



# 2023 Shades of Branding

Actionable Insights for Nigerian Brands in Bite-Sized Stories.

Crafted at Crevtus.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

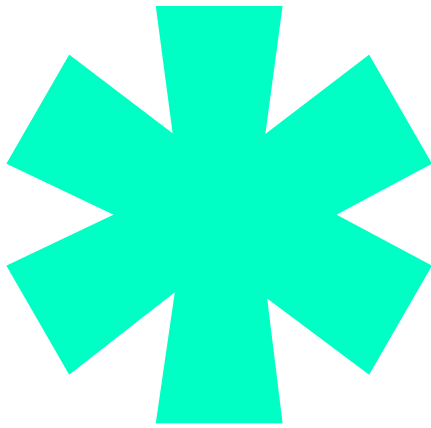
© 2023 Crevtus Studios.

# Contents

## Table Of

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>02</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>We Global Baby!</b>	<b>04</b>
X3M Ideas On An Extreme Feat	05
Afrobeats, It's Our Time!	07
At this point, Guinness World Records, Cut Us Our Cheque!	09
And Now You Come In, America's Got Talent.	11
Nollywood? More Like Ball-yWood (Nah, this title was cringe)	13
<b>Behold, The Power of Naija</b>	<b>15</b>
This is Big Brother	16
Acts of Goodwill	18
Apparently, We Listen to Podcasts, Like A Lot	20
Who English Epp?	22
<b>Harnessing "New Media"</b>	<b>24</b>
20 Years Later, Aki and Pawpaw Are Still Playing Games	25
3D Billboards, Holograms and The Metaverse	27
Spoiler Alert: Social Media Platforms Keep Evolving	29
You Knew We Had to talk about AI Right?	31
<b>The Brands That Make Nigeria</b>	<b>33</b>
Another Banger: Rema's Personal Brand	34
New Identities, New Skins	36
Nigerian Brands Can Be Playful...Wow.	38
<b>Creators, Influencers, or Just Very Powerful People</b>	<b>40</b>
Mom, I Want to be a YouTuber When I Grow Up	41
Short Form Videos, Long Money	43
Imagine Us Talking About ARCON	45
<b>2024 Shades: What's It Going To Be Like?</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>49</b>

# Intro- duction



P.S. From our UX Department:

You can enjoy this book in any order. The sections are not ordered in a chronological format.

Depending on whether or not you're reading this while watching TikTok, you should be able to finish the whole book within 20 minutes.

## What is '2023 Shades of Branding'?

This is a highlight of some of the interesting things from Nigerian brands in 2023. These 'things' are crafted into bite-sized stories and insights that you can apply to your brand.

## What '2023 Shades of Branding' isn't.

Let's get it straight, this is not a report. We will leave that to others. This is a collection of our stories, the Nigerian journey and the brands shaping it. So, grab your stool and sit under this *iroko*.<sup>1</sup>

## Who is '2023 Shades of Branding' for?

This gem is crafted for the wizards behind brand magic: brand strategists, brand managers, marketers, heads of communication, and yes, the brand owners themselves. If you're in the business of making brands shine, this is for you.

Now, let the fun begin!



# We Global Baby!

The entertainment industry put Nigeria on another tier of the global stage in 2023. The dedication and hard work of many playmakers captivated the world, and we've highlighted some of the great moments for you.

# X3M Ideas on an Extreme Feat

A Nigerian agency doing awesome work, X3M Ideas, led by the visionary Steve Babaeko, snagged Nigeria's first-ever Cannes Lions Award at the Cannes International Festival for Creativity.

The best part was that this win happened during the festival's 70th anniversary, which coincided with X3M's 10th anniversary, adding some extra *pizzazz*<sup>2</sup> to their win!

Their award-winning campaign, 'Soot Life Expectancy,' which bagged the prize in the health category, wasn't just about advertising; it was about making a positive impact.



Focused on tackling environmental issues caused by illegal refineries in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, the campaign got people involved by providing personalised life expectancy calculations.

The Cannes Lions Award is the Olympics of advertising – and X3M ideas came out victorious, not just for themselves, but for Nigeria as a whole, showing our nation's resilience and talents for the world to see!

# Our Take- away

X3M's win shows us that local stories, when executed with boldness and innovation, can achieve global relevance. By embracing strategies that resonate culturally and socially, your brand can carve out a unique and memorable identity on the world stage.

Don't be afraid to shoot for the big prizes, and when you do, remember to come from an original perspective—something that makes your story stand out among the noise.

## Expert's Corner

The Cannes Lion win demonstrates the excellent spirit of Naija on a global scale. We started with the Grammys, now Cannes, and the progress continues. Little by little, we get to show we are certainly amongst the global elites, whether in music, advertising, or whatever we so choose.

**Steve Babaeko**  
CEO/CCO X3M IDEAS



# Afro-beats, It's Our Time

With over 15 billion global streams and notable collaborations with some of the greatest artists in the world, Afrobeats kept breaking records throughout the year.

We can't fit everything in this chapter, so we created our own 'wrapped'. The prince of Afrobeats, Rema, celebrated a billion streams on Spotify, topped with a Ballon d'Or performance (more on him in a later chapter).

Tems made history by being the first Nigerian artist to get an Oscar nomination for her work on Rihanna's 'Lift Me Up', a song from 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever'. This was after winning her first Grammy in February for her collaboration with Drake and Future on 'Wait For U.'

Talking about the Grammy Awards, they added three new categories, including the 'Best African Music Performance' category, acknowledging the global impact of Nigerian artists like Burna Boy, Wizkid, Davido, Olamide, Asake, Ayra Starr, and Fireboy.

Nigerian artists were also all over the NBA All-Star game, with sterling performances from Burna Boy, Tems, and Rema. CNN was apt when they said, 'The trio performed an Afrobeats-packed halftime show, a sign that the genre's global rise is continuing into 2023'.

Beautiful news like this gives hope for the huge potential of our music industry. *Statista*, a global data and business intelligence platform, says African music streaming revenue might hit a whopping \$484 million by 2026. We do not doubt that Afrobeats will be a significant contributor to that number!





# Our Take- away

The rise of Afrobeats can teach you a few things about collaborations beyond your usual networks, fostering cross-industry alliances and international partnerships to expand your reach and offer holistic solutions to customers.

As a brand manager or business owner, take a page from Afrobeats' book: highlight what makes your brand special and culturally unique. This will not only make your brand stand out but also connect strongly with people all over the world, just like Afrobeats has done. This strategy can open up new markets and opportunities, just like the growing trend in music streaming in Africa.

## Expert's Corner

Afrobeats has been our biggest and leading export this year in terms of entertainment. Yes, it's been a long time coming, but that's what you get with consistency and improving the quality of the product being offered. Afrobeats has shown that with proper branding, consistency, and the ability to evolve and adapt to time!

I'll use nightlife in Nigeria as an example. Just like Afrobeats, there was a time when it wasn't taken seriously, and you'd be looked at in a certain way when you said you were a nightlife promoter. However, it has evolved into a formidable industry, with celebrity promoters, DJs, and hype men who tour the world alongside our Afrobeats royalty, turning every event into an experience. This influence has been felt both in society and by the government.

Yes, we can't move the clubs around, but we are beginning to export our nightlife experience to the world!

**Godfather**  
A&R/Nightlife Promoter



# At This Point, Guinness World Records, Cut Us Our Cheque!

According to the African Times, Nigeria emerged as the most influential nation on the internet in 2023.

If you are in doubt, look at how Nigeria decimates Ghana every time the Jollof wars start. On a serious note, though, one of our finest moments was rallying support for Chef Hilda Baci in her bid to get the Guinness World Record (GWR) for the then-longest individual cooking marathon, with an official record of 93 hours and 11 minutes.

Nigerians showed amazing engagement on the GWR social media pages, creating a whopping 33.9 million impressions and 242,000 likes at the time of this writing. GWR noticed this and tapped into it throughout and after the campaign.

Now we wait for Chef Dammy to take us to new heights.



# Our Take- away

To win over your target market, you need to get involved in causes and discussions that matter to them.

Carry them along with the behind-the-scenes and build in public so your customers can cheer you on and lead to viral moments. Success comes to brands that mix smart strategies with daring actions that truly connect with people's emotions, hearts, and minds.

## Expert's Corner

Lagos is not the competition.

Which city in North America would you say has the most popular activity? New York? And for Europe, what city would you say? London/Paris? How about Asia? Beijing? And for Africa? You guessed it, Lagos.

So, what you do in Lagos is what Nigeria talks about, and what you do in Nigeria is one of the top two things to hear about in Africa. Your activities in that West African coastal city have the potential to be globally recognized, almost instantly, and with technology, you have the numbers and a potential community that can talk about you.

Also, the next time you plan a project that will most likely be online, it takes the same \$50 to put an ad captured for Lekki as it would for Oxford Street. Put some extra thought into your strategy. Own your global share, baby. You are from Lagos.

**Tomi Wale**

Brand Consultant/Creative Director



# And Now You Come In, America's Got Talent



Guess who else wanted a taste of Nigerian excellence?

Nearly three years after his viral 'Don't Leave Me' challenge took the internet by storm, Nigerian comedian Josh2Funny made a global comeback. He delighted audiences with a series of off-beat performances that once again went viral.

While Josh's acts were scripted and intentionally subpar, he demonstrated a keen understanding of grabbing attention. Trust America's Got Talent to tap into this attention as well.



# Our Take- away

America's Got Talent and Josh2Funny's collaboration shows us the power of well-planned 'spontaneity'. The unexpected collaboration not only made the show more interesting but also attracted a new audience. Employing a similar strategy can assist your brand in capturing eyeballs in today's attention-driven economy.

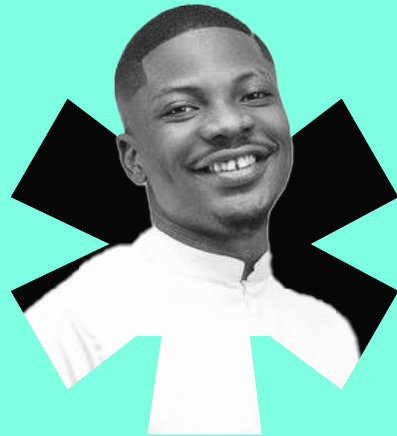
## Expert's Corner

The power of collaborations can't be overemphasized. Brands should not just invest in collaborations but also strive to be more strategic with whom they collaborate. One of the 'strategic partnerships' that stood out for me in 2023 was when the renowned author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie collaborated on the Dior Lady 9522 by Maria Grazia Chiuri; that was a powerful collaboration.

Another unexpected one was Josh 2 Funny x AGT. Looking forward, 2024 should be a year marked by more strategic collaborations and partnerships.

**Tomiwa Talabi**

Founder, Lagos Life & Digital Creator





# Nollywood?

## More Like Ball-yWood

(Nah, this title was cringe)

The wise Nigerian thinker Small Doctor once said, 'If you no get money, hide your face'. But in 2023, Nollywood had no reason to hide. The Cinema Association of Nigeria reported that the Nigerian box office revenue soared by N121 million in August 2023, reaching a total of N603 million from ticket sales nationwide (a 25% increase from the previous month).

One striking case of our success was 'The Black Book', a Nollywood sensation that has taken the world by storm. It is a masterpiece that showcases the industry's evolution from low-budget dramas to high-quality productions.

With a whopping \$1 million budget, it is the second most expensive Nollywood movie ever, only behind Half of a Yellow Sun's N1.6 billion (\$2.2 million adjusted for inflation). It also made history as the first Nollywood movie to top the Netflix charts worldwide, with over 70 million views since its debut on September 22, 2023.

It stayed in the top 10 English-language titles globally for three weeks, reaching No. 3 at its peak. Greatness!



# Our Take- away

The boost in box office revenue and success of movies like 'The Black Book' reveal that our film industry has a lot of appeal and that local content with authentic storytelling can resonate globally.

It also reminds us of something we have always known: *soup wey sweet, na money kill am*.<sup>3</sup> The heavy investment ensured good casting, an appropriate set, and production to match the tastes of a global audience. This emphasises the importance of investing in quality (and branding) to stand out in a competitive market.

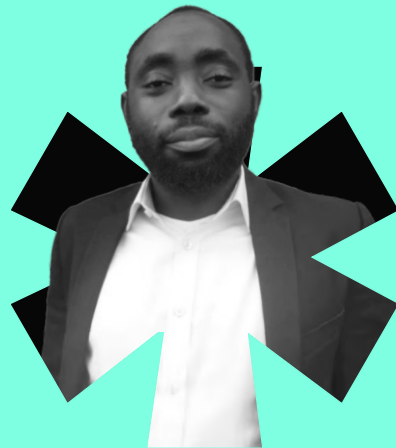
Finally, strong brands make for great leverage. The director, Editi Effiong, used his strong reputation in the tech world to attract support from Nigerian tech founders and Nollywood powerhouses. These backers didn't just provide funds; they also used their credibility to promote the movie to their audiences. This created a powerful PR and image boost that would have been difficult otherwise.

## Expert's Corner

Nollywood has come a long way. Finally, the movie industry, akin to the music industry, has entered a phase where revenue and profitability are somewhat guaranteed due to the proliferation of Subscription Video On Demand (SVOD) platforms. The need for these platforms to host the best content for their subscribers has created a marketplace for Nigerian (and African) movies through licensing and original productions.

The success of movies like 'The Black Book' will likely make Nollywood more attractive to additional investors. Thus, I anticipate seeing more Entertainment and Movie Funds emerging in the new year, alongside more Private Equity firms investing in movies as a new asset class. Capital tends to follow profitability, and Nollywood has indeed unlocked new levels of profitability.

**Adedammy Adedotun**  
Temple Management Company





# Behold, The Power of Naija

Guess who is coming back for their crown? Nigeria's status as an African powerhouse is undeniable. But if you are still doubting, this chapter is dedicated to you, Thomas.





# This is Big Brother

We thought of starting this section with something big. The latest season of the reality show at the time of this writing (BBNaija All Stars) made a big splash, garnering 1.5 billion votes throughout the season.

Media experts at *P+ Measurement Services* have evaluated the 23 million views globally, an impressive figure.

The show ignited a lot of discussions on social media and proved to be a goldmine for sponsors like Moniepoint, Tecno Mobile, and Pepsi, who cleverly captured 36%, 21%, and 13% of media attention respectively with their creative ads.

# Our Take- away

Only some brands can sponsor shows like Big Brother. However, it doesn't prevent you from tapping into the buzz shows like this generate on social media. By engaging with trending topics and conversations, your brand can experience a significant increase in brand exposure.

The engagement the show has, like the voting process, can also be mirrored in your marketing strategies. Think beyond the go-to channels and use real-time interactions to keep your audience engaged and invested.

## Expert's Corner

The true catalysts for this digital phenomenon are the dedicated fans of the housemates. They play a pivotal role in steering the narrative, acting as the primary drivers behind the discussions and trends across various digital landscapes that unfold during the Big Brother Naija show. These vibrant conversations, in the form of Twitter's real-time updates to TikTok and Instagram's visually rich content, create an expansive digital footprint.

These conversations also resonate far beyond the confines of the show, leading to organic engagement. This engagement, driven by the fans' passion, transcends boundaries and becomes a powerful tool for brands. Riding the waves of these trends created by the fans, brands can organically integrate themselves into the discourse, gaining visibility, fostering engagement, and elevating their brand presence without the necessity of official sponsorship on the Big Brother Naija stage.

**Oluwafemi Ogunsanya**

Lead Strategist

TBDA - The Bees Digital Agency



# Acts of

As brands become more important in our lives, they must connect organically with their audiences and feel like they're real people who care about us.

For instance, Dr. H2O, a street hawker, became an Aquafina water brand ambassador after a viral video showcased his creative promotion of the brand. Impressed by his inspiring story, Aquafina appointed him as their ambassador and provided him with a business setup worth millions of Naira.

In another vein, LG Electronics Nigeria also released a video featuring their factory facility through social media influencer Ola of Lagos. The video showcased the company's operations and highlighted its commendable efforts to empower wheelchair users by providing them with employment opportunities.

# Goodwill

# Our Take- away

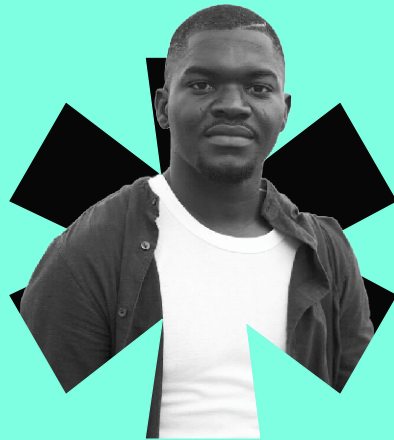
We had a takeaway here but cleared it out because Opeyemi conveyed how brands can utilise goodwill better. Take in the beauty below.

## Expert's Corner

Acts of goodwill in brand development are not limited to a brand's product or service but extend to making a difference by incorporating environmental, social, and cultural value creation into their mission and operations. Take 'Two Blind Brothers' as an example. Founded by visually impaired brothers, they donate all profits to cure retinal eye disease. Their 'Shop Blind' feature allows customers to buy mystery boxes without seeing them.

This unique approach built trust, forming numerous partnerships with charities and advocacy groups. It demonstrates how CSR drives brand development and fosters loyal connections.

The narrative does not mean a brand has to be very big to achieve this, but stepping into the vibrant streets of the community. These are not mere marketing ploys but brushstrokes on the canvas of brand perception; each act a testament to a deeper purpose.



Such genuine initiatives will resonate powerfully with consumers, bringing forth bonds stronger than any billboard.

Brands that embrace goodwill rewrite their stories, not just in bold headlines but in the hearts they touch and the communities they strengthen. This, then, is the essence of acts of goodwill—a quiet revolution in the symphony of brand development, where kindness becomes the conductor and positively impacts the grand finale.

**Opeyemi O.**  
Project Manager

# Apparently, We Listen to Podcasts, Like A Lot



Spotify revealed that Nigeria is the second-highest consumer of podcasts in Africa, closely trailing South Africa. This surge in podcast popularity is mainly driven by the younger generation, particularly Gen Z (18-24 years old), who make up half of all podcast listeners, using them for entertainment and self-improvement. Cheaper data too. We didn't forget that.

Notable podcasts like The Honest Bunch Podcast, I Said What I Said, Menisms, So Nigerian, and Tea with Tay resonate with Gen Z and Millennials due to their focus on trending topics and candid conversations.

This shouldn't be surprising, though; nothing can separate Nigerians from some good *amebo*.<sup>4</sup>

# Our Take- away

Podcasts offer a pathway to a wider, younger audience through sponsorships and partnerships. To stand out, personalize your podcast to match your audience's interests and preferences, and fill in the gap with topics they enjoy.

Podcasts, being longer and valued, serve as strong brand touchpoints, forging intimate and lasting connections. With the podcasting trend expanding, creating your own or partnering with established podcasts is crucial to tap into this growing market. Remember, content is King.

## Expert's Corner

Podcasting is definitely in its 'IT' era. It has always been there, but the introduction of video has made it easier for people to get interested. Audio-visual content passes messages faster.

A lot of people have also jumped on the train of being "podcasters" so to really filter the ones with valuable substance is a chore and this is one of the cons of its popularity.

Many often wonder how these 'podcasts' generate income. You'd be surprised that ads are not a joke in podcasts. Unlike videos where you can skip through ads, you kind of have to listen through with audio.

Podcasts also fit into people's routines, from taking a walk to early morning alone time, people listen to clear their minds or get a desirable mood. Very similar to music but the difference is you feel like you're having a conversation and you're getting a response.

**Tolani Ayeni**

Head of Production, Eggcorn Digital





# Who English Epp?



While pidgin is easily one of Nigeria's biggest unofficial languages and is a great tool in every Nigerian's life, it is still looked down upon. Air Peace creeps back into the spotlight this year by empowering its pilots to make routine flight announcements in this language of ours.

This was different and caused some customers to post videos of this experience, which garnered mostly positive reactions, giving the brand significant organic reach, which might have otherwise been expensive to achieve.

This move has also offered them brand differentiation, increasing their perception as a fun and unapologetically Nigerian airline.

# Our Take- away

Fun brands succeed because they make people feel good and do things differently, and in today's world, that is free positive publicity. We know that not every brand can be that fun, but always search for ways to add more character to your communications.

## Expert's Corner

Nothing beats people feeling seen or heard when they watch or listen to you. I know because I have tested the waters many times, and having people relate to me is what has stuck.

As we approach 2024, don't let the fear of being perceived as 'cringe' stop you from putting out whatever you're working on. Unless, of course, it borders on harassment—please discard that notion. Don't be ashamed to try new things, and even if you feel ashamed, don't let it show. People can sense it.

**Virtuous Irianele**

Brand & Influencer Marketing Strategist/Storyteller







# Harnessing 'New Media'

These days, the line between 'old' and 'new' media keeps getting blurry.  
While many brands are yet to tap into the gold mine of innovations in  
media, others are embracing them and doing cool things.



# 20 Years Later, Aki and Pawpaw Are Still Playing Games

The release of 'Aki and Pawpaw Epic Run' ignited considerable excitement among Nigerians and the gaming community.

This 3D, fast-paced adventure game stars two of Nollywood's most beloved actors, Chinedu Ikedieze and Osita Iheme, as they embark on exciting journeys across Nigeria.

Since its launch, the game has garnered over 100,000 downloads and features appearances by celebrities like Cubana Chief Priest and BBN's Nengi.

# Our Take- away

Creating a game that connects to familiar things like our local transportation *danfos*,<sup>5</sup> *okadas*<sup>6</sup> police characters, and other popular elements, ensures success. Nostalgia sells well, so merging what people cherish from the past with what you're offering is key.

This game's success also shows how using cultural symbols boosts brand involvement. Fans get to stay engaged with these figures and their famous work in a personal way, building stronger loyalty. Interested in learning more about this? [We have an article on transmedia storytelling](#) – a shameless plug, yes!

## Expert's Corner

Brands shape culture. Because, for businesses to succeed, they must invest in influencing people's thoughts and behaviours to align with their goals.

Today, new media channels make it significantly easier for businesses to connect with individuals, creating a natural environment for engagement and purchasing. This phenomenon is unfolding prominently in Nigeria, where storytelling and the crafting of strategic narratives have become instrumental in selling products that people now consider essential.

With the advent of social media, the boundaries are increasingly blurred due to public access to a wealth of information. This provides brands with opportunities for more effective storytelling, revolutionising how stories are created, distributed, and consumed. Whether you are a business or a personal brand, storytelling is a valuable tool for facilitating human-to-human connection, because storytelling taps into an essential part of being human—emotions.

**Soji Oyemomi**

Founder Episodx/ Brand Strategist/Educator



# 3D Billboards, Holograms and The Metaverse

The future looks increasingly immersive, and many brands agree with us. Remember those videos of billboards with subjects that felt so alive that you could touch them? *The Maslow*, Africa's first 3D digital billboard, was unveiled in Lagos, Nigeria, and is set to make advertising more immersive and interactive.

Similarly, MTN Nigeria launched a hologram tour that showcases the power of 5G and hologram technology. The tour featured Nigerian celebrities like Praiz, Johnny Drille, and Qdot, who performed 'live' through fully interactive, hologram devices.

These performances were streamed in real-time from a remote location to the holographic devices, showcasing the power of MTN's 5G network.

This is a first in Nigeria and showcases MTN's commitment to ushering in a new era of entertainment by fusing music, art, and technology.



# Our Take- away

The potential of the metaverse and other immersive technologies is exciting for brands aiming to create unique and personalised experiences for their audiences. Tapping into the power of new technologies makes you stand out as you craft powerful touchpoints for your audience. A word of caution, though: remember to always use technology your audience understands or can find their way around to avoid alienating them.

If you want to explore more about the metaverse and how it can benefit your brand, we have [another article for you.](#)

## Expert's Corner

Immersive shopping experiences, fueled by augmented reality, redefine online retail. From virtual try-ons to real-world product visualization, brands enhance customer engagement, reduce returns, and foster lasting connections. In the evolving retail landscape, investing in these experiences is a strategic imperative for brand success.

**Derrick Ikenga**

Founder/CEO of Euphoria Labs



# Spoiler Alert: Social Media Platforms Keep Evolving

From WhatsApp Channels to Threads and Elon (Musk if you were wondering which Elon) changing Twitter to X, the social media landscape was shaken in 2023 as it always is every year.

The Channels feature of WhatsApp is a way for influencers and brands to reach out to their audiences directly, and with over 90 million users in Nigeria, it offers a unique opportunity for businesses to build stronger relationships with their audience on one of the most personal platforms.

We know you didn't miss this, but Twitter, sorry 'X', temporarily got a new competitor, and it was a masterclass in getting into the market at the perfect time. Meta's 'Threads' app became the fastest-growing app, with over 100 million users gained in less than a week. Sadly, retention fell by 82% in about a month. Interestingly, with all the controversy surrounding X, it didn't fall off like people expected. Hats off to Elon!



# Our Take- away

While it is tempting to always want to jump on the bandwagon of every new trend and platform, you want to ensure that you're already doing the best on the platforms where you already exist. Feed your existing audience properly before searching for new ones.

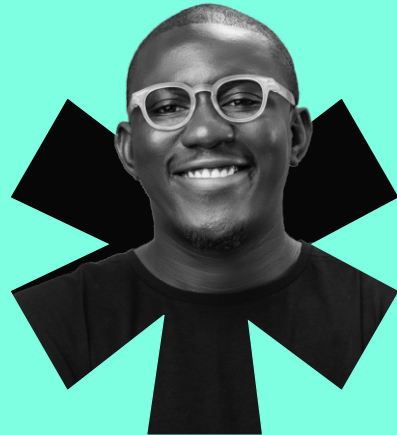
When you decide to try out new things, ensure you do so in a way that aligns with your brand's voice and the communication style within the platform. Never forget to be creative in all this as well.

## Expert's Corner

The number in your bio isn't just a number. There's a human being behind every screen. Before we're in the business of anything, we're in the business of PEOPLE first. All the money you want to make, the attention you want to get — the likes, comments and shares etc. will come from people. Platforms ultimately are a tool to serve the 'people', not the other way round.

People before trends. People before platforms.  
People over vanity metrics. People over profit.

**Salem King**  
Creator



# You Knew We Had to Talk about AI Right?

It's been just over a year since the AI craze (not its invention) took off, and its adoption has been widespread (we know you use ChatGPT). It has made many creative professionals write proposals, plan strategies, write semi-inspiring copy, and go on strike.

You may not have heard of this, but this may be the best time to be an AI researcher in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has thrown in a whopping N225 million to back 45 AI startups and researchers. Each of these lucky folks gets N5 million to boost their work, thanks to the Nigeria Artificial Intelligence Research Scheme.

This scheme aims to make Nigeria an AI powerhouse and a big player in the new technological arms race. Fingers crossed.





# Our Take- away

As AI advances, expect remarkable changes across industries.

Picture AI-driven chatbots ensuring seamless customer support, detecting fraud, and optimising transactions.

E-commerce will utilise AI for recommendation engines and pricing strategies.

Agriculture will see AI sensors boosting productivity.

Healthcare will adopt AI chatbots for patient queries and diagnoses.

Brands will use AI to understand customers better and create immersive experiences.

Sounds like a game-changer, doesn't it? But what do we know? We are just repeating what AI told us.

## Expert's Corner

The AI era isn't approaching—it's here, reshaping our lives and work. Embracing AI isn't just advantageous; it's becoming essential for businesses, radically enhancing productivity. It has also led to the creation of multimillion-dollar enterprises, by allowing us to solve problems at the speed of thought.

**Noel Abdullahi**

AI Transformation Director | Consultant,  
Data Science Nigeria





# The Brands that make Nigeria

A lot has happened in 2023. This section showcases some of the inspiring advancements made by Nigerian brands despite everything else.

# Another Banger:

One billion streams. That is how many times (plus change) Rema's 'Calm Down' featuring American singer Selena Gomez has been streamed on Spotify. It's the first song led by an African artist to reach a billion streams on Spotify. 2023 also saw him build a solid fanbase in India, a feat that not many Nigerian artists of this era can boast of.

With all these achievements, it's no surprise that Rema has gone alongside 'old cats' like Burna Boy, Davido, and Wizkid to sell out global venues like the O2 Arena. 2023 was indeed a great year for Rema, and it doesn't seem to be calming down any time soon because he is focused on his craft, *DND*.<sup>7</sup>.

## Rema's Personal Brand



# Our Take- away

Rema has mastered the art of intentional branding. Personal branding isn't only for solopreneurs or creators. Companies with leaders that have strong personal brands (think Tony Elumelu) move the brand further, so if your brand isn't leaning into this yet, you should.

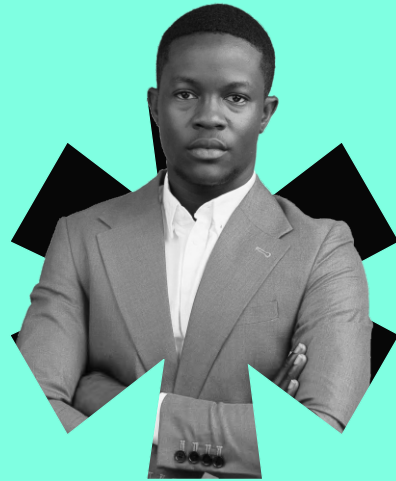
## Expert's Corner

In the early 2000s in Nigeria, the majority of us listened to music through the available media: CD albums (or the infamous selection Cds), a favorite radio station, countdown shows on TV, or through our neighbor's wall.

With the widespread adoption of the internet in the last two decades, an ecosystem of streaming platforms and social media has skyrocketed the number of people who can listen to music anywhere at any time, which means more value (and money). Brands can strategize creatively to tap into this opportunity on both sides of the equation: for the people putting out the music (artists, labels, publishers, and distributors) and the people consuming it (creators and every single human that loves music). Creativity is the only limit to the possibilities.

**Demola Lawal 'Latchenko'**

Music Executive/Music Tech Innovator



# New Identities,



In 2023, we noticed some companies rebranding. Pepsi changed its logo to be less minimalistic, aiming to connect better with younger people and show its strong dedication to Pepsi Zero Sugar.

Brands are not static; they mature, evolve, and sometimes become new entities. This is often a result of insights gotten from their audiences and is necessary for the sustained growth of the brand.

Similarly, OPay introduced a new, modern logo while EdenLife updated its brand with a fresh look and added new services to earn more money alongside its subscription plans. In the world of insurance, ETAP, an upcoming insurtech company, expanded by launching a platform that allows businesses to easily insure their vehicle fleets in just a few minutes.



# New Skins

# Our Take- away

Make sure your rebranding has a clear purpose! Whether you're reaching a new market, showing off new ideas, or trying new places, being real is key.

Communication matters too. Explain why you're making changes to your audience. Keep them involved before and after the rebrand to make sure it works well.

Also, keep an eye on how your brand does after the changes. Check things like how many people know your brand, what customers think, and how your business grows. These steps will take your brand higher!

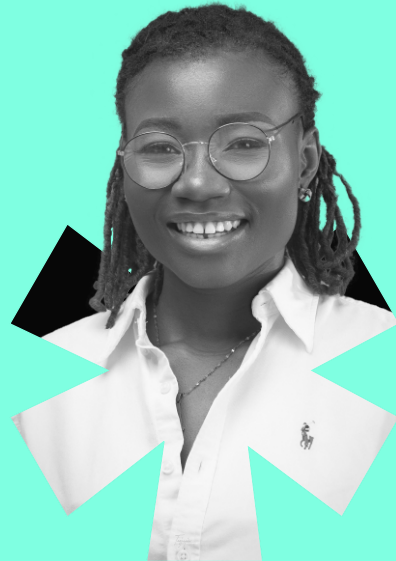
## Expert's Corner

Rebrands could be more daunting than building from scratch. (coming from one who has led and executed one at a big startup). This is because rebrands change the patterns we are used to, causing discomfort. A good rebrand, executed well outweighs the effort.

A well-executed rebrand demands an audit to evaluate brand alignment is crucial, involving employee and customer feedback. Establish baseline metrics for clear goals, reevaluate strategies, and prioritize strategy over design. Measure success through balanced feedback, communicate transparently internally and externally, ensuring employee buy-in, customer engagement, and investor awareness for a successful rebrand.

**Bolu Awakan**

Head of Brand & Design, Traction





# Nigerian Brands Can Be Playful... Wow.



Internationally, friendly banter on social media between brands is not uncommon; however, it rarely happens among corporate Nigerian brands. This year, though, some of them decided to break the cycle.

MTN playfully congratulated Airtel on the launch of their 5G service, nine months after MTN had launched theirs. Airtel responded with a witty reply, thanking MTN and suggesting they could do even better.

In another industry far away, right after Big Brother Naija announced the winner of the 2023 edition, Ilebeye, Piggyvest congratulated her and encouraged her to invest half of her winnings on their platform. Capitalising on this, FairMoney responded to Piggyvest's tweet, vying for Ilebeye's investment by promising higher returns.

# Our Take- away

These exchanges sparked conversations on social media and generated significant attention for both brands and their offerings. By engaging in playful banter, you can spark relevant discussions while promoting your products and services.

## Expert's Corner

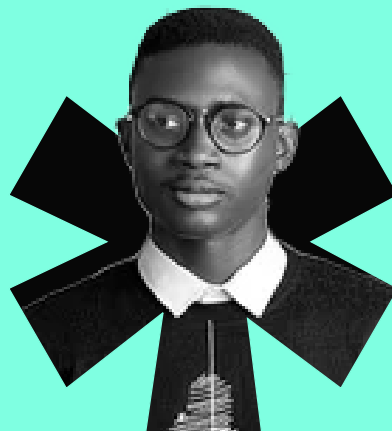
Most corporate brands have a significant obstacle: the perception that they lack real heart and soul—a sentiment that is perhaps justifiable because their identities are artificially created. (No offence to brand strategists.)

So, how can they connect to their audience on a human-to-human (H2H) level? This is where brand personality comes in via attributes that make brands human, relatable, and soulful, expressed in both visual and verbal assets. Brands now have to figure out how to activate this personality that they've chosen to embody. Engaging in friendly banter is one way to do this, which makes audiences feel as though they are brothers with the brand, living on the same street. ('Help me tap that bro's for back; I greet you boss' vibes). This becomes so real that people start to carve a face for these brands in their minds.

Brand owners must be innovative with these methods because, at the end of the day, it cuts across the distinctions of B2C or B2B; it's H2H—human to human.

**Funsho Felix**

Chief of Strategy, Bransolute







# Creators, Influencers, or Just Very Powerful People

In the words of Cersei Lannister (Game of Thrones for the uninitiated), 'power is power'. In this section, we will be focusing on creators, new power players in this tech economy.

# Mom, I Want to be a YouTuber When I Grow Up

Who would tell the older generation that 'pressing phone' is now a career? Social media platforms have made it increasingly easier and lucrative for people to build careers online, from education to entertainment and everything in between.

People across different generations have embraced the long-form video platform, being creative with their content and building communities that get value from what they post. We guess 'Welcome to my YouTube channel' must be one of the most popular phrases there.

Content creators typically get paid by showing off products or through the ad program on YouTube.

When they create reviews of relevant products, creators help brands sell their products by making them feel more personal. Even though the audience knows it's a sales pitch, these creators make it seem more real and trustworthy.



# Our Take- away

While you might be using YouTube to run advertisements for your brand, think about how you can utilise people's love for long-form videos on the platform to create communities and foster brand loyalty.

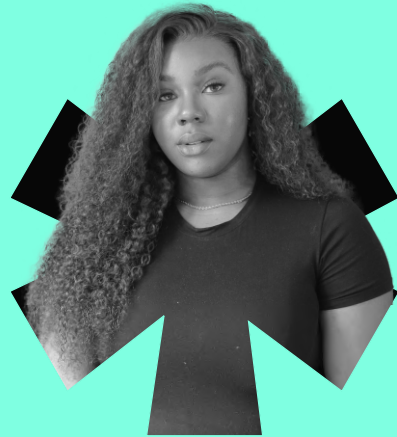
Influencer marketing through creators can also be a cost-effective way to build brand awareness and trust. It is a great way to bypass the scepticism that comes with advertising your products through traditional channels.

## Expert's Corner

Long-form content is definitely great for creators to express themselves more. I believe it is a great opportunity for creators to create educational content, ranging from tips and tutorials to lifestyle content like vlogs. YouTube, being a search engine, makes it so convenient for you to be discovered and to reach a global audience.

The earning potential from the YouTube partnership program is also something that could motivate any creator to get on board. I would 100% recommend stretching yourself as a creator with long-form content.

**Onyinyechi Anozie**  
Digital Marketer and Content Creator



# Short Form Videos,

Short vertical videos are all the rage online, grabbing people's attention with their quick and fun format. This evolution in how we watch videos has led to more creative content and new ways of telling stories.

Creators are capitalising on the popularity of shorts, as we call them, by exploring various monetization strategies such as

brand partnerships, merchandising, fan funding, and affiliate marketing.

All this rarely works in the absence of a community, so creators who know this constantly explore ways of building a tribe for people with similar interests.

# Long Money

# Our Take- away

Shorts have provided the same opportunities to creators that long-form videos have, and brands tap into this through partnerships. When you collaborate with a creator, always give them creative freedom to tailor your message into a format that resonates with their community.

This allows your message (and campaign objective) to sink in the most natural way possible.

## Expert's Corner

If you are interested in being a short-form content creator, you need to open your eyes to the reality that the glamour of that career path takes time. Don't suddenly quit your job if you don't have a security net. You need money and peace of mind to create great content and invest in your craft. However, have the mindset of an entrepreneur and build your brand on professional ethics. These will take you farther than raw talent.

**Tennie Oyewole**

Talent Manager/ Content Creator / Brand Strategist



# Imagine Us Talking About ARCON

Nothing to see here...



# 2024 Shades: What's It Going To Be Like?



Unfortunately, buying a crystal ball to predict the future was not in our budget this year. However, we can be quite sure that the energy from 2023 will continue into 2024.

The entertainment industry will keep growing, giving brands more chances to reach a global audience and break through barriers. We might see more brands using fancy tech like generative AI and immersive innovations to create cool experiences for people.

Brands will try to sound less like robots and more like caring humans. They'll do this by running well-crafted social responsibility campaigns and by collaborating with influencers and everyday people to share their message.

No matter what's coming, it's smart to look back and learn, figure out what worked, what didn't, and how to get better.

# Sharing is Caring

Did you love this? We encourage you to share it with friends, colleagues, and anyone who might find it beneficial. Feel free to distribute. We appreciate your help in spreading our ideas and insights.

Please attribute the work to Crevtus when you share it. A simple mention goes a long way!

While we are enthusiastic about sharing, it's important to respect the integrity of the original work. Please refrain from altering, remixing, modifying, or using the content for commercial purposes without obtaining prior permission from us. This ensures that the essence and quality of the work are preserved.

# Respecting Intellectual Property

# Connect with Us

To learn more about how we are partnering with brands that are changing the lives of Africans to create the brand identities, strategies and digital platforms that shape our future, [visit our website](#). If you would like to partner with us on an exciting project, feel free to reach out!

# Glossary

- 01 Iroko**  
A large, deciduous tree native to West Africa, known for its durable and valuable timber.
- 02 Pizzazz**  
Having a lively and exciting quality that makes something stand out and grab attention with style and flair.
- 03 Soup wey sweet, na money kill am**  
Nigerian Pidgin English expression that means 'A delicious soup is made with expensive or quality ingredients.'
- 04 Amebo**  
Nigerian Pidgin English slang for 'gossip' or 'gossipmonger.'
- 05 Danfo**  
A term used in Nigeria, particularly Lagos, for the yellow buses used as public transportation.
- 06 Okada**  
A local slang for motorcycles used for public transport in Nigeria.
- 07 DND**  
The acronym for iPhone's Do Not Disturb feature which is also the title of a song off Rema's 2023 *Ravage* EP.

# References

Nigeria Ad Agency brings in West Africa's first Cannes Lions Win. - [The Guardian](#)

Record Breaker, Hilda Baci bags Brand Ambassador - [Vanguard NG](#)

Nigeria Emerges As The Most Influential Nation On The Internet In 2023 - [The African Times](#)

Josh2Funny's America's Got Talent triumph highlights Nigeria's influence in driving virality for global brands - [Marketing Edge](#)

Black Book no 1 on Netflix worldwide - [Nairametrics](#)

Nigerian Box Office sees a whopping N121M surge in August - [Marketing Edge](#)

Big Brother Naija All-Stars records 23m views globally - [Brand Impact](#)

Aquafina Empowers Street Hawker With Business Setup - [Brand Communicator](#)

Pepsi's new logo, and its ditching minimalism - [Creative Bloq](#)

Coca-Cola credits 'world-class marketing' as it ups growth forecast - [Marketing Week](#)

OPay unveils new logo to celebrate 5th anniversary - [Brand Impact Nigeria](#)

Aquafina Empowers Street Hawker With Business Setup - [Brand Communicator](#)

LG Nigeria employs people with disabilities - [Live With Lynda](#)

Nigeria ranks as Africa's second-highest podcast consumer

Everything In Store for Podcast Listeners and Creators This International Podcast Day — [Spotify](#)

Airpeace jazzes up its routine pilot announcement with Pidgin English - [Live with Lynda](#)

# References

Aki and Pawpaw take on a new adventure in first Nollywood game - [Pulse.ng](#)

Alpha, Jam launches Africa's first 3D digital billboard in Nigeria - [Vanguard NG](#)

MTN Unveils Nigeria's First Hologram Tour - [Voice of Nigeria](#)

WhatsApp launches Channels - [brandcrunch.com.ng](#)

Threads Now Fastest-Growing App In History — With 100 Million Users In Just Five Days - [Forbes](#)

AI strategy: Nigeria in global hunt for its best minds - [BusinessDay NG](#)

Coke's latest mystery flavor is here. It's created by AI - [CNN](#)

Arcon pushes to regulate online ads, sues Meta for N30 billion. - [BusinessDay](#)

Nigeria launches Ad offences tribunal to crack down on misleading Ads

FG inaugurates advertising offences tribunal. - [Punch NG](#)

