

RETAIL THOUGHTS
HUSSEIN ADAM ALI

YOUNG & ENTERPRISING
SHAIKHA EISSA

TRENDS
MICAM 89

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
B8TA

IMAGES RetailME

Future of Businesses

www.imagesretailme.com

March 2020

Home & housewares market outlook



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COVER STORY

The home and related market size for the MENA stood at \$37 billion in 2018. The UAE recorded sales worth \$2.5 billion in 2018 and projected to grow at a CAGR of 3%, reaching \$2.9 billion by 2023. The home & housewares segment in Saudi Arabia reached double-digit growth in 2018. Going forward, the GCC interior design and fit-out industries are forecast to flourish as the demand for new residential properties, hotels, schools and hospitals continue to grow, reinforcing the region's importance as one of the fastest-growing in the world.

Dear reader

Looking beyond the present

Our cover story in this issue focuses on the home and housewares industry to coincide with The Inspired Home Show 2020, IHA's Global Home & Housewares Market, which takes place from March 14-17 at Chicago's McCormick Place Complex. The good news is that the copies of this edition will be on display along with leading industry publications at the show.

This year we are proud to sponsor two entries – Aura and Tavola – for the gia award from the Middle East as we celebrate the sixth year of our association with the Inspired Home Show and as the partner for gia awards. The previous Middle East entries sponsored by Images RetailME include THE One, Home Centre, Homes R Us and Marina Home Interiors.

The show, which brings together some 52,000-industry professionals from 130 countries to discuss top trends, build relationships and share the latest new products, will likely have to deal with new questions this year.

On the agenda in 2020, until recently, were questions on the status of the US economy and the long-term effect of current tariffs on goods from China. As we go to press, China still remains on the agenda, but the tariffs will have replaced with the aftermath of COVID – 19 ...page 35

Shoes speak louder than words, some say. That might be true! Shoes happen to be one of the most functional aspects of one's ensemble. We take a peek into the world of footwear at the Italian footwear industry's leading international trade fair MICAM, which took place from February 16-19, for the latest trends...page 16

We have Hussein Adam Ali, chairman of Swiss Arabian Perfume, sharing his 'Retail Thoughts' on a journey that started in 1974. Today, from a single store, the brand has more than 110 stores across GCC and Africa, and from the single market (UAE) to 80 countries with over 1,000 points of sale.

We have an important announcement on page 5 on our Advisory Board. A warm welcome to the first batch of members!

Also, watch out for details on MRF 2020 Dubai and MRF KSA ...page 28

Don't miss out on our Entertainment & Leisure exclusive in April!



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Stepping into the world of footwear

Rupkatha Bhowmick

Shoes speak louder than words, some say. That might be true! Shoes happen to be one of the most functional aspects of one's ensemble. How many times have you noticed a woman or man change into their high heels or formal laced shoes just before entering the workspace? And the comfortable flats, sneakers or loafers wait patiently in the storage space until the end of the workday?

The word 'MICAM' is written in large, white, three-dimensional block letters. The letters are placed on a dark, reflective surface that mirrors them. In the background, a tall, dark, stepped structure resembling a staircase or a modern architectural element stands against a blurred cityscape or exhibition hall background.

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9-9:30AM	Registration & networking breakfast
9:30-10AM	Opening address
10-10:20AM	Trophy presentation to sponsors followed by group photo
10:20-10:35AM	Keynote address: Retail prospects in KSA
10:35-11AM	Keynote addresses: Encouraging localisation
11-11:20AM	Research report: Evaluating the retail potential in KSA
11:20-11:35AM	Tea & networking break
11:40AM-12PM	Solo address: Social commerce on the rise
12-1:15PM	CEOs Conclave: Retailing in the Kingdom
1:15-2PM	Prayer followed by lunch
2-2:45PM	Panel discussion: Nurturing people in retail
2:45-3:30PM	Panel discussion: Evolving face of tomorrow's retail
3:30-4:15PM	Panel discussion: Building future-proof social destinations
4:15PM	Closing address
7pm onwards	RetailME Awards – KSA 2020



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8:30-9:30AM: Registration & networking breakfast

9:30-9:45AM: Opening address by Images Group Chairman

9:45-10AM: Keynote address: From a 'Selling' to a 'Buying' environment

Know about the ABCs of creating a fast paced, interactive and fun shopping environment to engage with and stimulate buying emotions of the hyper-connected consumers. Importantly, what does it take to create a brand that customers are happy to promote?

10-10:15AM: Formal introduction of the RetailME Advisory Board

10:15AM-12PM: The CX roundtable: Attract, engage, retain

Being customer-centric is not new. It has existed since the term retail was coined. Over time, the means and ways of creating a wow customer experience have changed, as the customer continues to transform. Customer experience, after all, is a continuous process to understand the needs of and engage with customers. The CX roundtable will bring together great minds from retail groups who are consistently decoding and positively disrupting the rules of customer engagement.

12-1PM: Panel discussion: Understanding digital transformation

Digital transformation journey is determined by the way retail is evolving and how brands and business are adapting to it. Businesses are embracing the new digital forces shaping the future, to maximise efficiency and performance. Today, businesses also realise that many moving parts - from technology pieces to people - have to work together for the success of digital. This panel discussion will focus on the key elements that determine the success of a retailer's digital transformation journey.

1-2PM: Lunch

2-3PM: Panel discussion: The art of delighting customers

Personalisation, engagement, inspiration are some oft-used terms to define the relationship between a brand and its customer. The end goal, importantly, is to never allow a customer to leave a store, website or app disappointed. Towards this end, retailers are working to fulfil every customer demand at the touch of a finger. This panel discussion will focus on what it takes to understand customer psyche and truly delight them - not once, but every time they shop with a brand.

3-3:45PM: Case studies: Collaborations to wow customers

The session will curate case studies with a focus on how retailers are collaborating with subject matter experts to optimise their CX capability, to upskill employees to better engage with customers, to analyse data to bridge engagement gaps.

3:45-5:15PM: Start-up Conclave: Building a CX-first mindset

Home-grown start-ups and entrepreneurs to pitch their stories of building great relationships with customers.

7:30PM ONWARDS: Images RetailME Tech Awards 2020



**8 June 2020
7:30pm onwards**

Conrad Dubai

IMAGES RETAILME TECH AWARDS 2020

The annual Images RetailME Awards, held along with MRF, recognises top performing retailers and best retail practices in the industry and rewards excellence across a range of retail categories.

We are proud to announce the Images RetailME Technology Awards 2020 along with MRF CX Forum – which will celebrate and honour some of the region’s most outstanding achievements for implementing technologies in retail.

Images RetailME Technology Awards is a catalyst for profitable retail. Today, technology deserves a stand-alone status as both a key challenge and facilitator for consumer-facing businesses. Images RetailME Technology Awards aims to serve as a benchmark in the Middle Eastern retail industry by honouring best practices and efforts of the retail and technology fraternities.

The categories have been carefully designed to ensure that not a single out-of-the box idea goes unnoticed. The awards have been rolled out with a focus on the following key aspects of retail operation – customer experience, innovation and excellence in operations.

The 2020 entries for Images RetailME Technology Awards are now open. If your retail company or brand attained some creditworthy performance numbers and/or raised the bar with outstanding innovation and pioneering initiatives during the past year, please feel free to communicate with us to be counted among the region’s retail stars.

The event is presented by Images RetailME magazine, the most widely read B2B retail publication in the Middle East, with over 30,000-strong readership across the MENA region. The monthly publication offers unparalleled insights through its network of correspondents, industry analysts and specialists.

Join us now and leave your mark of success in the retail world!

Images RetailME Awards 2020 Categories

Please understand the criteria before you select your category. The judges will require evidence of success achieved during the assessment period April 1 2019 to March 31, 2020 - (See submission guidelines below for each category).

1

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

LOYALTY & CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

This award will recognise the loyalty initiative introduced by a retailer that has shown innovation and best practice in the use of information and communications technology. Entries are encouraged from organisations, which can demonstrate, and measure the use of information technology as an enabler for business and customer advantage. Judges will look at cost-effective projects where technology has played a key role in enhancing quality, functionality, efficiency and better customer service, among others.

2

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

CUSTOMER SERVICE & EXPERIENCE

This category is open to a retailer who has implemented future-oriented initiatives to increase customer loyalty and satisfaction. Focus will be on the use technology to enhance customer experience, either online, in-store or both. The entries will demonstrate how this initiative has made the shopping experience more convenient, rewarding or inspiring. Judges will be looking for evidence of how the shopping experience was improved as a result of the initiative, as well as the level of innovation that makes the initiative stand out and return on investment from the initiative.

3

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This category will recognise a retailer who has delivered a successful technology project into its operations. The entries should demonstrate how the project met all requirements and highlight how it has improved the overall operations of the organisation. Judges will also assess the innovation level of the technology deployed.

4

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This award will honour a solution implemented by a retailer that enables customers to get the most out of the mobile experience, using their devices to engage with a brand and shop anytime and from anywhere. The entries should provide details of the technology powering the mobile channel, be it an app, mobile payments service or a mobile-optimised website.

5

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

IN-STORE TECHNOLOGY

This category, open to retailers, will identify a new in-store technology that has the ability to significantly improve a retailer's operations. For point-of-sale technology, please enter that specific category; this section is seeking shelf and aisle tools, display tech, camera, footfall and stock management monitoring systems. The entries should be able to demonstrate why the technology is innovative and how it can improve a retailer's business.

6

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

DIGITAL MARKETING

This category will recognise a marketing initiative implemented by a retailer, through advertising, social media or content marketing campaign. Judges will be looking at the campaign strategy, creative execution and most importantly, evidence of tangible success. Extent to which this strategy or campaign met the challenges set out by the retailer, the level of campaign creativity that makes it stand out and evidence of the impact of the campaign on sales and customer engagement.

7

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

ENTERPRISE SOLUTION IMPLEMENTATION

This category is open to a retailer, which, through the development and implementation of innovative systems and technologies, has increased efficiency within its operations.

8

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

ANALYTICS & AI

Increasingly the backbone of successful customer campaigns, this category will recognise how retailers are leveraging analytics, turning big data into actionable insights. Entries should be able to demonstrate advanced technical capabilities, which provided clear results for them. Judges would like to see innovative use of things like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to crunch the numbers at the back-end, paired with intuitive front-end displays and reports that make the analysis easy to understand and use.

9

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

DATA SECURITY & PRIVACY

This category will recognise initiatives implemented by retailers to protect personal data and security. The entries will have to prove they treat people's data correctly and have taken appropriate measures to protect privacy and personal data of customers in compliance with GDPR, which is essential to people's trust in the organisation.

10

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

The continuing rise of online and mobile retail has made the supply chain and delivery process a number one priority for retailers. This category will recognise the implementation of innovative technology to boost a retailer's omnichannel delivery proposition - be that in the supply chain, stock management system, logistics process or last-mile delivery. Entries in this category will need to provide evidence of the ability to enable seamless delivery of orders, resulting in a superior experience at every customer touchpoint.

11

Most Effective Tech
Implementation of the Year

OMNICHANNEL OPTIMISATION

This category will demonstrate a solution implemented by a retailer that is making a real difference to its omnichannel operations. The solution that helped the retailer execute a truly omnichannel approach, in terms of seamless customer experience, easy deployment of back-end systems across all operations or the ability to gather and analyse business data from all areas of the business in a single, holistic manner.

12

Most Effective
PAYMENTS
Implementation of the Year

This category will recognise retailers making payments a frictionless part of the shopping experience to boost repeat purchase. Judges will look for level of innovation that makes it exceptional, proof of increased customer engagement and retention as a result of the payment technology.

13

Most Effective/Engaged
TECH EMPLOYEE
of the Year

This category will recognise an individual employee from a retail brand who has made an outstanding contribution to the retail technology sector during the assessment period of 12 months.

14

Most Effective/Engaged
TECH CIO
of the Year

This category will commend an individual CIO/CTO from a retailer who has made an outstanding contribution to the retail technology sector over the course of their career, and during the assessment period of 12 months.

15

Most Effective
START-UP
of the Year

This award will recognise a start-up redefining the retail space. Judges will look for a truly unique and innovative idea and one they think will have the biggest impact on customers and retail.

This award is not open to entries. Judges will choose the winner from the start-ups showcased at the Start-up Conclave at MRF 2020.

Completed entry must include

- Entry Form
- 1000 Word Submission
- High resolution photographs/images of 300 dpi JPG or Tiff with captions.
- Payment proof/details
- Company Hi-Res Logo
- Nominee contact details



ENTRY FORM

Please tick the category you wish to enter

- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Loyalty & Customer Engagement**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Customer Service & Experience**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Project Management**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Mobile Commerce**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **In-Store Technology**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Digital Marketing**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Enterprise Solution Implementation**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Analytics & AI**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Data Security & Privacy**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Supply Chain Management**
- Most Effective Tech Implementation of the Year: **Omnichannel Optimisation**
- Most Effective **Payments Implementation** of the Year
- Most Effective/Engaged **Tech Employee** of the Year
- Most Effective/Engaged **Tech CIO** of the Year
- Most Effective **Start-up** of the Year

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Month	Year		

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APPROVAL OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

I hereby certify that all enclosed information and documents are accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Signature: _____

INFORMATION OF NOMINATED COMPANY/PERSON

Nominee's Name: _____

Number of entries: _____

Processing Fee: AED 1,500/- * per entry
Last date for submission of entry, April 20, 2020

Company: _____

PO Box: _____ City: _____

Country: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Contact Person: _____

Designation: _____

Processing fee

AED 1500 per entry – includes one invite for the Images RetailME Awards gala dinner.
Declaration: I/we hereby declare that I/we have read the Nomination Process and agree to pay the processing fee towards each nomination filed.

*The processing fee of AED 1500/- is non-refundable

Signature: _____

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Award categories and titles are subject to change without notice.
- Submitting an entry form does not guarantee nomination. Nominees will be shortlisted based on performance data as supplied in the entry form.
- The final evaluation will be done by the Grand Jury, which comprises of the most respected industry experts, analysts and observers.
- The Jury members evaluate only on the information contained in the entry form and not on any other information/perception/ judgment, hence please fill in the form carefully.
- Any attempt to canvass/influence for selection could lead to disqualification. Nominees must not contact Jury members or organisers in this regard.
- All information in the entry form is mandatory. If any information is not provided, it will directly impact the overall ranking and rating by the Jury.
- All nominees expressly agree that by participating in these awards, they are confirming that they will use:
 - a: The authorised and complete description of the award, as mentioned on the first page, in all public communications related to IRMEA awards.
 - b: Specific template of Images logo, ribbon & trophy provided by Images Multimedia FZ LLC.

- Entries with factually incorrect or misleading information may be deemed invalid.
- All nominees expressly confirm that the information they submit is accurate and correct, and that it may be used for internal research & Industry insights unless otherwise specified.
- Every entry form must be attested by a person at the level of Director / CEO / Owner.
- Jury and the organisers have the right to decide on the final categories to be awarded, renaming the titles, clubbing the categories and moving nominations to a category, other than the category originally filed – wherever required.
- Minimum three (3) valid nominations are required per category, else the award may be withheld and it will be communicated to the participant.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Please send a retail/organisation logo (**Vector Format**) along with category Specific pictures. It can be sent by email to caitlin@imagesretailme.com or through wetransfer.com.
- A separate write-up of about 350 words on the company profile.

FORM SUBMISSION:

Please provide complete information and submit the form by April 20, 2020 to Caitlin Aldendorff, Mobile: +971 50 911 4885 email: caitlin@imagesretailme.com. • www.middleeastretailforum



Middle East home & housewares market outlook bright

Lawrence Pinto



The home and related market size for the Middle East & Africa (MENA) stood at \$37 billion in 2018, according to statistics. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) recorded sales worth \$2.5 billion in 2018 and projected to grow at a CAGR of 3%, reaching \$2.9 billion by 2023.

Also, the online sales for home and related segment doubled from 7% to 14% in 2018. The success of the UAE market is attributed to its strategic location. One-third of the world's population lives within four hours distance from the Emirates.

The UAE is part of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a union of six Gulf kingdoms – including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Together these represent a population of more than 50 million people and a GDP of over \$1.665 trillion.

The home & housewares segment in Saudi Arabia reached double-digit growth in 2018. The Kingdom's residential market saw new supply of 20,000 units in 2018 and 19,000 units 2019. The new supply was driven primarily by internal factors, such as increased disposable income and revolutionary changes in the Kingdom's social structure. Some of the key contributing factors included the entry of women in workplaces and relaxation of rules on mixed-gender workplaces.

The infrastructure expansion in the UAE has accelerated, with a significant increase in residential apartments in recent years in preparation for the upcoming World Expo beginning in October 2020 in Dubai. It has increased the demand for home and other related supplies. The market is offering sleek options to meet consumer need for space-saving options, which have seen growth in demand as individual residential areas keep shrinking in urban settings.

The GCC interior design and fit-out industries are forecast to flourish as the demand for new residential properties, hotels, schools and hospitals continue to grow, reinforcing the region's importance as one of the fastest-growing in the world. The UAE continues to spearhead the GCC market in interiors, while fit-out spends in Saudi Arabia are also showing an upward swing.

Kuwait is emerging as a lucrative market too for interior design and fit-out, especially in the education sector; Oman for hotels and Bahrain for the retail industry. In 2019, the GCC countries were forecast to implement more sustainable designs across residential, commercial and hospitality projects. Among the sectors, the hospitality was forecast to hold the majority of total spend on interior design and fit-out in 2019.

In 2018, the UAE led the interior and fit-out spend for the residential sector worth \$13.5 million, followed by KSA at \$12.2 million. Saudi Arabia's residential market was forecast to complete a further 20,000 units in 2018 and 19,000 units 2019. Qatar's share of the market was forecast at around \$4 million, Bahrain \$2 million, Oman \$1 million and Kuwait about \$0.8 million.

The UAE led the market with a 39% share of the interiors, and fit-out spend in the GCC region. Saudi Arabia followed it with a share of 32%. The UAE and Saudi Arabia have undertaken significant renovation and refurbishment programmes, respectively, to upgrade old public buildings using sustainable products and smart technology.

During the past few years, construction in the UAE flourished to meet the requirements of the Expo 2020 and Vision 2021. It created an increased demand for interior design and fit-out with state spending estimated at \$15.5 billion in 2019. Expenditure on health, education and housing sectors represented 33% of the total 2019 budget. In terms of growth, according to the Dubai Design and Fashion Council, projections for the UAE design market were forecast to reach \$36 billion by 2019.

APRIL 2020

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