dot mena *NEWSLETTER*

TAKING YOUR BRAND FURTHER

VIRTUAL TRANSPARENCY

Is digital really allowing us to see what was so far being kept hidden?

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NATIVE ADVERTISING

Native advertising, also known as integrated advertising, is a form of content marketing that has been stirring up a storm thanks to its proven effectiveness online. Videos, photos and articles are placed directly into a publisher site and fit into the message and style of the existing content so that it becomes part of the consumer's line of thinking. Popular online publishers like *The Huffington Post*, *The New York Times* and *Buzzfeed*, among others, have created branches to their editorial teams that act as creative partners, helping develop branded content, which is essentially advertorials structured in the same way as traditional editorial content.

WHY NATIVE ADVERTISING?

Popular "traditional" forms of digital advertising formats such as banner ads and pop ups have not shown the sort of reach that native advertising content has shown. Consumers have learned to block out interruptive ad formats, either through browser add-ons or mentally with banner blindness, while native advertising is incorporated into in-stream user habits and interests.

HOW DO YOU MAKE STRONG NATIVE ADVERTISING CONTENT?

The key to great native advertising content is storytelling. It has to flow in line with the tone of the publishing site on which you're advertising. It has to be readable, entertaining and not sales-oriented.

WHAT DOES NATIVE ADVERTISING LOOK LIKE?

Examples of native advertising are Twitter-promoted tweets, Facebook-sponsored posts and promoted videos on YouTube, or even more traditional forms equivalent to native advertising, such as a DJ recommendation on air.

RULES OF NATIVE ADVERTISING

- Always make sure native advertisements are clearly labeled as exactly that. Major publishers will highlight such content with titles such as "Presented by…" or "Sponsored content provided by..."
- Content should be compelling, relevant and worth the reader's time. Otherwise, it will leave a negative impact and have the opposite effect to what brands are trying to achieve. How-to tutorials and trend profiles that aren't self-serving are successful for just this reason
- Don't present a press release to the public. In fact, if you can avoid mentioning your brand, even better. Readers will see right through any tactics to play with their minds
- Be as visual as possible. Videos, photos and infographics have far more impact on consumers and will generate more traffic than plain text

INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING BUREAU (IAB)'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Form: how does the ad fit with the overall page design? Is it in the viewer's activity stream?

Function: does the ad function like other elements on the same page and deliver the same type of content experience?

Integration: how well do the ad unit's behaviors match those of the surrounding content?

Buying/targeting: is the ad placement on a specific page, section or site? What type of targeting is available?

Measurement: what metrics are available for judging success?

Disclosure: how is this ad product identified as such?

MONDELEZ INTERNATIONAL SIGNS WITH GOOGLE

In a bid to dominate the online branded video content market among advertisers, Mondelez International has formed a global agreement with Google and its YouTube unit that will massively increase their digital media footprint across North America and Europe as well as Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia Pacific. Earlier this year, the snack maker announced that half of its marketing budget would target digital by 2016, while this year's total budget would see ten percent going to online video. Mondelez's spokesperson, Bonin Bough, told brand channel that he expects deeper insights on branded video, optimized ROI from reaching more diverse audiences and new models for content creation and delivery of video creative. ◼

Huffington Post and former Al Jazeera director to team up in the Middle East

Huffington Post is joining a former Al Jazeera director in launching the Arabic-language version of the AOL-owned news portal in the Middle East. It will be the 12th edition of the site around the world, which has already expanded its international strategy with local language platforms in several other countries, such as Germany, Brazil and South Korea. ◼

UM wins Johnson & Johnson's account for social media

UM will now be looking after the social media account for well-known children's care brand Johnson's Baby Middle East. ◼

Choueiri Group launches Web Tuesdays

The Choueiri Group is inviting the Middle East's communication industry for a little bit of learning and mingling, with its Web Tuesdays series. For each session, eight to ten speakers present their online work and expertise in six-minute blocks of time. The first event was held this past November; the series will run for a total of eight sessions per year. ◼

MOVERS & *SHAKERS*

Shakir Palakodan, director of trading at Carat MENA, will be leaving the agency.

After more than two years at Mediacom, **Mona Hakim** left her position as senior media manager earlier this year to join Samsung as head of media marketing.

Following almost a decade at OMD as business unit director, where he looked at relationships in Qatar and the Lower Gulf and managed FMCG accounts, **Alain Azar** has moved to DMS as sales director.

This past summer, **Hamza Shaqman**, former digital manager at MediaCom in KSA, made the move to digital media director at MediaCom MENA in the UAE office.

As of this past spring **Elia El Hashem**, former associate media director at ICOM Integrated Communications, has been working with Dentsu Jeddah.

Moussa Antoine Abdo has left the Initiative KSA office as senior digital planner and joined the Dubai team as digital media supervisor.

After spending the past few years at Starcom Lebanon as a senior planner and Starcom Mediavest Group UAE as regional media manager, where he was mainly looking after P&G brands, **Imad Hechaime** has moved on to work with Havas Worldwide as associate director on Emirates.

Senior digital media planner **Wissam Azzi** has left Carat after more than three years at the agency, where he worked with clients Dubizzle and GM. He joined Tribal Fusion (Exponential Interactive) last month as business manager.

Alice Elim, previously in charge of the Johnson's account, has moved to Carat to handle Mastercard.

Chadi Saab is now heading the Samsung team at Starcom Mediavest Group.

Pascal Khazoum started at Gmasko as digital media manager.

FIVE QUESTIONS WITH . . .

KAVITA DHYANI,
Head of media services at Havas Digital ME

What is the one app or gadget you can't live without?
Zomato

What is the first thing you do when you wake up?
Check my phone

Who is your favorite actor?
Ryan Gosling

Which brand do you admire most for its online strategy?
Nike

It's vacation time! Beach, mountains, countryside or city?
Beach

DOTMENA BRINGS ON-BOARD MM (MILLENNIAL MEDIA) AS EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE REGION

American mobile advertising company Millennial Media will now be exclusively represented in the Middle East by dotmena. With more and more brands pushing advertising spends and content onto mobile, the cross-platform network features advanced tools and services that will help maximize revenue for the region's app developers, while marketers can in turn capitalize on the app economy and its potential for digital interactions. ■

dotmena will now sell MENA inventory from informational Wikia

Wikia, the open-source hosting site for free, user-generated and crowd-sourced information, will now be selling its MENA inventory to advertisers in the region through an exclusive agreement signed with dotmena. Wikia is favored by the gaming, comic book and entertainment community and is known for going beyond the style and content of traditional Wikipedia articles, often narrowing down information to specific details that include opinions and points of view. ■

dotmena taps into the bridal industry with Arabia Wedding

Beginning this December, brands aiming to connect with women before their special day can start pushing ad dollars toward ArabiaWeddings.com, the Middle East's leading source for brides and grooms. With tons of content, including a deals section, directory and video and photo sections, as well as a hugely active social media community, the site easily incorporates various forms of paid media into the user experience while remaining the go-to source for couples. ■

A mobile revamp for all dotmena digital properties

Here at dotmena, we know how important mobile has become for the Middle East and North Africa, and we like to stay on top of our game. Over the next several months heading into the new year, you'll start noticing a major boost toward enhancing the mobile presence for all of our owned digital properties, which will be mobile-friendly by mid-2015. ■

Mediaquest magazines go interactive

Starting in the first quarter of 2015, you can head on over to the Google Play store for interactive versions of Mediaquest-owned magazines. Start loading up on digitalized issues, laid out to enhance the user experience while browsing via tablet and mobile without taking up shelf space. ■

WEIGHING THE DATA FROM ONLINE REPORTING

Advertisers, agencies and publishers are stumped on how to improve analytics reporting in the region. At the root of it is the need for more industry collaboration.

In an emerging market like the UAE and some of its GCC and Levant counterparts, where some would say the digital industry is still in its infancy, the subject of analytics and measurement is not one with any steadfast answers or clarity. The digital advertising market is constantly in flux, with new product releases, technology and metrics frequently throwing curveballs at brands, agencies and research companies, and it spurs just as many question marks as it does recommendations on moving forward. Print, TV, radio and other traditional media in the region are already tested by existing certifications and standards. Digital analytics, on the other hand, can be so in depth that it's expected to provide an even stronger performance while
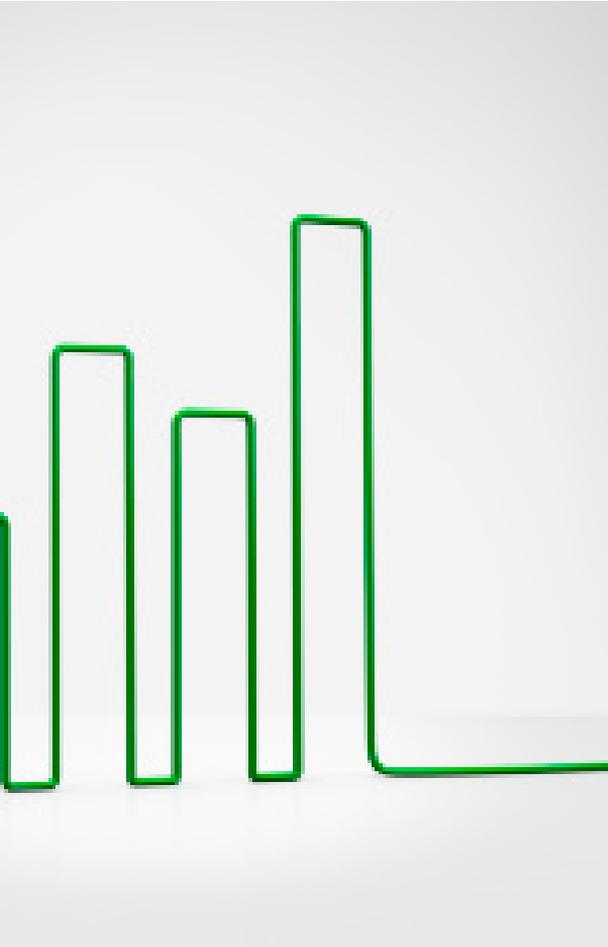
improving strategy and all-around services – but not without putting some best practices in place. There are a lot of numbers hurled at advertisers everyday, and actually making sense of this data can be tedious, not to mention ineffective and perhaps, inaccurate.

Sifting through

"The problem there is that it's all vendor-provided data services and all of their own standards. You're not able to harmonize the other data, to compare the performance of a particular

Ryan Murdoch,
head of data and
analytics at SMG

other markets are still relying, in a lot of cases, on publisher stats," Murdoch adds. "We place media with a publisher and they come back and say yeah, we delivered 'x' number of impressions or clicks as per the agreement." In such cases, using a service from a third-party would quantify the impact of that advertising, he explains.

Elie Aoun, president of IPSOS MediaCT MENAP

"We're on par with most of the developed markets," Rehman believes. "But the competitive information and the industry standards of performance measurement is where we get a bit off." He refers to the Nielsen OCR online ratings that take place in the US and Europe, as well as some of the emerging markets in Asia. "Those are the kinds of things that are missing from the industry," he says, suggesting the advertising industry begin a shared discussion. "You know, like you do in traditional media measurement, you look at your performance of TV advertising, or outdoor advertising or print advertising and agree to a structure to that measurement and that becomes a currency where you can start to trade or negotiate with media."

Doing their part

Others in the industry say it's the responsibility of the market itself to set the record straight on clarifying analytics. "We, as research companies, are left by ourselves alone to create the methodology. We're calling for any party who wants to be involved to come and do some auditing just to show what we're doing, we're transparent. So that is taking the initiative," says Elie Aoun, president of IPSOS MediaCT MENAP, pointing out that there is no existing consortium of digital companies, such as agencies, clients and research companies in the region. "This is not the job of the research agency. People can't say, 'Oh, ok, we need more transparency.' To be able to set up some standards, this is the work of the market," he believes. "We're calling for committees, meetings, media and media agencies to be called upon to participate and give their opinion." Aoun says there are options for analyzing data on the market, but that it takes investing financially to create the sort of infrastructure the industry is demanding. "We're mainly calling media agencies and telling them, you are concerned with most of the expenditures online so you should work closely together to be able to agree on different standards," he says. "Whatever standard they want to work on, it needs to be set by the market."

piece of video or a particular piece of advertising across platforms," says Asad ur Rehman, director of media for the Middle East and North Africa at Unilever. There are plenty of numbers made accessible through various analytics engines and databases, Rehman adds, and once aggregated, this gives a holistic view of activities. The confusion arises when various publishers report independently on performance with no standard basis of comparison, and when reviewing the response of content on one platform versus another. "We're trying to standardize practices using third-party technology, standardize how we track and monitor all of our campaigns and raise equality in terms of what we analyze," says Ryan Murdoch, head of data and analytics at Starcom Mediavest Group. Key challenges surround storing and managing data, getting access to the huge volume of data floating around and then analyzing and visualizing that data to optimize campaigns in the digital space. "If you take the UAE out of the equation,

As brands and agencies continue to struggle with weighing the meaning of their data, there are services out there providing insight on selected areas of performance. At the moment, there's

Effective Measure, a provider of digital audience and brand effectiveness tools used by the region and abroad to assess publisher websites and gather data. "Effective Measure is born out of reducing the vagueness in the market," says Matthew Robarts, regional MD MEA at Effective Measure. Previously, agencies gathered numbers from publishers and other sources without any sort of verification or means of comparison between sites as a single form of measurement. Now, by getting verification from Effective Measure, publishers can provide accurate data that agencies rely on, he says. "Often the publishers will contact us and say, you know we need to be measured by Effective Measure because it's going to help us get more business through the agency demanding those numbers," Robarts adds. "One of the challenges we've got in that space is that Effective Measure is the only currency to understand the brand effects of digital campaigns in this region," says Murdoch, who currently uses the service for some Starcom clients. He adds that the market still needs to mature here before required standards and technologies supporting the digital advertising industry come into play.

IPSOS has also recently launched products to provide a greater scale of measurement by offering data on how people use the web and their online activities across screens, all drawn from panels monitoring consumer habits. By fusing that data with their existing offline data on TV, print, radio and outdoor, they've built a platform that lets users measure incremental reach over different media online and offline. On the social analytics side, Socialbakers monitors brand engagement, content and interactions through APIs on social platforms. Part of this involves engineers tagging pages online in real time. Brands can have their own activity monitored in depth while their competitors' publicly viewable activity can also be tracked.

Social networks offer a little more performance comparisons, Rehman says, referring to Socialbakers and their public APIs as useful in

Asad ur Rehman,
director of media North Africa and Middle East at Unilever

aggregating cross-platform and cross-brand data. Though lacking in depth, it allows brands to see what's going on across a set of competitors. "That's still better than anything or nothing," Rehman notes. "It's really just saying, as an industry, can we agree on certain rules of the game and in the interest and benefit of everyone, can we start to give out access?"

Under the lid

Rehman's pointing out one of the major issues with how much competitor data is made public. Many brands and agencies have chosen not to share their information, which increases the gaps in accurate assessment of performance. "What digital doesn't do well is let you gather competitive data. So, for instance, if I want to know what my competitor's hair brand is doing, there are very few ways in which I can find out," he explains. "Effective Measure provides that sort of data but it's [about] how effective that is."

Although Effective Measure offers reporting from others that use its tools, those that aren't on board leave competitors with many question marks. Regional heavyweights that aren't participating in the conversation, using shared standards and letting others track their platforms are raking in a lot of money, Rehman continues.

True performance is incomplete without knowing what others are up to, whether it's publishers or competitors, which leaves brands and agencies exchanging and evaluating their gatherings on an uninformed, uneven foundation. That's the reason behind the consistent ambiguity around data overload. True, assessments can be made from a qualitative perspective, but there are also ways to collaborate on shared industry definitions agreed upon by vendors.

According to Rehman, the opportunity lies in sharing a greater level of detail in measurement, one that focuses on the methodology behind the numbers and a core definition of certain metrics. Maybe it's simpler than that. It's obvious that the tools are out there, and so are the numbers, but it's more about brands and agencies working together with the same goal in mind to set the standards they're demanding and to develop a shared knowledge base of the market they're all trying to navigate. ▪

VIDEO: SIGHT, SOUND AND MOTION THROUGH AN ARABIC LENS

Jonathan Labin, head of Middle East, Africa and Pakistan at Facebook, explains why storytelling in the region, and in the world, is only getting started.

© Corbis

The Arab world, with its rich history and culture, is synonymous with storytelling – stories of chivalry, generous traits and close family ties, that remain a major part of Arab culture and the very fabric of the societies that make up the region.

While stories continue to be meaningful, personal and relevant, the only factor that has changed over the years however is the ability and method to share the personal stories and experiences. Individuals nowadays have embraced technology, and more specifically social networks, to reach out to the people who matter most to them.

Embedding video in the news feed has made sharing stories with family and friends and discovering new stories with rich visuals, sounds and motions, a true pleasure.

TV was the discovery engine for the past 50 years, but with time, the mobile phone has become the screen of choice for consumers and today, the mobile news feed is the new center of discovery. We have observed this shift globally, where more than 700 million people use their mobiles to return every day, multiple times a day, to their Facebook news feeds and discover stories they care about: more and more often, beautiful stories with visuals, sounds

and motions. This year, in the period from May to July alone, the amount of video views on Facebook increased by 50 percent to more than one billion views a day.

As of today, Facebook has more than 74m monthly active users in the MENA region, of which 80 percent are on mobile, and 42m return daily. Those rapidly growing numbers, especially on mobile, enable the social media giant to share stories anytime and anywhere to an amazingly wide audience.

Now, brands have the opportunity to integrate themselves into this experience. With a creative ability to capture attention on the news feed, brands can reach out to the right people in an incredibly engaging way.

Creativity in storytelling has always been the most compelling factor to reach more people and capture their attention. The video narrative should be able to deliver the message, not only in a precise story format, but also in a highly creative and relevant manner that dares to grab the attention of the target audiences and create a 'share' effect to as many people as possible.

The mobile phone has become the screen of choice for consumers.
I am confident that people and brands alike will utilize this opportunity toward the advancement of storytelling in this digital age. This is only the beginning for many more stories to be shared, and as we always say at Facebook, "our journey is one percent finished." ■

Facebook has more than **74 MILLION** monthly **ACTIVE** users in the **MENA REGION,** of which **80 PERCENT** are on **MOBILE,** and **42 MILLION** return daily

**JONATHAN LABIN,
HEAD OF THE MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA
AND PAKISTAN AT FACEBOOK**

CREATIVITY IN STORY TELLING has always been the most **COMPELLING FACTOR** to reach more people and capture their attention.

ON A **ROLL**

We look at the size of the UAE automotive sector's online advertising spend from November 2013 up to October 2014, covering display advertising, video advertising, sponsorships, roadblocks and the IAB's new rising stars. ■

$16.1 MILLION

is the amount spent by the **auto sector** on online advertising in the UAE
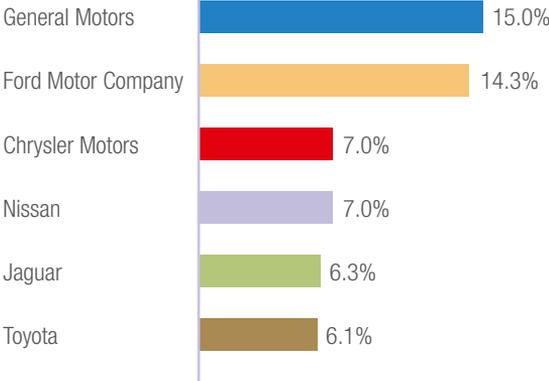
General Motors
$2.4M OR 15% SOE

Ford Motor Company
$2.3M OR 14.3% SOE

TOP 6 BRANDS HAVE CAPTURED 56% OF TOTAL AUTOMOTIVE AD SPEND

SOE %

Brand	SOE %
General Motors	15.0%
Ford Motor Company	14.3%
Chrysler Motors	7.0%
Nissan	7.0%
Jaguar	6.3%
Toyota	6.1%

MODELS

■ **Nissan tops** the 'most models advertised' chart with 13 models promoted; that's one more model than next contender **Ford**

■ **Nissan's models line-up:** Patrol, Sentra, Altima, Tiida, Pathfinder, 370 Z, GT R, Juke, Maxima, Sunny, Murano, X Terra, X Trail

SEASONALITY OF ADVERTISING

Highest spend recorded in **November 2013**:
$1.7M or **10.6% SOE**
Lowest spend recorded in **August 2014:**
$853K or **5.3% SOE**

Seasonality of Advertising: Automotive Net USD

—— Automotive

■ **Ford models line-up:** EcoSport, Expedition, Explorer, F150, Fiesta, Figo, Focus ST, Fusion, Mustang, Ranger, Taurus Lincoln MKZ

■ **Newcomer:** Citroën advertises online for the first time. The brand has launched a new campaign in September 2014

OOX
ooxmonitor.com

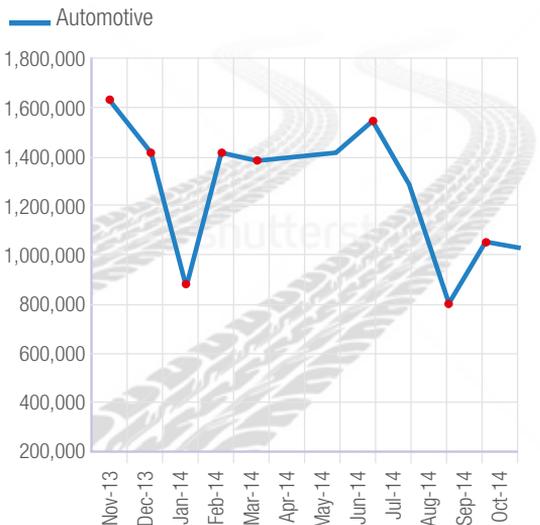## TOP 15 BRANDS BY SOE %

Brand	SOE (share of expenditure)
General Motors	15.0%
Ford Motor Company	14.3%
Nissan	7.0%
Chrysler Motors	7.0%
Jaguar	6.3%
Toyota	6.1%
BMW	4.1%
Alfa Romeo	3.1%
Mercedes-Benz	2.9%
Infiniti	2.3%
Volkswagen	2.3%
Hyundai	2.0%
Audi	1.9%
Honda	1.7%
Lexus	1.7%

$4.2 MILLION

is the amount spent by all **dealers** on online advertising in the UAE. This represents approximately **26%** of the total sector spends

TOP 10 DEALERS

have captured a **83.7%** share of the total of dealers' spends

Who's included in the Top 10?

Al Futtaim Motors, Trading Enterprises, Liberty Automobiles, Arabian Automobiles, Al Tayer Motors, Emirates Motor Company, Al Habtoor Motors, Al Nabooda Automobiles, Premier Motors
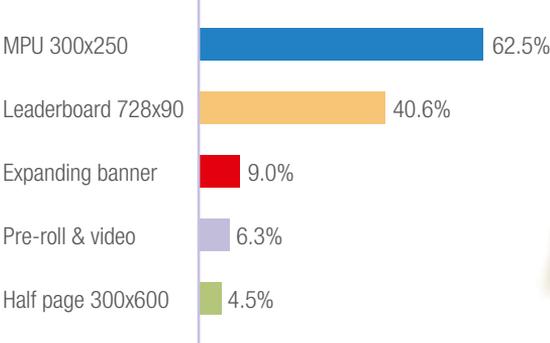
AD FORMATS

62.5% of the ad campaigns have used an **MPU (Mid-Page Unit)/medium rectangle 300x250**. Followed by the leaderboard 728x90 with **40.6%** utilization

Top 5 most popular ad formats

% utilization

MPU 300x250	62.5%
Leaderboard 728x90	40.6%
Expanding banner	9.0%
Pre-roll & video	6.3%
Half page 300x600	4.5%

More than **25,000** data points have been processed and analyzed in this infographic.

The ad spends are based on **NET ESTIMATES IN USD** and account for an average error margin of **20 PERCENT** in both directions.

The OOXmonitor database covers all **PREMIUM WEBSITES** with medium to high reach/Unique Users (UU) and the Google Display Network (GDN).

The monitoring methodology is based on a daily sample of page views across all the monitored websites. Allow an **ERROR MARGIN OF FIVE PERCENT** in campaign reporting.

All estimates are **INCLUSIVE OF DEALERS SPENDS**, unless mentioned otherwise.

M stands for **MILLION**, **SOE** stands for **SHARE OF EXPENDITURE**.

TWEET TO WIN

Twitter ads drive real results for MENA businesses, says Parminder Singh, managing director for SEA, India and MENA at Twitter (@ParrySingh)

With 500 million Tweets a day and 284m active users, people turn to Twitter to bring them closer to the things they care about, whether it's the news that affect their lives or the businesses down the street.

On Twitter, people talk about what they care about and what's happening around them right now, including your business. This gives you powerful context to connect your message to what's most meaningful to customers in real time. Engaging with real-time Tweets can influence conversations in a way that can help build your business.

Thanks to Twitter's unique real-time nature, the platform gives people, brands and advertisers a unique opportunity to connect and discover in real time, with hugely positive results, especially in the key market of MENA. In the region, we continue to enjoy strong results through the hugely effective advertising products: Promoted Tweets, Promoted Accounts and Promoted Trends.

To go deeper, as an example, consumer packaged goods brands' Promoted Tweets viewers buy 12 percent more from that brand on average, while users who engage with a brand's Promoted Tweet report 30 percent higher brand favorability and 53 percent higher purchase intent than non-engagers. The upshot is real, tangible success stories and powerful results with a wide array of new, additional services now offering even more options for brands and advertisers in the region.

ENGAGING WITH REAL-TIME TWEETS CAN INFLUENCE CONVERSATIONS IN A WAY THAT CAN HELP BUILD **YOUR BUSINESS**

PARMINDER SINGH, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SEA, INDIA AND MENA AT TWITTER

The ongoing success of the Twitter Ads product is fueled, in part, by the new advertising formats that we have rolled out in the region, including Promoted Video, which provides our users with a media-forward, one-click playback experience on mobile and web; and Mobile App Promotion, a full suite of products that enables advertisers to cost-effectively drive installations of their mobile apps and re-engage existing users.

MENA brands, such as @STC_KSA, @JarirBookstore and @Mobily, to name just a few, are doing really exciting and innovative things with Twitter Ads and we are excited to work with even more brands to help them maximize their Twitter presence. ■

On Twitter, **PEOPLE TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT** and what's happening around them right now, including your business.