

AFRINIC partners with Google to kick off 'Africa Connected' Competition - \$25,000 prizes for five Africans whose lives are 'powered by the web'

Africa, 28th August 2013. For those who have been positively influenced by the internet, here's a chance to share your web journey. Google is calling on entrepreneurs, creators, innovators and web-lovers in Ghana and across Africa to share their stories of how the web has transformed their lives and work. Whether you're a photographer, an entrepreneur, a fashion designer or a community activist, if the internet and Google tools have played an important role in your success, Google wants to hear from you.

"AFRINIC is proud to be partner of this initiative as we believe that the Internet has influenced our lives in Africa in many ways, but unfortunately there are very limited local knowledge and/or written stories of these success. Telling our own success stories will be a priceless legacy for the young and future generations but also an important catalyst for more investment in Internet Technology in Africa" states Adiel Akplogan, Chief Executive Officer of AFRINIC.

In the next five years, 7 out of the world's 10 fastest growing economies are predicted to be in Africa, and the Internet is playing an important part in this. Google's new initiative, 'Africa Connected: Success stories powered by the web', aims to gather the largest collection of inspiring stories about ventures established online by Africans, in Africa. Five successful entrants will win \$25,000 each, and will also have the opportunity to work with a Google sponsor over a six-month period.

“Google wants to hear from young, spirited entrepreneurial web adopters in Nigeria and other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa who have a healthy disregard for the impossible and who are using the web and technology to do cool and extraordinary things to rise above their circumstances, change their world, and achieve success. We want to showcase the amazing achievements happening in the new Africa”, says Affiong Osuchukwu, Google Lead for the Africa Connected initiative.

Fashion accessories designer, avid blogger and entrepreneur Naa Quartey, is one such example. This Ghanaian entrepreneur learned the basics by researching tips on how to setup and maintain a business on Google Search. Today, Naa has built a successful online store using a website to showcase and sell her handmade Ghanaian jewellery. Furthermore, Naa is able to track both her local and international clientele using Google Analytics.

Naa says, "My foray into fashion accessories design was a risk. My father always wanted me to be a doctor, as a business in the creative arts in Ghana was not perceived to be profitable. I decided however to follow my passion, take the risk, and break the perception by building a successful business in the creative industry. I took advantage of the lack of Ghanaian-made fashion accessories and created my niche. Now, as a result of my online presence, I am able to connect with and sell to a global and diverse clientele."

The owner and creator of [Afrinolly](#), Chike Maduegbuna, based in Nigeria, is another online entrepreneur. Afrinolly is a popular mobile app which lets people across the continent watch short videos on their mobile devices. This app has transformed Nigeria's Nollywood film industry by creating a movie trailer platform for new audiences. With over 3 million downloads already since its launch in August 2011, Chike hopes this will create a platform that connects aspiring film professionals with global film industry veterans.

South Africa's Mdu Ntuli grew up loving comics and trained himself as an animator using YouTube tutorials for both 2D and 3D animation. He now runs a successful YouTube channel showcasing his animated films and he has become a culturally important figure in the community, influencing young people about the ways of the world. He often hears people he doesn't know quoting material from his films.

Just a Band, an electro/pop band in Kenya, who used YouTube to learn how to create a new style of Kenyan music with electro influences. Their innovative sound was initially rejected in Kenya, but they refused to take no for an answer and started sharing their music on YouTube. Straight away they found a huge fan base and success - so much so that they now regularly travel to play at festivals in the UK, USA, other African countries and all over Europe. Young musicians now think of them as the 'Eminent Statesmen' of Kenyan music.

Categories for entries include Education; Entertainment/Arts/Sports; Technology; Community and NGOs; and Small Businesses. 20 semi-finalists will be selected from initial entries to take part in an interview and to produce a short promotional video. A judging panel made up of Googlers and external judges will then determine the 10 finalists. The 5 winners, in whose lives the web and Google have played a pivotal role, will then be selected by the online voting public. Submissions are open from August 27, 2013 to October 11, 2013. The competition will run until February 2014 when the winners will be announced.

For more information and to enter the Africa Connected contest, visit [www.africaconnected.co](http://www.africaconnected.co)

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The deadline for submissions is October 11, 2013. New to the web? Learn more about the web and Google through this platform, so that you too can do amazing things using the web as your springboard.

Africa Connected is made possible by help from a dozen partners: Africa: UNDP, NEPAD, AFRINIC Ghana: Joy Online, Graphic Newspaper Kenya: Nation Media Group Nigeria: THISDAY, Cool FM, Nigeria Info FM, Wazobia FM South Africa: SABC, City Press

Editor Summary

## Additional African Case Studies

### [Film Producer - Nigeria](#)

Asurf has gone from spending nights in internet cafes, so that he could watch YouTube to teach himself how to edit films, to running a successful film and video production company in Lagos, where he employs 10 people. His company is courted by Nigerian celebrities to film their music/entertainment videos locally and internationally.

### App Developer - Nigeria

Afrinolly, a company run by Chike Maduegbuna and his family, created a popular mobile app to enable mobile users in SSA to watch short video content on their mobiles. This has transformed Nigeria's Nollywood film industry by creating a platform for featuring movie trailers to a new audience. This 'Afrinolly' app has already had over 2 million downloads.

### [Citizen Journalist - Togo](#)

Noel is a citizen journalist who has utilised YouTube to attract the attention of, and become a correspondent for, international news agencies. He relies on Google Docs and Google +

Hangouts to communicate with both colleagues and news agencies.

### [Jewellery Designer - Ghana](#)

Naa has built a successful online store using a website to showcase and sell her handmade Ghanaian jewellery. Naa learned how to set up a business using Google search and says that Google and the internet have made it possible for her to make a thriving business out of her passion project. Google analytics also allows her to see trends in her buyers both local and international.

### Mdu Ntuli - South Africa

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### [Pop Music Group - Kenya](#)

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