



Thebe Ikalafeng is a Hall of Fame global African branding authority and THE leading advocate for a brand-led African renaissance. He is a trailblazing marketer who has been recognized as one of the Most Influential and Reputable Africans. Since being awarded a Marquette University American Marketing Association for marketing excellence upon graduation in 1992 in the United States, he has made a sustained, distinguished and consequential contribution to branding and in reframing the African narrative for over 30 years.

Building on a distinguished and meteoric corporate career which commenced in brand management at Colgate Palmolive in New York, and culminated as chief marketing officer for Nike for Africa, during which he won over 75 awards globally; he left corporate in 2002 to establish BLG, a brand-led advisory group at the intersection of strategy, creativity and intellectual property law; the seminal non-profit Brand Africa movement for a brand-led African agenda and the 'Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands' initiative which is widely referenced as the definitive barometer of brands in Africa; and Africa Brand Leadership Academy (ABLA), a post-graduate training academy, and AIP, an Africa-focused intellectual property advisory.

A respected thought leader in marketing, branding, intellectual property and related matters, he has written extensively, including chapters in "Nation Branding – Concepts, Issues, Practice" (2016 and 2022), the international text book for place branding by the UK's Professor Keith Dinnie, and in "Africa Bounces Back" (2021), the best-selling book on doing business in Africa by South Africa's Victor Kgomoewana; lectured at many consequential institutions of higher education in South Africa and abroad; given keynote addresses at eminent summits in over 25 countries across all major African and western economic capitals globally, including the Africa Leadership Forum in New York (2015); the Africa Investment Forum in Egypt (2016); the Africa Digital Summit in Morocco (2018, 2019 and 2023); the Brand Finance Global Forum in the United Kingdom (2016); the Nedbank Integrated Marketing Conference (IMC) in South Africa (2022); the ICCA Congress in China (2013); the City Nation Place Global

Annual Conference in the United Kingdom (2015); and the Tel Aviv Cities Summit in Israel (2016); co-hosted with the respected media authority, Gordon Muller, the CNBC Africa 'Marketing, Media and Money' show that navigated the billion dollar advertising industry in Africa (2017), and has been featured in media such as CNN, BBC, CNBC, FT and African Business.

*He has been recognized with **Lifetime Achievement awards** by Financial Mail AdFocus (2021) and the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (2022) for his contributions to marketing, branding and communications, and received a Special Recognition award for 'extraordinary contributions to branding and Africa at the 7th EMY Africa (2023) in Ghana and was honoured as an "Industry Icon" at the GQ Men of the Year awards in 2023.*

*In 2024 the University of Johannesburg and the University of South Africa will confer **Honorary Doctoral degrees** (PhD)(Honoris Causa) on Ikalafeng for exceptional contributions to the industry, branding and Africa. He has been named one of the '100 Most Influential Africans' by New African Magazine in 2013 and 2015; one of the 100 Most Influential Creative People of African Descent (2021) in support of the United Nations 'International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development,' and one of the 100 Most Reputable Africans (2023) by Reputation International.*

*He is a Fellow of the Institute of Directors (IoD) with **more than 25 years board experience** in banking, conservation, technology, tourism, FMCG and marketing related industries. He is a Chartered Marketer (SA) and was **educated in the USA, Italy and South Africa**, and holds BSc (cum laude) and MBA from Marquette University in the USA, and an LLM (Intellectual Property Law) from the University of Turin in Italy in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Switzerland, and completed executive programmes at Harvard Business School (USA) and Wits University (South Africa).*

***He has been to every country in Africa and every continent** in the world from Cape to Cairo, and the North Pole in Greenland to the South Pole in Antarctica; trekked the rare silverback gorillas on the Virunga mountains in Rwanda and Uganda; summited Mt. Kilimanjaro and the historic Mt. Sinai, and jumped the 216m high Bloukrans Bridge bungee in South Africa, among his many travels and breath-taking adventures globally.*

A consummate pan-African, "Thebe is Africa," (TedxGhana) and the 'foremost branding authority in Africa,' (African Business).

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Selected Speeches, Interviews and Writings

Ikalafeng, T. (2023). Brand are a catalyst for re-imagining the African narrative.

<https://www.ipra.org/news/itl/itl-530-brands-are-a-catalyst-reimagining-the-african-brand-narrative/>

How will African brands thrive? Future Proof. 02 June 2021. Future Proof is the marketing podcast from Kantar and Saïd Business School, Oxford University.

<https://www.kantar.com/uki/inspiration/future-proof-podcast/8-how-will-african-brands-thrive>

Thebe Ikalafeng: How Africa can build world-class brands (2020)

<https://african.business/2020/06/trade-investment/thebe-ikalafeng-how-africa-can-build-more-successful-brands/>

The Tefo Mohapi Show: Thebe Ikalafeng joined Tefo Mohapi to discuss personal branding, narratives, and Africa as a brand. (2020). <https://m.facebook.com/iafrikan/videos/the-tefo-mohapi-show-thebe-ikalafeng-joined-tefo-mohapi-to-discuss-personal-bran/236652817623576/>

The CNBC Africa Marketing.Media.Money Show (MMM) (2017) with Thebe Ikalafeng and Gordon Muller navigates the billion dollar advertising industry through the eyes of the senior marketers who are driving its evolution. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmjznHinpI4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QK1BvGfY13E>

Thebe Ikalafeng on the Branding and Reputation of Africa, Place Branding Observer, UK. 10 March 2016. <https://placebrandobserver.com/thebe-ikalafeng-interview/>

Thebe Ikalafeng on Branding Africa with Robyn Curnow – CNN Marketplace Africa. Jan 7, 2012.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnBHqRKs5s8>

