



## Member Interview



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**Q: Our interviewee today is a man who has been in the Middle East for more than 16 years. He did run Hewlett Packard before. Welcome, Mr. Amin Mortazavi**

**Amin:** Thank you very much. Thanks for having me today.

**Q: Can you introduce yourself in a few words? What did you do in the past? How did you come to Dubai?**

**Amin:** Actually, I started my career back in Austria. I moved as a young teenager to Vienna from Iran, where I did my Matura high school diploma and my university and then my first career moves. And then I moved to Dubai about 16 years ago.

**Q: We already mentioned that you worked for HP, did HP bring you to Dubai?**

**Amin:** Let me just tell you a little bit more about that. So I finished my degree in business administration and then started my first jobs in Vienna. I worked for a long time for Daimler Chrysler before I moved to Hewlett Packard. At Hewlett Packard in the Vienna office, I was responsible for

product management. Product management on the printing side, both on the commercial and the consumer side. Back in the day, if you remember, every IT company was trying to come up with some sort of handheld with telephony capability.

And back in the day, HP was one of the contenders as well as Compaq. And then it came to the big merger (between Compaq and HP). And unfortunately, both products, died away, that was just before Apple came up with the iPhone. I was managing the product side of the business in Austria. And then I saw an opportunity in the Middle East. So I had a chat. And in 2004, I moved with HP from Vienna to their Dubai office in the Internet city. After a very short while where I was looking also after the product management side of the business in the Middle East, I moved to manage the African business and the business in the Mediterranean, so to say.

I did that for about four to five years, and then in the last four years that I was with HP, I was managing as the GM the entire business for the Middle East end to end. Then I moved out of HP and I moved to Acer computers. I managed Acer computers for about three years for the region, Middle East and Africa and a little bit of Central Asian countries. And then in 2014, I decided to put an end to the corporate life and start something on my own.

**Q: *And that's exactly what you're doing right now, so you have your own business, can you tell us a little bit more about that business?***

**Amin:** The reason I started this business was, first of all, when you are a long time with corporate, there are many things that are favorable, but there are many things that go against your belief. And I saw a big opportunity across the Middle East, but also in Africa. And that opportunity was the lack of service providers in the aftermarket of the printing business. This sounds complicated, but it is not complicated at all. So basically, I established a company with a partner of mine, and we called it RQ8 Technologies. RQ8 Technologies is a print solution provider. What we do is we help companies to reduce their office printing costs. Basically, we enable companies to manage their printing within their premises, but also to reduce their cost. Fact is that the cost of office printing can absorb up to three to four percent of any company's revenue. And unfortunately - or fortunately for us - not many companies pay attention to that. And what we do is that we open their eyes and we provide them with different kind of solution that would be tailor-made for their own set-up and environment.

**Q: *In this time of Corona, basically, you should be very busy because as far as I see, everybody wants to reduce costs right now. So, it must be an Eldorado for you.***

**Amin:** Actually, yes. And we are very thankful for every additional customer we can get. I have to mention that during the Corona time, we went through a very difficult time. We are in a very niche market and it's very difficult to get those technicians and salespeople and people who are specialized in the architecture of the printing environment, but we managed not to let go of anyone, even despite of the cash flow situation in the UAE. And therefore, we are very happy for every additional business we can get. And you are absolutely right. All those people who were not ready to listen to us, now everybody is receptive when you bring up the word of savings. And these savings are really huge savings; it can go up to 30, 40 percent of the cost that every single company is spending on their printing. And you should look at the printing cost on a weekly or on a monthly basis, but more holistically on how much you spend on an annual basis on your printing. I'll give you just one example. There is a customer, one of the big customers that we serve now for the fourth year in a row. And that is the Alshaya Group. I'm sure you know them. It is Starbucks, P.F. Chang, Victoria's Secret... So, they have 750 outlets across the U.A.E. and obviously their headquarter in Al Barsha Dubai, and their warehouse set-up. They were spending about 1.6 million dirhams annually on their office printing alone.

And all over the years, we have brought down that cost to a million dirhams. So that is a 40 percent cost reduction that we have been able to pass on to them over the years. And obviously, it is very important for us to build a relationship with the customer because this is a fulfillment business sometimes on a weekly basis.

The other thing that I would like to mention is that initially when we started the business, we looked at the competitors, who does what and who does what right and what wrong. And we decided to have everything in-house. It means that whatever we promise to our clients, it is us who delivers the promise: being it delivery, the logistic or the warehousing or the technicians; even the technical services workshop that we have is owned by the company. And this makes it also very easy for us to take calls in a very short span of time. But also, it makes us very flexible to cater to the requirements of the customers.

**Q: *Talking about customers, can the members of the Austrian Business Council also become customers and what can you offer specifically for them?***

**Amin:** Of course. So, first of all, a lot of love that we give specifically to people that we know. And obviously we can offer them a free of cost assessment of their printing environment and provide them with our point of view. And most of the time, our point of view contributes to savings. And that is always a good basis for discussion. I have already reached out to a couple of members. And as I was mentioning to you, I also met with a couple of them.

Obviously, in this time it is very important that we make sure that we generate additional revenue. I will be very thankful for every single opportunity and every single lead that we can possibly get from the members. There will be a special discount applied for the members of the ABC. No doubt about it.

**Q: *So, what we can say is that basically all our members should reach out to you if they want to look into additional opportunities for savings. Amin, thank you very much for this interview. I wish you good luck and all the best.***

**Amin:** Thank you very much.