

# The SME Bulletin

June 2025 Edition

## *In This Edition*

- How to position your business for loans, grants and investor confidence
- Halfway done not half way there: Power moves for the second half of the year
  - Treasury wrap

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# Welcome



**Dear Business Owner,**

## **How are you? How are your goals?**

It is June already, can you believe it? We are halfway through 2025 but halfway through does not mean halfway done. This point in the year is a power zone where clarity meets momentum. Have you hit some goals or are still pressing towards them? This is your cue to pause, reassess and power up.

If there is one thing to build in this month, it is resilience. What does it really mean to build resilience as an SME in Nigeria? Beyond surviving, resilience is positioning. It is how you show up for grants, loans, and investor conversations. It is how you turn insights from the Access Business Clinic into action. It is how you separate the noise from the real opportunities like the Access Diamond Business Advantage (DBA) account, designed to scale your business.

We know the journey is not easy. Running a business in Nigeria takes more than just hard work, it takes grit, creativity and an unshakable belief in your vision. At Access Bank, we see you, and we are walking this path with you.

In this edition of the Access SME Bulletin, we are telling real stories and giving you power moves. The kind that will fuel your second half of the year not just with motivation, but with strategy.

The second half of 2025 belongs to those who plan like it's Q4 and build like it's Q1. You are not alone. You are part of a resilient community that's rising together.

*In business, resilience isn't just surviving the storm — it's learning how to dance in the rain.*

**- Vivian Greene**

### **Abiodun Olubitan**

*Group Head, SME Banking,  
Access Bank PLC*



# How to Position Your Business for Loans, Grants and Investor Confidence







Accessing funding is more than having a great idea, you have to be ready. Investors, lenders, and grant providers look for structure, compliance, and professionalism.

In this section, we will show you the key steps to make your business funding-ready, from legal registration to tax compliance and proper banking.

## **Structure Your Business Legally and Properly**

The first thing any financier, grant organisation, or investor wants to see is a legally recognised and structurally sound business. This is the foundation upon which trust is built. Register your business with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) if you are yet to do so. It gives your business a formal identity and demonstrates that you are serious about growth and accountability.

Additionally, obtain a Tax Identification Number (TIN) from the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS). This shows you are compliant with tax regulations which is a key factor when seeking formal financial support. Lastly, ensure you operate a dedicated business bank account like the Access Bank Business Account. Clear separation between personal and business finances reflects professionalism and transparency, both of which are essential for attracting financial support.

## **Know and Document Your Numbers**

No matter how passionate you are about your business idea, no one will fund a venture that does not have a clear understanding of its finances. Investors, lenders, and grant providers need to see that you know how much you are making, spending, and projecting for the future. Start by keeping accurate financial records; track your sales, expenses, profit margins and other key financial activities. This forms the basis for creating essential financial statements such as profit and loss reports, cash flow projections and balance sheets.

These documents will show the current state of your business and demonstrate your understanding of how to manage growth. If numbers are not your strength, consider hiring an accountant, part-time or freelance. A Clean professional, financial reports tells a story of discipline and potential. Financial clarity is what builds financial trust and without it, even the best business idea may struggle to gain the confidence of investors.

## **Craft a Solid Business Plan**

A business plan is much more than a formality to impress banks or investors, it is a strategic tool that gives your business clarity, direction and focus. It forces you to think critically about what you are building, why it matters and how you intend to grow it.



Begin with a compelling executive summary that clearly outlines what your business is about and the problem it solves. Follow this with a thorough market analysis, identify who your customers are, what their needs are, and why they choose you over competitors. Your revenue model should explain how the business makes money and what strategies you have in place for scaling sustainably.

Importantly, when seeking funding, be transparent about how much you need and how the funds will be used. If you are seeking ₦1 million or ₦100 million, funders want to know you have a clear, practical plan for allocation. A well-written business plan often becomes the deciding factor between a “maybe” and a confident “yes.”

## Build Social and Digital Credibility

The world is rapidly evolving. Your online presence can either enhance or hinder your chances of securing funding. For investors, grant providers, and even customers, your digital footprint serves as a quick credibility check. A professional website is no longer optional, it acts as your digital office, giving people a place to learn about your offerings, values, and track record. Beyond your website, maintain active and professional social media pages on platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook. Use these platforms to showcase your work, share behind-the-scenes content, and engage meaningfully with your audience.

Additionally, don't underestimate the power of customer testimonials. Real feedback from satisfied clients, along with case studies and reviews, builds trust and social proof. In a world driven by perception, looking credible often translates to being credible. When you're visible, consistent and professional online, you attract not just followers but funders.

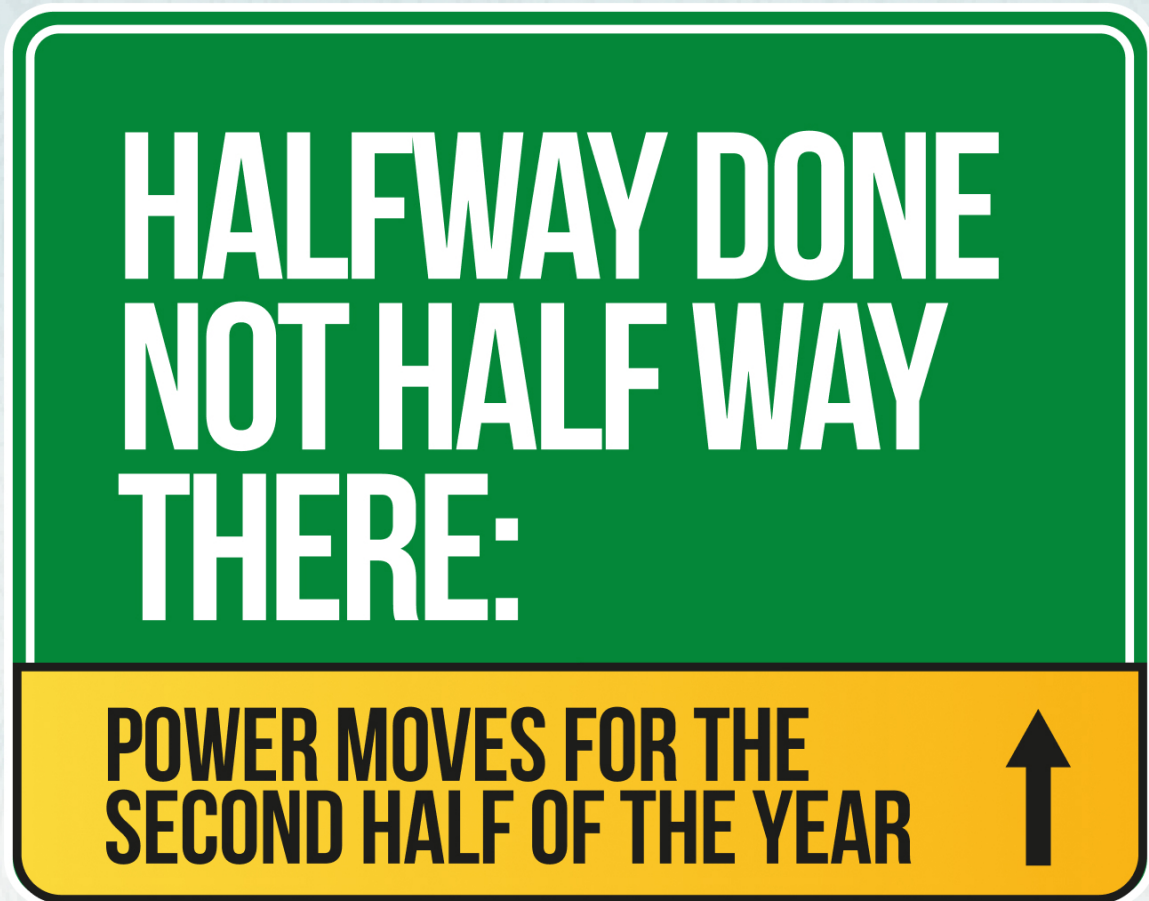
## Be Grant-Ready and Investment-Ready Always

Opportunities for funding rarely come with prior notice and when they do appear, only prepared businesses can take advantage. That's why it's crucial to stay grant-ready and investment-ready at all times. Keep an updated pitch deck that clearly outlines your business idea, value proposition, market potential, and funding needs.

Also, have a professional business profile document that summarizes your brand, offerings and impact, it is often requested during application processes. Your business plan and financial records should be regularly updated to reflect your current realities and projections. Remember, when opportunity comes knocking, it doesn't wait, being prepared can make all the difference between seizing the moment and missing out.

Conclusively, relationships are just as important as strategy in business. Sometimes, the doors to funding open not because of a perfectly written proposal but because the right person made a referral, gave you a heads-up, or vouched for your credibility. That's why being part of business networks and mentorship circles is invaluable. Attend business forums and events where you can meet other entrepreneurs, potential investors, and ecosystem enablers. Join industry associations that provide access to exclusive opportunities, insights, and connections within your sector.





Getting to June as a Nigerian business owner is no small feat. The year might have started with massive sales for your business, or maybe it has been more of a slow grind, navigating fuel scarcity, rising costs and customers who disappear after promising to "get back."

Whichever side of the story you are on, what matters is that you are still in the game and the second half of the year is full of so many possibilities. This is that moment where you pause, take a breath and look at everything with fresh eyes. What worked? What didn't? What needs to change? And what just needs more consistency? Sometimes, the breakthrough isn't in doing something new, but in doing what works with more focus and strategy.

Here are 5 practical power moves to help you reset your energy, refocus your goals, and position your business to finish the year strong.



## REWORK THE PLAN NOT THE DREAM

In five months, a lot has changed in the economy, customer behaviour, even your personal capacity. But just because the road is different does not mean the destination has to change.

Now is the time to revisit your vision board. What is still realistic? What needs adjusting? Maybe that product launch needs to move to Q4, or maybe your pricing needs to reflect current costs. Whatever it is, don't abandon the dream, just rework the plan.

A mid-year reset is a power move. It shows you are paying attention and playing long-term.

## LOOK AT WHAT IS WORKING AND BUILD AROUND IT

Now is the time to pause and check the facts. Are customers really buying the coconut bread, or is it the meat pie and chin chin bringing in steady cash? Your bestsellers should lead the way. Use what is already working as your anchor.

Take Amoke Oge, for example — she chose one lane: premium Amala and local food. No distractions. That clarity took her to 500,000+ deliveries on Chowdeck. She scaled by focusing, not trying to do everything.

Before chasing the next big idea, identify what is driving consistent cash flow. That is your leverage. Build from there, then experiment from a place of stability not confusion.

The second half of the year is not for trial and error. It is for tracking what works and doubling down.

## FIX THAT ONE THING YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT

Sometimes, the difference between growth and stagnation is one issue you have been ignoring.

If you run a fashion brand and customers complain about late orders, fix it. Delays break trust, no matter how great your designs are. Same with service businesses. If you are a makeup artist and clients are waiting around because you are double-booked, get organised.

You don't need fancy tools. A Google Form, website, or WhatsApp broadcast list can transform your bookings. Business is not just about making sales, you need to create experiences that keep people coming back. Fix what is frustrating your current customers and watch your business bloom.

## TRIM THE FAT ESPECIALLY IN COST AND ENERGY

Some things in your business are draining you and you know it. Are you running Instagram ads every week but never following up on the leads? Are you stocking items nobody has asked for in months? Are you still with that one vendor who always shows up late and makes you look unprofessional? It is time to strategise again.

Every Naira, minute, and ounce of energy counts especially in this economy. Don't wait till Q4 to do damage control. Free up your resources now so you can move faster, smarter, and with less stress.

## POSITION YOUR BRAND FOR BIGGER OPPORTUNITIES

You may not be ready for loans or grants today — but are your books clean enough to qualify tomorrow? Structure helps you show up stronger, for both your business and your customers.

Also, are you showing up online like a real business, not just someone "trying something"? If you sell skincare, for example, are your prices clear? Is your contact info easy to find? Do your photos build trust?

It is the time to be seen strategically. Partner with other small businesses, post consistently, join platforms like Access Bank's SME community, or speak at industry events. Visibility builds trust and big opportunities come to businesses that look ready.

Yes, we are halfway through the year but you are not halfway done. There is still time to grow, shift and win. Access Bank is here with tools, insights and support to help you thrive.



# EVENTS CORNER



The Access Bank SME Business Clinic (held in Lagos and Abuja), in partnership with Deloitte Nigeria was one for the books! It was real, practical, and exactly what many business owners needed.

The clinic offered one-on-one advisory sessions where MSMEs received expert guidance from seasoned Deloitte consultants on overcoming business challenges and scaling sustainably in their business. Critical areas such as Business Growth & Expansion, Operational Efficiency, Financial Management, and Sales & Marketing Strategy were looked into.

If you were there, you know how eye-opening it was. And if you missed it? Don't worry, there is more to come. These clinics are here to help you grow, one smart step at a time. Be on the lookout for the next edition.









# TREASURY WRAP

## Naira Strengthens Amid Renewed Foreign Inflows and Easing Global Tensions

The naira recorded a slight appreciation in May, buoyed by renewed foreign inflows into the country following the easing of global tariff tensions. In particular, the temporary pause in tariff hostilities between the U.S. and China contributed to improved market sentiment. As a result, the naira appreciated by ₦27 against the U.S. dollar, closing at ₦1,579.00/\$1 in the official foreign exchange market as of May 23rd, 2025.

This appreciation has been further supported by the Central Bank of Nigeria's sustained interventions in the FX market and a resurgence in foreign investor confidence. Looking ahead, we expect the exchange rate to remain relatively stable in the coming weeks, barring any resurgence in global trade tensions.

## Nigeria's External Reserves Climb to Two-Month High of \$38.56 Billion

Nigeria's gross external reserves have risen to a two-month high of \$38.56 billion as of May 22, 2025, according to the latest data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). This marks the highest level since early March and reflects a consistent streak of daily growth.

The upward trend began on May 9, when reserves stood at \$38.12 billion. By May 12, the figure had increased to \$38.21 billion, and continued its climb to \$38.30 billion on May 14, \$38.33 billion on May 15, and closed the week at \$38.38 billion on May 16. This represents a net gain of over \$260 million in just one week.

The continued rise in reserves reflects improving market confidence, bolstered by stronger foreign exchange inflows and the ongoing CBN foreign exchange reforms. .

## Treasury Bills: 1-Year Rate Holds at 19.60% Amid Robust Demand

The 1-year Nigeria Treasury Bills (NTB) rate remains steady at 19.60% as investor demand continues to outpace supply.

In the latest auctions, the Debt Management Office (DMO) offered ₦1.05 trillion in NTBs for the month and successfully sold ₦1.2 trillion across the standard tenors 91-day, 182-day, and 364-day bills. The stop rates settled at 18.00%, 18.50%, and 19.56%, respectively.

The next NTB auction is scheduled for June 4, 2025, where the DMO plans to offer ₦450 billion across the same tenors.





# Introducing the Market Association Lending Scheme (MALS)!



Leverage the strength of your market association to access business financing with ease.

## Benefits:



Secure financing for stock and fixed assets



Stay ahead with steady cash flow



Get up to ₦20 million without collateral, and above ₦20 million with collateral



Competitive interest rate

**Grow together, thrive together!**

For more information, visit your nearest Access Bank branch or email [Welovesmes@accessbankplc.com](mailto:Welovesmes@accessbankplc.com)

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# REFOCUS. RECHARGE. REPOSITION

- **Check Your Business Costs:** Prices are rising. This is the time to cut out waste, find cheaper options, and make sure you're not losing money without knowing it.
- **Remind People What You Do:** Don't assume people remember your business. This month, update your social media, business profile, and share your story again. Let people know who you are and how you can help.
- **Get Support:** You don't have to do everything alone. Look for people who can help. It could be a part-time assistant, someone to handle your social media, or even a delivery rider. You will have more time to focus on growing your business.
- **Stay Active and Visible:** Out of sight is out of mind. Keep posting, sending updates, or sharing offers. Stay present in your customers' minds — that's how they remember to buy from you.
- **Plan for the Rest of the Year:** What do you want to achieve by December? Start taking small steps now. Whether it's launching a new product, finding new customers, or learning something new. Start today.

June  
Tip Jar





On June 27, the world comes together to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to economic development, innovation, and inclusive growth.

MSMEs make up over 90% of businesses and contribute significantly to employment and GDP in many countries, including Nigeria. They are the heartbeat of every economy and a key force in driving innovation and resilience in the face of global challenges.

At Access Bank, we are proud to stand with MSMEs not just today, but every day. From offering tailored business support and capacity-building initiatives to providing access to finance, tools, and expert guidance, we are committed to helping your business thrive.

As we mark World MSME Day on the 27th of June, we encourage you to:  
Reflect on how far your business has come  
Take advantage of resources available to support your growth  
Connect, learn, and collaborate with fellow entrepreneurs



**Happy World MSME Day**  
to all our resilient, passionate,  
and visionary MSMEs!







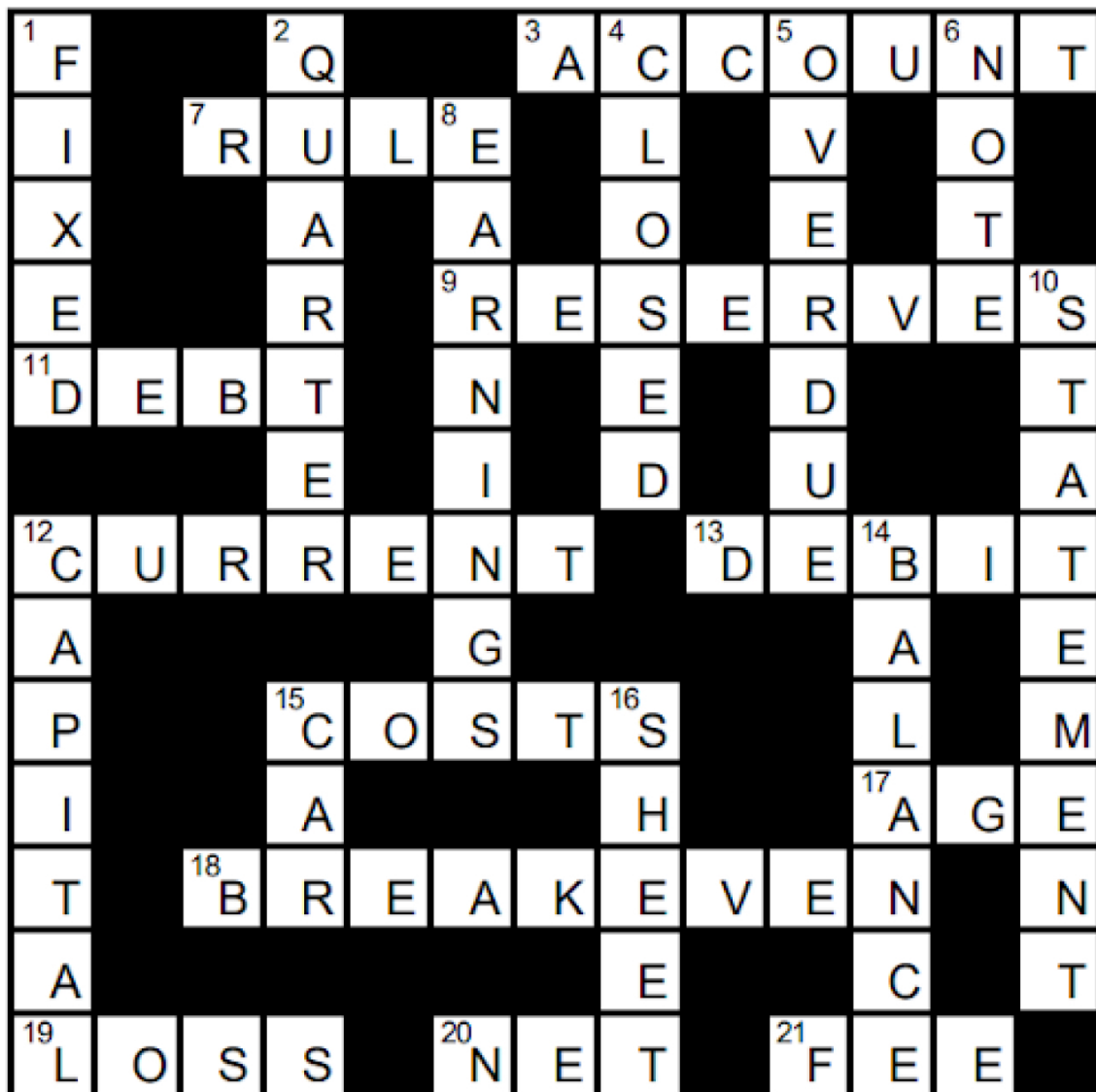
Ready to take a break and have a little fun? Test your knowledge, sharpen your mind, and challenge yourself with our quick business-themed games and trivia! Whether you're in it to win bragging rights or just want to unwind, there's something here for everyone. Let the games begin!

## Unscramble these words

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. KMARET           | 12. OMOENCY     |
| 2. ETENERNEPRRU     | 13. RTGWHO      |
| 3. TNEPRHEENPRUEIRS | 14. ISKLSL      |
| 4. ECIHN            | 15. LAUOBR      |
| 5. LOGA ETIDECRD    | 16. KWRO        |
| 6. TRUIOPPNYT       | 17. TCSIEH      |
| 7. NOIVVNAEIT       | 18. AORLSM      |
| 8. TMAE             | 19. COMEMTMTNI  |
| 9. SLGAO            | 20. BRLELEIA    |
| 10. REEVTAIC        | 21. EALICITSR   |
| 11. DIOEARNGZ       | 22. IVMPIECTTEO |



**Check out the answers to last edition's crossword puzzle below and see how many you got right!**





# See You Next Month, Go-getters!

Halfway through the year isn't the time to panic, rather, it is the time to power up. Maybe your goals are still in sight. Maybe you have had to tweak the plan. Either way, the second half is your chance to move with more focus, more clarity and less pressure to prove anything to anyone but yourself.

Remember: progress isn't always loud, and legacy isn't built in one perfect quarter. It's the consistent steps, the smart choices, the pivots you make when no one's watching.

Whatever this next half holds, never forget that Access Bank is right beside you. With funding, tools, and real support designed for businesses like yours.

So stay close, keep an eye on our offerings, and stay glued - the second half of the year is yours for the taking.

If you have any information or enquiry, you can please reach out to us **welovesmes@accessbankplc.com**

**Together, we can finish strong.**



**we**   
 **Love.**  
 **'sMes**