

MEPA'S OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage the widest possible spread of publications throughout Middle East and beyond.
- To promote and protect by all lawful means the publishing industry in Middle East
- To protect members by dealing collectively with problems.
- To cooperate for mutual benefits with other organizations concerned in the creation, production and distribution of publications.
- To promote the development of public interest in publications in association with other publishing organizations with similar objectives.
- To serve as a medium for exchange of ideas with respect to publication, sales copyright and other matters of interest.

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AL-DAKHIL PROMISES TO USHER SRMG INTO NEW MEDIA ERA

A strategic cooperation agreement has been signed between Saudi Research and Marketing Group (SRMG) and the World Association of Newspapers (WAN-IFRA).

Under the deal, WAN-IFRA would assist with SRMG's current and future projects, including new media and the group's local and global expansion plans. SRMG's Managing Director Azzam Al-Dakhil and WAN-IFRA President Tomas Brunegård signed the agreement at SRMG's headquarters in Riyadh recently.



SRMG Managing Director Azzam Al-Dakhil and World Association of Newspapers President Tomas Brunegård sign the agreement in Riyadh

Al-Dakhil said WAN-IFRA has a great deal of expertise in all aspects of the media industry, and would be the ideal partner as the SRMG embarks on its plans to add further quality to its wide array of products.

Al-Dakhil said the group plans to ensure it keeps up to date with rapid changes in the industry, including providing multimedia content on new platforms such as mobile phones.

Brunegård said WAN-IFRA was keen to develop the media industry across the globe, and that there were many opportunities to develop new markets in the region, which would necessitate training of people.

According to the agreement, the two sides would work closely to boost content with videos and info-graphics. WAN-IFRA also plans to launch specially designed training programs for staff of the group.

WAN-IFRA represents more than 18,000 publications, 15,000 websites and more than 3,000 companies from 120 countries, while SRMG is one of the largest media companies in the Middle East and North Africa engaged mainly in publishing newspapers and magazines.

SRMG has played a pioneering role in the region. Its most important publications are Asharq Al-Awsat, Al-Eqtisadiyah, Arab News, Sayidaty and Al-Majalla.

Source : Arab News

Followers & Likes: Women's Magazines

SAYIDATY Tops

Which of the region's women's magazines are performing best on *Twitter* and *Facebook*?

MediaSource has compiled (Last month) a list of the top 30 titles in terms of *Twitter* followers and *Facebook* likes.

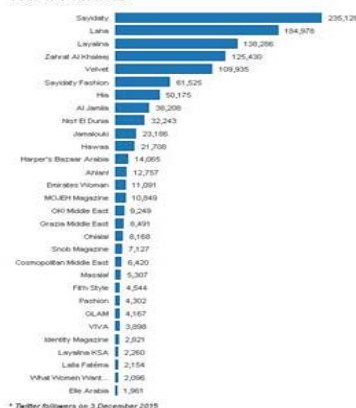
With over 230,000 followers, *Sayidaty* tops on *Twitter* followed by *Laha*, *Layalina* and *Zahrat Al Khaleej* respectively. Arabic language titles occupy nine of the top 10 places, with Sheikha Hend Al-Qassemi's *Velvet* magazine the only English title to make the top 10.

With more than 10 million likes, *Hijab Fashion* and *Sayidaty* are the leaders on *Facebook*, with Arabic magazines again occupying nine of the top 10 places. French health and beauty title *Santé+ Magazine* from Morocco is the only non-Arabic title to feature in the top 10.

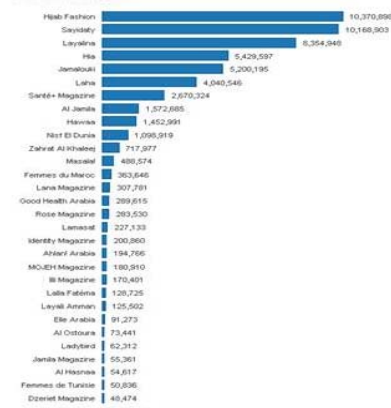
Magazine	Followers
Sayidaty	235128
Laha	184978
Layalina	138286
Zahrat Al Khaleej	125430
Velvet	109935
Sayidaty Fashion	61525
Hia	50175
Al Jamila	38208
Nisf El Dunia	32243
Jamalouki	23186
Hawaa	21708
Harper's Bazaar Arabia	14065
Ahlan!	12757
Emirates Woman	11091
MOJEH Magazine	10849
OK! Middle East	9249
Grazia Middle East	8491
Ohlala!	8168
Snob Magazine	7127
Cosmopolitan Middle East	6420
Masala!	5307
Fit'n Style	4544
Pashion	4302
GLAM	4167
VIVA	3898
Identity Magazine	2821
Layalina KSA	2260
Lalla Fatema	2154
What Women Want...	2096
Elle Arabia	1961

Magazine	Likes
Hijab Fashion	10370898
Sayidaty	10168903
Layalina	8354948
Hia	5429597
Jamalouki	5200195
Laha	4040546
Santé+ Magazine	2670324
Al Jamila	1572685
Hawaa	1452991
Nisf El Dunia	1098919
Zahrat Al Khaleej	717977
Masala!	488574
Femmes du Maroc	363646
Lana Magazine	307781
Good Health Arabia	289615
Rose Magazine	283530
Lamasat	227133
Identity Magazine	200860
Ahlan! Arabia	194766
MOJEH Magazine	180910
Illii Magazine	170401
Lalla Fatema	128725
Layali Amman	125502
Elle Arabia	91273
Al Ostoura	73441
Ladybird	62312
Jamila Magazine	55361
Al Hasnaa	54617
Femmes de Tunisie	50836
Dzeriet Magazine	48474

Twitter Followers



Facebook Likes



WAN-IFRA'S 11TH MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE

WAN-IFRA's 11th Middle East Conference on February 24th and 25th 2016 in Dubai provides publishing executives with an excellent opportunity to discover the latest regional and international top trends and best-practice ideas.

Hear about The Internet of things, Virtual reality, ad blocking, wearables, 3-D Printing, new and emerging business models for newspaper printing companies just to name a few.

TITLE : WAN-IFRA'S 11th MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE

DATE : 24th —25th FEBRUARY 2015

LOCATION : INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL, DUBAI FESTIVAL CITY, UAE

FOR MORE DETAILS : WAN-IFRA.ORG/MEC2016

FIPP MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA 2016

The 2-day programme will bring together leading international, regional and local speakers from inside the magazine media and related industries who will provide delegates with a view on key developments and trends globally and in the Middle East and Africa region specifically. Delegates will leave with a deep insight into media in the Middle East and Africa and will be able to benchmark opportunities and developments against international trends.

TITLE : FIPP MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA 2016

DATE : 10th —11th FEBRUARY 2016

LOCATION : HABTOOR GRAND - DUBAI—UAE

FIVE PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF PUBLISHING

More than a month after the public release of Apple's iOS 9, each day is bringing new surprises, dramas and lessons for the digital media world. We've accelerated towards an ad blocking apocalypse thanks to iOS 9, failed to see the rollout of the Apple News app in the UK (though you [can access it](#) if you really want to), and seen the launch of its rival [Facebook Signal](#).



We've also witnessed the sudden rise and equally sudden disappearance of [ad blocking app Peace](#), with Apple now also [removing some ad-blockers](#) that it deems to pose a security risk to users.

The latest analysis shows that iOS 9 adoption is happening [at record speed](#), so publishers need to move quickly to take advantage of Apple's software shakeup and adapt accordingly. Outside the Cupertino universe, there are some wider trends in the media that they should also be planning for. Below are a few key changes which are set to hit the publishing world in the near future.

1. There will be more deals between publishers and tech companies :

The desire for hits, impressions and revenue is rapidly pushing news companies into the arms of the social giants. We're at a stage where venerable global brands such as the New York Times and the Guardian are partnering with [Facebook](#) and Apple. They're upstarts when it comes to news, yes, but their massive user bases are enticing publishers with promises of millions of newer and (crucially) younger readers.

With Apple's News app – which aims to combine the immersive design of a print magazine with interactivity of digital media – Apple has seen this opportunity, and by the time of its announcement, it could already boast 50 different publisher partners in the US. This wouldn't have happened five years ago, but forward-thinking media companies are now much more open to this, as they see social as a way of monetising content – it's effectively a new distribution channel. We'll have to wait for the appearance of [Apple News](#) in the UK to see the lasting effects on publishers here.

2. Apple faces a tough fight with Facebook

Companies like Apple and Facebook have huge, incredibly rich data sets, allowing them to craft content portals that will keep millions of users within their walled gardens. While the barrier to entry for a consumer is very low for Facebook, the bar is slightly higher for iOS devices. And while there are plenty of iOS users out there who can be reached through Apple's News app, the problem is that Apple hasn't really solved the thorny problem of app engagement yet. [Most people use very few of the apps](#) that they have on their handset, so while the News app is all very well, are people going to use it regularly?

Apple's battle with Facebook and deals with tech companies will shape the face of the publishing industry in the coming years.

Meanwhile, networks like Facebook and Snapchat [have engagement nailed down](#) - users are coming back repeatedly and dwelling for a long time while they're there. And in the past few months, Facebook [has overtaken Google](#) as a traffic source for news content. One of the predominant reasons for this is the highly personalised nature of social networks, and publishers looking to create compelling experiences through these platforms will need to bear this in mind.

3. All content will be personalized :

Networks like Facebook enable publishers to better know their audience, and then deliver the right content for that person at the right time. There has been a lot of experimentation with personalisation from media companies, but consumers looking for personalised news feeds often turn to tools like Feedly and Flipboard. This reflects the fact that in the news space, no one has really nailed personalisation yet.

Apple's News app, with its emphasis on a personalised experience, may well change this. Looking at the entertainment space, Netflix and Spotify are just some of the players that have mastered this on-demand, personalised model and proved that it works. (It's worth noting that Google experimented with personalised news feeds with Google Reader, but it [closed down in 2013](#) – a possible hint that achieving this will not be straightforward.)

4. Quality journalism will continue to thrive; paywalls may prosper

The frantic hunt for clicks is consuming traditional media outlets, forcing them to think about omnichannel strategy and online engagement rather than their unique selling point – quality reporting. Too many have tried to create content for content's sake, despite competing against native platforms like BuzzFeed that have far more direct expertise in that world.

The publishers targeting the professional market are faring better, though. You only have to look at the success of the Financial Times, which has seen its recent profits grow after [increasing subscriptions by over 21% in 2014](#). Business news outlets are also, by and large, less reliant on clickbait: more often than not, the news they publish will be read because it conveys critical information, rather than because its readers are idly browsing the web for any old content to consume. This engenders loyalty among a readership, a valuable commodity in today's cut-throat media landscape.

Content creators have to think creatively, yes, but those predicting the death of quality journalism are wrong. There's certainly a place for high-quality, longform journalism in this brave new web, though publishers need to think about how they utilise social media to share this content quickly and efficiently.

5. New media companies will continue to attract investment

Concerns have been raised as to how attractive new media companies will be as investments [should there be another economic slump](#). However, the fundraising activities of some of these organisations in recent years ([Thrillist](#) raised \$54m recently, for example) mean that they are able to be very agile when it comes to finances and operations – an alien concept to many traditional media organisations, who have relied on staid proprietor models for decades. The [acquisition of Business Insider](#) by media giant Axel Springer for \$343m is indicative of a need for different business models for monetising – BI Insights is the money-making jewel in their crown.

New media is showing old media how it's done, not just with innovative business models, but by constantly experimenting with the types of content they offer. Consumers will always want content, but what more established publishers need to think about – and learn from new media companies – is how it is consumed and where it is consumed. Apple has addressed some of these issues with its iOS9 update, but there is a lot further to go. Those who are true innovators will be able to monetise their content, and should be attractive investment opportunities.

WHO WILL WIN THE PUBLISHING BATTLE IN 2016? EARLY PREDICTIONS FOR WHAT'S NEXT

2015 was an eventful year in the publishing world: Vox acquired Re/code, Vox and BuzzFeed raised \$200 million from NBCUniversal respectively, Vice Media received a \$200 million investment from Disney and partnered with HBO on a multi-year programming agreement, Facebook launched Instant Articles to natively host publishers' content, and Apple launched Apple News.

This year, we're going to see even more changes and innovations in the publishing space. As the CEO of a publishing technology platform for digital media companies, here are a few trends I predict to be big this year:



Smarter Platforms Will Emerge :

Data, data, data: this year it will all come down to who has the best data and who can use it the best. The digital media industry is littered with so many vanity metrics, and companies that using more integrated approaches to dissect their audience and offer truly personalized content will be sitting in a much better position.

Take for example WordPress: while it has proven to be an amazing tool for bloggers, its data simply isn't effective for true digital media publishers. There is a lot of innovation happening from a platform perspective; just look at [Matter.vc](#) and some of the companies that have come out of this digital media accelerator program.

Publishing Investments Will Increase :

We're seeing a lot of investors and prominent players getting behind the companies that have most successfully leveraged new models to monetize content — proving that content is still king. However, it's not the same as before: it used to be that the companies creating the best content would get all the traffic and win. Nowadays, it's the *platforms* that own that content.

This past year was a hot year for digital media mergers, acquisitions, investments and partnerships, but 2016 is already shaping up to be an even bigger one. We're already seeing companies like [Axel Springer raising its revenue forecast](#), because it is experiencing rising sales of digital ads for the media companies in which it invests.

Social Networks Will Change the Game :

Social networks already have a steady stream of regular visitors, and the influx of new forms of content is what's keeping them around for even longer. While [Twitter TWTR -6.25%](#) and [Google GOOGL -5.58%](#) are attempting to make news sharing instantaneous and in real time, Facebook appears to be more interested in creating a hub for publishers with its new platform, [Instant Articles](#). The feature has launched in several countries already, but it has received [mixed reviews](#) as many websites are concerned that they will not receive high traffic from publishing through the feature.

Traditional Publishers Will Announce New Acquisitions and Partnerships

Many traditional publishers continue to struggle to transition their content to modern day publishing platforms. Some publishers are tapping into major tech companies to increase the reach of their content; however, this poses some major issues since the publishers no longer own the content and the overall experience can be impacted. [TIME Inc. CEO Joe Ripp called Apple News a disappointment](#), claiming the company's news aggregation app hadn't lived up to its ad revenue promise.

Publishing Communities Will Proliferate :

Despite the competition with the big players in the publishing space, there will be more and more publishers building models tailored to specific audiences. Some publishers just happened to stumble upon massive growth because they were providing great content, but now, we're seeing more companies building smart publishing models catered to these specific targets.

Smaller publishers are also springing up, building niche communities from a core group of followers. [HelloGiggles](#), for example, was purchased by [TIME](#) and has created a "positive community for women." [Huzza](#) is place for musicians to connect with their fans and live stream performances, and [Motherly](#) supports Millennial women with expert information and mom-to-mom inspiration on their journey to motherhood. Just as with all industries, the digital media market will become more verticalized as the industry becomes more sophisticated.

Modern publishing platforms are getting big enough to either acquire other valuable media properties to roll those offerings into their platform, or partner with other major content creators to create a symbiotic relationship. Companies like Vice Media, Vox, Huffington Post and others are continuing to innovate and are bringing on content producers like NBC and HBO to further add value as we look ahead to what major changes will happen later this year.

Source : Forbes



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Middle East Publishers Association MEPA is a FZ. LLC organization with the motto of building a society of publishers that will think and act for the benefits of the publishing industry.

The aim of MEPA is to serve, promote and protect the interest of press and electronic publishers, whilst raising the future standards of the publishing industry in the Middle East.

**WE ARE ON THE WEB :
WWW.MEPA.CC**