

Get your companies online, marketers told

 By [Walter Wafula](#)

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Globally, there is an increasing use of social media platforms like Facebook, and Twitter, by individuals and companies. In Uganda, like elsewhere, individuals are more aggressive in embracing the social change than businesses.

Small and large businesses in Uganda spend a lot of time deciding which media to use to reach these individuals - especially the youth. At the first 2012 Marketers' Night in Kampala, Boaz Shani, managing director of Libi Links, the company behind local web portal www.ugo.co.ug, urged marketers to get their companies online so they can easily be traced by their tech-savvy customers.

"100 years ago you had to flip through a copy of Yellow Pages to find a company address; today you can get it online. We need to be on Facebook and Twitter to promote our companies," Boaz, said at the Marketers' Night.

His comments came on the back of a mini-survey he conducted at the venue to find out if the corporate executives were 'online-savvy'.

On Monday, the *East African* newspaper reported that social media is fast becoming the most preferred strategy for getting new customers for the majority of companies in the region, according to a survey by global business consultancy, Regus.

Boaz, noted that a radio station like Capital FM cannot claim to be "big" in Uganda when it conspicuously offline. "You cannot say, you are big when you are not online. Ugandans want to listen to Capital radio online," he added.

Capital FM is Uganda's most popular English radio station according to the Uganda All Media & Products Survey 2011. The station has no website, although it has a [Facebook page](#) which was last updated in December 2011.

Helping companies get online

Boaz's company is currently helping local enterprises get online for free, to enable them to realise the benefits of operating in cyberspace.

At the Marketers' Night, Mark Achola, the managing director at AAR Uganda and keynote speaker, tipped marketers on how to scale the boardroom ladder - a major challenge many of them face.

Achola observed that marketers in Uganda rarely make it to the top of the boardroom ladder, except when they break away from their employers. "Most marketers make it to the top when they create their companies."

Without citing examples, he said marketers are best known for their cunning marketing skills aimed to sell their products. "We all have to tell a lie once in a while. It's a bad thing," he asserted.

To succeed, he advised them to polish their morals, widen their professional knowledge, become organised and to hire the right people to work with.

"If you are going to make it to the top, you need to understand discipline. You need to stick to what you set out to do because if you are discipline, you think within a certain framework," he said.

"Surround yourself with people who are smarter than you. To do that, you must be intelligent. If you surround yourself with intelligent people, you will succeed faster." concluded Achola.

ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

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