

## Rare mix of producers and filmmakers to meet at BFMA Conference

The Broadcast, Film and Music Africa ([BFMA](#)) conference opening tomorrow in Nairobi has producers and film experts from the USA's Hollywood, Nigeria's Nollywood and India's Bollywood in the list of experts speaking at the conference.



According to the final line-up of speakers released to media at a press conference, held last week, by UK-headquartered firm AITEC Africa and the conference's country-host partners Kenya ICT Board and the Kenya Film Commission, the conference will feature over 16 nationalities and includes leading-edge presentations on broadcasting models, media audience research, sustainable content production, multi-casting and programming in media. Other topics include African film and music distribution as well as creative venture financing.

Sean Moroney, chairman of AITEC Africa, who is the programme director for the conference, disclosed that the US film industry would be represented by three firms, while Nigeria's burgeoning media industry will have five speakers.

"We have dynamic new-media success stories from both Nigeria and Ghana involving newly established music online distribution, filmmaking and emerging TV broadcasting models," said Moroney.

The Nigerian film and broadcast executives include Jason Njoku, founder and CEO of iROKOTv; Gregory Olumuya of Royal Roots Communications and Eric Idiahi, CEO of Spinlet Nigeria (which has gained a reputation as Africa's iTunes service for its music distribution model).

During the event also, leading international broadcaster Discovery Channel will screen a new film, the "Insi Story", courtesy of Bruce Rabinowitz, who will be presenting it at the conference. The screening will mark the introduction to African broadcasters of the African starred film on HIV.

### Meet-the-Venture Capitalist

Various billed as one of the largest gathering of broadcasters and filmmakers in Africa, BFMA this year features the first "meet-the-Venture Capitalist" platform referred to as the Africa Media Business Exchange. The exchange is a platform where new broadcasting, animation, advertising and film businesses will get to pitch their business ideas to leading venture capitalist with interest in Africa's growing media and creative content industries.

"Venture capitalists are excited about the prospects in the Africa creative content industry and this is the inspiration behind this platform. We want to ensure that it is ideas that determine how high an artist really flies," said Chiaka Orjiako of FilmBiz Africa, who is directing the platform. The investment funds participating in the Media Business Exchange include the Netherlands-based Media Ventures Fund, InvesteqCapital, the

US-based Acumen Fund, 88 Mph, Speed Capital and InReturn Capital. South Africa based Convergence Partners is also attending.

Paul Kukubo, CEO of Kenya ICT Board, which is sharing the country-host partner title with the Kenya Film Commission, said hosting the conference again for the fourth time in Nairobi was a milestone.

"We are happy that the Broadcast, Film and Music Africa conference is bringing knowledge from all over the world yet again to East Africa. This conference confronts important issues whose discussions will support the growth of technology and media industries," he said.

On his part, Peter Mutie, the Kenya Film Commission CEO has appealed to broadcasters, filmmakers, animators and other players in the creative content development space to 'find time, interact and brainstorm at the conference.

"We are particularly excited about the depth of the programme as experts from all walks of life share their experiences in the broadcast and film business. This will boost knowledge, inspire quality and instill wisdom in new ventures," he said.

## **Keynote presentations**

Keynote presentations will include that of US based Manu Savani, CEO of Gala Entertainment Corporation which produces and distributes film and TV programmes in the US and Asia. The *Economic Times* at one time described Savani as a leading distributor of Hollywood films in various continents. He has served on the board of the Emmy awards.

Mohinder Walia, CEO of Media Guru, India and a famed turn-around industry leader for entertainment and broadcasting businesses, will give a keynote speech on media partnerships opportunities between India and Africa. Walia has headed various entertainment companies in Hollywood, including Fox Television Studios and several broadcasting concerns in Mumbai and has over 20 years' experience in management.

Other notable participants include Michael Dearham, senior vice-president Cote Ouest in Mauritius, one of the region's most successful TV content developer and distribution companies. His presentation is titled "Overall analysis of production levels, innovations, budgets and financing ecology in the African audiovisual market".

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