

Building pan-African brands

By  Natalia Rosa

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Africa is an incredible continent of people who solve problems innovatively. As Africans, we need to be aligned in sharing this message with the rest of the world and not get stuck with the Afro-pessimistic perceptions we sometimes read in the media.



Source: www.unsplash.com

African Brand Architects is a collective of PR, marketing and communications specialists who came together during the Covid-19 crisis to help the hard-hit tourism and hospitality sector. Africa Brand Architects' core vision is to uplift the stories in Africa to enhance the continent's reputation by showcasing its opportunities from a business perspective.

Creative Africa

Africa's massive potential for growth cannot be underestimated. The continent is an attractive business and investment destination. Its people have a unique way of solving challenges and innovating.

I like to say within constraints comes opportunity. If you don't have a lot of choices, you tend to get very creative. When you have everything on your side, you don't need to be creative. In Africa, we have to solve so many challenges, so we get to innovate a lot.



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The challenge for us is getting stuck in the weeds of Afro-pessimism that we see elsewhere in the world and starting to tell ourselves that story. Unfortunately, when you tell a story over and over, even if it's not true, people start to believe it.

Invest in Africa

Africa comprises a 1.2bn person market, the potential for a vast free trade area and a youthful population.

My advice for emerging businesses in Africa is to look at Africa, not to look outside. If you look at the opportunity that exists within the continent in your backyard - and you tap into what it is that is needed in that backyard - you will go far.

Throw out the rulebook. Business owners need not try and recreate something working in the rest of the world. Rather, look at the community you want to target and solve their problems.



Gap in market for youth to pursue artisan careers

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Don't try and recreate something that you've seen elsewhere that has worked, or with another company. Look at the environment that you're in and understand what the circumstances are of that environment, what the pain points are of that community and how you can solve those problems.

Covid-19 has had a significant strain on businesses, the world over. There is so much uncertainty that we as humans look to businesses and brands to be human and to focus on the well-being, connection and safety of their customers.

If you are a brand in a Covid pandemic time and you want to have an emotional connection with your customer, you've got to start thinking about service above self.

ABOUT NATALIA ROSA

Natalia Rosa is the MD of Big Ambitions, a specialist travel and tourism communications and marketing organisation which helps tourism and travel organisations connect with their members and customers.

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