



Exploring How The Retail Sector Is Evolving

Over 150 of the Middle East's retail industry leaders gathered to delve into the current and future state of retail and to pay tribute to the largest retailers in the region.

In September, Forbes Middle East revealed the Middle East's biggest retail industry leaders for 2019 at a half-day event that also provided a platform for industry experts to discuss the challenges facing the sector today.

Three separate panels dissected the opportunities, challenges and changes in the retail sector. Overall, industry leaders agreed that by using omni-channel methods and both modern and traditional resources, retailers are currently completely reinventing the retail sector, with a focus on creating an unforgettable experience for end users.

The first panel discussed how leveraging innovation can create a better customer experience and emphasized that people do not want to just visit a store anymore, but are looking for experiences.

The second panel, "E-commerce: What's next?" continued the conversation of customer experience and the

role that technology is playing in it. One of the key points made was that the online ordering process will be greatly simplified in the future in order to improve customer experience.

The third and last panel echoed the sentiment that e-commerce is here to stay but that it is very unlikely to completely replace traditional brick and mortar. Rather, these two are becoming complementary extensions of one another, creating an omni-channel experience for clients.

The night ended with an award ceremony acknowledging the largest retailers in the region. The 2019 Forbes Middle East Retail 20 are among the largest groups in the region and were selected based on the impact they have on employment, diversification and bringing international brands to the region.

The event was held in partnership with AYM Commerce and West Zone Supermarket.



With the first panel *Leveraging Innovation to Better the Customer Experience* (L-R): Moderator **Mohammed Dhedhi**, Principal at A.T. Kearney Consumer and Retail; **Fahad Abdulrahim Kazim**, Vice President of Meydan Malls within the Meydan Group; **Shafeena Yusuf Ali**, Founder and CEO of Tablez Food Company; **Daniel Parry**, Managing Director and General Counsel at Gulf Related; **Odi Trikaliotis**, Chief Research Officer for Customer Experience & Mystery Shopping at Ipsos; **Khurshid Vakil**, Co-Founder of Marina Home Interiors and **Claudine Coletti**, Managing Editor at Forbes Middle East



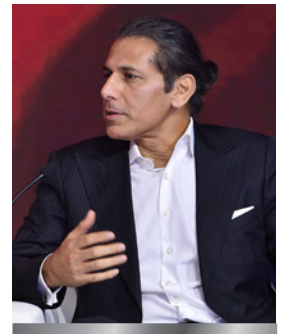
Majed Al Tahan, Co-Founder & CEO of Danube Online and Founder & CEO of AYM Commerce



Ahmad AR BinDawood, CEO at Danube and the BinDawood Group



Fahad Abdulrahim Kazim, Vice President of Meydan Malls within the Meydan Group



Khurshid Vakil, Co-Founder of Marina Home Interiors



Third panel *Retail X.0 - How to Deliver An Optimal Omni-Channel Experience* (from L-R): Emcee **Omar Al Madidy**; moderator **Mohammed Dhedhi**, Principal at A.T. Kearney Consumer and Retail; **Ahmad AR BinDawood**, CEO at Danube and the BinDawood Group; **Cem Tarik Yuksel**, Managing Director at UNILEVER; **Miroslav Kafedzhiev**, Vice President and General Manager of Honeywell Safety & Productivity Solutions for the Middle East, Russia and Customs Union, Turkey, Central Asia and Africa; **Adel Sajan**, Director of Danube Home; and **Claudine Coletti**



Shafeena Yusuf Ali, Founder and CEO of Tablez Food Company



Sarah Jones, Founder & CEO of Sprii.com



Second panel: *E-commerce – what next* (from L-R) moderator **Joerg Meiser**, Senior Manager for TMT & Consumer Business at Monitor Deloitte; **Majed Al Tahan**, Co-Founder & CEO of Danube Online and Founder & CEO of AYM Commerce; **Ashraf Atia**, Chief Commercial Officer at Zbooni; **Sarah Jones**, Founder & CEO of Sprii.com; and **Onur Elgun**, VP of Strategy & Performance for MENA at Talabat



Ahmad AR BinDawood, CEO at Danube and the BinDawood Group and **Claudine Coletti**, Managing Editor at Forbes Middle East



Karan Bhawnani, CEO of West Zone Group



Salim M.A., Director of Lulu Group International



From Tablez Food Company, **Inaayah Abdul Aziz**, Media and Marketing Manager and **Shafeena Yusuff Ali**, Founder & CEO; **Justina Eitzinger**, CRO of Forbes Middle East



Ishwar Chugani, Managing Director and CEO of Giordano Middle East; from Marina Home Interiors, **Shayan Vakil**, managing retail operations and **Khurshid Vakil**, Co-Founder; and **Fahad Abdulrahman Kazim**, Vice President of Meydan Malls within the Meydan Group



L-R: Muddassir Ahmad, DGM Strategic Alliances at Sharaf Group; from Al Ghanim Industries, **Joel Hanson**, Sales Director - Xcite and **Abdallah Mouazen**, Senior General Manager - Chevrolet Alghanim; **Ahmad AR BinDawood** CEO at Danube and the BinDawood Group; **Karan Bhawnani**, CEO of West Zone Group; **Claudine Coletti**, Managing Editor of Forbes Middle East; **Lea Maalouf**, Public Relations & Communication Manager of Chalhoub Group; **Shuja Jashanmal**, Director of Jashanmal Group; and from Lulu Group International



Abdallah Mouazen, Senior General Manager (Chevrolet Alghanim), Al Ghanim Industries



Muddassir Ahmad, DGM Strategic Alliances (UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar) Sharaf Group



Shuja Jashanmal, Director of Jashanmal Group



Lea Maalouf, Public Relations & Communication Manager of Chalhoub Group



L-R: **Odi Trikaliotis**, Chief Research Officer for Customer Experience & Mystery Shopping at Ipsos; **Mohammed Dhedhi**, Principal at A.T. Kearney; **Joerg Meiser**, Senior Manager for TMT & Consumer Business at Monitor Deloitte



Forbes Middle East team