



## Michael Ugwu

Michael is the Founder and CEO of Freeme Digital Ltd. Freeme Digital is a Label Services & Distribution company in Nigeria offering A&R, production, marketing and distribution services. Michael is also the Founder of The Freeme Space the largest state of the art digital production studio and sound stage in Lagos Nigeria. The Freeme Space has hosted the biggest artists and brands on the continent including Burna Boy, Wizkid, Hennessy, Essence Magazine, Big Brother Africa, MTV Base, The Tonight Show (Jimmy Fallon) and many others. Michael was the pioneer General Manager for Sony Music Entertainment West Africa, one of the largest record labels in the world. With Sony Music Michael represented a catalogue of over 5 million records. As well as being involved in the signings of Wizkid and Davido to Sony Music Michael brokered a first of its kind major label catalogue licensing deal with MTN the largest telecommunications company in Africa (60m subscribers) in April 2018. In 2020 Michael became the first Nigerian to be appointed to the Merlin Network board. Considered the 4<sup>th</sup> Major Label and representing 15% of global independent music rights the Merlin Network has distributed over \$2 billion to its 900 label members since 2008.

Michael Ugwu is the founder of Metaphrase an NFT community he set up to support creatives, brands, collectors and builders in the NFT space as well as drive mainstream adoption of NFTs across Africa. To date the community has hosted successful meet ups in Lagos, London and New York. Michael is an avid investor in NFTs often describing himself as one of the only dual Bored Apes & Crypto Punks in Africa (570 in the world). Since May 2020 he has amassed a collection of over 1000 NFTs including Crypto Punks, Art Blocks (Curated, Playground and Factory) Meebits, Bored Apes, RarePepe's, Akutars, Doodles as well as pieces from Fewocious, Hackatao, Anthony Azekwoh, Micah Johnson, Xcopy, Osinachi, Fvck Render and others since he got into the space.

Michael also plays in the Lagos Angel investment space having invested in a number of innovative platforms such as [www.shecluded.com](http://www.shecluded.com) (a female only financial services company) [www.atideproject.com](http://www.atideproject.com) (creative agency) [www.spendify.ng](http://www.spendify.ng) (expense tracker). Michael is also an avid crypto currency investor with investments in two Lagos based Y Combinator backed crypto start-up's - [www.coinprofile.co](http://www.coinprofile.co) (crypto remittance platform) and [www.buycoins.africa](http://www.buycoins.africa) (crypto currency exchange).

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