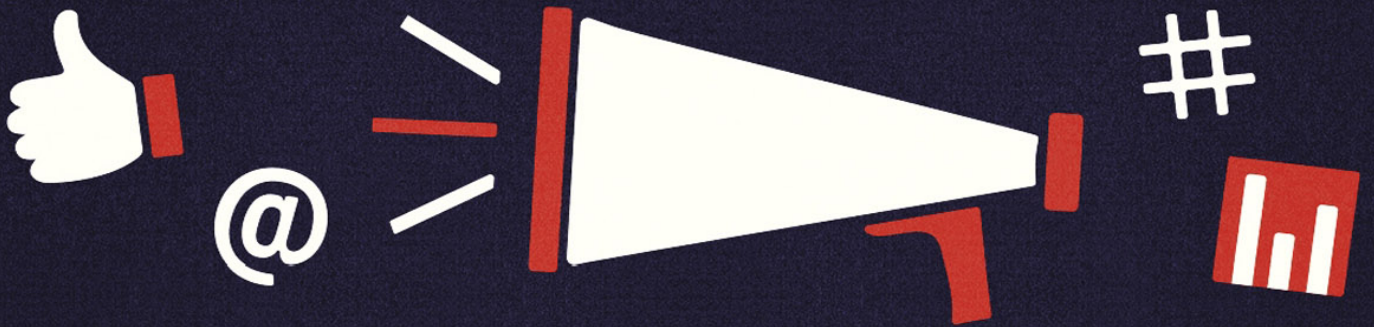


FOREWORD BY
NANDO'S

How To...



BUILD it

GROW YOUR BRAND

NIRAN VINOD & DAMOLA TIMEYIN

How To... BUILD it

GROW YOUR BRAND

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WRITE-ON PAGES

Any references to '*writing in this book*' refer to the original printed version.

Readers should write on a separate piece of paper in these instances.

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About the Authors

Niran Vinod is a creative strategist at the Creative Shop at Facebook and Instagram, working with fashion and retail brands and agencies to help them maximise their creative potential on the platforms. He has previous experience at We Are Social, Independents United and AKQA, where Niran bridged his knowledge of photography, design and technology and the worlds of commerce, content and community for over ten years.

Damola Timeyin is a creative strategist for Facebook and Instagram. He was formerly a strategy director and partner at Bartle Bogle Hegarty. He has delivered everything from social to brand strategy for household brands such as Tesco, Weetabix and Clarks Shoes. He is also Head of Strategy for creative network People of Culture Collective (PoCC) and mentors young people who want to break into the creative industries.

Born out of South Africa, made famous in the UK, arguably Nando's has become as big a part of British culture as drinking tea. More than just PERi-PERi chicken and chips, Nando's continues to be the best and most loved restaurant brand, treating its customers like its family and putting culture at its core.

FOREWORD BY NANDO'S

A lot of people have asked us over the years what the recipe for a successful brand is. But that's a bit like asking the recipe for PERi-PERi itself. It's a secret. Not just because we like to keep it quiet, but because a truly successful recipe is individual to a specific chef and their specific ingredients.

There's no one recipe for a great brand, but there are items that we believe every aspiring entrepreneur needs in the bag: a unique product, a place for your brand to live and its customers to thrive, the right people around you, and passion. Though, of course, each person will have their own signature flavours to add. But these four things – product, place, people, passion – are must-haves.

We knew we had the perfect ingredients for success back in 1987 when the idea for Nando's was sparked at a chicken grill in Jo'burg, South Africa. We were two determined, hardworking mates (soon to be business partners), at a cool place to eat (place), feasting on a tasty plate of chicken with Portuguese flavour and African fire (a unique product). These were the blocks we built our brand on, and it was our passion that pushed us all the way.

It hasn't all been plain sailing. Like any entrepreneurs we've made a few wrong decisions at times – but it's how you handle your mistakes that matter. Believe it or not, our first three sites didn't make much money when we first opened in London, but we hung in there. We knew we had something special, so we made each plate sold count. We also opened a Nando's in Ibiza many moons ago (we like to party) but we didn't foresee the quiet winters, so we – sadly – had to close. We've always turned our losses into lessons, through perseverance and knowing when to let go. Everyone fails at some point, but fail well and you'll never regret a mistake in your life.

Our food brings the unique spirit of Southern Africa to the world with our magic chillies, in a way that no one else can. Literally. Our African bird's eye chillies – the key to our legendary PERi-PERi sauce – are farmed sustainably under the Southern African sun exclusively for Nando's. That's what makes our product so special. Give your customers a unique product they can't get elsewhere, something to keep coming back for. That's what we did, and we now feed customers in almost every continent in the world.

Nando's might have been born out of South Africa, but it was made famous in the UK. We launched here in 1992 and grew our name with our fun, vibrant restaurants covered in original South African art. Our cosy-but-lively restaurants are designed to feel like a home away from home. But each is a gallery too, a place for you to feast your eyes, as well as to feast on our food. Creating special experiences like this beyond the product for your audience is vital; every successful brand has a visual hub.

We're now a proud staple of British culture, up there with Burberry and a cup of tea (at least, that's what we're told). Supporting local communities, creative industries and youth projects keeps us at the forefront of culture, and allows us to have fun with the brand whilst making a difference. We're truly a global brand in a digital age, connecting and collaborating with other inspirational people both offline and online, in our mission to help change lives.

You might not know this, but Nando's was founded on the principles of the Spirit of the Rainbow Nation: a post-apartheid South Africa where democracy, inclusivity and equality were champion. We launched at a time when divisions were high in South Africa, as they so often are throughout the world today. And we believe the spirit of the Rainbow Nation that drives us here at Nando's resonates today more than ever.

Every brand is more than just its product, and Nando's is more than just PERi-PERi and chips. We're founded on the empowerment of the people we serve, and employ to serve. Hiring good, passionate people and sticking by our values have been the key to our success.

The strongest brands today are those that make a lasting positive impact and have a meaningful relationship with their consumers. Put simply, they have a mission to do more. Good business makes more than just profit; it makes a

better world. Our brand purpose, our ‘why’ is ‘*Changing Lives, Together*’. We wonder what purpose you will find to make this planet we share a better place to live? We’re excited to find out.

Nando’s is all about bringing people together. It’s our ambition to fire up young people around the world; feeding more than just your appetites, but your imaginations too. That’s why we’re so happy to introduce this book brought to you by #Merky Books – an imprint whose dedication to bringing people together around the joy of reading, unlocking their creativity and investing in community we could not champion enough.

If we could let you young firestarters know one thing about building a brand it would be this: expect to get your hands dirty. Our success wasn’t handed to us on a plate. We were the ones handing out the plates, around the clock. Tenacity and passion trump expertise and money any day. We didn’t have business degrees or know about the restaurant industry when we started – but we were prepared to work hard and learn on the job. We put our minds to it even when others were doubtful. If we succeeded, so can you.

And lastly – don’t forget to have fun! (Not too much though – if there’s one thing Nando’s Ibiza taught us it’s *everything in moderation.*)

So, devour this book like you would any plate from Nando’s. It’s written by some of the UK’s most exciting creative talent for you to learn from. We can’t wait to see what big ideas you make happen with their advice!

**Nando’s,
2020**

iNTRODUCTION

SO YOU WANT TO BUILD A BRAND?

This may be the most challenging thing you ever decide to do. There will be tears, late nights, and moments when you wonder why you started in the first place. But we promise you, afterwards you'll look at what you've created and celebrate both the wins and the losses.

Building something that started as an idea in your mind and seeing it manifest in the real world is one of the most rewarding things you can do. You have the potential to influence lives, change culture and even make a bit of money along the way. All you have to do is start the journey. This book is your guide.

WHAT IS A BRAND ANYWAY?

A brand is the way a company, organisation or an individual is perceived by those who experience it. It's more than just the name, typeface or logo: it is how a product, business or campaign resonates with the customer. Brands are more than a superficial veneer around a business. Think of it as an invisible layer, wrapped around a product or service making it mean more in the mind of the customer.

As the term 'brand' can refer to either a company or an individual, we'll be looking at both – mainly how you can build your company's brand, as you set up and grow your business, but also how you can build your personal brand as you navigate through your career.

WHO ARE WE?

Between us we have spent twenty years working for some of the world's best agencies, on accounts for some of the world's biggest companies, and we have even built our own brands too.

Damola's experience building brands began during secondary school, in Year 10, with an entertainment brand called TimSon Productions that he created with a friend. They produced sold-out talent shows, long before Simon

Cowell reinvigorated the format, and used the proceeds to pay for a month-long expedition to Ecuador.

Fast forward a few years, and, after a brief stint as a banker, Damola got the chance to help build brands professionally and learn from some of the brightest and best, at Dare (*Campaign's* 'Digital Agency of the Decade'), then at the renowned creative agency Bartle Bogle Hegarty and most recently at Facebook. In these places he developed social, digital and brand strategies for household names, among them Tesco, Virgin Media and Barclays Bank.

However, Damola's most enjoyable experiences have been when building his own brand, The Capture Collective, and helping to build and advise start-up brands, such as the bank for young people, Osper, the creative network, People of Culture Collective (PoCC), and, most recently, premium African vodka brand, Vusa. With each he got the opportunity to 'see under the hood', helping to make crucial decisions about the DNA of these brands and seeing the impact of these decisions in real life.

Niran's creative journey, meanwhile, began as a two-year-old, when his parents gave him his first set of LEGO, which allowed him to explore his imagination and build whatever came to mind. That feeling of building something from concept to execution is still what brings him the most joy, and is how he ended up learning design through magazine tutorials and forums at the age of thirteen, which then led to art school, to study creative advertising strategy.

Niran's time at art school exposed him to an environment he'd not come across before, one that expanded his horizons, and allowed him to create his own brand – a website, Yin&Yang, which grew organically and paved his route into the industry through an internship at WeAreSocial. There, he learned more in the two-month summer break than he had during his entire time at university, and, as a result, he was headhunted to work on the ASOS account at a small creative agency called Independents United (IU-HQ). After a few years, Niran then moved to one of the most innovative digital agencies in the world, AKQA, to work for his childhood dream client, Nike. He pivoted out of agency life in 2015, in order to move to Instagram as a Creative Strategist on the advertising side of the business, helping clients within the fashion e-commerce and luxury market. But, outside of his nine-to-five, he's always had side projects that fuel his creativity, from

photography to art direction, and consulting on various brands' digital strategies.

HOW WE MET

We connected a decade ago on Twitter – off the back of a photography project that involved Niran capturing a photograph of London a day for a year. A mutual follow based on both of us working in the same industry led to Damola reaching out a little while later to get Niran's thoughts on The Capture Collective, as he was in the process of setting it up. Then came the usual thing of bumping into each other at a plethora of music and industry events across the city, and we became friends, collaborators, colleagues and now co-authors.

WHY ARE WE WRITING THIS BOOK?

When we reflect on the brands and businesses we've attempted to build ourselves, it's hard not to shake our heads with a touch of regret. While valiant, our efforts sometimes didn't amount to much more than a couple of lines on a CV and stories to tell in a book.

However, we were both navigating the system without a metaphorical map, torchlights or a guide. As the children of first-generation immigrants, who had worked hard to create a good life for their families in the UK, our parents' objective had been for us to build on their success, which, as many will recognise, mainly meant: nail your education and settle into a stable, traditional job.

While we largely followed this pre-ordained path, there were lots of occasions where we'd intuitively try to navigate the system in a different way to what our families had envisaged – whether that was setting up a production company with a friend at school or a lifestyle brand after university. But we mainly used these 'side hustles' to demonstrate to potential employers that we had what it took to be a top-tier employee, instead of continuing to build these brands into something that could last. Yet, in hindsight, none of them actually had to be deviations off the main path. They could have *been* the path.

This is why we believe it's about time that advice normally reserved for the meeting rooms of advertising agencies and marketing departments is decoded and made available to people who wouldn't otherwise have access to these places or that information. This book is not a brand-building bible, as there are more qualified people out there writing those; it is a well-informed point of view on some of the things we wish we'd known when we started out. And if it helps one person navigate the system effectively or build a brand that becomes successful, writing this book will have been worth it.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO FIND BETWEEN THESE COVERS?

This book is for people who are building a brand for the first time. We'll set the scene with some tips on how to start your brand-building journey, then help you lay the foundations for your brand, and give you some ideas about how you share your brand with the world, followed by some nuggets that may be useful as you reflect on the journey you've been on.

STARTING
THE
JOURNEY

CHAPTER I

USE THE
POWER OF
YOUR
NETWORK

While the responsibility for your brand or business begins and ends with you, it's unlikely that you will make it the success it should be alone. Building a brand starts with the people close to you, those who you trust to share your vision, and who can help you scale and build.

Damola's mum would often say to him: 'Show me your friends and I'll tell you who you are.' At times, these words felt like a warning, thinly disguised as loving advice. In hindsight, they bear more significance that he cared to realise and have helped guide him through his career.

So, if we want to build brands that last, we have to reflect on the people we surround ourselves with and consider who we want by our side on our journey. From close friendship groups to mentors and investors, having the right team around you at every stage of your brand-building journey will both prepare you for success and also help manage your missteps along the way.

IRON SHARPENS IRON

The expression 'iron sharpens iron' is another term Damola grew up hearing. He was sure it was an old Nigerian saying, but, no, it's a proverb from the Bible that refers to iron blades being used to sharpen other iron blades, until they became useful tools. In your own context, having 'sharp' people around you can make you more effective at what you do.

So, as you build your brand, don't be afraid of *not* being the smartest person in the room. If you *are* the smartest person in the room, then, frankly, you need to find another room. Make it your mission early on to find your 'iron' – that person who is sharper than you and can push your thinking. Proximity to that person, whether in a physical space, or virtually, will inevitably sharpen your ideas as well as your output.

Let's look at pop culture for a second and see this principle in action. Take the life of American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat – the rapper Jay-Z's favourite artist – who, by the time of his death, had risen from street graffiti artist to legendary neo-expressionist painter. Basquiat emerged in the context of 1970s New York, a period of political and economic turmoil,

where emerging creatives found the early rap, punk and street-art scenes coalescing. This environment brought him and other notable pop art artists, such as Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf, Fab 5 Freddy and, later, Andy Warhol, together. While Basquiat's innate talent was unquestionable, being connected to a community of progressive artists had an undeniable influence and impact on his art, which would later be regarded as ground-breaking.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE TO SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS?

1. **TWITTER COMMUNITIES** – Your network on Twitter will inevitably revolve around your interests as well as your friends. When they collide, friends can become collaborators.
2. **LINKEDIN COMMUNITIES** – LinkedIn is a useful place to find people with similar professional interests. It allows you to connect with experts from around the world and participate in conversations as if you were in a classroom or lecture hall.
3. **UNIVERSITY ALUMNI COMMUNITIES** – Many universities create alumni groups, which are full of people who have gone on to do a range of different things. You'll be surprised by the amount of experience only an email away.

The Warhol to your Basquiat could be within arms' reach. Plug into your local or industry-based networks and connect with people who are willing to share their passion, expertise and experience with you.

YOU NEED MORE THAN YOUR 'DAY ONES' TO SUCCEED

Our favourite Canadian rapper, Drake, made the 'No New Friends' motto famous, with the song of the same name, but his own entourage is proof that you need your 'Day Ones', those who've been there from the beginning (i.e. Day One), as well as your 'Day 100s' to build successfully.

Both of us have been there for friends. We've been the 'Day Ones', helping them launch start-ups, but we've also been the 'Day 100s', the experts helping a brand grow.

As you build your brand, you'll need a whole squad of different people to help:

THE DOERS – Those who will stop at nothing till the job is done

THE RIDE OR DIES – Those who look risk in the eye and tell it to 'do one'

THE GENERALISTS – Those who are happy to turn their hand to most things, as there will be lots to do

THE SPECIALISTS – Those who know a lot about a specific thing and can help you grow in a very specific way

THE EXPERIENCED – Those who will use their experience and expertise to lead aspects of the brand or business in your absence, because you can't do everything

Are you going to be great at everything? That's unlikely. You will go further by focusing on your strengths, understanding your weaknesses and assembling a team of people that complement each other, than you will trying to be a one-person band.

As you assemble the crew that will help you build this brand – make it diverse, make it inclusive, make it intersectional. It's proven that diverse and inclusive teams lead to better results.

As two men writing a book, we understand that our voice is typically the loudest. However, we build and grow brands at work with an exceptionally talented, inclusive team around us that make it happen because of the nuances and different perspectives they bring to the table.

Diversity and inclusion isn't a fad. We're not advising you to do this because diversity and inclusion are the idea du jour, we're recommending this

because it's a game-changing strategy that makes a difference. Especially if everyone who has a seat at the table also has a voice at that table.

SOMEONE HAS TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH

Accountability is not about someone telling you what to do, or about being chastised when things go wrong; accountability is a tool that ensures you reach your potential. Most businesses have this, in the shape of a board of directors whose purpose is to make sure the company is moving in the right direction, and who represent the interests of key shareholders and stakeholders. If a business has a board of directors, why shouldn't you?

A great tool for ensuring accountability is having a 'personal board of directors', who are different to the people helping you do the day to day. These people are different to the 'team' listed above: they should offer a different perspective, some home truths, and guidance – another layer of accountability to ensure you reach your vision.

Creating your own personal board of directors can be an informal process. You certainly don't need to hold interviews, and your 'directors' shouldn't need a salary.

In most cases, you may already have these people around you, but not know it. And, if not, reach out. On your personal board you should have someone who:

- **CAN CRITIQUE YOU** – They will give you honest and sensible advice without you catching feelings
- **YOU ASPIRE TO BE** – A person with the type of skills and experience that you want to have yourself in the future
- **HAS SIMILAR EXPERIENCE TO YOU** – Someone who understands your perspective and experience and can put themselves in your shoes
- **IS FROM A DIFFERENT GENERATION** – This person brings the benefit of age, and sees life through a different lens