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# THE ENTREPRENEUR AFRICA

THE RE-BIRTH EDITION

+

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## MAKING MONEY IN THE NEW ECONOMY

It's Kid Stuff... Find Out Why

## THE BUSINESS SIDE OF LAW

How To Make Big Bucks In  
Corporate Practice

## 6 TOP YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN NIGERIA

See How They Made It Early

## E-COMMERCE EVOLUTION

Why You Should Jump On It Now

## EAT YOUR CAKE AND HAVE IT

10 Ways To Start A Business And Still Keep Your Job

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

## welcome to the new us

*"Like the butterfly you will also go through stages of change, rebirth, and new beginnings for transformation and renewal...Break out of your comfort zone, shed old layers, and stretch in your potential to become your best self...experience rebirth and take flight" – Susan G Young*

The above wise words of Susan Young very closely capture our story. For the last one year, your inspiring magazine, The Entrepreneur, has been on a self-reexamination leave, with the ultimate aim of reemerging better, richer, and more impactful. This edition represents that reemergence, hence the title, Rebirth Edition.

Some of the important changes made so far include: upgrading to the continental level which necessitated a change of name to The Entrepreneur Africa; moving our operational base to Lagos, Nigeria; changing the intervals of the issues to become monthly (making it more regular than before); overhauling the team membership to introduce more capable hands (with the publisher, David Agu, taking over as the Editor-in-Chief); changing of our graphics handlers, and of course, the entire graphics outlook, including our logo; and upgrading the contents to meet the needs of every kind of entrepreneurship enthusiast.

In this Rebirth Edition, we have chosen a unifying, as well as inspiring figure, Dr. Olakunle Churchill, for the cover page. The Chairman of Big Church Group is unifying because he's young and successful, and therefore inspires every young entrepreneur out there whose goal is success, and at the same time Dr. Churchill is into the area of business (Real Estate) and embarks on non-profit activities (youth empowerment) often undertaken more by the older folks in business. This edition features, prominently, his latest project of empowering over 36,000 young Nigerians in the agro business. It's our hope that some of our young readers in Nigeria benefit directly or indirectly from that project, and that our more successful readers across Africa get motivated to embark on similar projects, on any scale in their countries.

Another interesting content of this edition is the special feature on the 6 top young entrepreneurs in Nigeria. That, really, is one of my favourites, and I do hope it inspires you, too. We equally looked into two landmark projects simultaneously going on in the commercial city of Lagos. Those are the Eko Atlantic City and Dangote's refinery. We do hope you tap into the investment opportunities revealed in the former, and get motivated by the later. There are numerous other great features like the Business Side of Law with Paul Musa. We hope to have captured a new class of audience – lawyers – through that.

Overall, this edition has spoken in many languages known to entrepreneurship, and you're assured it'll be a great read. Welcome to May, and to a new you; a new us. The rebirth.



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PHOTO BY SEUN ISAAC

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## EAT YOUR CAKE AND HAVE IT:



# 10

## WAYS TO START A BUSINESS AND STILL KEEP YOUR JOB

*By Drusilla I.B.O.*

Ever heard of the proverb, 'you can't eat your cake and have it'? Well, not to worry, at The Entrepreneur Africa we think you can. Because, first off, the crux of entrepreneurship is about finding a way to rewrite the scripts of seeming impossibilities. So, In case you currently work 9 -5 and live in busy cities where it takes forever to get home due to traffic. Or, as is the norm in our dear Africa, you're a married mother with husband and children to take care of at night despite working your ass off during the day. As long as you're determined to pursue your passion by way of launching your own

business, all we're saying is, we've got ways out for you, notwithstanding.

In his book, 'Before You Quit Your Job', Robert Kiyosaki said, "One of the most frightening days of my life was the day I quit my job and officially became an entrepreneur. On that day, I knew there were no more steady paychecks, no more health insurance or retirement plans. No more days off for being sick or paid vacations. On that day, my income went to zero"

Very often, it is this very fear of not having a steady income that holds most

people back from starting a business. Perhaps you've faced this fear yourself, right? This is why after analysing the thoughts of Kiyosaki and others on the matter, we've compiled these 10 ways to keep your job and still run your own enterprise. Please enjoy.

**1. Turn your hobby into a business.** First off, starting a business is going to take a lot of your time. So, you might as well do something you enjoy. Take a look at how you spend your free time. What are you really passionate about? Maybe it's cooking. Now, find a way to make money doing it.

Can you start a blog? Document your creation process and write about the food you cook. You do it anyway, so it should be fun to share your skills with the world. Better yet, can you sell a recipe e-book? Compile your 100 best recipes, and sell the e-book for a reasonable amount.

If cooking isn't your thing, find out what is and find a way to make money doing it. It won't even feel like work. It's a promise.

## 2. Focus on product, not services.

A lot of employees' first thought is to take the skills they use in the corporate world and offer them as a consultant —

business is to build an investment angle.

Do you, for instance, have a passion for real estate? If so you can start small. There are many upcoming parts of your city you can find cheap lands today. Start by buying a plot, half plot or anything, and wait a year or two and you'll see how much your investment has doubled. Even big cities like Lagos, Accra, Nairobi, etc, still offer this option.

This requires some time investing in your financial education, as well as making it a priority to save money for investing. But once you get in the game, the sky is the limit. And it can all

If you want to run a successful business while working full time, you need to become an expert at productivity and time management. Cut the TV time, stop going out for drinks and buckle down. You'd be surprised what the work you do in an hour or two in the evenings and a half-day on Saturday can do for you.

## 7. Leverage technology.

There is a ton of technology out there to help cut many tasks that used to take hours to a mere matter of seconds, in some cases.

Research and utilize a solid marketing automation software to automate many of your mundane emails, and accounting software like QuickBooks — which integrates with your smartphone — to keep track of expenses and income on the go. Use a service like Shoeboxed to scan your important documents and make them searchable. Employ project management software to help manage your team of experts and contractors. The possibilities are endless.

## 8. Make the most of business travel.

If you work long hours at your day job, it may be hard to squeeze in time to work on your own venture. But you'll agree that it's during business travels you get the most of free time. Don't waste that time. Use it wisely for your own business.

## 9. Turn your employer into a client.

Finding clients before you quit your day job will help you build the cash flow you need to make the leap. Often, the best place to start is your current company.

## 10. Sock away what you earn.

If you're making money on top of your salary, it's tempting to splurge on extras, but we recommend banking all of it. And here's a further advice, when you eventually launch the business, prepare not to take a single dime out of it for 12 months.

At the end of the day, the time will come — if you follow the advice above — when you'll still have to quit your job. So count the cost if you truly want to be an entrepreneur. But the good news is you can have a great head start. Today, it's entirely possible to build a great business while working full time. Start today, and build a great tomorrow.

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“  
What are you really passionate about?  
...Now find a way to make money doing it  
”

---

in short, to build a service business. The problem with a service business, especially if it's on the side, is that you don't own a business; you simply own a job.

Services are a tough business because you have to sell your time. If you're not working, you're not making money. And when you work full time, pulling long freelance hours is a surefire way to burn out.

Rather than sell services, figure out a way to create a product. If it's consulting, put together a course that you can sell. Or, if you're a writer, create books that you can sell. Many writers sell their books on Amazon, Okada Books, etc., as e-books for and generate income even while they're sleeping.

The trick is to look at what services you can provide and find the product angle. If you can do that, you'll be making money even when you're not working. That's a true side hustle.

## 3. Learn how to invest.

Another way to build a great side

be done easily in your free time

## 4. Work on your business, not in it.

The temptation for those running a side business is to do all the work themselves. But a much better way is to find quality contractors or even an employee or two who can work in the business. That way, you can spend your time managing them and building the business.

You can, for instance, own a fleet of trucks, hire drivers to do the long-hour drives, while your time is spent lining up jobs and managing the business on the weekends and in the evenings.

## 5. Assemble a great team.

Find great team members and use them. Get a good assistance/manager. Find a great attorney. If you're investing in real estate, use a reputable and successful broker. Focus on what you can do best, and let others do the rest for you.

## 6. Own your schedule.

A common excuse for not starting a business is that you don't have time. This is bull.



# Meet Alvin, The 26-Year Old TAXi HUB Founder, Who's About To Put Uber Out Of Business

By Tolu Simpson

*Although soft-spoken, with a tender mien, 26-year old Alvin Ukeh, founder of Taxihub.com.ng, doesn't play when business is on the agenda. A graduate of Accountancy from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Spy-millionaire, as he's fondly called by friends, moved to Abuja in 2014 for the National Youth Service. And now he wants to change the way taxi business is run in the nation's capital city. And now Uber has a run for their money, because Taxihub is about to launch. Excerpts.*

All is set for the launch of your new venture, Taxihub.com.ng. Tell us more about it.

Taxihub is an online taxi hailing service taking off in Abuja. Users can book taxis at the comfort of their homes, using the Taxihub application. Taxihub enables any person seeking a taxi to obtain one in few minutes. The Taxihub App utilises GPS technology to connect users to nearby drivers. It is swift and easy. People can download the application on their smart phones and start getting taxis right away.

What ignited the spark in you to start this business venture?

The inspiration for Taxihub began back in 2014, when I arrived Abuja for my NYSC. Back then, as a corper, I was earning 19800 naira per month from the government and I would spend about half of that sum going to my place of primary assignment on one taxi or the other. You can imagine the meagre sum that was usually left on me to cater for other needs after spending a 'fortune' on taxis. I noticed the taxi

fare was unjustifiably expensive and unstandardized. They never got to use meters. Different taxi drivers will charge different amounts to get from Point A to Point B irrespective of the fact that it was the same distance. And the quality of some of the taxis were anything but good. And people weren't used to hailing taxis at the comfort of their homes. People were accustomed to hailing taxis, standing by the roadside. Thus, I thought I could tackle these challenges by building a trustworthy platform so that people could use meters in order to obtain a standardized pricing system and also obtain good quality taxis by booking on the Taxihub app at the comfort of their homes.

This line of business is still relatively new in Nigeria. What gives you the confidence that you'll succeed in this largely uncharted water?

As a budding entrepreneur, I make sure that I dig deep for alternatives to do anything better or make things better. If things don't go as planned, I don't cry over spilt milk, I simply scout for alternative solutions. When you have such a drive, nothing can stop you...you will eventually breakthrough. That aside, Nigerians have come to embrace innovation... they will give anything to have a platform which makes life easier for them. Taxihub brings you swift, safe and comfortable taxis on an application that is easy to download and utilise. I am optimistic Nigerians will love this platform.

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Thus, I thought I could tackle these challenges by building a trustworthy platform so that people could use meters in order to obtain a standardized pricing system and also obtain good quality taxis by booking on the Taxihub app at the comfort of their homes.

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Have you been into the transport business in any form before?

No, not at all.

In the interim, where are Taxihub services expected to cover?

For starters, Taxihub will be taking off in Abuja. But later, we'll also kick start operations in Lagos and Port Harcourt before considering other cities.

What made you chose Abuja for the initial takeoff?

Abuja residents have been accustomed to using taxis. It is the major means of moving around. The taxi culture is quite remarkable, hence our target market is large and insurmountable. And the issue of traffic jam is quite minimal, unlike in Lagos.

What's the intended concept for your operations? How would your services be accessed by potential clients?

Firstly, users will have to download the Taxihub application which will be available on Google play Store and the App store. Open the Taxihub app, which is compatible with iOS, Android and the new BlackBerry devices. Indicate your pickup Spot and then order your taxi at one click. In few seconds, you'll receive notification of the name, phone number, picture, car model and plate number of your driver. You will also be able to track your driver on the app, as he approaches you to pick you up as fast as possible.

Do you have your own taxis or you intend

to liaising with existing taxi drivers/car owners?

Taxihub has its own taxis and also liaises with existing taxi drivers. Existing taxi drivers can apply to work with Taxihub.

One of the world's biggest online taxi providers service providers, Uber, recently entered the Nigerian market, providing similar service your company intends to provide. Does that not scare you?

Not at all. I'm not deterred by that.

What different experience are you introducing into the industry to attract clients?

Taxihub will be issuing reward cards to its users. This reward card is being marked each time you use our taxi so that when you spend a certain amount using our taxis, you will be issued a free ride on the subsequent trip. Taxihub promises to be very fast in bringing the drivers to users, so that one can enjoy a ride in a fully air conditioned taxi. Our drivers will be fully monitored for compliance so as to ensure the safety of users.

What marketing strategies do you intend to use in reaching your potential clients?

We are into partnership with some media organizations. Very soon, we will be going on a massive campaign using

diverse media of awareness to bring our brand to the knowledge of all and sundry. We hope to enshrine our brand image in the very minds of potential users.

How did you generate funding for such a big venture; Do you have investors?

Planning for Taxihub Nigeria didn't just start today. I have a partner, Williams Ozioma Nnabuchi, who has been my childhood friend. We got some seed funding at the preliminary stage of our business coupled with savings over the years. But at the moment, we are keeping our fingers crossed, hoping that more funds will come from potential investors so as to aid in the expansion of our business in a nutshell, we are still open to investors.

And do you foresee a quick return on investment in this venture, or not?

We are very optimistic. Even though we are in our early days, we already have people waiting on us to flag off our service so they can patronise our services. So eventually, we will make profitable returns.

So, when are you flagging off Taxihub?

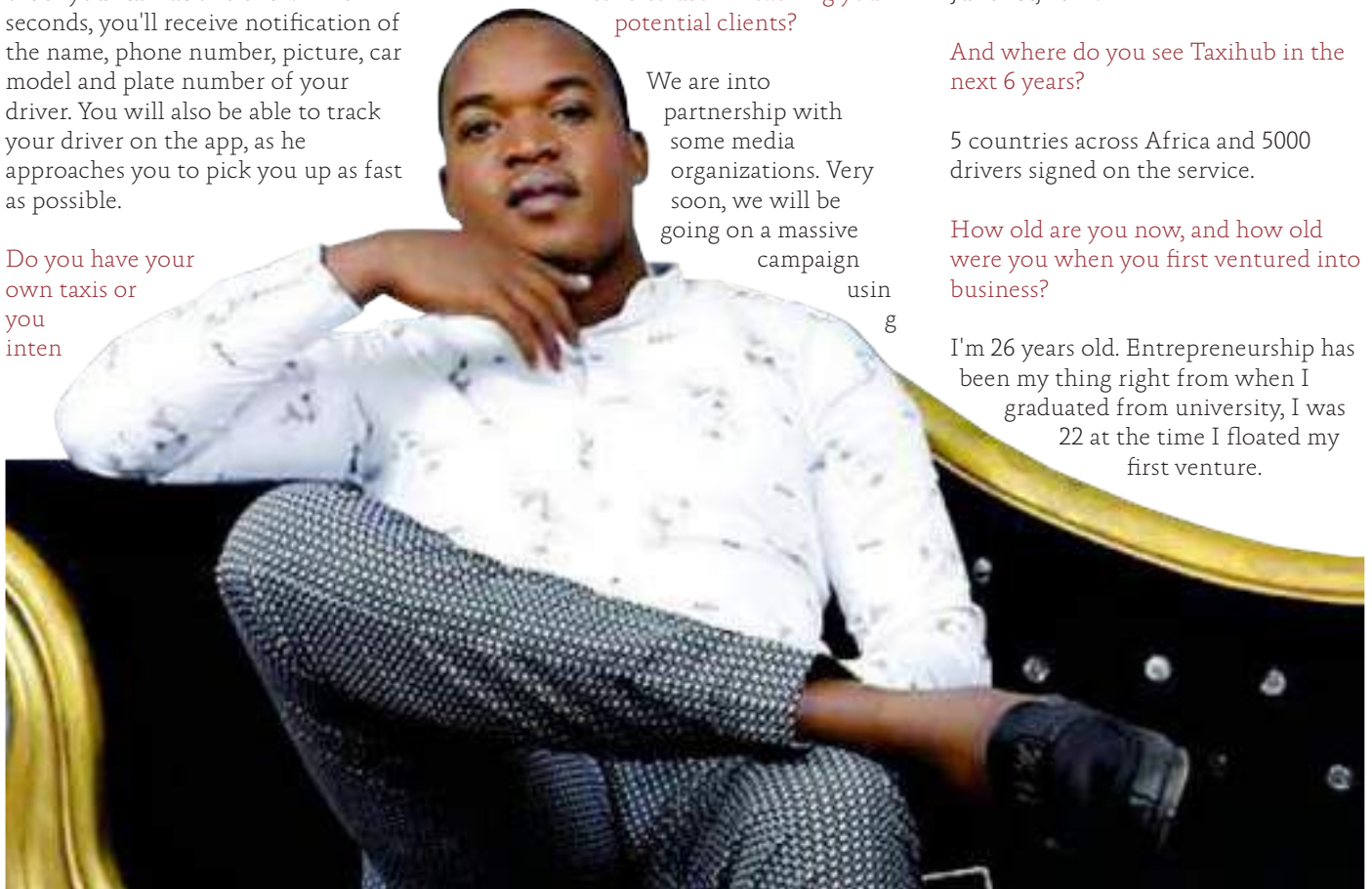
June 1st, 2017.

And where do you see Taxihub in the next 6 years?

5 countries across Africa and 5000 drivers signed on the service.

How old are you now, and how old were you when you first ventured into business?

I'm 26 years old. Entrepreneurship has been my thing right from when I graduated from university, I was 22 at the time I floated my first venture.





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The emerging entrepreneur of the 21st century undoubtedly will have to go beyond the norm and steer a new course. Given the technological advancement and dynamism of the modern world, the budding entrepreneur has a mandate to swim with the tide, to dance upon thorns and even more importantly, emerge with a head above the sky.

E-commerce in Nigeria is indeed the new deal in our ever revolving world. For the entrepreneur engaged in product offerings and services, e-commerce is the golden field that must be mined. According to the nation's Bureau of Statistic, the e-commerce industry boasts about 300,000 online orders daily and reckons as the fastest growing with an estimated 25% annual growth. For the emerging entrepreneur, e-commerce presents an entirely new and exciting proposition.

Apart from the unending possibilities that e-commerce affords, including minimizing operational cost, maximizing efficiency and convenience, among others, there is more to e-commerce than meets the eye.

#### Level playing ground

In the face of limited and scare resources, e-commerce affords the budding entrepreneur a plethora of unlimited opportunity to dream again. Here, the emerging entrepreneur need not bother about the more established and structured businesses as e-commerce places her on the same pedestal as everyone else. From being clouded by heavy industry weight and limited by site, e-commerce affords the 21st century entrepreneur the



## E-Commerce Evolution:

• 3 REASONS YOU SHOULD JUMP ON IT

By Emmanuel Ezeh

opportunity to reach her market almost on a red platter.

#### Competitive advantage

While the budding entrepreneur has to contend with numerous challenges associated with a start-up, one that e-commerce as come to outwit is that of competitiveness. The emerging entrepreneur of the 21st century with a vision to satisfy a probing need, coupled with the availability of e-commerce is already ahead of competition. While the challenge of accessible and reliable internet riddles the country, e-commerce enables a start-up to strive and get the attention and patronage it badly needs.

#### Global reach

E-commerce is largely built on ICT. While Nigeria is yet to reach the required advancement compared to other countries, e-commerce propels the emerging entrepreneur and obliterates these limitation. The emerging entrepreneur is able to reach her market across the globe and hence tell her story to an unlimited, eventful and cheering world audience.

The torch of e-commerce is indeed enticing and offers a whole new ground to the budding entrepreneur. For the emerging entrepreneur, it affords her a port to seek, and can help propel Nigeria's next emerging entrepreneur. It is undoubtedly a leeway towards a dream come true.



# EKO ATLANTIC: A CITY RISING FROM THE SEA

See How To Invest Now!

*By David Agu*

Eko Atlantic City, expected to provide homes to about 450,000 residents, and 300,000 commuters, is an entire new coastal city being built on Victoria Island adjacent to Lagos, Nigeria, to solve the chronic shortage of real estate in the world's fastest-growing megacity. It is a focal point for investors capitalising on rich development growth based on massive demand – and a gateway to emerging markets of the continent. The Entrepreneur put together this piece to bring you closer to this architectural marvel and open you up to the investment opportunities which abound therein.

*Standing on 10 million square metres of land reclaimed from the Atlantic Ocean and protected by an 8.5 kilometre long sea wall, Eko Atlantic, according to the developers, “will be the size of Manhattan's skyscraper district. Self-sufficient and sustainable, it includes state-of-the-art urban design, its own power, clean water, advanced telecommunications, spacious roads and 110,000 trees”.*

*The project has made significant progress in its infrastructural development (for phases I and II) as it has completed 14 bridge structures in just two years. It had in 2015, launched the Eko Boulevard, the city's eight-lane road network (the first in*

*Nigeria). And in November, 2016, it launched its first fully completed tower, The Black Pearl Tower.*

For savvy investors, Eko Atlantic City represents far more than just surging Lagos land value. As Nigeria continues its unstoppable trajectory to become the financial capital of Africa, handlers of the project insist that, “investing in Eko Atlantic opens unprecedented opportunities for tapping into the wider potential of the continent as a whole”.

And for a willing investor, the first suggestion we'll like to make is in the area of real estate. Plots of land are available for sale. Plots of lands are sold per square meter and the prices per square meter are dependent on the location of the plot for sale, which are as follows:

- Inner city plots
- Plots along major roadways
- Canal front plots
- Ocean front plots





The Eko Atlantic City project comprises of 6 phases. Phases I & II combined is a total of 5,000,000 m<sup>2</sup>, with the infrastructure of these phases nearing completion. Reclamation of Phase III is underway and should be completed shortly. Some developers have started building already. Details of some of the developments that have commenced can be seen through these links:

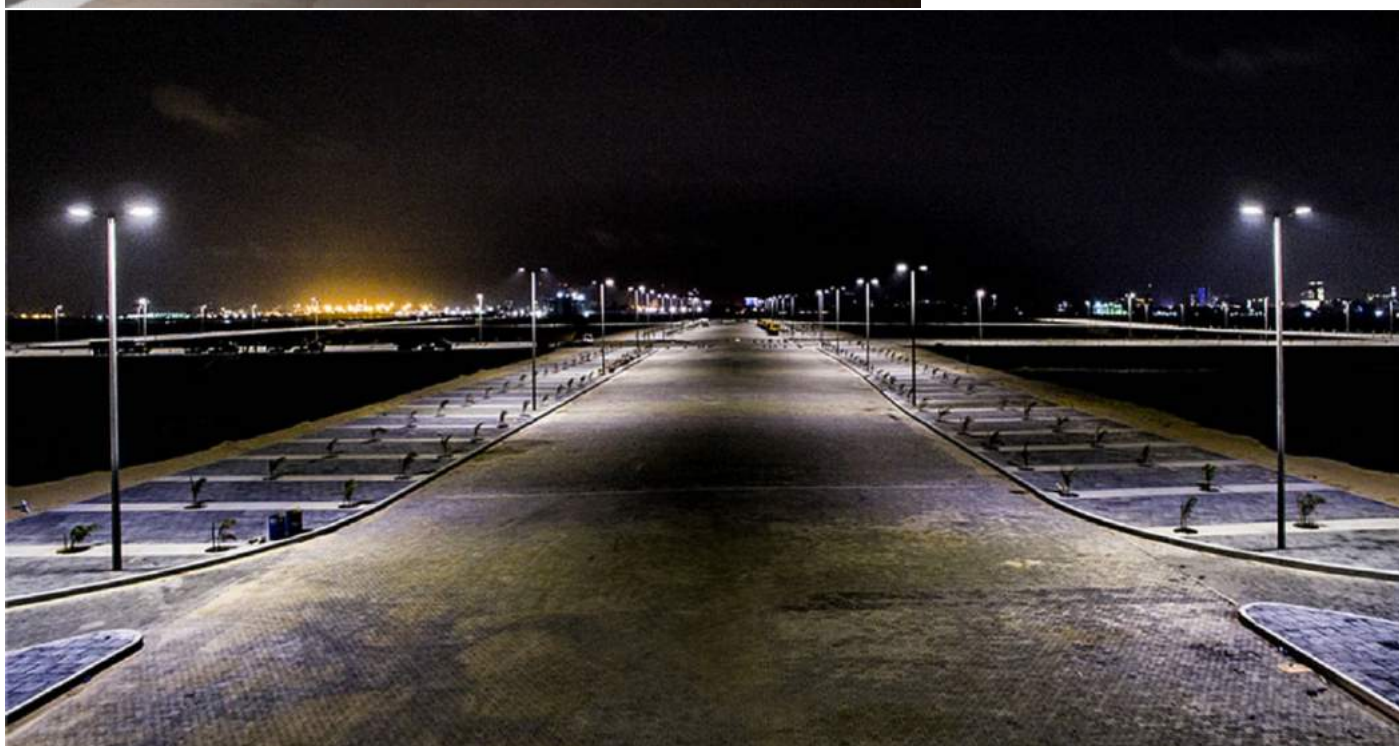
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There is a commercial building, which is being built in the Marina District. Completion and hand over date is scheduled for the second quarter of 2017.

Below is a brief summary of what the building has to offer in terms of rental opportunities only:

- The Alpha 1 building sits on a plot of 5,003 sq m.
- The total height of the building is 17 floors.
- The total built up area is 12,121 sq m.
- The total lettable area is 7,400 sq m.
- Each floor of the building, has between 500 to 510 sq m of lettable area per floor.

Sand filling of Phase III to VI is planned to be completed by 2019, with the infrastructure of remaining phases to be completed by 2021. The entire development is mixed use and a plot of land can be used for either a residential or commercial development.





# How Slot Grew From A Small Phone Repair Shop To 60 Big Stores, And 700 Employees, Nationwide

– Nnamdi Ezeigbo (CEO, SLOTT Systems)

By Godwin Toju Ojeh

*Nnamdi Ezeigbo, the Founder/CEO of SLOTT Systems Ltd, is inspiring as well as successful. Of course it's not news that in today's Nigeria SLOTT is to the mobile phones industry what Amazon is to Ecommerce in America. But what you probably didn't know was that this smart phone giant and pioneer, which you find in every neighbourhood in major cities nationwide, started with zero capital. Well...maybe not exactly zero capital, for as Mr. Ezeigbo would say, "Courage was my first capital". And lest we forget, he also co-founded the two fastest selling smart phone brands in Sub-Saharan Africa, TECNO and Infinix. Now we present you the following inspiring words from the horse's mouth, an excerpt from Mr. Ezeigbo's presentation at a leadership and Entrepreneurship program at University of Lagos recently. Get inspired!*

"I schooled both at Yabatech and Lagos State University, where I studied Electrical Electronics Engineering and Computer and Electronics Engineering, respectively. Then after Youth Service I wanted to work in an oil company. But spent two years trying to get the kind of job I wanted without success. That was when I decided instead to venture into entrepreneurship. My first step was to undergo some months of apprenticeship training in tech business, as that was where my passion lay. Entrepreneurship requires passion, first and foremost. But capacity is also very important. For instance, a 6-ft-tall person who has passion for basketball can very well become a successful professional basketball player. This is because he has the capacity. So, for me, I looked inwards and knew I had the capacity to go into ICT business because of my educational background and the relevant apprenticeship I had undergone.

Now courage is very crucial. Courage was my first capital. Next I started by giving service. If you want to start a business and you don't have start-up capital, then you can actually start by finding out a way to render service first. And for an emerging entrepreneur, building relationships is everything. So, build and nourish relationships.

I started SLOTT by working as a computer engineer, attaching with a friend in a small shop. To my customers then, I proved to be very competent at what I did, so I was able to maintain good relationships with them through my work and my attitude. So to be a good entrepreneur, you need three assets, namely: Capability, Strategy, and capital. You should have vision, but must back it up with great strategies.

Again, to do well in the field of you need to create a platform or platforms that that solve problems for the society. That was what we did with the TECNO brand by introducing dual Sim Card phones, after which others followed.

I started SLOTT with nothing. But I built on relationships. The guy in whose shop I attached myself for the first six months of my business was actually my classmate. And when I finally got my own shop, the man who helped me get it was also my customer whose issues I had handled well. I eventually bought that building where I rented the SLOTT shop, for

N100million. Now SLOTT has 60 shops nationwide, and 700 employees. Overall, always act quickly when the ideas come. Avoid delays."





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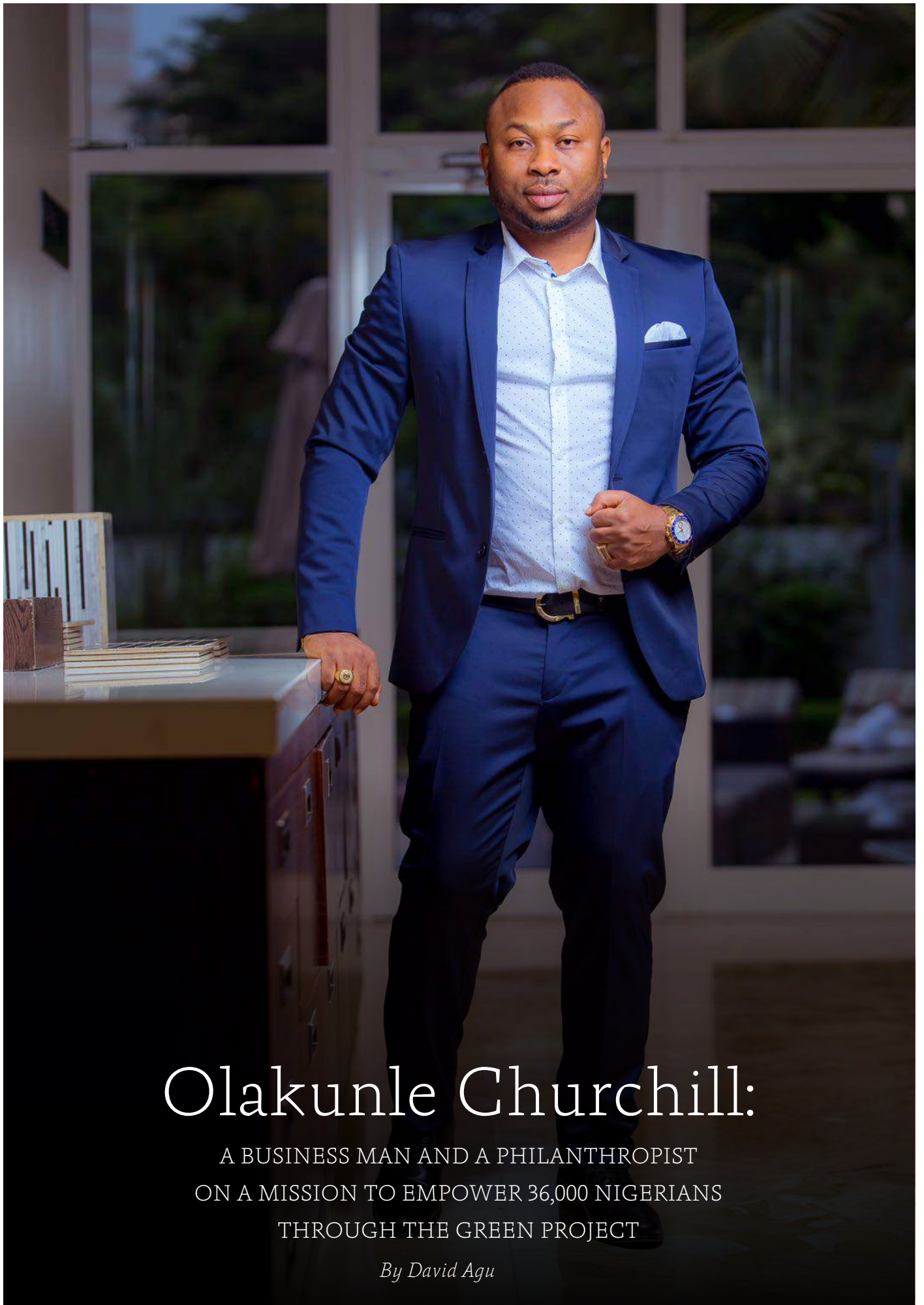
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# Olakunle Churchill:

A BUSINESS MAN AND A PHILANTHROPIST  
ON A MISSION TO EMPOWER 36,000 NIGERIANS  
THROUGH THE GREEN PROJECT

*By David Agu*



“My philosophy is to see an Africa that is free from poverty. This can only be achieved if we, as business people, take the front role in empowering our people”

The above are the words of Dr. Olakunle Oladunni Churchill, and in a nutshell, concisely describe this man whose beautiful image graces our cover, befittingly. A man who's in business because he needs the proceeds to put smiles on the faces of those direly in need of it. Young, handsome, soft-spoken and totally smart as though straight outa Silicon Valley, Dr. Churchill's unassuming personality often hides away so much of the accomplishments he's got tucked under his sleeves, at the first meet. This explains why for years he eluded media focus. And until three years ago, little or no details of the man's entrepreneurial and philanthropic strides were in the media space. Obviously he preferred things that way – quietly accomplishing. But as the good book says, a lit candle should not be hidden under the bushel. It was this beautiful light that attracted one of Nigeria's finest screen divas, Tonto Dike, who soon became his wife in 2015. From then on, Dr. Churchill has become a regular media sensation. Notwithstanding that, there's so much of the business and philanthropic side of him still untold, for there seems to be something fresh about the man each new day. So join, us as we profile Dr. Olakunle Churchill and how he's about to change the lives, and help rewrite the stories, of tens of thousands of Nigerian youths across the country through this new initiative, the Green Project.

### **In The Beginning**

Dr. Olakunle Churchill who hails from the Olakunle family in Abeokuta, Ogun State, and a close nephew of the former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, was, without doubts, born into affluence. But what set him apart “My philosophy is to see an Africa that is free from poverty. This can only be achieved if we, as business people, take the front role in empowering our people” was that from a very young age he drove to be independent, to make

his own name through his own independent efforts. “It was indeed an interesting growing up years. Fortunate enough, I was close to affluence, but I did not let that get into me. As a focused kid, I had always known what I wanted”, he states. And if Dr. Churchill had always known what he really wanted even as a kid,

the picture became even clearer as he grew closer to adulthood. He discovered his fascination with gadgets, computers, and ICT generally. In his own words, “my passion for computers, Computer programming or related functions was addictive”. And that became the making of the man he has become today.



## The Making of Big Church Group

Dr. Churchill formerly launched into the world of serious business when he started his first company, Big Churchill Haven Limited. And his rise was quick, and he made it early, partly because he started early in the pursuit of his passion, and partly because he took a wise step into the IT industry at a time the market was still relatively virgin. And what's more, his decision to start in Ghana, instead of his home country, Nigeria, paid off big time, as he encountered less competition, and soon dominated the ICT industry of the fast-rising West African country. Big Churchill Haven Limited is an IT/Solution and total security company. It has over the years made extensive expansions to over 10 countries including the United Kingdom, Switzerland and of course his home country, Nigeria. But business is like marriage as well; the true satisfaction comes when it has been able to produce children. So what started as a singular tech company has now metamorphosed into a conglomerate now known as the Big Church Group of Companies, with 6 subsidiaries namely: Big Churchill Haven Ltd; King Andrea Realtors; Big Church Entertainment; Big Church Consults; Big Church Green and Mining; and Big Church Foundation, all together dealing in over 10 industries (including IT; Real Estate; security; consulting; agriculture/mining; training; and of course charity) in more than 10 countries worldwide.

But, despite having taken a leading chunk of Ghana IT and Real Estate Market, Dr. Olakunle Churchill remained an unsatisfied man until 4 years ago when he came down to get established in his home country, Nigeria. As they say, there's no place like home. But Dr. Churchill confesses that it wasn't a smooth ride for him, breaking into the Nigerian market. In his words, "Nigerian market is quite saturated and highly competitive. The business environment in Nigeria is more lucrative because it's larger with much more clients. This, of course, made my team and I to step up our

games and service delivery. In truth, persistence and commitment to excellence in delivery eventually helped pave ways for us in the Nigerian market".

One of the hallmarks of entrepreneurs is making tough decisions and taking risk, and in Dr. Churchill's words, "one of the tough decisions I've had to make in recent years, in relation to my work, is to relocate to Abuja. Before now, I had limited business partners in Abuja unlike in Ghana, Lagos or Europe but I still went ahead to open an office in FCT". But that decision has proven to be a wise one because today, barely 4 years after, in the Nigeria's ever rising



capital city, Abuja, Big Church group has become a major player in the IT industry, and a major stakeholder in the city's all-important real estate sector, with major stakes in some of the choice housing estates across the city. And Dr. Churchill's acquisition of over 280 plots of land at the Numatville Megacity within Abuja, in 2016, is a loud statement that the Big Church Group has truly come to prominence within the nation's real estate market.

## A Life of Philanthropy

"My philosophy is to see an Africa that is free from poverty. This can only be achieved if we, as business people, take the front role in empowering our people", Dr. Olakunle Churchill stated emphatically in response to a question about his charity movements. One of the beneficiaries of his philanthropic activities, one of Nigeria's forgotten musical icons had this to say, "One thing is sure, you can't encounter Churchill and remain the same". That's right, a look at his charitable strides in the last couple of years simply affirms what another beneficiary had stated, "Churchill changes lives". For Dr. Olakunle Churchill, business and

philanthropy are inseparably complimentary. He engages in the former to enable him perform the later. To *concretise* this living philosophy, he dedicated one of the 6 Big Church group's subsidiaries to charitable works *stricto sensu*. That is the Big Church foundation. Many Nigerian stars have been named ambassadors of this foundation, including the R&B musical sensation, Praiz, whose ambassadorial contract with the foundation is worth over N50,000,000. Every year since the inception of the foundation, hundreds of millions of Naira are earmarked by the foundation for various charitable projects. Some of the big beneficiaries of the Big Church Foundation's helping hands over the years include IDP communities within North East Nigeria and the Agatu community people following the destruction of

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"Nigerian market is quite saturated and highly competitive. The business environment in Nigeria is more lucrative because it's larger with much more clients..."

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their lives and properties during the bloody Fulani herdsmen attack last year. In March, 2016, Dr. Churchill embarked on a 3-day charity tour of his mother's home state of Ondo, Nigeria. That project witnessed awards of scholarships to students in various schools in the state, financial donations to orphanage homes within the state, payment of medical bills for patients at hospitals, e.g Mother and Child Hospital; among others. And last January, Big Church Foundation led by Dr. Churchill visited the University of Abuja where several low-income students received full-cover scholarships, and these same gestures were subsequently extended to other schools in Abuja, Anambra, Benue, and Bauchi States.



Just recently, the foundation embarked on a major rescue project at Kada Rivers, a crisis-ravaged community in Southern Kaduna, Nigeria. Big Church foundation, through this project which has lasted for months, is helping the community to rebuild, and restore light to a place besieged by darkness, destruction, and blood-shed. For his various humanitarian works, Dr. Olakunle Churchill was honoured as a UN Goodwill Ambassador, and has received many other awards including the prestigious Peace Achievers Award, and just recently, the Northern Nigeria Peace Award. And here's the best part...oh wait for it; or rather, find out below.

### The Green Project to the Rescue

Dr. Olakunle Churchill has just rolled out programs aimed at empowering over 36,000 Nigerian youths with requisite funds to enable them go into agro businesses and mining. This is termed the Green Project, and is

powered by Big Church Green. According to Dr. Churchill, "the green project is aimed at revolutionizing the Nigerian agricultural sector by unleashing young Nigerians on the fields and forestalling the food crisis that seems to be staring the country in the face each new day". The green project is focused on all aspects of agriculture, both crop and animal farming, and is targeted at empowering 1,000 youths in each of the 36 states and capital of the country. To accomplish this, Big Church Green has embarked on processes of acquiring massive acres of lands in each of the states. These lands will be made available to the benefitting youths for farming engagements in each state, and the required startup funding will equally be made available. But, Dr. Churchill understands he can't achieve this massive revolution alone, and as such has set out on a mission to co-opt state governors, traditional rulers, and

other major stakeholders in each state to form a progressive partnership to enable this lofty project. With the flag-off summit, featuring participants and exhibitions from all the states, scheduled for May 2017 in Lagos, it looks like this dream is becoming the new reality. Experts have described this project as strategic, as agriculture and mining are the most neglected sectors of the Nigerian economy, although they represent the most realistic options to overcoming the country's over-dependence on oil. In preparation for the flag-off, registration for interested youths has since commenced on the foundation's website, [bigchurchgroup.org](http://bigchurchgroup.org). "This project is very dear to my heart because it will not only transform thousands of individual Nigerian lives, but could become the rescue Nigerian economy has been yearning for", said Dr. Churchill, smiling satisfactorily. Then he added. "To enable us take on this giant plan with confidence, we have recruited new sets of professionals to join our team as we embark on this mission".

### Final Words

Dr. Olakunle Churchill is still quite young, but has chosen to embark on the kinds of daring entrepreneurial and philanthropic works not usually associated with his generation. It has only been barely four years since he returned to get established in Nigeria, yet he has set out on a mission (devoid of politics or personal profits) to chart a new course for a country in dire need of a new direction. This is the real story of a man who's into the business of doing good.



# FACES AT THE #CVL-HELP, UNILAG 2017

*#CVL-HELP is the hash tag for Higher Education Leadership and Monitoring Program (HELP) organized by Prof Pat Utomi's Center for Values in Leadership (CVL). This 2017 edition was held on March 31, 2017 at the University of Lagos Main Auditorium, with focus on Youth Leadership Development, Employability Skills Enhancement, Entrepreneurship training and Mentoring.*



Prof Utomi, CVL Founder, making a speech



Prof Pat Utomi welcoming the rep of UNILAG VC, Prof Rahmon Bello, while Nnamdi Ezeigbo and Rev Fr. Fortunatus observe



Mr. Nnamdi Ezeigbo  
Founder/CEO, SLOT Systems (Speaker)



Prof Utomi Welcomes Acting British High Commissioner, Mr. Ahmed Bashir



A cross section of the audience



Mr. Victor Okoro  
CEO, Greater Works Concept  
(Agro-business Millionaire)



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# The Business Side of Law:

• HOW TO MAKE THE BIG BUCKS IN CORPORATE PRACTICE

- Paul Musa

*By David Agu*



*Paul Musa is a very jolly gentleman. Tall; dark; handsome; and youthful, even in his fifties. As the founder and Managing Partner of the Victoria Island-based law firm, Paul Musa & Co, Mr. Musa has seen it all in the vibrant arena of corporate practice in Nigeria's commercial capital, Lagos. And he has emerged successful. In this interview with David Agu, Paul Musa shares vital points that has made him first choice lawyer for top brands in the nation's commercial and oil and gas sector, and how every lawyer can hit it big, too, in corporate practice. Excerpts.*

**Tell us about your legal practice.**

We're strictly into corporate practice. We're retained by a couple of organisations like Exxon-Mobile, Total (the exploration side of Total), and a couple of banks like Standard Chartered Bank, First Bank, Union Bank, and UBA. Basically, the focus of our practice is on the oil and gas and Banking industries.

**So, how long have you been into law practice?**

Hmmm....not too long. Just 25 years (general laughter).

**There's a popular statement by lawyers, that law is the greatest profession on earth. How true is that?**

Absolutely true. If you are a lawyer, you find yourself into diverse professions. You can be called upon to do an investigation and represent Medicine. Or to do an investigation and make a presentation on the technical side of engineering. I have a

Master's Degree in business administration and I'm doing H.R. So I found out that with Law I'm able to appreciate these other fields better. You see some aspects that even the professionals in these other fields don't see. And they, too, baffle at the extent to which you have stretched it. I have a book I'm writing now which I titled the Legal Side of Corporate Accounting. In this book, I've been able to magnify corporate accounting beyond what the accountant sees. If you're not a lawyer, you can't be fulfilled till you become one, and if you're a lawyer with passion, dumping the profession is like dying.

**In practice, there are core litigation lawyers and those into corporate practice. Can you throw more light on that?**

In Nigeria, once you're called, you're called. So you're at liberty to do both, like I'm doing now. Even though we focus on the corporate side of Law, but sometimes, like in debt recovery matters, we end up in litigations. Like right now, we have a contract matter which is coming up at the Supreme Court soon. We're representing Exxon-Mobile, and we started at the High Court in Eket. Judgment was in our favour at the Court of appeal, but the opposing parties are still aggrieved, so it's now at the Supreme Court. So, to put a straight-line jacket and say I don't do litigation, I do only corporate practice, looks unlikely.

**So, basically, what does a corporate lawyer do?**

A corporate lawyer basically deals with corporate establishments, sector, or companies. He does a lot of things for companies. He gives legal opinions, drafts agreements, etc. Section 37 of the Companies and Allied Matters Act tells you what a company is.

**Those in litigation make big names, while those in corporate practice make big bucks; how true is that?**

(Giggles)...errrm, yeah, there's a point there, in that if you're in core litigation you could shout, and the pressmen are always there to re-echo your shout. But in corporate practice you're just cool; you could make just a legal opinion and you're paid N10million and nobody hears about it. So, I agree that if you're into corporate practice, the chances of making more money is there, because if you're doing a brief for companies like Shell or Total, what they're willing to pay, normal individuals may not afford same, except in political cases (but the money might be tainted).

**What should a new wig consider before choosing either corporate practice or core litigation?**

What side of Law interests you most? For me, when I was in the university, the course that interested me most was Law of Contract. So, Law

students and new wigs should consider passion before choosing.

**Representing companies from outside or working as an in-house lawyer, which do you recommend?**

I'll rather work as an outsider than to be an in-house lawyer. For one, Law is a dynamic thing – constantly changing – and if you work as an in-house lawyer you might miss out on the developments in the legal arena. And when you retire, and want to pick up your wig and gown, you'll see that Law has left you far behind. Again, you're restricted financially. No matter how much salary you're paid as an in-house lawyer, you can make that 20 times over with just one brief, as a practicing lawyer, and you're not restricted to one company or client.

**So, to succeed as a corporate lawyer, what are your tips?**

If you need to succeed as a corporate lawyer, you need to first of all mind your association. If you drink, where do you drink? I'm a member of Ikoyi Club, and sometimes when you go there the person sitting next to you might be the next governor of Lagos State or the MD of Shell. So, you

should mind the kind of circles you mix with, because you need connections. Most times it's from your interactions you get your briefs. This is as against closing from work and going to a beer palour in Ajegunle. There, what you're gonna get is: "someone stole my chicken" or "my neighbor beat up my daughter". Those are the kind of briefs you get there. Continuous educational development is also important. And Your physical appearance also means a lot in corporate practice, so a corporate lawyer must take his dressing seriously. Get good cologne, smell good, and look good all the time, even if you don't own a car yet. These are key on the corporate side of Law.

**Has corporate practice paid you handsomely?**

Absolutely.....Absolutely (general laughter).

**And when you're not working or sleeping, what would you, most likely, be caught doing?**

Singing. Yeah. If I were not a lawyer, I would've been a musician. Oh, how I love to sing (laughter).



# “Technology And Software Are Coming For Your Jobs, Unless You're A Farmer”

– Victor Okoro

By Godwin Toju Ojeh

*What's your notion of agriculture, and what image do you see when a farmer is mentioned. Dirty, tattered, and exhausted, I bet. Well...wait till you've met Victor Okoro, and all that notion will change. Victor Okoro is the CEO of Great Works Integrated Services Ltd; an agro millionaire who deserves the title of World Agro Brand Ambassador. He talks the talk as much as he works the work. Having first picked interest in farming at the age of 11, Mr. Okoro has experimented with all agricultural options over the years, and he now preaches a message capable of making a farmer out of every Nigerian. This has led him to establish an agricultural training program for those with interest in farming. And it's absolutely free. We present you his wise words below:*

“Something prompted me to me to get interested in agriculture at the age of 11. It was the feeling I got from watching my mum sow maize seeds into the soil and how they quickly grow and produce. I asked her how that happens, and she said it was God that made it grow. But I wanted to find out more for myself. So I guess the farmer that I am now was never accidental.

After school, getting a job was frustrating, so I set up a company in 2003 at Odogbolu in Ogun State, to go into agriculture. I started with one plot

of land. But today we have more acres of land than we can use. Now we sell off more than 160 tons of fish every six months, and supply broiler chickens in hundreds of thousands.

Technology is changing everything, and software can solve every problem, except to ask you what you wish to eat and actually produce same. So, they're coming to take away all jobs, except farming. So, shouldn't you rather become a farmer now? Agriculture is not for the frustrated. People can sack you from any job, but not from a lifework.

And the opportunities here are so large. For instance, this is the only sector of the economy you can get government support with ease, as all the governments have many financial projects for farmers today. And, on an even brighter side, agriculture reduces depression because as you watch your crops or animals grow you derive so much joy and pride which can even help prolong life. You should become a farmer today.”

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Technology is changing everything...  
They're coming to take away all jobs, except farming.

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# DANGOTE'S LAGOS REFINERY: 20 FACTS THAT'LL INSPIRE YOU

*There's only one richest black man in the world – Alhaji Aliko Dangote. And there's only one country that can validly lay claim to him – Nigeria. Thus, every aspiring Nigerian, and indeed African, must seize every opportunity to get inspired by this rare entrepreneur. And this mind-blowing refinery project, commenced in 2016 by Dangote Group presents such opportunity. So, read the facts below, and get inspired.*



- Over \$4 billion worth of equipment currently sits on the site.
- The project is slated to cost \$14 billion (N2.8 trillion) and Dangote's singular equity contribution to that is \$7 billion (N1.4 trillion).
- The project site is larger than Victoria Island. It is located on 2135 hectares of land in Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos near the Lekki Free Zone.
- It is the largest industrial complex in Africa Work goes on, on the site, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- World Record 2.72 million accident-free hours recorded on site, without a single lost time to injuries.
- It is the largest single train grass roots refinery in the world with a processing capacity of 650,000 BPSD.
- Dangote Group brought in the world's #1, #2, and #5 sand dredgers to sand fill the site. 60% of the land being swampy. So far these dredgers have reclaimed 13 million m<sup>3</sup> out of 30 million m<sup>3</sup>.
- During construction, the project will employ over 25,000 Nigerians.
- When this project comes online, Nigeria will save a minimum of \$10 billion a year on imports.
- The Ammonia component of the plant will produce 2.8 million tonnes of Urea.
- Dangote is producing its own electricity to power the plant and by so doing is saving 75% costs. Dangote produces electricity at a rate that is significantly cheaper than the Federal Government. Dangote's cost is \$400,000/MW, while Federal Government is \$2,000,000/MW.
- All the civil engineering is done by Nigerian companies.
- The plant has an export value of \$6 billion per annum, meaning Dangote's efforts will increase the amount of foreign exchange in Nigeria's foreign reserves by at least 40% of current value on a yearly basis
- Dangote said when this project comes on line, his friend Femi Otedola will save at least N26 per litre on millions of litres of diesel and petrol which his companies import annually. These savings will be passed on to the consumers and it will take a lot of pressure off the banks.
- Billions of Naira were paid to acquire the land and to settle the existing communities. More money was also allocated and spent to relocate the existing communities
- This project will restore the dignity of Nigeria, a crude producing country that has for years gone abroad to meet its demand for refined products
- Refined products to be produced at the plant include but is not limited to propane, petrol, Jet Fuel, Diesel, Kerosene, Carbon Black, Polypropylene, Polyethylene.
- The United States Trade and Development Agency is supporting this project with \$997 million.

# MAKING MONEY IN THE NEW ECONOMY: IT'S KID STUFF!

– Strive Masiyiwa



*Every month, on this column, we bring you words of wisdom from proven business leaders. In this edition we present you this piece culled from Strive Masiyiwa. Strive is the Zimbabwean founder of Econet, Kwese TV, etc. Enjoy!*

The other day a dear friend of ours dropped by our home in South Africa. Her 14-year old son was born about the same time as our youngest daughter, and they went to kindergarten together. I will call him "John" for the sake of this little story, which is otherwise all true.

"John is quite an entrepreneur," his mother began proudly. Well, naturally all mothers are proud of their kids, so why should she be any different?

Anyway, she continued: "Sometimes he makes up to R5,000 building social media profiles, and selling them."

"He does what?!" I exclaimed.

"Oh, that's nothing, Strive. That's just when he needs pocket money."

"Okay... What else does he do?"

"He recently negotiated a deal for a certain type of toy from India, to

supply customers in South Africa"

"He what?!"

"Well, he goes on the Internet and does research on products and prices, and finds the cheapest sources for things like cricket bats, and other things that kids like," she said.

"Recently he found some very unusual sneakers that all the kids wanted, and he bought them, and resold them immediately for twice the price."

"You are talking about John, and not his dad?" I asked quietly, just to be sure.

"John sometimes asks his dad to represent him, when he needs an adult."

"Ehehe!... He hires his own father!"

"Look, John isn't the only kid out there who knows how to make money from the Internet."

And at that point, I burst out laughing: "On that point you're right! Joe Gebbia,

Brian Chesky, Nathan Blecharczyk (Airbnb co-founders); Evan Spiegel, Reggie Brown and Bobby Murphy (Snapchat co-founders) and of course, Mark Zuckerberg!" I exclaimed. "These guys are just kids when compared to people like me. And yet they have already built businesses that are bigger than the GDP of most African countries!"

But here's the most exciting "take away":

"John" is an African child. Just like Anesi, and his brother, Osine, from Nigeria who I wrote about in 2015. Remember them? The kids who built a browser before they were even teenagers?

This means that the next Zuckerberg is probably living in your house, toddling around already playing with Lego and maybe imagining robots or beyond!

In my own home, our youngest daughter does all the "tech stuff"!

When our guys finished the Kwese.com website, I called her over and said, "Is this any good?"

She went into the corner and said, "Pretty cool, but I would change this and this."

"Let me get my notebook, baby."

"I will charge you!" she laughed.

"Name your price."

I asked a simple question: "Do you really know how to make money in the new economy?"

In the new economy, it will be about our ability to let go of old mindsets about wealth, and wealth creation. We must not only equip our kids; we must trust them with our very future.

At the end of this week, do a little review and examine what you did with your smartphone:

Which websites did you visit, and why?

# Was it to find out something?

# Was it to sell or buy something?

# Was it to be entertained?

# Was it to keep in touch with friends, and family?

If it was primarily social, then either change your habits, or you will work for "John" one day... (And that might not be so bad, because at least you will have a job.)

In all the things you do on the Internet, did any make you money, develop your career or kick start your business venture?

Think about little John. He's 14 years old, and already he understands the new economy. Wow!

Let's get to work! We have a continent to change... Fast!

# Natural Hair & The Working Woman



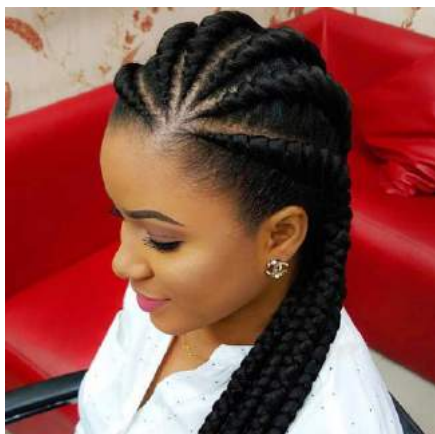
For those of us who are not aware of the trend, 'natural hair' refers to 'non-chemically straightened hair'. In other words, hair that has not been relaxed.

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of women who are embracing their natural hair texture and the emergence of specialized hair products and salons that cater to women with natural hair is a big indicator that this trend has come to stay.

There are various reasons why women like Solange Knowles, Omoni Oboli, Lupita Nyong'o and Chioma

Chukwuka- Akpotha have joined the "natural hair movement." These include:

- Embracing their identity as black. Black people are the only race with tightly coiled hair.
- Living life organically. With the increasing awareness of the effects artificial compounds in our food and household products on our health and the environment, some people have opted to cut out as much chemicals and artificial from their daily living as much possibly this includes their hair.
- To make a fashion statement. Artists like Diana Ross, Janelle Monae and Nneka have been making style statements with their hair for years.
- To curtail Alopecia (hair loss). In other to control hair loss due to over manipulation of fragile hair some sufferers have decided to go natural.
- Religion. A notable example is the Deeper Life Bible Church where female members do not relax their hair.
- To grow longer hair. Un-relaxed black hair grows better and healthier.



Personally, I relate with number 6 (growing longer hair). For years I struggled to get my hair to reach my shoulders. I constantly fought a losing battle against breakage, scanty and weak damaged hair. Since I did not believe that long hair was the genetic privilege of a few, I researched until I discovered natural hair.

Utterly frustrated but completely hopeful I joined #TeamNatural and it paid off. My hair grew longer in one year than it had in four years put together. To say that I am proud of my hair is stating the least. I love my hair shrinkage, curls and all. So you can imagine my surprise when my colleagues kept requesting that I “do something” about my hair. I also heard comments like “your hair looks unkempt”, “can't you afford relaxer?”, and so on.

All these got me wondering what exactly was wrong with the God-given hair growing out of my head. It made me wonder what it would be like if I worked in a corporate environment. Well, according to the “good hair” study, an extensive research carried out by the Perception Institute and Shea Moisture on how black women's natural hair texture was perceived and how it affected them professionally, nappy hair is generally seen as untidy and unprofessional with most people preferring a smooth and silky texture for the office environment. The study discovered that having natural hair in the work place can greatly reduce how employers/clients view your capacity to perform. In other words, you could be as smart as Albert Einstein but if you're a black female with natural hair you wouldn't be taken seriously. Some women have reported being told that their hair is not good for the company's image and in some companies carrying natural hair is a fire-able offense.

Generally, this problem does not affect women in the entertainment or fashion industry. Thus, having been made aware of the status quo as regards natural hair in the work place, what can be done?

The following are just some of the ways “Naturalistas” can maintain their natural hair without having to loose their jobs or credibility because of it.

- **Braids:** Getting your hair neatly braided into various styles like box braids, twists, Ghana weaving, and so on, will help you present a professional look without damaging your hair.
- **Crochet:** This protective style became popular about a year ago and it is a firm favorite because it doesn't take time and it still protects your hair.
- **Weavons:** This is usually the go to hair style for most women.
- **Non- relaxer blow out:** This involves sectioning and blow drying your damp hair in other to straighten it. The hair can be made straighter with a hair straightener/flat iron.



- **Wigs:** This is my personal favourite because they are versatile (there are different styles and colours to choose from) they are cost efficient (they can be used over and over again). They are convenient (after a long hot day, I can simple take off my wigs and jump in the shower without fear) also these days modern wigs are more secure and more realistic looking than regular weaves.

I hope you found this article very helpful. I am always happy to hear from you, please send your comment and feedback to: Facebook: Drusilla Ibo, Instagram: @drusillareigns, Twitter: @drusillaIbo or you can send an email to: editor@theentrepreneurmag.com



# 6 Top Young Entrepreneurs in Nigeria

## • WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON AND HOW THEY MADE IT EARLY

By David Agu

*With a combined analysis of ratings by Forbes, Ventures Africa, etc., in recent times, The Entrepreneur has put together the following young Nigerian entrepreneurs as the top six as at the first quarter of 2017. Interestingly, these young wealth creators have quite a lot in common. The most common thread among them is that they all delved into the new economy, ICT, and really at a time when the water was still murky. Additionally they seem to share a common trait for zeal and resilience, failing, dusting up their selves, and trying again, till the eventual success which has now made each of them worthy of a place in this list. And as can be gleaned from their individual stories below, these young entrepreneurs had set out to solve needs first and foremost, for the society. Financial reward simply became the natural consequence of their efforts. And more importantly, they all set out early, and have, thus, arrived early. Read and be inspired.*



**Iyinoluwa Aboyeji,**  
Co-Founder, Andela  
Co-Founder/MD, Flutterwave

Last year, Iyinoluwa was listed by Forbes among the Most Promising Young African Entrepreneurs. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Legal Studies from the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. He ventured into ICT business with Bookneto Inc, which he helped found and run. Bookneto Inc, is a social e-learning platform for university

professors to teach online courses. It was acquired in 2013 by the Canadian Innovation Center. In the same year, 2013, Iyinoluwa, still in his 20's, co-founded Fora. And he had this to say: "At Fora, our mission is to help young Africans to take back their continent through online education". And then he added, "We created Africa's first online marketplace for premium online courses accredited by top Universities and professional organizations".

It's even more appropriate to call Iyinoluwa a serial entrepreneur, with focus on educational technology. Being unsatisfied with the success of Fora, he again co-founded Andela in 2014. Andela, a talent accelerator and ICT solution company, with offices in Yaba Lagos, and New York, trains world-class software developers and matches them with employers around the world. It became an instant success, and has successfully provided services to giant companies like Microsoft, IBM, etc. Backed by Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, GV (Google Ventures) and Spark Capital, Andela is building the next generation of global technology leaders. It's worthy of note that when Facebook Founder, Mark Zuckerberg visited Nigeria, Andela's Yaba office was his first point of call, where he expressed his amazement.

Iyinoluwa's latest venture is Flutterwave – a simple API for processing payments across card, bank account and mobile money platforms in over thirty African countries. Founded in May, 2016, Flutterwave has processed over \$20 million in transactions to date.

**Mark Essien,**  
**Founder, Hotels.ng**

Mark Essien, 32, is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Nigeria-based Hotels.ng, an online hotel booking agency which is the first and largest of its kind in Nigeria. The online portal allows users from all over the world to book rooms from a selection of over 8000 hotels.

Since establishing Hotels.ng in 2013, Mark has overseen the growth of hotel listings on the platform from just over 100 at launch to over 8,000 hotels in 21 regions of Nigeria with millions of transactions yearly since 2014. Hotels.ng recently secured an investment of \$1.2m from international investors, further boosting its expansion drive. In his words, “The African business ecosystem is brimming with opportunities and you just need to find what works”.



**Prince Nnamdi Ekeh,**  
**Founder, Yudala**

Prince Ekeh is the 24 year old founder and vice president of the composite retail platform, Yudala, which has taken the e-commerce space by storm since August 2015 launch of its online store. Yudala employs over 400 Nigerians on full time basis. It plans to have Yudala

store in every local government council by 2019, taking an estimated 10,000 Nigerians out of the labour market.

Ekeh's company wrote its name and that of Nigeria in the history books on Thursday November 26th 2015 by successfully undertaking the world's first e-commerce drone delivery to flag

off its inaugural Black Friday sales. At the end of 2015, Google rated Yudala second among the top trending Nigerian brands for that year.

An Economics graduate of the University of Lancaster, Prince also holds a certificate in International Business and Economics from Harvard. An alumnus of the prestigious Lagos Business School (LBS), Prince holds a firm belief that the youth hold the key to unlocking the full potential of the Nigerian economy and the only industry that will provide them with this opportunity is the ICT. According to him, “I was about 19 then and was still in school when the idea of Yudala came. I kept it in my head and was mentally nurturing it and even at that time I could see the limitless possibilities of e-commerce and on-line retailing”. Although he's the son of Leo Stan Ekeh, the Billionaire owner of Zinox, Prince Ekeh chose the path of independence, and has already justified it.



**Linda Ikeji,**  
Blogger

The only female in this list, and unarguably the most popular, Linda Ikeji, 35, is a clear instance of how hobbies of today could become huge wealth creator tomorrow. Linda was born into a poor family where she had to struggle to pay her own way through school. This led her into modeling. But modeling wasn't paying then. So she also sold beer at a hotel sometimes. Being in a society where most struggling young girls are expected to give their bodies to men in exchange for financial support, she was tempted many times, but made a

decision that has positioned her as an inspiration to young women across Africa.

She says, "I started struggling since I was 17 to support my family. I was determined to make it on my own, never let any man take my dignity". She recalls having to trek to school in her university days because she couldn't afford transport fare. Later, in 2006, frustrated and jobless, Linda started blogging just to while away time. In 2008 and 2009 she was begging people to place adverts free of charge on her blog, [LindaIkeji.blogspot.com](http://LindaIkeji.blogspot.com). Fast-forward to 2 years later, the same blog began to fetch her so much money.

Today, her blog, [LindaIkejisblog.com](http://LindaIkejisblog.com) has become one of the most visited sites in Africa...and her worth is estimated to have crossed the billion mark, with monthly revenues above \$50,000. Hear her: "Now I have more money than I even know what to do with it. I make millions of Naira from what I love doing...blogging". In August 2012, Forbes Africa described her as a success and case study of blogging. Linda studied Mass Communication at the University of Lagos. She has been featured by BBC, CNN, Ventures Africa, Forbes, etc.



**Paul Orajika,**  
Founder, Auldon Ltd

38 year-old Nigerian entrepreneur, Paul Orajika, is the founder of Auldon Limited, a manufacturer of African-themed toys which depict, promote and teach Africa's cultural heritage to children. He founded the company 18 years ago with less than \$100; it now has annual revenues of more than \$10 million.

Apart from Nigeria, Auldon's toys are now sought after in countries like South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, and some parts of Europe. In 2015, Auldon launched the Unity Girl Dolls, a set of multi-cultural dolls clad in the traditional attires of Nigeria's major ethnic groups.

Orajika studied accounting at University of Lagos (UNILAG) and Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from Lagos Business School, Pan-African University (PAN). He ventured into business at Idumota, Lagos, at the age of 18 out of frustration for failing to obtain visa to travel to the U.S. Now he says, "and that is how that reluctant step taken out of frustration ended up becoming my glorious journey to success and fulfillment.



**Seun Osewa,**  
Founder/CEO, Nairaland Forum

34-year old Seun Osewa is the creator of [Nairaland.com](http://Nairaland.com), Nigeria's largest online forum, which he launched in March 2005. It currently has over 1.5 million registered members. Nairaland

is ranked amongst the seven top most visited sites in Nigeria by Alexa.com, and is credited to being the biggest African forum, according to Forbes. Seun started Nairaland with plans to be making N60,000 per month but things came out too positive for him that today, he is a multi-millionaire.

Before Nairaland, Seun, who's a web development expert, had tried his hands on some other cyber ventures like a web hosting site, Mobile Nigeria Forum, etc., but they mostly failed. He learnt from his failures and turned them into success with Nairaland. In the year 2013 seun entered the Forbes list of best African successful entrepreneurs under 30.



# She Hawked Clothes from House to House; But Now Her Boutique is Worth Millions

By Tolu Simpson



She Hawked Clothes from House to House; But Now Her Boutique is Worth Millions Simeipiri Robert studied banking and finance at the Rivers State University, but whoever thought she was going to queue up with the rest of thousands of graduates scrambling for the few available banking jobs in the country must've been wrong. This is because in her

words, "working for people has never been my plan. I've always wanted to be my own boss". Then she added, "I've always had passion for business, and as such there was no need looking for a white collar job".

While undergoing her National Youth service in Kaduna, in 2011, Sime (as she's fondly called) began that journey

to becoming a self-made woman. But that journey was difficult, as the right capital was hard to come by. Her business interest was in ladies clothing. With just a little more than N50,000 capital raised, and not being enough to set up a proper shop for her wares, Sime took a drastic step. "I first started by selling the cloths from street to street, from house to house, and knocking from door to door". But that was not enough, so she equally did this: "during those days, whenever I was travelling home to Port Harcourt, I would buy sets of wrapper from Kano, and when I get to P.H, I sell them and make more profits".

Fast-forward to 2017, her Port-Harcourt-based boutique, SIM SIM Collectibles, has become a one-stop shop for all ladies' fashion needs. And to further make her shop a truly ladies' delight, she has added large collections of virgin human hair which most young Nigerian women would die to have; and as expected, they're selling faster than Chloe Kardashian's limited bum shorts collections. Thus, Simeipiri's little-more-than-N50,000 startup, few years ago, has now metamorphosed into a multimillion naira fashion business, and qualified her as The Entrepreneur self-made woman this month.

Now, Simeipiri is set to launch a hair plaza in Port Harcourt, specifically for virgin human hair. And soon, she says, "I have plans to establish SIM SIM Collectibles in Lagos and Abuja". And what's more, Sime has created and empowered a network of young girls, including family members, who have launched out on their own through her hair venture.





## Got Ideas But **No Funds?**

- UACHD WILL GIVE YOU GRANTS AND ASK FOR NOTHING IN RETURN

*By Mary Jane Nwankwo*

If there's anything Nigeria has in great numbers, it's young men and women with innovative ideas. But what the country lacks, however, are the right environment and availability of funds to help these young ones concretise the said ideas. But one not-for-profit organisation has taken matters into their own hands in this regard, and is bent on helping young Nigerians accomplish their life dreams of becoming successful entrepreneurs and change agents. That is the Uche Ahubelem Center for Human Development (UACHD). Founded in 2015 by the Lagos-based real estate

giant, Mr. Uche Ahubelem, the foundation has embarked on massive youth empowerment every six months since inception. And at the 4th edition of the Uche Ahubelem Empowerment and Seminar Series which held last December at the Ball Room of Oriental Hotel, Lagos, over N3.6million outright grants and other consolation prizes were given out to winners of the bi-annual business grants.

And what's more, the empowerment series, which has been described as the most genuine in the country, is about

to enter the streets and rural areas, as the founder, Mr. Ahubelem goes radical in his efforts to invest in human growth. According to the foundation's Project Director, Mr. Chike Egemole, "UACHD's next set of empowerment is targeted at the ordinary, not-so-educated, members of the society, mostly women, who are out there on the streets and local markets working hard to grow their small businesses, but with little funds. Those categories of entrepreneurs deserve to be encouraged, too". Then he added, "and as our founder, Mr. Ahubelem, has announced, the foundation shall also be embarking on rural empowerment schemes, starting with his home state, Imo". These series of empowerment is scheduled to commence from June, 2017, while the next regular Uche Ahubelem Empowerment Series holds in December.

Now what are you waiting for? Whether you're young or old, as long as you've got a bankable business idea, UACHD is saying it's not too late to start. And they're putting their money where their mouth is. So, all you've got to do is to visit [www.uachd.org](http://www.uachd.org), and keep a tab on them, and you could be the next recipient of millions in funds to enable you turn that idea into a real business and become a job creator, instead of a job seeker.

Here are some pictures from the last empowerment series, and hurray, our publisher, David Agu was among the beneficiaries.



Contestants sample their products



A cross-section of the audience



Another cross-section of the audience



David Agu making his presentation



Mr Gbadebo Adejana, CEO Reaty Point Ltd, Speaks



Winners Celebrate- David Agu, Joseph, Fatima, and Debby



Presentation of cheques to winners at UACHD office



Monalisa Chinda was the Co-MC



The Founder, Mr Uche Ahubelem, speaking



Judges Brainstorming



Group Photo of The founder, Invited Guests and Winners

# See Lagos And Dare:

• WHY IT'S THE LAST HOPE OF EMERGING ENTREPRENEURS

*By Emmanuel Ezeh*



See Lagos And Dare: Why It's the Last Hope of Emerging Entrepreneurs  
Lagos at the tick of time could mean anything. For one moment, it could mean nothing more than a clan besieged with madness. At another, it may as well seem the journey of a people into a dark alley. In the end, Lagos remains unfazed and almost turgid like the tenacity of a weed. Growing up in the village was not devoid of bizarre and uncanny stories about Lagos. Yet, at dawn their bearers flee to Lagos while the rest of us kept bidding our time. Another story of a kinsman who has "made it" in Lagos and we set forth, leaving our mother's heartbroken.

Lagos, in recent history has come to represent the Nigerian dream. While Paris-capital of France is accompanied

with the sobriquet *see Paris and die*, Lagos can fittingly be dubbed: See Lagos and dare. Given Nigeria's huge infrastructural deficit and rampaging unemployment, Lagos has grown into the last hope of the 21st century entrepreneur. It has become beacon for the corps member at a hinterland. For the young lass hoping to kiss the headlines, it has remained a bastion.

The National Bureau of Statistics may have ranked Lagos as not only the highest contributor to the nation's GDP but also host the highest number of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, but does that stand Lagos out as the hot bed for emerging entrepreneurs? Apart from housing a plethora of industries and multinationals, as well as the epicenter of commerce, enterprise,

entertainment, media, arts, glitz, glamour and just about every other thing, could there be more to Lagos than meets the eye? For the emerging entrepreneur of the 21<sup>st</sup> century who craves to explore and enhance his potentials, Lagos could just be that x-factor.

## **Elixir**

At the heart of every entrepreneur is a dream, but so is a plan. In this the entrepreneur craves and builds his world around it. Yet given our peculiarities, one is wont to give up. But given the bustle of Lagos, it won't be long before an entrepreneur finds his rhythm to dream again. From the boy who resumes at wee hours as mason to eke a living, to the woman who straddles her ward behind as she hawks through traffic, one is fired up.

At the motor park one is attracted to a “PhD holder” owing to his elegance of expression until it hits you that he is merely a beggar: touts extracting money arbitrarily, and defying the adverse weather to molest unyielding drivers. Interviewer giving you a no, even if you can't help but notice as he smiles to the skimpily dressed girl, and just when you think your day is over, it dawns on you that your wallet is missing; the reality can be devastating. Yet it is this peculiarity of Lagos that stands it out and thickens the resolve of the emerging entrepreneur. Across the streets in Lagos abound stories of many who have risen from these slums right to the peak of their careers, of uncommon stories of pain, toil and triumph. All in time, Lagos provides that elixir for the emerging entrepreneur to do, to dare, to become.

### Market

With a population of over 20 million people, Lagos remains a pot of gold. According to the UN report on world population prospects, Lagos is the fastest growing city in the world. It is reckoned that Lagos in 2025 will be one of the highest populated cities in the world. At every twist and turn, Lagos is coveted by all and sundry. Officials at the nations Corporate Affairs Commission observed that eighty percent of registered businesses in Lagos today were not in existence 20 years ago. The emerging entrepreneur no doubt, thrives on the enormity of his market. His idea no matter how grandiose is dependent on the available market. This Lagos has in abundance and even in reserve. Lagos provides not just the right market for the emerging entrepreneur, but a niche to thrive. As the sea of people in Lagos roam daily in search of their livelihood, the emerging entrepreneur is afforded almost on a platter a platform to explore. From the man in traffic who until he winds down, instinct tells one he won't mind a chilled bottle of water; the football fanatic who cherishes a viewing centre to the comfort of his home, the normal



boy who grew up learning only to prepare noodles but would soon turn to a fast food for succor...the market niche is endless.

### Opportunity

The influx of industries and multinationals into Lagos may not just serve as a leeway for the emerging entrepreneur, but also play an inestimable role of providing invaluable internship and mentorship. With the attendant unemployment rate in the country, it is never in doubt that the situation has created so many emergency and unprepared entrepreneurs. These days, all it takes to bear the toga of an entrepreneur is to own or simply start a business, often with little or no experience or even professional guidance, which sometimes is as a result of the unavailability of one. As negligible as this has come to be, it is often the difference between that thriving business and an also-ran. Yet, as the day breaks, these opportunities are lurking. Across the nook and cranny of Lagos abounds not just these opportunities to explore and enhance one's pursuit, but also for the emerging entrepreneur to take the initiative, to seize the moment, to make it count.

### Need

With the influx of people into Lagos, the needs of these people become even more increasing. It is the place of the emerging entrepreneur to pounce and provide viable solutions to these needs. It takes every jack and gill to identify a need, but it will take an entrepreneur to provide quality and accessible solutions to these needs. If there is uniqueness about Lagos is that it thrives on the mass that have limited

purchasing power. But lo, these mass craves similar quality of service as the man at the highland. The “big man” during the day returns to his leaking roof at night, but one loathes him if perceived otherwise. Yet, finding these needs lies in the slums and shanties of Lagos. From the man who has never known electricity, to another who accessing clean portable water is a mirage, the needs are endless. Indeed with an apparent imploding population, comes with a plethora of need. The entrepreneur may as well seize this opportunity to explore and enhance his potentials

### Exhale

Lagos is a butt of joke. It's a city that amuses itself. In the heat there is always something to cheer. And for the emerging entrepreneur, what can be more soothing? Health practitioners are quick to recommend laughter but the kind you find in Lagos is as weird as genius. From the man who wails more than the bereaved, but soon returns with a protruding stomach complaining about how poorly chilled the drinks are, to the boy next door who is quick to introduce every girl visiting as his sister until the day all of these “sisters” came visiting. Across the streets of Lagos is a sea of activity. People moving dart and about, yet, they readily serve as relief to the emerging entrepreneur. A mechanic who tries too hard to impress drives a girl around with a car owned by her father. The sight when it finally dawned on him was pitiable. The damsel who will always inundate you with stories about her wealthy family until the day she throws a party only for her mother to come visiting from the village and her stammering knew no end. As mundane as the Lagos metropolis is, it could be endearing for the 21st century entrepreneur and perhaps provide just the right tonic to thrive.

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# Anambra 2017 Guber: An Entrepreneur Comes to the Rescue

By Alex Nwankwo



In the wake of this present democratic dispensation in Nigeria, Anambra state was viewed as the most difficult and politically problematic state in Nigeria's democracy. Why was it so? The long years of military rule in Nigeria brought about devastating political leadership consequences to the country. The machination was to create a social myth that would be interpreted as political problems by their controlled media. This would in turn require their input in the mediation for peace and settlement of orchestrated crises. As such, Anambra state was the target of the destruction by the enemies of Ndigbo. These powers were also aware of the differences in the character of the people of the state. They have seen the Anambra Igbo as desperados in all affairs of life. They observe the Anambrans as Igbo, who believe in the strength of their money more than the interest of their state and the general welfare of their people. Eventually, Anambra fell into the web-net of their trap, and got lost in the deep-sea of political palaver. At a time, Anambra political quagmire became a stinking embarrassment to Ndigbo as whole.

The politicians in the state lost complete sense of shame and social decency in their empty quest for political power. It took only the gentle

wisdom of Mr. Peter Obi to save Anambra from possible political explosion that was capable of thwarting the entire political history of the intellectually sophisticated state in the lower Niger. At the very end of this Peter Obi, former governor of Anambra state became the most respected, nationally celebrated, and politically most prudent, and result-oriented state governor in Nigeria federation. He is not only regarded presently as Nigeria's best governor, Peter Obi is the only governor, who built the best road network in Nigeria, and remains the only in recent Nigeria's democracy, who handed over cash that runs into billions to his political successor. Nobody has neared this laudable height in the present democratic dispensation.

Now to the current political challenges confronting Anambra as a state, the guber election is around the corner. As a powerful state with powerful citizens, what are the chances that Nde Anambra shall have a free and fair election that will reflect the will of the electorates; ensuring that their choice carries the mandates of their votes? Again, this year's election is of greater significance in the political restructuring of the entire south east geo-political zone. But there is a huge fear that the desperation of Anambra politicians and their instinct to have their way by all means possible, and at all cost may force them to allow enemies of Ndigbo to come in and plant the seed of perpetual discord in the new Igbo political societies.

The possibilities of all these speculations are dependent on the characters, who have come out to vie for the highest political seat in

Anambra state. Who are these people, and what are their chances to win the votes of the people? Certainly, Anambra 2017 governorship election is coming with different pictures that are surely going to change the wrongly perceived impressions people have about Anambra political behaviour. This new change is surfacing with the appearance of some rear gems, who are bouncing into the politicking ring of Anambra political contest.

One of this pacific political juggernaut is Prince Donatus Okonkwo, a business magnet and philanthropist of the highest order. He is the Chief Executive director of Tettrazzini Groups and owner of Zzini media among other investments in Nigeria and internationally. His Energetic Personality Disposition And Admirable Liberal Nature Singles Him Out As The Target Detail Solution Oriented Governor Anambra Needs. Again, His Generosity To The People Is Glaring, While His Placid Manner Is A Characteristic Which Compels The Admiration Of All. For This Reason And More, Federation Of Igbo Youths Association (Anambra Chapter), Wishes To Use This Platform To Ask The Good People Of Anambra To Cue Behind This Illustrious Son Of Ours For A Better Anambra.





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