



5th Middle East Retail Forum

RETAILING TO THE
CONNECTED CONSUMER

11 & 12 October 2016
Conrad Hotel, Dubai

Theme: **RETAILING TO THE CONNECTED CONSUMER**

With digital behaviours now firmly entrenched in the consumer universe, the shopper today is not just connected but is also highly evolved, empowered and unforgiving. Technology has gone beyond being a tool to offer mere convenience; it is facilitating the speed and severity of customer reaction in real-time, it is delivering swift, measurable, map-able responses -- of all stripes -- to all consumer-facing businesses.

As a retailer, you need to go where your customers are. You need to become what shoppers need you to be. In this continuously connected world, you need to effectively become 'retailers without borders'. The challenge, however, lies in optimising the multiple consumption channels simultaneously, while seamlessly integrating your operations in several different landscapes.

As the preferred knowledge partner of the regional retail community, the fifth edition of the Middle East Retail Forum (MRF) will focus on just this: How do retailers walk hand-in-hand with the connected consumer delighting them at every touchpoint?

AGENDA

DAY ONE

9:30...

MRF INTRODUCTION

KEYNOTES: The GCC retail outlook

- The UAE's journey from a small trading outpost to a key retail destination globally
- Saudi Arabia's strategy to reduce dependence on oil – upcoming changes in retail regulations
- Luxury is entering a 'new normal' in the Gulf states
- The overall GCC retail outlook

10:30...

RETAIL BUSINESS OWNERS & CEOS CONCLAVE

Retail Vision 2020:

Engaging the connected consumer

- How has retailing changed in the last five years? What is the retail vision 2020?
- Biggest learnings from the last five years – some big changes that the next five years will bring to retail
- How can retail outpace the evolved, connected consumer?
- Future proofing brands – protecting the business while growing it
- Making retail sustainable – 2020 & beyond

14:15...

Convenience, choice, customer experience: 3Cs to delight customer

- Are retailers doing enough to create a seamless shopping experience?
- Omnichannel – is it here yet: While omnichannel is a reality in retail globally, has the Middle East been a laggard? Are regional retailers thinking about a solid omnichannel strategy?
- Convenience vs experience: Is online driven only by convenience, while it's all about the experience in store?
- The last mile in retail.
- Socialising with the consumer: How to make commercial sense out of social interactions with the connected consumer?
- Turning data into dollars: What data do retailers need? Who needs to see it? How can it help in managing the organisation? Is there need for a new type of employee, both as store staff and head office staff? What data is already available that are or not being leveraged?
- How can retailers leverage data to ensure profitability and operational efficiency?

Case studies by tech experts, including IT heads in retail and technology companies



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15:45...

Refresh, recharge, reinvent or die!

- How are brands reinventing while keeping the core proposition intact?
- Retail is at an interesting crossroad. It has become channel agnostic. How are traditional retailers coping with this change?
- In this day and age where the evolved, connected customers tend not to form brand loyalty, how easy or difficult is it to retain a strong customer base?
- How can retailers align with fresh consumer expectations?
- Energising consumer engagement through gifting and gift cards

19:30...

IMAGES RETAILME AWARDS 2016

DAY TWO

10:00...

RECAP FROM DAY ONE

10:30...

Young Turks redefining retail

- How important is it to do things differently?
- How important is it to have a sense of purpose?
- Why more and more young entrepreneurs are according more value to altruistic endeavours than making quick money?

12:00...

Love for food grows. Bon appetite!

- Increased allocation of space to F&B players in shopping malls
- New concepts gaining attention – fusion cuisines, fashion & sports themed cafés and so on

- Rise of new formats, like food trucks, to keep the excitement alive
- Technology in food space is getting more sophisticated
- Is food service a comfort zone for small/independent entrepreneurs?

14:00...

Creating retail destinations of the future

- Demand for newer, interactive concepts
- Demand for entertainment within retail destinations
- Consumers are seeking delightful experiences. Instead of simply browsing and buying products at retail destinations, they are looking for excitement with shopping becoming a by-product.
- Connected consumers demanding technology within retail destinations
- The changing face of the retail destinations
 - Rise of community/neighbourhood malls, entertainment centres, commercial centres
 - Recreating a high-street shopping ambience

15:30...

The power of 'she-economy'

- As early as 2000, women had reportedly surpassed men in internet usage. What does the she-factor add to the connected retail universe of today?
- As influencers, what do women retailers add to an industry that's highly dynamic and ever changing?
- Are women better suited as brand creators or retail operators?
- Women have been the chief purchasing officers of households globally. Now they are economically independent too. Has this changed their buying behaviour?
- Despite the power of she-economy, why are there fewer women in top positions within retail organisations?