

Bilingual Marketing Strategy Helps Western Brands Resonate in the Middle East

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, August 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As more Western brands expand into Middle Eastern markets, many still rely on word-for-word translation and recycled global assets. A more culturally fluent approach is gaining traction. This strategy rebuilds messaging from the ground up, shaped by language, behavior, and local nuance instead of being adapted after the fact.

As demand grows for regionally relevant content across MENA, this approach is being applied across sectors from F&B to automotive. It challenges the default model many brands rely on, which often centers on direct translation and visual repackaging, by shifting focus to cultural behavior first and language second.



Among the strategists leading this shift is [Afrah Asmar](#), whose bilingual framework has helped brands like Nutella, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Mercedes-Benz, Pizza Hut, HSBC, and Hyatt connect more meaningfully with Arabic-speaking consumers. Her work rethinks tone, visual style, platform behavior, and campaign timing to reflect how people actually talk, scroll, and engage across markets.

At MullenLowe MENA, Asmar localized campaigns for Nutella, Tic Tac, and Unilever's Lux and Lifebuoy, embedding Ramadan and Eid traditions into content to drive engagement. At Publicis, she adapted messaging for Mercedes-Benz in the Levant to preserve brand tone while improving cultural clarity. And at Memac Ogilvy, she led regional strategy for Coca-Cola and Hyatt, adjusting language and visual elements to reflect Gulf values.

As one of the few regional consultants with deep bilingual fluency and cross-market strategy experience, Asmar has also taken this framework into consultancy and freelance work. She developed bilingual content for HSBC and led the full Arabization of Coursera's social media marketing course. Each project required more than simple translation and demanded a bilingual ear for tone and a strategic eye for cultural nuance.

"The words might translate," said Asmar, "but tone doesn't. Humor doesn't. Confidence, warmth, urgency - they all land differently in Arabic and English. That's where most campaigns fall apart. This strategy exists to close that gap."

The framework continues to evolve through [Asmar's](#) consultancy, Memo Randoms, which helps brands navigate the language and culture divide across markets including Dubai, Toronto, Boston, and Lisbon while preserving brand identity.

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