



Executive Profile Herbert Mensah

Herbert Mensah, an alumnus of Sussex University in the UK, is a self-made, highly successful businessman who has also developed and produced some of the biggest and most memorable media extravaganzas in Ghana.

A major driving force of Herbert's - namely a passion to play a significant role in the development of Africa - has led him to become involved in the arena of Sports Management in which he has employed his leadership, charisma and resources to change the face of football in Ghana, and continues to do so.

In his quest to make a significant contribution to the development of Africa, he has also initiated various ongoing research and development projects ranging from renewable energy to regional economic cooperation ventures.

Leading the cellular phone industry in Africa

Before cellular telephony came to the continent of Africa, Herbert read the market trends and positioned himself to take advantage of this life-changing technology. This foresight resulted in Herbert becoming the biggest mobile handset distributor between 1992 and 2006 in sub-Saharan Africa outside South Africa when he led the market with distributorships for Motorola, Sony Ericsson and Nokia.

Between 2005 and 2007 Herbert also established a state-of-the-art Level 3 Motorola and Nokia-certified mobile phone and repair centre in Accra to fill the void of after sales support created by most manufacturers.

Anticipating and exploiting major opportunities



The 1994 elections in South Africa spelled unprecedented opportunities for African businessmen who could pre-empt these opportunities. Herbert identified the spread of MNET, a South African digital satellite TV network, into Africa and managed to negotiate the position as Country Manager for Ghana. This allowed him to develop and implement some of the biggest extravaganzas experienced in Ghana including:

Face-of-Africa finals in Ghana (1998/1999). This fashion model search and selection event was covered by international media with stars from across the world including The Emotions, Akosua Busia, Meikway, Oswald Boateng, Miss Universe and a host of modelling and beauty celebrities from around the world.

M-NET African Showcase (1995). Under Herbert's tenure the biggest African Fashion and music extravaganza dubbed the M-NET African Showcase was organised in Accra. It brought glitterati of stars together – amongst them the guest of honour Zindzi Mandela, daughter of Nelson Mandela.

Max Brito Charity Extravaganza (1996). Max Brito was paralysed during the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa. On recommendation of Herbert, the biggest charity sports extravaganza ever was organised with MNET as sponsors. The British and South African National Rugby teams were brought to Ghana and substantial funds were generated to support Max Brito and other less fortunate sports stars in Ghana.



Between 1995 and 2000 Herbert also represented the BBC in Ghana, with the responsibility of liaising with the media and Government on all aspect of radio programming and recommendations on marketing and PR matters.

Investing in Africa's development through sport and the youth

Rebuilding Kumasi Asante Kotoko



In 1999, Herbert was appointed as Chairman of Kumasi Asante Kotoko by the then King of the Ashantis, Opoku Ware II. At that stage the club had for all practical purposes disintegrated. Herbert devised a five-year strategic plan that would ensure excellence both on and off the field. This ambitious plan included the introduction of international coaches, development of professional training facilities, sourcing of sponsorships, development of revenue sources through a club-owned newspaper and other supporter-driven initiatives. The development of a modern centre of excellence and stadium for the club was on the cards when Herbert's tenure ended in 2003. In December of the preceding year, Kotoko were runners-up in the African Cup Winners Cup (now Confederation Cup).

It is generally acknowledged that Herbert's involvement with Kotoko set the scene for many changes in Ghanaian football, en route to becoming professional.

Sports and Marketing Management Consultancy



SOS (Strategic Outsourcing Solutions) Networkx was established by Herbert in 2004 with the objective of providing professional management services to football clubs on the continent. The essence of the consultancy can be found in its International network of technical, medical and marketing resources.

In 2004, SOS Network managed to acquire the services of German International coach Ernst Middendorp on behalf of Accra Hearts of Oak Sporting Club, to assist them in their quest for success in the CAF African Tournaments. The club went on to win the first ever CAF Confederation Cup that year.

Prosport Ghana



In 2007 Herbert teamed up with Prosport International to establish an associated company in Ghana with the objective to assist the vast pool of exceptional talent in the West African Region to reach their full potential through professional management of the players on-and-off the field.

Club Ownership en Route to a Centre of Excellence



Herbert acquired Royal Knights FC, a 1st Division Team in Ghana, in 2007. An International coach was appointed to guide the development of players of exceptional quality. This step is viewed by Herbert as an extension of his youth development initiatives, and negotiations have been initiated with international investors for the establishment of a world class Centre of Excellence and Youth Academy.

Other Business Developments

Herbert's philosophy that Africa generally and Ghana specifically provide huge opportunities that are currently subject to feasibility studies initiated by him. The most important of these include:

Biofuels

The developing world has been identified as a major potential provider of feedstock for the production of biofuels. Very few successes have, however, been recorded and indications are that these failures are mostly due to an unprofessional approach to the business development process. Herbert has identified this as an area of importance in light of pressures to find solutions for global warming, and has launched an investigation into the feasibility of establishing a biodiesel plant in Ghana in association with a leading research institute in India.

Ghana Gateway Project

Herbert has always held the view that Ghana is strategically in an excellent position to fulfil a more important role in African and world economics. The country is geographically about six hours from Europe, the USA, Dubai and South Africa. It boasts a stable and business-friendly environment with English as its main language.

Herbert has therefore initiated research in order to formalise a concrete proposal to fulfil the true potential of Ghana in its role as the gateway to the sub-region.

References

His Excellency President J. J. Rawlings

Republic of Ghana (1992 – 2000)

His Excellency Alhaji Alliu Mahama

Vice President, Republic of Ghana (2001 – 2008)

Mrs. Irene Charnley

Non-Executive Director: MTN; Non-Executive Director: FirstRand Bank;
Director: Johnic. South Africa.

Prof. Yaw Nyarko

Vice-Provost, New York University, New York, USA.

Mr. Paul Temple

Senior Partner, Baker Tilly, Peterborough, UK.

Mr. Etienne Heyns

Former Director of Marketing and Development, M-NET; Sales and Marketing
Manager, Graham Beck Wines, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Mr. Lazarus Zim

Chair: Northam Platinum; Chair: Mvelaphanda Resources Ltd; Chair: Kumba
Iron Ore. South Africa.

Further Enquiries

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