

African Renaissance

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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The dream of an African Renaissance has been around for some 68 years. The term was apparently first coined by [Cheikh Anta Diop](#) in what is now a book entitled "Towards the African Renaissance: Essays in Culture and Development, 1946-1960". 65 years later, it is hardly clairvoyant to acknowledge that Africa's natural and human resources will be pivotal in almost every category you care to name in the decades to come; here's how:

1. African fashion will come out of the closet

Although to many the latest 'fashion trends' themselves don't seem to be of much consequence, throughout history fashion has acted as a mirror to global zeitgeist and can be used by savvy trend spotters as an indicator of broader trends.



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If we didn't heed the signs that African style was on its way up when [Louis Vuitton](#) copied Masai check in 2012, we now have another chance. Stylists have been attempting to convince us that African motifs are on trend for years, but this is the year that it will really stick. What else is the trend for mis-matched colours and motifs than a happy meeting of Lesotho blankets, Sheshwe print and the symbols of Malian mudcloth?

What to expect: More African fashion designers and fabrics becoming big names on the global catwalk and interior design.

2. Afrocentric multimedia content

To achieve groundswell the above types of initiatives are going to need to be captured, catalogued, promoted and distributed.

What to expect: A higher presence of joyous Afrocentric multimedia and cross disciplinary co-labs.

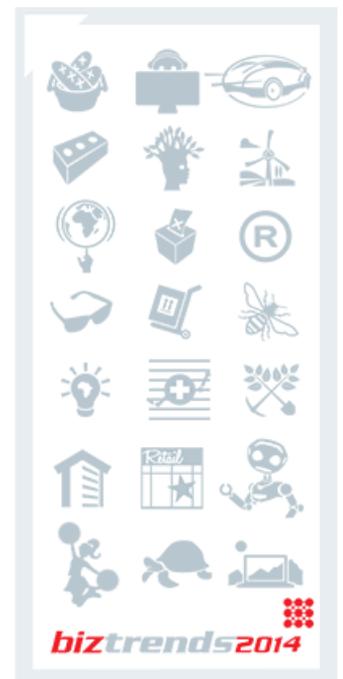
3. Afro-culture

Uncovering the magnificent history and richness of our continent in unbridled truth will continue to spawn more new high profile African authors, musicians, filmmakers and global fashion, dance and style trends.

What to expect: All of the above.

4. Afro-apps

It's all been a bit quaint, the raving on about mobile penetration in Africa, when only a miniscule percentage of these are smart. Add to this hit and miss infrastructural support from purveyors of broadband and what have you and you can see the race for mobile penetration in Africa has barely begun. Personally I'd love to see Apple, who apparently currently own a scant 1% of mobile market share in Africa, put some effort into



innovation and enabling in our region.

What to expect: A race by mobile brands to get traction on the billions of users via handset and Afro-app solutions with varying degrees of success.

Source: www.robynhobson.com

5. Smart agriculture

December 2013 saw the governments of South Africa and the Netherlands in collaboration with partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the World Bank and the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), host the 3rd Global Conference to discuss the food, nutrition security and climate change.

What to expect (and pray for): The rise of global thought leaders, scientists, farmers and NGOs and investors in forging new ways to manage natural and energy resources in pursuit of access to food in our region.

6. Marketing Africa

No matter how accomplished Africa's culture and craftsmanship, to compete will require some savvy marketing and merchandising strategies. Skills like branding, positioning and business acumen are vital for our region to fully realise the economic value of our innate advantages in many areas.

What to expect: More entrepreneurs.

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