

Dubai Lynx awards Advertising Person of the Year

The organisers of the 3rd Dubai International Advertising Festival have presented Ramzi Raad, chairman and CEO of TBWA\RAAD Middle East with the 2010 Dubai Lynx Advertising Person of the Year Award, describing Raad as a pioneer and key figure in the Middle Eastern and North African advertising industry for nearly four decades.

Raad's advertising career

Raad graduated from the American University of Beirut and began his advertising career in 1967. During the following 12 years he helped to expand the first Middle East regional agency network, firstly into Kuwait and Bahrain. Then, with the eruption of the Civil War in his native Lebanon, he was the first Lebanese ad man to move to the Gulf where he settled in Dubai in 1975. In 1982, he moved to Paris and two years later transferred to London. In 1986 he returned to Dubai which has since remained his base of operations.

In 1988, Raad was voted president of the UAE Chapter of the International Advertising Association (IAA) and during his presidency, the first Advertising Awards Program in the region was launched (1990). The first meeting for the IAA World Executive Committee in the Middle East was hosted in Dubai, and the chapter led large delegations to the IAA World Congress in Sydney, Australia (1988) to Advista Arabia in Cairo (1989) and the Asian Advertising Congress in Lahore, Pakistan (1989). He was then named vice president/area director of the International Advertising Association for the Middle East and Africa in 1991.

Raad is a founder of the GCC Advertising Association, the Middle East Research Forum and the Middle East Advertising Agencies Association. He has lectured on Middle East Advertising in London, Zurich, Sydney, Lahore, Cairo, Bahrain, New Delhi and Mexico.

Raad founded TBWA\RAAD Middle East in September 1999, which entered the Middle East Ad Agencies Top 5 League, with a network of agencies in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Riyadh, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Algeria and Morocco. The network he leads also encompasses Ketchum Middle East (PR), and Tequila Middle East (CRM).

Instrumental in MENA

"Ramzi has been, and continues to be, an instrumental figure in the development and growth of the advertising and communications industry throughout the Middle East and North Africa. We are delighted to pay tribute to his dedication and success," said Terry Savage, chairman of Cannes Lions, who, with Motive Publishing, are joint organisers of the festival.

On receiving the award, Raad said, "I am extremely humbled and flattered to be acknowledged by the Middle East ad industry with this award, which I consider only partly personal, as most of the credit goes to my TBWA colleagues who have earned this honour along with me. I am so pleased that this comes to me the 10th Anniversary of TBWA\RAAD, confirming that we have fulfilled the TBWA mantra to 'Change the Rules of Arab Advertising' something I had promised to do, and we have done it in record time.

"To me, this is less about my own 40 years in the business and more about the exciting momentum and where it will take us. As a region, we are at a pivotal point in time, and I look forward to seeing what our you

ad talent will show the world, the further our region steps into the international spotlight," he continued.

On World's Most Poerful Arabs list

Raad has also served as the Middle East consultant for the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (1988-2000) and the Dubai Press Club which is owned and managed by the Government of Dubai (1999-2000). In 2009, Raad was named on the list of the World's Most Powerful Arabs.

Raad will be honoured during the Dubai Lynx Awards Ceremony and Dinner to be held on 17 March 2010 at The Palladium in Dubai.

Joseph Ghossoub, President and CEO of MENACOM (formally The Holding Group) and Tanvir Kanji, Head of Inca Tanvir have both been past recipients of the award.

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