



Empowering artists, redefining streaming experiences.

Post-Webinar Summary:

“From Music to Merch – Building Your Fashion Brand as an African Artist”

Hosted by Blessing Tenumah, Artist Acquisition and Marketing Lead, Josplay

Speakers:

- **Chinedu Bright** – Creative Director & Talent Manager
- **Abu Christopher** – Founder, 1606 Clothing

Our webinar held on Friday, 21 November 2025, broke down what it truly takes for African artists to turn their music identity into a real fashion brand. The session explored how merchandise goes beyond t-shirts and hoodies - it's a branding tool, a revenue channel, and a deeper emotional link between artists and fans.

Key Takeaways

1. Merch Is an Extension of Your Story

Merchandise only works when it reflects the artist's identity. Your logo, colors, symbols, style, and even the tone of your communication should form a consistent visual and emotional language fans can recognize instantly.

2. You Don't Need to Be Famous to Start

Both speakers agreed: you can begin a successful merch brand with a small but loyal audience. Even 10 active fans are enough to launch early concepts, test designs, and build habits that scale later.



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3. Fans Buy Emotion First, Product Second

Mr Nedu strongly emphasised that merch succeeds when it captures a moment, represents a theme in your music, or reminds fans of the feeling your sound creates. Mr Abu agreed growing your merch brand should not be about the fabric alone. He said, "It's about your identity".

4. Quality Is Non-Negotiable

High-quality materials and clean production determine whether fans return for future drops. Cheap prints and poor fabric ruin long-term trust.

5. Don't Mass-Produce; Use Pre-Orders

Artists often lose money producing bulk merch before they understand demand. The safer approach, Mr Abu advised, is to release designs, let fans pre-order, and produce only what's paid for. This removes storage waste, sizing issues, and dead stock.

6. Collaboration Is Strategic

Artists shouldn't work alone.

It is more rewarding to prioritise collaboration with experts who share similar growth goals. These partnerships strengthen your brand and bring new audiences into your fan ecosystem.

Consider experts:

- designers
- tailors
- stylists
- photographers
- content creators
- culture exploiters

7. Contracts Matter More Than Creativity

Many artists get trapped in contracts because they didn't think past the creative excitement. When partnering with designers or brands, artists are advised to always confirm:

- exit clauses
- revenue shares
- ownership of designs



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→ usage rights

8. Merch Isn't Only Clothing

Fans can connect with posters, mugs, accessories, tangible collectables, lifestyle items and themes, even digital collectibles. Anything that reflects your identity can become part of your merch ecosystem.

9. Merch Scaling Depends on Growth

Global brands like Beats by Dre or major artist collaborations didn't start as merch. They started as influence multiplied by clarity of brand. Once your brand becomes stable, merch evolves into standalone products and full-scale business ventures.

10. Start With Identity, Then Build the Merch

New artists should not rush into merch. It is more rewarding to focus first on, sound identity and community. According to Mr Nedu, "once these are clear, merch becomes a natural extension - not guesswork".

Closing Note

Josplay continues to empower African artists with tools, education, and the highest royalty payout in the region. Whether you're emerging or established, you can build a fashion brand that reflects your artistry and gives fans something to hold on to.

Find more information about Josplay Rise Fund on www.josplayrisfun.org

Thank you for attending our webinar.

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The Josplay Team