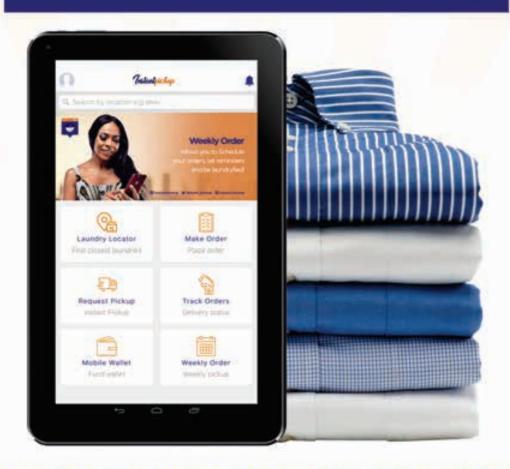




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Building people with passion...

The Entrepreneur Africa October 2017

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EDITOR'S NOTE



How long is 'long enough' for the measurement of the success, or otherwise, of a business venture to commence? 3 months, 6 months, or 3 years? Methinks it all depends; on the nature of business, type of industry, the ultimate height intended, amount of initial capital, etc. But more importantly, it really depends on what success means to the business owner(s), in the particular line of business chosen. Success is not always measured in terms of actual profit made. Yet, a non-profiting business can hardly be described as a successful business.

What, then, is the success in business, and when is the adequate time to begin its measurement? I'll start with the later. First, on the nature of business. Media ventures, especially newspapers and magazines publishing, for instance, according to a school of thoughts, needs to have existed for 3 years before the owners can begin to expect profits. If this school of thoughts were to be believed, it means that the first 3 years of existence of a media business are periods of continuous investment, and zero or minimal expectation of profits. Again, if this school of thoughts were to be believed, can a media venture be described as successful even before the 3 years, or major profitmaking mark, whichever is first? Methinks the answer is 'yes'. How about a trader, an importer or exporter, for instance? For these ones, it would be correct to say that the measurement of the success, or otherwise, of their venture, is immediate. This is because, anyone who imports or exports a container or more of any product expects immediate profitable returns, to enable them make a return, otherwise such endeavor folds up, and the business is described as a failure. How about the developer of major real estate properties for letting/leasing purposes? For such a major venture, it could take more than 5 years to even recover the invested funds before banking on profits. The instances are endless. And, indeed, on this subject matter, it is safe to say that what is good for the goose may not be good for the gander. Business success, therefore, is a relative state of affairs.

For us at The Entrepreneur Africa Magazine (TEAM), we are pleased to announce that this has been a successful venture. Not because we dispute the postulation that a media firm like ours needs at least 3 years to start expecting good profits; no. But because this is a social enterprise, and financial profit is not the ultimate measurement of this kind of venture, although that cannot be wished away. What, then, are the indices of our success? The first edition of this magazine dropped in May, 2017. Then, we promised to keep it monthly. This is November, 2017, just six months after, and this edition is the 7th issue. Since its inception, no month has passed without a new edition. Being able to maintain this frequency and consistency, for us, is a kind of success, because only a few magazines in Africa have been able to keep it going this way. Again, our audience has grown greatly. In 6 months of existence, our hard copies have a monthly reach of over 70 thousand readers in Nigeria, while the digital copies have been downloaded by thousands across over twenty countries, including Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, United States, U.K, Canada, etc. We've also established major followership among most of our

regular readers. Whenever there's a delay in releasing a new edition each month, the messages from our followers often keep us restless. How about the impacts made? A lot of ideas have become actual businesses in the last couple of months due to the encouragement received from reading the magazine monthly. And many struggling startups have picked up after applying the practical business principles often shared every month on this magazine. Again, this magazine has become like a trophy. For every accomplished entrepreneur whose story is featured here, it is a symbolic award. It is a demonstrative salutation, and an encouragement to do more, and a promise to the upcoming that someday, they, too, shall be celebrated. The Entrepreneur Africa has been well accepted in and outside of business/corporate circles, and we're just getting started. The presence of some of the most important names in business and entertainment, in Nigeria, at our last September 30 launch event is only a testimony to how well we've done under 6 months. These and more, have given us reasons to smile and feel fulfilled in the last 6 months. This, to us, is success.

In this November issue, titled New Frontiers Edition, we present you Ubi Franklin, who is a great example of how to be young and successful. We wish you great success (however manner you define yours). It's time to break out; to conquer new frontiers. Cheers.

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Mastering the art of small talk is a stepping stone to a more successful career. Small talk is not only a crucial part of the business realm, it is a skill that will help you develop meaningful connections, grow your circle of business contacts and friends and diffuse awkward situations.

In a world in which we are often focused on our smartphones or computers, face-to-face interaction is the gateway to building new relationships with colleagues or business contacts.

Here are some tips to help you start that smart business conservation.

Be confident Eye contact and body language is very important in building a rapport. Don't shy away or be overbearing. Give the other person enough time to talk and listen

Get off your smartphone conversing with someone while fixated on your phone is rude. Give the person you're talking to your full attention.

Ask for stories, not answers One way to get beyond small talk is to ask openended questions. Aim for questions that invite people to tell stories, rather than give bland, one-word answers. Instead of.....

"What do you do?"

"What line of work are you in?"

"What's your name?"

"How long have you been living here?"

Try....

"What's your story?"

"What's the strangest thing about where you grew up?"

"What's the most interesting thing that happened at work today?"

"How'd you end up in your line of work?"

"Who do you think is the luckiest person in this room?"

Avoid complaining if you don't have anything positive to say rather say nothing. Complaining often puts you in a negative light, so rather keep the conversation upbeat.

Arm Yourself with Relevant Topics People love to talk about the news, and it's an easy way to step up boring bits of small talk and turn it into a fun conversation. Walking in with a few topic ideas in mind is a good way to direct a conversation. Develop a habit of catching news of some type on a daily basis. Just a quick scan of the headlines is plenty, along with reading a few articles or catching a few stories that are particularly unusual or interesting. A good conversationalist is at least vaguely familiar with current events and can discuss trending topics about noteworthy world leaders, celebrities, notable weather or astronomical events, and other general interest stories.

- Toss out Ideas until Something Catches on when you're starting a conversation, not all topics will catch on right away. Sometimes the other person simply doesn't have much to say about that subject or maybe it just takes time for them to warm up. Keep your first attempts light and breezy. When something seems to catch their attention, hover on that topic.
- Avoid Inappropriate Topics in a Business Conversation When you open up and expose who makes the most money, you've put the conversation on unequal footing. Leave out mentions of how much you make or what big purchases you've made, like how much your car or home cost. There are some topics to avoid if you're going to be a stellar conversationalist Here are the subjects to steer clear of:
- Religion & Politics (if you disagree, it's easy to stray into hostile conversation).
- Problems at work (not only is it boring and negative, but there could be unexpected consequences, for example, you never know what could get back to your boss).
- Family and/or relationship problems (until you are intimate friends, family troubles are just too much information).
- Income and/or Expensive purchases (it sounds like bragging and is a real turnoff).

These topics are often sensitive and can lead to tense, awkward situations. Rather go for topics of common interest such as travel, sports, business and current affairs. Use your judgment to assess the situation and introduce a suitable topic according to the circumstances.

A skilled conversationalist understands it's not always how much you say, but rather what you say and, most importantly, what you hear from the person you're talking to. Small talk can just be that, too, and it can stil



(Every month, on this column,
we bring you words of wisdom from this proven,
world-renowned business leader, Strive Masiyiwa. In this edition we present you
this piece he wrote on how not to miss out on emerging
opportunities. Strive is Zimbabwe's richest man and founder of Econet, Kwese TV,
etc. Enjoy!)

My first contact with mobile telephony was actually at university in the early 1980s in a telecommunications class. At that time there were small systems operating in the US. I had one question on my mind: Why can't we introduce this technology in Africa?

running my own business, and focused on construction engineering. Having always subscribed to professional magazines, I knew about the excitement building up over mobile

telephony in Europe and America.

There was no Internet where I could "Google" to learn the latest developments but I did my best to keep up, sometimes going to the British Council to read foreign newspapers! I would often spend hours in the library at the University of Zimbabwe, even though I was never a student there. I would go there to read periodicals on engineering subjects.

One day an American guy who sold "walkietalkie" radios for the police forces came by my office and I began to pump him about this new

technology:

"Do you know if there is anyone in Africa

working on mobile phones?"

"There's a guy in Zaire who has started operating a small analogue system. He set it up in 1987. Has about 3,000 customers."

"Can you introduce me to him?"

"Definitely."

A few weeks later I was on my way to Zaire (now DRC). Mobuto was still President. That was 1991.

I began to travel to telecommunications equipment trade shows. During one of those trips in Germany, I went straight to the Siemens stand:

"I hear you guys recently shipped a small trial digital mobile switch to Cameroon."

"Where did you hear that?" the guy asked,

quite surprised.

He introduced me to his boss, who introduced me to his boss. Eventually someone admitted they knew something. They were behaving like it was some kind of state secret! Eventually someone introduced me to the guys at Siemens South Africa. It was now 1992.

"Since you are so smart, you obviously know that soon a new standard will be announced called GSM," the guy said laughing as I sat in

their Pretoria office.

"Then things are really going to take off," he said. "This game is not going to be analogue but digital."

"Yes, ľknow."

"What do you have in mind?" he asked.

"I want to set up my own business in Zimbabwe."

The story of my battle for a license in Zimbabwe, and subsequent successes in countries like Botswana, Lesotho, Kenya, New Zealand, are well documented. I have chosen to recount this part of the story in the Lion and The Ranger series, because there are key lessons for entrepreneurs running through this theme:

To get in early on new developments you have to be well read, and constantly learning! Right now, even as I write, there are things emerging that are going to be bigger than anything we have seen before, including mobile phones, and the Internet. These developments are known best by people linked to a particular field, and who are determined to stay at its cutting edge.

__lt does not matter what you are into, there is something going on there! It might be in cars, media, telephony, agricultural, manufacturing

technology... something is going on!

Once you spot an opportunity you must step up your learning about it. It will not come from one small write up. You will have to follow up, sometimes even for months or even years. There are no "short cuts." You must apply yourself.

Invest in yourself! See how I invested in both time and money to get the knowledge and contacts I needed. With your smartphone, in less than two weeks you could probably learn everything I took years to find out in those days...

Wow, you guys are so blessed! I could wait three weeks (or more) to get a reply to a letter for information. This now takes you a matter of seconds on the smartphone.

Act quickly. Don't procrastinate!

"If you see a bandwagon, it is already too late!" William Goldsmith, once said... As a student I once worked in a restaurant and I learnt it's not smart to order food when the kitchen is about to close. # You figure it out. Finally, always remember: # Your mindset!

Maybe you are not yet as successful as you want to be, or you feel you aren't successful at all

Every single lion in the history of the world started out as a cub.



All businesses face competition. Even if you're the only restaurant in town you must compete with cinemas, bars and other businesses where your customers will spend their money instead of with you. With increased use of the Internet to buy goods and services and to find places to go, you are no longer just competing with your immediate neighbours. Your competitor could be a new business offering a substitute or similar product that makes your own redundant.

Your competitors are businesses that may deter people in your target audience from choosing you. While this immediately makes them seem like the enemy, the truth is that competition is not all bad. In fact, <u>itis important for companies to have competitors</u>, because it is through competition that innovation and improvement occur. However, innovation and improvement only occur if you know how to respond to competition properly.

You may be thinking, "what can I possibly learn from competitors that would help grow your business."?

 ${\bf Start\ with\ getting\ information\ about\ your\ competitions}$

When you get information about your competition, you should evaluate the information you find about your competitors. This should tell you whether there are gaps in the market you can exploit. It should also indicate whether there is a saturation of suppliers in certain areas of your market, which might lead you to focus on less competitive areas. Draw up a list of everything that you've found out about your competitors, however small, and learn from that. It will Reduce Trial and Error for you. Every target audience and business combination will produce different results, and a major part of running a business is experimenting with what works.

Note:

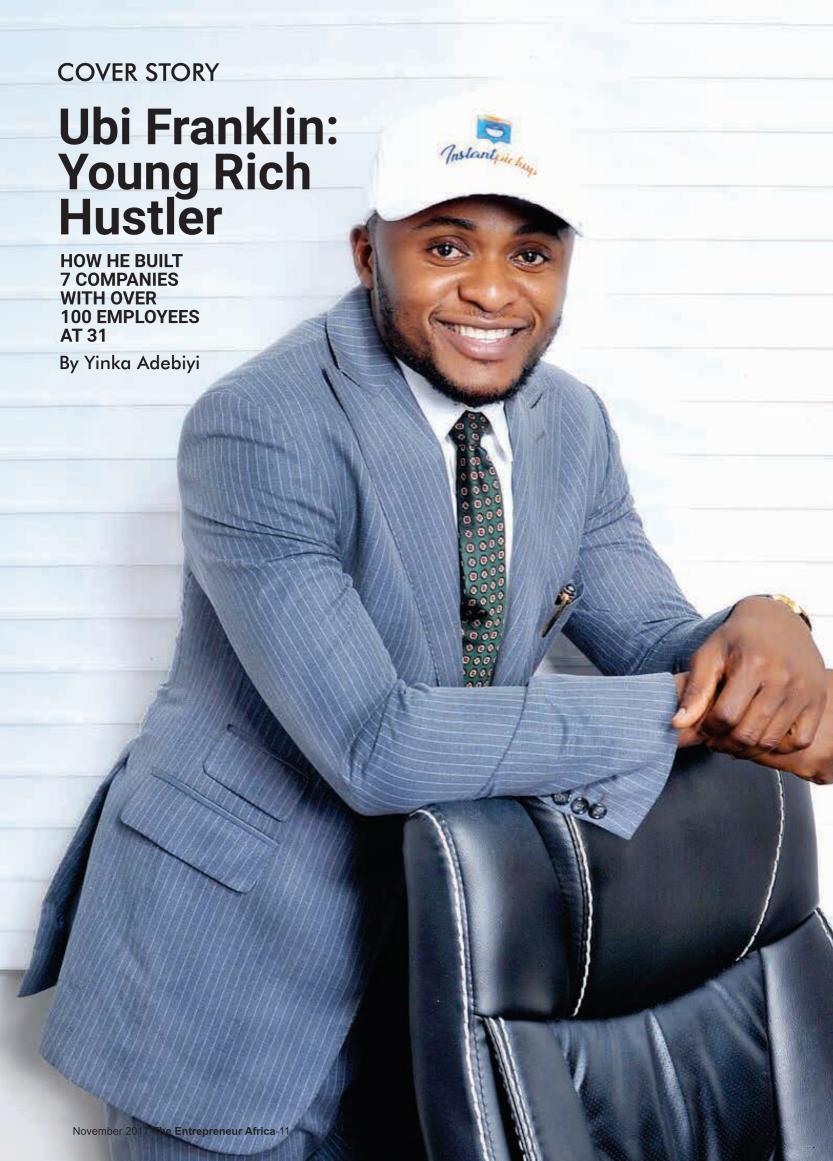
What you can learn from and do better: If you're sure your competitors are doing something better than you, you need to respond and make some changes. It could be anything from improving customer service, assessing your prices and updating your products, to changing the way you market yourself, redesigning your literature and website and changing your suppliers. Try to innovate not imitate. Now you've got the idea, can you do it even better, add more value? Your competitors might not have rights over their actual ideas, but remember the rules on patents, copyright and design rights. For more information, consult the Intellectual Property Toolkit.

- What they're doing worse than you. Exploit the gaps you've identified. These may be in their product range or service, marketing or distribution, even the way they recruit and retain employees. Customer service reputation can often provide the difference between businesses that operate in a very competitive market. Renew your efforts in these areas to exploit the deficiencies you've discovered in your competitors. But don't be complacent about your current strengths. Your current offerings may still need improving and your competitors may also be assessing you. They may adopt and enhance your good ideas.
- What they're doing the same as you. If you have a similar target audience, you can learn from them by watching which strategies succeed and which ones do not. For example, if a competitor is successful on social media, follow along and take cues from their most engaging posts. If they're running <u>Facebook ads</u> or Instagram giveaways to get more customers, try to see if it will work for your business. If you have a different target audience, you might learn some ideas to adopt and apply to your audience. Or, you might be able to predict that if a particular strategy is working for their target audience, it will not work for yours.
- Improve Your Products and Services. Knowing who your competitors are, and what they are offering, can help you to make your products, services and marketing stand out. It will enable you to set your prices competitively and help you to respond to rival marketing campaigns with your own initiatives. Also, your competitors' products and services can help you stay on top of what's new and exciting, and provide inspiration for your own innovative

However, while you can learn from your competitors, you mustn't let them become a focus when developing your own business. Focusing too much on competing with (rather than learning from) your competition can also lead to an over-reliance on customer feedback.

Focusing on your business and its strengths breeds innovation, self-evaluation and credibility. It also helps you find your purple cow - the one thing that makes your business unique to the customers who love you.

Competition is not just another business that might take money away from you. It can be another product or service that's being developed and which you ought to be selling or looking to license before somebody else takes it up.



At 31, with 7 high-profile companies in his name, and haven become a major millionaire at an age far below 30, Ubi Franklin should be described as accomplished and successful. But the young father, Law Degree holder, music business mogul, and serial entrepreneur, says he hasn't even passed the ground zero yet. In his own words, "when I meet people and they ask me, what do you do? I tell them I'm a hustler; because, you know, we have to keep hustling". As the founder and CEO of Made Men Music Group, which has produced a number of Nigeria's music export, and some of Africa's biggest contemporary music sensations, Ubi, though himself not an active singer, can rightly be described as one of the pioneers of contemporary music business in Africa. But while his has become a household name in his country, Nigeria, mostly due to his involvement in the entertainment industry, there's much more of the business sides of him that most do not know. Thus, in this interview with The Entrepreneur Africa, we've tried to reveal the staunch businessman that is Ubi Franklin. Very importantly, we looked into his current big business project, Instant Pick-up, which has remained the talk of the city since its official launch earlier this year. What is it all about? What new does this app-based venture introduce into the laundry industry? And how far does he intend to go with this new laundry business? These questions, and more, are answered below. Again, how did Ubi Franklin make it so big, while still so young? And what entrepreneurial principles has he had to live by? Find out below. Excerpts.

Before the entrepreneurial bug caught you, what were you into?

School; then work. I worked for my brother, first. Then I started working for Julius Agwu (the comedian) as his Personal Assistant. After that, I had to start something of my own.

I found

What inspired you to start your own company? I found out that when you work for some people, it's for you to change their perception of how they see to do it yourself. That's why I decided to do

How many phases will you say you've passed presently?

I think I'm still in the zero stage, because as for you. In fact, you have to keep learning. that won't be true; I have not even passed the Otedolas, and the Adenugas have confidently say they have done so. We, on when we get there we'll know that we've right now we're still scratching the surface.

Will you say your story is a grass to grace one? From a family end, I grew up in a comfortable family. you are starting up your thing, it's different. So, I won't someone, I always tell people, do something that taker, but one thing about taking risk is, once you take risk, the cake. So when I take risk I take calculated risk and try to make sure that I put myself in a position where, whatever I see, I can take.

that when you work for people, its tough for them to see the ideas you have. And its tough for you to change

their perception on

how they see things

tough for them to see the ideas you have and it's tough things; so for you to actualize your dream, you have something on my own.

from your early days to where you are

an entrepreneur, there's a learning process So if I say I have passed through any phase, through any phase. Maybe the Dangotes, passed a stage or two. Those ones can the other hand, are still building a brand; so passed through a first or a second stage, but

But no matter how comfortable your family is, when say the journey has been rosy, but if I have to inspire challenges you. My friends always say I'm the biggest risk end point is always sweet. See, the bigger the risk, the bigger the

So, have you ever taken any risk where the end result wasn't good for you?

Yes, I have.... Spending money on some artists and finally not making money from them and after one issue here and there, they had to leave. But you know what, that same company made money from other artists, so it wasn't a total loss.

You read law in Madonna University. Why did you deviate to entertainment and other businesses?

If you check the industry well, you find out that it's not everybody that is doing what they studied in school. For example in the Nigerian entertainment industry, you know Omawunmi is a lawyer, but she's singing. Everything is passion; it's about where your mind leads you to. For me, I found myself doing this because I was building the right relationships with people, so I started a music company, first.

How did you start your music company?

I started managing artists; helping them promote their social media pages and all. Then I would go for shows and help them hold their towels or drinks and other things. When I started working for Julius Agwu, I met a lot of them and I took interest in actually managing on full time basis. So, I started a record company because I felt like managing my artists and also being an investor in their music project.

When you want to sign in an artist, what do you look at or, look for?

I sign artists based on how I feel about the person. If I feel right, the world will feel right. And so far I'm sure I've never made a mistake...



So you choose based on intuitions?

Yes, you know music is based on how you feel; it's based on your intuition, and having been in the industry for this long, I can see an artist that I believe would become something big in the future.

Most record label owners are artists; so for those that aren't, would you say they're there just for profit-making, or for passion?

The funny thing is, if you go into the entertainment industry, especially the music industry, because you want to make money, you might end up losing money, instead. Come in with passion, instead. You see, passion will drive you, passion and hard work will get you everywhere. I tell people there's nothing like luck in this business. Once you work hard, you'll see the result from the hard work. If you work on the street and pick one million naira on the floor, that's luck because you didn't work for it, you're just lucky. But if you work hard, pay salaries and make money from your business, that is hard work, it's not luck. For me, I didn't come into the entertainment industry for making money, I came because of passion and because it's something I actually love to do, and then money came in and I had to grab it.

What are your other entrepreneurial outfits?

I own 7 companies, but just a few are well known, though. I own MADE MEN MUSIC (a record label); I own TILT TERRACE (it's a restaurant and lounge), I own INSTANT PICK-UP (it's an online laundry solution app in Nigeria and for now, we're in Lagos and Abuja). Then I own PROTEUS MEDIA (it's a media buying company); I own INTERCORE SOLUTIONS (it's a tech company); and a couple of other companies that are doing their trading on their own.

How many employees are on your staff, generally?

For all my companies, I have a little above one hundred.

For someone who studied law, how were you able to go into these various businesses?

You see, once something is in you, it's in you. It's not about what you read in school. You see a lot of lawyers doing different things, so it's not about what you read in school. For example, look at Falz. For Falz to be doing what he's doing, you know that he enjoys doing it. If we all want to do what we read in school, trust me, we will not be enjoying what we are doing. I enjoy what I do because I actually apply sense in another person's field and it works for me.

Do you involve family in your businesses?

Structure! I put the right structure in place. That's what I work with.

Let's talk about Instant pick-up. What led to its creation?

I'm a very busy person. I'm always on the plane; going from one place to the other. So, when I travel and get back to town, I'd heap my clothes and if the gateman or the boy that lives with me is not around, the clothes are there for another two to three months because I'm travelling. So I told myself, why not just create something to make this easier. I know there are people like me out there, so why not just create something that would make people save their time, and I came up with the idea of INSATNT PICK-UP. It is an online laundry service App that connects you with laundry houses within your location. We connect, we collect, and we deliver your laundry. from the comfort of your home.

What is your client base for instant pick-up?

It's large, so I cannot give you numbers right now, but it's large and it's growing.

So in the next 5-10 years what are your expectations for instant pick up?

I'm praying that in the next Syears, INSTANT PICK-UP should be everywhere in Nigeria, Africa, and some parts of the world. In the next 10 years, ISTANT PICK-UP App should have, at least, 3-5 million active users.

$You \ have \ an \ on-going \ project \ called \ Ubi \ Franklin \ Start-up \ Funds. \ What's \ that \ about?$

Ubi franklin START-UP FUND, for me, is a way for me to help people who want to start up a business. I know it's tough starting up a business, so for me It's a way to help these people.

What has been your greatest challenge as a businessman? And how have you been able to overcome it?

My greatest challenge has been trying to find the right people to support you, because you cannot do the whole job yourself. Today you hire this staff, the staff is just here because they

just want to get a job, tomorrow they tell you they want to leave because they got another job. So the biggest challenge as a business owner is having people that would actually ride that journey and go through that whole process with you. Also, there are always times when, as an entrepreneur, you have to be the accountant, the call centre executive, you have to be everything. There are times when you see things not going right, you have to take off your jacket and make sure that things are done rightly. So those are the basic challenges and I'm sure every entrepreneur will understand them.

What will you say you did or still doing that has helped you get to where you are now?

I have faith; I have Grace. I work hard, and don't listen to gossip. If you like say anything about me and write anything about me, the more you write, the more money I make, so I focus on the things that matter. Those are the things I do differently. You know once you focus, for example, if I am reading a book and I decide that until I finish this book, I'm not going to look at you, I'll do better with the book. So, once you cultivate the habit of not looking at what other people are doing and start focusing on what you are supposed to do, you'll get everything right. The most important thing is not minding what social media or what this fan or that fan is saying, because that fan will run away if you're not doing well, so you have to focus and get it right.

What is your greatest achievement so far?

My greatest achievement so far has been INSTANT PICK-UP; my companies are doing well and also my kid.







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A good customer service relates to the service you and your employees provide not just before and during purchase but after purchase as well. Improving your customer service skills can lead to greater customer satisfaction and a more enjoyable experience for them.

Although it can take extra resources, time and money, what most people don't know is that a good customer service leads to customer satisfaction which can generate positive word-of-mouth for your business, keep your customers happy and encourage them to purchase from your business again. Good customer service will most definitely help your business grow and prosper.

No matter the size of your business good customer service, needs be at the heart of your business model if you wish to be successful. It is important to provide good customer service; to all types of customers, including potential, new and existing customers.

A good customer services will lead to:

- Loyalty... Treating customers with respect, greeting them with enthusiasm and going above and beyond to resolve any problems and issues can keep customers coming back. When companies seek to resolve problems and issues in a quick, pleasant and efficient manner, customers remain confident in the company and continue the business relationship. Small businesses can compete with larger businesses by cultivating customer relationships through personal attention and care.
- **Profits...** Good customer service departments understand the relationship between the way they greet, treat and handle customers and the bottom line. Efficient customer service departments seek to solve problems as they occur, and, if possible, prevent them in the first place. For instance, when processing an order for products or services, good customer service departments will ask necessary questions to ensure the customer is ordering the correct item or service, and will verify the data before ending the call or contact to verify accuracy. This can reduce the drain on company resources and increase customer satisfaction by reducing the number of returns, complaints and

problems that crop up because of poor handling. In addition, properly trained representatives can effectively cross-sell additional products or services while processing customer orders, thereby increasing sales.

- Trust....These days, people will only stay loyal to a company if they have very good reason to. Otherwise, there is <u>plenty of competition</u> available they could choose to move to. As a result, you have to work even harder to keep customers and build their trust in your brand. By providing the best in customer service, you will increase trust, and that could mean the difference between customer loyalty and customers who jump ship.
- Brand awareness... If you don't already know this, then it is time to learn. Word of mouth is the most powerful ally you have on your side. What your customers say to others could make or break your business. When you provide the best in customer service, guess what happens? People will talk about you. They will remember your brand. If they hear someone else talking that they need a specific kind of company, they are much more likely to say, "Oh, go to this place. They are great!" Happy customers help spread positive word-of-mouth, resulting in an additional avenue for marketing and advertising for your company.
- Combating Higher Prices... As a small business, you simply may not be able to afford to offer the low prices that the corporate chain store around the corner charges. By providing excellent customer service, you can offset the effect of your higher prices by offering a better customer experience. The Small Business Success website indicates that customer service-driven businesses can charge up to 9 percent more for their products and services, and grow the business twice as fast as average.



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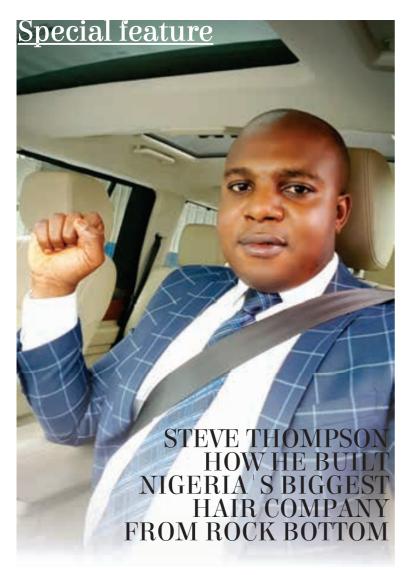
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head office is now. This year 2017, we're still doing great, maintaining the branches and servicing a lot of retailers and wholesalers. We have over 900 registered whole sale customers with their membership card and we also partner with factories Ogunsaya, Lagos. But unfortunately that branch abroad for hair purchase and distribution.

It's often said that "what a man can do, a woman can do better". But for Steve Thompson, CEO ROYAL HAIR, one of the most trusted hair companies in Nigeria, it's the other way round; i.e. "what a woman can do, a man can do better". Riding together in his posh 2016 Range Rover, Steve Thompson, an electrical Engineer by training, tells The Entrepreneur Africa's Yinka Adebiyi how persistence and determination helped him grow his business as well as the principles that are helping him remain relevant in a business full of competitors. This is the story of a man thriving in a woman's world. Find out how he's been winning. Excerpts.

How did you start with business, and what growth have you experienced so far?

I went into business in 2009, in London, where I started ROYAL HAIR. It wasn't easy, it was hard. I use the word HARD because I was arrested a lot of times at the London bridge station because I didn't have permit to sell at the government facilities and all that. But I kept on pushing it. At a point I became very broke in London, I came back home with \$250. That was July 2012, I came back home. I had few customers in Nigeria but I didn't have any money

again. But with that \$250, I started the business again in Nigeria. I bought only 3 set of hairs with that money in 2012 and started selling in Isolo, Lagos. So I would get pictures on internet and display and if my customers wanted, they'll pay and then I'll rush and order for the hair and give it to them. I made contacts with some of the agents abroad especially in china. So whenever I send money, even if I send 50,000 naira, they'll help me buy it and send it the next day if someone is coming back, because they'll always see someone coming back. Then I'll wait for them at the airport to collect my goods. I can go to the airport by 11am to wait for the flight that is coming by 4pm just to take my 2 bundles of hair. *laughs* I don't sleep, I don't rest, I'm always about it because I had no alternative. So I kept doing it like that but I made sure I sold with profit, I made sure I wasn't joking. If I'm buying 3 hairs, when I made the money I'll use it to buy 5 set of hairs again. So I was doing it that way for less than a year. I rented the first shop in Ogunlana drive, Surulere, Lagos. The day I came to rent the place, I didn't have money to pay for the service charge. The rent was 300,000 naira without service charge. So I pay only the rent and opened the windows because there was no light *laughs* I stayed there for 3months without light till I was able to pay for service charge.

March, 2013 was when I moved there, but by December that same year, I had 3 staff working for me and till now, I've done guite a lot. I have a lot of customers already. 2014 I got married and opened another one, by that time the business was already growing. We opened another branch in Adeniran didn't work, so we closed it down and continued with the Ogunlana drive, branch.

2014 we kept pushing and selling and making profit. I was buying only original not fake and because of that if I sell to you, your friend will see it and would then call us. So we kept selling like that and people were saying great things about the product. As at 2012, I was staying with my sister but by the end of 2014, I moved out and was staying at Lekki, Lagos because of the great turn over that came for me. By 2015, we opened a branch in Port Harcourt and employed more staff, we became 8. 2016, we opened another branch in Maitama, Abuja and then came to Lekki Phase 1, where our head office is now. This year 2017, we're still doing great, maintaining the branches and servicing a lot of retailers and wholesalers. We have over 900 registered whole sale customers with their membership card and we also partner with factories abroad for hair purchase and distribution.

What is the concept that led to the creation of royal hair? And why hair?

There was no concept, I was broke. I was looking for what to do, I tried different businesses but it didn't work. I sold laptop, computers accessories, selling from abroad to Nigeria, but it didn't work. When I sold the hair, I bought the first set and sent to my sister in Lagos, she sold it in one week and sent me the money back in London. I kept buying and selling again and that was it. I said to myself "this is it, I've arrived in that business. and I don't want to leave".

So you're saying there's great profit in hair business?

If you sell original, there is, it's profitable but if you don't it's not. We have 25 graduates now as staff, one of our staff even has masters from the UK. So if it's not profitable we can't be paying and our rent now is about 15 to 18 million a year for all our branches, in Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt. We're still planning to open another branch in Owerri before the end of this year.

Do you ever get intimidated knowing fully well hair business is majorly a woman's

No!! No!!! They even feel sad to have me in the business, women feel sad to have me in the business. I wish more men will come into the business. Remember, women like to buy from men, do you know that? Women like to buy from men. So more guys should come into the business because women like to buy from men. This is so because it's easy for women to play with men and be friendly with them to even ask for discount.

So in other words this is the benefit of being a man in this business?

Yes, it's a benefit for me as a man. I can get women to like me and buy from me as well as bring their friends to buy from me. Women sometimes evny their fellow women but it's difficult to envy men, so because of that I'm good.

There are lots of people who own a hair business, how do you stay relevant here? That is, what makes you unique?

It's easy to stay relevant. Number one, when you sleep at night, I don't sleep — I sleep only 3 hours every day because I talk to people abroad, hair companies, I have over 30 hair companies on my list that send me new products. Now, if you bought my straight hair last week, this week I'll bring candy curl and you'll like to buy it. If you buy my candy curl this week, next week I'm bringing hair curls or bouncing waves and you'll also want to buy it. So because a lady should buy 4 or 5 hairs in a year, I'm ready to satisfy you with those hairs. The next year we will take it from there but I have to keep bringing in new hairs to stay relevant for so long.

Where do you get your products from and are there special ones made for you?

Like I said I have over 30 hair companies on my list that send me new products and yes we have a few special ones made for us, very few. The special ones are little because we can't really trust the companies not to make them for other people, so it's not about making special products for you, instead it's about being original.

How difficult and expensive is it to start a hair business?

Number one: its capital intensive, number two: hair is different, it's not like cloth or handbags or shoe. Hair is like gold and diamonds, you don't buy gold and diamonds anyhow, and you need to buy from a trusted brand. So when a brand is calling little price you don't trust them because it may wash, that's how hair is. Hair requires hard work, it's not about the money it's about building trust, making your customer to trust that your hair doesn't tangle, shred, it's very fine and all, that is the most important in the business. It's good if you can sell original for example buying from ROYAL HAIR means buying original, so if you can keep selling original, then it's easy.

Do you ever get criticized and how do you handle criticism?

No! Rather I help people a lot. I help people that want to start the business, I assist them, advise them and tell them how to do it. I can mention some big

hair names that bought from me for like 3/4 years before they started buying abroad, so I can't aet criticized instead they love me.

What is our customer rate and reach?

In terms of numbers, we have lots of customers everywhere both home and abroad. Also, we ROYAL HAIR are the only hair companies that can deliver hair the same day anywhere you are in Nigeria, so our reach is quite wide. We have partnership with DHL and FEDEX, we deliver almost every 2days to the US and UK.

Would you say your hair business is doing better that others? Especially those owned by women?

ROYAL HAIR is not just doing better, if we're 100%, other people are like 20% because we're the only people who can employ over 20 graduates where others have one or two who may not even be graduates. So we employ people that are really learned and smart. We even have official cars for some of our staff, that's to show that we are not on the same page with other companies. In the business, we're far.

What is your greatest achievement?

As a company, we've not even started because we're just testing waters. The plan is to have a hair plant in Nigeria, where they make hairs, you don't have to travel again instead will come to Nigeria and buy it. We'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. I'll tell you the name when it comes.

Personally: my greatest achievement is to own ROYAL HAIR, It's not easy. To own a company that is selling, to own a company that whether you're there or not it can run on its own because there are capable people there and it's structured already.

What do you plan to achieve in the next 5-10 years and what steps are you taking to accomplish that?

2-3 years, from Kano down to Calabar, we should have a branch in each of the capital cities. Benin Warri, Enugu, ROYAL HAIR will be there in all these cities. In 5 years, we should be in Accra and Cape-town. In 8-10years, we would have opened our New York and Atlanta offices and also back to London.





It was a gathering of who-is-who recently, in Lagos, for the official launch of The Entrepreneur Africa Magazine (TEAM), and Team Africa Awards. The monthly magazine, which has become one of Africa's top business/entrepreneurship magazines within less than six months of its first release in May, 2017, gathered top CEOs and captains of industries at the Virginrose Resorts, Victoria Island, Lagos on September 30, to celebrate entrepreneurship and the people changing Africa through it. The Theme of the event was: Inspiring Africa's Economic Boom, Through Entrepreneurial revolution.

Key issues regarding Africa's economic re independence/rebirth were discussed at the event by panels of discussions made up of business leaders from various industries. One of the high points of the event was the unveiling of the maiden edition of Team Africa Awards (The Entrepreneur Africa Magazine Awards), which the organization described as an exclusive honour for those changing the face of Africa through innovative enterprise. Some of the pioneer recipients of this great honour were the iconic professor of political economy and veteran entrepreneur, Prof. Pat Utomi, Top Businessman and Chairman of Big Church Group, Dr. Olakunle Churchill, Wife of legendary Musician 2face, Annie Idibia, founder of 'Sack Your Landlord' philosophy and CEO of Realty Point Ltd, Debo Adejana, acclaimed financial expert and CEO of Graeme Blaque, Mr. Zeal Akaraiwe, Solar Energy Revolutionist and CEO of Arnergy Ltd, Mr. Femi Adeyemo, and some other leaders of industries.











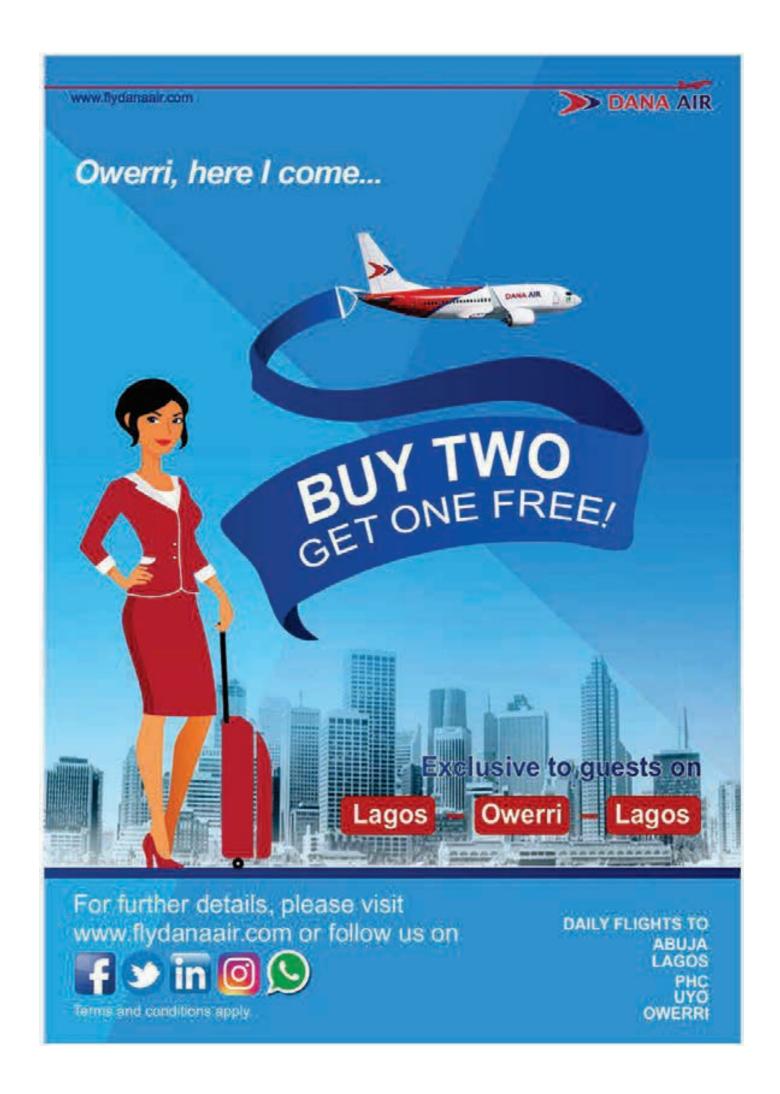












Business Insight

INOLVII FAMILY

FAMILY
INVOLVEMENT:
GOOD FOR
BUSINESS
OR NOT?
FIND OUT
By Kimberley Edokpayi



The dilemma of involving a family member in your business, is an experience business owners has gone or will eventually go through. Employing family members can undoubtedly pose certain pitfalls, but it also offers great benefits that are worth exploring. Family businesses come with their own set of unique advantages and challenges but in order to be successful, the advantages must be capitalized upon and the challenges overcome.

If you've gotten to that dilemma stage, first you have to know the pitfalls of involving family members and how to handle them when put on the spot.

Know that when hiring your own relatives, you run the risk of causing resentment amongst your other staff, or of giving the impression of favouritism and nepotism. Nepotism is a big issue you'll most likely face involving a relative in your business. Some family businesses are reluctant to let outsiders into the top tier, and the result is that people are given jobs for which they lack the skills, education, or experience. This, obviously, has a far-reaching effect on the success of the company.

In the case of family employment, a thorough job description objectively clarifies what knowledge and skills are required for a position so creating a well thought out job descriptions of positions and putting a well-qualified relative will somehow prevent nepotism. Provided that the family member you place in that position actually meets those pre-defined requirements (and receives compensation commensurate to their role) an impression of favouritism will not be created. If you wish to train and groom a relative for a particular job that they are not yet qualified for, first give them a trainee position with a title and wage that are reflective of this.

In essence, treat the employment of relatives with fairness and transparency and you will effectively defang nepotism of much of its worst potential Conflict is also bound to happen at any firm and working with relatives can create such conflict if family tensions or problems fail to remain at home where they belong. Because family members are involved, conflict can be more difficult to solve and can result in difficult endings. Unfortunately this issue requires a mature and determined effort to overcome the natural imperfections of human nature, so its success depends upon the individuals involved.

However, let's look at the bright side. Involving a relative causes a Long-term Outlook. Non-family firms think about hitting goals this quarter, while family firms think years, and sometimes decades, ahead. This "patience" and long-term perspective allows for good strategy and decision-making.

There is also this sense of Commitment from family members. Since the needs of the family are at stake, there is a greater sense of commitment and accountability. This level of commitment is almost impossible to generate in non-family firms. This long term commitment leads to additional benefits, such as a better understanding of the industry, organization and job, stronger customer relationships and more effective sales and marketing.

Unfortunately, the things that make family firms so wonderful are the family involvement, the highly personal relationships, the inherent loyalty and commitment, the flexible structure, but they also make them challenging to sustain for the long term. The goal, then, is to recognize and understand both the strengths and the weaknesses of family businesses, in order to better manufacture long-term success.

In a way, hiring family is a lot like living with family—there are positives and negatives, and it's the thoughtfulness, fairness, and care with which you approach situations that will determine whether it's the good or the bad that predominates.

Provided that your business doesn't involve hiding horses' heads in people's beds, working with your family can be an extremely positive, productive and profitable experience!





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Partners and Customers Express Satisfaction At SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC's Appreciation Dinner

By Ojeh Godwin and Yinka Adebiyi

In this part of the world, when you hear about a company that has solutions for anything that has and requires electricity, you'd definitely want to associate yourself with them. Well, that is what SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC is all about, and their slogan LIFE IS ON says it all.

At a dinner organised in honour of their customers and partners on October 26, 2017, at the Oriental Hotels and Suites, SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC showcased how they offer lots of products and services for different sectors of the market, from airports to hotels, to oil and gas, housing and solar street lights, and many more.

Major investors, partners, and customers from various industries were present to hear what Balaji Lenka (GM, Anglophone West Africa), Mojola Ola (Partner Project Head), and Obinna Uche (Service Director), all had to say on how SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC can solve electric problems anywhere in any industry, anywhere in the world. Representatives of top banks, hotels, and other high profile organisations who make up Schneider's customers also seized the opportunity to express their satisfaction with the use of the company's electric products so far.

Vivianne Mike-Ezeh, the Marketing Communication Manager, Anglophone West Africa, who was also the host of the event was delectable on the microphone as she kept the audience reminded that LIFE IS ON SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC.









5 THINGS TO NOTE WHEN HIRING SALES OFFICERS

By Bunmi Jembola

Sales is unarguably one of the most daunting organizational functions in our century. It is easily the least desired job function of many available options in organizations. Notwithstanding the challenges that come with it, Sales is the cash cow in any organization. Sales is the lifeline of every business. In the same vein, salesmen are the lifeline of the success of every sales process. There are a few things you should know look out for while hiring your sales team. I made a list of five of them that I consider the most important.

Sales is unarguably one of the most daunting organizational functions in our century. It is easily the least desired job function of many available options in organizations. Notwithstanding the challenges that come with it, Sales is the cash cow in any organization. Sales is the lifeline of every business. In the same vein, salesmen are the lifeline of the success of every sales process. There are a few things you should know look out for while hiring your sales team. I made a list of five of them that I consider the most important.

- 1. Skills over experience-Experience counts. When I talk to people about my sales coaching skills I validate myself by saying I have had over a decade experience in B2B sales, so experience is vital. But if you are so long on experience and thin on skills, that is a no-no! A man can have one year of experience in a ten year role. If you stayed on a job doing the same thing for the same people for 10 years, come on, that's not 10 years experience. That's one year of experience in a 10 years role!
- 2. Knowledge over certificate- It gladdens my heart these days when I speak to CEO's intending to recruit sales officers about minimum educational qualification as a requirement. I see that many are not so bothered about whether or not they have a degree. Interestingly, I am getting more comfortable myself with recruiting candidates into well-paying sales roles who may not have excellent first degrees or who have non at all. Generally speaking, people who are excited about learning do well in sales. If someone has not read a book in a whole year chances are that he is averse to change and that's the biggest impediment to success in the sales profession. Almost everything change in sales every month and you will be required to learn, change and relearn so frequently that you cannot afford an anti-learning attitude.
- 3. Attitude Over everything-I reviewed post recruitment reports from clients and found that every candidate who demonstrated excellent attitude at the point of recruitment are doing very well. I mean E-V-E-R-Y! By attitude here I mean two things- People who will NEVER be comfortable giving excuses. I mean people who genuinely believe nothing is impossible.
- 4. Role plays may not work- Many times one of the key questions in an interview for sales guys is asking them to do a role play. That only works in road side retail sales; certainly not B2B and may be not high value sales. Role plays are not bad but they are grossly limited in their usefulness to determine who'd be a good sales guy. Often, you will see aggression and say it's persuasiveness. Role play focuses on the ability to talk while the most important skill in sales is listening. Sometimes you see eloquence and then conclude it is knowledge. At any rate, two things will eventually earn you a sale for B2B. Strategy and persistence. You can't validate either by roles play.
- 5. Ask questions-In my next article I will be sharing 5 questions I ask. But here is one of them. If a prospect has capacity and has a need but delaying to buy what can you do? There is no wrong or right response to this answer but the creativity of the answer should tell you what a candidate can do when faced with a similar challenge and he will; very frequently.

Bunmi Jembola is Nigeria's leading sales coach, trainer and consultant. He has over a decade experience in B2B and B2C sales that spans four industries including I.T, Banking, FMCG and Consulting. In those years he earned over N12Billion in aggregate sales value. He is the CEO of Sales Ruby Ltd which is at the fore-front of deploying technological solutions to organizations for sales enablement. He is also CEO of Venture Starter Ltd. He is the Convener of Founders Conference and Africa Startup Festival. Bunmi hosts a quarterly Sales Master Class for entrepreneurs and senior sales executives.

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Are you amongst people who when asked about becoming an entrepreneur or starting a business, will reply with "I wish I could do that, but I'm just too old"?

That's not true. YOU'RE NOT TOO OLD to start that business, so get rid of that mind-set.

Yes, people in their teens and twenties have grown up in the new world of business that's been evolving over the past twenty years or so. Yes, they have all the time in the world, and yes, they've always been told that they can be anything they want to be and that starting their own business is absolutely achievable.

But does that mean that there's an age limit on becoming an entrepreneur? Absolutely not! You might hear from many that start-ups are for the young. Young people can afford to waste time, try different things, and sit back in track pants and code. But, think again. If you're in your 30s or 40s, don't you have plenty of time left too? You can, of course, do all these things too. As a matter of fact, you have the edge over the younger generation because you have sufficient savings and knowledge too.

If you're still wondering if you're too old to start your own business, chase your dreams, and achieve success, then check out these 3 tops reasons that say it's never too late.

1. Age is just a number: With age, we do become less good looking and less fit. But as an entrepreneur, it is not the looks that matter. It is the innovation that does.

Rather than giving importance to age, one should give importance to the mind-set. It is your attitude which determines the choices you should make, not your age. Age is something you can't control. But your decisions, you can.

You might be in your mid-30s, sitting behind your office desk and wondering "What if I had started my business venture". You might dispel the thought the very next second thinking "It's too late for me now". This is where you go wrong. It is never too late.

When you go for a conference for entrepreneurship, you might feel like a misfit in a room full of young entrepreneurs. But you should learn to use that to your advantage. It is the outcasts who stand out and turn heads.

2. More focused approach: When we are young, we have a lot of different ideas. Our mind is a pool of ocean which is flowing with new ideas every day. We think of every new idea that pops into our mind as a credible opportunity and venture into a number of different fields. No offences to the younger generation, but more often than not, the ideas we come up with are not our best ones.

The main thing you have in your hand when you are young is time. You learn a skill, say website making, and you come up with new ideas to make money out of it. You think of a start-up idea. You make a website for it. And then you think that's it. I have my new business venture.

It is when you grow older that you see the big picture. Starting your own business takes more than just making a website. As you grow older, you realise the concepts of business models and leverage. You analyse which ones you like and which ones you don't, and then you carry forward accordingly.

3. You have more resources than ever before: It is true that there are several young successful entrepreneurs out there. It is true Mark Zuckerberg started Facebook when he was just 19. But, it is also true that Charles Flint started IBM when he was 62.

Young entrepreneurs have to struggle a lot a lot in this field. They have to put in a lot of effort to meet even the smallest of investors. On the other hand, a professional turned entrepreneur will already have several contacts which he has maintained a relationship with for years.

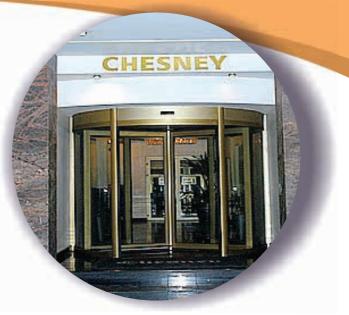
The more you stay in the professional world, the more contacts you develop. So when it's finally time for you to start your own business, you will have a wide network of successful professionals.

Where you might lack in youthful energy, you make up in experience. You make up so significantly that you will never feel like you're falling behind. In fact, you will have an edge. So if you are planning on giving up on your dream of becoming a successful entrepreneur just because of your age, it might be time to think again.

Really, you can start a successful business at any age. All you need is an idea and the drive to succeed. If you're <u>motivated</u> enough to do the market research, find your niche, and start building your business from the ground up, then it doesn't matter how old or young you are – you're an entrepreneur. The more willing you are to learn and take calculated risks, the better off you'll be at any age.









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Despite the worrying level of poverty in the country and in Africa as a whole, women especially are becoming entrepreneurs with the determination to succeed. It is then safe to say that the Joan Agha Foundation (JAF) has been part of these success stories, empowering more women to succeed in their businesses.

The foundation has over the years imparted the lives of indigent persons across Nigeria with various interventions, and "the lecture for women entrepreneurs" has been part of their projects for 5 wonderful and achieving years.

This year's annual lecture was exceptionally impactful as it had the likes of 4 success driven, ambitious and determined businesswomen as the speakers of the day, women who have strived through thick and thin to succeed in their various businesses.

There was the mental illness empowerment lecture for sustainable growth, by Dr. Adegbenga. This was included in the event because it can be said that mental illness could be a major obstacles to the growth or establishment of any business and the aim of the lecture was to promote good health, prevent mental illness and reduce stigma.

Then came Bukky Ashinde – founder, Bella Africana, Dr. chioma Ayorinde – CEO Swish ideas, Wunmi Amokeode – creative director, Design for Love and Mrs Joycee Awosika – MD/CEO Oriki Group, who all shared their unique stories with every aspiring and already established woman entrepreneur that was present at the lecture.

Also present where both men and women of calibre including the ever blazing philanthropist, founder and president of The Joan Agha Foundation (JAF), Mrs Joan Agha, alongside her husband, Dr. Billy Agha.

We therefore wish to congratulate the entire team of Joan Agha Foundation (JAF) on the good work and humanitarian services, and also wish them many more successful and productive years to come.







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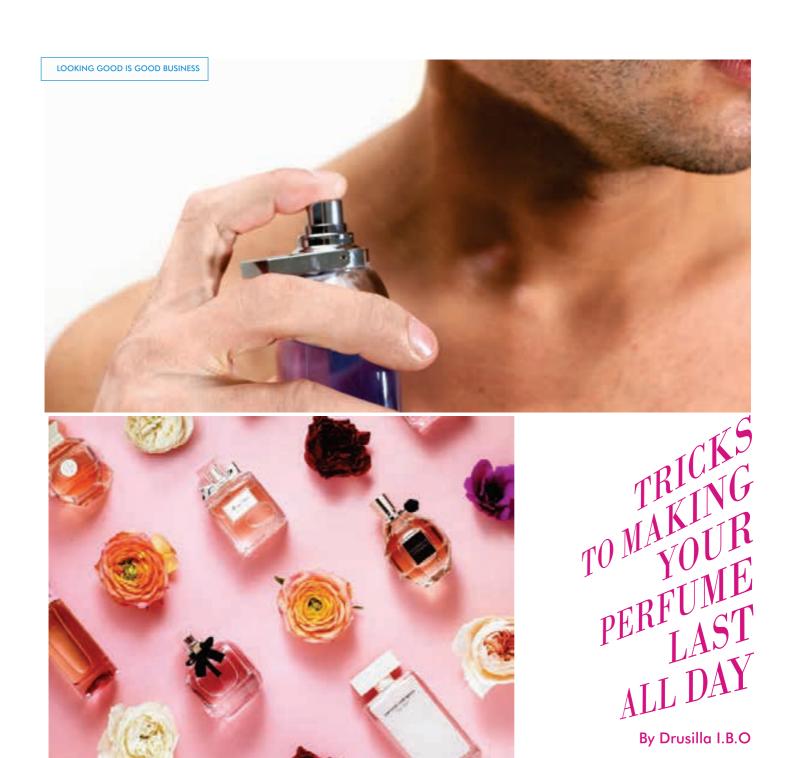
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It's so cool to have a signature scent that adds to the ambiance of who you are, and one that people remember you by, whether at home, work or wherever. Scent is the most powerful memory trigger. Just one small trace of a scent can take your mind right back to a specific place, event, person, or period of time.

But most times, the scent never seem to last all day. Here are some tips to make that scent last long enough to attend that business dinner or that Thank God it's Friday party... winks*



Moisturize that skin... If you have naturally oily skin, you're in luck — a scent will last much longer on you. For those of you with dry skin, find out if your scent comes in lotion form, and use that first for maximum scent capacity. If it doesn't come in a lotion, first use an unscented moisturizer on damp skin wherever you plan to apply your scent.

Apply to pulse points... Heat is what activates perfume. The pulse points on your body (where your heart rate can be felt) are the best spots to apply a scent, due to the warmth of your blood. Some such points are located behind your ear, at the bottom of your throat, on your wrist, inside your elbow, and behind your knee.





Don't rub... After applying a fragrance, many people feel a need to rub it in in order to warm the skin or spread the scent. This is a big mistake! Rubbing a perfume breaks down its molecules, diminishing the scent into thin air.

Store it the right way... Heat, light, and humidity can all break down the compounds in a perfume, causing it to be less fragrant. To keep your scent at its best, store it in a cool place, away from direct sunlight. Make sure to keep it out of the bathroom, as the heat and humidity from showers and baths could damage it greatly.



Interview

DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL FOR LACK OF FINANCE. NOW KWAME IS LAGOS' FAVORITE CHEF

By Yinka Adebiyi



There are some arenas of life where men are considered incompetent in Africa. One of such is the kitchen arena. However Kwame Ahmed has proven convention wrong in this aspect. As a matter of fact he has, over the years, emerged as one of the king chefs in Nigeria's economic capital city, Lagos. Born in a polygamous family of 3 wives and 19 children, and in one of Lagos' slums, Orile, Kwame had to start early to learn how to make a living. His mother (3" of the wives) was a great local cook, and was notable for her Yoruba famous local mashed beans meal, Ewa Agoyin. Kwame started by helping her prepare and sell the peculiar beans meal, as a little school boy. That was the beginning of his interest in the kitchen arena. And this is why he owes his subsequent fortunes as a cook to his early tutelage under his mather.

Although from a poor background, but Kwame made it as far as the higher institution. He was studying Computer Science at Lagos State Polytechnic when he had to drop out due to lack of necessary funding. But dropping out to pursue his passion as a cook turned out to be a really wise decision. This is because while Kwame's mother cooked Ewa Agoyin for local folks. Kwame now cooks for kings, earning himself the status of one of Lagos' favourite chefs for the rich, VIPs, and royalties. In this interview with The Entrepreneur Africa, Kwame shares his struggles and triumphs, as a man kinging in a woman's world, i.e the kitchen. Excerpts.

What inspired you to become a chef?

Growing up in Orile Iganmu, a low income area, and growing up in a polygamous family with so little resources was a motivation for me and it really helped me to get thinking at a very tender age. I forgot to tell you that this idea of Kwame's kitchen was birth when I was in JSS 2. My mother was an amazing cook she would help people to cook for their events for a small amount of money and as the first son of 6 boys in a polygamous family I had to learn everything from her, the domestic chores to the family beans business, and cooking business. Lastly I've always had this great love and passion for cooking. You can not completely achieve success with things you don't love. And I really wanted to make a difference; you know, change the narrative. So, it was pure passion

Tell us how kwame's kitchen started, and how it has grown to where it is now.

Aside for working for Tantalizers and Chicken Republic, I trained for two years with Mayflower Catering School in Accra, Ghana. To take the lead in this line of business, so much research and innovation has to come in, and you just have to explore various. And creativity is a must.

At an early age, a lady approached me, few days to her wedding, saying that the caterers she formerly contracted had failed her. And she was banking on us to pull it through. It was successfully done. That's how the brand you see today started. Referral is the best kind of adverting in our line of business. That has helped us a lot.

Do you have any specialization in the catering business?

Of course we do most of the non- conventional dishes like Ewa Agoyin, Asaro, and Ofada Rice with grills. Not forgetting that we also do event management.

What is it like running a kitchen/catering service?

It is quite strenuous and very demanding physically and professionally, because it goes beyond cooking alone. Service and delivery is key, if you are out to succeed in the business. We are in a computer age, so explore the internet for new skills, recipe, and ways to make the business better. Attend seminars/conferences, online courses etc. Cooking is all about exploring. Lastly, encounter and discuss with other professionals and work with bodies related to the business.

You need people. Then money comes last. We started with just the passion to serve and enjoy what we are doing. Now the event industry has grown tremendously.

How capital intensive is this business?

Yeah...you need money. N500,000 to billions , but we advise you to start little, so possible the falls and failures don't swallow you up. What you need at first is the passion to want to do it.

How much has the recent recession affected the business?

Parties happen in the corporate and social environment all the time, but we all know parties happen majorly when clients have money to put into it. So due to economic issues there hasn't been as much merry and celebration as before, so it affected the amount of job orders. But we are still grateful.

Has being a male played any role, positive or negative?

Yes, it has its merits and demerits. Most of the direct clients are females. 3 tips to attain

success in the business?

If you were offered a job with N500,000 monthly salary, , would you dump this venture for a 9-5?

Of course not. First, so much has gone into building the brand; it's not about the money, but the happiness and fulfillment I get at doing what I do. And lastly we have a lot of people who are colleagues, clients, friends, and family who have come to trust and believe in the brands through great services.

What is the staff strenght at kwame's kitchen currently?

Presently, we have 25 staff members, and 6 trainees, and we still have over ten waiting for us to create space for them internally to join us on internship.

What are the constraints and challenges and steps to solve them?

Expansion has been so difficult, because we need huge money to expand to other parts of the country.

And we need government's intervention, to train youths in order to engage them. We are already talking to the Lagos State Ministry of Employment and Wealth Creation under the SSEE program by kwame's kitchen.

Where do you see kwame's kitchen in the next five years?

We are working towards becoming the first name to come to mind in the industry; create a strong value chain and success attaining firm for so many; build a sustainable brand and try building a global brand locally; and most importantly, make enough profit to keep us in business.





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October 2017 The Entrepreneur Africa



Harry Gordon Selfridge, the founder of Selfridge's department store in London, in 1909, originally coined the phrase "the customer is always right". This popular adage is typically used by businesses to give the company a high standard of customer care in the eyes of the customers or convince customers that they will get good service at this company *and* convince employees to give customers good service. They say "we need to satisfy our customers, that is why they are always right". But the truth is, there are customers who will NEVER be satisfied no matter how far you bend over. No matter how much time you dedicate, these customers will still be unhappy with what you provide. So, why jeopardise the business for "these" customers?

Here are some reasons why we think customers are not always right.

They make your employees miserable – whether we like it or not, a well-motivated employee will deliver his/her best to the growth of your business. And, the more you support your employees, the better customer service they'll provide to your other customers. As a general rule, unhappy employees provide poor customer service, while happy employees are more than willing to go the extra mile.

If you tell your employees to treat the customer like they're always right, at one point in time you'll make the employees miserable because the thing is there will always be nasty, rude, grumpy customers. When it comes down to supporting your employees or supporting an insufferable, irate customer, you want to support your employees. You want customers to know that, while you value them, you won't let them abuse your employees.

Also, when you inform your employees that the customer is always right, it pits the employees against the customers, with the customers always coming out on top. This creates problems on multiple levels and doing this often undermines the authority, control and effectiveness of the employees and most times causes employee resentment against managers.

Bad Customers Create Bad Experiences for customers or potential customers.

Believe it or not, there are some customers you DON'T want. If a customer constantly complains, abuses employees, creates unpalatable scenes, or creates stress for your company, they're not worth it. It doesn't matter how much money they pay. A bad customer:

- Erodes employee morale
- Requires an unusually high amount of resources
- Increases employee stress levels
- And more

There may be times when you have to avoid a customer in order to protect your company and employees. If you're planning on staying in business for the long haul, you need to avoid terrible customers.

You are the expert not the customer —There will be times when a customer thinks they are the expert, when they assume that something is supposed to work a certain way or presume to know how to run your business. You have to let them understand in all ramifications that you and our employees definitely know your products more than the customers.

If you've done your best to address their issues, you shouldn't feel guilty about moving on. In fact, it's your responsibility to keep going. Your business does not exist solely for that customer. You also meet the needs of hundreds of other customers, as well as support your employee.





every event is a promise look.



When you look at a broad definition of branding, it can be a bit overwhelming to think about what is involved in your brand.

Although "Brand" is often defined as a "Name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers" (Source: Wikipedia), we believe brand is more than that. Branding goes way beyond just a graphic element. More than a logo, a brand lives and evolves in the minds and hearts of potential clients. It's a fostered set of emotions and ideas consumers associate with your company. With the infinite number of choices offered to consumers these days, many companies are looking for unique ways to connect emotionally with consumers. That is why the various seminars or lectures you hear about branding can really not be too much to the ears.

When you think about your brand, you really want to think about your entire customer experience. In short, your brand is the way your customer perceives you.

It is critical to be aware of your brand experience and have a plan to create the brand experience that you want to have... a good brand doesn't just happen... it is a well thought out and strategic plan.

Many small organizations and start-ups neglect to spend necessary time thinking about their brand in this broad sense and the impact it has on their business.

You should know that:

- Branding is a way of clearly highlighting what makes your offer different to, and more desirable than, anyone else's. Effective branding elevates a product or organisation from being just one commodity amongst many identical commodities, to become something with a unique character and promise. It can create an emotional resonance in the minds of consumers who choose products and services using both emotional and pragmatic judgements.
- Branding adds value to your product. People are generally willing to pay more for a branded product than they are for something which is largely unbranded. And a brand can be extended through a

whole range of offers too. This obviously adds value to the business.

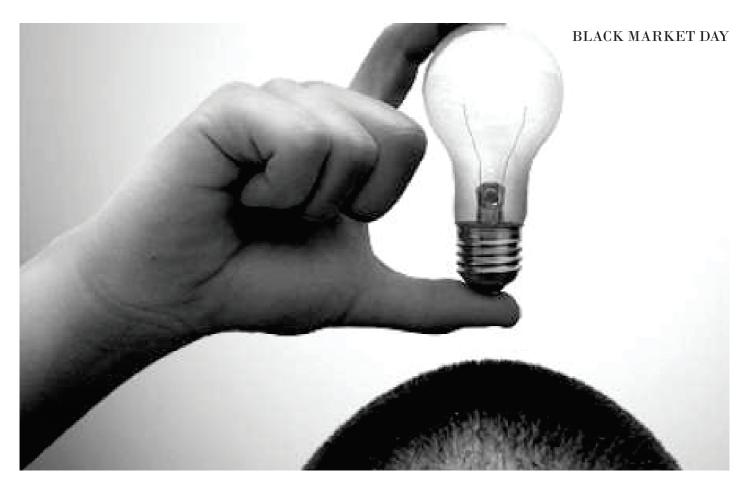
- Branding Improves Recognition. One of major components of your brand is your logo. As the "face" of a company, logo design is critical because that simple graphic will be on every piece of correspondence and advertising. A professional logo design is simple enough to be memorable, but powerful enough to give the desired impression of your company.
- Branding Creates Trust. A professional appearance builds credibility and trust. People are more likely to purchase from a business that appears polished and legitimate. Emotional reactions are hardwired into our brains, and those reactions are very real influencers.
- Branding Generates New Customers. Branding enables your company to get referral business. Would it be possible for you to tell a friend about the new shoes you love if you couldn't remember the brand? A large reason 'brand' is the word used for this concept is that the goal is an indelible impression. As the most profitable advertising source, word of mouth referrals are only possible in a situation where your company has delivered a memorable experience with your customer.

The most profitable companies, small and large, have a single thing in common. They have established themselves as a leader in their particular industry by building a strong brand.

...and remember, your brand is not what you say it is, it's what THEY say it is.

_ With help from Marty Newmeier.





WHO, REALLY IS AN ENTREPRENEUR SCRATCH THAT. WHO REALLY ISIN'T

By Mary Jane Nwankwo

Living loosely translates to making a living. Everyone is on a chase to managing things to make ends meet. An average person who survived a day in the real world has unwittingly managed hunger, shelter and security in order to stand before the Master of the universe to negotiate another day of grace in an albeit risky business of staying alive. This is empirical evidence that everyone who lives is an entrepreneur. The thing with entrepreneurship is that it collects from too many people to deserve a definition. For instance, an entrepreneur is one who organises and operates a business venture and assumes much of the associated risk.

A market woman who shouts at the peak of her voice to attract buyers may be dabbling into advertising. Profit making is the reason people roam the earth. She knows the consequences of a day spent watching her tomatoes sigh from neglect, so she steers passersby to her stall. Few days later than that, she may have to put those tomatoes to a forced usefulness in her kitchen if the disappointed tomatoes begin to hiss to ruin. Her shouts are basic advertising, tinted with a readiness to shed business risks, lest her vegetable business take a plunge.

You look a little away from the market woman and you are confronted by a rage of landlords whose source of livelihood is renting stalls to people who have items for sale. You would see in these set of business people a patient timeliness as they await their returns monthly, quarterly or annually. The landlords and shop letters are usually angry people. They have a perforated body of anger to shed for the periodical restrictions allowed them by the nature of their enterprise, little wonder they keep a pile of notice to quit beneath their cool demeanour. They are immune to daily haggling as their stock in trade is time. They wait it out. This leads to impatient waiting for time and tide, as they too are visited by risks of wear and tear. They wisely invest in good renovation as they stand waiting for new inhabitants and why not, new money. One would think they are not concerned with profit making when they let prospective tenants walk away from probably a faulty faucet or a hike in rent. They are as confident as truth for shelter is a basic need. Call them seasonal entrepreneurs, fine. Entrepreneurs, nonetheless.

You would think that that person who helped you find that dream house is just a good Samaritan. Well, a good Samaritan entrepreneur you mean. Those ones have gradually become more celebrated than the bricklayer who plastered the walls under the scorching sun. They taunt you with agent fees until you begin to wonder what agency is responsible for sightseeing. These days they have offices across town with huge billboards mounted on someone else's building telling you about someone else's building. In that case, you pay them for ratting o u t the location of a choice apartment. Call them snitches, parasites, near jobless landlord's relatives who had no hand in the construction of a building but is 'in charge', 's ight'man,

They call themselves agents and they are out for business. Ignore their invisible wares, you may risk a few nights under the bridge or the demise of a favourite pair of shoes in a quest for habitat.

I would have talked about the workers or rather jobbers on site. The framework of architecture. The real deal. But there are numerous units in every unit in this unit. The mason, plumber, painter, electrician and the expressionless man who comes to watch them on a daily basis. These are entrepreneurs who shelter a range of risks in order to shelter mankind.

Really, is there really a person who isn't an entrepreneur? Don't answer until you are certain that that person breathes.

Is it the teacher who casually recites nursery rhymes to pupils? What does he or she do by the weekend? You may be taught to respect the dignity of employment. I came across a teacher in a conference who sold barbecue on Saturday nights in his beer palor. His beer parlor sat peacefully in his front yard that it was easy to see it was his and he

opened only on weekends. You may say 'greedy man'. I say 'great entrepreneur'.

Meanwhile, while you argue that one has to attend a certain business ritual to be called an entrepreneur, you may fall ill and decide to seek medical or spiritual help, depending on your preference. If you choose to see a medical practitioner, you may be alarmed at why Jesus healed people for free when he could have opened a hospital in Nazareth. You are confronted with an even more distorted image of the ideal entrepreneur. You see that in the quest to save life, a simple path on the back costs a fortune when it is done by a white cloaked, terribly handed individual. You would almost exclaim in figures when you see a random bill for a patient who is smilling gratefully to the bank in spite of a fractured I

And just before you pass out from shock, you see that girl from college who failed every subject except handwriting tearing out receipts to clients. It is only then that you remember that life's precious.

And for the spiritual healers, they control the bank accounts too. A spiritual warfare debits benefactors.

A lawyer works his way into firm, dodging adversities in his business of debate while assuming the risk of daily living circumstances. He drags each day on the path of legal fulfillment while seeking to build a home, a career and ultimately a life. And for every jail sentence he adverts your way, his or her pockets are larger than they were before he or she ever began to think about defending your obviously. innocent self .It would be shady to say a lawyer who has mastered the art of proscribing justice and losing some clients to some squeaky truths, which is a risk in itself has not earned to wear a badge of entrepreneurial honour.

A peep into the entertainment industry reveals a band of determined entrepreneurs smiling on the big screen. Musicians who shrill out senseless songs and pocket home quality cash to start up real estate businesses abound. You would find in the movie industry a wave of diligent persons who have never appeared on a movie but make it happen for the actors while they appear on tabloids as rich . producers and directors.

They are not 'the caught in the act' entrepreneurs you have in mind, but they are no different from bank CEOs, company heads and all other amplified image of an entrepreneur in the imaginary register for the world.

The truth is that there are many expectations to life. One of these expectations is the absence of expectations. A business oriented individual finds a way out of economic crisis at every given opportunity, no matter what job mask currently covers the human face. And that is true entrepreneurship. Raw and uninhibited.

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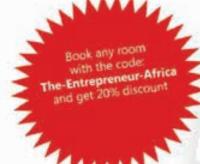
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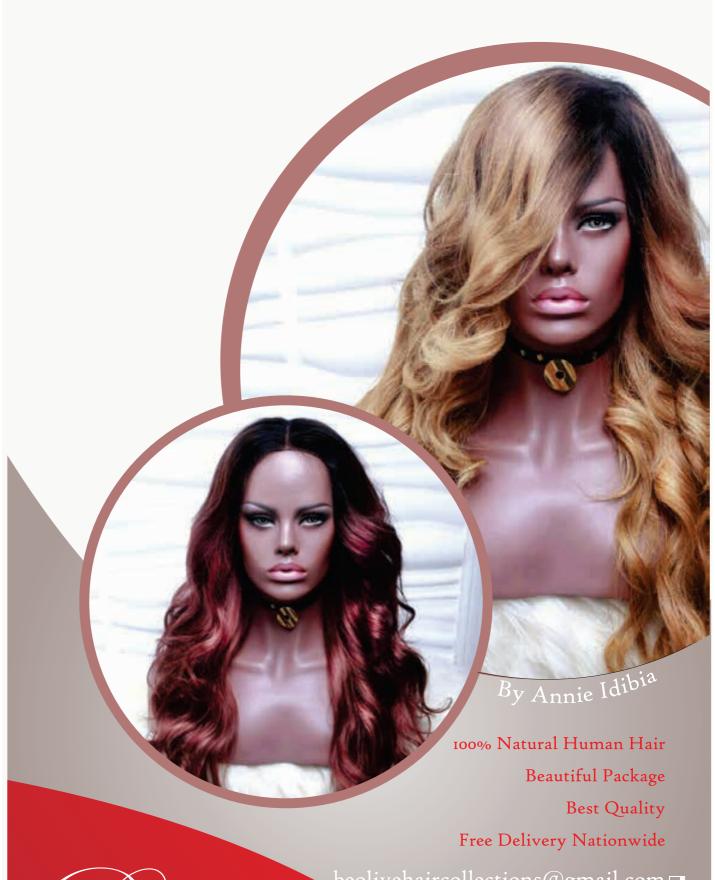
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