

DECEMBER 2017

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# THE ENTREPRENEUR AFRICA

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Find Out How To Change  
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**Thinking Of Where To  
Start A Business In Nigeria?  
5 Reasons Why Lagos  
Is Your Best Bet**

**Meet 42-Year-Old  
Chinedu Echeruo  
Who Made \$1bn From Apple**

**Thinking Of Rocking  
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Read This First**

**Don't Be A  
Control  
Freak!**  
Allow people to  
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- Strive Masiyiwa

**10  
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To Make Your  
Business Meetings  
Productive

**Retired at 55; Entrepreneur at 61**

# **JOAN AGHA**

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# Contents

- 4** Time Magazine Sold Amidst Political/Economic Considerations
- 26** "I Don't See Airbnb", Says Ubi Franklin as He Launches Instant Apartment
- 36** Did You Achieve Your Business Goals For 2017?
- 38** Meet 42-Year-Old Chinedu Echeruo, Who Made \$1bn From Apple And Returned To Make Africa Great Again
- 30** Don't Be A Control Freak: Allow people to do their jobs!
- 28** Had Losses In 2017? Find Out How To Change That For 2018
- 32** Thinking Of Rocking Your Jeans To Work? Read This First
- 11** Retired at 55; Entrepreneur at 61: JOAN AGHA. Now She's Helping Other Businesses Succeed
- 08** Thinking Of Where To Start A Business In Nigeria? 5 Reasons Why Lagos Is Your Best Bet
- 18** Everyone Needs A Home; And It's My Business To Get You A Good One - Funke Kehinde
- 06** 2018 To The Rescue: Seize the Moment
- 22** Law is a Noble Profession, Yes; But It's Also A Business – Tochukwu Onyiuks, Esq
- 07** 10 Ways To make Your Business Meetings Productive
- 43** 7 Cheap And Interesting Ways To Attract More Customers To Your Small Business
- 45** Royal Hair News Report
- 40** Black Market Day



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# 2018 To The Rescue: *Seize the Moment*

Between 2016 and 2017, it's hard to tell which has been the more challenging for most African economies, especially Nigeria. But the heart-warming report is, we may have seen the worst of it yet. And as the curtain is drawn on 2017, a bright sunshine is rising on the other side (i.e 2018). Literally. For some, the sun had already begun to shine since the beginning of the last quarter of 2017. The Nigerian nation could be included in that category, as the country declared itself out of recession within the said last quarter. This, no doubts, had a multiplier effect on individual industries and organizations, as some who had not recorded profits in nearly 2 years returned to profiting again. However, for others who received a deeper cut below the belt during the economic downturn, it's not yet uhuru. But whichever category you or your organization belong to, 2018 beckons with an opportunity to get back up, dust yourself, and march on.

For Nigeria, one can predict a higher circulation of money in 2018, as governments are expected to increase their spending on projects with the aim of impressing electorates ahead of 2019 election. As an entrepreneur, you must be vigilant to ensure your company reaps from this. Contracts will be flying around. Spread your nets early, and wide, too. You never can tell what it'll catch.

And here's another reassuring news: with increased government spending in 2018, it'll create a trickle effect, as the individual members of the society will also have more cash in hand and more willing to spend it. So, you can start early to reach out to your old customers who previously stalled in their patronage. They'll, more likely, be ready to come around now.

More importantly, after every depression/recession comes hope. 2018 is the year of hope. So, cheer up and be hopeful for a coming harvest. And when it comes, take in as much as you can; you have worked hard to deserve it.

But, aside the above matters, don't forget, it's Christmas and New Year season. It's a time to have a good laughter, make merry, and be happy, for above all you've still got life and good health.

Compliments the season to all our esteemed readers and subscribers across the world; from all of us at The Entrepreneur Africa. Cheers to Christmas, and to a productive 2018.

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# 10 Ways To Make Your Business Meetings Productive

By Ojeh Toju

For the proper running of organizational structures and broad-based strategizing, companies must not only hold meetings, but hold effective meetings. But all too often, meetings run longer than they should and fail to keep attendees engaged. Thus, it's our job at the Entrepreneur Africa to help you achieve the best results out of your business meetings. And, with additional materials from entrepreneur.com, we present you the following 10 guides on how to get the job done.

**Determine the objective.** A clear goal will set the tone for the meeting and determine its direction. Your goal should be specific and measurable. If you're expecting attendees to brainstorm, ask each participant to arrive with a list of ideas.

**Ask yourself if a meeting is actually necessary.** Meetings can be expensive. To calculate the precise cost, multiply the hourly wage of each person present by the length of the gathering. If your objective can be met through e-mail, conference call, Skype, or even a quick one-on-one discussion, skip the meeting altogether.

**Invite decision-makers.** The most effective meetings involve stakeholders to ensure decisions can be made immediately. If a key decision-maker is unavailable, ask a subordinate to attend. Ideally, this person will be able to speak for their supervisor, and--at the very least--take notes and report back.

**Stand up.** Routine meetings designed to touch base with employees and discuss status reports can usually be accomplished in 15 minutes or less. You'll be more likely to keep the meeting short and to the point if everyone remains standing.

**Schedule strategically.** If you want each meeting participant to be fully engaged, avoid Monday mornings, when everyone is

catching up on e-mail. Also avoid Friday afternoons, when employees are busy wrapping up the week and looking forward to the weekend. Schedule meetings on a day and time when participants are most likely to engage.

**Set a time limit and stick to it.** Meetings that drag on for hours cause attendees to lose patience and focus. Attention spans are short, and time is valuable. The most productive meetings start on time and end on time.

**Prioritize the agenda.** Don't leave the most important topics for last. To ensure that the highest priority objectives are met, discuss the most pertinent issues first. That way, if someone needs to step away or leave the meeting early, you'll still have accomplished your main goals.

**Stick to the agenda.** The agenda is an outline--a framework--to keep everyone on topic and to maintain the meeting's flow. The agenda should be kept to one page and should not include anything other than main topics of conversation. Sidebar conversations waste valuable time. If participants insist on talking out of turn, step in and suggest that they talk after the meeting or schedule a separate discussion. Then segue immediately back to the topic at hand.

**Deliver concepts through stories.** When you present a group with key concepts or new ideas, especially models that are difficult to understand, explain why they should care. Frame the issue with a quick story and use examples.

**Wrap it up clearly.** At the end of the meeting, quickly reiterate any decisions, deadlines, and clarify any follow-up action required. All meeting participants should understand exactly what is expected of them. Schedule any follow-up meetings immediately.

# Thinking Of Where To Start A Business In Nigeria?

## 5 Reasons Why **Lagos** Is Your Best Bet.

By Kimberly Edokpayi



The quote that says 'if you can make it in Lagos, then you can virtually make it anywhere in the world' is, indeed, very true. The city provides first-hand experience of what might be considered 'real life' because it offers a vast market for any business an entrepreneur has in mind to do. It is a city of saints and sinners and you need to be on your toes all the time. There is room to make it in the city only if you can tap into the abundant opportunities available.

When it comes to becoming a self-made millionaire in Nigeria, there is no better place to be than Lagos. This is where anyone can start from the scratch and become a millionaire. Everyone in Lagos is a hustler; they are always busy working or doing something that will bring them money. Lagosians are taught to be 'street-wise'.

So what then makes Lagos, Lagos...?

1. It is one of the largest cities in Africa and with a growing population of about twenty million people; Lagos remains one of the best places to set up a business not just in Nigeria but in Africa. With GDP in 2014 pegged at \$90 billion, Lagos' economy stands as the 7th largest in Africa- bigger than Cote d'Ivoire and Kenya, two of the continent's most promising economies.
2. Lagos is a major financial centre in Africa; the megacity has the highest GDP, and also houses one of the largest and busiest ports on the continent. Centre of Nigeria's modern economy, Lagos has the largest share of working population in sub-Saharan Africa.
3. It is clear that whatever the size, and however the city is defined, Lagos is the centre of one of the largest urban areas in the world. With a population of perhaps 1.4 million as recently as 1970, its growth has been stupendous. A lot of people travel to Lagos from around the world daily for various reasons and the largest amongst visitors to Lagos are people who come from all around Nigeria and even Africa for commercial reasons, because besides the population of Lagos, it possesses more developed business infrastructures compared to other parts of Nigeria.
4. Lagos is currently home to 65 per cent of Nigeria's businesses, with a presence of over 2,000 manufacturing companies, 200 financial institutions and the largest collection of small and medium enterprises in Africa, it has also emerged as a major hub for the headquarters of national and global companies.
5. According to Lagos Global, Lagos is the premium destination to experience entertainment in Nigeria with ample opportunities for investment. The Nigerian music industry is the most dominant in Africa with most of the key performers based in Lagos. The e-commerce industry is the next frontier for the emerging markets; it is an unstoppable evolution

Overall, Lagos is the best place to start a generic business because of volume and the established commerce, so as a smart investor, you can take advantage of the growing population in Lagos and make money for yourself.



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RETIRED AT 55;  
ENTREPRENEUR  
AT 61

*Joan  
Agha*

Now She's Helping  
Other Businesses Succeed

By David Agu

As a young girl born and raised in a large polygamous family, the first thing Mrs Joan Agha learnt was how to share. Then she learnt how to work; and diligently, too. These have, in turn, come to represent the basic summary of the life 61-year-old

Mrs Agha has lived, is living, and intends to further live henceforth. With 38 years of marriage to the love of her life, Dr.

G.U Billy Agha, 4 children, and 3 grand kids, Mrs Joan Agha also stands tall as a role model on how to be a wife, mother, and grandmother. And very importantly, how to lead a great family life, despite choking work schedule. Following her degree in Business Administration from the University of Benin, and an MBA from the University of Lagos, Mrs Agha went ahead to

work in some of the best places in the country. From the Federal Ministry of Education to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), before she crossed over to the private sector, and to no other place than Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCO) and Later transferred to Shell Petroleum Development Company Limited (SPDC). In 2011, Mrs Agha retired from her plum job at Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC). She was then 55, but as she would say, still full of energy: retired but not tired. Thus, in the same year, she officially launched Joan Agha Foundation (JAF).

The Foundation (JAF) serves as a formal platform to continue her philanthropic work. Joan, very much interested in training and consulting, further birthed Joan Consulting (a management consulting outfit that has gone on to train the workforce of some big companies in Nigeria). In a few years of existence of both outfits, Mrs Agha has, through them, produced numerous entrepreneurs, empowered others, and helped companies become more productive and profitable. With further professional trainings, home and abroad, including a course at the Cranfield School of Management, London, Joan, at 61, could be said to be a total package. And in all of these, she says her greatest passion and satisfaction is helping bring smiles to faces where there were previously none; and this she does through JAF. In this interview with The Entrepreneur Africa, Joan Agha reveals that what has really led her and her family to success is their self-styled acronym, TINAG (i.e, There Is No Alternative to God). Excerpt.



**From your professional experience as an employee, first in government, and then in private sector, before retiring to set up your own outfit, how would you counsel employees who have ambitions to, someday, become entrepreneurs?**

The mistake some employees make is that they think that working for other people means that their entrepreneurial spirit should not manifest. Personally, whatever I do, I always do so heartily, believing that God is my supervisor at any point in time. So even when I was working for the various organizations I worked for, I was entrepreneurial. I tried to do my best, and be as innovative as possible, within the organizations. In my job descriptions and my responsibilities, nobody ever found me wanting. So, all these have helped me a whole lot, because now that I am on my own, I still wake up by 6am. When I was working in SHELL, the resumption time was 7am, and I got used to it. So, yes I still wake up by 6am. I get up, do my morning devotion and a little exercise. So, it's not difficult for me because that has been my pattern. Now that I'm on my own, I even have to work twice as hard because you're the one going to look for the money for the profit-making business and the non-profit foundation, you have to go talk to people to help carry this enormous responsibility.

That's it; if you plan to get out and start your own someday, then you need to start testing the waters first by being entrepreneurial within your current employment. Surely, it'll come in handy when you eventually venture out.

**You're an example of what's called retired but not tired. How true is this statement?**

Oh yes, I read somewhere of a 104 year old Chinese man who said, "you don't have to retire if you're doing what you love". Then I said, okay, no wonder I find out that I'm really not tired, I want to do a whole lot more. But, what would I have been doing, if not what I do now. Should I have just woken up each day and just vegetate, because I'm retired? I think I still have a whole lot of things to give to the world around me.

**What inspired you to venture into your own business after retiring from years of public and private employment?**

I became 61 this year, and my mum passed on at 85. What if God gives me such grace, so in the next 20-something years I'm supposed to be doing nothing? I think I'm still young and very much energetic, so I believe I still have a whole lot to give.

**What does the business of management consulting entail? As such consultant, what do you really do?**

Management Consulting is the practice of helping organisations to improve their performance, operating primarily through analysis of existing organisational problems and the development of plans for improvement. Consultants are experts in their own areas, and it is the expertise that people or organisations seek to

solve challenges confronting them. JOAN CONSULTING is into training. We train people on leadership, and on other various courses, depending on what the client wants. The name, JOAN CONSULTING was inspired by PHILIP CONSULTING, many years back. I just fell in love with that name and that was how I named mine JOAN CONSULTING. So we are into various levels of training, recruitment, and so on.

**How ripe is corporate Nigeria/Africa for the services rendered by consultancy firms like yours? Don't you think most companies still see it as "WASTE MONEY"?**

Yes, Nigeria is ripe for management consulting services, because, as in other countries, organisations here also, aside from on-the-job training, need fresh perspectives from third parties, with a view to continuous improvement. Besides, most organizations cannot train their staff by themselves while still focusing on work. So they'd rather outsource all that, including hiring.

**Tell us about your not-for-profit organisation, Joan Agha Foundation (JAF). How did it come about?**

I would say it started when I was in my mother's womb....(Laughs). Why do I say so? Because I was born into a very large polygamous family. But it was a wonderful one where you wouldn't know who gave birth to whom and we just did

everything in unison. We lived a communal life, sharing everything and it was beautiful. The mantra in the family then was that "it is only what cannot be broken that cannot be shared". So I said if I grow up, I would want to live this life of sharing and giving. That was how it started, so even before the foundation itself came into being, I was already paying school fees for people and doing some other things. When I was the president of the Catholic Women Organisation in St Michael

Raphael and Gabriel Catholic Church, Satellite Town, Lagos, for instance, we set up a help and care committee where we were helping women to pay hospital bills, children's school fees and so on. One time we had fundraising and we were able to give 33 of the women 100,000 naira each as loan to set up their own businesses. We were able to buy a brand new 30-seater coaster bus, and to make that happen, I had to sell the shares I had with a certain company (which I had designated for my retirement). But, it is true what they say, that givers never lack; so when I launched my foundation in 2011, someone asked me, "do you have a bus for this foundation?" I said "no" and he replied, "okay, I'll give you a bus". So, we officially started JOAN AGHA FONDATION (JAF) in 2011, alongside my 55th birthday. Nigerians with their heart of gold came out to really support the foundation.

**What has JAF been up to?**

We are basically into helping the youths and women. Why? Youths are not just the hopes of tomorrow; they are the hopes of today, because it's in the morning you'll know how the day will



Oh yes, I read somewhere of a 104 year old Chinese man who said, "you don't have to retire if you're doing what you love". Then I said, okay, ... I want to do a whole lot more.



go, thus any support we intend giving them, we should give them now. I'm very passionate about helping them financially, counselling-wise, and on mentorship. We have been able to give outright grants to 25 of them to set up their own businesses or expand the existing ones. We also grant scholarships to the brilliant ones among them. We have done that for 37 beneficiaries. For women, we've given about 64 of them business loans. But what we've decided to do for them now is what we do for the youths, find women that are really entrepreneurial and give out outright grants.

We also started the lecture series for women in entrepreneurship. We started this in 2013, because we realised it's not just to give out money; they also need to listen to successful women and how they made it in their fields.

**From your experience in supporting entrepreneurship through JAF, what can you say regarding entrepreneurial consciousness in Nigeria?**

Last September, we had 72 youths entrepreneurs apply for grant from JAF and then we shortlisted them to 22 and interviewed those 22. It was so impressive the kind of business ideas they have or were already into. There was one from Abuja that came together with different youths that speak different languages; Italian, Bulgarian, German and Chinese. They came together to form a consulting company. And what do they do, they interpret for companies, and individuals and get paid handsomely for their services.

**What would you say are the greatest challenges to entrepreneurial development in Nigeria?**

The greatest problem we have is electricity. Let the government try to fix electricity in the country. Once election is over, I believe that whoever has won requires the prayers of every one of us because once that person succeeds, the nation succeeds. Just imagine that we have electricity 24/7, year in year out, you'll be amazed what Nigerians are able to do. Nigerians are resilient people. You knock them down, they get back up and keep moving.

**What's next for Joan Agha Foundation?**

JOAN AGHA FONDATION wants to be able to build a skill acquisition centre. Because most people with the handiwork businesses; plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc, are always in demand. So we want to set up such a centre where the youths can be trained in those areas, and the training will be in such a way that it can be bench-marked with the best practices in the world. You can say "go to JAF, you'll get the best plumber or electrician" and so on. So by the Grace of God, we want to see that happen soon.

**How often does the empowerment scheme for the grants hold?**

It's been annual, and last year we gave outright grants to only 4 youths. This year we gave to 10, and by the Grace of God, in 2018, we hope to up the ante, even as we hope for extra support.



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• Featured Interview •

**Everyone Needs  
A Home;**

**And It's My  
Business To  
Get You A  
Good One**

**- Funke Kehinde**

**By Yinka Adebiyi**

**Beautiful Funke Kehinde has had tremendous experience in the real estate industry. We're talking about 17 years. But she has not always bee her own boss. She first had to deal with other bosses for 10 years, during which she worked for another real estate firm, first as Facility Maintenance Manager, and later as Head of Property (Lettings and Sales). But when the time came to take the bold entrepreneurial step, she knew. Thus, in 2010, Funke quit her job and launched her own real estate firm, Brilliant Concept International. Being a woman and running your own firm in an industry dominated by men are not the easiest of combinations. However, after seven years in this business, and haven grown Brilliant Concept from a small startup to a thriving real estate venture, it becomes clear that Funke was not here to play. Even if she was, she's definitely aiming to be among the big players now.**

**Funke holds a degree in Business Administration from Lagos State University, and is married with beautiful kids. In her words, "treating clients like family is both a guiding principle and a way of life". And like as she would add, "at Brilliant Concepts, we do not only make HOME OWNERSHIP A REALITY, but also search for BEST OPTIONS WITH FLEXIBLE PAYMENT TERMS FOR YOU. We have properties (Lands and Buildings) within and outside Lagos for sale at AFFORDABLE PRICES and FLEXIBLE PAYMENT PLANS". In this interview with The Entrepreneur Africa, Funke gives some insights into the real estate business, and much more. Excerpts.**



#### **How did you get into the Real Estate Industry and how has the journey been so far?**

Some years ago, my husband and I wanted to relocate and move to another location, we searched for apartments within our budget and could not find something suitable. About the same time, a Cousin of mine was also looking for a house to buy with Flexible payment options. The difficulty in finding a suitable apartment for my family and a house with flexible payment options for my Cousin woke up the desire to learn more about Real Estate. This awakened a passion in me which to the Glory of God birthed Brilliant Concepts International.

#### **Some People say Real Estate Business is Capital Intensive, how True is this?**

Real Estate Business can be classified into different sectors based on the Scope of Operation. There is the Agency and Brokerage part of it; and there is also the Real Estate Development arm of it. The Agency and Brokerage aspect of it does not require much capital. All you need to do here is to find available properties and find interested parties to either buy or lease them. More like being the Middleman between the available properties and the clients who need them. This does not require much capital. On the other hand, a Real Estate Developer will require more capital. This involves building houses for sale (Either with your own capital, Bank loans, or Offtakers Equity Contribution) for interested parties to buy. This aspect of Real Estate Business is more capital intensive.

#### **What business opportunities are there in the Real Estate Industry?**

There are many opportunities in the Real Estate Industry at the moment. Depending on your budget, you can buy Plots of land in Strategic Locations and Resell at a higher Price in a few Years. You can also buy Houses and pay over a period of time and then resell or even lease the Property and receive Yearly Rent. We have a wide range of good investment options with high Return on Investment for anyone at Brilliant Concepts. Just call on us and we will give you the available options.

### **What Special Services does Brilliant Concepts Provide?**

The major Pain of an Average Nigerian (Either in Nigeria or in Diaspora) is the PAIN OF ACCOMODATION AND INVESTMENT. Everybody desires to have a home to call his or her own. This is where Brilliant Concepts comes in. We help our clients overcome this pain. We have affordable homes to suit every budget, no matter how small, with flexible payment options up to 48 and 60 months.

We also offer advisory and Consultancy Services to our Clients on the best kind of Real Estate Investments to invest in.

### **How successful is Brilliant Concepts?**

To God be the glory, we can proudly say we have done well for a young thriving company. Our Strength is in our Clientele, and we continually strive to be better than we were the day before.

### **What's your greatest achievement so far in this business?**

My Greatest Achievement as the MD/CEO of Brilliant Concepts is the fact that I, along with my team have been able to help our Clients achieve their home Ownership Dreams. That gives me so much joy.



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# Law is a Noble Profession, Yes But It's Also A Business

— Tochukwu Onyiuke, Esq.

By David Agu

Tochukwu Onyiuke is the ideal lawyer. By that I mean the kind of man that makes you begin to give serious thoughts to going into the legal profession, if you were not already one, and if you're already one, but not actively practicing, a time spent with this pure gentleman is sure to make you rethink your decision. In this Yuletide Edition of The Entrepreneur Africa, Mr. Tochukwu shares a bit of his experience in years of active involvement in the business of law practice, and some of the key principles that can help one thrive in it. His journey in the legal arena began at the University of Jos, Plateau State, North Central, Nigeria, where he obtained a degree in Law, before being called to the Nigerian bar in 2001. He proceeded to obtain a Masters in Financial Management from Middlesex University, London. He returned to join Punuka Attorneys and Solicitors (one of the top law firms in Nigeria) where he found a mentor in Chief Anthony Idigbe SAN, who headed the firm then. After four years of committed work

**and experience at Punuka, Mr. Tochukwu took a bold step to start his own independent practice. Thus, in 2011, in partnership with two of his former colleagues at Punuka, Azubuike Ezech and Deborah Chukwuedo, the law firm, Accendo Law, was formed from a merger of two independent firms. Now, with Tochukwu, Azubuike, and Deborah, each heading the firm's dispute resolution/litigation division, Commercial division, and Secretarial/Corporate/real estate division, respectively, Accendo Law has grown from a one-room law practice firm to a major player in the Nigerian legal arena, under six years. A growth, Tochukwu attributes to a great working relationship, dedication, and financial prudence among the partners. And very importantly, he emphasizes that whereas law practice is a noble profession, and must be so treated, however, every law firm must be run like a business, if the benefits of such hard work is to be reaped. Excerpts.**

**Law, by its nature, is regarded as a solemn profession, and as such is not often called a business, so to speak. But, in your opinion, would you say that law is a business?**

Yes, I would say that law is a business. I would also advocate that law firms should be managed and run like a business. I'm also of the view that those days of one-man practice should be over. In one-man practice, it's hard to attract international clients, because such clients want to see that risks and burdens of their brief are shared, such that the absence of one lawyer does not mean the stalling of the progress of the client's transaction. The most difficult part of running a law firm is managing the outgoings. So, here at Accendo Law, what we've done is that for each file, especially in litigation, we have a record of the income and every expenditure that has been made will be recorded in the file. So, there has to be a synergy between the litigation clerk and the associates who are working on the file. And at the end of the case, you can do checks and balances, and be able to tell how much profit you've made in a particular transaction. This way, you're running practice like a business, and you're also ensuring that there are no loopholes, or leaking money. In addition, here we also audit our accounts at the end of each year.

Again, to achieve efficiency, you need to equip, energize, and encourage your staff. You must always endeavor to offer them incentives to appreciate their works. And it mustn't always be money. Things like promotions or holiday packages. In our law firm, apart from the staff salaries, each associate that works on a brief gets a certain percentage of the income. So by the time an associate adds up all that to their salary at the end of the month, they feel more motivated.

So, for a law firm to, not just survive, but thrive, it must be run like a business, to ensure the growth of the firm, the partners, and the associates.

**But, do you not worry that running a law firm like a business, stricto sensu, would, in the long run, derail the primary purpose of the profession, which is the pursuit of justice?**

I don't think so, because in our firm, for instance, we devote a portion of our income to the handling of pro bono cases. And we've done such cases even up to the Supreme Court level. Such steps are taken strictly in the interest of justice and humanity.

**There's a wide-spread complaint among young lawyers that the practice does not favour them financially. How true is this, and how can new wigs hit early success in law practice?**

But that's why it's called 'practice'; and that's why it has been known from time immemorial that law is a noble profession. So, anyone who intends to make a living out of the practice of law must be committed to the practice. I understand that it takes a bit of time to get to the promised land, if you're in practice, but that's how it is in such practice-based professions. It's the same with Accounting, Medicine, etc. It always takes a bit of time. For you to become a consultant in medicine, it may probably be in your late 30s, even if you graduated at 24. As long as it's called a practice, that's what you get. It's not the same as when you work for the oil companies, I.T, or telecommunication outfits. But the beautiful thing in this profession is that by the time the others in other fields are getting retired, that is when your skill begins to command you serious money, if you've been consistent. So, young lawyers should learn to be patient, hardworking, and know that their license to good life and wealth is in their hands. It may be postponed, but it'll come. A lot of lawyers live in wealth, but it didn't come in their 20s or early 30s. They worked, they travelled, they read extensively, and they denied themselves of so many things, while getting the experience. So, there's no short cut! And you must have a passion for it.

#### **From your years of experience at the bar, what can you say of legal practice in Nigeria, vis a vis the west?**

Nigerian law practice is evolving. I can say that quite a number of law firms in Nigeria, especially in Lagos, run an international-standard practice. You have law firms now that specialize in different areas of law. Firms that are being managed like a business. In the past 15 – 20 years, we have seen law firms that have tailored their practice to the standard you have abroad, especially England. You also see Nigerian law firms sending their associates and partners to big law firms in England for exchange programs. And because Nigeria is one of the biggest emerging markets in the world, there's a lot of foreign direct investment coming in. It's worthy of note that there are many law firms that are well-positioned here to handle all those transactions, notwithstanding their nature or novelty. So, we can say, law practice in Nigeria has grown, and is still growing, and definitely it can fairly compete anywhere in the world.



**Your firm, Accendo Law, is a partnership, and has obviously been doing well. What principles could be employed to run a successful partnership?**

There has to be commitment to quality, commitment to clients, and readiness to render solutions to client's problems. The partners have to be, sort of, friends. There also has to be accountability. All the partners must be ready to hold themselves accountable for the failure or progress of the firm. At our firm, we meet like two or three times a month to decide on the strategies to adopt at every juncture. It takes deliberate efforts to make a partnership work. It is not to be left to chances. Specializing, and continuous developments through seminars and conferences also need to be intentionally done. The firm's accounting is also a major aspect to making it work.

**At inception, your law firm, Accendo, began in just a room apartment. 6 years down the line, you now occupy such a big space, as office. How did you guys get here this fast?**

We are not where we want to be yet, you know; but I think that the partners in this firm, including my own self, have given a lot of time to building this practice. What has helped the most is that we long decided that it wasn't time to start making merry yet. We decided that this is the time to build. So, most of the income that is made is re-invested into the practice. Good accounting and prudent spending has helped us achieve a lot.

**What roles has your clientele played in getting you to where you are today?**

Having the right client has helped as well, yes. We treat our clients with great care, and as result we're often kept on retainers, and they pay us accordingly. But there are also another set of clients who don't really pay, but we still keep them, because through them other briefs that pay well come in. So, it's all a game of balance. Again it's very important to keep in touch with clients.

**As the world embraces the digital economy, what are the new opportunities that have been opened up in the field of law?**

New opportunities abound in digital law, telecom and multimedia. The opportunities in I.T law are enormous. In fact, I think it has overtaken the oil and gas practice. The digital law connects telecom, Intellectual Property practice, and entertainment law, and it's gradually getting to touch every aspect of human endeavor. Besides, that's where you find most of the richest people in the world today. Now, you could imagine how much money their lawyers make in dealing with their legal affairs.

**...For a law firm to, not just survive, but thrive, it must be run like a business, to ensure the growth of the firm, the partners, and the associates.**

# Luxury Meets Affordable

## as Ubi Franklin Launches Instant Apartment

By Yinka Adebiyi

The young-rich-hustler, Ubi Franklin, alongside his team, recently launched an online platform called INSTANT APARTMENT. The application is a platform that provides short, medium and long term luxurious property and accommodation services for guests.

Some of the luxurious services include: free Wi-Fi, swimming pool, 24 hours uninterrupted power supply, cable TV, provision of a car and chauffeur for mobility, free pickup from the airport and many more.



According to the Managing Director, Ubi, the platform's goal is to help customers gratify their various tastes and needs with the wide range of luxury apartments which have been made available (27 as at the time of launch). It's also an avenue for property owners to advertise their properties to potential guests across the globe and all these can be done on their website, [www.instantapartment.com](http://www.instantapartment.com).

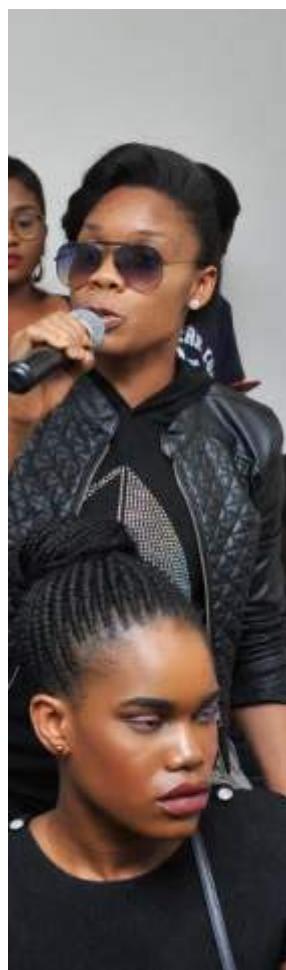
Speaking at the press conference, Ubi added, "Apartments on the platforms are carefully selected and the hosts are thoroughly verified to provide the best accommodations and additional services like a free meal on the first day of arrival, restaurants, events, recreation centres, among others".

Guests at the launch event unanimously agreed that this is a brilliant and innovative project. In the words of David Agu, Editor of The Entrepreneur Africa, "this new platform has opened up a new way for property owners to earn good income, without tenancy headaches or the hassles of running a hotel. Ubi is clearly ahead of his generation. And this would make it his 8th company."

When asked if he's not worried of the challenge of competing with Airbnb, an international giant which provides similar services, Ubi simply replied, "Oh, I don't see them."

So, in case you're planning for a vacation in Lagos this yuletide, Instant apartment seems ready to give you a home treatment.

The Entrepreneur Africa was at the launch in Lekki, Lagos, to bring you pictures.



# Had Losses In 2017? Find Out How To Change That For 2018.

By Kimberly Edokpayi



At the end of the year, it is important for businesses to calculate the GDP for the year to know if it leads to profit or loss. Just as it everyone aspires to make that big profit for the year, it's not uncommon for businesses to operate at a loss, especially those still finding their feet. Most businesses face losses at some point or another; they often operate at a loss temporarily when starting out or in periods of growth. This is okay if you've got enough in the bank to cover the costs of running your business until your income picks up. Whether you are facing start-up losses or you are a long-established company weathering a tough economy, part of owning your own business means you may be able to soften the blow of an economic downturn, depending on the type of losses incurred?

Generally, operating at a loss is when you're spending more money than is coming in to the business, where business expenses exceed revenues, you have a loss. It could result from anything; from one-time costs to get your venture going, a low point in your business cycle, a big advertising campaign or simply because you expanded your company.

But if your business is frequently operating at a loss because of slow sales, you'll need to make some changes to how your business is running in the coming year. Think about consulting an advisor to help you turn things around.

## What to do if you're operating at a loss

- Reduce your expenses
- Is there anything you can cut from your spending?
- Can you reduce the amount of drawings you're taking from the business?
- Try to negotiate better deals from your suppliers.
- Sell assets you're no longer using.

## Increase your sales.

- Can you charge more for your product or service?
- How can you sell more of your product or service?
- Can you get more customers?

## Get advice

An advisor may be able to help you turn it around. Advice from an accountant or business advisor can help you get your business back on track and avoid trouble ahead.

## Avoid these common pitfalls:

- Having your head in the sand about being in a loss position.
- Not having a plan in place to get back out of it.
- Purchasing things you can't pay for — if you go to a supplier when you know you can't pay the invoice, you're operating in an insolvent position and can be made bankrupt.

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DON'T BE A  
**Control Freak**

**Allow People To Do Their Jobs!**



**Every month, on this column, we bring you words of wisdom from this proven, world renowned business leader, Strive Masiyiwa. Strive is Zimbabwe's richest man and founder of Econet, Kwese TV, etc. Enjoy!**

Over the years I have talked a lot about the importance of People in building your business. Now let me tell you something which should be obvious: Allow them to do their jobs! This can be very hard because most entrepreneurs are "control freaks."

They want to do everything themselves and find it difficult to let go. If you cannot go away for several weeks and leave someone in charge who is not related to you, then you don't know how to allow others to do their job!

It all begins with trust. You have to trust the skills of the people, and you have to trust the processes. It is maintained in respect.

My friend came by once and asked me to give his son a job. "I don't know how to do it," I replied.

"But it's your company, you just need to issue an instruction."

"Out of respect for the people I put in charge, I can never issue such an instruction," I replied.

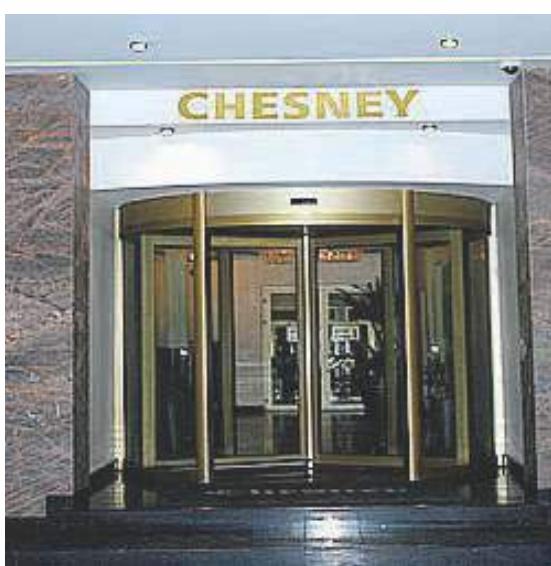
These things are so difficult to understand for ordinary people who do not appreciate how high performance businesses operate. If I appoint someone CEO, he really is the CEO. I cannot issue him or her instructions like a schoolboy.

When you let people do their job, trust them and give them respect, you will have mastered how businesses grow big.



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# Thinking Of Rocking Your Jeans To Work?

READ THIS FIRST!

By Drusilla I.B.O

Before you slip on a pair of weekday jeans, consider your workplace and what is appropriate—if you are a banker or a lawyer, you might be limited to twill trousers even on Casual Friday! But if you work in a more casual profession, you have to know how to rock it well to work.

Here are some ways to rock that jeans to work...



#### Pull it all Together With a Great Blazer

A tailored blazer that fits well is exactly what is needed to take a casual pair of jeans to the next level. The blazer is one of the oldest “professional” staples in the book, and the same goes for wearing the jacket style with jeans. Try upgrading a sleek pair of jeans with a structured blazer. Think suit and match light colours with light and dark with dark.



### Go Monochromatic

If basic blues feel too casual, try monochromatic. An all-black look is easy to pull off, while an all-white ensemble will convey softness. For added oomph in either option, play with mixed textures and materials.



### The Darker The Wash, The Better.

When it comes to the jeans themselves, a darker wash is always better for the office. Lighter washes tend to appear more casual and give off a certain laissez-faire vibe; a dark jean says you mean business. Whether you opt for a deep blue or an honest black wash, go with a super-skinny jean for maximum sleekness. Rips however are not appropriate for most offices.

### Buy a Silk Blouse

A sweet silk blouse will give your jeans a feminine feel-look for tops with pretty patterns or intricate necklines. If your workplace is more formal, skip distressed denim and go for a crisp pair of dark-wash jeans.



### Tuck Your Blouse/ Shirt in.

This may seem like a bit of a "duh" moment, but simply tucking in your shirt is a great way to show you're putting effort into your look. A blouse is your best bet, though a sweater in a relatively thin fabric could also look seriously chic. For an edgier approach, tuck in the front portion.

### Shoes Matter

To keep the look pulled together and professional, veer towards the direction of shoes you might otherwise wear at the office. Think structured pumps, professional looking wedges/ heels or well-fitting flats. The easiest way to instantly transform a pair of casual jeans into professional pants? Throw on a pair of heels.



## Time Magazine Sold Amidst Political/Economic Considerations

US magazine publisher Time Inc. will be bought by rival media company Meredith Corporation for \$2.8bn (£2.1bn). The deal is backed by the billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch, who are known for supporting economically conservative causes. Meredith is an Iowa-based publisher and broadcaster which has made two previous unsuccessful bids for Time.

Time has struggled with declining advertising revenues since it was spun off from Time Warner in 2014. In addition to Time, the company also publishes People, Sports Illustrated, Entertainment Weekly and Fortune magazines.

In the UK, Time Inc's titles include Wallpaper, the NME, Horse & Hound, World Soccer, Uncut, Women's Own, Ideal Home, and Anglers' Mail, among others.

In November, Time's third quarter revenue slipped 9.5% to \$679m, marking the sixth straight quarter the publisher fell short of analysts expectations. "This all-cash transaction, and the immediate, certain value it provides, is in the best interests of the company and its shareholders," Time's Chairman John Fahey said in a statement. Meredith owns print publications Family Circle and Better Homes and Gardens as well as local television stations across the US. The company said the deal would give it nearly \$700m in digital advertising revenues and an "unmatched reach" to the valuable millennial customers, in their twenties and thirties.

### Political activism'

As part of the deal, Meredith has secured \$650m from the Koch brothers' private equity arm, Koch Equity Development. The two brothers run Koch Industries, which is one of the world's largest privately-owned companies, with interests ranging from pipelines to paper towels.

According to the Koch Industries website, "to millions of Americans, the words 'Koch brothers' and 'political activism' go hand-in-hand". They've long championed economically conservative candidates and

causes, but they've also pushed criminal justice reform and made large donations to the American Civil Liberties Union. Their involvement in a media deal is likely to raise concerns that they'll use their investment to wield influence.

A suggestion they might attempt to acquire the Los Angeles Times and Chicago Tribune in 2013 sparked petitions and protests from readers concerned about their intentions.

However, Meredith said the Koch brothers won't be given a seat on the board of Time Inc, and won't have any managerial or editorial input.

### Person of the Year

Meredith says the acquisition of Time Inc will give its brands a readership of 135 million and paid circulation of nearly 60 million. "We believe this acquisition represents a transformative and financially compelling growth opportunity for Meredith Corporation and will increase shareholder value over time," Meredith's chief executive Stephen Lacy said in a statement.

Even if Time Inc has struggled in recent years, its eponymous magazine still holds significant cultural influence. An example is its "person of the year" issue, which is now in its 90th year. The issue recognises the person who "for better or for worse... has done the most to influence the events of the year".

Past recipients have included almost every sitting US president, Queen Elizabeth, Pope John Paul II and Mahatma Gandhi. More controversially, Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler also both received the recognition.

This year's choice made headlines last week, after US President Donald Trump claimed he was expected to be given the title for a second consecutive year. Time magazine disputed the president's claim, and said it did not comment on the cover story before publication.



Newcastle Hotel is a top-class 3-Star hotel located at Block 15, Plot 20&21 TF Kuboye Road, by Oniru New Market, Victoria Island, Lagos. It is situated close to popular and exciting places in Lagos. The sandy Kuramo Beach, which is on the south side of Victoria Island, is just close by and the Elegushi Royal Beach is about 10 minutes away.

It boasts of over 50 rooms with modern furnishing and trappings which are categorised into Castle Standard, Castle Deluxe, Castle Royal, Castle Business, Castle Diplomatic and Castle Ambassador. Rooms come fitted with a soft bed, fridge, flat screen television, work table and chair, and en-suite toilet and bath; some of its terrace overlooks the sea and some the city.

Guests at Newcastle Hotel can relax or enjoy a swim in the standard pool. The on-site restaurant boasts tasty and mouthwatering dishes accompanied by a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks provided by the well-stocked bar. The lounge is also open to guests to relax, meditate, mingle or take in the scenery.

Some of the other hotel facilities include: free Wi-Fi connection, mini-bar, hairdryer (on-demand), smoking room, ample parking space, event centre, on-site wedding coordinator and premium customer service.



**Block 15, Plot 20&21 TF Kuboye Road,  
by Oniru New Market, Victoria Island, Lagos.**

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# Did You Achieve Your Business Goals For 2017?

By Tony Okoroafor

The year is coming to an end, but it doesn't mean your business is coming to an end. But your business can gradually come to an end if you do not understand the need to always set business goals and work towards the realization of such goals.

Many entrepreneurs do not understand the importance of setting business goals. This is the major reason many businesses never really reach their full potentials, do not maximize their profits, have no succession plan and hardly survives a generation.

One of the characteristics of successful companies is that they work on targets. They set milestones and work towards the accomplishment. When you have a business goal before you, it gets your creative juices flowing. One mistake that most business people make is that they try to wait when everything is available to start setting gigantic business goals.





You don't need to see the whole staircase to get to the last floor. All it requires is one step after another. You need to be smart to set business goals and goals make you smarter. It is not the entrepreneur that has all the resources that makes it to the top; it is the one with smart ideas who knows how to get things done. I was reading one of Robert Kiyosaki's books one day when I read a particular statement that got me thinking for months. Let me try to paraphrase that statement. He Wrote: "I may not be the best writer in the world, but I have sold millions of copies of my books. In other words, I am not a best-writing author but a best-selling author".

You may not be a professor of business management but common business sense can take your business from local to international level. Of course, with the concomitant massive profits.

Early this year, I set a massive challenging goal to add other businesses to the ones I was already doing, because I wanted to increase my streams of income. One of the businesses I had in mind to establish was capital intensive. But I had made up my mind that I must do it. After all, I had gotten some knowledge that taught me that in the School of Creativity, money comes last.

As it is my style, before procrastination could knock on my door I had gone into the business. The initial capital required to take off was N35million. But what I had was less than N2million. It seemed practically impossible to make that move. But when your goal is in the driving seat of your business, you can develop supersonic imagination to decimate obstacles. Long story cut short, the business was started and has achieved massive success, even without borrowing a dime. As a matter of fact, the business has so grown that one is still wondering how such feat was achieved in such a short period of time.

The current business you are running now has the capacity for quantum leap. It has the capacity to triple or even quadruple its profitability within the existing resources. You need to awaken the dormant giant sleeping inside that business. Most times when you tolerate the level you are operating at, it will remain like that. I tell people not to complain about what they permit. The inherent capacity is there for your enterprise to become a Group Of Companies. If you set a goal to break out of your shell, you can turn your business to a conglomerate in a record time.

The difference between where your business is right now and where it should be is largely a gap in knowledge and action. I normally tell people that starting somewhere is great, but remaining there is tragic.

Business leaders in their field of endeavours do not remain static in thinking. They are always hungry to conquer new frontiers.

Personally, anything I accomplish in a particular year becomes obsolete to me the next year. That is what supplies me the energy and mental stimulation to go and conquer new grounds. Do not revel in past glory when men are planning to build holiday resorts in the sky.

If you think you don't have the right skill-set and mental attainment to do certain things to advance your business, seek for a mentor, broaden your horizon by reading, or talk to a consultant. The year is ending. Those who don't take stock become a laughing stock. Do this; I will see you at the top.



• Deal Maker •

# Meet 42-Year-Old Chinedu Echeruo, Who Made \$1bn From Apple And Returned To Make Africa Great Again.

By Yinka Adebisi

Chinedu Echeruo, founder of HopStop.com, is \$1 billion richer courtesy of the sale of his company to Apple. HopStop.com makes mobile applications for both iOS and Android that covers over 300 cities throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe, and the United Kingdom. With the sale, Echeruo is now the chairman of the Board for HopStop.

Ten years ago Chinedu Echeruo was a hedge fund manager and frustrated New York City resident lost in a vast bus and subway system. His desire to fix the dilemma of figuring out how to get from point A to point B using public transit led to the invention of HopStop.com, a pedestrian navigation service that helps people get door-to-door directions or find nearby subway stations, bus stops, taxi service providers, and car rental places.

A former analyst at Investment Bank and Hedge Funds, Echeruo founded HopStop in 2005. He grew up in Eastern Nigeria and attended Kings College, Lagos.

In 2007, Black Enterprise presented HopStop with the Small Business Innovator of the Year Award, which recognizes companies that have set trends and broken new ground in a particular industry. HopStop grew 250% in three years, from \$574,268 in revenue for 2007 to \$2 million in 2010 and an estimated \$5 million in 2012.

In a historic move, HopStop was sold to Apple Inc, for what some

analysts estimate to be \$1 billion (Echeruo is not at liberty to reveal details of the acquisition due to a non-disclosure agreement). HopStop's acquisition by Apple helps to bolster the hardware company's software mapping tools.

The 42-year old innovative businessman accomplished what he set out to do, which was to bring products and services to market that solve problems and make a profit for the founding entrepreneur, investors, and shareholders.

With the sale of HopStop, Echeruo returned to his native Nigeria where he is a principal at Constant Capital Partners Ltd, a boutique investment bank and personal investment company in West Africa.

His main focus is making Africa the next global economic frontier. On his next step in life, he has launched two companies so far: MindMeet and BoxCircles. MindMeet fosters a seamless exchange of information to inspire people and enrich lives in the process. By streamlining and merging technologies like calendaring and direct payments to charity, MindMeet is a fresh way for people anywhere in the world to exchange knowledge (virtually or in-person) in bite-size time slots. And also launched BoxCircles which is a people recommendation platform for entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs use BoxCircles to find the people their trusted network – their circle – have already worked with, and already love.



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THEY'RE USUALLY INTO PROPERTIES,  
CONTRACTS, OIL AND GAS;

## Beware of Abuja Con Men!

By Mabel Agbenyo

They drive a Mercedes or any exotic car and wear designer slippers to the mall acting careless with his bottle water and his perfume a bit heady. They pick a few toiletries or whatever and wait in their car acting like they are on a phone call till you get out and notice their latest iPhone and Samsung on their lap. Sisters do not fall for this, it is a scam!!! If you must exchange number just keep your guards up because I tell you most of them live out of their cars. There is always a traveling bag or two in the boot of their car and they have no stable accommodation.

Same thing they do in clubs, nurse a glass of drink almost all night and smiling slyly around a corner acting like they own the place, these ones wait for you to step out to urinate before forming coincidences and asking for your number in the most charming and polite way that you will give without thinking twice.

You know how lots of empty estates are scattered around Abuja? So here is what they do. They pay the security guards and the guards in turn let them camp overnight in houses yet to be rented or sold or furnished apartment where owners are not in the country and they clear out in the mornings and start the hustling of getting babes living alone. They are usually into "Properties, contracts, oil and gas".

When they tell you the above occupation, sister shine your eyes. (I know this because they caught lots of security men in the estate where we used to live).

Some of them claim to live with friends in a big house and they don't want you being around their "Lousy friend" because you are special but they are cool with you hanging out with their friends. That way you are never allowed into the house, they invite you to their friend's place to chill but never where they live because well, they don't trust their friends. LIE!!!

Two three months into the relationship they must have tried to impress the girl and hint at marriage because that's all most ladies want to hear. Whether they come and shout "I don't care about marriage" or they form "miss independent" SOME ladies fall when they start hearing marriage. So these men will form marriage then gradually move in with you without you realizing it. It will just be "my man is so loving, he likes being close to me or at my place".

They bring home food most nights and sleep over then give you the grand lie. "My rent just expired and since we are about getting married I don't want to pay another rent in that apartment, it will be better if I move in with you so we save the money and pay for a bigger place before wedding, don't worry my things will be at your place but I will mostly stay with Mo (they all have a fall back guy who is somehow related to the president or FCT minister or one top shot politician).

When they say this, sisters I beseech you therefore, hold your ears and slap yourself back to reality. You have just been faced with a classic Abuja boy. Let them move in at your own peril, they never leave until you throw them out and that is usually very difficult because they are always charming and you can't find anything wrong with them.

If you mistakenly meet the mad ones like few of my friends have met then "E don be for you". The mad ones will take over your life and home, they will start forming ownership and even threaten you, they will convert your things to theirs and they will make you feel like you are a bad person for complaining.

Home owners are coming back to the country for Christmas so the boys are clearing out of their "houses" and they have intensified their games. Don't say I didn't tell you. I have seen this happen to a lot of ladies in Abuja and I can tell you it is not funny.



# Brickwall Group

## Six Years and Successful

By Yinka Adebiyi

Recently, management and staff of Brickwall Global Investment Ltd (Brickwall Group) marked the company's 6th anniversary, in low-profile style. The company, which officially took off in November 2011 as a single real estate firm, has grown so fast under six years to become one of the top real estate operators in West Africa, and diversified its investment to other sectors of the economy, including construction, health, hospitality, and transport.

Founded by Mr. Uche Ahubelem (who has been described as accidental entrepreneur by The Entrepreneur Africa), the company took off in a two-shop space at Balogun market. However, within 6 years of

existence, it now has more than 9 major offices in major cities in Nigeria, including Lagos, Enugu, Asaba, and Owerri. Brickwall has also contributed greatly to easing the country's unemployment challenges, as it

currently employs more than 500 workers across the country.

In the words of the Chairman/GMD, Mr. Uche Ahubelem, "hard work and commitment to solving customers' needs have largely brought us this far. Also treating our staff right has helped. This is a matter of garbage-in-garbage-out; what you put in your staff is what you get out of them. Treat them right, keep them motivated, and they produce better results for you. Such is our approach here, at Brickwall".



Mrs. Zeinab Maduagwu, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the company had this to say, "although I joined the company just a year ago, from what I've been a part of in that short period, I can say that when we say that Brickwall is a global investment group, it's not just mere words. We're going global. If Brickwall has risen to this national high-standing in six years, then imagine when the company clocks 10".

The head of the company's ICT department, Mr. Olusegun Gideon insists that Brickwall is the best real estate firm in Nigeria, going by a combination of the size of its property holdings, Treatment of clients

and handling of prospects. In his words, "This is the only real estate firm where prospects are given VIP rides to property inspections, they're treated to great meals while at it, and for just being prospects, they get other perks"

Brickwall currently has estate developments in Lagos,

Enugu, Asaba, Owerri, Ogun, and some other cities in Nigeria. Some of them include Mayflower Estate, Green Gate VIP Estate, Igbesa Estate, Santa Florida VIP Estate, etc.

Within the 6 years period, the company also became a group, launching out its subsidiaries in other sectors of the economy. Some of its subsidiaries include Brickwall Pharmacy, Brickwall Construction, Yummy (a fast-food and hospitality outfit), etc.

In view of the above and more, it is, therefore, correct to say that Brickwall is six and successful.



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# 7

## CHEAP AND INTERESTING WAYS TO ATTRACT MORE CUSTOMERS TO YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

By Yinka Adebiyi

No matter how great your products or services are, your business will not make any money unless customers are willing to buy them. No customers, no business. Period! However, most small businesses experience hard times or fail, not because customers do not want to buy their products, but because customers don't even know their products/services exist in the first place. So, with help from [smallstarter.com](http://smallstarter.com) we bring you these cheap and highly effective ways by which small businesses can market and advertise their products and services.

- **Word-of-mouth always works!** This is definitely the oldest form of marketing and advertising used by businesses since the world began. While it may bring slower results than radio or television, it still works very well. Because people are becoming increasingly suspicious of paid advertising, I still think word-of-mouth remains one of the most trusted methods in the world today. When a customer is happy and satisfied with a product or service, there's a natural human tendency that they are likely to share this experience with people in their circle of trust and influence – family, friends, colleagues, neighbours and sometimes, strangers.
- **Free' works like magic!** Everybody loves free stuff. Giving away some of your products and services for free lets people out there know that you exist, gives you a chance to prove the value of your product or service and show that it really works and provides your future customers with a risk-free way to try out your products or service without spending any money. And if customers find value in your products or services, they will be willing to pay money for it. Let's say George wants to start a barbershop in his neighbourhood and he's looking for a simple, cheap and effective way to advertise and kick-start his new small business. He decides to put up a sign in front of his barbershop that reads: 'Free Haircuts. First 20 People Only'. This reads like a sign that will definitely catch a lot of attention, right? That is the power of free!
- **Offer discounts and deals.** Just like free stuff, discounts and deals work well too. They are another creative and low cost way to attract more customers to your business. People often see discounts and deals as a huge opportunity to save money and enjoy a product or service for a whole lot less. In fact, discounts and deals usually influence customers to buy more products or services than they initially planned. They love to 'take the opportunity' because the same products may not be so cheap tomorrow.

**Everybody loves free stuff. Giving away some of your products and services for free lets people out there know that you exist, gives you a chance to prove the value of your product or service and show that it really works and provides your future customers with a risk-free way to try out your products or service without spending any money.**

- **Start a Contest.** Everybody loves to win. It's not just always about the prize you win, it's the thrill of getting lucky or beating other people. Call it 'ego' or whatever you like, but it always works.
- **Are you on Social media?** Social media is changing the way business is done in today's world. Popular social media networks like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook are some of the top places where your potential customers hang out and it makes perfect sense that you register your business there too.
- **Print and Distribute Flyers.** Flyers remain a simple but very effective way to publicise and advertise your business. They usually work best for small businesses that target customers within a particular area (such as university campuses, residential estates, offices and industrial areas). To try out this method of advertising, you don't need to invest in very expensive flyers. If you have limited funds, its best you focus more on the message you want to deliver and not on the pictures, graphics or colours.
- **Get Involved In Volunteer Work.** Doing volunteer work is often an overlooked opportunity to enjoy free publicity. Get involved in volunteer work in your community, church or mosque. Sponsor an event or offer your services for free.



# Christmas Came Early At Royal Hair

By Ojeh Toju

It's the festive season again, a time where fashion, beauty and style is really displayed amongst everyone especially the ladies. Hair is a major accessory in women's fashion, and that is why it is very necessary to get the best hair products during this season. The "man making it in a woman's business" Steve Thompson, CEO of Royal Hair, speaks on the type of products and services Royal Hair will be giving to customers this season and what to look out for in the New Year.

According to Steve, "Hair is different, it's not like cloth or handbags or shoes. Hair is like gold and diamonds, you don't buy gold and diamonds anyhow, and you need to buy from a trusted brand. Hair requires hard work, it's not about the money it's about building trust, making your customers to trust that your hair doesn't tangle or shred, and that is what Royal Hair is all about. Buying from ROYAL HAIR means buying original and quality hair".

With over 30 hair companies sending them hair products, Royal Hair is most definitely coming in with a new and different set of quality hair this season, from French curls to bone straight hair to candy curl to bouncing waves that will suit every woman. As a way to celebrate customers this season, there will be a 40% discount on all products.

Also, next year Royal Hair will be expanding into new products, they're going into a new line of hair creams, hair dye, edge control, hair conditionals, hair shampoos and all other hair products that would flood the market.

And for those saying "how long or fast can I get my hair when I order for it?" Well, with branches in Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt, Royal Hair are the only hair companies that can deliver hair the same day anywhere you are in Nigeria, so their reach is quite wide. Having partnership with DHL and FEDEX, they deliver almost every 2days to the US and UK.

So thinking of getting quality Hair this season, we suggest you try ROYAL HAIR...





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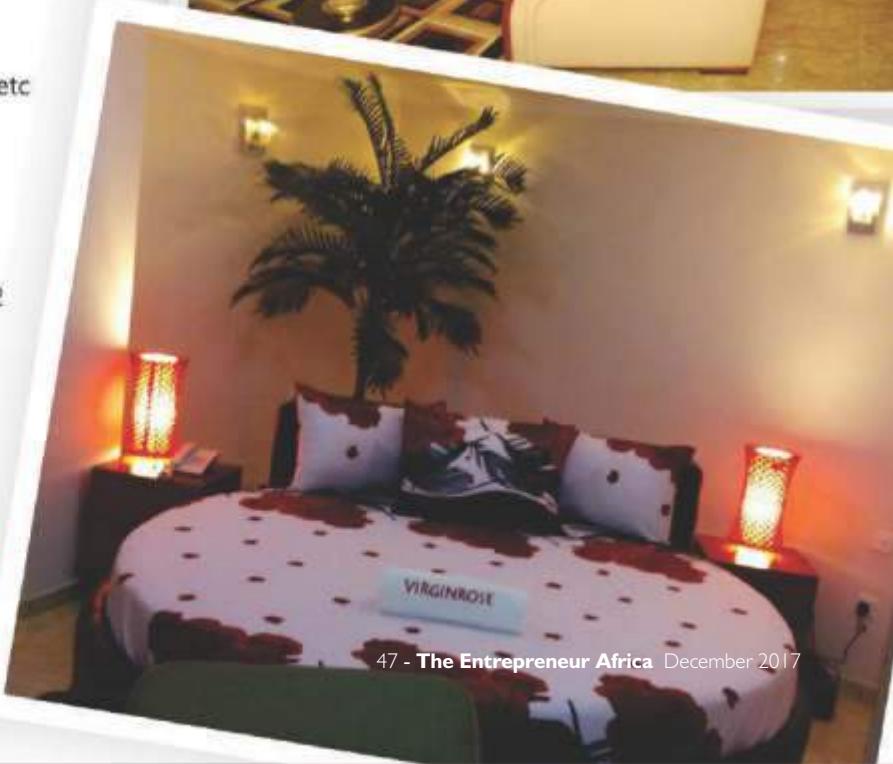
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