News Updates

MIDDLE EAST PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION

MEPA'S OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage the widest possible spread of publications throughout Middle East and beyond.
- To promote and protect by all lawful means the publishing industry in Middle East
- To protect members by dealing collectively with problems.
- To cooperate for mutual benefits with other organizations concerned in the creation, production and distribution of publications.
- To promote the development of public interest in publications in association with other publishing organizations with similar objectives.
- To serve as a medium for exchange of ideas with respect to publication, sales copyright and other matters of interest.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Sayidaty.net No. 1 Arab women's website worldwide !

Sayidaty, a sister publication of Arab News, reached in August first place among the most visited Arab magazine websites for women worldwide, according to Effective Measure, a leading online measurement provider in the world.

More than 1.6 million unique users visited Sayidaty last month, generating more than 20 million page views from around the world with half of the visitors coming from the GCC, according to Google Analytics.

Prince Turki bin Salman

Sayidaty launched its new website in September 2012 with a strategy of covering all that are required by Arab women in their daily lives. The content includes social issues, fashions, jewelry, children's education, marriage, family relations, cuisine, health, work, lifestyle, home, décor capacity building and more.

Sayidaty is considered the largest circulating women's magazine in the Middle East. The success of its website on the Internet reflects its wealthy content in both print and Web editions. The success of Sayidaty.net is also reflected on the social media like Facebook, YouTube, Google+, Pinterest and Instagram.

Last July, Sayidaty expanded its online services and launched a new section titled "Experts and Forums" that links its readers with outstanding experts who provide their expertise and knowledge to visitors to the website and answers their questions on various matters such as health, health, beauty, fashion, parenting, education and marriage consultations and much more, free of charge.

Mohammed Fahad Al-Harthi, editor in chief of Sayidaty and Arab News, attributed the magazine's remarkable achievement to the vision of Prince Turki bin Salman, chairman of Saudi Research & Marketing Group, who has set out a strategy to expand the group's activities into the new media.

"Prince Turki's vision has identified the company's future direction in the light of changes and challenges in the media industry," Al-Harthi said.

The merging of the magazine's employees for the website and print edition helped in making optimum and effective use of their expertise, he pointed out.

"Sayidaty has also achieved first place among Arab magazines in social media with hits on Facebook reaching on average more than 1.6 million fans. Its followers on the Twitter have crossed 170,000 and nearly 12.5 million have viewed its videos on YouTube and we are rapidly increasing on other networks," he said.

Al-Harthi added: "Our popularity has also reflected on Sayidaty's mobile applications in the region with more than 600,000 downloads through iPad, iPhone and BlackBerry. This shows the remarkable progress in the magazine's content over the years. It also indicates that we have a lot of readers abroad following the magazine's content using all types of media.

Source: Arab News

GCC advertising revenues hit $4.8bn

Kuwait Financial Centre (Markaz) recently published the executive summary of their GCC Media report providing insights into the GCC media industry dynamics, identifies its revenue components and ad-spending trends. The report also discusses the key drivers of demand, identifies emerging trends and characterizes the challenges of the GCC media industry.

With the onset of financial and economic crisis in the later part of 2008, the media and advertising industry faced many challenges and recorded declining revenues. However, the GCC region was not as badly hurt by the economic downturn as the western economies.

Since the latter half of 2010, the media industry in the region started to show promising signs again. Presently, the companies in the region have begun to increase their media spending budget as economies from their hiatus. In 2012, the advertising revenues in the GCC grew by 5 percent, year-on-year to reach USD 4.8 billion.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia have the largest share of ad spending with 33 percent and 30 percent respectively; followed by Kuwait with 20 percent share.

Billboards seen along Shaikh Zayed Road, Dubai. Latest figures reveals that the GCC advertising revenues hit $4.8bn in 2012

At the same time, the media industry landscape is also changing rapidly as a consequence of technological advancements and changing consumers' habits. The digital media is growing in influence and effectiveness. Presently, the digital media captures 18 percent of global media share of ad spending, which is expected to grow to 20 percent by 2014.

However, in the GCC, print media is still going strong with 71 percent share of overall ad-spending. The digital media is still in its infancy in the region but growing at a brisk pace.

Social networking and use of social media sites have been on the rise in the GCC. Of all the social media sites, Facebook has the highest penetration in the GCC (about 40% in the UAE and 35% in Kuwait), distantly followed by LinkedIn and Twitter. Kuwait has the highest Twitter penetration of 13 percent in the Arab world, compared to 3 percent each, for Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar.

Globally, the print media is struggling as a result of dwindling circulation figures – especially in American and European regions. In 2011, the N. America recorded 4.3 percent decline in newspaper circulation and in Europe it declined by 3.4 percent. On the contrary, in the MENA region the newspaper circulation clocked the highest worldwide growth rate of 4.8 percent and it grew by 3.5 percent in Asia. The changing media consumption habits of consumers are driving ad-spending away from traditional print and towards digital platforms. In the GCC, the print media is still considered more trustworthy, and hence grew at a CAGR of about 3.5 percent between 2007 and 2011. However, in the GCC, the readers' preferences are gradually shifting towards the digital media.

The television market in the Middle East has undergone radical changes in the recent past. The free-to-air market continues to be a dominant segment in the region. The ad-revenues from Television media stood at USD 693 million accounting for 14 percent of total ad-revenues in 2012 in the GCC.

The media industry in the GCC has brighter prospects because of improving literacy rates, favorable young demographics, higher income levels and technological advancements.

Source: Arabian Gazette

ARABNET RIYADH 2013

arabnet
Riyadh 2013

December 3-4

ArabNet Riyadh 2013 is the largest gathering for digital professionals and entrepreneurs in the Kingdom, aiming to highlight the best of Saudi digital innovation, developments and trends. ArabNet Riyadh 2013 will host over 80 speakers from across the the region and the world, and attract over 800 digital professionals to connect and network. The gathering will focus on digital Arabic content development in the GCC and Saudi market; mobile apps, trends and habits; brand management and advertising; commerce, entrepreneurship and more.

Source : http://arabnet.me/conference/riyadh/

Date : 3—4 December 2013

Location : Riyadh—KSA

Source : http://arabnet.me/conference/riyadh/

WORLD PUBLISHING EXPO 2013

World Publishing Expo 2013 is taking place from 7-9 October 2013 at Messe Berlin.

The leading exhibition **for technology to publish news on tablets, mobile, in print and online.**

The German capital will host the worldwide gathering of newspaper and media executives.

World
Publishing
Expo 2013

IFRA Expo & Conference
7-9 Oct, Berlin, Germany

Date : 7—9 Oct 2013

Berlin—Germany

Source: http://blog.wan-ifra.org/blogs/world-publishing-expo-blog

THE DIGITAL ARABIC CONTENT MARKET: SIZE, CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

In November of 2012, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, or ESCWA, published a report that focuses on digital content creation and consumption in the Arab region entitled "The Status of the Digital Arabic Content Industry in the Arab Region."

The document aggregates statistics and findings on digital content, compares global and regional statuses, pinpoints areas of weakness, and concludes with a list of recommendations. And although the report was published in 2012, a large part of it deals with projections and estimates for the coming years. It also presents an alternative, detailed mechanism in assessing the market for years gone by, offering fresh insight into an area that suffers from a lack of proper measurement tools and documentation. Finally, the list of recommendations, we believe, is still relevant to the current state of the market and needs to be seriously considered.

More on the subject, be sure to check out our upcoming summit. The ArabNet Riyadh 2013 is the largest gathering for digital professionals and entrepreneurs in the Kingdom, with a focus on digital Arabic content development in the GCC and Saudi market.

Below are highlights of the data, observations, and conclusions available in the report.

Defining Digital Arabic Content

The report starts with defining digital Arabic content, which takes many forms and serves several functions. It is as follows:

Digital Arabic Content: Any content in Arabic represented in digital form on the Internet (or on CD, DVD and other formats). It includes web-sites, portals, and e-services, as well as audio and video content. It also includes software, databases, open source products supporting Arabic language functionalities and tools, such as, but not limited to, Arabized software interfaces such as word processors, Arabic language processing software such as speech and character recognition programs, search and translation engines, etc.

Secondly, it also identifies what constitutes the digital Arabic content industry as the following:

Digital Arabic Content Industry Is the collection of DAC related products and services generated, produced or distributed by organizations and enterprises of all sizes, as well as start-ups and individuals which enable access, use and exchange of Arabic content.

Global Trends & Issues

Based on a report by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), the global content market for 2011 was estimated to be just below $3000 B and is predicted to increase to $3800 B in 2015. The digital share of entertainment and media spending stood at 27.9% in 2011, and is expected to rise to 33.9% in 2015.

The growth in this domain is largely dependent on connectivity and affordability. The rise is also due to the emergence of new business models: subscription, advertising, and contractual.

The report also notes that the industry is economically concentrated, which is the result of several factors: big players' access to very large venture capital and stock markets and privileged access to large markets.

"The major players set then the pace and the rules of the market, as well as the business models, on the global and countries' levels. Most of emerging businesses need to adapt and compete in this environment. Often, their best fate, if they are successful, is to be bought off, largely overvalued, by one of the majors."

Governments so far seem to have failed to address this issue. They do not help create favorable market environment and business conditions for an emerging and rapidly changing digital industries and services landscape, which is mostly made of small medium enterprises.

### Estimating the Size of the Local Market

A Price Waterhouse Coopers study - Global Outlook of E&M 2011 – 2015 - is used to estimate the digital content in the Arab world based on global models. Here are the global figures for entertainment and media, internet, advertising, and consumer/end user.
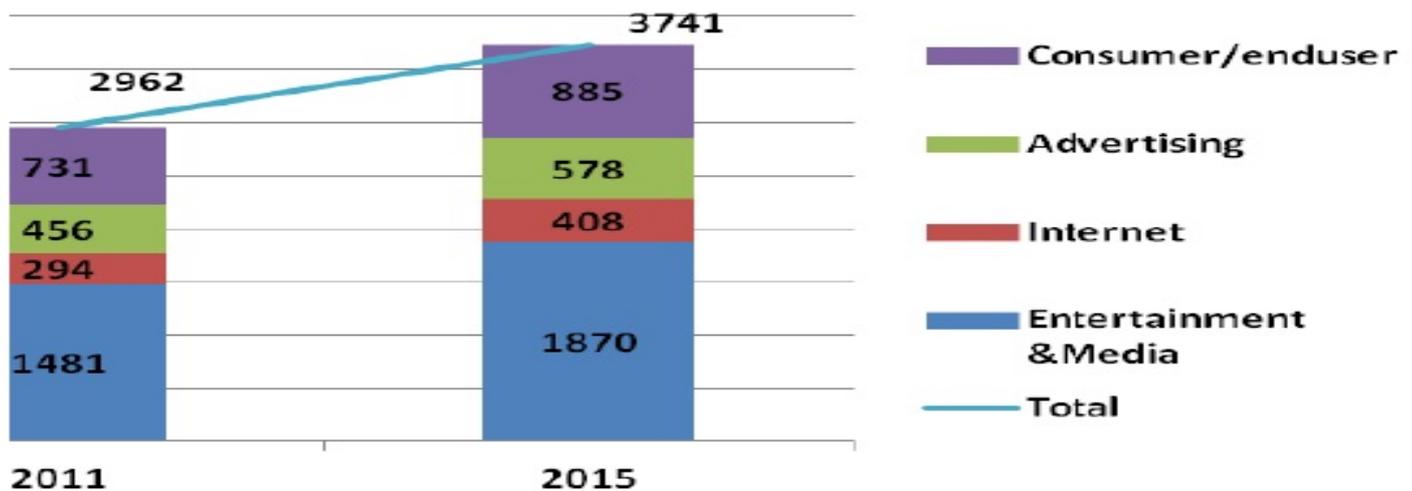
The size of the Arab content market is assumed to be proportional to the percentage of available content, which is generally believed to be around 3%. Local figures would then be:
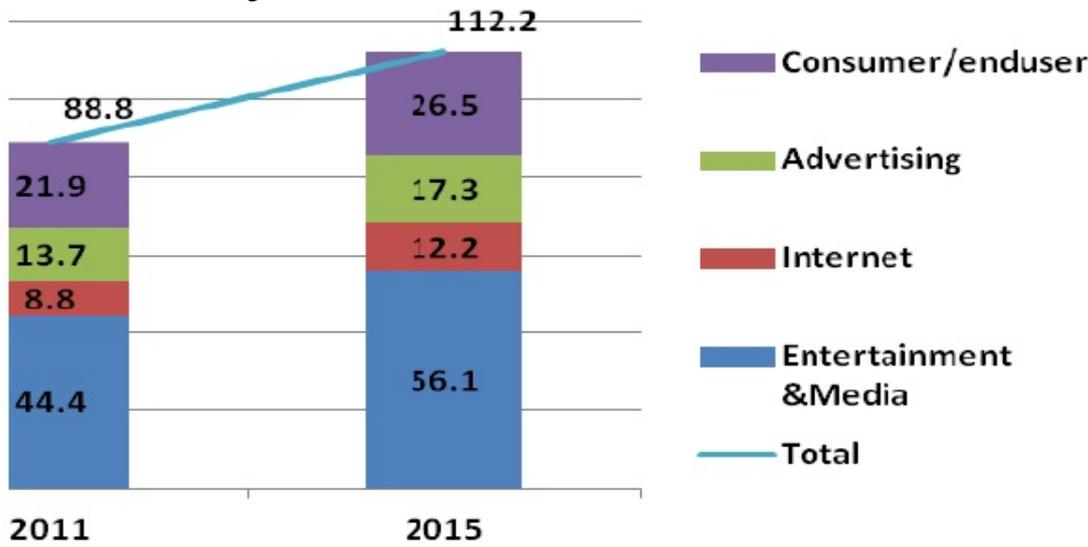
Estimates for each segmented is then applied to get the figures for digital content. 16% in 2011 and 20% in 2015 for entertainment and media and consumer/end user markets. 60% of Arabic content is assumed to be online. The region's portion of internet advertising is assumed to be 3%.
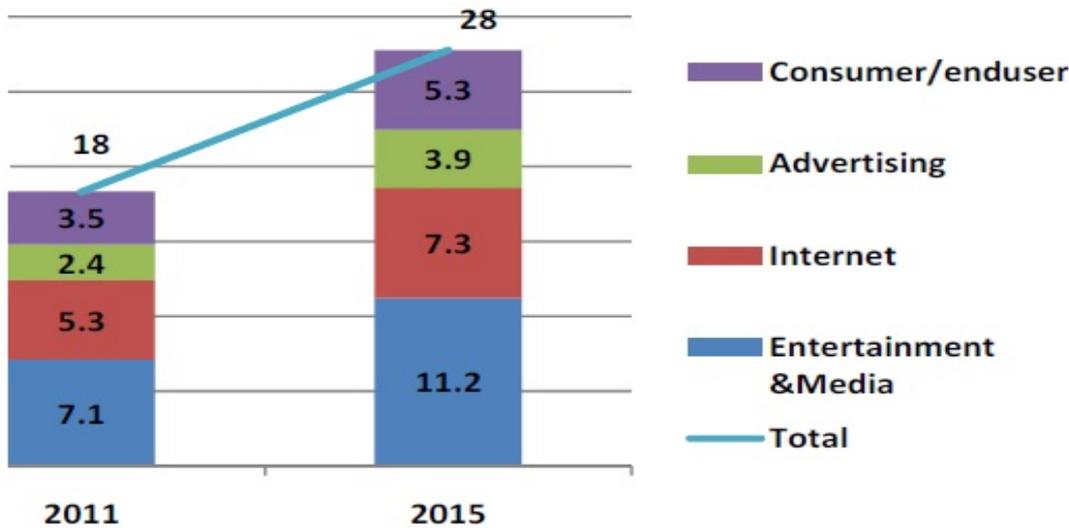
So the values for the digital Arabic content is estimated to have been $18 billion in 2011, and is predicted to hit $28 billion in 2015.

Local Challenges

A key issue to for digital content is monetization. In a survey by the Arab Media Outlook, respondents pinpointed the main difficulties associated with monetizing content. 45% noted that the wide availability of free content was a cause. 39% cited the lack of audience and circulation measurement, 36% blamed the quality of the content produced, 16% reported piracy.

The industry also suffers from significant difficulties in attracting development funding, venture capital, project financing and enterprise investment. Due to low return on investments, this issue plague both low and high income countries.

Content players that rely on advertising suffer from the concentration of ad market and low levels of ad spending on new media, whereas those that charge for subscription suffer from low revenues average citizens and their low access and use of banking services.

Recommendations

The study concludes with a number of recommendations. These include:

- Improving the affordability and penetration of broadband, particularly in less privileged areas.
- Establishing of national and regional foundations that facilitate financing, provide advice, and monitor and benchmark progress.
- Encouraging the banking sector in introducing venture capital support for start-ups and the creation of SME in DAC industry sector.
- Supporting and funding research and development in computational linguistics in order to produce tools that ease the process of producing grammatically correct text for translated content.
- Encouraging universities to partner with the industry, incubators and professional associations in designing academic and professional courses in digital content development and processing
- Investing in a regional partnership to develop automated tools for optical character recognition
- Encouraging the establishment of content industries for e-Books and e-Learning in the Arabic language
- Launching regional DAC awards for individuals, the business sector and government institutions

Launching an awareness campaign on the beauty and wealth of the Arabic language, its heritage and culture

Source: ARABNET

MIDDLE EAST PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION

Dubai Media City;

- Media Business Center, 2nd Floor, No 06
- 5th floor, No. 506
** - Building No. 2, CNN**
P O Box: 502038, Dubai, UAE.

Tel: +971-4-3916559
Fax: +971-4-3918019
E-mail: mepa@mepa.cc

Middle East Publishers Association MEPA is a FZ. LLC organization with the motto of building a society of publishers that will think and act for the benefits of the publishing industry.

The aim of MEPA is to serve, promote and protect the interest of press and electronic publishers, whilst raising the future standards of the publishing industry in the Middle East.

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