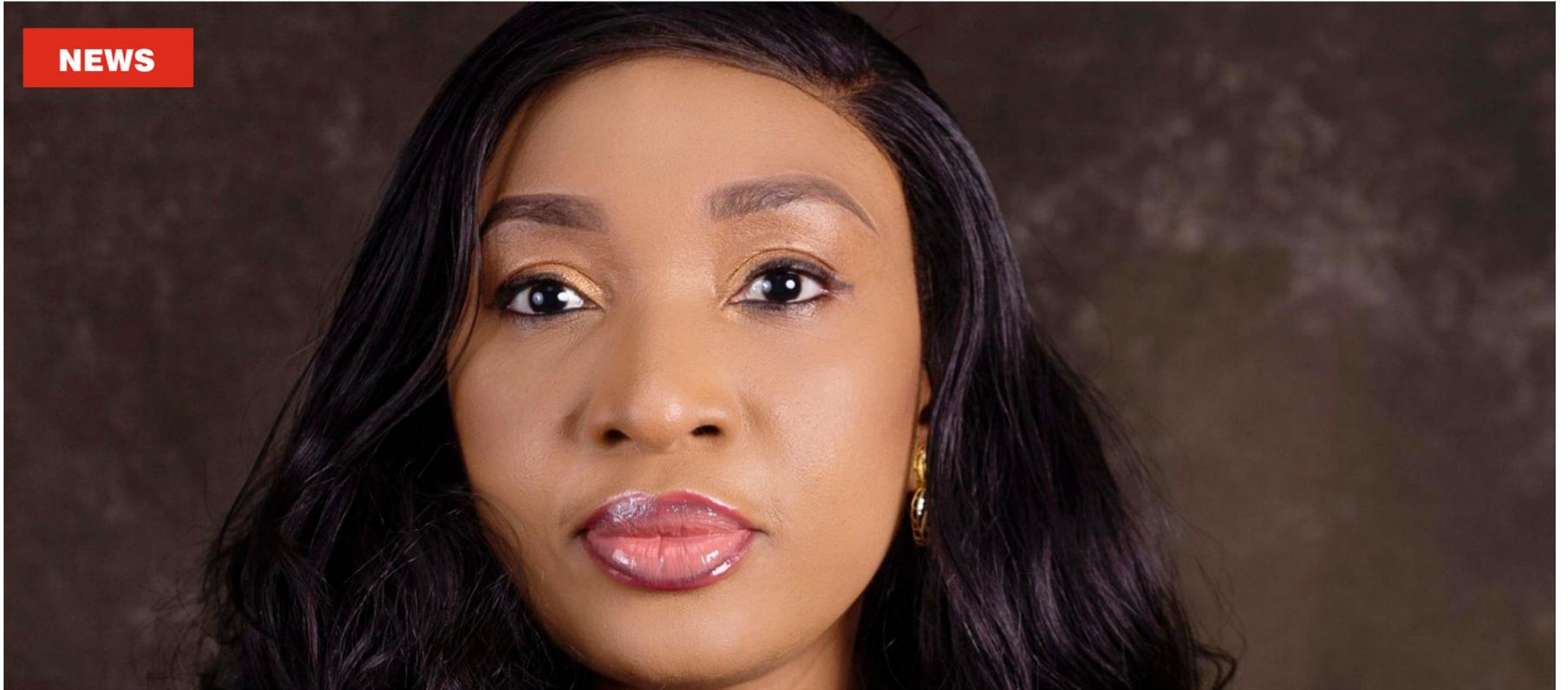
With multiple awards over the years,
UBA continues to distinguish itself in the
financial service industry across Africa,
North America, Europe and the
United Arab Emirates

UBA, *Africa's Global Bank*





NEWS



Maureen Ifada Joins Global Elite as Jury Member for SABRE Awards EMEA 2026

In a significant milestone that underscores her growing global influence, Maureen Ifada, Marketing Director at FrieslandCampina WAMCO Nigeria Plc, has been appointed as a jury member for the 2026 SABRE Awards EMEA. The announcement places her among an elite group of leading brands and marketing communications professionals from across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, who will evaluate hundreds of the year's most compelling submissions.

The SABRE Awards, known internationally for recognizing superior achievement in public relations and communications, draw entries from a wide range of sectors and disciplines, setting a high bar for creative excellence and strategic impact. Ifada's inclusion on the jury panel reflects both her personal stature and the increasing recognition of African marketing leadership on the global stage.

Ifada's appointment to the SABRE Awards EMEA jury

is the latest in a series of prestigious roles and honours she has earned in recent years, affirming her as one of Nigeria's most impactful and respected marketing strategists. Her two-decade career at FrieslandCampina WAMCO has seen her rise from a management trainee in the Consumer Marketing Department in 2003 to a key member of the company's management team since 2024, steering brand strategy for household names such as Peak and Three Crowns Milk.

2025 was a standout year for Ifada's professional accolades. She was named the Nigeria Marketing Amazon at the 2025 Nigeria Marketing Awards—an honour celebrating her outstanding influence in the country's marketing landscape. Earlier in the same year she was crowned Outstanding Marketing Amazon of the Year by Marketing Edge, ahead of being recognised as Marketing Director of the Year at the Brand Handlers Awards. Additionally, she twice

received inclusion in WIMCA's Top 50 Most Influential Women in Marketing and Communications in Nigeria, an award that spotlights women driving transformation in the industry.

Ifada's impact extends beyond Nigeria's borders. In 2025 she was appointed as a judge for the International Content Marketers Award (ICM), where she joined other global experts in evaluating creative excellence in content marketing. Her jury experience also includes participation in the Native Advertising Awards, further demonstrating her standing as a trusted evaluator of quality and innovation in brand communications.

Across her career, Ifada has been widely credited with driving powerful brand stories that resonate deeply with consumers. Her leadership in repositioning Three Crowns Milk through its "Healthy Mums, Happy Families" campaign and her strategic stewardship of Peak Milk's enduring market

BRANDS & CONSUMERS CONVERGE HERE

www.brandessencenigeria.com



dominance are frequently cited as hallmarks of her visionary approach to consumer-centric marketing. Speaking on her SABRE Awards EMEA appointment, industry observers say Ifada's judgment and insight will be invaluable in assessing submissions that push the boundaries of creative communications in an increasingly competitive and interconnected

marketplace.

As global award platforms continue to elevate standards and spotlight influential leaders, Maureen Ifada's trajectory from national brand builder to globally recognised juror exemplifies the rising influence of African marketing professionals on the world stage.

From Classroom to Commerce: Caleb University Students Experience Real-World E-Commerce Operations at Jumia Nigeria



Students and lecturers from CALEB University, Imota, Ogun State, have described their recent immersion visit to the Jumia Nigeria office and fulfilment centre in Lagos as "inspiring" and "transformational," following an in-depth exposure to real-time e-commerce operations.

The academic delegation, led by Dr. Ayorinde Oduroye, Head of the Department of Computer Science, visited the leading e-commerce platform as part of efforts to bridge classroom learning with practical industry experience. The engagement provided students with a comprehensive understanding of digital retail operations, technology-driven logistics, supply chain systems, and customer fulfilment processes.

Speaking during the visit, Dr. Oduroye expressed profound appreciation for the opportunity. "We actually didn't expect an experience as intensely inspiring as what we had here at Jumia Nigeria headquarters today. We teach e-commerce in our classes, but we've seen a lot here that will enhance my teaching and impact the students tremendously. We thank Jumia Nigeria for this opportunity," he said.

Students were also given a guided tour of the company's warehouse facilities, where they observed first-hand the precision and efficiency that power modern e-commerce operations.

Adewunmi Jesse, a student of CALEB University,

noted: "One of the things that impressed me is that I got to see how complex the world of e-commerce is. I'm particularly thrilled by how efficient the workflow here is. Even when we toured the warehouse, I saw that everything was maximised to maximum efficiency." Chief Executive Officer of Jumia Nigeria, Temidayo Ojo, reaffirmed the company's commitment to knowledge-sharing and youth development. "I'm excited to see aspiring and ambitious young minds come to learn and have such a great time with us here today. It's our joy to share knowledge and inspire the next generation of industry titans who will take the mantle from where we are and reach even greater heights," Ojo stated.

The visit forms part of CALEB University's broader academic approach to experiential learning, designed to equip students with practical insights that complement theoretical instruction. By opening its doors to future tech and business leaders, Jumia Nigeria continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening Nigeria's digital economy ecosystem.

As Nigeria's e-commerce sector continues to expand, collaborations between academia and industry stakeholders are increasingly critical in preparing students for the demands of a fast-evolving digital marketplace.

The Rhythm That Never Fades



The TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations 2025 left no room for the lukewarm. From the opening kickoff to the final second of the final, the tournament was a succession of intense moments, fully committed duels, and figures that tell the story of an African football game in full assertion. Crowned champions after a controlled campaign, Senegal imposed their authority. Morocco, solid and consistent finalists, confirmed their competitive maturity, while Nigeria, finishing third, left their mark on the AFCON with their attacking power and statistical dominance. A dense, demanding edition, whose numbers outline the strengths and deep trends of a continental football scene moving forward without compromise.

Morocco 2025 will be remembered as the "Infrastructure AFCON." For the first time, the tournament featured nine world-class stadiums across six cities, providing dedicated base camps for all 24 teams. This logistical feat streamlined operations for athletes, global media, and over 1.3 million fans—a significant increase from the 1.1 million attendees in Ivory Coast 2023.

The quality of the pitches translated directly into a higher standard of play. The tournament became the highest-scoring edition in history, with 120 goals surpassing the previous record of 119. Beyond the football, the opening ceremony—headlined by Davido and French Montana—framed the event as a premier global entertainment product.

Amidst the elite stadiums, the "rebellious" and colorful soul of African football thrived. DR Congo's Michel Nkuka Mboladinga became the tournament's viral sensation. Dressed in vibrant suits and mimicking the stoic posture of national hero Patrice Lumumba, he symbolized the deep political and historical identity fans bring to the stands.

Melvin O. Udoosen

BrandEvangelist

melvin@brandessencenigeria.com

Turning passionate customers into your brand evangelists

**Mobil motor oils deliver
excellent engine protection.**



Turkish Airlines Unveils Its 500th Aircraft Featuring a Special Livery of 100,000 Employees

Turkish Airlines, operating one of Europe's youngest fleets, has reached another significant milestone in its journey that began in 1933 with a modest fleet of five aircraft. Joining the fleet at the end of 2025, the 500th aircraft named 'TK Family' was unveiled during a special launch event today by the Turkish flag carrier.

The unveiling of the 500th aircraft, featuring a special livery designed with photographs of Turkish Airlines' 100,000 employees and retirees, was held with wide and meaningful participation, reflecting the spirit of unity and solidarity. The event at Istanbul Airport was attended by executives from Turkish Airlines and its subsidiaries, former senior executives, employees and retirees, as well as prominent figures from the aviation industry. The launch also featured children of martyrs who gave their lives for the Turkish nation, representing all 81 provinces of Türkiye, and the cast of Turkish Airlines' memorable 'I dir*' (When You Dream) commercial. This special gathering once again demonstrated that Turkish Airlines' growth story consists of not only numbers but also shared effort, loyalty, and solidarity.

Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee Prof. Ahmet Bolat stated at this special event: "Our 500th aircraft represents far more than a new addition to our fleet; it stands as a symbol of 93 years of dedication, determination, and shared vision. Having considerably accelerated our journey to the top after 2003 with 65 aircraft, today we take pride in reaching 356 destinations across six continents with over 500 aircraft. Twelve years ago, when we filmed our 'When You Dream' commercial with 247 aircraft and 247 destinations, the



500th aircraft was a dream. Witnessing that dream become reality today holds a special meaning for the entire Turkish Airlines family. We see our 500th aircraft not as a milestone marking an end, but as the beginning of the 'Second 500' era. In line with our goal of reaching a fleet of 1,000 aircraft by 2036, we remain committed to positioning our country as one of the global hubs of aviation."

As part of this unveiling, the "TK Family" aircraft performed a special ceremonial flight, tracing the number 500 in the sky to mark the beginning of the airline's 'Second 500' era. Operated under flight number TK500, the flight carried the children of martyrs and their families, along with Turkish Airlines executives, former senior executives, and employees. Aircraft representing key milestones in Turkish Airlines' fleet expansion were also showcased at the event venue, alongside a full-scale replica of the airline's first aircraft, drawing significant interest.

The fleet milestone aircraft were introduced in the following years:

- 100th Aircraft – August 2006
- 200th Aircraft – November 2012
- 300th Aircraft – February 2016
- 400th Aircraft – March 2023
- 500th Aircraft – December 2025

While continuing to enhance operational efficiency and passenger comfort through investments in modern aircraft, Turkish Airlines remains committed to strengthening its fleet in line with its sustainable growth strategy. The 500th Aircraft symbolizes not only the airline's current strength, but also its vision of reaching a fleet of 1,000 aircraft by 2036.

Drawing strength from its heritage as it confidently moves toward the future, Turkish Airlines continues to write new success stories in global aviation, guided by its principle of "growing together, rising together."

Mouka's Chief Commercial Officer Honoured with Creative & Branding Icon Award 2025

The Managing Director of Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals (DPRP), Mr. David Bird, has revealed that Dangote Refinery is unlike any other Nigerian refinery. It operates on a European/Asian Merchant Refinery model, positioning itself to become the world's largest and most advanced refinery with its hybrid automation infrastructure and adherence to international best practices.

Mr. Bird also highlighted that the refinery features a state-of-the-art configuration designed to meet modern standards for high-quality fuel supply. Speaking during a media briefing and facility tour of the Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals complex at the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) in Lagos, he stated that the plant is setting new standards for cleaner fuels across Africa, both in the short and long term.

He pointed out that West Africa has historically been a destination for inferior and substandard petroleum products from abroad. However, the entry of Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals is expected to reset the benchmarks for petroleum product distribution and supply across the continent.

According to Mr. Bird, the refinery prioritises meeting Nigeria's local fuel demands by eliminating fuel queues nationwide. Simultaneously, it aims to serve export markets by sourcing crude oil to ensure uninterrupted operations.

He stressed that Dangote produces high-quality fuels aligned with international environmental and health standards. Debunking circulating rumours, Mr. Bird insisted that the refinery operates under stringent, internationally recognised best practices and cannot



compromise on fuel quality or safety standards. "It's a Nigerian company but an internationally certified refinery," he emphasised.

Mr. Bird also noted that since commencement of operations, Dangote Refinery has been able to resolve Nigeria's perennial petrol scarcity, especially during festive seasons, by maintaining a constant supply of petroleum products to the country.

Highlighting its uniqueness, he explained that the refinery differs from others because it can distribute products both by sea and land, adhering to the highest industry standards.

Regarding energy sourcing, Mr. Bird revealed that the refinery currently sources its power internally from alternative energy sources — steam and gas turbines — generating 500 megawatts for its operations. He also announced plans for growth and expansion under the Vision 2030 programme.

The Dangote Group is also planning to expand its nearby port facilities to accommodate more ships, particularly from Brazil and other countries, which regularly bring

raw materials and facilitate fertilizer exports.

He stated, "Dangote Refinery was not like any other. It is a hybrid of United States, European and Asian Merchant refinery models in Nigeria. Dangote Refinery combined all these with more stringent quality standards. We source about 25 crude stocks but the one from Nigeria takes the highest share of 65 percent while other sources take 35 per cent." He added, "Dangote Refinery is not a single trade entity; aside from petroleum, we produce other intermediate products such as diesel, kerosene, Jet A1, gas and other downstream products." Supporting this, Mr. Tony Chiejina, Group Branding and Communications Manager, Dangote Group, reflected on Nigeria's history of fuel scarcity, noting that since 1975, it has been associated with festive seasons.

He emphasised that Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals holds great promise for Nigeria, calling on industry stakeholders and Nigerians to support the company in achieving its goals for Nigeria's oil and gas industry, particularly the downstream sector.

Polaris Bank Introduces International Gift Card Feature on VULTe

Polaris Bank, via its digital lifestyle platform VULTe, has unveiled a new, quicker way for users to send love, appreciation, and rewards across borders with the launch of its International Gift Card feature. This innovation allows customers to deliver global brand gift cards to family and friends anywhere in the world within seconds. Engineered for speed, security, and everyday relevance, the feature offers a wide selection of international and local brands across categories such as groceries, beauty and wellness, fashion, electronics, entertainment, gaming, and lifestyle services — all accessible seamlessly on VULTe. Whether it is paying for a Netflix subscription in London, sending Spotify Premium to a friend in Accra, gifting a Starbucks coffee in New York, or helping a loved one shop at Amazon or Shoprite, VULTe's Gift Card feature transforms digital transactions into meaningful real-world experiences, supported by Polaris Bank's secure digital infrastructure.

To use, customers simply log in to VULTe, select



'Lifestyle', choose 'Gift Card', pick their preferred brand, enter the amount and recipient's email, confirm the transaction, and authorise with their PIN. The gift card is

then delivered instantly, eliminating shipping delays, currency issues, and geographic restrictions. The gift card catalogue includes major brands and platforms such as Amazon, SureGift, Visa and MasterCard Prepaid Cards, iTunes and Apple, Google Play, Steam, Razer Gold, Netflix, Spotify, Starbucks, and PaySafeCard — covering physical goods, digital content, subscriptions, gaming, and everyday essentials. With this new feature, Polaris Bank continues to demonstrate its commitment to digital innovation and lifestyle banking, positioning VULTe as a bridge between financial services and global everyday experiences — enabling customers to turn simple moments into meaningful connections, delivered instantly, securely, and without borders.

Polaris Bank has been recognised as Nigeria's Digital Bank of the Year in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, and as MSME Bank of the Year in 2022, 2023, and 2024, according to Business Day's Banks and Other Financial Institutions (BAFI) Awards.

inDrive Unveils New Advertising Platform, inDrive Ads, in Nigeria and 19 Other Countries

Demonstrating sustained global momentum, inDrive, a comprehensive mobility and urban services platform operating across 48 countries, has once again been ranked as the second-most-downloaded ride-hailing app worldwide for the fourth consecutive year. The latest report from Sensor Tower, a prominent market intelligence firm, confirms this achievement.

The report also revealed that inDrive climbed from fifth to fourth place in the global travel app download rankings, signaling increased user engagement as the platform transitions into a super app. Since its launch, the peer-to-peer pricing model that allows drivers and riders to mutually agree on fares has driven the app's popularity, resulting in over 400 million downloads. Available in 1,065 cities around the globe, inDrive has facilitated more than 8 billion transactions to date.

Furthermore, the report highlighted that inDrive ranked number one in the travel category by downloads in nine countries, including newcomers Peru and Pakistan. It also ranked among the top three most downloaded travel apps in 22 countries worldwide.

In 2025, inDrive accelerated its evolution into a super app by expanding beyond core ride-hailing services to include intercity transportation, courier, grocery delivery, and financial services. This broadening of offerings aims to deepen user engagement by addressing more daily needs, thus supporting its ongoing global expansion.

Behind the scenes, advanced technologies such as AI and analytics underpin this growth. These tools enable



personalized experiences, improve accuracy through machine learning-driven mapping and ETA predictions, and anticipate user needs with predictive analytics. Importantly, inDrive's commitment to fairness remains intact, allowing users to retain control over pricing decisions, in line with its core principles of transparency and user choice.

According to the report, super app ecosystems are increasingly becoming vital growth drivers for the ride-hailing industry, especially in emerging markets where users are engaging across multiple services more frequently.

Founder and CEO of inDrive, Arsen Tomsky, commented on the milestone: "Maintaining our position as the world's second most downloaded ride-hailing app for a fourth consecutive year is a powerful validation of the value inDrive delivers to its users every day. This recognition reflects the trust people place in our platform and the continued dedication of our global team. As inDrive evolves into a super app, we remain focused on our core principles of fairness, transparency, and user choice, while expanding access to services that make a meaningful difference in people's daily lives."



POWERING NIGERIA FOR THE FUTURE

Leading Nigeria's energy transition with accessible, affordable and reliable energy that drives social and economic prosperity.

seplatenergy.com

Seplat Towers, 16a Temple Road (Olu Holloway)
Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: +234 1277 0400

4th Floor 50 Pall Mall London SW1Y 5JH
Phone: +44 (0) 20 3725 6500

info@seplatenergy.com
<http://seplatenergy.com>

Indigo Secures Six Nominations at 2026 SABRE Africa PR Awards

Integrated Indigo Limited, a comprehensive marketing communications consultancy, has received multiple nominations at the 2026 Superior Achievement in Branding, Reputation & Engagement (SABRE) Awards, recognising its impactful, strategic communications campaigns across various sectors.

Organised by PProvoke Media, the SABRE Awards honour exceptional campaigns that demonstrate excellence in branding, reputation management, and engagement across Africa.

Integrated Indigo earned recognition in the Corporate Social Responsibility category for the Nigerian Bottling Company's Youth Empowered initiative and Lafarge Africa's Women on Wheels. Simultaneously, a story about a US\$50 million investment executed for Lagos Free Zone was nominated in the Financial Communications category.

In the Industrial/Manufacturing category, the Nigerian Bottling Company's rPET Collection Hub and Lafarge Africa's Women on Wheels were both shortlisted. Additionally, the launch of Nigeria's first low-carbon



concrete by Lafarge Africa was recognised in the Marketing to Consumers (New Product) category.

Commenting on the nominations, Managing Director/CEO of Integrated Indigo Limited, Bolaji Abimbola, expressed gratitude for the recognition, noting that being acknowledged on a reputable global

platform such as the SABRE Awards reflects the firm's unwavering commitment to excellence and meaningful storytelling.

Abimbola explained that the nominations highlight the strength of collaboration between Integrated Indigo and its clients, as well as the dedication of the team behind each campaign. "We are deeply honoured by these nominations. This affirms our belief that strategic communications should not only elevate brand visibility but also drive measurable impact. From youth empowerment and gender inclusion to sustainability innovation and investment storytelling, each campaign reflects the trust our clients place in us and the passion of our team," he said.

With nominations covering corporate social responsibility, financial communications, industrial innovation, and consumer marketing, Integrated Indigo continues to strengthen its position as a trusted strategic communications partner for organisations committed to building reputation, promoting sustainability, and creating shared value.

IVI PR Launches IviTrybeSage Masterclass to Equip PR Professionals, Opens Registration

IVI PR, a strategic communications firm based in Lagos, is proud to announce that registration is officially open for IviTrybeSage: an exclusive masterclass designed specifically for the modern PR professional. In an era where the media landscape shifts daily, IviTrybeSage serves as a bridge between academic theory and real-world PR and communication demands. The programme focuses on providing practical, cutting-edge skills to create a pipeline of highly competent talent. Participants will learn how to move beyond traditional press releases into the realm of strategic influence and creative storytelling, transitioning from foundational PR tactics towards the sophisticated demands of today's global market. "In an era of noise, it is imperative that clarity is prioritised through strategic communication. The industry is evolving at breakneck speed," says Nosa Iyamu, CEO of IVI PR. "IviTrybeSage isn't just a training session; it's a community for those ready to lead the conversation rather than just follow it. It is for those who want to understand how to drive clarity rather than joining the bandwagon of those who merely sell noise."

The PR industry is a dynamic field defined by rapid digital transformation and shifting audience behaviour. For PR practitioners to transition from mere messengers to high-value strategic partners, continuous skill acquisition is imperative. Today's



practitioners must master a diverse toolkit that includes data and trend analysis, crisis management in the age of 'cancel culture', and strategic storytelling. By proactively sharpening these skills, PR professionals ensure they can navigate complex algorithmic changes and evolving social trends, allowing them to protect brand reputations with precision and command a well-earned seat at the executive table. The curriculum will cover brand personality and storytelling, public relations strategy, media relations, crisis management, social media and

digital PR, influencer marketing, and more. IviTrybeSage is open to fresh graduates seeking the skills necessary for an upward trajectory in strategic communications, as well as entry-to-senior level PR and marketing practitioners, corporate communications executives, and ambitious agency leads.

Registration is now live and will remain open until capacity is reached. Given the exclusive nature of the IviTrybeSage programme, spaces are strictly limited to ensure an intimate, high-impact learning environment.

Ideas Origin Media Embarks on Strategic Move to New Creative Hub in Lagos

Ideas Origin Media has officially relocated to a brand-new creative hub in Lagos, marking a pivotal milestone in its growth trajectory. This move underscores the agency's dedication to excellence, innovation, and culturally grounded brand development. During the opening ceremony, the Chief Executive Officer of Ideas Origin Media described the new facility as "more than a physical expansion, but a strategic investment in how ideas are conceived, refined, and executed." The CEO elaborated, "This creative space represents our belief that great ideas do not happen by accident. They are the result of clarity, collaboration, and context. Here, brands can access solutions that are rooted in African realities, compliant with regulatory expectations, and aligned with global brand aspirations. Our goal is to help businesses grow with confidence, relevance, and impact." Designed to serve as a nucleus for strategic thinking, creativity, and execution, the new space provides an environment where brands and businesses can craft ideas that genuinely resonate with African audiences while remaining scalable to international markets. It embodies Ideas Origin Media's philosophy of creating work that travels across borders without losing cultural relevance.

The opening event was attended by prominent figures from Nigeria's advertising and corporate sectors, emphasizing the agency's increasing influence. Guests included Dr. Olalekan Fadolapo, Director General of the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON); Mr. Tunde Rahman, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Special Duties; Mr. Lanre Adisa, President



of the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria; Mrs. Olamayowa Ogunwemimo, MD of First Ally Asset Management and DGMD of First Ally Capital; and renowned Marketing and Communications Consultant, Kanmi Da Silva, among others. On the significance of the new creative space, Tunde Rahman remarked, "Spaces like this matter because they shape the quality of ideas that emerge from them. This opening signals the agency's intent to operate at a higher strategic and creative level, not just in Nigeria, but across markets." Located at 2A Oroleye Street, Awuse Estate,

Opebi, Ikeja, the new creative space further solidifies Ideas Origin Media's position as a forward-thinking partner for organizations aiming to build strong brands, launch products, enhance visibility, and connect meaningfully with their audiences.

With this expansion, Ideas Origin Media re-affirms its commitment to delivering original ideas, strategic clarity, and executional excellence for brands poised to compete and succeed both locally and globally.

Leadway and Paga's Doroki Collaborate to Enhance Business Security for Nigerian Merchants

Paga's Doroki platform, a key player in Nigeria's fintech space, has formed a strategic alliance with Leadway Assurance, one of Nigeria's leading insurance providers. This partnership is designed to offer comprehensive, tailored insurance solutions specifically for Doroki merchants, aiming to protect their businesses against daily risks and facilitate quick recovery from unforeseen events. As part of this collaboration, Doroki merchants will have access to insurance products crafted to safeguard essential aspects of their daily operations—protecting their income, assets, and business continuity. This initiative emphasizes a holistic approach to risk management. Besides providing coverage, Doroki and Leadway will deliver clear guidance on policy details, claim procedures, and best practices for risk mitigation. This empowers merchants with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and confidently navigate uncertainties.

"At Doroki, we see our merchants as partners in driving economic activity across Nigeria's retail landscape. This partnership with Leadway—an insurer with decades of experience and a strong reputation for reliability—means our merchants can focus on growing their businesses with the peace of mind that they're protected," said Arike Okwunowo, General Manager of Doroki Merchants. Diana



Mulili, Head of Digital Business at Leadway, expressed the company's dedication to expanding access to financial security for Nigerians. "At Leadway, we believe insurance should integrate seamlessly into the everyday realities of people and businesses. By partnering with Doroki, we are embedding practical, easy-to-understand insurance solutions into a platform merchants already

trust—helping them protect their income, assets, and livelihoods while continuing to grow with confidence." This partnership not only delivers financial protection but also promotes a culture of preparedness, awareness, and informed decision-making—crucial elements for sustainable business growth in an environment of unpredictability.



How Digital Payments Are Transforming Nigeria's Community Nightlife, Moniepoint Reveals

Moniepoint Inc., Africa's leading all-in-one financial ecosystem, has published a new case study titled "The Business of Community Nightlife in Nigeria," offering a rare, data-driven insight into the country's informal night-time economy. While upscale "Dettys December" venues attract headlines with daily revenues of 360 million and table prices soaring to 1.2 million, Moniepoint's research shifts focus to the "community nightlife" where roadside bars, suya stalls, and neighbourhood taverns form the backbone of social life for millions of Nigerians.

The comprehensive study draws on transaction data from more than 27,000 clubs, bars, and lounges operating on Moniepoint's payment networks, complemented by fieldwork with nightlife operators and workers across the country. By combining anonymised transaction data processed by Moniepoint with on-the-ground interviews and observational research in various Nigerian cities, the study offers a rare, granular view of how money, labour, and social interaction converge after dark. It is part of a series of sector-specific reports by the company, aiming to increase data visibility within Nigeria's informal economy.

According to the report, in a notable departure from broader trends in Nigeria's informal sector, cash payments are declining in nightlife transactions. The study reveals that bank transfers now dominate, closely followed by card payments, with cash actively discouraged due to security risks. Moniepoint's data indicates that, during peak night-time hours, transfer transactions outnumber card payments by nearly 2 million on its network. One of the most operationally significant findings concerns the timing of spending. Nightlife in Nigeria operates late into the night, but the economic activity is concentrated early. Transaction



volumes begin to rise sharply from 8pm, peak before midnight, and then decline gradually, even as venues remain busy. By the time the longest hours of the night arrive, most purchasing activity has already taken place. This has clear practical implications for bar operators — the most critical hours for staffing, stock replenishment, vendor payments, and cash flow management are between midnight and 6am. The report also emphasises the sector's vital role in employment, noting that local bars typically increase their workforce by 30-50% on peak nights. Conservative estimates suggest that at least 54,000 Nigerians are engaged in nightlife labour each night. "Nigeria's local bars and night-time operators are not peripheral to the economy, they are a critical part of

its architecture. We see a substantial and sustained economic sector that employs hundreds of thousands of Nigerians every night and deserves the same attention we give to agriculture, healthcare, and retail. Our goal is to make sure every one of those businesses has the tools to grow. From providing credit to finance renovations and sound systems to offering same-day settlement that allows vendors to restock and tools like Moniebook that facilitate inventory management and reconciliation, Moniepoint is committed to ensuring that this vital artery of the nation's economy remains viable and empowering," said Tosin Eniolorunda, Co-Founder and Group CEO, Moniepoint Inc.

One Brand
Partnering
for Progress

UBA
United Bank for Africa

Leo Becomes Africa's First Chatbot for Cross-border Payment

You can now enjoy seamless and instant money transfer
across the continent when you use **PAPSS** on **Leo**



Scan to chat with Leo on



www.ubagroup.com

Africa, USA, UK, France

Africa's Global Bank



Chaos in the Cathedral: How Morocco's \$55M AFCON Masterclass Collapsed into a 16-Minute Shambles

The 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon) was designed to be Morocco's grand rehearsal for the world stage. In many ways, it was a triumph of ambition—a high-octane tournament that shattered goal-scoring records and showcased infrastructure so advanced it made European leagues look over their shoulder. Yet, as the dust settles on a final that descended into 16 minutes of surreal, high-stakes paralysis, the tournament leaves behind a complicated legacy. It was a month where Africa proved it could build the future, even as it struggled to manage the heat of the present.

A New Gold Standard

From the moment the first whistle blew in Rabat, it was clear that Morocco had moved the goalposts for what an African tournament looks like. The Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium stood as a glittering cathedral of sport, a testament to the billions of dollars of investment backed by King Mohammed VI.

Pitches remained pristine through torrential rain, and for the first time, the "technology gap" seemed to vanish. "It shows the world that sometimes Africa can do it better than other countries," said Omar Khyari of the Royal Moroccan Football Federation. With a record 121 goals scored and ticket revenues leaping from \$11m to \$55m, the tournament was a commercial juggernaut. Morocco has effectively turned itself into the "headquarters" of

the African game, setting a bar so high that future co-hosts Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda may find it impossible to clear.

The 16-Minute Meltdown

However, the gloss of the infrastructure couldn't fully mask the cracks in game management. The final between Senegal and Morocco will be remembered not for its tactical nuances, but for a chaotic standoff.

When a controversial penalty was awarded to the hosts in stoppage time, the Senegal squad staged a walk-off that lasted over a quarter of an hour. The delay turned the stadium into a pressure cooker, culminating in Brahim Diaz's failed Panenka attempt and a bitter fallout. Morocco boss Walid Regragui called the scenes "shameful," but for many, the incident was the boiling point of a tournament-long frustration with officiating. Despite the high-tech stadiums, the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system felt like a step backward from previous editions. Long delays and questionable calls haunted the knockout stages, proving that while you can buy the best screens, you cannot buy consistency in judgment.

Security and Superstition

Beyond the tactics and the VAR booths, the tournament grappled with "old school" footballing headaches. Senegal's federation raised alarms after their stars were mobbed by fans at a train station, and the final was marred

by clashes between supporters and security.

Then there was the "battle of the towels." In a bizarre recurring theme, Moroccan ballboys and fans were caught on camera attempting to steal the towels of opposing goalkeepers—a superstitious attempt to break the "juju" or focus of the shot-stoppers. While it provided social media fodder, it pointed to a lack of professional discipline that CAF (the Confederation of African Football) may be forced to penalize.

The Road Ahead

As CAF looks toward a future of quadrennial tournaments, the 2025 edition serves as both a blueprint and a warning.

Morocco proved that Africa can host a tournament with the commercial soul of a World Cup. The record-breaking revenues and world-class facilities suggest the continent is ready for the biggest stages of all. But the governing body now faces a mountain of paperwork: reviewing booking regulations that saw captains miss the final, addressing the "lottery" of group-stage tiebreakers, and fixing a security apparatus that left players vulnerable. The 2025 Afcon was a beautiful, record-breaking, and occasionally broken spectacle. It showed that while Morocco has built the stadiums of tomorrow, the soul of African football still demands a level of fair play and order that no amount of investment can overnight.

Digital Juggernaut: AFCON 2025 Shatters Records with 5 Billion Views as Senegal Claims Crown

The TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) Morocco 2025 has officially cemented its status as a global digital powerhouse. Data released by CAF on Wednesday reveals a staggering 6.1 billion digital impressions and 5.2 billion video views, nearly tripling the engagement figures of the 2023 edition. This monumental growth marks a turning point for African football, transforming a continental tournament into a viral "cultural movement" that resonated far beyond the pitch.

A Digital Explosion

The leap in engagement from the previous tournament in Ivory Coast is unprecedented. While AFCON 2023 garnered 2.1 billion views, the Moroccan edition surged to new heights, driven largely by the African diaspora and a younger, tech-savvy audience.

Total Video Views: 5.2 Billion

Digital Impressions: 6.1 Billion

Fan Engagements: 285 Million interactions

TikTok Impact: Over 1 million user-generated videos under the #TotalEnergiesAFCON2025 hashtag.

CAF noted that the tournament's reach was propelled by a mix of breathtaking goals, behind-the-scenes access, and fan-led content that blended football with music, fashion, and humor.

On-Pitch Glory and High-Stakes Drama

While the digital numbers soared, the action on the grass was equally intense. The tournament, which ran from December 21, 2025, to January 18, 2026, concluded with a thrilling finale at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat.

Champions: Senegal secured the trophy with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over the hosts.

Runners-up: Morocco finished second on home soil.

Third Place: Nigeria rounded out the podium.

The closing ceremonies reflected the tournament's modern, high-production feel, featuring a headline performance by Nigerian global superstar Davido.

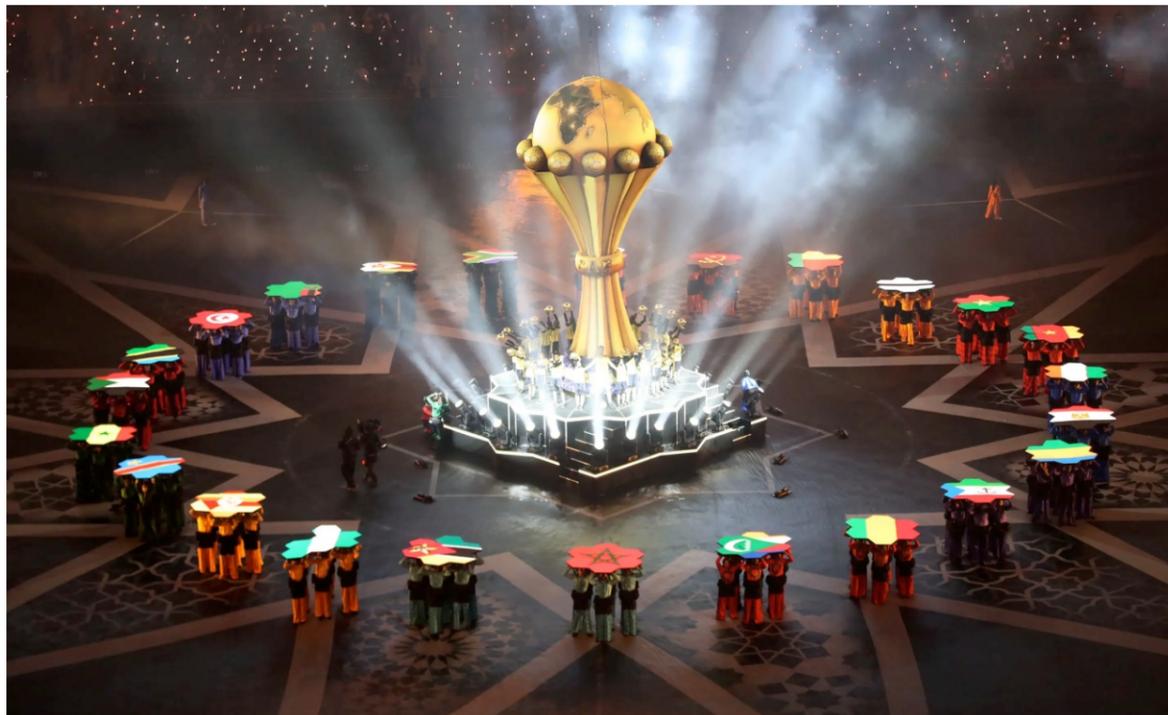
The Shadow of Controversy

Despite the record-breaking success and world-class infrastructure, the 2025 edition was not without its friction. The narrative was frequently punctuated by:

Officiating Disputes: Significant criticism regarding refereeing standards.

Technical Glitches: Reported malfunctions with the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system.

Disciplinary Action: CAF was forced to issue sanctions



against the federations of Algeria, Senegal, and Morocco, as well as several individual players, following on-field altercations and various acts of misconduct.

The Verdict

By combining elite infrastructure with a viral digital

strategy, Morocco 2025 has set a "new standard" for continental sports. As CAF transitions the tournament toward a quadrennial format, the sheer volume of global engagement suggests that African football has finally captured the world's undivided attention.

Infrastructure Excellence Meets Gridlock Drama: Assessing the Complex Legacy of Morocco 2025

The 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Morocco was a tournament of staggering contrasts. Over 29 days, the continent witnessed a masterclass in sports organization and infrastructure, paired with record-breaking viewership and on-field drama that tested the very limits of sportsmanship. As the Teranga Lions of Senegal secured their second continental title, the tournament left behind a blueprint for future hosting—and a stern warning about the pressures of the

modern game.

A New Standard for Continental Hosting

Morocco 2025 will be remembered as the "Infrastructure AFCON." For the first time, the tournament featured nine world-class stadiums across six cities, providing dedicated base camps for all 24 teams. This logistical feat streamlined operations for athletes, global media, and over 1.3 million fans—a significant increase from the 1.1 million attendees in Ivory Coast 2023. The quality of the pitches translated directly into a higher standard of play.

The tournament became the highest-scoring edition in history, with 120 goals surpassing the previous record of 119. Beyond the football, the opening ceremony—headlined by Davido and French Montana—framed the event as a premier global entertainment product.

The Human Element: Icons and Underdogs

Amidst the elite stadiums, the "rebellious" and colorful soul of African football thrived. DR Congo's Michel Nkuka Mboladinga became the tournament's viral sensation.



Dressed in vibrant suits and mimicking the stoic posture of national hero Patrice Lumumba, he symbolized the deep political and historical identity fans bring to the stands. On the pitch, the "gap" between Africa's elite and its emerging nations appeared to widen. While Tanzania and Sudan pushed heavyweights Nigeria and Senegal to the brink in spirited displays, the tournament was notably devoid of major upsets, suggesting a period of

olidation among the continent's traditional powerhouses.

Structural Cracks: Tickets, Tech, and Tragedy

Despite the gloss, several systemic issues drew sharp criticism:

Ticketing & Scalping: A sophisticated secondary market saw ticket prices triple, leaving many traveling fans stranded.

VAR & Officiating: Technical malfunctions, specifically during the DR Congo vs. Benin Republic match, hampered the credibility of the Video Assistant Referee system.

A Somber Note: The journalism community mourned the loss of Mohamed Soumaré, a titan of Malian sports media, who passed away during the tournament.

The Final: A Masterclass Marred by Chaos

The climax at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium provided the most dramatic 120 minutes of the year, but for the wrong reasons. A disputed goal for Senegal and a late-regulation penalty for Morocco sparked a 16-minute walk-off by the Senegalese squad. The tension peaked when Morocco's Brahim Díaz saw his Panenka penalty saved, leading to a goalless regulation finish. Senegal eventually triumphed in extra time, but the post-match scenes—including a media room brawl and the cancellation of Coach Pape Thiaw's press conference—left CAF with a mountain of disciplinary investigations.



The Rich & Creamy Custard



Checkers Custard Official



CheckersCustard



www.checkers.ng



How Global Sporting Events Will Shape Travel in 2026: How Marketers Can Respond

2026 will be a busy year for sports tourism, beginning with the Milano-Cortina Winter Olympics and carrying through to the FIFA Men's World Cup in the summer and beyond. Major competitions will take place across Europe, North America and Asia, creating sustained movement across borders as fans travel domestically and internationally to watch their favourite sporting events.

For the complete insight, WARC's latest Industry Snapshot explores the growth of sports tourism, as part of five key trends in the travel & tourism industry in 2026, and draws out practical examples of how brands can engage right now.

Why mega sporting events matter

Global research by Expedia shows that international sports travel has grown into a meaningful segment of the tourism market, accounting for 10% of global tourism spending. 44% of sports fans now travel internationally for events, with the share even higher among younger travellers.

For marketers and agencies, this means that the year will unfold with a series of opportunities tied to global touchpoints and events, each drawing its own wave of attention and travel activity. Those in the travel and tourism sector that maintain visibility during these waves of interest will be more likely to gain influence where fans choose to stay and explore.

How marketers can respond

1. Identify what drives incremental spending during a sports-driven trip.

With most sports event-driven trips lasting between two and six days and fans spending over \$1500 per trip, travellers invest heavily in experiences beyond



the match itself, from accommodation and dining to local exploration. Understanding when, where, and how these travellers choose to spend will unlock opportunities to reach a greater share of this high-value audience.

2. Align with high-attention cultural moments.

Major sporting events create predictable spikes in attention, and that attention is increasingly digital. Ampere analysis shows that 94% of Gen Z keep their phones close while watching sports, often multitasking by checking stats or engaging on social platforms, creating a prime opportunity for brands to influence fans in real time. Even without formal sponsorship, brands can tap into these high-attention cultural moments by aligning content and

partnerships with the momentum surrounding each event.

3. Build early affinity with fast-growing sports.

Several sports categories are gaining momentum, creating openings for brands to establish credibility before these spaces mature. Women's sports is a clear example: WARC data shows awareness of the FIFA Women's World Cup has reached almost 80% of the general population, yet brand investment still lags behind consumer interest. With two-thirds of Women's World Cup fans finding brands more attractive when they participate in sponsorship, early movers can secure meaningful long-term affinity as audiences like these continue to grow.

NIVEA's "Double the Care, Double the Glow" Campaign Rewards Thousands with Cash, Vouchers

NIVEA has reaffirmed that its historic 3 Billion National Consumer Promotion is still underway, with four successful draws already held and Nigerian consumers celebrating life-changing rewards.

To date, nearly 300,000 winners have emerged across the country, including 40 fortunate consumers who have each won and redeemed N1 million cash prizes. Additionally, 200 winners have received 50,000 Jumia shopping vouchers to buy Nivea products online, while approximately 280,000 winners have secured N1000 instant airtime. As the campaign continues, the fear of missing out grows, and more Nigerians are eager to participate in upcoming draws.

One of the lucky millionaires, Ezeobi Valentine Chigozie, who won during Week 3 of the raffle, described the moment she received the call from NIVEA as unforgettable. "When I got the call from NIVEA, I wasn't home. I was so excited and surprised. I plan to use this money to continue my schooling," she said.

Other confirmed winners of the million-naira prizes include Bello Omobolanle Helen, Oluseyi Adebayo, and Ike Angela Amaka, among many others, underscoring the campaign's nationwide reach and credibility.

Despite the growing list of winners, the promotion remains very much active, with many more prizes still up for grabs. NIVEA emphasizes that opportunities for Nigerians to participate and win are still abundant as the campaign progresses.

Participation is simple and accessible: 1. Purchase any of the NIVEA 400ml body lotion variants—Cocoa, Rich Nourishing, Even Glow, Advanced Care, Perfect & Radiant, or Deep. 2. Locate the unique code on the pack. 3. Scratch the code, dial *7022*, then enter your code followed by #, and follow the instructions to submit. 4. Receive N1,000 instant airtime and an automatic entry into weekly draws.

The "Double the Care, Double the Glow" campaign



rewards consumers instantly with airtime and weekly prizes, building toward larger grand prizes at the end of the twelve-week promotion.

At the grand finale, winners will have a chance to claim N5 million, N3 million, N2 million, three brand-new SUVs, and ten all-expense-paid trips to Spain to watch Real Madrid live at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium, thanks to NIVEA's long-standing global partnership with the football club.

Fiyin Toyo, Marketing Director for Central, East & West Africa (CEWA) at Beiersdorf, remarked on the campaign's significance: "At NIVEA, care goes beyond skincare.

This promotion is our way of saying thank you to Nigerians who trust us every day. Seeing real people win real rewards across the country reinforces our promise to always give back in tangible ways." She further emphasized that transparency, fairness, and

inclusiveness are at the core of the initiative, with every eligible purchase offering instant rewards and multiple chances to win.

The 3 Billion Consumer Promotion has full approval and regulation from the National Lottery Regulatory Commission (NLRC), Lagos State Lotteries and Gaming Authority (LSLGA), and the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), ensuring a credible and transparent process. As weekly draws continue nationwide, NIVEA urges Nigerians not to wait on the sidelines. The promotion is live, rewards are real, and anyone could be the next big winner. With this initiative, NIVEA reaffirms its leadership in skincare and its enduring commitment to delivering Double Care, Double Glow, and Double Value for consumers across Nigeria.

GTBank Introduces Quick Airtime Loan at 2.95%

Guaranty Trust Bank Ltd (GTBank), the flagship banking arm of GTCO Plc and Africa's premier financial services group, has announced the launch of the innovative Quick Airtime Loan. This new digital solution provides customers with instant access to airtime when they run out of call credit and have limited funds in their bank accounts, ensuring they stay connected when it matters most. In today's always-on environment, running out of airtime can be more than a minor inconvenience. It may lead to missed opportunities, disrupted plans, and lost connections — often precisely when funds are tight and options are limited. The Quick Airtime Loan was developed to address this issue, offering customers immediate credit to purchase airtime directly from their bank. Eligible GTBank customers can access amounts starting from 100 up to 10,000 by dialling *737*90#. The service is currently available across all major mobile networks in Nigeria and will soon expand to include data loans, further strengthening its role as a reliable on-demand platform. For years, the airtime credit market has

been dominated by telecommunications companies, with charges around 15%. GTBank is now reshaping this landscape by offering a customer-focused, bank-led digital alternative at a competitive rate of 2.95%. Built on principles of transparency, convenience, and affordability, the Quick Airtime Loan aims to broaden access to airtime, deliver meaningful cost savings for millions of Nigerians, and redefine how financial services are embedded in everyday life.

Commenting on the product launch, Miriam Olusanya, Managing Director of Guaranty Trust Bank Ltd, said: "Quick Airtime Loan reflects GTBank's continued focus on delivering digital solutions that are relevant, accessible, and built around real customer needs. The solution underscores the power of a connected financial ecosystem, combining GTBank's digital reach and lending expertise with the capabilities of HabariPay to deliver a smooth, end-to-end experience. By leveraging unique strengths across the Group, we are able to accelerate innovation, strengthen execution, and deliver a more integrated customer experience across all our

service channels." The launch of Quick Airtime Loan also signifies GTCO's evolution into a fully diversified financial services group. Using HabariPay's Squad, the solution reinforces the Group's ecosystem approach by integrating banking, payment technology, and digital channels to provide intuitive, all-in-one experiences for customers. With this new offering, Guaranty Trust Bank continues its legacy of pioneering digital-first solutions that have transformed customer access to financial services. Building on the success of its widely used QuickCredit offering and the convenience of the *737# USSD banking platform, the bank reaffirms its commitment to innovative financial solutions.

Guaranty Trust Bank (GTBank) is the flagship banking arm of GTCO Plc, a leading financial services group with a strong footprint across Africa and the United Kingdom. The bank is renowned for its leadership in digital banking, exceptional customer experience, and innovative financial solutions that deliver value to individuals, businesses, and communities.



SAY NO TO PIRACY

Stop stealing from creators,
Respect their work



#PIRACYISTHEFTPROTECTCREATIVITY



The HOME of GOOD FOOD



More Reasons to Love.

What's your reason?



Great Taste, Good Nutrition.

Egbin Power Launches Tech Empowerment Initiative for Host Communities

This program, part of the company's Personal Corporate Social Responsibility (PCSR) efforts, seeks to enhance employability, promote entrepreneurship, and broaden access to opportunities within the digital economy.

Chief Executive Officer of Egbin Power Plc, Mokhtar Bounour, emphasized that the initiative demonstrates the company's dedication to inclusive and sustainable development. He stated, "In today's digital age, technology is no longer optional but a critical driver of economic inclusion and growth," adding that intentional actions are necessary to close digital gaps and prevent uneven development.

He further explained that excluding communities from the digital economy leads to uneven and unsustainable development, highlighting the importance of targeted interventions to bridge these digital divides. "The Empowerment Programme is designed to address this gap by providing young people in Egbin, Ijede and Ipakan with access to practical and in-demand digital skills that can improve employability, foster entrepreneurship, and create new economic opportunities within their communities," he noted.

The initial cohort comprises beneficiaries from the three communities participating in structured training sessions covering ICT fundamentals, graphic design, full-stack web development, digital marketing, cybersecurity, and data analytics. The program combines classroom instruction with practical, hands-on learning experiences. Participants were selected through a



screening process that evaluated curiosity, determination, and willingness to learn. Beyond technical skills, the program also emphasizes workplace competencies such as ethics, problem-solving, collaboration, professionalism, and digital responsibility. Bounour urged participants to serve as ambassadors of the initiative, embodying values of integrity, discipline, and service. He highlighted that their progress could serve as proof that strategic corporate responsibility can generate tangible impacts.

He encouraged beneficiaries to see their role as broader than personal development—urging them to learn with

character, share their knowledge, mentor others, and use their skills to address real local challenges. Bounour expressed that the true legacy of the program would be the ripple effects it creates through shared success and community growth.

The launch of this Tech Empowerment Programme reaffirms Egbin Power Plc's ongoing dedication to sustainable community development, trust-building, and creating long-term value. The company remains committed to investing in people, strengthening its host communities, and contributing meaningfully to Nigeria's digital and economic advancement.

CcHUB EdTech Fellowship Returns with \$100,000 Equity-free Funding

Co-creation HUB (CcHUB), Nigeria's first innovation centre and technology hub, in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, has begun accepting applications for Cohort 4 of its EdTech Fellowship in Nigeria. The program will select 12 early-stage startups building inclusive edtech platforms to receive \$100,000 in equity-free funding alongside a 12-month incubation programme offering mentorship, technical support, and access to ecosystem partners. Despite rapid growth in edtech across Africa, many students remain underserved. In Nigeria, connectivity and infrastructure gaps mean that large numbers of schools and learners in rural areas cannot access digital learning platforms. Students with disabilities are particularly affected, as most edtech tools lack accessibility features that will aid easy learning. Cohort 4 targets founders building for learners mainstream edtech has largely bypassed: people with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons, underserved and rural communities, and young girls and women. It is also calling for startups developing education data systems that fit real school workflows, not just dashboards built for pitch decks. Previous cohorts of the Fellowship have tried to bridge these gaps: Cohort 3 in 2025 supported 12 startups that reached over 21,000 learners, including girls, students living in rural areas, and children with limited access to digital resources. Cohort 4 aims to build on that experience. The fellowship also prioritises startups developing education data systems that fit real school workflows and improve decision-making and



learning outcomes. Mastercard said Cohort 4 deliberately seeks solutions that may be complex to implement but have the potential to reach learners often overlooked by mainstream edtech. "Cohort 4 reflects our commitment to supporting solutions designed for learners who are too often underserved by mainstream innovation. This means building for real-world environments where infrastructure maybe limited and implementation requires contextual understanding," said Nissi Madu, Managing Partner and

Practice Lead, re:learn. Since its launch in 2019, EdTech Fellowship has supported 72 startups across Africa, collectively reaching over 700,000 learners, 89% of them children and youth, with nearly equal representation of 49% female and 51% male.

Eligible Nigerian edtech startups can apply for the fellowship at futureoflearning.cchub.africa. Applications close on 30 March 2026.

Canal+ to Shut down Showmax after MultiChoice Takeover

Canal+ is set to shut down the video streaming platform Showmax as part of cost-cutting measures following its acquisition of MultiChoice, according to an exclusive report Brandessence recently.

The report said Canal+ and MultiChoice confirmed that the service would be discontinued after a review of their streaming operations, although a specific shutdown date has yet to be announced. "The decision to axe Showmax was made by the Showmax board and reflects the continued focus of MultiChoice, a Canal+ company, on financial discipline and investment optimisation, in an increasingly competitive and capital-intensive global streaming environment," the company added.

Showmax was launched across Africa by MultiChoice in August 2015 as a streaming competitor to global platforms such as Netflix, Apple TV+, Prime Video and Disney+.

In February 2024, MultiChoice relaunched the platform in partnership with NBCUniversal, a subsidiary of Comcast, using the technology behind the Peacock streaming service. However, the revamped platform reportedly struggled to meet subscriber growth targets despite significant investment in content and technology. According to Variety, MultiChoice and NBCUniversal invested about \$309m in equity funding in Showmax to support content production and platform development, but the expected growth did not materialise.

Showmax's trading losses also worsened by 88 per cent in MultiChoice's last annual financial results before the Canal+ takeover, while revenue declined. Canal+ acquired control of MultiChoice in September 2025 and has since embarked on aggressive cost-cutting measures aimed at saving about €400m by 2030.



The report said the decision to shut down Showmax was made by the platform's board as part of efforts to improve financial discipline and optimise investments in a competitive global streaming market.

Despite the shutdown, MultiChoice said there would be no job losses linked to the closure because the takeover agreement with Canal+ prevents staff retrenchment for three years. "The decision to discontinue Showmax services will not involve any retrenchments. The group will be engaging and supporting employees through various transition options," the company said.

MultiChoice has already begun rebranding several Showmax Originals as content for its television channels, including Africa Magic, M-Net, Mzansi Magic and kykNET.

Showmax's planned shutdown comes after Amazon MGM Studios announced in January 2024 that it would

stop commissioning new original content in Africa.

During an investor call earlier this year, Canal+ Chief Executive Officer Maxime Saada said Showmax had not been commercially successful and that a decision on its future would be taken soon. Meanwhile, Canal+ said it would continue investing in premium content and technological innovation for MultiChoice subscribers as it strengthens its position in the African entertainment market.

Showmax had, in recent years, experimented with tailored subscription models aimed at African audiences, including mobile-only entertainment plans and a dedicated English Premier League streaming package that allowed subscribers to watch matches live on their phones at lower subscription rates.

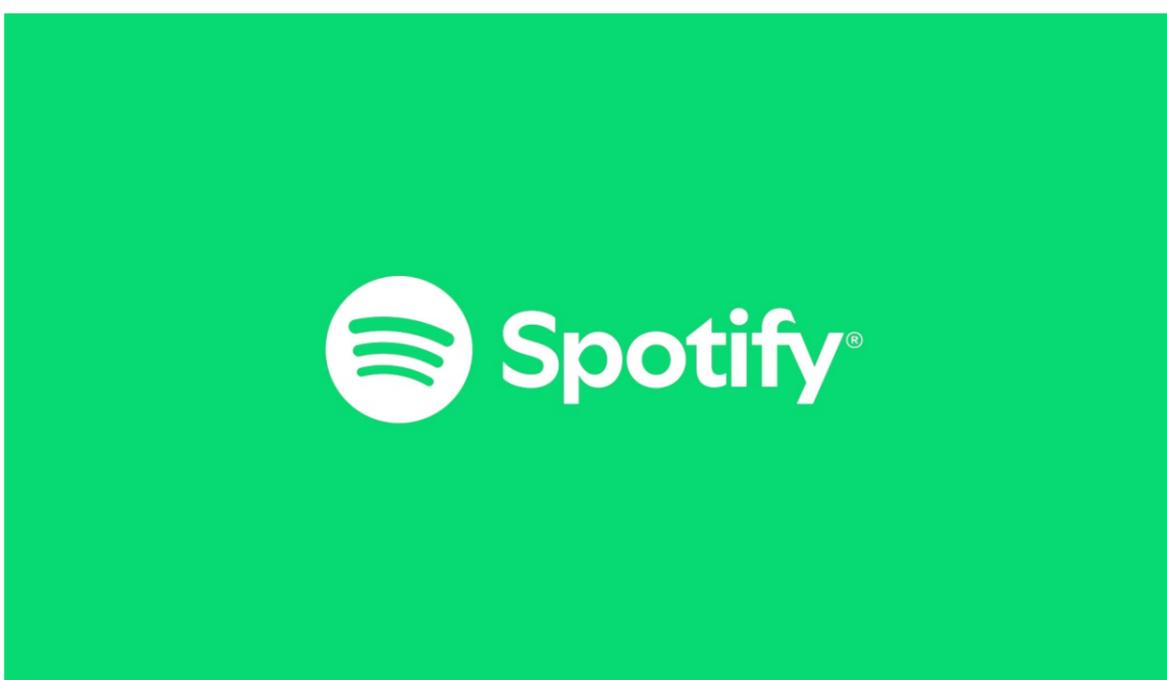
Nigeria's Music Streaming Grew by 163.5% in Five Years — Spotify

Five years after its launch in Nigeria, Spotify says music streaming in the country has grown at an average rate of 163.5 per cent, underscoring the speed at which Nigeria has emerged as a global streaming force. In a statement made available to the News Agency of Nigeria on Monday in Lagos, the company reported triple-digit year-on-year growth in its early years and sustained momentum through 2025. The platform, which entered the Nigerian market in February 2021, described the journey as one marked by rapid cultural acceleration. Spotify said at the heart of that growth was Afrobeats, which recorded a 5,022 per cent increase in streams locally between 2021 and 2025. It added that other genres also witnessed remarkable expansion. According to the platform, Amapiano surged by 10,330 per cent; Gospel and Praise grew by 5,499 per cent; Hip-hop and Rap rose by 3,020 per cent; while R&B climbed by 2,602 per cent. Spotify further said language had become another growth engine, with indigenous-language listening increasing by 554 per cent in 2024 and 87 per cent in 2025 within Nigeria.

Globally, indigenous-language streams rose by 141 per cent in 2024 and 41 per cent in 2025, reflecting what the company described as a growing appetite for local-language storytelling and sound.

According to Spotify, listening habits reflected global curiosity from day one. The first track streamed in Nigeria at launch was "到此為止" by Shiga Lin, reinforcing the platform's view that Nigerian users are eclectic and open to discovery.

Over the five-year period, the most-streamed artistes in Nigeria include Burna Boy, Davido, Asake, Wizkid and Seyi Vibe. Among the most replayed songs are 'Remember' and 'Lonely At The Top' by Asake; 'Kese (Dance)' by Wizkid; 'Doha' by Seyi Vibe; and 'With You'



by Davido featuring Omah Lay. The platform said the number of Nigerian artistes on Spotify has grown by 158 per cent since launch, while users have created more than 25 million playlists within the period. According to the company, in 2025 alone, Nigeria recorded over 1.4 million play hours on the platform. Spotify also noted that podcast consumption is expanding, with more than 59 billion total podcast hours streamed since its launch. The

platform added that user behaviour reflects a young and adventurous market, with the average listener aged 26. In recent months, Nigerians streamed an average of 150 different artistes, which Spotify described as evidence of a discovery-driven audience.



MY SOUP'S FIRST CHOICE

- Easy to mould
- Easy to swallow
- Premium wheat
- Fortified with Vitamins and Minerals





Moniepoint
MICROFINANCE BANK



Made for your progress

Download the Moniepoint personal and business banking app today



For more information, contact us via - Socials    @moniepoint, info@moniepoint and +234 201 888 9990

Peak Milk Fuels Nigeria's AFCON Passion as Super Eagles Clinch Bronze

Peak Milk, Nigeria's leading dairy brand and the Official Milk of the Super Eagles, has successfully concluded series of watch parties and bar activations across major cities during the just-concluded Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), celebrating the Super Eagles' impressive campaign and bronze-medal finish. Football, Nigeria's most beloved sport, once again demonstrated its unique ability to unite the nation. Throughout the tournament, Peak brought fans together in vibrant, high-energy spaces where Nigerians gathered to cheer, celebrate, and relive every defining moment of the Super Eagles' journey. The watch parties reinforced Peak's role as both the emotional and nutritional fuel behind Nigeria's enduring football passion. Beyond live match screenings, the Peak Watch Parties delivered immersive fan experiences. Attendees participated in engaging activities such as the Peak Header Ball Challenge, Peak Dribble Maze, and Peak Penalty Challenge, showcasing their football skills and competitive spirit. Fast-paced trivia games and predict & win rewarded fans with Peak-branded items and exclusive merchandise, while complimentary samples of Peak Yoghurt Drink kept energy levels high throughout the matches. The excitement reached another level with a special appearance by Broda Shaggy, one of Nigeria's leading influencers, at the watch party hosted at Ojez. His presence energized fans on-ground and sparked real-time engagement across social media, amplifying the celebration well beyond the physical venues and extending the AFCON excitement to millions nationwide. Peak also engaged online communities with the Passion Leader Board Challenge, where weekly tasks were carried out to win exciting week prizes and a grand prize at the end of the campaign. Speaking on the success of the campaign, Peter James, Brand Manager, Peak Milk, said: "The Super Eagles' performance at AFCON once again reminded us of the resilience, talent, and fighting spirit that define Nigerians. As



the Official Milk of the Super Eagles, Peak is proud to have been part of this journey, fueling the passion of fans from kick-off to the final whistle. Our watch parties created shared moments of joy, pride, and celebration, and the bronze-medal finish gave Nigerians even more to cheer about."

Also speaking, Omolara Banjoko, Marketing Manager, Peak Milk, added: "For nearly 25 years, Peak Milk has stood proudly with the Super Eagles, nourishing not just the team but the millions of Nigerians who believe in them. The AFCON watch parties were a powerful expression of national pride, bringing communities together to experience football, connection, and nourishment." The watch parties formed a central pillar of

Peak Milk's broader AFCON campaign, which spotlighted how Peak nourishes every cheer, every emotion, and every celebration. From families preparing matchday breakfasts with Peak Milk to fans expressing their passion in unforgettable ways, the campaign reflected Peak's enduring commitment to nourishing both the body and spirit. As the Super Eagles return home with a well-earned bronze medal, Peak Milk celebrates Nigeria's unity, resilience, and unbreakable football passion, reaffirming its promise to continue nourishing the nation's Peak Passion, on and off the pitch.

Cross River Govt Kicks off MTN CHAMPS Season 4 in Calabar

The fourth season of the MTN CHAMPS athletics competition officially commenced with a vibrant opening ceremony at the UJ Esuene Stadium in Calabar, drawing young athletes, school representatives, sports officials, and enthusiasts from across the region on March 5, 2026. The event was formally declared open by Hon. Peter Agbe Odey, Deputy Governor of Cross River State, who highlighted the importance of youth sports development and commended MTN Nigeria for its continued investment in grassroots athletics.

In his remarks, the Deputy Governor noted that initiatives like MTN CHAMPS play a critical role in identifying and nurturing young sporting talents while also promoting healthy competition among students.

Also speaking at the ceremony, the Commissioner for Sports in Cross River State praised the championship for providing a platform for young athletes to showcase their abilities and pursue opportunities in athletics. He said, "The state remains committed to supporting programmes that empower young people through sports. We are proud that the first leg of CHAMPS S4 is happening in Calabar, next in Jos, and in Ibadan."

In addition, Onyinye Ikenna-Emeka, Chief Marketing Officer of MTN Nigeria, reiterated the company's dedication to youth development through sports. "With MTN CHAMPS, we are committed to building high-



value young athletes. We believe in talent development. And we appreciate the people of Calabar for welcoming us back, most especially the Governor of Cross-River state, highlighted by the Deputy Governor of Cross-River state." Following the official opening ceremony, the stadium came alive with thrilling track events as student-athletes from various secondary schools took to the field to compete. The day's activities featured a series of races, including the 100 metres and 400 metres events, with participants

demonstrating impressive speed, endurance, and competitive spirit.

Several schools from across the state and neighbouring regions participated in the competition, creating an energetic atmosphere as athletes battled for top positions in their respective categories.

The Calabar leg of MTN CHAMPS Season 4 is expected to feature multiple track and field events over the coming days till 7th of March, with outstanding athletes set to qualify for subsequent stages of the competition.



CHAIN REACTIONS AFRICA
Continental PR Leadership with 10 SABRE Nominations and Gold Win

Montepoint
New Digital Payments Are Transforming Africa's Community Markets, Management Revenue

Western Union Wins Global Award for Best Mobile for SABRE Awards 2024

Brandessence Team

Publisher: 3BrothersMedia
Creative Director/Editor - in - Chief: Udosen Oma Melvin
Editors: Adwin Monoyo, Gladys Johnson, Chidubem Nwaosu
Marketing & Circulation: Godwin Echie, Morgan Thomas, Chidiebere Ohadebere, Rasaq Awosanya
Layout and Design: 3BM Team
Client Services: Mary Princess Udosen, Keri Idong
Media Consultants: Ikem Okuhu, Goddie Ofose, Azuka Onwuka
Contributing Editors: Daniel Obi, Adedeji Ademigbuji
Photography: Ochai Samuel | Amine Imagery

About Brandessence

Brandessence is a knowledge base promotional magazine that collaborate brands and consumers together by providing information about brands through promotional content, campaigns, advert, events and interviews. 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.

Distribution: Lagos, Ibadan, Ogun, Port Harcourt, Benin, Abeokuta, Bayelsa, Aba, Owerri, Abuja, Onitsha, Benin, Warri, Jos etc.
Distribution Channel through our Free Direct Distribution Strategy:
Distribution Methods – Direct Distribution/Placement to youth. Distributed to strategic opinion leaders, brand owners, young executives and industry leaders, Eateries, Airports, Hospitals, Universities, Private Cabs, BRT buses, Dispatch Riders, Hotels, Bars, Beer Parlours, Street Guerilla Distribution, etc. It is readily available at all prime magazine stores (Silverbird, The Hub Media Store, Domino Stores, Terra Kulture, Ikeja Mall, Shoprite, YSG Hub).
Traditional Channels: Strong Street Marketing. Street Vendors & News Stands placement (Magazine for news enthusiasts)

Brandessence is published monthly (Online & Print) by 3BrothersMedia.
 © 2026 All rights reserved. Reproduction of this magazine in whole or part is prohibited.

ISSN: 2276-9668 ISSUE 74 FEBRUARY 2026
Office: Plot 1436, Sanusi Fafunwa Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria
Tel: +234 803 043 5456, 0816 299 8402
Email: info@brandessencenigeria.com
Website: www.brandessencenigeria.com
 All editorial content in this supplement is owned or exclusively licensed by Brandessence and may not be reproduced in any format without prior permission.
 All correspondence to info@brandessencenigeria.com

BRAND NEW



CHAIN REACTIONS AFRICA

Chain Reactions Reinforces Continental PR Leadership with 10 SABRE Nominations and Gold Win

Chain Reactions Africa has once again asserted its continental leadership in Public Relations practice, clinching the Gold trophy in the Travel & Leisure category for the Lagos Shopping Festival, at the 2026 African SABRE Awards. The win sets the tone for an unprecedented year, as the consultancy leads all contenders with a record 10 nominations—more than any other consultancy across the continent. The Nigeria-based public relations and integrated communications powerhouse leads a competitive field that includes South Africa’s Clockwork with eight nominations, alongside global agencies such as Edelman and Weber Shandwick. Now in its tenth year, the African SABRE Awards recognize Superior Achievement in Branding, Reputation and Engagement and celebrate excellence among agencies and in-house teams across the continent. This year’s competition, held for the first time in partnership with the Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA), attracted over 500 entries, with more than 120 campaigns making the final shortlist. Winners will be honored at the PRCA South Africa Conference in Johannesburg on March 17–18, 2026. Chain Reactions Africa’s dominance is built on a history of record-breaking performance. In 2024, the consultancy made SABRE history by winning seven trophies, the most ever claimed by a single firm. In 2025, it maintained its leadership position, securing four awards, consolidating its status as a powerhouse in African PR and showcasing Nigerian excellence on the global stage. The firm’s momentum extends beyond the continent. Chain Reactions has also earned five nominations at the 2025 Global Alliance World Public Relations and Communication Awards, reflecting its growing international influence and thought leadership in

communications. At the 2026 SABRE Awards, Chain Reactions Africa’s 10 nominations span multiple sectors and disciplines, underscoring its versatility and expertise. Highlights include, Company of the Year – Guinness Nigeria Premier League Trophy Tour, Reputation Management – 9mobile: A Symphony of Voices, Measurement & Evaluation – The Vibranium: Rebranding 9mobile to T2, Western Africa Category – From Promises to Proofs (Presidency), Show Some Love to Mum (Indomie), Standing for Climate Action. Repping the Future (C40 Cities/Lagos State). Marketing to Consumers (Existing Product) – Orijin: Deeply Rooted Campaign, Public Sector/Government – From Promises to Proof and Technology – The Vibranium: Tech Meets Tenacity, Commenting on the achievement, Israel Opayemi, Managing Director/Chief Strategist of Chain Reactions Africa, said, “Winning Gold and leading the continent with 10 nominations is a powerful validation of our belief that African storytelling, powered by data, insights, and cultural intelligence, can set the global standard. From rewriting SABRE history in 2024 to sustaining momentum in 2025, and now 2026, we continue to engineer trust, build enduring brands, and fly the Nigerian flag proudly on the world stage. What a brilliant way to start the year!” Other Nigerian organizations receiving recognition this season include Image Merchants Promotion Limited, Integrated Indigo, Red Media Africa, and CMC Connect. As the countdown to Johannesburg begins, Chain Reactions Africa is not just participating, it is defining the narrative of African communications, asserting its unmatched authority and setting a benchmark for excellence across the continent.

FOR ADVERT PLACEMENT CALL 0803 043 5456, 0809 050 0212

Brands & Consumers Converge Here



access more
freedom



- Brand News
- Advertising
- Articles
- Brand Campaigns
- Battle of Brands
- Famous Logo History
- Branding & Good Health
- Interviews

BREAKING NEWS

Pre-registration For the Stunning Samsung Galaxy S7 and S7 Edge Opens Today – March 1st

© March 2, 2016
Yemi Alade Drops New Album "Mama Africa" | Out on iTunes

Rethink what a phone can do
Be One of the Chosen few

© March 2, 2016
Pre-registration For the Stunning Samsung Galaxy S7 and S7 Edge Opens Today – March 1st

© March 2, 2016
Cashing In: Toke Makinwa Becomes Brand Ambassador for Mecran Cosmetics!

CNN
© March 2, 2016
**2016 MULTICHOICE
CNN Multichoice African
Journalist Awards 2016**

© March 2, 2016
UBA Group Appoints Kennedy Uzoka As Group Managing Director



THE HEART AND SOUL OF A BRAND

www.brandessencenigeria.com



FIND OUT how we can become the **GROWTH ENGINE** for your **BUSINESS.**

enquiries call: 0803 043 5456, 0816 299 8402

MobilTM Super

Synthetic Engine Oil

Blended Perfectly for maximum
Engine Protection.



API SP

For more information, kindly visit: www.11plc.com

11

Mobil SuperTM

...make it Mobil