

2024 MEPRA Executive Board Nominees





**Joseph John
Nalloor**

**Discipline Lead, Media &
Communications,
Murdoch University
Dubai**

Joseph John Nalloor has been teaching media in the UAE since 2005. Joseph worked as a sub-editor and journalist before turning to teaching and has served as chairperson for two media schools. Presently, Joseph is the Programme Coordinator for Media and Communications at Murdoch University Dubai. He has been an academic with over 19 years teaching experience in Dubai, UAE. His areas of interest are social media, journalism, PR and strategic communications.

As an educator, he has been involved with and serves on academic boards to develop curriculum that keep university media education current and industry relevant. He has always believed in strong academia-industry collaborations and has nurtured students to be industry-ready through internships and graduate roles with MEPRA members. He has also facilitated guest sessions by MEPRA leaders on campus and provided a platform for MEPRA workshops and events.

His students, over the years, are working with leading media houses and PR firms in the UAE and the region. Many of them have gone on to win industry awards and recognition.

Joseph has previously been responsible for several tie-ups with the Emirates Literature Festival, Sharjah International Book Fair, Dubai International Film Festival and Dubai Press Club among others.

Moreover, Joseph's research and industry engagement has garnered him recognition as a thought leader in the media field. His publications in peer-reviewed journals, presentations at international conferences, and contributions as a speaker on panels and media channels about communication issues demonstrate his commitment to staying at the forefront of industry trends and sharing his insights with a broad audience.



**Justin
Kerr-Stevens**
Managing Director,
BLJ Worldwide

With over 20 years of experience in the development and delivery of communication campaigns, Justin has been resident in the Middle East for the last seven years.

As the General Manager of Portland's Middle East Office, Justin worked with key public sector clients in Qatar and oversaw the Portland's first business acquisition in the region. He joined BLJ Worldwide in 2020 and now manages the largest independent agency team in the country, with over 75 staff.

He has led the design, development and training of high-performance project-based teams in six countries across Australasia, Europe and the Middle East and has been responsible for building government communications teams in Central Asia, the Middle East, Australia and Europe.

As a strategic advisor, he has acted as the principal in-country communications advisor to heads of state, foreign ministers and communications directors. He is adept at in-house and agency management with multidisciplinary experience covering administration, digital advisory, public relations, public affairs, advertising (ATL and BTL) nation branding and data analytics.

He is the Chairman of the Qatar Australia New Zealand Business Association and an active member of the PR community in Qatar.



Neda Shelton

Senior Vice President
Group Communications,
Mubadala

Neda is a senior communications leader with over 22 years of experience in global corporate communications and marketing, having worked for leading brands in the Middle East and Europe, across government, technology and tourism sectors.

As Executive Board member of MEPRA since February 2022, Neda leads the Sustainability Communications Committee. She is also a Board Member of The Marketing Society Abu Dhabi where she chairs the Sustainable Marketing Working Group. Neda currently serves as Senior Vice President of Group Communications at Mubadala Investment Company, driving strategic communications projects related to transformation, governance, sustainability and ESG.

Prior to joining the Mubadala, Neda was the Director of Corporate Communications and PR at Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Authority, where she led the award-winning international media strategy and PR launch of the adventure attractions, including the longest zipline in the world.

Previously, Neda managed internal and external communications at Emirates Airline and dnata from 2010, where she was instrumental in leading transformational brand engagement campaigns and delivering CSR initiatives.

Before embarking on her role with Emirates in Dubai, Neda spent a decade living in Spain working in the PR and communications industry, where she began her communications career with multinational travel and technology brands including Amadeus, a public-listed company headquartered in Madrid.

A British national, and fluent in Spanish, Neda holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Sussex, as well as post-graduate certificates in Sustainable Marketing, ESG, Digital Marketing, Executive Leadership and Coaching.



Monther Tayeb

Communications
Consultant

Monther Tayeb is an experienced Public Relations and Communications professional with significant local, regional and International experience. With more than 20 years of experience, Monther has extensive understanding and expertise in Corporate Communications, Public Relations and Marketing. His strength is in conceiving, developing, launching and managing holistic communication strategies for local and international companies.

Currently Monther plays the role of a strategic communications consultant for various Ministers, Ministries, semi government entities and a few PIF companies. Earlier Monther served as the First Deputy Chief of Corporate Communications and Public Relations at the Saudi Electricity Company (SEC). He was instrumental in crafting the corporate communications strategy for the organization and overseeing various functions of the corporate communications department kingdom wide.

Prior to his appointment in SEC, Tayeb served as the Director General of Media and Strategic Communications at the Ministry of Defense, and as General Manager, Riyadh, of Consulium (a specialist government strategic communications consultancy). Before that, he was the regional Director of Public Relations and Communications at the multinational defense company BAE Systems. During his tenure there, he implemented the Company's communications policy, directing both Internal and External Communications Kingdom-wide, including advertising, media relations, promotional and marketing support programs and websites, creating closer ties with stakeholders and building goodwill to enhance and protect the Company's reputation and ensure its vision was communicated effectively.

He also took charge of BAE Systems' Public Affairs and Customer Relationships programs with the Ministry of Defense, the Royal Saudi Air Force, the National Guard, the Royal Saudi Naval Force and other official and semi-official government bodies. This involved managing a substantial budget and Tayeb developed a team of 16 employees, based in both KSA and the UK, for which he was the principal interface between Saudi Arabia and Group Corporate Communications.

Monther Tayeb served as the Head of Public Relations at the multinational dairy company Almarai. He was also appointed as a strategic communications consultant to many projects at the Ministries of Media, Tourism, and Housing and to many other government commissions. Monther Tayeb is a certified coach who has helped train many Saudi media professionals. He is also the organizer of The PR Forum – the largest public relations event in the Kingdom.

2024 MEPRA Strategy Board Nominees





Aimee Peters

Regional Head of Brand,
Partnerships and B2B
Marketing, HSBC ME

Aimee started her career at Microsoft Gulf in the early noughties, treading the PR boards of UAE, Oman, and exploring CSR opportunities in Afghanistan with the UN. The press trip to Kabul, and our visit to Vegas remain talking points with certain regional journalists to this day. A stint at Symantec working across the Dubai and Johannesburg offices made sure I had a lot of air miles, and was fantastic experience working with a global team. From there, a shift agency side called, before jumping in to the newly emerging world of financial PR, then commodities at the Mercantile Exchange, before settling in at HSBC for the best part of the next decade, initially in Dubai but very quickly transferring back to London. That period saw a gradual shift from pure PR to the world of integrated communications, and eventually in to Marketing, but never losing the focus on the power of well crafted messaging at the heart of any communication, across any channel. Finally, a move back to the region arose with the role of Group Head at Mashreq, where the remit has been to create a group function, across brand, performance marketing and communications.

Aimee has since moved to HSBC ME as Regional Head of Brand, Partnerships and B2B Marketing.



Andira Raslan

Business Director,
MSL – Publicis
Groupe

Andira Raslan has 13 years of experience in PR and communications across the Middle East, having worked in both agency and in-house roles.

Her experience focuses on corporate communications, crisis communications, public affairs and consumer marketing. In her capacity as a Director / Senior Counsel, she has serviced several industries including FMCG, tech, finance, government and quasi government. She looked after global coveted brands such as McDonald's, Netflix, TikTok, Uber, Mastercard, PepsiCo among others.

Raslan led the planning and the design of Ithra's communication function (part of Saudi Aramco) and contributed to the strategic positioning of the Saudi Ministry of Housing in Riyadh. She also lived and worked in Kuwait where she managed local accounts such as Ooredoo, KFAST, and Gulf Bank.

Raslan has significant experience with global NGOs and think tanks on a plethora of public policy issues such as rule of law, anti-corruption, climate change, women's rights and youth.

She holds a BA in Law from Filiere Francophone de Droit et Sciences Politiques and a Specialist Diploma in Public Affairs from CIPR London. She is fluent in Arabic, English and French.



Andrea Gissdal

Communications
Consultant

Andea is a consultant to the Emirates Literature Foundation (and others).

Andrea is consulting to the Voices of Future Generations, an initiative under the patronage of UNESCO which promotes literature and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to children.

In her previous role with the Emirates Literature Foundation, Andrea led an integrated department combining PR, marketing, content, design, digital and web development, all working together to bring different messages to life for different audiences and deliver meaningful results for the organisation.

Today, she is offering marcomms strategy and PR support to a range of clients on a project basis.



Benjamin Schroeder

Vice President, Head of
Global Regions & MEA
Communications,
Siemens

Benjamin Schroeder is Vice President, Head of Global Regions & MEA Communications, Siemens, since May 1, 2017. Prior to that, from December 2015, he looked after 15 countries in the Middle East.

His career with Siemens spans 15 years, working across different business divisions and across continents, from the Americas to Europe and Asia. In his current role, Schroeder is responsible for major growth hubs such as Egypt, the UAE, Qatar and Russia. Before taking on this position, Schroeder was the Head of Communication Services at Siemens in Munich, where he led a team of about 100 people across Germany, China, the US and the Middle East.

Since joining the company in 2002, he held several other positions, including Regional Manager of the Automation and Drives Division at Siemens for Canada, Mexico and Central America. During his time in Beijing, China, Schroeder was responsible for business development, marketing and strategy for Drives Technology, part of the company's Industry Sector at the time. After that, he moved to head marketing and communications for the entire Industry Sector across North East Asia, headquartered in Beijing.

Schroeder graduated in 2002 from the International Management School Bad Malente in Germany with a diploma in International Economics. Besides work, he enjoys sports and traveling.



Camilla D'Abo

Strategic Consultant

Camilla d'Abo, a recognized business leader with more than two decades of experience in marketing and strategic communications in the Middle East. Having lived and worked in Dubai for nearly 40 years, Ms. d'Abo possesses a unique knowledge of the region and brings exceptional credentials and reputation for managing global brands and meeting client needs for integrated communications strategies.

In 2004, Ms. d'Abo co-founded one of the region's most innovative integrated communications agencies—DABO & CO.—and over 12 years, the business grew to become a 80-strong team, representing some of the world's leading brands including Marriott, Ritz-Carlton, BMW, Rolls-Royce, Nike and HSBC. The business achieved multiple accolades for its quality of work, including being named the 2012 Agency of the Year in the medium-sized agency category by the Middle East PR Association (MEPRA), with Ms. d'Abo being chosen as the 2014 Entrepreneur of the Year at the Gulf Capital SME Awards. In 2015, the Dubai Government chose DABO & CO. as one of the top 100 performing small and medium enterprise in Dubai and the company was ranked second in the category of Human Capital for its delivery of excellence in company culture and human resources. Camilla was most recently the managing director of APCO Worldwide's Dubai office.

Prior to joining APCO, Ms. d'Abo served as an executive director for Sport In Life Distribution—a retail distribution company based in Dubai—overseeing the firm's transition to B2C channels and developing crucial customer engagement strategies, including the launch of an e-commerce platform and the adoption of an omnichannel operational model.

Her other personal accomplishments include being awarded the Chairman's Award in 2017 by MEPRA and being ranked as one of the Top 50 Brits in the UAE in 2013 and 2015 by Arabian Business magazine. Ms. d'Abo started her career in corporate finance, having worked in asset management for Credit Lyonnais Rouse UK and for the chief economist of Bankers Trust Australia.



Erica Pettit Alkhfaji

Group Head of
Corporate
Communications,
Orascom Development

Erica is Group Head of Corporate Communications & Brand at Orascom Development, a leading international developer of vibrant, integrated communities in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In this role, Erica leads a broad agenda integrating Orascom Development's Corporate Brand, Public Relations and Internal Communications in support of our business objectives.

Erica has more than 20 years of experience in strategic communications leadership roles where she was responsible for building reputations and brands. Most recently, Erica was Head of Corporate Communications at ADQ, the Abu Dhabi-based investment and holding company mandated to accelerate the Emirate's transformation to a knowledge-based economy, where she was responsible for creating the Corporate Communications function. Prior to ADQ, Erica was part of Visa's Corporate Communications regional team for Central & Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa. She previously worked with communications consultancies in MENA and the US where she developed and executed integrated communications programs for companies such as Bloomberg, Brookfield, CFA Institute, The Coca-Cola Company, Google, PwC and Ooredoo Group.

Erica holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Bradford in the UK and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of California, San Diego in the US.



Euan Megson

Managing Director,
Action Global

Euan has over 16 years' experience in the Middle East media landscape, working across the industry's triumvirate of agency, press and client-side businesses.

He has led fully-integrated campaigns for a diverse range of industry-specific clients across sectors including aviation, property, tourism, sport, retail, technology and finance.

As the Managing Director of Action Global Communications' MENA hub in the UAE, Euan is spearheading the independent group's evolution from a traditional Public Relations consultancy into a leading regional provider of fully-integrated communications services.



**Farah Imad Al
Alami**

**Chief Communications &
Marketing Officer, Abu
Dhabi Stem Cells Center**

Farah I. Al Alami is the Chief Communications & Marketing Officer at Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Center (ADSCC). She has more than 19 years' experience in communications and marketing in the region, with special focus on healthcare. In recognition of her efforts in the PR industry, she was listed in 2019, 2020 and 2022 as one of the top most influential communications and PR professionals in the Middle East in the Power Book of PR Week, UK. She was also listed in the Arabian Business list of 40 under 40 seasoned leaders and young executives in 2019, Arabian Business list of GCC Young Achievers in 2021 and 2022, and Arabian Business list of 30 under 40 in 2023.

Prior to joining ADSCC, Al Alami was the Chief Marketing & Communications Officer at NMC Healthcare. From 2016 until 2021, she served as the Chief Marketing & Communications Officer at United Eastern Medical Services (UEMedical) and its subsidiaries including Danat Al Emarat Hospital, HealthPlus, Moorfields Eye Hospital Abu Dhabi and several projects in KSA. Farah then moved temporarily to Mubadala Health as Senior Director, Communications & Marketing as part of Mubadala Health's acquisition of UEMedical in 2021. From 2013 to 2016, Mrs. Al Alami served as the Regional Director of Communications & PR in Middle East & Turkey for US-based Cleveland Clinic, and early in her career she worked at Sheikh Khalifa Medical City for more than seven years.

Al Alami is also an elected Board Member at the Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA) since January 2016, and a MEPRA Awards Judge since 2019. She has served as a committee member in the Women in Business Committee under the American Chamber of Commerce Abu Dhabi (AmCham Abu Dhabi) from 2017 - 2019. She was also invited to present segments in a weekly medical TV show (Fi Baytina Tabeeb) on Abu Dhabi TV Station from 2012 to 2014 to promote healthy lifestyles.

Aside from the corporate world and in her free time, Farah dedicates her time to promote reading. She uses her Instagram account to document her reading journey. She has also co-founded "Al Alami Book Club" with her cousin in 2020, attracting over 800 members/readers from across the globe.

Al Alami holds an MBA (with distinction) from New York Institute of Technology (NYIT), and a bachelor's degree in Marketing from the Yarmouk University in Jordan. She has also earned a Certificate in Leadership Principles from Harvard Business School Online in January 2023.



Henry Jakins

Head of Special
Projects, Marketing,
Travelport

I have what may just be the best job at Travelport – leading the R&D behind major global marketing moments such as campaigns, events and more. In the role, I'm proud to have worked with our brilliant in-house marketing and communications teams to deliver multi-award-winning campaigns including The Forgotten Code, which doubled the number of requests for support for intellectually disabled travelers globally, and Brand the World, which put our new brand literally into the hands of thousands of employees.

Prior to my current role I was Head of Global Communications, overseeing all external communications for Travelport throughout the pandemic. During my time with the company, I have also held roles including Head of Integrated Communications and Head of Communications for Asia Pacific, Middle East, Europe, and Africa.

I joined Travelport in 2017 after spending eight years at Edelman, where I worked from three of its best offices: Edelman Singapore, Edelman London and Edelman Dubai. I left the company as a Director and Client Relationship manager for one the Dubai office's largest accounts, Majid Al Futtaim. While at Edelman, I also played a key role in building out its global relationships with Shell and Aviva.

I started my career at an independent media relations agency in London. While with the company, I led a variety of B2B and not-for-profit accounts for organizations including the British Airports Authority and was presented to Her Majesty the Queen for my work with the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund.



Hilmarie Hutchison

CEO, Matrix PR

Hilmarie comes armed with multiple disciplines, mainly communications, business management, accounting, and information technology. This has served her well as CEO of Matrix PR.

Her career path has seen her play roles as an accountant, CFO and business and communications consultant in the USA, Australia, South Africa, Denmark and the UAE. Since 2008 she has been actively involved with communications, PR, Social Media and Digital Marketing.

At Matrix she wears several hats. In addition to managing the day to day operations of a small consultancy, she is also responsible for developing and implementing internal and external communications programs for the company, supporting and building the team while driving the broader business objectives, planning and strategy.

Her education includes a Bachelor's degree which she completed Summa Cum Laude at the University of Maryland, USA.



Inka stever

Assistant Dean for Student
Affairs, College of
Communication and Media
Sciences, Zayed University
Abu Dhabi

Inka Stever is Professor of Practice at Zayed University Abu Dhabi. She has been teaching at the university since 2012, where she has part of the college leadership in her positions as Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Internship Coordinator. She also served as a member of the University Standing Committee for Student Success, GlobCom lecturer and Advisor to the MEPRA Student Chapter Abu Dhabi. She has repeatedly been awarded the Merit Award of Exceptional Faculty by the College of Communication.

Her field of expertise is Integrated Strategic Communication. As Professor of Practice Inka focuses on bridging the gap between academic and the corporate world. She has mentored students in international communications competitions (GlobCOM) and worked with her student for local clients such as DU, the General Secretariat of the Executive Council Abu Dhabi (GSEC), and the UNHCR.

She started her academic career after 15 years of professional experience in public relations. At the Global Corporate Communications department of DaimlerChrysler Financial Services in Berlin, Germany, she moved from Media Relations to the role of Editor-in-Chief of the international employee newsletter, a bilingual mirror publication in English and German with a global circulation of 12,000. She also was involved in developing global communications strategies and concepts for special projects.

She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in politics and history from Ripon College, Wisconsin and her Master of Arts in North American Studies from the Free University Berlin in Germany. She is fluent in German and English.



Jamal Al Mawed

Founder & Managing
Director, Gambit
Communications

Emirati/British/Palestinian hybrid with over 14 years' experience handling the PR and Communications of multinational brands overseeing more than thirty countries, Jamal's career before founding Gambit Communications took him to senior roles at leading brands such as Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and the Dubai Properties Group.

Pioneer in Social Influencer Engagement, Al Mawed has spoken at over 20 PR and Marketing summits across the world and is a university guest lecturer, senior judge for industry panels, magazine columnist and guest radio speaker for literary book reviews.

Selected by The Holmes Report in the prestigious EMEA 'Innovator 25' list for 2019 alongside names such as Greta Thunberg, and in the PR Week Power Book 2019 & 2020, while in 2016 he was named by The Huffington Post as one of 'Ten to Watch' in the Middle East MarComms Industry. Early in his career he was the recipient of the MEPRA 'Young Communicator of the Year Award'



Lauren Fryer

CEO, MUSE.co

Lauren Fryer has worked across multiple facets of communications over 25 years of her professional career including PR, Media Relations, Marketing, Crisis Communications, Strategy Development and Event Marketing, Lauren is Muse's Founding and Managing Partner for over 13 years now. Lauren has worked with the leaders in media including BBC, CNN, Time Warner, Network Ten and ITP Publishing while based in Melbourne, London, Dubai, Qatar and now Monaco.

Establishing Muse in 2010, Lauren and her team have quickly grown the agency to a full-service marketing and communications agency, based in 5 countries, working across a variety of sectors, offering a diverse list of services. This has allowed Lauren and Muse to deliver the best in strategic planning and implementation of creative and impactful marketing and communication campaigns.

Sitting on a number of boards and taking instrumental roles with numerous organisations, Lauren not only spearheads the ongoing development of Muse but also the marketing industry in the GCC.



Louise Jacobson

Managing Partner,
Brazen MENA

MULTI - AWARD WINNING
TOP - FLIGHT PR PRACTITIONER
21 YEARS OF INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Heads up agency - founded in 2015
Overall responsibility for client satisfaction and results
Global Women in PR MENA Board Member
MEPRA Strategy Board Founding Member and Leadership Majlis speaker
PR Week Middle East Power Book 2019 - 2022
Highly Commended – PRCA MENA PR Leader of the Year
MEPRA, PRCA MENA, NextGen and Cannes Lions Awards judge
Dubai Business Women Council Member
Female Fusion Circle Member
Member of The Marketing Society
Girls Out Loud X Dubai College Mentor / Big Sister
Regular speaker and thought leader on PR and Social Media



Mara Carpencu

Vice President,
Communications,
BPG Group

Mara is passionate about using the power of communication to help businesses achieve their goals. She has over 17 years of experience in PR, marketing communications, events, and mass media, with a focus on the Middle East market.

She currently leads the Communications practice at BPG Group, where she has been managing and executing award winning communications campaigns for over 6 years. She is also a sustainability advocate and a WPP Stella MENA mentor.

Mara started her career in journalism as a TV producer and presenter before relocating to the UAE, where she held various marcoms roles for business events and exhibitions, as well as a boutique PR agency, prior to joining BPG Group.

During this time, she has worked with a diverse range of international and regional B2B and B2C clients in the Middle East, across industries such as consumer and enterprise technology, corporate and business services, fintech, real estate, logistics, retail, and more.

Mara holds a Master's degree in Mass Media and Public Relations, with a thesis in Crisis Communications. She also holds a BA in Journalism and BBA in Marketing. In addition to her professional experience, Mara is a trained stage actor and improviser, and speaks 5 languages.



Michelle Taylor

Head of Communication
Strategy & Planning,
ADNOC Distribution

Michelle Taylor is a commercially driven senior comms leader with international brand experience across a variety of industries including energy, retail, healthcare and technology working for iconic companies such as Shell, Unilever, Samsung, Marks and Spencer and Bupa to name a few.

Michelle has been in the region since 2019 working for ADNOC Distribution where she leads the comms strategy and planning, and is responsible for operationalizing comms. She has been instrumental in helping the company retain its leadership position in the UAE whilst launching in KSA and Egypt. Before this she was a senior consultant for H+K Strategies, Dubai.

Michelle's career has been split between in-house and agency for the likes of Edelman, Weber Shandwick and MS&L. Her experience includes managing reputation, thought leadership, executing complex change management campaigns, delivering high impact product launches, new market entry strategies, sponsorship activation and running 24/7 press offices.

Before the Middle East, Michelle worked predominantly in London in local and global roles collaborating with teams across the world including USA, China, India and Australia.

Michelle has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) degree in communications, is a member of the ADNOC Distribution Gender Balance Committee and Global Women in PR.



Mohaned Lafi

Managing Director,
Corporate & Business,
Four Agency Worldwide
MENA

Mohaned leads Four MENA's corporate and business division , working across sectors including aviation, aerospace, logistics, technology, energy, banking and real estate.

He leads a department that represents Airbus, the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation, Dubai Airports, UPS, Honeywell, SITA, IATA, Dubai Airshow, Wizz Air Abu Dhabi and Commvault. He has also worked for many years with Etihad Airways, Abu Dhabi Airports, Dubai Airport Freezone Authority and the Global Aerospace Summit (on five editions of the event).

Mohaned was winner of the Middle East's Young Communicator of the Year award by MEPRA in December 2015. He joined Four in November 2012 as part of the graduate trainee scheme and is part of the MENA management board.



**Natasha
Hatherall-Shawe**

**Founder & CEO, TishTash
Communications**

Natasha (or Tash as she likes to be known) has over 20 years experience in the marketing, media and PR world. Born and educated in the UK, Tash holds a PhD in psychology and marketing and has a genuine passion for people and understanding what makes them tick.

With a varied career across account management, media planning and buying, public relations and marketing, Tash's experience spans clients in many sectors, beauty, fashion, FMCG, travel, financial, retail, automotive and property. Her CV includes leading global agencies McCann Erickson Worldwide, Euro RSCG and Havas Global, and global corporations L'Oreal and Diageo.

Tash moved to the region in 2010 and having spent time working for Abu Dhabi Media, heading up marketing for a number of their brands, she took a leap of faith, setting up boutique beauty and wellness communications agency TishTash in 2012 and hasn't looked back since!

In 11 years TishTash has become one of the most sought after and respected independent agencies in the Middle East, using their know how and passion for the latest trends to create campaigns that get brands noticed, which saw them win PRCA Middle East Best Agency in 2021 and highly commended in 2022. Tash has also scooped a number of prestigious awards herself including Gulf Capital Business Leader 2021 and PRCA PR Leader 2022. The agency purposefully remains boutique in size, working selectively with the best and the brightest emerging and established brands in the industry. Current agency clients include ASICS, The Body Shop, Bath & Body Works, Kibsons, Lego, Mamas and Papas, Gap, Victoria's Secret and FACES Middle East to name just a few. 2022 saw TishTash open offices in KSA and the UK.

In her spare time (which isn't much!) Tash is working on her first novel about the media world of the Middle East and she enjoys Pilates, reading and sleep.



Olivia Ann Hennigar

Vice President, Corporate
Communications,
Mubadala Investment
Company

Libby Hennigar is the Vice President, Corporate Communications at Mubadala Investment Company based in Abu Dhabi. She is responsible for the development and articulation of Mubadala's corporate narrative and related corporate messaging across all channels and stakeholders both internal and external. Her role as the company's corporate storyteller makes her a master narrator and curator of corporate content across all media. She is the communications business partner to Group Strategy and Enterprise Risk Management and is a member of the company's ESG Working Group.

Before joining Mubadala, she spent five years as a Senior Communications Consultant based in London, where she specialized in Change Communications working with a number of global Financial Institutions and large blue chip organization in Financial Services. She was also the Marketing Manager for Lansons Communications, a strategic reputation management consultancy with offices in London and New York. Additionally, she has worked for RSA Insurance and was part of the team responsible for the global rebrand. She began her career in Publishing and holds a MSc. Media Management and qualifications from the Chartered Institute of Marketing, and the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.



Peter Jacob

**Managing Director, Current
Global, MENAT**

Located in Dubai since 2016, Pete has over 25 years' experience across the communications mix and has spent his career leading, co-ordinating and executing international campaigns for large organizations in the private and public sectors across the Middle East, Europe, UK and Africa. He specialises in driving strategic multi-channel campaigns, often involving the buy-in of multiple diverse stakeholders, to generate impactful results, developing audience-driven messaging, brought to life through an integrated communications approach, across internal and external channels.

Pete is the senior client lead on a range of multi-market and integrated programmes and also serves as one of Current's senior facilitators. He has worked with the likes of First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB), Dubai Holding Entertainment, Five Guys, Mastercard, IBM, Celgene, GM, Jumeirah Group, FIFA, GSK, Johnson & Johnson, Nespresso, SABIC and Aramco.

Specific areas of expertise include narrative, messaging and storytelling development, media and presentation training as well as creative and campaign ideas development. Pete previously led new business across EMEA for Weber Shandwick based in London, also helping establish the B2B practice. He started his career at technology agency, LEWIS PR, before joining Brands2Life. Prior to Weber Shandwick he headed up sales and marketing efforts across 11 EMEA markets at Text 100.



Roland Buerk

Senior Vice President of
Corporate
Communications,
Mubadala

Roland Buerk is Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications at Mubadala, a sovereign wealth fund managing \$284 billion in assets in the United Arab Emirates and abroad. He focuses on corporate narrative, media, data and intelligence, with a special interest in communications around responsible investing and ESG.

Roland began his career as a journalist in the UK working in broadcast news for ITN. He then joined the BBC as a South Asia correspondent covering every country in the region including India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. He lived in Bangladesh and then Sri Lanka where he reported on the last two years of the civil war. Roland was posted by the BBC to Tokyo and was Japan Correspondent during the March 2011 earthquake and the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

Roland changed careers in 2012 joining Nissan at its headquarters in Yokohama as General Manager of Corporate Communications. He was posted to Dubai by Nissan to be Senior Director running Communications in Africa, the Middle East and India.

At the end of his Nissan posting Roland stayed in the UAE by joining DP World, a Dubai-based global ports and logistics company, before moving on to Mubadala in early 2022.

Roland attended school in the UK and South Africa, and read Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham.



Rosa Bullock

Founder & CEO, Sociate
Communications

A vibrant, dedicated, and self-motivated individual, Rosa Bullock moved to Dubai in 2013 with the vision of making it big in the city. She was determined not to let any small or big hiccups get in her way! With an experience in marketing and public relations spanning both in the UK and UAE, Rosa decided to invest her expertise into opening her own company – SOCIATE LLC. Sociate is her baby and with much hard work and immense dedication it has become an agency brands want to be associated with and is gaining popularity within the region as well as internationally.

With a BA in Fashion Management and Marketing, Rosa has worked within a broad spectrum of industries and has adapted to many roles over the past years including modelling, promotions, product management, marketing manager and public relations manager. She is also very proud of being associated with some top brands within Dubai and the UK including Mulberry, River Island, Grazia, Tribeca, and Al Noor Training Centre for Persons with Disabilities (a cause very close to her heart). In addition to taking on challenging roles throughout her life, Rosa has also been a part of her family business for over three years.

Having a zest for life and being an overly passionate person, she aims to take Sociate to much higher levels and with her unique and friendly way of working, she targets to bag in many more clients in the coming years.

In her limited spare time, Rosa juggles fitness pursuits with raising her infant daughter – Ayda Grace. Amidst the diaper changing sessions and power smoothies, Rosa squeezes in intimate dinners with her partner. She is on a constant pursuit to seize the day, both personally and professionally. Always up for a productive chat over coffee, no conversation is too small for Rosa!



Rose Carbonell

General Manager,
Acorn Strategy

At Acorn Strategy, Rose has spearheaded award-winning strategies for some of the most relevant UAE government organisations, delivering marketing and communications frameworks to some of the country's most ambitious initiatives, with a specific focus on education, economic development, energy and sustainability. She has worked with most of the key Government entities in the UAE, driving strategies for strategic country initiatives.

Strategic lead for major UAE projects including Abu Dhabi Digital Authority, DoE, Department of Economic Development, Abu Dhabi Global Markets, etc.

At Reed Exhibitions, led the strategic marketing for WFES, generating \$11B in business deals, developed the launch plan for the Climate and Environment Expo & Forum, facilitated and managed program development and the marketing campaign for the Abu Dhabi Sustainable Finance Forum, designed and executed the full delegate engagement strategy and supported content production for the Future Sustainability Summit.

As a Marketing Consultant, created marketing campaigns based on individual customer journey and supervised product conception, development, and implementation of Latin America strategic plan.

At Yas Viceroy, maximized revenue and publicity opportunities and managed key marketing initiatives such as the Yas Viceroy Race Weekend 2014, the hotel's largest revenue-producing campaign of the year, surpassing profit targets by 6%.

Increased Aetna's market share within New York diverse communities by developing engagement plan through grassroots, educational efforts and community partnership, and at Aetna (Chicago), planned over 100 events, including conferences, expos engagement, sponsored events, seminars, and community-based events. Assisted the Aetna Foundation in \$800K donations annually, screening applications, selecting grants, and conducting PR activities. Planned brand activation and partnerships with key community partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce, American Heart Association, and American Diabetes Association.

At Philips Electronics, launched community/educational CSR initiatives and tripled participation in the Employee Volunteer program to 300+ participants in 2 years, winning an award from the United Nations.



Saad Abu Touq

Managing Director, Public
Relations, UAE,
Ogilvy

Saad is a highly experienced communications professional with a remarkable track record spanning over 16 years in the PR industry within the MENA region. His expertise lies in helping brands and organizations in building and protecting their reputation while orchestrating effective strategic communication strategies that resonate with the right audience through relevant platforms, to ultimately drive favorable public perception and awareness.

During his tenure at Ogilvy, where he has dedicated more than 13 years of service across three markets in the region, namely the UAE, KSA, and Jordan, Saad has honed his skills and developed a deep understanding of the regional context and communication dynamics. This rich insight has positioned him as a trusted partner to his clients, empowering them with valuable counsel on crafting and executing impactful communication strategies. His extensive portfolio spans diverse sectors, including corporate, technology, mobility, finance, tourism, and FMCG, among others.

Currently serving as the Managing Director for PR, Saad leads the Public Relations business in the UAE. In this capacity, he shapes communication strategies, optimizes business operations, driving sustainable business growth, delivering exceptional client value, and nurtures a thriving PR community across the MENA markets. In his capacity as Managing Director in the UAE, Saad also assumes a key role in overseeing the overall business operations for Memac Ogilvy in the UAE, collaborating closely with various cross-functional teams and departments.



Salem Alnuaimi

Communications Director,
Abu Dhabi Media Office

Salem AlNuaimi is an award winning communications leader with more than sixteen years of experience across UAE government.

He is currently Head of Media Relations at Abu Dhabi Media and has held the position since March 2017. He is responsible for development of the overall communication strategy and policies. Prior to this role, Salem was External Affairs Manager at Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation, At ENEC, he was responsible for driving corporate, digital, stakeholder's engagement and strategic communications.



Shaimaa El Nazer

Strategic Communications
Lead, Tamkeen

Shaimaa El Nazer is the Strategic Communications Lead at Tamkeen, managing communications of leading global and local partnerships that support Abu Dhabi's knowledge economy and civic enablement.

Shaimaa is an award-winning communications strategist with experience spanning 14 years in corporate communications, public affairs, and storytelling. Shaimaa crafted communications and brand awareness campaigns across the MENA region in diverse sectors, from energy to technology, aviation, entrepreneurship, arts and culture, higher education, and destination marketing. She works closely with C-Suite Executives to shape strategic narratives and key messages, deliver public speaking training and media coaching, and manage stakeholder engagement. Shaimaa holds a bachelor's degree in political science and is certified by CIM in Digital Marketing. She is passionate about social development, behavior change, and social impact.



Simon Buerk

Senior Vice President of
Corporate Affairs,
Emirates Global Aluminium

Simon Buerk, Senior Vice President Corporate Affairs, Emirates Global Aluminium

Simon Buerk has been in charge of EGA's Corporate Affairs Department since 2016. He is responsible for managing EGA's reputation and leading external and internal communications.

Mr. Buerk has two decades of experience in communications and journalism, much of it in the Gulf. He has worked for Shell in the United Kingdom, the UAE and Qatar, and was Head of Communications in Qatar during the construction of one of Shell's largest projects. He served as Head of Communications for Glencore, including during the period of its initial public offering. Mr. Buerk led a public relations consultancy in Dubai prior to joining the Company.

Mr. Buerk holds a Bachelor's degree in Geography from the University of Leeds, UK, and also studied at the Université Joseph Fourier in Grenoble, France.



Sophie Toh

Managing Director,
TOH PR

Starting her career as a PR Week 'One to Watch' in London, Sophie set up TOH PR in 2011 based on her previous experience at Brunswick Group and leading luxury lifestyle agency, LUCHFORD APM.

At the former, she managed high profile European cultural events and art exhibitions, sponsorships and partnerships, including Art Basel, the Tate Modern and the Venice Biennale.

At the latter, brands included high profile travel and F&B brands including Nespresso, Courvoisier, Starwood Luxury Collection and The Lanesborough. She brings her years of consumer PR experience to the team, growing the company in a dynamic fashion and taking a strategic lead on all accounts.

TOH has evolved into a full-service, award-winning consumer agency, with strong roots with major institutions and global brands. The client portfolio spans a diverse mix of retail, hospitality, tech and transportation. Sophie is the Managing Director at TOH.



Tala Abu Taha

PR Director,
Viola Communications

Currently, Tala is the Director of Public Relations at Viola Communications, heading the Public Relations division at the company, managing the PR team and providing strategic consultations to its many diversified clients in a range of different fields, including public affairs, corporate, consumer, public engagement and media relations across the UAE, MENA region and internationally.

Previously, she worked as the head of regional operation at ASDA'A BCW Global in the UAE, managing 13 offices around the MENA region, and working closely with the heads of all regional offices to manage growth, revenue, and achieve positive positioning for the entities and senior management.

Tala also worked as a Practice Director - Public Affairs at Ketchum-Raad in Dubai, leading Ketchum's team for Kuwait Airways in collaboration with the Kuwaiti government to manage its communications overall throughout its transformation strategy. Previous to this position, Tala was embedded with the Qatar Foundation in Doha as its Communication Director, a secondment arranged through the UK-based PR agency, BLJ Worldwide.

In previous roles, she has held the position of founder and Managing Director for almost 10 years of VARCC Communications and was the co-founder and Deputy Managing Director of TRACCS in Jordan in 2003.

In addition to her PR and communications experience, Tala is a respected and award-winning writer and journalist, having worked at Nox Magazine (Jordan) as Editor in Chief, and Jordanian newspapers Al Arab Al Yawm, Addustour, The Star Weekly, and Arabia.com Middle East.

Tala's skills in communications, public affairs consultation, strategic consultancy, creative solutions and business development are an integral quality that has been recognized by several organizations in Jordan, the Middle East and internationally. These include the John Smith Trust Fund Rule of Law (UK), MEPRA (UAE), Leaders for Democracy Fellowship, (Washington DC), Syracuse University (New York), International Professionals Jordan (IPJ); and many other regional and global organizations.

Tala's experience and knowledge of governmental institutions and social development programs has been finely tuned across the Middle East, having worked with Aktis Strategy UK, on the Integrated Community Security Program in the Middle East hosted in Turkey with regard to Syria. She worked with the USAID governmental institution on its SABEQ program in Jordan, in addition to Media and Capacity Building projects with MSI and Cofey - USA in Turkey for Syria. She has executed many projects within the Jordanian government's initiatives, including developing the Civil Society program and others. Tala was also part of the Japan Government International Cooperation Agency (JICA) project to build awareness and a Capacity Building program in the Baq'a refugee camp in Jordan.

Tala is an active member of MEPRA, the Jordan Forum for Business and Professional Women, and the Jordanian Press Association.



**Yasser Mohamed
Zaki**

**Strategic Communications
Expert, Sadara Chemical
Company, KSA**

Yasser is a first-class strategist who associate his work with innovative tactical solutions to always brings value to his clients based on the highest professional standards in public relations and communications. He is the 1st Egyptian to obtain the Chartered PR status and the 3rd Arab national in addition of being a Certified Media Quality Internal Auditor and a Certified PR Manager in addition to the various professional and leadership certificates he has obtained in his career journey. Yasser is a PR and Corporate Communications expert, bringing over 20 years of experience throughout the EME region. He has worked with local and global organizations in various capacities, managing diverse roles and responsibilities in communications, marketing and management.

He has an extensive knowledge across main functions including public relations, external/internal communications, integrated marketing communications, brand and reputation management, crises communication, digital communications and social responsibility.

In addition, Yasser held many advisory positions in various regional and international PR & Communications non-profit organizations. He was a Vice-Chair of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations' Energy Leadership Platform (CIPR-ELP), Council Member at the PR & Communications Association (PRCA_UK), Vice President of the Gulf Chapter for the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and currently he is a Strategy Board Member at the Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA). Also, he is a public international speaker and professional member at CIPR, PRCA, PRSA, IoIC, CIM, AMA, and IoD.

Yasser is a certified experienced PR & communications awards' evaluator who has been judging and chairing many regional and international awards, such as IABC Gold Quill Awards and MEPRA Awards.

He holds a bachelor's degree in International Business from Cairo and has started his early career in Egypt as a marketing supervisor in the real estate sector, followed by the IT sector. Prior to Sadara, he worked for EQUATE Petrochemical Co. and Kuwait National Petroleum Co. (KNPC) in Kuwait.