

PROFILE OF MEPA MEMBER

CONCEPT MEDIA

concept
www.conceptgroup.ae



Concept Media is a UAE based publishing house offering cogent publishing solutions across different industries and is a part of the Concept Group, which provides integrated marketing communication through eight dedicated companies.

Concept Media have several pioneering products to their credit notable among them Dubai Health Directory, the first official annual directory for the Department of Health and Medical Services; Dubai Media City Directory and Emirates Business Pages, the first official directory for Emirates Post.

Among other innovative reference sources are Invest & Live in Dubai, an annual publication providing guide to the economic, commercial and social Dubai and the first Investors' Guide to the UAE, which has been specially commissioned by the Ministry Of Economy.

Concept Media also brings out the prestigious RetailME, region's leading business retail magazine and Millionaire, a bi-monthly luxury lifestyle publication.

NEWS UPDATE

FIRST EVER ENGLISH LANGUAGE BUSINESS DAILY LAUNCHED IN MIDDLE EAST

Arab Media Group, the largest media group in the United Arab Emirates, launched Emirates Business 24/7, the Middle East's first English language daily dedicated to business and economic news.

The new publication went on sale on Sunday (9 December 2007) and focuses on business related local, regional and international news, matching editorial best practices from across the world.

Arab Media Group's CEO, Abdullatif Al Sayegh, said, "The current economic boom in the region, especially in the UAE, has resulted in an exponential increase in readers' interest about latest business developments.



Abdullatif Al Sayegh, CEO of Arab Media Group.

Moreover, decision makers and opinion makers today are looking for a source of in-depth analysis, thought-provoking editorials and objective information across all sectors.

"The growth of Dubai into one of the leading global financial centres calls for its clear manifestation in the media world. With recent developments in Dubai's financial markets, the UAE has joined the big league of global centres, alongside New York, London and Tokyo."

Editor-in-chief is Riyadh Mickdady, a seasoned journalist with over 21 years experience. The editor is Frank Kane and Mustafa Al Rawi is managing editor.

Source: watchingthedia.com

MORE THAN 100 JOURNALISTS KILLED IN 2007

More than 100 journalists have been killed in 2007, the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) said in its half-year report on press freedom worldwide, published on 19 November 2007.

One hundred and six journalists died on duty in 28 countries – 45 of them in Iraq, where 150 media workers have lost their lives since 2003.



The number of journalists killed in 2007 is approaching the record 110 deaths last year.

Journalists in Latin America continue to be the victims of murders, threats and harassment when investigating sensitive subjects such as corruption and drug trafficking. Government persecution and legal actions also hinder the work of the press, which nevertheless continues its unyielding battle for freedom of information.

In the Middle East and North Africa, there are a growing number of independent newspapers that do not shy away from criticizing the authorities and questioning the lack of democracy. Nonetheless, the general media scene is plagued by strict government control and legal action taken against anyone who dares question the regime in place.

More and more journalists in sub-Saharan Africa are prosecuted and jailed on charges of "endangering state security," whereas harsh repression through "insult laws" and criminal defamation continues. Threats, attacks and violence target those who report the inconvenient truth, whether it is linked to the handling of a conflict situation, abuse of power or personal misconduct.

Hostility toward independent and opposition media and attempts to silence them could again be seen in various parts of Europe and Central Asia. Spurious extremism and anti-state criminal charges remained an effective tool to hinder critical reporting.

Asia is home to some of the most repressive regimes in the world, which suppress all dissident voices and forbid any form of independent media. Simmering ethnic, political and religious tensions exist in a number of countries.

Source: WAN

ACTIVITIES AND OTHER UPDATES

THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF NEWSPAPERS WILL HOST A TWO-DAY SCENARIO PLANNING WORKSHOP



The Workshop

The World Association of Newspapers will host a two-day Scenario Planning workshop on 29-30 January, 2008, to explore the sweeping changes in the Newspaper business, and to create detailed plans addressing each issue. Among the industry challenges to be explored, and corresponding roadmaps to be developed, include:

- Advertising competition
- Cover pricing models, including free
- Monetising digital media
- Circulation decline
- Escalating fixed costs
- Non-traditional content providers
- Hostile investment landscape
- Misinformation about the industry in the press
- Growing pains in China, India and beyond
- Securing and training qualified workers for a changing environment

Location : **Le Manoir de Gressy - Gressy, France**

DATE: 29-30 January, 2008

(<http://www.wan-press.org/scenarioplanning/programme.php>)

RESEARCH ARTICLE

MIDDLE EAST PRINTING INDUSTRY - THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

Pira International, one of the leading information provider for the printing, paper, packaging and publishing industries recently published a new study about the future of graphic arts industry in Middle East region. Titled The Future of Printing Markets in the Middle East, the study offers an insight on the printing industry in Middle East and the future prospects of this industry until 2012. The study compiles wide range of information including tables, facts and figures. The market for printing in the Middle East was estimated at \$5.3 billion in 2007 and is forecast to reach \$7.6 billion by 2012, according to the study.



Based on extensive primary and secondary research, the study provides a quantitative breakdown of the market by end-use sector, print process and country, plus five-year forecasts to 2012. The study also breaks down the market for key supplier markets, including substrates, inks and machinery.

The market study shows how the printing industry in the Middle East has undergone a sea-change in the recent years, to become one of the most successful industries in the region. The print market has evolved distinctly and is expected to grow at an average annual growth rate of 7.7% till 2012. The publishing industry of the region is also experiencing unparalleled growth with an increase in the number of publications. Economic prosperity, strong inflow of foreign investments, changing lifestyles and restriction on the visual media are some of the factors that are accelerating the growth of the print sector.

Increased literacy has led to greater demand for printed sources of information, with many newspapers adopting the latest digital workflow technologies including computer to plate. Thus, unlike many parts of the world where demand for dailies is shrinking, printed journalism continues to flourish and thrive in the Middle East and newspapers still remain the most sought out sources of information. Introduction of new trade, consumer and lifestyle magazines have also helped the printing industry in the Middle East to witness unsurpassed growth and action.

The emerging countries in terms of printing include Turkey, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt. The printing industry in Turkey, for instance, is investing heavily on new technologies and innovations to compete with the European printing companies. The advent of the [Dubai Media City](#) has helped attract more publishers to the UAE and has in turn triggered the demand for printing services from the region.

Being one of the most promising new markets in the world, the region in the recent years has seen a definite shift in its printing technology. Offset presses continue to enjoy a major share in the printing market and this is further enhanced by the increase in demand for quality and speed from the print consumers. Over the last few years, flexographic printing in the region has seen a significant growth and this growth has largely been seen in the narrow web flexo label printing sector. Flexographic printing has also made a contribution to growth in the packaging sector. Gravure printing is also making a mark in the industry, with Syria, Egypt and Iran being the emerging markets for gravure and flexo based presses, catering primarily to the flexible packaging sector.

The market for digital printing in the region is expected to expand significantly in the future. However, the countries in the Middle East are yet to realise the potential benefits of colour printing for document production. Many printing houses are, as a result, making efforts to educate the businesses sector on the role digital printing technology and customer services can play in business development initiatives.

[Screen](#) printing is facing immense competition from the digital printing market. One of the main features of [Screen](#) printing is that it can survive in outdoor conditions, particularly natural light for more than three years and can be used for long runs. [Screen](#) printing is still the favourite for long runs in the region and is still being used in countries such as Lebanon, UAE and Saudi Arabia. Whereas in Egypt it is expected that many [Screen](#) printing presses are likely to close due to stiff competition from offset and digital printers.

There have also been noteworthy developments in wide format inkjet printing markets with businesses that have adopted this format realizing its benefits in terms of cost reduction, faster turnaround and increased quality control. Traditional printing houses, [Screen](#) printers, sign shops and photo labs have also started to use wide format printing to a great extent and advertising houses use this process for speedier production of one-off samples.

The increasing use of computer-to-plate (CtP) technology is one of the noteworthy trends to be seen in the consumables market in the region. There has been an increase in the usage of CtP in Bahrain, UAE, Qatar and Oman. Since 2004, around 200 CtP have been installed in this region. Number of installations varies across the countries in this region. UAE is ahead of others, followed by Saudi Arabia and Iran.

End-use markets

The main end-users of the printing market in the Middle East include publishing (newspapers, magazines, book publishing), commercial printing (printed advertising) and package printing. The package print sector accounted for the largest share with 41.8% in 2007 followed by the print advertising, commercial printing and newspapers sectors accounting for a combined share of 33.3%. It is expected that printed advertising and security print will grow at higher growth rates of 10.9% and 9.4% respectively as they are perceived as the emerging sector requiring more print activity.

The newspaper industry in the Middle East has been around since the turn of the century. In 2007, two world famous newspapers, The Times and The Sunday Times both of London, began publication of their international edition in the Middle East. This move is likely to further enhance the importance of newspaper publishing in the region. The UAE has the largest share in the newspaper market in the region and publishes seven major newspapers, of which four are Arabic and three are English. The newspapers published in the UAE follow the American format as is seen in the case of the Gulf Times. Newspaper supplements are also gaining popularity among the readers.

In recent times, dramatic advances in the printing technology have occurred and the introduction of new printing technologies has helped reduce make-ready time, cost of production and secured better quality for the publications. Most of the key publishers in the region are investing in high end machines that incorporate both heatset and coldset facilities in the extended printing unit.

Specialized magazines like health magazines, lifestyle magazines, economics and entertainment are gaining popularity in the region. The Middle East, especially Dubai, is seeing the launch of almost one new magazine every week. The strong influx of tourists is also triggering the launch of new magazines aimed at niche markets such as golf.

Many Middle Eastern countries have a large population in the age group of 15-25 years and this clubbed with improvements in the quality of education has resulted in an increase in the need for printed educational materials. This favourable demography in the region has been responsible for the expansion of the printing market. Lebanon had a large market share in the region in terms of text book printing and contributed largely to the export market. However, both Syria and Egypt have increased their textbook printing and this is likely to offer stiff competition to the printing industry in Lebanon.

In the recent years, the commercial printing sector of Middle East has witnessed a significant growth. Nowadays, the commercial printers of the region have invested digital presses for different applications ranging from commercial products to personalised cards.

Significant growth in the retail markets and spread of hypermarkets has led to an increase in specialised printed advertisement products such as flyers, posters, billboards and brochures, which in turn have a positive impact on the printing industry in the region. Advertising, especially that of government and public sector continues to contribute to newspaper revenues. This is despite the recent onset of online advertising. Besides, advertisers have moved from magazines to newspapers as newspapers are more popular than magazines in the region.

The package printing sector has emerged as one of the most vibrant sectors of the printing industry in the region and is rapidly growing, with the increased demand for improved means of packaging. Printers are investing heavily in package printing to ensure that demand does not outstrip capacity as well as to provide high quality print to brand owners.

Source : ME PRINTER

SELECTED TOPIC

WILL OUTSOURCING BE THE HOT TOPIC OF 2008?

There are certainly plenty of examples emerging of both specific aspects of functional outsourcing as well as a number of newspaper companies where outsourcing is a central strategic theme.

And where there are functions being outsourced, there are companies seeking to take on the work. And this in itself can become a considerable profit centre for newspaper companies seeking to undertake contracts from other publishers.

It would seem that no aspect of our industry is immune from the concept. Look hard enough and you will find examples of editorial, advertising, production, distribution, technology and finance being packed off to an outside supplier, seemingly capable of providing a better service at a low price, and make a profit.

I say 'seemingly' because while there are plenty of compelling reasons for outsourcing, there are also a number of cases of it going horribly wrong.

Traditionally we have viewed the extremes of the value chain as the in-house preserve. Content creation and customer relationships are regarded as too important and critical to risk outsourcing to a third party. The bits in the middle - printing, distribution - were the areas for sharing.

I was once laughed at for suggesting to a newspaper that they outsource advertising sales. The publisher told me I was crazy. (OK, that's a separate issue.) Yet it is an established and very successful practice in many countries where newspapers have particularly high shares of advertising expenditure.

Many editors freak out at the idea of outsourcing any aspect of the newsroom. Yet news agencies are an enormous, valuable element of our industry. Many agencies are now offering excellent outsourcing services for editorial production. Fewer and fewer newspapers are employing full-time photographers. I was staggered to notice that one of the world's most famous editors was outsourcing all of his news content except opinion, until I realised that he was maybe right, and I was maybe wrong.

At the other extreme, companies are seeing the advantage of being the service supplier.

One company in the Netherlands provides specialist pre-press services for European newspapers, which they in turn operate in India.

In Italy, suppliers of editorial systems are now hosting content management and archive services at their own offices, instead of installing expensive plant at their newspaper client's offices.

A newspaper in Ireland has outsourced its editorial production to a company in France.

In the USA newspapers in neighbouring and competing markets are establishing joint ventures print and distribution resources.

Consortia to buy paper are commonplace.

Perhaps the biggest outsourcing trend currently is for newspaper companies either to abandon their own printing, or to become industry suppliers of printing. The issue is largely related to access to and the perceived use of available capital. I predict that in ten years time, over 50% of industry capacity will be differently sourced (in or out).

More and more functions within the newspaper are going to find themselves outsourced. Newspaper companies are starting to pay employees to leave and set up a separate company to which it outsources their old jobs.

Centralisation is another trend. Major companies are abandoning local operations in telephone sales and finance and setting up central units that are more flexible and efficient.

While the primary reason for outsourcing is likely to be to seek improvements in operational or financial performance of the company, competitive advantage is another key consideration.

So if it's a hot topic where do you start? The key lies in recognising where core competence and competitive advantage can best be applied.

In some areas of the newspaper operation, it is essential that the newspaper maintains control of the every aspect of the process. In others it may be beneficial to outsource. In some areas such as distribution or printing, the operational advantages maybe so strong, that it is advantageous to outsource or partner with a competitor.

At the point of product creation, the collection and choice of stories, the editor must clearly control all aspects of his newspaper product.

At the other end of the newspaper value chain, newspapers in common with other goods and services, see closer relationships with their consumers as a key to loyalty and purchase frequency. In subscription markets newspapers are looking at ways of adding value to their offer as a means of recovering revenues from what have become heavily discounted offers.

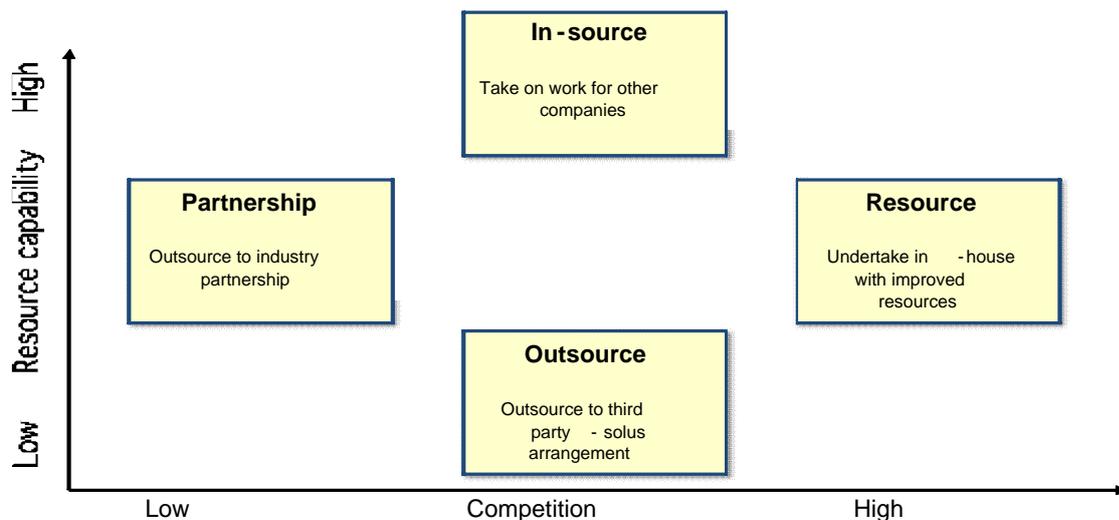
As one moves through the value chain, so the potential benefits and opportunities for outsourcing or partnership increase. In areas such as printing and distribution the question is not whether services could or should be outsourced but whether the value of partnership outweighs the issues of competition.

Where resource capability in a particular function is low the logical step is to outsource. If the competitive element is also low, then one may for example outsource printing to a competitor. If the competitive issues are stronger then the company may have to expand its resources to maintain competitive advantage.

Where the resource capability is high the company should consider taking on projects from other newspapers, so it may that it undertakes advertising sales or distribution for other newspapers with whom it does not directly compete.

By allocating each function into this framework publishers can identify those that would benefit from outsourcing, those that should be retained in house, and also areas where the company can usefully generate revenue by insourcing functions from other companies.

Outsourcing model



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You may feel uncomfortable about the notion of outsourcing, but don't be complacent. A friend of mine makes a good living acting as a locum CEO. When the bosses job can outsourced, anything can happen.



iMedia Advisory Services Ltd. is the leading international advisory service to the newspaper industry. We combine our vision of the future of the publishing with an in-depth knowledge of industry developments in product, process and technology to provide cutting edge solutions to our clients. iMedia is an Ifra joint-venture company.

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