



Unlocking Nigeria's Digital DNA

\$18B Potential for Innovation & Growth

eTerview

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The interim forfeiture and
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says NASITDEA DG Haruna Sani

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Nigeria's Digital Transformation: Unlocking \$18B potential with strategic investments in AI & infrastructure

Nigeria's digital transformation is rapidly gaining momentum, as highlighted by a recent report from **Public First**. In 2023 alone, **Google's products and services**, including Search, Ads, YouTube, and Cloud, contributed an estimated **\$1.8 billion in economic activity** across Nigeria. Additionally, the report indicates that by **2030, Artificial Intelligence (AI)** could potentially contribute a staggering **\$15 billion** to Nigeria's economy. A 2024 report by the **GSMA** further underscores the role of **mobile technology** in driving Nigeria's digital economy. According to the report, the mobile sector contributed **N33 trillion** to the country's GDP in 2023, with **N2.4 trillion in tax revenue**, making it a significant source of government income. By 2026, experts predict the sector could generate up to **\$18.3 billion**, cementing its position as a cash cow for Nigeria.

National Digital Economy Bill

Amid global economic shifts and technological advancements, **Nigeria is on the verge of a digital revolution**. The country's digital economy is set to become a driver of **economic growth**, job creation, and innovation. Key to this transformation is the **National Digital Economy Bill**, which aims to provide a comprehensive legal framework for **electronic transactions, digital signatures, and e-government services**. This bill is designed to replace paper-based processes with **digital solutions**, streamlining operations across sectors. Nigeria's multi-faceted approach to **digital transformation** is anchored by initiatives such as the **3 Million Technical Talent Programme** and the **Broadband Alliance**. These programs aim to enhance productivity across sectors through **technology**, while positioning Nigeria as a leader in **digital commerce** within the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** framework. The country's digital economy has already revolutionised how millions of Nigerians **shop, bank, and communicate**, unlocking new opportunities for **economic growth**.

A fraction of Nigeria's digital economic potential

However, a study by the **World Bank's Nigeria Digital Economy Diagnostic** reveals that Nigeria is currently capturing only a fraction of its **digital economic potential**. Strategic investments in **digital infrastructure** and **education** are needed to develop a truly **dynamic and transformative digital economy**.

Progress has been made in **human capacity building**, with initiatives such as Google's **Digital Skills for Africa** and the **3 Million Technical Talent Programme** training over **1.5 million Nigerians** in **digital skills** in 2023 alone. But there are still gaps to address, particularly in **STEM education** and **AI fluency**, to prepare Nigeria's workforce for the future.

Digital infrastructure remains a critical challenge

Digital infrastructure remains a critical challenge. While Nigeria boasts the **largest mobile market in Sub-Saharan Africa**, supported by strong **broadband infrastructure** and improved international connectivity, **fixed broadband** is limited, especially in **rural areas**. This leaves a significant portion of the population without **internet access**, hindering the country's ability to fully harness its digital potential. Efforts to digitize **public services** are underway, but more needs to be done. Both public and private digital platforms are essential to support **eCommerce** and the provision of digital services. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of **formal identification records** for millions of Nigerians, which prevents them from accessing essential public and private services.

Improving the policy environment

The government also needs to improve the **policy environment for digital entrepreneurship**. Despite Nigeria's large, youthful, and entrepreneurial population, the potential for **digital entrepreneurship** remains underexploited. Agencies like **SMEDAN** must enhance their efforts to engage more young Nigerians in **digital entrepreneurship schemes**, unlocking new engines for economic transformation. Access to **digital financial services** is another area in need of improvement. While progress has been made, a large number of Nigerian adults still lack access to **formal financial accounts**, which hinders the country's efforts toward **financial inclusion** and **economic participation** in the digital space.

Nigeria's path to sustained **digital growth** requires the **right policies**, targeted investments, and collaboration between key stakeholders. By investing in **digital infrastructure**, promoting **digital literacy**, and fostering **innovation**, Nigeria can build a **robust, inclusive, and sustainable digital economy** that meets the needs of its citizens and drives economic growth for years to come.

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NNIA's Sheidu on collaboration for growth and strengthening Northern Nigeria's startup ecosystem



Bashir Sheidu, Chairman of the Network of Northern Incubators and Accelerators (NNIA), is at the forefront of efforts to promote and expand the startup ecosystem in Northern Nigeria. In an insightful conversation with Nana Theresa Timothy of IT Edge News.Africa, Sheidu discusses how collaboration among incubators and accelerators is key to unlocking wider opportunities for startups. He highlights the importance of addressing critical challenges such as funding, mentorship, infrastructure support, training, and scaling to foster innovation and sustainable growth in the region.

Why is the NNIA crucial to building and strengthening the tech ecosystem in Northern Nigeria and what unique advantages does it offer to innovators and startups in the region?

NNIA plays a crucial role as a platform that unites key stakeholders in the northern ecosystem. The primary goal is to establish a unified space where collaboration, partnerships, and knowledge-sharing can thrive. One of the main challenges in the northern ecosystem has been slow growth, largely due to the absence of a cohesive platform for discussing common issues. NNIA aims to address this by bringing together critical stakeholders,

particularly policymakers, to discuss the support available and explore solutions for the ecosystem's challenges, fostering collective growth.

Fostering collaboration and unity among startups and hubs is key to the growth of Northern Nigeria's tech landscape. What initiatives are you implementing to promote this unity?

We conducted a mapping of the ecosystem across the 19 northern states to identify key players, as this data is crucial for developing effective collaborative strategies. This will streamline our efforts in implementing the methods we have planned. We are also organising meetups, where stakeholders engage with ecosystem players and bring policymakers into the conversation to better understand what's happening in their regions. Additionally, we are fostering collaboration and partnerships between startups in northern Nigeria. Thanks to NNIA's partnership with Pinnacle, a consultancy for NITDA and the DWTC, we were able to provide opportunities for startups and key players to present at the GITEX Africa in Marrakesh.

Startups and hubs in Northern

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NNIA envisions itself as a key catalyst for innovation and growth in northern Nigeria. Our efforts extend beyond supporting local communities, as we aim to collaborate with other ecosystems.”

Nigeria often face unique challenges compared to their counterparts in other regions. What do you see as the biggest hurdles, and how is NNIA working to address these?

Our primary challenge is funding, which is a common issue for startups and becomes particularly critical when it comes to scaling. Another significant obstacle is the lack of infrastructure, and NNIA is working to engage policymakers to support startups in this area. Additionally, double taxation on hubs is a burden, and we are striving to alleviate this for startups. Power supply is also a key issue, as many startups require consistent electricity to operate effectively. NNIA is actively addressing these challenges to create a more supportive environment for growth.

As the largest network of innovators and startups in the north, what long-term goals are in place to ensure continued growth and development of the tech ecosystem in Northern Nigeria?

NNIA envisions itself as a key catalyst for innovation and growth in northern Nigeria. Our efforts extend beyond supporting local communities, as we aim to collaborate with other ecosystems, particularly well-established ones in the South East and South West. Our long-term objective is to form partnerships with international ecosystems and attract global investors to the northern region of Nigeria, creating broader opportunities for growth and development.

SK Bello: Kaduna spearheading innovation through global ties



Engr. Shuaibu Kabir Bello, Senior Special Assistant to the Kaduna State Governor on ICT, discusses the state's strategic efforts to build a technology-driven future through partnerships with global tech giants like Huawei. Kaduna is not only investing in digital tools to improve government service delivery but is also prioritising youth capacity building to foster a thriving ecosystem for innovative startups and emerging technologies such as IoT and Blockchain. With a focus on becoming Northern Nigeria's hub for tech innovation, Kaduna is positioning itself as a leader in the digital economy. He shares with *IT Edge News*, Nana Theresa Timothy.

Kaduna State recently partnered with Huawei for Smart City Development. Elaborate on how this partnership is to progress. Its specific impacts on urban management and public services delivery in Kaduna.

The Huawei partnership involves a multi-phase project that we have recently initiated. We have completed the first phase, which focused on state security. This phase included installing security cameras at key intersections, major roads, city exits, and within the city itself to enhance security and manage traffic. The partnership also introduced an advanced Traffic Intelligence System to monitor the state's traffic database. Additionally, the agreement encompasses IoT

[Internet of Things] solutions and other government-related technologies. The primary goal of this collaboration is to improve security in Kaduna State, and we are dedicatedly working towards achieving this aim.

Kaduna hosted the GITEX Startup Roadshow in February 2024, a significant event for tech innovation. How has it impacted the local startup ecosystem?

The road show was aimed at providing startups the opportunity to showcase what they have in order to gain local and international attention. It was also geared at getting supports from banking and financing sector. It is most especially fulfilling knowing that



we were able to achieve these goals. A lot of startups who were able to make it to the roadshow left with some sort of partnership, or at least, promises of delivery and collaboration with investors. We were able to take two startups to GITEX Africa hosted in Morocco which was a plus to us.

Emerging technologies like Blockchain are becoming central to the global tech landscape. How is Kaduna State supporting startups focusing on these technologies?

We are currently cultivating an environment where blockchain technology can flourish, with education being a primary focus. Our assessments revealed that while many youths are well-versed in Web2, they have limited knowledge of Web3. To address

“KADUNA IS POSITIONING ITSELF AS THE LEADING TECHNICAL HUB NOT ONLY IN THE NORTHERN REGION BUT ACROSS THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. WE ARE TAKING STRATEGIC STEPS TO REALIZE THIS VISION”

this, we have developed structured programs to provide them with fundamental Web3 education. Additionally, the state is working on implementing real-world government solutions, such as a blockchain-based land registry, to

fully leverage the blockchain revolution.

Kaduna aspires to be a rallying ground for tech entrepreneurs in Northern Nigeria. What strategic initiatives are being put in place and how do you see the state's role evolving in the broader Nigerian tech sector?

Kaduna is positioning itself as the leading technical hub not only in the northern region but across the entire country. We are making intentional efforts and taking strategic steps to realize this vision. We have identified specific areas within the metropolis to develop the Kaduna Technology City, where we aim to collaborate with major tech giants like Microsoft and Google to establish their operations. Additionally, we are focusing on enhancing tech education programs to train youths, keeping them updated and preparing them to be global tech talent. We are actively advancing in software development and data analysis, with Kaduna State emerging as a top player in these fields. The progress we are making is exciting, and I am confident that significant developments will continue to unfold in the coming years.

Foreign investment is crucial for capacity building and job creation. Are there ongoing plans with offshore companies to invest in Kaduna's ICT sector?

Kaduna has always been a centre of attraction for foreign direct investments. Over the years, investors have chosen Kaduna as the choice destination to invest into and the tech sector is no different. We've had interest from global tech giants as well as the local tech giants that have shown interest in Kaduna State.



Kaduna State: Paving the way for a smarter, more prosperous future.



President Tinubu and Governor Sani in China

Kaduna State: A Hub of Innovation, Investment, and Development

Under the visionary leadership of His Excellency, Senator Uba Sani, Kaduna State is solidifying its position as a leader in sustainable development, driving massive local and international partnerships that open doors to vast investment opportunities. With a focus on sectors like Agriculture, Healthcare, Science & Technology, Infrastructure, Solid Minerals, and Renewable Energy, Kaduna is shaping a prosperous future.

Strategic Partnerships Leading the Way

- **SMART CITY Project with Huawei Technologies:** In a landmark partnership, Kaduna State is collaborating with Huawei to create a Smart City, witnessed by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. This project will revolutionize security, transparency, city management, and attract top talents and investments.
- **Industrial Park with Hebei Province:** The Hebei Province partnership is set to construct a world-class Industrial Park in Kaduna, creating opportunities for growth and employment.
- **CCECC Projects:** China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) is actively involved in executing transformative infrastructure projects across the state, enhancing Kaduna's status as a premier investment destination.

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Bridging the Last Mile Initiative 2024 - 2027:** A focused effort to achieve digital inclusion,

empowering businesses and livelihoods in Kaduna with advanced digital tools.

- **Tech-Enabled Startup Law:** This groundbreaking law positions Kaduna as Nigeria's leading digital technology hub, fostering an ecosystem of innovators with export-ready skills.
- **Kaduna Smart City Project:** Committed to fast-tracking the Smart City project with Huawei, aiming for a more secure and prosperous Kaduna State.

OTHER KEY INITIATIVES

- **Hebei Industrial Park Construction** in partnership with CCECC.
- **Skills Development Council** to address the state's skills deficit and boost employability.
- **Climate Change Policy Launch** to transform Kaduna into a model of climate resilience.
- **Lithium Processing Plant inauguration** in partnership with Ming Xin Mineral Separation Nigeria Ltd.
- **Digital Empowerment for 50 Schools** through the Kaduna Agile Project, providing 1,250 laptops, solar power solutions, and internet connectivity.
- **GITEX Africa Startup Roadshow:** Kaduna proudly hosted the GITEX Africa Startup Roadshow, in partnership with Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), spotlighting Kaduna as a hub for young, creative talents and fostering innovative tech solutions. This event further amplified the state's commitment to supporting entrepreneurial growth through the Tech-Enabled Startup Law.



Kaduna for Climate Sustainability



Senator Sani inside the Lithium processing factory



Kaduna signs MoU with Huawei



Development talks in China



GITEX Africa Startup Roadshow, Kaduna



Kaduna for Climate Sustainability



Digital Empowerment for Schools



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KC Hub and the mission of building a generation of creative entrepreneurs in Northern Nigeria

Located in Jos, Plateau State, Kefianos Creative Hub (KC Hub) is among the early pioneers in Northern Nigeria's creative sector. Founded by High Chief Kefas Wungak Ropshik, a politician, philanthropist, and entrepreneur, KC Hub is committed to nurturing and empowering the next generation of creative entrepreneurs. In this interview with *IT Edge News.Africa*, Nana Theresa Timothy speaks with Dilas Che Yusuf, Founding Member and Lead Trainer at KC Hub, about the challenges and opportunities in building a vibrant creative ecosystem in Nigeria. Dilas sheds light on the Hub's mission to foster creativity, innovation, and business acumen among aspiring entrepreneurs, while addressing the unique needs of the region.

Tell us about some of the most groundbreaking projects or startups currently being nurtured at your hub?

KCHub is actively nurturing talent. During one of our recent graduations, our principal officer, Kefiano, supported participants in advancing their personal projects. The hub is now focusing on expanding beyond mere knowledge dissemination. We aim to help participants apply their newly acquired skills to develop real-life solutions. A notable achievement includes the successful training and certification of approximately 495 individuals. Additionally, we are working towards acquiring new equipment to further enhance the hub's capabilities.



We have launched several projects that allow these talents to showcase their abilities and challenge each other.”

How does your hub create an environment that encourages collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas between entrepreneurs, developers, and other stakeholders?

We actively encourage the talented and creative individuals in our hubs to pursue internships and provide guidance on various platforms where they can further develop their skills. We have launched several projects that allow these talents to showcase their abilities and challenge each other. Additionally, our dedicated

team monitors and supports these individuals to ensure their continued engagement and progress.

What global or local challenges is your hub particularly focused on solving, and how are these efforts impacting communities?

The inspiration behind the founding of KC-Hub was the observation that many talented individuals in this region were not leveraging the appropriate channels to develop their skills. The hub was established to tap into and nurture this talent, guiding them towards the right opportunities. This ensures that their abilities contribute positively to the country's economic growth and development.

How does your hub support startups not only in terms of funding but also in accessing markets, mentors, and resources to take them to the next level?

Our hub receives funding from a variety of sources, including both external investors and contributions from our team of co-founders. This dual funding approach not only supports our growth and operations but also demonstrates the commitment and confidence of our co-founders in the hub's vision and potential. Their investment, underscores a shared belief in our mission and the value we aim to deliver.

Innovating beyond the centre Nnamdi Ibe on Axia Hub's mission to foster tech growth outside Nigeria's major cities



Nnamdi Ibe, CEO and Founder of Axia Technology and Innovation Hub (Axia Hub), sits down with Nana Theresa Timothy to discuss the launch of their new coworking space and the unique challenges of growing a tech hub outside Nigeria's major urban centres. He also shares insights on how Nigeria can more effectively embrace emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the need for inclusive tech development across the country. Axia Hub aims to drive innovation in underserved regions, fostering a stronger, more diversified tech ecosystem.

Axia Hub's newly launched coworking facility offers a conducive environment for tech and creative entrepreneurs in Jos. How does your hub create an environment that encourages collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas between entrepreneurs, developers, and other stakeholders?

Collaboration is at the heart of this space, designed to foster the

exchange of ideas and facilitate meetups. We promote an atmosphere of open communication while respecting individual boundaries. Supporting entrepreneurs requires providing the foundational resources they need to grow. In this region, certain essentials are often lacking. For entrepreneurs to succeed, they need an environment that offers adequate

schools, empowering them to create real-world solutions.

Hubs in cities like Lagos and Abuja often have easier access to funding and support. What strategies can be employed to level the playing field for innovation centres in cities like Jos?

It's true that the southern part of Nigeria has seen significant technological success due to early adoption,

giving them an advantage in securing funding from foreign investors and sponsors. However, funding isn't the only benefit institutions like ours can receive. By focusing on our internal systems, initiatives, and fostering our own creatives, entrepreneurs, and technologists, we can gradually shift value in this direction over time.

With the increasing adoption of AI in various industries, what do you see as the future of software developers in Nigeria?

I've been quite concerned about AI. While I don't believe AI will eliminate jobs, I am worried about our initial response to it. My research into AI adoption in the West shows that, in Nigeria, we often focus on consuming AI products rather than on production and research. For example, many people view ChatGPT as the entirety of AI, but it's actually a product of extensive research. We should shift our focus towards the technologists who drive AI innovation, rather than just the products themselves.

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We've incubated several startups that have gone on to make significant impacts in various sectors, including defense.”

support. The hub helps bridge this gap by providing essential services like high-speed internet and a reliable power supply, connecting entrepreneurs to global opportunities.

How has the hub contributed to the growth and development of local tech talents?

First, we've incubated several startups that have gone on to make significant impacts in various sectors, including defense. One of our incubated startups has transformed the transportation sector, particularly inter-state travel. We've also supported startups in e-commerce and logistics. Secondly, our initiatives have had a strong focus on education. One of our notable programs is the 'Community Delivery Innovation', which targets secondary schools and higher institutions. We engage students, spark their interest, and provide support to help them move from theoretical learning to practical problem-solving. Through this, we've reached around 30 to 35

How cross-border collaboration is helping to drive innovation at ThinkHub



Iyanuoluwa Oluborode, Creative Director at ThinkHub, shares his insights with Nana Theresa Timothy of IT Edge News. Africa on how cross-border collaboration is shaping the future of ThinkHub, the youngest creative hub in Jos, Plateau State. Oluborode discusses how these partnerships are opening new doors for growth and innovation, helping the hub leverage untapped opportunities in Nigeria's burgeoning creative economy. Through strategic alliances, ThinkHub is charting a new course for creative entrepreneurs and pushing boundaries in the local and global creative space.

How does ThinkHub support emerging talent and entrepreneurs in the creative industry especially in the city of Jos?

We launched the hub to nurture the creative talent in Jos, recognizing the wealth of artistic and innovative individuals both locally and across Nigeria. Our platform is fully equipped to give these talents the tools and space they need to transform their ideas into reality.

Additionally, we foster a collaborative environment, encouraging the exchange of ideas and teamwork among creatives.

What specific resources or tools does ThinkHub offer to help artists and creators develop their skills and grow their businesses?

Answer: The hub is equipped with essential tools to help creatives bring their ideas to life. We provide

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Our success is defined by the employment opportunities we've facilitated. We've successfully connected talented individuals with organisations seeking their skills.”

resources such as cameras, microphones, lighting, studio space, a sound room, and an art space stocked with canvases, paints, and brushes. Everything a creative needs to thrive in a productive environment is available at our facility.

Can you share some success stories or notable projects that have emerged from ThinkHub's community?

Our success is defined by the employment opportunities we've facilitated. We've successfully connected talented individuals with organisations seeking their skills after they've received training and mentorship from our team at the hub. Additionally, we've collaborated with other communities to deliver impactful projects and achieve remarkable results.

Can you share with me some challenges you've faced in running a creative hub, how you navigated around it, and how do you plan to expand or evolve in the future?

Working with creatives can be challenging as it requires a deep level of understanding and collaboration. There must be a value exchange—something meaningful to offer in return for their work. One major challenge we encounter is the lack of patience. Managing a diverse team, particularly within the creative community, demands patience, but many creatives struggle with this, which can make the process more difficult.

Blockchain will bridge financial gap for SMEs and unbanked

- Blockfuse Labs' Adaaku



Blockfuse Labs is leading the charge in advancing blockchain technology, not just in Jos, Plateau State, but across Nigeria. In an interview with *IT Edge News.Africa*, CEO and Co-Founder Adaaku Peter discusses with Nana Theresa Timothy the critical role of government and other stakeholders in supporting blockchain adoption to drive development across various sectors.

What are your challenges in providing high-level training for blockchain developers?

The primary challenge is finding individuals with strong web2 skills. Since blockchain is part of web3, a solid understanding of web2 is essential for anyone looking to train in web3. We opened applications for web3 development training and received around 500 applications. However, after administering an exam to assess applicants' web2 knowledge, only four people

passed. The second major challenge is adoption—blockchain technology is not yet widely embraced in the country due to a lack of awareness, which is unfortunate.

How is Blockfuse Labs some of these challenges in terms of product development?

The organisation has established a platform to train complete beginners in web2 technologies, preparing them to transition into the web3 training program. To support this, the organisation has enlisted mentors to guide these beginners. Additionally, they are developing a decentralized management system and have successfully trained individuals in web3, with one group building a decentralized crypto wallet. The primary objective at Blockfuse Lab is to eventually develop our own blockchain.

“We have launched several projects that allow these talents to showcase their abilities and challenge each other.”

Are there strategies Blockfuse Labs is implementing to create a community of professionals and create impact beyond the tech ecosystem in Plateau State?

The organisation strives to ensure inclusivity by hosting monthly meet-ups. These gatherings aim to connect people, foster collaboration, and inspire individuals who are advancing in web3 technologies. Additionally, they provide education on the significance of blockchain. We're also planning to organise hackathons and quizzes, where participants can compete and share knowledge, further enhancing the learning experience.

What can government offer to support blockchain tech development and companies like Blockfuse Labs?

The government plays a key role in advancing blockchain technology, which is vital for the future. First, by creating clear regulations, it can reduce uncertainty for companies. Offering incentives such as tax breaks and grants will further encourage blockchain innovation. Additionally, investing in education and research will help build a skilled workforce. The government can also adopt blockchain in public services to improve transparency and efficiency. Finally, regulatory sandboxes will allow startups to test solutions safely, while promoting blockchain in fintech will boost financial inclusion for small businesses and the unbanked.

NITDA and partners host IPv6 summit to accelerate Nigeria's digital transformation



The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), in collaboration with Huawei, the IPv6 Forum, and the IPv6 Council Nigeria, recently held the **IPv6 Driven Digital Summit** in Abuja, themed “*Bringing Net 5.5G Into Reality: Inspiring New Growth.*” This summit marked a significant step forward in advancing Nigeria's digital technology and emphasized the necessity of transitioning to IPv6 to meet future internet demands.

“Nigeria is among the first countries in Africa to migrate from IPv4 to IPv6. This allows service providers to offer improved services, enhances security by preventing easy hacks, and ensures service availability through better traffic management. While some of our companies have already transitioned to IPv6, we aim for it to become the standard across all critical service providers within the digital economy,” said Minister of Communications,

Innovation, and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani. NITDA's Director General, Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, emphasised President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's priority of accelerating diversification through industrialization, digitization, creative arts, manufacturing, and innovation. Mr. Latif Ladid, President of the Internet Protocol Version (IPv6) Forum, praised Nigeria's efforts.

NCC achieves 96% compliance in SIM-NIN linkage ahead of September 2024 deadline

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) announced that over 153 million Subscriber Identification Modules (SIMs) have been successfully linked to National Identity Numbers (NINs). This reflects an impressive compliance rate of

96%. It also marks a significant increase from the 69.7% compliance rate recorded in January 2024.

Reuben Muoka, NCC's Director of Public Affairs, highlighted the progress made in implementing the Federal Government's 2020

policy to link all SIMs to NINs, calling it a critical step towards enhancing Nigeria's digital security and economic growth. The NCC aims for complete compliance by September 15, 2024, ensuring that no SIM in Nigeria operates without a valid NIN.

S.Mobile launches API for seamless MTN data bundle integration in banking and fintech platforms

Banks and fintech companies can now directly integrate data bundle services into their platforms using the new Application Programming Interface (API) developed by S.Mobile for MTN data bundle distribution.

Adonu Kingsley, CEO of the Enugu-based S.Mobile, highlighted that this API allows banks and fintech companies to expand their service offerings, attract new customers, and increase engagement with their existing clientele.

This innovative solution is tailored to meet the needs of banks and fintech firms, offering a seamless, efficient, and scalable platform for distributing and managing data bundles. Designed with flexibility and ease of use in mind.

DBI and NATEP explore partnership to accelerate job creation and boost foreign exchange



The Digital Bridge Institute (DBI) and the National Talent Export Programme (NATEP) are in discussions to collaborate on accelerating NATEP's goal of creating one million jobs.

NATEP's National Coordinator, Dr. Olufemi Adeluyi, along with Barrister Henry Ogbogu and Ms.

Zainab Saka, visited DBI in Abuja to explore this strategic collaboration. DBI President/CEO, Daser David, emphasised the institute's commitment to evolving its training programs to meet rising global demands and ensure international recognition for its trainees.

"We're evolving our training

programs to meet the rising global demand and ensure that our trainees receive international recognition," said Daser David DBI, President/CEO of the DBI.

The DBI management team, including Ms. Viola Askia-Usoro, Mr. Nwanze Okonkwo, Mrs. Chinwe Alaribe, and Mr. Akin Ogunlade, "engaged with the NATEP team in alignment with President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda," added David who recently assumed duty as CEO of DBI.

NATEP is strategic to achieving Tinubu's agenda for job creation

President Tinubu launched the NATEP last year to shore up Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings. NATEP serves as a dedicated entity to address the unique needs and challenges faced by the talent and service export industry.

Nigerian government enacts Critical National Information Infrastructure Protection Order, 2024

The Nigerian government has officially signed the 'Designation and Protection of Critical National Information Infrastructure Order, 2024.' "This gazette now makes it an offense to wilfully damage assets such as telco towers/sites, switch stations, data centres, satellite infrastructure, submarine & fiber

optic cables, transmission equipment, e-government platforms, databases, among others," said Dr. Bosun Tijani, Minister of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy in a post.

He added: "This is a significant step that will strengthen and protect investments in the ICT sector by

reducing incidences capable of damaging the operations and functionality of our technological systems, infrastructure, and networks." Tijani emphasised the importance of safeguarding these Critical National Information Infrastructures (CNII) as a priority for the administration.

The Future AI Economy will take centre stage at GITEX GLOBAL 2024



- UAE takes the lead in AI as international markets face talent race to meet global demand
- The Future AI Economy will take centre stage at GITEX GLOBAL 2024, the world's largest tech and startup event, taking place from 14-18 October in Dubai

The global surge in Artificial Intelligence (AI) investments propelled by the increased demand in rising digital industries, from digital health and future finance to cybersecurity and public services, has ignited a race among businesses to secure specialized talents, sustain the relentless pace of their tech innovations, and their position among the early adopters of AI.

Goldman Sachs research has [forecasted](#) that global investment into AI could reach \$200 billion by 2025, while Bloomberg [reported](#) that the generative AI alone could have a \$1.3 trillion market value by 2032. This growth is driven by a widespread acknowledgement amongst global leaders that AI solutions are an increasingly vital tool for driving enhanced productivity and higher growth. As Thomas Pramotedham, CEO of Abu Dhabi-based AI enterprise Presight, recently [told](#) the GITEX Tech Waves podcast: “Today you'll see companies applying AI and AI evolving - in five, ten years' time, it will get smarter, and when it gets smarter, you'll get more efficiency and shorter routes to answers for

difficult and complex questions. In return, that will be to the betterment of society and the world we live in.” Such as Presight, over 3,500 of the world's most prestigious brands investing in AI solutions will converge at the Dubai World Trade Centre, from 14-18 October, for the world's largest tech and start-up event, GITEX GLOBAL 2024. The powerhouse exhibition and conference will bring together the biggest tech community in the world, from experts, founders, and investors to government leaders and senior executives, to showcase their breakthrough AI technologies, discuss mutual synergies, and forge key collaborations to catalyze future advancements in the industry. The landmark event will spotlight

the opportunities and challenges surrounding the AI global economy, including ethical development, quantum computing, large language models (LLM), policies and regulations, real implications of AI in edtech, health, and finance, and the future of work and employment. The rapid AI emergence still impacts the job market according to recent studies. In 2022, Deloitte [estimated](#) that there were only 22,000 AI specialists in the world while, last year, it was [predicted](#) that only half of all AI-related jobs could be filled.

UAE's Bold Steps in Creating the World's Future AI Economy

Leapfrogging several global markets, the response of the UAE, which has been increasingly successful as a [global hub](#) for the AI industry, consists of a robust long-term government agenda to harness the full potential of AI to empower individuals, communities, and organisations. Aligned with the UAE National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence and a clear vision to become the world leader in AI by

2031, the country has invested in integrating AI into public services, energy, tourism, and education. In Dubai, the leadership has shown profound commitment to making the emirate the world's fastest, most agile, and future-ready city by launching the Dubai Universal Blueprint for Artificial Intelligence. This highly strategic annual plan aims to accelerate the adoption of AI applications, looking at achieving the targets of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 by adding AED 100 billion, 27.2 billion dollars, yearly to the emirate's economy and boosting productivity by 50 per cent through the adoption of digital solutions.

GITEX GLOBAL 2024: A Powerful Platform for AI Experts and Leaders

As the world's largest tech and start-up event, GITEX GLOBAL is firmly aligned with the widely recognized UAE AI-driven economy, with Dubai as the fastest-growing international hub for AI experts, leaders, academics, and top voices in the industry.

Headliners include the most powerful tech giants driving AI dynamics globally, such as Adobe, Alibaba Cloud, AWS, Builder AI, Dell, G42, Google, HPE, IBM, Meta, Microsoft, Nvidia, Open AI, and Oracle, among many others. Middle East's premier companies and organisations advancing AI and projecting the region's native tech to the world, such as Presight, e&, Technology Innovation Institute (TII), and Khazna, will also present their products and innovations at the show.

A premier lineup of international speakers will join the stage for thought-provoking discussions in AI, featuring names such as Isabell Gradert, VP of Central Research and Technology at Airbus (Germany), Michael Spranger, President of Sony AI (Japan), Axel Voss, Member of the European Parliament (Belgium), Stephen Ibaraki, Founder of the UN/ITU AI for Good (Canada), Jong-Soo Choi, CTO of Samsung (South Korea), and Dr Priya Singhal, EVP of Biogen (USA).

More information about GITEX GLOBAL 2024 is available at:

www.gitex.com/

Nigerians turn to AI for career growth and creativity, Google search report reveals



A new Google Search report shows that Nigerians are increasingly using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to build careers and enhance creativity. The report reveals that Nigeria ranks sixth in Africa and 25th globally for search interest in AI. The highest AI search interest on the continent for

the first half of 2024 comes from South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. According to Google, data from January 1 to July 15, 2024, indicates that interest in AI grew by 150% in Kenya, 130% in Nigeria, and 120% in South Africa, compared to the same period last year. Kenya ranks fourth in Africa and 13th globally for AI search interest, while Nigeria is sixth in Africa and 25th worldwide. In Kenya, searches for “what is AI” increased by 60% year-over-year (YoY), while “how to use AI” searches rose by 90%. In

Nigeria, searches for “what is AI” grew by 30% YoY, and “how to use AI” searches increased by 40%. In South Africa, “what is AI” searches increased by 20% YoY, while “how to use AI” searches rose by 70%.

The report highlights that South Africans are interested in using AI to enhance their careers and creativity. Breakout searches including “AI image generator,” “AI writer,” “online AI chat,” and “logo maker AI,” grew over 5,000% in interest since last year.

Emefiele's Legacy: The interim forfeiture and the tragic tale of Nigeria's eNaira



Matters eRising with OLUSEGUN ORUAME

A Federal High Court in Lagos has ordered the interim forfeiture of \$2.04 million and seven properties linked to the former Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Godwin Emefiele. The ruling, issued by Justice Akintayo Aluko, follows an application by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which is investigating alleged fraudulent activities connected to Emefiele.

Emefiele's tenure at the CBN is marred by numerous allegations of corruption and mismanagement, with one of the most controversial being the launch of Nigeria's digital currency, the eNaira, in 2021.

The CBN engaged Bitt Inc., a fintech company with minimal market capitalization and just a handful of employees, as the technical partner for the eNaira project. Critics alleged that Bitt Inc. was a company tied to Emefiele and his associates, raising concerns about conflicts of interest and potential self-dealing. Emefiele even announced plans for the CBN to acquire a majority stake in Bitt Inc. after its registration in Nigeria, further fueling suspicions. Industry experts warned of missed opportunities to strengthen Nigeria's fintech ecosystem, reduce the country's reliance on foreign exchange, and enhance the value of the naira. They urged then-President Muhammadu Buhari to scrutinize

the contract, but their concerns were ignored, and Emefiele remained undeterred. Now, with Justice Aluko's ruling, Emefiele is forced to forfeit properties that include prime real estate in Lekki and Ikoyi, Lagos, as well as an industrial complex under construction in Agbor, Delta State. The properties are suspected to have been acquired through proceeds of unlawful activities. This judgment serves as a stark reminder of how initiatives like the eNaira were mismanaged under Emefiele's watch. The eNaira, launched with much fanfare as Africa's first central bank digital currency (CBDC), has struggled to gain traction. Despite promises from its promoters, adoption rates have been sluggish, and challenges persist.

Unlike cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ethereum, the eNaira is controlled by the CBN and is pegged at parity with the physical naira. However, its success hinges on building trust—a priority that was neglected by Emefiele.

A recent analysis by Vanguard Newspaper revealed that the value of eNaira in circulation increased by 302% in nine months to N10.26 billion by the end of September 2023. Yet, this growth has not translated into widespread adoption or usage. Although the CBN claimed over one million hits on the eNaira platform within 24 hours of its

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The state of the eNaira serves as a sombre commentary on the broader failings of the nation's financial governance.”

launch, many now see these numbers as a hollow victory, overshadowed by the deeper issues of trust and credibility.

The interim forfeiture judgment against Emefiele is more than just a legal decision; it is a condemnation of his tenure at the CBN. The eNaira, once hailed as a groundbreaking initiative, now stands as a tragic symbol of what happens when personal ambition and greed take precedence over national interest.

As Nigeria grapples with the economic challenges left in the wake of Emefiele's leadership, the state of the eNaira serves as a sombre commentary on the broader failings of the nation's financial governance.

'People-factor' is crucial for effective ICT policy implementation, says NASITDEA DG Haruna Sani *By Nana Theresa Timothy*

Haruna Sani Sani, Director General, Nasarawa State Information Technology and Digital Economy (NASITDEA), emphasises that the key to successfully implementing ICT policies lies in addressing the 'human or People-factor.'

He notes that resistance to change, particularly among civil servants, poses great challenges.

Transparency that is technology-driven can create apprehension among those used to established systems. "The biggest challenge are the people," Sani tells IT EdgeNews.Africa in a chat from Lafia town, capital of Nasarawa State.

He adds: "As the Director General of the Nasarawa State Information Technology and Digital Economy Agency. I understand that resistance to change, particularly from civil servants, poses a significant challenge in implementing ICT policies.

Technology brings about transparency, which can be met with apprehension by those accustomed to existing systems".

Vision is to harness technology to empower young people

Since assuming office about a year ago, Sani has aligned NASITDEA with Governor Abdullahi A. Sule's vision to support youth and enhance skillsets for the digital economy.

"As an Agency, we recognize the pivotal role that ICT can play in building skills among Nasarawa's youth. Our vision is to harness technology to empower young people, equipping them with the digital skills necessary for the modern workforce and fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.



“

In Nasarawa, our vision is to harness technology to empower young people, equipping them with the digital skills necessary for the modern workforce.”

To achieve this, we have put in place several initiatives.”

The agency is focused on improving citizens' experience with government services through technology. To achieve this, NASITDEA has launched various initiatives aimed at empowering young people with digital skills, fostering innovation, and addressing cybersecurity concerns.

“We are implementing widespread training and educational initiatives aimed at improving digital skills among our citizens, starting from schools to adult education programs,” says Sani.

Sani stresses the importance of gaining the confidence of civil servants and ensuring a

transparent and fair implementation process for new digital technologies. The agency has initiated widespread training and education programs to improve digital skills across different demographics, from students to adults. He says NASITDEA is focused on ensuring that all stakeholders understand and support “our ICT policies crucial for successful implementation.”

The agency is also working to address cybersecurity concerns by taking measures to protect the state's digital infrastructure from cyber threats.

He adds: “we are investing in robust cybersecurity frameworks and continuous monitoring systems to safeguard our digital assets.”

Streamlining Government Processes Despite challenges, including funding

constraints, NASITDEA is exploring diverse funding sources to sustain its ICT initiatives. With the support of Governor Sule, Sani underscores the agency's commitment to reforming bureaucratic processes, enhancing service delivery, and fostering a culture of acceptance and collaboration

“We are working on reforming bureaucratic processes to make them more agile and responsive, ensuring timely implementation of our policies. By addressing resistance with a combination of communication, training, incentives, and inclusive practices, we aim to foster a culture of acceptance and collaboration,” says Sani.

Critical satellite infrastructure starts deployment in Africa

The first of a series of PUMA-2025 receiving stations specifically designed to capture data from the next-generation of Meteosat geostationary satellites was installed recently in Nairobi, Kenya. It will ensure that Kenyan meteorologists can use the most accurate and

frequent data from the Meteosat-Third Generation (MTG) satellites to support the sustainable development of local communities and protect lives and livelihoods. EUMETSAT supports the African Union Commission's effort to set up a network of similar stations in

several national weather and climate services across the entire continent in the following months. This will empower most African meteorologists and scientists with the most recent technology to receive and use MTG data.

Countries strengthening cybersecurity efforts, but increased action still required

Countries around the globe are improving cybersecurity efforts, but stronger actions are needed to meet evolving cyberthreats, according to the Global Cybersecurity Index 2024, released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). On average, countries have taken more cybersecurity-related actions and improved their cybersecurity

commitments since the last index was released in 2021.

Worrisome threats highlighted in the report include ransomware attacks targeting government services and other sectors, cyber breaches affecting core industries, costly system outages, and breaches of privacy for individuals and organizations.

“Building trust in the digital world is paramount. The progress seen in the Global Cybersecurity Index is a sign that we must continue to focus efforts to ensure that everyone, everywhere can safely and securely manage cyberthreats in today's increasingly complex digital landscape,” said Doreen Bogdan-Martin, ITU Secretary-General.

FG and Google launch ₦100m AI Fund to boost Nigerian startups and drive innovation



The Federal Government of Nigeria, through the National Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (NCAIR), has introduced a 100 million AI Fund to support Nigerian startups leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create innovative solutions. The initiative, launched with backing from Google, aims to accelerate AI-driven

entrepreneurship and economic growth in the country. “This AI Fund is a crucial step in nurturing local innovation that addresses Nigeria's unique challenges while contributing to national economic growth. By empowering our startups, we are investing in their success and in the future of Nigeria's digital economy,”

said Dr. 'Bosun Tijani, Minister of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy, during the launch event in Abuja.

Google's West Africa Director, Olumide Balogun, emphasised that this partnership aligns with Google's goal of building Africa-focused digital solutions and supporting innovation across the continent. “Our collaboration with Google reflects our shared vision for Nigeria's technological advancement. The AI Fund aims to provide our entrepreneurs with the necessary resources to create transformative AI solutions. We are excited to see the innovative projects that will emerge,” said Dr. Bunmi Ajala, National Coordinator of NCAIR.

House of Reps demands BPE accountability over N10B NIPOST company registration expenses

The House of Representatives has called on the Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE) to provide a detailed account of approximately N10 billion allegedly spent on registering two companies for the Nigeria Postal Service (NIPOST). The call was made by Rep. Bamidele

Salam, Chairman of the House Committee on Public Accounts, during a resumed investigative hearing in Abuja. Salam questioned the justification for such a significant expenditure, stating, "No reasonable Nigerian will believe that N10.4 billion was spent to register

the two companies, which eventually folded up one year after their launch." The two companies, NIPOST Transport and Logistics Ltd., and NIPOST Property, were reportedly launched in May 2023 but ceased operations by May 2024, following a Presidential directive.

NCC launches device management system to boost mobile security and consumer protection

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has introduced the Device Management System (NCC-DMS), a robust solution aimed at enhancing security and protecting consumers in Nigeria's mobile device market. The new initiative, called the 'Type Approval Business Rule 2024', mandates that all Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) in the country connect to the NCC-DMS.

The primary objectives of the system are to improve security, enforce regulatory compliance, and increase control over mobile devices across Nigeria. Acting as a Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR), the NCC-DMS will serve as a unified database, enabling the tracking and monitoring of mobile devices on all networks. By registering and monitoring

devices, the NCC aims to curb the use of unapproved devices and combat issues like phone theft and fraudulent activities involving mobile gadgets. This new system promises stricter control, ensuring that only authorized devices are used across Nigeria's communication networks, thus promoting safer and more regulated mobile usage.

Galaxy Backbone strengthens digital transformation partnership with Benue State following Alia's visit

Galaxy Backbone (GBB) is deepening its partnership with Benue State following a comprehensive tour of its advanced digital infrastructure facilities in Abuja by Governor Reverend Father Dr. Hycinth Iormem Alia. This visit marks a significant step forward in GBB's mission to drive digital transformation across Nigeria through strategic collaborations with all 36 states of the federation. Governor Alia was given an in-depth tour of Galaxy Backbone's Uptime Certified Tier III Data



Centre, Security Operations Centre (SOC), and Network Operations Centre (NOC). These facilities underscore GBB's commitment to delivering top-tier digital infrastructure and cybersecurity solutions. These state-of-the-art centres are pivotal to the company's vision of supporting national and

state-level ICT development. "Our visit signifies our commitment to advancing Benue State's technological infrastructure," said Governor Alia. GBB's Managing Director/CEO, Professor Ibrahim Adeyanju, reiterated the company's dedication to delivering robust digital infrastructure. GBB is already strengthening its market presence as a provider of comprehensive services, including cloud computing, colocation, connectivity, and cybersecurity.

NIGCOMSAT CEO says launch of NigComSat-2 will boost Nigeria's space and communication capabilities

Nigeria is set to take a significant step forward in its space and communication infrastructure with the planned launch of NigComSat-2, a new communication satellite.

The CEO of Nigerian Communications Satellite Ltd (NIGCOMSAT), Mrs. Jane Nkechi Egerton-Idehen, made this announcement during an event in Lagos, affirming the country's

commitment to advancing its space capabilities despite current economic challenges.

Egerton-Idehen addressed recent doubts about Nigeria's ability to follow through on its plans for a second communication satellite, stating, "I am excited to share with you our plans to launch NigComSat-2 in the near future. This satellite represents the next phase in our

commitment to advancing Nigeria's space capabilities and providing world-class satellite services."

The NigComSat-2 satellite will significantly enhance NIGCOMSAT's capacity to deliver high-speed communication services across Nigeria and beyond. It is designed to support a wide range of applications, including broadband internet, telemedicine, and e-learning.

EFCC freezes ₦548.6m linked to ByBit and KuCoin amid forex and tax evasion probe

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has obtained a Nigerian court order to freeze 548.6 million (approximately \$670,000 USD) held in accounts tied to users of ByBit and KuCoin. This action is part of a broader federal campaign targeting foreign exchange violations and tax evasion linked to foreign crypto platforms.

The court order accuses ByBit and KuCoin of facilitating activities that devalue the Nigerian naira. The EFCC claims that these cryptocurrency platforms have been instrumental in "price discovery, confirmation, and market manipulation." These actions led to sharp fluctuations in the naira's value. The commission highlighted

an instance on April 18, 2024, where the naira plummeted from N1,250 to N1,980 against the US dollar in the black market.

According to the EFCC, 22 frozen bank accounts were used by individuals to exchange naira for USDT. The USDT is a stablecoin pegged to the US dollar at rates harmful to Nigeria's economy.

Vertiv unveils innovative cloud-based solution for optimized edge infrastructure management in EMEA

As AI workloads pivot to the network edge, the need for enhanced visibility at these remote data centre sites has become increasingly apparent.

Recognising this, Vertiv (NYSE: VRT), a leading provider of critical digital infrastructure and continuity solutions, has introduced Vertiv™ Environet™ Connect, a cloud-connected and web-based fleet management and

monitoring solution.

It features a device-agnostic interface that can handle diverse data centre infrastructure equipment across multiple locations, regardless of the manufacturer. Environet™ Connect is now available in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), and in North America.

Environet Connect speeds the deployment of remote Vertiv

equipment and improves its health and efficiency through mass provisioning and firmware updates of network management cards. The system's monitoring capability enhances the oversight of critical infrastructure and provides customisable and configurable alarm notifications. Monitoring covers UPS systems, rack power distribution units (PDUs), generators, and thermal units.

Gbajabiamila praises NASENI's technological innovations and product advancements

The Chief of Staff to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila, has praised the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI) for its technological advancements, innovative products, and contributions to various economic sectors.

During a familiarization visit to NASENI in Abuja, Gbajabiamila expressed his admiration for the agency's efforts. The Chief of Staff, accompanied by the Deputy Chief of Staff, Senator Ibrahim Hadeija, and the Permanent Secretary of the State House, Engr. Olufunso Adebisi explored NASENI's facilities. This included a test drive of its electric vehicle pick-up van,



and visit to the Hatch Box, and Innovation Hub. They also reviewed new products like the Home Solar system, Solar Irrigation Pump, Prepaid Meter, Laptop, Smartphone, and Battery, among others.

Gbajabiamila commended Executive Vice Chairman/CEO Khalil Suleiman Halilu after touring the NASENI Complex for the new projects and products initiated under his management.

Nigerians criticize N100m AI Fund as inadequate: Tech community reacts to minister's AI launch

Nigerians have expressed frustration over the recently launched ₦100 million AI Fund, initiated by the Minister of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani. Many, particularly within the tech community, believe the amount is insufficient to make any meaningful impact in Nigeria's burgeoning AI sector.

The Federal Government, through the National Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (NCAIR), introduced the ₦100 million AI Fund to support Nigerian startups leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create innovative solutions. Backed by Google, the initiative is aimed at fostering AI-driven entrepreneurship and contributing to economic growth.

However, critics were quick to point out that the fund, amounting to approximately \$61,000, pales in comparison to the capital required to drive significant AI innovation. Nigerians have taken to social media to express their disappointment, with many calling the sum "a waste of public time."

Global Inclusivity and AI Conference highlights Africa's potential to leverage AI for sustainable development



Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents significant opportunities for Nigeria and Africa to accelerate their development goals, according to participants at the "Global Inclusivity and AI: Africa" conference in Lagos from September 10-11, 2024. The two-day event was co-hosted by the U.S. Department of State and Nigeria's Ministry of

Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy. The event hosted over 200 attendees that discussed the future of AI in Africa. They included U.S. and African government officials, private sector leaders, civil society representatives, and academic experts.

"AI offers real opportunities to advance Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

and address key challenges like global health, food security, education, and climate change," said U.S. Ambassador Richard Mill in his closing remarks.

"According to Prof. Ibrahim Adeyanju, Managing Director/CEO of Galaxy Backbone Limited, Nigeria's contribution to global AI advancements depends on strengthening infrastructure and partnerships.

Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, Director General of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), highlighted the transformative potential of AI in Africa.

Minister of Communications, Innovation, and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani, reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to leveraging AI for national development. He outlined plans for creating structured policy support to promote AI adoption across all sectors.

NIGCOMSAT offers support to telcos facing economic challenges, aims to bridge Nigeria's digital divide

The Nigerian Communications Satellite Ltd (NIGCOMSAT) has extended a hand of support to telecom operators struggling with poor network services due to economic pressures. The publicly-owned satellite company is offering its solutions and services to help these operators enhance their offerings amidst mounting inflation, forex devaluation, and unsustainable service tariffs, which are impacting their ability to roll out and expand infrastructure.

NIGCOMSAT has a portfolio of offerings designed to support



telecommunications companies, including providing access to Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and enabling payments in local currency to mitigate the challenges

posed by forex fluctuations.

“We have been working diligently to upgrade our infrastructure, particularly our hubs in Lagos and Abuja, to provide communication solutions that meet global standards. Our service delivery team is committed to ensuring reliable support for all our offerings, such as broadband internet, direct-to-home (DTH) services, transponder leasing, and broadcast services,” said NIGCOMSAT CEO Mrs. Jane Nkechi Egerton-Idehen.

NITDA and Brevity Anderson announce Digital Nigeria International Conference & Exhibition 2024

The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), in partnership with Brevity Anderson, has announced the Digital Nigeria International Conference & Exhibition (DNICE) 2024. Scheduled for October 22nd to 24th, 2024, this event will bring

together global leaders, industry experts, innovators, academics, and policymakers under the theme “Empowering a Digital Future.”

As Nigeria advances toward becoming a leading digital economy, the 2024 conference will serve as a key platform for

dialogue, collaboration, networking, and innovation. The event will feature a diverse array of keynote speeches, panel discussions, workshops, product showcases, and exhibitions designed to promote the growth of Nigeria's digital ecosystem.

CAC to enforce shutdown of unregistered POS operators after September deadline

The Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) has announced its intention to clamp down on Point of Sale (POS) operators, also referred to as Fintech operators, following the expiration of its September 5, 2024, deadline for mandatory registration. Operators who have failed to comply with the registration directive risk being

shut down.

In July, the CAC issued a directive requiring POS operators to register their businesses as formal entities. However, the commission expressed disappointment in a recent statement, citing low compliance rates despite the large number of POS operators across the country.

“We want to make it clear that the Commission is collaborating with law enforcement agencies and other relevant stakeholders to implement a comprehensive enforcement and sanction framework. This may result not only in the shutdown of non-compliant businesses but also in severe legal consequences,” the CAC warned.

NDPC chief calls for greater collaboration to strengthen data protection and digital trust in Nigeria



Dr. Vincent Olatunji, National Commissioner and CEO of the Nigeria Data Protection Commission (NDPC), has called for increased collaboration to address the challenges and opportunities in

the data protection ecosystem. Speaking at the 16th Annual Conference of ISACA in Abuja, Dr. Olatunji emphasized that data protection is a collective responsibility that affects everyone. During his closing keynote address, titled “Harnessing Digital Trust for Inclusive Financial and Technological Access,” Dr. Olatunji highlighted the crucial role of digital trust and data protection in achieving financial inclusion. He noted that as financial inclusion in Nigeria rises—from 56% in 2020 to 64% in 2023, according to the

EFInA Access to Finance (A2F) Survey Report—the importance of robust data protection measures also increases to safeguard all participants in the financial ecosystem. Dr. Olatunji underscored the role of trust in the digital era, stating that operators, regulators, and users must collaborate to ensure a secure and reliable system. He advocated for strong organizational and technological measures to protect digital footprints, which are essential for fostering greater trust and confidence in digital technologies within Nigeria.

TD Africa launches automated Microsoft CSP platform for license reselling across 47 African countries

TD Africa has unveiled its fully automated Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider (CSP) platform, opening new avenues for growth and profitability for businesses of all sizes across Africa. The platform enables Microsoft's indirect resellers to effortlessly resell Microsoft licenses in 47 African countries,

providing enhanced security, increased productivity, better collaboration, and flexibility. The automated CSP platform streamlines the entire licensing process—from customer onboarding to license provisioning—by eliminating manual tasks and reducing

turnaround times. This allows businesses to focus on delivering exceptional customer value while maximizing their revenue potential. With competitive pricing and a wide range of Microsoft cloud products, businesses of all sizes can now expand their reach and accelerate digital transformation.

Kaduna State partners with Huawei to launch ambitious smart city project

The Kaduna State Government has formalised a partnership with Huawei Technologies Nigeria Limited to launch the Kaduna Smart City Project, aimed at transforming the state into a safer, more efficient, and technology-driven hub. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed at Huawei's Beijing office, witnessed by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, along with Nigerian governors, ministers, and senior officials during his recent official visit to China. Governor Uba Sani highlighted that



the Smart City Project is set to enhance security, improve the efficiency and transparency of public services, and attract investment and talent to the state. The initiative is part of Kaduna's broader strategy to become an economic and technological hub in northern

Nigeria. Huawei will act as the strategic partner, delivering comprehensive solutions in areas such as unified command, intelligent traffic systems, enhanced security, smart education, e-government, healthcare, ICT talent development, renewable energy, and public transportation. A joint committee will be established to oversee the project's implementation, funding, and technological deployment, ensuring sustainability and value for Kaduna's citizens.

Nigerian government requires NIN for subsidised rice purchases amid shift to digital identity

Potential buyers of a 50kg bag of rice at the subsidised price of N40,000 will need to present their National Identification Number (NIN) before making a purchase, the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Sen. Abubakar Kyari, revealed to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). This move aligns with the government's increasing emphasis

on using digital identity for delivering services and products to citizens. The sale of 30,000 metric tonnes of milled rice at subsidised rates has commenced nationwide, with the government verifying buyers through their NIN to ensure transparency and prevent fraud. This initiative is designed to provide relief amid current economic

challenges and to ensure that each person is limited to one 50kg bag. Kyari explained, "Prospective buyers will be verified using identification mediums such as NIN and phone numbers to prevent multiple purchases by fraudulent individuals."

TEDS 2024: Celebrating a decade of innovation and driving Nigeria's digital transformation



TEDS 2024 is marking a significant milestone in Nigeria's tech industry as it celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Young Innovators of Nigeria (YIN). Hosted by YIN and the Network of Incubators and Innovators in Nigeria (NIINE), the second Technology Ecosystem Dialogue Summit Series (TEDS 2024) will bring together key stakeholders

to discuss the pivotal role of digital technology in boosting Nigeria's revenue management and energy security. The summit, scheduled for October 16-17, 2024, at PTDF Towers and Conference Centre, Abuja, aims to foster collaboration between the public and private sectors, integrating

innovative technological solutions into Nigeria's revenue systems. "These efforts align with both national priorities and global best practices, promoting sustainable economic development, fiscal governance, and stability," said Abu Andrew, Founder of YIN.

Accra Institute of Technology to lead global AI integration in higher education

In a bold move, the Accra Institute of Technology (AIT) has committed to becoming one of the first universities worldwide to fully integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) across all facets of its operations. The groundbreaking initiative was announced by AIT President, Professor Clement Dzidonu, during

the institution's 20th graduation ceremony.

“We are at the dawn of an AI revolution, and universities across the world are exploring ways to integrate these technologies into their core functions,” Professor Dzidonu remarked.

Dzidonu emphasized the

transformative impact AI will have on higher education. He outlined AIT's strategy to lead this shift by embedding AI across 12 critical stages of the student lifecycle. These stages include curriculum development, program delivery, assessments, research, and alumni engagement.

Sierra Leone signs \$50m deal with China for digital transformation and agriculture boost



The Government of Sierra Leone, through its Ministry of Communications, Technology, and Innovation, has signed a USD\$50 million agreement with China National Technical Import & Export Corporation for the implementation of the SMART Sierra Leone Project. The agreement, signed on the sidelines of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Summit in Beijing, marks a major step forward in Sierra Leone's push

for digital transformation.

President Julius Maada Bio, during the signing ceremony, emphasized the project's three key objectives: expanding internet connectivity to over 400,000 unconnected citizens, building national data centers to safeguard sovereign data, and strengthening security for critical state infrastructure in Freetown. Sierra Leone's internet penetration rate was 21.2% as of early 2023.

Huawei to establish joint PV test lab with Nigeria's Rural Electrification Agency

Huawei plans to establish a joint PV test lab with Nigeria's Rural Electrification Agency (REA) as part of the efforts to achieve the shared goals of both nations. Huawei announced this when President Tinubu visited the company Tuesday as part of a separate engagement during President Tinubu's official visit to China.

Part of the REA mandate is to promote rural electrification in

the country; co-ordinate rural electrification programs; and administer the Rural Electrification Fund (REF). The PV test lab will help the REA in validating different products and solutions for vibration, durability, reliability, and stability under 'three highs' conditions before deployment.

President Tinubu's official visit to China precedes his participation

in the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, scheduled to hold from September 4-6, 2024. At the meeting President Tinubu and Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the elevation of Nigeria-China ties to that of a comprehensive strategic partnership.

Staying Ahead in the Digital Economy Oluwaseun Dania on innovation and tech solutions at Alpha-Geek Technologies

Oluwaseun Dania, founder and lead consultant of Alpha-Geek Technologies, shares insights on how his company stays ahead in a fast-paced digital landscape by delivering cutting-edge IT solutions tailored to the evolving demands of the digital economy. A visionary in finance, blockchain, and Web3, Dania leads a team of skilled digital and technical consultants, providing innovative solutions across a variety of industry sectors, helping businesses thrive in the ever-changing technological ecosystem.

How do you rate Alpha-Geek Technologies' acceptance alongside other competitors who have been around longer?

Our services stand out for their uniqueness and quality, which our clients can attest to. While other companies may have been around longer, we deliver innovative solutions that are second to none, helping us establish a strong foothold in the market.

What's your company's growth strategy in next 10 years with the shift towards a digital economy by both government and the private sector?

We are strategically positioning ourselves as the backbone for IT infrastructure across diverse sectors. By staying ahead of technological advancements, our team is committed to providing cutting-edge solutions that align with the evolving needs of the digital economy.

Is Alpha-Geek Technologies looking to expand beyond Nigeria and how does the company plan to approach this?



Yes. We are already present in Ghana and serve a global audience through our digital platforms. Our goal is to maintain a strong local presence while expanding our international reach, leveraging our expertise to offer top-tier services globally.

As an IT solutions provider, how is Alpha-Geek Technologies utilising emerging technologies such as AI to enhance its business?

We have integrated AI into our DIY website content development platform, offering customers enhanced options for content creation and value delivery. Additionally, our team is actively developing AI-driven solutions that will cater to various industries, further driving innovation and efficiency.

**“
We are positioning ourselves as the backbone for IT infrastructure across diverse sector**



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NIPOST targets ₦10b revenue boost through strategic expansion and technological innovation

The Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST) has set an ambitious target to achieve a ₦10 billion revenue increase through strategic expansion and innovation, according to Postmaster General and CEO, Mrs. Tola Odeyemi. She shared this vision during the opening of a three-day Strategic Management Retreat in Abuja, attended by NIPOST management, directors, and postal managers from across the country.



Mrs. Odeyemi emphasized the leadership's commitment to transforming NIPOST into a

dynamic agency that not only supports government operations but also makes a tangible difference in the lives of ordinary Nigerians. A significant component of this transformation is a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), aimed at reducing transportation costs for the 22 million businesses registered with SMEDAN by 15%.

Hotspot Network and Solarkiosk Solutions ink joint venture for rural connectivity and energy in Nigeria



Hotspot Network Limited, a leading last-mile connectivity and telecom tower operator in Nigeria, and Solarkiosk Solutions GmbH, a Pan-African leader in off-grid solar energy, have formed a groundbreaking joint venture to deliver innovative energy and connectivity solutions to rural communities in Nigeria.

The joint venture (JV), known as Hotspot-Solarkiosk, will function as both an Energy Service Company (ESCO) and an Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor. It aims to deploy cutting-edge technology solutions and services to enhance connectivity and solar energy access across

Nigeria. The primary mission of this partnership is to economically empower rural off-grid communities through sustainable energy and improved connectivity.

The new JV will be addressing energy situation in Nigeria's rural areas which is particularly dire. Only 41.1% of the population in rural Nigeria have access to the grid, most of whom receive less than 12 hours of electricity per day. A GSMA survey found that telecom operators in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria, often face power outages, lack of grid access, high energy costs, and challenges in adopting renewable energy. Nigeria's energy poverty index is 0.38, indicating that more than half of the households are energy poor, driven by surging energy demand, insufficient supply, and low income.

Logidoo launches Afridoo to streamline e-commerce for African merchants

Logidoo, a leading logistics solutions provider committed to enhancing trade across Africa, has launched Afridoo, an innovative tool designed to simplify online sales and empower African merchants. Afridoo offers a comprehensive solution tailored for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), individual merchants, and companies aiming to establish or expand their presence in Africa's rapidly

evolving e-commerce landscape. With Afridoo, businesses across the continent can streamline their online operations, broaden their market reach, and tackle logistical challenges more effectively.

The user-friendly platform integrates an Order Management System (OMS), a Warehouse Management System (WMS), and a Last Mile Management System (LMS), providing a unique combination that allows SMEs and

individual merchants to efficiently manage all aspects of their online stores. From inventory management and order processing to customer relationship management, Afridoo simplifies operations and fosters business growth. "Afridoo eliminates the complexities of managing separate platforms for inventory, orders, and deliveries," said Tamsir Ousmane Traoré, CEO of Logidoo.



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Since 2013, Pinnacle has offered investment insights and advisory services; facilitated business networks, partnerships and collaborations to Nigerian public and private organisations. It has provided extensive support services and managed international exposure for a number of startups within the Nigerian startup ecosystem.

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