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MENA media and entertainment outlook, 2024-2028





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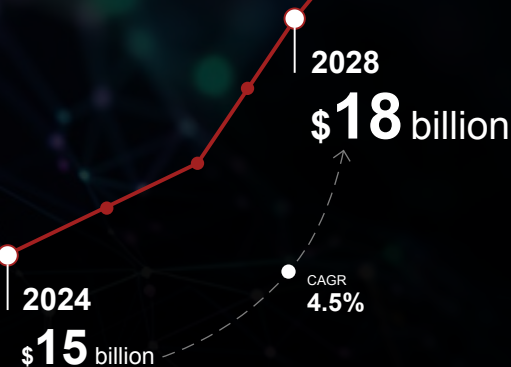
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The media and entertainment market in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is expected to grow steadily and in line with the global market in the years ahead, with industry revenue forecast to rise by **\$3 billion to \$18 billion** by 2028. Growth will again be driven by the ongoing transition to digital: its share of the total market is expected to grow from **71%** this year to **74%** in 2028, well above digital's forecast global average market share of **68%** in 2028. Total advertising spending is forecast to exceed consumer spending for the first time, capturing **51%** of the total media and entertainment market by 2028 as advertising revenue grows by **7.4%**. Demand for premium video and gaming content is rising, with consumer expenditure across MENA projected to grow by **3.7%** from 2024 to 2028, well above the global average growth rate of **2.7%**. Finally, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are predicted to remain the region's dominant markets, with their share of media and entertainment revenue rising from **64%** in 2024 to **66%** by 2028.

MENA media and entertainment market (USD, billion)





1

Internet advertising leads the way



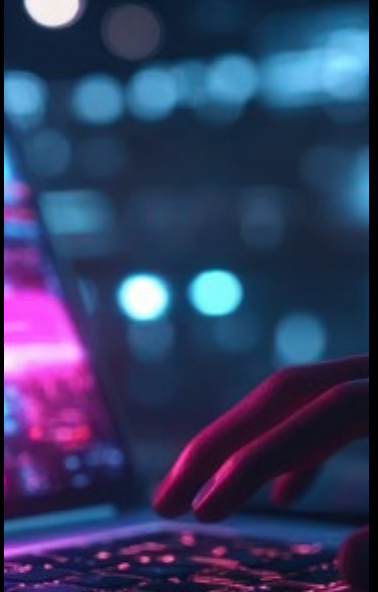
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Video is growing as streaming and cinema expand



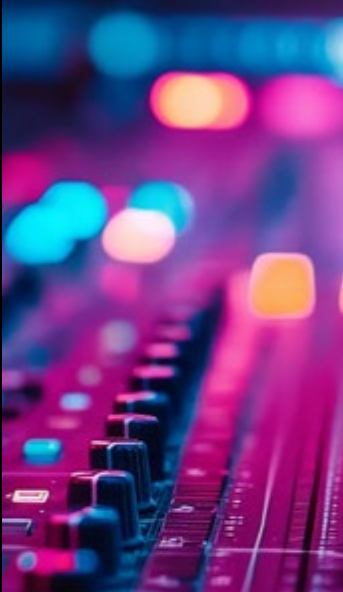
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Gaming is thriving, driven by casual mobile gaming



4

Publishing is continuing to pivot toward digital



5

Audio streaming audience is expanding

1

Internet advertising leads the way

Internet advertising is expected to be the strongest media and entertainment segment in MENA, growing at a CAGR of **7%** between 2024 and 2028, fueled by the surge in digital consumption resulting from a 3% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in fixed broadband services and the market penetration of mobile devices. They are helping drive the acceleration of e-commerce advertising, which is being increasingly embraced by business. Between 2024 and 2028, we forecast a CAGR of **7.2%** for paid search advertising, **7.1%** for display, and **1.3%** for classified.



The advertising value chain is diversifying, with **online retail advertising showing a CAGR of 11% from 2024 to 2028** and accelerating the expansion of internet advertising across MENA



As **business models embrace digital advertising**—an example is the launch of advertising-based video on demand platform StarzOn, leveraging StarzPlay content—programmatic tech will drive efficiencies



MENA Broadband penetration outside the GCC is low compared with mature markets (for example, 38% in Egypt in 2024 versus 82% in Western Europe), **reflecting the potential for internet advertising**



Egypt's internet advertising market is projected to grow the fastest at a CAGR of 9% from 2024-2028, driven by a forecast jump in broadband penetration to 49% in 2028



Video is growing as streaming and cinema expand

Video, growing at a CAGR of **5.9%** between 2024 and 2028, is driven by the continued expansion of video streaming¹ and box office revenue across MENA, with Saudi Arabia accounting for approximately 50% of total revenue in 2028. The CAGR of streaming video services is projected to be **6.9%** between 2024 and 2028, while pay³ and free-to-air television revenue is predicted to rise by **4.2%** annually during the same period. Cinema is expanding, with revenue expected to grow at a CAGR of **7.9%** from 2024 to 2028.



Across MENA, the total number of OTT subscribers is projected to reach 21 million by 2028 as consumers **increasingly adopt international and local platforms that provide high-quality regional content**



OTT subscription revenue growth of 5.1% annually continues to outpace TV subscription revenue (3% annually), driven by **increasing demand for on-demand content and the growing popularity of streaming services**



Subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) has a larger market share than advertising-based video on demand² (AVOD), but **AVOD is growing at 10.3% annually – more than double the 5.1% of SVOD**



Cinema growth will be partly driven by **a 3% annual increase in screens across MENA**, particularly in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, along with the rising popularity of local content such as *Mandoob* in Saudi Arabia

¹Includes OTT Video and Video Internet Advertising Revenue

²Includes AVOD, Instream and Outstream Video Internet Advertising

³Includes IPTV



3

Gaming is thriving, driven by casual mobile gaming

Gaming, growing at a CAGR of **4.4%** from 2024 to 2028, is driven by casual mobile gaming, fueled by the increasing use of smartphones, greater audience diversity, and the incorporation of local language and cultural references within games. We forecast the **6.6%** CAGR of casual mobile gaming from 2024 to 2028 to easily outstrip the **1.1%** and **0.2%** CAGR of console and PC video gaming, respectively. Video game advertising is expected to grow at a CAGR of **1.6%** from 2024 to 2028, while the e-sports sector is projected to grow significantly during the same period, driven by substantial government investments.



The **growth of casual mobile gaming** is driven by in-app purchases, social and multiplayer features, and increasing cross-platform playability



Key MENA markets such as UAE and Saudi Arabia will **increase focus on developing local ecosystems to support game developers**



Events and tournaments like the **e-sports World Cup** have attracted top teams and players, boosting the region's visibility on the global map



The digital-first nature of e-sports means **opportunity lies in sponsorships and media rights**, not in traditional revenue sources



4

Publishing is continuing to pivot toward digital

Publishing revenue is expected to continue declining—falling at a CAGR of **2.1%** from 2024 to 2028—as digital publishing growth fails to offset the combined decline in print subscription and advertising revenue. Consumers across the region continue to migrate to digital platforms. We forecast newspaper circulation to fall at a CAGR of **4.3%** from 2024 to 2028, with magazine circulation dropping by **3.2%** annually during the same period. Newspaper and magazine advertising—which include digital platforms—are forecast to rise at a CAGR of **0.6%** and **2.4%**, respectively, from 2024 to 2028. E-books is expected to have a CAGR of **5.1%**, from 2024 to 2028 more than ten times the **0.5%** CAGR of print books.



As **traditional revenue streams¹ fall by 5.3% annually across MENA** – faster than the global 4.2% average annual decline – companies continue to diversify by focusing on subscriptions, new content, digital advertising, and new businesses such as marketing services



MENA digital newspaper and magazine advertising spending is increasing faster than the global average (7% and 3%, respectively), while MENA print newspaper and magazine advertising spending is declining faster than the global average (10% and 6%, respectively)



Social media is becoming the top news source as use of mobile devices grows: **76%² of consumers in the UAE and 63%² in Saudi Arabia prefer to get news from social media**



Regional **e-books revenue growth of 5.1% annually** is outpacing global growth (4%), driven by increasing digital adoption and the availability of regional content in a digital format



¹ Includes print consumer magazine and newspaper

² YouGov survey results on news consumption preferences

Audio streaming audience is expanding

Audio, growing at a CAGR of **5.6%** between 2024 and 2028, is dominated by digital streaming, live music, and radio, with digital streaming growing the fastest at a CAGR of **9.4%**—encouraging record labels to sign new regional talent. This strength provides opportunities for local and international creators to access a rapidly expanding and engaged audience: live music is predicted to have a CAGR of **2.1%** from 2024 to 2028 and radio **4.9%** during the same period. Demand for podcasts is also growing, especially in key markets such as Saudi Arabia, with a predicted CAGR of **5.9%** from 2024 to 2028.



Rising consumer spending is expected to **push revenue from music streaming across MENA to a CAGR of 9.4% through 2028**, more than double the forecast global growth of 4.3%



Premium audio streaming in the region is growing faster (10% annually) than ad-supported streaming (7% annually), and **will account for 90% of digital music streaming revenue in 2028**



Saudi Arabia and UAE continue to support live events and **will contribute 72% to MENA's live music revenue by 2028**, driving stable growth in the segment



Podcast demand is growing, especially in key markets like Saudi Arabia, with monthly listeners expected to rise 4.4% annually to reach 13 million by 2028, sparking new opportunities for creators and advertisers





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