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STARTING A BUSINESS IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

● Launching a company in the UAE? Don't forget these important things, say experts

BY CHIRANTI SENGUPTA
Editor

Find out about the changes in business ownership laws



The UAE has introduced several new legislations to attract foreign investment and fuel entrepreneurship and the most notable is 100 per cent ownership by foreign nationals of companies licensed and registered in the UAE. The government has created a "Positive List" of business activities where foreign investors can own up to 100 per cent of the shares in an onshore company. The "Positive List" focuses on three key areas — manufacturing, services and agriculture — where the government wants to see more businesses committing investments.

"100 per cent ownership is subject to additional conditions," says Syam Panayickal Prabhu, Founder and Managing Director, Aurion. "These include minimum capital, implementation of latest technology and contribution to research and development, as well as satisfying the requirement of the licencing authority at the emirate level."

Decide on the jurisdictions



In the UAE, an investor can set up a company in mainland, free zones or offshore jurisdictions.

"For a company planning to do business exclusively in the UAE or GCC with an office or a factory facility, it is always advisable to set up in mainland. If the company is intending to do import, re-export and B2B with mainland companies, it's a good idea to get a free zone licence, where 100 per cent expatriate shareholding is possible for all activities," explains Prabhu. "If the intention is to set up a company for international business, offshore International Business Company (IBC) is the best option. Offshore IBCs are considered to be a resident outside of the UAE and they can neither have offices in the UAE nor conduct business within the country."

Applicability of VAT



"It's critical to know about the Value Added Tax (VAT) law that stipulates all products and services are subject to 5 per cent VAT if the annual turnover of a company exceeds Dh375,000 and the company's modus operandi comes under the purview of VAT law, unless it is under the exempted category or the zero-rated category," says Prabhu.

Understand the laws and regulations of company formation



Prabhu from Aurion lists a number of laws and regulations that an entrepreneur needs to be aware of before setting up a company in the UAE.

- Federal law No. 2 of 2015 on commercial companies and the amended law No. 26 of 2020 apply to any entity involved in commercial, financial, industrial, agricultural, real estate or other kinds of economic activities in the mainland.
- Find out about the UAE labour law which explains the rights, duties, contracts and remedies of employees and employers.
- Learn about the common customs law of GCC as well as custom policies of the emirate in which the company is established.
- You also need to find out about free zone regulations — each free zone has its own rules and regulations developed within the general framework of business and commercial laws of land.
- Economic Substance Regulations (ESR) require the companies in the UAE carrying out "relevant activities" listed in regulation to maintain adequate "economic substance" in the UAE.
- Law of bankruptcy provides a legal framework to address distressed companies in the UAE, while helping them avoid bankruptcy and liquidation through various mechanisms like financial restructuring.

Why you need to hire a business set-up consultant



Entrepreneurship presents many challenges but, with the right support, it is easier and faster to start a business than handling the entire process on your own.

A business set-up consultant will help you in various aspects of establishing a company in the UAE. "They will first help you filter all the options available and select the most viable one based on your specific requirements," says Oliver Brinsley, Senior Business Setup Consultant & Sales Manager, Trade License Zone. "They also take care of the processing on your behalf. Business set-up is a process that requires accuracy as errors may cause lengthy delays and can be costly to rectify."

How to select a business set-up consultant



There is a myriad of business set-up consultants in the market offering the same services and products. "The key differences will be on the level of service, market knowledge, and industry experience," says Levi Joshua, Business Set Up Manager, Ezzone. "They should be able to fully understand your operations and vision so that you are better equipped not just with the correct licence to start your business but also to plan the scalability of your growth."



Syam Panayickal Prabhu
Aurion



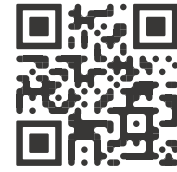
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WHY FREE ZONES REMAIN ATTRACTIVE FOR NEW BUSINESSES IN THE UAE



● Hamriyah Free Zone in Sharjah

Courtesy of HFZA

- They are constantly innovating and strengthening the ecosystem for SMEs, giving entrepreneurs the opportunities to thrive even in the worst of times

BY KEITH J. FERNANDEZ
Special to GN Focus

The UAE's free zones are working to strengthen the climate for new businesses by offering lower fees and bespoke packages in an uncertain economy. Following new laws designed to improve business climate, some ecosystem players even testify to an increased number of new registrations and business expansions even during the pandemic, with technology-focused sectors seeing high traction.

As one of the first to adapt to the changes in the business environment, Hamriyah Free Zone saw several international companies announce expansion plans within the free zone, says Saud Salim Al Mazrouei, Director of the Hamriyah Free Zone Authority (HFZA).

"The pandemic did not dampen our commitment to transform the way global trade is done and you will see it in the success stories that fuelled our passion even during these unprecedented times," he says, explaining that HFZA's pivot to online services for investors during the pandemic proved invaluable.

To help entrepreneurs overcome the situation, Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone introduced the Business LYTE packages, offering up to 50 per cent off, which helped prospective investors to continue with the plans of business set-up. "We also provided additional months of licence validity for our existing companies and increased the visa quota for all our new and existing businesses," says Johnson M. George, General Manager, Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone Authority.

Similarly, Creative Zone, a business advisory firm, assisted several UAE-based and global investors launch and expand their ventures in the UAE and Saudi Arabia during the pandemic, says its Head of Marketing, Neha Thomas.

This is thanks in large part to an operational shift that has seen the company's concierge and PRO services assist clients in other countries with opening bank accounts as well as arranging visas and licences.

"All our services are available online, and we have digitised the entire process of business set-up, right from the first consultation to delivering your licence at

your doorsteps," she says. "Owing to the adverse effects of the pandemic on business everywhere, we provide subsidised rates for all our value-added services such as insurance plans, logistics, software, sales and marketing, funding and legal assistance."

Thriving SME ecosystem

As has been widely reported, digital and technology-focused businesses have done well during the pandemic. "Many start-ups, particularly e-commerce and other digital platforms, recorded steady growth, giving a massive boost to the country's digitalisation efforts," Thomas adds.

"We see a rising culture of entrepreneurship, owing to the several incentives the government has provided to the start-up and SME community. From providing healthy stimulus packages, government-led funding opportunities to 100 per cent ownership of onshore companies, the UAE's SME ecosystem has hope written all over it."

A series of regulatory changes to company formation and residency laws has been enacted over the past



Saud Salim Al Mazrouei
Hamriyah Free Zone Authority



Johnson M. George
Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone Authority



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the ideal
company package
for your business
in UAE”

Syam P Prabhu B.A(Law), LL.B, LL.M
Founder & Managing Director



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6 UAE FREE ZONES

year to improve the ease of doing business within the UAE. For the first time, long-term residence visas are now available to entrepreneurs in some categories, and they may own 100 per cent of mainland businesses in many sectors subject to minimum capital conditions or incubator approval.

Similarly, digital platforms such as Invest in Dubai are poised to simplify setting up a Dubai-based company in over 2,000 areas across various licence types, while the Dubai DED Instant Licence is now available within five minutes with no pre-approvals. Further policy changes, such as the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology's new "Operation 300bn", a new tactic aimed at supporting 13,500 industrial SMEs, will incentivise companies in specific sectors in line with strategies to establish global leadership in economic sectors built around breakthrough technologies.

Dubai CommerCity, for example, was launched last year at the height of the pandemic. A new free zone dedicated to e-commerce and logistics, the Dh3.2-billion project aims to be a hub for online retailers serving the Middle East, North Africa and beyond, where local, regional and global e-commerce players benefit from premium digital and physical infrastructure.

Grasp of market dynamics

As always, investors must understand the markets they operate in, says Syed Shuaib, Business Consultant, Capital International Group (CIG), a company formation advisor. He emphasises the competitive attractions of a free zone company within such an environment.

"Free zones provide many advantages over mainland companies in the UAE, not the least of which is faster market entry. Often, free zones will have a list of activities that are industry-specific and also have access to facilities such as seaports, airline terminals and warehousing. Another distinct advantage of free zones is the ability to combine different business activities, which can be difficult for mainland companies."

George Hojeige, CEO, Virtuzone, which offers incorporation services across free zones in the UAE, says the day after 100 per cent ownership for mainland companies was announced, he was inundated with requests from investors asking for their companies to be restructured. "People are calling all the time, asking if they should still pay their sponsor. Hundred per cent ownership is possible in certain situations or industries only."

Like Shuaib, he says free zones are attractive for international investors because of several reasons, including their low entry and set-up costs, no requirement for upfront share capital, minimum paperwork, the option of a flexi-desk and zero per cent duty on import and export.

But with the intricacies of the new laws coupled with ever-changing business conditions that can prove challenging even for established businesses, companies new to the UAE are being advised to consider the services of external consultants.

"Covid-19 brought topsy-turvy conditions for businesses across the world," says Hatem El Safty, CEO, Business Link. He cites challenges for SMEs such as legislation,



● Launched last year, Dubai CommerCity provides an all-in-one e-commerce hub



Neha Thomas
Creative Zone



Syed Shuaib
Capital International Group



George Hojeige
Virtuzone



Hatem El Safty
Business Link



Meet Joshi
Flyingcolour Group

operational areas of focus, information or data sorting and changes in customer behaviour. "With too many things over the head, it's complicated to focus on business movements and this is where business set-up consultants work as a walking stick. From documentation to analysing customer trends, we do it all efficiently and right in time. Consultants are experienced and know the in and out of place. It is like being pro at every minor but impactful place."

Company set-up firm Trade License Zone provides a free, no obligation consultation to investors in order to ensure that they are receiving accurate and comprehensive advice, says Oliver Brinsley, Senior Business Setup Consultant and Sales Manager. In addition to tax, VAT, accounting, advisory, travel and media services, the firm offers a full suite of office solutions, including co-working space, meeting room facilities, reception management and a number of other start-up-related services. "We found that these services became even more popular, mainly because it provides businesses with extensive flexibility," he says.

Support for new entrepreneurs

Consultants can help guide new entrepreneurs, adds Meet Joshi, CEO of Flyingcolour Group. The firm offers entrepreneurs advisory services from launch through to operations. "Any new growth sectors will surely come with its own guidelines, and grey areas. Our years of work in the industry could provide a helping hand to those venturing into new sectors. Apart from setting up of the business, we can also then provide on-going support through accounting, internal auditing, immigration, banking and any other requirements a business may need."

The traditional post-recession bounce could augur well for companies that start businesses in the wake of the pandemic, Joshi says.

"The market has definitely faced challenges due to Covid and the SMEs are a huge part of the overall economy. However, historically, after any challenging era, a new era filled with more opportunity and prospects takes shape. I expect the same in this case, and surely over the next couple of years, the market will be in high recovery mode." ■

THE REGISTRY OF CHOICE



RAK International Corporate Centre is a world-class whitelisted jurisdiction and one of the fastest-growing government-owned corporate registries, with a reputation for compliance and professional services.

"In April 2020 RAK ICC reacted to the challenging time by announcing an unprecedented level of business stimulus measures," says Alan Bougourd, Registrar, RAK ICC.




"The bulk of this support came via exclusive discounts to help businesses keep costs under control. Up until the end of June 2020, RAK ICC offered a 50 per cent waiver on new agent registration fees and new incorporations, and a 25 per cent discount on premium product packages. Those who were already agents with RAK ICC took the advantage of the amnesty programme that extended for the rest of 2020," he says. "RAK ICC is enhancing its digital offering to ensure it is fully digitised to enable businesses to continue operating efficiently in these challenging time."

— GN Focus Report

THE LEADING E-COMMERCE FREE ZONE IN THE MENA REGION



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BOOM FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY TO CONTINUE...

...BUT DON'T WRITE OFF TRADITIONAL BUSINESS SECTORS

- Trading, services, pharma, tourism and hospitality sectors will continue to thrive after the pandemic

GN Focus report

The pandemic has accelerated the rise of the digital economy and will continue to do so, say start-up ecosystem leaders from across the UAE, yet there remains opportunity for regional entrepreneurs in traditional economic sectors as the world works to build out the new normal.

Despite the wide-scale disruption resulting from Covid-19 and a drop in venture deals, start-ups in MENA raised a record sum of just over \$1 billion (Dh3.6 billion) in 2020, with the money largely going to technology companies in e-commerce, finance and healthcare, according to the 2021 Emerging Venture Markets Report from regional data platform MAGNiTT.

Start-up ecosystem leaders in the UAE expect to see continued interest from global founders eager to capitalise on the region's digital economy. "Going by the current trends we are witnessing in the market, we expect the digital and e-commerce sector to thrive in the coming years," says Dr Khalid Omar Al Midfa, Chairman, Sharjah Media City – Shams. "An increase of service providers within the ecosystem offering digital services and contributing to the growth of the digital footprint of companies is expected. As Shams offers a conducive environment for such companies to begin their entrepreneurial journey in the UAE, we are observing this spike first-hand."

While lockdowns and retail closures impacted the economy in several ways, these accelerated demand for solutions focused on online retail and digital transformation in the workplace, says Levi Joshua, Business Set-Up Manager at Ezone, a company that helps businesses establish operations in the UAE, with survey data showing that 40 per cent of UAE respondents are shopping more online, with over 45 per cent of the UAE

population planning to continue their new phone shopping behaviour.

World Economic Forum estimates place the UAE's 2020 e-commerce market at \$27.2billion. "Furthermore, there has been a dramatic acceleration on digital transformation of workforce operations. The increased requirement for technological solutions to increase and monitor employee productivity also led to a hastened growth in the constantly evolving technology sector. Other fast-growing sectors are in service and logistics, among other industries that are evolving to satisfy the business demands of the new normal," Joshua says.



"Going by the current trends we are witnessing in the market, we expect the digital and e-commerce sector to thrive in the coming years."

Dr Khalid Omar Al Midfa
Chairman, Sharjah Media City – Shams

Medical supplies industries, including parapharmaceuticals, and food and beverages catering to nearby markets have noticed a surge in demand, says Johnson M. George, General Manager, Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone. "There has also been a rise in companies looking to relocate their facilities, which helped us rent out a large percentage of our warehouses and industrial plots."

Despite the attention on digital solutions, there continues to be space for companies in traditional business sectors to do well, particularly

as vaccine programmes help countries open their economies. "Most sectors of the economy are needed for the overall economic environment to function and sustain. Be it trading, services, tourism or hospitality, there is a demand for each sector [in the UAE]," says Meet Joshi, CEO of the business set-up consultants, Flying-colour Group. "There is a large, ever-growing scope for e-commerce, technology, and fintech sectors. As the world progresses, it is very hard to overlook these sectors. However, as mentioned, these sectors are an addition to the economy, and are not replacing the existing sectors." ■



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3 WAYS UAE BUSINESSES CAN DEAL WITH THE EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC

1 QUICK ACTION ON DECISION MAKING

With such high stakes on the line, entrepreneurs find themselves dealing with the inability to make a decision due to overthinking. "Break down what needs to be done into smaller steps, and then prioritise issues based on their level of importance. You will feel more in control and confident in your ability," says Shabana Shaikh, Head Sales & Marketing at Capital International Group.



2 CULTIVATE A POSITIVE MINDSET

Entrepreneurs are no exception to the wide range of emotional responses engendered by the pandemic but are under additional strain as they strive to provide the best possible service to their employees and customers. "Set aside time in your schedule for self-care to be intentional. The more you're able to find inner calm during this crisis, the better able you are to make decisions and lead your business," says Shaikh.



3 SELECT THE RIGHT FOCUS

For business owners dealing with conflicting demands, it can be difficult to know where to prioritise time and resources. "Consider what is truly important to your business when making your decision. For the majority of us, it is our people – employees, clients, vendors, and partners."



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OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR START-UPS DURING THE PANDEMIC

- Leaders from the free zone community and the business set-up sector shared their views on how to tackle the short-term challenges in light of Covid-19 while strengthening entrepreneurial potential in the UAE

GN FOCUS REPORT

“IFZA’s organisational model is designed around an agile, business-focused community”

MARTIN G. PEDERSEN, Chairman, IFZA Dubai

As one of the leading free zones in the UAE, how does IFZA help consultants and partners lead while initiating their business model?

IFZA is known for its unique business model focused on building partnerships in the UAE and around the world. This business model is highlighted by three pillars of competence, knowledge transfer and community. We strengthen our partnerships by ensuring that we provide them with a competent, dedicated team of experts with up-to-date knowledge of the free zone industry. To ensure that our hundreds of global partners speak and act the same language wherever they are in the world, we developed the IFZA Academy, the first and only learning institution of its kind in the region



fully dedicated to the free zone industry. Finally, IFZA's organisational model is designed around an agile, business-focused community so we are able to respond to the needs and requirements of our stakeholders as quickly and effectively as possible.

How has IFZA changed the free zone business model in its quest to help the company formation industry grow?

IFZA constantly thinks from the perspective of our target groups, constantly refining our products and processes to ensure our clients' excellent experience in each of their engagement with us. In addition to our approaches towards our partners, the benefits of IFZA's culture of constant progress trickles down as well to entrepreneurs and their businesses. We constantly review our processes with the goal of simplifying the process and remove as many barriers to their entry into the dynamic business environment of Dubai.

“Dubai CommerCity offers all the e-commerce support services you need to take your business online”

DEVERE FORSTER, COO, Dubai CommerCity

What makes Dubai CommerCity unique in terms of location and services?

Dubai CommerCity is the first and leading free zone dedicated exclusively to e-commerce. With an area covering 2.1 million square feet and an investment of around \$1 billion, it is uniquely designed to support new and existing e-commerce businesses across the MENA region. Strategically located next to Dubai International Airport, the free zone is specially designed to enable fast e-commerce fulfillment across the region. From services point of view, in terms of what is being developed, I would say Dubai CommerCity offers “e-com in a box,” where we are not just a free zone, where you not only get space for office and warehouse to set up your business, but also all the relevant support services you need to take your business online.



How is Dubai CommerCity planning to attract business?

Dubai CommerCity supports new entrants to build e-commerce capabilities. We have developed a unique approach, working with our partners and the government entities here in the UAE, pushing to overcome the challenges for businesses who wish to establish their e-commerce footprint in the region, which will attract the right pool of investors to the park.

“The pandemic has given digital media the chance to shine”

DR KHALID OMAR AL MIDFA, Chairman, Sharjah Media City — SHAMS

What are the key challenges you see SMEs facing during the pandemic and how can SHAMS help them navigate the challenges?

It is the very nature of media to adapt and evolve as per the ever-changing circumstances in the market. The media industry has been improvising consistently, even during the pre-covid era. However, the pandemic has pushed the industry into a direction where digital media is king, which is a reality most industries are gradually accepting, while adapting to the best of their abilities. The pandemic, while having an obstructive impact on traditional media, gave digital media the chance to shine.

Within Shams, we have witnessed a surge of entrepreneurs opting for our digital licences, be it e-commerce, mobile-app development or digital advertising. Businesses with a strong digital footprint have been able to weather this storm and we are gradually seeing others following suit.



How does SHAMS act as a one-stop shop for creative entrepreneurs to set up and grow their business?

Our focus on creative entrepreneurship stems from the need to support businesses, which utilise their intellectual knowledge and skills to thrive. Businesses built on creative ideas are the ones with the potential to disrupt the market and change the way business is conducted on a day-to-day basis. At Shams, we fuel creative entrepreneurship by reducing their cost of entry into the market and providing them with a supportive ecosystem to thrive. Through various events and exhibitions, we also provide our start-ups a platform to showcase their business to potential clients, partners and investors.

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“Our primary USP is the customer-friendly approach”

JOHNSON M. GEORGE, General Manager, Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone Authority



Now, that the Emirati ownership law has been abolished, what benefits do free zones provide over mainland businesses?

Although the new regulations state that all businesses are open for full direct foreign ownership, companies involved in strategic impact activities are exempt from this and

will be subject to stringent review and minimum UAE shareholding and board participation requirements, which will be determined by relevant authorities in each emirate with different restrictions.

The Decree-Law came into force starting

January 2, 2021, except for the provisions abolishing minimum Emirati ownership levels, the nationality requirements for directors of public and private joint-stock companies, and the removal of the local service agent requirement for branches and representative offices of foreign companies. Several of the new amendments provide for additional regulations and rules to be adopted. Hence, more clarity is required in this.

Free zones are exempt from corporate tax and customs duties. Further, free zones provide a one-stop solution to the customers like company formation, licencing, visas, facilities like office, warehouse or land, issuance of building and construction permits and all approvals, making it the best choice for foreign investors in the UAE.

What makes UAQ Free Zone unique in terms of location and services?

Our primary USP is the customer-friendly approach with personalised attention to all our clients.

We are one among the few designated free zones in the country, offering serviced and accessible industrial plots of land, ready-to-move-in warehouses of various sizes, and bespoke offices. The free zone provides a wide range of business activities like no other as well as easy access to major highways, seaports and airports.

“Fujairah government provides high-quality and cost-effective infrastructure”

SHARIEF HABIB AL AWADHI, Director General, Fujairah Free Zone

What sets Fujairah Free Zone apart in terms of location and services provided?

Three things: Cost-effectiveness, enhanced infrastructure, and the availability of manpower and decision-makers.

There's no point having a great location without proper investment. Today, we have the deepest port in the Middle East. The Fujairah government has established authorities that provide infrastructure that is high-quality and cost-effective by international standards.

Accessibility to the authorities is also important, and something we've helped a lot of businesses here with over the years. Being part of the UAE, Fujairah is empowered by the federal



government – we have a desalination plant, pipeline and silos. These things breed confidence, helping to attract businesses and make Fujairah a great platform for FDI. The more we deliver businesses, the better our infrastructure will be, and the better the opportunity.

In this uncertain economic climate, how do you believe Fujairah Free Zone has risen to the challenge?

We have some strengths, like location, and have developed a few businesses that have become a niche and trademark of Fujairah.

Business is like an ocean wave. Companies have to cope with the ups and downs. When some fail, others come up. After 2020, the challenge is different. Market uncertainty will always be there – it's related to wars, oil prices, depreciation etc. The pandemic is unusual, but there have been crises before, and people overcome these.

“Covid-19 can serve as a catalyst for long-term sustainable economic reform”

SAUD SALIM AL MAZROUEI, Director, Hamriyah Free Zone Authority



How can free zones support the UAE's investment ecosystem and stay sustainable in the long run?

Free zones are a driving force in the growth of the economy in the UAE. They help stimulate economic development, create

jobs, boost and diversify exports, and expedite the industrialisation process of an economy at lower costs for the government. Incidents like the Covid-19 pandemic with a sudden drop in oil price can serve as a catalyst for long-term sustainable economic reform.

Now that 100 per cent ownership will be allowed in mainland, free zones have to future-proof themselves through innovation and digital transformation to remain relevant.

As one of the leading free zones in the northern emirates, how does Hamriyah Free Zone support SME investors in this challenging time?

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, our priorities have been to enhance the competitiveness of our operating companies. We have launched several packages and initiatives to support all businesses and investors, including exemption on inspection fees, fines for the late renewal of commercial licences and visas, as well as 50 per cent discount on transferring shares, aligned with the government stimulus package.

Our visa validity has also been extended to three years for investors and their employees alike, which gives a positive impact on their operational costs. We are also offering new companies 20 per cent off on warehouse and office packages as well as complete exemptions on licence fees.

What makes Hamriyah Free Zone unique in terms of location and services?

More than 6,500 companies, both Fortune 500 enterprises and SMEs, currently operate and flourish at Hamriyah Free Zone.

The modern free zone is spread across 30 million square metres, offering a unique advantage of sea, land and air connectivity. Offering an access to a 14-metre deep port and 7-metre deep inner harbour, HFZA is home to the highest number of steel fabricators in the region and also a primary hub for oil and gas companies in the region. Hamriyah Free Zone Authority issues a trade licence in less than 60 minutes.

Customised world-class facilities include warehouses, industrial plots and executive office suites with a wide range of on-site solutions; coupled with a host of exclusive free zone benefits.

“RAK ICC entities are established in a matter of 2-3 days”

DR. SAMEER AL ANSARI, CEO, RAK International Corporate Centre (RAK ICC)

Please brief us on RAK ICC, highlighting how you could help a company set up an international business presence in the emirate?

RAK ICC specialises in the establishment of International Business Companies and Foundations. RAK ICC entities are established in a matter of 2-3 days through our registered agents that provide corporate services and the registered office address for the company. RAK ICC companies are used by individuals and corporates to hold international assets and for wealth planning.

What are the key advantages of setting up an international business company at RAK ICC? How does an International Business Company (IBC) differ from a Free Zone Company (FZCO)?

RAK ICC IBC companies benefit from all of the advantages of the UAE, while conducting their



international trade or holding their global assets in a world class company registry, which is based on a common law and operates in full compliance with international standards. Also, with no direct UAE premises or employee costs, these entities are more cost-effective. For companies that require offices, visas, etc., the FZCO structure is more appropriate.

Is migration to RAK ICC from other jurisdictions possible? What are the main benefits of redomiciliations?

Companies can easily redomicile into RAK ICC from other jurisdictions, both from within the UAE or internationally. The main benefits of redomiciling to RAK ICC include the maintenance of the existing legal status of the company, the continuation of its current banking arrangements and access to Common Law Courts. We have had hundreds of migrations from many jurisdictions such as BVI, Seychelles, Mauritius, Labuan, Marshall Islands, etc.

“EMAC adds fast-track and emergency arbitration to its rules”

MAJID BIN BASHIR, Chairman and Secretary General, Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre (EMAC)

EMAC is the only specialist maritime, offshore energy, logistics arbitration centre in the Middle East. What are the key advantages of choosing EMAC for dispute resolution?

Until 2016, the Middle East was void of a place to settle specialist maritime, offshore

energy and logistics-related disputes. Keeping in mind that no one enters a mutually beneficial agreement with the prospect of a dispute, when an unfortunate disagreement or conflict arises, parties want the comfort of knowing that their dispute will be technically understood by an impartial body and that the resolution or award will be enforceable in multiple countries.

Today, the UAE not only recognises the value of arbitration as a whole, through its updated federal arbitration law, but the country is home to both common law and civil law courts, making it one of the world's leading jurisdictions to offer the co-existing systems successfully.

With the UAE signed up to the New York Convention, parties have further certainty that their award will be enforceable through the member states. In addition, EMAC has attracted world-renowned industry specialist arbitrators, mediators and experts to its panel, offering a one-stop place to find a reputable arbitrator, mediator or expert.

EMAC is one of the few centres in maritime that adds fast-track arbitration and emergency arbitration to its rules. The centre has adopted an approach that enables parties to conclude disputes in a cost and time effective manner while they can continue to focus on business as usual.

Today, EMAC's offices and facilities are central to the region, making it accessible and this provides ease of access, further supporting cost reduction in dispute resolution.

What are some of the success stories of EMAC since its launch?

EMAC through a series of events, has built a brand that enables business. Today, the EMAC Breakfast series is one of the most popular gatherings in the industry where stakeholders meet to discuss issues, developments and regulations around the industry.

EMAC's case support has increased whereby parties have recognised the efficiency and the service that the centre offers.

Through consistent stakeholder engagement, the referral to EMAC as the preferred option for dispute resolution has been confirmed in many industry relevant contracts.

One of the most important offerings at an arbitration centre is panel listings and as mentioned, EMAC has an impressive panel that offers parties a go-to when choosing a reliable arbitrator.



“SMEs are a vital component of Abu Dhabi's business landscape”

KHALID AL MARZOOQI, Director Commercial, KIZAD

What steps have you taken to boost the SME sector?

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of any economy, and are a vital component of Abu Dhabi's business landscape. As engines for growth and employment, SMEs are one of the main pillars of Khalifa Industrial Zone



Abu Dhabi's (KIZAD), business strategy. As one of the leading enablers of industry, it is our responsibility to provide businesses with the opportunities to be competitive in their respective markets. The SME relief packages we announced recently are aligned with the UAE's efforts to protect SMEs in the country from the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.”

“We find a paradigm shift in the thought process of investors”

SYAM PANAYICKAL PRABHU, Founder and Managing Director, Aurion

How do you help entrepreneurs tap new sectors that offer growth opportunities?



As business consultants, our role is to guide entrepreneurs to achieve their dreams. We support them in setting up the right legal structure so that they are on a solid platform to do the business. We always advise entrepreneurs to start a business in which they have the knowledge and confidence.

Aurion has been operating in the UAE for more than a decade. How do you assess the evolution in the UAE's entrepreneurial landscape over the past decade?

We find a paradigm shift in the thought process of investors. The freedom to do business and safety are the key drivers of growth in the SME sector. The paperless e-governance added to the transparency and precision in administrative matters. Over the past decade, the UAE has evolved as the most sought-after destination for investors to set up their establishment so that they can cater to clients in MENA, and South Asia.

Are there any exclusive Covid-related packages that the firm created to boost confidence among entrepreneurs?

Any business, which fails to respond to the Covid-19 disaster by adjusting its terms, conditions, and pricing will soon become obsolete. Keeping this in mind, we have slashed the professional service fee by half to help investors establish their entities in the UAE.

“We emerged as winners during the hard times”

HATEM EL SAFTY, CEO, Business Link

Tell us a bit about Business Link. How diverse is your service portfolio?

With an expertise of 20 years, Business Link UAE is one of the leading business set-up consultants who serve across GCC. Our plethora of services includes business set-up in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Oman for mainland, free zone, offshore, company branch formation, company subsidiary set-up, PRO services,



visa services, local and corporate sponsorship, company liquidation, virtual office set-up, trademark registration and many more.

What are the challenges the firm has faced in the past few months and how have you dealt with them?

The unprecedented time gave birth to numerous challenges and sailing in the same boat, we also faced these. But I am pretty impressed to see how our team changed the hardships of regulation, resource management and customer management into an opportunity and guided customers accordingly. We emerged as winners during the hard times and helped our clients too.

Are there any expansion plans for the firm?

Business Link plans to expand in MENA and Europe to make its services available to other countries.

“CIG has launched various flexible business set-up packages”

AYUB AHMED SAIT, CEO and Managing Director, Capital International Group (CIG)

How can CIG help entrepreneurs set up business in the UAE amid the uncertainties of the pandemic?

Since the outbreak, we've had to rapidly adapt and change our key operating procedures to ensure the safety of our clients and employees while still providing unconditional client services. CIG has launched various flexible business set-up packages, which have been helping people to kickstart their entrepreneurial journey. With CIG, you can start your company from the comfort of your own home. We've turned the whole procedure into a digital one. We've also added a number of payment methods and simple payment plans to make the business set-up process as smooth as possible.

How does CIG maintain its edge over other business set-up consultants in the UAE?



We have always believed that the existing clients are the real gems of CIG. On a daily basis, we aspire to provide an unbeatable client experience. We closely work with each client, having been in the industry for over 14 years. The large number of positive

reviews and referrals attest to the high quality of service provided by CIG, which is something we are proud of. We are always with our clients in challenging times and are also there to celebrate and promote their businesses through our networks and channel. Apart from that we offer the maximum number of extended business solutions and initiatives that give them a chance to network, grow, and sustain.

What are the key jurisdictions where you can help entrepreneurs start their businesses?

We work with all the jurisdictions in the UAE and have the right expertise in setting up companies in mainland, free zones and offshore.

“The main problem SMEs faced during the pandemic was not knowing when and how to pivot their business model”

LORENZO JOORIS, CEO, Creative Zone



How did Creative Zone cater to its client's needs during the pandemic? Do you offer any new services or products?

We enriched and optimised our offerings that were more suitable and essential for our clients' growth during the pandemic. We brought in more strategic and innovative partners on board, providing smart solutions and services, including special offers on Microsoft Office Suite, logistics and drop shipping services, insurance services, Zoho One platform, to name a few.

We have also partnered with institutes like Make It Happen University that offers SMEs training programmes to learn the art of selling. Our strategic partnership with the Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC) allows all Creative Zone women entrepreneurs get a one year free membership access.

What are the key challenges you see SMEs facing during the pandemic and how can Creative Zone help them manage the same?

Considering the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, the main problem SMEs faced was not knowing when and how to pivot their business model to adapt to the changing business landscape. To address the widespread challenge, we have been regularly organising webinars and workshops for entrepreneurs that initially provided them with a roadmap, a real-time sense of where businesses were heading and what needs to be done by SMEs to survive the tough phase.

How does Creative Zone assist businesses and start-ups post setting up?

Apart from providing several value-added services at preferential rates, we have developed effective platforms where entrepreneurs and start-ups can promote themselves. CZ Connect is one such platform where business owners and other professionals can exchange ideas, cross-sell products and services, network and establish meaningful business relationships. We frequently hold virtual networking sessions, events for the entrepreneurial community. We also help clients by featuring them on all our social channels.

“We create partnerships with our clients for life”

MARIBEN CHRISTINE EUSTAQUIO, Managing Director, Ezone

Could you tell us about Ezone? How does Ezone act as a one-stop shop for entrepreneurs to set up and grow their business?

Ezone is more than a business set-up company; we are business enablers. We do this by translating the complexities of setting up a business in the UAE into an easy process guided by our market knowledge and years of industry experience. In short, this is where the business set-up process is made easy.

Many business set-up companies like to call



themselves a one-stop shop for entrepreneurs but, at Ezone, we create partnerships with our clients for life.

We are not only there for you when you want to start your business; we can also assist you to re-evaluate your growing business and provide you optimal

solutions as you progress.

What are the key challenges you see SMEs facing during the pandemic and how can Ezone help them manage the same?

A key challenge for SMEs during the pandemic was to ensure that their business is positioned

to be resilient against ever-changing market conditions. Many SME businesses were not ready to cope with the rapid and unpredictable changes brought about by the Covid crisis, which highlighted their weaknesses and redundancies. This forced businesses to rethink their strategy especially in terms of operations, personnel, and budget to ensure that their focus is not just on immediate recovery but on long-term planning.

Ezone can support SMEs reassess their operational expenses in terms of licencing and personnel. We can provide outsourced solutions — not just for PRO services, administrative assistance, and accounting and tax work, but we can also support you in re-evaluating if your current licence is the best option for your business and if your annual licence costs are reasonable, given the current market conditions.

BUSINESS SETUP CONSULTANT IN DUBAI



Starting a business in Dubai is easy and hassle-free with Make My Firm business consultants. We have a team of expert business setup consultants who can provide Mainland business setup and company formation in Dubai.

We assist you with all legal procedures during business setup that makes you free, to focus on core business.

Specialized

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- ✓ Aircraft Trading License
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- ✓ Aviation Consultancy

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- ✓ Rera
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“We had to push our limits to circumvent the challenges posed by Covid-19”

MEET JOSHI, CEO of Flyingcolour Group



What are the challenges the firm faced during Covid? How did you circumvent them?

Covid-19 has presented challenges to companies all over the world and we are not an exception.

Our business set-up industry was earlier reliant on face-to-face interactions and we had to regularly liaise with clients and submit documents in person to relevant authorities, which became challenging for us when the pandemic hit. Covid has increased uncertainties over health and finances, and this impacted the business set-up sector in Dubai. We had to push our limits to circumvent these challenges. We smoothly transitioned into remote working, thanks to our existing software. Even during the lockdown, we were able to serve our clients relatively smoothly, due to our software. Our team also worked tirelessly to serve our clients. Credit also goes to government departments, who, very quickly, adjusted to the situation, and introduced several online services, which ensured continuation of important services.

What are the main benefits that Flyingcolour offers prospective clients looking at setting up business in the UAE?

Flyingcolour has 17 years of experience in the business set-up advisory field in the UAE. We have served several thousands of global clients for company formation and corporate structuring. We provide expertise and research-based advisory, focusing on accurate information. We have a team of 60 trained people to attend to our clients, and we are always working towards improving our software and technology to provide excellent customer services. We are also familiar with and have worked with most government departments; so we can provide ease of processes, and even better prices, among other benefits.

What are the future plans for the brand?

We are always looking to expand our scope of services to provide one-stop solutions to our clients. Apart from business set-up, we have established an expert division on tax advisory, accounting and VAT services.

We have also developed verticals of real estate brokerage and global citizenship, residency and immigration services (outside the UAE).

“We honour our promises to customers”

FARINA AHMAD, CEO & Partner, Make My Firm

How do you maintain an edge over other business consultants in the UAE?

With right consultancy, transparency and on time delivery, we are currently managing 350 companies and helping them set up operations in the UAE. We honour our promises to customers and that's how we maintain an edge over other companies in the UAE.

Now that the UAE allows 100 per cent ownership of business for foreign nationals, it has become easy to set up mainland companies. What are the things we need to consider before incorporating a mainland company?

Entrepreneurs can have 100 per cent ownership in mainland companies but this is applicable in some specific sectors and is subject to fulfilling the



government criteria.

To incorporate a mainland company, you need to choose the right activity, which fulfils the requirements of the business concept, select the right professional partners and the service provider, and ensure that all your legal documents are drafted by a professional consultant.

Are there any covid-related packages that the firm created to boost confidence among the entrepreneurs?

During the current pandemic, Dubai Economic Department (DED) has introduced options where business owners can pay their licence renewal fees in 3 to 12 monthly instalments or with zero down payment and also without renewed lease contract, subject to DED approval.

“The UAE is doing a fantastic job at attracting international interest”

KARL HOUGAARD, Founder and Managing Partner, Trade License Zone

How does Trade License Zone act as a one-stop shop for entrepreneurs to set up and grow their business?

We provide guidance and a steady hand from the outset, assisting with every step of the process — business set-up and beyond. In addition to business set-up services, Trade License Zone offers a full suite of office solutions, including co-working space, dedicated fully-furnished offices, meeting room facilities, reception management and a number of other start-up-



related services.

The SME sector is undergoing many changes in operations during the Covid era. How do you read the market in the next couple of years?

As always, the UAE is doing a fantastic job at attracting international interest on all levels of business and lifestyle, and therefore, it remains a top-ranked international destination to do business and to live. Consequently, we see more and more internationally based SMEs setting up their hub in the UAE — a trend we foresee continuing.

What are the key challenges you see SMEs facing during the pandemic and how can Trade License Zone help them manage the same?

Uncertainty regarding licence set-up options and spending money in the wrong places can be detrimental, especially when starting out. We aim to provide clarity and transparency throughout the initial set-up process and then take care of all the heavy lifting so you can focus on giving your business the best possible start.

“UAE is the best place for starting a business”

NEIL PETCH, Co-founder and Chairman, Virtuzone

The growth of the SME sector is critical for the overall growth of the UAE economy. How could you help entrepreneurs tap new sectors that offer scope for growth?

More start-ups from around the world will come to the UAE because they're realising that this is the best place for starting a business. We're working with the government in developing a borderless business environment, so companies can be set up without needing the founders to be physically present in the UAE, enabling them to seamlessly tap into business opportunities here.

What are the challenges the firm faced during Covid? How did you circumvent them?

The trust of our staff and clients is crucial to us. We made sure to provide them with a refuge from the uncertainties brought by the pandemic.

Flight to quality was also a factor. Customers were more discerning as they didn't want to do business



with companies that might not be there after a year. Since we're already a trusted name in the industry, we provided them with the assurance that their companies are safe with us.

Observing that our clients became more price sensitive, we worked closely with free zone authorities and our partners to reduce prices across the board. Going the extra mile for our clients allowed us to capture more market share, which helped us thrive even during this difficult time.

What are the main benefits that Virtuzone offers prospective clients looking at setting up business in the UAE?

In the UAE, there are over 60 jurisdictions, so it's easy to set up a business with the wrong licence. Virtuzone provides the right solution, the right price and the best value-added services. Virtuzone delivers excellent processes, quality service and spot-on advice that save people time — after all, time is money.

Discover your Business DNA with Trade License Zone.



TRADE LICENSE ZONE
Smart Business Setup

Business
Setup

Trusted
Guidance

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IFZA DUBAI: ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN THE UAE FREE ZONE INDUSTRY

**IN CONVERSATION WITH
MARTIN G. PEDERSEN,
IFZA DUBAI CHAIRMAN**

What sets IFZA Dubai apart from other Free Zones in the UAE?

As one of the most dynamic Free Zones in the UAE, we have leveraged our strategic location at Dubai Digital Park, in one of Dubai's most innovation-focused districts, and combined it with the highest levels of competence, customer-oriented service and regulatory knowledge. By doing so, we have built a powerful platform that empowers international and local businesses to grow and thrive within an environment where knowledge-sharing and innovation is continuously cultivated. Ultimately, we can offer clients so much more than a Free Zone – IFZA Dubai is a community where SMEs are motivated to create, inspired to succeed, and enabled to become part of an ever-evolving ecosystem that nurtures energy, creativity and excellence. Over a period of just three years, IFZA has grown into the powerful platform it is today, with an extensive global network of more than 800 partners around the world and growing.

Why is IFZA's new strategic hub in Dubai so important to its growth?

Even though we have achieved so much already, IFZA's exciting journey in Dubai is only getting started. The whole world is changing at a rapid pace, hastened even further by events of the past year, and it's important that we change with it. With that in mind, we strive to build competence in everything we do, while looking to the future, positioning the transfer of knowledge as a core strength of our organisational culture, and always redefining the highest service levels. This enables us to consistently identify new and enhanced methods of understanding, learning and teaching within our unique ecosystem that contributes to the growth and vision of the UAE. Importantly, Dubai provides the perfect environment to help us achieve these ambitious goals. It continues to stand out as an attractive global hub, where our clients can create, develop and succeed.

How does IFZA's sponsorship of Polo align with its wider community outreach strategy?

At IFZA, we strive to always think from the perspective of our target group and to create uniquely positioned products and services that enable visionary entrepreneurs from around the world to locate themselves here in Dubai. As we increase our global reach throughout new markets in Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas, one of our important propositions is Dubai's strength beyond business.

It is our purpose and our passion to form collaborative relationships with people who share our mindset of excellence and success, which makes our partnership with the Al Habtoor Polo Resort & Club Polo Season 2020-2021 a natural fit. Inspired by the determined and resilient spirit of the people of Dubai, and with the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved as our top priority, we have stepped out boldly and set a positive example for others to follow.

What does IFZA hope to achieve in the coming years?

IFZA has continued to go from strength to strength in 2021. In the midst of such a rapidly changing business environment, our flexibility and forward-thinking approach in the present ensures our clients are fully equipped to prepare for and rise above the challenges.

We are ambitious enough to capitalise on our strengths, but humble enough to recognise the need to continuously improve, evolve and innovate whilst we look to establish a multi-jurisdictional model and enter the next chapter of our long-term strategy. As we welcome an increasing number of international businesses into our ecosystem, we do so with the confidence that the creators, innovators and entrepreneurs of the future are being cultivated at IFZA, as our long-term vision bears fruit.

“

Over a period of just three years, IFZA has grown into the powerful platform it is today, with an extensive global network of more than 800 partners around the world...

”

“

The agreement between the Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority and International Free Zone Authority, is a gateway for companies from different industries registered with IFZA to work from DSO and benefit from the advanced infrastructure, modern facilities, and the countless opportunities it provides to the business sectors locally, regionally and globally.

”

Dr. Mohammed Al Zarooni
Vice Chairman and CEO
Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority



“

This step plays a vital role in the growth plans set by IFZA to accelerate its ambition to tap into the international markets. The logistical, industrial and commercial facilities available in Dubai, and in DSO in particular, will enhance our ability to attract global investments and serve local and global business communities.

”

Martin G. Pedersen
Chairman
IFZA Dubai



CREATING A STRONG FRAMEWORK FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

IN CONVERSATION WITH GERARD HOBBY, IFZA DUBAI HEAD OF LEGAL

Has IFZA's transition to Dubai gone well?

We are very pleased at the pace at which we have integrated our business licensing and visa issuance processes in our collaboration with Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority.

We have also sought to simplify our documentary proof processes with respect to foreign corporate entities, by requiring only the authorising resolution to be both notarised and attested, thus saving both time and cost for our licensees.

How do the new Federal law compliance regimes (AML, UBO and ESR) affect IFZA licensees?

We have regularly been reaching out to our licensees in line with these new compliance regimes. However, actual registration and filings under AML (Anti-Money Laundering) and ESR (Economic Substance Regulations) will only affect a very small number of our licensees given that the registration regimes under these regulations relate to a limited number of specified business activities. UBO (Ultimate Beneficiary Owner/s), on the other hand, clearly applies to all our licensees and our new registration and licence renewal processes now require specific UBO declarations.

What product innovations is IFZA considering?

We have expanded our migration regime to accommodate the continuation within IFZA Dubai of companies incorporated not only elsewhere in the UAE but also incorporated anywhere else in the world where a company's jurisdiction of incorporation allows for re-domiciliation. As compliance and KYC (Know Your Customer) procedures continue to become more tedious in many parts of the world, we are of the view that this product will become increasingly popular.

We are consistently monitoring local and global trends, which leads to competitive products and services that help us maintain our position at the forefront of innovation in the Free Zone industry.

POWERED BY A COMMITMENT TO CONSTANT PROGRESS

IN CONVERSATION WITH JOCHEN KNECHT, IFZA DUBAI CEO

Why do you think IFZA has been so successful in such a competitive market?

To be honest, the key is in doing the simple things better than anybody else by offering quick and transparent processes, efficient response times, and a results-oriented approach.

By placing trust and transparency at the core of our strategy, our dedicated team of experts can not only attract local and international businesses, but also continuously give them reasons to establish long-term roots for their companies here in Dubai.

What exciting projects is IFZA working on currently?

We are putting the finishing touches to the IFZA Business Park – a state-of-the-art business campus of fully serviced buildings right at the heart of the Dubai Digital Park. In addition to this, we are expanding the scope of the IFZA Academy, our very own knowledge hub dedicated to providing the most reliable industry knowledge, skills and experience for the Free Zone industry.

How have IFZA designed its own unique ecosystem?

A key element to IFZA's positive outlook is our ecosystem that is built around continuing excellence in everything we do.

Starting with management and across all levels of IFZA Dubai, we highlight the importance of our values, including taking personal ownership, customer-focus, fairness, transparency and simplicity.

Ultimately, we aim to translate our values into a very simple approach – we treat everybody with respect, offer a truly professional set-up, and feel responsible for social and environmental matters.

How is IFZA preparing itself for the future?

There is immeasurable potential across all aspects of the IFZA ecosystem. Guided by our constant striving for excellence, we continue to attract businesses to Dubai from across the globe, who are keen to take advantage of the quick and easy incorporation of IFZA Free Zone Business Licenses, as well as the world-class benefits that we provide. Overall, I am very optimistic about IFZA's future here in Dubai and excited by our plans to expand our global reach in the coming years.



IFZA ACADEMY: DEVELOPING INDUSTRY COMPETENCE FROM DUBAI TO THE WORLD



Stefan Lindeque / Gulf News

Amelia Hewson is a specialist Australian adult educator and manager who has built a strong reputation in both the public and private sectors across the UAE for developing and implementing innovative training programs. Amelia is managing the IFZA Academy, a dedicated learning institution for the Free Zone sector.

For those who are unfamiliar with IFZA Dubai and the IFZA Academy, can you clarify the role your department plays in IFZA's day-to-day business functions?

In a nutshell, the IFZA Academy is the first Academy of its kind in the UAE Free Zone sector. We emphasize the importance of relationship building, knowledge sharing and upskilling of all individuals involved in an IFZA incorporation. In addition, we work hand in hand with our extended network of over 800 Partners worldwide to ensure their professional experiences are streamlined and they feel confident to facilitate an IFZA incorporation regardless of what may be changing or unfolding in the world around them.

How would you say the IFZA Academy assists those who wish to open their own business?

That's a great question! Although the Academy focuses on training our Professional Partners, the immense sharing of information eventually translates into a faster, smoother and more efficient incorporation process for our license holders. The Academy focuses on competence and transparency so it really is our job to ensure all our Partners are up to date with the latest news and information to better serve their clients in both the UAE and abroad.

You mentioned that IFZA works with both local and International Professional Partners, what is IFZA's reach to date?

Our reach is really impressive, on a weekly basis we train up to 100 participants both

face-to-face and online. The number of Partners joining IFZA and requiring our services, is growing at a staggering rate.

In 2021 alone, we have conducted training for Partners in over 20 countries worldwide, including UK, Germany, Italy, China, Pakistan, India, Philippines, Greece, Lebanon, Israel, KSA, Oman, among others.

How has Covid impacted the Academy?

To be honest, Covid has had a positive impact on our sector. People all over the world are starting to appreciate the value of owning their own businesses and taking their family security into their own hands. The Academy has been working relentlessly to ensure our Partners are able to convert their client's dreams into reality even during these troubling times. That being said, with Covid restrictions impacting social interaction, we have seen a dramatic shift

from traditional face-to-face delivery to a more modern e-learning methodology.

Since our inception, IFZA has honed a culture that places great emphasis on forward thinking, flexibility and adaptability, so the move from classroom to screen was a challenge we were ready to embrace. During the National Sterilization Program, the Academy delivered over 40 sessions to more than 1000 participants.

This initiative was really valuable in maintaining our relationships and continuing to support our Partners, in spite of the pandemic. Our online training option is now more popular than ever and we are so pleased to be able to continue building relationships whilst providing our Partners with the peace of mind they desire.

IFZA ACADEMY IN NUMBERS (from March 2020 – March 2021)



WORK, CONNECT AND THRIVE WITH IFZA DUBAI PROPERTY SOLUTIONS



Wael Abdulkader
IFZA Dubai Property Manager

In the first quarter of 2021, IFZA Dubai unveiled its world-class offering of products and services strategically located inside its new headquarters at the Dubai Digital Park.

Designed for entrepreneurs who are looking for inspiring facilities to work, IFZA's new range of business solutions range from furnished Flexi Desks to Personalized Bespoke Offices. Tenants can also benefit from a selection of networking and social spaces that help foster business connections with other clients and companies incorporated within the Free Zone.

Every office package includes a number of value-added features, including complimentary WiFi across the entire complex, free monthly meeting room hours, complimentary parking for each office space user, and additional benefits that come as part of IFZA's thrust to develop a business-optimized community.

In the near future, a curated selection of retail and food and beverage outlets complemented by a calendar of events and activities will help enhance the community experience of all tenants, businesses and visitors.

The serviced office system is particularly designed by IFZA for startup companies who need a quick and cost-effective solution that allows them to focus on making their business thrive while the IFZA Property Team takes care of the rest.

This is simply the beginning, as IFZA is set to unveil more features that will allow greater opportunities to work, connect and thrive in one of Dubai's dynamic centers of growth.



CREATING A STRONG COMMUNITY BEYOND BUSINESS



IFZA Dubai Chairman Martin G. Pedersen (center) with Al Habtoor Group Vice Chairman & CEO Mohammed Al Habtoor (left) and Al Habtoor Trading Enterprises CEO & President Rashid Al Habtoor (right) at the signing ceremony of the AHPRC Polo Season 2020-2021.



IFZA Dubai Chairman Martin G. Pedersen (left) with former World Number 1 tennis champion Boris Becker (center) and Al Mahra Team Patron Rashid Al Habtoor (right).

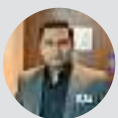


IFZA Dubai Professional Partners with Chairman Martin G. Pedersen (left) and CEO Jochen Knecht at the IFZA Polo Lounge.



IFZA Dubai Chairman Martin G. Pedersen with recipients of the IFZA Outstanding Partner Awards.

PROFESSIONAL PARTNER TESTIMONIALS



Deepak Jain

CEO
Leela International

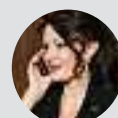
It has been a wonderful journey of association with IFZA as a business partner. IFZA has been tremendously professional, timely and provides a great clarity in all the services provided. We really thank and appreciate all the teams at IFZA for helping us deliver the best to our customers. The Polo Match organised by IFZA was first of its kind in Dubai by any Free Zone ... it was an amazing experience.



Karthik CM

Founder & Managing Partner
MK International
Corporate Services LLC

IFZA has provided us with excellent professional services. All the support which was given to us for opening Free Zone companies in Dubai was precise and clear. IFZA was flexible and respectful of our client's decision as to how they wanted to move forward with the time frames. We simply could not have set up the Free Zone companies for our clients in Dubai without the help and support of IFZA.



Olena Volkova

Managing Director
Taer OI FZC

I am very proud to be a part of such a professional and considerate team like IFZA. Being their registered partner gives me a chance to provide a high class service to my customers around the world and support the prosperous growth of the UAE.



Beena Jacob

Head - Sales & Operations
Global Resources Group
(UAE Free Zones)

We at GRG Group are privileged to work with IFZA, an organization with a clarity of vision and a strategic approach. With their competitive rates, approachability, flexibility and accessibility, IFZA have endeared themselves to our clients and our team. IFZA Polo was a memorable and a defining initiative that enhances the quality of working relationships and provides a platform for even our clients.

At IFZA Dubai, we are determined to develop a culture of constant progress and strong relationships beyond business. In line with this, we invested in programs and partnerships that allow us to contribute to the community in line with our ethos of doing business differently.

One of our key platforms is sports – particularly polo, the iconic sport of kings. We are proud to associate ourselves as the very first official season sponsor of the Al Habtoor Polo Resort & Club in their 2021-2020 Polo Season. In addition, we have also invested in being the team sponsor of the Al Mahra Polo Team. These involvements have allowed us to make a strong statement to our global community about the resilience of Dubai.

This is only the beginning, as we intend to expand our community presence in the near future, not only in sports, but also in arts, culture, education, skills development and direct community work, both in our spacious new headquarters and beyond.

The much-anticipated opening of the Expo 2020 Dubai later this year will open new doors for us to reach out to the local, regional, and international community and show how we at IFZA and the rest of the UAE are leading the way in thriving differently.



A WORLD OF NEW POSSIBILITIES AWAITS™

Hamriyah Free Zone Authority in Sharjah, UAE offers economically viable incorporation services including modern infrastructure, logistics, investor connectivity and critical operations support for its investors.

We are the epicentre of excellence offering progressive enterprises world-class facilities including offices, state-of-the-art warehouses and prime industrial land with a commercial framework that contributes to their sustainable growth, in a trusted and stable manner.

Benefits

Business set up in less than 60 minutes | Full foreign ownership allowed | 100% repatriation of capital and profits | VAT designated zone | 360-degree connectivity with strong land, sea and air network | Access to a 14-metre deep port and 7-metre deep inner harbour | On-site customs facilities | VIP service with an exclusive lounge | Convenient access to 300+ online services | Effective and efficient customer support | 24-hour security within the Free Zone | Labour accommodation with recreational facilities.



Empowering Enterprise™



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MARITIME INDUSTRY



ACCELERATOR HUB



INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING PARK



GLOBAL LOGISTICS PARK

Hamriyah Free Zone Authority, PO Box 1377, Sharjah, UAE. T: +971 6 526 3333 | F: +971 6 526 3555 | E: info@hfza.ae [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) /HamriyahFZA [in](#) Hamriyah Free Zone Authority

www.hfza.ae

Providing excellence in

Maritime Arbitration & Mediation

Dubai International Financial Centre Level 3
Precinct Building 5 (South) Dubai, UAE

info@emac.org.ae

800 EMACAE (800 362223)

www.emac.org.ae

Why choose EMAC for dispute resolution?



مركز الإمارات للتحكيم البحري
Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre



Applies a modern arbitration framework

EMAC's arbitration rules are based on the latest UNCITRAL model law, with modification tailored to support the international maritime, offshore energy and logistics trading and arbitration community.



Applies best practices for mediation

EMAC's mediation rules adopt international best-practice standards.

Settlement in mediation can be converted to an arbitral award, subject to EMAC mediation rules.



Distinguished Panel of Arbitrators, Mediators and Experts

EMAC's panel of arbitrators, mediators and experts are specialist *industry professionals, carefully vetted to meet with the highest standards.



Access to world class services

Light touch case management support provided by skilled Case Managers and experienced executive committee to ensure a streamlined process according to EMAC's arbitration / mediation rules.

Offers state of the art hearing facilities, implementing technology to provide for save, secure and private hearings.



Governance

EMAC is neutral and independent to support the *industry arbitration community according to international best practice.

EMAC's secretariat is overseen by a 13-member board of trustees, all notable representatives of the *industry.

EMAC's secretariat comprise of highly qualified and experienced commercial, legal and administrative professionals.



The only specialist maritime, offshore energy and logistics arbitration Centre in the Middle East Region

Provides a neutral place of arbitration for international parties.

Strategically located along the East-West corridor for parties who are spread across different locations and is within walking distance of a range of hotels, along public transportation services and 20 minutes from the Dubai International Airport.



Dual Jurisdiction

The United Arab Emirates offers an option to adopt common law jurisdiction through the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) or Abu Dhabi Global Markets (ADGM), OR civil law jurisdiction through the onshore courts available in all Emirates.

Unless otherwise agreed by parties, Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) is the default seat of arbitration wherein the DIFC procedural arbitration law applies.



Flexibility

EMAC's arbitration rules applies guidelines that reflect the nature of arbitration to allow parties to follow a process that is convenient for them.



Cost Efficiency

Hybrid-form of arbitration with light touch case management at competitive rates.

Proximity to *industry with access to world-class legal representation in the region.



Enforcement

EMAC awards are enforceable under the New York Convention and several multilateral and bilateral treaties.

Arbitration awards are rendered within 90 days from date of conclusion of the final hearing.



Emergency relief

In case of immediate urgency, a party seeking interim relief may request that EMAC appoint an emergency arbitrator.



Fast Track

Procedures designed to support smaller claims of under USD1.9 million.

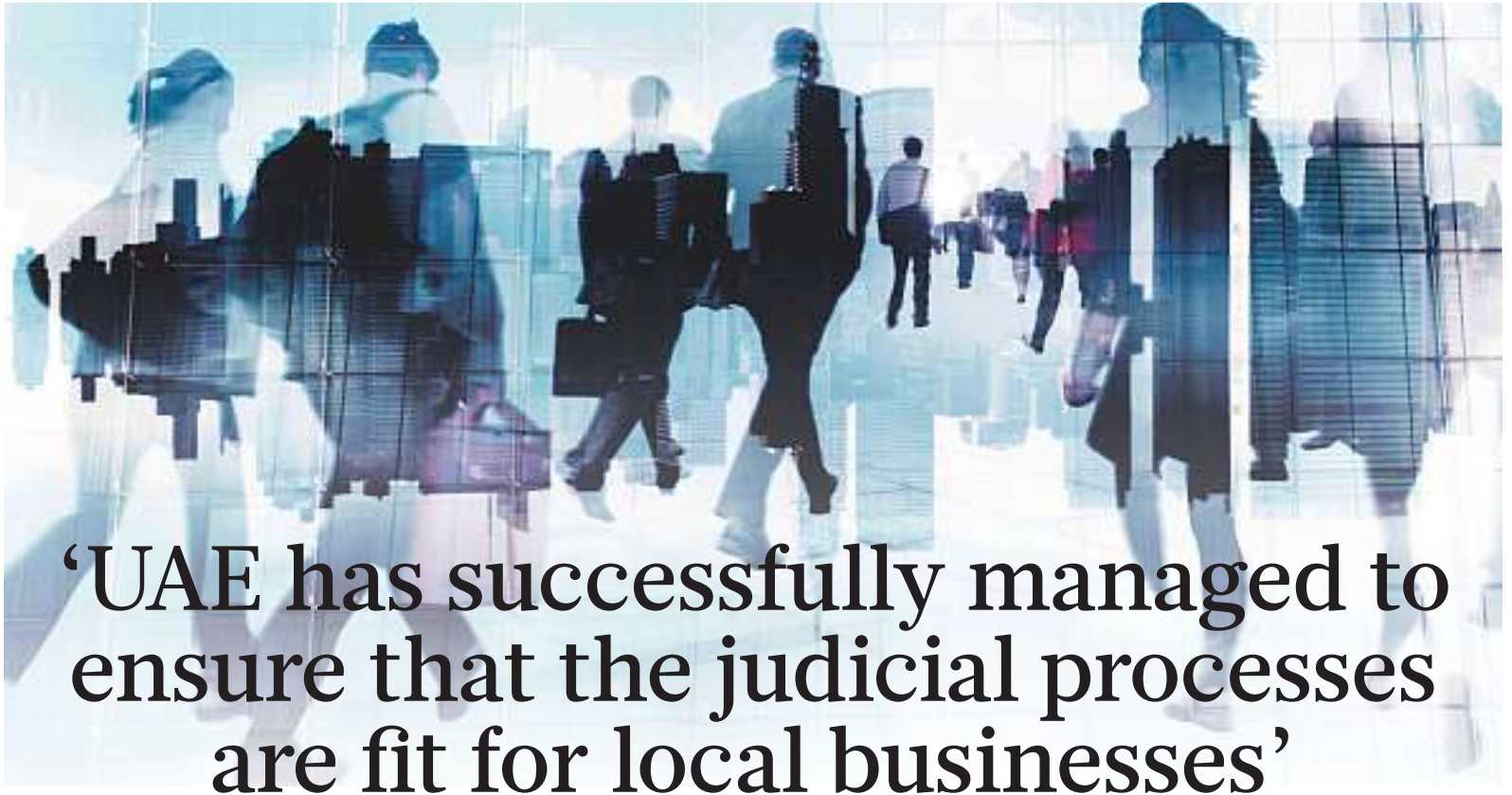
Significant reduction in procedural time limits.



Ad-hoc arbitration

Parties that opt out of administrative support, have access to EMAC's ad-hoc arbitration procedures.

*Industry = maritime, offshore energy and logistics



‘UAE has successfully managed to ensure that the judicial processes are fit for local businesses’

● As offshore businesses grow in the UAE, there is an increasing need for arbitration resolution services

BY HELGA JENSEN-FORDE
Special to GN Focus

Legal cases can be a costly exercise for any company and are undoubtedly best avoided. However, things do go wrong in all businesses and, with offshore facilities in the UAE growing exponentially, arbitration services have become necessary.

“Arbitration, especially where contracts are cross-border, with assets held in multiple jurisdictions, is a viable avenue for dispute resolution,” says Majid bin Bashir, Chairman and Secretary General, Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre (EMAC).

“Arbitration, especially where contracts are cross-border, with assets held in multiple jurisdictions, is a viable avenue for dispute resolution.”

Majid bin Bashir
Chairman and Secretary General, Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre (EMAC)



tion Centre (EMAC). “Arbitrators essentially are industry specialists, impartial individuals who understand the terminology, technicalities and legal complications to maritime or offshore energy cases.”

Key issues that necessitate the need for arbitration vary, but with the excellent legal framework in the UAE, the results can prove positive. “Every contract signed presents its risks and liability, which would suggest that for litigation or arbitration, there is no one size fits all. However, in dispute management, the UAE has successfully managed to ensure that the judicial processes are fit for local businesses and the many international stakeholders who have invested in the country, onshore and within free zones,” explains Bashir.

“In the case for arbitration, seats may vary, but in a country that offers civil law or common law arbitration practices within the same borders, it means that parties continue to have comfort in the fact that they no longer need to refer contracts to overseas jurisdictions when the preference is for common law procedures. These practices and legal protections are now available right here in the UAE through the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM). With offices located in the heart of DIFC, EMAC has modelled arbitration rules on international best practice.”



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● A breakfast session at the office of Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre (EMAC)

While the pandemic has affected many businesses and the way they operate, EMAC has effectively tackled any challenges that virtual arbitration may have posed.

“EMAC’s challenges over the past 14 months are no different from any other business,” Bashir says. “Adaptation of technology in place of the in-person access has been accelerated and this has become the immediate go-to option for communication. Business interruption has been nominal, and the centre was in the process of customising an online dispute resolution platform that works for both internal and external users.”

Whatever the future has in store, it seems that, with all the framework in place, EMAC is set to continue to support companies in free zones by making arbitration faster and more cost-effective for all types of dispute resolution. ■



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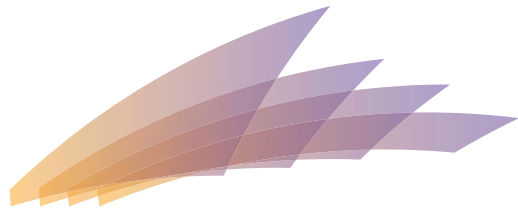
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raK ICC

RAK INTERNATIONAL
CORPORATE CENTRE

RAK INTERNATIONAL CORPORATE CENTRE

The Registry of Choice

Who we are?

RAK International Corporate Centre is a world class whitelisted jurisdiction and one of the fastest growing Government owned corporate registries, with an excellent reputation for compliance and professional services.


Why RAK ICC?


- 100% foreign ownership
- Fast, easy and cost-effective registration process
- Cost efficient registration and renewal fees
- Common law regulations with access to DIFC and ADGM courts
- Variety of legal structures and different products available for different usages
- No restriction on capital repatriation
- Ability to open bank accounts locally and internationally

RAK ICC companies are best suited for:

- Worldwide Investments & Global Trade
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- Wealth Management and Succession Planning
- International Tax Planning
- Structured Finance Transactions
- Securitizations and Ring-Fencing Assets
- Ownership of Real Estate Properties & Assets
- Holding Structures and Special Purpose Vehicles
- Estate Planning and Asset protection

RAK International Corporate Centre
Government of Ras Al Khaimah

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- Along with free zone entities, business consultants are helping entrepreneurs realise their dreams of launching their companies. UAE-based SMEs share their success stories

GN FOCUS REPORT



NOSHAAB KHILJEE
Partner & Director — Sales & Marketing,
SQUADLEAD MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT
UK & MIDDLE EAST



Squadlead Management Consultant has offices in London and Doha. Due to high demand for our immigration services in the UAE, we planned to open our

immigration consultancy company in Dubai and thought that it would be really very difficult to form a company during the current situation.

After discussing with my partners who are in different countries, we decided to go ahead with IFZA. Every process was done online within five working days. It was just an amazing experience. We received expert support, quick business incorporation processes, and a cost-effective business licence package that allowed us to set up business from Dubai quickly. Moving forward, we foresee success in the near future.



SURENDRA LALWANI
Promoter General Manager, SKLC GLOBAL FZCO



As a company focusing on management consultancy and tax advisory, it is especially important to find a free zone that allows me to set up my company quickly and securely. I was extremely happy to choose IFZA because the process of incorporating my business was fast, pain-free and without any hidden costs. The entire team at IFZA was able to give me professional and expert advice throughout each step of the process.



TAHA TERCAN
Founder, Red Spades FZCO
(Red Spades Creative Agency)



IFZA simply made our life easier with their pain-free licensing process. The team was extremely helpful and the whole process took less than a week. I am happy how fast, efficient and friendly they are.



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Website: www.fujairahfreezone.com

YES! WE DID IT

“



HITESH DEWASI
Director & cinematographer, Hitesh Dewasi Studios

As an artist and entrepreneur, my relationship with Sharjah Media City — Shams has surpassed all my expectations. It took only three days to start my business, and they helped me understand the process of registration in a very straightforward way. The support team is always very insightful on any questions I had. But most of all, the opportunities Shams created for me, like publishing my photography work at Sharjah Xposure Festival, is a testament to them believing in their customers. I highly recommend Shams to everyone, especially foreign nationals, to start their UAE business here.

“



ENIS KARSLIOGLU
Chairman and CEO at Bigg+ Global Loyalty, Rewards and E-commerce Group

We are very excited and happy that we are a part of the Dubai CommerCity family. As BiggLoyalty is the first company to move in to this state-of-the-art location, this is also a very historic milestone for us as well. We hope that as Biggbrands' global e-commerce service provider, we will build the future of crossborder e-commerce hand in hand in this region. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Dubai CommerCity team for all the hard work and sincere cooperation they have put into this project.

“

AUORE NIO
Co-founder, Ninjoo (Part of Hellmann Worldwide Logistics' Multi-client Warehouse in Dubai CommerCity's Logistics Cluster)

We were positively surprised with the attention Ninjoo received as a start-up and the genuine intention of everyone at Dubai CommerCity to help us establish and develop. Dubai CommerCity's partnership with Hellmann Worldwide Logistics turned out to be very instrumental for us to overcome supply chain challenges associated with import, warehousing and fulfillment from a free zone entity into mainland UAE. We are looking forward to Dubai CommerCity being on our side as we go ahead with local and international expansion plans.

“



AHMED QADRI
Director, Pixelhaus Media

After having plenty of time to think during the lockdown, I decided to start my own business. However, I wasn't looking forward to all the legwork and stress that goes along with setting up a business, especially since it was my first time going through the entire process. Fortunately, from the moment I spoke to Shams, I was at ease knowing that my trade licence registration was handled. I was amazed to see that I was able to get everything completed in a matter of days. The entire process was fairly straightforward, the staff who coordinated with me were very meticulous and had answers to all of my questions. I am very pleased with the service I received and I recommend Shams to anyone who is looking to open a new company in the UAE.

“



BENOIT DEMARNE
Vice President Operations Isolation Valves EMEA, Emerson Automation Solutions

Emerson, founded in 1890 and headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri (USA), is a global technology and engineering company. Emerson's Emirates Techno Casting (ETC) located in Sharjah is one of the largest and most technologically advanced steel-casting foundries in the world. Pentair, one of Emerson's acquired businesses, has established its headquarters in the Hamriyah Free Zone. Emerson recognises HFZA as a strategic location for its business, as it is situated in proximity to serve and cater to customers' needs. Having been in collaboration with HFZA since 2002, Emerson has grown as a business with their support and services. We recognize HFZA's strong commitment to the improvement of the quality of its infrastructure and services.

“



ABDULLAH ABDULLATIF ALARFAJ
CEO, Caline Factories

Since 2016, Caline Chocolate factory specialises in manufacturing the finest hand-made Belgian chocolates that operates bean-to-bar process through three factories around the world.

Today Caline is successfully operating its final manufacturing process facility

at Hamriyah Free Zone, which is contributing to our ambitious vision of becoming a leading company in chocolate manufacturing globally. Hamriyah Free Zone is a prime and strategic location which allows us to reach our customers and achieve successful collaboration with various stakeholders in the GCC region and the world. HFZA provides us with excellent integrated logistics support and professional business services.

“



TAN SRI A.K. NATHAN
Chairman and Managing Director, Eversendai

Eversendai Group has been involved in structural steel construction since the last 35 years with major projects across the Middle East, South East Asia and India. Our facility at Hamriyah Free Zone started operations in 2005 and provides all kinds of structural solutions such as design and detailing, supply, fabrication and painting etc. With the excellent support and investor friendly policies of HFZA, Eversendai Engineering FZE overcomes all operational challenges to become one of the finest fabrication facilities in the Middle East to handle all kinds of complex structures. Having this facility at the strategically located free zone with a very good connectivity by land/sea/air, we are able to serve the entire UAE and other countries in the Middle East.



Business Setup in Dubai-UAE

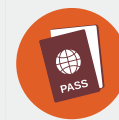
(Mainland | Freezone
| Offshore)



Accounting, VAT & Tax Services- UAE PRO & Trademark Services-UAE



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Since 2004



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| 2nd Passport |
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Segment



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Office 2608, 09 & 10, Concord Tower, Dubai Media City, Dubai UAE

36 UAE FREE ZONES



SATYENDRA KUMAR AHUJA
Director, Quality Castings



Quality Castings Limited, a ISO 9001-2008 certified

foundry, was established in 1994 and it came into operation within six months due to an unprecedented cooperation from the Fujairah Free Zone team. Fujairah Free Zone Authority offers conducive atmosphere for industrial growth and excellent infrastructure facilities like power, water, transportation, imports and exports without bureaucratic delays.

Right from the day one, the support we received from the free zone is exemplary. Thanks to their excellent relations with the local authorities, we did not find any hurdles in our operations and we had a smooth sailing for the last 26 years.



GUNASEELAN TANGGARAJU
General Manager, Audex Fujairah



Audex, established in 2007, is a subsidiary of PEC

Singapore and is the largest provider of engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning services in oil and gas, petrochemical and pharmaceutical industries.

Audex has established its own dedicated engineering services specifically to focus on delivering appropriate, cost-effective, engineering design and project management.

We had the full support from the Fujairah government and the management of the Fujairah Free Zone Authority who provided all the facilities to start the company and the assets required for our activity in this field.



DAN BARNABAS LACZO
Founder UAE-Solutions.Com



We have been working with UAQ Free Trade Zone for over five years now. They are

more reliable, faster and agile than many other free zones. Timelines are kept and we hardly ever have any negative surprises. Our clientele is mostly European, with very high expectations and therefore we cannot compromise on quality and efficiency. That's why we mostly work with UAQ Free Trade Zone. We highly appreciate their great work.



PAVEL SERGIENKO
Founder, Iver Chem FZE



I established my company, which deals in pharmaceutical raw materials trading, one month ago at Umm Al Quwain Free Zone.

After researching about various free zones in the UAE, I realised that UAQ FTZ provides all types of services that

I need for my business, such as taxation benefits, port access, low prices for the incorporation process and fast and professional support. It also has a good website with all steps and requirements for establishing a company.

From the beginning they gave me the clear picture of the whole process, in terms of time and money. They also helped me in preparing the incorporation documents.

Even after the company incorporation, they advised me about the process of opening a bank account. UAQ FTZ staff were kind and ready to answer all my questions.



MUHAMMAD TARIQ
Chief Executive Officer, InZone Corporate Services Provider Dubai



RAK offshore companies and foundations are at the heart of our business structuring advice. RAK ICC provides offshore company solutions

and related services that meet the highest international standards. We offer a full range of corporate services including incorporation of offshore companies, foundations and related estate planning solutions through RAK ICC.

We strongly recommend RAK ICC as a jurisdiction due to its futuristic infrastructure, comprehensive regulations and internationally recognised compliance standards. Any businesses incorporated with the RAK ICC also take advantage of the favourable tax regime and a large network of double taxation treaties and bilateral agreements signed by the UAE.



OWISS REFAAT
Chief Operating Officer, SFM Corporate Services (Dubai Branch)



SFM has extensive experience in global company formation and Ras Al Khaimah has become an in-demand jurisdiction for company formation over the last 15 years. Naturally, we wanted to offer this jurisdiction to our

clients and partner with a RAK corporate registry that could provide the registry services and the same business vision as us, which led us to partnering with RAK ICC.

This is one of the most reputable, and renowned registry internationally, and our partnership allows us to offer our clients a fully compliant, world-class company registry in a beneficial, growing, and stable jurisdiction. The RAKICC online portal allows us to register companies easily and to manage our portfolio remotely. They have also provided us a dedicated contact who is always on hand to assist us.



SURAJ MOHAN
Executive Director, Var Ange Project Support Services Limited



We incorporated our company, which is primarily into the energy sector, in 2018 and aim to expand to the rest of the UAE and South Asian countries in the next five years. We have chosen the Masdar City Free Zone in Abu Dhabi as it has a robust ecosystem

and infrastructural support to foster a wide range of business activities and industry sectors. Aurion played a vital role right from the initial discussion on company incorporation to the final stage and beyond. From document attestation to getting free zone authority approvals, Aurion executed the process seamlessly. Aurion guided us to the right free zone based on our business activity and designed the right company structure for us. We are happy with the free zone's operations as well as the pace of our operation.



CHARMINE NORONHA
CEO, Magnifique Cosmetics



I launched my company, which offers skincare, fragrances, bath, and other

cosmetic products, in Dubai in 2017. For the past three years, I have been a loyal client of Business Link. Hatem El Safty, CEO of the company, and his team have always been professional, helpful and obliging. I would recommend Business Link to anyone looking to establish their businesses.

**Our Best
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- Assistance in Bank Account Opening
- Legal, Tax & Accounting Consultation
- Discounted Insurance Plans

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setup@creativezone.ae

YES! WE DID IT



ANDY YIACOUMI
CMS Credit Management Services

I have known Mariben since 2013. We launched in 2013 in the Creative City Free Zone in Fujairah. As the business evolved, we changed our licence to move to Dubai Department of Economic Development (DED). We offer credit management related services, such as credit rating, debt mediation and consulting. Mariben and her team (E-zone) are supportive, offering a professional and personalised service. We receive advice on the processes, from employee visas to company licencing from government departments. They supported us with cost-effective solutions and reasonable market rates, and arranged for our e-signature card. They are changing the industry culture with their transparent and honest approach to business.



CARLO ABBIATI
CEO & Founder, Immobilia Real Estate



After 15 years of experience as an investor in the UAE real estate market, I decided to have an official broker licence in mainland

Dubai last year. The key activities of the company are investment consultation, real estate brokerage, and leasing property brokerage agents.

It was an excellent experience to work with Capital International Group (CIG). It is always advisable for entrepreneurs to opt for a detailed consultation from an expert business consultant like CIG. This will make the process hassle-free in the long run. From answering all my questions in the first interaction to providing me guidance with regards to my business activity and then assigning a dedicated account manager for my licence, the process was professional, smooth, well-structured, and quick.



LISA SCOTT-LEE
Dubai Performing Arts Academy



We launched our company in Dubai mainland with Creative Zone in 2014. Dubai Performing Arts Academy, fondly

known as DPA, provides all aspects of performing arts training including the first BTEC in Performing Arts in the UAE.

We first started the business as a free zone enterprise and then later transitioned to mainland. Creative Zone made the whole process easy and stress free for us. The team is professional and compassionate; they understand a person's sentiments and vision when launching a business. My account manager was always available to take my calls and solved all problems very efficiently. I would highly recommend Creative Zone to other entrepreneurs.



MOHAMED ABDI MOHAMED
Owner and Director, GOIN Shipping & Cargo



I am glad to be associated with Make My Firm Business Set Up Services for the last three years and

I am happy that I have chosen a very professional firm for my business set-up. They have deep knowledge of business set-up rules and regulations, offering me the right guidance. I have set up four companies with Make My Firm and it has always been an amazing experience. They are very accurate with processes and timelines. They made everything easy for me to set up my business in Dubai. I recommend everyone to seek advice from Make My Firm as they are a one-stop-solution for everything a business owner will need to set up a new business in the UAE.



VIMI JOSHI
Vimi Joshi Beauty



I launched my company, Vimi Joshi Beauty, at Ajman Free Zone last month and the key activities of my business

are related to the beauty industry, which includes celebrity photoshoots, conducting makeup masterclasses and organising beauty panel talks as a key industry leader. The Flying Colour Team was instrumental in launching my company successfully. They were professional and supportive, ensuring that the process went smoothly. They kept me updated through every step of the process and stayed in touch with me even after the business set-up process was completed to ensure I was satisfied with their services. I would highly recommend Flying Colour to everyone for their exceptional service.



ZETA YARWOOD
Executive, Personal and Professional Development Coach, Zeta Yarwood Coaching FZCO



While we've been active for years, we innovated our business model and needed a new licence to accommodate all our activities. These include our personal and business coaching services, and creating personal and professional development online content for businesses and their employees. The entire Trade License Zone (TLZ) team went above and beyond in helping me set up my license at IFZA. They listened to our requirements and stopped at nothing to help us. We faced several challenges and TLZ tirelessly found all the solutions we needed. They also helped us set up the bank account afterwards. Establishing a business in the UAE can be challenging. Having a business set-up company you trust is key. For us, TLZ is that company and I highly recommend them.



LAUREN TICKNER
Founder, Online Impact



As an online business that helps people launch online courses and run online coaching companies, moving my business to the UAE made so much sense both for tax and for new opportunities. In the UAE, everyone knows everyone so Online Impact has been able to get new clients very quickly. You can sort of become a celebrity in your industry in just a couple of months. I really couldn't have done this without Virtuzone. Not only did they help me with everything from choosing the right location for my business and understanding how to structure my company, they also have trusted connections for just about anything you could possibly need here in the UAE.

Choose the most cost effective Free Zone in the UAE that's open to entrepreneurs and the flexible environment they need to grow in. Set-up a Free Zone or dual license business with a quick online application and registration that requires no security deposit. You'll get a shared workspace, free Wi-Fi and one-stop shop business services on-site. Perfectly located between Abu Dhabi and Dubai, KIZAD Free Zone packages start from only AED 9,450/year. We're here to listen, support and deliver.

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ABU DHABI PORTS

LAUNCH PAD TO SUCCESS

● **GN Focus** picks some of the top free zones for starting your business in the UAE



IFZA DUBAI

IFZA provides local and international businesses with the ideal platforms and location to fully optimise the benefits of the UAE's strategic geographic position and world-class infrastructure in a business and tax-friendly environment. Business owners and employees can also benefit from flexible residency visa packages and a wide spectrum of innovative office solutions and real estate products from its new headquarters at Dubai Digital Park.

Licences

Business owners can rely on accurate advice on the perfect fit for their companies from more than 2,000 business activities within three distinct types: Professional, Commercial and Industrial. Foreign incorporated companies may also register a branch at IFZA.

Packages

IFZA offers single and multi-year free zone business licences, with a choice of up to three free business activities in every licence.

Contact details

Ifza.com; 800-IFZA (4392)



SHARJAH MEDIA CITY (SHAMS)

Shams was launched in 2017 to act as a catalyst for creative and media businesses to grow and thrive.

Key Sectors

Despite being a media free zone, Shams offers over 150 business activities across various sectors.

Licences

Shams offers Service, Trading and Industrial licences. Its standard licence pricing is Dh11,500.

Special offers

- 30 per cent off on standard licence packages with three business activities on the same licence
- Up to 35 per cent off on multi-year licence packages
- Freelancer licences start from Dh5,750

Contact details

800 Shams (74267); Shams.ae



UMM AL QUWAIN FREE TRADE ZONE

Key sectors

Food and beverages, light industry, medical equipment trading, I.T. consultancies and international investment firms.

Licences

- Commercial with specific activities, trading and general Trading
- E-Commerce and portal licences
- Professional services with consultancy activities
- Industrial licences
- Premium licences with special activities such as investments, logistics, legal consultancy and more
- Freelance permits

Special packages

Currently, the free zone provides up to 50 per cent subsidy across various licence packages. Additionally, it offers reduced industrial land rental rates, and e-channel deposit waivers for most licence packages. It also has bespoke office spaces including all utilities packages.

Contact Details

Uaqftz.com; 06 764 7272

DUBAI COMMERCITY



Key sectors

E-commerce, fashion and apparel, beauty and cosmetics and pharma, among others

Licence types

E-commerce

- With this type of licence, holders are entitled to trade goods and services online.

Trade

- This licence allows the holder to carry out trading activities specified in their licence, including import, export, distribution, and storage of specific products.

Service

- This licence is suitable for service-oriented businesses. It enables entities to provide the services specified by their licence.

General Trading

- This licence allows the holder to trade in general activities, including import, export, re-export, storage, and distribution.

Freelance

- This licence allows the holder to offer services based on the activities specified in their licence.

Special packages

Dubai CommerCity is the ideal destination for businesses looking to set up or expand their e-commerce business. It offers special tailored packages based on individual requirements of your business both for business set-up and e-commerce enablement services enabling fast e-commerce fulfilment across the region.

Contact details

Dubaicommercity.ae; info@dubaicommercity.ae

VIRTUZONE

BUSINESS SETUP WITH NO REGRETS

START ANY BUSINESS

WITH JUST

AED 1,995

It doesn't take much to start
your own business in the UAE.
That is, if you choose Virtuzone.

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info@vz.ae | +971 4 457 8200



FUJAIRAH FREE ZONE

Key sectors represented

Fujairah Free Zone Authority is a government organisation focused on encouraging foreign investments by providing efficient solutions for licensing through ease in issuing permits as well as administrative services. Fujairah Free Zone provides a lucrative infrastructure base for attracting all kinds of FDIs and manufacturing entities to join the multinational set up of large medium and small businesses operating in Fujairah.

Licences

- Fujairah Free Zone has the infrastructure to accommodate investors in the fields of trading, manufacturing, assembling, distribution, consultancy, logistics and marine, by providing trading offices, warehouses or land as per their requirement.

Special packages

Fujairah Free Zone Authority is offering special packages and discounted offers for companies who would like to start their business. Investors can enjoy advantages, privileges and maximum assistance from the authority.

Contact details

09 222 8000 ext. 123, 175, 129;
Fujairahfreezone.com

HAMRIYAH FREE ZONE (HFZA)

Key sectors

Hamriyah Free Zone offers investors the opportunity to open a company in one of six diverse sectors — oil and gas, industrial manufacturing, Food Park, maritime industry, Global Logistics Park and Accelerator Hub.

Licences:

HFZA offers three types of licences:

- Commercial licences for trading, general trading and e-commerce
- Industrial licences
- Service licences

Special packages

HFZA's ongoing promotions for warehouses, offices and land plots are 50 per cent incorporation fee waive off for the first year; 100 per cent licence fee waive off for the first year; 50 per cent service fee waive off for the first year; and deferment of security deposit until next year's licence renewal.

Contact details

06 526 3333; info@hfza.ae; Hfza.ae



KIZAD

Advantages

- KIZAD offers some of the most competitive free zone business set-up packages in the UAE.
- Ideal location between Abu Dhabi and Dubai
- 1,2,3 & 4 visa free zone packages for up to three years
- Packages include shared workstations or dedicated offices, free internet & Wi-Fi, one-stop-shop services, company set-up in 24-hours, quick and easy approvals, no security deposits on start-up packages, no deposits for visas and dual licences available for Abu Dhabi

Special packages

SME start-up packages start from Dh9,450 (+VAT)

Contact details

Kizad.ae/landing/freezone; 800 10 20 30



RAK ICC



RAK International Corporate Centre (RAK ICC) is one of the fastest growing government-owned corporate registries with an excellent reputation for compliance and professional services.

Key sectors

RAK ICC companies are best suited for private wealth management and succession planning, international tax planning, securitisation and ring-fencing assets, and ownership of real estate properties and assets. It is also suited for international business such as trade, structured finance transitions, corporate restructuring and redomiciliations, holding structures and special purpose vehicles.

Licence

RAK ICC regulations allow for flexibility

in the company structure via the varying types of companies that may be incorporated i.e. (a) a company limited by shares; (b) a company limited by guarantee that is or not authorised to issue shares; (c) an unlimited company that is authorised to issue shares; (d) a segregated portfolio company; or (e) a restricted purposes company and classification of shares are allowed under these structures.

Special packages

RAK ICC offers various packages in redomiciliation with the most cost-effective registration fee. RAK ICC registered companies can benefit from the amnesty programme till the end of 2021.

Contact details

Rakicc.com



INNOVATORS IN THE INDUSTRY

Thinking of starting your business endeavors or expanding your business in Dubai?



Every new beginning calls for us

- **Gold Package – Start Your Business**
With **AED – 21,999** With 100 percent Ownership in Dubai Mainland
- **Silver Package – Start Your Business**
With **AED – 17,499** With 100 percent Ownership in Dubai Mainland
- **Now Get Dubai Mainland License in Just 2 Hours** **AED 14,999** With 100 percent Ownership in Dubai Mainland

WHY CIG?

One Stop Shop for all Business Needs
Corporate Structure Offering | Specialized in Mainland Incorporation | Corporate Sponsorship
Expert of UAE Free Zone Setup | Corporate Bank Account Opening | Trusted and Continuous Relation with Banks | FDI Partners | Second Passport Services | 0% Interest on Payment Plans | Free Network Events with Large CIG Clientele | Access to Angel Investor and Fund Raising | Safe and Reliable | Two decades Hands on Experience in UAE Market

📍 Corporate office: 19th Floor, 48 Burj Gate Tower, Sheikh Zayed Road, Downtown, Dubai, UAE
📍 Branch office: 401, Al Zarouni Business Center, Sheikh Zayed Road, Barsha First, Dubai, UAE
☎ 800 CIG (244) 📞 +971 50 578 2514
🌐 www.cigdubai.ae

* T&C apply

SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURS

- A ready reckoner on the UAE's trusted business consultants who can help you start your dream venture

AURION

Key services

Aurion offers a wide range of specialised services in the field of company incorporation, PRO services, legal documentation, residence visa processing, bank account opening assistance, ISO standards consulting, accounting support, VAT assistance, chamber of commerce registration, tax residence certificate, import/export code, trademark registration, knowledge management, and more.

Special packages

Aurion has announced a combo offer for investors, who will be able to obtain a business licence and quality management certificate from approved certification bodies.

Also, Aurion has launched a special discount promotion for businessmen PRO services, offering 50 per cent off with a dedicated PRO agent throughout the assignment.

Number of clients handled

Over the past 12 years, it has supported more than 4,500 companies from 80 countries.

Contact details

Aurionuae.com; 04 250 4150



This includes trade licence (government charges), corporate service agent fee, e-office, preparation of legal documents, corporate PRO services, court fee, company stamp, dedicated telephone number, conference room facility, call answering services, business address of premium location and dedicated account manager.

Number of clients handled

Over 10,000

Contact details

800244; Cigdubai.ae

CREATIVE ZONE

Key services

Company incorporation services in Dubai mainland, UAE free zones, Abu Dhabi mainland, and Saudi Arabia; tax and accounting; banking; co-working space and concierge and PRO.

Special packages

Creative Zone offers free zone trade licence for Dh5,750 and Dubai mainland licence for Dh23,000.

Number of clients handled

44,000

Contact details

04 567 7333, setup@creative-zone.ae



BUSINESS LINK

Key services

Business set-up consultancy services in GCC; professional, commercial and industrial business set-up in the UAE for mainland, free zone and offshore, business licenses, branch office set-up for a foreign company, subsidiary company set-up, PRO services, local and corporate sponsorship.

Special packages

It has a limited time offer for Dubai mainland company set-up, starting from Dh22,000. This includes local sponsor and PRO services. It also offers 50 per cent off on e-commerce licence. You can now start your company for Dh6,800.

Number of clients handled

Business Link has handled more than 15,000 clients and 24,000 projects.

Contact details

Businesslinkuae.com; Businesslink.ae; 04 321 5228



EZONE

The team at Ezone has helped thousands of entrepreneurs start their business in the UAE and supported many more through their personalised, value-added services that enabled them to scale up their businesses successfully.

Special packages

Ezone has waived processing fees for DED and Dubai free zone incorporation as well as for DED and Dubai free zone licence renewal and amendment from April to June.

Number of clients handled

While Ezone is a new entity, Mariben Christine Eustaquio, its Managing Director has handled over 3,000 clients.

Contact details

050 149 5611; http://www.ezone



MAKE MY FIRM

Key Services

Business set-up services: Business set-up free consultation; assistance in opening bank account, residence and dependent visa, external approvals as per licence category; assistance in fit out approval, local partner or service agent for mainland licences, for sharing office facility, and assistance for product and trade mark registrations.

Make My Firm also offers external approval assistance from several government departments.

Currently handling

350 customers

Contact details

Makemyfirm.ae; 052 6739777, 04 5847025



TRADE LICENSE ZONE

Key services

Trade License Zone is a one-stop-shop for business set-up in the UAE, assisting with every step of the process. It offers guidance and support with free zone, mainland and offshore licence and visa applications.

Trade License Zone offers a full suite of office solutions, including co-working space, dedicated fully-furnished offices, meeting room facilities, reception management and several other start-up-related services.

Special packages

With solid partnerships with numerous jurisdictions throughout the UAE, it can offer the latest streamlined and cost-effective business set-up packages. Trade License Zone has also tailored a package called eBorderless.com for e-commerce as it is the most popular business activity in the market today.

Number of clients handled

It has handled thousands of clients since its inception.

Contact details

04 429 5888; Tlz.ae



VIRTUZONE

Key services

Company formation in mainland, free zone and offshore jurisdictions; one-stop-shop for all business set-up, trade licence and visa requirements.

Business support services: Accounting, tax advice, payroll, VAT registration, mail management, PRO, bank account opening, receptionist services, IT support, branding, copyright registration and more.

Virtuzone partners with Aramex, Arabian Radio Network (ARN), Carasti, Dubai Startup Hub, Eitsalat, KPMG, Launch-DXB, Petra Insurance Brokers, Shopify, Tajawal, VFS Global, WeWork, Zbooni and more.

Special packages

Start any business with just Dh1,995.

Set up your own business now for just Dh19,995 per year. All-inclusive. Free visa included, for life.

Number of clients handled

Over 40,000 entrepreneurs from 180 countries since its establishment in 2009.

Contact details

Vz.ae; 04 457 8200



CAPITAL INTERNATIONAL GROUP (CIG)

Key services

Company formation in the UAE, business centre, financial services, succession planning, visa and immigration services

Special packages

Gold package: You can start your business for Dh21,999 with 100 per cent ownership in Dubai mainland. This includes trade licence (government charges), corporate service agent fee, e-office, preparation of legal documents, corporate PRO services, court fee, immigration card, one investor visa, company stamp, dedicated telephone number, conference room facility, call answering services, business address of premium location and dedicated account manager.

Silver package: You can start your business for Dh17,499 with 100 per cent ownership in Dubai mainland.



FLYINGCOLOUR

Key services

Business set-up and structuring in the UAE for mainland, free zones, offshore; business set-up in the UK, the US and Canada; corporate services and PRO services, bank account assistance, accounting and bookkeeping, tax consultancy, real estate brokerage, global migration and citizenship services and skilled immigration services.

Special packages

Flyingcolour has always believed in offering excellent services at reasonable rates. Its company formation packages start from Dh5,000. Its VAT and tax services start from Dh500.

Number of clients handled

Over a period of 17 years, the company has handled over 10,000 clients globally.

Contact details

Flyingcolour.net, 04 454 2366





E.ZONE

Business Setup Made Easy

LOOKING TO START A BUSINESS?

START YOUR
**E-TRADER
BUSINESS**

FROM ONLY
AED 1,500*



START YOUR
**UAE FREE ZONE
BUSINESS**

FROM ONLY
AED 5,750*



START YOUR
**DUBAI
FREE ZONE
BUSINESS**

FROM ONLY
AED 13,900*



START YOUR
**DUBAI (DED)
MAINLAND
BUSINESS**

FROM ONLY
AED 20,000*



★ subject to terms & conditions and
business activity requirements

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hello@e.zone

KIZAD

Offering free zone business packages starting from Dh9,450 to boost SMEs

Khalifa Industrial Zone Abu Dhabi (KIZAD), a subsidiary of Abu Dhabi Ports, now offers free zone business start-up packages, starting from only Dh9,450, to support entrepreneurs and SMEs during the global economic slowdown.

In line with Abu Dhabi Ports and the government of Abu Dhabi's efforts to support and safeguard businesses, the relief package offers prospec-

tive KIZAD free zone customers savings of up to 36 per cent on new registrations and a waiver on the security deposit for any registrations.

SMEs are a crucial component of Abu Dhabi's business landscape and one of the main pillars of the Ghadan 21 programme, which KIZAD adheres to.

Approximately 98 per cent of all companies in Abu Dhabi are SMEs, which contribute 29 per cent of

its GDP and 44 per cent of its non-oil economy.

KIZAD's package for businesses is available in three tiers, the first providing up to 36 per cent savings on new registrations of three-years, 20 per cent savings for two-year registrations, and 15 per cent savings for one-year registrations.

Across all packages, customers will also benefit from having their security deposit waived.



● Khalid Al Marzooqi, Director Commercial, KIZAD

HAMRIYAH FREE ZONE (HFZA)

One of the largest manufacturing and industrial hubs in the MENA region

Established in 1995, Hamriyah Free Zone is ideally located in the Emirate of Sharjah, UAE, offering economically viable incorporation services including modern infrastructure, logistics, connectivity and critical operations support for its investors, encouraging regional, international trade and commerce.

More than 6,500 companies, both Fortune 500 enterprises and SMEs, currently operate and flourish at Hamriyah Free Zone.

The modern free zone is spread across 30 million sqm of prime industrial land, offering a unique advantage of sea, land and air connectivity. Offering an access to a 14-metre deep port and 7-metre deep inner harbour, Hamriyah Free Zone is home to the highest number of steel fabricators and also a primary hub for oil and gas companies in the region.

Hamriyah Free Zone Authority offers investors the opportunity to open a company in one of six diverse sectors. These key sectors are: Oil and gas, industrial manufacturing, Food Park, maritime industry, Global Logistics



Park and Accelerator Hub.

Solutions

HFZA offers cost-effective offices and licencing options to support aspiring entrepreneurs, with a wide range of services and facilities built to help them reach their goals. HFZA has also streamlined and simplified the procedures which enables the entrepreneurs to get their licence in less than 60 minutes.

International standard, pre-fabricated warehouses are available to suit your business requirements. These light industrial units provide appropriate electrical loads and lighting and are equipped with

roller doors and a loading bay.

Hamriyah Free Zone offers prime industrial plots of land starting from 2,500 sqm at competitive fixed-lease rates for the first five years and a range of facilities such as, extensive network of transportation, power, water and waste management, dedicated labour accommodation with recreational facilities, and much more.

The free zone also offers a host of exclusive benefits.

- Business set-up in less than 60 minutes
- Full foreign ownership permitted
- 100% repatriation of capital and profits
- No customs duty on im-

port, export and re-export

- No corporate and income taxes
- VAT designated zone
- On-site customs
- VIP service with an exclusive lounge
- Convenient access to 300+ online services for visas, renewals and other services
- Effective and efficient call centre
- An array of licences, including commercial, service and industrial
- Highly developed infrastructure and telecommunications link
- 24-hour security and CCTV within the free zone
- On-site labour accommodation with recreation centres
- On-site medical facilities

Licences:

Hamriyah Free Zone Authority offers three types of licences.

1. COMMERCIAL LICENCE

■ **TRADING:** This licence allows the holder to import, export, sell, distribute and store items specified on the licence.

■ **GENERAL TRADING:** This licence allows trading (import, export) of unlimited number of products.

■ **E-COMMERCE:** This licence allows the holder to carry out trading of goods and services over electronic network.

2. INDUSTRIAL LICENCE

This licence allows the holder to import raw materials for the purpose of manufacturing, processing and/or assembly of specified products, packaging and exporting of the finished products.

3. SERVICE LICENCE

This licence allows the holder to conduct services or consultancy services listed on the licence.

Contact Details

Phone: +971 6 526 3333
info@hfza.ae
www.hfza.ae

DUBAI COMMERCITY

The perfect ecosystem for e-commerce businesses

Dubai CommerCity is the first and leading e-commerce free zone in the MENA region. With an area covering 2.1 million square feet and an investment of around \$1 billion, Dubai CommerCity is the first-of-its-kind free zone aimed at elevating Dubai's position as a leading hub for e-commerce. The free zone is perfectly placed to benefit from the exponential e-commerce growth in the region that is outpacing the global growth average.

Dubai CommerCity is facilitating regional and international businesses by providing a unique e-commerce ecosystem and a comprehensive turnkey e-commerce solution for businesses to run effectively and seamlessly. In addition to the complete business setup and customs support, Dubai CommerCity also offers e-commerce strategy consulting, guidance on e-commerce regulations in the region, end-to-end logistics solutions inclusive of warehousing and last-mile delivery, complete e-commerce platform solutions, digital marketing services, and other support services, including but not limited to, photo studios, and call centres, among others.

The free zone is divided into three clusters, each with its own innovative design. The Business Cluster is home to modern landscaped buildings with Grade A premium offices; the Logistics Cluster consists of state-of-the-art dedicated and multi-client warehouse units

with scalable pay-as-you-go pricing models; and the Social Cluster houses restaurants, cafes, exhibitions, and events.

Dubai CommerCity is located in the heart of Dubai and at the centre of the regional trade route, providing access to over 2 billion people within a 2-hour flight radius. Its strategic location next to Dubai International Airport, allows for fast e-commerce fulfillment across the region.

The availability of special e-commerce licences, pre-negotiated partnerships, and smart-cost structures lay a solid foundation for any start-up, or indeed already successful e-commerce ventures, to grow their business with Dubai CommerCity.

Bringing it all together

Whether you are a start-up or an established business, Dubai CommerCity offers individually tailored e-commerce enablement services to all potential investors to explore how your business can benefit from the growing e-commerce opportunity in the region. Through innovative support services, modern infrastructure, and endless networking opportunities, the free zone provides suitable and stable groundwork from where you can grow your business.

Dubai CommerCity offers its clients complete e-commerce and omnichannel solutions in a



box and completes the entire business set-up cycle for the e-commerce business and omnichannel retailers with all the value-added services that these businesses would require. The free zone not only offers office and warehouse space to set up the business but also all e-commerce enablement services under one roof, creating the perfect ecosystem to help your e-commerce business thrive in the UAE and beyond. With industry experts at every level, Dubai CommerCity is a one-stop shop for all your e-commerce needs, pushing further Dubai's status as an e-commerce hub; hence attracting more foreign direct investments into the UAE.

Dubai CommerCity - Enabling the 'e' in commerce.

RAK ICC

Why now is the time to redomicile to RAK ICC

To stay or go? Across the UAE, the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with the new Economic Substance Regulations (ESR), has caused many a company to re-evaluate their location. And with good reason.

If you're one of these, here's why you should think seriously about redomiciling to RAK ICC.

● **It has the resources:** To meet the above-mentioned ESRs, you're going to need the required amount of physical assets, employees and core income-generated activities (CIGAs). The UAE has all the physical office space you need – not to mention a huge pool of talented people to choose from. You will also have access to common law courts. Here, you're covered.

● **They're tailored to you:** Do you feel that your current jurisdiction isn't quite the right fit for your company? RAK ICC recognises that every company has unique needs and challenges. The days of one size fits all are long gone. It offers a range of solutions to ensure your company is geared up to meet the ESR – all the while enabling you to maintain your existing legal status.

● **It won't be a headache:** Covid-19 has given us enough to deal with – you may be thinking you don't need the extra complication of redomiciling. But with RAK ICC, there is no complication. A built-in effective back-office process ensures fast processing and – more importantly – you can preserve your opera-



tional and banking history. We offer a seamless one-stop-shop redomiciliation service, leaving you free to reap the benefits of this business-friendly location.

● **Your business is your own:** There's a fine line between necessary disclosures and loss of privacy. If you have confidentiality concerns, this may be the place for you. While many jurisdictions are in the process of implementing public company registries according to UBO regula-

tions, the UAE and RAK ICC are committed to keeping your information confidential.

● **You're in safe hands:** Finally, in these uncertain times, RAK ICC is a safe bet. Unlike many jurisdictions that have been formally blacklisted for non-cooperation in terms of tax, the UAE sits firmly on the whitelist. You can be sure the infrastructure is set up to help you meet the necessary international business regulations.

CAPITAL INTERNATIONAL GROUP

Helping new businesses reach the next level

With lucrative tax rates, a first-class standard of living, and unlimited opportunities, it is clear why the UAE attracts so many entrepreneurs and start-ups. However, while the UAE might be well-known for being a great place to launch that dream venture, knowing where to start might seem more complex. The good news is that, with a little help, it can be incredibly straightforward.

Whether you think you have that next big idea and are struggling to get your business off the ground or are looking to grow in the market place, Capital International Group (CIG) can help. Founded in 2007, Capital International Group is core in business set-up specialising in assisting both fledgling and more established businesses. As the company provides business solutions, including workplace hubs with over 83



luxurious offices, hot desks, and shared working spaces, finding an accessible base has never been easier. In addition, Capital International Group can assist with the paperwork needed to set up

businesses through their corporate government liaison, legal solutions and immigration and visa services.

As CIG has tie-ups with free zone entities and is associated with prestigious

committees, such as business councils and the Dubai Economy, the team is successfully established within various business networks. In fact, CIG is among the UAE's top business set-up brands and has also provided help to start-up solutions in the US, the UK and Asia.

While the professional team prides themselves on providing satisfaction to their customers, the business solution packages on offer aim to be as cost-effective as possible. Dispensing help with everything from accounting, tax advice to marketing; these packages could certainly be an investment to take that burgeoning business to another level.

If you think the time is right to start that company or are looking to grow your business connections, contacting CIG could be the best place to start. For more information, visit Cigdubai.ae or call on 800 244 (CIG).

CREATIVE ZONE

CZ Access: One platform for all business solutions



CZ Access is designed to fill the service gaps entrepreneurs and businesses experience while launching their business. CZ Access provides all Creative Zone clients with the extra benefit of getting a wide range of business and corporate services under one roof from its channel partners. As a valued client, they are eligible to avail its exclusive discounts and special packages. One's visa, Emirates ID, medical, tax certificates and other such requirements are taken care of by Creative Zone's concierge and the PRO team.

Renting an office space right away can be a considerable cost burden on fresh start-ups. Its co-working and meeting space at Downtown Dubai offers customised office space with all

modern amenities and customer care tools that support a growing business. To give entrepreneurs better control over their company's finances, it has its in-house tax and accounting services that assist with assurance, tax and accounting.

Its strategic partner network features global industry leaders such as Microsoft, Zoho, DHL, InsuranceMarket.ae, and Telr amongst many others.

Over and above all this, for customers seeking to enhance their knowledge and occupational skills, Creative Zone also offers preferential rates for Spencer Lodge's Make It Happen University and E-business masterclass of Creative 971. MySyara, UAE's first digital car service app, is also one of its associates who gives attractive discounts exclusively to Creative Zone clients.

FLYING COLOUR

A positive outlook for the UAE economy and businesses



While most global economies, including that of the UAE, recover from the impact of Covid-19, speculations on the future economic situation of each country are making the rounds. The leaders of the UAE and each emirate have focused, in recent years, on shifting the country's dependence from oil to multiple non-oil sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, finance, consulting, agriculture and trading. The economy has shown high resiliency during the pandemic, and is expected to undergo a fast recovery in the coming months.

The government and its proactive policies have played a major role in navigating through this tricky and challenging phase. In recent months, the government has announced several new reforms and policies, which could possibly have a significant positive impact on the UAE's economy. Changes in inheritance

laws, company formation laws, social laws, opening of business with Israel and Qatar, and Expo 2020 are just a few of the major announcements that could have a lasting impact on the country.

This invites a highly positive outlook for the future and overall business ecosystem in the country. Add to this an already and ever improving world-class infrastructure, low taxation and no income tax, safety, and its location in the heart of the world, and it presents a very lucrative opportunity for people from all over the world to do business in the country, and set up their base in the UAE.

We, at Flying Colour, have been offering advisory for company formation, structuring and inheritance planning for the past 17 years, and we are keeping ourselves up-to-date on the changing commercial rules of the country. We are excited on what the future holds for the UAE.

SHARJAH MEDIA CITY (SHAMS)

Why Shams is the ideal destination for your business venture

The UAE's free zones are exemplary business havens that provide unlimited opportunities to foreign investors, entrepreneurs, and SMEs from all around the world.

Sharjah Media City (Shams) is a dynamic free zone located in the Emirate of Sharjah that has made significant developments in the creative business sector.

With a world-class business environment, exclusive incentives, and specialised facilities for creative and media businesses, Shams has transformed into a global hub for innovation. The free zone is designed to connect talent with a forward-thinking community of innovative companies. Here are some reasons why Shams is ideal for those looking to embark on their entrepreneurial journey in the UAE.

Shams offers several cost-effective options to entrepreneurs who are looking to set up their new



business. With their media licences starting from just Dh5,750 for the month of April, this low-cost of entry is ideal for SMEs in the region.

Shams provides media-focused education and training to businesses established in Shams, especially the ones working directly

in the media sector. It offers free training and workshops to clients on photography, film and cinematography, among others. They benefit heavily from such training opportunities that are available on-site. Media professionals can upgrade their skills and enhance

their expertise at seminars, training programmes, and Q&A sessions conducted regularly at Shams by industry experts worldwide.

Shams helps companies grow by providing them free space at exhibitions, such as GITEX, Xposure and Seamless Middle East. The companies benefit from business networking with regional traders, IT professionals, technology enthusiasts, students, and consumers.

The Shams Freelance Licence package is available for those in the media sector. It offers individuals the opportunity of working on media projects and establishing themselves in the industry.

Given the above key reasons, Shams has become the most preferred destination for new media business set-ups. With a business-friendly environment and a hassle-free licencing process, setting up a new business in Shams has never been so quick and easy.

VIRTUZONE

Empowering entrepreneurs for over a decade

As a business that started in the study of its Co-founder and Chairman, Neil Petch, Virtuzone has always been a company that celebrates and champions the spirit of entrepreneurship.

It is the driving force that has continuously inspired Virtuzone over the years to empower entrepreneurs by making it easier and simpler for them to realise their goals.

Today, under the leadership of Neil, Geoff Rapp, Co-founder, and George Hojeige, CEO, Virtuzone has achieved a stellar track record of enabling more than 40,000 entrepreneurs from 180 countries to set up their own businesses in the UAE.

Going above and beyond the initial paperwork

While the core of Virtuzone's services is a seamless and cost-effective business set-up, the company makes sure that its clients are not just set up right from the

start, but that they are also well-equipped to manage their business operations on a daily basis.

Virtuzone's business support services were launched especially for this. The Dubai-based company has in-house teams providing timely, professional and efficient solutions for its clients in the following areas: accounting, payroll, bank account opening, branding, copyright registration, mail management, VAT registration, IT support, office space leasing, receptionist services and more.

Competitive and value-driven business set-up solutions

The solutions that Virtuzone brings to aspiring entrepreneurs and existing businesses are hinged on its mission to consistently deliver a high-level of service and customer satisfaction within competitive rates.

Complementing this is Virtuzone's commitment to provide unbiased, expert advice that al-



lows entrepreneurs to establish their companies in the most advantageous jurisdictions for their nature of business, and with the right trade licence and activity.

Throughout its 12 years of operations, Virtuzone has always

sought to provide its clients with innovative solutions that add value to their businesses and help propel them to sustainable growth and success.

"As our customers succeed, so do we," said Neil.

UAQ FREE TRADE ZONE

A key partner for the global investor

Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone (UAQ FTZ) with its strategic location in the UAE offers enterprises and entrepreneurs a wealth of opportunities as it is a major entry route to other GCC countries, Asia, Africa and Europe; thus providing a solid and sustainable base for manufacturing, exports and re-exports to the rest of the world.

Here's why the free zone's land options with customisable lease terms and dedicated industrial zones are great:

It has exceptional logistics infrastructure: Located on the E311 highway, the UAE's longest road, the free zone offers superb road infrastructure as it is a great starting location for shipping

to any road-connected location in the GCC. It is just 30 minutes from Dubai.

Proximity to world class airports and seaports: Makes it an ideal destination in the region for import, export, re-export and manufacturing. Businesses at UAQ FTZ get special concessions at UAQ's seaport. The lower delivery time increases efficiency in logistics too.

Undisturbed access to electricity, water and telecommunication: The land units are electricity, water and telecommunication infrastructure-ready, which makes it a great choice for companies as uninterrupted supply to these utilities are key to industrial success.



Wide availability of raw materials: A logistics hub, the free zone is a cost-effective option for all manufacturers, thanks to its hassle-free customs procedures.

Availability of labour: The UAQ FTZ ranks high in labour market efficiency with its ability to attract and retain multilingual manpower for all types of

industries. Labour accommodation is within walking distance for all industrial units.

Excellent cost savings: Apart from the UAE tax benefits, the free zone offers minimal operational expenses, low living costs and high-performance potential, making it an ideal location for SMEs and micro-businesses.

MAKE MY FIRM

Turning your vision into reality

Dubai is a well-known business hub, an excellent gateway for entrepreneurs and SMEs to establish business. Individuals, foreign entities and visitors are welcome to launch their trade businesses or professional firms in one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

Make My Firm is a one-stop solution for entrepreneurs and SMEs to set up a new business within mainland, free zones, and offshore in the UAE. Its aim is to turn your vision into reality with expert advisory services on business set-up. The brand's scope of work involves understanding client requirements for business set-up in Dubai; analysing the correct legal business activity as per the business module; providing a cost-effective and easy solution with technical and commercial details for business set-up; legal document drafting, company registration, residency visa process; providing office facilities (physical/ on-usage office set-up) as per business needs; and fast-track company formation services with licence issuance in three hours.

Make My Firm offers expert services in setting up a licence on VIP basis with the Dubai Economic Department (licence issuing authority), with all formalities for name reservation, approval and memorandum signature and licence issuance finished in three hours.

The brand's expert team offers deep knowledge about set-up



● Farina Ahmad, CEO, Make My Firm

advisory services that cater to all your requirements as per your business set-up needs.

Make My Firm also offers free consultancy sessions with its business set-up experts on prior booking basis and it is glad to offer assistance on the right legal guidance as per the legal and commercial framework in Dubai, before investing in a new venture.

The Dubai market is booming and it's a good time to start business in the emirate, with affordable office space, lower cost of living, and easy business licence process on tap. Make My Firm wishes all success and growth to newcomers and start-ups and invites them for a free consultation session.

EZONE

Cost-effective solutions for SMEs with limited resources

At Ezone, we go beyond business set-up by breaking the spectrum of your business needs into manageable segments, and we walk with you each step of the way.

We start with the important part of getting to know you — our client, understanding your business, and appreciating your vision.

From there, we will support you by providing you with carefully laid out, unbiased options for incorporating your business so you can make an informed decision. We will then give you full, personalised assistance as you navigate through the required licence approval. Our role doesn't end once you receive your trade licence, our support extends to the required immigration visa and labour requirements.

The biggest value of working with Ezone is that we work within an ecosystem of services that range from tax and accountancy to virtual PA, and many others to provide you with cost-effective solutions for SMEs with limited resources. More importantly, as our client, you can be assured that you will always have a member of team on hand to talk to or ask for advice to help you navigate smoothly across our increasingly complex business environment.

Regardless of the size or scale of your business, our team are unwavering in our commitment to give you peace



● Mariben Christine Eustaquio, Managing Director, Ezone

of mind and confidence so that you can focus on your expertise — your business, as we focus on our expertise — incorporating your business and supporting you at each stage of your growth.

Ezone also provides personal support that goes beyond simply doing business. We value relationships and, for us, you are not just a number. This personal approach has allowed us to thrive on referral and return business, because satisfied clients are the best form of marketing any company can have.

BUSINESS LINK

Complete solutions for all your business set-up needs

Business Link, with a team of experts, offers top leading business consultancy services for the past 20 years across the GCC countries. The company makes sure every dream business turns into reality. Business Link stays with you throughout your entrepreneurial journey. The team of experts has the experience and in-depth knowledge of company formation in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. It is well acquainted with the government rules and regulations of the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Its strong principles, continued support, timely assistance, and most-efficient services are some of the major highlights that distinguish Business Link from other players in the market.

The Business Link team comprises experienced personnel with knowledge in municipal, foreign affairs, immigrants, and other laws to support clients in setting up a business. To name a few, the



Business Link team constitutes of Hatem El Safty being the Managing Director, while Shamnas Sham-sudheen works as Operation Man-

ager and Mafaza Sharfan works as Senior Business Consultant and many more. Business Link offers tailored solutions for every entre-

CERTIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

Here are some of the awards won by Business Link:

- IFZA professional partners award
- Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce & Industry – Appreciation award
- Awarded as the Best Business Set-up Consultancy in Dubai
- Global Business Excellence award

preneur starting a business in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Oman. It provides a holistic solution to make every business the best fit for the future-ready UAE. Business Link believes that the company value defines how committed it is towards their customers and service quality. Its core values include – progress, respect, integrity, drive, excellence and commitment.

FUJAIRAH FREE ZONE

Convenience meets cost-effectiveness

In Fujairah Free Zone, cost-effectiveness, convenience and easy access to authorities as well as well-priced human resource facilities are the key factors that draw in entrepreneurs, says Sharief Habib Al Awadhi, Director General, Fujairah Free Zone. “I think the best thing about our free zones are the easy licencing procedures and cost-effective tariffs.”

While easy regulations and a generous grace period smoothen the process of business set-up at Fujairah Free Zone, they also comply with international standards of corporate governance, he adds. Today’s convenience was unthinkable a decade ago. “Ten years ago, it might take months to get a license. Today, it’s simple. You can just do everything online.”

Al Awadhi says that although start-ups in the tech, logistics, food securi-



● Sharief Habib Al Awadhi, Director General, Fujairah Free Zone

ty and pharmaceutical sectors are promoted heavily by the media – and, consequently, free zones often feel pressured to market these – but the reality on the ground is different.

“It’s easy to come and say I have 100 start-ups involved in trending topics like AI, or the next Google, rather than saying I have companies in well-established but less exciting

industries such as packaging or plastics processing, which are doing well.”

The Fujairah Free Zone niche Al Awadhi is perhaps proudest of is accessibility to authorities, both gov-

ernmental and managerial decision-makers. “This gives a lot of comfort to the business community. If we look around in Fujairah, we have an oil zone that has developed tremendously over the past 20 years. We accordingly developed the free zones, the port, and now we have a devoted establishment to look after these.”

During a challenging 2020, Fujairah Free Zone provided safety training to its people and clients while also extending support by restructuring tariffs.

Other human factors matter too. Operating a free-zone business requires calls after hours, site accessibility, handling imports and exports while dealing with environmental, safety and human resource issues. “You need devoted people. We’ve been working on these elements for more than 25 years but are always looking to improve things.”

AURION BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

Striving to excel

When experience and expertise blend together, the implementation gains perfection. Aurion, the top business set-up consultant in the UAE is the perfect example for it. With more than a decade-long track record and up-to-date market knowledge in company incorporation, Team Aurion stays ahead in its field of activities.

Aurion being the pioneer in company incorporation has played a vital role in setting up more than 4,500 companies in the UAE from across 80 countries. Guided by Syam Panayickal Prabhu, a postgraduate in law, Aurion delivers what it promises with transparency and perfection.

The team of expert business consultants constantly interacts with global investors to analyse their precise business requirements and suggests the right company formation package, business activity, and free zone in the UAE for setting up their base.

Why choose Aurion as your business consultant in the UAE

Aurion has a well-structured support system to serve international clients with a multilingual team of expert legal and professional business consultants, and a multilingual website for global investors to easily reach out to the team.

Aurion IT Team has indigenously developed office management system software tool for securing client data and streamlining the workflow.

Its motto of Trust, Excellence, and Delivery (TED) makes Aurion the most trustworthy business advisory in the region.

Awards galore — persistence pays

The numerous awards received by Aurion speak for the quality of service rendered. In 2021, it received three free zones awards for outstanding performance and



● Syam Panayickal Prabhu, Founder and Managing Director, Aurion

also the “Top Business Consultant of Middle East” Award from Silicon India, the best-selling IT Magazine in India.

Aurion Zone — All businessmen services under one roof

Being the registered agent of 11 major free zones in the UAE, Aurion plays an important role in developing the business of various

free zones.

Aurion has also integrated all the company incorporation and allied businessmen services into a comprehensive 360-degree business set-up solution under the Aurion Zone, catering to high-net-worth global investors for all their business requirements.

Visit Aurionuae.com or call on 04 250 4150 for more information.

TRADE LICENSE ZONE

A one-stop-shop for business set-up in the UAE

Trade License Zone is the UAE's fastest-growing business set-up specialist, with an unwavering focus on transparency and service excellence. This is a one-stop-shop for business set-up in the UAE, assisting with every step of the process. Trade License Zone offers guidance and support with free zones, mainland and offshore licence and visa applications.

Based in Dubai, Trade License Zone operates from two branches — one in Jumeirah Lake Towers (HQ) and another in Dubai Media City. In addition to business set-up services, Trade License Zone offers a full suite of office solutions, including co-working space, dedicated fully-furnished offices, meeting room facilities, reception man-

agement and several other start-up-related services.

Its focus is on providing a personal service, offering trusted guidance and affordable set-up solutions. During the company set-up process, a great deal of support is typically required, as there are many options available, and it is paramount that the right decisions are made.

With numerous partnerships with free zones throughout the UAE and an expert team that speaks 11 languages, it is well placed to offer streamlined and cost-effective packages to a local and global customer base.

While its primary function and focus is business setup, Trade License Zone understands that this is only the beginning of the journey for any new en-



trepreneur. Once we have successfully helped with the initial company set-up, we then see it as our duty to create an environment of support for new business owners and entrepreneurs. To this end, our TLZ Start-

up Partners division, made up of carefully selected and trusted suppliers, offers a range of business services for new companies.

The company has recently launched TLZ Travel to provide clients with

UAE short stay visit and tourist visas, and a range of other tourism services and now it looks forward to the imminent launch of TLZ Advisory — a bespoke and specialist advisory division.



**NOW, THERE'S AN EASIER WAY
TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US!**

QUICK 🌊 CONVENIENT 🌊 EASY



DARE TO DO IT DIFFERENTLY.



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