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NEXA

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Spotlight on Qatar



catering to presidents and famous footballers during the World Cup, they have perfected the art of making guests feel like superstars. Exploring the streets was a fun adventure, with many F&B options all around; it was interesting to see some of our favourite brands recreate themselves to suit Doha's style and offering. If you're looking for a quick and charming getaway, I recommend discovering Qatar's blend of tradition and innovation. Sure, it can feel less busy than we used to, but sometimes you need to be less active; Qatar is a good place to go if you want to slow down and calm down. It's the perfect opportunity to see a new skyline, ancient souqs, and fascinating museums. In this edition, we invite you to explore the wonders of Qatar as we dive into its vibrant culinary scene, inviting you to embark on a gastronomic exploration like no other and discover the new era of luxury hospitality that promises unforgettable experiences. We also focus on sustainability within the sector, addressing it from all angles as we gear up for our much-anticipated annual Sustainability Forum, scheduled for the 31st of August. Join us as we navigate the path towards a more sustainable future, where responsible practices shape the landscape of the hospitality industry regionally and globally.

During my trip to Qatar earlier this year, I was impressed by the level of luxury and hospitality that I received at every touchpoint. The Raffles/Fairmont Hotel, in particular, exuded regal elegance with its exquisite attention to detail. It was truly a royal affair, from the glamorous design and amenities to the elegant rooms and lobby. The staff is so attentive and eager to go the extra mile; I assume that after

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seymone".

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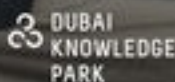
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MCDONALD'S UAE OPENS ITS FIRST RESTAURANT RUN BY AN ALL-FEMALE WORKFORCE AND PARTIAL SOLAR PANELED ROOF

McDonald's UAE has unveiled its 197th operating restaurant in the Emirates, located in Umm Suqeim 2, Dubai, operated entirely by an all-female workforce. The milestone launch was made even more memorable as the restaurant is also partially solar-powered, continuing McDonald's UAE's ongoing mission to have a greener future.



MMG GROUP INTRODUCES OSH DEL MAR: COMBINING VIBRANT FLAVOURS OF UZBEKISTAN AND CENTRAL ASIA WITH MODERN TWISTS



MMG Group (formerly Bolt Group), an internationally renowned hospitality company known for its commitment to excellence, is proud to announce the opening of OSH Del Mar. Located at The Address Beach Resort, this highly anticipated restaurant is set to welcome guests in August 2023. At OSH Del Mar, the culinary experience is elevated through the restaurant's unique approach to open-fire cooking. The use of three different types of charcoal grills (Josper, robata, spit), and more, including ovens, combined with natural wood smoke, impart unparalleled depth and flavour to each dish.

PICKL OPENS NEW FLAGSHIP BRANCH IN JBR

Pickl, the award-winning UAE-born burger brand celebrated for its award-winning cheeseburgers and fresh fried chicken sandos, is excited to announce the opening of its state-of-the-art flagship location in JBR. The long-awaited venue has now opened its doors, debuting an exciting new menu for all guests to enjoy. Restaurant manager Ioana Lazar heads up the female-led outlet, which comprises a majority of female chefs. Anticipation has been building for the launch over the past two months, with Pickl giving away 1,000 free burgers to passersby who activated a QR code on its iconic pink hoarding at the JBR location.



NIGHTJAR CITY WALK OPENS ITS DOORS

The highly anticipated opening for Nightjar City Walk has arrived! Don't fear, you lovers, of the OG Alserkal Avenue flagship; this is not a cookie-cutter concept destined for brand ruin but a grand evolution into a new and ultra-tempting cult of cool!

These guys really know how to do things with a little edge, their personality is stamped across everything they touch, and they're certainly not afraid to be different and bask in the vibes this new venue radiates.



sector. The company will invest in new tourism projects and develop attractive destinations with hospitality, tourist attractions, retail, and food and beverage offerings in cities across Saudi Arabia, in addition to investing in the local tourism value chain. Asfar will enable the private sector through co-investment opportunities, and by creating an attractive environment for local suppliers, contractors, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to

PIF ANNOUNCES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SAUDI TOURISM INVESTMENT COMPANY “ASFAR”

The Public Investment Fund (PIF) announced the establishment of the Saudi Tourism Investment Company (Asfar or the Company) to support the growth of the country’s tourism

develop tourism projects and destinations, thereby creating a competitive environment that will enhance the variety and quality of the hospitality and tourism offering.



GIUSEPPE RESSA, APPOINTED AS CLUSTER GENERAL MANAGER AT MANGO HOUSE SEYCHELLES AND CANOPY BY HILTON

Mango House Seychelles and Canopy by Hilton Mahé, which is set to open later this year, is delighted to announce the appointment of Giuseppe Ressa as Cluster General Manager, bringing with him 40 years of international hospitality experience – from the Middle East, Europe, and Asia – to the role. Returning to the family of Hilton Hotels & Resorts, where he started his career many years ago, Giuseppe will be joining the team with motivation, excitement, and passion. Driven by his love for exotic, luxury destinations, the exceptional location, positioning, and offering at both of the resorts are what drew him to his new position.



AGTHIA GROUP LAUNCHES USD 54 MILLION CORPORATE VENTURE CAPITAL FUND

Agthia Group PJSC, a diversified food and beverage company, announced the launch of Agthia Ventures, a corporate venture capital fund (“CVC”) designed to expand Agthia’s innovation capabilities and create mutual value with start-ups as the company continues to drive profitable growth in both new and existing markets.

Funded by Agthia and its parent company ADQ, an Abu Dhabi-based investment and holding company, Agthia Ventures will be managed together with Touchdown Ventures, a global leader in establishing and operating bespoke CVC programs for blue-chip corporates, with over 100 completed venture investments to date.

BEN TRODD APPOINTED AS CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT AMAN

A seasoned professional in the hospitality industry, Ben brings over 25 years of experience to the position. In his role, Ben will oversee all facets of Aman’s intricate hotel and resort operations, to deliver the brand’s vision and strategy, working closely with Chairman and CEO, Vlad Doronin, whilst ensuring the unique characteristics and exceptional levels of service, for which the distinguished collection is recognised, are retained.





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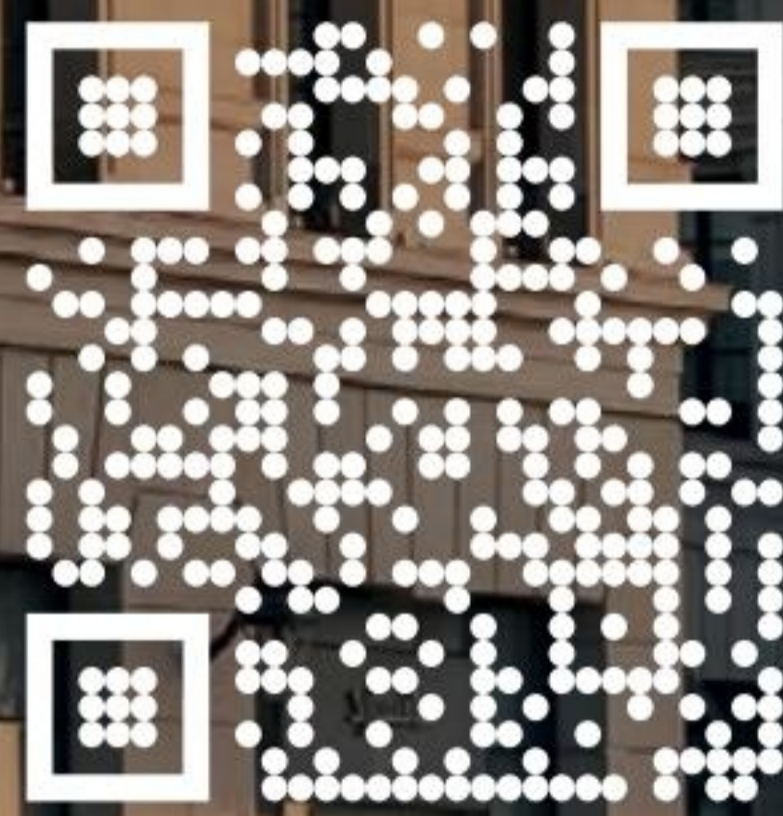
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EACH BRAND HAS A STORY EACH STORY HAS A **GUIDE**

BY SARAH TRAD, CO-OWNER, CLOSED CAPTIONS COMMUNICATIONS

Sarah Trad Co-owner, Closed Captions Communications walks us through why a brand story is as important as its name and logo, and what to focus on while writing yours.

It's poetic to talk about souls and discovering your brand's exquisite essence before revealing it to the world. But what is a "soul," and why does it matter so much?

As a journalist by training and practice, I have a lot of questions. When I started dabbling with creative writing for restaurants, it was mainly to uplift their menus or their company's corporate decks. Until one day, when I found myself facing the most challenging yet prosperous project: creating the personality and tone of voice, along with writing the brand story, mission statement, and values, for a brand new Mediterranean restaurant to be opened in The Palm, Jumeirah.

That day, and for a month after, questions poured on me like the green code lines from the Matrix. I went on an educational journey focused on branding, creative narrative for companies, the F&B sector in the MENA, and the simplest quest that combines them all, how to bring out the best of a company through genuine words.

As someone who months later chose to courage through impostor syndrome and into the "business owner" world with my older brother, by launching our own branding narrative studio, I'll lay out what a brand story is as simply as I can.

1. It answers questions. The who, what, where, when, and most importantly why, should all be answered within a brand story. Merge your company's core values as well, even if not explicitly.

2. It reads well. A story audacious enough to request people's attention better be a good, well-written one.

3. It shows a human face. Companies are entities; a space with employees who work to produce a service/product. Brands are ideologies; a realm where supporters meet on common ground and indirectly help the brand grow bigger and better.

4. It focuses on customers. A company is built to either serve the ego of its owner or the needs of people. Choosing the latter is wiser.

5. It entices a switch. Not only will your company offer similar services/products to your competitors, but it will also share the same customer base. You want them to switch? You gotta show them your unique selling propositions (USPs).

Some out-of-touch companies put the "why" aside while, in fact, it's the most genuine answer to that question that attracts people. Why are you in this business? Why should I care about yet another restaurant by the sea? Why should I become your customer? The

switch from brand to brand is not easy, and most probably your company did not invent or discover the wheel, which means you'll be jumping into already populated waters in almost all fields. The least you could do is be genuine with your intentions and purpose.

How about how to write a story for a brand? I'll use the restaurant as an example:

1. Knead in the brand's personality and tone of voice. Anything and anyone without a personality is too bland to demand attention, let alone loyalty. When I was working on that first project, the restaurant that had me discover the depth of branding and its amazing impact, I had to detail out who she is, what her personality is like, and how she communicates with people. (Yes, "she" because she's a person who's inviting you to her fresh banquet by the sea.) Within the personality exercise, I graded from 1 to 10 the following character traits: Excitement, Ruggedness, Sincerity, Competence, and Sophistication. Then, I filled them out with more details based on how I see her. For her ruggedness score, she nailed a 3/10 because even though one can swim and enjoy the sand while eating, the place remains upscale and neat, with certain high standards. As for the tone of voice exercise, I delegated adjectives to each of the following: Character, Tone,

Sarah Trad, Co-owner, Closed Captions Communications





THE SWITCH FROM BRAND TO BRAND IS NOT EASY, AND MOST PROBABLY YOUR COMPANY DID NOT INVENT OR DISCOVER THE WHEEL, WHICH MEANS YOU'LL BE JUMPING INTO ALREADY POPULATED WATERS IN ALMOST ALL FIELDS.

generous, and receptive to information. Still, simplicity is highly reliable when talking to an ocean of diverse people, so shelve the literary complex terms and analogies.

4. Explain the problem and the solution. In every story, there's a protagonist facing an issue and venturing into solving it. With this restaurant, the conflict is finding an upscale space that can accept kids, pets, and people in informal/beach wear (though this is not explicitly mentioned); the climax is the birth of the place with its all-welcoming vibes; the resolution is a spacious restaurant with indoor and outdoor areas, a beach lounge, and a smoothie bar to fit everyone's taste.



Language, and Purpose. Her tone is straightforward, fun, and inviting, while the language she uses is clear, persistent, and occasionally witty. These will help later on with social media and marketing campaigns and will set out the tone to be used throughout all communications.

2. Have your target audience in mind. When writing, the community you're aiming to build should stay in mind. She welcomes everyone, from couples and big groups to children and pets. Instead of listing them one by one to prove to readers that the restaurant is

inclusive, I merged them into the story along with what cuisine is being offered and within what atmosphere. The glue to it all would be making the reader feel the vibes they will dine in, imagine the scenery that'll surround them, and decide for themselves what values they'll be gaining by choosing this specific restaurant.

3. Use complex descriptions through simple language. Adding colour to a story makes all the difference. It's been scientifically proven that engaging stories affect the mind in ways that make the person friendlier, more

People don't want to be told who you are or what they should think of you. When you meet someone for the first time, their impression on you is based on your own preferences, not theirs. With how advanced and analytical we've become, it's slightly harder to fall for lies or inflated truths. Marty Neumeier, a branding genius whose many talents and insights propelled Silicon Valley companies into branding competition back in the 80s, has summed up the company-customer relationship in two sentences: "Your brand isn't what you say it is. It's what they say it is." Focus on the reason why you exist (customers' needs) and why you'll be making money and helping your employees learn (customers' money and feedback), and you should be good no matter how small or big your company gets. ●

Ricky Shah, Head of Consulting Services, Middle East, OCO Global



FOOD AS SURVIVAL VS AS A DESTRUCTIVE LUXURY

BY RICKY SHAH, HEAD OF CONSULTING SERVICES, MIDDLE EAST, OCO GLOBAL

Frequently, we come across alarming statistics about climate change that force us to confront the fragility of our existence. It's sobering that 99% of the species that once thrived on earth have vanished. Ironically, our relentless pursuit of endless growth and prosperity could ultimately lead to our downfall due to our unsustainable lifestyle.

Food as survival

Food is a pleasure, but it is also survival. That is where we are now, globally, fighting for survival. Much of the discourse about climate change rightly focuses on cleaner transport and less carbon-intensive manufacturing. Still, we must talk more radically about reorienting our food systems to help us survive.

The 2022 World Food Prize winner Cynthia Rosenzweig put it perfectly when she said, "Climate change cannot be restrained without attention to food system emissions, and food security for all cannot be provided without resilience to increasing climate extremes".

Multiple global crises (Covid-19, the Russia-Ukraine tension and more) have exposed structural weaknesses in our food systems and threatened the survival of many. In and amongst the sirens of war, concessions to enable the transport of critical grains from

Ukraine demonstrate the 'above-all-else' imperative of food.

Food as a destructive luxury

The GCC's wealth has enabled the region to make massive strides in food security regarding the availability, affordability and quality of food. This has been achieved through various means, including buying agricultural land abroad and investing in some of the largest food producers.

Shopping for food in the region is second to none – go into any supermarket, and you're inundated with apples from every corner of the earth and mangosteens, rambutans and lychees that one could only dream of finding in the UK.

But this is a core part of the problem. While the GCC countries perform exceedingly well in most metrics of the Food Security Index, all six countries' lowest scores in the 2022 edition were in the Sustainability and Adaptation dimension.

This does not come as a surprise. The region imports around 85% of its food, much of this by necessity. It is impossible to produce enough food locally to meet demand – that doesn't happen anywhere, and that's not the argument here. Instead, rebalancing is needed to reduce the reliance on imports, grow locally where feasible, and drive changes in consumer behaviour.

Opportunity in crisis

Just as the fuel efficiency of US cars increased significantly following the 1973 oil crisis, the aggregation of different climate and food-related challenges provided a fertile ground for innovation and action. The GCC's wealth and desire to act as global leaders across a number of fields mean that it is well placed to drive innovation in food systems and act as an exemplar to the rest of the world.

Recognising the stable regulatory environment and significant government incentives, a host of leading AgriTech companies have set up across the GCC, allowing the region to build on this early success to accelerate the growth of local production capabilities.

Pure Harvest and Madar Farms have noticeably changed things in the UAE; go into any supermarket, and you'll increasingly see fruit and vegetables made in the country - a sign that growing food in the desert is possible!

GCC governments are increasingly doing their part to drive systemic change. The UAE government's AgriTech Sector Development Team, Qatar's hosting of the International Horticultural Exhibition in 2023, and Oman's empowerment of farmers through intelligent agriculture demonstrate meaningful engagement in the topic.

Consumers as the final hurdle

Despite these green shoots, consumption patterns in the region are the primary challenge to overcome. By its very nature, the region attracts millions of global citizens; each one wants a taste of home, which has its price tag for the environment.

So, what's the answer here? Can the GCC maintain its strong value proposition to foreign labour and clamp down on some of what keeps them connected to their past?

In part, yes; if governments in the region can attract more investment into smart agriculture, they can drive more local production. Companies and people may decide to reorient their consumption patterns if they can drive consumer awareness campaigns that make the 'luxury vs survival' question apparent.

So far, the region has been shielded from some of the economic turmoil gripping the globe. However, in a world where climate change doesn't discriminate, the region cannot rest on its laurels and must set the stage to ensure future generations can survive and thrive in the GCC. ●



IN THE KITCHEN WITH CHEF ELLIANA

↑ CHEF ELLIANA OSORIO CORTES,
Hilton Ras Al Khaimah Beach Resort

Where does your joy for cooking come from?

Being able to cook has always been a source of joy for me, whether for friends or family. Ever since I was young, I have exhibited discipline, dedication, and a genuine passion for the things I love. My main inspiration was the desire to explore the world in different ways, mainly through experiencing diverse and authentic cuisines from all corners of the globe. Each culinary adventure creates lasting memories, and revisiting those flavours is akin to embarking on a journey through time and space. The yearning to travel and discover new culinary wonders ultimately drove my decision to pursue this career.

How do you incorporate your culinary traditions into your kitchen?

It has been a challenging yet fulfilling journey to incorporate the traditional flavours of my kitchen. Adapting my recipes to meet diverse preferences and tastes has led to significant personal growth. Exploring and adjusting to a new culture has allowed me to rediscover and embrace new flavours. These additions have been warmly

received by both our guests, who are open to learning about my culture and traditions and the local community.

What should people know about the culinary offerings in the Emirates?

The United Arab Emirates has a diverse and excellent culinary scene. As previously mentioned, the country's cultural diversity allows for a wide range of dining experiences, offering the opportunity to explore and learn about various cuisines. Having visited multiple emirates, I find it fascinating to discover various culinary delights crafted with exceptional local and international ingredients.

What makes Colombian cuisine stand out?

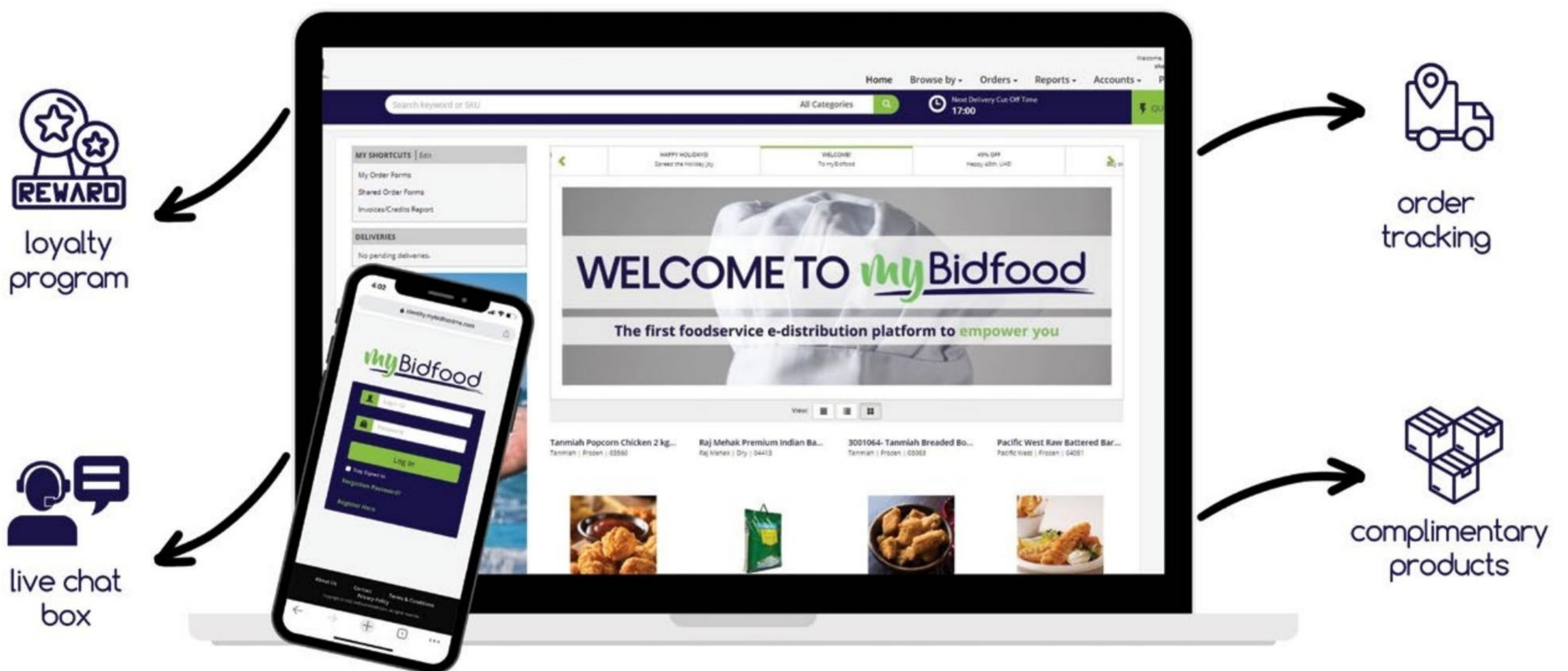
Its extensive range and regional variations characterise Colombian cuisine. Its standout feature lies in abundant fresh ingredients, including various fruits, tubers, and fish. This multi-cuisine is renowned for its originality and versatility, offering a delightful fusion of colours, flavours, and aromas that captivate the palates of all who indulge. ●

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QUINTESSENTIAL QATAR

Discover Qatar's Finest Dining Destinations, from Charming Local Gems to Fancy International Fusions

Indulge in the ultimate culinary experience as we unveil the 20 must-visit restaurants in Qatar. From charming local gems serving authentic Qatari flavours to upscale eateries offering a fusion of international cuisines, this list promises to delight every palate. Enjoy dishes crafted by world-renowned chefs with warm hospitality that defines Qatar's finest dining destinations. Whether you seek traditional dishes or innovative culinary creations, there's an adventure awaiting every food enthusiast in Qatar's vibrant and diverse dining scene.



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Catching up with **DELIVEROO** MIDDLE EAST

Since entering the region, Deliveroo has become a go-to choice for customers seeking convenience and quality dining experiences in the comfort of their homes, from local eateries to high-end restaurants. With its innovative approach, customer-centric focus, and dedication to its rider community, Deliveroo Middle East has shaped the food delivery landscape in the region. We spoke with Anis Harb, General Manager at Deliveroo Middle East, for an update on the brand's current achievements and future plans.

What is Deliveroo's current growth strategy?

Our mission is to be the definitive online food company, and we aim to be the platform that people turn to whenever they think about food. To achieve this, our focus has always been on offering the best value proposition to all three sides of the marketplace: consumers, riders, and restaurants and grocery partners. Our core business strategy

now revolves around 'hyperlocal' areas with the greatest profit potential, and we are dedicated to winning these areas, neighborhood by neighborhood, in the UAE.

Which region in the GCC looks like an attractive market for Deliveroo, and why?

In 2023, Deliveroo's primary focus is on expanding our business throughout the UAE. This is a market we are focused on, committed to, and prepared to invest in. We have already expanded our business across multiple cities in the UAE, serving millions of customers in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Al Ain, Ajman, and Ras Al Khaimah.

Moreover, across the Middle East, Deliveroo's business is experiencing rapid growth, and we are fully committed to investing and expanding our operations in the region. Currently, we operate in three markets: UAE, Kuwait, and most recently Qatar. Qatar presented a great opportunity for us to grow the business due to its densely populated cities, multicultural demographics, rich food

culture, and a growing F&B sector. This allowed us to bring our unique service to the market and offer consumers a wide range of food and experiences.

How many restaurants are you currently working with in the UAE as compared to 2022?

Deliveroo's ODG & Restaurant sites have grown by almost 15% YoY in the UAE. We take pride in offering around 13,000 restaurant and grocery partners in the UAE, and we are committed to expanding this selection even further across the Emirates throughout 2023. This ensures that our customers have access to the widest range of options possible. Notably, a significant number of our restaurant partners are exclusively on Deliveroo, such as Joe & the Juice, Reif Kushiyaki, The Wise Guys, Five Guys, to name a few. This is a result of our ability to provide customers with a distinct and unique value proposition.

Tell us about the recently launched Editions site in Abu Dhabi?

Globally, Deliveroo pioneered the creation of Editions delivery-only kitchens in 2017. Editions reflect our commitment to supporting the growth of our partners, providing customers with high-quality and diverse food options, and driving the food scene forward.

In the UAE, we have heavily invested in six Editions sites in Dubai and Abu Dhabi to help our partners grow their business without taking on the risks associated with traditional brick-and-mortar expansions. This also offers customers access to a wider selection of restaurants in their areas.

The recent expansion of Editions into Abu Dhabi brought well-loved UAE brands to the capital for the first time. Additionally, restaurants already operating in Abu Dhabi utilised this launch to expand their radius in the emirate.

How has the market received HOP to date?

Deliveroo HOP is the first delivery-only rapid grocery service operated by Deliveroo in partnership with leading retailer partner Choithrams in the UAE. This service delivers on-demand groceries to customers in as little as 15 minutes.

Presently, we operate three HOP sites located in Motor City, Business Bay, and JLT, which cover a wide range of areas throughout the city. We are actively explor-



Months of consistent practice paid off when both the men's and women's teams participated in an international tournament in January 2023, competing against twelve professional teams. This marked a major milestone for ice hockey in Bahrain.

In May 2023, Bahrain secured a victory in the male Arab Cup tournament in Kuwait, making history in the sport. Petr's dedication to both hospitality and ice hockey is a testament to his hard work and determination. He believes that both roles complement each other, with skills from each domain enriching the other.

Petr's commitment to supporting the local community is unwavering, and he finds fulfillment in balancing his hotel management responsibilities with coaching ice hockey. His story serves as an inspiration for pursuing passions outside of work and maintaining a well-rounded, balanced life. From the hotel lobby to the ice rink, Petr Dubsky's unique experiences have shaped him into a successful hotel General Manager, a respected ice hockey coach, and a pioneer in developing ice hockey in the Kingdom of Bahrain. ♦

From the HOTEL LOBBY to the ICE RINK

Petr Dubsky breaks the mold of a typical hotel General Manager. Leading a hotel team at The Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel, Residence, and Spa Bahrain, he also harbours a deep passion for ice hockey.

His journey with the RHG began 15 years ago, and through hard work and dedication, he climbed the ranks to become the General Manager of one of Bahrain's first five-star hotels.

What sets Petr apart is not just his impressive hospitality career; it's his love for ice hockey. After completing the ice hockey international coaching license course in the Czech Republic, he decided to support the development of the sport in an unexpected location: the Kingdom of Bahrain. In his free

time, he coaches kids, the male senior team, and a group of dedicated Bahraini women at the ice rink.

Petr's passion for ice hockey started at the tender age of five in the Czech Republic, a country where ice hockey is a national sport. Despite pursuing a hospitality career abroad at 20, he managed to play ice hockey in various countries like Ireland, Georgia, Bahrain, KSA, and Oman.

During the pandemic in Oman, he stumbled upon the Oman ice hockey team and began practicing with them, even assisting in coaching. When he returned to Bahrain, he knew he wanted to continue his involvement in the sport and took on the role of Head Coach of the Bahrain National Ice Hockey team.



Provok, a two-floor venue, entices guests to choose between fire and ice themes. The lower floor features icy designs and intricate ice sculptures, creating an immersive ambience of relaxed elegance. In contrast, the second floor boasts vibrant red interiors and mesmerising fire displays, igniting passion and excitement.

Guests of Fairmont Gold enjoy exclusive access to the lounge on the second floor. This private sanctuary provides a range of luxurious amenities, including a dedicated check-in area, complimentary continental breakfast, afternoon tea, evening canapés, and an enticing dessert buffet. Moreover, the lounge features a mixology bar, where guests can delight in expertly crafted cocktails and experience the art of mixology firsthand.

Raffles Doha is home to ALBA by Enrico Crippa, the first restaurant outside Italy for the talented and renowned chef. Enrico Crippa, a world-renowned Michelin Three Star chef and the mind behind the esteemed Piazza Duomo restaurant, has brought his contemporary and refined style of Italian cuisine to the iconic Raffles Doha. Recently ranked 19th in The World's 50 Best Restaurants 2022, Chef Crippa invites guests to experience his culinary mastery at ALBA.

The restaurant's name, ALBA, pays homage to the Italian region of Langhe and its capital, Alba—a place Chef Crip-



pa holds dear to his heart. At ALBA, guests can expect an exclusive and elegant dining experience immersed in an artistic, dynamic, and surprising menu. Chef Crippa's culinary approach respects local traditions while presenting the rich flavours of Italy in a new context. He skillfully incorporates local and traditional ingredients, with a particular focus on the spices and scents of the Orient.

Leading the team at ALBA is Executive Chef Antonino D'Alessio, who has been a part of the esteemed Piazza Duomo team for many years. Assist-

ing D'Alessio in the dining room is Vincenzo Donatiello, the Director and Sommelier at Piazza Duomo for nine years. With their expertise, alongside the rest of the dedicated team, they aim to uphold Chef Crippa's philosophy.

Chefs Crippa and D'Alessio have collaborated to curate the menus offered at Raffles Doha. They have evaluated and experimented with a formula that encapsulates their vision of traditional dishes reimaged stylishly. The flavours and preparations draw inspiration from Italy's rich and diverse regional cuisines, taking guests on a modern sensory journey from the North to the South.

ALBA by Enrico Crippa promises to be an extraordinary dining destination where guests can savour innovative Italian cuisine created by world-renowned culinary talents.

This dual-branded hotel, Raffles and Fairmont Doha, strives to expand the appeal of Qatar, catering to a range of guests and enriching the overall visitor experience. This endeavour aligns with Qatar Tourism's ongoing mission to transform the country into a world-class holiday destination. By offering exceptional accommodations and unparalleled hospitality, the hotels contribute to Qatar's journey towards becoming a sought-after and memorable place for travellers from around the globe. ●





Transforming CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

BY THOMAS KURIAN, HOTEL MANAGER, LEVA HOTELS

The Hospitality industry in the Middle East has been one of the critical pillars of the region's GDP, and given the current travel and tourism dynamics, it is expected to perform well despite economic turbulence. The differentiating factor lies in the recognition of adapting to changing demands and customer expecta-

tions. Whether it's the Expo 2020 held in the UAE or the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, the region has successfully hosted phenomenally global events to bring back the excitement in business, lifestyle, leisure, and tourism. With innovation, strategic planning, and advancements in operational tools, the Middle East is expected to continue the pace in 2023 and beyond.

The future is tech-forward.

The industry will continue focusing on prioritising customer experiences, analytics, and automation because those who fail to adapt will fall behind. Whether it's changing consumer preferences, a highly competitive environment, rising operation costs, or the impact of geopolitical events on travel patterns, the Hospitality industry faces factors beyond their control. However, with innovation leading the response strategy, the industry has successfully devised tech-enabled offerings to amp up customer experiences. Renowned hospitality players in the region have adopted tech-enabled operational tools to streamline functioning, with many others following suit. An upward graph suggests that technology will eventually take over a sizeable segment of hospitality operations to increase the quality of customer experiences.

By prioritising the use of technology and innovative solutions that streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance professional efficiency; it has been observed that automated guest experiences are the most