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# WORLDDEF E-COMMERCE

WORLDDEF PUBLICATIONS

Jumia Group CEO **Francis Dufay**:  
We Plan to Strengthen Relationships  
with International Sellers



## Africa's Largest Marketplace: Jumia

COUNTDOWN TO WORLDDEF ISTANBUL 2025

THE ARCHITECTS BEHIND VIRTUAL STORES

"ACCESS TO REAL-TIME DATA WILL BE CRUCIAL IN  
THE COMING YEARS"

ACCESS TO 950 MARKETPLACES IN 195 COUNTRIES

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# WORLDDEF E-COMMERCE

**WORLDDEF E-COMMERCE MAGAZINE**

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# WORLDEF E-COMMERCE

## Editorial



**Sedat Ateş**

Secretary General,  
WORLDEF E-Commerce Foundation

Dear readers, hello,

Commerce has gone far beyond the process of evolution. Now, it is not just about analyzing data but about storytelling with data; not just about coding but about understanding user psychology. We are experiencing an unnamed era of transformation. We must adapt to change and question how we will continue our profession and existence as individuals or businesses in the face of artificial intelligence.

Andrew Yengin, Director of the Stanford University Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, answers this question as follows: "Artificial intelligence will not replace humans; people who use artificial intelligence will replace those who do not."

[My latest TEDx talk has also been published on its official channel. To watch my talk, you can search for "Sedat Ateş" on YouTube!]

### **Go with the Flow...**

#### **The Rise of Social Commerce: TikTok and Live Shopping**

Traditional e-commerce models are undergoing transformation, and social media platforms are redefining the shopping experience. By integrating shopping directly into the social media experience, TikTok offers consumers a fast and interactive purchasing process. In particular, TikTok's TikTok Shop feature provides brands with the opportunity to reach consumers directly.

Live shopping events enhance sales by enabling instant interaction with consumers. The ability for users to purchase directly from content creators or brands accelerates buying decisions. The success of social commerce lies in content-driven and highly interactive strategies.

User reviews, influencer collaborations, and interactive advertisements not only enhance brand credibility but also offer consumers a more engaging and authentic shopping experience.

#### **AI Agent (Make and N8N): Smart Automation in Business Processes**

In today's business world, speed and efficiency are more important than ever. AI Agents [Artificial Intelligence-Powered Automation Systems] optimize business processes, enabling companies to operate faster and at lower costs. Platforms like Make and N8N stand out in this field by reducing manual workload through seamless integration between different applications—without the need for coding.

#### **What Are Make and N8N?**

These platforms automate business processes by facilitating data flow between various software applications. For example:

- **E-Commerce:** Automatic order processing, inventory management, and customer email segmentation
- **Customer Service:** Fast support through chatbots and AI-powered response systems
- **Marketing:** Automated creation of personalized campaigns and customer analytics

## Subscription Model

The subscription model is a business approach that allows customers to receive a specific product or service periodically in exchange for regular payments. Today, it is successfully applied across various industries, providing companies with a sustainable revenue stream.

### Types of Subscription Models

Product-Based Subscriptions:

- **Subscription Boxes:** Products curated around a specific theme are delivered monthly (e.g., beauty boxes, coffee subscriptions, healthy snacks).
- **Consumable Goods:** Regularly used products like razor blades, coffee capsules, and diapers are automatically shipped to customers.

Digital Subscriptions:

- **Media & Entertainment:** Platforms such as Netflix, Spotify, and YouTube Premium offer content consumption through subscription models.
- **Education & Online Courses:** Platforms like Udemy, MasterClass, and Coursera provide access to knowledge through monthly or annual subscriptions.

Service-Based Subscriptions:

- **SaaS [Software as a Service]:** Software like Adobe Creative Cloud, Microsoft 365, Notion, and Canva operate on a subscription basis.
- **Fitness & Health:** Online personal training, meditation apps, and diet programs are structured around subscription-based models.

### Where Are Subscription Models Headed in the Future?

I actively follow platforms like Reddit, Quora, and X on a daily basis. Additionally, I stay closely connected with many professionals and communities, especially within the LinkedIn ecosystem. Based on refined and filtered insights, here is a summary of where subscription models are headed:

- **AI-Powered Personalization:** Artificial intelligence enhances the experience by recommending the most suitable products based on customer preferences.
- **Smart Subscriptions with IoT:** Smart refrigerators or coffee machines will be able to place automatic orders when products run low.
- **Sustainability-Focused Models:** Refillable subscription boxes that reduce single-use plastics are becoming increasingly popular.

### The Power of Networking: The Key Accelerator of Success

Being at the right place, with the right people, at the right time is one of the fundamental formulas for success in the business world. However, this power must be reinforced not only with strategic thinking but also with the right connections. Scaling a business is not just about offering a great product or service; it's also about bringing it to the right audience.

The power of networking does more than just expand your business—it connects you with visionary thinkers, helps you recognize opportunities quickly, and enables strategic collaborations. This is a critical step toward taking your business to the next level.

Remember, great success is only possible with the right network. And when it comes to building that network, the best place to start is **WORLDEF ISTANBUL**. Taking place on **May 15-16-17, 2025**, this event will bring together the most influential figures and visionaries in the business world, offering you an unparalleled opportunity to grow and connect.

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## Grand E-Commerce Fair in Dubai: WORLDEF DUBAI

The global e-commerce fairs platform WORLDEF hosted a grand event in Dubai. The global e-commerce fair WORLDEF DUBAI, held at Dubai CommerCity, attracted nearly 10,000 participants from 82 countries. The next WORLDEF DUBAI event will take place in January 2026.

Under the patronage and in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman of the Dubai Integrated Economic Zones Authority (DIEZ), the WORLDEF DUBAI 2024 fair brought together the global e-commerce ecosystem. Organized with the strategic partnership of Dubai CommerCity (DCC), the first and only free zone in the Gulf region focusing on digital commerce, WORLDEF DUBAI gathered nearly 10,000 participants from 82 countries on December 4-5, 2024. The fair has been recorded as "the largest e-commerce event in the Gulf region."

## The Future of Global E-Commerce Discussed!

As part of WORLDEF DUBAI, more than 120 stands were set up. The event featured various sessions, keynote presentations, and panels across the “Future Commerce,” “Case Study,” and “Masterclass” stages. These sessions covered a wide range of topics, including the future of e-commerce, artificial intelligence, digital economy trends, and e-commerce opportunities in the Gulf region.

## Zeyoudi: We continue to invest in infrastructure to facilitate e-commerce across the Middle East and beyond

H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, speaking at the WORLDEF DUBAI 2024 fair, said the following: “E-commerce has become a key driving force of the global economy. Over the past 25 years, it has reshaped industries and redefined consumer experiences. This year, global e-commerce sales are projected to exceed 6.4 trillion dollars, with mobile commerce contributing approximately 2 trillion dollars to that total. This means that, in 2024, 20% of all retail purchases will have been made online. This is a clear reflection of how deeply digital trade has integrated into our lives, driven by near-universal internet use and mobile penetration.”

“The United Arab Emirates has long recognized the potential of e-commerce. That is why we continue to invest in infrastructure to facilitate e-commerce across the Middle East and beyond, including developing Dubai CommerCity, the region's first and leading free zone dedicated exclusively to digital commerce,” H.E. added.

## High-Level Participation at the Fair

The opening ceremony was attended by His Excellency Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade, H.E. Muradali Alimardon, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Abdullah Al Basti, Secretary General of Dubai's Executive Council, H.E. Dr. Mohammed Al Zarooni, Executive Chairman of DIEZ and Chairman of the Board of Dubai CommerCity, H.E. Tugay Tunçer, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the UAE, H.E. Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah, President and CEO of Dubai Chambers, H.E. Hesham Al Qassim, CEO of wasl Asset Management Group, Omar Nart, CEO of WORLDEF, along with representatives from leading international digital commerce companies.

Furthermore, the event was attended by H.E. Sherali Kabir, Minister of Industry and New Technologies of Tajikistan; H.E. Kurbon Hakimzoda, Minister of Agriculture of Tajikistan; H.E. Halimzoda Abdulrahman, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Office of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan; as well as ambassadors from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Argentina, and Colombia. The Consul General of Singapore was also present.



## Strategic Role

H.E. Dr. Mohammed Al Zarooni, Executive Chairman of DIEZ and Chairman of the Board of Dubai CommerCity stated that hosting the Worldef Dubai, one of the leading events in digital commerce, underscores Dubai CommerCity's commitment to elevating the sector's strategic role in fostering non-oil economic growth, aligning with Dubai's Economic Agenda D33.

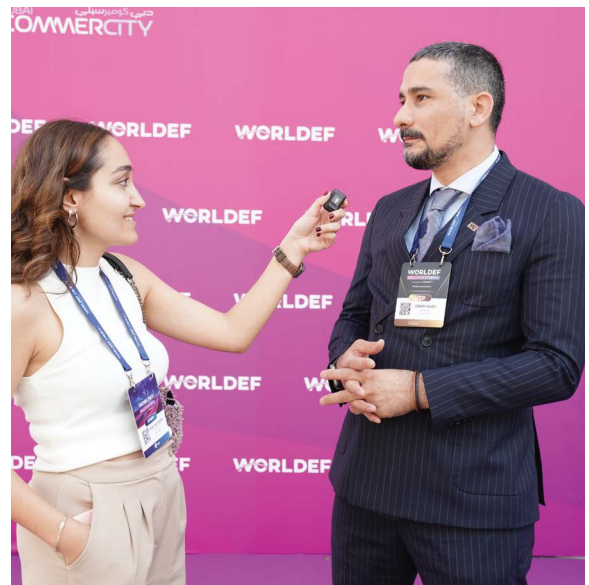
Al Zarooni noted the exceptional interest from stakeholders across the digital commerce sector, evident in the forum's high participation levels and distinguished lineup of speakers from leading global companies. The level and status of participation reflects Dubai's position as a global trade hub and its pivotal role in fostering anticipated growth within the sector, as well as its strategic importance at the heart of global trade, logistics, and other related services.



H.E. Tugay Tunçer, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the UAE, highlighted the importance of the strong trade ties between the UAE and Türkiye, noting the UAE's status as Türkiye's largest trading partner in the GCC. He emphasised the need to enhance trade cooperation between the two nations, given that both are key regional business and aviation hubs.

## Omar Nart: WORLDEF is a unique platform that brings together leaders and visionaries to discuss opportunities and challenges in the digital economy

Omar Nart, CEO of WORLDEF, said: "We gather in Dubai—a global hub of innovation and trade—to shape the future of commerce. WORLDEF is a unique platform, bringing together leaders and visionaries to discuss opportunities and challenges in a rapidly changing digital economy. This year's focus, "Driving Global Trade Through Partnerships and Innovation," highlights the power of collaboration. We thank Dubai CommerCity for the support and for hosting this important forum."



## "Dubai Holds Cross-Border Importance in E-Commerce"

Omar Nart stated that Dubai is a trade gateway not only for the United Arab Emirates but also for Africa, South Asia, and other surrounding countries. Nart said, "If you only consider Dubai's 9-10 million population, you would be analyzing the situation incompletely. The key is to position Dubai as a gateway and use it to expand to the entire region."

Emphasizing that Dubai caters not only to the UAE but to the entire region, Nart highlighted that Saudi Arabia's e-commerce market volume is 32 billion dollars and mentioned that countries such as North Africa, South Africa, India, and Pakistan are contributing to a significant e-commerce potential in Dubai. He pointed out that the country's infrastructure, regulations, and customs processes are fully aligned to facilitate trade.

## "We Plan to Expand to Asia by 2026"

Nart mentioned that this year's event received much more attention than expected, saying, "We had 125 stands and about 10,000 visitors. Our expectation was 5,000 visitors, but this number reached 10,000. This shows that e-commerce has gained significant momentum in this region after the pandemic." Sharing information about WORLDEF's plans to expand to Asia, Nart stated, "We plan to expand to Asia by 2026. We are in discussions with Singapore. We are also targeting Europe through Frankfurt. One of these two locations will be our third event center." Nart also added that the next WORLDEF DUBAI event will be held in January 2026.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM WORLDEF DUBAI CAPTURED ON CAMERA!

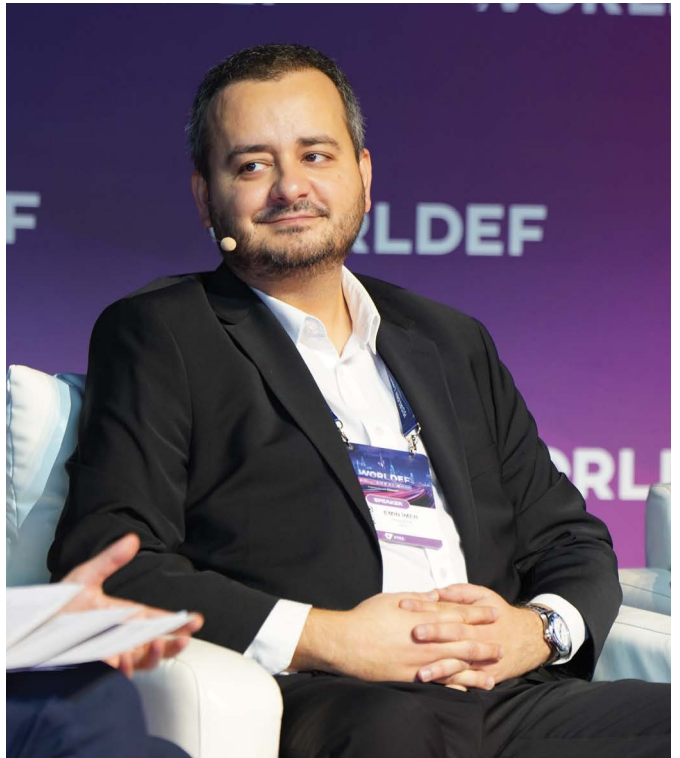
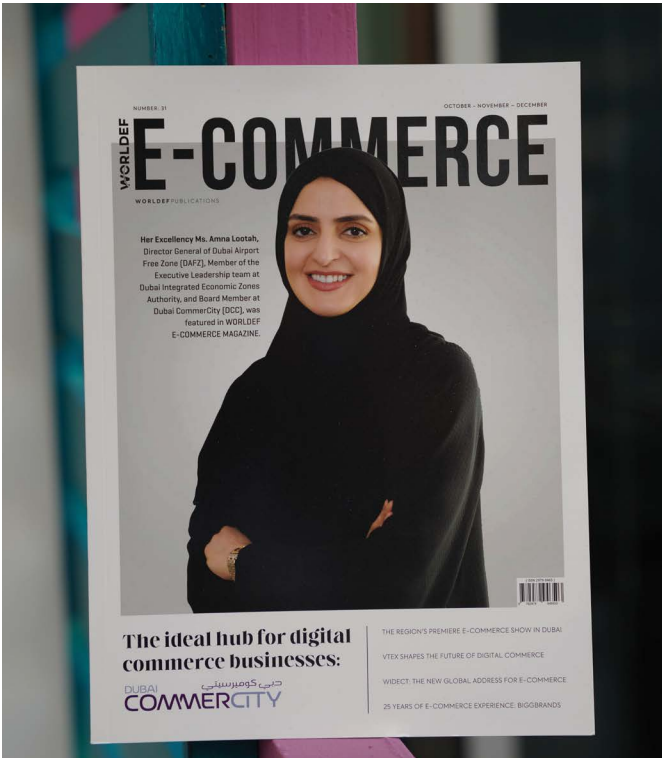




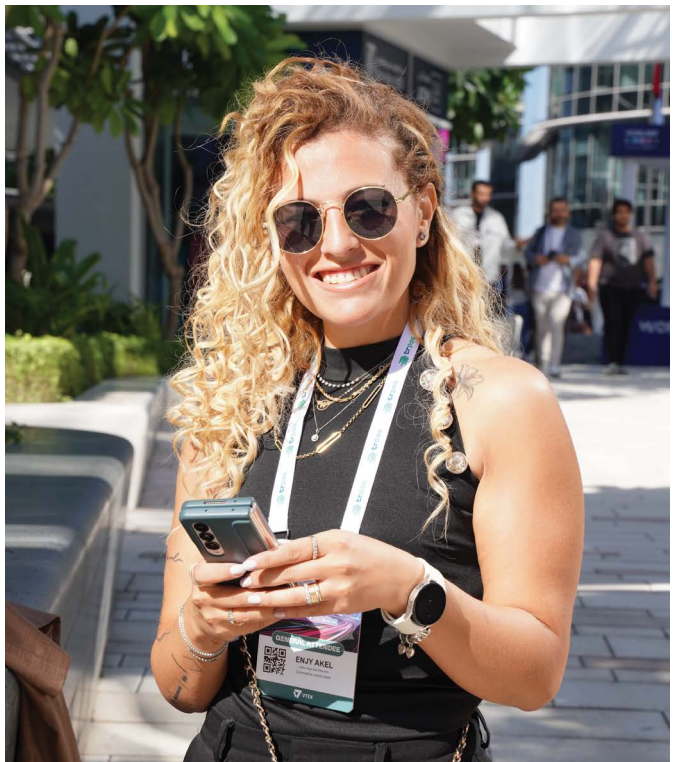




GRAND E-COMMERCE FAIR IN DUBAI: WORLDDEF DUBAI







# Digital Partner for SMEs in the MENA Region

**alw@faa**  
Your Trusted IT Partner  
**ALWAFAA GROUP**

**Alwafaa Group's Founder and CEO,  
Muneer Alwafaa**

## What Does Alwafaa Group Offer to E-Commerce Brands?

E-commerce is one of the key focus areas for Alwafaa Group. Within this scope, the services they provide include:

- Website and app development: We design scalable, user-friendly e-commerce platforms tailored to client needs.
- Digital marketing: Helping e-commerce businesses optimize visibility and ROI through SEO, social media, and performance-based advertising.
- AI solutions: Through Daidu.ai, we deliver AI-powered tools for predictive analytics, customer engagement, and process automation.
- Marketplace integration: Supporting businesses to establish a presence on platforms like Amazon, Noon, and other major marketplaces.

Alwafaa Group aims to ensure the seamless integration of technology into e-commerce operations, enhancing efficiency and improving the customer experience.

Founded in 2002, Alwafaa Group is one of Dubai's leading digital marketing and IT service providers. From humble beginnings, the company has evolved into a dynamic organization focused on delivering innovative solutions to businesses. Alwafaa Group envisions empowering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by facilitating seamless technology adoption, enabling them to grow and compete effectively in the digital world.

Speaking to WORLDEF E-COMMERCE, Alwafaa Group's Founder and CEO, Muneer Alwafaa, stated: "Our journey includes ventures into AI, e-commerce, and digital transformation, with our latest project, Daidu.ai, providing AI-driven tools like chatbots and enabler programs to support SMEs. These initiatives highlight our commitment to driving growth through innovation."

## "E-commerce in MENA is experiencing unprecedented growth"

Alwafaa Group CEO, Muneer Alwafaa, shared his insights on the developments in the e-commerce sector in Dubai and the MENA region with the following remarks:

"The MENA region is witnessing unprecedented growth in e-commerce due to. Dubai's e-commerce strategy has fostered a business-friendly environment, encouraging digital transformation. AI tools are becoming essential for customer personalization, inventory management, and predictive analysis. With high smartphone penetration, mobile shopping has emerged as a dominant trend. Advanced fintech solutions have boosted consumer confidence in online transactions. Businesses are shifting towards eco-friendly practices to meet evolving consumer expectations. These factors are reshaping the e-commerce landscape, making it more competitive and innovation-driven."





## “The E-Commerce Market in MENA Will Exceed \$50 Billion”

Muneer Alwafaa stated that he anticipates significant developments in the MENA e-commerce ecosystem by 2025:

“The MENA region’s market value is expected to exceed \$50 billion, driven by technology adoption and consumer demand. Businesses will rely heavily on AI for advanced customer insights, logistics, and marketing automation. Eco-friendly packaging and operations will become key differentiators for businesses. An increase in international trade facilitated by advanced logistics and payment solutions. Augmented reality [AR] and virtual reality [VR] will enhance the online shopping experience. The future of e-commerce will revolve around customer-centric strategies powered by data and innovation.”



## “Our E-Commerce Team Consists of Specialized Professionals”

Alwafaa highlighted that the company’s e-commerce team is made up of experts specializing in various fields and stated: “Creating robust, scalable websites and apps for e-commerce businesses. Performance-driven digital marketing experts who ensure client success. Specialists providing AI solutions like chatbots and predictive analytics. Ensuring seamless support and service delivery. We prioritize collaboration and continuous learning, enabling us to deliver exceptional results for our clients.”

## Challenges in the e-commerce sector

Muneer Alwafaa also provided the following insights regarding the challenges in the e-commerce sector: “While the e-commerce landscape is thriving, it comes with its own set of challenges:

- **Competition:** The rapid entry of new players demands constant innovation to stay ahead.
- **Logistics:** Managing delivery efficiency and costs, particularly in remote areas, remains a challenge.
- **Data security:** Ensuring secure transactions and protecting consumer data is critical for building trust.
- **Customer expectations:** The need for fast, personalized, and seamless shopping experiences requires significant investment in technology.

At Alwafaa Group, we address these challenges by leveraging cutting-edge solutions, fostering innovation, and maintaining a customer-first approach.”



## Adding value to the e-commerce ecosystem

Alwafaa, “To truly drive the e-commerce industry forward, collaboration and knowledge-sharing are essential. Businesses must embrace emerging technologies like AI, focus on sustainability, and prioritize customer experience to succeed. At Alwafaa Group, we are committed to being a catalyst for this transformation by delivering innovative solutions, empowering SMEs, and building a strong community of like-minded entrepreneurs. Together, we can shape the future of e-commerce.”



## Who is Muneer Alwafaa?

Finally, Muneer Alwafaa shared his career journey and vision: “I am Muneer Alwafaa, an entrepreneur, influencer, and AI specialist with over 22 years of experience in Dubai. My journey began in 2000 in a small village in Kerala, India, where I dreamt of building a business that made technology accessible to all. Today, as the Founder and CEO of Alwafaa Group and Daidu.ai, I’m proud to have created platforms that empower businesses to achieve their goals.

My passion lies in supporting SMEs, especially in adopting AI and e-commerce strategies. I believe in the power of continuous

learning and innovation to stay relevant in this fast-changing world. I’m an influencer having more than 1.2 millions followers across different social media platform, a radio presenter and TV host, a motivational speaker and becoming an author of the book ‘AI in Business’ soon.

Looking ahead, I aim to; expand Daidu.ai’s reach and introduce AI to more businesses, foster innovation in the e-commerce ecosystem. Mentor aspiring entrepreneurs and share knowledge through masterclasses and thought leadership initiatives.”







Alexander Henn, CEO of Squared Circle Ecom, stated, “Think of us as architectural designers behind virtual storefronts, strategists for successful product launches, or even the ‘troubleshooters’ who fix things when disaster strikes. We don’t believe in fluff. We believe in results.” Henn appeared as a guest on WORLDEF E-COMMERCE.

Headquartered in India, Squared Circle Ecom’s expertise extends far beyond the basics. Its strongest presence is in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Germany, Australia, and the U.S. The company has collaborated with major marketplaces such as Amazon, Lazada/Redmart, Noon, and Namshi. Alexander Henn remarked, “E-commerce does not follow borders, and neither do we. Whether it’s helping a brand break into new markets or optimizing operations across multiple regions, we make scaling a seamless experience.”

### **“Cut Through The Noise And Focus On What Works”**

In response to the question, “What do you promise e-commerce brands?”, Henn replied: “No promises here, but real, measurable outcomes. Cut through the noise and focus on what works. Optimized storefronts that convert, not just look good. Marketing strategies with impact, not impressions. AI-powered insights so you don’t have to guess. Smooth operations that keep your vendors and customers happy. Captivating and engaging content and creative services. In short? We help brands sell more, stress less, and scale faster.”

## **The Architects Behind Virtual Stores: Squared Circle Ecom**

Squared Circle Ecom goes beyond supporting online sales for brands – it ensures that brands sell smarter. Founded in 2019, the company has built a reputation for transforming market chaos into structured and scalable growth. The team specializes in everything from account management and marketing strategies to data-driven insights and technological solutions. Squared Circle Ecom’s mission is to be the digital partner brands truly want to work with—efficient, sharp, and always one step ahead. Its vision is to help brands navigate the digital landscape with intelligence, efficiency, and the right amount of courage.



## **“The Game Is Changing, and Brands Must Adapt”**

Squared Circle Ecom CEO also discussed the challenges in digital marketing: “Marketing today is an obstacle course, and only the adaptable survive. The biggest challenges are:

- The attention deficit crisis: If you don’t hook people in three seconds, they’re gone.
- The platform explosion: It’s no longer just Google and Facebook. Now it’s TikTok, Instagram Shopping, WhatsApp Commerce, and whatever else pops up next.
- The data lockdown: With privacy updates and the death of third-party cookies, brands need new ways to reach their audience without creeping them out.
- The AI takeover: Ignore AI, and you’ll get left behind. Use it wisely, and you’ll be ten steps ahead.

The playbook is changing, and brands need to adapt or fade into digital oblivion!”

## **“Ignoring Artificial Intelligence is Like Running a Market Without Cash Registers”**

In response to the question, “How is artificial intelligence transforming your industry?”

Alexander Henn said: “As a player, ignoring AI in today’s e-commerce scene is like running a souk without cash registers. Possible, indeed, but far from the mark.” He added: “AI-driven digital merchandising is not the future; it is the present, and we’re paving the way at Squared Circle Ecom. We offer AI-driven solutions, including automating product listings, enhancing the searchability of items using intelligent tagging, and designing targeted campaigns that capture the imagination of consumers.”



## **“We Make the Impossible Possible for Our Customers Every Day”**

Henn also shared the features that distinguish Squared Circle Ecom from other platforms: “At Squared Circle Ecom, we are committed to delivering exceptional e-commerce solutions. Our tagline, ‘We square circles for our customers every day,’ reflects our dedication to overcoming challenges and achieving success for our clients.

Our regional expertise, having collaborated with platforms like Amazon, noon, Talabat, and Lazada, enables us to understand the local nuances of selling in these regions. Whether it’s D2C websites, global marketplaces, social commerce, or quick-commerce platforms, we optimize your omnichannel presence to maximize reach and conversions.

In other words, we don’t just make things look good—we make them work smarter, sell faster, and scale bigger. Our commitment to innovation and operational excellence ensures that your brand not only competes but thrives in the digital marketplace.”

## Squared Circle Ecom Team: Experts in Scaling Brands

Henn described the Squared Circle Ecom team: “The team of industry experts, creative problem solvers, and data-driven strategists at Squared Circle Ecom excel at scaling brands across digital platforms. We identify changes in the market and build strategies to stay one step ahead. Our action-oriented marketers turn impressions into clicks and clicks into conversions, while our insightful data analysts translate data into actionable insights that fuel business growth. Our influential creative professionals know that good design is not only beautiful; it must also be engaging and influence purchasing decisions. With our years of experience across FMCG, fashion, beauty, electronics, and emerging markets, we have worked with leading global and regional marketplaces like Amazon, Noon, Talabat, Lazada, Flipkart, and Shopee.”



### About Alexander Henn

“In 2019, I co-founded Squared Circle Ecom Pvt Ltd with Rajeswari Henn [Managing Director] and Priyanka Henn [Director]. As a family-owned digital merchandising company, we built Squared Circle Ecom with a clear vision: to help brands scale seamlessly across global marketplaces while setting industry trends, not just following them.

It all started at Amazon India, where I quickly learned that customer obsession is a principle, not just a mantra, that leads to long-term success. My work earned me the ‘Above & Beyond’ award, and later at Lazada-Alibaba, where I played a significant role in building digital commerce across Southeast Asia.

Amazon India: I contributed to building one of the strongest retail teams, driving marketplace expansion, and implementing global best practices. Lazada-Alibaba Group: I set up a Center of Excellence in Bangalore and was instrumental in Lazada’s grocery expansion across Southeast Asia. Speaker & Thought Leader: I have spoken about AI-driven digital merchandising and marketplace scaling at global industry events such as AICRA Tech Start-Up Conclave and Seamless Berlin.”



# Thomas Kipp: Access to Real-Time Data Will Be Crucial in the Coming Years

Thomas Kipp, Senior Advisor for Transportation, Travel, and Logistics at Roland Berger, emphasized that data will be the most significant trend in technology in the future. Speaking at the WORLDEF DUBAI event, Kipp stated, "The point of sale can be either retail or online, but all these processes must work together. From a data perspective, access to real-time or near real-time data will be extremely important over the next 5-6 years."

## "Retail Essentially Functions as a Warehouse"

Kipp further elaborated: "How do you optimally balance service levels at the point of sale with inventory levels and products in transit? Suppliers must also grasp this concept because they are responsible for ensuring that manufactured products are available for sale. I believe this is the future of supply chains and data. Looking ahead, real-time data access will be essential for supply chain management, as it plays a crucial role in warehouse operations."

He continued: "Today, you can sell products online while simultaneously operating brick-and-mortar stores. Essentially, your retail store functions as a warehouse. This raises an important question: How does this impact inventory management? When a product is taken from the store for shipment, it results in a reduction in inventory. If you do not recognize this within a couple of hours, inventory balance, replenishment, and calculations may be inaccurate. This is why access to near real-time data will be critical. Many companies are already excelling in this area."

## A Seasoned Expert in Digital and Logistics Sectors

A Seasoned Expert in Digital, E-Commerce and Logistics Sectors  
Having held C-level roles in leading Logistics companies like DHL Group, Aramex and Naqel Express for the past 20+ years, Kipp has developed extensive expertise across digital, e-commerce as well as related Logistics sectors. He is currently a Senior Advisor at Roland Berger, a leading global consulting firm, where he focuses on logistics, transportation, and supply chain issues, particularly in the Middle East, while also working on international projects.

## "Access to Real-Time Data Will Be Crucial in the Next 5-6 Years"

Kipp reiterated that data will be the key technological trend of the future, explaining, "Why do I say this? Because what you truly need to understand is how to conduct business with your end-to-end supply chain and how to connect suppliers, logistics providers, and points of sale. Whether the point of sale is retail or online, all these processes must operate in harmony. In terms of data, access to real-time or near real-time data will be of paramount importance over the next 5-6 years."



## Challenges in Cross-Border E-Commerce

Kipp also discussed challenges in cross-border e-commerce, stating, “The primary challenge is how to create a reliable shopping experience. For instance, if you and I want to purchase something from the U.S., it may seem simple because targeting that market is crucial. However, how can we ensure a trustworthy experience? What about my personal data? Can I pay using the same payment method I use domestically? Can I shop with the same confidence as I do locally?”

He added: “When considering cross-border e-commerce, it is essential to clearly identify the target consumer. Is the consumer in the target market the same as one in my home country? Take China as an example: If I were living in China, I would use eBay, WeChat, and expect customer service in Chinese. If you aim to sell to China, are you prepared to invest in organizing this experience to gain consumer trust in your product, service, and overall shopping experience? These are key considerations for businesses embarking on this journey.”



## Understanding and Managing Returns

Another major issue, according to Kipp, is managing returns efficiently on a global scale. “Although there are regional solution providers, return processes remain complex and challenging. Some companies are developing scoring models to predict return probabilities based on factors such as product profiles, consumer behavior, and country trends. While this is helpful, businesses must still understand how to manage returns effectively.”

Touching on return-related technologies, Kipp highlighted that “Dubai Customs utilizes blockchain technology, which can facilitate seamless and verified transactions. Solutions like these are essential. In Dubai’s customs and logistics sector, there are examples of how such technology simplifies processes for everyday consumers.”

## “For Me, the Key Word Is Resilience”

Kipp also addressed human logistics, emphasizing the importance of resilience in supply chain management. “When I think about supply chains and their future, the key word that comes to mind is ‘resilience.’ Resilience is about how well a supply chain responds to and recovers from disruptions. One of the best examples is COVID-19. Since the pandemic, I feel like the industry has been in a constant state of crisis, driven by various factors. COVID-19 was an unexpected crisis, but in recent years, we’ve witnessed increasing geopolitical tensions and trade issues. Take the Red Sea situation, for example—these are real challenges impacting our sector. The critical question is: How can we respond effectively?”

Kipp elaborated: “Many e-commerce companies assume they are exempt from these challenges because they are accustomed to dealing with shipping disruptions, particularly to the U.S. However, if trade issues persist, can e-commerce sellers still ensure a reliable and predictable supply of products? Or should they rethink their approach?”

## Expanding Supply Base and Strategic Partnerships

Kipp suggested that businesses should consider diversifying their supply base. “Another question is how to collaborate with different partners for domestic delivery and logistics. Strategic partnerships play a crucial role when establishing an e-commerce infrastructure or ecosystem. Additionally, predicting consumer demand is essential for financial planning. For instance, in this region, we know that certain food products like sweet potatoes are highly demanded during Ramadan. How do you forecast this demand accurately? How can you improve your predictions and adapt your business model accordingly? How do you manage inventory to avoid excessive stockpiling?”



## Proactive Crisis Management Is Essential

Kipp cited Sheehan as an example, explaining, “Sheehan can launch a new product within seven days—imagine that. But how long will that product remain in demand? How do you predict that? And how do you manage a supply chain capable of launching 5,000 to 8,000 new products daily? This requires data-driven decision-making and a robust supply chain management strategy.”

Concluding his remarks, Kipp emphasized the importance of forward-thinking leadership in crisis management. “Very few companies have taken the time post-COVID to reflect on and prepare their organizations for future disruptions. Responding to a crisis often requires a complete reevaluation of organizational models and decision-making processes. Decision-making must be delegated to those closest to the disruption. Whether the issue arises at a port, an airport, or in transit, no one will wait for instructions. This is why businesses must proactively engage in crisis management to be well-prepared for future challenges.”

### Who is Thomas Kipp?

Thomas Kipp works as a Senior Advisor for the Transportation, Travel, and Logistics practice at Roland Berger, a leading international consulting firm. He is based in Dubai. With more than 25 years of experience in the logistics, transportation, postal, and e-commerce sectors, Thomas has held various C-level positions and global operational responsibilities. He moved to the GCC region in 2020. Thomas previously served as the CEO of Naqel Express and Group COO of Aramex PJSC. Prior to this, he was a Divisional Board Member at DHL Group for 14 years, where he held various global roles within the Postal and Parcel/E-commerce division.





## The trusted partner for Amazon sellers: MarginBusiness

Omar Angri, CEO of MarginBusiness



MarginBusiness is a specialized agency that supports Amazon sellers in the Gulf region and Europe by helping them maximize their e-commerce potential. By offering tailored solutions, the company assists businesses in overcoming the challenges of selling on Amazon and achieving sustainable growth. MarginBusiness aims to become the preferred partner for Amazon sellers in the Gulf and European regions, building a strong bridge between these markets. We spoke with Omar Angri, CEO of MarginBusiness FZE LLC, about the company's story.

Omar Angri says, "We aim to support brands in optimizing their Amazon presence, driving revenue growth, and achieving long-term success by leveraging our expertise in localization, optimization, and strategy."

### What does MarginBusiness offer to Amazon sellers and the e-commerce ecosystem?

MarginBusiness provides end-to-end account management services to Amazon sellers. These services include:

- Launching and scaling
- Video and photo services
- Listing optimization: Creating SEO-optimized, culturally relevant product listings to boost visibility and conversions.
- PPC management: Designing and managing advertising campaigns to maximize ROI.
- Account health monitoring: Ensuring compliance with Amazon's policies to avoid interruptions.
- Localization: Adapting product listings to the nuances of each market, including language and cultural preferences.

Omar Angri added the following: "Our contribution to e-commerce lies in bridging the gap between sellers and their target markets. By focusing on cultural adaptation and Amazon-specific strategies, we help businesses thrive in the competitive e-commerce landscape while simplifying the complexities of entering new regions."

### "Amazon is making significant investments in infrastructure, customer support, and delivery systems"

In response to the question, "Could you provide insights about Amazon's development in the regions you serve?", Angri stated the following: "The Gulf region, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia, represents a rapidly growing market for Amazon, fueled by high internet penetration and a shift toward online shopping. Amazon UAE and Amazon KSA are investing heavily in infrastructure, customer support, and delivery systems, making them ideal entry points for sellers targeting the Middle East. In Europe, Amazon continues to dominate, with mature markets like Germany, the UK, and France offering robust opportunities for sellers. However, each market has unique dynamics, requiring precise localization and strategy. Sellers who can adapt to these nuances stand to gain significantly."

## "We are a trusted partner for Amazon sellers"

Omar Angri shared the following about what sets MarginBusiness apart from similar platforms: "MarginBusiness stands out because of our localized approach and deep understanding of the markets we serve since 13 years. Unlike generic service providers, we: Focus on cultural nuances, ensuring listings including photos resonate with the local audience. Offer a team of native speakers for each target market, providing accuracy and authenticity in translations and content. Provide a comprehensive range of services, from listing creation to scaling businesses.

Offer DIAFY [Do It All For You]: A unique, hands-on approach tailored for busy individuals who want to start on Amazon UAE. With DIAFY, we handle everything from account creation to brand development, sourcing, listing optimization, and PPC management, providing a complete A-to-Z solution for building a successful Amazon brand. Our proven track record, personalized service, and commitment to helping sellers achieve tangible results make us a trusted partner for Amazon sellers."

## "Our multilingual team ensures that brands maintain their identity while expanding into global markets"

Omar Angri continued: "Our team comprises experienced professionals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, reflecting the markets we serve. We employ Amazon-certified experts in PPC management, e-commerce strategists, content creators, and localization specialists. With 15-20 team members, each contributing unique expertise, we are agile enough to provide personalized support while having the capacity to handle large-scale projects. Our multilingual team ensures that sellers can expand globally without losing the essence of their brand."

CEO of MarginBusiness, Omar Angri, also shared his thoughts on WORLDEF: "Our collaboration with WORLDEF has been instrumental in expanding our reach and strengthening our position in the e-commerce ecosystem. As a prominent platform connecting e-commerce stakeholders, WORLDEF provides valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration.

We have already spoken at two major events in Istanbul and Dubai, sharing insights and expertise with the e-commerce community. These experiences have solidified our relationship with WORLDEF, and we are excited about the potential to deepen this cooperation further in the future. Through this partnership, we aim to continue empowering sellers in the Gulf and Europe to achieve success on Amazon."







**Nikola Ilchev**

Founder of Balkan eCommerce Summit

# Balkan region's leading e-commerce summit



eCommerce Academy, which operates in the Balkans, has been developing various formats, programs, and initiatives for eight years to strengthen the region's e-commerce community. It provides businesses with the knowledge, tools, and connections necessary to improve their operations, expand their markets, and significantly boost their sales. The region's most important e-commerce event, Balkan eCommerce Summit, brings together all industries intersecting with e-commerce. Behind eCommerce Academy and Balkan eCommerce Summit, both crucial to the region's e-commerce ecosystem, stands a seasoned professional: Nikola Ilchev. We spoke with Nikola Ilchev, the founder of eCommerce Academy and Balkan eCommerce Summit, about e-commerce and the upcoming summit.

## "Our focus is on facilitating cross-border sales in the Balkans"

Nikola Ilchev stated: "We take immense pride in being the driving force behind some of the most impactful and influential events across the Balkan region. Even when we are not the primary organizers, we remain deeply involved, providing unwavering support to ensure their success. A notable example of our commitment to collaboration is our strong and continuous backing of all initiatives spearheaded by WORLDEF, an organization that shares our vision for advancing e-commerce."

He further added: "In addition to organizing events and providing support, we are dedicated to addressing one of the biggest challenges businesses face in the Balkans: cross-border sales. Our efforts focus on simplifying the complexities of international trade for e-commerce companies in the region. By fostering cooperation, building bridges, and eliminating barriers, we aim to create a seamless cross-border trading experience, enabling businesses from the Balkans to thrive in an increasingly competitive global market."

## Balkan eCommerce Summit (\*) – April 29-30, 2025!

As the founder of Balkan eCommerce Summit, Nikola Ilchev highlighted that the summit is a leading event that brings together businesses and professionals from more than 20 countries across Central and Eastern Europe. Regarding the upcoming event, organized under eCommerce Academy's leadership at Arena Sofia, he shared the following insights:

"For 2025, we are thrilled to announce the participation of attendees and exhibitors not only from the region but also from countries like Ukraine, Türkiye, Germany, Italy, and even as far as India. This expansion underscores the Summit's growing reputation as one of the most significant gatherings for e-commerce and digital marketing professionals in the region, playing a pivotal role in shaping the industry's future."

Nikola Ilchev continued: "Balkan eCommerce Summit has become a cornerstone event, fostering collaboration, innovation, and growth in the sector. Its influence extends far beyond the Balkans, positioning the region as a dynamic hub for e-commerce and digital marketing excellence. The 2025 edition, scheduled for April 29-30, promises to be the most exciting yet, featuring a stellar lineup of world-class speakers. These experts will share invaluable insights on a wide range of topics, including boosting sales, mastering SEO strategies, crafting impactful marketing campaigns, harnessing the power of social media, exploring emerging trends, building compelling brands, and driving product innovation. Attendees can expect a rich exchange of ideas, hands-on knowledge, and unparalleled networking opportunities."

\*For more information and registration, visit: <https://balkanecommerce.com>





## "Our greatest strength is our unique network of over 4,000 e-commerce business representatives"

Speaking about their contributions to e-commerce brands and the e-commerce ecosystem in the Balkans, Nikola Ilchev provided the following details:

"E-commerce brands are constantly seeking new markets to expand into, innovative partnership opportunities, and cutting-edge services to accelerate their growth. This is where we excel. With our extensive expertise and deep understanding of the e-commerce ecosystem, we specialize in facilitating meaningful connections between service providers across different countries and regions. Whenever an e-commerce business owner needs assistance in finding reliable partners or solutions, we are always ready to offer the most well-informed and tailored recommendations."

"Our strength lies in our unparalleled network, which includes over 350 service providers and a vibrant community of more than 4,000 e-commerce business representatives across 20+ markets. This extensive network enables us to serve as a trusted and indispensable partner, helping businesses navigate industry complexities and seize growth opportunities beyond borders."



## "The Balkans offer a fertile ground for e-commerce growth"

Nikola Ilchev also assessed the development of e-commerce in the Balkan region:

"The Balkans stand out as one of the last regions in Europe where e-commerce continues to experience consistent double-digit growth year after year. This dynamic growth has made the region an increasingly attractive destination for e-commerce businesses from Central and Western Europe looking for new opportunities and untapped markets. With a unique combination of rapid digitalization and increasing consumer demand, the Balkans present fertile ground for e-commerce expansion and innovation."

"Leading this regional growth is Romania, which stands out due to its large population, advanced digital infrastructure, and mature market dynamics. As the largest market in the region, Romania sets a benchmark for digital transformation and e-commerce adoption. Following closely behind are Bulgaria, Greece, and Croatia, all of which have thriving e-commerce ecosystems. These countries significantly benefit from EU membership, making cross-border sales more seamless for businesses and consumers alike."

"Meanwhile, the Western Balkans—including Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo—has emerged as an exciting hotspot for e-commerce growth. Over the past few years, these markets have seen a remarkable surge in online transactions, driven by increasing internet penetration, growing consumer confidence in online shopping, and the adoption of digital payment solutions."

## "At the heart of our company is a key leader"

Ilchev emphasized that they collaborate with top professionals across various fields, including digital advertising, email marketing, copywriting, design, public relations, and communication strategies. He further added: "At the heart of our company is a key leader—someone who takes responsibility and drives the entire team forward."

Finally, he reflected on their collaboration with WORLDEF: "The team at WORLDEF are both valued partners and trusted friends, and we deeply appreciate our collaboration. Since our first participation in their event in 2023, we have consistently supported their efforts and have always relied on their support in return. Their team is exceptional—highly skilled, dedicated, and truly inspiring to work with."



# "E-commerce will evolve significantly in 2025"

Ecomcy helps brands and businesses succeed in highly competitive marketplaces such as Amazon and Walmart. The company aims to provide innovative, data-driven strategies that optimize sales performance, increase profitability, and build a strong brand presence. Ecomcy strives not only to be a service provider but also to be a trusted partner in its clients' growth journey. Vincenzo Toscano, Founder and CEO of Ecomcy, shared the company's story with WORLDEF E-COMMERCE. Toscano said, "E-commerce will evolve significantly in 2025," and shared the trends in e-commerce.

Vincenzo Toscano stated that the e-commerce consulting industry is highly competitive, with many agencies offering similar services. He explained the areas in which Ecomcy differentiates itself as follows: "We understand that every brand is unique, so we craft strategies that align with each client's specific goals. Having worked with clients across the US, Europe, and Asia, we bring a global perspective to local markets. Our focus on measurable results ensures that every strategy delivers tangible growth. We prioritize building relationships that go beyond transactional services, aiming to be trusted advisors for our clients."



## What does Ecomcy offer to Amazon and Walmart sellers?

- Amazon DSP Management: Advanced programmatic advertising strategies to target high-value audiences and increase brand visibility.
- PPC Campaign Management: Custom strategies to optimize ad spend, improve ROI, and boost organic ranking.
- SEO and Listing Optimization: Keyword-rich copywriting, image enhancements, and A+ Content to maximize conversion rates.
- Product Launch Strategies: Data-driven plans to ensure successful product rollouts, including influencer marketing and promotional tactics.
- Inventory and Supply Chain Management: Streamlined processes to prevent stockouts and optimize fulfillment costs.
- Market and Competitor Analysis: Insights into market trends and competitive performance to make informed business decisions.



## "E-commerce will evolve significantly in 2025"

Toscano also shared his predictions for the e-commerce ecosystem in 2025. "E-commerce will evolve significantly in 2025," said Toscano, outlining some key trends as follows: "AI-driven tools will allow sellers to offer hyper-personalized experiences to their customers. Consumers will increasingly demand sustainable products and transparent supply chains.

Brands will need to blend their online and offline strategies seamlessly to capture more market share. Specialized, niche products will gain traction as consumers seek unique solutions tailored to their needs. From customer support to advertising, AI will continue to optimize and streamline processes for sellers."



## Who is Vincenzo Toscano?

Vincenzo Toscano is a seasoned e-commerce expert and entrepreneur with a rich background in helping brands thrive on platforms like Amazon and Walmart. Born in Italy and raised in Venezuela, Vincenzo moved to London, where he honed his skills over eight years, driving success for businesses in the competitive world of online retail. As the founder of Ecomcy, a UK-based agency specializing in Amazon and Walmart marketing optimization, Vincenzo has built a reputation for delivering tailored strategies that transform businesses. Under his leadership, Ecomcy has become a trusted partner for brands globally, known for its data-driven campaigns, innovative approaches, and client-centric philosophy. Vincenzo's journey is marked by his passion for empowering brands to unlock their full potential. Through Ecomcy, he has redefined how businesses approach e-commerce, combining cutting-edge technology, deep market insights, and a personalized touch to help clients achieve sustainable growth. His efforts have not only boosted sales and visibility for numerous brands but have also enabled them to build stronger connections with their audiences worldwide.

Vincenzo's mission is clear: to revolutionize the e-commerce landscape by offering unparalleled expertise and solutions that drive real impact for brands, no matter their size or industry.







## Smart Solutions for Amazon Sellers' Success



Selling on Amazon gets tougher every day. With constant rule changes, new competition, and complex systems, staying ahead feels like an uphill battle. That's where Vanessa Hung comes in, offering real solutions for sellers who want to thrive, not just survive.

Vanessa Hung is the go-to strategist for sellers who want to make sense of Amazon's complex platform. Originally from Venezuela, Hung moved to the United States to earn her business degree and gain new opportunities to expand her knowledge of global marketplaces. Through her agency, Online Seller Solutions, she offers hands-on support that helps Amazon sellers tackle challenges and streamline their operations. She also founded the Sellerverse, a practical community where Amazon sellers and operators share strategies, learn from each other and the courses, and solve real problems together.

### What Makes Online Seller Solutions Different?

With a 95% success rate fixing Amazon issues, over 5 years of experience, and deep knowledge of Amazon's backend, Online Seller Solutions doesn't just give advice, they do the hard work for you. They understand exactly how Amazon works and can handle all the details of your Amazon business so you can focus on growth. The company takes care of the complicated tasks that most sellers find confusing or time-consuming.



### Here's How They Help You Succeed?

Optimizes both front-end and back-end product listings using AI-driven strategies and semantic SEO to enhance visibility, relevance, and compliance with Amazon's algorithms like Rufus and COSMO.

Offers Single Solutions for specific challenges, including Seller Central Account Setup, Creative Services for listing enhancements, and Secondary Language Translation for global marketplaces.

Offers Ongoing Monthly Support to help manage your business, handle tasks, and keep everything running smoothly.

Delivers Enterprise Solutions with scalable white-label services and expert-led workshops to optimize operations for large businesses and aggregators.

Protects brand integrity through brand registry optimization and strategies to protect against counterfeit listings and hijackers.

Conducts account health audits and provides actionable insights to improve performance, and maintain compliance on Amazon's platform.



## A Real Success Story

One seller woke up to find every single one of their listings gone. No warnings, no chance to appeal, just an Amazon notice saying their products made health claims they shouldn't. Amazon's message was clear: "Nothing you can do. No appeals. No reinstatement." The only option Amazon offered was expensive lab testing costing thousands of dollars with no guarantee of approval.

But Hung's team at Online Seller Solutions:

- Figured out why Amazon misunderstood the listing content.
- Rewrote everything to fix the problem.
- Created a smart appeal that proved Amazon was wrong.
- Got all the products back online without paying for unnecessary tests.

Online Seller Solutions doesn't just accept Amazon's first answer, they find the real solution when your business is on the line.

## The Sellerverse Community

This community gives members:

- Simple guides for using Seller Central without the confusion
- Step-by-step help for making product listings that actually sell
- Ways to manage inventory and keep your account healthy
- Smart strategies for protecting your brand

But Sellerverse isn't just about training. It's a place where sellers support each other, share what works, and solve problems together.



## Why Hung Is Worth Listening To?

Vanessa Hung has helped over 20,000 Amazon sellers improve their businesses. She works with brands making anywhere from six to nine figures in sales. She regularly speaks at major e-commerce events worldwide: Prosper Show, SellerCon, BDSS, European Seller Conference, WORLDEF DUBAI, and MDS. At these events, she shares the newest strategies for AI and the future of selling on Amazon.

## Hung's Approach Keeps Sellers Competitive?

Amazon is changing fast. Vanessa Hung believes that understanding what customers and Amazon really want is more important than old-style keyword tricks. "If your listing doesn't match what customers actually need, you're not just losing sales, you're becoming invisible," she says. With new AI tools changing how Amazon works, sellers must adapt quickly. Online Seller Solutions helps businesses stay ahead by ensuring their listings work well with Amazon's latest updates.

Hung also warns about Amazon making their platform unnecessarily complicated in ways that often benefit themselves more than sellers. Her advice is simple: adapt faster, optimize smarter, and understand the reasons behind Amazon's choices.

For 2025, Vanessa is focusing on two things: disruption and automation. She believes sellers who use AI and automation will do better than those stuck in old ways of working. New tools like Amazon DSP's Contextual Keyword Targeting will help brands reach more customers without spending so much on expensive PPC campaigns.

"The future of selling on Amazon isn't just about keeping up with changes," Vanessa Hung explains. "It's about seeing them coming, using your data smartly, and staying one step ahead of both competitors and Amazon itself."





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## Africa's Largest Marketplace: **JUMIA**

Africa is drawing global attention with its young population, rapidly growing cities, and increasing disposable income. With developing economies and excellent potential for e-commerce, the continent is home to 54 countries, each at different stages of economic growth. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, also boasts the continent's largest economy. Headquartered in Nigeria, Jumia stands as Africa's largest online marketplace. Jumia is the only true pan-African platform on the list, operating across multiple markets. Jumia Group CEO Francis Dufay spoke exclusively to *WORLD E-COMMERCE* magazine. In this interview, we discussed Jumia's future goals, its collaboration with Hepsiburada, and the evolution of e-commerce in Africa. Dufay also shared valuable insights on several other key topics. Here is the full interview—enjoy the read!

Jumia was founded in 2012 in Lagos, Nigeria. The company's mission is to improve the quality of everyday life in Africa by leveraging technology to provide innovative, convenient, and affordable online services. Its vision is to connect African consumers and entrepreneurs, fostering economic growth and expanding access to goods and services. The platform consists of a marketplace that connects sellers with consumers, a logistics service that facilitates package delivery, and a payment service, JumiaPay, which enables secure transactions. Listed on the New York Stock Exchange [NYSE: JMIA] since 2019, Jumia operates in 9 countries across Africa and also has offices in China, Dubai, New York, Germany, and Portugal.

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## Jumia had an annual active customers of 5.4 million

For the full year of 2024, Jumia reported revenue of \$167.5 million, down 10% year-over-year, or up 17% in constant currency. GMV of \$720.6 million, down 4% year-over-year, or up 28% in constant currency. Operating loss of \$66.0 million compared to \$73.3 million in 2023, down 10% year-over-year, or down 15% in constant currency. Adjusted EBITDA loss of \$51.3 million compared to \$58.2 million in 2023, down 12% year-over-year, or down 21% in constant currency. Physical goods Orders, excluding South Africa and Tunisia, increased 18% year-over-year, with even greater acceleration in December. The strong growth was driven by robust customer demand, continued product expansion, and compelling value for our offerings. Total physical goods Orders increased 15% year-over-year. In 2024, Jumia had an annual active customers of 5.4 million. The company is attracting what it believes to be a stickier and higher quality customer base as evidenced by a 375 basis point year-over-year improvement in repurchase rates with reference to the third quarter of 2024.



Francis Dufay shared the following regarding the goals for 2025: "As we look ahead to 2025, the company is optimistic about its future. The business is stronger and more efficient than it was just two years ago, and we believe we have a good opportunity ahead of us. Our priorities for the year are to build on this momentum by driving top-line growth and improving operational efficiencies. We plan to double down on expansion outside the main urban centers, expand our product assortment with competitive pricing, and strengthen relationships with international sellers. To improve our path to profitability, we will continue to enforce cost discipline and enhance operational and marketing efficiency."

## What Sets Jumia Apart from Its Competitors



In response to the question, "What differentiates Jumia from competitors like Amazon and Takealot?", Francis Dufay stated: "Jumia is present in 9 markets in Africa. Takealot is only present in South Africa, and Amazon is present there and in Egypt. In South Africa, Jumia only offered fashion through Zando and our competitors don't currently operate in the fashion segment or they sold it. Jumia's unique value proposition lies in its deep understanding of the African market and its ability to tailor services to the continent's diverse needs. Unlike global competitors, Jumia has built an extensive logistics network capable of reaching rural and remote areas, ensuring reliable delivery even in regions with limited infrastructure."

Dufay added; "Our payment solution, JumiaPay, addresses the specific financial ecosystem in Africa, promoting cashless transactions in markets where traditional banking services may be limited. Additionally, Jumia's commitment to supporting local entrepreneurs and businesses fosters economic growth and provides consumers with a wide array of locally sourced products."



## What does Jumia promise to e-commerce sellers?

Jumia Group CEO Francis Dufay responded to the question, "As a global marketplace, what do you promise e-commerce sellers?" as follows: "Jumia offers e-commerce sellers a robust platform to reach millions of consumers across multiple African countries. We provide end-to-end logistics support, from warehousing to last-mile delivery, ensuring products reach customers efficiently. Our payment infrastructure, JumiaPay, guarantees secure and timely transactions. Furthermore, sellers benefit from our marketing and advertising services, designed to enhance product visibility and drive sales. We are committed to fostering a supportive environment that enables sellers to scale their businesses and thrive in the African e-commerce landscape."



## "Hepsiburada has started listing Turkish brands on Jumia Egypt"

Last October, Jumia partnered with Hepsiburada, one of Türkiye's largest marketplaces. Dufay shared the following information on this collaboration: "In October 2024, Jumia entered into a strategic partnership with Hepsiburada to enhance product offerings for consumers in Egypt and North Africa. Through this collaboration, Hepsiburada lists its private label products and selected Turkish brands on the Jumia Egypt marketplace. This initiative aims to provide our customers with a wider selection of authentic, high-quality Turkish products. The partnership is currently operational in Egypt, and we are evaluating the potential to expand this collaboration to other African markets where Jumia has a presence."



## "Jumia is ceasing operations in South Africa and Tunisia"

Following Jumia's announcement of its withdrawal from the South African and Tunisian markets, Dufay shared the latest developments: "In October 2024, Jumia made the strategic decision to cease operations in South Africa and Tunisia to focus resources on markets with higher growth potential. These two countries collectively accounted for approximately 2% of orders and 3% of GMV in the

first nine months of 2024. The exit process involved employee and lease termination costs, asset liquidation, and other associated expenses. This move allows us to streamline operations and concentrate on strengthening our presence in core markets where we see significant opportunities for growth and profitability."

In response to the question, "What are your plans regarding the strategy of focusing on consolidation in the nine countries where the company operates?" Dufay stated: "Our current strategy emphasizes deepening our footprint in the existing nine countries by enhancing the customer value proposition, expanding our logistics capabilities, and enriching our product assortment. We are investing in technology and infrastructure to improve operational efficiency and customer experience. By focusing on these markets, we aim to capture the substantial untapped potential and drive sustainable growth. This approach allows us to allocate resources effectively and build stronger relationships with local consumers and sellers."

## The e-commerce market in Africa will exceed \$40 billion by 2025!

The African e-commerce landscape has been experiencing steady growth, driven by increasing internet penetration, mobile connectivity, and a youthful, tech-savvy population. According to data from Statista, the e-commerce market in Africa is expected to generate \$40.49 billion in revenue by 2025. With an anticipated annual growth rate [CAGR 2025-2029] of 8.46%, the market is projected to reach a volume of \$56.03 billion by 2029. According to data from TechCabal Insights, Africa's mobile-first approach is expected to account for over 60% of e-commerce transactions by 2025, with mobile phone adoption projected to reach 623 million unique subscribers by the same year.



Dufay also shared his insights on cross-border e-commerce in Africa:

"Cross-border e-commerce in Africa is gaining momentum, facilitated by regional trade agreements and improvements in logistics infrastructure. Jumia has been instrumental in this growth by enabling international sellers to reach African consumers and vice versa. Our platform offers a diverse range of products from global vendors, providing consumers access to goods that may not be readily available locally. This expansion of cross-border trade contributes to a more dynamic and competitive marketplace, benefiting both consumers and sellers."

He added that Nigeria, Egypt, and Kenya are among the countries with the greatest potential for e-commerce, thanks to their large populations, increasing internet penetration, and growing middle class.

## Challenges of E-commerce in Africa



In response to the question, "As the largest marketplace in Africa, what are the key challenges for e-commerce in the countries you serve?" Francis Dufay stated: "E-commerce in Africa faces several structural challenges, including logistics infrastructure, digital payment adoption, and internet penetration. Many regions still lack reliable transportation networks, making last-mile delivery a complex and costly process. Additionally, while digital payments are growing, cash remains dominant in many markets, requiring a hybrid approach to payments. Internet penetration and smartphone adoption are increasing, but data costs can still be prohibitive for some consumers. Regulatory complexities and fragmented markets also pose challenges, as each country has its own rules governing e-commerce, imports, and taxation. Despite these hurdles, Jumia continues to innovate by investing in logistics, expanding JumiaPay, and working closely with local governments to create an enabling environment for digital commerce."

## "E-commerce will become an integral part of daily life"

Jumia Group CEO Francis Dufay envisions a future where e-commerce in Africa becomes an integral part of daily life, driven by technological advancements and increased accessibility. He believes that continued investment in infrastructure, fostering local entrepreneurship, and embracing innovation will propel the industry forward, ultimately contributing to economic growth across the continent.

## Jumia's Artificial Intelligence Strategy

So, how is artificial intelligence transforming e-commerce in Africa? What is Jumia's AI strategy? Here is the assessment of e-commerce professional Francis Dufay: "Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing e-commerce in Africa by enhancing personalized shopping experiences, optimizing supply chains, and improving customer service through chatbots and virtual assistants. At Jumia, we are integrating AI to analyze consumer behavior, forecast demand, and streamline operations, ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our customers efficiently. We recently adopted Sprinklr to enhance the user experience for customers, sellers, and employees across 9 African countries and 140+ digital channels, including WhatsApp, TikTok, email and live chat. Sprinklr's customized, AI-powered platform and self-service capabilities offer Jumia a scalable, omnichannel solution to effectively manage support for its diverse user base.

Jumia's adoption of Sprinklr consolidates user support operations onto a single platform, providing real-time visibility into agent interactions and performance. This empowers managers to understand key topics and themes that drive contact center traffic and to allocate support resources effectively. With customizable reporting and data-driven insights, the team gains a deeper understanding of support interactions, enabling targeted training programs and enhancing overall service quality."



Highlighting that Jumia provides employment to thousands of people, Dufay said, "Jumia's team is a diverse and dynamic group of professionals committed to driving the growth of e-commerce across Africa. With operations in nine countries, Jumia employs thousands of people across various departments, including technology, supply chain, commercial, marketing, customer service, and vendor management. The company is built on a strong culture of innovation, agility, and collaboration, attracting top talents from Africa and beyond. Jumia also invests in young talents through internships, training programs, and initiatives like JForce, which empowers independent sales consultants. Our leadership team brings together expertise in e-commerce, technology, and financial services, ensuring that we continue to shape the future of online retail on the continent"



## Who is Francis Dufay?

Francis Dufay is currently the CEO of Jumia. Prior, he was EVP Africa for the Jumia Group. Before that, he served as CEO of Jumia Ivory Coast from 2014 until 2022. Before joining Jumia, Francis worked in Brussels (Belgium) for McKinsey & Company (2009-2014) where he managed projects in Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, focused on eCommerce and retail, as well as Public sector & economic development. Francis holds an MBA in Marketing from Northwestern University (UK) - Kellogg School of Management; a master's in management from the Community of European Management Schools (CEMS) Masters in Management and an MSc from HEC Paris Business School (France).



# "The Era of AI in E-Commerce" to be Discussed at WORLDEF ISTANBUL!

WORLDEF continues to shape the future of e-commerce and retail technologies. Bringing together global leaders and innovators, the international e-commerce fair WORLDEF is set to host a major event in Istanbul. Scheduled for May, WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025 will focus on AI-driven transformation in e-commerce!

Dubbed the "World's #1 E-Commerce Show," WORLDEF is once again uniting the global e-commerce ecosystem in Istanbul. Following its highly successful event in Dubai last December, WORLDEF will host its next major gathering on May 15-17, 2025, at the Yenikapı Event Area in Istanbul.



## What to Expect From WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025

**RockStar Speakers:** Listen to insights from top founders, government officials, enterprise tech leaders, and investors from around the globe, all focusing on e-commerce.

**New Perspectives:** You'll gain fresh insights into the future of tech focused on e-commerce across our 4 content stages, discovering the innovations that will shape tomorrow.

**Interactive Exhibition:** Experience the future of tech in e-commerce firsthand as you explore our immersive expo floor and connect with the world's leading solution providers.

**Networking:** Utilize our upgraded app to connect with your next business partner, customer or solution provider in the e-commerce industry.

## Countdown to "WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025" Begins!

Preparations are in full swing for WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025, widely recognized as "the region's largest e-commerce event." The fair will serve as a key meeting point for the e-commerce, artificial intelligence, and retail technology ecosystem. As e-commerce continues to evolve, brands striving to stand out in the digital commerce landscape will gather at this prestigious event to drive transformation in the modern retail era and explore new opportunities in AI.



## WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025 in Numbers

**80+ Countries**

**30.000+ Attendees**

**200+ Speakers**

**500+ Enterprise Retail Brand**

**240+ Exhibitors**

## AI is Transforming E-Commerce!

E-commerce is undergoing a profound transformation with the integration of artificial intelligence [AI]. AI-powered systems are continuously evolving, enhancing customer satisfaction through personalized shopping experiences.

- **AI-driven recommendation systems** boost sales by suggesting products tailored to user preferences.
- **Chatbots** provide 24/7 customer support, instantly responding to inquiries.
- **Inventory and pricing algorithms** adjust dynamically based on demand.
- **Fraud detection technologies** enhance security, reducing the risk of fraud.
- **Visual search and voice assistants** make shopping more convenient.
- **AI-powered marketing analytics** enable more efficient campaign strategies.



These innovations are making e-commerce smarter, faster, and more user-friendly, strengthening businesses' competitive edge.

At WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025, attendees will witness firsthand how AI is revolutionizing e-commerce. This exciting event will present groundbreaking opportunities that redefine the future of the industry. The event will also feature AI-focused brands, expert speakers, and interactive booths.

## 5 Leading Sectors at the Fair

• Logistics and fulfillment

• Logistics and fulfillment

• Investors

• Retail technologies

• Entrepreneurs

## AI in E-Commerce | E-Commerce in Everything

E-Commerce in Logistics

E-Commerce in Fintech

E-Commerce in Software

E-Commerce in Digital Marketing

E-Commerce in Supply Chain

E-Commerce in Legal & Law

## E-Commerce Professionals to Deliver Inspiring Speeches

One of the most prestigious events in the e-commerce world, WORLDEF ISTANBUL, will bring together leading industry figures. Senior executives from the e-commerce ecosystem will deliver inspiring speeches on innovative strategies, digital marketing trends, and the future of commerce.

Participants will gain valuable insights into expanding into global markets, AI-powered sales techniques, and enhancing customer experience. The event, which also stands out with its networking opportunities, will open doors to significant collaborations for entrepreneurs and brands. This organization, shaping the future of digital commerce, will be an unmissable meeting point for industry professionals.

## Omar Nart: Key Players and Industries Driving AI Transformation Will Be at WORLDEF ISTANBUL!

WORLDEF CEO Omar Nart has expressed great excitement for the upcoming WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025, set to take place in May. Reflecting on last year's event, he highlighted the strong synergy created within the e-commerce ecosystem, stating: "WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025 will build on this synergy. This year, we anticipate even greater engagement, participation, and interaction. We have designed a comprehensive AI-focused program that will allow companies and visitors to witness firsthand how artificial intelligence is reshaping e-commerce. From logistics to digital marketing, service providers to marketplaces, hundreds of key players and industries are driving this transformation—and they will all be at WORLDEF ISTANBUL!"



Omar Nart, WORLDEF CEO

## "Opportunities for Every Business Connected to E-Commerce!"

Nart further emphasized Istanbul's strategic significance for the e-commerce ecosystem: "As the host city, Istanbul presents extraordinary opportunities for global e-commerce brands. Situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, the city continues to attract major international players. Brands that see Türkiye as a key hub for sourcing and production will find valuable partnership opportunities at WORLDEF ISTANBUL 2025. This event is a gateway for all companies intersecting with the e-commerce industry."

## Some of the Participating Countries

	Italy		Croatia
	Germany		Czech Republic
	Slovenia		Estonia
	Bulgaria		Hungary
	Bosnia and Herzegovina		Latvia
	Kazakhstan		Lithuania
	Saudi Arabia		United Arab Emirates



# ChannelEngine Provides Access to Over 950 Marketplaces Across 195 Countries



ChannelEngine connects brands and retailers with over 950 marketplaces worldwide. It offers a single platform for managing product data, inventory, orders, and pricing across all online channels. With smart automation and seamless integration, it enables businesses to drive more sales, grow faster, and maintain control over their operations. The scalable and reliable platform ensures smooth operations, securing long-term success as businesses grow. Headquartered in Leiden, Netherlands, with global offices in New York, Dubai, Munich, Paris, and Singapore, ChannelEngine helps leading brands such as Unilever, Sanofi, Philips, and Sonos expand their marketplace presence globally. ChannelEngine's Vice President of Strategic Development, Niels Floors, shared the company's story with WORLDEF E-COMMERCE.

## Global Marketplace Guidance and Localized Expertise

ChannelEngine operates in 195 countries and provides businesses access to over 950 marketplaces. Its services include product data management, inventory and order synchronization, and pricing automation. The platform offers seamless integrations with ERP, PIM, WMS, and order fulfillment systems, along with AI-powered tools for category matching, packaging, and performance optimization. Additionally, by supporting 1P, 3P, and hybrid sales models, ChannelEngine provides global marketplace guidance and localized expertise to help businesses succeed in diverse regions.

## "We Help Our Clients Stay Competitive and Achieve Long-Term Success"

Niels Floors shared the company's mission and goals: "Our purpose is to empower brands and retailers to thrive in the evolving e-commerce landscape. Our goal is to simplify and optimize marketplace operations, enabling businesses to grow profitably and sustainably while expanding their global reach. By leveraging cutting-edge automation, strategic insights, and our extensive marketplace network, we help clients stay competitive and achieve long-term success."

## "ChannelEngine Offers Comprehensive Solutions to Improve Marketplace Operations"

ChannelEngine VP Niels Floors commented on the competitive landscape of the industry, stating: "The marketplace integrator industry is highly competitive, with a focus on scalability, automation, and innovation. ChannelEngine stands out due to our comprehensive platform, global marketplace network, and customer-centric approach. Our localized insights, advanced tools, and tailored support ensure businesses can thrive in a dynamic and competitive environment."

Regarding the question, "What do you offer to global e-commerce brands?" Niels Floors responded: "For global e-commerce brands, ChannelEngine provides comprehensive solutions to enhance their marketplace operations. This includes access to over 950 marketplaces worldwide, along with tools designed to simplify VAT compliance, currency conversion, and translations. The platform ensures real-time synchronization of inventory and orders, enabling seamless operations. With AI-powered insights, businesses can optimize pricing, create product bundles, and analyze competitors effectively. Additionally, ChannelEngine offers personalized guidance for cross-border selling strategies, empowering brands to expand internationally with confidence. To address lost revenue, particularly on Amazon Vendor, the Recovery Management tools help businesses reclaim funds lost to operational discrepancies, boosting overall profitability."



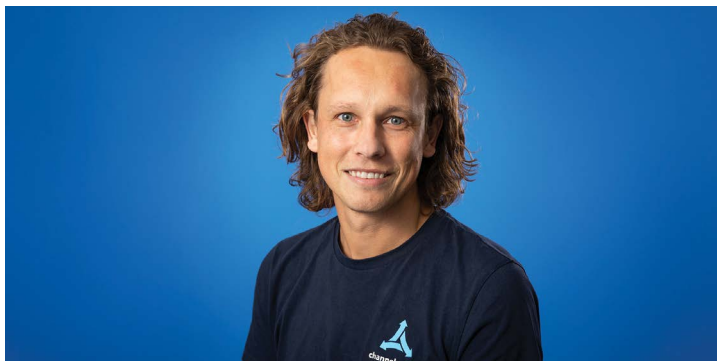
## Niels Floors Shares Insights on Cross-Border E-Commerce in 2025

In forecasting the future of cross-border e-commerce in 2025, Niels Floors stated: “We anticipate significant growth in cross-border e-commerce, driven by consumer demand for international products and advances in logistics. Brands will prioritize localized content, faster delivery times, and streamlined payment solutions. Additionally, automation and AI will play pivotal roles in optimizing operations and driving profitability.”



### “Marketplace Integrators Face Constantly Evolving Challenges”

Niels Floors also addressed the most common challenges faced by marketplace integrators, saying: “Marketplace integrators often face challenges such as managing ever-evolving marketplace requirements and regulations, which demand constant updates to stay compliant. Balancing first-party (1P) and third-party (3P) operations effectively is another significant hurdle, as each model requires distinct strategies and resources. Providing localized solutions for diverse markets adds complexity, as it involves tailoring operations to meet the unique needs of various regions. Scaling operations without compromising efficiency or profitability is a common concern, as rapid growth can strain resources and processes. Lastly, ensuring data security and compliance is critical, as integrators handle sensitive information across multiple platforms.”



## What Do E-Commerce Brands Demand?

Niels Floors shared what e-commerce brands seek: “E-commerce brands seek centralized management of multi-channel operations, enabling them to oversee their online presence across various platforms. They also require real-time data synchronization for inventory and pricing to ensure accuracy and efficiency in their operations. Additionally, these brands look for insights to optimize sales and profitability, allowing them to make data-driven decisions. Automation plays a crucial role in this, streamlining processes and reducing manual effort, which further enhances operational efficiency. Tools that streamline cross-border logistics and compliance are also crucial for ensuring smooth international operations, and personalized support is needed to navigate the complexities of selling on multiple marketplaces.”

Niels Floors also mentioned that the ChannelEngine team, consisting of experts from over 40 different nationalities, provides deep local market knowledge with global expertise: “With offices in key regions worldwide, we provide hands-on support to businesses at every stage of their marketplace journey. Our in-house engineering and product teams continually innovate to ensure our platform meets the evolving needs of our clients.”

## Who is Niels Floors?

Niels Floors is the Vice President of Strategic Development at ChannelEngine, a role that sits at the intersection of e-commerce, technology, sales, and strategic partnerships. In recent years, he has been instrumental in setting up and managing ChannelEngine's global Sales and Partnership team, overseeing operations in EMEA, APAC, and North America. Always with a finger on the pulse of industry trends, Niels travels extensively to connect with experts in various regions. His insights not only influence ChannelEngine's direction but are also generously shared with his teams, clients, and the broader market to ensure informed, future-proof decisions. Whether you're looking to understand emerging market trends or seeking to implement high-impact strategies, Niels brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table.



## GMG Selects ChannelEngine to Drive Marketplace Expansion Across MENA & SEA

ChannelEngine announces its collaboration with GMG, a global well-being and retail conglomerate, to drive GMG's marketplace expansion across MENA and SEA.

GMG, a global retailer, manufacturer and distributor, has established itself as a dominant force in the retail industry, operating a robust portfolio that features internationally recognized brands, such as Nike, Columbia, Jordan, The North Face, Timberland, and Vans. By partnering with ChannelEngine, GMG enhances its marketplace capabilities, leveraging the platform's advanced integration technology to optimize operations, expand brand visibility, and drive significant revenue growth.

With ChannelEngine's innovative software, GMG will seamlessly integrate its world-class brand portfolio into leading marketplaces, efficiently managing product data, inventory, orders, and pricing across multiple online platforms. This integration will empower GMG to maximize its reach, catering to the rapidly growing e-commerce demand in the MENA and SEA regions.

### "Together, we're setting the stage for a transformative digital expansion"

Niels Floors, VP of Strategic Development and Regional Lead at ChannelEngine, commented: "GMG's unparalleled portfolio and regional influence make them an ideal partner for ChannelEngine. By combining their expertise in retail with our cutting-edge marketplace technology, we are unlocking immense potential for growth and innovation in the MENA and SEA e-commerce ecosystems. Together, we're setting the stage for a transformative digital expansion."

Jonathan Flender, Vice President - Digital & Omni at GMG, shared: "At GMG, we focus on driving digital innovation and expanding our e-commerce footprint globally. Partnering with ChannelEngine unlocks new opportunities to streamline operations and expand our reach across leading marketplaces. By automating processes, optimizing product listings, and centralizing order management, we can deliver a superior online experience to customers worldwide. This collaboration supports our goal of transforming e-commerce into a profitable growth engine for the business."

The partnership highlights the growing importance of marketplaces in driving ecommerce growth across regions where digital adoption is surging. With ChannelEngine's scalable platform, GMG is well-equipped to capitalize on this trend, ensuring its brands achieve greater visibility and reach in an increasingly competitive online retail environment.





## A global partner for growth in marketplaces: Podean

Podean is a marketplace marketing agency serving in over 30 countries. The brand name "Podean" is derived from the word 'antipodean,' which means "two places on opposite sides of the world." The company promises its clients "global reach," "a unique perspective on every customer relationship," and "growth in marketplaces." Adam Woolcock, MENAT Managing Director of Podean, shared the brand's story with WORLDEF E-COMMERCE.

### "Our primary goal is to equip e-commerce brands with innovative solutions."

Adam Woolcock stated the brand's goals and objectives: "At Podean, recognized as the Premier Marketplace Marketing Agency, our mission is to unlock growth for our clients across marketplaces. With our global expertise and partnership-focused approach, we empower brands to navigate complex challenges and seize growth opportunities. From strategic planning to execution, we offer end-to-end support, collaborating closely with your team to ensure success."

"Our vision is to transform the e-commerce landscape by providing comprehensive services tailored to the evolving needs of businesses around the globe," Woolcock added. "Our primary goal is to equip e-commerce brands with innovative solutions that enhance growth, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. We aim to be the go-to partner for businesses striving to scale and thrive in the digital marketplace."

### Countries Served and Services Offered by Podean

Adam Woolcock, MENAT Managing Director of Podean, provided information on the countries served and the services the company offers:

Winning Amazon's top global agency award in 2023, Podean is a truly global-first agency with a footprint across five continents. Our teams are strategically located in the US, UK, EU, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, the Middle East, and Türkiye.

We offer a full suite of services:

- **Marketplace consulting:** Our team will work with you to assess your current operations and goals within the eCommerce space, leveraging our expertise across multiple disciplines to craft a tailored plan that optimizes your performance and positions you for long-term success.
- **Global expansion:** We deliver end-to-end solutions to help you expand your business into new global markets through Amazon and other leading marketplaces, scaling sales quickly while fostering sustainable growth in each new region.
- **Marketplace media:** We combine cutting-edge tools and tech with a team of experts to deliver exceptional results for brands across marketplaces. Our proprietary solution, RPM [Retail Powered Media], integrates non-media signals—such as out-of-stock data, low stock levels, price changes, and merchandising tactics—to inform and optimize media strategy for maximum impact.

- Retail operations: We quickly and seamlessly launch your products, optimizing and managing listings to drive maximum sales—without placing additional strain on your internal resources.
- Content & creative: From PDPs and A+ content to brand stores, banners, and product videos, we craft compelling, scalable content that attracts shoppers and sets your brand apart. As leaders in best-in-class creative, we ensure every asset drives engagement and lays a strong foundation for optimal media performance.
- Social commerce: Through our LiveCraft division, we launch and scale leading brands on platforms like TikTok Shop, using content, affiliate, retail, and livestream strategies.
- Data analytics and insights: Our team of data scientists and SQL experts specialize in enhancing advertising measurement by providing customizable reporting and building robust models that maximize the value of first-party, partner, and data, including Amazon Marketing Cloud.

## Podean's Goals in the Middle East and Türkiye

Establish a robust presence and forge partnerships with local businesses.

Leverage our expertise to drive the digital transformation of the region's e-commerce landscape.

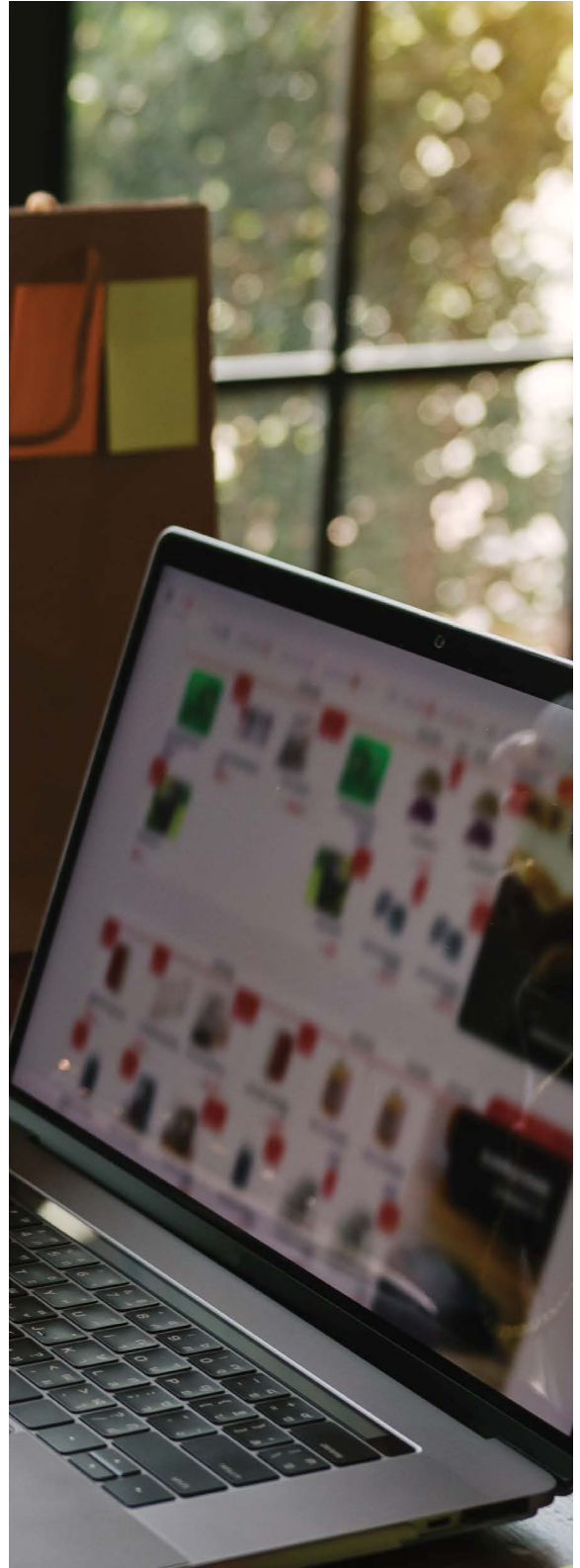
Create strategic alliances with local e-commerce platforms and retailers.

Develop localized solutions that resonate with Middle Eastern consumer preferences.

Invest in local talent to boost our service capabilities.

## "MENA is undergoing a dynamic digital transformation."

Adam Woolcock also shared insights on the development of marketplaces in the MENA region: "The MENA region is witnessing a dynamic digital transformation fueled by high internet penetration, a youthful, tech-savvy demographic, and governmental support. We foresee significant growth in online retail, with marketplaces becoming central hubs connecting diverse products and services to consumers. To harness this growth, there's a need to enhance logistics, payment systems, and regulatory environments."



## "We offer customized solutions to stand out in the competition."

Woolcock made the following statement about the competitive landscape in the industry: "The e-commerce sector is intensely competitive, where success hinges on innovation, customer experience, and operational effectiveness. Podean stands out by blending advanced technology with personalized service, focusing on long-term client relationships, understanding unique needs, and delivering customized solutions that drive success."

### Who is Adam Woolcock?

"As the Managing Director MENAT at Podean Marketplace Marketing, I have over 20 years across multiple facets of media. Starting with traditional media agencies [before digital was a thing!] and then to large media conglomerates before shifting to digital marketing after recognizing the potential of marketplace marketing, in addition to being swayed by the appeal of Podean's truly unique corporate culture, including its global work-from-anywhere policy. My plans involve continuing to expand our footprint across the region, driving innovation, and fostering a culture of excellence."



## "Significant transformations are expected in marketplaces due to technology and consumer expectations."

Podean MENAT Managing Director Adam Woolcock also shared some predictions for the industry in 2025. He emphasized that significant transformations are expected in Amazon and other marketplaces due to technology and consumer expectations: "AI and machine learning will personalize shopping, optimize logistics, and predict consumer behavior more accurately. Blockchain technology will enhance transaction security and product authenticity. Amazon's logistics will evolve with innovations like drone delivery and autonomous vehicles, setting new standards in efficiency. There will be an increase in niche marketplaces or specialized sections within Amazon, catering to specific consumer interests. Sustainability will become a priority, with initiatives aimed at reducing environmental impact."

Woolcock continued: "Regulatory frameworks will adapt to these changes, focusing on data privacy, seller rights, and consumer protection. Cross-platform integration will facilitate seamless buying experiences across different marketplaces. Voice and visual search capabilities will become more refined, impacting how products are marketed and discovered. Augmented Reality will allow consumers to virtually try products, reshaping online shopping. Podean Marketplace Marketing aims to lead in adapting to these trends, ensuring clients are at the forefront of the marketplace evolution."

Adam Woolcock added: "Agility is key in the fast-evolving e-commerce world. Brands that adapt swiftly to consumer trends and technological shifts will succeed. Investing in talent and fostering a culture of creativity and experimentation is also crucial."





# Marcin Piekarczyk Blends Physical and Digital Retail Experiences

Marcin Piekarczyk, Founder of MP Consulting and Head of E-Commerce at WAFI Group, has over 16 years of experience managing major retail organizations across three continents. In addition to leading well-established global brands, he has also managed numerous start-ups that have become profitable and market-leading. Marcin Piekarczyk was featured in *WORLD E-COMMERCE* magazine.

## "Our B2B Approach Focuses on Collaboration"

Marcin Piekarczyk shared insights about his latest venture, MP Consulting: "My most recent venture involved the establishment and launch of a 3,500 sq. m. phygital concept store, which blends physical and digital retail experiences in a unique and innovative way. What distinguishes this business is its product differentiation and the exceptional overall retail experience. Rather than competing with brands that are readily available both online and offline, I have deliberately curated a selection of premium to luxury brands from around the world, bringing them to the UAE market. Currently, the store offers a diverse collection of over 200 brands from more than 60 countries.

In alignment with evolving retail trends in the GCC, the in-store experience is fully experiential. We host events within the store, and I, along with my team, made the decision to open a specialty coffee shop to enhance the customer experience. Additionally, store design and visual merchandising are dynamic, ensuring that every visit offers a fresh, surprising, and impressive experience. This, I believe, is the essence of 'the new retail.'

Furthermore, our B2B approach is centered on collaboration. We work closely with our brand partners, allowing them to merchandise their products with the support of my team, activate and launch new collections, and actively contribute to the success of our business. This creates a mutually beneficial environment for both B2B and B2C stakeholders."

## "In E-Commerce and Retail, Critical Elements Are Customer, Experience, and Data"

When asked about his activities in e-commerce, Piekarczyk responded: "I approach such questions by going back to the fundamentals. While many organizations focus on creative solutions and trending ideas, it is essential to build a solid foundation first. In the context of e-commerce and retail, the critical pillars are customer, experience, and data—all of which must be integral components of any digital strategy."

- **Customer:** Today's customers are increasingly savvy, less loyal, and more price-sensitive due to the broader competition and easier access to global brands. Despite a modest 4.6% growth in retail within the GCC, consumers are more cautious in their purchasing decisions. Loyalty remains the key to long-term success. Effective CRM campaigns are crucial for maintaining customer loyalty and ensuring a strong, ongoing relationship. Ultimately, the customer is king.
- **Experience:** The customer experience is another foundational element. Consumers today expect more than just products—they seek an engaging, memorable experience with brands. This is especially important in the GCC, where shopping malls continue to play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior. To succeed, brands must implement a fully omnichannel strategy that ensures a seamless, experiential retail environment. There is a considerable opportunity here, as e-commerce penetration in the GCC remains relatively low—typically in the single digits—well below global averages.
- **Data:** The importance of data cannot be overstated. While much is said about AI and data modeling, many businesses still fail to effectively harness the wealth of data they collect.

In my previous roles, I had the opportunity to work on data consolidation projects, aggregating insights from all retail touchpoints across multiple brands and sales channels. This experience allowed me to educate senior leadership on how to strategically leverage data. When understood and used correctly, data is a goldmine that can provide invaluable insights and drive informed decision-making."

## "Many Companies in Dubai Still Rely on Traditional IVRs and Chatbots"

Discussing the developments in the e-commerce ecosystem in Dubai, Marcin Piekarczyk shared the following information:

"The most significant development in the industry today is undoubtedly Artificial Intelligence (AI), which many companies are now striving to incorporate. I believe AI has the potential to be a true game changer, provided it is applied strategically. In Dubai, several companies still rely on outdated systems such as traditional IVRs and chatbots, which are often poorly managed and result in a subpar customer experience. A simple adaptation of AI to create intelligent customer service agents could significantly enhance the customer experience."

I have been collaborating with a company in Asia that has developed a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for this very purpose. Last week, I had the opportunity to engage with this technology, and I am confident it will revolutionize the industry. AI will have a wide range of applications, spanning across operations, fulfillment, marketing, and more.

While we are still in the early stages of AI adoption, there is a common misconception that AI is simply an extension of basic algorithms that have been in use for years. In reality, AI offers far more advanced capabilities, enabling companies to automate, personalize, and optimize operations in ways that were previously unimaginable."



## "It is Crucial to View the Retail Experience as an Enjoyable Opportunity"

Piekarczyk also made the following observations about retail and e-commerce: "To address this question directly, the key to success in retail is ensuring that you offer the right product at the right price, coupled with a seamless and straightforward customer journey that eliminates the potential for errors, confusion, or second-guessing.

Beyond this, it is essential to view the retail experience as an opportunity for enjoyment. Customers today seek more than just a transaction—they want an engaging and enjoyable experience while shopping. Furthermore, the purchase process should not end with the exchange of money and product. It is critical to nurture customer relationships, provide exceptional service, and ensure that customers feel valued, encouraging them to return.

While many may expect me to highlight buzzwords such as AI, VR, or AR, the truth is that these technologies are tools to serve the larger purpose of enhancing customer experience and optimizing organizational profitability. Ultimately, it is the fundamentals that drive success, with technology playing a supporting role in achieving these objectives."



## "It is Fascinating to Witness How E-Commerce Trends Transition Across Markets"

WAFI Group Head of E-Commerce and MP Consulting Founder Marcin Piekarczyk concluded:

"It is essential to build a well-rounded team that, while operating within a stable organization, is able to think with the agility and innovation of a start-up. In my most recent project, I was fortunate to assemble an exceptionally talented team that worked collaboratively to ensure the success of the business.

It is particularly fascinating to observe how e-commerce trends transition between markets. Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working across three continents, gaining experience in both highly developed markets and emerging economies. My roles have ranged from hands-on positions to strategic leadership, which has shaped my approach to talent acquisition. I seek individuals who possess the ability to execute at a tactical level while also having the foresight to step back and think strategically.

Currently, I am in the process of transitioning my existing business and will soon be available for new projects in the GCC as well as globally. Please feel free to reach out if you are interested in collaborating on retail projects."

### Who is Marcin Piekarczyk?

With over 16 years of experience managing large retail organizations across three continents, Marcin has developed a proven track record of success. He has led well-established global brands such as Lacoste, The Body Shop, Lego, and Mothercare, as well as numerous start-ups that have grown into profitable, market-leading businesses.

Marcin is highly skilled in driving digital transformation, with extensive expertise in transitioning businesses from traditional retail models to fully integrated hybrid/omnichannel operations. His deep understanding of the evolving retail landscape enables him to navigate complex challenges and achieve sustainable growth.

As an industry expert, business consultant, and keynote speaker, Marcin is passionate about fostering innovation and implementing forward-thinking strategies that position businesses as leaders in their respective markets. He is committed to supporting companies in their digital and retail journeys, offering tailored solutions through both full-time engagements and his consulting firm, MP Consulting. Marcin is always open to collaborating with businesses worldwide to drive transformation and long-term success.



Chairman of eCAG,  
**Vladimer Kandelaki**





# eCAG is building a strong e-commerce community in Georgia

The eCommerce Association Georgia [eCAG] was established in 2020 with the aim of promoting the growth and development of e-commerce in Georgia. The association's primary goal is to create a strong digital economy by bringing together businesses, professionals, and stakeholders in the e-commerce ecosystem. Chairman of eCAG, Vladimer Kandelaki, was a guest on WORLD E-Commerce MAGAZINE.

**eCAG's mission:** The goal is to support businesses, advocate for fair regulations, and provide education and resources to help local businesses succeed in the digital space.

**eCAG's vision:** Our goal is to make Georgia the leading e-commerce hub in the region, connecting local and global markets, while making innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability the core elements of our efforts. Through initiatives such as the "TrustMark project," "eCommerce Academy," and "eCommerce Day," we are building a stronger and more connected e-commerce community.

## "We are focused on establishing strong interaction with Europe"

Chairman of eCAG, Vladimer Kandelaki, outlined the association's goals in Europe as follows:

"The eCAG has a clear focus on engaging with Europe as part of Georgia's strategic direction toward EU integration. Our objectives in Europe are rooted in expanding the opportunities for Georgian businesses and fostering international collaboration. In Europe, our key objectives are:

- Expanding Georgia's global footprint: We aim to connect Georgian businesses with European markets, enabling them to access new customers and opportunities.
- Promoting collaboration: We are building partnerships with European associations and companies to share knowledge, exchange best practices, and foster cross-border e-commerce.
- Advocating for European integration: Georgia is on the path to European Union integration, and we support aligning local e-commerce practices and regulations with EU standards to ensure a smooth transition.
- Creating exposure for Georgian businesses: Through international events like the E-Commerce Berlin Expo, we help local businesses showcase their products and services to global audiences.

Our work in Europe is about positioning Georgia as a trusted and competitive player in the global e-commerce ecosystem while empowering businesses to scale beyond borders."



## "The e-commerce market in Georgia surpassed 500 million dollars in 2024"

Kandelaki also shared basic information and current statistics about the e-commerce ecosystem in Georgia:

"The e-commerce sector in Georgia is witnessing robust growth, driven by digital transformation and changing consumer behavior. Here's an overview of the current state of the ecosystem:

- E-commerce volume [2024]: The estimated annual e-commerce market size in Georgia exceeds \$500 million USD, driven by increasing online transactions in retail, services, and digital products.
- E-commerce penetration: Approximately 25% of Georgian consumers actively shop online, with this number steadily rising due to improved internet access and digital literacy.
- Annual growth rate: The e-commerce sector has grown at an average annual rate of 15-20% over the past five years, with accelerated growth observed during the pandemic.
- Key drivers: Growing adoption of digital payment methods, increased smartphone penetration, and a surge in cross-border shopping are fueling the sector.
- Challenges: While e-commerce is expanding, barriers such as logistical infrastructure, trust in online platforms, and alignment with international standards remain areas for improvement.

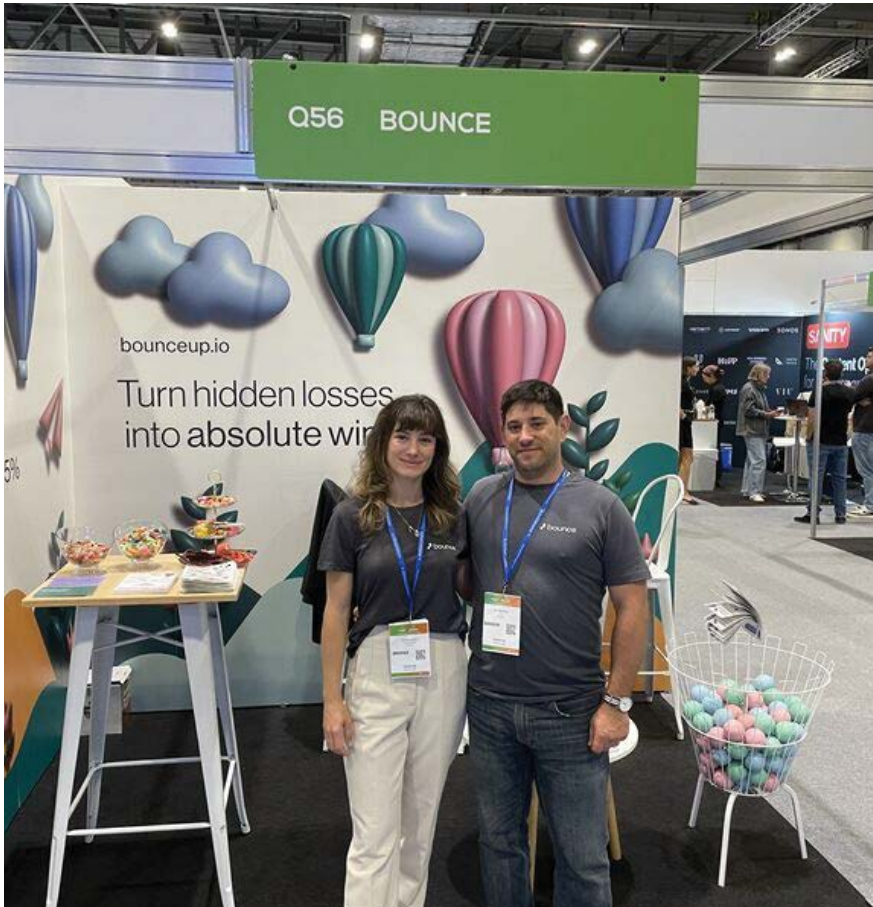
Georgia's e-commerce ecosystem is on an upward trajectory, with significant potential to become a regional hub for digital commerce.

## "WORLDDEF is a leading platform that brings together global e-commerce stakeholders"

Chairman of eCAG, Vladimir Kandelaki, lastly evaluated the collaboration between eCAG and WORLDDEF: "Our partnership with WORLDDEF has been a cornerstone in fostering Georgia's integration into the global e-commerce ecosystem. WORLDDEF's reputation as a leading platform for connecting global e-commerce stakeholders has been instrumental in creating opportunities for Georgian businesses to engage with Turkish and international markets. Through our collaboration, WORLDDEF has provided invaluable insights into global e-commerce trends, strategies, and best practices, which have been shared with our members to enhance their competitiveness. WORLDDEF's events have opened doors for Georgian businesses to connect with Turkish and international leaders, investors, and potential partners. These connections are crucial for fostering cross-border collaborations and scaling businesses globally. By working with WORLDDEF, we have been able to inspire and empower Georgian businesses to adopt global standards and innovations, further advancing the local e-commerce ecosystem. We deeply value our partnership with WORLDDEF, as it aligns with our mission to connect Georgia's e-commerce community with global opportunities and resources."







- **Purpose:** Solve the problem of failed legitimate payments by turning card declines into successful transactions, ultimately helping businesses recover lost revenue.
- **Mission:** Improve payments experience and create a seamless journey with no obstacles through advanced machine learning technology .
- **Vision:** Help businesses maximize their payments processes by creating a journey that is optimized to their and their customers needs.

We focus on US, Canada and UK and operate on NA and UK/EU.”

## Professional Solution for Payment Declines in E-Commerce: bounce

The payment recovery solution Bounce integrates seamlessly with any platform to recover declined payments. By turning failed transactions into successful ones, the platform leverages machine learning technology to address card decline issues. Optimizing payment processes to meet specific needs, Bounce is the only solution that protects revenue flow in real time.

Bounce Co-Founder and CEO Bator Sutton shared insights about the company's goals, mission, and vision: “Bounce is a payment recovery solution that turns hidden losses into absolute wins. Bounce is the only solution that gets your declined deals through and saves your customers experience and your revenue directly, in real time and without relying on customer action or on complicated sequences. Our AI-powered technology works with any billing or subscription platform of your choice and wins back your deals.



## Machine Learning-Powered Transaction Recovery Approach: Absolute

When asked, "What services do you offer to e-commerce brands?", Sutton stated: "We offer payment recovery for checkout, free trials, and subscription transactions, as well as a payments AI agent for payment cost optimization."

Bator Sutton explained the challenges faced in e-commerce payments as follows: "Smooth conversions and checkout experience will be a main focus for e-commerce in general. Specifically for payments, Failed transactions and recovery present a critical challenge to the checkout / monetization experience, costing businesses significant revenue and customer loyalty. When transactions fail due to expired cards, insufficient funds, or technical errors, merchants often lack effective recovery mechanisms to salvage these sales. Traditional recovery workflows are typically manual, delayed, or non-existent, leading to permanent loss of sales opportunities, lower order value and frustrated customers who may never return. These declined transactions don't just represent lost immediate sales - they can damage customer relationships and result in higher customer acquisition costs as businesses need to find new customers to replace those who abandoned their purchases."

Sutton added: "Bounce's Absolute solution tackles this challenge head-on with its real-time ML-powered approach to transaction recovery. The platform can identify and recover up to 20% of lost checkout conversions by analyzing thousands of features in real-time to identify good users who were falsely declined. Another thing that sets Absolute apart is its unique zero-risk business model - there's no platform fee, and they offer a 100% guarantee on every transaction we approve. This means merchants can achieve immediate revenue uplift without any upfront investment. The ML solution integrates seamlessly with existing payment gateways and provides a detailed dashboard that tracks recovered deals and revenue uplift, allowing businesses to quantify the impact on their bottom line. Merchants have seen revenue increases of up to 5% through recovered transactions that would otherwise have been declined."

## "The only solution that resolves failed payments"

In response to the question, "What differentiates you from similar platforms/companies?", she stated: "Bounce is the only solution that solves failed payments within the merchant's existing processing flow, keeps your customers and transactions seamless experience with no interventions or additional entities. Maintaining high recovery rates, with Bounce Absolute - you have full guarantee over the impact Bounce can generate. We are a team of Data and Eng. executives, ex. PayPal and Wonga, that identified failed payments as a critical issue with no good solutions that are relevant for e-commerce companies."



## Strategies for Gen Z Engagement, Payments & Growth

Gen Z, the market with a staggering \$360 billion in purchasing power. Born into the era of Spotify personalization and Amazon-speed expectations, Gen Z is not only reshaping how we consume content but also how we do business. This exclusive webinar shares breakthrough strategies on how to win over Gen Z, focusing on different parts of the conversion journey, including insights on optimizing influencer payments

<https://www.bounceup.io/gen-z-payment-webinar>



Vichren Bisset, CCO and Board Member of euShipments



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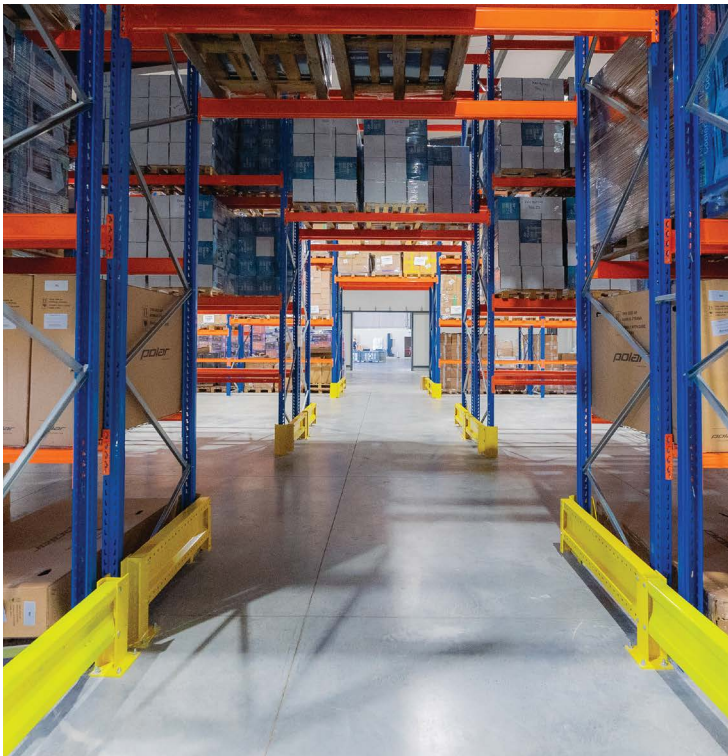
 euShipments.com

euShipments  
stands out  
with over  
800 delivery  
methods  
in Europe

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euShipments offers premium logistics and cross-border delivery solutions specifically designed for e-commerce businesses. By simplifying cross-border e-commerce, the company supports online merchants in growing within the European markets. With a vision to become the essential logistics partner for e-commerce in Europe, euShipments strives to deliver efficiency and scalability in every aspect of its services. It aims to offer innovative solutions such as Returns Management, Cash-on-Delivery (COD), Refunds, and logistics operations that enhance the online user experience. We spoke with Vichren Bisset, CCO and Board Member of euShipments, about the brand's story.



## “Our logistics and fulfillment network covers over 27 European countries”

Vichren Bisset shared the following regarding the countries they currently serve and their target markets: “Currently, our fulfillment and logistics network covers over 27 European countries, enabling our clients to penetrate diverse and dynamic markets. We operate with 15 fulfillment centers strategically located across Europe and partner with 60+ last-mile couriers, offering the impressive over 800 delivery methods. In the near future, we aim to further strengthen our presence in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) while exploring growth opportunities in Western European markets.”

## “We aim to support Gulf-based online merchants in establishing their e-commerce presence in Europe”

Bisset also shared the company's goals regarding the Gulf region: “While our primary focus is Europe, we are open to exploring partnerships and expansion opportunities that align with the needs of our over 1000 clients. Also, we aim to support Gulf-based online merchants in establishing and expanding their eCommerce presence in Europe. Our tailored fulfillment and delivery solutions ensure Gulf eCommerce businesses can meet the expectations and preferences of European online users and grow their market share effectively.”

## The services euShipments offers to e-commerce brands

- Warehousing and inventory management
- Cross-border deliveries with optimized transit times via 60+ integrated carriers
- Cash-on-Delivery (COD) solutions with daily payouts in multiple currencies and to diverse bank/fintech accounts
- Returns management, including automated pickup requests and locker drop-offs
- Real-time tracking and customer support

Vichren Bisset said, “Our services enable online merchants to expand into new markets, improve their operational efficiency, and enhance the customer experience. By taking care of logistics complexities, we allow merchants to focus on growing their businesses.”

“We have strategically grown by acquiring key e-commerce fulfillment and logistics companies in Europe”



Bisset stated, “Our team at euShipments.com is a dynamic mix of eCommerce logistics experts, IT specialists, and customer service professionals dedicated to delivering tailored eCommerce solutions. We have built a culture of innovation and problem-solving, ensuring that we provide the right logistics services to meet the unique needs of our clients. In recent years, euShipments.com has strategically expanded by acquiring key eCommerce fulfillment and logistics companies across Europe. The combined experience of euShipments.com and its acquired companies – Croatian Pick&Pack, Romanina Helpship, and Slovak Swiss Point Data, exceeds 40 years in the eCommerce logistics industry. This extensive expertise enables us enhancing our logistics network and service offerings, providing client-centric custom solutions that meet the diverse needs of eCommerce businesses.”

Finally, euShipments CCO and Board Member Vichren Bisset said the following: “Our collaboration with WORLDEF has been extremely useful in reaching new audiences and fostering connections within the global eCommerce ecosystem. As our dear partner, WORLDEF has provided us with valuable platform to share insights, engage with eCommerce professionals, and showcase our expertise. Together, we are contributing to the growth of eCommerce by promoting innovative logistics solutions and supporting online merchants in achieving their expansion goals. We look forward to strengthening this partnership further.”





**Remo Giovanni Abbondandolo**

General Manager, MENA at Checkout.com



## Innovative and Seamless Payment Solutions Globally:



Checkout.com offers innovative and seamless payment solutions to businesses around the world. As a global payment solutions provider, it focuses on payment performance, helping businesses unlock their full potential. The company is on a mission to equip businesses with the technology and tools they need to succeed in an increasingly digital economy. Additionally, Checkout.com continues its efforts with a vision to build a world that fosters strong connections between businesses and customers by ensuring a seamless flow of payments. With a focus on innovation, reliability, and performance, Checkout aims to lead the payment industry by providing solutions specifically designed for modern business needs. Remo Giovanni Abbondandolo, General Manager, MENA at Checkout.com, spoke with WORLDEF E-COMMERCE about the company's goals and services.

### "We Are Committed to Accelerating the Transition to a Digital-First Economy in the Gulf"

Describing the company's goals in the Gulf and Europe, Remo Giovanni Abbondandolo said, "In the Gulf, we are dedicated to driving the region's shift toward a digital-first economy by delivering localized payment solutions with global reach, designed to enhance performance and meet unique market requirements. Our focus includes empowering sectors like e-commerce, fintech, and digital wallets while promoting the adoption of Alternative Payment Methods (APMs) to cater to the region's diverse customer base. By prioritizing payment performance, we help businesses improve acceptance rates, reduce friction, and maximize revenue."

Regarding Europe, he added, "In Europe, our goal is to help enterprises scale across borders by providing robust payment solutions that prioritize performance, scalability, compliance, and innovation. We aim to strengthen our partnerships with merchants, equipping them with the tools and insights to optimize payment processes, boost transaction efficiency, and unlock new revenue opportunities."



## "Checkout.com is Not Just a Payment Provider, But a Performance Partner for E-Commerce Sellers"

"For e-commerce sellers, Checkout.com is more than a payment solutions provider [PSP]—we are a performance partner," said Remo Giovanni Abbondandolo. "We help merchants increase revenue by improving payment acceptance rates, offering real-time data and insights, and optimizing transaction processes. Our relentless focus on payment performance ensures that e-commerce businesses can provide a smooth experience to their customers while improving performance and increasing conversions. In the MENA region (as well as globally), our partnerships with leading e-commerce players have resulted in significantly reducing failed transactions and increasing customer satisfaction. We also empower e-commerce businesses to expand beyond the region by providing a unified payments platform that handles cross-border transactions with ease. Our tailored solutions allow merchants to cater to local payment preferences while ensuring compliance with local regulations."

## "The Global Digital Payment Sector Has Rapidly Evolved"

Abbondandolo shared insights into the development of payment systems in the MENA region, stating: "The global digital payment landscape has witnessed remarkable growth over the past few years, and the MENA region has evolved even more rapidly, driven by the growth of e-commerce, fintech innovation, and increased adoption of digital payments. Governments are prioritizing cashless initiatives, such as Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which has accelerated the shift toward digital payment systems. In parallel, the rise of APMs and real-time payments is transforming the way businesses and consumers interact."

## "We Specialize in Serving Large-Scale Enterprises"

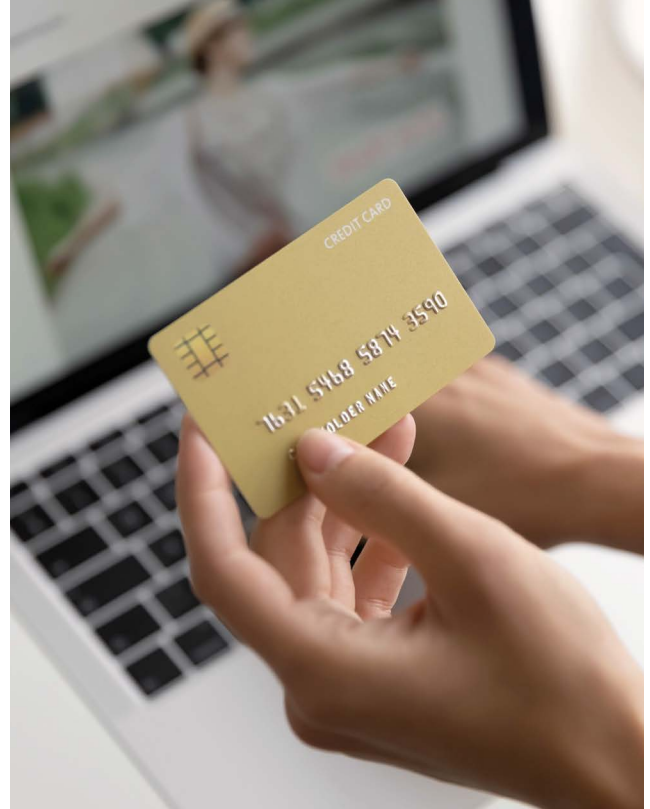
Abbondandolo explained what sets Checkout.com apart from other players in the market: "Our differentiation lies in our commitment to payment performance, seamless integrations, and localized expertise, with a specialization in serving enterprise merchants. We deliver industry-leading transaction acceptance rates, helping businesses maximize their revenue at scale. Our platform is API-first, offering merchants unparalleled flexibility to integrate payments into their systems efficiently and effectively. Additionally, our regional expertise sets us apart. In MENA, for example, we offer deep market knowledge and localized solutions tailored to the region's unique payment landscape. Beyond technology, we pride ourselves on our hands-on partnership approach, ensuring that our enterprise merchants have the strategic support and resources they need to grow and excel in competitive markets."



## "Checkout.com Team Consists of Over 2,000 Payment Experts Worldwide"

Remo Giovanni Abbondandolo shared that the Checkout.com team comprises over 2,000 payment experts worldwide. He also noted the company's strong presence in the MENA region, APAC, Europe, and the U.S., saying: "Our diverse team brings together a wealth of expertise in technology, finance, and e-commerce, enabling us to deliver innovative and localized solutions to businesses worldwide. At Checkout.com, we offer a dedicated white-glove service. We provide our clients with a dedicated solutions engineer with deep knowledge of their industry, allowing us to precisely understand what they want to accomplish."

He further added, "In the MENA region, we have a dedicated team that understands the nuances of the local market and works closely with merchants to address their specific needs. Our collaborative approach ensures that we are always aligned with our merchants' goals and priorities, yet focused on the long term. Our next-generation technology does not simply give businesses the ability to accept payments. It seamlessly brings solutions, systems, and providers together for the long term."



## "Payment Performance is at the Heart of Everything We Do"

Abbondandolo emphasized Checkout.com's commitment to fostering the growth of digital commerce in the region, stating: "Our collaboration with WORLDEF has been a valuable platform for fostering meaningful conversations about the future of e-commerce and payments. Through our partnership, we've had the opportunity to engage with industry leaders, share insights, and showcase our expertise in driving payment innovation. WORLDEF's events have allowed us to connect with merchants and stakeholders, reinforcing our commitment to supporting the growth of digital commerce in the region."

Finally, he added: "As we look ahead, Checkout.com remains focused on empowering businesses to thrive in the evolving digital economy. Payment performance is at the heart of everything we do, driving business growth, customer engagement, and market expansion. With this vision, we will continue to innovate, collaborate, and deliver solutions that redefine what's possible in the world of payments."





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**M&DIAPOSTE**   
HIT MAIL

**Mediaposte  
Hit Mail is  
focusing on  
three  
countries  
in 2025**

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The Bulgaria-based marketing and e-commerce agency Mediaposte Hit Mail aims to expand its services across Central and Eastern Europe [CEE]. In 2025, it plans to expand to Turkey, North Macedonia, and Serbia, offering its comprehensive services in these countries. Since its growth in 2005, the company sees great potential, especially in the Western Balkans region. Mediaposte Hit Mail Bulgaria Country Manager Hristo Radichev shared the company's goals with WORLDEF E-COMMERCE magazine.

Hristo Radichev said, "Our group has two brands in Bulgaria. Mediaposte Hit Mail Bulgaria is a full-service marketing and ecommerce agency based in Sofia, Bulgaria. Metrica is a fulfillment operator and customer service provider. We are part of the French group La Poste." ifadelerini kullandı.

## "We aim to expand our services across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), including Türkiye."

He also shared the following information regarding the question, "What are your goals, mission, vision, and objectives in Europe?"; "We have an impressive range of services for ecommerce brands, including digital marketing, email marketing, full serviced cross-border expansion, orders fulfillment, and call center. These services are designed to help businesses get more sales, engage more customers, and achieve much better, measurable results. The mission is to provide clients with fully measurable and improved results for their marketing campaigns, utilizing data-driven strategies and innovative approaches. The vision focuses on building the most reliable marketing agency team in the region, delivering superior return on investment for clients through effective communication channels and top quality logistics infrastructure. Our objectives include expanding our services across Central and Eastern Europe [CEE], including Türkiye. In short, we help ecommerce merchants jump from their local market to others and reduce time to market with at least 6 months."

## "The transport is quite expensive, the timeframe for delivery is very long, and there are customs involved"

According to the information provided by Mediaposte Hit Mail Bulgaria Country Manager Hristo Radichev, Mediaposte Hit Mail Bulgaria currently serves more than 10 EU countries. Its most active markets are Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. For 2025, the company aims to expand to Türkiye, North Macedonia, and Serbia, offering the same comprehensive services. Regarding this, Radichev shared the following information:

"We see a great potential in the Western Balkans region [Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia], where there are plenty of people having issues with online orders from merchants abroad. The transport is quite expensive, the timeframe for delivery is very long, and there are customs involved. Our team has worked hard in the last 3 years to provide a good solution for all these challenges and in 2025 we will start offering all these services to merchants interested in the region.

## What does Mediaposte Hit Mail Bulgaria promise to e-commerce companies?

It provides time, resource, and cost savings for companies. They have strong experience in areas such as performance-focused digital marketing, email automation, creative solutions, end-to-end product information management, technical integrations, order fulfillment, last-mile delivery, and customs procedures. Their network of partners for fulfillment and logistics currently covers more than 15 EU countries and continues to grow. The company is well aware of the challenges faced by e-commerce retailers looking to expand abroad, and it has solutions for each of them.





## **“We are also ready to help Turkish retailers sell directly or via marketplaces to the EU”**

Radichev continued as follows; “We are also ready to help Turkish retailers sell directly or via marketplaces to the EU. All this without the hassle of establishing a local company, dealing with shipping companies, customs, or last mile delivery couriers. They don’t have to change their operations in any way. All we need from them is just to give us their well structured and accurate products’ data. Then we help them spread it across various sales channels, like ecommerce websites and marketplaces. The merchants get all the orders in one place through a convenient platform. Then they just have to prepare the parcels and ship them. We take care of the rest, including payments, customs, last mile delivery, returns management etc.”

Hristo Radichev stated that they currently do not have any goals in the Gulf region due to the long distance that needs to be covered. He also said, “However, we offer an online platform that makes product information management, logistics and customs clearance smooth and much easier. This could be quite interesting for any company in the Gulf region dealing with cross-border sales.



## **About Mediaposte Hit Mail**

Mediaposte Hit Mails is a company with a rich history in Bulgaria. It was founded in 2005 under the name “Hit Mail” as a specialized agency for direct marketing. In 2009 the French group La Poste acquired a majority stake and renamed it to “Mediaposte Hit Mail”. Since 2010 a number of new services have been added, mainly in the field of digital marketing: email marketing [sending email broadcast and newsletter], PPC advertising, development and optimization of landing pages, management of promotional campaigns and loyalty programs, etc. In 2014 the company was already 100% owned by the French group. In 2015 the owner of “Mediaposte Hit Mail” also acquired a majority stake in the firm “Metrica”. The new company in the group specializes in call-center services [telemarketing, customer service, info-lines, etc.] and fulfilment for e-shops. Since 2018 Mediaposte Hit Mail is a member of the Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry [BRCCI].

## **“The digital team is managing 6-digits monthly budgets across 10+ countries in Europe”**

Hristo Radichev said the following about the company’s experienced team: “All of them are remarkable experts in their field. The digital team is managing 6-digits monthly budgets across 10+ countries in Europe. The cross-border team has helped many e-retailers grow big much faster than expected in new countries. The orders fulfillment team has processed millions of parcels in the last few years. All of them are focused, enthusiastic, and practical people. They are ready to share their know-how to our ecommerce customers in order to help them avoid common mistakes, scale up their sales, and save both time and money during their business expansion.”

## **“We realized that the WORLDEF team is truly amazing”**

Finally, Radichev made the following assessment about the collaboration with WORLDEF: “We collaborate with WORLDEF since 2022, when we visited the event in Istanbul for the first time. The team is really amazing, helping us not only to set up properly our expo stand, but to meet new potential clients and partners from different countries. The growth of the event is truly remarkable in the last few years. I can only encourage WORLDEF to dream even bigger and to keep being a top benchmark for all ecommerce-related forums worldwide.”



# End-to-end trade facilitation in cross-border e-commerce: stelcore

Stelcore enables brands to engage in global trade with full transparency and ownership by partnering with them. Currently operating in over 16 countries, Stelcore provides comprehensive end-to-end trade facilitation services. These services include listing brands on destination marketplaces and/or setting up their own D2C (Direct-to-Consumer) websites. Brands are relieved from the complexities of registration, regulatory compliance, and other operational challenges in target markets, as Stelcore manages these processes seamlessly. This allows brands to focus solely on scaling their business and increasing sales.

Speaking to WORLDEF E-COMMERCE, Stelcore Partner Viswanath S emphasized that the company differentiates itself by offering a comprehensive trade facilitation ecosystem across 16+ countries. He stated, "While competitors often provide fragmented solutions, Stelcore offers an integrated approach that enables brands to expand into global markets without complexity."



## Why Stelcore stands out?

- **Transparency and ownership:** Unlike other players, Stelcore partners with brands to provide complete transparency and control over operations, allowing businesses to scale confidently.
- **End-to-end services:** From being an Importer or Seller on Record to managing compliance, 3PL logistics, warehousing, D2C website management, and payment reconciliation, Stelcore ensures a smooth, hassle-free expansion process.
- **Strategic focus on D2C growth:** In addition to marketplace listings, Stelcore empowers brands to build their D2C presence, an often-neglected yet critical growth driver.
- **Local expertise with global reach:** Stelcore combines its deep understanding of local regulations, customer behavior, and operational nuances with a global footprint, giving brands a competitive edge.

## Stelcore provides end-to-end support to brands globally

### Who is Viswanath S?

Viswanath S described his career with the following words: "I have extensive experience in the Middle East's Retail and e-commerce sectors ~ 15 years, where I've had the opportunity to lead transformative initiatives. I am ex Noon / Namshi [the biggest ecommerce player in the Middle east] & M H ALshaya [the largest retail franchise] wherein cumulatively I have spent the rich part of my career. My work has focused on building cross-border marketplace, growth and strategy, scaling private label businesses, product development, retail operations, developing streamlined operational frameworks for major platforms in the region to name a few. I'm a Chartered Accountant and Certified Internal Auditor, and I've also been deeply involved in mentoring and investing in startups across various industries, fueling my passion for growth and innovation."

Viswanath S shared the following insights regarding the services they offer to global e-commerce brands: "Stelcore, with its long-standing expertise in the industry, has been providing a complete suite of comprehensive cross border and local trade enabling services, helping numerous brands and sellers succeed in the global markets. Stelcore leverages years of experience to offer end-to-end brand support, including Importer on Record, Seller/Merchant on Record, Customer Relationship Management, 3PL Logistics, Warehousing, custom platforms, and payment reconciliation. These services enable brands to reach customers in 14+ global markets, driving sustainable growth. D2C (Direct to Consumers) serves as an additional sales channel that complements a brand's existing sales strategies, offering an extra layer of support to enhance long-term, sustainable brand growth."

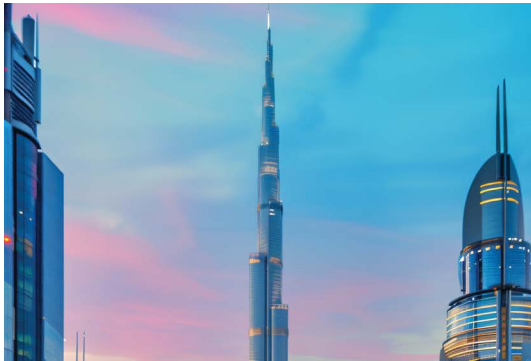
# SHORT NEWS FROM THE E-COMMERCE WORLD

## E-commerce Volume in Türkiye Reaches \$78 Billion



Türkiye's Minister of Trade, Ömer Bolat, announced data on Türkiye's e-commerce volume for 2024. Bolat stated, "The e-commerce volume, which was 850 billion lira in 2023, has reached 1.86 trillion lira by the end of 2024. This corresponds to \$78 billion. The combined growth rate over the past four years is 92%. Four years ago, the e-commerce volume was around \$40 billion. The share of total e-commerce in overall trade also increased from 20.3% in 2023 to over 21% in 2024."

## UAE's First E-Commerce Market Map Launched



UAE-based WEE Marketplace, in collaboration with the analytics firm Data Insight, has introduced the first e-commerce market map for the MENA region. Designed for sellers, analysts, and all e-commerce professionals, this project provides valuable insights into the UAE's digital marketplace. The interactive map is freely accessible via a link, requiring no registration or additional steps.

## DHL eCommerce Enters Saudi Arabian Market

Logistics is a key growth pillar of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, with rapid expansion anticipated. DHL eCommerce and AJEX partner to capitalize on the anticipated double-digit growth rate in Saudi Arabia's parcel market.



## European Parliament Approves VAT Reform

The European Parliament has approved a revision of Value Added Tax (VAT) regulations, under which online platforms will be held responsible for VAT payments if their sales partners fail to comply. The reform is aimed at combating unfair competition and addressing VAT fraud. Policymakers in Brussels anticipate that businesses will save billions of euros in costs due to this overhaul.



## Europe Hosts Headquarters of 95 Out of the World's 250 Largest E-commerce Companies!

Europe is home to the headquarters of 38% of the world's leading e-commerce giants. Among the 250 largest e-commerce companies globally, 95 have their headquarters in Europe—a figure that surpasses the total number in the Americas and significantly exceeds that of Asia. Within Europe, Germany leads the way as the country with the highest number of e-commerce headquarters.

## TikTok Shop welcomes merchants in Germany, France, and Italy

TikTok is boosting its European ecommerce operations. From now on, merchants can register to start selling through TikTok Shop in Germany, France, and Italy. Users of the social media platform in these countries will soon be able to place orders.



## China's E-Commerce Market Leads Globally for 12 Consecutive Years

China's e-commerce retail market recorded a 7.2% growth in 2024, reinforcing its global leadership in the sector. For the 12th consecutive year, the country retained its title as the world's largest e-commerce market. At the National E-Commerce Conference held in Beijing, officials reviewed China's e-commerce performance in 2024, analyzed development trends, and outlined key priorities for 2025. According to the Ministry of Commerce, China's online retail sales reached 15.5 trillion yuan (approximately \$2.16 trillion) in 2024. These figures confirm China's position as the world's largest online retail market for the 12th consecutive year.



## UAE Warehouse Rents Expected to Rise by Up to 10%

Warehouse rents in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are projected to increase by up to 10% in 2025, driven by rising demand from e-commerce and multinational corporations, low vacancy rates, and a shortage of industrial land. Notably, Dubai's industrial and logistics sectors are experiencing significant rent hikes.

## Alibaba Boosts Revenue with AI-Powered Growth

The Hangzhou-based company reported an 8% year-on-year increase in revenue for the quarter ending in December, reaching 280.2 billion yuan (approximately \$38.38 billion). Net income also surged to 48.9 billion yuan (around \$6.71 billion). Following the announcement, Alibaba's shares listed on the New York Stock Exchange jumped by over 12%.



## Otto to Close 480 Customer Service Positions

One of Germany's largest online marketplaces, Otto, has announced plans to eliminate 480 call center positions, leading to the closure of several customer service locations across the country.



## SellerX to Cut Workforce by 20%

E-commerce aggregator SellerX has announced plans to lay off one-fifth of its workforce. This decision will affect 170 employees out of a total of more than 800, as the company moves to reduce costs amid financial pressures.





## Rising Demand for a Seamless E-Commerce Experience



A new FedEx e-commerce report highlights the growing importance of a flawless online shopping experience. According to the study, over 80% of surveyed consumers consider home delivery (81%), free shipping (76%), and real-time tracking (68%) as standard expectations. Furthermore, 97% of consumers have abandoned a purchase due to an inconvenient shopping experience, emphasizing the increasing demand for seamless transactions.

## Philippines to Establish Barter System for Cross-Border E-Commerce



The Bureau of Customs (BoC) of the Philippines has introduced new regulations governing customs procedures for cross-border e-commerce transactions. Under the new directive, all stakeholders—including e-commerce operators, digital platform providers, e-retailers, value-added service providers, logistics firms, and customs brokers—must obtain accreditation for conducting such transactions.

## Libyan B2B e-commerce Alkremeya goes live

Libya-based B2B e-commerce platform Alkremeya has officially launched operations, with ambitious plans for regional expansion. Founded in 2023 by Abdurrahman Ejder and Fasih Ullah Ghafoor, Alkremeya connects retailers directly with importers and wholesalers, providing real-time access to updated product listings. Alkremeya plans to invest in artificial intelligence and machine learning to further refine its predictive analytics and operational capabilities.



## E-commerce thrives in Cambodia

Cambodia's market value of e-commerce was estimated at 1.51 billion U.S. dollars in 2024, up from 1.29 billion dollars in the year before, a report said on Tuesday. The report said that e-commerce revenue in the Southeast Asian country will reach 1.78 billion dollars in 2025.



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