

Executive Biography



Dr Rotimi Olaniyan

CEO, Apex Advisory UK · Strategy & Business Transformation Adviser

Dr Rotimi Olaniyan is a strategy and business transformation adviser and CEO of Apex Advisory UK, whose work sits at the intersection of strategic ambition, commercial performance, and organisational change. With more than three decades of senior leadership experience spanning Africa, Europe, and the United Kingdom, he is engaged by boards and chief executives, from major African corporations to high-growth UK SMEs, to help organisations navigate complex inflection points: whether that is post-acquisition integration, strategic repositioning, commercial capability building, or the design of new growth platforms.

Currently, Dr Olaniyan serves as Executive Adviser on Strategy and Business Transformation at Guinness Nigeria Plc, where he works directly with the CEO and the leadership team to define the company's 2030 strategic ambition and lead organisational transformation following its acquisition by Tolaram International. The engagement, at a publicly quoted business with approximately £200 million in annual revenues, is indicative of the scale, complexity, and seniority of challenge he is equipped to address.



Rotimi's commercial career has been built across the highest levels of multinational practice and entrepreneurial leadership. Early career foundations were laid at Cadbury Nigeria and Colgate-Palmolive, where he held senior roles and marketing programme experiences spanning brand strategy, new product development, field sales, and regional market expansion across Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal, and France – including marketing lead for a \$10 million joint venture investment in West African manufacturing and distribution in 1995. He subsequently led West African operations for TEQUILA/TBWA within the Omnicom global network, where he was a member of the strategic team that won and launched the MTN brand in Nigeria on a multi-million dollar campaign budget and went on to secure a ₦1 billion (\$6.5 million) multi-year commercial development contract with Unilever Nigeria.

As founder and CEO of Proximity Communications Nigeria, an independent consumer engagement agency serving P&G, Unilever, Guinness, Coca-Cola, and Kimberly-Clark, among others, Dr Olaniyan built one of Nigeria's 50 fastest-growing private companies, as recognised by the Allworld Network, an initiative chaired by Professor Michael Porter at Harvard University. He has also served as an independent director at Pagatech, a pioneering mobile payments company, during a period in which the business grew its active user base by 500 per cent.

Alongside his commercial practice, Dr Olaniyan spent eight years as principal faculty and programme director at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University, directing master's and MBA programmes and developing the next generation of marketing and business leaders. He was also extensively involved in executive education, working with notable companies such as Boots and Ecco. This sustained engagement with rigorous scholarship and evidence-based management practice is not incidental to his consulting work; it is the source of the structured diagnostic thinking, intellectual frameworks, and disciplined strategic reasoning that distinguish his advisory approach.

His UK advisory practice extends to the high-growth segment of the British economy. As an accredited adviser and mentor on the UK Government's Help to Grow: Management programme, Dr Olaniyan has worked directly with ambitious UK SME leaders to build the strategic, commercial, and operational capabilities needed to scale. This strand of his practice reflects both a practical commitment to UK business development and a recognition that the strategic challenges facing high-potential smaller enterprises – growth planning, market positioning, leadership capability, and operational discipline – demand the same quality of thinking brought to bear on larger, more complex organisations.

He holds a Doctor of Business Administration from Nottingham Trent University and an MBA from IESE Business School and has held fellowships at Harvard University and London Business School. He is a Senior Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy and a published author and scholar, with peer-reviewed work appearing in leading academic journals, internationally edited handbooks, and global conference proceedings. His published research spans entrepreneurship and community enterprise in African markets, the institutionalisation of mobile payment systems, and the strategic dynamics of emerging market service ecosystems. He is a past vice president and fellow of the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria.

Dr Olaniyan is available to work with organisations on a retained advisory, project, or independent directorship basis. Operating from both his UK and Lagos practices with an active international footprint, he serves two distinct but complementary client contexts: large African and multinational organisations navigating strategic transformation and growth and high-growth UK SMEs requiring the commercial rigour and strategic thinking typically available only to larger businesses. Engagements may span corporate strategy, business transformation, commercial and marketing capability, and board-level advisory.

Rotimi partners with leaders and senior teams to align strategic ambition, culture, and operating rhythm. He designs and facilitates energising executive workshops, co-creates practical playbooks, and supports executives via critical friendships to execute business growth and transformation plans with confidence. He is valued for his structured thinking, broad repertoire of planning frameworks, probing questions, broad cultural fluency, and bias for action, delivered in a calm, results-focused style.





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