



مدينة الشارقة للإعلام
Sharjah Media City

FIVE YEAR IMPACT REPORT

2022



Sharjah Media City (Shams)
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His Highness Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed Al Qasimi
Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and Chairperson of the Sharjah Media Council



MESSAGE OF HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH SULTAN BIN AHMED AL QASIMI

The establishment of Sharjah Media City (Shams) in 2017 was an important milestone in achieving these goals through the establishment of a growing business community fuelled by ambitious entrepreneurs and driven by innovation in the media sector.

Under the visionary leadership and guidance of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the emirate continues on the path of progress with strategic and well-thought-out goals and plans. Over the past several years, the emirate has been implementing diverse economic projects in the media and publishing sectors, which have come to define Sharjah.

Sharjah is now recognized as a city with great opportunities and diversity in the science, technology, media and cultural fields, in addition to its success in many economic sectors. Sharjah has accelerated its pace in the development of a number of strategic environmental, tourism and academic projects, consolidating its position as a regional hub for development and progress. Today, as the emirate looks to the future with great confidence, it presses ahead with the integration of these vital sectors and their contribution to overall growth of the nation.

The diversity of projects and huge ambitions are at the heart of the emirate's plans and strategies for the future. Proper planning and infrastructure development, as well as the legislation of laws has opened the door for tremendous opportunities for young people and entrepreneurs to produce innovative solutions. Sharjah's inclusive policy for all has further cemented it as a creative incubator in the region.

The remarkable developments in the various industries and the clear success indicators have created a renaissance in the emirate, which had to be accompanied by a strong media message. This is why Sharjah has established over the past few years a number of institutions and bodies to lead the message of media in Sharjah, integrating all areas, from the creation of social media content, to various production projects, to publishing and the development of a thriving ecosystem of media companies.

MESSAGE OF HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH SULTAN BIN AHMED AL QASIMI CONTINUED

This strategy has helped in conveying and promoting the true picture of the emirate's immense potential at – the local, regional and global levels. We are working hard to empower the media sector with integrated infrastructure, technology and other vital support enabling it to present Sharjah's message of success effectively.

The establishment of Sharjah Media City (Shams) in 2017 was an important milestone in achieving these goals through the establishment of a growing business community fuelled by ambitious entrepreneurs and driven by innovation in the media sector. Shams as an institution has been working on two tracks that reflect the vision of Sharjah, first in qualifying and training a new generation of media professionals who are aware and conscious of the value and vital importance of the media conveying the

message in sync with the demands of the changing times. Secondly, Shams is working to establish a new approach to entrepreneurship based on innovative ideas capable of promoting creative industries.

Shams' defining features and roles have begun to emerge as an important contributor to Sharjah's cultural sector, through employing its vision to strengthen the media sector. It is looking to build an advanced business community based on innovation with the potential to make a qualitative shift in various vital and creative industries.

Shams has a clear vision to achieve its goals to support and strengthen the media sector in Sharjah and the UAE. This has been achieved through ambitious initiatives, projects and participation that have left a clear mark in the media sector

in a short time, underscoring the keenness of its leadership to develop Shams as a leading global hub of media and creativity.

H.H. Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed Al Qasimi

Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and
Chairperson of the Sharjah
Media Council



MESSAGE OF HIS EXCELLENCY DR. KHALID OMAR AL MIDFA

Guided by the vision and directives of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed AlQasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the emirate has skilfully navigated a world rife with challenges and widespread developments, brought on by immense technological advancements that have made the world feel no larger than a small village.

With the growing role that media and entrepreneurship play in world economies, Sharjah recorded admirable progress and a healthy economic performance across all key sectors – most notably in business and media. It was that same vision that was present five years ago, when Sharjah Media City (Shams) was established as a free zone to strengthen the emirate's media sector and growing business community. Shams was



Shams is drawing the curtain on five illustrious years, where we managed to play a leading role in developing the media industry.

Dr. Khalid Omar Al Midfa
Chairman of Sharjah Media City (Shams)

tasked with spearheading the sector's growth and developing an integrated, innovation-led ecosystem, headed by Sharjah Media Council with support from affiliated institutions – like Shams – to keep it in sync with other relevant local and federal government entities.

A closer look at Shams' philosophy will clearly highlight our core objective: we strive to support Sharjah's human-centric system and its noble mission to empower people through meaningful media content and unique creative industries that can spearhead progress, enhance the wellbeing of the community, and boost Sharjah's economic performance, diversity, and competitiveness.

With that in mind, Shams has led a balanced and interconnected approach over the past five years, as we strived to grow the media and business sectors and make a profound impact on society.

Sharjah Media City has made it a priority to facilitate the process of establishing businesses and building partnerships with media groups to empower licensed companies in the free zone.

Furthermore, Shams has prioritized participating in major events in Sharjah and the UAE, and undertook ambitious media projects that aim to inspire a new generation of talented individuals to lead the 'new media' sector in the emirate. Our mission also includes training human resources and empowering them to bring tangible change in their respective fields, with Shams as their launchpad.

Sharjah Media City's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the uninterrupted growth we experienced throughout that prominent – if difficult – period of human history is a fine testament to our commitment to supporting our community of companies and prioritizing their needs thus cementing the emirate's status as a global hub for innovation-driven media and creative industries.

Shams is drawing the curtain on five illustrious years, where we managed to play a leading role in developing the media industry and establishing a growing business community dedicated to transforming bold ideas into pioneering media projects.

Our objective for the years ahead is to reap the benefits of the work we have done, continue developing a thriving entrepreneurship ecosystem in the media and creative industries, and leave an indelible mark on Emirati and Arab society with an innovative and developed media scene.

MESSAGE OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SHIHAB AL HAMMADI

Guided by the visionary leadership of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed AlQasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the Emirate has solidified its status as a world capital of culture, art, civilisation, and human development. His Highness's vision drives Sharjah's commitment to noble human values and principles as a means to ensure the prosperity of the economy and the wellbeing of future generations.

Media plays a pivotal role at the heart of our systems, designed to develop the community, drive progress through every part of the emirate, and create a stand-out media model that has become a powerful instrument of Sharjah's soft power strategy. Out of these ambitious objectives, His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah outlined a forward-thinking vision to establish Sharjah Media City (Shams) and entrust it with playing a key role with the leading media institutions in the emirate.



Sharjah Media City prides itself on its proven track record of collaborating with various government and private institutions, as we work to support our business community of licensed companies.

H.E. Shihab Al Hammadi
Managing Director of Sharjah
Media City (Shams)

Shams complements the media ecosystem in Sharjah, combining two main roles. First, paving the way for game-changing ideas and creating opportunities for innovators and creators to hone their media skills and transform their visions into viable media projects that can send a meaningful message to echo throughout the media sphere. Second, channelling these ideas and embedding them into a sophisticated economic system, thus setting the stage for them to grow and enhance their competitiveness.

In more practical terms, over the past five years, Shams has managed to build a robust, integrated foundation to support media entrepreneurs, establishing it self as a destination for visionaries and innovators to articulate their ideas, turn them into successful businesses, and become influential contributors to the growing and innovative business community in the heart of the Emirate of Sharjah.

We consider Shams to be the driving force behind a new and highly qualified generation of media professionals, offering access to its resources and a wide network of partners to streamline procedures for companies, remove obstacles, and empower them to skilfully lead the media industry in the UAE and the region into the future.

That being said, we, at Sharjah Media City, also have a wider economic vision that aims to create new opportunities for the emirate's economy, offering a plethora of projects, initiatives, and innovations that we are confident will transform the free zone industry in the UAE.

Shams has a dedicated team with an exceptional set of skills and capacities to navigate various situations and developments, remain on top of market trends and opportunities and attract more promising investments.

Shams' internal culture prizes collaboration and teamwork, and this can be seen across many of the projects we have launched over the past few years.

Sharjah Media City prides itself on its proven track record of collaborating with various government and private institutions, as we work to support our business community of licensed companies, offering them ample opportunities for growth. Ultimately, we strive to build a prominent media hub and a global centre for innovation-based media.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world is increasingly connected through media engagement and digitalization. Having a voice and a presence at the national, regional, and international level is essential for countries and stakeholders. Launched in 2017, Sharjah Media City (Shams) - Free Zone Authority was established as a world-class hub for media and creativity. Created through an Emiri decree by order of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed AlQasimi, Ruler of Sharjah, Shams builds on the rich historical traditions of the Sharjah Cultural Project. The organization operates to inspire creative entrepreneurship, enable community engagement, and foster a vibrant and connected ecosystem for innovative businesses.

Built on robust strategies that take a measured and future-oriented approach, Shams' efforts over the past five years have put Sharjah at the heart of the UAE's media and creative ecosystems. Mandated to develop into a world-class hub for media and creativity in the region, Shams encourages business growth amongst creative entrepreneurs and encourages SMEs to launch and grow their ideas with licenses that best reflect their journeys ahead. This strong vision is backed by a diverse, gender-balanced team of 35 employees.

The Shams freezone offers close to 150 media and creative activities. The leading regional creative freezone, its rich network of channel partners bolsters its mission of catering business solutions best suited for license seekers through a hassle free experience at getting them incorporated, along with supporting them at every step of the journey.

Shams's exceptional stature with economic impact was exemplified during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. They supported their entrepreneurs and SMEs with flexible payment plans and competitive pricing structures. The freezone grew exponentially during this period and had an overall median monthly renewal rate of 68%. As one of the fastest growing free zones in the UAE, the organization has over 10,000 active companies, to date, that are continuously renewing and extending Shams' ecosystem to supercharge Sharjah's creative economy.

Through targeted partnerships and by providing innovative support for its community, Shams has curated a human-centered and cost-effective set of offerings to support its customers.

Shams has been instrumental at supporting UAE becoming a rising star in the world of gaming and eSports. Propelling the global viewership and recognition of the Arab culture and narrative, it has facilitated and directly played a part at regionally expanding the gaming and eSports industries hosting tournaments and bringing in over 300,000 online audiences. Additionally, Shams has catalyzed pioneering activities, such as the UAE Entertainment Experience which upskilled +2500 aspiring filmmakers, actors and scriptwriters and resulted in a film showcased in UAE cinemas.

Shams has developed novel new media platforms to serve local and regional businesses in unprecedented ways. An example of such platforms is its global influencer marketing platform that has over 800 registered influencers in the UAE alone.

It has also actively provided contributions and funding for media, business, and public service endeavors in the region supporting the media and business industries. Shams continues to collaborate with leaders, industry stakeholders and prominent companies to grow the media influence of the UAE through a variety of roadshows, conferences and engagements, all to empower and inspire the shining regional talents.

Encouraged by its remarkable progress, Shams hopes to enhance its future footprint in the virtual space through ambitious development plans that serve the media sector. In its continued endeavors to serve its community, the organization aims to assist customers through its residential, commercial, community, and media facilities, built over 2 million square meters of physical area, situated in Sharjah.

THE SHAMS JOURNEY

In a digitally connected world where representation plays an important part of forming an image, branding, and strategy, Shams was launched as a catalyst to help media and creative businesses grow and thrive in Sharjah and the wider UAE.



The Birth of Shams

Led by Dr. Khaled Al Midfa, a core team was tasked with creating a blueprint for the Sharjah Media City. Working closely with media and creative freelancers, the team worked to understand the specific needs of the media and creative community and the challenges that faced the nascent ecosystem in Sharjah. Addressing all manner of infrastructural shortfalls and intellectual deficits, the team designed an entirely new playbook of operations for a free zone.

A year later, after detailed deliberations, Shams was founded in February 2017 under an Emiri decree by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed AlQasimi, Ruler of Sharjah.

Today the organization operates as a full-fledged ecosystem that enables entrepreneurs and SMEs to add to Sharjah's rich and vibrant media environment.

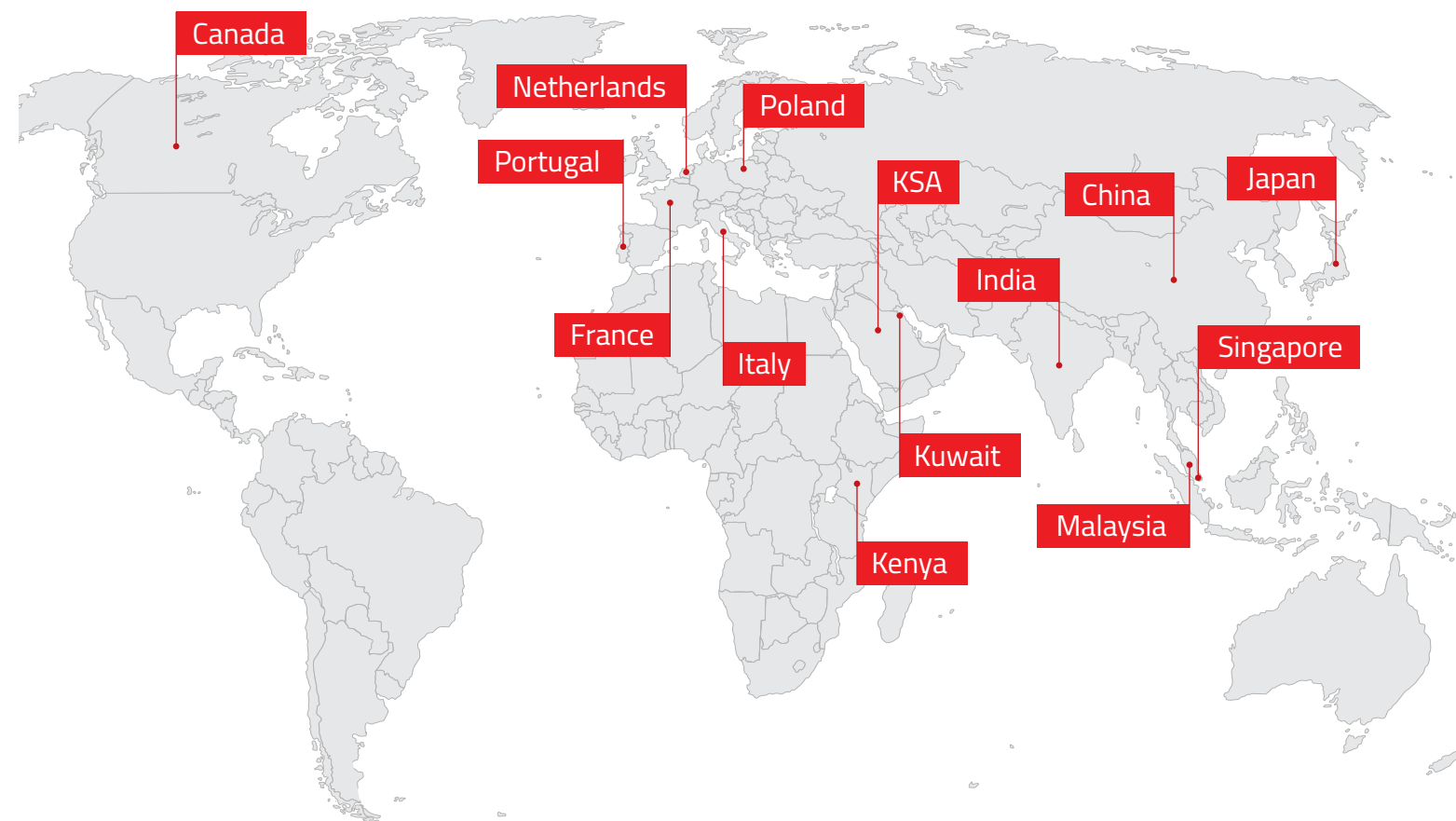
High-Value Objectives

Shams operates to serve the Sharjah government's vision and the media sector. It is committed to:

- Developing and nurturing talent and human capital in the media and creative sectors
- Attaining regional leadership in education
- Training new entrants to the media and creative economy
- Supporting and developing high-quality media and creative content
- Providing world-class, affordable infrastructural support that fosters media creativity
- Enabling small and medium-sized companies, establishments, and pioneers to engage with the wider creative economy
- Enhancing Sharjah's reputation in the creative and media fields by highlighting local content amongst regional and global audiences

International Benchmarking, Partnerships and Growth

Shams has always prioritized global connectedness through international partnerships and collaborations. Since its inception, Shams has actively worked with other entities and organizations to set up a media hub. It has built on previous learnings and experiences of local and international media entities to find solutions that facilitate a wider variety of media players.



A Story of Creativity and Agility

Shams builds on His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed AlQasimi's Cultural Project. Dating back to the 1970s and rooted in His Highness's vision to own the cultural and historical narrative of Sharjah, Shams plays a vital role in supporting local stakeholders in positioning the Emirate as a global brand and player.

By taking a two-pronged hybrid approach, Shams operates as an economic free zone and an influential enabler for the UAE's media sector. By focusing on micro and small businesses, Shams also helps organizations compete through quicker administrative processes, sustained online and in-person support, and continued exposure through participation at industry-related events.

THE SHAMS JOURNEY CONTINUED



2017

- February: Amiri Decree is signed
- Shams Strategy 2017-2019 is developed
- Shams licenses over 1,000 companies

2018

- Complete and move to the new buildings
- Shams licenses over 5,000 companies

2019

- 21 advanced events launched successfully
- Shams launches the UAE Entertainment Experience

2020

- COVID-19 start and the rapid growth followed
- Shams Strategy 2020-2025 is developed
- Shams licenses over 10,000 companies

2021

- First Feature Film is released

2022

- Shams launches new Business Center

A Journey of Excellence

Since its inception in 2017, Shams has achieved significant milestones and by the end of 2021, the organization had already more than 10,000 active companies as members, building upon the strength of the UAE's existing media sector.

Operating through approximately 150 licensing activities in the media and creative industries and their supporting areas, Shams is powered by a qualified and diverse team that reflects a gender balance at all levels, including across leadership and management.

The organization has also catalyzed pioneering activities, such as the **UAE Entertainment Experience**, the country's first crowd-sourced movie creation exercise, with contributions from a wide range of talents. The project culminated with the Sharjah-led feature film 218: Behind the Wall of Silence, released in May 2021. Shams has also fostered the growth of new media platforms, such as **eSports** and **Influencer Marketing**, that are already actively serving local and regional communities. To take its endeavors into the future, Shams launched the new business center to support additional growth and progression. Comprising of three buildings and over 700 workstations, the newly built modern and spacious structure houses state-of-the-art amenities like meeting rooms, a gym, and restaurants.

THE SHAMS STRATEGY



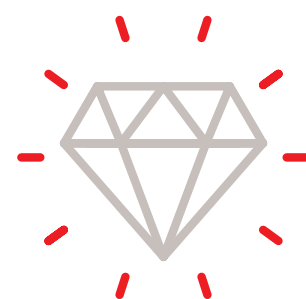
SHAMS Vision

To be a world-class hub for media and creativity in the region



SHAMS Mission

- To develop an innovative Media City
- To inspire creative entrepreneurship among SMEs and encourage business growth
- To promote a vibrant and connected ecosystem for innovators to live, learn, and co-create



SHAMS Values

- **Community:** Community comes first in everything Shams does
- **Customer:** The customer feels empowered and inspired within a thriving group of likeminded people
- **Creativity:** Fostering organizations within the wider media society by enabling individuals and new talent through excellence and innovation

Adding to the UAE's SME Ecosystem

Shams operates with a focus on helping micro and small businesses establish themselves within the UAE's media ecosystem. Most free zones in the UAE target large companies and anchor tenants even though 86% of private-sector employees in the country are employed by SMEs. By supporting the unique needs of those organizations that make up the backbone of the region's economies, Shams is assisting in growth and profitability.

SHAMS SUPPORTS SME's
ESTABLISH THEMSELVES,
OF WHICH

86% OF THE
UAE's PRIVATE-SECTOR
EMPLOYEES ARE EMPLOYED BY
SME's



BUILDING A WINNING CULTURE

A Strong Work Team

Shams has grown from its humble beginnings of three employees to stand as a powerhouse today. With a motivated and dedicated team that operates through the strength of a gender-balanced workforce that prioritizes Emiratisation, Shams continues to grow from strength to strength. The organization is committed to investing in young and emerging talent and nurturing it to add value to the broader media ecosystem.



Growth and Development

Shams has witnessed an organic increase in employee numbers. It is indicative of the organization's role across the media ecosystem in Sharjah and the wider UAE and of a work culture that fosters growth and development.



Employee Welfare

Since its inception in 2017, Shams has prioritized the personal growth and wellbeing of its employees. With dedicated team-building activities and periodic site visits to Sharjah's various cultural attractions, as well as activities that foster a culture of connectedness and collaboration.

Shams devised attractive benefits and compensation packages that take into consideration the UAE's modern cost of living. This enables the organization to attract top tier talent and ensure a motivated and driven workforce.



35

NUMBER OF CURRENT
EMPLOYEES



116

NUMBER OF CUSTOMER
SERVICE EMPLOYEES



3,000+

NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT HOURS



22

NUMBER OF INTERNS



42%

FEMALE LEADERSHIP

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Supporting SME Growth

- Shams has quickly emerged as a leader in the regional free zone industry. It has achieved this by recognizing the needs of SMEs and working to help them drive business development, achieve growth, tackle market challenges, and capitalize on profitable opportunities. Shams' rich network of channel partners – coupled with its SME-focused service portfolio which offers flexible office spaces, financial and tax business consultancy, and compliance support, all provided through its innovative online portal – has allowed the organization to respond to the needs of its clients in a timely and reliable manner. The organization's success stems from a commitment to seeing their clients' businesses flourish while continuously improving on the services offered.
- The COVID-19 pandemic was a difficult time for SMEs. Shams has made the decision early on to actively support its community of entrepreneurs by listening and responding to their needs. For example, at the peak of the pandemic, Shams allowed flexible payment options and restructured fee plans and facilities in support of its customers. Many mainland companies and large organizations based out of other free zones slimmed down their operations on account of reduced business. Due to its competitive packages and supportive ecosystem, many of these companies found refuge in Shams, making it their new home. By establishing a system that took care of the needs of small organizations and its readiness to provide flexible solutions, Shams witnessed exponential growth.
- Shams believes in its clients' work and believes in the innovation that can be found in solutions provided by the smaller, more agile businesses. Shams has always turned to its database of registered companies to identify creative service providers. It has also recently opened the door to its rich network of partners to reap these benefits as well as actively participating in providing business development opportunities and contracts to its community.

Milestones

 **10,000+** ACTIVE COMPANIES

 **62%** MEDIA COMPANIES' GROWTH RATE

 **88%** SHAMS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATE

 **68%** RENEWAL RATE

 **10,000+** NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED

 **170+** NUMBER OF NATIONALITIES

Unique Entrepreneurial Nexus

- In the last decade, Sharjah has seen unprecedented economic growth centered on large-scale infrastructure developments and ambitious projects. The Emirate has also created a clear strategy of supporting, enabling, and empowering entrepreneurs, launching numerous programs and initiatives to reach this objective.
- Shams is on a mission to nurture the entrepreneurial flame in Sharjah's new media markets and attract record-level foreign direct investment (FDIs) to the Emirate to drive growth. Shams continues to fuel strong SME expansion, support innovative businesses, promote job creation, and foster creative talent development.

Investing in Clients' Long-Term Success

Shams underpins economic growth through its robust global partnership network, client-ready solutions, and support services. It operates to expedite business setup, lower initial operational costs, and offer a competitive licensing fee structure. Its value proposition offers an end-to-end technology ecosystem with market-leading business support. Shams leads with the understanding that the long-term success of its clients will form the bedrock of Sharjah's economic future.

- Since Shams' inception in 2017, the organization has recorded a 17% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in revenue, operating on an industry-leading 68% median monthly renewal rate. Shams has continuously evolved its offerings through sustained client engagement to better suit customers' unique needs.
- Shams continues to provide business development support through mentorship and coaching. It supplements these activities through customer matching events between its community of companies and government and corporate partners.
- Additionally, to support emerging talent in the sector, Shams has launched the Ghaya package. The heavily subsidized offering encourages university students to enter the world of entrepreneurship and develop their skills and experiences. By supporting and nurturing the growth of new talent in the industry, Shams is making a strategic and long-term investment in its clients' future.

Uncompromising Compliance Ethos

- Shams prioritizes client protection through awareness-raising educational sessions and the strict adherence to government rules and legal frameworks.
- Since its inception, Shams has worked with industry experts to create a concise framework of relevant, implementable, legal, and regulatory policies that fall within its jurisdiction.
- Shams' extraordinary progress is built on its strong internal governance strategy and robust compliance practices. It holds itself and its clients to the highest compliance standards. 82% of Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBP) companies in their portfolio (a total of 767 organizations) have already been activated under the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) goAML fraud prevention and intelligence systems. As of December 2021, Shams has achieved a record-high 93% Ultimate Beneficial Owner (UBO) submission rate, supporting the UAE government in its anti-money-laundering measures.

MEDIA SECTOR IMPACT

Shams plays a crucial role in nurturing creative talent in the region through partnerships, training, and by building ecosystems that develop and advance the media sector. It has successfully attracted leading entrepreneurs to the industry. Through its commitment to attracting, nurturing, and fostering the growth of media and creative companies, Shams has witnessed a 62% increase in the number of media companies in its portfolio of customers in 2021.

Media and Creative Industries Partners



هيئة الشارقة
للإذاعة والتلفزيون
SHARJAH BROADCASTING AUTHORITY



الفن الإعلامي للأطفال والشباب - الشارقة
SHARJAH MEDIA ARTS FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN



هيئة الشارقة للمتاحف
Sharjah Museums Authority



مسرح الشارقة الوطني
Sharjah National Theatre



معهد الشارقة للتراث
SHARJAH INSTITUTE FOR HERITAGE

Key Achievements and Milestones

1 The UAE Entertainment Experience: The nation's first crowd-sourced movie creation exercise

In early 2019, Shams launched the UAE Entertainment Experience, a unique project connecting filmmaking professionals to creative talent entering the world of cinema. The initiative aimed to train young media talent, empower them to lead artistic and cinematic production, and create films that represent Emirati and Arab societies and showcase the UAE's culture globally. This initiative laid the foundations for an integrated cinema and arts sector that drew inspiration from the public and engaged audiences in the end-to-end production process.

Through this public initiative, **32 teams** emerged from **2,500 participants**. After attending several training workshops and individual professional orientation sessions, a final panel of participants was drawn with more than **40% female representation**. The participants shot **29 experimental feature films** over eight months.



1st CROWD SOURCED
MOVIE INITIATIVE



29 FEATURE FILMS
(over 8 months)



32
TEAMS



2,500
PARTICIPANTS



40%
FEMALE



MEDIA SECTOR IMPACT CONTINUED

2 218: Behind the Wall of Silence: The first “made by the public” film in the Arab World

As part of the UAE Entertainment Experience initiative, Shams created and launched the landmark feature film 218 – the first movie to be made by the public in the Arab world. 218: Behind the Wall of Silence is an Emirati suspense drama telling the story of three young women going through seemingly separate yet intertwined experiences.

3 Shams Online Arena: Supporting the rise of the UAE as a hub for gaming and eSports

As a subset of creative media, gaming grabs the attention and the imagination of the youth, and has a strong digital community aspect that aligns with Shams’ values. The MENA region has one of the highest gaming rates globally and continues to be a rapidly growing industry. Shams is particularly invested in building on the commonalities offered by gaming and gamers to take ownership of the Arab narrative. It aims to encourage, support, and invest in digital platforms that positively portray the Arab world and communicate with global audiences. Shams is playing a pivotal role in the national and regional expansion of the gaming industry and is committed to seeing the UAE become a regional hub for eSports. Various pilot tournaments have been conducted and backed by community organizers across different games. In September 2021, Shams Media Services, the commercial arm of Shams, partnered with UAE-based eSports organizer and production company Calyx to bring local gaming communities together through eSports tournaments.

The Shams Online Arena has so far hosted **49 tournaments**, engaging over **6,500+ participants** with a **social media reach exceeding 300,000**.

Media and Creative Industries Partners



4 OMNES Influencers: Shaping a new era of communication and marketing

Shams was amongst the first entities in the region to capitalize on the growing influencer marketing movement through its influencer marketing hub. The OMNES Influencers platform is a joint venture between OMNES Media and Shams Media Services. It aims to create, manage, upskill, and promote influencers by connecting them to institutions and companies investing in influencer marketing.

The platform’s popularity in assisting media influencers in the region has grown significantly; Shams has already registered a total of 5,000+ influencers, of which 800+ are UAE-based.



5 Collaborations - A powerful method to enrich the media ecosystem

Shams believes in the power of collaboration to drive ecosystem building and has adopted a collaborative mindset since its inception. It continues to work closely with local and international media partners, as well as key educational institutions, to support the sector’s growth and develop the UAE’s media space.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

As an organization, Shams operates beyond just customer experience and management. Based out of Sharjah, it builds and invests in the Emirate's values of community-centricity and development. Putting the Sharjah creative and media community first is a fundamental founding value at Shams. The organization strives to continuously engage with its clients and widen the role of media players by facilitating, connecting, and empowering various platforms, through trainings, and community-centered activities. Shams has achieved these goals through targeted upskilling programs, partnerships, competitions, and focused sponsorships.



Training - A Vital Tool in Building the Media Ecosystem

Shams utilizes training opportunities as an important tool to nurture entrepreneurs and equip participants with the required management skills to grow their businesses. Since March 2018, it has conducted numerous technical and innovative skills-focused workshops for creative enterprises, entrepreneurship communities, and students. The sessions covered essential business and media topics, including IP rights, TV and radio presenting, fundamentals of cinematography, and the legal and regulatory aspects of setting up and operating a company.



3,000+

THE NUMBER OF
TRAINEES



100+

THE NUMBER OF
TRAININGS



400+

THE NUMBER OF
YOUTHS TRAINED

Supporting Sharjah's Entrepreneurial Community

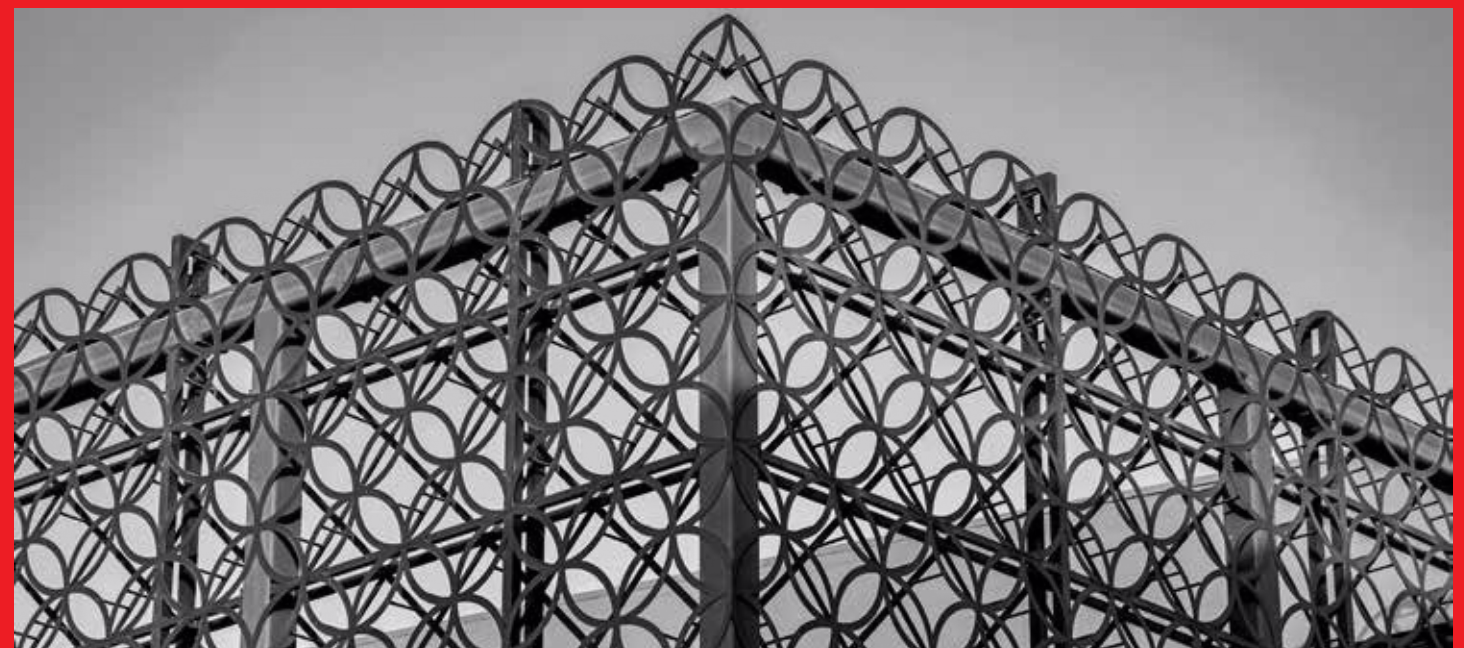
Shams promotes entrepreneurial growth in the region by working with leading private and public stakeholders to extend support to Sharjah's media industry players. It has collaborated with prominent stakeholders to market and promote the region through roadshows and conferences, as well as to inspire and empower entrepreneurs and businesses in the Emirate. Shams also supports its community of businesses by granting access to all relevant industry events where Shams is present. This leads to valuable business development and media exposure opportunities for its clients and companies. The assistance simplifies access and helps companies grow as part of the Shams ecosystem.

Upskilling the Community and Enhancing Business Competence

Shams is continuously supporting its community through training workshops designed to address their business requirements and improve their business skills. Shams views the business success of its community of entrepreneurs as an integral part of its own success. Understanding the need for business skills beside the creative fields, Shams has been offering multiple training sessions, either free of charge or at a heavily subsidized rate, covering topics like public speaking, VAT, economic and investment regulations, and compliance, in addition to courses on digital marketing.

Urban Development Plan Linked to Shams' Mission and Value System

Design principles translate the Shams strategy into actionable themes enabling the urban development, architecture and civil engineering teams to transform the land into a business-focused media hub of creativity with functionalities that serve the community and respect the environment. Currently, Shams provides three facility options, in addition to the currently available shared desk facility at the Headquarters building. The new facilities offer dedicated office space, shared office space, and dedicated desks. The Shams facilities are designed to serve clients and cater to their needs.



COMMUNITY IMPACT CONTINUED

Sponsorships and CSR Contributions

Since its inception, Shams has been committed to playing a vital role in developing business and media ecosystems and giving back to the local community. It has made various contributions, funding media, business, and public service endeavors. The funds were distributed to a variety of sectors, as represented below:



MEDIA
41%



BUSINESS
33%



CSR INITIATIVES
10.5%



GOVERNMENT
15.5%

Shams Media Community Focus

Shams undertakes continuous efforts to inspire and empower the community through strategic partnerships, community-based initiatives, training events, and entrepreneur mentorship programs.

Shams Talks

Shams' main goal is to inspire people to tap into their creative side and join the media community. To reach large audiences of entrepreneurs, Shams initiated the webinar series Shams Talks. The platform invited creative minds to share their journey and success stories to ignite a spark that ripples throughout the industry.

Shams Podcasting Competition

The Shams Podcasting Competition aimed to inspire a new generation of podcasters in the region and equip them with the necessary skillset. The workshop ran over three days and hosted 30 participants, chosen from over 130 applicants. As a part of the bootcamp, participants received instruction and training on developing and honing their podcast pitches. A professional podcasters' judging panel selected three winners from the program. Each winner received AED10,000 in cash, a free business license with Shams, free access to an audio recording facility, and a co-working space in Shams.

Partnerships to Enhance Community Relationships

Shams leads with the belief that businesses are only as strong as their community of stakeholders. It has actively worked to bring investments into Sharjah to build a stronger media district. As early as 2017, Shams had been engaging with value-added partners across various industries in Sharjah. It has partnered with key players from the government, corporate, and education sectors, and has been offering services to community-based organizations and employees at Sharjah Media City.

Businesses



Education



Community



A NOTE OF THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS



هيئة كهرباء ومياه وغاز الشارقة
Sharjah Electricity, Water and Gas Authority



Government of Sharjah | حكومة الشارقة
Department of Public Works | دائرة الأشغال العامة



GOVERNMENT OF SHARJAH | حكومة الشارقة
Roads & Transport Authority | هيئة الطرق والمواصلات



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF ENERGY & INFRASTRUCTURE



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الطاقة والبنية التحتية



القيادة العامة لشرطة الشارقة
Sharjah Police Headquarters





THE FUTURE OF THE CITY

Message from the Chairman

Since its establishment in 2017, Sharjah Media City (Shams) has made a series of notable achievements that have cemented its role in building an ambitious community driven by innovation and led by young entrepreneurs in the media sector. As an institution that embodies the vision of the Emirate of Sharjah to empower a new generation of media professionals and set new and innovative approaches to entrepreneurship in the creative industries, Shams is committed to constantly driving the ecosystem forward, building on the promising results of the work we have done, and keeping our promise to develop the media and creative industries.

This can only be achieved if we remain persistent in playing our part to boost the emirate's competitiveness and diversify its economy. This ultimately allows us to further expand

and enhance the services we provide to our community of entrepreneurs, as well as to explore new and innovative approaches to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of our offerings.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank the dedicated team we have at Shams for their hard work, professionalism, and commitment. Their exceptional set of skills and unmatched ability to navigate challenging business climates, all while remaining on top of market trends and opportunities, is evident from the many projects we have successfully executed over the past few years. I am proud of the talent we have at Shams and look forward to reaching new heights together.

Dr. Khalid Omar Al Midfa

Chairman of Sharjah Media City (Shams)