

MEDIA CONTACT

Nanci Martin

+974 3303 7672

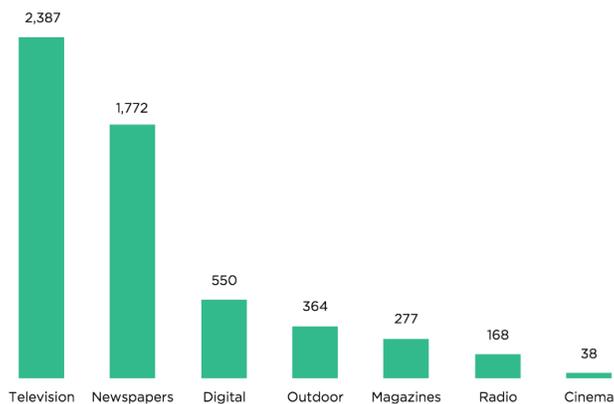
nanci.martin@northwestern.edu

Northwestern Research Finds Total MENA Ad Market at \$5.5 Billion

Doha, Qatar – September 19, 2016 -- The global advertising market is undergoing fundamental changes due to changing dynamics and the increased use of digital media. And a recent study by Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) reports that that transition is also causing a slow expansion of ad revenue in the MENA region.

The study, [Media Industries in the Middle East, 2016](#), which was conducted by NU-Q in cooperation with the Doha Film Institute (DFI), reports that over the past five years, the industry has shown a weak but stable growth in the MENA region. In 2015, the total ad market in the region was worth an estimated \$5.5 billion (USD) in net advertising revenues.

Total Ad Revenues in MENA, by Platform (USD millions)



Note: Figures reflect NU-Q Ad Revenues Estimate

MEDIA INDUSTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST, 2016
MIDEASTMEDIA.ORG

Northwestern University has conducted research related to the increasingly complex media landscape in the Middle East over the past several years.

“Disruption across the media industries largely driven by new, digital developments and the displacement of traditional media outlets, is the nature of advertising revenue globally and in the region,” said Everette E. Dennis, dean and CEO of Northwestern University in Qatar. “This report provides decision-makers with insights, based on hard data, that suggest how technological developments have – and will – influence the trajectory of media related industries, including advertising.”

The report found that digital still represents only 10 percent of ad spend, compared to 30–35 percent spend on print. Collectively, MENA countries trail other regions in innovation and adoption of new technologies (e.g., limited digital measurement, programmatic buying, and non-advertising forms of marketing). As a result, many of the opportunities of digital advertising have yet to be realized, despite high levels of digital consumption in the region.

Several key dynamics are changing the industry, such as the convergence of advertising platforms (traditional vs. digital) and services (strategy-only vs. execution). The market structure of advertising buyers and agencies in MENA is highly fragmented, with the strong presence and influence of international players. A number of acquisitions are taking place, mainly by international players seeking to break into or expand their presence in the region.

Ilhem Allagui, associate professor at NU-Q noted that the transition from traditional to digital is having an impact on the region. “Understanding how agencies buy media today is not simple. It is certainly not as simple as it was before the rise of digital advertising. Agencies have challenges when considering media choices, as measurement is increasingly difficult to trust,” said Allagui. “The Arab Region is no exception.”

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About Northwestern University in Qatar

Northwestern University in Qatar draws from its parent organization, [Northwestern University](#) (Evanston, Illinois), a distinguished history, famous programs and an exceptional faculty. Founded in partnership with Qatar Foundation, NU-Q provides a framework through which students explore the world and, ultimately, shape its future through its distinguished schools of [communication](#), [journalism](#), and [liberal arts](#).