QDB
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مـؤتمـر رواد لريادة الأعمال
2024
Rowad Entrepreneurship Conference
DOHA-QATAR

القمة العربية للمشروعات الصغيرة والمتوسطة
ARAB SMEs SUMMIT
Navigating Digital Horizons آفاق العصر الرقمي

ازدهـار البلدان كرامة الإنسان
ESCWA

Workshop track on

E-commerce acceleration

18 November 2024

1.00–4.00 p.m. | Al Rayyan Room

Introduction

E-commerce has rapidly evolved in the Arab region, transforming from a niche market into a cornerstone of the retail sector. The initial growth of e-commerce in the region was driven by the increasing penetration of the Internet and mobile devices, along with a young, tech-savvy population eager to embrace online shopping. Arab Governments have also recognized the potential of digital economies and implemented policies to foster e-commerce, further catalysing its growth.

In recent years, the Arab region has witnessed a surge in e-commerce activity, fuelled by shifting consumer behaviours and advancements in technology. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this shift, as lockdowns and social distancing measures pushed more consumers to shop online. This period highlighted the critical role of e-commerce in ensuring business continuity and meeting consumer needs during times of crisis. The growth in online shopping has led to increased investment in digital infrastructure, such as improved payment systems and logistics networks, further enhancing the e-commerce ecosystem.

Looking ahead, the Arab e-commerce market is poised for continued expansion, driven by several key factors. The rise of mobile commerce (m-commerce) is transforming how consumers interact with online retailers, with a growing number of people using smartphones and tablets for shopping. Additionally, advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR) are providing businesses with powerful tools to personalize customer experiences and optimize operations. As the region's digital economy continues to mature, there will be increasing opportunities for SMEs to leverage these technological advancements to drive growth and compete on a global scale.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have gained valuable insights and practical knowledge on emerging e-commerce trends, effective digital marketing strategies, and the integration of advanced technologies like AI and VR. They will be equipped to adapt their business strategies to remain competitive, optimize their online presence, and create immersive shopping experiences that can drive growth and expand their market reach.

Topics to be covered

The workshop will provide a platform to explore and discuss the following topics:

- ### Session 1: Exploring trends and opportunities

  This session will delve into the latest trends in e-commerce, providing participants with insights into how these trends are shaping the future of online retail in the MENA region. The discussion will cover the growing importance of mobile commerce and social commerce, the integration of omni-channel strategies, and the need for personalized customer experiences to meet evolving consumer expectations. The session will explore the role of data-driven marketing in boosting sales, as well as the increasing focus on sustainability in e-commerce practices. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of these opportunities and learn how to capitalize on them to enhance their business operations.

- ### Session 2: Enhancing digital marketing strategies – case study

  This session will delve into two insightful case studies. The first case study will explore the impact of omni-channel strategies on customer experience, demonstrating how brands can leverage technology to seamlessly unify physical and digital interactions and adapt to the evolving landscape of omnichannel commerce and engagement. The second case study will focus on enhancing digital marketing strategies, showcasing practical techniques to strengthen online presence, optimize website performance, and expand customer reach. Participants will gain actionable insights to elevate both customer engagement and digital marketing effectiveness.

- ### Session 3: Leveraging AI and VR in e-commerce – case study

  This session will focus on the transformative potential of AI and VR in the e-commerce sector. Participants will engage in a practical discussion on how these technologies can be leveraged by small business owners to reach a broader audience, create more engaging customer experiences, and ultimately drive business growth. The session will cover the basics of AI and VR, provide examples of their application in e-commerce, and offer guidance on how SMEs can integrate these technologies into their operations.

Agenda

1:00-2:00 p.m.

Exploring trends and opportunities

Presenters

Hamad Al-Hajri, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Snoonu

Abdelbasset Boulelouah, Marketing and E-commerce Expert, International Trade Centre (ITC)

Hazem Metwally, CEO, Commerce Ocean

Saoussen Ben Romdhane, Business Development Officer for MENA Countries, ITC

Moderator

Rhea Abboud, Founder of Hadiyati E-commerce and Community Leader of eTrade for Women (UNCTAD) for the Arab Region

Spotlight on regional programmes

Joelle Yazbeck, Regional Coordinator of the eCommerce Acceleration Programme (eCAP), ICC-ESCWA Centre of Entrepreneurship

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2:00-3:00 p.m.

Enhancing digital marketing strategies – case study

Co-facilitators

Allan Villegas, Senior Research Fellow and Entrepreneur in Residence, HEC Paris in Qatar

Omar Ashour, Co-Founder and CEO, Enable.Tech

Rhea Abboud, Founder of Hadiyati E-commerce and Community Leader of eTrade for Women (UNCTAD) for the Arab Region

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3:00-4:00 p.m.

Leveraging AI and VR in e-commerce – case study

Co-facilitators

Abdelbasset Boulelouah, Marketing and E-commerce Expert, ITC

Eric Le Glas, Marketing and VR Expert, ITC