Cynthia Thinwa

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SUMMARY

Passionate about impactful marketing research through machine learning & data science.
Has combined open-source and corporate experience of over 5 years.

SKILLS

Communication Skills: Report Writing, Copywriting, Design, Public Speaking, Marketing
Programming Skills: Power BI, Python (Scikit-learn, Pandas, TensorFlow, Django, Flask, Kubeflow, OpenCV), R, SQL, Linux, JavaScript
Interpersonal Skills: Negotiation, Team Player, Empathy, Leadership
Adaptability: New Idea Generation, Multiple Domain Knowledge & Experience in Marketing, ICT, Performance Management and Quality
Intellectually Curious: Continuous Learning, Teaching, Problem Solving

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Quality Lead (Interim), Kenya   November 2022 - Present
DHL Supply Chain Ltd. – Nairobi, Kenya

I have 2 key areas of responsibility:

Quality Management System
- Achievements
  - *Conducted an activation which saw 2 sites successfully participate on World Quality Day 2024 and increase general awareness around Quality to the yard and shopfloor teams across Kenya.*

External Quality Audits
- Achievements
  - *Successfully completed CSCS: Quality Essentials course, ISO 9001: 2015 Internal Auditor, ISO 14001:2015, and ISO 45001:2018 training*
  - *Created a virtual platform where regional and local stakeholders could get status updates on progress towards closing actions concerning external quality audits.*
  - *Streamlined documentation for Kenya and managing eQMS migration for the country*
  - *Worked within a team to move client audit scores from "Needs Significant Improvement" to "Pass" and successfully led a team to ensure we score 86% in a separate customer audit in 2023.*
  - *Presented Audit Results in Power BI for Senior Management Consumption and also shared aligned areas of monitoring for Quality performance*

Performance Management Lead, East Africa   February 2022 - Present
DHL Supply Chain Ltd. – Nairobi, Kenya

I have 5 key areas of responsibility:

Standardization
- Achievements
  - *Curated warehousing data to make it accessible for 3 sites in 2022*
  - *Pulled TMS Data from source and automated reporting for an existing client in 2024.*
  - *Created a shared workspace on Power BI for East Africa, used by all stakeholders for local analysis*

Performance Management
- Achievements
  - *Enhanced data quality by implementing a regular data reporting and data validation process for East Africa*
  - *Collaborated with my colleague to have various Site Leads use custom KPI dashboards viewed by external customers*
  - *Collaborated with people from all levels of seniority to standardize Operational reporting within the first 90 days of my role.*

System Management
- Achievements
  - *Created a shared PowerBI workspace, that was connected to Microsoft Teams for relevant parties to access dashboards*
  - *Leveraged data gateways for automated refresh direct from 2 key source systems: a data warehouse and a database*
  - *Standardized data transformation and archiving leveraging Python, KubeFlow and Git within DHL infrastructure in 2022*

Stakeholder Management
- Achievements
  - *Conducted a time tracking and attendance study with all Kenya site leads in 2022*
  - *Created dashboards that could be viewed by both data providers and senior management in a Cloud environment*
  - *Worked in cross-functional teams to deliver various projects, including 2 startups and 1 existing customer*

People
- Achievements
  - *Coached various people to analyze data using Power BI.*

AI & Blockchain Intern   May 2019 - February 2020
Adrian Group (K) Ltd. – Gitaru, Kenya
- Built the first machine learning customer segmentation solution to facilitate insights around consumers and map existing churn to each segment.
- Insights from this solution led the business to emphasise data collection efforts from technicians to increase data size and availability.
- Developed 3 product use cases with sketches and price points after conducting value chain analysis on how the solution could be commercialized.
- Participated in documentation efforts, leveraging my business writing skill and past internship experiences.

Client Service & Digital Intern   March 2018 - August 2018
Brainwave Communications Ltd. – Nairobi, Kenya
- Managed 4 brands' social media by engaging with follower content and replying to user feedback on behalf of Client.
- Reviewed social media analytics and wrote monthly reports for all 4 brands.
- Delivered a content strategy proposal for 1 brand.
- Working with a designer, we were able to leverage influential hashtags and persuade the media buyer to increase spend for a brand post; this increased content reach from a Kenyan audience to include both Tanzanian and Ugandan audiences and increased the number of prospective sales via social media.

Business Development Intern   September 2014 - October 2014
Infotrak Research & Consulting Ltd. – Nairobi, Kenya
- I did secondary research for the firm and wrote 1 proposal for a prospective client.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

University of Nairobi – Nairobi, Kenya   September 2019 – September 2022
Master of Science in Social Statistics (thesis on the informal economy in Kenya)

University of Nairobi – Nairobi, Kenya   September 2012 – December 2016
Bachelor of Commerce, Marketing Option with Upper Second (thesis on tour operators in Nairobi CBD) and 65.47/100 GPA

Bishop Gatimu Ngandu Girls' High School – Nyeri, Kenya   January 2007 – December 2010
Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education with a mean grade of A minus

SHORT COURSES

SHEQ & BCM Conference   May 2025
DHL Supply Chain Europe, Middle East & Africa – Physical
- Was trained and represented Africa on matters Security and Quality other professionals from the various countries and clusters within the region.

DHL Certified Supply Chain Manager   February 2025
DHL Supply Chain Kenya – Physical
- Learned more about the DHL Supply Chain way of working and how the Supply Chain industry works.

DHL Certified Training: Creating Value with Data Science   January 2025
DHL Group – Remote
- Learned more about the DHL Supply Chain way of managing Data projects, with a focus on applied Data Science.

ISO 9001:2015 Internal Auditor Certification   May 2023
SGS Kenya – Remote
- Grew in awareness of the ISO 9001:2015 and learned how the standard is implemented and audited.

DHL Certified Supply Chain Specialist   December 2022
DHL Supply Chain Kenya – Physical
- Learned more about the DHL Supply Chain way of working and how the Supply Chain industry works.

SHEQ Workshop   May 2022
DHL Supply Chain Africa – Physical
- Was trained on matters Security, Health and Safety, Quality and Performance Management alongside other SHEQ professionals and Site Leads from the various South African sites
- Conducted a GEMBA walk around the Plumbago P&G Site in South Africa.

Introduction to Machine Learning in Production

Coursera – Remote

June 2021

- Learned a framework for deploying Machine Learning solutions.
- Obtained a final grade of 94%.

International School of Advertising – Nairobi, Kenya

January 2018 – December 2018

- Obtained The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Level 4 Award in Digital Marketing with Distinction
- In ICEA LION Life, I advised on how to leverage integrated brand communications for a product relaunch - the report was well received by the head of Marketing & Communications at ICEA LION Group at the time.
- In KCB Bank, I wrote a briefing paper on multi-channel marketing and wrote a marketing report assessing their readiness for multi-channel marketing in online and offline spaces and how integrated their marketing efforts were.

Microsoft Professional Program in Data Science

Microsoft Learning & 21c Skills - Remote

November 2018 – December 2020

- Learned fundamentals of data analytics, data science and big data management.
- Obtained a mean grade of 92.8%.

PROJECTS

Tech Lead, Kenyans in Print   November 2022 - Present
- Collaborated in an initial team of people across the world for the first 4 months to build an end-to-end solution that can sustainably convert newspaper scans of selected human interest stories from Dec 2021 - Dec 2022 into searchable text
- The concept was fleshed out in Jupyter Notebooks here.
- The API (created using Flask) is currently under development.

Writer, NLP Toolbox series   March 2022 - October 2022
- Wrote about a framework that would help projectize Natural Language Processing projects and create machine learning that is more real-world and less theoretical; I also gave a talk on the same topic here and here at Lanfrica
- The aim of the article was to demystify natural language processing (NLP) to technical and non-technical audiences alike.
- The articles currently have more than 70 reads and more than 20 views on average.

Bootcamp 33 Trainee, Prospect 33   August 2021 - November 2021
- Underwent training on application of data science in financial services, particularly investment banking.
- In a team of 6, we leveraged graph technology to identify if a client is participating in money-laundering activity based on public data sources.
- We were able to present our findings to seasoned investment banking professionals and received both group and individual certification.

Machine Learning Teaching Fellowship, Delta Analytics   May 2021 - November 2021
- Underwent training on teaching technical concepts to both technical and non-technical audiences (For more, click here).
- Conducted a lecture on 8th October here, showing how to process audio, video and text data using a Natural Language Processing pipeline, with #KOT (Twitter) data.
- The video got 80+ views in 2 weeks and has sparked discussions around locally made NLP solutions that consider code-switching and multilingualism at the same time.

Tech Lead, applysocialstats.com   August 2020 - Present
- It demystifies data, research and math concepts, based on my Masters journey in the University of Nairobi.
- It currently has more than 10 users.
- Programmed the site (v. 1.0) in 5 months using Python (Django), HTML, CSS and JavaScript; deployed on DigitalOcean.

Writer, Why you should contribute to open-source as a data scientist   June 2020
- Documented my experience here on contributing to ScikitLearn, an open-source machine learning library
- The aim of the article was to encourage more people to embrace open-source.
- It currently has more than 200 reads and more than 80 views.

KIVA project   April 2020 - June 2020
The goal of the project was to look for additional data sources in order to assess the welfare of KIVA borrowers. Project insights include:
- The welfare of borrowers was good because:
  - Massive impact is being achieved for Kenyan men and Filipino women, because the loans are small enough to pay back and monthly repayments are taking up only 50% or less of their monthly income
  - Few borrowers are taking loans for personal use
  - Social businesses that employ locals are taking up loans of USD 50,000
- However,
  - Countries that have many more people in need like Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone and Mali have a high debt burden, trapping borrowers from these countries in poverty.

Finalist, DataHack4FI Season 3 Competition   November 2018 - August 2019
- Was part of the top team in Kenya that got to represent the country in the African finals (For more, click here).
- Enrolled in and completed MPPDS (Microsoft Professional Program in Data Science) certification, with one of the best performances in the country.
- In the grand finale, more than 300 key stakeholders in financial inclusion and technology met in Kigali Rwanda, and my team was able to present to a panel of judges an InsureTech solution.