

AFRICAN

FOUNDERS

JAN 2021 / ISSUE 001

MAGAZINE

FINANCE
THE BEAUTY &
THE BEAST
STRUCTURE
BY KOBO
ACCOUNTANT

CAREER
HOW TO BUILD A
CAREER IN THE
BEAUTY
INDUSTRY BY
CVM CAREER

EVENT
THE 4TH GHANA
MAKEUP AWARDS

**VALERIE
OBAZE**

THE CALM BUT
RESOLVED FORCE
CHANGING THE
NARRATIVE IN THE
AFRICAN BEAUTY
INDUSTRY

**BEAUTY
BUSINESS
EDITION**



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MEDIA



A PREMIUM PR, MARKETING AND
ADVOCACY AGENCY WITH THE
SOLE AIM OF AGGRANDIZING THE
PEOPLE OF AFRICA THEIR
BUSINESSES AND THEIR BRANDS.

QUICK SERVICES

INSTAGRAM VERIFICATION
WIKIPEDIA PROFILING
ORGANIC FACE BOOK &
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS
GRAPHIC DESIGN
WEBSITE CREATION
COMPANY / BRAND PROFILING



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“

*THE BEGINNING
OF ALL THAT IS
GOOD IS ALWAYS
AT THE END OF
ALL THAT WENT
WRONG.*

”

I am elated to say the least, African founders magazine has been a brain child for years, watching it develop into this beautiful publication gladdens my heart.

As we move forward in life its good to reflect and be thankful for the past because it has prepared us for the future , even when we think we will never make it through the dark times. Gratitude was one of the many feelings our cover girl Valerie shared with us during our interview with her in page 32 as she recently celebrated the tenth anniversary of her business; R&R Luxury.

Even during the pandemic people took courage to birth their dreams and pursue their goals. Cheryl our startup feature in page 23 is a good example, So be hopeful when life gets tough remember that the beginning of all that is good is always at the end of all that went wrong. You will emerge as pure gold.

Special thanks to our guest contributor Ubong and Adedayo. Do not miss their columns on page 7 and 47 respectively, Every entrepreneur needs to read them.
Thank you for being here.

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Beauty and the Beast Structure!

BY UBONG DAVID ITA FOUNDER KOBOACCOUNTANT

The creative... I'm Ify Okoro, I am a CREATIVE!, my business is my hobby!"

I hear this all the time, working with entrepreneurs in the creative & beauty industry.

Where business is literally run in a, well, pleasant and casual way.

There's a quote by Jennifer Adrool that says "treat your business as a hobby and it'll pay you as a hobby. Treat your business as a business and it'll pay you as a business"

There has been a recent surge in the amount of information especially with regards to doing business the right way. If you are online a lot, you would have stumbled on posts, articles & publications, encouraging businesses (especially in Nigeria), to do better in certain key business areas like; Sales, Finance, HR etc. The word "structure has become almost a cliché term".

In the simplest of terms, structure is a **well thought out design** that **prescribes** how your business would & should be conducted. It should give direction to everyone one, including the business owner(s), on what to do, when to do "the what", and the most **effective way** to do that what.

The challenge...

Why do creatives have a tough time putting structure to their business...



Beauty and the Beast Structure!

Like every other entrepreneur, they also face the same challenges; internal challenges like having the right team or getting the prerequisite training to run a great business, or external challenges like poor infrastructure, availability of capital, human resource deficit, Government Policies and other wide effects from macro economic activities that are beyond their control.

I will however, look to deal with the challenges I feel entrepreneurs in the creative|beauty spaces have some control over. Those that are more internal and can be influenced and|or managed by them.

I have noticed that Creatives struggle with structuring their business for two major reasons;

1. They are creatives! As a creative, one of your key strengths is your ability to operate without borders - outside the box. And all of a sudden, you are asked to start putting your business in a box. *“Like seriously? How do I even do that?”*
2. Most Creatives start off their business as a hobby. They create to express their inner reflections and inspirations. Most of them run for years as hobbies that pay the bills.

Why should you put some structure to your business?

As earlier stated, Structuring your business (especially finances), can somewhat feel like you are getting boxed in. A makeup artist for example, with a passion for painting faces, would naturally love to try out several products. They sometimes even brag on how many products they got in the makeup box. Imagine telling her/him to only buy new products based on actual need for the product or at least try to justify spending on a new product, as against, buying products based on instincts. That has got to be tough.

Not structuring your beauty business on the hand can translate to; losing business assets (cash, inventory etc), losing out on sales - poor bookkeeping processes, tardy operations and having a limit on your ability to scale.

I have identified a few triggers that turn the table for most entrepreneurs. Triggers that get them to the place where it is either now or never.

- Funding - Looking for investments to expand or scale.
- Theft - Losing money to staff theft, Vendors and other related parties.
- Capital depletion: running out of funds and inventory to keep operations running.
- Compliance - Taxes: this is where they get a letter from the govt on their taxes.
- Personal growth/exposure: attending seminars and workshops open up the entrepreneurship's mind to the need for structure in their business.

How then do you structure your business as a “Creative “??

Here are 7 things I recommend that you can do, at the least, to ensure you have a semblance of structure that will keep your business afloat.

1. Automate: Automate any and everything you can. Move your sales process to the cloud. See fresha for your bookings. For your bookkeeping, you have a number of software out there... airtable, Googlesheet, etc.
2. Separation/segregation of duties: Firstly separate your admin/operations from the creatives. Ensure that you have a non-creative admin personnel running the administrative part of the business. Also separate yourself from your business!
3. Separate again; Make sure you do not have one staff start and finish a business activity. Separate who takes the order from the person that processes the order and if you can, the person that dispatches the order. Separate your main cash transactions from your petty expenses. Separate as much as possible! Just keep separating.

***Beauty and the
Beast Structure!***



4. Document: make sure all processes within your organization are well documented. It must be simple and easy to understand. Run it by your staff (the users) severely before you adopt the document.
5. Simplify: it is important that you simplify your processes to make it easy to comply with. Robust, rigid and complex systems are usually hard to implement and run. Beyond that, because we currently live in a volatile environment, it is important to be as agile (flexible) as possible. Keep your systems simple and adjustable.
6. Compliance: it is one thing to have good structures in place, but without enforcing compliance, of what use is the structure? The CEO is usually the chief compliance officer for SMEs. If the CEO fails to hold themselves accountable... the rest is history!
7. Review and improve: you must constantly review and improve your systems if they will remain relevant. Internal and external changes will need to be aligned with, hence the need for continuous review and improvement.

Beauty and the Beast Structure!

BY UBONG DAVID ITA FOUNDER KOBOACCOUNTANT



www.koboaccountant.com



R&R LUXURY TURNS 10!



The R&R Luxury officially marks their 10th year anniversary. For them it's a celebration of a decade of growth, evolution and extra ordinary accomplishments. The R&R team put together a brunch which close friends of the brand attended. Congratulations to them.







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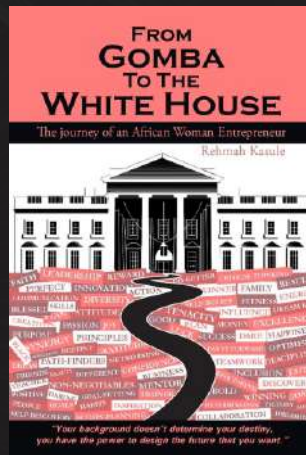
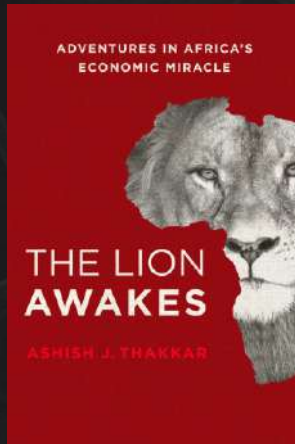
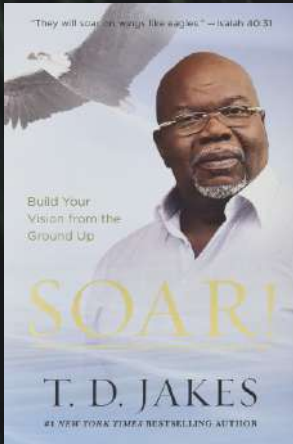
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4 BOOKS EVERY ENTREPRENEUR MUST READ

by Eric Afotey Odai



Vimal Shah a business tycoon who is from Kenya once said “Today is the beginning of the rest of your Life. You are the pilot of your life. Lock in your destination; take off to it, from where you are.” This has been the drive through the success of many business individuals who had made sacrifices on the road to achieve what they have today. It takes courageous men to start a business without looking back at what could happen, the loses that could be made but rather take every risk on the road. This is not an easy task to embark on, it takes dedicated mindset as well discipline and how much you as person has invested knowledge-wise.

When it comes to investing in your knowledge, there's no way we can do away with books. Books possess the power to transform a person by working on the mindset and the whole thought process of a person. Businessmen and women have always referred to books to gain some level of understanding. As the famous saying goes "If you want to hide something from a black person put it in a book" arguably every African has their own reservations to this comment and I say this with no level of offense but to some extent it could be factual. Eventually this assumptions about the Africans has been overlooked as the world is feeling our inputs in all the sectors especially with the business world.

Today, let's introduce some few books every entrepreneur must read, the likes of the young entrepreneurs venturing into the world of business. These books will help shape business approach and the level of thinking that goes into decision making. These are written by Africans for Africans and the world at large.

Soar! Build Your Vision from the Ground Up – Author T. D. Jakes

T.D Jakes is a African American and one of the best selling New York authors. Jakes seeks to encourage the public that everything you aim to achieve can be reality, as a matter of fact there's nothing that can't be achieved under the sun.

This piece focuses on putting together the practical business of making an accurate and swift decision to attain success, global CEO with the dynamic inspiration of a life coach, Soar challenges readers to maximize their God-given abilities by activating their dreams into reality.

The book makes it practical enough and clear processes one should follow for launching the entrepreneurial drive while offering transformative services and fulfilling God's destiny. Aiming and soaring higher from the scratch best describes the potential of this book.

Rising From The Ashes - Author Miyanda Katiwa

Miyanda Katiwa is successful entrepreneur from Zambia. Miyanda knows the best way to impact the lives of others is sharing her true life experiences through her writings.

This book, 'Rising from the Ashes', delve into the real life story of Miyanda, lessons from her experiences in life and business. She sort to make the piece as practical as possible by stating emphatically her moments of struggle, brokenness and hopelessness. Not ending there, it goes on to outline peculiar solutions which will help any other entrepreneur to overcome their own hurdle. This book is a must for every entrepreneur even more important for young entrepreneurs on the come up to have access to make business life easier for them

From Gomba to the White House - Author Rehmah Kasule

.Ms Rehmah is a Ugandan, a business professional and author. She has won some accolades pertaining to her discipline. Her mission is simple and straightforward, motivating young people to be economically stable and independent.

Ms Rehmah Kasule's book is a piece which focuses on her personal and business development tool that will practically teach you how to believe in yourself, learn how to dare to be different, to share, learn, and collaborate with others. Also give you lessons to be able to empower your networking skills, dares you to standout within the lot. It will give you the vigor to achieve anything at all that you can tune your mind to.

“Your background doesn't determine your destiny, you have the power to design the future that you want.” Ms Rehmah. Everything is attainable once there's life, according to the successful business mogul and that's understanding.

Lion Awakes - Author Ashish Thakkar

Ashish J. Thakkar is a Rwandan who was born in England, Leicester but decided to settle in Africa, Rwanda due to the migration of his parents. Over the past years Thakkar has had a successful career in the business sector. He is the founder of Mara Group and Mara Foundation, and he is a co-founder of Atlas Mara Limited. He has written a couple of books which shares insights into the business market.

The 'Lion Awakes' focuses mainly on the growth of Africans economy which is highly important for every individual that does a sort of business in Africa. Ashish, relates the story of today's Africa, one often overshadowed by the terrible headlines.

The book is made up of revelations in trading on the shores of Africa. It also nurtures on the ways to go through to attain success as an entrepreneur, also testimonies of people who turned personal adversity into positivity.

The book is a piece of inspiration to every African entrepreneur, everyone needs to get involved to build the reputation of Africa to the world.



Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has been awarded the Women's Prize for Fiction 'Winner of Winners' for her novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*. The public chose Chimamanda's novel over a stellar-line up including Zadie Smith, the late Andrea Levy, Lionel Shriver, Rose Tremain and Maggie O'Farrell, amongst others.

This one-off award marks the culmination of the Prize's year-long 25th anniversary celebrations, forming a key part of The Women's Prize Reading Women campaign which champions a quarter of a century of phenomenal winners.

AKOSUA *Cosmetics*



BEAUTY THAT UPLIFTS FROM WITHIN

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CHERYL AKOSUA AGYEMANG

THE PROMISING
FOUNDER OF AKOSUA COSMETICS

**STARTUP
FEATURE**

Cheryl is the owner and founder of Akosua Cosmetics, Before starting her business she got a Bachelor's degree in Pharmacology & Toxicology and worked at a salon for about two and a half years. Her job allowed her the opportunity to attend industry trade shows where she got to see a lot of new brands and new skincare technologies/formulations. It was all so fascinating for her, so she started trying out some cosmetic formulations at home for fun. She fell in love with it and decided to pursue graduate studies in Cosmetic Science, which she is currently doing. Lets get to know her better.

What inspired you to startup a business in the beauty industry?

I was inspired by the oils and butters from Ghana that were in my house. My passion for making my own products led me to try out formulations with these ingredients. The results were incredible! I had some friends try them out as well and they also noticed the difference in how much more enriching the products were compared to other products they've used. From there I decided I wanted to have my own beauty brand that places an emphasis on showcasing Africa as a center for natural beauty and investing back into the continent.

In March 2020 we were at the peak of a global pandemic, What made that time so perfect for your startup kickoff?

When I was preparing to launch Akosua Cosmetics, it was a little unclear how COVID-19 was going to change things here in the US. I actually launched Akosua Cosmetics on March 6th, Ghana's Independence day. I felt that was the perfect day to launch because Ghana is a major part of my brand's foundation. It was my way of paying homage to my homeland.

How did you build a network for sales?

Instagram! I started the @akosuacosmetics Instagram in February, before launching to create brand awareness. It grew to 50 followers the first day. Within the first week I ran my first instagram Ad to increase brand awareness which led to continued increase in followers. By the time Akosua Cosmetics launched on March 6, 2020, I had 70 followers and which converted to my first few sales. It still remains the main platform that brings in new customers. I have also utilized my network of friends and family to help me spread the word about my brand.

Who was your very first customer and How did you feel selling your product to them?

My very first customer was a friend of mine from college. I only had two glosses for sale at the time and she bought both. It was very exciting and touching to see a friend supporting my business!

Is there anything you can tell us on how customers differ from each other, in terms of sales strategy needed?

Each customer has different concerns before making a purchase. A majority of customers are concerned about pricing first, so it is important to make the value of your products known under product descriptions or through social media. Some customers need a visual, so it is important to show what the products look like through swatch pictures or pictures/videos of people using the products. Others want to know about other customers' experiences. Reposting previous customer's posts using your products or showcasing product reviews will help those new customers build confidence in your brand.

How did you come up with your pricing scheme? What were the factors considered?

There are a few things that contributed to my pricing scheme. First, I determined the total cost to make the final product. It is so important to figure that out first so you don't end up losing money on production. The cost of all the packaging elements and shipping should all be added. From there I considered the quality of my products and compared it to the quality and pricing of products already in the market. Finally, and most importantly, I considered my target audience and what their price range would be.

You're barely a year in business how has your experience been?

It's been an interesting experience filled with ups and downs, as is the life of an entrepreneur. In nearly a year I have seen successes, made mistakes and made changes. I'm grateful for all of it. Overall I am so happy that I started my beauty brand and look forward to how Akosua Cosmetics grows in 2021

Who is a model to you in the African beauty industry? And Did they directly or indirectly affect any of your start up decisions?

There is a growing number of inspiring individuals in the African beauty industry. Two that have been role models for me are Chichi Eburu and Evita Joseph. Chichi Eburu, owner of Juvia's Place, started her brand by selling makeup tools before releasing her amazing palettes. I felt this was a great strategy, especially when starting off with a restricted budget, so I utilized it as well. I began my business with lip glosses to get my start in the industry and save to be able to produce high quality skin care products made for all types of skin. Evita Joseph Asare, owner of Evita Joseph Beauty, is an inspiration to me because she is a woman who used her engineering background to create a beauty brand. It's encouraging to see another woman from the STEM industry apply her education in the beauty industry.

How do you manage the production and distribution of your product?

I manage both production and distribution. I make all of my products, package them and send them out myself. I currently only distribute in the US, but I plan to begin distributing internationally this year. For production, I keep track of inventory through my website, but I also have a schedule to check manually and restock anything that is running low. I also have scheduled days for experimenting with formulas for new products and testing out new colors for the lip glosses.

What Public relations and Marketing strategy has worked for you well?

Since my business is still very new, building brand awareness has been my main marketing goal. I've found that doing giveaways has really helped. I do a giveaway for every 100 followers I gain on Instagram. I'll run the giveaway as an ad to bring in new followers that eventually become new customers. I have found this really works and it is a great way to engage with potential customers.

What training did you attend before you established your business?

To get a better grasp on the beauty industry, I took the Beauty Industry Essentials course with the Fashion Institute of Technology.

What training will you like to attend in the future?

After completing my graduate education in Cosmetic Science, I'd like to further my expertise in business with a Master's in Business Administration.

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BITCOIN : THE NEW CURRENCY

By Chris Baah

There is an argument whether Bitcoin should be considered a currency.

Opposing views have been made.

According to The English Dictionary, a Currency is *money or other items used to facilitate transactions*. Bitcoin can be used to facilitate transactions. Hence, it fits the bill. Bitcoin is a Currency or just like the heading of this article says, *The New Currency*.

Like all currency, one must know the value of it. This is why in this article, we'll get to see the origin of BitCoin, how it can be obtained and how it can be spent

The Origin

Bitcoin cannot be mentioned without the pseudonym *Satoshi Nakamoto*. From how Bitcoin operates, it can be seen that Satoshi Nakamoto created it in 2008 and widely recognised in 2009 for the purpose of making paperless, untraceable transactions ; and in the case of some countries like Ghana, unregulated transactions. A decentralised system of trust-less cash system. Devised as a system for removing the possibility of corruption from the issuance and exchange of currency. Doing away with the need for third-party operations. Solely based on crypto-proof.

Because of its anonymity, it was embraced fully by those who wanted to make transactions without the limit of institutional rules or compliant behaviour. However, with the course of time, due to the idea of it also being an investment, other parties have embraced the use of Bitcoin.

Like every other currency and stock, it has had rises and lows in value. From a start value of \$0.30 per BitCoin, after lots of crashes and rises, to \$10000 per Bitcoin in February 2020 to \$4000 due to the Covid-19 crisis. Now, it has an approximate value of \$34000. And this value is destined to change. With all its characteristics as a currency, it also is a software. Like all softwares, it has gone through updates. Now at Bitcoin core version 0.20.1.

Due to its anonymity, it has had some backlashes from Countries trying to regulate it. All things considered, it is an ever-evolving system. This is why we need to understand How it can be obtained.

How it can be obtained

Exchange

One of the simplest ways in Exchange for Bitcoin is by using the Coinbase app. Create and verify your Coinbase account, and you've made the first step.

After your personal identity has been confirmed and verified, you can connect a payment option of your choice. Before a payment option is made, you need to know the fees associated with it. So, you can choose an option that best suits you. After a payment option is done, you can buy a Bitcoin. It's that easy.

You can receive Bitcoin by sharing your wallet address with anyone dealing in Bitcoin. Almost like Bank Transfers, Bitcoins can be transferred.

For safety, after obtaining the amount of Bitcoins you want, it is advisable to store only an amount that is actively been exchanged on the online wallet. The online wallet is the exchange wallet provided by the Exchange (i.e. Coinbase etc.). Large amounts can be saved offline using a paper or hardware wallet. Wallets containing your private keys that can access your Bitcoin. Without required knowledge, these cannot be done.



Mining

Anyone with a computer can download and use the Bitcoin software and mine Bitcoins.

Maria Bustilos confirms in *The New Yorker* that, Bitcoin releases a twenty-five-coin reward to the first node in the network that succeeds in solving a difficult mathematical problem. This requires a certain amount of proof-of-work calculation. The solution is then broadcast throughout the network, and competition for a new block and its twenty-five-coin reward begins. This way, bitcoins are mined like gold used to be. In quantities that are small relative to the total supply so that the supply grows slowly. Bitcoins are initially issued to the miners, but are distributed when miners buy things with them or sell them to non-miners. Mining should be done by specialists with server farms of specialized hardware.

How it can be Spent

Purchases

Using Exchange platforms, Bitcoins can be used to make purchases. Bitcoin is money. Hence, one has to be meticulous when dealing with it. Ensure every detail you give pertaining a transaction is correct. Read and understand every information before you make a confirmation. Some businesses accept the use of Bitcoins as payment. This way, when the reference ID or barcode provided by the Exchange platform is had (i.e. Coinbase etc.), payments can be made.

Investment

Bitcoin can serve as a stock. Due to its constant decreases and increases in price, it can be purchased with money you are willing to lose with hope its price will increase in the future. For example, using the Coinbase app, one can buy a Bitcoin at ₦120000 today. In 2 years time, if the cost of a BitCoin is at ₦200000, you would make more than 50% as profit on your stock.

Bitcoin is an ever changing currency, and one needs to be aware that trading in it can bring loss or profit.



The Sustainable Era

R&R is a sustainable beauty brand from Ghana, creating products that share Africa's ancient beauty secrets with the rest of the world.



SHOP R&RS NEW ECO-FRIENDLY COLLECTION ONLINE NOW

Natures Gift to Africa, Africas Gift to the World.



WWW.RANDRLUXURY.CO.UK

A woman with long, thin braids is sitting at a dark wicker table outdoors. She is wearing a white button-down shirt and a gold chain necklace. In front of her is a silver laptop and a white coffee cup. The background shows a green lawn, trees, and a modern building with large windows.

AFRICAN
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Cover Story
by Ihunanya

*Research is the most important step in starting any business and most of the time, it is free to conduct research – Google is my best friend! Always stay up to date with the latest industry news and trends through sites such as Beauty Independent, Women's Wear Daily and BOF. -
VALERIE OBAZE , FOUNDER R&R LUXURY*

*V*alerie was born in the United Kingdom. She had a really great childhood growing up in London and would often spend summers in Accra with her extended family. Being part of a large extended family she had lots of cousins her age to spend time with hence it was never boring coming home.

She started off doing a degree in business IT and swiftly realized she wasn't cut out for the world of computer programming and made moves to change her course of study. She finally studied Communications, Culture & Media at Coventry University England and graduated in 2003. Enjoy our interview with her as we get upclose on her business and future plans.

So tell us, How has your family and education background informed the decisions you made in your business?

Although I have always had an entrepreneurial spirit and had a weekend job throughout high school, I knew that attending university was expected by my parents and would be a solid part of my educational journey. Leaving home gives you the opportunity to gain independence, make solid friendships and truly come into your own.

Throughout University I always had a part time job and did internships during my summer holidays to gain knowledge of various industries and understand what the working world looks like. Post-graduation with a variety of experience under my belt, I went straight into the world of PR, working my way up from an intern to account executive and finally to account director at various consumer PR agencies in London, before setting up my own PR agency with my close friend. My PR career has been extremely beneficial during my journey not just as the owner of a PR agency, but also gave me great fundamentals on how to market my brand once I went into the business of building R&R Luxury from scratch.

How did you source capital for funding your business?

I started R&R Luxury whilst I was still working as a PR freelancer, so I used my income from that, along with savings from previous jobs to get going. Bootstrapping was the obvious way for me to get started, I was able to invest in small batches of packaging and raw ingredients and used low cost and free tools available to me to learn what I could about my industry. I took full advantage of social media and the internet when starting up the business by attending online courses and growing my customer base.

What other options of capital funding were open to you?

I didn't do much research at the time into other options. I think bootstrapping when first starting out is always the best way to go, people will be able to see how much you believe in your idea through all the resources you are using to make it happen. Once you're at a stage where you need to move to the next step and no longer have the financial means to make that happen, then it's a great idea to go to investors or banks, as you will already have the experience with running and financing your business.

Was it difficult getting a name for your brand?

No not at all, as the brand was inspired by my daughter and created to fulfil a mother's need to give her newborn child the best natural ingredients for her skin, I decided to use her initials for the brand name. This worked perfectly for me as R&R has a double meaning which is 'Rest & Relaxation' so it all came together quite well.

What inspired the branding style of your business?

With my background in PR, I already had a keen eye for branding. When creating the R&R logo, which I've had since the early days of the brand in 2010, I wanted something that was simple but eye catching. For me, how the brand looks, is just as important as the quality of the products itself. I've always wanted the brand to expand and be able to sit next to international brands on the same shelf without looking out of place.

What was the most challenging moment you faced as a Start Up?

I think the most challenging thing for me was venturing into a realm of the unknown. My background was in marketing, not in manufacturing or cosmetic formulation, so I had to start from scratch and learn as I went along. You learn from experience and are able to develop the skills necessary to deal with new challenges that come along.

Fast forward 10 years later and I'm still learning something new each and every day. No two days are the same for me as the CEO of a skincare brand, one day I may be on the factory floor with my production team and another day I may be in the R&R shop, at the office or travelling across the Atlantic for a trade show. The variety can be challenging to keep up with, but it is also interesting and exciting to do (and learn) something new every day.

Have you faced any challenge that threatened the existence of your brand?

Well apart from the obvious challenge that most businesses faced in 2020 which was the global pandemic that we all faced called Covid-19, there hasn't been a time when I've thought, "ok this is it, this could be the end for R&R". As a brand owner, I feel that this journey of a thousand miles began with one step and every day we just put one foot in front of the other, stepping out in faith and trusting that the purpose of this brand will come to full fruition. The pandemic definitely shook us, but it also opened our eyes and minds to a how to pivot and be innovative in times such as this and thankfully although our physical retail took a huge hit, the ecommerce platforms we had set up prior to the pandemic were able to carry us through the hardest times.

What were some of the mistakes you made in the early stage of your business?

Starting up, I did most roles in the business myself, as many entrepreneurs do. If I was to start again, I would probably try seeking advice from consultants before making decisions in regard to certain areas of the business, such as packaging and compliance. Although these services may come with a high cost, I think it is worth investing in them from the start so that you are not inconvenienced later.

A woman with long, thin braids is smiling and looking over her shoulder. She is wearing a white, off-the-shoulder, long-sleeved dress. She is standing in a garden with green plants and a white wall in the background.

AFRICAN
FOUNDERS
Cover Story
by Ihunanya

It feels surreal! Celebrating this 10th anniversary milestone is such an incredible moment of gratitude for me. To see this brand, that I started in my kitchen with my husband, reach a decade is amazing.

- VALERIE OBAZE , FOUNDER R&R LUXURY

R&R Luxury is 10! How do you feel about this milestone?

It feels surreal! Celebrating this 10th anniversary milestone is such an incredible moment of gratitude for me. To see this brand, that I started in my kitchen with my husband, reach a decade is amazing. To celebrate our 10th anniversary, we teamed up with some young, African creatives to film the 'Chapter 10 documentary' and when I watch it back, I realise what an extraordinarily rewarding journey it has been.

I'm so thankful to all of our customers, supporters, followers and every single person that has ever purchased an R&R product. I am also so grateful for the amazing women in the rural North of Ghana that process our raw ingredients as they are the backbone of R&R Luxury and we are doing all that we can to support and empower them through our NGO, Women of the Savannah Development Project.

How have you been able to sustain the capital funding of your business?

Up until 2019, the business was completely bootstrapped, however towards the end of 2019, we were able to get a low interest facility from a bank which helped us to build key infrastructure that the business needed to go to the next level of scale.

Have you recorded any financial milestone you will like to share?

The most important thing for us is that we have always turned over a profit from year to year and have never made a loss. We are working on our first major financial milestone and when we get there, we promise to let you know.

What trainings and skills acquisition programs have you attended in the last 10 years that has impacted your business positively?

As I was entering into the world of beauty for the first time, I did a variety of online and in-person courses to learn more about the business of cosmetics via the global Shea Alliance, Plush Folly and Formula Botanica. I have also taken a range of online courses on topics from digital marketing, to pricing strategy and business growth. I generally always have online courses ready to complete which I have purchased.

Last year, I had the opportunity to embark on a course at the renowned MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), which was a Venture Scaling Bootcamp. I learnt a lot during the fast-tracked course and am still implementing some of the ideas into our strategy for 2021. More recently, I embarked on an e-commerce training programme which helped us to grow our online sales through SEO and we are really seeing the impact of this, I think it is important for all entrepreneurs to learn about ecommerce, especially in this digital age.

What other trainings and skills acquisition will you recommend upcoming beauty entrepreneurs to undergo?

Research is the most important step in starting any business and most of the time, it is free to conduct research – Google is my best friend! Always stay up to date with the latest industry news and trends through sites such as Beauty Independent, Women's Wear Daily and BOF. The beauty industry is huge and there are changes every single day – be sure to read (online and in the press) and listen too, there are some amazing podcasts available from industry experts which provide a great insight into the world of beauty.

How do you balance your work and family life?

It's a continuous struggle, I always have 'mum guilt', but I have an extremely supportive husband, amazing family and a great team who help me to balance my work and home life. Being an entrepreneur includes a lot of late nights, long hours and lots of travel, but I am blessed to have a strong support system. Working is important to me as it helps me to show my three daughters that they can be whoever they aspire to be as long as they put in the work and that nothing worth having comes easy!

If not the beauty business, what other businesses will you like to explore?

I am an entrepreneur at heart and I currently run other businesses and NGOs alongside R&R Luxury. If not beauty, then I think I may have ventured into the world of interiors or property development.

You are one of the most successful beauty entrepreneurs in Africa, who do you owe that Achievement to?

Firstly, to God. And secondly to the belief that He has put in me. It is the hard work I have put in, combined with my Faith and an unwavering support system that has gotten the brand to where it is. Of course, I can't thank our loyal customers enough and of course without the help of our growing team R&R, where would we be? But ultimately, I believe that you get out what you put in and I have been working extremely hard over these past 10 years to share nature's gifts to Africa with the rest of the world and it seems the world is finally catching on. Luxury can come from Africa!



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THE 4TH GHANA MAKEUP AWARDS

By Evelyn Borbor Selasi



The concept of makeup is nothing new to the world. Makeup has overtime become the popular colloquial term for its original name; cosmetics. These refer to care materials that are used to boost the odor and look of the human body. They generally involve mixtures of chemical substances, some naturally and others synthetically manufactured. They are made purposefully to enhance the physical appearance of people without harming them. In ancient Egypt castor oil was wore as protective balms and also to impress their gods. Ancient Greek civilization also used various kinds of cosmetics with evidences found in documents such as the Bible. Now cosmetics include skin-care creams, powders, perfumes, lipsticks, nail polishes, contact lenses, bath oils and various other chemical products that are made to take care of the different parts of the human body.



Time has proven that makeup is not just bound for femininity and not just for beautification purposes, but a decent means of income for various companies and economies that have taken keen interests in its manufacturing and distribution. In view of this amazing history with makeup and its vast economic opportunities, the Ghana makeup award was founded specifically for the beauty and makeup industry in Ghana. It sought to prize and celebrate pioneers and upcoming names and brands in the industry, and also unify all stakeholders and consumers. The event was a weeklong event that centred on appreciating the makeup creativity on the parts of makeup artists, brands, consumers, retailers and wholesalers in the Ghanaian beauty and makeup industry.



Twenty-five (25) Practitioners, Businesses and Brands in the Beauty Industry were honoured for their excellence in 2020, at the 4th Ghana Makeup Awards and Curriculum Launch, held on Friday, November 13th, 2020 at the Labadi Beach Hotel Accra.

The event was graced by the Special Guest of Honour, Hon. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, Minister of Education and his deputy Gifty Twum-Ampofo, the Executive Director of COTVET Dr. Fred Kyei Asamoah, renowned Ghanaian Media Personality, Kwami Sefa Kayi and other Special Guests and dignitaries from public and private institutions such as the Office of the President, NEIP, YEA, GSA, SDF.

Major sponsors included Black Secret Makeup, Juben House of Beauty, The Beauty Institute, TCL Ghana and Kasapreko Cardinal, and in partnership with COTVET Ghana, SDF Ghana, Labadi Beach Hotel and Innova DDB Ghana.

The full list of our Award Winners for the 4th Ghana Makeup Awards is as follows:

Industry Choice Award (Most Influential)	Portia Gyeni-Boateng (Cutie Bridal)
Beauty Entrepreneur of the Year	Stephanie Adu (Colorbox Cosmetics)
Beauty Brand of the Year	So Aesthetics
Discovery Artist of the Year	Zara Nasara Ibrahim- Tanko (Slay by Zara)
Digital Education/ Advocacy	Dr. Hannah-Lisa Tetteh (Health Avail)
Digital Commerce and Marketing	Colorbox Cosmetics
Best Innovative Response Strategy to COVID 19	Skin Gourmet Hand Sanitizer
Lifetime Achievement Award	Madam Margaret Sappor
Lifetime Achievement Award	Mrs. Joyce Godslove Akutor Lamptey
Honorary Award	Jemima Akua Kyereda Deveer
Special Recognition Award	First Choice Hair & Beauty
Gallant Man in Beauty	King David Thompson (Abrantie College)
Gallant Man in Beauty	Eric Amankwah (Rozay Cosmetics)
Gallant Man in Beauty	Bernard Kingsley Annoh (Black Secret Makeup)
Gallant Man in Beauty	Ezike Kelvin C. (Zikel Cosmetics)



Next year is the 5th Edition of the Ghana Makeup Awards and we look forward to it with anticipation. Our plan is for a spectacular event showcasing the best of the industry, with a wide array of partners supporting the industry. Therefore, get ready for a fun-packed and impactful lineup of activities as we countdown to our 5th Anniversary. At this juncture we wish to give Special Thanks to our Advisory Board Members who have contributed immensely towards the success of the Ghana Makeup Awards over the years.

Follow the post event recaps of the 4th Ghana Makeup Awards with the hashtags on *@ghmakeupawards* on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



HOW TO BUILD A DREAM CAREER IN THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY

*BY ADEDAYO ADEYOKUNNU
FOUNDER CVM CAREER*

I wear different hats; I work as a Professional CV Writer, a Recruiter and a Career Coach and one of the most common questions I get asked as a Career Coach is “How do I build a career?”

Everyone or almost everyone I know wants to build a career, some people want a career that allows them travel the world with all expenses paid by their employer, some others want a career that gives them flexible work hours, for some others, anything that pays the bills works just fine no matter the industry.

Whatever that career is, and in whatever industry it's in, the same tips work for everyone.

The first tip is, know what you want, and the second tip is, know what skills you need. The first and most important aspect to building anything or any career for that matter is knowing what you want. Today, we'll be narrowing things down to the beauty industry.

In 2017, Euromonitor International valued the global beauty and personal care industry at \$465 Billion and according to Fior Market, a futuristic Market Intelligence Company, the global beauty and personal care industry is expected to reach \$756.63 Billion by 2026. This is definitely a massive market to explore.

So if you want to make beauty more than a hobby or if you love the industry and want to build a career but not sure how to or what to do. Whether you're a recent graduate or an experienced hire, this post will discuss some job opportunities available in the beauty industry.

The beauty industry continues to transform itself, and career opportunities and choices also keeps opening up alongside the transformation. Many years ago, being a make-up artist or an aesthetician, may have been the only job opportunities you could readily think about (obviously, apart from those involved in the production side of things), but in recent years due to technology, beauty startups, celebrity brands amongst other things, the beauty industry offers a range of career opportunities.

Like every other industry, you need to have the required skills or find a way to acquire the skills if you don't have it. Here are some of the skills you can leverage to get a job in the industry.

1. **Writing:** If you enjoy writing, then why not share your passion for beauty products and write about them? You can work as a Beauty Blogger, a Copywriter, An Editor, Content Creator, you can even write e-books. Your job will involve writing about products and brands. You can write reviews of the products you tried out, document your journey when you're experimenting with specific products, share your beauty routines, etc. Now that you know, what are you going to write about?
2. **Teaching:** Have you ever thought about teaching? If you enjoy teaching and like the beauty industry, you can be a beauty educator. You can train your on clients, organise online or physical classes or work as a Beauty Educator for a beauty brand.
3. **Product Development or Product Advisory:** If you look around you, you'll see a lot natural beauty products, the global natural skin care products market size was valued at \$10.84 billion in 2019. So if you have some experience and knowledge in chemistry and biology, you can develop beauty products, or you can work in an advisory role with a beauty start-up.
Brand and Marketing Manager: What is any product without branding and marketing? As a Brand Manager you are responsible for maintaining the brand integrity across all company marketing initiatives and communications, you are equally responsible for creating and managing promotional collateral amongst other things. This sounds extremely fascinating

4. Administration: Then there is the administrative process too, answering telephone calls, scheduling meetings, preparing reports, filing documents, managing inventory, maintaining company records, handling budget and invoicing, providing customer service, etc. If this is your thing, then go for it!

No matter what you are interested in, you can find the right job for you. Beauty is rewarding and it can provide you the career you want. Whether it's working as a Make-up Artist, a Beauty Therapist, a Social Media Manager, a Product Manager or even a Social Media Manager. I am certain you will discover exactly what you require to make your career dreams come true.

So how you can position for any of the roles you'd ask me. You can intern with a beauty brand, many beauty brands offer internships, and there are few ways better than interning to break into any field. You can also start out as a freelancer, the internet is an amazing platform to brand yourself- start a blog or a Vlog and start showing off your interest and knowledge.

Networking is another way in, many of us got our start because of someone we know or met, I landed my first role because of a personal relationship, so leverage your network. Go to industry events and beauty trade fairs, talk with as many people as possible and network your way in.

And of course get your career documents ready; your CV, Cover Letter and LinkedIn Profiles are a great way to advertise yourself, it's important that you put together an effective CV and if you're not confident in your writing skills, get professional help- I write very brilliant CVs that have gotten interviews in a number of industries both the formal and informal sectors. Whatever it is you decide to do, get the required skill, take advantage of any opportunities that present itself and don't be afraid to start at the bottom!

thank you!

*We are pleased to see that you made it
the last page of this publication.*

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