

News Updates

MIDDLE EAST PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION

MEPA'S OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage the widest possible spread of publications throughout Middle East and beyond.
- To promote and protect by all lawful means the publishing industry in Middle East
- To protect members by dealing collectively with problems.
- To cooperate for mutual benefits with other organizations concerned in the creation, production and distribution of publications.
- To promote the development of public interest in publications in association with other publishing organizations with similar objectives.
- To serve as a medium for exchange of ideas with respect to publication, sales copyright and other matters of interest.

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SAYIDATY'S SUCCESS FORMULA REVEALED

DUBAI: Sayidaty is the No. 1. Arabic magazine in the Arab world with a strong print and digital background, said Mohammed Fahad Al-Harhi, editor in chief of Arab News, Sayidaty and Al-Jamila, while addressing WAN-Ifra conference that concluded on Thursday (14 May 2014).

“Print, digital, and online versions of Sayidaty are growing. Two years ago, our page views were about 2 million, but today they are 31 million. One and a half years ago, our position was 7th; today it is first. This indicates the clarity of our digitalization strategy,” he said, addressing a session titled Powerful Strategies to Turn your Online Reach into Powerful Business.



Mohammed Fahad Al-Harhi, left, editor in chief of Arab News, Sayidaty and Al-Jamila addresses the WAN-Ifra conference on Thursday in Dubai. Right: A

“The traditional media is moving to digital and our team is well prepared to face the digital era,” he added.

He said 6.8 million readers visited Sayidaty’s website last year and they spent there four minutes on average. “We are No. 1 in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait,” he said.

“We have millions of Facebook followers and our YouTube views hit 22 million last year. Downloads from Sayidaty were over a million,” he explained highlighting the strength of Sayidaty’s digital side.

“Since Sayidaty has been a leader in print for many years, we were a bit lazy to turn to digital. However, three years ago, we decided to go digital. Today, we are top in website content, social media, and we have a strong tie-up with Rotana TV which enhances our reach in the visual media.”

Sayidaty’s digital and Web teams are strong and well trained, he said, adding: “All journalists in Sayidaty can handle print and online at a time.”

The magazine has a professional team to create human-interest content, he said. “In addition, we use content from readers which increases our loyal readers.” Al-Harhi said Sayidaty’s newsletter has 50,000 subscribers.

“Since Sayidaty has been in the market for over 33 years, we know the taste of readers and feel the pulse of the market. Moreover, we have a strong research unit to monitor the need of the market and readers,” he said. “However, our main focus is on print edition and a major chunk of our income comes from it.”

He said his magazine uses social media as a tool for branding and to attract readers. “More than 25 percent of Sayidaty’s new readers come through Facebook.”

Source: ARABNEWS

BULLISH RUN CONTINUES FOR UAE'S AD SPEND

Government entities lead, while retail and entertainment show sustaining power

Dubai; 06 May 2014

The feel-good factor continues to fuel the UAE's advertising industry, with an estimated \$398 million (Dh1.46 billion) being spent in the first three months of the year against \$381 million same time last year. And it looks as if the upbeat sentiment will run for quite a while yet.

As has been the case for some time, local government agencies and government-owned enterprises continues to take the lead in pumping in the ad dollars into the marketplace — in the first quarter, they spent an estimated \$79 million for an overall 20 per cent share of the overall ad billings, according to data from Pan Arab Research Centre (Parc), which tracks official media rate cards. (Interestingly, the UAE Armed Forces had the highest measured spend on TV during this period, with \$3.88 million.)



The three pillars of the local economy — retail, entertainment and hospitality — took up the next three spots, based on Parc numbers. Then comes real estate specific advertising, or more precisely its return with an 88 per cent increase in ad spend compared with a year ago, with a total estimated at \$32 million.

A clear pattern is starting to show up since early 2013 — if the first-half of last year saw steady increases in spending, there was a sharp spike in the second-half as build-up towards the confirmation of Dubai as the host city for World Expo 2020 in late November. December sparked a celebratory round of advertising highs as marketers and the local ad industry got the confirmation that the upturn was well and truly on.

The first quarter of 2014 confirms the bullishness. If anything, advertisers were hoping for more — “The start was not slow, but I think most of us were — and are — a trifle more bullish,” said Avishesha Bhojani, BPG | Group CEO.

Traditional media continues to hold its own in the UAE's ad mix; newspapers pulled in \$227 million for a steady 57 per cent share, while magazines accounted for \$58 million (15 per cent share of the overall). Television commercials fetched \$31 million in the first quarter, representing 8 per cent of the total. The share of outdoor media, at \$59 million, was also put at 15 per cent. (The Parc numbers do not track digital media spend.)

“Currently both multinational brands as well as strong local brands are spending, though there are variations in the individual spending patterns,” said Mahesh Sundaresan, CEO at Ikon Advertising & Marketing. “MNC brands will always consider media that delivers reach across markets, such as pan-Arab television. As for digital, it is registering strong growth driven by both MNCs as well as local brands.

“Where we can see clear spike in ad spend is in retail, services and FMCG (fast moving consumer goods) which is in line with Nielsen's UAE consumer Confidence Index for Q1-2014 which is positive. While real estate spends have gone up, these have been on very select projects.”

Source: GULF NEWS

PUBLISH LIVE USERS' GROUP MEETING



What are the main challenges facing publishers as they move forward for new revenues generation?

A two days seminars and workshop of Publish live users organised by KnowledgeView and hosted by Dubai Media City :

- Latest trends globally for successful publishing operations
- ◆ Exchange digital Newsroom experiences by Publish live users
- ◆ Peak into the next major upgrade of KnowledgeView's Publish live and get the chance to influence the making of great digital publishing software

Date : 28—29 May 2014

Location : Dubai Media City, UAE Al Sofouh Road, Building 2, Ground floor

Dubai—UAE

UAE AND SAUDI ARABIA IN THE FOREFRONT OF DIGITAL CONT

Although statistical research predicts the demise of the print publication by 2028 in the UAE, researcher and self-proclaimed “futurist” Ross Dawson says newspaper organisations will not die with it.

Ross Dawson making a presentation on ‘The Future of Arab Media’ on the opening day of the 13th Arab Media Forum in Dubai on Tuesday. — KT photos by Rahul Gajjar

“To be frank, the extinction of paper print is not that important. The news is important, so whether it is on paper or not really doesn’t matter. It’s just about moving with the times.”

Presenting ‘The Future of Arab Media’ session at this year’s Arab Media Forum in Madinat Jumeirah, Dawson said digitalisation is the way forward as “we are living in an age where people are consuming media throughout the whole day”.

And with the global economy set to rise over the next 20-25 years, media will be at the heart of this growth, he said, before pointing out the seven driving forces behind creating a thriving media epicentre in the region.

“These seven elements will feed success: Increased media consumption, fragmentation, participation, personalisation, evolved revenue models, generational changes, and increased bandwidth.”

Dawson said the most fundamental shift in media of late has been fragmentation and although the media sector continues to grow as a whole, the introduction of new, online media channels means “the pie now is being sliced into smaller pieces”.

So at a time where paper is being binned in favour of technology, what does this mean for the future of Arab media? According to Dawson, the UAE has become one of the frontrunners in a digitally dominated world, so to continue expanding its media footprint, it needs to continue shifting from old media channels to new.

“Focus needs to be steered towards global strategies. Local news organisations will focus on national and regional news, but there needs to be a focus of global news. Take Al Jazeera for example. It is creating content for a global audience and crowd interaction is breeding its success.”

With 95 per cent of the population logging on to social networking sites on average of 2.7 hours per day, the UAE is now noted as one of the world’s highest users of Twitter and Facebook, alongside Saudi Arabia. These figures keep the future of Arab media in good stead, according to Dawson, as news consumers are champing at the bit when it comes to mobile information.

“It will be interesting to see if other Arab nations follow in the footsteps of the UAE and Saudi Arabia as they develop. If so, the future of Arab media will look strong.”

With communities filtering, discussing and engaging in topical discussion, news has now become a community-assisted medium where audiences around the world collaborate and draw on insights together and Dawson said for any country to stay on board the media train, it needs to allow people to individualise content.

“Reporters cannot always be there when news breaks, so using social media the public can create the news and spread it quicker than anyone else,” he said, adding that there is massive value in timeliness.

“Getting the news first has huge impact on a story. Newspapers report news too late because of printing deadlines, so it is imperative to spread news across all interfaces.”

But for Dawson, one thing is key. “Experimentation. That is the most important aspect here. I call myself a futurist but no one can predict the future. The key is to try things and figure out what does and doesn’t work.”



Ross Dawson making a presentation on ‘The Future of Arab Media’ on the opening day of the 13th Arab Media Forum in Dubai



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Middle East Publishers Association MEPA is a FZ. LLC organization with the motto of building a society of publishers that will think and act for the benefits of the publishing industry.

The aim of MEPA is to serve, promote and protect the interest of press and electronic publishers, whilst raising the future standards of the publishing industry in the Middle East.

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