

Downturn times in the Arab Advertising Industry: Strategies of Survival

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The recent global financial crisis has brought profound transformation to the traditional way of management in the advertising industry. Almost all regions were impacted by the recession; the Arab Gulf was no exception. There are a number of major trends that are not just taking place, but shaping the face and future of the advertising industry in this rapidly growing and yet-untapped region: diversification, specialization, adoption of integrated approaches, and mainstreaming of social media. Under the impact of the recession, a number of advertising agencies have begun rationalizing by optimizing their offers and services. This involves a very real challenge to advertising practitioners tasked with crafting and planning strategies and executing them successfully. No academic study has yet addressed the specificities of management of advertising agencies in recession times in the Arab Gulf region. Using a content analysis approach on data drawn from a sample of industry related journals and corporate interviews over the period of the recession 2009, this paper examines issues of adaptation, restructuration, and reorientation by managers and decision-makers in the advertising industry.

Field of Research: Advertising; Marketing; Mass communication; Management