

Advertising

LASAA restructuring, a new dawn in outdoor business

Stories by Daniel Obi

Outdoor advertising operators have reacted to the management restructuring at the Lagos State Signage Advertisement Agency (LASAA), describing it as a new dawn in the industry.

Bamidele Fashola, governor of Lagos State, last Wednesday removed Makamaka Abibi, as the managing director of the agency, replacing him with Tunji Bello, former commissioner for environment in the state.

A Adegoji, managing director of Royal Communications, an outdoor firm disassociated as a welcome development. It is a new dawn for the OAAAN members who have gone through difficult environment in the last few years. It is a time of renewal and time of hope," Adegoji said.

Describing Bello as a friendly and understanding man, Ade-



goji said as soon as he settled down, the operators would sit down with him and look at the way forward.

Another operator, who does not want his name mentioned, told BusinessDay that before now, some operators have either moved into another business or gone to other West African coun-

tries to operate, adding, however, that the appointment of Tunji Bello would likely reinstate the spirit in the business at the state.

Though Kote Ademulugbo, president of Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAAN), could not be reached for comments, he, however, ad-

vised his members to face the challenges in the industry as they come.

He said in the last few years his members complained bitterly and "we in the OAAAN never got close to our targets and projections. We lost so much in terms of structures, nor after having suffered such huge losses,

How big is Afromedia's share in outdoor business?

In a recession like this and persisting difficult operating environment when companies' longevity is not guaranteed, it is imperative to study the history of big brands as a note for struggling organisations.

This is a time most organisations that are under heavy economic pressure are searching for solutions "vital Apart from realities, attending workshops and listening to pieces of advice, evaluating the success stories of some other organisations could offer antidote.

For instance, Afromedia Nigeria plc, one of Nigeria's foremost out-of-home advertising firms, has been operating in Nigeria in the last 50 years with some others are giving way. The out-of-home firm came into existence and

became autonomous on October 28, 1959.

Originally Afromedia was a small service arm of West Africa Publicity (WAP), the latter itself was incorporated in 1928 as part of the parent United Africa Company Limited (UACL).

However, in 1959, and to meet the requirements of international convention which did not permit a single organisation to run both agency services and media contracting services, two companies were formed by the parent UAC conglomerates. The companies were Afromedia Nigeria Limited to handle outdoor services, and Lincol Limited to handle agency work. Both were run as two independent members of the UACL Group.

What therefore, could be the agency's survival strategies in the last 50 years which

perhaps, other growing agencies could leverage on? The Nigerian outdoor business has been under stress in the recent time affecting the small and the mighty operators, a factor which makes it imperative to learn the arts of survival. Recent seminars by marketing communication practitioners on the strategies of surviving during recession have emphasised both on a shift from the business norm and creativity in the industry.

In recent times, there has been proliferation of marketing communication outfits which is in response to the demand from clients, but these agencies must learn the art of growing their firms.

Afromedia says that apart from its cordial relationship with its clients;

team work, in-depth strategic thinking and good leverage on experience have combined to keep it soaring. It said: In 2000, the company won the Chartered Institute of Marketing of Nigeria award as: The Best Market-Driven Outdoor Advertising Company amongst many others.

Revealing other strategies, Akin Ire Olojede, managing director, Afromedia plc, said the agency was currently building workable business relationships with key states/stakeholders in the country, especially those who possess high advert potentials.

"In simple terms, we are focused on initiating and executing Public-Private Participation (PPP) schemes with various authorities through securing medium to long term Exclusive Advertising Concessions. Some of these agreements are already in place in a few states whilst we are currently in discussions to ensure others become a reality," Olojede said.

The company is celebrating 50th anniversary with a theme "Be Green." The CSR initiative is to draw public attention to the need for a neat and clean environment. Therefore, it is a move to make Nigerians begin to think more than a cursory look, and pay more attention to

we must now re-invest."

The changes at LASAA could be one of hopes Ademulugbo predicted he said that 2010 had lots of hope for practitioners and advised members not to give up on the industry.

A segment of the media industry that is perhaps hardest hit by a mixture of the recession and environmental challenges is the outdoor advertising business.

In 2007, for instance, the hitherto burgeoning advertising industry experienced what could be referred to as a Tsunami when its clients' billboards and signages, erected with hundreds of millions of naira, were pulled down by LASAA.

The action was part of LASAA's moves to check the proliferation of cluttered billboards in an attempt to avenge the mega-duty drama. Since then, most practitioners in the sub-sector have not recovered from that action, a situation further compounded by the unpleasant business environment.

STAR in new labels, advert campaign to mark independence

Nigerian Breweries plc, the nation's brewery giant and owner of the STAR lager beer brand, has revealed plans to celebrate with the country and citizens in grand style on the occasion of the 50th independence anniversary.

This was revealed at a media conference to kick off series of activities that the brand has put in place to celebrate Nigeria's Golden Jubilee milestone.

Jacco Van Der Linden, managing director Nigerian Breweries, revealed that the advertising campaign would celebrate Nigeria and Nigerians by thrilling citizens into unique gestures and activities bundled into a special 'Star and Nigeria at 50' package.

List of activities includes, a



with long list of clients, management savvy, it is not surprising that Afromedia, which has invested heavily in the nation's economy, is dominating in the industry after 50 years when some other companies' bones are wearing.

John Anderson Kay, author of "Why firms succeed", agreed that the success of classically-innovative firms rests less on any single innovation, but on the architecture that enables it to derive a succession of innovative products.

"New research shows that innovation will be essential for businesses over the next decade as they try to thrive and survive by seizing new opportunities, improving their competitive position and providing more value to their customers."

"Innovation isn't restricted to science labs and corporations. It's the driving force behind small business entrepreneurship," Roy Rosin, vice president of innovation at Intuit, said, adding, "Small businesses instinctively use innovation to create new products and services, efficiently manage their business... and acquire new customers. These innovations are the keys to their future."

special independence commemorative front and back labels for STAR bottles, and a new STAR campaign on radio, television, print and outdoor media. In addition, there will be special anniversary editions of the popular STAR Game Show, where loyal consumers will be rewarded. The show will hit the screens very soon.

There will also be a free distribution of 100 crates of STAR lager beer to the nation's political powerhouse in Aso Rock Villa, Abuja, and 50 crates to some selected state governments and local governments across the nation.

Linden explained that STAR Lager had chosen to celebrate Nigeria at 50 in this special way due to the rich history, remarkable achievements and mutual love shared together, adding that the relationship between them will forever blossom.

"STAR, the nation's number one beer, has been with Nigeria throughout its 50 years of existence and the nation has made STAR the nation that is today. The union is one of fun, excitement and brightness in every sense of the word. Both have consistently and faithfully kept their promises to one another. Star in its promise of delivering quality to so many of Nigerians over the last 50 years and Nigeria in its promise to maintain its brand and loyalty to its passion," he said.

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