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ENTREPRENEUR

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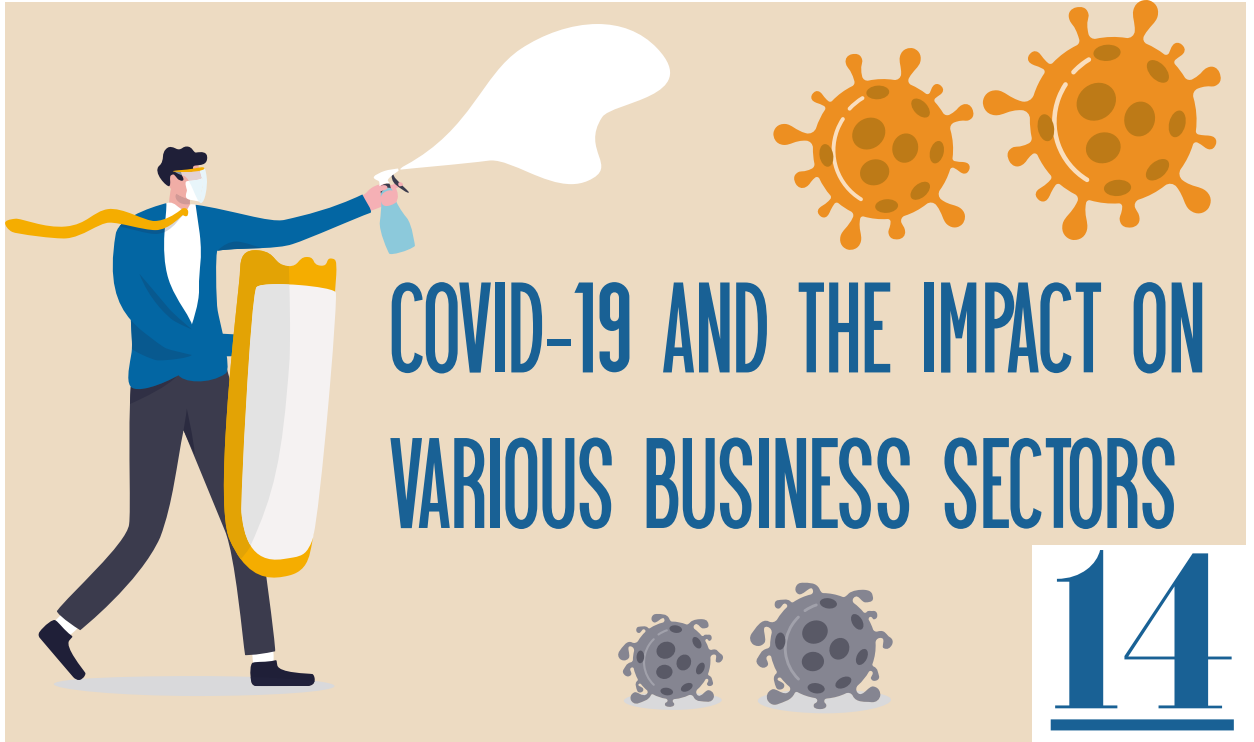


TECHNOLOGY
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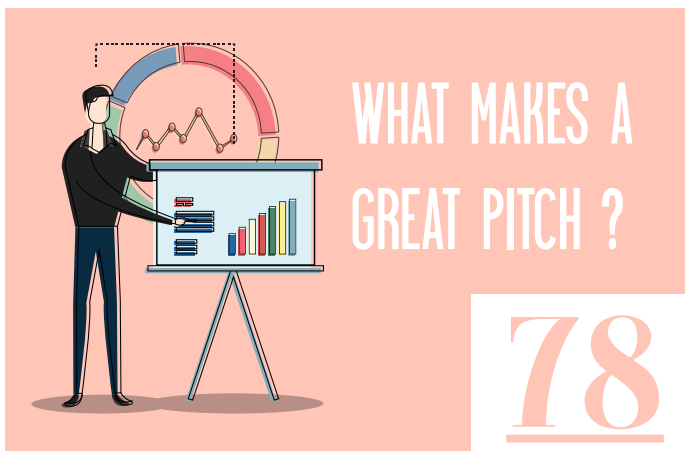
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B ENTREPRENEUR

After Covid-19, what's next for business?



Although we experienced major setbacks and disruption, there is no recourse but to resume and reopen the many establishments closed under national directives.

The effects aren't temporary but it left indelible scars, such as huge profit losses, weakened economic activities, termination of valuable human resources, and major jobs in an already troubled economy still reeling from a crisis from the previous decade.

Business in Bahrain and worldwide was more deeply impacted after the threat was announced as a global pandemic, and economic slowdown became inevitable.

Even the world's leading economies were caught off-guard and faced the crisis with lack of preparedness. However, Bahrain

like a few other countries dealt with the blow with a tenacity which displayed economic resilience, and witnessed a high rate of recoveries against a handful of deaths.

Despite the impact on the Gulf economies and the major setbacks in the various industrial sectors, Bahrain chose to push on, plan ahead and deal with the pandemic with a wise lesson earned.

When the pandemic subsides, business will go on as usual.

a. hamid alasfoor
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BEntrepreneur Magazine

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

Azure Administrators who manage cloud services that span storage, security, networking, and compute cloud capabilities. Candidates have a deep understanding of each service across the full IT lifecycle, and take requests for infrastructure services, applications, and environments. They make recommendations on services to use for optimal performance and scale, as well as provision, size, monitor, and adjust resources as appropriate.

Candidates for this exam should have proficiency in using PowerShell, the Command Line Interface, Azure Portal, ARM templates, operating systems, virtualization, cloud infrastructure, storage structures, and networking.

INDUSTRY

Avaya Spaces introduces an App that takes Remote Working to a New Level

Avaya Holdings Corp. has launched Avaya Spaces in Bahrain, a cloud meeting and collaboration app that goes with a free 60-day trial and access for education and non-profit organizations in response to strict quarantine and work from home regulations under the directives of the government to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Avaya Spaces is popular because of its unique features such as ease of implementation, impact on organizational resilience and continuity and accessibility from a browser or mobile app. The app offers a cost-effective solution for remote connection and collaboration via video, voice, chat, content sharing and online meetings, thus enabling business continuity regardless of geographical constraints.

A New Cost-Effective AI Solution by IBM to Streamline IT Operations

IBM announced a new variety of AI-powered technologies and services designed to ease IT tasks and operations at a recently held Think Digital conference. The need comes in the face of enormous challenges confronting CIOs as companies recover and rebuild from the damages of a global outbreak. Forecasts indicate that by 2024, businesses with strong AI capabilities will be more responsive to the needs of consumers, rivals, regulators and collaborators at a rate that's 50% faster than companies with lower AI capabilities. One of the new solutions include IBM Watson AIOps, which uses AI to optimize the capabilities of businesses in detection, diagnosis and response to IT issues in real time. The app efficiently allows companies to automate at infrastructure level and help CIOs generate more positive results and higher-value jobs, and enables them to advance their network capabilities for better performance. The new IBM infrastructure and AI technologies offers leading organizations a cost-efficient solution to maintain superior customer service and pursue recovery efforts during the pandemic.

stc Bahrain tackles financial sector digital readiness and challenges

stc Bahrain, a world class digital enabler, hosted a series of virtual panel discussions participated in by industry leaders and government entities, to deliberate on how companies and the local economy are responding and adapting to the global pandemic. During the first virtual panel discussions, stc Bahrain was joined by leading financial institutions such as Standard Chartered Bank, CrediMAX and American Express Middle East, to discuss the theme "Financial sector digital readiness and challenges during COVID-19".



NEWS



New developments and investment opportunities in Bahrain's oil sector

The latest developments in the oil sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the COVID-19 outbreak and its economic repercussions became the highlight of an interview with the Kingdom's Minister of Oil, Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, at a YouTube program hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Bahrain. The chamber received praises for its key role in organizing events that enhance business opportunities and investment between the Arab countries and the United States. Shaikh Mohammed stressed the need for flexibility, wisdom and good planning during the pandemic, in order to guarantee a better and promising future for the world oil markets; and highlighted the importance of strengthening the role of shared responsibility among oil producers and providing needed support for the industry's sustainability, despite the unprecedented decline in demand for oil during the pandemic. A related development was a decision adopted by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) at its meeting in March, to reduce oil production by 10 million barrels per day from May 1, 2020 for an initial period of two months.



Consumers turn to eCommerce during Ramadan

A research finding on online consumer spending during the Holy Month of Ramadan was recently released by Criteo (NASDAQ: CRTO), the global technology company powering the world's marketers with impactful advertising. The finding revealed that around half of countries worldwide witnessed a drastic increase in online sales transactions. The shift in consumer preference, which is expected to grow further during Ramadan is attributed to the need for social distancing against the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. The trend emerged around late February and witnessed peak activities during mid-March. The sectors which experienced a huge increase in sales during the pandemic in the month of March include protective gears, food, fitness, games & video game consoles, and outdoor equipment. Since mid-February, the highest volume of sales includes kitchen and dining, clothing and accessories, shoes, personal care, communications, audio, electronic accessories, jewelry and décor. According to Alistair Burton, Country Manager MEA at Criteo, "Globally, we have seen daily web traffic surge by more than 50%. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, consumers have moved online: whether for work, school or shopping. As most traditional retailers remain closed, we expect this trend to continue during Ramadan, a month that has a significant impact on purchasing and consumption in the region."

Zooming in on Eric Yuan





Zoom allowed people to stay social despite intense social distancing measures. Against the emerging threat of the global pandemic, came the unstoppable rise of Zoom videoconferencing service from 10 million users in December 2019 to 300 million users in April 2020.

Before the lockdowns happening worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Zoom was mainly used by companies for meetings, conferences and anything business related.

Nowadays, after the rise of the social distancing culture to stay safe from COVID-19, people started using Zoom for a wide range of connectivity



purposes including keeping up with family and friends, family or class reunions, hosting events, conducting musical performances, parties, weekend club meetings and photoshop classes.

Behind the new norm in social interaction is Eric Yuan, a 49-year old Chinese-American billionaire entrepreneur, the CEO and Founder of the \$35 billion Zoom Video Communications.

As the world economy braced

for the worst because of COVID-19, Eric's net worth jumped 112% to \$7.57 billion in the past few months since lockdowns were imposed everywhere across the world.

Zoom suddenly became the second most installed app in the Overall downloads non-game apps category, emerged on top in the Apple Store Downloads, and came third in the Google Play Downloads. Its growth increased 43 times since 2019, and reached a total of 94.6 million installs.

“I wanted to join a company where I woke up every morning and felt happy: I wanted to build a better solution to deliver happiness to the WebEx customers, that's it.”



“We have identified a path forward that balances the legitimate right of all users to privacy and the safety of users on our platform”



diminished sources of income amid the crippling effects of the coronavirus pandemic, Eric Yuan started making billions. He has made nearly \$4 billion in 3 months as usage of his video conferencing solution continues to hit the roof.

Eric was born in Shandong Province, China by his parents who are mining engineers. He has an undergraduate degree in applied mathematics and completed a master's degree in engineering.

He worked for four years in Japan and later on at an internet startup in Silicon Valley, California where he navigated towards a career in teleconferencing.



Before creating Zoom, Eric was a vice president at Cisco Systems telecommunications equipment company. He was also involved with WebEx, another videoconferencing company under Cisco.

The concept of Zoom was developed while Eric at one time tried to conduct a long-distance communication with his long-distance girlfriend. Eric told Forbes in 2017, "I was only able to see her twice a year and it took more than 10 hours to get there by train. I was young then, 18 or 19

years old, and I thought it would be fantastic if in the future there was a device where I could just click a button and see her and talk to her."

The need to connect with his girlfriend on a regular basis urged Eric to integrate video with a telephone-based conferencing system. He developed Zoom with user-friendly and unique features which sets users against different types of virtual backgrounds.



Eric initially developed a smartphone-friendly video conferencing system for Cisco in 2011, which was eventually rejected. When he left Cisco, he developed Zoom.

In the early days, Eric struggled to acquire investment support to launch Zoom, and even went to the extent of borrowing money from friends and family. He passionately worked and involved himself in every aspect of Zoom—from customer service to emailing customers. Eric told CNN, “I wanted to join a company where I woke up every morning and felt happy: I wanted to build a better solution to deliver happiness to the WebEx customers, that’s it.”



The plans offered by Zoom have limits on the number of people that can participate in a video conference. Thus, as more individuals participate in a conference, the more a customer will pay for a plan.

Despite his enormous success, Eric remains down-to-earth and well-loved by his employees, as attested by “a 99% approval rating from employees on workplace review site Glassdoor”, which likewise named Yuan its Big Company CEO of the Year in 2018 according to CNBC.

According to CNBC, Eric is also a committed father, and finds time to hang out with his wife and their three children. He is also very much involved in the basketball career of his oldest son, and he even attends his games and practices.

While Yuan says his newfound wealth doesn't particularly excite him, he is eager to see what he hopes will be a permanent change in the way we work. For him it's all about bringing value to society, the community, and to the world and to make it sustainable. His fulfillment doesn't come from the billions he makes, but rather from the customers which he satisfies.

Eric said “I care about these people and their experience with Zoom, so it feels very natural to me to want to jump in and see if I can help.”

For more information:
zoom.us



In April 2019, Zoom made its initial public offering—and share price immediately escalated to 72% on its first day of trading, thus making it one of the most successful IPOs of the year—and Eric a billionaire.

Zoom's largest customers come from diverse industries across the globe including Wells Fargo (WFC), VMware (VMW), Samsung, Uber, ServiceNow (NOW), Capital One, Splunk (SPLK) and Walmart.

“We have identified a path forward that balances the legitimate right of all users to privacy and the safety of users on our platform.”, Eric explained to CNN.



Covid 19 and the impact on various business sectors

Just up to last year in 2019, governments world-wide were planning significant capital expenditure on infrastructure projects. Even up to January 2020 no one expected that things would change drastically, however, in the current climate government focus has now shifted entirely.

COVID-19 or the Corona virus outbreak was first identified in the Wuhan province of China in December 2019 whereas the World Health Organization declared the outbreak to be a public health emergency of international concern on 30th January 2020. The outbreak was recognized to be a pandemic on 11th March 2020. As of 22nd April 2020, more than 2.56 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in 185 countries across the globe resulting in more than 177,000 deaths. The virus causes severe acute respiratory syndrome and, as of now, the source has been identified as bats via pangolins.

The virus is primarily spread between people during close contact through droplets (released when sneezing, coughing or even talking). To contain the spread of COVID-19, governments across the globe have had to take some very critical measures such as lockdowns and social distancing.

Obviously, the governments of all major countries have





“Retailers are now ensuring that customers can reach them over a portal and the retailers can provide them “contactless” delivery and curb-side pick-up services for consumers.”

had to make significant interventions so that businesses can rapidly adjust to the changing needs of their people, their customers and suppliers, while navigating financial and operational challenges. Needless to say, these shutdowns are going to affect world economies significantly in the short and perhaps also the long run. With every industry, function and geography affected, the amount of potential change to think through can be daunting.

Impact on ways businesses are conducted

Under these trying circumstances the resilience of businesses are being tested. COVID-19 is compelling businesses to rapidly operate in innovative ways and to create new working systems. Businesses will have to strike an even balance by adopting new systems and defining priorities. Business owners will have to act swiftly to address their immediate resilience issues and lay a foundation for the future.

Consumer Sector

In the consumer sector, though the businesses have been impacted, they are in a position to reach out to customers via the e-commerce route. They will

have to make an extra effort to be visible on online shopping portals. Certain governments have also announced their own online shopping portals e.g. Bahrain has announced a website mall.bh where more than 100 companies have already registered. This website allows small and medium enterprises to promote their services free of charge.

Many malls in Bahrain are considering not charging rent to the shops and the government of Bahrain is considering not charging for utilities and municipal tax. Directives have been issued to waive interest on short term and long term loans for 3 months.

With respect to other commercial sectors (Direct-to-Consumer and B2B organizations), the coronavirus pandemic has forced these companies to undergo a new phase of innovation. Despite the crisis, buying behaviours & patterns are likely to change even after the crisis ends. Businesses who viewed digital commerce as a secondary way of reaching out to their customers may now make digital commerce their focus. For example, retailers are now ensuring that customers can reach them over a portal and the retailers can provide them “contactless” delivery and curb-side pick-up services for consumers.

Construction and Real Estate Sector

In the construction sector whilst the industry has not been impacted significantly in the short term, it is expected that the industry will be impacted in the long run due to low oil prices in the Middle East. According to latest assessment by the IMF, growth in GCC countries is projected to contract by 2.7% this year. This is because oil exports are expected to decline by \$250 billion across the region. However, in the construction sector there is very little room to follow e-commerce route and later finance is likely to pose challenges in this sector.

The same could be said about the rental and real estate market. As many

businesses begin to focus online and demand for commercial real estate reduces, it is likely that rents will also decrease. However, many will welcome these developments as deflationary pressure may be overdue in an inflated real estate sector.

Airline, Travel and Tourism Sector

Airlines

Airlines, travel and tourism sectors have witnessed the most significant fall when compared to other sectors. British Airways had to suspend 36,000 employees in the wake of this pandemic. IATA estimates that global air transport could fall by as

and negotiate with airport authorities for reduction in parking facilities.

However, with every challenge comes opportunity, and while general air transportation demand has dropped, the cargo transport sector may see a dramatic rise in demand. Laying off cabin crew and other staff members may simply be laying the groundwork for future profits made in the cargo sector, as digital commerce, shipping and air transportation of goods becomes far more important.

Travel & Tourism Sector

Travel companies engaged in selling of tickets face an uphill task and will have

overcrowded hospitals or other dwelling spaces.

Energy Sector

Given the fact that airlines, the bigger consumer of fuel & oil, have stopped flying the demand for aviation fuel has declined to unprecedented levels. This is evident from the fact that oil prices that hovered around \$37 per barrel in January 2020 have dropped significantly to \$17 per barrel. In fact the Oil futures are trading below \$0.

Due to the fact that the COVID-19 crisis has become a focus of world politicians for the right reasons, the energy sector



much as \$252 billion (44% below 2019 numbers). The governments across the globe will have to bail out the airlines, so that they can retain their employees and market share. The short term solution would be the suspension of administrative employees and crew while retaining pilots and engineering staff. Other options worth considering would be to reduce staff salaries by a significant percentage of up to 30%. Also, the airlines may have to shelve their fleet expansion plans for at least 2-3 years. Airlines will have to monitor cash flows very closely and perhaps may have to seek debt restructuring from its lenders including lessors. Airlines will have to suspend the purchase of new aircrafts

to make staff redundant as the ticket selling activity has been virtually non-existent. For reasons mentioned under the heading, Airlines, Travel & Tourism has seen a massive decline as tourists cannot travel in the current scenario with suspension of most flights. As a result, the hospitality industry has also taken a big hit as even they have had to shut restaurants located within the hotel. The Travel and Tourism sector faces the most significant challenges when it comes to staying afloat.

The only area where they could possibly look for some lifelines relate to re-patriation opportunities, or in situations where hotels offer capacity to

is likely to continue to struggle. Like the airline industry, the energy sector too will have to take some drastic measures, such as the following:

- Assess how profitability and cash flow generation can support on-going operations in low-oil price climate-including current (and forecasted) cash operating expenses, taxes and other cash expense items
- Oil & gas companies may have to consider reducing capital expenditure such as exploration of new fields and instead consider extraction of more oil & gas from their existing fields.

- Maybe the time has now come to make serious efforts on developing renewable energy sources and breaking the status quo. The companies who get ahead in this regard are sure to be future world leaders.

Finance Services Sector

The banking world and fintech has not remained immune to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis. Banking staff have been asked to work from home and this is bound to affect productivity.

It may be very pertinent to mention that investments products offered by the banks have seen a massive decline and, as a result, investors are shying away from any new investments via the banks. With a massive decline in sectors such as energy, airlines, construction, etc. banks will have very few lenders. Banks and fintech

companies are responding with ideas and innovations about how they can help their customers to better deal with the impact of Covid-19.

Financial Market participants should develop a communication strategy in case there is a material disruption to their activities. Hence some banks have been communicating with their clients digitally, and over the phone. Some of the digital technology enablers are as follows:

- Analytics and insight solutions to identify and prepare for new risks
- Business process reengineering and automation to ensure availability of digital banking services
- Artificial Intelligence backed tools and conversational platforms to deal with surge in call volumes
- Video Banking Facilities.

Conclusion

This has been a summary of some of the effects of Covid-19 on various business sectors. One certainty is that some of these changes will have permanent effects on the way business is done in the future. There are also other sectors not mentioned, such as the personal service sector, which includes hairdressers, salons and other such services. These sectors are probably hit the hardest, with no tangible way to survive the crisis. As many people start handling such tasks themselves, workers in this sector will have to adapt, innovate and change their service offerings entirely, if they are to come back to business in the short term.

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How to Work from Home (Without Losing Your Mind)

Working from home has its perks. You can play music as loudly as you want. You don't have to be irritated by your colleagues. But at the same time, you will have to deal with loneliness and isolation.

With the fact that not many people are given the option to work from home, we have to acknowledge that it is a luxury. For people who don't have that option, they have the added stress of dealing with health care worries.

Here are some tips to protect your sanity when you work from home.

Get dressed

If you don't get ready for the day, your day never really starts. Instead of working from home, you're just at home, with the occasional work check-in. That's fine and healthy now and then! You are not a drone. But if you're in this for the long haul, you need to treat it like any other day at the office, minus the office part. Besides, it's good to be prepared if someone springs a surprise Zoom invite on you.

Have a dedicated work space

Where you actually set up shop is entirely up to you. Maybe you have a dedicated office space with a desktop and a view. Sounds nice. If you don't, that's also fine; you can work on your laptop at a kitchen counter. The point here is to clearly define the part of your house where work happens. That makes it more likely that you'll actually get things done when you're there, but just as importantly might help you disconnect when you're not. Remember that when you work from home you're always at home—but you're also always at work. At all costs, you should avoid turning your entire house or apartment into an amorphous space where you're always on the clock but also kind of not. It's no way to live.

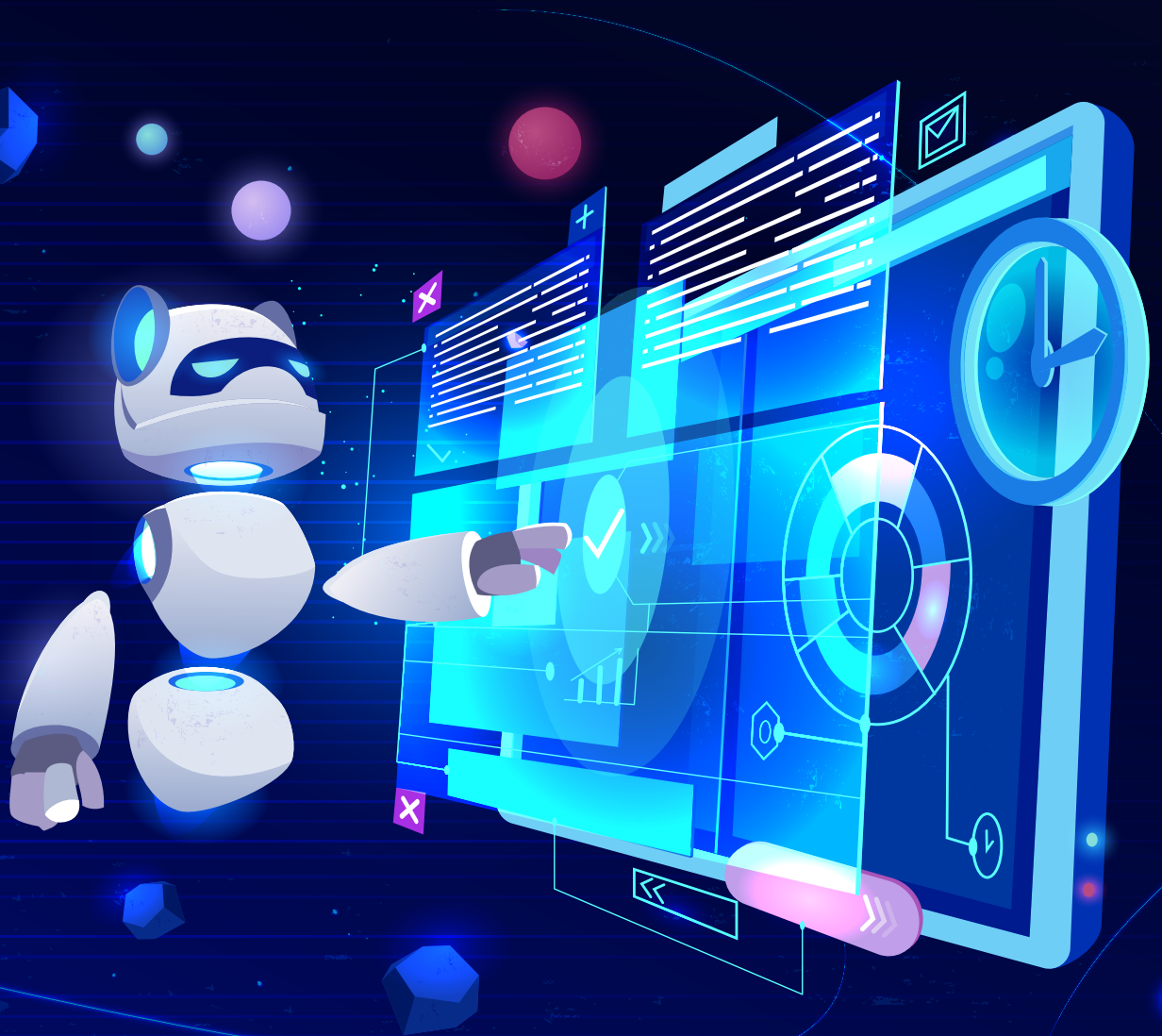
Go outside

Being cooped up at home for long periods of time is not good for your mental health. Walk around the block at least a couple of times a day just to stretch and to give your mind a break. Remember, sitting is terrible for your health, and mind-numbing when you're staring at the same wall or window all day.

Having a pet helps. If you have a dog, you have to go outside to walk it. If you have a cat or a fish or a ferret you can talk out loud without feeling like a crazy person. And if you're feeling stressed out, a good belly rub usually helps. In either direction.



Tech Culture





“Cybersecurity has never been a boardroom agenda item until recently when major organizations in our region and globally were hit by various types of attacks most commonly ransomware.”

CyberSecurity Threats & Opportunities

An Interview with GulfSec Founder Jameel Al Sharaf

Can you tell us more about GulfSec and what inspired you to start the business?

Gulfsec specializes in providing cybersecurity services and solutions primarily aimed at the fintech, banking, financial services and insurance sector. The idea emerged from my own experience working for large financial institutions where I struggled to find cybersecurity specialists who not only can deliver cybersecurity risk assessments and consultancies but can also provide hands-on technical know-how. Most organizations today do not usually have dedicated cybersecurity teams who can monitor and protect their systems and networks against potential cyber threats. Gulfsec can help such organizations continuously assess cybersecurity threats, understand the risks and resolve any vulnerabilities.

Can you tell our readers more about cybersecurity and why companies should invest in it?

Cybersecurity has never been a boardroom agenda item until recently when major organizations in our region and globally were hit by various types of attacks most commonly ransomware. Most organizations delegate cybersecurity issues to the IT teams to deal with as senior management tends to find the subject too technical to understand. Until such time when an attack does happen leaving such organizations exposed to operational and reputational risks and in some countries severe legal implications. There are two important facts about cybersecurity threats: 1) Cybersecurity threats transform and change to counter the advancements in technology. 2) There is no 100% permanent cure against cyber-attacks. Organizations in any sector must, therefore, keep elevating their defense against cyber threats especially if they are going through digital transformation initiatives.

Because of the recent pandemic, more and more companies have moved their work stations online. What is now your assessment of

the cyber security risk especially in Bahrain?

The current pandemic situation has certainly tested the robustness and readiness of organizations to operate under strict measures. Those who have been prepared will no doubt have minimum disruption on their business operations. Others who have not adopted clear business continuity plans and strategies will certainly struggle. As organizations are forced to keep a minimum workforce onsite, new challenges emerge due to "work from home" guidelines. While accessing corporate resources from home will minimize the impact on the business operation, it creates serious cybersecurity challenges. Such challenges include unsecured home routers, infected home devices, shared home devices, non-backup of data, remote session compromise, weak passwords and social engineering attacks. There have been reports of increased cybercrime activities globally especially around fake COVID-19 donations and remote access hijacking. In Bahrain, and due to the advancements in technology and stable broadband network, many companies have resorted to the use of remote access tools to sustain business operations. Luckily, there has not been any reports of major cyber-attacks in Bahrain, however, the impact can only be assessed in a few months. It usually takes over 250 days to discover a cybersecurity vulnerability as hacking techniques have become sophisticated and will only be triggered whenever there is a chance to exert maximum damage.

What is your plan to scale Gulfsec?

As stated earlier, our focus today is to support the financial sector in Bahrain which is regulated by the Central Bank of Bahrain and subjected to stringent regulatory requirements including those covering cybersecurity. Our solutions and services are also vendor-agnostic, meaning, that we can be entrusted by our clients to provide transparent and unbiased assessments and remediation services. We also plan to expand to the healthcare sector as we believe this sector has never received the necessary attention from the regulators with

regard to cybersecurity risks and data privacy legislations. By building a strong client base in Bahrain, we intend to expand to neighboring GCC countries. Our growth plans also include setting up partnerships with well-established consultancy firms to gain access to vast numbers of highly skilled resources at competitive prices.

What advice can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs and startups, especially in the cybersecurity field?

My best advice to anyone thinking about starting a company is to find a problem and come up with an innovative solution to build the business on. I think most of the failed startups are due to entrepreneurs creating solutions to problems that do not exist. This does not mean entrepreneurs cannot build businesses on problems solved by others; however, they must always try to find innovative approaches to problems. An example would be fast-food restaurants e.g. McDonalds vs. Shake Shack. Each company targets different segments of the market with a different range of products; however, both are ultimately fast-food chains. Entrepreneurs will always face challenges as they build their businesses, and many ideas will never succeed. The main goal would be to keep trying different ideas and different approaches at different times with different people and customers, just keep going until you achieve the ultimate success. Cybersecurity is a growing problem globally. As technology advances and new jargons emerge such as AI, IoT, Industry 4.0, Blockchain, Drones, Quantum Computing, VR and AR, cybersecurity threats will always be ahead. There will always be vast opportunities to solve cybersecurity problems as they lead to new entrepreneurial opportunities.

Unipal Launches Mobile App

Offering Special Discounts For Students In Various Commercial Establishments

Unipal, a multi-benefit platform for students, launches its Mobile App which offers over 150 discounts & offers for students in Bahrain.

The mobile app, which works in tandem with a website, www.unipal.me, can be downloaded from Play Store for Android users, and App Store for iPhone users. It addresses the need of the high value student consumer segment towards budget friendly options and a healthy

university-life balance.

Aside from special discounts on commercial establishments, the platform also showcases an events page wherein students can attend ongoing and upcoming events in Bahrain at special discounted rates. It will also feature information on skills development workshops for students, on topics such as CV writing and preparation for job interviews. The Unipal discount app offers huge discounts in a wide range of commercial, leisure and service

establishments such as restaurants, cafes, clinics, gyms, salons, spas and more.

According to its founders, young entrepreneurs Ali Alalawi, and Ali Al Shaer, the Unipal app can be used in over 140 participating establishments and these include Dose, Regency Health Club, Al Areen Palace Villas, Fresco, Coffee Republic, iMachines, Wingman, and Box it, with more establishments participating with exciting new offers in the coming months.



For a Better **Student Life.**





BRINC BATELCO

Batelco Continues Sponsorship of Brinc MENA to Accelerate Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Bahrain

Batelco proudly announces the renewal of the sponsorship of the Brinc Batelco IoT Hub for a further three years. Brinc Batelco, located in Manama, Bahrain, aims to support Bahrain's youth by promoting innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, and most importantly, the upskilling of future generations of technology experts.

The renewed sponsorship of Brinc in Bahrain stems from Batelco's commitment to support education and entrepreneurship and enhance the growth of digitization, as it's in line with the efforts of developing this field within the Kingdom. The partnership is structured to drive innovation and creativity within the Brinc Batelco Hub through product design and development initiatives as well as workshops designed to drive entrepreneurial practices, encouraging the generation of new products and services.

Brinc Batelco successfully hosted its latest youth-centric event on 19 and 20 April with a virtual education-themed

hackathon designed to empower students during school closures. The virtual hackathon was organized in support of social distancing measures to curb the COVID-19 pandemic in line with official directives.

The hackathon, launched in partnership with InJaz Bahrain and Cleverplay, focused on the development of remote learning solutions to support educational efficiency for the future. Thirty high school and university students divided into five teams participated in the virtual hackathon which utilised such tools as Zoom and Google Sheet, Forms and Slides. The ideas presented by the teams were very diverse and tackled different perspectives of remote learning like VR, programming terminal, digital internship and much more. The winning team under the name 'Minds' presented a pitch which featured the use of virtual reality, with an application that provides the visuals and environment of a science lab for students who are missing out on the laboratory experience. The 'Minds' team members

won cash prizes, vouchers and 3-months hot desk at the Brinc Batelco IoT Hub.

Over the past two years, a number of programmes sponsored by Batelco took place at the Brinc Batelco IoT Hub including eight hackathons for Batelco's employees, students and the community with 230 participants who were able to tackle 32 real-world challenges. Three corporate product design bootcamps for Batelco employees to create new innovative solutions were also delivered, and furthermore, over 30 workshops revolving around IoT, technology and innovation, and more than 90 technology events for the community's aspiring future entrepreneurs were hosted at The Hub.

CONSTRUCTING THE DREAM

An Interview with

Carlos Manuel Mendoza Rodriguez—CEO of Anser

“BRINC has been our fuel to accelerate the vehicle and diversify our services to our clients”

1. Please tell us more about Anser and what inspired you to create the business.

ANSER is a mobile & web platform that allows any construction company to mitigate and control any overrun cost and delay through the use of AR & AI. ANSER puts the experienced construction manager in the palm of your hand.

Two years ago, while we were working in a construction project and the client took several days to decide the next part of our job, we found that this industry would be benefited if they carried a tiny, experienced project manager right in their pocket. For many years, the industry and contractors have depended on the right communication channel and on-demand decision-makers that align with any project to the best baseline—and this is what

ANSER is trying to do; just make communication easy, fast and effective.

2. Who were your first customers and what was the reaction towards Anser in your hometown?

Patria was our first customer. They are a local developer in Monterrey, Mexico City where the idea of ANSER was conceived. The customers didn't believe in ANSER at the beginning but after they saw the benefits of our solution and how it can impact them in a positive way, they decided to start pilots with us.

3. Why did you decide to come to Bahrain and is this part of your plan to scale Anser?

For sure Bahrain is the place to go to as we want to accelerate our expansion of services due to the amounts that get

wasted every minute by having the wrong conditions and decisions from construction companies. BRINC has been our fuel to accelerate the vehicle and diversify our services to our clients.

4. Can you tell us more about the startup ecosystem in Mexico and how this compares to Bahrain?

Mexico is a big country where you can find a great startup ecosystem full of high-tech companies that seek to improve the world as we know it right now. The main difference between the ecosystem in Bahrain and Mexico is the amount of money that you find in terms of investment for early-stage companies, but after that, the courage and desire to be successful with an initial idea that can change the world is the same in both countries.

5. What advice can you give to aspiring tech entrepreneurs?

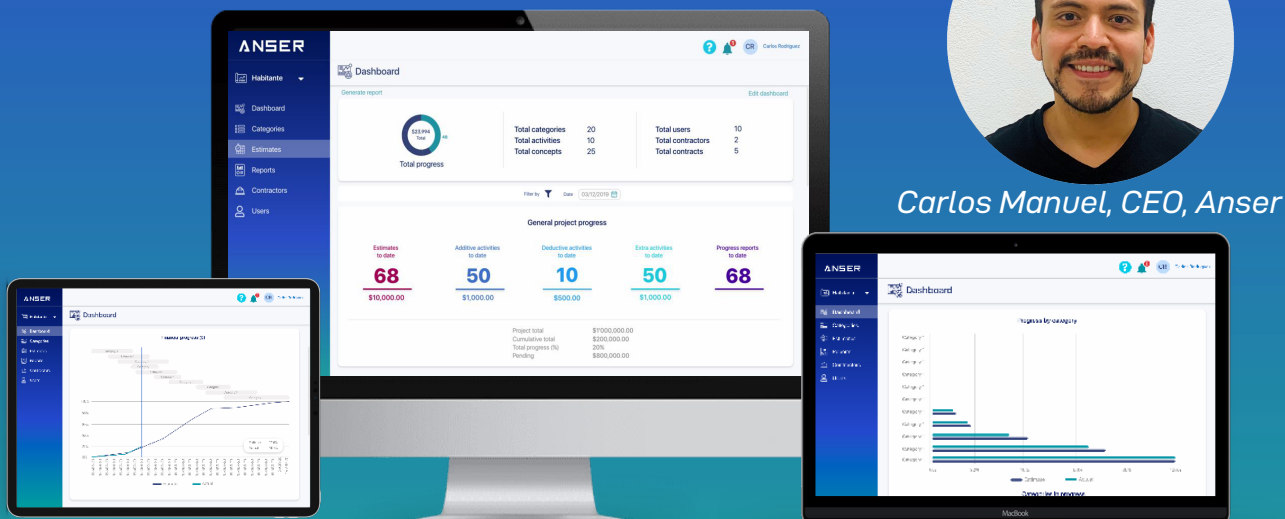
I would like to say to everybody that if you have an idea, a really good idea that maybe only you have thought about, I suggest you go and make it real because you only need that one idea that works. The life of an entrepreneur it's not easy in comparison with a good job and good life quality. The entrepreneur will always seek to materialize their ideas rather than be rich in the first moment. For me being an entrepreneur is not a lifestyle or mood, it's an internal desire to make your dreams come true even when nobody wants to dream it too.

For more information:
anserweb.com



Carlos Manuel, CEO, Anser

ANSER



Smart Parking Solutions



An Interview with Onur Kilic from Freepark

1. Can you tell us more about Freepark and what inspired you to create it?

While visiting a mall, I noticed that special needs people could not park in their designated parking spaces because other people were occupying them. After some investigation, I found out that it is a big problem not only in Turkey but also in some other countries. From this awareness, I developed a smart parking lock which reserves the parking space so that only authorized people can open it via the Freepark app and use it. No one else can block their spots anymore. We started to sell our devices to malls for parking reservation as well as to private customers and

municipalities and we also received requests from malls for VIP parking. After receiving requests from municipalities and malls for VIP parking, we integrated the parking management system to our system so that we could start collecting parking payments from our app. Now, we have expanded to Bahrain and established our company here in 2019.

2. What is your USP (unique selling point)?

Using a physical parking reservation device and the parking management system integrations made our system very powerful and flexible. With integrations, we can digitize parking spaces completely. With digitalization, we provide mobile payment



and contactless payment through our mobile applications which is also a good prevention opportunity in the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. What is your plan to scale this project?

We are doing a lot of business development and we are trying to strengthen the system day by day by including the requests from customers in our system.

4. How has Brinc helped you to develop this project?

Bahrain is a small but very nice country which provides a good opportunity to test your project and expand to the GCC. Thanks to Brinc, we explored Bahrain and had the chance to introduce our

project to many customer and investor candidates. During the Brinc accelerator program, they trained us how to start our business here and how to prepare a pitch for the Brinc demo day. We are really lucky to have explored such a professional accelerator team and now we are like a family.

5. What advice can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs?

Technical, financial or unforeseen problems in entrepreneurship will always happen. These problems should not discourage entrepreneurs. With the experience they have gained every day, they will overcome problems and work harder knowing that they have the strength to do it.





Flat6Labs Bahrain holds their first Digital Demo Day for its 4th Cycle

Flat6Labs Bahrain is proud to announce that it has successfully completed 4 Cycles since its launch in March 2018. Within its 2 years of operation, the accelerator has reached several milestones which include job creation, supporting startups and the local ecosystem, raising awareness on entrepreneurship in the country, engaging with youth and women through community engagement activities, supporting its portfolio with securing follow-on funding and more.

Out of 1,100+ applications that were received by Flat6Labs Bahrain, a total of 28 companies both Bahraini and international have graduated from the programme with a USD \$32K seed investment, as well as rigorous training, coaching and mentoring that have enhanced their business development and product/services offered. Several of these have gone on to receive much traction and become renowned names in the Kingdom's startup ecosystem such as Inagrab, Telp, Sinc, Majra, Tamaran, Akalati and Springring. Through its expansive network of VCs in the region which include Faith Capital, 500 Startups and Arzan VC; the accelerator has successfully supported several of its portfolio companies in raising a collective sum of USD \$1.6 Million in follow-on funding; over a 2x multiplier of the initial invested amount.

They are also holding their first Digital Demo Day for its 4th Cycle where 7 innovative startups will be presenting their businesses virtually to hundreds of registered online attendees. The 4th Cycle includes startups addressing problems with unique solutions across an array of industries including Telehealth, Education & Student Services, F&B, Lifestyle Applications, Fashion Tech, Exergaming, and Fitness Applications. All of the startups have technology at their core and are ready to showcase their product to potential investors, the media and the greater business community.

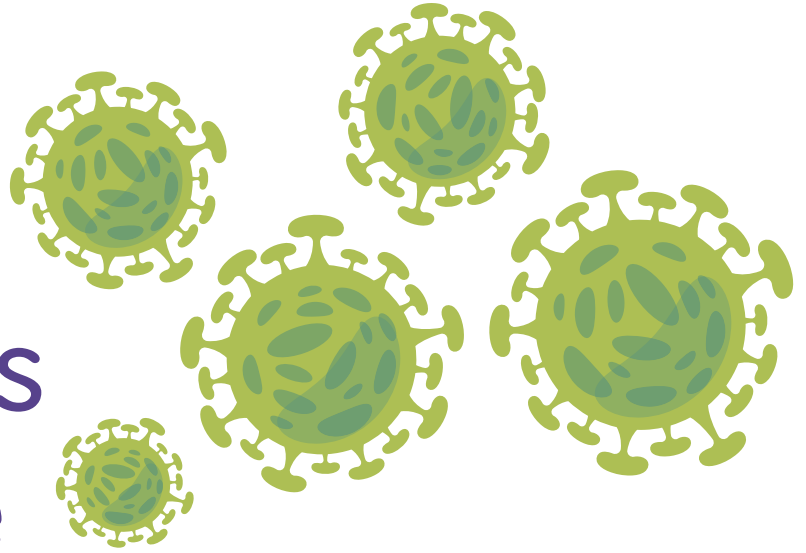
Flat6Labs Bahrain has also contributed to economic growth in the country through not only investing in innovative & youth led businesses, but in job creation as well. Together with its 28 companies, 100+ full-time jobs and 70+ internships have been created. Furthermore the accelerator has played a key role in inspiring youth towards entrepreneurship through its community outreach by partnering with all the local universities and professional institutes and conducting workshops to educate the public on how to approach launching a startup, offering its space for free for ecosystem events, participating in key ecosystem activities, mentoring through programmes such as Injaz, Mashroo3i and Intelaaq, speaking at panel discussions related to

startups, youth and women, sponsoring prizes in startup competitions by offering a seat in the Cycle Bootcamps, and organising its own community events such as its Women in Startup panel during GEW 2019.

The accelerator has worked strategically to expand its network by consistently fostering new partnerships with public and private sector stakeholders. Its two main partners are Tamkeen and EDB, however Flat6Labs Bahrain has also forged over 40 partnerships which include Zain Bahrain, its official Telecom Partner, AWS, Microsoft, GAN, Bahrain Fintech Bay, Tenmou, Charles Russell Speechlys, BIBF, Ahlia University, University of Bahrain, Royal University for Women, Arabian Gulf University, and many more.

Pakiza Abdulrahman, Head of Startups at the Bahrain EDB, said: "Flat6Labs Bahrain is a key contributor to the Kingdom's fast-growing startups ecosystem. It achieves tangible results for its portfolio companies – whether they be innovative homegrown, Bahraini startups or international entrepreneurs seeking a regional base to grow and scale their ideas and businesses. These local and international startups are the backbone of our ecosystem. I look forward to congratulating many more Flat6Labs Bahrain graduates in the years to come."

Virtual Leadership: Team Success At A Distance



Since Covid 19 has disrupted the world, the reality of working from home presents a new challenge for most leaders: how to ensure team success when working virtually? At the same time those same leaders and managers, as well as their team members are increasingly feeling the stress of this new reality. The challenge is to perform professionally with the added responsibility to home school our children, alongside being cooped up at home and not being able to have the kind of social interaction that we humans desire. This crisis can impact our mental health. Leaders need to ask themselves how they will manage to achieve their targets, how to maintain their trust base and keep their teams engaged. As it will take months before we return to any kind of “normal,” we need a practical crash course on virtual leadership: “Team Success at a Distance.”



Team success relies on the following four layers, ranked according to importance.

1. Strengthen the mutual trust base:

- Call and care for your colleagues and check in without an agenda
- Ask colleagues to make a video of their home office and share in a team call to gain understanding of their current situation
- Indicate a conversation about team norms and agree on ways of working

2. Keep the team engaged:

- Prepare online meetings well by sending reminders before-hand and to make sure there are clear tasks on each part
- Ensure enough time in the meeting for a check in moment
- Have fun together by creating tea/ coffee/lunch breaks, and organizing games that create energy

3. Ensure constructive interaction with more dialogue:

- Share personality profiles more actively to ensure a common language in understanding each other
- Invite and elicit open dialogue and feedback
- Use online surveys and polling tools

4. Action result by writing clear targets, rules and responsibilities

- Reiterate the goals that bind the team and prioritize targets and tasks

- Create smaller defined tasks/ milestones and celebrate success more often
- Be overly explicit about rules and responsibilities

Practical prerequisites:

- Structure the process transparently: Agree on online meeting etiquette; Have rotating leadership of online meetings and agree what each role entails. Collaborate by video to ensure presence and required focus.
- Be proactive in organizing online meetings: Organize a daily kick –off and check out call with a set agenda; Make sure everyone is in their own environment for online calls; Establish online team rituals.



Doris Martin

Associate Editor - BEntrepreneur

Head of Advisory Committee
Bahrain Businesswomen's Society

Tatawwar Online Awards Ceremony

Finalists 2020 Edition



“The online workshops and coaching sessions have been carefully designed to provoke reflection and challenge current ways of working to stimulate innovative thinking for a sustainable future.”

Tatawwar brought to you by HSBC in partnership with Potential.com is supporting the next generation of social innovators.

The 20 finalists will now participate in an online acceleration programme

Tatawwar: Building Tomorrow's Minds, from HSBC and Potential.com, has announced the top 20 projects submitted by students. The finalists representing the Middle East and North Africa region include 2 students from Algeria, 2 from Bahrain, 4 from Egypt, 2 from Kuwait, 1 from Oman, 3 from Qatar, and 6 from the UAE. They have been chosen based on judging that took place during prototype workshops and the business model that they submitted online after they took the associated online courses.

This year's edition of Tatawwar: Building Tomorrow's Minds has seen 4650 students from over 1000 schools register for the blended learning programme. The Tatawwar team hosted 12 workshops for the shortlisted 250 students in each of the programme's countries in January and February followed by online mentoring and courses to help them develop their prototype and business models.

The top 20 finalists will now join an

acceleration programme that includes twice-weekly webinars to help project owners fine tune their pitching skills, and learn key business skills including financial projections, raising funding, future career fitness, technology trends and marketing. Each webinar will bring together international experts on each of these topics to help the students. In addition, each of the top 20 students will be provided with four one-on-one coaching sessions and get a one-year free membership to their local fablabs, where they can continue to develop their prototypes.

The final awards ceremony was live-streamed on 9 May 2020 at 2pm UAE time, where the winners were announced after having delivered their final pitches to judges the day before. The public joined and participate in the finals through Tatawwar's Facebook page.

The top three winners' prototypes will receive cash prizes of USD5,000, USD3,000 and USD1,500 respectively.

Sabrin Rahman, Regional Head of Corporate Sustainability at HSBC, Middle East, North Africa and Turkey, said, "We are thrilled with the response we've had to this year's Tatawwar programme and have been hugely impressed with

the ideas and business models that the students have developed. We are looking forward to working with the 20 finalists through the rest of the programme – the online workshops and coaching sessions have been carefully designed to provoke reflection and challenge current ways of working to stimulate innovative thinking for a sustainable future."

Tatawwar: Building Tomorrow's Minds is an interactive online and face-to-face programme that brings together students aged 15 to 18, schools, parents and the business community to innovate for a sustainable future by addressing one of three United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals:

1. Climate Action
2. Human Health and Well-being
3. Clean Water and Sanitation

Two of Tatawwar's previous winners, Samah Abdullah from Egypt and Zoya Naeem from the UAE have come up with innovative solutions to address the water scarcity challenge and crowdfunded their projects.

Samah has developed and just released her first WMS App which is now available for download on the Google play store.

WITH TWO WEEK BATTERY LIFE AND THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY OVER 100 WORKOUTS

HUAWEI LAUNCHES PRE-ORDERS FOR THE NEW EDITION OF WATCH GT 2e

Huawei's new edition smartwatch, HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e is now available for pre-order. Powered by Kirin A1 chip, Huawei's first self-developed chipset for wearable products promises a long-lasting battery life by providing efficient performance with low-power consumption. The watch brings a whole new set of features that will make the smartwatch experience something out of the ordinary.

An eye for design, Huawei has opted to implement into the HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e a unibody design with a 316L grade stainless steel body that gives it a bold and robust look. The HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e also packs in a 1.39-inch AMOLED display for the dial, perfect for reading notifications, fitness analysis and more. The watch faces can be customized to fit the wearer's style and personality. The versatility and comfort of the watch, allows users to wear it for a workout or for every day.

Understanding the needs of its customers, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e comes with a

two-week long battery life, thanks to Kirin A1 chip. The smart watch can last longer even when other tasks are running.

With detailed feedback and analysis of performance, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e is capable of recognizing almost 100 workouts. These include 15 professional workout modes, eight of which are outdoor sports (running, walking, climbing, hiking, trail running, cycling, open water swimming and triathlon), while the other seven are indoor sports (walking, running, cycling, pool swimming, free training, elliptical machine and rowing machine) and an additional 85 types of sports in six categories, including extreme, leisure, aquatics, fitness, ball games, winter sports, rock climbing, parkour, skateboarding, surfing, tennis, baseball and even aerobic exercise as a part of hip-hop dancing. There is nothing this smartwatch cannot keep a track of.

In addition to fitness tracking, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e also keeps track of the health of its wearer. TruSeen™ 3.5 heart rate monitoring technology provides accurate heart monitoring, while the

HUAWEI TruSleep™ 2.0 feature monitors sleep. The smartwatch can also help maintain stress levels with the HUAWEI TruRelax™ technology that provides 24/7 pressure monitoring complete with breathing exercises. A truly unique feature is its capability to monitor blood oxygen saturation (SpO2) levels to avoid any accidents while working out.

With a storage capacity of up to 500 songs connecting seamlessly with Bluetooth headphones, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e allows music control via the watch itself. The remote shutter feature allows the wearer to take a picture, while the 'Find My Phone' feature helps users find their phones even if it's on silent. You can also get notifications from a wide range of apps and even use the flashlight feature.

Consumers can now order and shop online <https://bit.ly/2SG3ERQ> with free delivery. The HUAWEI WATCH GT 2e is the best choice for a new smartwatch. Its solid battery life, stylish design and heavy-duty fitness tracking and health features makes it the perfect companion.



HUAWEI
UPDATE.COM

The one lesson we should learn from the Corona pandemic

No one expected to live in a pandemic or forecast that the whole world will be in lockdown where curfews would be imposed in as what has happened in early 2020. Businesses have been impacted differently in which some have suffered and incurred losses, others are struggling to exist, while a few others are benefiting from the crisis. To illustrate this point, on the one hand, the hospitality, airlines and tourism industries were hit very hard, on the other hand medical technology, online technology in all its forms and pharmaceuticals industries were leveraging with a very high demand. But, in any case, what should small to medium enterprises start doing differently?

The answer would certainly be thinking out of the box, starting from investing in technology. Whether we like it or not, the whole educational system has been transformed with online teaching and learning; learning management systems were demanded, online conferencing apps were used and certainly educational apps were utilized. Schools who have invested previously in such systems did not face any difficulties in continuing their pedagogical

activities however, other schools, took a longer time to adapt in terms of training their teachers, parents and students. This investment has to continue in all its form of virtual reality, online conferencing and Learning Management Systems (LMS). Parents, students and administrators have to ride the same boat in the future and keep integrating all the educational process in a blended way. This will extend to institutes, academies, schools, universities and training centres.

Similarly for the non-emergency healthcare, those clinics that had patient management systems and online consultations ready did not have to go to the snooze phase during the pandemic, while others had to waste time in chasing technology suppliers to provide and train on online healthcare. Healthcare providers should take recent incidents as opportunity and begin an opportunity from now on to segregate their shifts into to transform their mechanism from patients' visits into online consultations, and online consultations, where all the physical boundaries will disperse and international patients will seek such services

i.e. more income. For other medical providers, such as pharmaceuticals, legislations should be in place to send online prescriptions permit doctors and patients to get the medicine delivered straight to the door steps.

With the two major examples of healthcare and education, let us discuss other entrepreneurial and business activities and ask a couple of questions: Why did some shops and stores close down when a legal window was opened for them to sell online? Was it difficult for showrooms to provide virtual services?

Well, the definite answer is no, they could have done much more. With Whatsapp Business App and other apps being available, as well as the same salespersons who work for you, let your customers enjoy live why not and dedicated video-call tours around the

showroom, in the same way that they visit the actual showroom. Alternatively have a virtual showroom with simple navigation accessible. With the presence of such apps, I just wonder why businesses did not use those free features!

If you cannot invest in an e-store or a website with commercial features, simply upload your catalogue on all of your social media platforms and through online payment systems that are in your reach, use the simplest methods on WhatsApps Business catalogue in the setting, or through Instagram story highlights, or through a Google Drive Link that can be shared easily. Websites such as Facebook started offering their shopping platforms for free such as Shopify, and some Ministries of Commerce such as Bahrain's MOICT launched an electronic mall for free, mall. bh, in addition to C2C platforms

“But, in any case, what should small to medium enterprises start doing differently?”

that can be utilized for B2C such as Amazon and Ebay and so on.

What about delivery? In many countries around the region, there are delivery companies with strong infrastructure that you can sign agreements with, or you can deal with trusted freelancers who have their own cars and offer services to all, or you can even hire your own delivery drivers.

Indeed, some businesses were banned from both home services and delivery, such as salons, massage shops, health spas and clubs, yet all these businesses could have added a trade activity to their commercial licence and start delivering bundles of products and provide online/live guidance and assistance to the customers. A culinary school for instance, was delivering the ingredients and offering the live class to the students. Imagine a salon offering direct online/live support after selling its bundle of scissors, creams and delivering shaving kits and machines.

The idea is to think outside the box, and to prevent negativity in all forms in your business. For instance, brilliant ideas surfaced when hotels and private hospitals merged to offer private quarantine services as their product.

What you need to do is the simple (SWOT) Analysis to put a strategy to go forward, where you brainstorm with your teams or partners, the strengths (S) that you have as a business such as your brand name, or quality product, reputation ... etc., and then highlight the weaknesses (W) such as no available space at the store, or the limited bandwidth capacity on your website. Then pinpoint the threats (T) such as legislations of hygiene, physical distancing and other restrictive decrees, or even fear amongst your staff, or the decreasing buying power of your customers. Finally extract opportunities (O) from all of these, for instance

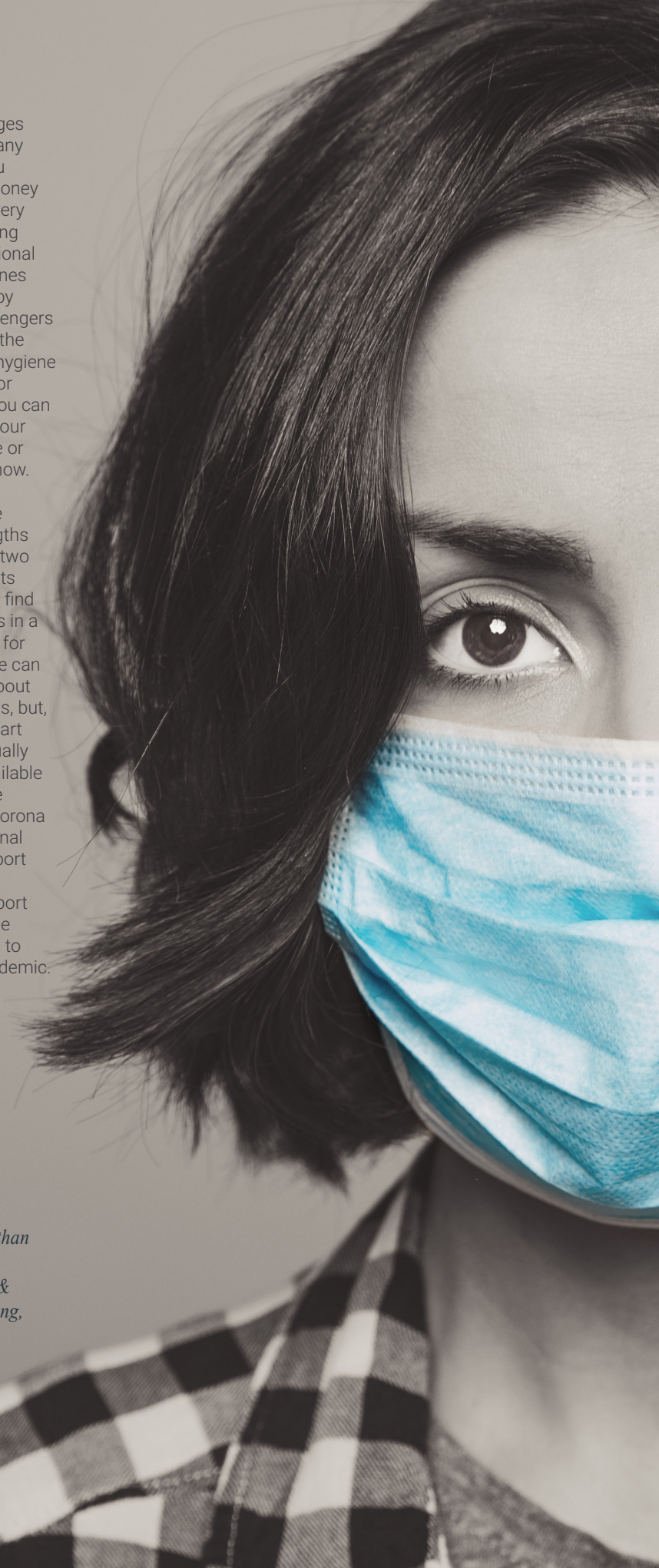
providing early bird packages with discounted rates for any service or product that you sell, in order to keep the money flowing in, or starting delivery services, or even embedding hygiene in all your promotional activities, for example airlines started such a campaign by showing prospective passengers about their latest filters in the cooling systems, and the hygiene measures they prepared for every journey from now. You can do the same by showing your customers how your place or product is more hygienic now.

Once you're done form the two internal factors Strengths and Weaknesses, and the two external factors, the Threats and Opportunities. You will find yourself and your business in a better stand and prepared for the post-corona period. We can discuss more and more about this topic and provide ideas, but, it is your chance now to start gathering your teams virtually through the many free available platforms and suggest the three pillars of your post-corona business; 1- The new internal investments that can support your core business 2- The additional services to support your consumers and 3- The strategy that prepares you to successfully pass the pandemic.



Hussain Sharakhi

A renowned trainer and regional speaker for more than 14 years. He specialises in Soft & Social Skills, Sales & Marketing, Blended Learning, Human Resources and Linguistics.



How to reboot your business

With the ravages of Covid-19 affecting everybody and mostly business owners, it is high time that you as a CEO, startup owner or proprietor of a small business think about rebooting so you can pivot and thrive in the Covid-economy, post-Covid and beyond.

Some tips:



Leverage the power of social media.

You can grow your business, increase awareness and build a solid reputation with social media. Lead generation is also part of the growth process, and social media is important in that regard. Interact with your existing customers on daily basis, and advertise your products and services on the various social media platforms. You will be able to generate more leads and convert them to customers. Because of the on-going crisis, brick and mortar stores are severely affected, so it's a good idea to deliver your products and services where needed.



Address capacity issues

Larry Styler, writing for Forbes, said that many companies hit a plateau because of their inability to accommodate growth. More sales than you can handle is a problem many entrepreneurs would like to tackle, but if your warehouse or logistics infrastructure are at capacity, your manufacturing facility can't put out enough units per month, or staffing and technology have become limiting factors, then the challenges of growth can become disastrous.

Remember: during these times you can't do anything until you can make, deliver and support your product or service. Ensure your supply chain, distribution ecosystem, and team are ready, willing and able to go.



Inspire Others

Inspire others by thinking ahead, painting an optimistic view of a future they care about, and calling people to practical actions they can take to be part of the solution -direction-giving language. People will be excited about your product and will want to see it themselves!



Deliver something of value

So many products and services are redundant but if you give something unique and valuable to people's lives then you've got yourself a winner. Be open in dealings with the consumer; and be clear and consistent, building bonds gradually over time. This will ensure you have a genuine following.



Match the marketing you're using to the media and the user.

You need to find the right medium – passive or active – for your marketing approaches. Interruption ads on Facebook, for example, are out of sync with the active consumer experience on that site. Jan Kuom of WhatsApp used to say "nobody gets excited thinking about what ad they're going to see tomorrow, instead they get excited thinking about who messaged them—or who hasn't". Make your marketing exciting, inviting and sexy, and that will bring more customers over.



Future Driven fintech



A Launchpad for your business

An Interview with POSRocket





POS Rocket

Please tell us more about POS Rocket and what inspired you to start the business?

During my previous endeavor with ifood.jo (an online food business in Jordan which was acquired by Delivery Hero in 2016), we struggled with point of sale systems. We could not fully automate the process, reduce our overheads, eliminate wrongly handled orders nor further enhance our customer experience. That's when we realized that there's a gap: Legacy POS systems in the region are way outdated, complex and expensive. We studied the POS market and realized that there's an opportunity. The point-of-sale is the core of a customer-merchant interaction and transaction. We imagined the possibilities and the multitude of applications we can serve and we pursued them. Our first MVP was finalized three months prior to handing over iFood to the acquirers and the first customer was locked-in a month before. Four years down the line, we have thousands of customers and are operating in 4 countries, proving that our tech is indeed needed and what we continue to pursue is well worth it.

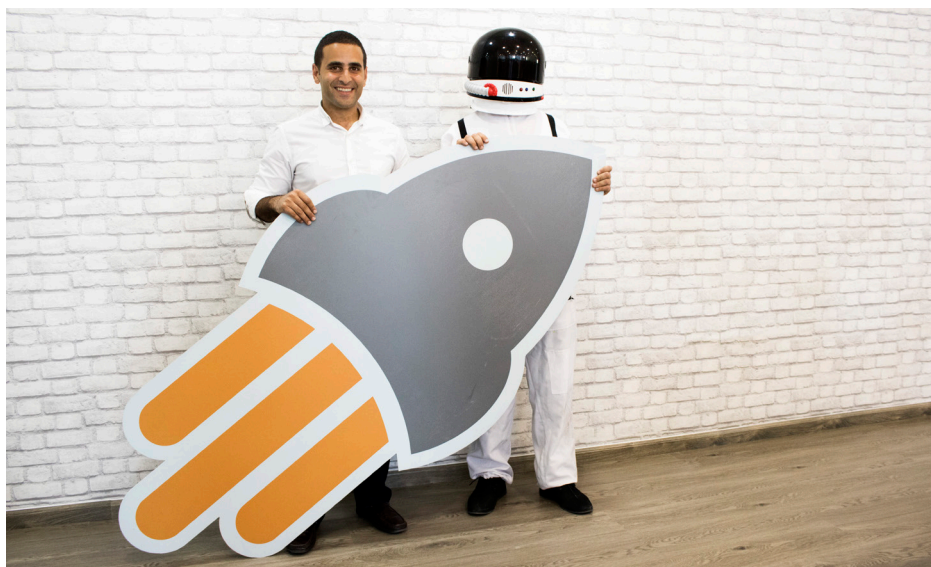
We are a cloud-based service, meaning

that our customers do not have any servers or complex network infrastructure, nor need an IT professional to maintain the system. We handle all that. Our solution is accessible and flexible, our customers can keep an eye on their store no matter where they are around the globe, and can know exactly what is going on in real-time. We allow small business owners to invest in a POS system that is built for them, utilize over ninety percent of the features and pay only a small monthly fee, as opposed to traditional point of sale. The POS 1.0 market is crowded indeed. Ours is POS 4.0! We are excited and see loads of opportunity

What was the gap you were trying to answer/ the problem you were trying to solve with POS Rocket?

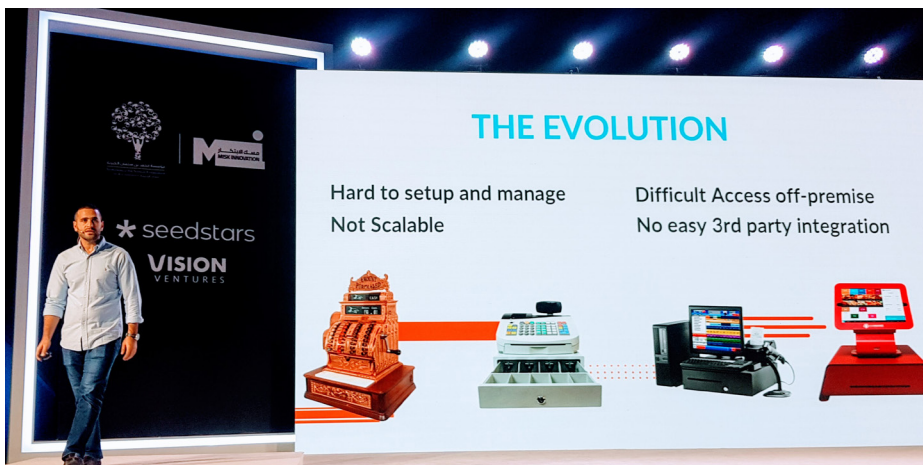
Traditional point of sale systems are decentralized, expensive, difficult to setup, cannot be accessed remotely and do not scale. Merchants pay a lot while using so little and bear the costs of hefty server hardware and IT personnel to operate them. POSRocket solves that by utilizing a centralized cloud technology. We provide a scalable model by taking all the server complexity and cost off our merchants

“Four years down the line, we have thousands of customers and are operating in 4 countries, proving that our tech is indeed needed and what we continue to pursue is well worth it.”



so that all they need at the shop is an iPad, a cash drawer and a receipt printer and they can start selling. The system will keep track of their sales in real time, help them manage their operations, and provide mobile access to their reports to take quick and educated decisions.

To be able to cater to the market and win in this competitive space, we understood early on that we cannot build everything ourselves nor need to be able to do so. Therefore, POSRocket was founded to become a platform rather than only a service from day one. We've developed a set of APIs that empower independent developers and third-party integrators to build and/or integrate their innovative



apps on top of POSRocket, creating an unprecedented win-win for all. We've recently released our APIs and are thrilled to be leading the way into becoming the first merchant-centric, value driven ecosystem in the region enabling merchants to maximize their benefits and returns on investment.

Our company culture breathes innovation by embracing a 'can do' mentality and thinking big in building a global - rather than a local - product. We strive to deliver a 'rising tide' platform that fulfills the promise of lifting every boat; and this is what really makes us unique and gives us our edge in this space.

What is your plan to scale POS Rocket?

We chose to focus on SMBs, for two reasons: they are the bigger segment of the market, they need impact in order to grow. We strategically think of our customers in every decision we take and ensure that we build and deliver the impact

they need. For this segment, our business strategy is to build a repeatable, scalable and a profitable business. We firmly believe the importance of innovation lies in operation and implementation as much as it lies in product and continue to invest heavily in automating and employing the right tools to enhance process, workflow and productivity. We have a passion for cloud tools which is why we created one ourselves and ensure that we integrate them to utilize their maximum potential. Achieving exponential growth cannot be done without leveraging partnerships and skillsets existing in the market. Our product focus is on three core functionalities of the POS: sales tracking & reporting, inventory management and customer profiling. Enhancing the value chain via API integrations allows us to join forces with those who specialize in various areas of retail tech such as e-commerce, online food ordering, deliveries, shipping, payments, loyalty, recommendation engines and so much more. If it's someone's bread and butter, no one can

do it better. We come in to this space to complete rather than compete and to create a win-win for everyone.

With the COVID pandemic upon us, what advice can you give to businesses who are struggling at the moment?

We are living in a very unusual time and there is almost no previous data to build on and predict what will happen or the impact of this pandemic.

I have a few points to share:-

- Look for new and other markets. It's time to get creative and think of adapting your solutions to sectors that are less hard-hit. Brainstorm with employees, partners, and investors. You have nothing to lose. It's a time when entire infrastructures are looking for opportunities to get a foot in a startup door, whether for a one-off joint venture or for an M&A. Some corporations have amassed lots of capital and are just waiting for opportunities. This is the time for them to exploit them.
- Emerging from the crisis will be a gradual process. It's important to plan appropriately for the various stages of the global market's recovery.
- At this time, it's best to transition to daily flow management. That's right: daily, not monthly. It's helpful in determining the right steps to take.

And what advice can you give to entrepreneurs and startups who would like to work in the tech/ fintech field?

This pandemic proved how we truly rely on technology and how important it is to have ready solutions for the basic things we do in life, fintech has a huge opportunity since more than 80% of the Arab World are un-banked, which is a great opportunity for innovation.

Before you start, think of the problem that you want to solve and the other way around, don't come up with the solution first to a non-existing problem, this is very important.

Lastly, the entrepreneurial journey is very hard and you have to be mentally prepared because it is a roller-coaster, but if you have the right solution and mindset, success will be given.



Bahrain and Portugal

enter proactive initiative to support startups globally during COVID-19



The Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) – the Kingdom’s investment promotion agency – has entered into a proactive initiative with GrowIN Portugal, a platform that helps entrepreneurs incorporate, fund, expand and move their startups to Portugal. The agreement will serve to promote cooperation between the two organizations, particularly with regard to supporting startups globally during the ongoing pandemic by connecting the two startup ecosystems.

To this end, both parties have agreed to:

- Collaborate on the promotion of key events and opportunities in their respective markets;
- Promote opportunities for developing the startup markets in their respective countries;
- Support startups by arranging introductory meetings with key ecosystem stakeholders in both countries;
- Exchange information on the evolution of their respective startup markets

Commenting on the initiative, Pakiza Abdulrahman, Head of Startups, Bahrain

EDB, said: “This timely initiative will provide some much-needed support for not just Bahraini and Portuguese startups, but startups from around the world. The ongoing crisis has hit almost all economic sectors, including the startup industry, and across the globe, we’re seeing an unprecedented slowdown. By connecting and thereby bolstering our two ecosystems, Startup Bahrain and GrowIN Portugal are providing a lifeline for innovative startups seeking a supportive environment in which they are able to empower the digital economy in their respective countries

Anas El Arras, Chief Executive Officer, GrowIN Portugal, added: “Startups need support now more than ever before, so we are delighted to be collaborating with Bahrain EDB to do just that. Bahrain and Portugal each offer supportive ecosystems complete with funding support, highly-skilled labour forces, cutting edge digital infrastructure and world-class accelerators. Moreover, we each sit on the doorstep of major markets: Europe and MENA respectively. By combining forces, combining ecosystems, we can provide a global space to accelerate startups from around the world,

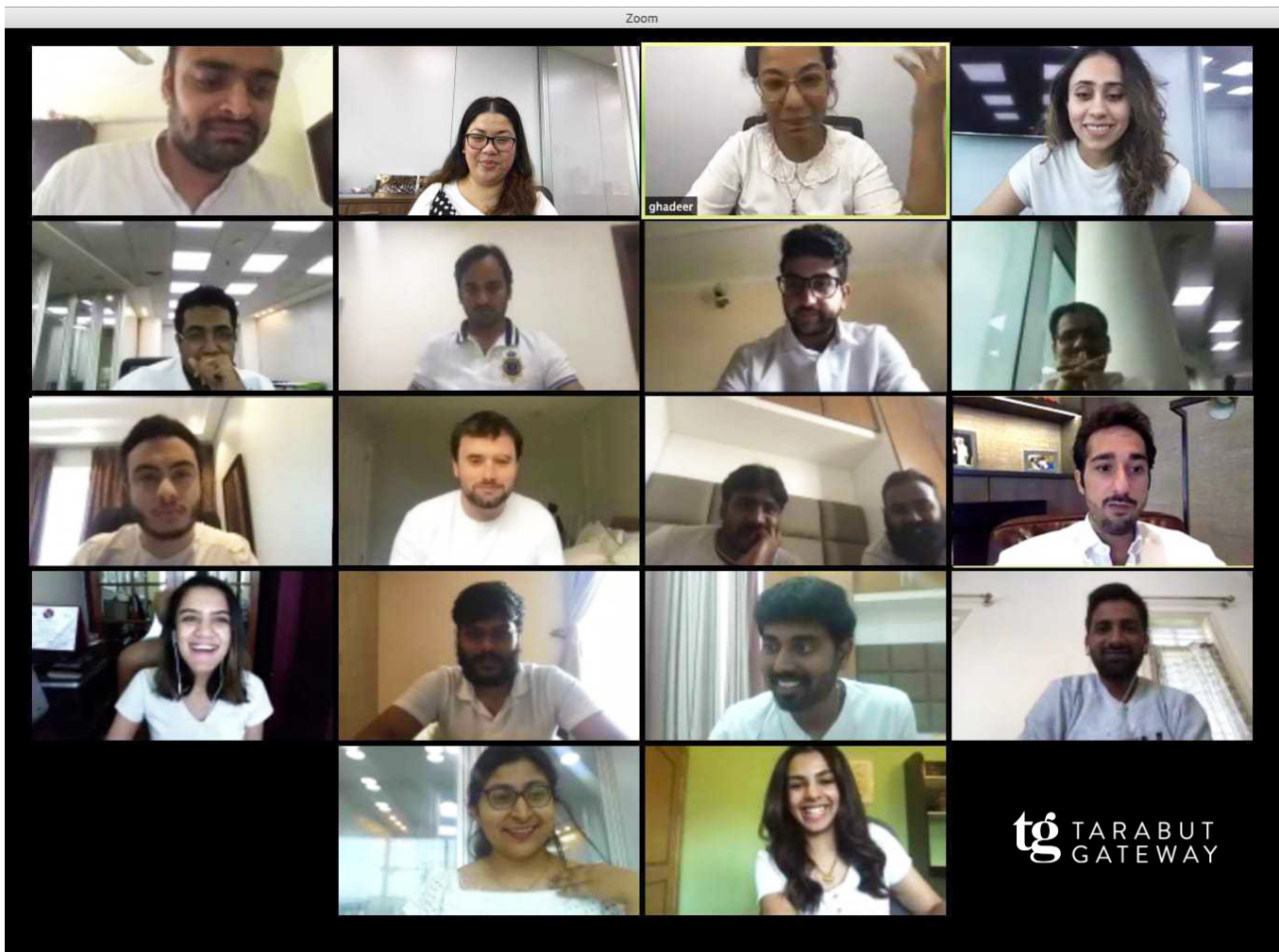
and ensure innovation is not hampered by the global crisis.”

Today, both countries trade in a number of items with a focus on aluminium, paper and cotton products. As of 2019 the non-oil trade between the two countries accounts for nearly US \$22 million increasing from US \$6.7m in 2009.

The signing of the agreement follows on from a Bahrain EDB delegation to Lisbon in October 2019, where it announced a fast-track setup process for startups globally looking to take advantage of the business environment and a well-connected startup community through the Startup Bahrain initiative. With its flexible regulatory environment; the availability of multiple accelerators, access to funding opportunities, world-class physical and digital infrastructure; and some of the lowest set-up and operating costs in the region, hyper-connected Bahrain is increasingly the destination of choice for companies from all over the world seeking to access the growing USD1.5 trillion Gulf markets. The island Kingdom is keen to attract more Portuguese companies and startups.

Tarabut Gateway

Launches Virtual Hub To Empower Youth And The Wider Community



MENA's largest Open Banking platform; Tarabut Gateway (TG) will launch their 'TG Hub' in the month of May to give back and empower the community amidst the challenging situation. This comes in line with TG's larger goal of fostering an inclusive financial culture in the Kingdom.

The TG Hub will be a free to access, virtual comprehensive platform available to both individuals and businesses.

The virtual platform will roll out 3 programs with a focus on educational awareness and community engagement.

In terms of education, the hub will create e-programs; free, online, simple and concise learning videos that will provide access to various online learning platforms, resources and toolkits, delivering crucial skills to help build experience in various subject areas. The

programs will be presented by local and regional entrepreneurs, plus business owners whom will share their insights, and perspectives to support startups and individuals to prepare and learn.

Through the hub, university students will have the opportunity to apply for virtual internships. The 1-month online internship program is offered to all university students with the opportunity to gain coursework credit. The internships are targeted towards students curious about a career in FinTech, and will have the opportunity to participate in FinTech projects (covering areas including research, partnerships, value proposition development and more), whilst also being part of Tarabut Gateway's team virtually. Part of the internship program, students will have the opportunity to attend online lectures run by global FinTech experts and

leaders sharing their rich insights, and experience.

Lastly, in terms of guidance and support, the TG hub will host online Office Hours, which are 30 minute consultation sessions by TG's team of seasoned experts. The sessions are open to the community including individuals, corporates and startups that would like to get business growth advice on their business model, including how open banking can help them and their business ideas.

Abdulla Almoayed – CEO & Founder of Tarabut Gateway “This is a challenging time for everyone - individuals, businesses, startups. We are all facing major disruption in our normal operations and daily routines. We wanted to create a space online to provide guidance and offer opportunities to the different segments of the community, in an accessible way. This is our time to shift our resources to help others become adaptable, and to consume content that will help them continue, to do more.”

He added, “Now is the time to take advantage of digital technologies when it comes to learning,

awareness and engagement. Creating relationships online can be quite limitless, and that's the silver lining of this challenging time – we will experience that together via all our initiatives as a country.

Tarabut Gateway views financial inclusion as a huge enabler of impact, and are pushing the envelope for financial accessibility. In line with their vision to foster and promote financial inclusion, earlier this year, the company launched a national campaign that is ongoing until the end of the year creating accessible, simple and clear content to highlight the opportunities for consumers, and the collaboration prospects for banks and FinTechs.

“This is our time to shift our resources to help others become adaptable, and to consume content that will help them continue, to do more.”





5 Social Media Marketing Myths—Busted!

There is probably no question that social media platforms are beyond something filed under “everyone should-have.” It is now the most powerful tool for business to market their products online.

As a digital marketer who adopts this same technique in my day-to-day life, there are various myths some marketers (among my peers) hold on to.

Let's dive into some social media myths we've all probably heard around the water cooler, and explain why it is just a myth.

Social Media Leads Generated Can't Be Measured:

This is certainly not true. Instead of calculating the followers and likes on social media platforms, a company is better off calculating the leads. They can do this by looking at impressions, interactions, reach, views and conversion.

Businesses usually think that when they start running promotional campaigns, they will start getting leads. But it's not true. Social media is a great way to develop a conversation with people. Other than conversations, you can figure out what its

“In my opinion, it is a great market research, PR tool. One should stop expecting it to be a lead generation machine.”

consumers are interested in by running different campaigns and using the data to analyze which content worked and then running a similar campaign to get more leads. In my opinion, it is a great market research, PR tool. One should stop expecting it to be a lead generation machine.

#Hashtags will do everything:

Hashtags which first came a tags feature in Tumblr is a useful tactic to reach a wider audience to join the conversation. Now Hashtags are the new trend, and all the social media sites like Facebook and Instagram platforms are flooded with them. They play a major role in joining together common conversation threads, but stuffing a sentence with hashtags will make it look unusual and ugly.

Too many hashtags in a post will ruin the whole content, diverting people's attention from reading the description thus distracting the audience from the true message. In addition, it can make your post look like spam. On Instagram, posts with several hashtags receive the highest engagement; but on Facebook, posts without a hashtag perform better than those with a hashtag.

While it is a powerful tool for directly engaging with your customers and fans, it can also generate sales. Dell famously made 3 million dollars from a Twitter promotion. Many brands use hashtags to build relationships with their audience, which will create customers in the long run.

Impossible to calculate ROI on social media

Differentiating the amount spent and generated from social media is a really hard process as many times, you cannot distinguish between online and offline sales. Anyone can determine the return on investment as long as specific metrics are set before the campaign started.

Whether you're measuring the performance of certain social media posts, views, landing pages or even purchases, one needs to establish their goals, what assets you're going to create to achieve them, and by using measurement tools such as Google Analytics, it is easy to track the conversions and clicks on social

media. There are various social media resources available online like Sprout Social, HootSuite and others.

You have to be on every platform

The point that you have to be on every platform to get users attention is a myth. In fact, it causes more distraction on what content to be posted on each social media to drive user growth. You can do better by focusing on the best social media platform by researching which segment your audience belongs to and create more of such content accordingly in that particular platform.

Creating little depth connections across many platforms will never be as effective as having a deep connection with your audience on one or two platforms.

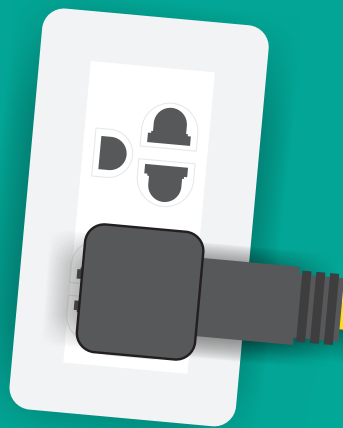
Famous Author - Seth Godin (18 marketing bestsellers) refuses to tweet on Twitter and only writes a blog (1 per day consistently) and encourages people to focus and create content on 1 platform as it doesn't divert people's attention.

Just because 1 among all your friends are on different social media doesn't mean you should.



Nauman Mohammed

is an integrated digital marketing specialist with a passion for building relationships between brands and customers through the combination of technology and communications.



The Most Creative Businesses In Bahrain

Business in Bahrain is a rich amalgam of fresh new ideas. This characteristic is most particularly persistent in emerging businesses which are opening up pathways of creativity in product development.

Trends in the sector are constantly under the watchful eyes of a global audience of investors, entrepreneurs and consumers. Uniqueness, creativity and innovation are among the criteria that promotes patronage and transformative entrepreneurship.

The following enterprises were established by creative entrepreneurs and are considered as game changers in their respective sectors:



Sinc

A Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) mobile platform, that's proudly Bahraini. It simplifies human resource management in the areas of payroll, administration, staff scheduling, location & job tracking and operating timesheets. SINC aims to expand its development team and build out the job tracking functionalities that small businesses need.



Honey Flow Africa

(use the code to read article online)
Honey Flow Africa aims to combat issues for beekeepers ranging from parasite infestations to changing climates with the use of IoT technology. The company produces hive monitors which remotely transmit data in real-time, offering at-a-glance information such as temperature, weight, humidity, sound and foraging activity.



Majra

Majra.me is an online millennial recruitment platform that helps employers find the right candidates for their job opportunities by matching them on the basis of culture and personality fit for their company. It highlights company environment through digital content and personalizes the application process.



SPRINGRING

Springring

A cloud-based Schoolwide Communications Management Platform that eases and facilitates communication requirements for school administrators, teachers, parents and students; and provides a comprehensive link control system between all EdTech platforms and the school's communication needs.



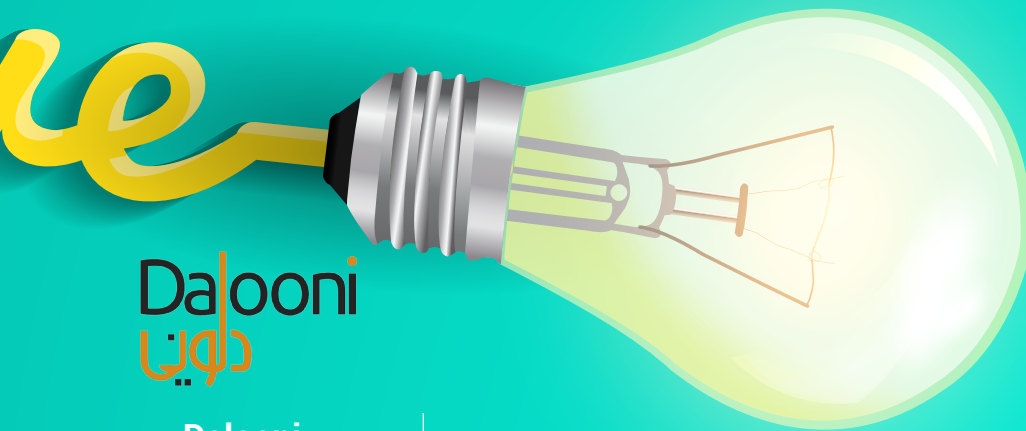
Tamarran

Tamarran is the region's first & only online sports facilities reservation website. The platform helps users find and book a wide range of sports venues, fitness classes and recreational activities in an instant without going through the manual process.



Stories Studio

(use the code to read the article online)
A Bahraini enterprise for video game development, creating games for impact. Its goal is to create games that promote a global cause or human condition and it aims to stimulate discussions, raise awareness, inspire and encourage people to take action.



Dalooni

A mobile app-based platform that facilitates quick connection between businesses and the sales force and enables payment via commission instead of salary basis.



Nural Technologies

(use the code to read the article online)
A team management platform for small businesses. It can handle anything from minor tasks to very complex projects; and allows your team to harness productivity for best performance. Teams can save time by increasing collaboration across departments, offices and branches.



Hayatech

(use the code to read the article online)
Hayatech is a unique employee health program that promotes wellness through incentives, gamification, and rewards. This B2B, Software as a Service (SAAS) and connected hardware platform works directly with corporates and wellness providers to incentivize employees to adopt healthy habits. Users can sync their favorite wearable, including Apple Watch, Google Fit or Fitbit.



BEANBOAT

Beanboat

The company makes a significant contribution to the coffee industry by empowering coffee farmers with increased market access through an online sales platform; and its foremost concern is fair trade and enhancement of consumer benefits. The goal is to showcase the company's business model to the international community and represent Bahrain and the growing social entrepreneurial spirit within it.



Telp

(use the code to read the article online)
An online platform that offers bookings for tutors and academic programs; thus enabling students search and book tutors quickly and properly. It develops the system of private tutoring by sharpening focus on the teaching aspect rather than in administrative and marketing functions.



FLAT6LABS

HELD THEIR FIRST EVER
DEMO DAY!





DOCTORI

fx
get active

GYM/CLASS

Sept

+O+S
connecting families

 Unipal

This is a behind the scenes look of what happened.

1. Can you tell us more about the Digital Demo Day--number of viewers, startups that pitched and how was it received?

Flat6Labs demo days have become a bi-annual highlighted event in Bahrain's startup ecosystem. Unfortunately due to the current pandemic the original planned Demo Day had to be postponed. With no clear timeline on when a physical event would be plausible, we decided to have our first ever digital demo day on the 6th of May. It was definitely a new form of viewer experience and there were many details to go over in order to make sure that we maintained the same excitement and entertainment elements that go into our physical Demo Days. We were very happy to see that given the global accessibility of a digital demo day, we managed to have over 1000 viewers tune in! We had 7 startups that pitched; Doctori, Tots App, Unipal, Sept, BeanBoat, FX Get Active and GymClass. We were also very pleased to see the number of interested investors reach out to us to get in touch with our startups post-demo day. Overall it was a great success and we hope to be able to continue the Flat6Labs digital demo day experience. You can watch the full demo day on our YouTube channel Flat6Labs Bahrain.

2. How has the current pandemic changed how the accelerator's programme is run?

The safety and well-being of our startups and staff are of the utmost importance. We complied with government recommendations to implement work from home from mid-March to ensure we

are doing our part in the national efforts to combat this pandemic. Our new cohort includes a few international startups and global travel restrictions have prompted us to devise new means of running our 5th Cycle. We are now continuing on by taking the entire programme online to maintain the safety of our trainers, mentors and startups, as well as make it as accessible as possible.

3. What form of support have you been giving to your startup portfolio during this time?

We are proud of how our startups have found new and innovative ways to adapt to new market demands. Our startup Telp for instance, took her tutoring platform digital where students can receive online tutoring instead of face to face. Our role throughout this challenging time has been to provide constant support and guidance to our portfolio, ensure they are doing well by keeping their spirits up, working with them to find creative ways to boost their sales, and promoting them across our network and social media channels. We also partnered with Zain for their Stay at Home campaign where our startups and their products and services were featured.

4. About the next cycle – when does it start, who are your next batch of startups and how will the program continue?

Our 5th Cycle is set to commence in June. We are very excited about the new digital format of the programme and welcoming the new cohort. The new format would definitely help us plan training and coaching sessions more effectively and also enable us to bring in more trainers and mentors without having much constraints on time and location. In a way,

we feel that there are a lot of silver linings in taking the acceleration programme online and we look forward to taking full advantage of every opportunity for our startups to make the most of it.

5. Are you now accepting applicants for the next cycle?

Yes, we are happy to announce that we are accepting applications for our 6th Cycle. We welcome all innovative early stage startups, or talented entrepreneurs with creative ideas to apply to our programme for the chance to receive a \$32,000 investment. In addition to funding, we provide world-class coaching and training in various areas of business development, 15K in AWS credits, support with follow-on investment, access to our MENA network and more. Interested applicants can learn more and apply through our website www.flat6labsbahrain.com.



“Our mission has always been to empower more people to be able to take control of their finances.”

An Interview with **Lennart Asshoff**

Founder & CEO of Nucoro



Can you tell us more about Nucoro and what inspired you to start the business?

I've worked for many years in wealth management and it became very clear that there needs to be a 10x improvement in the technology we see and experience in the wealth management space.

If it doesn't change then making investing accessible for the masses will not happen. This is what inspired me to start Nucoro.

Our mission has always been to empower more people to be able to take control of their finances. By building the technology infrastructure for incumbent firms - we can enable them to offer the best saving and investment propositions for their clients, which means they in turn have a better financial future and that's really what drives me.

How is Nucoro enabling digital innovation and transformation and enabling businesses?

The best-in-class solutions we see everyday from Betterment through to Acorns, are very hard for traditional firms to build internally but acquiring or buying tech comes with it's own set of challenges.

What we do at Nucoro is enable innovation by partnering with traditional financial institutions. We provide the technology which is where we specialize and have a lot of brilliant expertise within the team and we work with large firms who have the customer base, the brand loyalty and the data.

It's really a win-win scenario from a business perspective, but it's also a huge win for customers too as they get access to the best tools and services fintech firms have to offer. So it's actually a win-

win-win, the best kind!

Plus, because the platform is configured on a client-by-client basis to match the needs of our clients' unique customer base we are able to remove the need for static, one-size-fits all product approaches. Customer-centricity is an important pillar of the digital transformation agenda and using our technology, customised solutions can become the norm, not the exception.

Also, with the flexible technology infrastructure already in place, this is a quick and efficient route for firms to get these propositions into the market in weeks, not years.

You talked about an "aha" moment when you realized that investment and wealth management required more than just another retail platform. Can you tell us more about this?

With the goal of helping people have a better financial future, the aha moment really came when I realised that we didn't need to build it all from scratch

and go out there and acquire a million customers at the same time. We could really focus on building an incredible tech platform that we could use to work with a multitude of clients. This meant we knew we could reach so many more people by working directly with larger more established firms to help them save and invest.

Please tell us more about your recent partnership with Bahrain Fintech Bay and what both parties hope to achieve?

We are excited to work with Bahrain Fintech Bay to enable firms in the MENA region to accelerate their innovation agenda with the Nucoro platform.

Digital transformation timelines are under immense pressure as customer expectations continue to shift and our technology can support firms in efficiently delivering the tools and services their clients need.

We hope to empower more customers with exciting new fintech propositions from saving through to investing,

and by having a strong partner in this region, we hope to have a hugely positive impact on the fintech landscape in the MENA region.

What advice can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs and startups?

Just do it. Start. Because otherwise you never will.

Just know that it will be the craziest rollercoaster ride you've ever been on and not only that, it will be a really difficult one too. I have learned so much about myself, how to run a business, how to deal with setbacks; it's been the best experience of my life, but it's definitely aged me as well!

I would also say that now is the best time ever to launch a technology-based company. It is so much easier to do now than it ever has before, and you can get something built and functional in a shorter amount of time.

So get out there and give it a go.

for more information :
www.nucoro.com





“ We believe that everyone should have an opportunity to do what they love and become economically empowered while they do it.”

Unleash Your Potential

An Interview with Shadi Banna, CEO
& Founder of Potential.com



Please tell us more about Potential.com and what inspired you to start the business?

Potential.com, established in 2005, is an education technology (Edtech) company on a mission to find the most efficient and effective way to empower communities around the world. We believe that everyone should have an opportunity to do what they love and become economically empowered while they do it. Since we started Potential.com in 2005, we continuously explored new ways to focus on practical learning that is linked to the real world. We give individuals and organizations the tools they need to succeed. Our online empowerment platform and learning content works hand in hand to deliver that goal.

Can you tell us about the recently held Tattawar event and how this was shaped?

Tatawwar is one of the many programs that we have developed over the years targeting 15-18 year-olds to help them to come up with and develop social innovative solutions to global challenges. The program, funded by HSBC, is running in 7 countries across the Middle East and North Africa region. We found a great partner in HSBC given their deep rooted belief in sustainability and the development of future job skills. By putting together our joint experience and efforts, we have developed a scalable and impactful program that puts the student community at the center of the development. In the program, we also bring together teachers, parents, professionals and other stakeholders to support the students. From a total of 4650 students that participated in the online program this year, nearly 200 were shortlisted to take part in physical workshops and then shortlisted further to a top 20 that went through an acceleration program. The talented individuals that made it to the finals were exceptional with the star - the winner, Bader Al Sarraf - coming from Bahrain. Bader won \$5,000 in cash and will be supported over the coming year to develop his prototype further to showcase it in the Expo 2021 in Dubai.

How is real-world education the key to an organization's, nay, a community's success?



Real world education is a phrase we came up with to drive home the fact that we all expect more from education these days. The education system that schools and universities still follow has been in place for hundreds of years and was well suited during the industrial revolution. It is not well-suited for today's fast paced world where all information is a click away. We need to evolve education so that it is in line with the opportunities and needs of the real world. We need the education sector to help promote more creativity, innovation, business skills, problem solving and other life skills. The real world of jobs and entrepreneurship should infiltrate the schools and the corporate world should be infiltrated with continuous practical learning opportunities. That's real-world education.

Can you tell our readers about Potential's Enterprise solutions?

Potential.com provides enterprises and organizations with access to an empowerment platform and content to help launch programs to develop and empower their community and ecosystems including partners and staff. Enterprises subscribe to the platform and content through a software as a service (SaaS) model and pay based on what they use. We also offer customized platforms and content for specific programs like we did for Tatawwar.

Do you have any advice for aspiring startups and entrepreneurs?

Entrepreneurship is one of the most fulfilling careers anyone can get into. It's also one of the most important professions to develop. Developing an entrepreneurial mindset allows us to see

the world's challenges as opportunities. The process allows us to enrich the lives of those around us and have a sense of fulfillment in following our passion. However, entrepreneurship is tough. It needs resilience, it needs a tolerance for failure and rejections. Developing those skills and being able to persevere in the face of adversity is crucial for everyone, especially in the post COVID-19 world. My advice to entrepreneurs is that you should always be in it for the long term. As long as you are working on something that you are passionate about - the boundary between work and play will blur. Even if you put in the hard work that is needed to succeed, you will not feel it as hard work, but rather enjoy it. The motivation and drive that you will get from following your passion will help you to succeed. So, plan well, take solid steps forward toward your goals, and don't look for shortcuts. Doing so will help you succeed financially in the long run and also help you in fulfilling your purpose.

for more information :

www.potential.com

Communicate like a CEO

First of all, what does a CEO do? And why should s/he communicate well?

A CEO's role tends to vary from one business to another, significantly depending on the business' size, company culture, and overall corporate structure. In massive enterprises or corporations, CEOs will typically deal only with very high-level decisions and strategies, as well as decisions that direct the business' overall growth. In smaller businesses or startups, CEOs often are more involved and work directly with the daily functions of the business. CEOs are representatives as "the face" of the company, so they are responsible for setting the tone, vision, and even the internal culture of their businesses. This is why it is important for CEOs to communicate positively and correctly to others.

Some tips:

- 1) **Be empathetic-** People respond positively to you when they believe that you are genuinely interested in them. A good way to demonstrate empathy is active listening. Pay attention to what others are saying and ask questions so that you fully understand their point of view.
- 2) **Be open or transparent-** when you are in a leadership position, it is important to demonstrate a willingness to transmit information that is useful to people in their line of work.
- 3) **Have proper posture-** Posture can affect a lot about a person's presentation. It can affect their

voice, especially if they are leaning against something, hunching their shoulders, or slouching in a chair. As a CEO, you need to have a room-commanding voice that is capable of getting attention and inspiring listeners— be they stakeholders, company fans at a speech, or partners in a meeting.

4) **Consider starting a CEO blog-** Blogs can be an authentic channel for communication, so it's worth considering starting up a blog as a CEO. Blogs can provide a somewhat more personal look into what life is like running a business, as well as "behind the scenes" look into what goes on at the business itself. This could be something that will bring a following to your business as well as build brand loyalty.

5) **Be authentic-** Don't be afraid to show your personality. It's vital for CEOs to project a positive image of themselves as people as well as the avatar or face of the company. By letting your personality shine through, people can connect with you more.

6) **Learn how to adapt to different styles of communication-** Different audiences will require different types of communication. There will be for example, certain standards of meetings in Japan that will be different from meetings in the US. Brushing up on culture and norms is never wrong and will let people know you care enough about them to do your homework.



WOMEN LEADERS



A close-up portrait of Nivedita Dhadpale, a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a dark blazer over a red top. She is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a thoughtful expression. Her sunglasses are perched on her head, and she is wearing a small, sparkling earring.

Bahrain for All

An Interview with Nivedita Dhadpale,
Founder of BHR4ALL & CSR Heroes

Bahrain for All: Please tell us more about Bahrain for All and what inspired you to create this initiative?

I consider Bahrain my home, I have lived here since 1989. Over the years it has been my sincere endeavor to contribute and serve the Kingdom at all levels, be it professional, entrepreneurial or in the government. I had an objective to reach the needy and particularly focus on less abled citizens. In 2011 Bahrain for All' was set-up to celebrate the diversity in Bahrain under one flag. Having worked closely with the differently abled and in particular with the Intellectually Disabled (ID), since 2002 in Bahrain and before that in the UK, BHR4All was an opportunity to further highlight and promote inclusivity. To move forward, I registered BHR4All under my consultancy and events company ConsultNivs. We are an all-inclusive apolitical, non-religious and non-denominational group of dedicated volunteers incorporating the ethos of traditional family values of caring for each other. Thus, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Our small team of dedicated young people, have vowed to positively encourage the optimization of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) budgets. That should, we believe, lead to a genuine long-term impact on the society through; alignment of thinking, integration of activities, active engagement of key stakeholders and the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With encouragement and guidance from the Court of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, we

succeeded in organizing the first BAH4All event in May 2013. It was to acknowledge our gratitude to the leadership and reinforce the message that people from all walks of life stand strong with the Kingdom and will continue to contribute to the growth of the country while promoting and respecting Arab culture.

Unity in Diversity: Your event highlights unity in diversity? Why is this important in Bahrain—a modern, cosmopolitan country?

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa AlKhalifa, HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman AlKhalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa have assured the country's firm position on the protection of religious freedom, respect for pluralism as well as intellectual, cultural and religious diversity. The Kingdom's commitment to the physical, moral and mental development of youth as well as the values of inclusivity, tolerance, peace and social solidarity are clearly stated in the National Action Charter. Our goals are clearly aligned with those of the National Action Charter with a vision to support and encourage youth empowerment, health through sports, intellectual development and inclusive social cohesion.

"Unity in Diversity" is our ideology, that describes Bahrain's openness to people from all walks of life. The country is a melting pot of many nationalities and faiths that live side by side in harmony. Through participation of many communities in our activities, we have managed to gain exposure across the Middle East, North Africa, East Africa, Pakistan, India and Asia.



Our theme for the ninth edition of BHR4All was "Leaving Nobody Behind": sending a bold and unambiguous message that everybody, no matter their background, gender, race, nationality, ability or faith, have a constructive role in Bahrain's story. We are very grateful for the invaluable support from H.E Shaikh Hisham bin Abdul Rahman Al Khalifa, Governor of the Capital Governorate, Mr. Gangan Suri, CEO of Bahrain Bay Mr. Faisal Bin Faqeeh, Chairman of Bin Faqeeh Real Estate and Dr. Hashim Hussein, Director of UNIDO. Bahrain Bay presented a modern face of Bahrain, which is consistent with our mission to showcase the multicultural, cosmopolitan, and tolerant nature of Bahraini society. Every year, we take great care to include as many of Bahrain's communities as possible by personally reaching out to embassies, NGOs, senior citizens groups, social clubs and special centers. As a result, over the years, we have established warm relations and good rapport that help our ultimate cause.

We have organized over 50 events for the differently-abled members of society with the aim to sensitize the general public to the abilities and challenges in this community. During these public-inclusive

events, queries are often raised about long-term care for people with the full spectrum of special needs, indicating a serious lack in the knowledge of disability. We always look forward to inspiring participation from altruistic citizens, charities, potential funding/aid agencies and helping them to grasp the ground realities as well as complexities of differently abled individuals through factual data from our local studies.

Please tell us more about the Bahrain for All initiatives and what new projects are you planning to undertake?

We are a small team of dedicated volunteers: Mohammed Usman, Salman Amjad and myself. Our long-term goal for BHR4All, through sustained efforts, is improving the quality of life of the intellectually disabled community. The latter include entire families: parents, siblings and other members living in the household. They need comprehensive assistance in the fields of special education, occupation training, social skills, physiotherapy and daily living skills. To turn these seemingly difficult goals into reality, the

“ Having worked closely with the differently abled and in particular with the Intellectually Disabled (ID), since 2002 in Bahrain and before that in the UK, BHR4All was an opportunity to further highlight and promote inclusivity. ”



first step is collection of valuable data to ascertain the extent of the problem, assessment of urgent needs and probable solutions. Information obtained will be used towards planning any service. My modest contribution to the latter was my methodical collection of local data. The results can provide the road to future services for the special-needs populations. My Masters thesis (taken in Strathclyde University) discusses in detail what we can do in Bahrain. The title of the scholarly thesis is, "Bahrain for All: assessing the Intellectual Disabled Community in the

Kingdom of Bahrain". Some of the recommendations made by me, were successfully implemented in two of our Inclusive Summer Camps in 2018 and 2019.

In 2018, supported by Faris Kooheji and Spartan Fitness we trained a group of differently abled youth for a month, three times a week. At that time, we had 12 students (Down Syndrome-9, Intellectual Disability-2, Autistic 2 and ADHD-1). After our limited effort at our first camp, we learned more skills in complex programme. In fact, after the camp, a young man with Down Syndrome was invited for an exhibition fight on an international platform with HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa. This demonstrated to the world that awareness of difficulties is acknowledged at a high level. Bahrain takes care of the differently abled community and is pursuing what can be achieved by this community with sheer tenacity.

In 2019, with the support of mr. Hatim Dadabai and the Bahrain Institute of Hotel & Retail (BIHR), we organized another (second) comprehensive camp for twenty youth. It ran for six

weeks, five days a week. Despite the general lack of financial support, we succeeded in acquiring precious services in kind, from numerous sponsors/ partners in the market. We are extremely grateful for their good will, without which, we would not have had such a stimulating summer camp! Apart from shadow caregivers, there were also four volunteers and four school students to assist during the camp. These respected partnerships offered our participants a wide range of experience, training, skills and exposure to a variety of environments and people. Lack of funds meant we were unable to recruit additional paid expertise and support more differently abled youth despite being inundated with requests. (Detailed report on the summer camp is published and available.)

Our significant findings in 2019 were:

- 15 out of 20 students were over the age of 16 years.
- 90% improved socialization skills.
- 40% learned to balance sensory overload.
- 90% began to think





independently (i.e. formed their own opinion).

- Almost all began to focus and follow instructions.
- Due to the nature of their condition, no one of this group is able to work independently or can be left unattended – a controlled and secure environment is required.

We were limited to 20 students due to lack of funding but achieved good results and hope to have more such activities in 2020.

Challenges: What were the challenges that you faced in the beginning and how were you able to overcome these challenges?

Long term investment! Our aim is to encourage commitment by shifting the mindset of offering a short-term “charity-based donation” to one of enduring partnership, equality and collaboration. Essentially the desire of philanthropists, leaders and members of the community is to help the disadvantaged. Evaluation of proposals that request funding, relies on in-house personnel in charge of marketing and the final decision with the management

to invest in CSR activities. Therefore, it is important for us to gain access to management to encourage much needed long-term investment.

A camp/sheltered workshop under the umbrella of BHR4ALL can only be sustained with a cash injection. Our experience has shown that the community we work with requires repetitive tasks that will over time, improve their motor skills, coordination and recall. These facts should encourage the private sector

to be actively engaged to achieve consistent long-term planning. It should be noted that none of the community members that we work with closely can be left unattended and will most certainly require varying levels of assistance for the rest of their lives.

The challenge of achieving sustainability must continue. However, heightened awareness of the needs of the special community, will help in generating more interest among generous citizens. We hope that would result in long-

term monetary partnerships. Our success lies squarely on the shoulders of communities, sponsors and volunteers; only their efforts can help support differently abled individuals in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Tips: What tips can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs?

Keep social responsibility in the forefront of any business strategy.



Women In Business

From then till now, women are continually creating milestones in every facet of business--pushing and surpassing the bars set for them by society.

In the month of International Women's Day, BEntrepreneur puts emphasis on the irreplaceable role of women in business and society.

The emergence of women in power in a class of their own has spread more vastly beyond geography, into territories

previously unexplored by the gender.

In Bahrain, more than any other time in history, women have elevated their status to heights never before witnessed in the Kingdom.

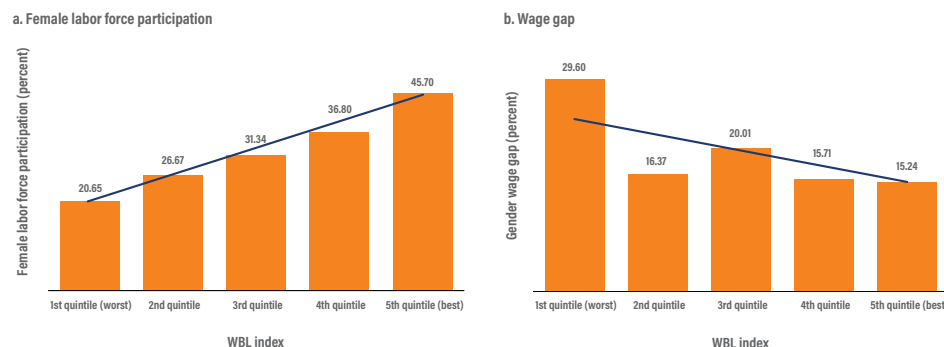
From interests embracing stereotypes such as food arts and crafts, the wave

of change crossed over to more virile strongholds like politics, fintech and entrepreneurship, where women continue to excel and outperform every time.

In a 2020 report by the World Bank on Women, Business and the Law, more women were associated in the labor



WHERE THE WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW INDEX SHOWS GREATER EQUALITY, FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES ARE HIGHER AND THE WAGE GAP BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IS LOWER



2020 Report by the World Bank on Women, Business and the Law

force with higher income and improved development outcomes.

Discriminatory laws still pose a huge impediment to women’s economic security, career growth, and work life balance, and these continue to limit equality of opportunity, creating a business environment that does not adequately support working women.

The report further states that in the Middle East, women merely enjoy half of the rights

which men have; and only 75 percent compared to other countries worldwide. Over the last 50 years, women continue to push the barriers toward economic participation, but so much work is yet to be done on the state of women’s economic opportunities. While a decade ago, women were mostly gauged by the laws and regulations that restrict economic inclusion, the present times explore the relationship between women’s empowerment and economic outcomes.

Furthermore, Women, Business and the Law 2020 states that new reforms on women’s equality of opportunity contribute to more stable economies, higher labor sector engagement and successful development outcomes. In the past few years, 40 economies from regions and income groups have made women’s economic empowerment a priority by implementing 62 reforms promoting women’s participation in the labor sector.

The report emphasizes that “such reforms allow governments to cultivate a business environment that benefits women entrepreneurs and employees, enhancing economic productivity and accelerating development.”

According to statistics, 5% of CEOs of leading companies are female, and women in senior management in 2019 totaled 29 percent – the highest number on record, but still not high enough.

A parallel study by Grant Thornton, entitled Women in Business 2019, says that “Opening up development opportunities will keep the best people moving up. When women see other women in top roles, they are more likely to aspire to them. A similar study by American Express Canada and Women of Influence found that although only 32% of female respondents believed that reaching the C-suite was an achievable goal, this increased to 49% if they had a mentor, and 61% with a

ECONOMIES THAT HAVE EXHIBITED THE MOST PROGRESS TOWARD GENDER EQUALITY SINCE 2017										
Economy	WBL 2020 score	Change in score	Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension
Saudi Arabia	70.6	38.8	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
United Arab Emirates	56.3	29.4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Nepal	73.8	18.1		✓	✓		✓			✓
South Sudan	70.0	18.1		✓	✓		✓			
São Tomé and Príncipe	86.3	11.9			✓		✓			
Bahrain	46.3	8.8		✓		✓				
Congo, Dem. Rep.	78.8	8.8					✓			✓
Djibouti	68.1	8.8		✓		✓				
Jordan	40.6	8.8			✓		✓			
Tunisia	70.0	8.8		✓		✓				

Source: Women, Business and the Law database.

“When women see other women in top roles, they are more likely to aspire to them.”

sponsor. It's equally telling that organizations ranked highly on Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies list have twice as many women in senior management as those at the bottom.

The study says, "Our 2019 women in business data clearly shows that, despite the powerful business case

actions, all businesses can drive positive change."

From women who comprise the backbone of businesses, to women who pioneered them, women today who dominate the business landscape are those who set a benchmark for others and leave a long-term influence to future generations; visionaries shrewd in

our daily lives.

The importance of women as key drivers of the economy is gaining recognition among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Women in senior roles are increasing across the region,



Report by Grant Thornton, entitled Women in Business 2019

in favor of gender diversity, change at the top has been too slow in coming. At Grant Thornton, our years of reporting on women in business, our experience as a global network of firms, and our own efforts to achieve gender balance at executive level have shown us that progress comes through deliberate action in targeted areas. By committing to these

business but empathic towards their communities. Women who have attained stature as role models and are ready to impart their knowledge and experience as mentors. Women who drive their companies towards achievements, their businesses towards success. Women who have brought a huge difference that has become deeply embedded in

along with the number of women scaling the higher echelons of business, a reflection of the path of transformation towards a non-oil dependent economy. Reforms are constantly transforming roles and women have gained unequalled stature in diverse fields such as politics, technology, education and medicine.

As per the World Bank's annual report on Women, Business and the Law 2020, such reforms in the last two years pertain to economic empowerment by women.

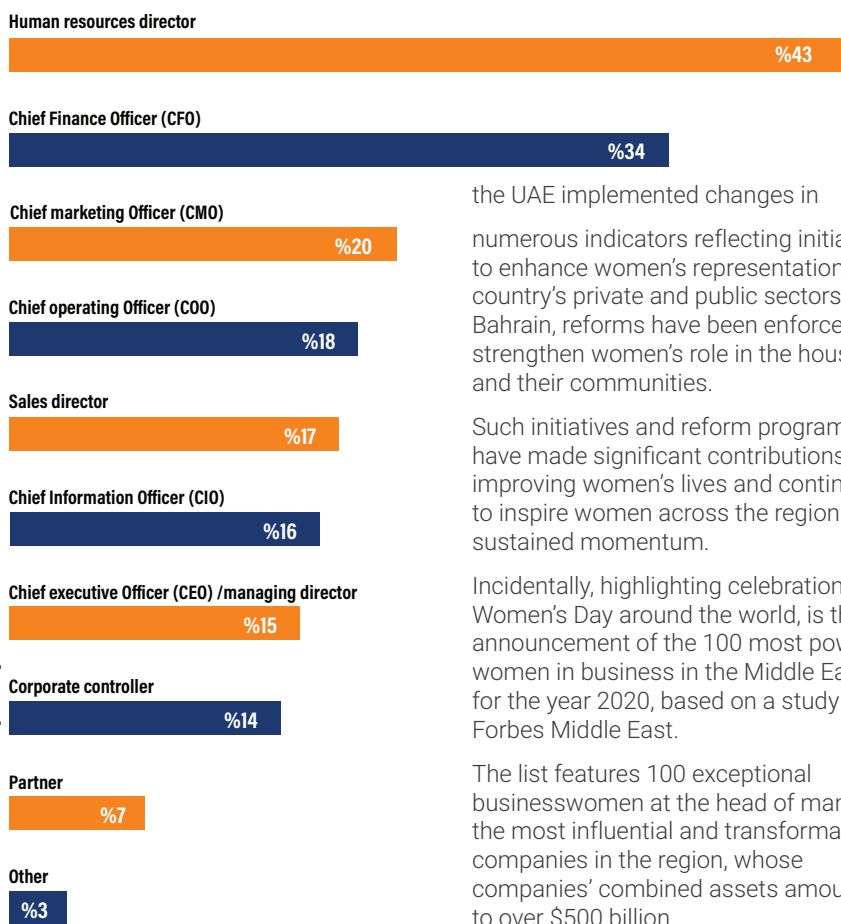
More drastic changes are sweeping across the global community, and in the Middle East. This year, Saudi Arabia was recognized as the global top reformer, following the enactment of breakthrough reforms supporting women's participation in the economy. A total of 30 women had been appointed for the first time to the Saudi Shura Council in 2013, while 17 women took up municipal positions in 2015.

In this regard, Saudi Arabia



Leadership roles held by women

Report by Grant Thornton, entitled Women in Business 2019



Source: Grant Thornton IBR 2019

made it among the top-10 performing economies in the Middle East and North African and Sub-Saharan African regions, with Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates among those who enacted top reforms across a range of indicators.

It is highly anticipated that the GCC will enact more reforms with Saudi Arabia spearheading the campaign in alignment with Vision 2030's goal of increasing women's labor force participation and abolishing discriminatory and gender-based regulations. Currently, Saudi Arabia is advocating women's entrepreneurship and providing them more access to financial support and services. On the other hand,



the UAE implemented changes in numerous indicators reflecting initiatives to enhance women's representation in the country's private and public sectors. In Bahrain, reforms have been enforced to strengthen women's role in the household and their communities.

Such initiatives and reform programs have made significant contributions in improving women's lives and continue to inspire women across the region in a sustained momentum.

Incidentally, highlighting celebrations of Women's Day around the world, is the announcement of the 100 most powerful women in business in the Middle East for the year 2020, based on a study by Forbes Middle East.

The list features 100 exceptional businesswomen at the head of many of the most influential and transformational companies in the region, whose companies' combined assets amount to over \$500 billion.

The list featured 22 new entries and 23 nationalities represented across 28 sectors, with Emiratis dominating other nationalities with 23 entries.

According to Khuloud Al Omian of Forbes Middle East, "These Arab women are not only driving economic growth in the region, but they are also representative of the Middle East's strong female leadership and influence across all areas of life from e-commerce to financial services.

The list includes, Raja Easa Al Gurg, Managing Director of the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group; Renuka Jagtiani, CEO of the Landmark Group; Rania Nashar, CEO of Samba Financial Group; Sarah Al Suhaimi, Chairperson of Tadawul; Lubna Olayan, Chairperson of the Saudi British Bank, among others.

Nowadays, it has become apparent that previously male-dominated industries and occupations are eradicating masculine stereotypes and women are advancing to positions of leadership that are paving the way for women empowerment in business.



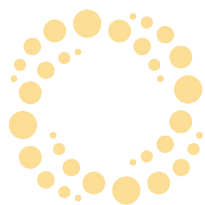
“Georgia has been named the best place for arranging international events, and recognized for offering top conditions for foreign visitors to combine their business trip with leisure.”

KREBA—

a hub of organization within Georgia

An interview with Tamar Khutsishvili
Founder of KREBA





KREBA

Please tell us more about KREBA and what inspired you to start the business?

First of all, I want to thank you, BEntrepreneur Magazine for your interest in KREBA company which provides Professional Congress Organizing services. It's our pleasure to be your guest! I want to mention here the words of Benjamin Franklin: "Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning." Personal and professional growth is what leads to improvement, achievement and success. The main inspiration and aim of KREBA was to create something interesting and new, namely a more comfortable environment in the tourism sector; Georgia has been named the best place for arranging international events, and recognized for offering top conditions for foreign visitors to combine their business trip with leisure.

KREBA offers a wide range of services



and support which includes translation and interpretation services as well as full technical support during congresses and tours. Incidentally, we provide interpretation service in Georgia and abroad.

We are the finalist for THE BEST WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AWARD in 2018. We also received a Diploma of appreciation for outstanding support and reliable partnership, for contributing to the development of the tourism industry in Georgia twice in 2018 and in 2019.

Tell us more about your beautiful country, Georgia and why it is a promising and resourceful tourist destination?

Thank you for your interest in my country Georgia - THE BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE & ASIA. From the south-east it is bordered by Azerbaijan, from the south –by Armenia and Turkey, from the north –by Russia; The Western part of Georgia is washed by the Black sea; Tbilisi is the capital of Georgia founded in the fifth century;

We, Georgians do believe that 'a guest is sent from God' – hospitality for Georgians isn't only business, it is genetically characteristic of Georgians.

Georgian national dishes are amongst the best in the world for their diversity and taste.

The Georgian alphabet is unique –one of 14 independent alphabets in the world.

Georgia is the homeland of the Golden Fleece and the sorceress Medea, who was believed to be the progenitor of medicine.

Georgia is the homeland of Wine.

Georgian dance is a celebration of life and of Georgia's rich and diverse culture. Each dance portrays the characteristics of the region in which it originated.

It's one of those countries where, within a short span of time, you can swim in the Black Sea, go skiing in the Caucasus mountains and in between enjoy bustling city life.

And of course, a good holiday first and foremost, means, a safe holiday. According to the Numbeo 2016 report Georgia is the safest country in Europe, and 6th in the world following South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan.



How can entrepreneurs and startups in the Middle East benefit from an exchange with Georgia?

We can say that Georgia is country of opportunities, for example Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency is focused on creating and developing tools, that will contribute to a stable economy with sustainable and high-quality actors. The organization offers a set of products and services to interested parties and potential beneficiaries, which is focused on helping technology-oriented entrepreneurs and startups to walk the distance from the idea to the functionality income models.

At the current stage, small grants program, Startup Friendly, Startup Beats, Boot Camp, common working space, Incubator, Registry of Ideas, training portal and the IT support system is a combination of products and services that are key tools for developing a stable startup ecosystem.

What are the difficulties that arise from having a tourism business and how does KREBA manage this?

Right now not only for Georgia, but all over the world, the main problem is the Covid-19 Global Pandemic.

In KREBA, we believe that human resource is the main value of business; so, first of all, we care for our employees. The current problems have given us several opportunities. Our team worked to incorporate video conferencing

applications with simultaneous interpretation systems. This has proven successful and right now, we can provide our customers with simultaneous interpretation services remotely in any country of the world;

"In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity"

Sun Tzu

What advice can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs and startups, especially in the tourism business?

Passion, drive and determination; these are common and most important for entrepreneurs and startups.

Of course you also need the ability and capacity to take risk. In KREBA, we agree with the main principles of the startup grind.

Make friends not contacts. Help others first before you take. KREBA says: Customer service is an attitude!

I want to end this interview with the words of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf: "If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough."

Thank you for your time and interest in my beautiful country!

We will be happy to be your host in Georgia!



Delivering constructive criticism

Sometimes it's hard to have to be the bearer of criticism. People look at you strangely and somehow take things personally. But if you think about it, and if you already are in a CEO or middle management position, you were once in their shoes so it's important to not destroy the person's confidence but instead critique them constructively so they can be better.

•Example of constructive criticism:

"In the future try to plan ahead, make a schedule to get things done in time."

•Example of negative criticism:

"You have to stop leaving things until the deadline!"

Here are some tips to start delivering constructive instead of destructive criticism.

1. Start with what works

Too often, we hear either "brutal honesty," or no truth at all: "Everything is great!" Real feedback is actually about telling the truth without blame or judgment - one of the four universal communication principles developed by Dr. Angeles Arrien. And the truth always has two parts: something is working, and something could be better. Start with what works, then share the upgrade.

2. Make goal achievement personal.

Goal achievement is more likely when the person sees the goal as

important and of personal value. Try to phrase your suggestions in a way that frames personal goal-achievement

3. Praise in public, criticize in private.

Consider the time and place. Don't deliver critical feedback in a group space. Remember - the purpose of constructive criticism is not to engender feelings of shame or disgrace, but to encourage change!

4. Use the "feedback sandwich" method.

On her website, life coach Celes Chua (as cited by Bustle) recommends the use of the "feedback sandwich" when you need to give somebody advice. This consists of starting out with praise, or a positive comment, then getting into the area of feedback that could potentially be construed as criticism, and rounding it out by reiterating the positive. For example, you might tell a coworker that they're amazing at client-relations, but that they could improve their presentations in meetings, and finish it up with the fact that you're super excited to see the progress you know they're going to make. That way the criticism is "sandwiched" between two positives, which makes it seem less harsh.

5. Be conscious of your tone.

Be careful of your tone as it can make or break how feedback is perceived. If you're coming

off as stern or angry, that's an instant for someone else to put up their defenses. Always try to take a moment to consider how you'd like to be approached if the situation were reversed.

6. Ground your constructive criticism in behavior.

Constructive criticism clearly describes the behavior that you want changed. Instead of telling the other person that they are irresponsible, provide the dates

when they have come in late. Rather than saying they are disrespectful, reference how they roll their eyes and sigh. Instead of saying you want them to be more of a "team player," explain the specific behavior that you expect.





A Penny for Your Tots

An Interview with Tots App Founders

1. Please tell us more about Tots and what inspired you to start the business?

Tots is a family guide, connecting parents with kids activities and events. Our app and website will provide parents with a variety of activities, complete with ratings, reviews, online bookings and calendar management. We were inspired to start the business from our own experience as mothers. We found it extremely difficult to find things to do with our family, be it activities or events. As parents, it was a hassle whereby we were constantly searching on different social media platforms trying to find events for our children, and in many instances, we would end up missing events or forgetting about them altogether.

2. How is your business affected by the pandemic and what are the steps you are taking post-Covid to enhance your reach/ influence?

With the current situation and the effects of COVID, the official launch of the app will be delayed till the end of Q3 due to the limited events and activities that are taking place at the moment.

With the current challenges comes great opportunity. We believe that the pandemic has shifted consumer behavior and positively encouraged consumers to move online.

We are excited to launch the app and will use this period to continue supporting local vendors and organizers through a temporary website www.totsstore.co whereby parents can browse activity kits from a variety of businesses and get them delivered directly to their doorstep!

This has been a great period to build relationships with vendors and start building our customer database.

3. What was the gap/ market need that Tots was trying to fill?

There was a clear gap in the market and huge market opportunity as there was no integrated platform to browse for family events and activities. Looking at the current landscape, parents were unable to find, book or manage their children's events and activities seamlessly. Additionally, the majority of activity centers are yet to invest in their online infrastructure, be it dedicated websites that accept online bookings, and relied solely on social media platforms to promote their businesses. We believe this is a great opportunity to reduce the investment required from individual organisers by providing them access to a large customer base and a vendor dashboard that allows them to manage all online bookings, analyze their consumer behaviour and push marketing notifications directly to their user base.

4. How was Flat6Labs helpful in accelerating your business?

Flat6labs helped Tots get market ready. They provided mentorship and guidance in all aspects of our business, be it marketing or finances. It has been a great opportunity to be a part of the Flat6labs program having gained knowledge and networking opportunities across the region. Their support has been vital in ensuring Tots embarks on a successful journey.

5. What advice can you give to aspiring startups and entrepreneurs?

Be flexible, seek advice and pivot where necessary. As entrepreneurs, it is extremely important to seek advice from experienced professionals, better understand other perspectives and pivot your business model where necessary. Even if you start your journey picturing it a certain way, it is important to acknowledge what works and what doesn't and pivot accordingly. The current pandemic is a great example where Tots had to pivot its strategy and turn a challenge into an opportunity. Being flexible and keeping an open mind is key.



“Champions keep playing until they get it right.”

-Billie Jean King



“You are never too small to make a difference.”

-Greta Thunberg

Women Leaders Quotes

“Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.”

-Marianne Williamson



“The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me.”

-Ayn Rand



“Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.”

-Anais Nin



“Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.”

-Oprah Winfrey



Rsquare Technologies

Celebrating 10 Years Of Shaping Innovation In The Kingdom

Bahrain based software development company Rsquare Technologies has passed the 10-year mark in the Kingdom. As a leader within the FinTech space, Rsquare has developed 19 innovative IT FinTech solutions, that were utilized by 400+ clients locally. The company has supported public and governmental entities spanning various key sectors including oil and gas, insurance, banking, education, automobile, construction, hospitals and medical, and more.

Rsquare Technologies has created a successful case study as a FinTech pioneer in Bahrain. The company is a resident of Bahrain FinTech Bay; MENA's largest FinTech hub, and has been part of several high-level delegations taking part in the Singapore FinTech Festival, Bahraini economic delegation to India, Vizag FinTech Festival in Andhra Pradesh, and several regional conferences in Jeddah, UAE, and more.

End of 2019, Rsquare Technologies and Singapore-based venture accelerator Startup Accelerator have signed a


Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote cooperation in FinTech and other emerging technologies while fostering innovation and startup growth. The company is currently in talks with several banks regionally, in line with their expansion plans focused on Kuwait and Muscat, to introduce custom bilingual software for their market needs.

Over the years, Rsquare Technologies has built an internal research and development center to create, and produce "Bahrain-made innovative solutions" to serve the Kingdom, whilst providing a launching pad for younger generations to excel and exhibit their technological skills. The company's mission is to become one of the biggest IT development centers in the kingdom of Bahrain, and to serve the entire Region.

Rsquare Technologies is a custom software development company that specializes in developing scalable, user-friendly applications and automation software, backed by exceptional technological expertise. The company offers cross dimensional IT-focused

solutions which encompasses Artificial Intelligence, automation, maintenance, and management tools. Some of their products include an artificial Intelligence powered chatbot Sara, automation tools such as compucheque; computerized cheque system pre-configured with all Bahrain banks, compufirm; an innovative form printing software, CIS software; a survey automation process focused on the insurance sector, Easy Recon; which automates the reconciliation process for financial institutions. Additionally, management tools include the HRMS; a one click helpdesk that gives a complete overview, property management and maintenance tools to serve the real estate sector, and more.

Shanthini Raja, Founder, Chairperson & CEO of Rsquare Technologies said "We are celebrating 10 years of shaping innovation. Day to day we continue to follow the ethos of building regionally-focused Hybrid tech solutions that work for this market, and allow businesses to do more. Our continued success, and resilience in the Kingdom reflects Bahrain's commitment to creating a business-friendly culture. We were



blessed to have a strong foundation for FinTech companies, like us, to flourish, with the right infrastructure, tech-friendly regulations and a thriving entrepreneurial



community.

She added, "Our successful journey these past years is due to the support from our clients, partners, and most importantly our committed and passionate team for allowing us to continue, and to do more. We are grateful, and thankful to have been supported, and backed by various governmental entities such as Bahrain EDB, BCCI, MOIC, Tamkeen, The Indian Embassy, Rowad, and more."

Shanthini Raja is a pioneer within the FinTech space, and has established herself as a regional speaker, mentor and entrepreneur. She is committee member of the Women in FinTech Bahrain; an initiative by the Bahrain Economic Development Board, an active member of Bahrain Business Women Society, and has been involved in various business and community groups such as Amcham Bahrain, Bahrain Entrepreneurship Organization (BEO), Bahrain India Society and several more. She received several awards including the Bahrain Business Women Award from the Asian Chamber of Commerce in Hyderabad India. The Indian Arab Friendship Foundation, and more.

“As a leader within the FinTech space, Rsquare has developed 19 innovative IT FinTech solutions, that were utilized by 400+ clients locally.”

Team Minds: Winners of The Brinc Ilearn Hackathon

“We wanted to utilize our time to make a change instead of complaining about boredom and Brinc gave us the perfect opportunity to do so with the iLearn Hackathon.”

Please tell us more about Team Minds and what inspired you to start the business?

Our team consists of a group of university students from various institutions across Bahrain. We wanted to utilize our time to make a change instead of complaining about boredom and Brinc gave us the perfect opportunity to do so with the iLearn Hackathon. As a team, we wanted to come up with an idea that could not only benefit individuals during the pandemic but also be effectively used in the long run and assist in enhancing the day-to-day learning experience of student using resources that are inexpensive and readily available in the market. Thus, we started to analyze and research more into the age group of students whose education was being highly affected by the pandemic and their main concerns. To our surprise, the young students struggle the most due to not having a classroom environment and others faced issues with certain subjects that require a hands-on lab experience. This undeniably is not provided by online learning platforms. Therefore, we were inspired to devise an idea that would help fill in



these crucial gaps and make the online learning experience more beneficial and worthwhile.



Tell us more about innovation in education and why this is needed—now more than ever before?

In such a world that is always evolving, innovation acts as an empowering process. In case of the education sector especially, it is required to help improvise on the teaching and learning processes in educational institutes, and break through the stereotypical methods which have been followed throughout the years, encouraging teachers and students both to make use of their creativity and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, it is vital in making learning experiences to be more relevant to student abilities, aptitudes, and ambitions. Innovation is needed even more so now, as the world is moving towards being more technologically efficient by the day, trying out processes to be shifted entirely towards online methods. Especially in such pressing times of the pandemic, it was seen that the future of education



What were the challenges that Team Minds has encountered and how were you able to move past these challenges?

Well, we knew we had an atreat idea but for it formulate into something tangible, we needed investors on board. So, our biggest challenge was to estimate our financial cycle as VR technology is something really fresh in the field of education and no historical results were there to take a page out of. Thankfully our entire team has a commerce background which made this tedious but most important task easy. We split every element of our package and attributed a certain estimate to it, to reach the total investment needed and furthermore we used our plan of scale to match the revenues against the cost incurred in the year of incorporation and for every following year.

was brought too soon onto the schools and educational institutes by the means of online classes. Although it was proven to be of more convenience, it brought a lot of issues with it,for which educational institutes had not been prepared.

It only made sense for us as students to innovate and find a solution to the problems faced. We chose innovation through technology with the use of already existing resources. To conclude in the simplest of words, "Change is the only constant." It is important to realize that innovation holds a very important place in education, as both industries are connected and are ones with the most sustainable futures.



What is your plan to scale?

Initially, our plan was developed in order to serve Bahrain in this crucial time of Covid-19. However, as it is a step towards the future of education, we really believe it can be implemented worldwide, even after the pandemic diffuses.

To take it step by step, I'd say, first we need to segment and target our customer base in Bahrain. With the focused education sector being K-12, public schools of Bahrain along with the top 12 private schools would be targeted within the first two years of operation. Expecting a positive response of course, our short-term plan to scale involves expanding our operations throughout the GCC in the



third year of our product's life. With time, moving into the long run we plan to further improvise on the technology offered by our application and make it competitive enough to be used worldwide.

So, as long as plan of scale is concerned, our innovation focuses on two ever growing fields of education and technology, for which it would be a loss to keep it limited within a specific country or region.

What advice can you give to entrepreneurs and startups—especially those who would like to enter the EdTech field?

Wayne Gretzky once said 'You miss 100% of the opportunities you don't take' and that's what inspired Team Minds to take actions to the problems we saw in the things we did. There's a huge chance that if a majority of the people around you face difficulty with something then the rest of the world does too, that your solution may be the answer to all of them.

Ed-Tech is a field that can change the world and revolutionize living like Edison's light bulb once did. It is a field with immense scope and the greatest opportunities with education being behind most sectors. The bottom line is to believe in yourself, your ideas and your team. With that the only thing between success and yourself is focus, commitment and sheer will.



How to be productive when stressed

The word “stress” immediately raises mental and emotional triggers to people. But there are positive aspects to stress that can be utilized so as to finish that paper or report, chug the last few pages of the audit or even raise a lackluster performance.

The Yerkes-Dodson curve relates the amount of motivational energy, called “arousal,” a person may possess to how well they’ll perform at a given task. The basic idea is that at low levels of arousal, people don’t perform particularly well. In this state, people aren’t all that motivated to get much done. That helps explain why being totally stress-free can breed laziness or complacency, and also why some of your most productive days are those when the clock is ticking for you to wrap up a big project.

And since stress is unavoidable, it may be to your best advantage to befriend stress and work with it. Below are some tips on how to work with stress instead of against it.

Get a full night’s sleep and don’t go hungry.

There are four barriers to creating a positive reality, which is nicknamed as HALT — being hungry, angry, lonely or tired — so if you feel any of those things, you need to eat, calm down, talk to someone you love or sleep.

Use stress don’t let it use you.

Alicia and Thomas Crum (doctor, Tedx Speaker) discovered that: “Stress hormones actually induce growth and release chemicals into the body that rebuild cells, synthesize proteins and enhance immunity, leaving the body even stronger and healthier than it was before. Researchers call this effect physiological thriving, and any athlete knows its rewards.”

Eliminate distractions

While this should be a no-brainer, eliminating distractions can be trickier than it sounds. Distractions take many forms and can be as obvious as a radio station blaring in the background or as

insidious as your cell phone “tinging” social media updates for 8 hours. If you work from home, a pleasant sunny day beckoning from beyond the front door can be an intense rival to the tasks you’ve assigned yourself, while a cuddly kitty certainly offers its own distracting appeal. So turn off your phone, find a quiet spot where you don’t fall into the temptation of daydreaming, and get to work!

Make your work environment pleasant

Happy workers are productive workers. If listening to your iPod makes you happy — and isn’t a distraction — then invest in some great earbuds and enjoy yourself as you crank out those reports. Maybe spruce up your office with some houseplants that you find calming, or attach photos of inspirational figures to your walls. Whatever keeps you calm, happy, and motivated will likely keep you productive and less stressed.

Final Thoughts: Research suggests that some stress can actually be beneficial to performance so don’t lose it, just use it!



“And since stress is unavoidable, it may be to your best advantage to befriend stress and work with it. Below are some tips on how to work with stress instead of against it.”



BOSS Life



Currencies		Commodities		News
FTSE 100	5962.32	Gold	▲ \$1146.06	Long ha for Tesco
FTSE All Share	2475.20	Gold	▲ (748)	Company
FTSE All Share Yield	5.28	Change	-0.04 (-0.08pc)	halts sales
US	Rate 1.5314			spirat but
	Change -103c			profits fall



“Looking at situations like COVID-19, despite its dark sides, it offers opportunities that challenge everyone; lecturers, collaborators, students--we are all pulling together whilst learning and developing new training and assessment approaches.”

MANAGING AN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL

An interview with Julien Liscouet-
Director General of Vatel International Business School

Can you tell us more about your role as Director General of Vatel International Business School and what your role entails?

My role involves the overall management of staff, students, regulatory bodies, partnerships etc. as well as adapting to new trends and guiding Vatel to mirror what happens in the leading hotels worldwide i.e. if hotels suddenly focus on environmental sustainability, we would ensure it is something we also focus on and teach to our students. Looking at situations like CODIV-19, despite its dark sides, it offers opportunities that challenge everyone; lecturers, collaborators, students – we are all pulling together whilst learning and developing new training and assessment approaches. Our priority is always to provide students with the best possible future for their professional life.

What would you say are the elements of a successful Hospitality business school?

Selecting students who show the most potential (hospitality is something natural) is the key element, as well as delivering the tough business courses by lecturers drawn from both the hospitality industry and academics in order to create the magic, grace, business acumen and finesse that should be present within all staff – from those that welcome guests on a daily basis to the General Manager. Vatel is training the leading managers of tomorrow, and has been doing so for the last 40 years. That is why Vatel works side by side with hotels and is very attuned to the needs and the trends of the hospitality industry.

Can you share with us what you think will be Hospitality's jobs of the future?

The usual jobs will always exist but the sector is ever-changing to meet and exceed clients' needs. The world may change after COVID-19 but the Hospitality sector will always remain because everyone loves to travel and stay in hotels. Because Vatel is a business degree and courses include Management, Marketing, Human Resources,

Company Economics, to name a few, should our graduates wish to enter other sectors, they have the academic background to excel. After all, hotels are very big businesses so our graduates have transferable skills as well as refined inter-personal skills which are a winning combination for any industry.

How does tourism/hospitality survive during the lean times? How do you create opportunities during these moments?

By making tremendous efforts to evolve, adapt, create and prepare for the future; be it financial, human, etc., the entire hospitality industry is moving forward collectively and is offering support to each other. As we all know, businesses are having to be innovative at the moment throughout the world. As we have seen here in Bahrain, some hotels have hosted people who are in quarantine due to COVID-19, others are offering online cooking shows, but as I said, all will be looking to the future and will be training their staff for business when hotels reopen. Hotels are always learning and there

is no doubt that they will be more inventive whilst ensuring that their clients are aware that they provide security and safety for all guests always, and not just during crises.

What is your advice to prospective students and their parents that aren't aware of hospitality and the opportunities within that sector?

Open your eyes and be part of one of the most exciting industries which offers a wealth of opportunities. Vatel provides its graduates with a double Bachelor degree, one from Bahrain and one from France which is recognised throughout the European Union. Our graduates not only work in hotels, but also in large international events like F1, as well as international travel agents like Expedia. Roles are diverse within the industry and include Guest Relations, Marketing, Finance, Human Resources, Public Relations, Events Management, Sales amongst many others.

For More Information :
www.vatel.bh



NBB Supports 4,000 Migrant Workers as part of the Capital Governorate's "Together We Care" Campaign



As part of its efforts to lend a helping hand to those affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has contributed to cover food provision and supplies for 4,000 migrant workers as part of the Capital Governorate's 'Together We Care' campaign. The campaign, led by His Excellency the Capital Governor, Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, was launched in an effort to support the underprivileged migrant workers who have been tremendously impacted by the global pandemic through the distribution of ready cooked-meals and food essentials such as rice, oil, and vegetables.

NBB's contribution towards this campaign follows from its contribution to the #FeenaKhair (There is Good in Us) national campaign to help fight against the impact of the virus and protect the community.

Commenting on the occasion, His Excellency Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Capital Governor said, "I am very proud of what has been achieved since the launch of the campaign, it has demonstrated the true meaning of all parties coming together and working as one towards a common goal which is to deliver basic food supplies to those in need. We are extremely pleased with the support received by the National Bank of Bahrain, who has always been on board

with all charitable initiatives that serve to strengthen community partnership. This has proven that we all are truly #TeamBahrain and reaffirms our values and solidarity. Giving back continues to be within our culture and remains a top priority, and we encourage all to participate in this campaign to provide aid to those affected most by this current crisis."

Jean-Christophe Durand, Chief Executive Officer of NBB, commented, "Since the first signs of the pandemic in the Kingdom, the Government has demonstrated admirable efforts to combat the spread of the virus and its impact on businesses and the community, through a series of initiatives which have to-date contributed to the

Kingdom's overall welfare. The 'Together We Care' campaign, further demonstrates the endeavours taken on a nationwide scale, to provide for those who are in greater need. Supporting the community is embedded within NBB's core values and ingrained in the way we operate, and we see it as our national duty to contribute to all initiatives that aim to provide some relief to all those in need during this critical time."

The campaign is being organized by the Capital Governorate in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior who are managing the distribution process.

How to attain peak performance?



What does it mean to achieve peak performance? Peak performance is when you achieve maximum results on what you're focusing on. Hard you may say? It is entirely possible. But it's also no secret that most people don't achieve maximum results in their life.

1 Start with a routine

The first step towards achieving peak performance in your life is starting with the routine you've set for yourself. A routine is simply what you do every single day. This can be classified as getting up thirty minutes before work or getting up before the sunrise. Your routine when you get home from work could be sitting and watching TV, or it could be reading a book or working on your business.

2 Set monthly goals

If you set a goal for yourself, for example, to write a book, that goal is very vague. Try and break it down into smaller chunks. If you'd like your book to be 90,000 words, then you know you have to write 1,000 words per day for 3 months. If at the end of a month, you've only written 20,000 words, then you know next month you have to write 40,000 words. When

you set monthly goals, it will be easier to create your power list. Without setting goals for yourself, you will veer off into any direction and end up at a destination you didn't intend.

3 Drink lemon water

Among the most important benefits of lemon water are its strong antibacterial, antiviral, and immune-boosting power, making sick days from work nearly non-existent. Lemon water cures headache, freshens breath, cleanses the skin, improves digestion, eliminates PMS with its diuretic properties and reduces the acidity in the body.

4 Be optimistic!

A requirement of peak performance is to look for the best in every situation. Optimism is the commitment to believe, expect and trust that things in life are rigged in your favor. Even when something bad happens, you find the silver lining.

To function at peak performance levels you must believe your dreams are never too big to be fulfilled, that you cannot out-dream this Universe. When this belief is backed by hard work and an open mind to receive the guidance necessary to get to where you want to go, be assured you will get there.

Talabat Partners

with Over 300 Bahraini Organizations during COVID19 period

Working towards enhancing precautionary efforts to limit the spread of the Corona virus (COVID-19), Talabat, the region's leading food and grocery delivery application, announced that it will extend its free delivery campaign throughout the Eid Al-Fitr holiday. The campaign, which started last March, waives delivery fees based on a customer's proximity to a restaurant, was launched throughout the Kingdom in an effort to support local businesses and encourage users to stay at home. Talabat has also waived registration fees during this period to support local businesses that are new to e-commerce.

This initiative contributed in increasing its services footprint through signing partnerships with more than 300 Bahraini large and small businesses in all sectors, including: Home Electronics, Ramez Markets, Alosra Supermarkets, Al-Jaser Factory company, Alzaeem Butchery, Alia Flowers, Alo Basheer, Naseef Restaurant, Café Bateel and many others who benefited from this initiative and offered their customers free delivery services.

Talabat has also signed an agreement with the Ministry of Health, whereby they deliver medicines for chronic diseases to patient's homes to ensure the health, safety and comfort of patients. In addition, an agreement between abattoirs accredited by the Animal Resources Agency and Talabat enabled customers the option to order fresh meat via the platform. This service is the first of its kind in the region and is expected to be implemented in other neighboring countries.

Hesham Al-Saati, Managing Director of Talabat, said: "We are proud to proactively launch services that add value to our customers and partners through strategic partnerships with the government and

private sector. In addition to the various health measures taken by Talabat such as promoting online payment to reduce the exchange of cash and the launch of Talabat's contactless delivery, we have also worked closely with the COVID19 taskforce and the Ministry of Health to conduct COVID19 tests on over 93% of our fleet to ensure the safety of our partners, customers, and riders."

"The confidence that our partners and customers have placed on us has gone beyond food – from flowers to electronics, and from cosmetics to medicine. We are proud of the Kingdom's efforts in combating COVID19 and maintaining business continuity and the important role we play in connecting businesses to customers in Bahrain."



talabat

How to motivate your sales team in a crisis

The crisis is here and your sales team is stuck. The economy is bad, people don't return calls, everyone is despairing. How do you keep yours and their morale intact and fight through this crisis?

First of all be aware: there is an emotional impact to this crisis that you and your team will go through. However, this can allow you a priceless opportunity to strengthen team bonds, galvanize trust and build confidence.

The manager's success now rests on their ability to enable their teams to survive and thrive.

Your sales team has the job of dealing with objections, pushbacks and challenges every single day. They have to deal with a lot of uncertain conditions and unforeseeable circumstances. When things go wrong, they have to deal with the anxiety and responsibility of not hitting their targets—and they will need you to ease that burden for them.

These are some crisis situations that managers need to be prepared for:

1. Sales people leaving

Sales people can leave for personal reasons such as resignation, dismissal or personal illness. The outcome of this is that the sales people who remain might feel stressed because they are taking more load. The rest of the team may also be at this time questioning the future of the company.

2. Missing Sales Targets

The best salespeople are optimistic, but when significant sales targets are missed,

optimism won't be enough to convince your superiors to keep the sales people.

3. Disciplinary Procedures occur

Whenever disciplinary issues occur, it takes an emotional toll not only on you as the one that works on the disciplinary procedure and the person involved, but your entire sales team, too.

The Best Way to Immediately Respond to a Crisis

1. Be transparent but don't vent

When the crisis hits your sales team, don't try to keep the crisis to yourself. Worse still, don't just share information sparsely and deceive your team members by trying to stage manage a situation. Stick to reality.

2. Seek ideas from your team

With the increase in stress and pressure your team will feel, it's important you encourage them to share their thoughts. This will allow you to help them prioritize and allocate their time and resources. It's your job as a sales leader to ensure you're

available for any concerns that arise.

The next step is ensuring everyone on your team can freely access the information they need to understand and deal with a sales crisis is to empower them to contribute to the solution.

Small crises happen everyday. Salespeople are privy to that. The idea is to keep going together as a team.



What makes a great pitch?



There is always a need to pitch. An idea, a business plan, yourself. Everyone, everywhere should have the skill of being able to present themselves to a potential investor, who could literally be standing in line behind you in a coffee shop. Ditto, if the startup accelerator you've been hounding finally agreed to meet you. And finally, once you have your business started, you'll need to pitch your product to your customers.

So how do you research, craft and present a winning pitch? Here are some tips.

1 Hit emotion and business needs. Without heart, a pitch falls flat. But without the business idea to balance your pitch, your pitch becomes groundless. It's all about finding the perfect balance.

2 Tell a story. Telling your personal story or a story that inspired you is a good way to make your pitch stand out. Human beings have told and

listened to stories over the centuries, and the reason is we all love a good story.

3 Tailor your pitch. You can't just hand out the same cracker to everyone. You'll need to understand the situation and the location, the other parties' level of interest and who are you speaking to: are they a potential investor or a customer?

4 Begin with the end in mind. People especially investors and customers want to know about results. You would probably want to go on and on about the features of your product or service but the bottom line is still what are the results that you have gotten? Make sure to include that in your pitch.

5 Solve a problem. Empathize with the audience and know the problems that they have. This ensures your likeability. As Michael Parker, author and pitch coach says "If they don't like you, they won't buy you".

6 Show them a mock-up. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a mock-up, 3D rendering, or even an actual product or an app is worth 10,000. People nowadays are very interactive and they would wish to play and test your product. If you give them an experience, they won't soon forget it.

7 Show testimonials. Celebrity endorsements happen for a reason. If they use or find a product good enough, people want to use them too. Showing social proof that your idea works adds credence to your pitch. Another bonus is you are getting real insight into how people use your products and maybe use this to upgrade your product.

Let's Get Physical!

An Interview with FX Get Active

“He said,
We are all busy until
we become sick.”

Please tell us more about FX Get Active and what inspired you to start the business?

In October 2016 we were all standing in the corridor of our office ready to leave. One of our colleague and a good friend walks straight to me and said something before he left. What he said kept me thinking for the next few months. He said, “We are all busy until we become sick”. He was retiring at a young age because of a lifestyle illness caused due by physical inactivity. For the next two years I tried finding out

various reasons why people don't achieve their fitness goals including myself, then started FX GET ACTIVE in September 2018.

Tell us more about corporate health and how important it is in today's world.

In this era of Information technology, most of us are stuck with demanding desktop jobs, where we are in our the seats most of the time. Physical inactivity and related disease kills over 5 million people every year. There are numerous campaigns



that are run by health organizations throughout the world like “Sitting is the next smoking” today. World Health Organization who says we need at least 75 minutes of High Intensity or 150 mins of moderate to High Intensity exercise per week.

Tell us more about the FXGET Active App and how it motivates people to be more fit.

We are a hardware and software platform that makes getting active very simple. We wanted to transform the fitness experience to a more fun, social and interactive event. We built Video Game Kiosks where people can take quick high-intensity workouts and compete against others.

What were the challenges your company has faced pre and during the pandemic? How were you able to survive and adapt to these challenges?

Every challenge is an opportunity. We were a company who majorly focused on B2B customers. Due to the current scenario and work from home becoming the new normal in most of the IT Companies, we started strategizing and pivoting into

fx
get active

the B2C space with relevant modifications to the product. We have newly added mental fitness and VR fitness to our product line.

What advice can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs and startups?

More often we find entrepreneurs get stuck in some kind of situation where they see challenges ahead and then fall into a vicious cycle. We tend to focus most of our energy on things that we can't do at that moment of time. If we can start taking action on small steps we can still work towards our goals. The idea is to keep moving no matter what, we can always do something that will take us at least one step closer to our dreams.

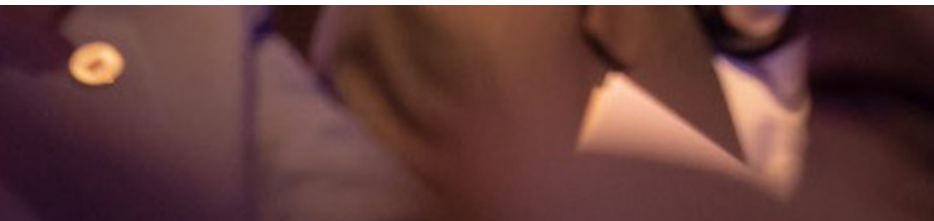
For more information:
www.fxgetactive.com



“Furthermore, Portugal has pioneered the establishment of a public co-investment fund named 200M whose mission is to encourage startups to attract investments by having the state co-invest with their main investor which encourages both the startup and the investor.”

GROW YOUR BUSINESS IN PORTUGAL

An Interview with Anas Al Arras,
Chief Executive Officer, GrowIN Portugal





Please tell us more about GROWIN Portugal and how it helps entrepreneurs and startups?

GrowIN Portugal's mission is to enable entrepreneurs and startups to set up, incorporate, accelerate, expand, and grow their businesses. On the one hand, we provide non-EU startups with the tools and services to help develop their ventures and ease access to the EU markets via Portugal. On the other hand, we work with Portuguese startups and entrepreneurs to open up new business opportunities for them and allow them to adapt and expand their presence beyond Europe, namely to the Middle East.

You have a system wherein startups and entrepreneurs can apply for Equity Free Funding? What does it mean and how is this important to startups?

GrowIN Portugal helps startups become eligible and apply for several equity-free funding programs and incentives. As a matter of fact, Portugal is one of the countries where there has been unprecedented public and private support to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. One of the main vehicles for that is the Portugal 2020 program which is a partnership between the EU commission and Portugal has raised an amount of over 25 billion euros from 2014 to 2020. The Portugal 2020 program has been one of the main vehicles to support startups and will continue over the coming five years. Other than that, there are other equity-free incentives such as the StartUp Voucher, which is for entrepreneurs aged between 18 and 35 and whose projects are still at the idea stage.

Furthermore, Portugal has pioneered the establishment of a public co-investment fund named 200M whose mission is to encourage startups to attract investments by having the state co-invest with their main investor which encourages both the startup and the investor. Last but not least, Portugal Ventures, has been availing several equity funding possibilities and we are part of its network of Ignition Partners whose role is to help startups apply for and obtain the required funds.

Please tell us the benefits of incorporating in Portugal. And can incorporating a company in Portugal can be done remotely?

There are several benefits in incorporating a company in Portugal. Many startups choose to set a base in Portugal as it allows them to do business freely in the EU. Furthermore, a Portuguese company is eligible to various Portuguese and European funding programs. It's also easier and more comfortable for a European Venture Capital Fund to invest in an EU entity as it operates under the same laws and regulations. Some entrepreneurs choose to set up a base in Portugal to have more options for online payments which is extremely important especially when it comes to SaaS Solutions and E-Commerce. There are also other reasons such as the StartUp Visa program that allows brilliant entrepreneurs to gain residency in Portugal.

In Portugal, it's possible to remotely incorporate a business. Hence, in November of last year, GrowIN Portugal launched the first-ever Company as a Service Platform that enables entrepreneurs worldwide to remotely incorporate and manage their business in Portugal. Furthermore, Portugal has announced March of this year the upcoming launch of its E-Residency program. This program will allow anyone who wants to establish a company in Portugal to do so without having a tax residence in the country, which is similar to what is already performed in Estonia, for instance. Those using this program will also be able to access both personal and business banking services and the National Health Service.

How is GROWIN helping startups during this crucial period of COVID-19?

In these difficult times, everybody has realized more than ever the importance of startups and of accelerating digital transformation across every field and industry. Hence, Portugal has been a role model in this very aspect as it has shown a unique sense of community with the rise of the Tech4COVID19 movement where more than 5000+ people: engineers, designers, marketers, and health professionals, have joined hands in developing and launching innovative solutions to help combat the COVID-19 pandemic. This is another proof of the

uniqueness of the Portuguese startups' ecosystem and how different it is from other places.

As far as GrowIN Portugal is concerned, we have been working with our startups to adapt their solutions and develop novel ones to help tackle the current issues. Examples of very promising concepts that we have been working on within our community are a Video Conferencing Platform, a Smart Queues Management Application, a Block-Chain based Immunity Passport, etc.

In such uncertain times, it's also extremely important to collaborate with entities beyond one's ecosystem. As far as we are concerned, Bahrain represents the gateway for Portuguese businesses to position themselves in the GCC and MENA regions. Therefore, we have been working very closely with Bahrain EDB and Startup Bahrain to join hands towards enabling startups and SMEs from both the Bahraini and Portuguese ecosystems to learn from each other's experiences and expand into further markets.

What advice can you give to aspiring entrepreneurs and startups?

Our advice to entrepreneurs is to try to optimize their resources, adjust their business models, and open up towards alliances and partnerships. To be honest, it's time that everyone tries to collaborate and work on encouraging out of the box thinking and cross-border collaboration. I personally believe that we have to encourage creativity and focus on speeding up the time it takes to digitize processes and launch innovative products and solutions. In other words, we advise entrepreneurs to take the initiative and not hesitate in going beyond their comfort zones. The times are changing, and we all have to make the best out of these changes rather than remaining passive and afraid of what might come next.

For more information:
<https://www.growinportugal.com/>

Tamkeen's Business Continuity Support Program provides support to 20,000 enterprises



As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to cause a major strife in international business, diverse sectors of the economy, mostly the most fragile ones consisting of small and microenterprises are suffering the repercussions. Tamkeen is helping curb the downhill trend through an initiative called Business Continuity Support Program, following the directives of His Royal Highness the Prime Minister, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.

Numerous small and micro enterprises have already benefited from the Tamkeen program and the Authority aims to achieve a target number of 20,000

enterprises which will be given maximum benefits to help them partially cover operational expenses.

Dr. Ebrahim Mohammed Janahi, Chief Executive of Labour Fund 'Tamkeen', said that many small and micro enterprises have already been supported through the Business Continuity Support Program, which continued to receive applications until the last day on 11th May 2020.

He stated that Tamkeen is reviewing and evaluating all applications as per their compliance to the program's criteria and how containment measures impacted their business activities; with support immediately provided to enterprises operating in heavily impacted industries.

The evaluation process is conducted on a regular basis to address the needs of small and micro enterprises, which are eligible to receive funding between BHD 1,050 and BHD 12,000, relative to the number of employees. Payments are distributed over a three-month period, provided that the requirements are met for each monthly payment, which can be done by logging into the electronic portal and uploading receipts for their expenses on a monthly basis. The coverage will include taxicab, public transport and bus drivers, driving instructors, and kindergarten workers. Labor market fees have also been suspended for a period of three months.

Startup Playlist

Entrepreneurship is already challenging: the emotional highs and lows, the struggle to gain stability and footing in the market, and the bleak journey to being profitable. Some entrepreneurs get inspired by books, some by movies—but the power of music is undeniable and here we break down some inspiring songs.

1. Survivor by Destiny's Child

To be an entrepreneur one must become a survivor, able to take all the lessons from the past and not be haunted by it. This song by Destiny's Child talks about the people who bring other people down and think that they will be less if they move away but it

turns out that people are born survivors, able to be mentally, physically, and spiritually blessed without the naysayers.

2. Roar by Katy Perry

Katy Perry's song is an adrenaline-fueled call to action. "I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter/ dancing through the fire. / Cause I am a champion, and you're gonna hear me roar". Put this song on shuffle and hit the gym or go hustle.

3. You Gotta Be by Des'ree

Des'ree challenges us to "Listen as your day unfolds/ challenge what the future holds/ try to keep your head up to the sky". As every startup

founder knows, each day is uncertain but the singer advice crooning "You gotta be cool/ you gotta be calm/ you gotta stay together". Wise words indeed!

4. Walking on Sunshine by Katrina and the Waves

This is the song you play when you found your startup investor, when your pitch has been perfected and swept the people off their feet that by the grace of God, you received more than your intended seed funding. This is the song you play when you survived your first year of business with money to spare—literally it will as if you're walking on sunshine.

5. All Star by Smash Mouth

This is for all the people who ever struggled to make their first paycheck running their own business (wait, that's basically everyone). Smash Mouth sings "Hey now, you're an all-star, get your game on, go play. Hey now, you're a rock star, get the show on, get paid". And you will, eventually.

6. Get Up Stand Up by Bob Marley

Get Up Stand Up is an admission that as a business owner, you are no longer the same person you were before. You are completely different and you have the dignity and the courage to "stand up for your rights".



Something Positive

The following realization has just profoundly hit me; there is always something that is worth celebrating every single day of our lives.

You are probably unaware of these blessings that are surrounding you all the time, or perhaps you have neglected them and began taking things for granted quite often. Eventually, you do not even recognize that this is a blessing and start to consider it as a normal occurrence. Somehow, you begin to think that you are entitled to own this blessing and that you have claimed it over time as you got used to it. You might be expecting this extraordinary blessing to always be there in your life no matter what.

Let me speak for myself when I say that there are a huge number of things that I consider myself extremely lucky and grateful to have. I might be writing this down as a gentle reminder for myself and perhaps if it is a situation similar to yours, then you could also relate to what I am saying. We mustn't forget that the things we have now were once things we wished deeply to have one day.

Not all of us are privileged enough to find ourselves living in a safe and beautiful country that is filled with friendly people and lovely places. Literally anything you wish for is at the tip of your fingers with a click of a button. This is an almost impossible dream to be reached by others to be able to sleep at night with peace and serenity, knowing without a doubt that they are safe and sound in their country which they are fortunate enough to call home.

The slightest inconvenience we feel in our bodies regarding our health, freaks us out big

time! So then, why are we ungrateful when everything is good and healthy? We should appreciate the fact that nothing is wrong with us in this very moment. Right now, you might be able to do whatever you like, whenever you want in such a free manner; you might have the ability to walk, run, breathe, feel, hear, see and so much more. All these blessings which some people might take for granted, could be something others wish to have so badly. Others could have severe diseases and sicknesses, but still choose to go through their own personal battles in order to survive. And yet they still hold on to hope, knowing that one day they too will be blessed. Because only when something is taken away from you, do you then realize how blessed you were to have it in the first place and wish more than anything to have it back just so you take better care of it and make sure it never goes away again.

Some mornings, we might wake up complaining that it is too early and that we do not wish to abandon our comfortable and warm beds. You might be forcefully dragging yourself to work where you have the opportunity given to you to actually achieve something that will make your future-self proud of you and to build a career that could make you a very successful person someday. Meanwhile, others are continuously searching for a job or looking for any kind

opportunity to work. They get glances from others who think of them as a burden on society.

What is incredibly rare these days is being surrounded by people who are always there for you and carry genuine feelings towards you. If you know one or more people who care and worry about you with no interest whatsoever in return, then you are a blessed person. Hold on to those who are pure and sincere. Make sure you cherish every moment you have with that person and of course be as real as that person is with you.

Be proud of everything you have right now. Capture every feeling and own all your memories.



Mariam Abdulla

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How to help during coronavirus?

The ongoing coronavirus crisis continues to have profound effects on our society: schools and business are shuttered, hospitals are overwhelmed, and unemployment numbers are rising. The tragedies, both big and small, can be difficult to process. While it is easy to feel powerless in such an unprecedented situation, here are some ways we can support others during these challenging times.

Fund Scientific Research

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Nothing would help more than meaningful, targeted treatments for COVID-19 and ultimately a vaccine. You can go online and donate to a scientific organization of your choice to help fund scientific research that will put this pandemic to an end.

Help the hungry

7

With many people out of work or unable to shop for groceries, food insecurity and hunger are serious concerns for the world's vulnerable populations, like the elderly, homeless, undocumented workers, and the many millions of people who have been laid off in the wake of the pandemic. Give what you can. Help where you can.

Support small businesses

6

Unfortunately, it is not a matter of if small businesses will be affected by the social-distancing, but how devastating those effects will be. For those looking to help now, you can donate to small businesses or volunteer to keep businesses afloat and ensure a speedy recovery.

If you find yourself with more spare time and have skills to share—anything from website design and social media marketing experience to accounting acumen—reach out to local business owners and offer to help with anything they might need.

Prevent the spread of illness

5

Prevent the spread of the illness by washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public area or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Don't forget to moisturize.

1 Donate blood

Due to the cancellation of blood drives, there are severe shortages in hospitals. Healthy individuals are needed now to maintain a sufficient supply. Call your local hospital to find out how to make a donation.

2 Give lifesaving medical resources

Areas of emphasis include helping health-care workers with purchases of masks, gowns, gloves and other protective equipment; supporting quarantined and vulnerable individuals; and hygiene promotion campaigns to limit the spread of the virus.

3 Donate books.

If you want to help internationally, First Book takes donations that helps deliver 7 million books to children in need who don't have internet access or home libraries to keep learning.

4 Support restaurants, cafes and bars that have closed.

Many eateries have been forced to reduce or close operations due to the outbreak. If you want to support your local restaurant, consider ordering takeout or purchasing a gift card or merchandise.



“Opportunities
live in the
place where
complaints are.”

-Jack Ma



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