

Smart buildings

Qatar's construction industry adopts smart AV systems

The latest audiovisual (AV) technologies are impacting Middle East's construction in many ways, writes Farwa Zahra

The overall AV market in the Middle East is projected to expand at about 15 percent a year from 2012 to 2015, growing from USD1.58 billion (QAR5.7 billion) in 2012 to USD2.38 billion (QAR8.6 billion) by 2015, according to the general manager of InfoCommAsia, Richard Tan.

In the Middle East, according to Tan, the AV technology is mostly used in the government, corporate, broadcasting and hospitality sectors. Ali Al Daghistani, senior sales manager for Extron Electronics, Middle East and Africa, believes that signal transmission is largely responsible for this. "New transmission techniques inside buildings replace the existing analogue AV cabling infrastructure. Space-saving fibre optic cables replace dozens of analogue lines," he told *The Edge*.

Some of the applications of AV streaming include delivering digital signage across the building, distributing corporate announcements and messages to selected audiences in the building. The AV technologies in the construction sector in Doha find their applications in commercial buildings, educational institutes, conference venues and office spaces, etcetera.

While the AV technologies should be ideally considered in building projects at their design stage, to allow optimum performance, they can also be incorporated into existing buildings, explained InfoComm's Tan.

15%

Growth rate of audiovisual market in the Middle East.



Richard Tan, general manager of InfoCommAsia, says that the two things setting the Middle East apart are excellent infrastructure and readiness to accept new technologies.

Growth drivers

The 15 percent growth rate of AV market in the Middle East also reflects certain peculiarities about the region. Tan is of the view that two things set this region apart from many other markets. These, he explained, are "excellent infrastructure, which allows for quick adoption of new technologies many of which rely on good telecommunications infrastructure, and a high degree of affordability and readiness to accept new technologies."

Zeyad Al Jaidah, managing director of Techno Q, shared a similar sentiment when he told *The Edge*, "I see these countries catching up very quickly with top-of-the-line AV technologies in most venues," adding further that universities to hospitals, meeting rooms to impressive auditoriums, are now all equipped with the latest in technologies rivalling their

"Many AV technologies were introduced in Qatar before appearing in the neighbouring countries." - Zeyad Al Jaidah, Techno Q.

counterparts in top cities around the world.

Sustainability

The latest AV technologies also provide long-term efficacy. "The AV systems such as digital signage, video conferencing, interactive video walls and meeting room systems are helping businesses save time and money and are increasing their productivity with reduced energy consumption," said Al Jaidah.

AV in Qatar

In Qatar, the evolution of AV communications in buildings is still in a phase of development. This makes the market open to future opportunities for AV technology providers and allows space for market growth. "Qatar is somewhat of a technology pioneer in the region. Many AV systems and technologies were introduced in Qatar first before appearing in the other neighbouring countries," said Al Jaidah, who sees the exploration of new technologies as a growing local trend in Qatar. **e**



GE's auditorium at Qatar Science and Technology Park houses some of the latest audiovisual facilities, provided by Techno Q.