

PRESS RELEASE**Attn: News Editors*****For Immediate Use***

BLAZE UNVEILS BYOB TV SHOW JUDGES AND CONTESTANTS

Reality show positioned to showcase youth's entrepreneurial talent and encourage young people to create their own jobs

Nairobi, Kenya 18th December 2017... Safaricom's (NSE: [SCOM](#)) youth network [BLAZE](#)¹ has today unveiled the **12 contestants**² who will be taking part in its new reality show, **BLAZE BYOB TV**³, which will premiere on Monday 6th February 2017.

The contestants were selected from Nairobi, Rift Valley, Central, Western and Coast regions, and include: Susan Mueni, Joseph Wanja, Paul Zakaria, Cate Akoth, Valentine Nekesa, David Kimani, Wayne Ochieng', Sam Ngure, Susan Maina, Vinsencia Gisore, Keith Asumba and Lynette Achieng'.

The aspiring entrepreneurs are all aged below 26 years, and were selected following a rigorous auditions process that was carried out during the BLAZE BYOB mentorship summits held between June and October 2016.

The TV series will be on air for a period of eight weeks, during which the contestants will be evaluated on their ability to perform outstandingly well across a series of tasks that will assess their business skills, navigating carefully crafted challenges that simulate real-life situations, and working with mentors and established brands to earn the judges' and audience's favour.

Contestants will be eliminated each week, with the overall winner bagging a grand prize of KES 5 million that includes KES 3 million in start-up capital and the remainder in

¹ <http://blaze.co.ke/>

² (Insert link to contestants' profiles)

³ (insert link to TV show on BLAZE site)

the form of mentorship, financial advice and business support from Safaricom and various partners. However no contestant will go home empty-handed, with each receiving a consolation prize that will go towards supporting their businesses upon elimination.

“Every year, over 800,000 young men and women enter a job market that can only provide employment to less than an eighth of them. We must find a solution to the challenge of youth unemployment by encouraging them to embrace entrepreneurship and create jobs,” said Safaricom CEO Bob Collymore during the launch of the TV show.

“The title of the show – Be Your Own Boss – reflects what we see as a step towards finding a solution to unemployment, and that is encouraging the youth to create their own employment. We believe that these 12 contestants represent millions of Kenyan youth who can become entrepreneurs, and therefore employers, if they receive the guidance and support required to venture into business,” he added.

Based on a reality TV-show concept designed to be relatable to a Kenyan audience, the show is in line with BLAZE's promise to empower the youth and teach them how they can be their own bosses, by encouraging them to earn from their passions and talents and igniting a spark in them to achieve their own versions of success.

Contestants will be guided and evaluated by a panel of three **judges⁴** selected from media and entrepreneurship backgrounds.

Trushar Khetia is the Founder and CEO of the Tria Group of Companies, which comprises of an out-of-home advertising company and Society stores – a retail supermarket chain with branches in Thika, Nairobi, Maua, Meru and Naivasha. He was listed in the [Forbes' 30 Most Promising Young Entrepreneurs In Africa 2016 list⁵](#).

Kennedy Ombima, popularly known as King Kaka, is a prolific rapper and entrepreneur, overseeing a portfolio of businesses that includes artist management, graphic design and apparel under the name Kaka Empire.

⁴ (insert link to judges' profiles on BLAZE site)

⁵ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2016/04/25/30-most-promising-young-entrepreneurs-in-africa-2016/9/#30b7816f5d06>



The third judge is Caroline Mutoko, one of Kenya's best known radio personalities and current Chief Marketing Officer at Radio Africa Group. With over 15 years' experience in radio, Caroline is widely referred to as the undisputed Queen of Kenyan Radio and a voice that inspires Kenyan youth.

"The selection of the judges was not easy either. These three judges represent what we feel Kenyan youth can relate to: burning passion for business, a desire to tread the unconventional path and a hunger for success. With Caroline, Trushar and King Kaka we're presenting to contestants and the audience three Kenyans who are excelling in their fields, who know what it takes to succeed and who are willing to share what they've learned on their journeys to where they are now," added Bob.

Since its launch in May 2016, BLAZE has signed up close to 900,000 subscribers, with over 44,000 youth attending the mentorship summits in Eldoret, Thika, Nakuru, Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu. Of these, 778 young men and women auditioned for the TV show, going through an intensive five-stage audition process that resulted in the selection of the final 12.

The BLAZE BYOB TV show will air on KTN between 8.00pm and 9.00pm every Monday, beginning 6th February 2017 and closing with a live grand finale on Monday 27th March 2017.

**/...ENDS... **

Blaze Manifesto

BLAZE celebrates the **young**, those on the road not taken;

Who in spite of the critics, are now our **hope**.

We celebrate their **passion**, and its effect on the world around us.

This is **BLAZE**