

The Bestselling Pan-African Business Magazine

African BUSINESS

An IC Publication | 54th Year | N° 474 | June 2020

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SPECIAL REPORT AFRICAN DEBT

10 YEARS

Africa's Best Brands

A CHALLENGING DECADE FOR AFRICAN BRANDS



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*When we carried out our survey of Africa's most admired brands for the first time in 2010, things were looking optimistic for African brands, but since then their representation in the ranking has dropped by nearly two-thirds. What will it take to allow African brands to compete with the global giants that dominate the table? Brand Africa founder **Thebe Ikalafeng** examines the results of the 2020 survey and reflects on what they tell us*

A CHALLENGING DECADE FOR AFRICAN BRANDS

In the midst of the euphoric and successful staging of the first FIFA World Cup in Africa when internal pride and admiration of Africa was arguably at its highest, African brands also enjoyed their most dominant position in the inaugural Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands ranking. Back in 2010/11, when we launched the ranking of Africa's best brands, African brands accounted for 34 of the 100 most admired African brands, following a continent-wide poll.

The then president of the African Development Bank, Dr Donald Kaberuka, stated that "Africa's private sector is poised to become the main engine of growth for the African continent." Following a decade of growth driven by public investments, the advent of technology, rising exports to China and a fast-growing consumer class, the private sector, the engine of brands, was predicted to fuel the growth of the continent.



Kenyan marathon runner Eliud Kipchoge is a partner of Nike, which retains its place at the top of our list of Africa's most admired brands.

Special report: Top Brands



With the rise of new African private sector champions, many anticipated the emergence and rise of African brands. Growth was projected to reach 6.2% by 2020. A decade later, in the midst of a global health and economic pandemic, the optimism has been tempered. Growth projections at the start of the year hovered around 3.9% but now there is talk of Africa's first recession in 25 years.

How is this reflecting on African brands? It's a bleak outcome. This year's ranking shows a further decline for African brands, representing 13% of this year's list, little more than a third of their showing a decade earlier. This is their lowest performance to date, down 2% from last year. Asia (16%), Europe (42%) and North America (29%) have all managed to increase their share.

Ethiopian Airlines has moved up 14 places in our list of most admired African brands – see pages 29–30.

Overall, out of the top 100 most admired brands from our first ranking in 2010/11, only half still appear in this year's list. This is due to mergers, acquisitions and the obsolescence of many brands. The most prominent changes are in the technology category with the demise of BlackBerry (#32 in 2010/11); the consolidation of Vodafone (#54 in 2010/11 and now #13); which acquired Vodacom in 2008 and rebranded in 2011; Etisalat (#40 in 2010/11) rebranding to 9 Mobile in 2017; and Motorola (#39) being acquired by Lenovo in 2014. We've also seen the rise of Chinese brand Tecno, which has raced up the ranking from #33 to #5 – a dominant performance for one of China's premier global brands that's not even sold in China!

Mergers and acquisitions will impact the rankings in different ways. Following a merger it will take time for a brand to rebuild its presence and this appears to be the case for Absa as it asserts its brand beyond South Africa. Despite rebranding back to Absa in 2018 after UK-based Barclays sold back its shareholding in Barclays Africa to the South African banking group, it has dropped out of this year's rankings as it rebuilds its brand across the continent, having featured at #76 in 2010/11. The same is true for former South African brewer, SAB Miller, since the multi-billion dollar merger between AB InBev and SAB Miller in 2016. It took the #31 spot in 2011, with its iconic beer Castle at #67, but neither feature this year.

The goddess of victory

American sports brand, Nike, retained its top spot for the third year in a row as the #1 most admired brand in Africa. Ranked #9 a decade ago, the brand today reigns supreme, buoyed by partnerships with record-breaking African athletes such as Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge, the sub-two-hour marathon runner, and also by global collaborations such as the ones with South Africa designer Poppy Karabo and Nigeria's music sensation Wizkid on his Starboy brand.

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THE REWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

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Special report: Top Brands

Nike also sponsors the shirts of the Nigerian and South African football national teams, thus being ever visible throughout sub-Saharan Africa. As a result of these high-profile actions, Nike continues to reign as an aspirational and go-to brand for sports, fitness and lifestyle.

What is African?

The dominance of non-African brands is unabated. In the survey question to determine the most admired African brands, a host of non-African brands are identified as African. Brands such as Coca-Cola (#2 in 2011 and #4 in 2020) top the list of such brands. The company has been on the continent for almost 100 years and through innovative distribution and engaging localised campaign strategies tailored to African markets, it has achieved ubiquity and a certain Africanness. Where else would you have someone ordering a warm coke, as is often the case in East Africa?

A common theme among the top 10 such brands is their deep local insights, localised marketing and outsize marketing budgets. As a result they have managed to create an intimate and infectious relationship with the African consumer. The strategy for these global brands has been, as Brand Leadership terms it, to “think locally and act globally”.

This is the case for brands such as Vlisco, the Dutch wax fabric designer, which is dominant in its sector, and Guinness, consumed by more people in Africa than its own domestic market in Ireland. The same is true for Vodafone and Airtel.

Africans don't prefer local

Among the 27 countries surveyed, which account for over 85% of the continent's population and GDP, only in Zimbabwe (through Econet), in Zambia (through Trade Kings) and in Tanzania (with Azam) do we have a local brand taking the country's #1 spot. In Liberia, an African brand from another country, MTN, takes the #1 spot, but in all the other countries, it is a non-African brand: Nike (11 out of 27), Samsung (4/27), Coke (3/27) and Adidas (2/27) lead the way, with Tecno, Orange and Airtel each dominant in one country. Powerhouse African brands, such as Dangote in Nigeria, Safaricom in Kenya and MTN in South Africa, don't even make the top spot in their domestic markets, and in North Africa, all the Top 10 most admired brands in Egypt and Morocco are non-African.

Kings of finance

GTBank claimed back the #1 spot this year, in a specific question and ranking of brands in financial services (see table, right), after falling out of the top five in 2019. Its clever marketing, global presence and some of its flagship food and fashion events have undoubtedly helped make it a fixture of daily life in some of its key markets, especially its home base Nigeria. The bank has taken banking and finance to the people, and associating this with something fun and useful.

Interestingly, every brand in last year's top five (FNB, Bank of Africa and Standard Bank) has lost ground in the rankings, with only Ecobank and Absa managing to stay within the top five. The industry is dominated by African giants. International brands do feature in some cases but these are payment companies as opposed to traditional banks – Paypal, Western

Union and Visa. We expect to see mobile money and other disruptors muscle their way up the ranking as we see an increase in digitisation and digital-led economies, something which this pandemic has only accelerated.

Where's the African media?

As part of the survey, we also ask media-specific questions. The top 25 media is once again dominated by international groups, led by the BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera (see table below right). Only seven of our top 25 originate from Africa which begs the question how much of our narrative do we control.

The major shift has come as non-traditional media have entered the sway. Streaming giant Netflix comes in at #10, ahead of traditional media stalwarts such as SABC, France24, and Sky News. Just outside the top 10, at #12, social media juggernaut Facebook also ranked above traditional media brands such as Sky (#21), France24 (#15) and Fox (#23). Making up our list are other digital players: YouTube comes in at #20, Google at #24 and Instagram at #25. These non-traditional players have increasingly positioned themselves as, and are, preferred media channels among African consumers.

Made in Africa

When prompted to choose their favourite African

Right: Young people browse Facebook on their smartphones. New media brands are occupying more space in our media rankings.

Most Admired Finance Brands

2020 Rank	2019 Rank	Brand	Country Of Origin	Change
1	6	GTB	Nigeria	+5
2	new	First Bank	Nigeria	n/a
3	1	Ecobank	Togo	-2
4	7	UBA	Nigeria	+3
5	3	ABSA	South Africa	-2
6	2	First National Bank (FNB)	South Africa	-4
7	5	Standard Bank/Stanbic	South Africa	-2
8	9	Access Bank (Diamond)	Nigeria	+1
9	4	Bank of Africa (BOA)	Mali	-5
10	15	Zenith	Nigeria	+5
11	new	Equity Bank	Kenya	n/a
12	8	KCB	Kenya	-4
13	11	Western Union	USA	-2
14	20	Société Générale	France	+6
15	new	Paypal	USA	n/a
16	12	Old Mutual	South Africa	-4
17	13	Mpesa	Kenya	-4
18	22	VISA	USA	+4
19	19	MTN Mobile Money	South Africa	-
20	14	Standard Chartered Bank	UK	-6
21	17	Fidelity Bank	Nigeria	-4
22	new	Axa	France	n/a
23	18	Orange Money	France	-5
24	16	Nedbank	South Africa	-8
25	new	Outsurance	South Africa	n/a



brand (see the table on page 30), the split is pretty even between South, East and West Africa. Compared to last year, East Africa increased its contribution by 4% to 36%. West Africa came in with 28% of those brands represented and Southern Africa with 36%. A key driver for East Africa's growth is the Tanzanian conglomerate Azam, with a diverse portfolio that spans media and consumer goods, and a rebranding that has started to reap rewards and endearment from the region's consumers.

While its peers are on their knees, the crown jewel of the African skies, Ethiopian Airlines, continues to grow its brand, moving 14 spots to #7. Increased market share from a bigger fleet and new routes, an ambitious growth strategy and its status as an airline that actually manages to make money have turned it, it appears, into the "Pride of Africa", as it likes to call itself.

Zimbabwe's stalwart brand, Econet, has slid eight places to #13. It is hard to pinpoint exact reasons but it's been a tough year for the group which last year pulled the plug on its pay-TV venture, Kwese media. The group has an important African footprint through Liquid Telecom, an internet solution provider, and its reputation will only increase if it manages to acquire a telecoms licence in Ethiopia, which is opening up its market to foreign entities.

Jumia, dubbed "The Amazon of Africa" at its audacious launch on the NYSE, has struggled to match expectations, dropping five spots to #18. Jumia, and many e-commerce brands in Africa have their work cut out, especially with e-commerce giants Alibaba (#92 in the main table) and Amazon (#56 in the main table) lurking in the background. The African consumer may be their next battle ground. Jack Ma, the billionaire founder of Alibaba, launched the Africa Netpreneur Prize last year to support the next generation of African entrepreneurs, with the understanding, as he sees it, that "a digital revolution, will make it possible to turn Africa into a global hub".

One company trying to create a hub in motor manufacturing is Nigeria's Innoson. The brand, which comes in at #10 in our most admired African brand category, whose ambition is to eradicate *tokunbo* (used foreign automobiles) from Africa, manufactures cars and motorbikes in the industrial heartland of Nigeria in Anambra state. Our main top 100 list, however, only features non-African automobile majors such as Toyota (#11), Mercedes Benz (#19) and BMW (#40).

Winners and losers

In the main table, one of this year's big winners is Indomie, which comes in at #34. An Indonesian based company that entered the Nigerian market over 30 years ago has today managed to turn instant noodles into a staple food in Africa's most populous country, challenging jollof rice for main billing in Nigerian households. It controls 74% of the market and the brand is so popular that the Indonesian trade minister Enggartiasto Lukita said that most Nigerians make the common mistake thinking of Indomie as a local product. To many Nigerians, all noodles are Indomie!

The second highest mover is Vlisco, moving 50 places to #45. Vlisco is arguably the most dominant brand representing African fashion. Its success has

Most Admired Media Brands

2020	2019	Brand	Country Of Origin	Change
1	1	BBC	UK	-
2	2	DStv	South Africa	-
3	3	CNN	USA	-
4	4	Al Jazeera	Qatar	-
5	n/a	ITV	UK	n/a
6	n/a	MTN	South Africa	n/a
7	n/a	Canal+	France	n/a
8	5	RFI	France	-3
9	n/a	Azam TV	Tanzania	n/a
10	n/a	Netflix	USA	n/a
11	n/a	MTV	USA	n/a
12	n/a	Facebook	USA	n/a
13	6	SABC	South Africa	n/a
14	n/a	RTI	Ivory Coast	n/a
15	n/a	France24	France	n/a
16	n/a	Vodafone Group	UK	n/a
17	n/a	Airtel	India	n/a
18	n/a	Trace Africa	France	n/a
19	n/a	etv	South Africa	n/a
20	n/a	Youtube	USA	n/a
21	n/a	Sky News	UK	n/a
22	n/a	Star Times	China	n/a
23	n/a	Fox	USA	n/a
24	n/a	Google	USA	n/a
25	n/a	Instagram	USA	n/a

Special report: Top Brands

shone a light on African fashion and undoubtedly inspired other global brands, such as LV Basotho's range of blankets or Christian Louboutin's collaboration with Senegalese artists to launch the Africaba Tote Bag incorporating bold Ankara prints that originated in West Africa.

The world of fashion has helped African style go global. More recently we saw English designer Stella McCartney also use Ankara inspired prints in her Paris show and Thai-American designer Thakoon taking inspiration from the Maasai for his latest collection. In a resurgence and appreciation of "African fabrics" most of which are inspired by Vlisco, among the "brands" mentioned by respondents were Mozambique's "Capulana", Ghana's "Kente" and Zambia's "Kitenge".

The company that has moved most in our rankings is French dairy company Danone, moving up 60 places to #30. It hasn't all been plain sailing, however, for this brand that celebrated its 100th birthday last year. In Morocco, a major market for the company, it suffered a wide boycott in 2018. However, following some consumer engagement sessions and nationwide awareness-raising it has managed to build back this brand equity. The brand won an award at the Peace and Sport Awards in late 2019 and the year saw the return of the Danone Nations World Cup, with Danone taking kids from all around the world to Barcelona to compete in this prestigious competition.

One brand that has dropped significantly since we compiled the first rankings is Dolce & Gabbana, dropping from #58 in 2010 to #98 today. In a YouGov survey

Most Admired African Brands (prompted)

2020 Rank	2019 Rank	Brand	Category	Country of origin	Change
1	1	Dangote	Consumer Non-cyclical	Nigeria	0
2	2	MTN	Telecoms	South Africa	0
3	4	DStv	Media	South Africa	1
4	3	Anbessa	Apparel	Ethiopia	-1
5	18	Azam	Consumer Non-cyclical	Tanzania	13
6	8	Glo	Telecoms	Nigeria	2
7	21	Ethiopian airlines	Aviation	Ethiopia	14
8	new	Vodacom	Telecoms	South Africa	n/a
9	7	Shoprite	Retail	South Africa	-2
10	new	Innoson	Auto-Manufacture	Nigeria	n/a
11	10	Trade Kings	Consumer Non-cyclical	Zambia	-1
12	6	Safaricom	Telecoms	Kenya	-6
13	5	Econet	Telecoms	Zimbabwe	-8
14	12	Amarula	Alcoholic Beverages	South Africa	-2
15	new	Nasco	Consumer Non-cyclical	Nigeria	n/a

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in the US conducted in February 2020, it was the least popular luxury brand in the rankings. This slide of the popularity of the former global trendsetter in America appears also to be the case in Africa.

Another brand that seems to have lost its lustre is Turkey's LC Waikiki, falling 32 places to #99. Its higher position last year coincided with a campaign they ran as they expanded their footprint in Kenya and South Africa. This year's ranking is probably a truer reflection of its position.

Conclusion

So what does this year's ranking tell us? After an exciting early start to the decade, and despite a vibrant entrepreneurial environment with pockets of excellence, the scramble for the much trumpeted value and size of the African consumer spend is still taking place between brands from outside the continent rather than from within.

What Africa isn't short of are ideas, blueprints and enthusiasm. But they require financial and government support to really grow and take off. We appear to be moving in the right direction: the African Continental Free Trade Area will help our brands reach new markets; the removal of travel barriers with the African Union Passport will also enable Africans to discover new brands as they travel the continent.

But to compete with the global behemoths will require greater ambitions for our brands to be the ones our people aspire to and respect – “top-of-mind” brands that we don't only consume but which represent the lives we want to live. That will require a change of mindset from the top down. It can't be someone else's story or success. It needs to come from within. The next decade cannot be another promise for an “Africa rising”, an “African renaissance” or “Africa's time”. Africa's time is NOW. ■

Contributors: Tshepang Makofane, Reahile Ramathesele (Brand Leadership), Karin du Chenne (Kantar) and Thabani Khumalo (Malo & Fynn Group).

Top 3 Most Admired Brands By Category

Category	Brand	Country of origin
Alcoholic Beverages	Guinness	Ireland
	Star Beer	Nigeria
	Tusker	Kenya
Apparel Retailer	Zara	Spain
	H&M	Sweden
	LC Waikiki	Turkey
Auto Manufacturers	Toyota	Japan
	Mercedes Benz	Germany
	BMW	Germany
Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nestle	Switzerland
	Dangote	Nigeria
	Unilever	UK
Electronics / Computers	Samsung	South Korea
	Tecno	China
	Apple	USA
Food	Indomie	Indonesia
	KFC	USA
	McDonalds	USA
Luxury	Gucci	Italy
	Louis Vuitton	France
	Chanel	France
Non-alcoholic Beverages	Coca Cola	USA
	Pepsi	USA
	Fanta	USA
Technology	Google	USA
	Microsoft	USA
	Facebook	USA
Telecom Provider	MTN	South Africa
	Airtel	India
	Vodafone Group	UK

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Brand Africa 100 methodology

The Brand Africa 100 is a consumer-led survey which seeks to establish brand preferences across Africa, conducted in 27 countries which represents 50% of the continent, covering all economic regions and an estimated 80% of the population and the GDP of Africa.

The research yielded over 15,000 brand mentions and over 2,000 unique brands. Data collection was conducted by Brand Africa partner Geopoll (www.geopoll.com), a leading mobile survey platform with a database of over 250m respondents in emerging markets around the globe. Strategic analysis and insights were undertaken by research partner Kantar (www.kantar.com), a globally respected consumer knowledge and information company, and thought leadership by Brand Leadership (www.brandleadership.africa), one of Africa's leading brand research, strategy and activation advisory firms.

Since 2015, the bulk of Brand Africa data collection has been undertaken via GeoPoll's mobile research platform for data collection rather than a face-to-face method. Due to the high penetration of mobile across Africa, which is used as a primary communication mode and increasingly for consumer transactions, mobile interviewing has proven to be the most effective way to reach African consumers. Conducting interviews via mobile ensured a wider reach and expediency in conducting research across the continent than would be possible with face-to-face interviews. Individuals aged 18 and older in the sample countries were asked to report on their top three most admired brands, irrespective of country of origin or domicile. In addition, because of their catalytic impact or influential role, respondents were further asked to rank their top three most admired media and financial services brands respectively.

As an African-focused survey and given the growing number

of African brands, since 2017/8 a new question was introduced specifically focusing on identifying the most admired African brand.

With the final coded data, Kantar calculated a score for each brand and created an index that considers the sample and population sizes of each country, weighted on gender and population of the countries covered. The brands were further analysed to ensure there are no duplications and no generic category rather than trading brand mentions. Where the brand operated under different names in different markets such as Stanbic/Standard Bank and Vodacom/Vodafone/Safaricom, or where the brands were sub-brands of a dominant brand such as Apple's iPod, iPhone and iPad, the results were consolidated under one score for the group brand.

In identifying the list for the Most Admired African brands category, where the brands had a dominant African residual equity or identity derived from their origins in Africa such as Safaricom, M-Pesa and Tusker from Kenya or Castle from South Africa, irrespective of its ownership or shareholding the brand was recognised as an African brand.

To make the list of the Top 100 Most Admired Brands in Africa and the Most Admired African Brands, the brands had to be available and mentioned in the survey in at least one country other than their domicile market. Given the fragmentation and proliferation of local media, the media list is based only on truly pan-African media with reach across a significant number of African countries.

Finally, in recognising the impact of brand reputation on the value of brands, since 2019, Brand Africa 100 analysis has been identifying the most admired brands listed on leading African bourses.

Overall, since its founding 10 years ago, the Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands has been based on the most rigorous consumer-led methodology consistent with global best practice. Over the years, while the survey has been adapted and refined, and the sample of countries increased, it continues to yield consistent results and has become a trusted barometer of brands in Africa.

Karin Du Chenne, chief growth officer Africa Middle East and Matthieu Sauvage-Mar, VP of client development, GeoPoll



WHAT ARE THE TOP 100 MOST ADMIRABLE BRANDS IN AFRICA?

Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands is the most authoritative and referenced pan-African survey and ranking of brands in Africa.

Brands are both an asset and a catalyst for the image, reputation, value and competitiveness of companies and ultimately their countries of origin. Recognising this, *Brand Africa 100* was developed to research, rank and identify which brands are most admired by African consumers. The rankings are based on a comprehensive survey and analysis of brands across Africa.

Special report: Top Brands

Most Admired Brands in Africa

2020 Rank	2019 Rank	Brand	Category	Country of origin	Change
1	1	Nike	Sport and Fitness	USA	0
2	2	Adidas	Sport and Fitness	Germany	0
3	3	Samsung	Electronics / Computers	South Korea	0
4	4	Coca Cola	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	0
5	5	Tecno	Electronics / Computers	China	0
6	7	Apple	Electronics / Computers	USA	1
7	8	MTN	Telecom Provider	South Africa	1
8	6	Puma	Sport and Fitness	Germany	-2
9	9	Gucci	Luxury	Italy	0
10	13	Airtel	Telecom Provider	India	3
11	11	Toyota	Auto Manufacturers	Japan	0
12	10	LG	Electronics / Computers	South Korea	-2
13	14	Vodafone Group	Telecom Provider	UK	1
14	19	Nestlé	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Switzerland	5
15	25	Dangote	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria	10
16	21	Zara	Apparel Retailer	Spain	5
17	24	Unilever	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	7
18	16	Pepsi	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	-2
19	20	Mercedes Benz	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	1
20	15	Nokia	Electronics / Computers	Finland	-5
21	17	Itel Mobile	Electronics / Computers	China	-4
22	22	Orange	Telecom Provider	France	0
23	23	Sony	Electronics / Computers	Japan	0
24	18	Huawei	Electronics / Computers	China	-6
25	27	Google	Technology	USA	2
26	12	Anbessa	Apparel	Ethiopia	-14
27	26	Infinix Mobile	Electronics / Computers	China	-1
28	30	Glo	Telecom Provider	Nigeria	2
29	46	Louis Vuitton	Luxury	France	17
30	90	Danone	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	France	60
31	43	Chanel	Luxury	France	12
32	34	Hewlett-Packard/HP	Electronics / Computers	USA	2
33	40	H&M	Apparel Retailer	Sweden	7
34	75	Indomie	Food	Indonesia	41
35	49	FILA	Sport and Fitness	Italy	14
36	45	DSTV	Media	South Africa	9
37	50	Nivea	Personal Care	Germany	13
38	44	Blue Band Margarine	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	6
39	59	Microsoft	Technology	USA	20
40	28	BMW	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	-12
41	37	Lacoste	Luxury	France	-4
42	42	Versace	Luxury	Italy	0
43	29	Fanta	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	-14
44	33	Polo	Apparel	USA	-11
45	95	Vlisco	Apparel	Netherlands	50
46	62	Nasco	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria	16
47	92	Tigo	Telecom Provider	Luxemburg	45
48	77	Converse All Star	Apparel	USA	29
49	73	OMO	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	24
50	52	Shoprite	Retail	South Africa	2

2020 Rank	2019 Rank	Brand	Category	Country of Origin	Change
51	53	KFC	Food	USA	2
52	38	Auchan	Retail	France	-14
53	66	PZ Cussons	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	13
54	51	Facebook	Technology	USA	-3
55	new	Ford	Auto Manufacturers	USA	n/a
56	new	Amazon	Technology	USA	n/a
57	32	Guinness	Alcoholic Beverages	Ireland	-25
58	55	Honda	Auto Manufacturers	Japan	-3
59	58	Colgate	Personal Care	USA	-1
60	54	Star Beer	Alcoholic Beverages	Nigeria	-6
61	47	Tiger Brands	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	South Africa	-14
62	57	Dell	Electronics / Computers	USA	-5
63	35	Vans	Apparel	USA	-28
64	36	Toshiba	Electronics / Computers	Japan	-28
65	74	Jumia	Technology	Nigeria	9
66	new	Christian Dior	Luxury	France	n/a
67	86	McDonalds	Food	USA	19
68	83	Always	Personal Care	USA	15
69	39	Reebok	Sport and Fitness	Germany	-30
70	99	Sunlight	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	29
71	87	Close-Up	Personal Care	UK	16
72	new	Cadbury	Food	UK	n/a
73	69	Tusker	Alcoholic Beverages	Kenya	-4
74	61	Calvin Klein	Apparel	USA	-13
75	new	Guess	Apparel	USA	n/a
76	new	Oral B	Personal Care	USA	n/a
77	80	Mirinda	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	3
78	new	Philips	Electronics / Computers	Netherlands	n/a
79	89	Victoria Secret	Luxury	USA	10
80	71	Levi's	Apparel	USA	9
81	new	Prada	Luxury	Italy	n/a
82	new	Clover	Food	South Africa	n/a
83	new	Volkswagen	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	n/a
84	56	Audi	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	-28
85	new	Sharp	Electronics / Computers	Japan	n/a
86	new	BATA	Apparel	Switzerland	n/a
87	65	Lipton Tea	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	-22
88	new	7 UP	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	n/a
89	new	Dettol	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	n/a
90	new	Maltina	Non-alcoholic Beverages	Nigeria	n/a
91	96	Ariel	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	USA	5
92	new	Alibaba	Technology	China	n/a
93	new	Jeep	Auto Manufacturers	USA	n/a
94	70	Nissan	Auto Manufacturers	Japan	-24
95	new	Milo	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Switzerland	n/a
96	72	Hisense	Electronics / Computers	China	-24
97	97	Ferrari	Auto Manufacturers	Italy	0
98	60	Dolce & Gabbana	Luxury	Italy	-38
99	67	LC Waikiki	Apparel Retailer	Turkey	-32
100	78	Sprite	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	-22

Interview Nunu Ntshingila, Regional Director Facebook Africa.

Nunu Ntshingila is the regional director of Facebook Africa. She previously built brands for global advertising agency Ogilvy, heading its South African office. She tells us what brands mean for a company like Facebook

‘Facebook’s brand puts people first’

You’re a tech company that is part of everyday life, consumed more than any other brand daily. Yet in our surveys, when people think of a brand they think Coke, Nike or MTN. How does Facebook see itself as a brand and how important is branding to a tech company like yours?

Facebook’s business model puts people first, and so does our brand. Our brand is unique in the sense that its mission is to empower people to share ideas, find communities and make meaningful personal and business connections. In a young and vibrant region like Africa, it means that we give people the opportunity to be the architects of a new narrative for the continent. This is the most powerful brand building and we’re passionate about what our platform is enabling.

In November last year, we introduced a new corporate branding with a new company logo distinguishing the Facebook company from the Facebook app. The new branding aims at providing more clarity and is a way to better communicate our ownership structure to the people and businesses who use our services. We began including “from Facebook” within all our apps as we believe people should know which companies make the products they use.

The overall move reflects the need for the Facebook company to have its own voice and narrative because the issues we are dealing with and talking about are different to the Facebook individual app. Our brand is designed to help us better communicate our purpose as a company.

“Everywhere in the region digital platforms have been a great catalyst for an inspiring transformation that has enabled the rise of African brands”

What does your brand stand for?

We are driven by five principles that we stand for and hold deeply.

The first is to “give people a voice”. We strongly believe in a world where everyone gets an equal chance to be heard, where people have the power to communicate across borders and cultures and where they can organise around causes that matter to them. That’s the world we stand for and that’s what we’re trying to build every single day.

The second is to “serve everyone”. Our business model is ads so that we can make technology accessible to everyone.

The third is to “promote economic opportunity”. Facebook levels the playing field to help small businesses get off the ground. Entrepreneurs can create a Facebook page or an Instagram account and reach anyone with their idea, even if you don’t have a lot of money. That’s something that hasn’t really been possible before and it happens millions of times a day with more than 140m businesses using our platforms.

The fourth is to “build connection and community”. People use our apps to be closer to the people they care about but also build communities and start movements that lead to real change.

And finally, it is to “keep people safe and protect privacy”. We are committed to making Facebook a safe place and protecting personal privacy and information. We take this responsibility seriously.

You’re present in most countries around the world and most in Africa. Do you have to adjust the brand to different markets?

Facebook’s mission is clear: To give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together. Our mission in Africa is no different to what it is elsewhere in the world. Our branding remains the same. No matter where you are you will see the same Facebook – this is important to us as a global platform.

However, Africa is made of a variety of countries and cultures. The content that we see on our platforms reflects this unique diversity. Moreover, we are constantly connecting, listening and learning from all communities on the ground, whether it is startups, developers or advertising agencies to better serve them.

There are still many challenges that remain in the region, Africa is currently the least connected continent, with just over a quarter of its 1.3bn people connected to the internet. We know there is no silver bullet for addressing this challenge. We have a multi-faceted approach ranging from Facebook Lite – a standalone app that uses less data, saves space on your phone, and works well across all network conditions, even 2G; deploying cutting edge Wi-Fi technology on Goree Island in Senegal or leading African and global operators to build 2Africa, the most comprehensive subsea cable to serve the African continent and Middle East region.

What is the African experience of Facebook; what does it tell you about our continent, about what we like, what we consume, what we aspire to?

The future of Africa is young. In 2025, as most of the world begins to age, the African region will grow



younger to become a quarter of the world's most digitally active population. Our platform reflects the youthful spirit that drives Africa.

With the boom of social media, social commerce has grown simultaneously, redefining how brands approach their customers. Some of these brands are largely online and have carried the aspirations that are driving the increased consumption.

Everywhere in the region digital platforms have been a great catalyst for an inspiring transformation that has enabled the rise of African brands. For the first time, they can reach customers they didn't have access to before and sell their goods locally and globally. It's amazing to see how social media has enabled African brands to thrive.

Your community is a global one. What is the opportunity for brands to move from being local to becoming global, using your platforms, Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp?

Year after year, we see small businesses accomplish more than ever before, whether it's finding new customers, hiring employees or engaging with their communities. Small business becomes big business on Facebook and tiny companies get the type of global reach that used to be only available to the biggest companies.

Our platforms present huge opportunities for brands to scale and export their locally produced products to the world. Two-thirds of small businesses on Facebook say they've increased sales because of Facebook. This matters because when small businesses grow, they create jobs and fuel the economy.

Trust has been central to the Facebook story the last few years. Can you tell us a little bit more about what trust means for Facebook and the importance of trust in branding in general?

We know we have to earn back people's trust. That's why we have made improvements to better protect your privacy. We have become more transparent to ensure people can trust us with their information – and we know we have a deep responsibility to protect it.

In May, we announced the first members of the Oversight Board, implementing a new system for content governance and enforcement. The Oversight Board reflects a wide range of views and experiences and will exercise independent judgment over some of the most difficult and significant content decisions. This adds to our continuous efforts, with the introduction since 2013 of our Facebook transparency reports which give our community visibility into how we enforce policies, respond to data requests and protect intellectual property. Keeping information safe comes before anything else.

This leads us back to putting people first. We need to do three things: make sure you feel comfortable sharing on our apps; have quality content – including relevant ads – that you want to engage with; and give you full control over your information.

If people don't feel like Facebook is a good use of time, they won't use it. And if they leave Facebook, so will our advertisers. That's why we need to put people first. Our bottom line is getting this right for people. ■

Special report: Top Brands**Interview Thebe Ikalafeng, Founder and Chairman, Brand Africa and the Brand Leadership Group**

*For 10 years, Brand Africa has been working to mobilise Africans and the diaspora to proactively drive a brand-led African agenda. Its founder and chairman **Thebe Ikalafeng** tells us how Africa can build more successful brands*

‘Think local and act global’

When you look at African brands today, would you say they are stronger than they were 10 years ago?

As was the case at the turn of the decade, there remains a stronger enthusiasm for building African brands. But the rhetoric doesn't match the reality. There is not as much progress in the narrative about creating great brands. If you look at some of the stalwart brands, whether it is the MTNs, the Safaricom, the Dangotes, those have consolidated their strengths and their brands remain a staple across the continent. But these are a minority: we need to see a lot more brands coming to the fore.

In this past decade, we've seen a greater presence of African talent globally, be it in fashion, music, the arts. Doesn't that reflect a stronger 'Brand Africa'?

Africa has never lacked talent and the world has never stopped looking to Africa for inspiration. What we haven't seen emerge prominently are global African brands, even as “essential” as the likes of Zara and H&M or luxury such as Hermes and Goyard. Where the likes of Zara and H&M and others lead isn't just in fast fashion but in fast thinking to adopt or adapt to trends and consumer insights.

There are many examples of African talent out there. The young South African designer, Thebe Magugu, the first South African to win the prestigious LVMH Prize for fashion design. The ready-to-wear African fashion retailer, KISUA, founded by Ghanaian Sam Mensah to challenge the likes of Zara and H&M. Alara, the high-end Nigerian retailer founded by Nigerian businesswoman Reni Folawiyo. We have a lot of talent, we have a lot of enthusiasm, we have a lot of excitement and drive but unfortunately we don't see enough resources, patience and patronage that will support their growth.

Are you saying we need to invest more in brand building or do we need to think about brands differently, in terms of what a brand stands for, in terms of what a brand represents and making that brand go global?

There's two parts to it. Generally speaking, millennials are less forgiving of and loyal to brands than the older generations. They will move on to the next brand if that brand does not live up to its promise in terms of what it does functionally, but also in terms of how it fits into society or how they see themselves, what it does for the environment. In Africa we're too forgiving and we have often returned to the very brands that have been less than benevolent or respectful to us – often because of a lack of alternatives.

Two decades ago, while I was marketing director for Nike for the continent, on my first trip to Cannes in France, for the biggest advertising gathering in the world, I was quite astounded to see that a lot of the brands from England were inspired by and leverage their English heritage. The French were selling France. But the brands from Africa were trying to be American, British or French.

It was a woke moment for me. African brands cannot and should not compete with the French on how to be French. They don't have the authority or the authenticity. We need to take a distinctive African narrative to the world. It's what at Brand Leadership we call “thinking locally and acting globally”. In other words, we should be inspired by our African identity and heritage but deliver to a global standard.

Where do you think Africa is going to be piercing through? Is it going to be in fashion, the arts, music, culture or is it going to be in tech, innovation, banking, logistics?

The greatest opportunity and low hanging fruit for African brands is in technology and the arts. If you look at a brand like EVC in Somalia, Wari in Senegal and leading the pack, M-Pesa, technology has enabled us to leapfrog many Western nations with bricks and mortar legacy issues. Mobile money is where Africa has probably shown its greatest leadership. They are being referenced. Thus, Rwanda and Kenya are fast-tracking their initiatives to build world class technology cities to leverage technology to drive development not just for Africa but the world.



“We have a lot of talent, we have a lot of enthusiasm, we have a lot of excitement and drive but unfortunately we don’t see enough resources, patience and patronage that will support their growth”

When it comes to arts and culture, we’ve always been present with a global influence from South Africa’s Miriam Makeba collaborating with Harry Belafonte in the 60s, or the most successful Broadway production, the *Lion King*, or Mantsho, the South African designers collaborating with H&M for their first global Africa-inspired range. Luxury fashion brands are continuously looking to Africa for inspiration.

The problem isn’t our talent, it’s the ownership of our creative output. We are often invited rather than owning the space and dictating our own terms. Thus Stella McCartney can charge \$1,000 for an item we sell for \$5 or Louis Vuitton can overtly reference a Lesotho blanket and we’ll be the first in line to pay the 3000% premium.

We can reclaim our space because there’s already an appreciation of “African” aesthetic or rather, an appreciation of the design aesthetic that makes Africa different and admired.

We’ve got a Ghanaian and Kenyan at the helm of British Vogue and another Ghanaian at LVMH, so we are seeing these guys in the high profile places in global fashion. Yet African fashion remains a very small component of global fashion.

Unfortunately, while we have assumed those global positions which in theory are influential, the most transformation we’ve seen are the faces on the covers and names behind the titles. It has not yet translated to African-inspired creativity, African sourcing and African wealth. While Virgil Abloh has brought street cred inspired by hip-hop and rap culture to Louis Vuitton, he has yet to bring a compelling Africa narrative. But it’s a good start.

One thing that stands out from the survey: Africa has got tech brands we consume daily, the Googles and the Facebooks, and yet they’re not as prominent as your traditional brands. Why is that?

People’s relationship with brands is quite instructive. Some brands become part of a person’s identity and affiliation and others a necessary evil, so to speak.

Generally, media and financial “brands” aren’t viewed as a “badge of identity” but a necessary evil. They are viewed as essential commodities rather than “brands” that reflect their status or standing. That’s the difference.

Finally, right now, we are going through a crisis, a health crisis and an economic one. People say crises make reputations. How do you build brands through a crisis?

As our Africa’s Best Brands initiative shows, we have mostly relied on non-African brands for luxury but on African brands for essentials. During this crisis, where the non-African and other luxury brands have been put on pause, we’ve relied ever more on the essential brands, mostly African, for our day to day.

Out of this crisis those essential brands that have delivered with empathy, urgency and necessity will be rewarded. The time out of the global spotlight due to the pandemic has created an opportunity to deepen local brands’ engagement with African consumers in their time of need beyond just their functional needs and has laid a foundation and an opportunity once more for African brands to rise to the challenge. ■

Interview Tony Chiejina, Chief Brand and Corporate Communications Officer, Dangote Group

For the third year in a row, Dangote has topped our table of the most admired African brands. We spoke with **Tony Chiejina**, group chief brand and corporate communications officer, about the brand's journey

Staying true to vision keeps Dangote in number one spot



Left: Work proceeds on the construction of the Dangote Refinery. When complete it is expected to double Nigeria's oil refining capacity.

We are celebrating our 10th anniversary of Africa's Top Brands. You have been a constant feature of our rankings. Can you talk us through the story of your brand and how it has evolved?

The Dangote Group is currently a diversified and fully integrated conglomerate. The group's interests span a range of sectors in Nigeria and across Africa. The core business focus of the group, which started operations in 1978, is to provide local, value-added products and services that meet the "basic needs" of the populace.

Through the construction and operation of large-scale manufacturing facilities in Nigeria and across 16 other African countries, the group is focused on building local manufacturing capacity to generate employment, prevent capital flight and provide locally produced goods for the people.



The Dangote Group continues to reflect and evolve with our customers' needs. Staying true to its vision and mission of "providing basic needs", and with a continuously evolving product range, it stays relevant. This has consistently attracted new customers and increased market share, while valuing old customers. Consumer experience indicates that our brand interacts, and our products are reliable, and this is evident in our rankings over the years.

How important is the founder of the group, Aliko Dangote, to the group's brand?

Aliko Dangote, our president and chief executive is very important and represents the pillar behind the brand. Apart from being the founder, he is the brand icon and the face of the brand. He represents a huge brand equity upon which the other businesses thrive. His goodwill in the African continent and the world has undoubtedly built and raised the brand's love-score. The name Dangote in Nigeria and Africa reinforces the value we provide. It reinforces reliability, respect, corporate responsibility and, above all, empowerment.

Africans seem to consume local brands but their aspirations are global in terms of the ones they admire, in particular when one looks at essentials versus "luxury" brands. What's your experience?

Maslow's hierarchy of needs calls out food, shelter and clothing as essential elements of life. For any brand in the space, what is important is meeting these basic needs. Consumers are always aspirational in what they consume but that is also dependent on the willingness to pay for such brands. Our brands are sought-after on account of the simple fact that it meets their needs on all key fronts. Dangote Sugar, Salt, Foods, Cement, etc.

African brands have consistently represented a small minority of our Top 100. In fact, on average over the past 10 years, it's been around 20% and declining. Does it mean we cannot compete with more established global brands?

Depending on what perspective you view competition, African brands should first ensure that they meet the demand of the continent at an affordable price. Foreign brands are struggling in their space as well and that's why the destination is Africa in this era of globalisation. So African brands can compete.

What's your advice to aspirational entrepreneurs about building a brand?

A brand is a tool of trust. Consumers tend to trust brands that put them at the centre of their thinking. So always put consumers first. It is also called consumer centricism. Ensure you meet their needs at the right place, time, quantity and quality. ■



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