

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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Signage, Imaging & Media (SIM) 2008 in Abu Dhabi

MEPA supported the three-day Signage, Imaging and Media exhibition and conference (SIM) 2008 the most comprehensive trade show for the regional marketing and media communications industry, which took place in ADNEC.

IN-HOUSE PRINTING PROVIDES COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR MARKETERS

The inaugural three-day Signage, Imaging and Media (SIM) 2008 the most comprehensive trade show for the regional marketing communications industry opened last Tuesday 25th November 2008 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC).

Opening the event, Saleh Rashed Hamad Al Dhaheri, Board Member Chairman - Industry Committee, Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce said, 'I'm really impressed with the advances in digital technology and the quality of cost-effective large format printing, this is good for business.'

Indeed on view is the latest in digital printing technology, especially for in-house printing, which usually encompasses rapid short print runs and ad hoc outside prints. Top international brands such as HP, Epson, Roland and Xerox were all displaying the hottest digital printing technology.

'The quality and versatility of digital printing presses is such that not only end-user companies find them cost-effective, advertising agencies, pay-per-print document centres and even medium to large size printing houses are adopting these solutions,' said Deon Swanepoel, Business Development Manager, Xerox Emirates.

'The return on investment (ROI) can be anything from 12 months to 3 years, depending on print volume,' commented Obaid Kareem, Graphic Arts Business Manager, Xerox Emirates.

This will be good news for marketers, many of whom are having their budgets scrutinised for potential savings and greater value for money. However some print professionals are experiencing mixed-market reactions. Chandrasekhar Thampi, is a 'finishing' professional at Dubai-based Helios, a company which specialises in finished laminates, protecting outdoor prints from UV damage, scratches and harsh detergents.



'We have not felt any real affect so far from the global downturn. Naturally there are certain sectors such as regional property developers which are going through a tough time at the moment, but we deal across all industries and to date that strategy has served us well,' he said.

SIM 2008 is a combination of three vertical events in the form of an exhibition and three one-day forums providing a platform for companies to showcase products and solutions. The focus sectors of SIM 2008 include printing; signage; banners and posters; pre-press; digital imaging, capture, storage and processing; electronic media; conferences under advertising production; marketing and public relations; outdoor media; new media and entertainment.

In addition SIM is hosting three one-day focused seminars for industry professionals and specialists alike.

'Our daily seminar programme addresses the core elements of the show separately. Today is new media, on Wednesday digital signage and outdoor advertising is the topic for Thursday,' stated, Spencer Felix, Exhibition Manager for SIM 2008.

'The synergy is obvious for delegates, having discussed current and potential future sector issues, experts on the exhibition floor will be able to demonstrate in practical terms how they can offer appropriate solutions,'

added Felix.

Source: AMEINFO

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IFRA Middle East Conference 2008—CAIRO—EGYPT (In association with MEPA)

The IFRA Middle East Conference has established itself as THE meeting point for publishers from the Middle East.

On 25 and 26 November it gave an up-to-date overview of pressing business issues as well as technical topics. High calibre speakers from different countries presented case studies and international suppliers were showing their latest products.



Dr Azzam AL Dakhil : DIVERSIFY

Dr. Azzam Al-Dakhil, CEO of Saudi Research & Marketing Group, explains how his company has diversified in the last years, entering publishing-related services areas such as printing, distribution and advertising. Those areas have become very appealing because they promise new revenue streams.

"Our main reason to start a distribution company was that in our area there was none, and we needed to make sure that we arrive on time to our clients. This proved to be a good decision, and many other companies have taken the same initiative," says Al Dakhil, who adds that his company even has a unit to organise conferences.

Printing also has developed into a very profitable business in Saudi Arabia. The group has experienced an increase in revenues coming from printing.

"We believe in the publishing industry, in the new publishing or smart publishing. Therefore, we are exploring promising new business opportunities," says Al-Dakhil. He is not worried about declining circulation, because the Arab world has proved to be very reading-savvy.

"In every challenge there is an opportunity for success," says Al-Dakhil, There is no need to question whether we are publishers, printers or content providers -- newspaper houses just need to think in terms of what else can they do. More, more, more is the key to success, he says.

Mr. Ziad Tueni: Some tips

Ziad Tueni, CEO of Cooperative Printing Company S.A.L. in Lebanon, gives some tips on how newspapers in the Middle East can reorganise themselves and do a better job:

- Analyze your product with market studies, to make sure you are offering your readers what they want to read.
- Improve the quality of your staff through training.
- Tackle subjects from everyday life (people are fed up with only political news).
- Streamline the editorial workflow with a convergent newsroom.
- Make use of electronic media to bind readers to the printed edition (for instance, with teasers in the form of SMS messages).
- Involve readers in creating content (citizen journalism, blogging, forums).
- Let readers be the source of information for breaking news.
- Create reader communities.
- Be creative at the printing plant (for instance with new forms of advertisements).
- Consider merging production facilities.
- Make use of the experience of newspapers from western countries.

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**Middle East Publishers Association
MEPA is a FZ. LLC organization with
the motto of building a society of pub-
lishers 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 elec-
tronic publishers, whilst raising the fu-
ture standards of the publishing industry
in the Middle East.**

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