

# NettRESULTS

international marketing & public relations

## NettResults Public Relations Middle East

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### In This Issue

[Why you need PR and how to start...](#)

[Country Profile - UAE](#)

[Media in UAE](#)

[Media News](#)

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Dear Dianne,

As we slip into the November month all eyes are looking at 2012 planning. At an organizational point of view, whether it is a top down or a bottom up approach (or some hybrid) executives the world over are trying to balance forecasting sales optimism and economic pessimism to try and predict future revenues and spend. In this world of never ending budget cuts and drive for more sales, what can be done?

It's hard to predict the future. As Jim Collins maps out in his new book 'Great by Choice', it's not that we can predict most events that shape our businesses (be them natural disasters, economic turmoil, terrorist attacks, competitors, burst water main etc) - we can't, and neither can we control them. What we can do is predict that something will happen. So every business should be ready for the ever increasingly changing environment around them.

Of course, that's where PR comes into play. It is one of the few functions in a business that can be used to drive sales, reduce costs and can be turned on a dime to offer defense (or crisis communication) just as easily protecting an organization by keeping them out of the media, as it can drive branding by increasing media exposure.

How can NettResults assist to be nimble in 2012?

Happy PRing,

*Nick Leighton*

### Why you need PR and how to start...

An owner of a small (less than \$5 million) company asked me last week why companies engage in PR. It seemed so obvious, that I had to go back to the basics...

You know your company does great work. Your employees and clients know it, too. But until you start telling your story-and sharing your successes-with wider audiences, you're likely to remain the proverbial "best-kept secret."

Enter public relations. PR can help a company reach new audiences, achieve top-of-mind awareness, establish a leadership position and enhance image. In fact, some say the only difference between the no-name shops and the big-name firms is PR.

If you aren't already doing PR, you should be. And if you aren't sure where to begin, read on.

1 - Getting Started - First find your PR agency partner. Whether you follow an initial "gut" feeling or engage in a lengthier selection process, chemistry is likely to play a role in your choice of PR consultant. A PR consultant should become an integral part of your team-someone who

you'll trust, be comfortable with and enjoy working with. To that end, most smaller firms are likely to prefer working with a small PR agency or sole practitioner in a principal-to-principal relationship. Large PR agencies-while ideal for huge corporations-are unlikely to deliver the level of service you need.

2 - Arranging the Terms - As with any service, there are various ways of contracting for PR consulting. Most agencies and consultants recommend that clients pay a monthly retainer. Of course, you also have the option of hiring them on a project basis with an hourly billing structure. Before you sign a contract, be sure to inquire about what services are included in your monthly fee. Whatever pricing structure you choose, it might be wise to begin with a six- to 12-month commitment. Long enough to get PR going and to test the waters, but short enough that you can make changes if it's not going to plan.

3 - Setting PR Goals - Once you begin your relationship with your PR consultant, it's important to have realistic expectations. For starters, don't expect overnight success. It will take a bit of time for the consultant to become intimately familiar with your firm and to build or update an arsenal of basic tools, such as your background, fact sheet and bios. And keep in mind that many publications are monthly or bimonthly and have long lead times. So even if your consultant makes contact quickly, it will likely take three to six months before you see any results from thier efforts. Above all, experts advise against expecting to garner a certain type of coverage in a particular publication. Rather than creating such limiting goals, focus on building a workable plan that will guide your activities and provide metrics for measuring your success. If a plan is put into place that provides a consistent approach and is strategically focused, goals will be met. The results you get will be equal to the amount of time and effort that's put into it. A consistent stream of pitches, press releases and meetings with the media will produce the best results.

4 - Maintaining Momentum - Even after the initial excitement wears off, you'll need to continually re-energize your commitment to your PR program. That will require frequent, consistent communication with your consultant. PR cannot be conducted successfully in a vacuum. It requires a time commitment from the principal to work with the PR consultant, share what's going on with the firm and actively participate in the process. A PR consultant should become an integral part of the team and be viewed as an investment in the future of the firm. In other words treat your PR effort as you would your most important client. The more attention you give it, the more satisfied you'll be with the results.

5 - Measure - Make sure the factors for success are clear from the beginning, so both the client and the agency know where they are heading and how they are doing against SMART goals. This allows for a meaningful conversation between the client/agency on a regular basis - focused on business requirements.

Good luck! The global economy is dependent upon these smaller businesses, so let's use PR to make them great, create jobs and stimulate growth.



## Country Profile - UAE

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of seven states formed in 1971 by the then Trucial States after independence from Britain.

Since then, it has grown from a quiet backwater to one of the Middle East's most important economic centres.



Although each state - Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras al Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al Qaiwain - maintains a large degree of independence, the UAE is governed by a Supreme Council of Rulers made up of the seven emirs, who appoint the prime minister and the cabinet.

Before oil was discovered in the 1950s the UAE's economy was dependent on fishing and a declining pearling industry. But since 1962, when Abu Dhabi became the first of the emirates to begin exporting oil, the country's society and economy have been transformed.

The late Sheikh Zayed, ruler of Abu Dhabi and president of the UAE at its inception, was quick to seize on the potential of the oil industry. He oversaw the development of all the emirates and directed oil revenues into healthcare, education and the national infrastructure.

The oil industry has attracted a large influx of foreign workers who, together with expatriates, now make up more than three quarters of the population.

But the UAE's authorities also tried to reduce its dependency on oil exports by diversifying the economy, creating booming business, tourism and construction sectors.

While Abu Dhabi remained relatively conservative in its approach, Dubai, which has far smaller oil reserves, was bolder in its diversification policy.

Particularly during the credit boom that built up after 2000, Dubai sought to turn itself into the financial gateway and cosmopolitan hub of the Middle East.

It also began attracting vast amounts foreign investment for ever more ambitious construction projects, most famously the Burj Khalifa skyscraper - as of 2009, the tallest man-made structure ever built - and futuristic land reclamation projects, such as the palm-shaped artificial Palm Islands.

But the worldwide freeze in credit markets looked set to hit Dubai harder than oil-rich Abu Dhabi, prompting speculation that the balance of power in the UAE could shift back to its traditional political centre.

The UAE is one of the most liberal countries in the Gulf, with other cultures and beliefs generally tolerated, especially in Dubai.

However, politically it remains authoritarian. It was the only country in the region not to have elected bodies until 2006 December, when it convened a half-elected federal assembly, which, however, was restricted to a consultative role.

## Media in UAE

The UAE is a regional and international centre for TV and media, alongside Egypt and Lebanon. Dubai Media City and twofour54, Abu Dhabi's media zone, were set up to attract key players.

Organisations including Reuters, CNN, Sony and Fox have moved in. The UAE is home to major pan-Arab broadcasters MBC and Orbit Showtime Network.

The constitution provides for freedom of speech but there is strong regulatory and political control of media content.

Publications must be licensed and follow official guidelines on reporting. Foreign publications are censored before distribution. Journalists tend to practise self-censorship.

Internet use is extensive; by June 2010 there were 3.8 million users (InternetWorldStats.com). Extensive, automatic filtering is in place at ISP level. Targeted content includes opposition politics and religion.

### The press

- Al-Bayan - private, Dubai-based Arabic daily
- Gulf News - Dubai-based, English-language
- Khaleej Times - private, Dubai-based daily, English-language
- Emirates 24/7 - English-language online publication
- The National - Abu Dhabi-based English-language daily
- 7Days - English-language, free-of-charge tabloid



### Television

- Dubai Media Incorporated (DMI) - pan-Arab broadcaster, operates Dubai TV, Dubai One
- Abu Dhabi TV - pan-Arab broadcaster
- Ajman TV
- Sharjah TV
- MBC - Dubai-based pan-Arab broadcaster
- Al-Arabiya - pan-Arab news channel operated by MBC

### Radio

- Abu Dhabi Media Company - operates Abu Dhabi FM and other networks
- Radio Asia - commercial, broadcasts in Hindi, Urdu and Malayalam
- Al-Arabiya FM - commercial, Arabic pop
- Dubai 92 - commercial, English-language pop
- Noor Dubai 93.9 - commercial, "Islamic-oriented" news, talk
- City 1016 - commercial, programmes in English and Urdu

**News agency**

- Emirates News Agency (WAM) - official

**Media News**

**Middle East edition of Good Housekeeping set to launch**

A Middle East edition of Good Housekeeping magazine is due to be launched in December by Dubai-based ITP Lifestyle Publishing. Aimed at women aged 30+, Good Housekeeping was launched in the USA in 1885 and now publishes 17 international editions with a vow to help women find quality and value in every aspect of their lives - from health and well-being to food and fitness, beauty and home, personal style and parenting. Good Housekeeping Middle East is headed editorially by Katie Heskett as Editor-in-Chief.



**High-end lifestyle and fashion magazine launches from Kuwait**



A new luxury lifestyle and fashion magazine was launched this month by Kuwait-based A.I.C. Group. Lazzaro magazine is published monthly in Arabic and English and covers fashion trends and news, make-up, accessories, culture, art & design, food, entertainment, health and travel. The magazine's Editor-in-Chief is Mirna Abi Kheir.

**New magazine for the Energy industry**

A monthly English-language magazine aimed at professionals in the energy industry has been launched by Dubai-based Auto Trader Publishing House. Energy Life Middle East covers regional and international energy news, country profiles, opinions and issues, and also includes a lifestyle section covering sport, motoring, technology and travel for those who like to 'work hard and play hard'. The magazine's editor is Will Rankin.



## Al Nisr replaces Entertainment Plus and 4men



Al Nisr Publishing, the magazine division of Dubai-based Gulf News, has closed Entertainment Plus and 4men magazines and launched two new titles in their place. The new titles are Scene, a weekly celebrity and entertainment magazine published on Thursdays, while men's magazine Alpha will be published monthly. The Scene's editor is Gemma White and Alpha's editor is Nitin Nair.

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