iQIBLA's Vision: An Exclusive Interview with iQIBLA Founder Jack Shao

DUBAI, DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, September 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Jack Shao is the Founder and CEO of iQIBLA, a technology entrepreneur with nearly three decades of experience in smart hardware, mobile technology, wearables, IoT and connected devices. Since the late 1990s, his entrepreneurial journey has taken him from China to the Middle East, Africa, Europe and markets around the world. Throughout this journey, two interests have remained constant: technology and human civilization.



Jack Shao-Founder & CEO of iQIBLA



iQIBLA Brand LOGO

As a Christian, Jack's own faith has shaped his understanding of purpose, responsibility and the role of technology in people's lives. At the same time, he has developed a deep respect for Islam, Buddhism, Chinese spiritual traditions and the world's great civilizations. This combination of technology, culture and faith eventually became the foundation of iQIBLA.

A Journey Across Cultures

Jack's connection with the Middle East began in 1999. Over more than two decades, he traveled extensively and built businesses across Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Türkiye, Africa and other international markets. Unlike experiencing the region simply as an export market, Jack spent years working directly with local partners, distributors, retailers and consumers — gaining a close perspective on Muslim society and everyday life, including the

importance of faith, prayer, family and community, and the profound place of Makkah, Madinah, Ramadan, Umrah and Hajj.
As a Christian himself, Jack has always believed that understanding another faith begins with respect. His appreciation of Islam, Buddhism, Chinese traditions and other civilizations led him to focus not only on their differences, but also on shared human values: Faith. Gratitude. Remembrance. Compassion. Discipline. Family. Community. Inner peace.
Over time, this cross-cultural experience shaped one of his most important beliefs:
"Technology should respect culture and faith — rather than asking culture and faith to adapt to technology."

Nearly Three Decades of Technology Innovation
Before iQIBLA, Jack had already spent decades building technology products. Through UMEOX and other ventures, he built engineering and product teams covering industrial design, electronics, embedded systems, Android, mobile applications, cloud platforms, IoT, manufacturing and global supply chains.
His teams participated in several important waves of consumer technology — from compact mobile devices to early wearable communication products, children's connected watches and Android-based smartwatch phones. As AI and speech technologies developed, his teams moved into standalone smart translation devices, and subsequently accumulated extensive experience in IoT platforms and global connected-device services.
These years gave Jack and his teams an unusual combination of capabilities: Product Innovation · Hardware · Software · AI · IoT · Manufacturing · Global Supply Chain. But after decades of making technology smarter, Jack began asking a different question: Could technology also make people's lives more meaningful?



Building the Future of Muslim Tech



4000000 shipment celebration

2020 — The Vision for iQIBLA

In December 2020, during a period of reflection on the future of technology and humanity, the vision for iQIBLA took shape. Jack had spent decades watching technology become faster, more connected and increasingly intelligent — yet much of the industry was competing for one thing: human attention.



iQibla life APP

Jack began thinking about another possibility. What if technology could help people remember rather than distract? What if it could support prayer and spiritual practice? What if wearable technology could protect people during pilgrimage? What if health technology could help people recognize risks earlier? And what if technology could become a quiet companion to faith rather than another demand on attention?

His more than two decades of experience in Muslim markets made the opportunity particularly clear. The global Muslim community represented one of the world's largest populations, yet relatively few global technology companies were building complete technology experiences around Muslim life. iQIBLA was born from the convergence of three things: Technology. Culture. Faith. The mission was simple: Use technology to serve what matters most in people's lives.

2021 — Zikr Ring and a New Category

The first breakthrough was Zikr Ring. Dhikr — the remembrance of Allah — has been practiced by Muslims for centuries, traditionally counted using fingers or prayer beads. Jack and the iQIBLA team asked a simple product question: Could modern wearable technology support this ancient practice without taking away its simplicity and spiritual meaning?

Introduced globally in 2021, Zikr Ring combined miniature wearable technology with digital Dhikr counting, display, vibration interaction and connectivity with the iQIBLA App. The philosophy was deliberately simple: Technology should support the act of remembrance, not become the center of it.

Zikr Ring helped establish a new category of faith-focused smart wearables. Since then, the product family has evolved through multiple generations and reached millions of users worldwide. iQIBLA reported in 2026 that cumulative Zikr Ring shipments had exceeded four million units. But for Jack, Zikr Ring was never intended to remain simply a digital Tasbih counter — it was the beginning of something much larger.

RAFIQ — From a Smart Ring to a Faith Companion

The next evolution of iQIBLA is represented by RAFIQ. In Arabic, Rafiq means companion — a word that captures Jack's vision for the future of faith technology. A future wearable should not simply count. It should accompany. It should understand the rhythm of the user's day, support moments of remembrance, connect naturally with prayer, provide gentle reminders and help users understand their faith journey over time.

This philosophy is driving the development of RAFIQ OS, iQIBLA's next-generation experience for

faith wearables. With RAFIQ, the role of Zikr Ring begins to evolve: From Counter to Companion. RAFIQ OS is being developed around daily Dhikr, prayer-related experiences, personal faith records, contextual reminders and deeper integration with the iQIBLA digital ecosystem. AI will gradually extend this experience further through RAFIQ AI, exploring how AI can responsibly support learning, reflection and everyday faith without replacing qualified religious scholarship or traditional spiritual practice.
The long-term vision is clear: Your Faith Companion. Always With You.

Technology for Hajj and Umrah

Jack believes some of the most meaningful innovations begin not with technology, but with a real human problem. Hajj and Umrah provide one of the clearest examples. Millions of pilgrims travel in environments characterized by extreme heat, intense physical activity, high crowd density and unfamiliar geography. For elderly pilgrims in particular, becoming lost, dehydrated, exhausted or separated from their group can quickly become a serious safety issue.
This led iQIBLA into Pilgrimage Technology. iQIBLA's HajjBand is being developed specifically around the realities of Hajj and Umrah, combining long-duration connectivity, real-time positioning, SOS, return-to-camp guidance, group communication, Tawaf and Sa'i counting, health monitoring, heat-risk alerts, hydration and recovery reminders, and emergency assistance. The principle is the same as behind Zikr Ring: Do not begin with technology. Begin with the person and the real situation they face.

From Health Tracking to Preventive Health

Health is another important direction in Jack's vision. Today's wearables are very good at telling users what has already happened. Jack believes the next generation should increasingly help people understand what may happen next. iQIBLA is therefore expanding its wearable technology capabilities into health and preventive care — through watches, bands and connected health devices exploring continuous monitoring of heart rate, HRV, sleep, temperature, activity and recovery.
The long-term objective is not simply to generate more health data. It is to transform data into useful understanding: From Measurement to Insight. From Tracking to Prevention. This direction also connects naturally with pilgrimage safety, elderly care and everyday wellbeing.

iQIBLA Life — Connecting the Ecosystem

Hardware is only one part of Jack's vision. The next stage is to connect physical products through iQIBLA Life — a digital ecosystem connecting experiences around Prayer · Dhikr · Quran · Health · Family · Community · Hajj & Umrah. Future intelligent services can help users understand their personal journey across these dimensions while allowing iQIBLA devices to work together rather than remain isolated products. The objective is not to create another platform competing for attention. It is to build a digital layer that quietly supports Muslim life.

Building Globally, Understanding Locally

One of the most important lessons Jack learned from more than two decades in the Middle East is that there is no single "Muslim consumer." Faith connects Muslim communities around the

world, but cultures and lifestyles vary enormously — Saudi Arabia is different from Indonesia, the UAE from Egypt, Malaysia from Türkiye, Central Asia from Europe or North America.
For this reason, Jack continues to spend significant time in iQIBLA's key markets, meeting users, distributors, retailers, religious leaders, business partners and local teams. He believes meaningful technology cannot be designed entirely from a meeting room. It requires observation, listening, and above all, respect. This philosophy is guiding iQIBLA as it expands across the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Africa and global Muslim communities.
A Product Builder at Heart
Despite leading an increasingly global organization, Jack remains deeply involved in product development — from product definition and industrial design to hardware architecture, user interaction, branding, pricing, packaging and market strategy. After nearly three decades in technology, his belief remains unchanged:
"Great technology begins with understanding people."
Engineering makes a product possible. Design makes it usable. Culture makes it relevant. Purpose makes it meaningful.

The Next Chapter
Jack believes iQIBLA is still at the beginning of its journey. The first chapter was about creating a new product category. The next chapter is about building an ecosystem. Zikr Ring is evolving from a smart Dhikr counter into a Faith Companion. RAFIQ is becoming the intelligence and experience layer for a new generation of faith wearables. Hajj technology is bringing connectivity, positioning and health intelligence into pilgrimage. Health technology is moving from measurement toward prevention. iQIBLA Life is connecting these experiences into one digital ecosystem.
Together, they represent a larger transformation: From Faith Wearables to the Muslim Technology Ecosystem. For Jack, this is the natural convergence of a journey that began decades ago — across technology, cultures, countries and faiths. His goal is not to put more technology into people's lives. It is to build better technology around what people already value: Faith. Health. Family. Safety. Community.
And the philosophy behind it can be expressed in one sentence:
"Technology should not pull people away from what matters. It should help bring them closer to it."

Hanson Li
Umeox Innovation
email us here

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