

THE ROLE OF FILM IN BRAND, BRANDING, REBRANDING, AND INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY: COLLECTED ESSAYS

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Abstract

There has been a recent rush for branding both at the national level and at the level of business operations. Where a brand does not exist, branding refers to the creation of value, identity, and quality that attracts the appreciation of a clientele, which is generated and sustained through the satisfaction of their yearnings and aspirations, as well as return of good value for their patronage.

Branding is not a haphazard process that is carelessly initiated and erroneously associated with a change in name or logo. Where inexistent, branding is associated with a mark of distinction and quality, through which patronage is generated. But in a case where a brand exists, but has atrophied or been weakened by several factors including competition by better brands, rebranding is the cause of action that is initiated to resurrect the weakened or dead brand.

While various schemes are deployed in the branding and rebranding exercise, following several frameworks that are well thought out, the focus of this paper shall be the role of film in this entire exercise, as well as the various processes and conditions necessary for a successful branding or rebranding exercise.

Key Words: Brand, Branding, Film, International Diplomacy, Nation Branding, Nigeria, Rebranding, Trade Mark.

THE DYNAMICS OF BRANDS, BRANDING, AND REBRANDING

INTRODUCTION

The world is caught today by the fever of establishing brands, through conscious and sometimes unconscious branding and rebranding initiatives, but while some entities are quite successful in their effort at branding and rebranding, others have encountered woeful and dismal results, which stems mostly from ignorance and haphazard style of implementation. A brand is birthed when contact and experiences are associated with a service, person, or entity, to the extent that a relationship ensues between the product and the customer, which is absolutely founded on the gratifying contact and experiences, which reinforces the need for further contacts and experiences to be established with the product, entity, or person. A brand is a distinctive mark of quality, an assurance, a promise, and an experience attached to a product, service, entity, or person, to distinguish it from other competing products, to give clients and customers a platform to access the product, services, or entity that best satisfies their aspirations and expectations, vis-à-vis competing products or services.

A brand emerges not because a product or service is originated and acquires a name or image, but because it distinguishes itself with its faithful and sustainable affiliation with quality and satisfaction, which distinguishes it from competing brands, by an assurance that not only meets a promise, but guarantees contentment for any association with the product, service, or entity, to the extent that clients and customers now associate and regard and perceive the name or image of a product or service as a hallmark of excellence and customer satisfaction, which thereafter magnetises customers and clients that have had contact with the product or service and reinforces the need to make further contacts with the product, service, person, or entity.

Today though, the realities of the time has made it imperative that problems be tackled from a multi-stakeholder , multidisciplinary, multilevel, and multidimensional perspective, if any measure of success is to be attained, and this disposition has made it possible for branding, which is a totally commercial-cum-advertising concept, concerned with the process of allocating an image to a product, so as to make it marketable and attractive amongst consumers, to be transplanted and transported into the field of public administration, as a distinct formation of public diplomacy, where it is launched as country branding , concerning itself principally with the definition and construction of national consciousness and identity, as well as the building of a national image, through overt and covert sociocultural and politico-economic reforms, aimed at positively redefining its political and social dynamics internally, while securing an elevated geopolitical influence, facilitating trade (export), luring direct foreign investment, enticing tourist and boosting tourism, and tilting the power dynamics in the international system in its favour, through an effort that is sustained by a complimentary but concerted refinement and reassignment of its national and international resources and machinery. One problem that is though associated with the concept of nation or country branding, is the trivialisation of the transportation of branding techniques as it applies in commercial horizons into country branding, which is an offshoot of public diplomacy, without redesigning and fashioning it to accommodate socio-political realities of the political system, which operates on principles relatively alien to commercial traditions, processes, and practices.

When a brand is inaugurated through a conscious branding initiative, the next dilemma faced by both stakeholders and architects of the brand is its sustenance; the goodwill, benefaction, and esteem enjoyed by the brand must be maintained, and this is a tedious exercise, but where it is impossible for the value of the brand to be sustained, brand decline is promoted, which if left unattended encourages brand death. When a brand dies or declines, a rebranding option is inevitable, and this is a process where an old, declined, or dead brand (image) is reawakened and reinvigorated, to achieve its pre-existing ranking or a new status, as regards patronage and goodwill. On another hand, a declined or dead brand can be replaced (with a new image or brand), to activate and increase the loyalty enjoyed by it, reenergise it, and increase its influence, in the face of competing brands, as well as erase previous negative labels attached to it, and this process is referred to as rebranding.

DEFINITION OF BRANDING

Branding was the product of Egyptians of ancient epoch, and came into being around 200 BC, though it was primarily associated with the use of hot iron objects to sear the flesh of animals, so as to differentiate it from those owned by other farmers.

A brand is not the product or service, but the spirit behind the product or service; the spirit behind a product or service, which propels the product or service to greater heights, is the brand, and that is why every successful branding exercise must begin with the revitalisation, rejuvenation, reformation, and the rededication of the spirit in every product, entity, or service, before attempting to reform the physical composition of the product, entity, or service, and this is what branding (and by inference rebranding) is all about.

Branding is a systematic process and art of creating brands, while a brand is synonymous with the experiences gathered by a customers in respect of interactions with any product, entity, or service, which influences either positively or negatively, future decisions of the customer, concerning whether to further interact with the product, entity, or service, or not. A brand is more of a title or sign that is associated with a product, service, or entity, and this is what carries the spirit of the product or entity, which differentiates it from other products, services, or entities.

Taking a more encompassing dimension, a brand is a sentimental attachment and bond created by the unique spirits of a product, service, or entity, incorporated into name, identity, personality, or even logo, which embodies and transmits to consumers, most of the information that they require to know about the product, to the extent that the product or its name emits a signal in the psyche of the consumer that arouses a desire in them to make further contact with the product.

Various definitions have been associated with brands by different scholars, but despite the various directions trailed by such definitions, they have a common element, which is that a brand is whatsoever mark that is appended to a product, service, or entity, which differentiates it from competing products in the market.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BRANDING

The history and development of branding (or brand) as a concept is episodic, epochal, and equipotential, not just then, but also now, when it has branched and ventured into other spheres, where it has stamped its seal of influence, without evanescing or exhibiting arbitrary and excursive traits. Brand as a term, is derived from an Ancient Norse word, *brandr*, which denotes burning, and from here did it find its way into Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and society. Etiologically, the formative era of human civilisation, when shepherds and dairy farmers applied blazing, but distinctive hot objects on their animals, to assert their claim or ownership over such animals, is a significant reference point in any study that intends to investigate the origin of branding. The brand became associated with the farmer and the quality of his animals with time, to the extent that farmers applying good animal husbandry practices and rearing animals with desirable traits (like animals producing a large amount of milk), became brands that are sought-after in the market, while farmers that apply unethical farm practices or who bred animals with undesirable traits, have their animals shunned by both traders and consumers in the market, once his brand mark is identified on any animal. Subsequently, the brand or mark of dairy farmers became the yardstick used by buyers to determine their demand, and this trend has remained unchanged, even to the present day, where it has assumed a chivalrous, versatile, and unavoidable posture.

Pottery is one of the earliest art forms, which has defied the erosive influences of modernisation, subsisting and serving as a fundamental cornerstone of human civilisation in regions like Africa, Rome, and Greece, where anecdotal and scientific evidence validates the existence of brands, represented by the potter's fingerprint or other marks, which he imprinted or embossed on his products (otherwise called potter's mark"), to authenticate and assert its renowned quality, as well as establish his unique craftsmanship, which accelerates the patronage his products enjoy in the market. In other centres of civilisation, initials and names of potters were equally imprinted on their products, and as the society metamorphosed into a significantly mercantilist one, producers and products of clay with a record of distinction, had their brand name (or mark) imitated and counterfeited in the market, where adulterated look-alikes were produced by less endowed artisans, who dubiously apply superior brand names or marks to their substandard products, in their bid to improve sales and profit, thus undeservedly exploiting the goodwill enjoyed by skilful artisans and their excellent products; and this practice has lingered to haunt products with excellent qualities, even in the modern business environment.

Despite the fall of the Roman Empire, and the dispiriting influence of this development, the practice of branding did not die with the empire, as the branding fever had not only caught the commoners, but also the sovereigns (kings), who applied brands as a mark of their authority, of which Fleur-de-lis in France and Hapsburg Eagle in Austria are radiant examples. During the 17th and 18th century, when the embers of mercantilism was ravenously and expeditiously fanned by capitalism, the production and sale of porcelain products was driven to the apogee, predominantly under royal patronage, and this compelled factories and producers of porcelain in France and Belgium to adopt branding, not just to indicate the origin of the products, but also its quality.

Branding as a commercial initiative has been imported and deployed to other fields of human endeavour, even those outside the precincts of trade, but strict legal prescriptions enforcing the

hallmarking of gold and silver products by producers, as to give the buyer a measure of confidence in the product and producer (which is why the quantity or level of purity in gold ornaments like necklaces is measured and published on the material, usually in karat), not only gave impetus to the rising tide of branding, but actually enfranchised it, since it was closely tied to the idea of brand marks being a producer's mark or seal of quality.

By the 19th and 20th century, the industrial revolution, with its associated outcomes, mostly in respect of improvements in industrial processes and products (especially as it concerns a product's quantity and quality), generated the storm of branding, which prompted the widespread application of brands and branding techniques by both large and petite factories and producers, flying on the wings of mass-production and marketing of consumer products, especially in the Western economic hemisphere, where notable brands like Coca-Cola (soft drink), Heinz (canned baked beans), Quaker (oats), Kodak (film), etc, soon emerged as respected and trusted brand names that are synonymous with quality.

From a holistic point of view, the history of branding cannot be extricated from the alluring complexities of the potter's mark, trademarks, the hallmarking of gold and silver products, and the identification of herds by dairy farmers, for at the earliest point, herdsmen applied unique hot objects to the skin of their herds, as a means of identification, but this design upraised itself to become a symbol of quality that represented the skills and unparalleled craftsmanship of the farmer, thereafter turning out to determine and influence consumer choices in favour of herds with desirable and gratifying qualities, secured on the platform of trusted brands, and the distinctive products the brand represent.

Trademarks, "The name or distinctive symbol or device attached to goods...usually legally registered, as a warrant for their production by a particular firm",¹ is irrevocably connected to the development of brands.² Due to industrialisation and the catalytic developments it initiated in the 19th century, especially as it concerns packaged goods, local processes of production and products were elevated to centralised mega-factories, where the producer's logo, mark, or insignia was imprinted on barrels and crates housing their products for shipment, overtly outside the domain of the local populace and their control, and this condition unconsciously facilitated the placement of trade marks and brands on the same pedestal, where they enjoy synonymous and symbiotic relationship, as well as superior patronage from customers, who are influenced to patronise the goods produced in these mega-factories with brands or marks of quality, to the disadvantage of local producers and their products, which hitherto, in the absence of trade marks and brands, competed favourably with the owners and goods produced in the mega-factories. The meaning of brands by this singular action was equated and fused with trade mark, as a very thin line divides both concepts.

Branding and brands have interestingly sojourned to become a generic and household initiative, which has diversified and strayed into areas not envisioned by Lyle's Golden Syrup, which laid claim to being the world's oldest brand with its green and gold packaging that has remained intact for more than a century (since 1885); but this claim was refuted by a British brewery, Bass and Company, which claimed that its triangle brand was the world's first trade mark or brand. In recent times, branding has passionately ventured into areas hitherto inconceivable by the early initiators of this scheme, and today, terms like place branding, city branding (which

Lagos is currently undergoing), and nation branding (a current initiative of Professor Dora Akunyili, the Honourable Minister of Information and Communications in Nigeria), are scions from the original concept of branding, which has a mercantilist undertone. Nation branding has been safely piloted in United States of America, Switzerland, Britain, etc, but the term (nation branding) was academically originated and applied by Simon Anholt, in a brand management article published in 1998, in the Journal of Brand Management, and this subject-matter shall be the bedrock on which this discourse will rest.

THE RATIONALE FOR BRANDS, BRANDING, AND REBRANDING

There are questions raised in academic quarters bordering on the essence or rationale for creating brands, and veering into the course of branding and rebranding. Many scholars and grandees, both in those in commercial and public domains, conceive branding and rebranding as wasteful ventures concerned with originating cosmetic and false representations (achieved through advertisement and public relations manoeuvres) that mislead a customer, patron, or client to engage and establish meaningful relationship with a brand, but another school of thought that holds a contrary view, posit this stance to stem chiefly from their predilection for pessimism, ignorance, and mischief, and their unexplainable affection for propagating doomsday prophecies. From a pragmatic standpoint therefore, when brands are invented or revived through a systematic and calculated branding and rebranding initiative, the initiators gain a plethora of benefits and advantages that compensate for the expenses incurred in enforcing the initiative, if only the design and implementation is systematic, coordinated, multifaceted, legitimate, and harmonised along established and workable frameworks that are synchronised to be in tandem with indigenous socio-political variables and dynamics. Some of the reasons for branding and rebranding a product, service, or entity are:

1. Branding and rebranding enables a corporate and unique identity to be built around a product, service, or entity, enabling it to distinguish itself from competing or other inferior products (services or even entities), which in the absence of a brand (consummated via a branding or rebranding initiative), will not be distinguished from a superior and genuine product. A brand tells customers a lot about the personality and mercantile disposition of an entity, in a manner that is intriguing, alluring, and insightful.
2. Branding and rebranding is an initiative that carries a message that is attached to the branded product, service, or entity, which tells clients how the brand wants to be perceived by them, and what it has to say about itself to them. Brands convey messages and feelings, which is capable of enticing even those that have had no previous interaction with the brand. Professionally designed images and logos, together with catchphrases that are tantalising, not only represent the identity of a brand, but also carry a message that magnet the interest of customers, making them thereafter long for an encounter with the brand.
3. Branding and rebranding campaigns are undertaken to help customers and clients to easily identify a product, or the source of the goods and services that they acquire. Brands speak a language that is understood by a segment of the market, and those who understand the language spoken by a brand are enticed to patronise the brand. A property developer that sites a property (hostel block) near a university campus and decides to christen it “*Aluta Hostels*”, is passing a message that the brand identifies with the cause of students, and this condition is likely to attract

high patronage among the student population; on the contrary, if the same property is sited in another location outside the confines of the students population, the name “*Aluta Hostels*” may not pass the rights message, thus it may evoke a negative response from clients.

4. Within the confines of a competitive market, or even any market for that matter, the existence of brands or branding is a borderline that defines and separates the “boys” from the “men”; it creates a borderline that sets products with distinguished quality apart from other products that trail behind, and this makes consumer decision on what to buy easy and stress-free, while also making sales and profit high. In fact, branding and rebranding makes the projection or estimation of sales and profit easy, and this is to the benefit of the brand owners.
5. For a product to succeed and excel, especially in a competitive environment, it must secure and protect its name and the goodwill it enjoys amongst its clientele, which is how it captures customers’ loyalty, and why branding and rebranding is inevitable, if a measure of success is to be attained in this regard. It is a commonly acknowledged fact that if you refuse to brand yourself, other people will, ³ and when you refuse to brand, you lose the opportunity of capturing consumers’ loyalty, which is essential for the success of a brand. Many customers are attached to a brand, not because other brands are bad, or that they have had an ugly encounter with other brands, but because branding strategy is an alluring agent at work.
6. Since it represents a product’s fundamental potency and assets, as well as the clientele’s apparent value for the product, branding and rebranding is indispensable in any atmosphere, whether public or private, where competition and the need to establish a wide clientele base through service delivery that is satisfactory and excellence-driven are cardinal values that guarantee success. A brand is a promise to customers that they will derive a certain amount of benefit from any association with the brand, and because it is a promise, it gives customers a foundation to weigh the promises of one brand against those offered by competing brands, thereby making it possible for customers to make rational decisions on which brand to patronise.
7. Being the fountain and also bedrock on which lies the emotional link between a product and its consumers, branding and rebranding are indispensable designs that must be dutifully crafted, if a product is to enjoy a dominant role in a competitive environment. Branding and rebranding are substructures, on which lies the superstructure of a favourable and robust brand equity, and this condition (strong brand equity) authorises brand owners to charge and collect more premium from customers (than can be attempted by unbranded competitors), whose appreciation of the value-added bearing of the brand consoles and compensates for the pain imposed by the extra charge.
8. Without branding and rebranding, a product or entity cannot keep abreast with the challenges imposed by competition, dynamism, and the realities of the changing times, and thus cannot meet and overcome the tribulations associated with and imposed by the ever-changing preferences of consumers or its clientele in a market, especially those defined by competition.
9. When scandal or negative labels attack a product or entity, whether rightly earned or not, branding and rebranding presents itself as a tunnel for escaping from the depressing consequences that such odious and repulsive label attracts, and this is a positive influence that

controls the tide of country or nation branding and rebranding in the sphere of public diplomacy.

10. Brands, branding, and rebranding increases the intrinsic and extrinsic values that people or customers attach to a product, to the extent that they are willing to pay more to secure a brand, than they would pay for a superior product without a brand; branding and rebranding creates equity for a brand. People generally crave for more meaningful contact with a branded product, than they will for a product without a brand, and this explains why branding is an exercise that dictates the trend of events in this era of competition, hyper-connectivity and cooperation among commercial and sovereign political entities in the global scene, where the fire of globalisation is burning and razing the fence of cultural and commercial protectionism at the national level.
11. In a competitive market and an environment where multitasking is the order of the day, forgetting the particular products that they want to purchase, or the brand that they want to associate with, is not uncommon among customers, but with branding and rebranding, images, logos, or even slogans associated with a brand are easily memorised and remembered, and because these features of a brand are easily recalled, they influence the customer's decisions on what to buy. Even when a customer is confused or undecided on what to buy, branding influences the decision in favour of a particular brand, which has a beautiful image, logo, or even packaging.
12. Without branding and rebranding, the segmentation of a market will be a difficult, if not impossible task. When a product or brand creates a niche for itself through the exhibition of excellent products, quality assurance, and the fulfilment of the brand's promise, it creates a strong equity for itself, moving thereafter to create and magnetise the loyalty of its customers, to the extent that other competitors (competing brands) are not only cowed, but forced either to restrict their selves to a minute branch of the market, or to diversify away from the product line paraded by the brand with strong equity. Xerox and FedEx are examples of brands that control a sizeable and appreciable chunk of the copier and courier services market that they have not only segmented the market, but have moved to become household names that found their way into the English vocabulary; today, words like "Xeroxing" a document or "Fedexing" a parcel are admitted in spoken and written English, to mean copying and using courier services to despatch a document respectively.
13. Branding and rebranding affords a product or service the ability of penetrating into the subconscious existence of customers, where it resides, to influence many decisions and consumption patterns, in a manner that is beneficial to the brand and its development, and here it enthrones a culture of mass acceptance, which when once incepted, just like culture, is difficult to erase or discard.

UNDERSTANDING BRANDS AND BRANDING

ELEMENTS OF A BRAND

The rapidity with which techniques of branding are adopted and applied in the sociocultural and politico-economic departments of human enterprise is breathtaking and sizzling, especially now, when global economy and politics is shaped by ferocious competition for institutional relevance and dominance, in an environment that is congruously interconnected and interdependent. Branding and rebranding are designs currently adopted to boost and permit the growth and development of products, services, and entities, which swim in the ocean of esteem and superiority, by drowning competing products and entities, in the waters of profitability, relevance, and consumer (or brand) loyalty; branding and rebranding yield results for those who tenaciously apply its guiding principles, while adopting it as a paradigm for positive reform, but this outcome is not tenable, if the principal elements of a brand are not exploited, and they are:

Interior Elements: This refers to the internal components of a brand, which includes its personality (the customer's perception of the brand) and its self image (the conception or view created by a brand about itself and its owners), as well as other internally originated apparatuses of a brand.

Exterior Elements: A brand also has external ingredients, which comprises of such elements as its relationship with its patrons, the brand's expressions that cultivate a clientele base for it, and the physical attributes of the brand; these yardsticks are employed by some scholars to compartmentalise elements of a brand, but others apply other benchmarks like:

- 1. Psychological Component:** the foundation of this element of a brand, which is otherwise referred to as brand image, is the mind, and it is birthed from information gathered and expectations generated in respect of a particular product, service, or entity, by an individual, culminating in the establishment of emblematic paradigms or archetypes in the mind of the individual, which influences the individual to allocate certain exclusive and exceptional qualities and traits to the brand, in submission to the gambits of brand managers, who deliberately reinforce the expectations accompanying a brand experience, thus making a statement, a promise, and assurance of quality to its clientele.
- 2. Experiential Component:** every contact made with a brand by an individual, irrespective of whether it is meaningful or not, from which opinions are moulded and judgments directed, which is rather overt in nature, is apportioned to the experiential segment of a brand.

To some other scholars, the assertion and aforementioned sectionalisation of brands into psychological and experiential subunits is unacceptable, since they see it as being too restrictive and compressed. These radical scholars therefore hold that a brand can be elaborately analysed and compartmentalised into segments other than the aforementioned subunits, and these are:

- a. **Name:** every brand is founded on a name; it is a name that establishes and distinguishes a brand from other competing brands.
- b. **Mark or Trade Mark:** outside a name, a brand is characterised, categorised, and distinguished before its clientele, customers, or prospective patrons, by its logo, sign, initial, symbol, trademark, or corporate image, which creates an extraordinary profile and identifiable appearance for the brand in a market, where relationships are defined by competition.
- c. **Ranking/Personality:** another component or element of a brand is its position or ranking, which is the status allocated to a product or entity in a competitive environment, arising from the justification for its existence, and the realisation of this objective, whereupon a customer finds genuine reason for establishing a relationship with the brand and not with other competing brands; in fact, this is what distinguishes a product or entity from other brands in a market, culminating in a customer or prospective customer's ability to discriminate between a particular brand that they choose to associate with, from other brands that they detach from.
- d. **Trade Dress:** a brand cannot be fruitfully established and sustained in the absence of brand awareness or recognition, which can be achieved by flaunting the brand image, name, mark, symbol, etc, in all situations, at all times, through available avenues, and this is what trade dress of trade dressing entails. Therefore, brochures, letterheads, advertisement packages, websites, posts, etc, should bear the logo and other accessories associated with the brand, and this should be given widespread coverage, promotion, and exposure, which is what trade dressing (trade dress) is all about.

To some other liberal scholars, a brand encompasses many elements which include:

- A. **Visual Component of a Brand:** without visual representations in the form of a logo, trademark, name, etc, which a customer associates with a product or entity, any attempt aimed at branding or rebranding it will fail abysmally, because the customers or prospective patrons visual contact with a product or entity, as well as its logo, slogan, name, etc, has a far-reaching and long-lasting effect on the kind of relationship that will exist between the customer and the product, and the ability of the customer to differentiate a brand he is associated with from other brands.
- B. **Verbal Element of a Brand:** verbal impressions or representations are manufactured in the course of marketing or selling a product or service, or during interactive exchanges between an entity (and product) and a customer, via customer care services, and the impressions created symbolises the product or entity's department and quality assurance.
- C. **Auditory constituent of brands:** jingles or songs are many times associated with almost every brand, and in the circle of customers, the song or jingle is associated with a particular product or entity, because of its uniqueness, which distinguishes it from that of competing or other brands (products, services, or entities).

- D. Emotional features of a brand:** whenever customers make contact with a brand, either through advertisements, customer relations service, sales, or contact with other customers, positive emotional feelings are evoked and associated with the product or service (or even entity), if the brand maintains a desired quality and sustains the brand promise, but the contrary is what obtains, if the product or brand fails to deliver its promise of sustaining quality, and this emotional discharge and attachment to a product, is a fundamental element of brands.
- E. Descriptive facet of brands:** brands are constructs that define in every context, what a product or entity is, and what it represents, to an extent that it describe what the entity or product can offer its customers and non-customers, as they continuously make contact and interact with it, in a manner that enables the brand to simultaneously impute an impression of its fundamental embodiments and values into them.
- F. Communal component of brands:** with current advancement in the field of information and communication technology, both prospective and existent customers of a brand can share their experiences, views, and feelings about the brand, in mediums like the internet (chat rooms), outside the precincts of any influence from the brand managers, and this forms the communal aspect of a brand.
- G. Evolutionary segment of a brand:** arising from interaction with customers and non-customers alike, brands develop, to exhibit an evolutionary but innovative progress and reinvention, in concurrence with the dictates of complaints, suggestions, and advice of its clientele and prospective clients' base, and this constitutes the evolutionary segment of brands.
- H. Instinctive aspect of brands:** the feelings of customers, which is closely knitted with the communal and emotional segments of a brand, but are relatively instinctual in character, because both advertisement and information from significant and non-significant others have created an impression in a customer's mind, even before he has had any meaningful interaction with a brand, or its managers, is referred to as the instinctual aspect of a brand.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD BRAND

There are good brands in the market, and there are brands that are not faring well. What makes a brand good? The underlisted qualities are visible in brands that are doing well in the market:

- 1. Confirms Credibility:** a good brand is a signature of credibility, a symbol of trust, a hallmark of consistency, an epitome of dependability, and a personification of value and quality, and this magnificent aura is offered by an entity or product, to hold spellbound its clients (both customers and prospective patrons), whose loyalty it secures and retains. In the absence of a sustained offer of reliable services and products to its clientele, whose expectations, aspirations, convictions, and loyalty must never be dashed or taken for granted, a brand loses its potency, hibernates, and if no action is initiated to wake it up, slips into decline and dies; a good brand must therefore always espouse and exhibit a credible

personality, which strengthens and compensates its clientele for their sustained loyalty (brand equity).

2. **Attracts Potential opportunities:** any brand that lacks a sustained ability to attract and exploit potential opportunities is not a good one. The existing clientele base of a brand must not only be maintained, but also expanded, through the exploitation of whatever opportunities are present in the market, especially in a competitive environment, where the life and continued existence of the entity or product, is dependent on its ability to maintain and expand its clientele base.
3. **Delivers clear and precise information:** the message delivered by a brand must at all times be concise, consistent, and clear, and must not be packaged to confuse its clients or prospective clients. Since a brand is a statement or commitment to quality and improved value and service delivery, advertisements, jingles, and other interfaces with which a product, entity, or service connect with clients and prospective clients should be consistent, concise, and in consonance with the actual performance of the brand, if the brand is to be defined as good, otherwise, the brand's identity, franchise, awareness, equity, image, recognition, and dress will be adversely affected, especially when the message a brand carries is not clear and concise, or is inconsistent with its fulfillment of its promises, principally worse if it does not create or meet the expected value of its clientele. A brand should be able to confirm and promote its credibility; otherwise, failure confronts it, which negatively affects the definition of the brand. In this regard also, there should be brand differentiation, to enable customers correctly identify their choice of brand, and this implies that the logo, image, mark, and other items affiliated with a brand should be distinct, to dissuade confusions that arise from inability of customers to distinguish one brand's image or logo (identity) from another; in fact, the consequences of confusing customers due to lack of differentiation among brands is so dire that it is better imagined than experienced, as its far-reaching effects devour a brand's recognition, awareness, franchise, etc, ultimately leading to a brand's decline and death.
4. **Ability of the Brand to Procure, Protract, and Preserve a Relationships and a Titanic Clientele base:** following a pragmatic viewpoint, a good brand should be able to foster a cordial, mutual, and self-sustaining relationship with its cosmic clientele, which is continually expanding. For a brand to be classified as being good it must exhibit an inherent aptitude and propensity to secure and conserve existing relationships, while striving to build new ones, through its commitment to connect and establish workable and healthy relationships with old clients from whom fresh and prospective clients are fetched, to swell the clientele base of the brand.

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN BRANDING OR REBRANDING

Before initiating a brand (or to brand a product, service, or entity), the underlisted factors must be taken into consideration, if the initiative must meet successful in the end:

1. **The target Clientele of the brand:** when considering to brand a product, service, or entity, it is necessary for the brand manager to first consider which group of people or clientele the brand is designed for, or whose satisfaction the brand tries to appease, as well as the preferences and interests of the group, which will be taken into consideration when branding, if the brand is to

satisfy the yearnings of its target clientele; otherwise the brand is premeditated, even before its inception, to suffer a premature death. Therefore brand managers must put into consideration their target customers and their preferences, before undertaking to brand any product to satisfy them, or the brand will face the dire consequences of suffering rejection because it falls short of the expectations of its clientele.

2. **The Topography and Sociocultural background where the brand is to operate:** in branding a product or entity, brand managers must be cognisant of the geographical and sociocultural setting in which a brand is to operate, and the influences these have on the success of the brand. Issues like culture, population, religion, habits, fad, weather, etc, does influence to a great extent, the performance of a brand, and must be taken into cognisance by brand managers, especially when they are launching anew brand.
3. **The market where the brand will sell:** the market where a brand will sell is another factor that must be put into consideration by a brand manager. Questions regarding whether the market is monopolistic or competitive, saturated or underexploited, and the position of similar and competing brands, consumer habits, as well as the demand and supply of competing brands, are questions that must be answered and factors that cannot be neglected by a brand manager that intends to launch a successful brand.
4. **Best Channel for communication:** for a brand to be successfully launched, a reliable and credible medium (in this case film) has to be created and used as a forum for interaction between the brand managers (entity or product) and the customers, otherwise, failure will derail the brand from the track of success. For a brand to be successfully launched, the brand managers must initiate a scheme that will enhance the education of its clientele, on the need to associate and establish lasting relationship with the brand, and this is where advertising comes handy. A forum should also be created where consumers can channel their complaints and feedback to the producers of a brand, at least to help the brand improve, while addressing the problems consumers encounter as they associate with a brand, and this is a factor that cannot be neglected by a brand manager, if a successful brand is to be launched.
5. **The qualities of other competing brands:** The quality of competing brands in a market is another factor that must be seriously considered by brand managers, when they intend to launch a new brand (or revive a declining or dead brand) into a market, especially those defined by competition. For a brand to succeed therefore in a competitive market, it must strive to meet and possibly surpass the existing level of quality already attained by other competing brands. Where this is not the case, the brand will certainly meet premature death and a possible funeral. To this extent, the quality level of competing brands must be put into consideration by brand managers, who must ensure that the brand they manage, meet this level of quality, and even outshine it, for a definite statement to be made concerning the brand in the market. Since a brand is a mark of quality and a guarantee of customer satisfaction, it will do a brand no good, should it enter a competitive market with brands that cannot match or outpace other brands in respect of quality; otherwise, the brand will not make impact in the market.

STEPS IN BUILDING A GLOBAL BRAND

Technically, branding is adding value to a product or service by producers, so as to make their products distinguishable, saleable, and identifiable by consumers, who find the emotional and

subliminal traits evoked by the product (or service) irresistible, and the status of the producers alluring, which is lacking in other competing products, enough to permit the establishment of a long-lasting relationship between the brand and its clientele. Configuring the market mix in a way that is favourable to a product or service, thereby attracting comparative advantages over competing brands, is a cardinal force behind branding and rebranding initiatives. For a good brand to raise its head before global audience and other competing brands in the international setting, it must be built and birthed on a methodical foundation, which follows a defined but tested and trusted pathway, in the absence of which dangerous potholes of failure confront and derail the vehicle carrying the materials required for the successful launch and execution of the branding scheme, thus frustrating the successful delivery of this developmental and life-changing initiative. Though not in the underlisted order, the defined steps to be pursued for the successful inauguration and deployment of a vibrant brand (effective branding or rebranding) initiative is:

A. Planning stage of branding or rebranding:

A branding or rebranding exercise is premised on two principal foundations, and one of these underpinnings is planning; and the underlisted steps are encased and compartmentalised into the planning process.

- 1. Market Survey:** before launching a brand, the initiators of the branding project should endeavour to conduct a market survey, where information about the customers, size, and type of market can be obtained, while the prevailing qualities of competing or similar brands will be accessed and analysed, to enable the brand manager to make informed decisions concerning the brand, which must meet or even surpass the prevailing quality and quantity offered by existing brands, if it is to meet success at the end of the branding exercise. The packaging of a brand is more pragmatic and less prone to flaws, if a market survey is conducted prior to the actual launch of the brand. Market survey eliminates the shortcomings, derailment, and misrepresentation that plague and haunt an uninformed brand manager who decides to invent a brand, without first acquiring information on the operation of the market and the performance of similar or competing brands, which is essential for the building of a unique and successful brand that is capable of meeting the yearnings of customers, whose loyalty it secures with its guarantee of quality. Market survey also affords brand managers the opportunity of deciding the most dependable values to assign to a brand, before launching it into the market.
- 2. Formation of a Clientele Base:** After conducting market survey, where the dynamics operational in a target market are identified and systematically appraised, with particular attention being paid to those factors that will be beneficial to the emerging brand, the next step in building a brand is the conscious formation of a reservoir of identical and harmonised customers. Even in a particular locality or market, people have different wants and need, and no brand can satisfy these all alone; there is need for a brand to create a pool of those with similar needs that it intends to satisfy within a heterogeneous population in the market, and this process is referred to as market segmentation. The market must be segmented for a branding exercise to be successful.
- 3. Allocating a name to the product or entity:** In branding or rebranding a product or entity, it is essential that a name is created and assigned to a product, and this must be distinct, and

capable of distinguishing the brand from other competing but similar products. The creation of the name could be the initiative of an advertising agency or a department of government.

4. **Designing a logo or image:** Another initiative that is undertaken as a step towards branding or rebranding a product or entity is the creation of a logo or mark that is to be assigned to the product, as a signature of quality and hallmark of excellence, which is a promise of satisfying the customers' yearnings and aspirations.
5. **Creating a personality for the brand:** every product to be branded must be given a personality, or in the case of rebranding, a desired or forfeited personality could be resurrected and reassigned to the product or entity that is to be rebranded. In creating a brand, a personality is an inevitable step to be initiated, and the personality of a brand or its producers are those special traits that distinguishes the product and its producers from other competing products and producers in the market, and this is the magnet that captures and retains clientele, who remain hooked irresistibly to a particular brand.
6. **Publicising the brand and its cardinal values:** the brand and its cardinal values, which is somewhat responsible for the differentiation of the brand from other competing brands, should enjoy adequate publicity and advertisement. The customers, market, and public should be acquainted with the emergence of a brand, the highpoints of the brand, and the gains that associating with the brand attracts. A brand is likely to decline and die, if the consumers remain unaware of its existence.
7. **Choosing a market for the brand:** after inventing a brand, it is the place of brand managers or owners to choose a market where the brand will be introduced, and in taking this decision, the findings of the market survey will suffice in the determination of the best market for the brand; it could be a national, regional, or international market, depending on the strength and potency of the brand, vis-à-vis other competing brands.
8. **Effectively Set Targets:** The cardinal objectives of a brand or its owners and the competitive advantage enjoyed by a brand are factors that influence the decision of target setting, which entails choosing a segment of the market, while forgoing others throughout the branding or rebranding process, and corporations like Microsoft, which has restricted its operations to the computer and computer accessories segment of the market, is a radiant example of target setting in a competitive market.
9. **Positioning the Brand:** Whether branding or rebranding, the driving force behind either of the initiatives is the desire of the owners of the brand to lift the status of the brand to an enviable height in the market. To successfully position a brand, managers of the brand must consciously work to infuse qualities that are lacking in competing brands into their brand, and this must be relevant to the customers' yearnings. Positioning is concerned with the occupation of a vacant and valuable, but distinctive place in a market, by a brand, and this space occupied by a brand can be improved upon and expanded with improvements in the quality and service delivery associated with a brand. The movement from the per minute billing system to the per second billing system among mobile operators in Nigeria, and the many innovations introduced by competing brands like Glo, MTN, Zain, etc., is a radiant example of positioning of brands.

- 10. Introduce the product to the market:** Finally, a brand is launched into a market, where consumers or customers can interact with it, wherefore they establish a cordial and mutually-benefiting relationship with it, should it satisfy their aspiration and yearnings.
- 11. Reassess the Performance of Brands:** Periodically, the performance of a brand should be assessed, vis-à-vis the performance of competing brands and the ever-changing fads, interests, and need of the clientele population and market. Without frequent and calculated appraisals and adjustments to market conditions, a brand's popularity and position is likely to be negatively affected, and this could lead to its decline and death.

B. Implementation stage of branding or rebranding

After completing the planning stage of branding or rebranding, the next stage in the building and development of a viable and vibrant brand is the implementation stage, where the fundamental strategies originated in the drawing table of the brand managers are brought to the limelight.

- a. Product Quality:** The ability of brand owners and managers to launch brands that meet or surpass the quality attained by competing brands in the market, which also meets the aspiration of customers, is a fundamental initiative in the development of brands that enjoy wide patronage. Brand managers should always take the initiative of developing products or brands with remarkable quality, and the quality should meet the expectation of customers in the market, if the brand is to be developed into a global brand.
- b. Price of the Product:** Setting the price right is another step that must be endorsed and implemented by brand managers, for a brand to be developed into an acceptable and well patronised brand. What a customer is made to pay, how he is charged, and the existence of reasonable price concessions are packages that brand managers must tactically configure to win an enviable position and patronage for a brand. Ensuring that the right prices are allocated to products and that this revolves within the precincts of market dynamics is a step that brand managers must initiate.
- c. Product/Brand Promotion Strategies:** In any market, especially competitive ones, the employment of advertising schemes, coupled with expert public relations initiatives, are designs that can be used to project a brand positively, while translating it to the pedestal of strong equity, patronage, and acceptance; but the quality of the brand and the leverage it has over competing brands are factors that play crucial role in the success of this initiative.
- d. Effective and Positive Placement of the Brand:** The placement of a brand in the market is a crucial step in the implementation stage of branding. The brand has to be strategically placed not only in a location that is attractive to customers, the proximity of the location to the clients or customers is another crucial factor that must be addressed by brand managers, if their desire to build a brand that is globally acceptable is to be realised.
- e. Motivation of the Workforce or Persons:** Unlike brand promotion, which is a product element of a brand, motivation of workforce or personnel is a service element of branding, and has to do with the recruitment, training, and provision of adequate incentives to

galvanise the workforce (including the brand managers) into giving their all for the betterment of a branding service. A branding exercise is bound to fail if the right class of workers are not recruited, trained, and motivated to pursue with all vigour, the growth of the brand, through professional service delivery that is in tandem with international best practices. In the area of nation branding, the state and government must adequately provide for, as well as motivate workers and citizens to exhibit positive changes that conform with the dictates of rebranding or branding initiatives of the state and government, and this motivation usually comes through the endorsement of people-oriented policies and the exhibition of a genuine concern by the government about the welfare of citizens, as well as a rededicated and reformed disposition of the government officials and politicians in the operation of state affairs; this galvanises the citizenry to yearn and struggle to attain an appreciable measure of perfection, which translates to tangible gain for the rebranding or branding exercise, and therefore for the state.

- f. Serviceable Service Operation:** This is a service element of a brand, and it entails the fragmentation of the service process into an exhaustive, meticulous, and uninterrupted sequence, configured to achieve uniformity in the delivery of services, in a timely and satisfying method, appreciated by customers. In any branding or rebranding process, this is an element that must never be ignored by brand managers, because it goes a long way in endearing a brand to customers.
- g. Specialised Customer Service:** This is another service element of brands, and it is concerned with how the owners of the brand, its managers, or service personnel treat customers during the period pre-existing the formal transaction, during the transaction, and after the transaction. Customers must be given a treat of specialised and satisfying relationship or interaction with a brand, and an efficient and effective customer service or relations, goes a long way in establishing this desire in the customer's subconscious existence for further interaction with a brand; especially when previous relationships prove satisfying.
- h. Physical Testimony:** The customer must be made to remember and cherish his interaction with a brand, and to achieve this, the brand must leave with the customer, physical testimonies of the service rendered, which are though intangible, yet powerful enough to draw the customer back to the brand again and again.

EXCELLENT BRAND MANAGEMENT PRCATICES

Building a brand that enjoys global patronage and veneration requires the establishment of a scheme, which is systematic and programmed to thread on the path of success. For a global brand that enjoys widespread appreciation and patronage to be built, the underlisted steps, which are in no way exhaustive, should be initiated:

1. Brand managers should as a matter of fact ensure that at no point in the lifespan of a brand should they initiate schemes that alter the name, logo, symbol, or other facets of a brand that confers visual distinctiveness on the brand, unless there is a compelling justification for doing this. The name or unique logo of a brand confers a language that is universal and understandable by the clientele, who not only attach sentiments to the name or logo, but are

quick to employ it as a reference point of satisfaction and quality. While positive changes in other aspects of a brand are recommended, even during mergers, utmost care must be taken to preserve the distinctive identity of a brand, as this is the brain behind successful brands like Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Mobil, etc, which have introduced various products, but still employ or affiliate their names to such products, to retain its clientele. A change in the identity of a brand is likely to trigger negative responses from its clientele, whose intuitive interpretation of the product will be unfavourable, as the product is likely to be conceived as foreign, untested, and thus unreliable; the product will thus be treated with sceptical discretion, which will reduce the patronage it hitherto enjoyed.

2. In successfully managing a brand, managers should fervently strive to generate and establish an indelible and positive impression of the brand in the mind of its clientele, especially where the market is characterised by competition, and most markets are defined along the lines of irresolvable competition among different brands. The brand equity of a product must be on the positive side, and this is attainable only when positive and indelible images of a brand is created in the mind of its patrons or customers; this is an undeniable formula for success in a competitive market, where consumers' taste and choice varies, but is ultimately tilted towards and in favour of outstanding products in the array of products displayed by different brand owners or producers.
3. Fulfilling the brand promise or contract is one practice that should never be neglected by a brand manager or owner, if a brand is to prosper and be sustained in any competitive market. A subconscious contract exists between a brand owner or producer and the clients, to the effect that the brand must meet and surpass a mark of quality that is appreciable to its clientele, if the loyalty and patronage of the clientele is to be sustained. To this extent, if brand owners or managers fail to meet or surpass the benchmark of quality that is obtainable and attained by competing brands in a market, especially when it fails to meet the expectation of consumers or its clientele, a negative brand experience ensues, and this impacts negatively on brand's audit, equity, franchise, which can trigger brand decline and death (the Heart of Africa Project is a radiant example of how failing to fulfil a brand's promise can kill a brand). Keeping a brand's promise gives an intangible, but affluent and quantifiably expensive value (asset) to the brand's name or identity, which sometimes exceeds the tangible assets of the brand; brands like Coca-Cola and Guinness ride and rise on this horse to prominence.
4. Giving adequate protection to a brand is an option that should be given adequate attention by brand owners and managers, if their dream of reaching El Dorado is ever to be accomplished. A brand and its unique identity should not only be given legal protection in the form of copyright and patent cataloguing, which prevents dubious replication or counterfeiting of an elegant and quality-conscious brand by charlatans and fraudsters, but should also be protected by maintaining an appreciable standard and quality, which should be jealously guarded and guided, and should never be compromised, marinated in scandal, or be allowed to wallow in the murky waters of deficient and mediocre products and brands. While she held sway as the Director General of National Agency for Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Professor Dora Akinyuli, unconsciously undertook, albeit single-handedly, to rebrand the drug sector in Nigeria. Her assignment and effort was greeted with resounding success, as the country not only won laurels, but got readmitted into the committee of drug exporting nations, whose healthy credentials are not questionable. In fact, the many bilateral and multilateral treaties and

agreements originated during her tenure to check drug counterfeiting and faking, affirms her doggedness, and the irresolvable fact that successful branding (nation branding) is principally hinged on excellent public policies, which must be supplemented and complemented by patriotic and exploits of citizens (both corporeal and incorporeal), whose participation and active involvement is a key to any rebranding effort of a country.

5. In many cases, brand owners and managers make the tragic and cataclysmic mistake of rating and quantifying their brands and the charge of sustaining it as cost, rather than assets, and the outcome is unpleasant and detrimental to the development and sustainability of the brand. A brand is among the most prized asset of any entity, product, or producer; whatever is thus spent in advertising and marketing a brand should be treated as an investment, rather than cost. The relevance of brands to customers and the role brands play in sustaining its products, owners, etc, during periods of economic downturns is not in doubt, and for this, the relevance and appeal of a brand must not be allowed to decline, or be compromised, and this calls for adequate investment in the marketing and advertising of a brand. Trying to quantify the effects of investing (advertising and marketing) in a brand may not be visible in the balance sheet of its owners or an entity, but in the long run, evaluation of state of affairs in the market will reveal the enviable function that the investments in the brand is yielding. Thus, investments made in the development, advertising, and marketing of a brand is not wasted, and should not be treated as cost, but as a high-yielding investment by brand managers and owners.
6. Treating the clientele and other stakeholders with esteem is one practice that should not be neglected by brand managers, if the desire to establish a viable brand is to be achieved. In a corporate environment, good corporate governance should be enthroned, if the yearnings and aspirations of customers, patrons, and shareholders are to be met, and this cannot be achieved in the absence of a workforce that is adequately remunerated and appreciated. To this extent, a successful branding or rebranding initiative at the corporate level must be hinged on a scheme that enables the entity to appreciate and place value on its workforce and their contribution to the realisation of organisational goals. The workers must therefore be adequately remunerated, compensated, and motivated, in an organisational environment that they are made part of, if the customer's yearning for satisfactory and differentiated products, and the shareholder's yearning for dividends and profitability are to be met. At the state level (nation branding), the success of a branding or rebranding initiative is hinged on the fulfilment of the social contract, where the government is responsible and responsive to the needs and yearnings of the citizenry, who in turn, obey the government and give their "all" in return. Government must churn out exceptional and brilliant policies that positively affect the citizenry, and must lead by example, if they expect the citizens to show an appreciable level of commitment, patriotism, and sacrifice for national causes. Expecting citizens to change in response to a rebranding initiative of government, when they conceive the government as being corrupt and characteristically insensitive to their needs, is counterproductive, and can derail the train of successful branding or rebranding. For nation branding to be successful, the brand owners, managers, and stakeholders must be treated with utmost respect and veneration.
7. Exploiting the financial potential of a brand is a task that must be done by any entity, owner, or brand manager who intends to establish a vibrant brand that will measure up to other principal brands in a competitive global market or environment. By positively exploiting the equity in their respective brands, brand owners and managers can through licensing, co-branding, and

franchising, attract huge financial gains, while also spreading the alluring tentacles of the brand, to terrains hitherto considered impenetrable.

8. Branding is an art and brand management a skill. Brand managers, in order to establish and nurture a vibrant and viable brand, must exhibit an adroit understanding of the workings and dynamics of brands, vis-à-vis the socio-political subtleties of the market or environment where the brand subsists, and this knowledge must be prudently manipulated and applied to attract maximum benefits to the brand, its customers, and stakeholders. An understanding of how brands aid business success and how it adds or creates stakeholders' value, as well as deftness in communication, and the mastery of market research, advertising, and marketing, are *sine qua non* , for a brand to be effectively managed and established as a global brand.

FILM AND BRANDING

“Today as a nation, we begin a new journey...we open a new chapter in our attempt as a people to take conscious steps at redefining our nation, re-examining our values and character, and rededicating ourselves to the ideals of our founding fathers”; this speech heralded the rebranding initiative kick-started by Professor Dora Akunyili, Minister of Information and Communications, on Tuesday March 18 2009, at the International Conference Centre, Abuja, thus culminating in the conception of a logo and a brand, “*Good People, Great Nation*”.¹ The need for Nigerians to make that colossal attempt towards altering our attitudes, character, and orientation is no time but now, and this was highlighted by former Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, who spoke during the occasion. With this campaign initiative, Nigeria joined other countries of the world that have rebranded or are in the process of rebranding (USA, Britain, Croatia, Slovenia, Switzerland, etc), in the race and struggle to be influential and adequately but appropriately represented in the competitive global sphere, where issues of economic advancement and promotion, sustainable human and capital development at the national stage, global sensitivity and aversion to risk, responsible and responsive business environment, socio-political stability, workable and sustainable framework of infrastructure and development, etc, are elevated to contexts, where comparative and far-reaching advantages are attracted and accumulated by countries that adequately and positively address the aforementioned concerns, which they gorgeously parade via aggressive marketing and advertisement in international bazaars.

Today, like never before, the struggle for peace and power at the international political system has heightened, and because war is a prejudicial option at present, nations adopt multidimensional approaches like cultural diplomacy, gunboat diplomacy, political advertising, propaganda, and public diplomacy (which entails nation branding and rebranding), as imperatives too important to be compromised in their bid to build and sustain a global brand that can conquer other competing brands in the international sphere. Being new in our clime, and being a concept admitted through the entryway of marketing and advertising, nation branding, which is closely related to, but distinct from place branding and destination branding, is a political scheme and contraption, where the underlying principles of marketing and advertising are imported into the political arena, though this import is not and cannot be wholly applied to states without domestication and modification, because states are not marketable commodities in the strictest commercial sense; states lack the basic attributes of commercial

goods. In telling or rewriting their story therefore, states, especially those in the transitory stage (like Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Niger, etc), are wont to employ and initiate designs that facilitate its redefinition, reformation, rededication, redemption, redesign, redirection, rediscovery, and respect in any transnational milieu, through positive internal and external adjustment and readjustment processes, which are remunerative and rejuvenating.

As a borderless audiovisual media with an insurmountable appeal that is capable of arresting and holding spellbound its devotees, and as a capsule loaded with information and messages, directed at recipients, whose actions and inactions are advertently or inadvertently influenced, and because film speaks a universal language that permeates remote, rugged, and challenging terrains, affecting different people diversely, and because it achieves this feat self-effacingly, without overtly erupting grievances and schisms, or overlapping and encroaching on restricted jurisdictions, it is a veritable and reliable vehicle for the inauguration, packaging, and propagation of brands, for deposition at the global meal table, where influential actors in the global politico-economic league dine; this discourse therefore intends to x-ray the role of film in building and sustaining a global brand, but within the realms of nation branding and rebranding, which when illuminated, fosters a better understanding of branding as a concept, and the role of film in building, refining, and sustaining a global brand.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Film derives its appellation from the “photographic film” (or film stock), which is a material traditionally and primarily applied in the recording, storage, and display of motion pictures, which customarily consisted of frames, encompassing several individual images, flickered and exhibited in succession quick enough to create an illusive sense of motion to the viewer, who is unconscious of the flickering between the different frames exhibited, because of “beta movement”, a psychological phenomenon that ensures that vision effect persists, permitting the imperceptibility of the flickering of the different images in the frames, reinforced by the eye’s retention of images they come in contact with for a moment, even when the source of the image has been removed.

Dating back to 1880s, the birth of motion picture camera enfranchised and kick-started the capturing and storage of images of independent but component nature in single reels; a development that nurtured and shepherded the invention of motion picture projector, which was fashioned to transport light rays through the developed film, magnifying the pictures in the process when exhibited in screens, an initiative otherwise christened motion pictures.

During the period of its infancy, motion pictures were principally displayed as static shots, as film producers made no effort to bowdlerize or edit their works, which also lacked any form of animation or other cinematic techniques, as known to apply today. The disregard and lackadaisical consideration given to the experiment of Dickson in 1894, which was aimed at introducing and synchronising sound into motion pictures, relegated the motion pictures produced throughout the 19th century to the pigeonhole of visual works of art or exhibitions. The absence of sound in motion pictures created an unappeasable vacuum that cried loudly for attention, as the stringing of scenes together to bestow a narrative background to films (motion pictures), failed to make any considerable impact.

Still struggling to confer a storyline or narrative context to films, producers adopted the breaking of scenes into several shots of diverse forms and angles, which was an exercise in futility, as it failed to achieve the targeted goal of elevating film from a visual art form, due to the persistent absence of sound. Not daunted by their dismal failure, film producers initiated the strategy of using camera movement to give the films they produce a narrative character, but the vacuity remained to endlessly plague them, forcing them finally to resort to hiring pianists, organists, and orchestra, who are charged to play songs that befit the mood evoked by a film, for the singular purpose of magnetising and appealing to the interest of moviegoers. The avid struggle by producers to shortcut and eradicate the inadequacies the absence of sound imposed on the films they produce was a tortuous deficiency that persisted through the early 1920s.

Having overcome the shortcomings imposed on it by World War I, motion picture production gathered impetus and was speedily revolutionised to meet the challenges that had hitherto stalled its development. With the aid of innovative hi-tech equipments, reprieve finally came to film producers, who effortlessly integrated and synchronised sound effect and appropriate soundtracks of speech and music to the images or pictures captured by motion cameras; a singular design that elevated it to the exalted position of an audio-visual form of art, which was aptly rechristened “talking pictures”. Within this period also, black-and-white films and other cinematographic elements associated with it gave way to colour films, which came into prominence after World War II, registering permanently in the museum, black-and-white films, television, and other accessories associated with this archaic technology.

The 20th and 21st centuries recorded unprecedented developments in the chronicles of film, as the industry witnessed an unparalleled influx of seasoned personnel, who promoted film as a distinct and specialised segment of art, galvanised by the presence of computer and digital technology, which computerised and digitalised their operation, refining the quality and quantity of films produced, which in the face of new hi-tech gadgets and equipments, reformed and positively repositioned the entire motion pictures industry, which today, is resting solidly on the pillars of revolution, as computer graphics, movie editing software, and animation is redefining the face of film.

In the Nigerian context, the development of film has not been less interesting, as the trend in the global environment also affected the film industry in Nigeria, where the first film was exhibited in 1903, in Glover Hall Lagos, and the first film, entitled “*Palaver*”, was shot in Jos, capital of current Plateau State, in the year 1904.² The first film screening according to film profilers was incepted under the tutelage of Mr. Balboa from Spain (who actually screened the film from 12th to 22nd August 1903), in Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos, which was then managed by Herbert Macaulay, a man whose patriotic zeal is not in doubt. Foreign movies thereafter enjoyed an unchallenged aura, until the Colonial Film Unit (CFU) was birthed in 1939, under the initiative of W. Sellers. The films produced by the Colonial film Unit were predominantly documentaries, fashioned to foster development in the colonies, in vital areas of society’s life like health, education, and economy; the cinematic products of this unit were more or less fulcrums fashioned for the realisation of the purposes of the colonial government. The Colonial Film Unit was an agent of education, change, development, and the realisation of the purposes of the colonial government, attained through programmed cinematic products.³ Political scientists, in x-raying the development of film in Nigeria, contend and posit that the films produced by the

colonial government, under the CFU, were designed and programmed to achieve political gains, in line with the imperialist and overriding interests of the colonial government, to the detriment of the colonised people, whose culture and life were somewhat obliterated, negatively altered, and partially Europeanised.

In 1947, the Federal Film Unit (FFU) was birthed, resting the CFU thereafter on the bedrock of insignificance and extinction. The Federal Film Unit grew on the debris of the CFU, but the direction and functions of the FFU was in no respect different from that of the CFU. 1979 witnessed the birth of the Nigerian Film Corporation (NFC), which metamorphosed and morphed with time, to face the challenges plaguing the growth of the film industry in independent and now sovereign Nigeria, which was in dire need of indigenised, domesticated, and postcolonial cinematic products that will extinguish the colonial and mental epidemic bequeathed on the now independent state and her citizenry.

With colonialism rested in the dungeons of antiquity, foreign films and film makers, especially those from China, Honk Kong, and United States still dominated the cinematic scene, despite the windows of opportunity opened by the Indigenisation Decree of 1972, fashioned to allow Nigerians takeover the controlling heights and upper echelons of the film industry, partly because the Nigerian film makers were ill-prepared for this gargantuan role, and also because they lacked the financial muscle to compete with their rivals from India, China, United States, and England, especially the Anglo-American film makers, who enjoyed the privilege of screening their films free of charge in mobile cinema units scattered over the country. So prominent was the dominance of the Nigerian film industry and market by foreigners and foreign films that patriotic Nigerians like Afolabi Adesanya, not only noted it, but were forced by their amazement to bring this malady to public consciousness, moving thereafter to positively address it.⁴

Various attempts by Nigerians to take their destiny in their hands and venture into the film industry at this embryonic stage of film development in Nigeria recorded dismal results, as producers like Ossie Davies (*"Kongi's Harvest"*), Late Chief Herbert Ogunde (*"Aiye"*), Chief Francis Oyadele (*"Bullfrog in the Sun"*), etc, were put into bankruptcy and severe indebtedness.⁵ In fact, film producers like Adeyemi Afolayan (while producing the film *"Destiny"*), got into financial quagmire, as a result of a negative tilt in the exchange rate of the Naira to the Dollar then, but he managed to repay the loan he acquired to finance the film, though not without overstretching his financial muscles and that of his patrons.⁶ The jinx of financial crises plaguing the Nigerian film makers was finally broken, when Afolabi Adesanya (then a tyro film producer, but today a guru in the film making industry), riding on the sturdy horse of A-Productions, and powered by a deep understanding of the fashionable culture and the prevailing mercantilist appeal, produced a film *"Vigilante"*, from loans secured from H. Aderibigbe and R. Aggrey (who financed the film), as well as KMG and Afribank, which financed the marketing. *"Ose Sango"*, another movie from the stables of A-Productions was financed jointly by Wema Bank and Rims Merchant Bank.⁷ From this point, more Nigerians recorded giant strides in film production, while those that could not cope, relocated to video segment, which has been geometrically exploited, with many positive and outstanding accompaniments to show for it.

Today, like never before, the NFC has broken new grounds, producing its first feature film entitled “*Kulba Na Bama*” in June 1993, establishing of a film fund and an institute and a laboratory for film makers in Jos, while rising to the challenges of developing a vibrant and viable cinematic background and environment in Nigeria, in line with best practices, and the need to consolidate the gains of our individuality and exclusivity, in consonance with the rhythm of renaissance and self-improvement, where the colonial mentality and shackles are broken, without which the benefits of national autonomy and expansion, as well as the development of unique cinematic products that will leave our footprints on the sands of global socio-political time, will be sacrificed on the altar of imperialism.

Building Viable Brands: The Place of Film

Branding is a methodical art of creating a brand, while a brand refers to “*A collection of experiences and associations connected with a service, a person, or any other entity*”.⁸ A brand can also refer to “*A name, sign, or symbol used to identify items or services of the seller and to differentiate them from goods of competitors*”.⁹ A brand can also be defined as “*A collection of perceptions in the mind of a consumer*”¹⁰ Taking a more elaborate definition, a brand is considered a “*Symbolic embodiment of all information related to the product, service or company. It is an intangible and emotional bond, created by every interaction, even insignificant ones. . It is a feeling that is being evoked when the organisation or product’s name is heard. A brand has a unique name, identity, character, and personality, just like a human being.*”¹¹ To some scholars, a brand is “*A trade mark, identifying goods of a particular make: a mark of identification made with a hot iron...or to label with a trade mark.*”¹² Branding, which was the brainchild of the Egyptians, was originated as early as 200 BC, but was restricted to and meant “*The searing of flesh with a hot iron to produce a scar with an easily recognisable pattern for identification or other purposes*”. During the era of slave trade, branding was applied on human beings, but this practice is today constrained to the identification of animals, and is currently done with “*chemicals, tattooing, paint, tagging, or ear-notching*”. In the 16th century, the practice of branding horses and cattle was imported into North America by Hernán Cortés, a Spanish conqueror, and employed primarily as proof of ownership of animals, but radically transformed to become a symbol of quality.¹³

Consciously or unconsciously, the fever of branding and rebranding has caught not only corporate entities, but also nations, whose competition for recognition and supremacy in the international system has intensified the race for nation, destination, and place branding. In branding and rebranding therefore, both at corporate and state levels, the significant and irresistible role of film in the creation, development, and sustenance of brands, especially those with global appeal, cannot be overestimated. A brand is a symbol of quality, a mark of satisfaction, and an indication of a promise delivered, and in the face of a positively redesigned, revitalised, reformed, and rediscovered state behaviour (including policy reforms), which analogously steers the behaviour of citizens in parallel direction with that of the government, the deposition of these assets in the international meal table, where appetite is not only created, but hungry guests invited to savour the delicious delicacies of touring or doing business in such states, is a task to be executed, and film is the vehicle that will convey states to this “Promised Land”.

A brand emerges not because a product or service is originated and acquires a name or image, but because it distinguishes itself with its faithful and sustainable affiliation with quality and satisfaction, which distinguishes it from competing brands, by an assurance that not only meets a promise, but guarantees contentment from any association with the product, service, or entity, to the extent that clients and customers now associate, regard, and perceive the name or image of a product or service as a hallmark of excellence and customer satisfaction, which thereafter magnetises customers and clients that have had contact with the product or service and reinforces the need to make further contacts with the product, service, person, or entity.

Culture is a people's way of life, or a collection of their habits, appeals, and ideas, which are not only unique, to the extent that it gives the people an identity, but also so central to their conscience and continuous existence that it is learnt, shared, defended, and transmitted in an orderly but somewhat consistent and controlled manner, from parents to their offspring. In respect of branding and rebranding, especially when a global brand is to be originated and sustained in a competitive environment, culture, as embedded in film, is a phenomenon with an overwhelming appeal, which frames the perception and interpretation of both citizens and aliens, in respect of place-based natural and human assets. Cultural values play a sacrosanct role in shaping how people define and perceive places, and at the institutional level, it defines and gives an interpretative character to "*status quo*", the "*transformation*" processes, and the assessment of individual or group perception of a brand's strength or weakness,¹⁴ and because film is an embodiment of a people's culture that portrays the prevalent values in their country of origin, projecting the exploitation of local comparative advantages, it is an indispensable tool for building a brand with a global appeal, and "*Lets Dance*" (2009), an Mnet creation that is sponsored by Verve, attempts though not too successfully to revitalise culture through dance.

Outside being used as a vehicle for the export of the cultural heritage of a socio-political entity, film can also enhance the proper understanding of other cultures, which fosters stress-free interpersonal and inter-state negotiations and cooperation, and this factor can help in the building of a vibrant brand that enjoys global recognition and patronage. Films are used to transmit sociocultural prescriptions that operate within a political precinct, and by this way, it is also used to regulate the conduct of actors outside the political enclave, who are informally acquainted with the cultural dictates operational in an entity, in a manner that is appreciable and beneficial to international interactants and interactions, leading ultimately to the elevation and promotion of the status of a brand and its image.

In a world that is ravaged by globalisation, which obliterates the lines of national boundaries and social identity, leaving many cultures displaced, while abandoning the people in an ocean of cultural shock, normlessness, and anomie, which makes the mobilisation of the masses difficult and national development impossible, film comes to the rescue, being a medium for the storage, preservation, and transmission of the people's social heritage and a vehicle for socialisation that carries the cultural traits of the people. Film can be used in the preservation and transmission of the cultural traits of a people, protecting them from the devastating effects of globalisation on weaker nations and cultures (film is a tool for achieving cultural protectionism), while preserving their social identity in the process, which makes mass mobilisation for national development and the growth of a brand that enjoys global patronage workable and stress-free. The important role of film in the preservation and transmission of the cultural traits of a people

was emphasised inter alia thus: “*Film will be produced to protect and promote our rich cultural heritage and our national aspirations in the process of development.*”¹⁵ Commenting also on the important role of culture, it was opined by a renowned scholar and essayist that “*I am not aware of any nation that has been able to achieve development without proactive promotion of its essential cultural components*”,¹⁶ and the role of film in facilitating this objective of preserving and promoting national identity and culture cannot be denied. In fact, the Americanisation of the globe is the singular achievement of Hollywood, which cautiously but covertly exploited the neophilic tendency of human nature, through film.

For brands to enjoy success and significant patronage in the global theatre, they have to be appreciated and beautified, but this cannot be implemented when the brand is cocooned in obscurity. Our language as a people is prettified and elevated for the appreciation of international actors and their agents through film. Films like “*Living in Bondage*” (by Kenneth Nnebue), “*Shehu Umar*” (by Adamu Halilu), and “*Arugba*” (by Tunde Kelani), all glorify and popularise the beauty of Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba languages respectively, not only before Nigerians, who are made to appreciate and revitalise it, but before foreigners, before whom it is paraded as distinct and beautifully unique, so much to fetch the same admiration like French or Spanish languages. It is though appalling to note that Chinua Achebe’s “*Things Fall Apart*” (a novel), which has been transformed into film and subsequently translated to many foreign languages including French and Spanish, has not been translated into any major language in Nigeria (including the language of the revered literary guru, Igbo); the same condition applies to many other Nigerian play and prose works, and the Nigerian Film Corporation has a lot of work to do in this regard, if the brand’s life is to be robustly sustained.

In Nigeria, many local languages are fast becoming extinct, and movie makers are not helping matters, as they have resorted to the use of English language and slang (though the Yoruba movie makers are doing their best at promoting the language), to the disadvantage of indigenous languages, but they forget that films are mediums for the preservation and transmission of the cultural traits of a people, and the effect of this turn of events is dire. In respect of nation branding, language is one factor that identifies a brand (brand identity), and without unique identification features, a brand can be confused with other brands, and in a competitive market, it could lead to loss of patronage. Many Hindi and Yoruba films (like “*Arugba*” and “*Jenifa*”) play a more than significant role in the preservation of the cultural traits (language) of the people, which is a function that cannot be neglected, if a global brand that enjoys wide patronage is to be established.

Image research and correction is one sure way of building a brand that attracts international patronage and respect, and film is the surest way of conducting image research and correction. In any culture or society, there are elemental fragments of values and conducts that are incompatible with the strive for development and international respect for a brand, and it takes film to identify such anomalies, while proffering solutions that will redirect the train of societal values and conducts towards the track of development and international reverence. Films like “*Stronger than Pain*” (starring Nkem Owoh and Kate Henshaw, and treating the subject of domestic violence), “*World of Tears*” (which dwelled on the subject of segregation [osu system] with stars like Chika Ike and Stephanie Okereke), “*South African Connection*” (treating the subject of drug trafficking and its dangers, with Ramsey Noah playing a lead role), “*Holy City*”

(dealing on the subject of ethnic rivalry and chauvinism) and “*Human Trafficking*” (a serial movie produced in 2005 by Christian Duguay, treating the subject of human trafficking), are radiant examples of films used to conduct image research, itemising the ills in the society that hinder the development of a brand, and identifying ways of correcting the ills and revitalising the patronage enjoyed by a brand, especially before an international assembly.

Destination branding, which is primarily concerned with the advancement of domestic and international tourism, cannot be effected without film. For the tourist potentials of a state to be effectively exploited (destination branding), it must be able to position and display itself as an affordable, convenient, modern, and receptive destination (tourist haven), and this cannot be achieved without the utilisation and exploitation of the visual and verbal elements of a brand, which must be advertised and publicised, if the brand is to be identified from competing brands, and this is where film comes to the rescue. A film like the “*Gods Must be Crazy*”, despite its therapeutic effect as a tranquiliser that induces laughter, is used to depict the rich, adorable, and alluring safari and game reserves of Africa; this is capable of attracting both researchers and tourist. Not only is the visual elements of the brand projected through film, the verbal component of brands are also exhibited, and it is no surprise that slogans like “*The Land that Sings*” (Latvia), “*The Mediterranean As It Once Was*” (Croatia), and “*Good People, Great Nation*” (Nigeria) have emerged as verbal components of brands, exhibited alongside the visual elements of the respective brands through film.

The advancement of the human resource component of a society is a cardinal initiative in the drive towards national development and the evolution of a brand that enjoys global acceptance and patronage, and film plays an immeasurable role in attaining this Herculean feat. Film creates an avenue for manpower development in a society, and in Nigeria, the Nigerian Film Corporation is an agency that has enhanced through its training arm, the Nigerian Film Institute (NFI), the manpower development capacity of the nation, by churning out trained and specialised scriptwriters, film editors, photographers, directors, etc, and in the face of this, the place of the brand in a competitive global setting is advanced, as human capital development is regarded as a potent yardstick used in rating nations in the international political environment.

The gains of building a global brand will continue to elude a government and its people, unless their confidence is built and boosted, and this is a cardinal objective of branding, which is attainable when film is used as the fulcrum for attaining this enviable purpose, and this is unequivocally attested to.¹⁷ During the transitory stage, states are wont to be plagued by low level of morale and confidence, and it takes branding, with film as the pivot, to erase this negative perception and pessimism that plagues the people and government in transitory states like Nigeria. To this extent therefore, films like “*Sarafina*” and “*Things Fall Apart*” not only showcases the rich cultural background and enviable qualities of South Africa and Nigeria people respectively, but also exposes the ills perpetrated by the colonialists, despite their holier-than-thou attitude, and this serves as a confidence-boosting medicine that raises the hopes, aspiration, and self-esteem of the people, who now see their selves in a new and positive light. A film like “*Astronaut Farmer*” (directed by Michael Polish in 2006), is a film that can inject an appreciable dose of confidence in anybody or culture, as it stresses that nothing is impossible with determination and team spirit. This confidence-boosting feature is though lacking in a film like “*Western Union*” (produced in 2007, by Solomon Philips), which is a cinematic work that

not only labels Nigerians negatively as bad people with specialisation in human and drug trafficking, but also makes the building of a global brand cumbersome; such films should thus be discouraged.

Kick-starting, exporting, and introducing a brand into a competitive international market, where it is expected to occupy its rightful but prominent place, usually requires a high profile event that will be used to elevate, publicise, and promote the enviable traits of a brand, and countries like Poland (which used the Miss World 2006 finals to launch its branding campaign) and Estonia (which launched its branding initiative with the Eurovision Song Contest [in Europe] that it won in 2001 and hosted in 2002), and their adoption of this initiative, is a pointer to successful rebranding effort that should not be neglected. Film festivals and markets are events that attract a potpourri of professional and nationals, thus, it not only attracts investments into a political domain, which is a fundamental objective for initiating country or nation branding¹⁸, it can also serve as a credible avenue and venue for promoting, publicising, sustaining, and increasing the brand awareness, which is the knowledge people have about a brand, and this is cardinal to the success of a brand.

Interfaces are built beyond national boundaries, and cross-border relationships are established by film, when film makers conglomerate under the auspices of film festival or jamborees like Cannes or Shoot!, or under the canopy of co-production treaties, which allows seamless travel for the co-producing film crews, who not only establish friendship, but also covertly direct government policies and interactions, in areas considered unreachable if formal interstate collaboration channels are utilised, and in this way, expands the symbolic capital (the allocation of superior status to a particular culture) and the cultural capital (network of acquaintances or friends) of a state, and these are *sine qua non* for the establishment and development of a brand that enjoys international appeal and patronage. A film like “*Girls Connection*” starring many Ghanaian artists, groomed and directed by Tchidi Chikere in 2006, is an example of how film encourages cross-border relationship, interfaces, and relationships, to the advantage of the brand, which usually dazzles in the international platform, to the delight of its managers and owners.

In 2009 alone, which is yet in the second quarter, “*Obsessed*”, Beyoncé Knowles thriller, produced from the stables of Sony Screen Gems, raked \$28.6 million from 2514 theatre exhibitions in United States and Canada in one week; “*17 Again*”, from the stables of Warner Bros fetched \$39.8 million from 3255 theatre exhibitions in two weeks; “*Fighting*”, from the stables of Universal, garnered \$11.0 million from 2309 theatre exhibitions in one week;¹⁹ it is therefore safe to conclude that film enthrones a favourable and balanced financial base for a country and its citizenry. Film not only increases the gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP) of a country, thereby increasing its significance and rating in global economic milieus, it encourages an inflow of direct foreign investment (DFI) and the enthronement of a favourable balance of trade and balance of payment regimes in a country, chiefly because it builds a saleable image for the brand, and also because it readily shapes the investor’s/foreigner’s perception of a brand (or entity), which though risk averse, can be controlled and exploited to the advantage of the brand, if the image of the brand projected by films seems favourable and friendly to investors or alien clientele. Though branding can be employed in the attraction of investors, it takes film to launch a promotional campaign that is

required to create a long-term relationship between the brand and its customers, stakeholders, or clientele.

Despite the birthing of a brand, it takes a radical but favourable change in the perception of the clienteles and targeted customers, for the brand to be patronised and catapulted to an enviable position in a global setting, and in most cases, especially in transitory states like Nigeria that is burdened with negative labels originated by foreign media and political actors, not only must a favourable image be built and promoted to alter this unmerited label, fundamental but positive changes in the socio-political spheres of the peoples' life, as well as the presence of skilled manpower, desirable social infrastructure facilities, institutional attractiveness, absence of political and social instability, and policies that guarantee return on investments, are factors that give a favourable personality to a brand, which must be deposited in the international amphitheatre for significant players and non-players to savour and appreciate, thus patronise and establish a long-term relationship with the brand, and without film (documentaries like "*Obama's First Hundred Days in Office*" and "*Calabar Christmas Carnival*", etc), this cannot be achieved effortlessly.

The Nigerian Film Corporation and its robust interaction with significant socio-political gladiators like Mr. Stephen Bayly (a London-based film trainer), who not only appreciated Shoot! (a film training workshop organised by NFC), but also acknowledged the momentous attainments of NFC, when he commented on the corporation's role in creating a brand name in professional training for film practitioners in Africa, and Mr. Anitriguyanat (the Acting Indian High Commissioner), who, during a visit to NFC, noted the role of the corporation and film in enhancing bilateral and cultural relationship, as well as partnership based on mutual trust and goodwill, between India and Nigeria²⁰, are radiant examples of how film can change the perception of clients in the global setting, thus building a brand that enjoys significant patronage and respect. In reality though, the creation of public relations smokescreen or to conduct image building in respect of a product or brand that is intrinsically bad, without first correcting the anomalies and erasing the negative traits of the product or brand, is an effort in futility, and this is not in doubt.²¹

Negative labels originated via films can tarnish a state's image, scare direct foreign investment and investors, while depleting its stock of international recognition and respect. In fact, negative labels can frustrate a branding or rebranding initiative, and this is why there is need for film, which enjoys a wider coverage and patronage, to be used subtly to refute and redress a brand, if the brand is to enjoy stardom before global spectators.

Many a time, states neglect foreign films that paint them negatively, underestimating the enormity of damage done to their image and the possibility of their brand enjoying international prominence, which is why Nigerian film makers need to take their destiny in their hands, or suffer under the yoke of negative labels and definition, contrived by foreign agents and their cohorts. "*Lost*", an American television series shot in Hawaii, but produced by ABC Studio, Bad Robot Production, and Grass Semt Production, under the direction of Damon Lindel, Jeffery Lieber, and Abrams, J., needs being rebutted, as it depicts Nigerians once again as drug dealers, criminals, corrupt, and faithless brutes, using the Nigerian Naira note, as well as "*Eko*", a Nigerian character, alongside his associates, to deliver and publicise this label. What can we do about the Vaswani bothers and their corrupt and criminal deals in Nigeria? What can be said

of the unethical “Trovan” experiment in Kano State by an American multinational pharmaceutical firm, Pfizer, which left many children dead and others deformed? Our film makers need to wake up.

Film can be used to confront our accusers with their more heinous sins, correcting the uninformed and malicious labels attached to our brand, and balancing the scale of its relevance in the international system in our favour, for without this, the brand will continue to suffer jeopardy, with the consequential infestation of stunted growth and debility, which are traits that frustrate the development of a globally patronised and acceptable brand. A film like “*Osuofia in London*”, (where Nkem Owoh dazzled like a golden fish in a dark ocean), was used not only to correct the wrong impression created about Nigerians being driven by greed and materialism, but also to show that whites are neither angels, nor insulated from the overriding influences of greed. In “*The Masters*”, Nkem Owoh also redeemed the brand’s image and potency, by exposing the greedy, treacherous, and dubious underpinnings that drive foreign victims of fraud (419), who are as guilty as the fraudsters, because the original intention of the defrauded victim, who only runs to the law when defrauded, was to defraud and milk the country dry.

Branding is not a radical and atomistic dynamic process, but a sustained and continuous course that needs not end with the life of an administration. The branding campaign must be kept alive, thorough, and penetrating always, if a global brand is to evolve, and film is a medium that is characterised by its penetrating, thorough, and enduring character and appeal, capable of conveying the branding campaign beyond the lifespan of a government or administration.

A brand comprises of the visual, emotional, verbal, instinctive, psychological, auditory, and descriptive components or elements, which are difficult loads for other mediums to carry, but film can not only accommodate these elements, but can also transmit and publicise them on long-term basis, evoking the needed dose of psychological, auditory, verbal, emotional, instinctive, and descriptive responses from audiences, and this is a desideratum for the building and sustenance of a global brand. Patronage and a large clientele base is bound to be built for a brand by film, through the long-lasting emotional link it creates between and brand and its clients, which is a feat that cannot be easily accomplished if other mediums are employed .

Though public relations do magic in respect of a commercial product, the case is different when it has do with branding, especially nation (country), place, and destination branding. Through advertisements and other public relations outlets, a message may be transmitted about the viability and potency of a brand, but this is quickly recognised as propaganda and discarded as worthless, if it aims at changing peoples’ perception, which can be effectively moulded and directed by film, which is capable of creating and sustaining a lasting impression in the mind of viewers, so much to change their perception, without their knowing it.

Erroneously, many nations develop slogans and logos, believing this creates a brand that can be sold to consumers through aggressive marketing and advertising campaigns (which also incorporates elements of film), but this notion is fatal, as effective branding, especially when it is aimed at building a potent and superior global brand that enjoys international acclaim, has to do with policy and character reforms on the part of the government and its citizens, that must positively redress the brand’s image, which is thereafter transmitted to the international

marketplace via film, thus eliciting a positive response from stakeholders in the market, whose patronage and respect is attracted to a brand. Film therefore enhances the viability of a brand.

Hitherto, the dominance, power, and respect ascribed to a state rests on its economic, political, and military might, as well as its ability to overtly or covertly threaten or coerce other nations to bow to its supremacy, but currently, the story has changed, as globalisation and the shift towards a market economy, where marketing strategies rather than military might is defining and redefining the international socio-political landscape, has prompted wretched and remote countries (some of which are referred to as “banana republics”) to unflappably mutate and emerge from political oblivion and obscurity into international limelight and prominence, riding on the wings of a positively developed image and branding, elevated and publicised on the bedrock of the alluring, persuasive, and extensive character of films, which is employed to drive to the international pinnacle, the positive and endearing reforms of such hitherto “banana republics”. The role of a film like “*Crocodile Dundee*” (a 1986 film), in the branding and launching of Australia into international eminence and fame, cannot be easily forgotten. Film has therefore transformed itself into a source of political power that can be used to alter and rearrange the socio-political dynamics in the international system, in favour of a state, and film’s relevance in the creation of a renowned brand that occupies a prominent place in the global theatre cannot be overemphasised.

Branding is concerned with communicating and publicising the enviable attributes of an image or entity, while rebranding entails the launch of corrective and regenerative reforms at the internal and external stratum of society’s life, directed primarily towards addressing and redressing negative behavioural traits and labels, as well as the attendant injurious consequences that these negative configurations attracts to the brand. When the corrective initiative is launched, reversed, and corrected, it is capable of propagating, nurturing, embellishing, and expanding the patronage enjoyed by a brand, facilitating its catapult thereafter to international prominence and eminence, and the role of film in charting this course, is not in doubt.

Not only is branding directed towards attracting foreign patronage in the form of direct foreign investment and tourism, it is also designed to initiate a positive reform in the policy and behavioural facets of citizens’ life and their government’s operations, and in this respect, not only is film used as a propaganda tool, employed in the rebuttal and correction of wrong labels ascribed to a state by foreign spectators and their media, it is also used to spur and resurrect the spirit of patriotism and nationalism in a population, and this is necessary to boost their level of self-confidence, which is a key ingredients required for the creation of a successful brand in a population (state) and the development of a brand that enjoys global patronage.

Positive brands can therefore not be successfully midwived in an atmosphere infested with doubts, low morale, and a depleted sense of self-esteem, patriotism and nationalism among a population, and films have proved a credible medium for boosting self-confidence, while lifting the patriotic and nationalist spirit of the people. Films like “*HitlerJunge Quex*” (“*Hitler’s Youth Quex*”, produced in 1933) and “*Triumph des Willens*” (“*Triumph of the Will*”, produced in 1933), were employed by Nazi Germany as propaganda materials, which also spurred patriotic and nationalist sentiments among the populace, and this partly accounts for the somewhat success enjoyed by Germany during their World War campaign.

International awards and recognition conferred on certain films and its production crews, in recognition of the ingenuity of the producers, can boost a brand's image, while attracting international recognition, respect, and increased patronage to the brand, which is effortlessly defined and deposited as an appropriate and proper commodity fit for international consumption in the international marketplace, and a radiant example of this is "*Slumdog Millionaire*", from the stables of Bollywood, which won eight Oscar nominations in 2009, and geometrically projected and beautified the sagging image of India, which today has become a household name in film industries, the world over.

Political education and mobilisation of the masses, whose support is too important to be ignored, if branding and even political reforms are to be effectively pioneered and conducted in a polity, cannot be productively kick-started and concluded with victory, in the absence of films. In many countries of the world, the masses are positively reformed, mobilised, and aligned with the political tide and realities prevalent in their political space, through films, and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam political party in India, is one party that has appropriately utilised the gains of film and film stars, which it has used in the erection and sustenance of brand franchises, while educating the people politically and encouraging them to work in consonance with the aims of the government, through films like "*Parasakthi*" ("*The Almighty*"), written by Karunanidhi and produced in 1952), which condemned in line with the party principles and manifestos, burning issues like the caste system and inappropriate religious beliefs.

While the role of film in fostering understanding, stability, and unity in a political precinct, to the extent that a globally accepted brand is defined and developed is not in doubt, its role in the conduct of international affairs or relations, especially in respect of initiating subtle threats and pronouncements (gun boat diplomacy), which attracts advantages to a brand, to the detriment of competing brands, is not also in doubt. Through film, brand owners are able to make political statements that shape and reshape the operation of competing brands in its favour, and Britain's entire James Bond series serves as fundamental example of how brand owners use film to publicise their political standpoints and statements in the international system. Also, international sympathy and aid can be attracted to a brand, its owners, and stakeholders, through film, and in this way, its socio-political woes and other traumas are corrected, giving the brand better standing in the international community; a film like "*My Shocking Story*", aired by Discovery Channel, where a man, Dede, affected with irresolvable wart infection, was successfully treated with drugs supplied by an American doctor, who became conscious of his plight through film reinforces this role of film.

A brand cannot enjoy a prominent position in the international political arena, without conscious effort on the part of brand managers and owners to increase the level of recognition accorded the brand, while working assiduously towards reinforcing before political actors operating within the precincts of the global political showground, the fulfilment of the brand's promise, and film is a potent medium for the documentation of the appealing realities obtainable in a socio-political entity, for broadcast to international spectators, who are bound to be held spellbound by the alluring exhibitions packaged in such films. In another vein, it is obvious that

without knowledge of the past, we cannot understand the present, and without a fair understanding of the present, prediction of the future will be an impossible exercise.

Political history of a nation-state plays a crucial role, not only in the understanding of the present and the prediction of the political future, but also in the definition of the political landscape, as well as the erection of a solid foundations, upon which is laid the political culture and political socialisation frameworks of the political entity, and these are inevitable ingredients required for facilitation of branding and institutional reform, without which a brand cannot enjoy international acclaim and patronage; documentaries like “*Great Africans*”, produced by Mnet Africa (a scion of DSTV), which chronicles the life, times, and sacrifices made by great Africans like Thomas Sankara, Nelson Mandela, Wole Soyinka, etc, and “*Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee*” (by Vyes Simoneau in 2007), which chronicles the displacement of the American Indians by American expansionist wars, are ready example of the role film play in the institutionalisation of a viable and vibrant political culture and political socialisation framework, without which, a brand’s lifespan is bound to be short-lived.

In branding and rebranding therefore, the historical and socio-political ideals and attainments of the founding fathers of a polity must never be neglected or discarded, and film is a reliable medium for the recording and preservation of a nation’s history; in fact, film is an undeniable archival material and depository of the chronicles of a nation’s historical development.

Communication, both in the local or international political environment can be challenging and sometimes frustrating, especially when the political space cannot accommodate all those aspiring to communicate and be adequately represented; and because effective communication is a desideratum for seamless cooperation and interfaces to be established within a state and among states, films serve as a medium for state and non-state actors that cannot be accommodated or be allowed to communicate in a political space to adequately communicate and be represented, by enclosing their messages in film, which are subsequently deposited in the international showroom, where it is expected to attract the required attention from political heavyweights that determine outcomes in the political system.

Films, especially those with political undertones, are not only used to crystallise and express the political and other standpoints of a political entity, being tools for national self-representation, but also are employed as mechanisms for conducting surveillance on both government and citizens (both at the intra-state and interstate settings), probing into the inner recesses of discreet undertakings, which are deposited in public domains, where they fetch eulogy or condemnation, and in this process moulds public opinion, in a way that directly or indirectly creates responsible governments and citizens, which is a cardinal requirement for the establishment of a brand that is globally acceptable, recognised, and patronised. Especially for not showing enough remorse, many Chinese have refused to forgive Japan for their onslaught on China (Nanjing) in 1937, which resulted in the death of approximately 150,000 civilians and the sexual defilement of thousands of women, and to publicise their thoughts and mindset, without generating international upheaval that will negatively affect its brand, film was employed to disseminate the message; “*City of Life and Death*” (directed by Lu Chuan), was created under the sponsorship of the Chinese government (China Film Group), to convey the feelings of the

Chinese to Japanese people, thus stating and publicising through subtle means (film) the product of their surveillance and their standpoint.

Political miscalculations from national actors in the international political environment can be devastating, taking a great toll on the image of a brand, which may be forced into decline by lack of patronage, thus frustrating any branding or rebranding initiative. Film can be used to cover the political miscalculations of political actors in both national and international political scenes, and a radiant example is the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan by the Bush administration, without the authorisation of the United Nations, and being a political albatross, it was quickly redressed with films like “*Saddam Hussein*” and “*911*”, which exaggerated and over-criminalised the crimes committed by Saddam and the terrorist invasion conducted under the command of Osama Bin Laden and his Taliban associates, thereby using this to justify the American invasion of a sovereign entity (which was underplayed), in violation of United Nations Charter. These films were used to correct and avoid the ugly effects of this equally atrocious act of the United States government, by attracting international sympathy and justification for acts considered prejudicial to peace and international stability.

Though a medium fashioned primarily to entertain people, film has metamorphosed into a source of social power and this cannot be denied.²² Film not only creates social power, which is a fundamental element required for creating and developing a global brand, it indirectly creates, develops, and elevates the status of a brand, by refining and redefining the predominant political beliefs and behaviours in a political entity, which it aligns with the expected code of conduct prescribed for acceptance into the committee of nations enjoying respect and dominance in the international system, and by this way tilts the advantages that favour the brand and image of states positioned in this regard, despite the intense competition that defines the international marketplace. Ideals of democracy, which today is spreading like a tormented hurricane, is propagated through films, and “*Idi Amin*”, a film that chronicles the ills associated with dictatorship, is one such film that is used to implant democratic ideals into a society, albeit by subtle means that lack the competence of generating tension, thereby upsetting the balance and tranquillity of the international system.

Through political films, the interests of the citizens and government is attracted to happenings in the national and international political stratosphere, and this interest that is reinforced, is required for the success of branding and brands, which cannot be promoted and nurtured to prominence without adequate information about the dynamics and operation of the market and other competing brands in the international political system.

As a matter of fact, the policy making process and institution in any political enclave, as well as the political agenda and atmosphere, especially in a democracy, which is characterised by moderated competition and struggle among diverse groups, for the control of state power that is used to determine “*who gets what, when, and how*” (according to Harold Laski) in the political system, is not only played out in film, but significantly affected and influenced by it; internally by x-raying the dynamics that define the political landscape, and externally by acting as the eye with which foreign spectators see, define, and form perceptions about the enclave, and a favourable definition is necessary for the creation and development of a global brand.

Various socio-political practices and policies are enclosed in film and other cinematic narratives, and in this way, film intervenes in political processes and debates, and in this process generates social consciousness among the populace, and this consciousness prima facie, is responsible for erecting the foundation on which rests the pillars of building a global brand. The aforementioned consciousness generates patriotic zeal in the citizenry, which makes internal rebranding, aimed at creating a pleasant image and evolving a brand that is irresistible before international actors, a desired and easy task. A film like “*Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner*” (Stanley Kramer, 1967), not only explored the concept of racial discrimination, but also projected the place of racial integration in solving the dilemmas and distress injected by anti-black racism in the American society, using the distress suffered by an interracial couple as a focal point. In this way, the film intervened in the political debate concerning racism in the American society, and brought to public domain, not just the travails suffered by victims of racism, but also projected a workable solution. In fact, films can be used to make and publicise composite and complex political dilemmas and the solutions capable of terminating the quandaries and predicaments.

Not only can film be used to rouse the political consciousness of a people, whose mindset it sometimes reflects, it can be employed in the mobilisation of the people, and the eradication of socio-political plagues that infest and hinder their development, in a manner that radical changes are implemented, which refines, defines, and redefines the image and brand of the people, elevating it to the hallowed altar where they are revered and patronised by other actors in the international system. In India for instance, a film like “*Poorab aur Pashchim*” reflected the revolutionary mindset of the people in colonial India, propelling the people to struggle for independence and oppose colonial rule, while “*Rang De Basanti*” is a film that motivated youths in India into instituting a change in the government, which they considered unrepresentative.

American political hegemony in the global scene is not only attributed to, but also sustained by the mass media and films,²³ and in a world that is constantly defined and redefined by globalisation, resulting in the obliteration of national borders and barriers erected to protect a state’s sociocultural heritage, film is not only used to form and publicise public opinion within national and international boundaries, but also are employed in the integration and beautification of socioeconomic and political realities in a geopolitical entity, which is a requirement for the building of a brand that enjoys international patronage, especially in an international political system that is witnessing a paradigmatic shift from traditional international relations practices dominated by state officials, to a model that recognises the significance of non-state actors, unofficial instruments, and institutions (like film makers, the media practitioners, etc), conglomerated under what is called “global civil society”²⁴ or what is referred to as “global society”.²⁵

Films are a vehicle for the education of the populace, and education (whether formal and informal), is required for the development and rapid industrialisation of the society, and industrialisation increases the economic power and rating of a political entity in the international system, which in turn increases the rating and patronage of a brand. Furthermore, film carries messages that are accurately delivered to the masses, whom in turn are influenced and motivated to behave in a certain way. Social sequences of events are accurately transformed

into discernable and interpretable information by film, which also presents the prescribed code of conduct operational in the society and the applicable framework upon which social values revolve, and in this way, correlates the fragmented bits of social life in a political enclave, which it weaves into an operational whole, capable of being galvanised towards attaining the desired goal of the whole, thus fostering national development, which is the pillar on which rests branding and the emergence of a reputable brand.

Education is the base from which the development of any society is pivoted, yet today, the reading culture is diminished, not only in Nigeria, but the world over. The interest of youngsters and even adults alike no longer reside within the borders of reading, yet their interest in films continue to grow by the day, and this is why experienced teachers resort to packaging their curriculum's content in film, which is thereafter presented to students, whose interest in film motivates them to digest the content of such films, and in this way engage in a form of reading, which has a more lasting effect. Many schools and teachers now employ "teaching aids", which encompasses audio-visual cinematic elements in the delivery of lessons to students, and its importance is grand.

In another vein, outside developing the manpower base of a nation, the film industry eliminates the problems of unemployment in a polity, by creating avenues for many a people to be actively engaged in employment in the upstream as film editors, directors, producers, scriptwriters, costumiers, photographers, etc, and in the down stream as marketers, rental shop operators, retailers, etc; a fact that was acknowledged by Senator Bello Gada, Minister of Culture and Tourism, during the 2nd Ife Film Festival held at Oduduwa Hall, in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ille-Ife, on the 30th of January, 2009.²⁶ Since unemployment introduces economic chaos into a polity, in a manner that triggers other forms of social malady like robbery, prostitution, etc, which reduces a nation's credibility and esteem before the committee of other nations, while depleting the recognition and value ascribed to a brand, it can be safely posited that film is an indispensable ingredient required for the building of a robust and vibrant brand.

Natural and manmade disasters, which makes branding ineffective and depletes the stock of a brand's potency can be corrected and reversed, thereby positively reversing the fortunes of a brand, through film. Problems like hurricane assaults, desertification, teenage pregnancy, and the HIV/AIDS scourge can be corrected with film, which also inspires a people to face the challenges that confront them, with a view to overcoming it; film is therefore an agent of social reformation, which is an undeniably vital enterprise required for the birthing and development of a viable global brand, and "*The Inconvenient Truth*" (from the stable of Paramount), is one such film, used by Al Gore, a one time presidential aspirant in the United States, to bring the issue of global warming to the forefront of international debate .

Through film also, the cultural and developmental gap that exists between countries in the First World and those in the Third World, which accounts partly for the superiority of certain brands over others in the international marketplace, can be closed. Film embodies the sociocultural and politico-economic dynamics at play in a particular polity, which is what accounts for its overall condition, especially as it concerns its development. By x-raying films from other cultural entities, we not only correct the mistakes that account for our regression, but also foster rapid development along the lines of the initiatives of the developed entity, by replaying the

conditions that fostered development in the developed socio-political enclave under survey, in ours.

Natural endowments (climate, rivers, hills, and other tourist sites, etc), and manufactured endowments (responsible government, good and visitor-friendly laws, etc), as well as other risk mitigating factors like socio-political and economic stability of a socio-political entity, are quantified and qualified by film, which gives these resources adequate leverage that makes them presentable and gratifying before spectators in the international auditorium, and this helps to build a global brand. By depicting the beautiful landscapes, natural and manmade resources, and other cultural artefacts that reside in a sociocultural enclave, film becomes a foundation on which the pillars of cultural tourism lies, and cultural tourism is not just an aspect of branding, but a cardinal initiative vital for the development and aggressive marketing of a brand in the international marketplace.

Cross-border relationships, cross-cultural exchanges, cross-pollination of artistes, and the seamless linkage and migration between film producers and film crews in different political entities can be enforced and conducted under the auspices of bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements. The presence of Ghanaian artistes like Majid Michel (staring in the movies “*The Shepherd*” and “*Playboy*”), Van Vicker (staring in the movie “*Reloaded*”), and Yvonne Nelson (staring in “*Local Sense*”, and “*Princess Tyra*”), bears witness to the role of film in enhancing cross-border relationship, and this elevates and reinforces the potency and patronage of a brand in the global setting.

Because film x-rays the society, thereafter identifying its problems and proffering approaches for overcoming them, it can be safely employed in the determination of, and conduction of brand audit, the measurement of a brand’s value, the creation of brand awareness, the origination of brand experience, the enhancement of a brand’s equity, the popularisation of a brand’s identity (or trade dress), the creation of brand franchise, and the resuscitation of a brand’s image, and these are options too important to be neglected, if the dream to build a global brand that enjoys global patronage and appreciation is to be actualised. The revival of ghost or declining brands (otherwise referred to as rebranding) and the creation of brand knowledge-cum-awareness cannot be paddled through the murky waters of a global competitive marketplace to safe shores without film, which is why film is indispensable in any conscious effort geared towards developing a brand that enjoys global acclaim and patronage.

The international space is characterised by competition, and because it is defined by ploys initiated by states and their actors to obtain maximum advantages and leverages, which mostly translate to disadvantages within the realms of other states and competitors, nations employ subtle means to destabilise the strength and potency of other brands, as to promote the viability of their brand, and film is one scheme introduced by these actors to inject social disequilibrium and upheaval, misrepresentation and misinterpretation, conflicts and discord, as well as acculturation and cultural displacement, which irresistibly diminishes the value attached to a brand’s image, ultimately deforming the brand in the long-run, thus vitiating its capability to grow or viably compete with other brands, and a film like “*The Wild Geese*”, which not just portrays white supremacy, but also exposes security lapses in a black nation, is likely to

generate animosity and bad blood, especially between military personnel and civilian administrators, and the distrust created can overturn the stability that characterises a polity.

Through acculturation and outright displacement of lesser cultures, film can be used to influence the decline and death of a targeted brand, while it can also be used in the enrichment of brands positioned to benefit from the enormous advantages that film offer.

Films can also provide smokescreens that prevent other states and foreigners from accurately analysing socio-political variables operational in a polity under survey. Many Hollywood movies depict the American society as a developed, egalitarian, and peaceful environment, but at a closer glance, these are mere smokescreens incepted to cover the dark and ugly secrets that define the American political airspace, and the ability of brand owners to effectively invent smokescreen to eclipse their ugly undertakings (which is though discouraged), is a step that somewhat helps the brand to be globally acceptable.

Many social commentators hold the view that the introduction of witchcraft, juju, and nudity in many home movies produced in Nigeria is a major factor that diminishes the potency and patronage of our brand; to those in this school of thought therefore, our movie makers are responsible for the poor image and attendant sick brand that stares us in the face, but I beg to stoutly disagree. Foreign serial movies like “*Lord of the Ring*” and “*Harry Potter*” revolve around magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, while “*Desperate Housewives*”, “*The L World*”, “*American Pie*”, and “*Candy Girls*” are neck deep in nudity and sex; even “*Prison Break*” and “*Bad Boys*” emit blood-chilling violence, yet they won many international film awards, which placed them on the pedestal of ingenious movies.

“*The Mistress of Spices*”, (2005, Paul Mayeda Berges) is a radiant example of how traditional concepts revolving around herbal and magical operations can be fruitfully packaged, without bringing disdain upon a brand and its owners. In the film, a traditional Indian girl that is adopted into a generation of herbalists, who must not leave their spice shops nor have handshake with other persons, relocates to America, where she continues using her spices and fortunetelling business to solve people’s Problems. In America, she comes under intense cultural pressure, emanating from an American admirer, who makes her break the rules guiding the trade severally. The American lifestyle threatens her traditional Indian beliefs and practices (even her herbal practice came under threat), but rising up to the challenges, she retraced her steps, and went the extra mile of giving up her life, for failing to keep the tradition alive, but this act generates the favour and admiration of the guardian spirit that oversees the operation of herbalists, which allows her to regain her life, on the condition that she continues her herbal practice, while bringing her American lover to live with her in her herbal/spice shop. This somehow shows the superiority of the Indian culture over the American culture, and is a ray of hope for Indians in this era of Americanised globalisation of other parts of the globe.

The problem with Nigerian film, which draws the image and brand in the mud, is the poor packaging that bedevils film production: a film like “*Preacher Man*”, which was shot in the United States, with George Kalu as the scriptwriter and director, is vitiated and relegated to the background because grammatical errors undermined the work of the film’s editor, while the

movie, which could be ended in one part, was stretched superfluously to part four; this is the problem with most Nigerian movies.

The film industry is not acquitted of all the charges levelled against it in the people's court, for they are sometimes guilty of misrepresenting facts, Americanising even movies with local storylines, and exhibiting a rascal preference for using foreign currencies like Pounds and Dollars in movies, in total disregard of the Naira, and in this way encouraging the depletion of the value of the Naira, and this takes a negative toll on the vibrancy and development of the brand.

Also, many local movies project America as paradise, depicting everything good about this imperfect and atomistic society, and in this way, encourages brain drain, and the flight of local investors and tourist to the beautiful foreign locations exhibited in these movies, in search of El Dorado. The quest for quick money and the invasion of the film industry by charlatans, whose cinematic outputs are though ridiculous, yet prolonged to several parts, shot within one week in the same location, comprising of irrelevant and time-wasting flashbacks, is another factor that is militating against Nigerian movies winning the Oscar or other awards of international acclaim, which would otherwise give a boost to the image and vibrancy of the brand. The poor quality of most cinematic products is a factor that negatively paints our brand in bad light, and some movies are guilty of this sin.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The undeniable power of film in birthing, nurturing, and transporting a brand into the hallowed chambers of global acceptance and patronage can be analysed from the understanding of these three psychiatric phenomena viz: projection, introjection, and displacement. Projection is an imaginative adjustment to film that entails the "*Thrusting upon others imaginarily...qualities which we ourselves possess*"²⁷, and wholly relates to adjustments in the life pattern of a person or a groundless delineation of the concept of self, as influenced by his/her interaction with a film.

Introjection is a somewhat complete form of identification and adjustment, though discontinuous in character, but significantly entailing a temporal loss of both social and personal orientation, emanating from and actualised through "*Incorporation of a part of the environment into the concept of the self*."²⁸

Displacement on its own concerns itself with the imaginative experience derived from film, where the realities portrayed by film is partially superimposed or used to substitute certain personal values and personality traits in real social world, characterised by the continuance of a person's existence as himself, despite an imaginative participation in the sequence of events outplayed in a film. Displacement is an imitative but inspired adjustment, characterised by social disorientation, enabling the viewer to bridge the gap between him and the film, in a manner that somehow imposes a sentimental or emotional significance to a film in the eyes of the viewer; it is applied subconsciously to enhance the affective significance of a film. Displacement is the "*Substitution of another object, goal, or idea for the original object of the emotion, while the emotion itself remains the same*."²⁹ The enormous role of film in creating,

nurturing, and fostering the development of a brand that is globally acceptable can be better appreciated from this psychological focal point.

Effective crises management initiatives, good health practices, effective agricultural management measures and food security, as well as research and gender development, and the transformation of societies into knowledge-based economies (where knowledge is transformed into power), which totally redefines and positively alters the structure of production, education, and human resource management, initiating socio-political reforms that align with the spirit of globalisation, is one design achieved by film, and this scheme hinged by film, beautifies and enhances the patronage of a brand before other nations and competing brands. Socio-political attitudes, racial prejudices and stereotypes, as well as attitudes and personality, can be fundamentally reformed and altered, in line with the general expectation of actors in the international theatre, by film, through its potential of providing patterns and frameworks for communication and education (both formal and informal) that are not just alluring, but also capable of translating a brand from the islands of rejection to the Eden of global recognition, acceptance, and patronage.

The essence and extensive nature of branding or rebranding (or creating a brand that enjoys universal patronage) was captured and emphasised by DPM Mutambara, in a keynote address delivered to delegates at the inaugural Zimbabwe Tourism Stockholder's Conference in Harare, hosted by Zimbabwe Tourism Authority in 2009, when he asserted:

Tourism is central to the image of the country. It is the face of the country and everyone...must play his part to deal with perception that has damaged our image. Don't ask us to rebrand the country. The first thing is for you to rebrand yourself and make yourself relevant to the situation on ground...it is not the government's duty alone. It is your duty.³⁰

The original formation and packaging of those qualities and characteristics that give an entity unique definition and comparative advantages over other competing entities, which when packaged is advertised to bring further advantages, respect, and patronage to the entity, in the presence of other competing entities, is referred to as branding. For a brand to be packaged and effectively advertised to garner advantages to itself, it must emit an enduring appeal in the minds of customers and targeted customers, and film as an instrument that possesses a somewhat irrevocable and lasting appeal or influence in an audience, is an undeniable tool to be employed in the successful launch and promotion of a brand before diverse clienteles in the international amphitheatre.

When a brand is birthed but advertently or inadvertently suffers debility or decline, rebranding, which is a design fabricated to revive or revitalise the enduring traits of a brand, thus regenerating the patronage the brand enjoys, becomes an undisputable option, and this cannot be safely and successfully concluded without recourse to film. The dream of reaching the "Promised Land" will be unrealised, if we lack the zeal of taking our destiny in our hands rather than allow others control it; we shall sail to the "Promised Land", for we are good people that

make a great nation, and this is all it takes to achieve success in our struggle to overcome the challenges limiting our growth and development as a people forever united and together victorious, but film is the weapon that will be used to actualise this dream, and thus we must never forget, to launch the transforming, refreshing, and resuscitating war armed with film, unless we are determined to fight a battle already lost from the outset.

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