

DeepFest Underlines Vital Role of Female Tech Innovators for Industry and Economic Growth

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, February 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- DeepFest, the world's leading AI conference, put female tech disruptors in the spotlight on day three of its four-day run, highlighting their importance to industry innovation and growth.

Co-located with LEAP, the Kingdom's award-winning global tech event, running until 12 February at Riyadh Exhibition and Convention Centre in Malham, a number of female industry leaders and entrepreneurs took to the DeepFest stage, championing the sector's drive for gender equality.

According to a report by the World Economic Forum, it will take 131 years to close the gender gap across all sectors, and only 28 per cent of women feel confident in managing long-term financial plans, compared to 44 per cent of men. In an enlightening session titled 'Breaking Barriers: Women Leading the Charge in Tech and AI', Wafa Al Obaidat, founder and CEO of Playbook, a professional network for women in business that offers access to business and investment opportunities, shared her personal journey with money, from growing up with a fear of finances to recognising its potential as a tool for growth and empowerment.



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Wafa Al Obaidat, founder and CEO of Playbook

"When women have financial independence, families flourish, communities thrive, and entire

economies grow,” said Al Obaidat. “Companies perform better when women have access to capital, invest, and take control of their financial future. This isn’t just about fairness—it’s about smart economics and unlocking the full potential of half the world’s population.”

She also highlighted the systemic challenges women in business face towards accessing funding and financial opportunities, citing statistics on the gender investment gap and the low percentage of VC funding directed to female-founded startups. “Playbook addresses these challenges by providing a platform for women to connect, learn, and invest. We offer masterclasses, expert coaching, a startup marketplace featuring female-founded ventures, and networking opportunities designed to fit the lives and schedules of busy women.”

Annabelle Mander, Executive Vice President of Tahaluf, said: “It is truly inspiring to see all these incredible and successful women take to the DeepFest stage and so openly share their personal journeys, challenges, and successes with the industry. We are seeing a much-needed shift in how female tech leaders are being championed, and the stories coming out of the show floor this week are a testament to the importance of collaboration, connections, and dedication.”

Elsewhere, Dr Christina Yan Zhang, CEO of The Metaverse Institute, asked attendees in her session, which focused on how AI and brain-computer interfaces will power the future of entertainment, to imagine a world without phones or computers, where the digital and physical domains are accessed through thought alone, using brain-computer interfaces (BCI).

“The future of entertainment, and indeed human experience, will be seamlessly interwoven with our minds.” said Dr Yan Zhang. “Brain-computer interfaces, moving beyond their current medical applications like restoring mobility to a disabled patient, repairing vision through things like Neuralink, or treating patients with depression with a 60 per cent improvement result will become the ultimate user interface.”

Dr Yan Zhang looked at potential real-life use cases that are plausible in the future, even referencing the Marvel universe, where humans and technology have effectively become one being. “Far from the existential threat posed by AI, these advancements will empower us. Like Tony Stark and his Jarvis in the movie Ironman, we’ll each use a non-invasive BCI to connect with our AI companion, enhancing our abilities and connecting us in unprecedented ways,” she said.

“We do not need phones or computers any longer. This symbiotic relationship with AI, facilitated by BCIs, will not only revolutionise entertainment but also massively reduce the 62 billion kilogrammes of e-waste generated every year, as mentioned by the UN, ushering in a more sustainable future for all.”

For more information, visit www.DeepFest.com

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