

The 1st E-Commerce Summit in the MENA Region Marks Unprecedented Success

- The summit managed to attract more than 2,500 participants of the industrial, trade, finance, and banking sectors, including local and international speakers
- Number of internet users in Egypt has reached 39.6 million in April, compared with 39.1 million users in March 2018
- “The event has received immense support from market leaders in an effort to develop online trade, and we hope that this becomes an annual destination for major corporations and small and medium enterprises to contribute to the Egyptian market’s economic growth and development” robusta’s managing director, Hussein Mohieldin.

Cairo, Egypt – 26th September 2018: Egypt has witnessed unprecedented success with the first E-Commerce Summit that was held to explore the potential of e-commerce implementation and latest trends of business strategy in the country. The E-Commerce Summit, organized by robusta, took place in the Nile Ritz Carlton Hotel, September 26th in Cairo in attendance of H.E. Amr Talaat, Minister of Communications and Information Technology who gave a speech about the Egyptian Post project for E-Payment and the current direction of the government towards utilization of Data Science, Machine Learning and AI. The event held 21 talks and 13 different panel discussions hosted by more than 80 speakers, who are all CEOs and senior managers in their respective companies sharing their expertise in more than 15 different industries, in the presence of over 1,500 international retailers and market leaders.

The summit discussed the potential of the Egyptian market to become one of the leading markets in e-commerce. Statistics show that the number of internet users in Egypt has reached 39.6 million in April, compared with 39.1 million users in March 2018.

The event evaluated the e-commerce future trends in Egypt with influence from international markets, with a focus on business-to-business online transactions. Since the launch of Amazon Business in 2015, the market has been consistently developing, attracting more than 1 million customers, according to Forbes. Now, research identifies that 42% of B2B digital customers are millennials, optimizing payment solutions and increasing product options online. With this into consideration, the market targeting millennials has significantly increased, with the retail industry focusing more efforts into the millennial generation with online transactions as the main selling point.

“E-Commerce Summit is a starting point for the Egyptian market to evolve through digital transformation. The event has received immense support from market leaders in an effort to develop online trade, and we hope that this becomes an annual destination for major corporations and small and medium enterprises to contribute to the Egyptian market’s economic growth and development.” robusta’s CEO, Hussein Mohieldin, stated.

Mohieldin further added that the summit goals are compatible with the Egyptian government strategies embodied in the efforts exerted by Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology to support the digital transformation and e-commerce. Mohieldin recognized government initiatives that have assisted in the growth of the industry such as the National E-commerce Strategy for Egypt, in which it collaborated with UNCTAD and a number of international organizations targeting Egypt as the next

hotspot of growth in the e-commerce industry. The Egyptian government has developed the foundational framework to which the business environment continues to flourish with legislative changes like the Consumer Protection Acts, Cyber-Crime Law, as well as Data Protection Law.

Panel discussions and case studies were the highlight of the event upon which business leaders discussed the challenges of the progress of e-commerce in the market. This included panel discussions on policy, branding and marketing, as well as specialized talks on the technological advances behind e-commerce development like virtual reality systems. These discussions included business leaders of various industries as well as entrepreneurs that are focused on developing business ideas in their respective sectors.

The main theme of discussions focused on digital transformation to enable business development and consumer empowerment. Referring to recent studies, panelists confirmed that companies that have taken digital transformation as means to develop their operations reported a 26% increase in profit. Additionally, businesses with online transactions indicated that about 58% of companies relying on digital transformation and e-commerce strategies have a better focus on customer preferences, which constantly assist in developing their products and services.

Moreover, the event held robusta Startup Challenge in partnership with Falak to encourage innovation in the entrepreneurship market to accelerate progress and development within the e-commerce industry. Falak has been an avid supporter of the startup ecosystem, creating platforms for acceleration to enhance development of business ideas. Following an intense pitching challenge amongst 10 finalists during the competition, the winner “Kiliim” was chosen and awarded a cash prize of \$10,000 to execute their business idea.

The event recognized the achievements of top market leaders with an exemplary awards ceremony commemorating their successful investments in Egypt. The awarded companies included B.TECH recognized for the Growth Award, Cultark for the Digital Agency Award, and Nestlé celebrated as winner of the FMCG title. Additionally, Mondelēz received the Go-To-Market Strategy Award, Mountain View was granted the Innovation Award, Azza Fahmy successfully received the Fashion & Lifestyle Award, while R2S has won Rising Star Award. A15 was granted the Ecosystem Booster Award, Bosta won the Startup Award and Cross Border Award was granted to Edfa3ly.

The E-Commerce Summit managed to explore the untapped potential of digital transformation in the country and the region with proposed technical solutions to develop business strategies. Companies attending and collaborating in the event created more interest among attendees proving the success of the market’s unfounded success. This included the largest retailer for home appliances and consumer electronics in Egypt B.TECH, real estate giant, Mountain View, Nestlé the world’s largest food and beverage company, pioneering e-payment platform Fawry and the country’s #1 online recruitment website, Wuzzuf. Other partners contributing to the success of the event included; DHL as logistics partner, Uber as transportation partner and the most significant media publications in the country. With this unprecedented demand for market awareness and education in the field, there is high anticipation for the 2019 upcoming E-Commerce Summit.

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