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AFRICA'S BEST BRANDS 2018

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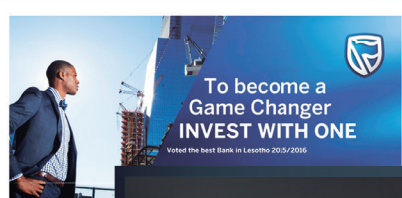
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Top Brands

African brands are on the rise while consumers and creatives alike challenge the relevance of global brands. Brand Africa founder and Brand Leadership chairman

Thebe Ikalafeng gives a perspective on the latest Brand Africa 100.

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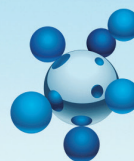
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Top Brands



Our survey received over 15,500 brand mentions covering more than 2,200 brands.



All indications are that Africa is on the rebound. The World Bank forecasts sub-Saharan Africa's growth will reach 3.1% in 2018 and 3.6% in 2019–20. This, while still below pre-crisis growth levels, is encouraging and premised on expectations of rising commodity prices and sustained reforms.

The 2017–18 Brand Africa 100 report reflects a steady African brands story, with African brands holding a 17% share of the Top 100 Most Admired Brands in Africa (see pages 16–17) consistent with previous years. In terms of the other regions, Europe (40%) declined by 5% and North America (24%) declined by 8%, while Asia (19%) grew by 12%.

We have 30 new brands entering the ranking, which is similar to the figure last year. The top five have remained, the same with Nike and Samsung swapping top spot.

Established African business brands such as Zim-

Nike took first place in this year's Top 100 Most Admired Brands in Africa.

babwe's Econet (#40), Kenya's Bidco (#80) have joined stalwart African brands, MTN (up to #6 from an all-time low of #9) and Dangote (up to #21 from #24), while Nigeria's 9Mobile (#90) has replaced its predecessor brand, Etisalat (which has remained on the list, declining from #13 to #44, despite exiting the market in 2017).

In our survey we asked respondents to rank brands in an unprompted way, before asking them prompted questions, such as the name of their most admired African brand or their most admired financial services brand. In the prompted survey, which was a deliberate effort to identify the 25 Most Admired African Brands (see table, page 21), Nigerian giant Dangote emerged as the #1 Most Admired African Brand.

Overall, the list, which started out with over 15,500 brand mentions covering over 2,200 admired brands, illustrates a very diversified portfolio of categories and brands in Africa.

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Top Brands



There is no question that Africans are invested in and admire brands.



However, the Brand Africa 100 list is still dominated by non-African brands in categories that are largely driven by and require long-term investment, research and access to skills and resources – electronics and telecommunications (30%), consumer, non-cyclical (19%), apparel (15%), automobile (8%), food (7%), sports and fitness (5%).

What is a brand?

There is no question that Africans are invested in and admire brands, with a keen consumption of global brands. Throughout its history, the Brand Africa 100 survey has elicited some interesting insights on brands in Africa.

For instance, when prompted to identify their Most Admired African Brand, some responses have listed generic product or category identities rather than the trading brands, with textile “brands” such as kente (Ghana), kitenge (East and Southern Africa), capulana (Mozambique) and wax, being mentioned. In other

Coca-Cola kept its place in the top five of this year's table.

instances, people who have a large African following – such as Nelson Mandela or the charismatic Malawian pastor Major 1 Bushiri – as well as sports teams such as former CAF champions, South Africa's Orlando Pirates and English giant Chelsea were also mentioned as Most Admired African Brands.

This indicates a varying conception of what is a brand by market, depending on exposure and level of development. In much of Africa, the brand follows the function, unless a brand owns the category and has established itself as a generic or is ubiquitous in its category, such as Coca Cola (#4), Toyota (#8), Samsung (#2) and Nike (#1), which have largely retained their positions. Other respondents merely stated that their most admired brand is “aucune” – any brand (as long as it works).

continued on page 18

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Top Brands

MOST-ADMIRED BRANDS IN AFRICA

2017/8 RANK	2016/7 RANK	BRAND	CATEGORY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	CHANGE
1	2	Nike	Sport and Fitness	USA	1
2	1	Samsung	Electronics / Computers	South Korea	-1
3	3	Adidas	Sport and Fitness	Germany	-
4	4	Coca-Cola	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	-
5	5	Apple	Electronics / Computers	USA	-
6	9	MTN	Telecommunications	South Africa	3
7	14	Tecno	Electronics / Computers	China	7
8	8	Toyota	Auto Manufacturers	Japan	-
9	22	Gucci	Apparel	Italy	13
10	6	LG	Electronics / Computers	South Korea	-4
11	11	Puma	Sport and Fitness	Germany	-
12	12	Sony	Electronics / Computers	Japan	-
13	7	Nokia	Electronics / Computers	Finland	-6
14	10	Airtel	Telecommunications	India	-4
15	17	Pepsi Cola	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	2
16	25	Itel Mobile	Telecommunications	China	9
17	29	Vodafone/Safaricom	Telecommunications	UK	12
18	15	Nestlé	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Switzerland	-3
19	19	BMW	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	-
20	20	Guinness	Alcoholic Beverages	Ireland	-
21	24	Dangote	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria	3
22	27	Unilever	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	5
23	26	Anbessa	Apparel	Ethiopia	3
24	16	Glo	Telecommunications	Nigeria	-8
25	21	Mercedes-Benz	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	-4
26	40	Huawei	Electronics / Computers	China	14
27	23	Zara	Apparel	Spain	-4
28	37	Infinix Mobile	Telecommunications	China	9
29	39	Toshiba	Electronics / Computers	Japan	10
30	35	Google	Media	USA	5
31	79	Polo Ralph Lauren	Apparel	USA	48
32	55	Tiger Brands	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	South Africa	23
33	32	Peak Milk	Food	Netherlands	-1
34	33	H&M	Apparel	Sweden	-1
35	34	Hewlett-Packard/HP	Electronics / Computers	USA	-1
36	18	Orange	Telecommunications	France	-18
37	78	Versace	Apparel	Italy	41
38	53	Shoprite	Retail	South Africa	15
39	31	Microsoft/Windows	Electronics / Computers	USA	-8
40	New	Econet	Telecommunications	Zimbabwe	n/a
41	38	Tusker	Alcoholic Beverages	Kenya	-3
42	46	Indomie	Food	Indonesia	4
43	86	Reebok	Sport and Fitness	USA	43
44	13	Etisalat	Telecommunications	UAE	-31
45	42	Lacoste	Apparel	France	-3
46	36	Honda	Auto Manufacturers	Japan	-10
47	44	Blue Band Margarine	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	-3
48	90	Louis Vuitton	Apparel	France	42
49	New	Trade Kings	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Zambia	n/a
50	30	Fanta	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	-20

All the rankings in our survey are independently produced and advertisers and sponsors have no bearing on the final results.

2017/8 RANK	2016/7 RANK	BRAND	CATEGORY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	CHANGE
51	77	Azam	Food	Tanzania	26
52	48	Star Beer	Alcoholic Beverages	Ireland	-4
53	New	Victoria's Secret	Apparel	USA	n/a
54	New	GTP	Textile	Netherlands	n/a
55	45	Mukwano	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Uganda	-10
56	47	DStv	Media	South Africa	-9
57	63	Facebook	Media	USA	6
58	New	Nivea	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Germany	n/a
59	71	Nissan	Auto Manufacturers	Japan	12
60	New	Alcatel	Electronics / Computers	France	n/a
61	49	Philips	Electronics / Computers	Netherlands	-12
62	91	Calvin Klein	Apparel	USA	29
63	66	Chanel	Apparel	France	3
64	51	Dell	Electronics / Computers	USA	-13
65	New	Lenovo	Electronics / Computers	China	n/a
66	New	KFC	Food	USA	n/a
67	New	Golden Penny	Food	Nigeria	n/a
68	New	PZ Cussons	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	n/a
69	New	Xiaomi	Electronics / Computers	China	n/a
70	73	Heineken	Alcoholic Beverages	Netherlands	3
71	New	Tommy Hilfiger	Apparel	USA	n/a
72	64	Omo	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	-8
73	52	Always	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	USA	-21
74	70	Tigo	Telecommunications	Luxembourg	-4
75	61	Colgate	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	USA	-14
76	New	HTC	Electronics / Computers	Taiwan	n/a
77	New	Amazon	Retail	USA	n/a
78	New	Auchan	Retail	France	n/a
79	New	McDonald's	Food	USA	n/a
80	New	Bidco	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Kenya	n/a
81	New	Oppo	Electronics / Computers	China	n/a
82	New	Dettol	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	n/a
83	80	All Star/Converse	Apparel	USA	-3
84	New	Dior	Apparel	France	n/a
85	New	Nasco	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria	n/a
86	85	Audi	Auto Manufacturers	Germany	-1
87	81	Close Up	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	-6
88	New	Avon	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	UK	n/a
89	50	Ford	Auto Manufacturers	USA	-39
90	New	9Mobile	Telecommunications	Nigeria	n/a
91	New	Ferrari	Auto Manufacturers	Italy	n/a
92	New	Maltina	Non-alcoholic Beverages	Nigeria	n/a
93	New	P&G	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	USA	n/a
94	67	Cadbury	Food	UK	-27
95	57	Sprite	Non-alcoholic Beverages	USA	-38
96	New	Haier Thermocool	Electronics / Computers	China	n/a
97	69	Cowbell	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Switzerland	-28
98	New	LC Waikiki	Apparel	Turkey	n/a
99	New	Fila	Sport and Fitness	Italy	n/a
100	New	Total	Oil and Gas	France	n/a

Top Brands

Africa's best Brands

Overall, the unprompted and prompted surveys of the Most Admired Brands in Africa and Most Admired African Brands respectively reveal an incredible consistency, with 60% of the top 10 brands being present in both tables, led by Nigeria's Dangote and Glo, South Africa's MTN and Shoprite, Kenya's Tusker and Ethiopia's Anbessa (see tables, page 21). The major change on the list occurred with the Safaricom/Mpesa scores being incorporated into the Vodafone/Vodacom brands since Vodacom is now the majority shareholder. Despite this, Safaricom/Mpesa remains a highly recalled brand when prompted, both in Most Admired African Brand and also in Most Admired Financial Services Brand.

Econet (#40 unprompted and #11 prompted) had a spectacular entry into the top 100 list, possibly driven by their cross-leveraging of their media and data assets, Kwese and Liquid Telecom respectively. Kwese, which has a growing presence across Africa also made the Most Admired African Brand list at #19.

The unprompted list of the Most Admired Brands in Africa is dominated by nine nations: Nigeria (7), South Africa (5), Kenya (2) Tanzania (1), Uganda (1), Ethiopia (1), Ghana (1), Zambia (1) and Zimbabwe (1). The prompted list is dominated by South Africa (5), Nigeria (4), Kenya (3), Ghana (3), Zambia (2) and Zimbabwe (2) in a list dominated by Alcoholic Beverages (5), Telecommunication (5), Apparel (2), Consumer, non-cyclical (7), Financial Services (2), Media (2), Apparel (2) and Retail (1).

Winners and losers

The winners and losers – dominated by non-African brands – underscore that brands don't live in a vacuum

TOP 3 BRANDS IN AFRICA – RANKED BY CATEGORY

CATEGORY	BRAND	2017/18 RANK	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
Alcoholic Beverages	Guinness	20	Ireland
	Tusker	41	Kenya
	Star Beer	52	Ireland
Non-alcoholic Beverages	Coca-Cola	4	USA
	Pepsi Cola	15	USA
	Fanta	50	USA
Food	Peak Milk	33	Netherlands
	Indomie	42	Indonesia
	Azam	51	Tanzania
Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nestlé	18	Switzerland
	Dangote	21	Nigeria
	Unilever	22	UK
Media	Google	30	USA
	Dstv	56	South Africa
	Facebook	57	USA
Telecommunications	MTN	6	South Africa
	Airtel	14	India
	Itel Mobile	16	China
Electronics / Computers	Samsung	2	South Korea
	Apple	5	USA
	Tecno	7	China
Auto Manufacturers	Toyota	8	Japan
	BMW	19	Germany
	Mercedes-Benz	25	Germany



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TOP 25 MOST ADMIRED FINANCIAL SERVICES BRANDS

RANK	TOP FINANCIALS	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
1	GTB	Nigeria
2	Barclays/ABSA	UK
3	Ecobank	Togo
4	UBA	Nigeria
5	Stanbic/Standard Bank	South Africa
6	Equity Bank	Kenya
7	First National Bank (FNB)	South Africa
8	Zenith Bank	Nigeria
9	Mpesa	Kenya
10	Western Union	USA
11	Access Bank	Nigeria
12	Diamond Bank	Nigeria
13	KCB	Kenya
14	Old Mutual	South Africa
15	BOA	USA
16	Standard Chartered Bank	UK
17	Union Bank	USA
18	Fidelity Bank	Nigeria
19	Nedbank	South Africa
20	MTN Mobile Money	South Africa
21	Airtel Money	India
22	World Bank	USA
23	Moneygram	USA
24	Paypal	USA
25	Orange Money	France

and that no amount of marketing investment can overcome fundamental product challenges.

Ford lost the biggest ground, dropping 78% from 50 to 89, possibly due to their much publicised safety issues and lethargic and reluctant response to the crisis of their Kuga brand in South Africa. In Nigeria, it is estimated that around 1.4m Focus and Kuga vehicles and some of its vans are suspected to be at risk of a “clutch pressure plate fracture” resulting in them being recalled. Sprite lost its fizz, dropping 38 spots. While globally, Sprite has global superstars such as the NBA’s LeBron James endorsing the brand, it is possible that the publicity of a court ruling in Nigeria that Sprite and Fanta (down 20 spots) could be poisonous affected the brand’s image. On the other hand, Etisalat understandably dropped 31 spots due to its exit from Africa in 2017.

The winners are dominated by apparel and lifestyle sport brands Ralph Lauren (+48), Versace (+41) and a resurgent Reebok (+43). The sports category remains a strong performer, due to complete repositioning or expansion in their positioning towards lifestyle. Partnerships with high profile non-sport celebrities such as Kanye West (Adidas), Rihanna (Puma) and Gigi Hadid (Reebok), have freshened and broadened the brands’ appeal, particularly to youthful and young consumers – which works well in an African environment where 60% of the population is under the age of 25. Hollywood’s direct and incidental endorsement has had an impact on the category. After a long stay, despite its innumerable challenges, BlackBerry finally fell off the list of Most Admired Brands in Africa following Apple and Samsung decimation of its handset franchise and its decision to ditch the smartphone business and focus on software

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Brand Africa 100 methodology

The BA100 was developed by Brand Leadership, in collaboration with Kantar TNS and Geopoll

The Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands research represents the most comprehensive and most representative brands study in Africa. It is a consumer-led survey that establishes brand preferences across the continent. The study is independently conducted by Brand Africa partners, GeoPoll, the leader in providing fast, high quality research from emerging markets, with strategic analysis and insights by Kantar TNS, the world's largest insight information research firm and Brand Leadership, Africa's premier branding advisory firm.

In the 2017-18 period, the survey was conducted in 23 countries, which cover all African economic regions and collectively represent at least 75% of the population and the GDP of Africa. These countries' brands are often the most dominant brands across Africa or within their regions.

Since 2015, Brand Africa has been using GeoPoll's multi-modal survey platform to collect data via SMS rather than face-to-face method. Mobile interviewing has proven to be the most effective way to reach African consumers because of the high penetration of mobile telephony as a primary mode of communication and increasingly for consumer transactions in Africa. This mobile methodology and GeoPoll's large database of respondents across Africa therefore ensured a wider reach and expediency in conducting research across the continent.

Individuals aged 18 and older in the sample countries were asked to report on their top three most admired (global or local) brands, irrespective of country of origin. In addition, because of their catalytic impact or influential role, respondents were further asked to rank their top three most admired (global or local) media and financial services brands respectively. As an African-focused survey and given the growing number of African brands, this year a new question

was introduced specifically focusing on identifying "the most admired African brand".

The survey yielded over 15,500 brand mentions covering over 2,200 admired brands.

With the final coded data, Kantar TNS calculated a score for each brand and created an index that takes into account 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 names in different markets such as Stanbic/Standard Bank and Vodacom/Vodafone, or where the brands were sub-brands of a dominant brands such as Apple's iPod, iPhone and Ipad, the results were consolidated under one score for the group brand.

Finally, 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 recalled in at least one other country other than their domicile market. Given the fragmentation and proliferation of local media, the media list is now focused only on truly pan-African media available across a significant number of African countries.

Overall, the Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands is based on the most rigorous consumer-led methodology consistent with global best practices - and the most representative and comprehensive study and ranking of brands in Africa.

Karin Du Chenne, CEO - Kantar South Africa and Matthieu Sauvage Mar, Partnerships Director, GeoPoll - a Mobile Accord service

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25 MOST ADMIRED AFRICAN BRANDS

CATEGORY	BRAND	CATEGORY	COUNTRY
1	Dangote	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria
2	MTN	Telecommunications	South Africa
3	Anbessa	Apparel	Ethiopia
4	DStv	Media	South Africa
5	Glo	Telecommunications	Nigeria
6	Shoprite	Retail	South Africa
7	Tusker	Alcoholic Beverages	Kenya
8	Safaricom	Telecommunications	Kenya
9	Amarula	Alcoholic Beverages	South Africa
10	Mukwano	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Uganda
11	Econet	Telecommunications	Zimbabwe
12	Ankara Clothing	Textile	Ghana
13	Tiger Brands	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	South Africa
14	Jumia	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria
15	Azam	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Tanzania
16	Marwa	Apparel	Morocco
17	Chibuku	Alcoholic Beverages	Zambia
18	UBA	Financial Services	Nigeria
19	Kwese	Media	Zimbabwe
20	Trade Kings	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Zambia
21	Kasapreko	Alcoholic Beverages	Ghana
22	Bidco	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Kenya
23	Alomo Bitters	Alcoholic Beverages	Ghana
24	Africell	Telecommunications	Gambia
25	Ecobank	Financial Services	Togo

TOP 10 MOST ADMIRED AFRICAN BRANDS (Unprompted)

RANK	BRAND	CATEGORY	COUNTRY
1	MTN	Telecommunications	South Africa
2	Dangote	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Nigeria
3	Anbessa	Apparel	Ethiopia
4	Glo	Telecommunications	Nigeria
5	Tiger Brands	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	South Africa
6	Shoprite	Retail	South Africa
7	Econet	Telecommunications	Zimbabwe
8	Tusker	Alcoholic Beverages	Kenya
9	Trade Kings	Consumer, Non-Cyclical	Zambia
10	Azam	Food	Tanzania

and enterprise solutions.

On the other hand, the fast food brands McDonalds (#79) and KFC (#66) have entered the list despite 80% of KFC's restaurants being in South Africa and McDonald's having presence in just four African countries –Morocco, Egypt, South Africa and Mauritius. But the brands are well known and steadily moving north. In addition, McDonald's has had a 20 year partnership with FIFA and is

thus well exposed to a football-crazy Africa, particularly during this period with the World Cup scheduled to take place in Russia.

Who's fuelling the African story?

The survey of prompted pan-African media brands shows that the African narrative is through non-African channels, with DStv (incorporating GoTV, Multichoice and Supersport) the lone African brand among the Top 10. The media list is led by BBC, which has an extensive history and coverage of Africa through its BBC World Service radio and specific African programming through Focus on Africa and others on TV.

The list is dominated by America (40%), Europe (30%) and Asia (20%). However, it is important to note that the media category is the most fragmented, with lots of local and regional players. As a consequence, only global players with extensive African reach and resources are known across the whole continent.

In the financial services sector, 60% of the Most Admired Brands are made in Africa. GTB retains its #1 position as the Most Admired African Brand, while Mpesa remains the standard for mobile money brands. Mobile money brands, Mpesa (#9), Airtel Money (#21), PayPal (#24) and Orange Money (#25)'s presence underscore the impact of not only Mpesa as the catalyst, but mobile as a key enabler for financial access. Nigeria (6), South Africa (5) and Kenya (3) lead the tables in a continent that's cash rather credit led.

Conclusion

Non-African brands are feeling the African heat – with consumers and creatives alike challenging their relevance and responsibility. Recently, Swedish brand H&M felt the wrath of African and diaspora consumers when their global campaign featured a black child model with the “coolest monkey in the jungle” hoodie. This caused their store to be trashed in South Africa while African and diaspora celebrities dumped the brand, creating a global crisis for it. MaXhosa, the South African global knitwear brand took Spanish giant Zara to task – backed by consumers and government – for copying their trademark designs.

At the same time many global brands – such as Balenciaga, Louis Vuitton and Stella McCartney – are increasingly taking inspiration from, appropriating or collaborating with African creatives. It's a new era for African brands – and for non-African brands to compete they will have to demonstrate (as Samsung, Coke and Toyota among the best examples) how to stay relevant and respond with solutions that show an understanding of the diverse African consumer with a burgeoning spend estimated to grow to \$300bn by 2050.

The Brand Africa 100 list of the Most Admired African Brands, and the success of brands such as Safaricom's Mpesa, Dangote and MTN have shown that Africa can now not only match but lead the world in delivering world-class solutions made in Africa. It is, now, truly Africa's time. ■

Top Brands

Historically, local brands were perceived as inferior, but a growing army of entrepreneurs who understand customer needs are building the value of their brands across the continent.

Local brands are on the rise

The time it takes to build a global brand is shorter now than at any time in history. The once sacred code to brand building has been cracked, dissected and shared over a multitude of free and accessible websites. The democratisation of education via the internet has ensured that the steps to follow are made easier with a plethora of low cost inputs across the value chain, ranging from logo and website design, to packaging and product distribution. Once only available to the large multinationals with deep pockets, international markets are now just a swipe away.

Africa is no different. Globalisation has ensured that the world's top marques have penetrated Africa with the same speed as they have the rest of the globe. Netflix and their competitors have ensured that release dates are now the same in New York as they are in Nairobi.

While it is true that the deeper pockets of global brands ensure that they remain the stronger brands on the continent, a new generation of Africans have studied the brand building formula and Africa continues to give birth to strong local brands at a growing pace. Starbucks' recent entry into Africa is seen trailing local Kenyan coffee chain Java House which has perfected the latte and laptop coffee culture with over 40 branches in East Africa. Kwese TV, Africa's newest pay TV satellite service beams the latest entertainment and sports with the same finesse as its American counterparts.

Despite the stifling of entrepreneurship in Africa through governments not creating conducive environments for growth, a growing middle class of entrepreneurs has a great understanding of customer needs and is devising ways to meet these needs with a local flavour. Historically, local brands were perceived as inferior and there is now a movement of adoption of these brands, firstly for the perceived brand value they bring and secondly for patriotic purposes. Global FMCG brands like Unilever, Colgate-Palmolive and Nestlé, all early investors into Africa, had many years without competition.

Then came counterfeit products, packed in look-alike



It is now not uncommon for local brands to have greater brand equity than their foreign counterparts.

sachets and cartons and sold for a fraction of their price. As populations grew and developed, local Africans realised that they could build these brands themselves and the competitors to multinationals were no longer those posing as them, but those proposing better value in brighter and better packaging with the same distribution channels and even a greater media spend to ensure success of their brands.

It is now not uncommon for local brands to have greater brand equity than their foreign counterparts and it is often difficult to ascertain which brands are home grown and which are foreign. Local telecoms companies are known to be dishing out reduced market share to the foreign "experts" as their advertising campaigns are more localised and equally professional. The Bakhresa Group in Tanzania have ensured that their Colas are found at competitive prices in every retailer and market in the country.

The Trade Kings FMCG group in Zambia are the largest FMCG producer in the country and are proud to have the largest media spend in Zambia. Their brands are now seen as more relevant, affordable and available than their foreign counterparts. Strong local brands are achieving status as regional brands. The global success of the home-grown Kenyan M-Pesa brand has shown not only the African tech sector, but all the continent's entrepreneurs that local brands are very much in vogue.

Since 2013, US and European private equity firms have been rewarding African entrepreneurs with record fund-raising. Private equity investors into Africa differ from their standard model by holding investments for longer periods and take a more active role in management by focusing on improving quality, corporate strategy and governance.

They are known to have a penchant for local brands that supply both local and export markets. As these private equity players leapfrog bureaucratic local funding norms, exponential growth of higher quality local commercial activity helps to drive the continent's mercantile ecosystem.



The number of middle-class Africans has tripled over the last 30 years to 313m people

313m



Consumers are getting smarter

According to the African Development Bank, the number of middle-class Africans has tripled over the last 30 years to 313m people. While one may debate the definition of the term middle class, it goes without saying that economic growth determines this growth and with five out of the top 10 fastest growing economies in the world being in Africa, our continent's middle class is set to flourish. Education is traditionally in company with economic growth and this will further drive local brands and their consumption. Jumia, Nigeria's ecommerce

Kenya's M-Pesa is an example of a local brand very much in vogue.

answer to Amazon is focused not only in bringing more products to the people, but to developing and investing in local suppliers.

The African consumer is smarter and more demanding than ever before. The African producer has proudly risen to the challenge and the exponential rise of Made in Africa will continue to permeate all corners of the continent.

Greg Benatar is group sales and joint managing director at Alliance Media.

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