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The impact of social media and technology in promoting

Saudi Arabia entertainment vision for 2030

Written by:

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**Subject:**

Using advertising and technology to promote the new Saudi entertainment sector globally to fill the gap between the Saudi perspective and the global community. Understanding how to craft the future of global innovation related to entertainment and advertising to help predict the influence it will have in developing Saudi Arabia's new vision of 2030.

**Aim and objectives:**

- Understating the role of advertising through social media to help in promoting the new Saudi entertainment sector globally
- Understanding people's perceptions of those who experienced the Saudi culture previously, how their perspective changed during the development, and their expectations after the implementation.
- The research will focus on gathering information from the global market and comparing it with the Saudi perspective. The research analysis will provide an understanding of the market's needs and how to link the gap between two different perceptions, the local and international, which will help create visual communication elements to help remove the gap.

**Abstract:**



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I believe it takes different people with different backgrounds and knowledge to frame the world. We all share the same purpose of creating a better world.

Throughout previous research, the pieces of evidence concluded that branding is a powerful tool. Through the research, qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to understand how to simplify culture transformation while positively impacting different contexts. That research aimed to understand how human expression can link knowledge, beliefs, customs, and how habits set boundaries on how they function according to their culture. The results of the research indicate that culture plays a massive role in the marketing field in how companies attract consumers to use their products. It also concluded that companies tend to design different types of products to obtain the power to satisfy different types of people and compete with one another. In the last couple of years, the industry in Saudi Arabia has overgrown. They are continuously developing new products in different industries, especially in the entertainment world.

Although culture transformation has considered one of the most complex topics when developing a brand strategy, it is considered one of the essential techniques to guarantee customer satisfaction and grab their attention.

The transformation of cultures has been designed to reduce the gap in the market and help different global contexts understand the global culture to simplify the communication between cultures.

Investigating the behavior of global consumers toward Saudi culture and understanding the factors that play a role in changing their perception of the Arab community will help establish a positive perspective and ability to integrate the future vision easily.



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The qualitative and quantitative research questions have been designed to analyze global community behaviors and provide recommendations to demonstrate the essential factors that influence the global market.

The most critical affectation comes from psychological influences associated with marketing communication and personal interpretation by consumers. Marketers can influence consumer behavior and redirect purchases over extended periods by investigating and analyzing past, present, and future consumer behavior.

Saudi Arabia is one of the biggest countries in the Middle East and one of the most powerful countries in that region. Many challenges can be faced when attempting to transfer culture between different contexts; breaking habits and changing their perspectives is one of the main challenges while finding a language that has been understood by different cultures to smooth the communication process.

In order to obtain a deeper understanding of how to simplify the process, I am interested in using qualitative and quantitative methods to predict how the entertainment strategy for 2030 can address this issue and positively impact global perception in regards to the Saudi society and developments.



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### **Historical context:**

For decades, Saudi Arabia's culture has been very conservative, and many things were forbidden. Based on the study by Nigel Stanger, he believes those factors had an impact on the global market perspective until the evolution of Social media occurred. Saudi citizens started to engage with these technologies, allowing them to share Saudi cultural values and norms. (Nigel Stanger, 2017).

In 2016 Saudi Arabia announced to the public their new vision for 2030. With the new vision, Saudi Arabia has transformed public cultural displays and changed the art and entertainment landscape. (Arab Gulf States Institute, 2020).

Today, Saudi Arabia has the world's most significant social media presence. With 40.20 million mobile subscribers, mobile penetration stands at 116% of the total population. (Global media insight, 2020) With the growth of social media platforms, the kingdom is trying to establish a supporting infrastructure to increase exposure to Saudi Culture.

### **Contemporary context:**

In 2016 the Saudi government announced their new perspective on leading the global market with the developed potential inspired by king Salman bin Abdul-Aziz and his son Prince Mohammed bin Salman; they helped in framing the infrastructure of Saudi Arabia and creating an opportunity to lead the entertainment world globally. (Arab Gulf States Institute, 2020).

A recent study by the Ministry of Tourism (Invest Saudi 2020) showed that 11 billion had been spent on local entertainment in Saudi Arabia, such as



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attending festivals and concerts. The new exposure through advertising and social media allowed the Saudi citizens to be engaged with the global market and understand the newly developed perspective, creating a communication process that will help the Saudi community participate globally with their new developments.

### **Theoretical context/ Literature review:**

The secondary research focused on online data gathering and previous observation of the global community in previous research. The following discovery previously found:

Research into the cultural aspect is well established and formed. Sociologists and anthropologists developed the idea of cultural transformation through entertainment. The 20th century took an interest in the effect and how it shifted from the functionalists to the structuralisms. Since culture is a combination of people's beliefs, traditions, language, behaviors, etc., that participate in one community and can integrate into another culture in different ways. (Atkins and Bowler, 2001: 5) one of these simplest ways is entertainment.

Managing people in a global context revolves around dealing with differences in the cultural, social, and economic systems that increase according to interdependent regions and countries (Brewster, 2011). As a result, developing a strategy structure to meet and compete for global integration is needed to grab the attention of the global market.

The initial literature review on the subject highlights three approaches to the study of managing people in an international context:

- Understand the perspective of people exposed to Saudi culture. The



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initial research suggests that people believe that the Culture and Customs of Saudi Arabia are diverse and influenced by harsh ecological and geographical conditions and historical circumstances. (By Akers, Deborah S., 2020)

- The primary research will focus on gathering information from online/offline resources to understand the impact of media on reducing the gap between the global and local perspectives.
- The analysis of the gathered information allowed us to understand the reason for the misunderstanding between the global and the Saudi culture. Based on the research done by Abdullah Alfalih in 2016, religion is a patterning of social relationships around a belief in supernatural powers, creating ethical considerations; he believes that the most crucial influence of religion in society is in the fact that it affects the beliefs of peoples. (Abdullah, 2016) .

One aspect that needs to consider is the rapid development of technology in Saudi Arabia. The kingdom of Saudi Arabia started to invest in the development of technology, spending around 6 Million dollars to become an entrepreneur in that field According to Dell Technologies Digital Transformation Index 2020 report, Saudi Arabia is one of the leading countries in the digital transformation cutting edge, from launching intelligent city projects to citizens services. (Motivate media group, 2021)

By 2030 Saudi Arabia is planning to invest in artificial intelligent project contributing around 135 billion dollars. The COVID pandemic opened an opportunity to Saudis to adopt the latest technology in the region as part of



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their future vision. In addition to the above, Saudi Arabia is planning to train around 20,000 AI and data specialists to become highly qualified and improve their productivity. (Arab news, 2022)

### **Methodology:**

As stated previously, the purpose of this research is to understand international and local perspectives regarding Saudi culture, and to do so will be contacting various research methodologies to address the issue.

- Qualitative research uses one-on-one interviews and focus group to understand the difference between people's perspectives in different situations. Using those techniques is to provide comprehensive knowledge and look for insight that will help develop the intended product.
- In addition, using quantitative methods such as a survey gives the international community a chance to share their fear and understanding of the Saudi culture freely. Research shows that people will share more detailed information and express their opinions easily when discussing personal and cultural topics.

The primary research question will focus on understanding the global cultural perceptions of Saudi Arabia and analyzing the how they conflict with the modern society. The aim of this research to address the following points:

- The negative perception of Saudi Arabia's culture created a deficiency of understanding.
- Analyzing and observing the behavior toward Saudi culture.



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- Understanding the reasons that prompt positive and negative behaviors.
- Search and develop solutions to reduce the gap between different cultures.
- Investigate the different types of media that the global community uses to gather information about Saudi Arabia and how they participate in crafting their perception.
- Investigate the influence of the global community perception on the development of Saudi Arabia's 2030 vision.

### **Findings:**

Humans use culture-specific as a critical aspect to define others, and their observations vary depending on the society and their acceptance of different cultures and behaviors. Therefore, particular behavior such as space, architecture, and entertainment can be a tangible expression of the non-tangible culture. The qualitative research aims to understand how we can use entertainment to transfer the cultural context of Saudi Arabia in a simple yet creative way.

Entertainment's positive impact on the transformation of cultures is a harmless way. The designed study aimed to investigate the following:

- The transformation of Saudi culture into the global community.
- The behavioral investigation of Saudi visitors before and after the announcement of vision 2030
- Understanding the factors that play a role in changing their perception of the Arab community.

A focus group investigated a random sample of people aged 28 – 40 in



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Jeddah and Riyadh. The statistical results were analyzed and presented in the following paragraphs to provide several key recommendations to understand people's needs. These results demonstrate the potential for accepting the new development in Saudi Arabia's culture, which concludes that there is an excellent opportunity to grow and improve the global perception of Saudi Arabia. The study also showed the essential factors that influence acceptance, such as technology and Architectural design, especially when arranged in an enjoyable environment.

The investigation started with understanding the most straightforward methods that can help transfer culture between different contexts. According to the findings, leadership is an essential factor that plays a role in shifting and transferring culture. Another factor is communication and engagement with others, which can help smooth the process. In addition, available resources, whether they are tangible or intangible such as space and environment, technology, and activities. Allocating the resources to generate an envisioned future that focuses on innovation and productivity. The participants agreed that Saudi Arabia is one of the leading countries that play a massive role in the economy, politics, and educational infrastructure. However, one of the obstacles that might challenge the transformation is the acceptance of the new development in the local and the global context.

The participants describe Saudi Arabia's culture before announcing the new vision as a strict community. They believed that several factors influenced their decision, such as:



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- Before 2019 there was no tourism visa to allow a foreigner to visit the kingdom.
- Hearsay and fake media are transferring false news about the country and the people.
- The clothing style reflected a conservative culture and created a fear of the unknown represented by females wearing veils while traveling in Saudi Arabia.
- Gender discrimination, giving men more authority over women, separating sections, banning women from driving etc.

However, Saudi Arabia reformed the country's structure in 2019, especially in the entertainment sector. According to the participants, they created a sustainable structure to follow and admire. Participants believe that the adaptation of new media and technology provided an extraordinary experience and developed a new perception of the country's culture. The new development opened the door to a diverse culture where people can freely share their needs and beliefs. Replacing the strict culture with a moderate perception empowered the new generation to develop themselves and their country. In addition, keeping them engaged and connected with the global nation.

Finally, it was understood through the discussion that in order to change the perception of the global community, the Saudis need to expose their culture and development through creative matters using new technology and new media that can help to visualize the achievements taking place in the country and invite people from the global world to participate in the envisioned future.



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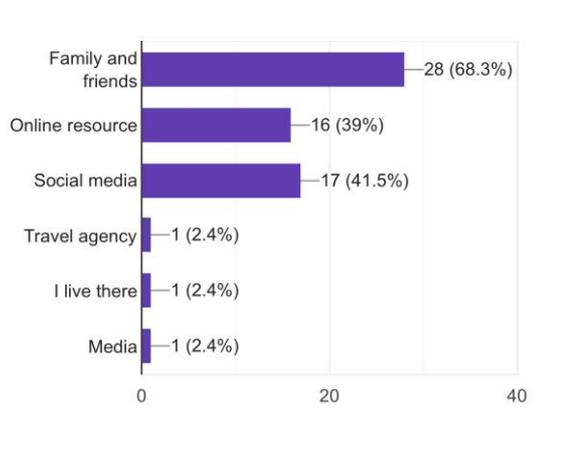
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To support the above finding a, qualitative research has taken place to have a clear understanding of what can help utilize the available resource to create an impact on the global community.

The data collection took place online. Distributing the questionnaire was based on a specific age range targeting foreigners who visited Saudi Arabia before and after the development of vision 2030. The number of respondents was 41. The data collection process took place in June 2022. The questionnaire used in this research had two parts, following a logical order, so it did not confuse the respondents. The questionnaire contains questions written in English regarding possible factors that are related to tourism and entertainment. The data was collected from foreigners who are not Arab. Around 65% of the respondents were female, aged 18 to above 45. 50% of the respondents travel between 2-4 times per year, and 80% of the total number have visited Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire showed that the popular two cities are Riyadh and Jeddah. Several reasons, according to the participants, made those two so special. These are tourism and entertainment, culture, job opportunity, and food. As shown in the figure (1) below 68% relies on friends and family to collect information about Saudi Arabia due to the fact that there are limited resources online. The same figure also indicates that social media comes in the second place with 41% because people trust a resource that provides them with live experience such as social media.



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**Figure 1: Information source collection of Saudi Arabia**

47% of the participants agreed that one of the obstacles for this Saudi Arabia tourism is the lack of resource and information gathering. 33% is not aware of the advance development of technology in Saudi Arabia.

Around 60% of the participants agreed that Riyadh and Jeddah are the most visited cities in 2021-2022 due to the activities that were done in the tourism seasons. However, around 30% of the total responder agreed that the entertainment needs development in some area to be accommodating the vision of 2030 and implement the new technology development to reflect the new vision of Saudi Arabia.

**Product:**

With the help of advanced technology, the new media opened a gate to simplify the transaction of information and helped transform culture in a friendly and easy way. Indeed, it is now possible to see how new ways of creating and distributing symbols have made it possible throughout history for people to change existing cultural practices and, through these changes in the way people socialize, to transform societies. (Howard Rheingold,



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2019).

Based on my research, I found that in 2019, around 2.77 billion people were using social media. (Influencer marketing hub 2019) With the help of smartphones that provide cheaper and more accessible access, this number will increase at least 10% by 2021. Based on my research, I believe that the social media platforms will be my source for gathering and distributing my outcomes.

Artificial intelligence opened a new gate for people to interact. Based on my research and finding my proposed strategy is to provide an open space for people to communicate and engage with each other. Using AI as part of social media where people can scan codes from posts that will take them to a 3D landscape where they can visualize and live the moment and share their perspectives with others. It can be an open space where people can interact with others learn from their experience and understand what is going in the entertainment sector. People will be able to live the experience from far away, which will encourage them to visit the kingdom.

The aim of this strategy is to track global interaction with the Saudi culture, record and monitor their behavior toward different cultural contexts, and provide recommendations and suggestions of places that might be similar to personal preferences. With this strategy, people will have the ability to visualize reality, and it will create a strong call of action where people will fill their experience with joyful moments that will help to transfer the Saudi culture in a friendly and acceptable way.

**Conclusion:**



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The culture of any community can be easily transferred and become acceptable by the global market once people can understand the perception of the culture through those who experienced the culture previously. It can also be determined through meeting the needs of the public and exceeding their expectation through simple yet creative visual communication elements to help remove the gap between different societies.





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