

Business

Zain Platinum sponsor of Kuwait's annual 'Auto Works Show 2019'

Company keen on supporting Kuwait's entrepreneurial community

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its Platinum Sponsorship of Kuwait's Annual International Auto Products and Services Show (Auto Works Show 2019). The event, held at Kuwait International Fair - Halls 5 & 6 in Mishref, commences today (Thursday) and continues until 19 January under the patronage of the Historic, Vintage, and Classic Cars Museum and the attendance of the Amiri Diwan's Administrative and Financial Chief Abdulaziz Saud Ishaq.

Zain's support to the event comes in line with its keenness to dedicate more efforts into supporting and empowering Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, as well as taking part in such initiatives that contribute to infusing cre-

ativity within the entrepreneurial community through partnering with entities that aim at its development, especially within the automotive sector that witnesses great popularity in Kuwait.

Auto Works Show 2019 is one of Kuwait's first specialized events dedicated to the automotive market. The event aims at meeting the needs of Kuwaiti consumers by gathering large, medium, and small businesses that specialize in offering automotive products, services, and parts for various vehicles, including cars and motorcycles. In addition, the event also features car accessory providers, car care products and services, motorsports companies, and more. The event also has a dedicated

section for the authorized governmental entities that facilitate commercial relations with external companies and organizations.

Zain is aware of the important role private sector companies play in encouraging such initiatives that support the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) segment, especially that it is one of the leading national companies in the private sector. Zain's participation at this event further reflects its keenness in developing the Kuwaiti entrepreneurial community, which bursts with young talents who have vibrant ideas that offer viable solutions for the market needs.

Zain's support to this event comes in line with its core



objectives that aim at shouldering the advancement of the community as a whole on all levels, where the company reaffirms the principal of partnership through similar efforts with the aim of contributing to the further progress of national economy.

Al-Najma draw on grand prize of KD 1 million & half and draw on salary campaign

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced the organization of the mega draw on Al-Najma Account Prize in the Avenues Mall tomorrow (Friday 18/1/2019) at 7pm. The Bank's customers and non-customers are eagerly awaiting to see who will win the largest cash prize ever offered by a local bank in Kuwait and the world for KD 1,500,000. The Bank will also hold draws on "Your Salary and More" Campaign specially designated for Salary Account holders and which includes draws on "Double your Salary with Al-Tijari" prize and the luxuries Velar the new car by Range Rover.

The festival will include a number of surprises, international shows, fun activities and contests for the attendees and visitors where the Bank intends to set a Guinness World Record title for the Largest prize-linked bank account payout in the world namely Al-Najma Account and to announce the lucky winner in Al-Najma Account Draw who will win the grand prize of KD 1 million and half as well as announcing the winner in "Your Salary and More" campaign. The bank wishes the best of luck to all Al-Najma Account holders and invites its customers and the public in general to attend the festival and enjoy the shows, surprises and fun activities accompanying the announcement of the winner of the Grand Prize of Al-Najma Account and the winners in "Your Salary and More" campaign.

Sri Lanka asks IMF to revive \$1.5bn bailout

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka has appealed to the International Monetary Fund to revive a \$1.5-billion bailout suspended during the island nation's political crisis late last year, the finance ministry said yesterday.

In October, President Maithripala Sirisena sparked weeks of high political drama, even featuring brawls in parliament, by sacking Ranil Wickremesinghe as prime minister and dissolving the legislature.

Courts and the parliament subsequently held that the president's actions were unconstitutional and restored the status quo after more than seven weeks of upheaval that alarmed the international community. The crisis prompted three international credit rating agencies to downgrade Sri Lanka and the IMF to suspend its bailout program that began in 2016 — just as it was about to disburse another instalment. —AFP

New retail tools aim to solve e-commerce profit dilemma

NEW YORK: Conventional wisdom in the Amazon era holds that the lowest price wins the battle of the retailers, leading many to just about give away items to make a sale.

Yet some data suggest a more nuanced reality: while 76 percent of retailers aim to sell goods at the lowest price, only 17 percent of shoppers say price is a dealbreaker, according to Forrester Research.

That discrepancy creates an opening for retailers to recover some of their long-lost profit margins, with new software to track prices and preferences to make sure the customer gets what they want hassle-free. Consumers "want a fair price and it's not the lowest price," said Cheryl Sullivan, chief marketing officer for software company Revionics.

Revionics offers programs using artificial intelligence and data analysis to help retailers identify the best price to avoid money-losing promotions. These new tools are among the wares on display at the National Retail Federation's "Big Show" that has packed in some 37,000 visitors this week at the Jacob Javits Center in midtown Manhattan.

The annual event comes on the heels of a strong holiday shopping season that saw solid sales, but profits suffered because of the reliance on heavy promotions and free shipping. Retail share prices were pummeled last week after holiday sales reports by Macy's, Target and Victoria's Secret's

Panasonic makes cutting and blending effortless with MX-S401

KUWAIT: Panasonic's latest kitchen essential is sure to make home cooking effortless and fun - the MX-S401 Hand Blender. Powered by an 800-watt motor, the MX-S401 boasts an innovative four-blade blending system, which effectively cuts and churns the toughest ingredients, thus easily taking the hassle out of preparing a wide variety of dishes, including nutritious baby food.

Using Panasonic's advanced blade technology, the MX-S401's four-blade system delivers outstanding results at all times with its ability to finely cut ingredients.

The durable, stainless-steel blender wand can easily reach into deep bowls, pots and jars - safe for hot or cold food and beverages. Designed with safety and comfort in mind, the wand can be immersed directly into the pot

or pitcher for savory, creamy soups and even velvety smoothies.

Katsuki Nishimura - Manager, PMMAF said, "The MX-S401, with its unique four-blade blending system and handy attachments, is a must-have kitchen tool designed to help busy consumers in Kuwait reconnect with the joys of home cooking. From soups, snacks, and salads to entrees, side dishes, desserts and even baby food, preparing multi-course meal is now possible with just a single appliance."

"Panasonic has always been known for kitchen appliances with high-quality Japanese craftsmanship and the MX-S401 is a great addition to the brand's product range. It is a brilliant combination of elegant design and powerful functionality with its innovative features," commented Omar Massouh - Director, Corporate Marketing & Public Relations at Easa Husain Al-Yousifi Company.

Built for high-performance and reliable blending, the MX-S401 carries other top-notch features, among them:

- Handy Attachments - The Chopper attachment easily cuts vegetables and minces meat while the Whisk is perfect for whipping cream, cake batter and more. There is also the Cutter Holder, which serves as a cover when the blender is not in use, and as a holder while cooking.

Al-Hamra and COFE App join forces to foster coffee community in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Al-Hamra Luxury Center and COFE App, a Kuwait-based coffee-centric marketplace app, announced yesterday a collaboration aiming to foster Kuwait's growing coffee community. The initial phase of this collaboration will include organizing a Latte Art Competition at Al-Hamra Luxury Center starting January 29, 2019.

Aligning with the growing market demand on coffee in Kuwait, the "Al-Hamra COFE Competition", a latte art championship, is part of the larger coffee celebration organized over 3 days, from January 29 till 31, 2019 by Al-Hamra Luxury Center and COFE App. Contestants can register for the competition through COFE App's website (www.cofeapp.com). The winner of the championship will receive KWD 1000 cash. The event will provide coffee lovers with a unique opportunity to discover a whole new dimension of coffee making through a series of activities with mixologists and coffee specialists.

"Coffee is not just a beverage, it is a culture. There is so much to discover about coffee in addition to just consuming the beverage. In the recent years, we have witnessed tremendous growth in Kuwait, both in terms of new and exciting coffee houses, as well as people's interest in this market. The "Al Hamra COFE Competition" is our way of bringing this growing coffee community together," said Founder & CEO of COFE App, Ali Al-Ebrahim.

While the industry is rapidly growing, coffee consumption in Kuwait is rising and gaining strong attention from the consumer. The recent explosion of local coffee shops in the country has come to show the strength of demand in this market. Studies have shown that the number of coffee shop openings in Kuwait has more than doubled to reach 48 coffee shops in 2016 and 81 coffee shops openings in 2017.

"Launching this competition and partnering with COFE App were prompted by the large demand on the center's coffee shops and direction of the local coffee market. We believe that this partnership will provide a new experience to our visitors and coffee lovers to discover different concepts of this product. We have had a successful partnership with COFE App since its inception and we are sure that this partnership will influence the coffee community in

parent and others that have shifted from traditional brick-and-mortar to so-called "omni-channel" formats. This year's trade show again features the latest and greatest in robots, virtual reality and other gee-wiz gadgetry, but also plenty of tools to try to boost profitability in e-commerce, where margins are leaner than in the glory days when shopping malls ruled.

But digital commerce is no longer novel and customers have become less forgiving of delivery snafus, or promotional misfires, such as sending coupons for rock concerts to classical music fans. It means shifting the spotlight away from the product-the traditional focus of the retailer-to customer experience. "It's no longer about killer apps," said Timothy Bridges, an executive vice president at Caggemini, a consultancy. "It's about a digitally-enabled customer experience."

Strategic discounting

Revionics's software takes readings in real-time of other e-commerce vendors, analyzes price and customer data, and changes prices for individual products up to a couple of times a day if needed, a technique commonly known as "dynamic pricing."

"The key is to understand which competitor on which items makes a difference," Sullivan said.

She said many promotions fail because they are on goods that are not truly price sensitive, or because they do not lead to sales on related items that make up for the discount. For example, a promotion on a low-margin item like dog food may be wise if it boosts sales of nearby items that are more profitable, such as pet toys, Sullivan said. Software by Canadian company Acceo allows stores to keep track of customers at each stage of the sales process, from communicating with a website to ordering and picking up a product.

The program can be personalized to shoppers-a rising trend-and it tracks inventory so that customers aren't told a product is in stock when it isn't.



- Easy Speed Control - Choose the ideal speed setting - High, Pulse or Low - to match the recipe and the ingredients.

- Child Lock and 2-Step Switch - These functions prevent accidental operation when not in use, or when mounting or removing an attachment.

- Double Motor Protection Devices - For maximum safety, the blender is equipped with a circuit breaker, and it will be activated when it is overloaded. The built-in Thermostat also stops the

appliance's operation when excessive heat is detected due to continuous usage.

- Dishwasher-safe - The stainless-steel shaft, beaker, chopper bowl and whisk are all dishwasher-safe so they can be easily washed, at the same time keep them constantly clean and hygienic.

The Panasonic MX-S401 Hand Blender is now available in Kuwait at all Best Al-Yousifi Electronics Showrooms and authorized distributors.



Kuwait," said the Marketing and PR Manager of Al-Hamra Luxury Center, Abdullah Al-Mansour.

Created by a team of coffee enthusiasts, COFE App has carved itself a niche among coffee lovers and early adopters in Kuwait's market. The startup app was beta launched in February 2018 and has quickly penetrated the market given the unique services it

provides to its users.

COFE App enables customers to order and pay for their coffee, and choose from multiple delivery options, including fast delivery to their office or home, counter pick up, and car pick up service. The entire selection and purchasing process takes place in the app, which offers comprehensive menus and drink customization options.



NEW YORK: Retail share prices were pummeled last week after holiday sales reports by Macy's, Target and Victoria's Secret's parent and others that have shifted from traditional brick-and-mortar to so-called "omni-channel" formats.

The program's job is to "look at all the touch points," said Ian Holland, said Acceo vice president for retail solutions. "If at any of these points it fails, then you're having a crummy experience."

One especially crucial area is free shipping, an increasing must-have to many shoppers. A survey presented by NRF found that 75 percent of consumers expect delivery to be

free even on orders under \$50, up from 68 percent last year.

Surveys also show customers increasingly eager to receive goods faster-within two days, not four, or within hours in some cases. Amazon has adapted another strategy, offering incentives-like credits that can be redeemed at Whole Foods-to customers willing to wait longer for delivery.—AFP