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Show dates: 12 - 14 May 2015, Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, Abu Dhabi | Day 1

DISTREE ME 2015 opens with 500+ senior executives confirmed to attend

The 11th annual DISTREE Middle East begins today with more than 500 delegates registered to attend the three-day event. DISTREE Middle East runs from May 12th to 14th at the Fairmont Bab al Bahr in Abu Dhabi, UAE. DISTREE Middle East gives technology and consumer electronics (CE) brands a unique opportunity to hold pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings with senior executives from the region's most influential retailers and e-tailers.

Farouk Hemraj, Director and Co-Founder at DISTREE Events, said, "More than 1500 one-on-one meetings have already been pre-scheduled between delegates at DISTREE Middle East 2015. Hundreds more will be arranged on-site during the next three days. We thank all delegates and sponsors for their continued support of the event.

"DISTREE Middle East remains the most efficient way for all technology and CE brands to enhance their relationships with the volume retail channel. Many new brands are looking to build reach in the Middle East retail channel. We continue to see

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Farouk Hemraj,
Director and Co-Founder,
DISTREE Events

Effective meetings

Farouk Hemraj, Director and Co-Founder, DISTREE Events, runs through the new features attendees can expect from DISTREE ME 2015, taking place from 12th to 14th May, 2015 in Abu Dhabi.

The Internet of Things (IoT) wave has been one of the key market trends since the beginning of the year. Smart solutions have crept

into every product category and have opened the door of opportunities for industry players. Increasingly, we are seeing that the trend is trickling down to the retail level, where retailers are now able to have intelligent one-to-one conversations, armed with a repository of information about each customer.

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

12th May 2015 Sessions of interest

18:00-18:30

GfK Keynote: How to grow business in 2015

18:30 - 19:00

Keynote: Quantum's winning strategy

19:00-19:10

Live@DISTREE

Amanulla Khan, Belkin Linksys

19:10-20:00

60 seconds to convince

13th May 2015 Block your diary

9:00-9:15

Keynote: Smart technologies

9:15-9:50

Live@DISTREE

Ahmed Ashraf, Brightstar

Khaled Kamel, Samsung

Rahul Singh, Mitashi

9:50-10:40

Panel discussion: Retail voices

10:40-10:55

Keynote: Connected commerce

11:50-13:00 / 14:00-15:50

Retail Academy Sessions (Contd. Pg 6)

20:30-1:00

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3rd June 2015

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Dubai, UAE

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AWARDS 2015

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Effective...

DISTREE Middle East 2015 aims to reflect the industry transformation and offers a common platform for buyers and retailers to come together and have impactful discussions. In its 11th edition, the event is taking place from 12th to 14th May 2015 at Fairmount Bab Al Bahr, Abu Dhabi.

Hemraj said, "There will be few changes in terms of technology products this year. Over the last year, we have observed the growth of some categories while others have slowed down. We aim at bringing answers and helping retailers to move in the right direction. New market opportunities such as smart home solutions and wearables are reshaping the industry.

"IoT is influencing the way products are sold. We are also observing the digitisation of the retail space where customers can be identified

as they walk into the shop. This enables customised promotion opportunities, which will be more effective. Today, there is a whole new area of interaction that is happening between the retailer and customer, not only online but also at the shop level."

Keeping in line with evolving market trends, attendees of DISTREE Middle East can look forward to new areas – Smart Technologies and Connected Commerce – in this edition.

"Connected products cannot be sold just from the shelf, customers need to be educated," he added. "So the question is how vendors, distributors and retailers can make this market happen? This also poses as a threat for traditional retail because in the past, electronics and technology products were sold only to a single channel. Today electronics is invariably present

in all sectors from consumer, healthcare, sports to education. To give an example, pharmacies will now become a channel for electronics product though they are health related." The profiles of the retailers are changing too now.

As e-commerce is increasingly gaining market share within the region, it will be an important topic at the event. "We try to bring a perspective of how e-commerce works in other parts of the world and how it can be done here," Hemraj said.

The content of the event is customised to each region, by talking to significant players in the market to understand issues and challenges present.

The market is going through many changes, said Hemraj. "There is tremendous pressure on traditional players present in the PC category and we see

the emergence of several new players in the smartphone arena. This will lead to even higher competition, especially in the lower end. We are trying to reflect these market trends in the variety of vendors that will be present at the event. There will be some new brands from the smartphone category as well."

This year, exhibitors and attendees can keep a track record of their scheduled meetings, seminar timings, details of workshops and general information through the event's new mobile app.

"We have tested this in Monte Carlo and it was successful," he said. "85 percent of the participants were using it as compared to the 5 percent we had last year. Everything is mobile now. We have to rethink the way to interact with customers and suppliers through the mobile app."



Reseller MIDDLE EAST



► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

DISTREE ME...

strong levels of innovation in emerging product categories such as wearables and smart home solutions," he added.

DISTREE Middle East 2015 is supported by Huawei, Linksys and Quantum as Platinum Sponsors; Acer, Brightstar, Gadgitech, HP and Max Electronics as Gold Sponsors; plus Ctroniq, June, Mercantile and TP-LINK as Silver Sponsors. Samsung is Retail Innovation Sponsor at this year's event.

DISTREE Middle East 2015 will also see the introduction of



the DISTREE Diamond Awards in the region. The recipients of DISTREE Diamond Awards will be determined using on-site feedback from retailers at the event. The DISTREE Diamond Awards cover

17 separate categories.

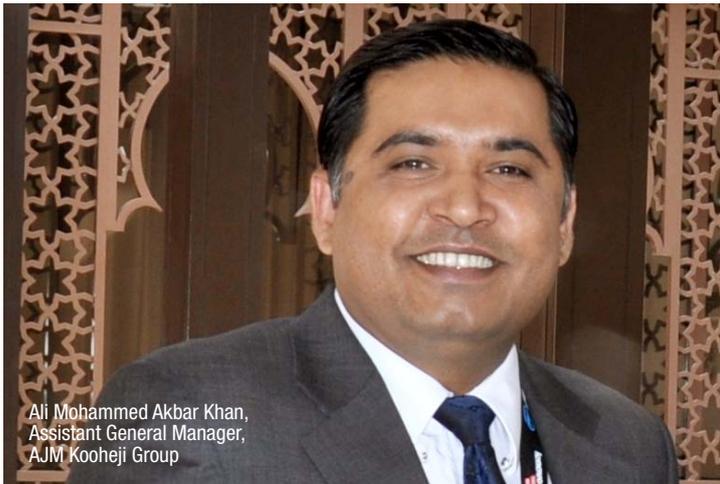
"We're very excited to launch the DISTREE Diamond Awards in the Middle East," added Hemraj. "The retailers and e-tailers that attend our event have a wealth of knowledge

and understand which brands and products have a compelling market proposition. The winners of the DISTREE Diamond Awards will be companies that retailers can be confident of doing business with.

These new awards will serve as a true mark of channel excellence," explained Hemraj.

DISTREE Middle East also includes a comprehensive conference programme with a mixture of keynotes, panel discussions and awards sessions. Focused workshop sessions will include speakers from Event Partner GfK; Content Partners Extrius, FFD, Navo and Quadmark; as well as Media Partner Channel EMEA. This year's event will gather 200 retail executives, representing more than 110 retailers and e-tailers from across the Middle East, to meet with more than 200 executives from vendors and distributors.

AJM Kooheji Group proposes 'DISTREE Club'



Ali Mohammed Akbar Khan,
Assistant General Manager,
AJM Kooheji Group

Ali Mohammed Akbar Khan, Assistant General Manager, AJM Kooheji Group, elaborates on company focus and highlights at DISTREE ME 2015.

What has been your company's main focus area for 2015?

AJM Kooheji Group has a whole portfolio of electronic products, which cover all aspects of life, with the exception of mobile phones. However, having analysed the growth, we are looking at venturing into this segment this year. We will be launching smartphones by end of May, in addition to this we will continue to maintain a healthy product category portfolio. We are also looking at brands that can penetrate our market and capitalise on a decent market share of some of the smartphone brands.

What is the status of the Middle East retail channel at present?

It is shaping up well and maturing in all quarters, thereby becoming a robust channel. The main reason for growth is because the ME retail market is able to weather any challenges from the market turbulence. It will be interesting to know whether growth of the retail channel in the Middle East region is exponential or hypothetical, in terms of balance in the region. We hope it will not be restricted to one particular market only.

What would you say will be your major highlight at the DISTREE Middle East event?

Our achievement over the last

year has been very realistic. When we sign brands, we make sure we complete the circle where principle, retailers and distributors are successful in the equation. We are overwhelmed by the success of LG, which has been with us over 35 years as we were able to establish the winning formula to complete the cycle. We shall be sharing our values and success stories at DISTREE ME 2015.

What is the importance of participating in a retail technology event like DISTREE Middle East?

We get the pulse of the region as we share many issues and challenges faced by our industry. It forms a perfect hub for brainstorming and after the event, we are refreshed and apply the same learnings in our day-to-day business.

How can DISTREE Events improve the event in the Middle East region?

I would recommend that DISTREE begin focusing on other markets in the region and I strongly recommend Bahrain as a venue, since it's a retailer's paradise and such growth needs to be identified. We should also get our share for being in the industry. There also should be a DISTREE Forum where we can communicate with the participants of the event throughout the year and share our experiences with the 'DISTREE club' every month.

TP-LINK showcases TL-WPA4220KIT

At DISTREE ME 2015, TP-LINK is displaying its latest products such as TL-WPA4220KIT, which extends the Internet connection to every room of the house through the existing electrical circuitry. The TL-WPA4220 features a Wi-Fi Clone Button enabling Super Range Extension, which means it can automatically copy the SSID and Password of the customer's router. According to the company, the device simplifies Wi-Fi configuration and allows for seamless roaming within the home network. With a Wi-Fi Clone Button enabling Super Range Extension, the TL-WPA4220 can automatically copy the wireless network name (SSID) and Password of router at the push of a button. After pressing the button, customers can place the powerline adapter anywhere they want wired or wireless access and enjoy seamless networking across entire home or office. With advanced HomePlug AV technology, the device provides stable, high-speed data transfer rates of up to 500Mbps on a line length of up to 300 meters. With wireless speeds of up to 300Mbps, users can effortlessly extend WiFi network via the existing powerline and broadcast a wireless signal to share with all WiFi enabled devices in another area of the home or office. Customers can set up a hassle-free Powerline network within minutes with the vendor's powerline adapters.

Taking stock



David Lewis,
Head of Digital,
MENA, GfK

David Lewis, Head of Digital, MENA, GfK, outlines key retail trends in the MENA region.

Can you discuss the digital trends in the MENA region?

The MENA region continues to offer and fulfil its' growth potential. In 2014, just under USD 30 billion was spent on the leading digital technology consumer goods, representing a 3 per cent growth against the previous year. This will continue in 2015, although the challenges and growth drivers are evolving.

The region is renowned for its resilience and ability to operate in challenging and at times unstable conditions. We will continue to face challenges such as health warnings, political changes and regional conflicts to a great extent in 2015. Furthermore, we face a new and unknown potential challenge with the declining oil prices, which means the ability to monitor and flexibility to react is increasingly important.

The rapid growth in the region over the last three years accounted for 53 per cent of MENA sales. While the Gulf will remain a key contributor for the region, it will be the growth in the newer emerging markets including Egypt, Pakistan and Algeria, which will drive sales ahead.

PC sales through the consumer channels across the META region are back on the

growth trajectory and have continued to climb since the beginning of 2015. This growth is supported by a number of key regional markets including Egypt, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, which are all recording a strong Q1 performance. For Saudi Arabia, the performance of the PC category was further stimulated in February 2015 by the injection of a reported 60 billion Saudi Riyals in the form of pay-outs across all state employees and within almost all Saudi listed and non-listed companies; leading to sales growth of 13 per cent for the PC category against the previous year.

Can you elaborate on the evolving retail landscape of the MENA region? How are retailers catering to omni-channel consumers?

The MENA retail landscape continues to evolve and for some countries, such as the UAE, this change is occurring at a fast rate. While 5 years ago traditional souk computer stores channel catered to 80 per cent of the UAE PC demand, the landscape has completely reversed today, with 80 per cent of sales occurring through generalist retail.

Increasing reach to end-users through the expansion of retail stores continues to be a key driver for the generalist/big-box retail to gain share of sales. There are now over 1,100 outlets across the leading six countries of the MENA region, with just under 150 outlets opened in the last 12 months. From City Centre Mall in Muscat, Oman across to Morocco Mall in Casablanca and most countries in between; mall development and expansion have been key drivers for the generalist retail.

Another key driver for generalist retail particularly in the IT sector has been promotional periods. Known drivers in the UAE – Dubai Shopping Festival, Spring GITEX and GITEX Shopper periods account for 50 per

cent of mobile PCs' yearly sales. We are also seeing increasing impact of sales periods in the wider region; for instance Q4 in KSA, which includes notable retailer promotions (eXtra Megasale and Jarir Promotions) supported the market sales peak in 2014.

Online, multi-channel and omni-channel are aspects much more widely discussed in the regional retail industry

“The rapid growth in the region over the last three years accounted for 53 per cent of MENA sales. While the Gulf will remain a key contributor for the region, it will be the growth in the newer emerging markets including Egypt, Pakistan and Algeria, which will drive sales ahead.”

today compared to three years ago. The level of insight and options available to consumers online continues to increase. In addition to reviews and blogs, we are seeing the development of regional pure-play online players, regional marketplaces, regional price comparison websites, in addition to the increasing presence of regional retailers online. As more and more 3G/4G infrastructure and devices support the increasing penetration rates of online and as logistics and security issues are better addressed, online sales in the region will boost further.

While online sales emerge, it is clear that online plays a big role in the customers' purchasing decision prior to the final transaction. With a young population, the Middle East boasts the highest number of Twitter users per capita (Kuwait) and the largest YouTube base per capita (Saudi Arabia) globally. Usage of social media, along with blogs to voice opinions on brands, products or promotions have been increasingly visible over the last 12 months. A recent global study from GfK found that 40 per cent of consumers use smartphones while in-store to compare prices – a clear live example of the growing omni-channel consumers we face.

How is Internet of Things impacting the retail environment in the region?

Although still in the early adoption phase in the MENA region, the Internet of Things and smart homes development do look to offer future potential. Initial signs of the development can be seen in the numerous property developments that are taking place in Dubai.

Encouraging consumers to upgrade their home to be 'smart' will require three aspects – driving consumer awareness, developing consumer demand and meeting consumer expectations. For the first aspect, we are increasingly seeing activity at large regional consumer events to promote consumer awareness of smart homes. Take the recent Spring GITEX event for example, which was used as a platform to showcase connected devices across the consumer electronics, telecoms and home appliances categories through purpose built experiences.

Developing consumer demand will need to further build off such events or utilise in-store experiences to fully explain how a connected home provides a genuine benefit to the consumer. In the meantime, understanding which IoT demands are greatest by country and meeting expectations in terms of price positioning will be key for the sector to begin to fulfil its potential in the region.

Acer launches new products at DISTREE ME 2015



David Drummond,
Vice President,
Middle East &
Africa, Acer

Acer makes its debut at DISTREE ME 2015 and is a Gold sponsor for the leading event aimed at senior executives operating in the Middle East ICT & CE retail sector. The vendor has previously been a sponsor for the Africa edition in 2014. At the event, taking place 12-14 May 2015 at the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr in Abu Dhabi, the company will showcase its technology portfolio and provide insight into key market trends.

“With the Middle East being a key market for Acer, it is important that we have our finger on the pulse of the marketplace, which means building on our strong relationships with retailers and e-tailers,” said David

Drummond, Vice President, Middle East & Africa, Acer. “DISTREE Middle East delivers ‘all killer and no filler’ with every delegate being a senior executive in the channel, making it the perfect platform for Acer to showcase its cutting-edge range of products.”

During the Acer Global Press Conference in April 2015, Acer launched over 40 products as part of its back-to-school portfolio. This includes the Aspire R 11 – the smallest addition to Acer’s convertible line-up with an 11.6-inch display, which features a uniquely designed 360-degree hinge, allowing it to convert fluidly between four modes.

The thin, lightweight and durable Aspire Switch 10 E and Switch 10 combine a full Microsoft Windows 8.1-based notebook and tablet in one flexible device, featuring a magnetic detachable design for latch-free docking and smooth transition between four modes.

Other models in Acer’s notebook computer line-up include the new Aspire V 15 with metallic aesthetic cues, the Aspire E Series with solid performance packed into a sophisticated design, and the Aspire ES series with all the essential features at an unbeatable price.

Acer has also launched the Revo One RL85 personal computer that is designed to be a family entertainment centre, featuring multimedia sharing, content streaming, huge storage and casting.

Parrot presents next-gen connected toys



DISTREE ME 2015 attendees will have a chance to experience Parrot’s latest products such as Rolling Spider and Jumping Sumo first hand. These devices can be piloted with a smartphone or a tablet via the free FreeFlight 3 application.

Parrot Rolling Spider, which is an ultra-compact flying drone with impressive agility, flies indoor and outdoor with great speed and stability. It rips through the air, flips and thanks to its removable wheels, rolls from floor to ceiling, said the company.

The Rolling Spider is piloted in Bluetooth Smart via the free FreeFlight 3 application for iOS and Android Smartphones and tablets, and for Windows 8.1 and Windows

Phone 8.1.

It can be equipped with two ultra-light wheels held by an axis in carbon fiber (10gr).

Once the wheels are fixed on its back, it races on the ground like a racing car and can, like a spider, climb along the wall and continue its run on the ceiling. It can also throw itself into the air with the same speed and flip, according to the company.

A vertical camera (60fps), positioned under its fuselage, helps it stabilise during flights. It also enables the device to take snapshots, which are recorded on the 1 GB Flash memory. The snapshots can then be transferred on a computer via the embedded micro-USB connector,



and shared via the ‘Pilot Academy’.

Parrot claims the Jumping Sumo device to be a new kind of connected robot with a “strong personality.” It runs full-speed (2m/s) inside the house, takes 90° curves and weaves in and out everywhere.

It can also perform a 180° in a flash. According to the company, the Jumping Sumo displays a technical prowess unique in the world of toys. Its two big retractable wheels ensure good road holding and adapt to all driving styles. The wheels open for greater stability in high-speed and re-tract in ‘compact’ mode to enhance agility and drive through narrow areas.

The Parrot Rolling Spider is

available in red, blue and white with, as a bonus, a set of 12 self-sticking “mouths” to be positioned under its nose so that no two devices look the same and to express its mood of the day.

The Parrot Jumping Sumo is available in three versions: black and red, white and black and khaki and yellow.

The Parrot Rolling Spider works with a rechargeable battery Lithium Polymer 550 mAH (compatible with Parrot Jumping Sumo) and has a battery life of 8 minutes.

The devices are available in UAE at retail stores such as Sharaf DG, Virgin Megastore, Dubai Duty Free, iStyle, Carrefour and Plug Ins.

Overview of Retail Academy Sessions 2015

New Retail Concepts

With the rapid merger of lifestyle and technology, the future of electronics retail will probably owe more to Dolce & Gabbana than to Hewlett Packard. What does this mean for business? This workshop offers an interactive discussion about the trends upending the digital retail markets, and what the Middle East channel can learn from innovative brands and retailers around the world. Hosted by Ryan Mackey.

African Channel Insights

Ahead of DISTREE Africa 2015, which takes place in June, this session provides an overview of current channel landscapes in Africa. Hosted by Sumant Saran, CEO at Extrius Consulting.

GfK SCM Insights: Navigating the Value Chain and Optimising Business Opportunities

Markets are more challenging, volatile and less predictive than ever. GfK will illustrate how vendors and distributors are able to navigate their value chain to optimise their indirect

business model at every single stage within the market and product lifecycle. Learn how to optimise pricing, demand and distribution. GfK will provide a comprehensive level of knowledge on SCM.

Future Retail Commerce: Reshape, Sustain & Adapt

This workshop will cover the dynamically changing retail landscape assessing opportunities and potential threats, plus omnichannel dynamics. Business challenges and the way forward for the retail channel will be discussed. The session will include infographic scenarios of regional e-commerce and a 'how to' approach to delivering the right omnichannel (online and in-store) experience. Hosted by K.S. Vasudevan, managing director at Navo.

MMR Insights: The Changing Retail Channel Landscape

A deep dive into the Middle East Retail Academy (MERA)

Monthly Monitor Report (MMR) looking at which vendors are most influential at a retail level by product category. This session will also explore how the retail landscape is changing in major ME markets, the role of generalists and specialists, plus the impact of special sales events on retail channel health. Session hosted by Channel EMEA's Stuart Wilson.

Smart Home Solutions Overview

This workshop will provide a comprehensive overview of smart home solutions making an impact in the market. This session will give an understanding of the benefits that smart home solutions offer consumers and a feel for the latest market trends. Hosted by Benoit van den Bulcke, Director, French Federation of Home Automation (FFD)

New Retail Channel Models for 2015

Hosted by Michael White, general manager of channel and

sales enablement consultancy Quadmark in EMEA. This session will explore the fragmentation of traditional retail channel models, which has been compounded by the explosion of new product categories. This continues to challenge traditional profitability structures and raises ongoing questions related to channel compensation models.

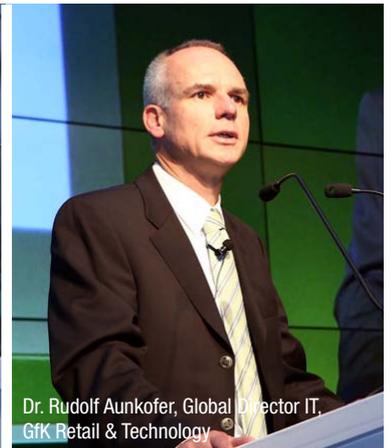
GfK Insights: IoT & Smart Home

How Household Appliances Fit the Concept. Are smart devices really making our homes safer, smarter, and more connected? Are customers really buying this story? GfK will highlight the fastest growing technology markets in the Middle East region: household appliances. Double digit growth rates and an increasingly high-end market offers new business opportunities for distribution and at the point of sale (POS). GfK will take you on a journey through the new trends.

DISTREE Middle East 2014 highlights



Basil Ayass, Marketing Director, Dell



Dr. Rudolf Aunkofer, Global Director IT, GfK Retail & Technology



Amanulla Khan, Regional Director - Emerging Markets, Belkin / Linksys



DISTREE Middle East 2014, celebrating its 10th anniversary honours those who have been participating in the event for the last decade at MERA Awards, last evening.