



# Uche Nwokocha

**Partner | ALN Nigeria | Aluko & Oyebode**

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## Background

Uche manages the Intellectual Property portfolio of Aluko & Oyebode, where she advises clients on the full range of brand-related matters, including trademark clearance, exploitation, acquisition, protection, and enforcement.

She advises foreign companies on the registration of their brands in Nigeria and has been instrumental in securing the registration and protection of several leading international brands.

She also prosecutes trademark, patent, and design applications, conducts opposition proceedings and dispute resolution, and registers licensing, franchising, technology transfer agreements, and product registration with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP), Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON), Nigerian Copyrights Commission (NCC), National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) and related agencies. She also advises clients on Anti-counterfeiting measures and parallel importation.

## Professional Membership

- Nigerian Bar Association
- Former Director, International Trademarks Association (INTA)
- Former Member, Finance Committee International Trademarks Association (INTA)
- EXCO, Intellectual Property Law Association of Nigeria (IPLAN)
- EXCO, International Association for the Protection of Industrial Property (AIPPI), Member, Licensing Executives Society (LES) (USA & Canada)
- Currently Board Member, Global Anti-Counterfeiting Group (GACG), Anti-Counterfeiting Group (ACG)
- Secretary, Anti-Counterfeiting Collaboration (ACC), Nigeria.

## Professional Qualifications

- Harvard Business School, Programme Leadership Development, PLD

1997: University of Lagos, Lagos, Master of International Law and Diplomacy, MILD

1991: Called to the Nigerian Bar

1990: Lagos State University, LLB

## Career Summary

2008 – Date: Partner, Aluko & Oyebode

2003-2008: Senior Associate, Aluko & Oyebode, Lagos, Nigeria

1998 – 2003: Senior Associate, George Ikoli & Okagbue

1992 -1996: Associate, Burke & Co.

## Awards & Accolades

- Selected as an outstanding Intellectual Property practitioner in the elite WIPR – World IP Review Leaders 2022.
- World Trademark Review (WTR) 1000 – 2020 Ranked
- Managing Intellectual Property – IP Stars in 2020, 2018, 2017 and 2016
- Managing Intellectual Property – Top 250 Women in IP for 2018, 2019, 2020

*“very intelligent and hard-working person” who is also a “thought leader.” – Chambers Global 2021*

*“one of the leading practitioners in the market”, – Chambers Global.*

## Top Matters

### Regulatory Transaction

- Advising Morinda / Tahitian Noni International at NAFDAC in connection with the registration of their several products for and successfully representing the company in negotiating out of court settlement for potential lawsuits and unlawful demands by several consumers attempting to extort money from the company.
- Advising Red Bull in connection with its distribution agreements, including ensuring its compliance with local law and regulations, while protecting the manufacturer's IP and other interest and advising on the registration of an alternative product during the temporary ban on importation of energy drinks into Nigeria.
- Representing a multi-national beverage company in connection with a frivolous complaint involving false advertising filed by a consumer at Consumer Protection Council.
- Advising Johnson and Johnson in connection with a dispute with its distributor, including preventing a threat to litigation.
- Advising a multi-national pharmaceutical giant in connection with the revalidation (extending the expiration date on an expired product) of its pharmaceutical product and liaising with NAFDAC on the investigation and prosecution of the distributor.
- Advising a multi-national company which manufactures and imports electronic mosquito repellants in connection with the legal landscape in Nigeria for the sales and marketing of its product, as well as on other aspects of Nigerian law, including advertisement, competition and consumer protection.
- Advising L'Oreal France in connection with the registration of its products with NAFDAC and registered several of its products with NAFDAC, and continuing to oversee activities of its distributors by monitoring distribution channels.

- Advising Bel Impex in connection with anti-counterfeiting strategies to stop incidences of fake products of the company in Nigeria. The project covered surveillance, raid and post raid actions on the infringers of Bel Impex trademarks and products in Nigeria.
- Advising BASF West Africa in connection with all the NAFDAC regulatory requirements relating to the importation of construction chemicals, and chemical raw materials into Nigeria. Uche also handles the applications filed at the office of the National Security Adviser of Nigeria for End-User Certificates required to import controlled chemicals by BASF, as well as regulatory applications filed for the export of chemical admixtures to other African countries by our client. Uche handled the transfer of all NAFDAC licenses from the client's previous distributor to BASF.
- Advising Godrej Group of Companies in connection with several transactions, including the taking over of the trademark portfolio management of Strength of Nature, reviewing the regulatory documents for its ongoing registrations at the NAFDAC, completing the pending NAFDAC registrations of all "Strength of Nature" products and transferring the NAFDAC licenses to client's Nigerian subsidiary.
- Advising FIFA in connection with several capacities in relation to cases of ambush marketing and infringement of FIFA Trade Marks during the FIFA tournament in 2010, 2014, 2018, and recently advising on Women World Cup 2019 in France.
- Advising MTV BASE in connection with the infringement of its registered MTV BASE trade mark by a domain name [mtvbasemusic.com](http://mtvbasemusic.com).
- Advising the client in connection with the infringement of its registered DANONE trade mark by a registered company, DANNON GROUP in Nigeria through the domain name [www.dannon.com.ng](http://www.dannon.com.ng) and petitioning Nigeria Internet Registration Agency (NIRA) for deregistering the website and/or transferring same to our Client.
- Advising the client in connection with investigations to uncover the counterfeit manufacturing site of SCOTT and HUGGIES trade mark and immediately contacted the Police to seal up the factory.
- Advising H&M in connection with the infringement of its trademark by a local business, and recently got the Corporate Affairs Commission to direct the infringing company to change its name.
- Advising Reckitt Benckiser and BASF in connection with anti-counterfeiting and product registration respectively.
- Advising Sovereign Brands in connection with the registration of its products with NAFDAC and undertakes the registration of the products at NAFDAC.
- Advising Maplebear, owners of Instacart, in connection with the transfer of an infringing domain name from a third party Nigerian company to Instacart.
- Advising Geneva Laboratories and Union Swiss, owners of the Bio-Oil, in connection with anti-counterfeiting strategies to tackle incidences of fake Bio-Oil products in Nigeria, including advising on and handling the transaction involving the taking down of counterfeit Bio-Oil products from ecommerce sites in Nigeria.

#### **Portfolio Management**

- Advising National Food Industries Company, Cornella and Omar Kassem Al Esayi Marketing Company in connection with all their trademark portfolios.
- Advising the Coca Cola Company in connection with their trademark portfolio.
- Advising United Biscuits UK , BMW, Hyundai, Sanofi, Syngenta Participations AG, among others on their Nigerian trademark portfolios.
- Advising Qualcomm Incorporated, NTT Docomo, NEC Corporation, Midrex Technologies, Bayer Pharma Aktiengesellschaft, among others in connection with their patent portfolio.

## **Opposition**

- Successfully handled the opposition proceedings on behalf of The Coca-Cola Company against Eco Hotels for the use of the trademark 'Eco Centre'.
- Successfully handled and presently handling several opposition proceedings on behalf of Apple.
- Representing Anheuser-Busch in connection with an opposition proceeding instituted by Budejovický Budvar Narodní Podnik against the registration and use of the Budweiser trademark.