



RETAIL
CONGRESS

YEAR OF
REINVESTMENT

RETAIL CONGRESS MENA 2023

POST EVENT REPORT

THE YEAR OF REINVESTMENT

Foreword

In an era marked by rapid change and unparalleled challenges, the Retail Congress MENA 2023, held at The Ritz Carlton Hotel DIFC, Dubai, deeply resonates with the current global retail landscape: "The Year of Reinvestment." This not only encapsulated the essence of our times but also paved the way for a forward-thinking dialogue among the brightest minds in the retail industry.

Embracing a New Era of Retail

2023 has been a pivotal year for the retail sector. It's a year where reinvestment has become more than a strategy; it's a necessary pivot towards sustainability, innovation, and long-term growth. In The Year of Reinvestment, we encourage retailers to think beyond conventional boundaries and invest in their future. This investment is not just financial – it's about investing in people, technology, and processes that redefine how retail operates.

Envisioning Growth and Innovation

The Retail Congress MENA 2023 provided a platform for industry professionals to explore the myriad ways in which reinvestment can transform their businesses. From expanding into new markets and renovating existing stores to adopting cutting-edge technologies and enhancing customer experiences, the congress showcased the limitless possibilities that reinvestment offers.

Networking and Collaborative Growth

The event became a hub for networking, deal-making, and sharing innovative ideas. Retail professionals from across the MENA region and beyond gathered to forge new partnerships, learn from each other, and set new benchmarks for the industry.

Looking Towards a Brighter Future

As the retail sector moves forward, The Year of Reinvestment represents a continuous journey rather than a solitary milestone. It's an ongoing narrative for every retailer who aspires to excel in a rapidly changing market. The insights and discussions ignited at the Retail Congress MENA 2023 are the initial steps towards what promises to be an exhilarating era of industry-wide transformation and prosperity.

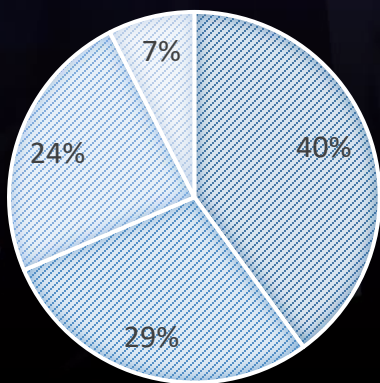
ATTENDANCE & ENGAGEMENT

Insights from Sensormatic Footfall Data

The Retail Congress MENA 2023, utilizing advanced footfall tracking technology provided by Sensormatic by Johnson Controls, offers a detailed perspective on attendee engagement over the two-day event. This data encompasses various aspects of the congress, including conference sessions, networking events, dealmaking opportunities, the exhibition, and the awards presentation.

Overall Number of visitors
from over 40 countries:

7,604

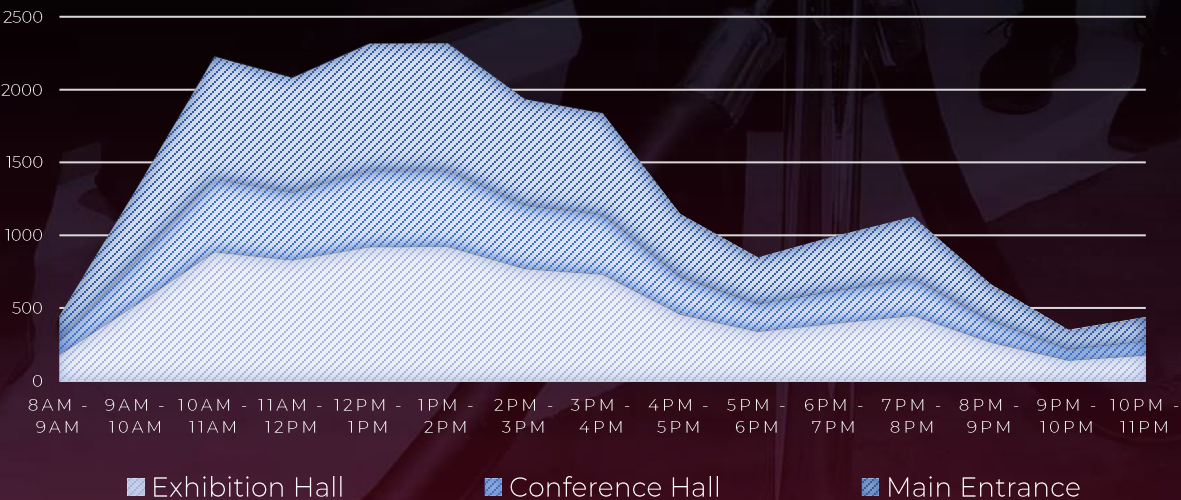


- Shopping Centres
- Retailers / Operators
- Service Providers
- Others



CLICK THE ICON TO
DOWNLOAD
ATTENDEES PROFILE

ENTRY POINTS FOOTFALL TRAFFIC



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE HIGHLIGHT

Doug Stephens: Mastering the Future with Innovation

Technologies Driving the Future of Retail

Doug Stephens – The Retail Prophet highlighted the dynamic changes in the retail industry, emphasizing the need for adaptability amidst emerging technologies, evolving consumer behaviors, and economic uncertainties. Discussions centered on the integration of robotics and AI in retail, focusing on their application in logistics, supply chain management, and customer service, while stressing the importance of human oversight to maintain creativity and ethical standards. The session also demystified the roles of the metaverse and blockchain, projecting their practical applications in authenticity verification and supply chain transparency. Concluding on a poignant note, the importance of maintaining empathy and humanity in technological advancements was underscored, advocating for a balanced approach where technology enhances rather than replaces the human element in retail.



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE HIGHLIGHT

Sonja Piontek: Unleashing Potential Beyond Boundaries

Leaving the Comfort Zone: Soaring to New Heights

Sonja Piontek's session was a masterclass in embracing change for transformative growth. Drawing from her global experiences, she illustrated the profound impact of stepping beyond comfort zones. Her emphasis on seizing opportunities, adopting a solution-focused mindset, and the power of determination offered practical strategies and inspirational insights. Sonja highlighted the importance of building strong customer relationships, turning customers into fans, and the collective celebration of successes.



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE HIGHLIGHT

Sam Rad: Envisioning the Future of Human-Centric Technology

Understand How the Retail Industry is Set to Benefit from the Coming Technologies

Sam Rad's presentation revolved around the dramatic technological evolution in society and its cultural impact. Trained as an anthropologist, Sam provided a unique perspective, focusing on how technologies shape culture rather than on economic trends. The session traced the journey from the early use of maps to the rapid advancements in blockchain, AI, and the metaverse, emphasizing the accelerating pace of change. Sam discussed the transformation from traditional supply chains to demand chains, foreseeing a future of personalized, on-demand production. The talk also highlighted the evolution of retail spaces, advocating for harmonizing commerce, leisure, and culture. She stressed the importance of embracing change, recognizing paradigm shifts, and, most importantly, celebrating humanity instead of replacing it with technology. This futuristic vision paints a picture of a world where technological advancements enhance human experiences and interactions, rather than diminish them.



CONFERENCE 1-ON-1 INTERVIEWS



Repositioning City Walk: A Case Study in Picking the Right Tenant Mix

Shahram Shamsaee, CEO of Merex Investment Group LLC revealed a transformative approach to retail and living spaces, marking a shift from traditional enclosed shopping malls to dynamic, mixed-use, open-air environments. Embracing an innovative High Street concept with a blend of indoor facilities and town squares, Shahram outlined the successful reconfiguration of City Walk. This includes the strategic move away from retail-heavy models towards diversified services that cater to health, education, and lifestyle needs, thereby increasing occupancy and creating a robust community hub.



Evolving Retail Spaces for Tomorrow

Fahad Ganem, CEO of Majid Al Futtaim - Retail, highlighted the evolution in retail strategy from traditional leasing models to a nuanced approach of space curation, attuned to changing consumer behaviors and market demands. The session focused on the necessity for a comprehensive digital overhaul, cultural adaptation, and an intensified focus on customer experience within the retail sector. Emphasizing data-driven decision-making, Fahad called for stronger collaboration and transparency between retailers and landlords to create environments that are profitable and consumer-centric, highlighting the industry's shift towards creating immersive, lifestyle-oriented retail destinations.



The Empowerment of Vision 2030

Alison Rehill – Erguven, CEO of Cenomi Centers shared insights on CENOMI's alignment with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, focusing on three critical pillars: thriving economy, vibrant society, and ambitious nation. CENOMI's strategy revolves around diversifying the economy beyond oil, generating employment opportunities, and enhancing women's participation in the workforce. CENOMI is at the forefront of retail innovation in the Kingdom, with three major projects known as the 'Jewels,' designed to elevate customer experiences through luxury offerings, entertainment, and a diverse tenant mix.



Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 Transformation

Meshaal Bin Omairh, Group CEO of Al Othaim Investment unveiled Al Othaim's ambitious transformation strategy, evolving from traditional mall development to pioneering large-scale mixed-use projects and urban planning in Saudi Arabia. This strategic shift aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, focusing on improving the quality of life and creating substantial job opportunities. The strategy involves 23 significant projects, reflecting a commitment to fostering vibrant, diverse communities. Meshaal aims to complete these projects by 2026, injecting new vitality into Saudi Arabia's urban landscape.

CONFERENCE STAGE SPOTLIGHT



Re-Igniting Shopping Places and the 4-Pillars of 'Future Readiness' - How can we Respond to Rapidly Changing Audience Expectations

This session at Retail Congress MENA 2023 examined the swift transformation of the retail industry, advocating for a paradigm shift towards experiential and community-driven spaces. Dubbed "Retail Darwinism," this shift recognizes the Internet's role not in the demise of physical shops but in their evolution into centers for unique consumer experiences. The discussion pivoted around placemaking anchored in cultural understanding rather than architectural design, proposing that retail's future hinges on content and community engagement over mere transactions. Identifying modern consumers as "Generation C," characterized by their demand for control, connectivity, and a contradictory mix of values, the talk emphasized creating spaces that cater to community rhythms by integrating diverse lifestyle elements. A forward-thinking concept presented was the idea of retail spaces as interactive media platforms, altering traditional revenue models towards data-driven strategies. Proposed metrics for future retail success included engagement, surprises, and dwell time, urging a departure from sales-centric assessments. In conclusion, the presentation called for retailers to embrace innovative strategies, focusing on cultural relevance and consumer behaviors to develop engaging, adaptable, and future-ready retail environments.



The Future of Places People Love

In this insightful panel discussion, Ibrahim Ibrahim, from Portland Design, and Gerard Groener, with extensive experience in managing billion-euro asset portfolios, delved into the evolving landscape of retail and placemaking. They emphasized the importance of understanding audiences beyond their role as consumers, advocating for a citizen-first approach to create destinations people love. The key is to view retail spaces not merely as transactional zones but as community hubs incorporating diverse elements like co-working spaces, healthcare, and education. The conversation highlighted the cultural shift needed within the retail real estate industry, urging the introduction of new skills and perspectives. This shift is seen as essential for creating sustainable revenue and adapting to changing consumer behaviors, where physical retail spaces serve as media platforms rather than just transactional venues. Gerard and Ibrahim stressed the importance of long-term strategies over short-term gains and discussed how embracing change requires strong leadership and a willingness to adapt. They also touched on the challenges of balancing the need for profit with the desire to create meaningful community spaces, suggesting innovative approaches to monetization that go beyond traditional leasing models.

CONFERENCE PANEL INSIGHTS



F&B Repositioning: Challenges and Opportunities

- Phil McArthur CSM, CDP, CRX – Chairman, McARTHUR Retail Development Specialists
- Will Odwarka – CEO, Heartatwork Hospitality
- Lee Talbot - Director, Retail Portfolio, Roshn

This discussion, panelists explored the evolution of F&B in retail, from a minor element to a key anchor in shopping centers. The focus was on the need for memorable experiences in F&B, not just expansion. Emphasizing human-driven experiences, they highlighted the importance of catering to customer needs and creating genuine connections. The shift towards mixed-use community projects, informed by customer feedback, was also discussed.



Unlocking the latest marketing trends. Today's Innovations in Promoting Retail

- Myf Bagnold – CMO, Cenomi Group
- Dan Finley – CEO, Debenhams
- Koral Ibrahim - MD, The Ready House
- Nada Abou Saab – Co-Founder, FIKRA

This session highlighted influencer marketing's rising trend, particularly in Saudi Arabia, as a shift from traditional methods. Collaborative commerce was discussed, focusing on partnerships with platforms like Amazon and Facebook. Another key point was shopping centers evolving into brands themselves, requiring holistic placemaking and marketing approaches. The importance of data-driven strategies to engage consumers effectively was emphasized.



Leverage Technology and Entertainment to Drive Innovation in Retail Development and Operation

- Rachel Kidwell – CEO, TCPinpoint
- Ilona Rose - Head of Retail, Adelaide Airport
- Mohamed Attia – General Manager Entertainment Division Al Hokair Group

The panel focused on the importance of technology in retail and entertainment sectors. Tools like Revit and Pinpoint were mentioned as crucial in project delivery. The role of immersive technologies like AR and VR in enhancing customer engagement was highlighted. For future trends, an increase in hybrid developments and tech-driven efficiencies was predicted, emphasizing the necessity of continuous reinvestment in retail assets.



Technology in Retail Real Estate

- David Macadam - CEO MECS+R
- Cem Eric - CEO, ESAS - Istanbul, Turkey
- Said Haider - Senior Director, Yardi

The discussion centered around the transition from paper-based systems to sophisticated data analytics platforms. The panel emphasized the importance of centralizing data for predictive analytics and improving operational efficiencies. A key point was the need for real-time data analysis to make quick, informed decisions. The discussion also touched on the cultural shift required within organizations to fully embrace digital transformation, not just as a project but as an ongoing process that involves the entire organization.

EXHIBITION AND NETWORKING

At the heart of our vibrant exhibition, a diverse array of industry leaders and innovators from the retail real estate sector has come together to showcase their latest offerings and developments. Booths filled with representatives from prominent companies based in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, among others, offer attendees the opportunity to engage with a wide spectrum of businesses—from established giants to emerging game-changers. Each exhibitor presents unique insights, services, and technologies that propel the retail landscape forward, highlighting trends and solutions that cater to the dynamic nature of consumer needs and market demands.



34
EXHIBITORS



STRATEGIC DEALMAKING SESSIONS

As a pivotal part of Retail Congress 2023, our tailored Deal Making sessions provided a focused platform for industry stakeholders to engage in productive one-on-one meetings. With private rooms and exhibition booths serving as conduits for collaboration, participants capitalized on the opportunity to forge significant partnerships and close deals.



90+ CONFIRMED MEETINGS



110+ ROBUST INTERACTIONS

AWARDS & RECOGNITION IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL 2023 AWARD WINNERS!!!

The Middle East Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards 2023 ceremony was a grand celebration of excellence, marking extraordinary achievements in Retail, Design and Development, NOI Enhancement, and Traditional Marketing. This event stood out as a testament to the industry's competitive spirit and high standards. Impressively, the ceremony saw a total of 191 entry submissions, demonstrating the fierce competition within the sector. Among these, 14% earned the prestigious gold award, and 29% were honored with the silver distinction, while a significant 53% progressed as finalists. This competitive nature underlines the demanding task faced by the panel of judges, who meticulously evaluated each entry, showcasing their commitment to recognizing and upholding the high standards of the retail industry.

TOTAL ENTRIES **191** GOLD WINNERS **56** SILVER WINNERS **27**



SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS: RCM 2023 MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

ZAWYA
IN 2023



Retail Congress MENA Image Courtesy: Image Supplied

RETAIL
Industry trailblazers gather at Retail Congress MENA: The Year of Reinvestment

The RECON MENA Conference, Exhibition, Deal-Making, Networking, Gala Dinner & Awards, is always a transformative experience for all participants

Press Release

October 24, 2023

Dubai, UAE – The region's top shopping mall and retail design makers converged at the Retail Congress organized by MECS+R, the largest association in retail industry, celebrating the 29th anniversary Themed "The Year of Reinvestment" at the luxurious Ritz Carlton DIFC.

The RECON MENA Conference, Exhibition, Deal-Making, Networking, Gala Dinner & Awards, is always a transformative experience for all participants. The opening speech by David Macadam CEO, MECS+R, was followed by insights from Dr Younus Al Mulla and Duail Al Ruyani of MECS+R. The event was a significant milestone in the retail industry, highlighting the importance of reinvestment in the sector.

APN NEWS

RPM Unveils Special Recon Edition Celebrating 'Year of Reinvestment' in Commemoration of 29th Anniversary of Retail Congress MENA: A Chronicle of Retail Excellence and Innovation

Published on October 23, 2023

Dubai: The Retail People Magazine, the publication arm of The Middle East Council of Shopping Centres & Retailers, proudly unveils the launch of the RPM Special Retail Congress Edition, a commemorative release aligned with the theme "Year of Reinvestment." This exclusive edition marks a significant milestone, coinciding with the 29th Anniversary of the Retail Congress MENA happening on October 23-24, 2023 at the Ritz Carlton, DIFC, Dubai.

Packed with fresh and insightful stories, the RPM Special RECON Edition delves into the dynamic landscape of retail, offering a comprehensive view of the industry's evolution. From the expansion of retail in KSA to the excellence of commercial properties in Saudi Arabia, this edition captures the essence of the vibrant retail sector.

Key Highlights include:
Insights into Retail Expansion in KSA – Discover the strategies and innovations driving the expansion of retail in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by Nasser Ghossein, Chief Operating Officer at Khim International Real Estate Development Company.
Commercial Properties Excellence in Saudi Arabia – Explore the excellence in commercial properties shaping the Saudi Arabia landscape.
Malls of the Future: Digitization and Hospitality – Navigate the future of malls, emphasizing that digitization should not overlook the warmth of hospitality.
Red Sea Mall: Elevating Jeddah's Experience – Uncover how Red Sea Mall is revolutionizing Jeddah's shopping and entertainment scene.
AI Ohain Investment Company: Revitalizing City Centres – Gain insight into AI Ohain Investment Company's efforts in revitalizing Saudi Arabia's city centers.

Along with this issue includes the Conference & Exhibition Guide for the Retail Congress Event highlighting the major sponsors and partners as well as exhibitors who will be participating in this biggest event. RECON MENA, Year of



mid east information

MECS+R Celebrates 29 Years of Retail Excellence at Retail Congress MENA: The Year of Reinvestment

October 22, 2023



Dubai, UAE – MECS+R, the largest association in retail industry, is thrilled to announce the 29th anniversary of its 29th year of excellence at the Retail Congress MENA. The event, themed "The Year of Reinvestment," celebrated the association's commitment to the retail industry over nearly three decades.

The event featured a series of presentations and discussions on the latest trends in retail. The speakers included industry leaders from various retail sectors, who shared their insights on the challenges and opportunities in the market.

Foot Locker
 AED 180.00 AED 200.00 AED 300.00 AED 420.00 AED 700.00

eye of arabia

AMAR
Celebrating Excellence: Winners of the Retail Congress MENA Awards 2023 by MECS-R

Published 1 month ago | November 16, 2023

By Eye of Arabia



The Retail Congress MENA Awards 2023, a pivotal component of the Retail Congress, illuminated the zenith of accomplishments in the shopping mall and retail industry. Hosted at the opulent Ritz Carlton Hotel in DIFC, Dubai, the gala not only acknowledged outstanding feats in marketing, retail, and design within the MENA region but also set the stage for an evening of unparalleled grandeur.

David Macadam, CEO of MECS+R, remarked, "The Retail Congress MENA Awards 2023 stands as a beacon within the conference, a moment eagerly anticipated. It has consistently played a pivotal role in spotlighting the triumphs of shopping malls and retailers in the region."

the AVENUE

DALMA MALL CELEBRATES A RESOUNDING VICTORY WITH NINE AWARDS AT MECS+R, REINFORCING RETAIL LEADERSHIP

by Arenal / Comments Off / 36 View / November 16, 2023

Dalma Mall, an iconic name in the world of retail and shopping, once again secured its prominent position in the retail shopping space by winning nine prestigious awards at the Retail Congress MENA Awards 2023. Hosted by the Middle East Council of Shopping Centres & Retailers (MECS+R), this achievement signifies a significant milestone in Dalma Mall's ongoing journey toward excellence in the retail sector.



At the Retail Congress MENA Awards, Dalma Mall was felicitated with nine awards, including four Gold Awards for Excellence in recognition of its exceptional contributions to traditional marketing. These categories include Public Relations, Cause-Related Marketing, Customer Service Excellence and Engagement, and Digital and Social Media.

Times of Oman

Mall of Muscat bags prestigious retail award at MENA 2023 ceremony

Published Monday 04 December 2023 10:07 AM

By Times News Service

THE MENA SHOPPING CENTRE & RETAILER AWARDS 2023

SILVER WINNER



Muscat Mall has been honoured with the 2023 Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Shopping Centre and Retailer Award, securing its position as a leader in traditional marketing excellence, for cause-related marketing. The distinguished event was held in Dubai, celebrating the most innovative and creative retail achievements across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Mall of Muscat's triumph in the 'cause-related marketing' category underscores its commitment to socially responsible initiatives.

The Mall of Muscat's cause-related marketing initiative was as a strategic response to Oman's post-pandemic economic challenges. Revitalising the scene in Sohar and Muscat International (SOHA) as a critical economic drive, the mall leveraged its

Trade Arabia
BUSINESS NEWS INFORMATION

City Centre Bahrain wins Gold at Retail Congress MENA 2023

MANAMA, November 7, 2023

City Centre Bahrain, the leading lifestyle and shopping destination in Bahrain, has won the prestigious 'Gold Award' for its community-driven #Bealight Ramadan campaign at the Retail Congress MENA 2023, the region's largest retail event.

The recognition was presented to City Centre Bahrain for demonstrating its unwavering commitment for uplifting the Bahraini community through its innovative and engaging Ramadan campaign – where Bahraini and residents of the Kingdom came together through the #Bealight initiative to save more than BD100,000 (\$26,504) for thousands of Bahraini citizens.



The initiative by City Centre Bahrain not only made a major positive impact on the community, but also provided the perfect platform for social entities and the public to contribute actively towards a noble cause.

#Bealight Ramadan campaign
 Organized in collaboration with the Royal Humane Society, the #Bealight Ramadan campaign attracted more than 5,000 people from across the kingdom to City Centre Bahrain to take part. It provided the local community the chance to contribute to the cause by turning on a light, with the shopping mall then donating money on their behalf – a total of 5,000 lights were lit at the #Bealight installation in the mall in support of Bahraini citizens.

Duail Al Ruyani, Mall Director of City Centre Bahrain said, "We are delighted and honoured to receive this prestigious Gold award from the region's landmark retail event, for a cause that has always remained close to our hearts. As the premier shopping, entertainment and lifestyle destination in the Kingdom, we are incredibly proud of the recognition of our role in engaging with the community through our community-driven campaigns and sharing a better tomorrow for thousands of citizens across the Kingdom. This award will certainly inspire us to create more memorable and meaningful experiences at City Centre Bahrain, the destination of choice for residents in Bahrain."

– TradeArabia News Service



TB trending BUSINESS
Insights

The Clock Towers Shopping Center is participating in the MENA Retail Congress

NOVEMBER 6, 2023

SHARE THIS: Facebook Twitter Email

The Clock Towers Shopping Center participated in the MENA Retail Congress held in Dubai to exchange expertise, conduct business deals, and diversify tenant selection from around the world.



campaign

Sahara Centre wins 2023 MENA Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards

November 16, 2023

By Jovita Kijomoyo

THE MENA SHOPPING CENTRE & RETAILER AWARDS 2023

SILVER WINNER



Sahara Centre has announced its second consecutive win at the 2023 MENA Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards.

The awards ceremony saw Sahara Centre securing two accolades for its "Take Off in Style" campaign.

In both the Digital and Social Media, as well as the Advertising categories, Sahara Centre's strategy has once again marked an imprint on the retail communications landscape.

This accomplishment serves as a testament to the Centre's resilience and the strategic expertise of its

SPOTLIGHT REEL: RCM 2023 EVENT VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS

EXHIBITION BUILD UP



FULL EVENT HIGHLIGHT



GALA DINNER & AWARDS



CAPTURED MOMENTS: RCM 2023 EVENT GALLERY



CLICK THE ICON TO
VIEW EVENT
PHOTOS



CAPTURED MOMENTS: RCM 2023 EVENT GALLERY



CLICK THE ICON TO
VIEW EVENT
PHOTOS



CAPTURED MOMENTS: RCM 2023 EVENT GALLERY



CLICK THE ICON TO
VIEW EVENT
PHOTOS



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS, EXHIBITOR & PARTNERS

PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS



SILVER SPONSORS



BRONZE SPONSORS



EXCLUSIVE SPONSORS

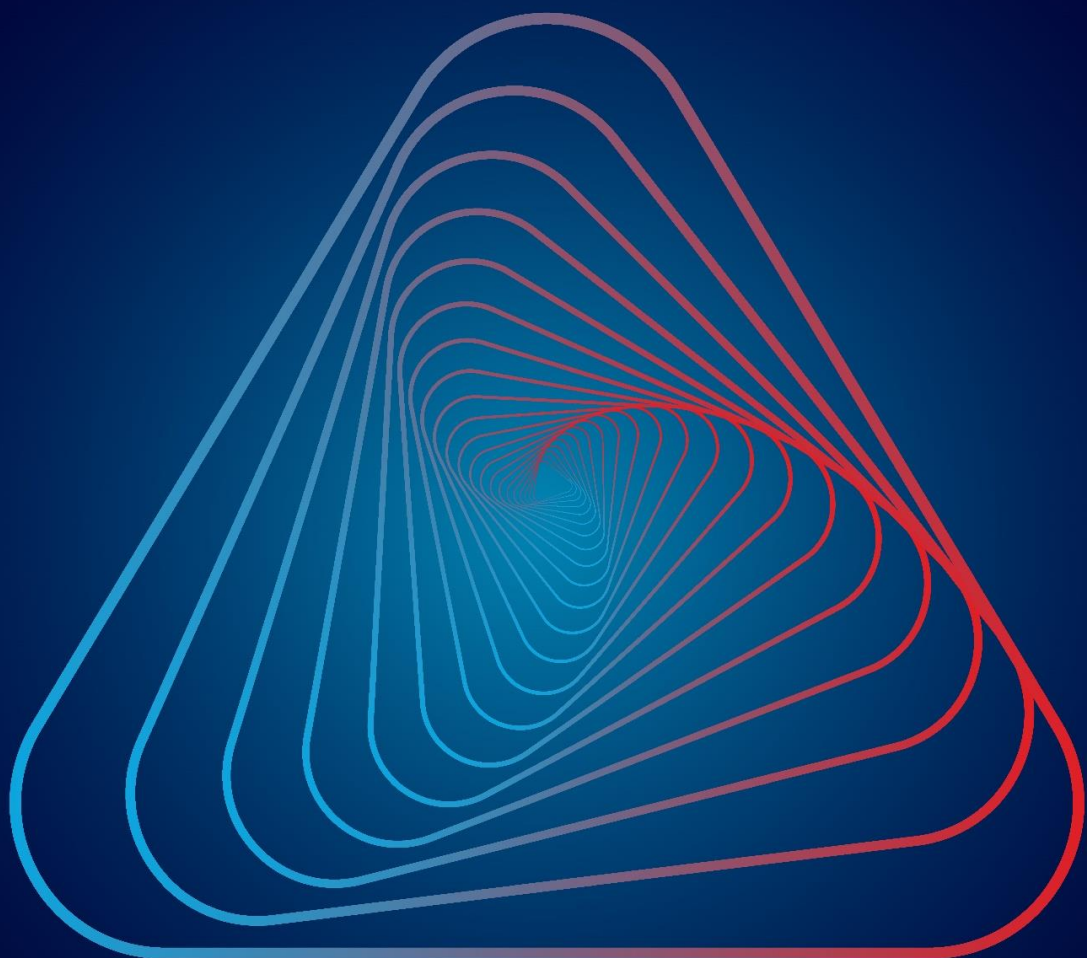


SUPPORT PARTNERS



EXHIBITORS





RETAIL
CONGRESS

GENESIS IGNITE

THE GENESIS OF VISION 2030 - REIGNITING RETAIL

RETAIL CONGRESS MENA 2024
RIYADH | SAUDI ARABIA
4-5 NOVEMBER 2024

WWW.RETAILCONGRESSMENA.COM