

GETTING READY TO WELCOME THE WORLD

5

CHAPTER



GETTING READY TO WELCOME THE WORLD

Expo's Learning and Development Strategy ensured the entire workforce was able to deliver their role to their full potential, equipping every person with the right skills and knowledge to perform their role confidently and competently.

The culmination of a series of readiness activities, the Expo Pavilions Premiere ran from January to April 2021 and offered a preview of the Expo visitor experience, testing workforce readiness and providing increased reassurances around COVID-19 preventative measures.

On a scale never seen in the region before, the Expo Operations Centre was home to every function's operational team, as well as operational representatives of all relevant external stakeholders. Testament to the collaborative spirit that underpinned site operations, this was the bedrock for the event's entire delivery, creating a safe, secure and seamless experience for every visitor that enabled the Emirati spirit of hospitality to shine through.

Innovation for the greater good was a thread that ran throughout the entire Expo. A tool to advance human progress, particularly in the field of sustainability, it enhanced connections, enabled efficient ways of working and ensured a smooth visitor experience.

From sponsorships, brand activations and marketing campaigns, to media partnerships and world-class communications and media facilities, Expo's Community Engagement and Marketing and Communications delivered the Expo message to audiences at home and abroad, building awareness and excitement and driving visitation.

Expo tickets were available across multiple touch points, leveraging the reach of Partners and stakeholders and including an expansive network of global ticket resellers. Dynamic pricing incentivised early sales and mitigated potential periods of low demand.

OPERATIONAL READINESS

LIMITED OPERATIONS

9 JANUARY 2021

- Site open (limited footprint) for Expo Pavilions Premiere (EPP)
- Limited delivery of services (scope and scale) to support EPP
- Limited implementation of event-time policies and procedures
- Expo Operations Centre active for limited hours
- Workforce training integrated into live operations
- Site security sweep and lockdown of access protocols, uplifts to Security and Transport Operations
- Movement of large teams of staff to site for familiarisation and takeover of venues and spaces

EXTENDED OPERATIONS

1 SEPTEMBER 2021

- Finalisation of construction activity and transfer of authority to Operations team
- Main Operations Centre (MOC) event-time participation operating 0800-1800
- Site Control activated; communications hub stood up
- Event-time contingency plans and crisis management procedure in place
- Site readiness activities progression and final systems full go-live
- Handover of participants' operational relationships to zones

FULL OPERATIONS

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

- All zones, Expo-owned pavilions and venues live
- All Operations teams assumed roles on site, final training of volunteers and contractors
- Final large-scale test events
- Operations moved to 24/7 (as of 29 September 2021)
- Expo Operations Centre fully operational (including Dubai Police, Transport Coordination Centre and Technology Operations Centre)
- Restricted movement of vehicles within Public Realm



Expo Pavilions Premiere

The Expo Pavilions Premiere was a milestone moment for Expo 2020 Dubai and people in the UAE and the culmination of a series of readiness activities, including those led by Expo and those conducted by external stakeholders, both on and off the Expo site.

Against the quickly evolving backdrop of the global pandemic, it was an invaluable opportunity to:

- Engage and excite the public by offering a taste of the Expo visitor experience
- Provide increased reassurances around health and safety by testing Expo's readiness to work within the current COVID-19 guidelines, including the organisation's flexibility and agility
- Test and refine operational plans, specifically in the Sustainability Pavilion and wider Zone
- Test the capabilities and confidence of Expo's workforce, including introducing the Expo Volunteers
- Work with key external operational stakeholders such as Dubai Police and emergency services
- Develop a spirit and culture of serving visitors amongst the workforce
- Showcase Expo's advanced state of readiness ahead of the October 2021 opening

Between 15 January 2021 and 10 April 2021, operating five days a week for six hours a day, EPP welcomed more than 100,000 visitors, including the general public, media, influencers, government entities, the education community, commercial Partners and leisure groups.

With a ticket price of AED 25 (USD 7), EPP included the opportunity to explore Terra – The Sustainability Pavilion and enjoy light programming in the Public Realm, as well as selected food and beverage and retail offerings.

Feedback from visitors and the on-the-ground experience of Expo's workforce led to a number of enhancements to event-time plans. This included improvements to signage and wayfinding, more consideration of volunteer attrition and the need to raise greater awareness of public transport options.

The EPP concept was further extended in March 2021, with members of the Expo workforce invited to bring their friends and family for an exclusive preview of Alif – The Mobility Pavilion and Mission Possible – The Opportunity Pavilion.

OTHER TESTING ACTIVITIES IN 2021

Al Wasl test event May 2021

Held across two evenings, this was an opportunity to test the venue in a range of different event modes included 1,200 simulated guests and 150 workforce. Outputs included mass loading the venue, further COVID-19 tests, and overall confidence-building for the premier venue on site.

Schools test event June 2021

Involving 400 schoolchildren, this rehearsal of the typical student journey focused on transport, reception and meals.

Table top exercises August, September 2021

Exploring function operations in the context of various 'likely scenarios', these events focused on how issues would be resolved and the procedures for response and escalation.

Safety & security August 2021

Testing potential scenarios and related processes and procedures, including multi-agency responses at both a local and federal level.

Test event 1 and 2 September 2021

Involving a number of participants' pavilions, this tested operational service levels at scope and scale, including various contingency plans. Held across two days at a weekend close to the opening of Expo, it was one of the final opportunities to refine plans once reviewing the operations with around 60,000 visitors on site.



WORKFORCE READINESS

Expo’s vast and diverse workforce included full-time employees on both permanent and fixed-term contracts, secondees from government entities and partners, embedded contractors and volunteers.

Learning and development

Expo 2020 was committed to ensuring that its entire workforce felt able to deliver their role to their full potential, equipping every person, whether paid, volunteer or contractor, with the right skills and knowledge to perform their role confidently and competently. This was delivered through a carefully developed Learning and Development Strategy, split into two distinct periods.

Pre-event training

In the pre-event period, Expo’s training strategy focused on equipping the workforce with the right skills and knowledge to enable them to perform their role confidently and competently.

Examples included:

- **Leading the Expo Way:** enhancing the leadership skills of more than 280 employees over 3,400 hours of interactive workshops
- **Mission Leader:** an accelerated classroom-based programme, enabling the 135 participants to be a strong force for change between Expo’s planning and operational delivery phases
- **Building Capability:** focusing on the transfer of operational knowledge, for example by working with Emirates Airline to see how its Control Centre operated and shadowing operational staff at the 2019 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Expo 2020 also offered a range of online micro-learning modules and longer, certified programmes, including through the Abu Dhabi School of Government. In total, more than 1.2 million online learning hours were recorded.

In addition, First Aid and Fire Safety Compliance training was also delivered to relevant staff working on site, including participants, both before and during the event.

Event-time training

Event-time training included access to an online learning experience platform, with members of the workforce encouraged to refresh their knowledge regularly throughout the event, including through a mobile app.

General training modules were designed to provide information on Expo’s themes, purpose and values, as well as on safety and security and other key processes and procedures, and were offered to volunteers, contractors, full-time Expo employees and participants.

Training was also offered to key stakeholders across the country, including service and tourism providers, ensuring consistency in service levels across the Expo site and beyond. Participating entities included Dubai Airports, Dubai Duty Free, Dubai Police, Emirates Airline and bus and taxi drivers.



Workforce contingency planning

With COVID-19 protocols and vaccination requirements applicable to all categories of workforce, the close monitoring of workforce supply was essential to prepare for and mitigate any potential shortfalls and ensure operational continuity and safety. This applied to full-time staff as well as contracted staff, performers and volunteers.

Part of Expo 2020 Dubai’s strategy was ‘Post Prioritisation’: In the event of a shortfall, workforce would be reallocated to priority and critical positions, working within the pre-defined minimum workforce threshold parameters. When the shortfall exceeded the minimum thresholds, or in the event of additional workforce required for special events or peaks in visitation, a Contingency Workforce was activated and deployed.

These measures saw hosting support extended to participants’ operations when required (primarily due to COVID-19 reasons), and proactively activating the contingency workforce to support particularly busy periods, such as New Year’s Eve.

OPERATING THE SITE

Command, control and coordination

The event-time operating model included three levels of operations:

- Gold (Strategic)**
- Led by Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, and comprising the Expo 2020 Higher Committee and executive level representatives from Expo 2020 Dubai, including the Chief Operations Officer
 - This point of escalation was reserved for issues which could cause significant reputational damage and/or require substantial budget allocation to remedy
 - Provided daily summary guidance

- Silver (Tactical)**
- Specific to the Main Operations Centre (MOC) and those who led a particular team or specialism. The MOC was the heart of operations, acting as an intermediary between Bronze and Gold levels, receiving situational updates and escalating issues where necessary
 - Led by a 'Duty Operations Director', functions and roles were covered by duty 'shifts'
 - Worked alongside the Dubai Police Operations Centre, Transport Coordination Centre (with the RTA), and Technology Operations Centre (TOC)

- Bronze (Operational)**
- Specific to the teams on the ground and those working directly on site, this level referred to the function, venue and zone teams and supporting operational spaces e.g. the Operations Control Room for all support services
 - Issues were encouraged to be solved at this level, reaching out for support and guidance upwards when necessary



Expo Operations Centre

The Expo Operations Centre (EOC) was the heart of all operations. Home to all operational teams, as well as operational representatives of external stakeholders, it managed all Expo 2020 event operations.

The EOC comprised four main operating centres and a control room:

Main Operations Centre (MOC)

The MOC was the central hub of information and the single source of truth for all operations. For business-as-usual activity, the MOC covered a number of ‘shifts’ each day, accompanied by twice-daily briefings and an end of day report. Led by a Duty Operations Director and supported by a Deputy Director and central coordinator, the MOC was staffed by desks comprising operational teams, as well as some essential non-operations teams:

- School Operations
- Protocol & Guest Services
- Operations Support Services
- International Participants Operations
- Pavilions and Exhibitions Operations
- Commercial
- Workforce Operations
- Security Operations
- Commercial Operations
- Ticketing Operations
- Events and Entertainment Operations
- Health and Safety Operations
- Expo Operations Centre including Production Control
- Site Operations
- Media Operations
- Visitor Experience
- Director General's Office
- Expo Operations Office
- Strategic/Crisis Communications
- Internal Communications

The role of the MOC was to provide situational awareness at all times, through the use of CCTV and other supporting systems such as crowd management. The MOC also drove integrated plans for the next day and week ahead, including for any special events and activities, resolved any complex issues, and communicated key information both upwards to the strategic level as well as downwards to the teams on the ground. While participation was internal in nature, the MOC consistently interacted with a number of external stakeholders.

Dubai Police Operations Centre (DPOC)

Working under the authority of Dubai Police, the DPOC combined efforts of numerous entities in areas including on-site safety and security and the wellbeing of visitors, linking the site to the wider city and beyond. It consisted of:

- Dubai Police (and numerous operational teams including Traffic Control, K9 Unit etc)
- Dubai Civil Defence
- Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services
- Emirates Auction
- Ministry of Defence
- State Security Authority
- National Centre of Meteorology
- Dubai Municipality
- Presidential Guard
- Roads & Transport Authority
- Esharah

Technology Operations Centre (TOC)

The TOC included the Cyber Security Operations Centre, where all Expo 2020 Dubai’s applications and networks were continuously monitored.

Transport Coordination Centre (TCC)

The TCC combined the efforts of Dubai Roads & Transport Authority with Dubai Police and the Expo 2020 Transport Operations team to create a unique hub of transport-related information, ensuring smooth arrivals and departures for all visitors. Covering all forms of transportation to the site, including the Metro, roads, parking, taxis and Expo Rider, this was the central decision-making hub for all transport-related matters.

Operations Control Room (OCR)

The OCR provided a centralised and streamlined approach to managing daily work schedules, problem resolution and mitigations across three work streams: Transport, Logistics and Facilities Management (FM).

The OCR went live in September 2020 ahead of Expo Pavilions Premiere, with full-time (24/7) operations beginning in January 2021.

During the event, twice-daily briefings provided an overview of the day’s activities across site, ensuring the teams on the ground were aware of how busy the site could potentially get and what activities were in store for the day ahead. This also allowed, for example, the Facilities Management teams to ensure sufficient cleaning staff were available around areas where large volumes of visitors were to be expected.

Stakeholder integration in the EOC

While Expo 2020 was held in Dubai, it was a nationwide, collective event, and a number of external stakeholders from around the UAE were integrated into daily operations, both in the EOC and on the ground.

Clear communication among all stakeholders – both internal and external – was critical. In total, 364 briefings were held across 182 days, led by the Duty Operations Directors. A separate Arabic language briefing was also held each morning with Dubai Police and a number of other external stakeholders. Further briefings and other forms of daily communication cascaded to include teams working across the site.

Integration started with the formation of the City Readiness Committee in March 2019 [see Chapter 1], which defined the scope of different stakeholders, set expectations and ultimately oversaw a series of activities to

achieve readiness across all government partners. Over the course of the readiness period, Dubai Police and other emergency services moved to the site, occupying key roles, increasing their presence and building relationships with their Expo 2020 counterparts. Examples included collaboration between Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services, Dubai Civil Defence and Dubai Municipality, to assist with critical first aid dispatch, food safety and inspections.

Over the course of the event, the strong relationship between the MOC, Dubai Police and the TCC proved to be critical in delivering the basic operational services that would create an exceptional visitor experience. Prime examples of this were the various special events that required additional planning outside the business-as-usual process. The UAE National Day and Golden Jubilee celebrations involved significant

planning around the transport nodes and arrival gates, as well as events held in Al Wasl Plaza and Jubilee Park, in anticipation of a busy day on site. The reality was as expected, with the joint EOC team working hard to ensure the teams on the ground were well-supported to deal with the upturn in demand. This was tested to the extreme with the Metro arrivals and the operational plan put into place at the main 2020 Arrival Plaza.

The notion of a joint operations room on this scale had not been seen in the region before, and it was testament to both the detailed planning, preparedness before the event and willingness to build strong relationships, that ultimately scored the success that was achieved collectively. This was not only one the event’s key successes in terms of site operations, but a bedrock for all of the delivery that was to follow across the full six months.



Zonal structure

In order to effectively manage the operations of such a large footprint, the Expo 2020 site was split into six operational zones.

Within each zone, a dedicated Zone Head was responsible for the delivery of all operations, acting as the centralised coordination point across all functions for the duration of the event.

Supporting the Zone Heads were representatives from various departments. Each zone team worked together to collectively manage the daily operations and issues resolution within each respective zone.

This structure ensured the site was effectively managed, as each zone had its own, distinct operational structure. The zonal operational structures adapted to the

activity within. For example, the Thematic zones were focused on gates and district and participant integration activity within, while Al Wasl focused on the gate, the plaza itself and the integration with DEC.

Car parks and service zones were managed by a separate Operations Support Services team and external stakeholders.



Planning, decision-making and issue resolution

The Operations Planning Office (OPO) was responsible for event-time planning for each and every day of the event, working with both non-operations and operations functions to coordinate and ensure the delivery of seamless, cross-functional operations.

- Its scope included:
- Daily planning for the event (establishment of baseline plans)
 - Forecasting operational planning with a ‘look forward’ to the operations team
 - Assessing the impact of requested changes on baseline plans and/or events
 - Identifying and highlighting high-demand days and integrating into planning efforts
 - Supporting with ad-hoc activities/events
 - Coordinating workshops to drive the planning efforts of relevant teams

Expo 2020 Dubai also established Issue Resolution Groups (IRGs) to support significant issues that needed substantial traction from multiple stakeholders. While the majority of IRGs were actioned as face-to-face conversations, a specific virtual chat group was created for those that required more input and collaboration. Due to the collaboration and effective integration of all Expo 2020 Dubai functions and external stakeholders within the EOC, only four IRG WebEx spaces were created throughout the six-month period, which was testament to the ability to work through issues.

Contingency planning

As well as planning for daily operations on site, a number of contingency scenarios were also accounted for in the planning phase. A general crisis management procedure was put into place, in addition to detailed and specific incident management procedures for teams on the ground, with timeliness of response the priority.

In total, 15 key high-level contingency plans were drafted, edited and tested with a range of functions and external stakeholders. These ranged from various adverse weather scenarios, to technology failures, workforce shortfalls, and power outages. The Expo Pavilions Premiere also provided an invaluable opportunity to test and refine a number of plans, for example learning specific lessons from a period of National Mourning which impacted opening times, and also different weather situations affecting the opening.

Across the event, all but one of the contingency plans were deployed. Examples included a period of wet weather which coincided with New Year celebrations. Plans were put into action to not only deal with the immediate impact on site, but also to handle the recovery stage, including resolving leaks in pavilions etc. Ongoing risk assessments

were also required on New Year’s Eve itself, relating to the planned live entertainment and pyrotechnics.

The variety of scenarios that unfolded required the range of operational teams to step up to the challenge with the support of external stakeholders. Participants, partners and suppliers, ably supported by contingency checklists, also required guidance to ensure there was consistency across the Expo 2020 response. While testing at times, it highlighted the benefit of having the plans thoroughly written, tested, and trained beforehand. An example of this was an earthquake mid-event, which, although limited in its impact, saw all teams on the ground quickly and completely rolling out an agreed process.



SUPPORTING THE SITE

Protocol and Guest Services

A dedicated Protocol and Guest Services (PGS) function was responsible for bringing the Emirati spirit of hospitality to life, and supporting the delivery of an exceptional visitor experience for every visitor.

Protocol and hospitality

An event of Expo 2020 Dubai’s scale and magnitude welcomed VIP guests from all around the world. Visits from VIPs were both proactively planned and reactively operated, and it was vital that these visitors were received and accommodated in a manner befitting their rank and position.

Expo 2020 Dubai hosted 1,937 VIP visits, welcoming 16,949 VIP and VVIP individuals. - These included Heads of State and other senior figures arriving at Expo 2020 for their country’s National Day, as well as global business leaders and high-profile celebrities, each with their own specific protocol requirements. Often including security teams, their visits were commonly supported by the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and the State Security Department.

Services extended to VIPs and VVIPs included a dedicated Expo 2020 Protocol Officer, the facilitation of advance team visits, use of the heliport, scheduled visits to attractions through pre-approved routes, the management and distribution of gifts, and the facilitation of high-level meetings with UAE Government representatives. VIP visits were scheduled through a dedicated VIP Protocol Booking System.



With many VIP visits and service requests being raised at short notice (often on the same day), additional team members were drafted in from Sharjah Police and Ajman Police, with early training proving invaluable.

The highest number of VIPs and VVIPs visited in February, as Expo 2020 Dubai entered its final few weeks, and the top three most popular attractions were the UAE Pavilion, the Saudi Arabia Pavilion, and the Germany Pavilion.

Guest services

Seven distinctive and highly visible Visitor Centres located across the site provided a range of guest services, from charging stations and wheelchair rental, to lost and found services and quiet spaces for those with additional needs [see Chapter 7].

Contact Centre

Operating with multi-skilled, multi-lingual agents and leveraging technologies such as Interactive Voice Response (IVR), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools and

chatbots, the Contact Centre was a vital tool to engage with visitors both before and after their visits to Expo, responding to queries and complaints via telephone, email and social media, and dealing with issues ranging from ticket sales to lost and found to general enquiries on shows and attractions.

The Contact Centre completed in excess of 300,000 personal interactions, and a further 1.2 million automated interactions via chatbot. Complaints accounted for just 0.5 per cent of total interactions.

Airport Welcome Desks

Located in four terminals across the UAE’s major international airports, the Airport Welcome Desks served as a first point of contact and information for potential visitors arriving in the UAE. With desks operating 24/7, hosts answered general questions about Expo 2020 Dubai, distributed brochures, maps and programming calendars, as well as small promotional gifts. The Welcome Desks received more than 100,000 passenger walk-ins throughout the event.

Access and accreditation

A secure perimeter was implemented and phased in approximately one month prior to opening to prevent the unauthorised access of people and prohibited items and maintain the integrity and security of the Expo site.

Personnel accreditation

Accreditation ensured that the site operated efficiently, securely and seamlessly by identifying and registering all required personnel, including participants, their suppliers and workforce. In doing so, only qualified and eligible personnel had the access rights needed to perform their recognised role. All applications were subject to a background check. Once an individual was successfully accredited, they received an Accreditation Pass which identified them and granted them specific access privileges for their role.



Media accreditation

Accreditation for media ensured all press and broadcast organisations and their staff were granted the relevant access and made aware of regulatory requirements relating to filming, photography, and equipment. Dedicated media services and facilities were only made available to accredited media.



Vehicles Access and Parking Permit (VAPP)

Accreditation for vehicles, a VAPP, defined access and parking privileges in three scenarios:

- Performing an operational duty e.g. construction, delivery etc.
- Fulfilling a commercial or protocol commitment e.g. transportation of staff or visitors
- Providing access for the Commissioner General(s)

Vehicles requiring access to the site also had to enter Vehicle Screening Areas (VSA), where technology solutions and access protocols (such as accreditation documentation) were utilised to search and scan vehicles, drivers, passengers and cargo.



Pedestrian Screening Areas (PSAs)

After crossing the Entry Portals, arriving visitors went through COVID-19 and ticket checks before crossing the PSA lanes. Each arrival gate had more than 20 PSA lanes, which opened and closed in response to visitor flow. Dedicated PSAs for Expo's workforce facilitated their smooth and efficient access.

The PSAs were an example of a number of entities working closely together to offer visitors a seamless operational journey, with a typical entry journey involving the Roads & Transport Authority, Dubai Police, Transport Operations, Site Operations, Protocol and Guest Services, Security Operations and Ticketing Operations.

Prohibited items

Prohibited items were strictly forbidden from the Expo site, and included items considered unsafe for use on site, such as Segways and roller-skates, as well as any items deemed illegal under UAE law.

Security Operations

Expo aimed to provide an exceptional visitor experience without any adverse security incidents and set new benchmarks for the security approach to major events.

Dubai Police was naturally a critical stakeholder in these efforts, overseeing overall command and control of the event's security and direct security operations across the site. The responsibilities of Dubai Police included monitoring all CCTV feeds and leading the principal response to any security incident. Dubai Police also coordinated with other relevant federal and local security authorities as part of an overall integrated security strategy. A number of private security service providers were also deployed to support the day-to-day event operations and address any on-the-ground incidents, with backup provided

by Dubai Police. Additionally, they supported activities such as access control, patrols, screening of vehicles and the monitoring of security systems.

Dubai Police was also responsible for conducting Threat and Risk Assessments (T&RA), which were aligned to international best practices and evolved as the identification and likelihood of risks changed in the lead up to and during the event. T&RA were also used to support strategic-level decision-making, prioritise resources and develop mitigation measures, with the overall aim of protecting people, infrastructure, information and processes.

Managing objects or activity in Expo 2020 airspace involved close communication and integration with a number of regulators, including Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and the Ministry of Defence, to ensure the relevant processes were followed, including securing permits. The Expo Airspace Security Management Portal and Unmanned Traffic Management system provided a centralised platform to track and manage all Expo's aerial activities and services, including the operations of drones, helicopters, falcons, fireworks, kites, lasers, pyrotechnics and light shows.

Security operations also included supporting VVIP personal security on site, coordinating emergency response and integration with the emergency services, vehicle searches and screening and the coordination of all security related stakeholders.

Expo 2020 harnessed the latest in security-related technology and innovation, including Drive Identification Systems, Under Vehicle Surveillance Systems, Face Recognition Systems, Explosive Trace Systems and Perimeter Intruder Detection Systems.

Technology Operations

A dedicated team, located in the Technology Operations Centre (TOC), was tasked with operating Expo 2020 Dubai’s digital products and services, enabling data analytics and business intelligence services and operating all information communications technologies (ICT) infrastructure. This extended to providing technical support to third-party stakeholders including Dubai Police, Dubai Civil Defence, Dubai Health Authority and the Ministry of Interior.

During the event, the TOC handled in excess of 57,000 service requests and incidents, with preventative maintenance and regular simulations and technical rehearsals ensuring ICT infrastructure availability remained at 99.9 per cent across all networks and clouds.

Media Operations

Media was a critical stakeholder in taking the Expo message far and wide, driving visitation and supporting the positioning of the UAE internationally.

More than 11,000 local and international media were accredited to cover the event physically, providing them with access to the world-class Expo Media Centre, located in the heart of the site, and a wide range of services and facilities, including:

- Work space within the multi-storey Expo Media Centre
- The timely relay of information through information desks, digital screens, media briefings and conferences
- Access to a rich bank of written and visual content
- Suitable media spaces, camera positions and photo positions in key areas across the site
- Broadcast compounds for mobile production control and satellite transmission
- Rate card services for other ancillary requirements

Logistics

Operating on a 24/7 basis, a dedicated team oversaw the import and export of exhibits, retail items and operational assets for international participants. This included collecting items from the countries of origin, transporting them via the relevant means of freight, providing packaging, being responsible for customs documentation, processing and clearance on arrival in Dubai, and transferring to Expo’s warehouse facilities. Based within the secure Expo site and operating as a Free Zone for customs purposes, Expo’s warehouse spanned almost 30,000sqm and was used to facilitate the handling and storage of assets required for the duration of Expo 2020 as well as uniform distribution operations, which provided uniform to over 30,000 staff and volunteers.

The team was also responsible for providing catering to Expo’s extensive workforce, consisting of Expo staff, government stakeholders, contractors and participants’ employees. More than 16,500 meals were provided every day from three different facilities.

Facilities Management

An exceptional visitor experience relied on a site that was clean and safe at all times, while also ensuring physical assets were well-maintained and preserved for legacy. A dedicated team oversaw all general cleaning, deep cleaning, sanitisation and specialist cleaning, and ensured these services had minimal impact on the visitor during opening hours.

Facilities Management also included the continuous planned, preventative, reactive and corrective maintenance of the Expo site and its facilities, including mechanical, electrical, plumbing and HVAC services, as well as landscaping and pest control.

A Computer Aided Facility Management system ensured all work orders were captured and the benchmarks for service levels across site were met.

Cleaning and waste management services were also offered to participants and commercial outlets on a rate card basis.

Transport Operations

With transport one of the first and last touchpoints in the Expo visitor journey, Transport Operations were people-focused, rather than operations-driven, ensuring a seamless experience across a range of transport options for visitors, participants and workforce – while also considering Expo’s commitment to sustainability.

Arriving on site

Delivering superior Expo 2020 traffic operations, transport and parking services required early planning, extensive testing and continuous fine-tuning – as well as close collaboration with the Roads & Transport Authority and Dubai Police. This included the development and implementation of detailed operational plans for easing traffic congestion around the vicinity of the site.

A number of ambitious targets were set to ensure an optimal visitor experience and increase repeat visitation, including:

- Limiting waiting time for Metro passengers to two minutes during peak times
- Limiting waiting time for bus passengers to 15 minutes for Dubai and 30 minutes for other emirates during peak times
- Finding a free parking space within five minutes after entering the car park
- Limiting waiting time for a car park shuttle bus to three minutes during peak times
- Using technology to count vehicles in and out of public parking, with a guidance system helping drivers find free spaces
- Supporting public parking operations with RTA staff

Moving around the site

While the Expo site was designed primarily as a walkable space, with shading and plenty of opportunities for visitors to sit and rest, a range of onsite transport options was available, further enhancing the visitor experience for people of all ages and abilities [see Chapter 7].

For example, due to a steady increase in demand for mobility across the site, more than 700 buggies were deployed. Enhanced safety training and regular communication on safe driving behaviours among the workforce ensured safe buggy operations.



85,000
mechanical, electrical and plumbing assets maintained



5.5 million
work hours completed



6.2 million
biodegradable waste bags used



250,700
litres of hand soap and sanitiser used



90
beehives relocated



700,000
shrubs and 11,000 trees maintained



Getting to Expo 2020

Metro
In preparation for Expo 2020, the Dubai Roads & Transport Authority extended Dubai Metro, one of the most advanced and modern rail systems in the world. The Expo Metro Station, Expo’s dedicated station, is able to serve an estimated 22,000 passengers at peak hours in each direction and allowed passengers to directly exit the Metro station and enter the site.

Expo Rider
The Expo Rider was a dedicated public bus service created specifically for Expo 2020 Dubai, provided and operated by the RTA. Available from 15 different locations within Dubai and a further nine inter-emirate stations, it was free to passengers with a valid Expo 2020 Dubai ticket. During peak hours, headway was based on forecast demand, and varied according to the route. Extra stand-by buses were available to accommodate additional demand and a courtesy shuttle operated on a request/ad hoc basis to support individuals who mistakenly exited Expo 2020 Dubai at a different gate to that which they entered. While seats were allocated on a first come, first served basis, tokens were issued to passengers on inbound journeys so they would be guaranteed a seat on their return.

Taxi and e-hail
Taxis from six operators and e-hail companies could be hailed on the street, picked up at taxi stations or booked by phone, and were also available via e-hail apps. Taxis operated before, during and after Expo’s opening hours, with more than 140 drop-off and pick-up taxi bays and large staging areas at all four visitor gates. The Expo site was geo-fenced, so when e-hail customers requested a vehicle, the relevant app informed them to proceed to the closest pick up point and the next available vehicle. When inside the vehicle, the visitor then shared a code generated by the e-hail app with the driver.

Car
The Expo 2020 site offered more than 30,000 public parking spaces, free of charge. Visitor Parking was open from 0800 until 60 minutes after the visitor gates officially closed. Parking lots located more than 600 metres from the plazas offered a free car park shuttle service provided by the RTA. A paid Valet Parking Service was also available.

Car park shuttle service
To accommodate the expected volume of visitors, 72 buses, each with a capacity of 70 passengers, provided easy access from the car parks to the Entry Portals. The service operated on a high-frequency basis, with load zone attendants responsible for queue management and customer service, and communicating with drivers to ensure safe boarding and disembarking.

Public parking spaces

General public	30,473
People of Determination	456
Valet	1,545
Nissan	609
Dubai Exhibition Centre	1,300
Total	34,383

Guest parking spaces

VIP	750
Premium	1,300
Media	154
Coach	387
Total	2,591



PRIORITISING HEALTH AND SAFETY



From the earliest stages of planning, Expo 2020 was committed to implementing, monitoring, evaluating and improving health and safety policies and standards, ensuring a safe and secure Expo for all.

A dedicated Health and Safety team was established, with an overarching Event Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Policy setting out core values, strategic pillars, objectives and targets.

A 'Commitments' document focused on the organisational and individual leadership behaviours required to develop a positive HSE culture, while a detailed 'Standards' guide, developed for both organisers and participants, defined HSE requirements applicable to event-time operations. A set of 'Promises' established key behaviours linked to significant hazards, including working at height, working in the heat and fire safety.



Achievements and challenges

Across six months, Expo 2020 Dubai's diverse programme of events provided visitors with an incredibly rich experience – and it came with a number of operational challenges, including:



Temporary structures

The need to quickly install and break down a large number of temporary structures including stages, floodlights, screens and seating involved coordination between a range of functions and external stakeholders, including approvals for engineering; adverse weather; and comprehensive risk assessments and method statements for installation, use and breakdown.



Weather

From fog and heavy rain to lightning and winds of up to 60 kph, the six months of Expo featured a significant range of weather phenomena. Contingency plans for different scenarios had been developed and were effectively deployed in response to accurate, real-time temperature, humidity, wind speed and rain data from an on-site weather station and proactive advice and updates from the National Centre of Meteorology. Alerts and forecasts were displayed on a tailored dashboard in the MOC, and distributed onwards to teams on the ground.



Fire safety

As the fireworks and pyrotechnics programme ramped up, so did the the regular review of firing points and storage areas, as well as collaboration with external stakeholders, such as Dubai Police. Fire and lift safety audits had been completed for all pavilions, buildings and exhibitions and, as a result, there were no significant fire incidents at Expo 2020 Dubai.



Medical situations

Close coordination between the Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services, based in the MOC, as well as Dubai Police, ensured excellent response times for paramedics on site. More than 415 Emergency Action Plans were developed in preparation for the various venues on site, and regular health and safety training was offered to the workforce, with excellent uptake by senior leadership in particular.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY

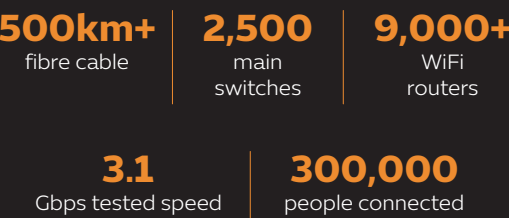
World Expos have always been showcases for science and technology, revealing some of the greatest innovations of their time, from the touchscreen and x-ray, to the telephone and elevator. They have provided a tantalising glimpse into the future, inspiring people of all ages to imagine a world where such technologies are in widespread use.

Expo 2020 was proud to continue and expand this legacy, with visitors not only discovering a huge range of technological innovations, but also experiencing first-hand (and directly benefitting from) technology as a tool capable of transforming societies and advancing and empowering humanity. Innovation for the greater good was a thread that ran throughout Expo's entire operations in the run-up to and during the event, and is the root of its legacy as a clean, green, innovation-driven destination. As such, examples of the positive, real-world impact of technology at Expo can be seen throughout this report.

As reflected in its theme, 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future', the concept of connectivity underpinned all of Expo 2020. Indeed, Expo fostered collaboration and new connections that would spur a host of new technological innovations through carefully selected partnerships and home-grown initiatives such as Expo Live.



Providing cutting-edge connectivity across the site was essential. The Expo 2020 5G network, delivered by Etisalat, Expo's Telecommunications and Digital Services Partner, in collaboration with Cisco, Expo's Network Equipment Partner, was the first commercial installation of its type in the region, covering the entire site.



This infrastructure was a key enabler of Expo's innovative digital solutions, including the Internet of Things (IoT), which saw devices interact with each other.

Building on this, Siemen's MindSphere acted – as the central nervous system of Expo's physical infrastructure, connecting more than 130 buildings and 200,000 data points – the largest installation of its kind in the world. Using sensors and analytics, MindSphere monitored and controlled building functions, such as security access, lighting control, elevators, air quality, noise, wind speed and even security and fire alarms. During the event, the data from these systems was managed in the Main Operations Centre and Zone Operations Centres, helping reduce energy usage and water consumption, enhance the comfort of visitors, and increase safety and security.

Siemens, Expo's Infrastructure Digitalisation Partner, also worked closely with Expo to develop a web-based smart city app, used for the first time at the event, to provide actionable insights based on the huge amounts of data collected across the site. In support of Expo's sustainability goals,

smart irrigation systems were used to monitor water usage and optimise water consumption by correlating data from weather and soil sensors. Flow-rate sensors detected the amount of water dispensed, checked for any potential leaks in the irrigation loops, and flagged any issues that might otherwise have gone unnoticed.

The lessons learned would lay the foundations on which cities of the future are built, connected, and run, putting technology at the service of the planet, driven by a concern for wellbeing and a desire to leave a light footprint.

Expo also harnessed technology to enhance the health and wellness of its workers building the Expo site, offering a high-tech wristband that recorded physiological data and even recognised early signs of health problems before they became physically manifest. The wearable device, known as a Whoop strap and available on a voluntary basis, measured strain, sleep and recovery and resulted in more preventative healthcare measures being taken [see Chapter 2].

Further embodying the theme of 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future', Expo 2020 sought out Partners at the forefront of their fields in technology and innovation [see Chapter 3].

Connectivity and hosting platforms formed the building blocks of infrastructure and networks (Cisco and Etisalat). This foundation facilitated communication with business systems (SAP and Accenture) as well as building and security management systems (Siemens), and played a key role in critical operational processes, such as accreditation (Accenture and Canon). Partner technologies greatly enhanced visitor engagement through the website and mobile app (Accenture), robots powered by artificial intelligence (Terminus) and spectacular

on-site displays (Christie), while ensuring effective privacy and security (Digital 14, Esharah and G42).

More widely, Partners' exhibits helped show how a more sustainable lifestyle could be achieved (Dulscos and PepsiCo), touching on future economic and payment systems (Emirates NBD and Mastercard), while visitors were introduced to the future of travel and transport (Emirates and Nissan) and trade (DP World) and the next breakthroughs in energy innovation (DEWA and ENOC).

These present and future aspects would not only be exhibited, but prototyped, tested and implemented at Expo 2020.

As the lines between the physical and digital world become increasingly blurred, it seems natural that the first World Expo held in the UAE and Middle East, a region experiencing rapid and transformational development, would be experienced in both realms simultaneously. The most compelling and complete way Expo could be experienced by virtual visitors was on the Virtual Expo website, which enabled users to experience a re-creation of the Expo site and pavilions in 3D and included 360-degree interior footage of many pavilions. Events, performances and ceremonies, either live or recorded, were also available on demand.

236 TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

**61 END-USER
MANAGED**
Archiving, Food Safety
Monitoring, Brand Portal, Health
& Safety, Payment Gateway,
Public Address and Voice Alarm
System, Replate, Sentiment
Analysis, Swapcard, eLearning

34 TECHNOLOGY INFRA- STRUCTURE PROJECTS

Middleware, Hosting, Network
Design and Implementation,
Disaster Recovery, On Site Data
Centre Set Up and Management,
Displays, Robotics, Visitor
Experience Design

178 BUSINESS SYSTEMS

**12 REAL ESTATE &
DEVELOPMENT**
Construction Schedule
Management, Construction Cost
Management, Risk Management,
Document Management,
Building Information
Modelling, Commissioning

**31 FRONT OF
HOUSE**
Expo 2020 Website, Expo
Participant Portal, Youth
Portal, Media Portal, Mobile
App, Retail in a Box, Ticketing,
Visitor Assistant

**20 PHYSICAL
SECURITY**
Baggage Screening, Vehicle
Screening, Integrated Building
Management, Access
Management, Video
Management, Mobile Device
Management, Airspace Tracking,
Security Management System

24 CYBER SECURITY SYSTEMS

**51 BACK OF
HOUSE**
Campaign Management,
Enterprise Resource Planning,
Employee Portal, Customer
Relationship Management,
Master Content Management,
Computer Aided Facilities
Management, Command &
Control Platform

**3 VIRTUAL
EXPO**
Expo 2020 Dubai Xplorer
App, Virtual Expo World,
Minecraft World

Smooth and seamless

Ensuring the smooth and seamless development and delivery of Expo’s vast technology operation was a dedicated team, which worked closely with internal and external stakeholders, including Dubai Police and the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority. In the lead-up to the event, the team and partners successfully delivered 236 projects and implemented more than 178 business systems, providing the technology infrastructure to deliver the services required by Expo 2020, its participants and visitors both before, during and after the event.

While many IT solutions deployed for Expo 2020 leveraged packaged software configured to fit Expo’s specific

requirements, a number of systems were built especially for Expo 2020, such as the Expo 2020 Mobile App, the One-Stop Shop – the online portal that seamlessly linked participants to Expo 2020, authorities, providers and suppliers [see Chapter 3] – and the award-winning Media Asset Management System, as well as bespoke solutions for managing Expo Live grants and an app offering visitors a free PCR redemption code.

In addition, more than 55,000 physical IT assets were installed across the site, from laptops and tablets to high-end servers, projectors, displays, as well as mobile ticketing devices and points of sale. These assets included the network hardware and cabling to support the WiFi and wired

network, the physical security network, and the media network.

During the event, IFT Operations and partners’ focus shifted from project delivery to delivering critical technology services, including:

- Incident and service request management
- Maintenance and support of cloud platforms, data centres and live business systems, and the fixed line and WiFi network
- Cyber security monitoring and threat response
- Spectrum management to minimise interference between radio devices



Supporting an exceptional visitor experience

Working with Terminus, Expo’s Official Robotics Partner, Expo deployed 152 programmable robots to engage with visitors and enhance their experience.

The friendly orange robots modelled after Opti, one of the Expo 2020 mascots, would prove to be hugely popular at Expo 2020. Fitted with a multi-touch display and AI-driven object mapping and detection, the Opti robots acted as goodwill ambassadors, greeting visitors, performing in special displays, taking selfies and offering guidance and assistance.

The attendant robot, with voice interaction, provided information to visitors and answered general Expo enquiries, while the patrol robot offered 360-degree surveillance, 24/7 patrols, fire monitoring and a mobile emergency alarm, among other core competencies.

Robots deployed by Expo’s Official Food Delivery Provider talabat provided zero-contact delivery and vending services to deliver dishes from its cloud kitchen to customers around the site, combining convenience with safety.

An AI-powered chatbot, Amal, developed in collaboration with Accenture and Smart Dubai, provided information on shows and attractions, and enabled visitors to interact and give feedback in real-time. Available in 10 languages, including English and Arabic, on both the Expo 2020 Dubai website and the mobile app, Amal could process and analyse large volumes of information to answer visitors’ questions accurately and quickly. She was also designed to learn and automatically develop and improve the service through natural language processing.

Expo also used advanced software and specialist WiFi positioning technology to help

forecast and manage crowd movements across the site, while an intelligent Smart Queue system offered guests the ability to reserve a specific time slot at participating pavilions, without having to wait in potentially lengthy queues.

Virtual Expo

The Virtual Expo concept was conceived during the bidding stage of Expo 2020 Dubai when, in 2012, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, said the UAE would not only host the best physical World Expo, but also the most advanced digital and augmented experience World Expo.

Intended to widen the impact of Expo 2020 Dubai, the virtual offering positioned Expo as a digital-forward entity and increased viewership by enabling ‘visitation’ from around the world from as many types of visitors as possible.

While Virtual Expo’s dialogues and digital recreations would not fully supplant the immersive experiences around Expo 2020 Dubai and inside the pavilions, many of which were designed to be experienced using the five senses, they acted as teasers for potential visitors intrigued to visit in person, and allowed many more to explore digitally, taking Expo’s collective messages around the world.

The ability to virtually explore and easily access the architecture removed barriers to visitation of cost and circumstance, and allowed Expo to reach youth and non-traditional audiences driven by curiosity around new virtual experiences. Similarly, the extensive range of diverse, entertaining and immersive content attracted visitors of varying ages, backgrounds and personas, and ensured repeat virtual visitation.

The depth of information and wide range of experiences – including website, app, video game, interactive tours, 3D explorative maps, video on demand, live-streaming, interactive live-streaming, hybrid events, augmented reality and podcasts – bred a rich familiarity with the themes and mission of Expo 2020 Dubai during the event and beyond, while also encouraging the active participation of a global community, building understanding and engagement towards the key issues of the day.

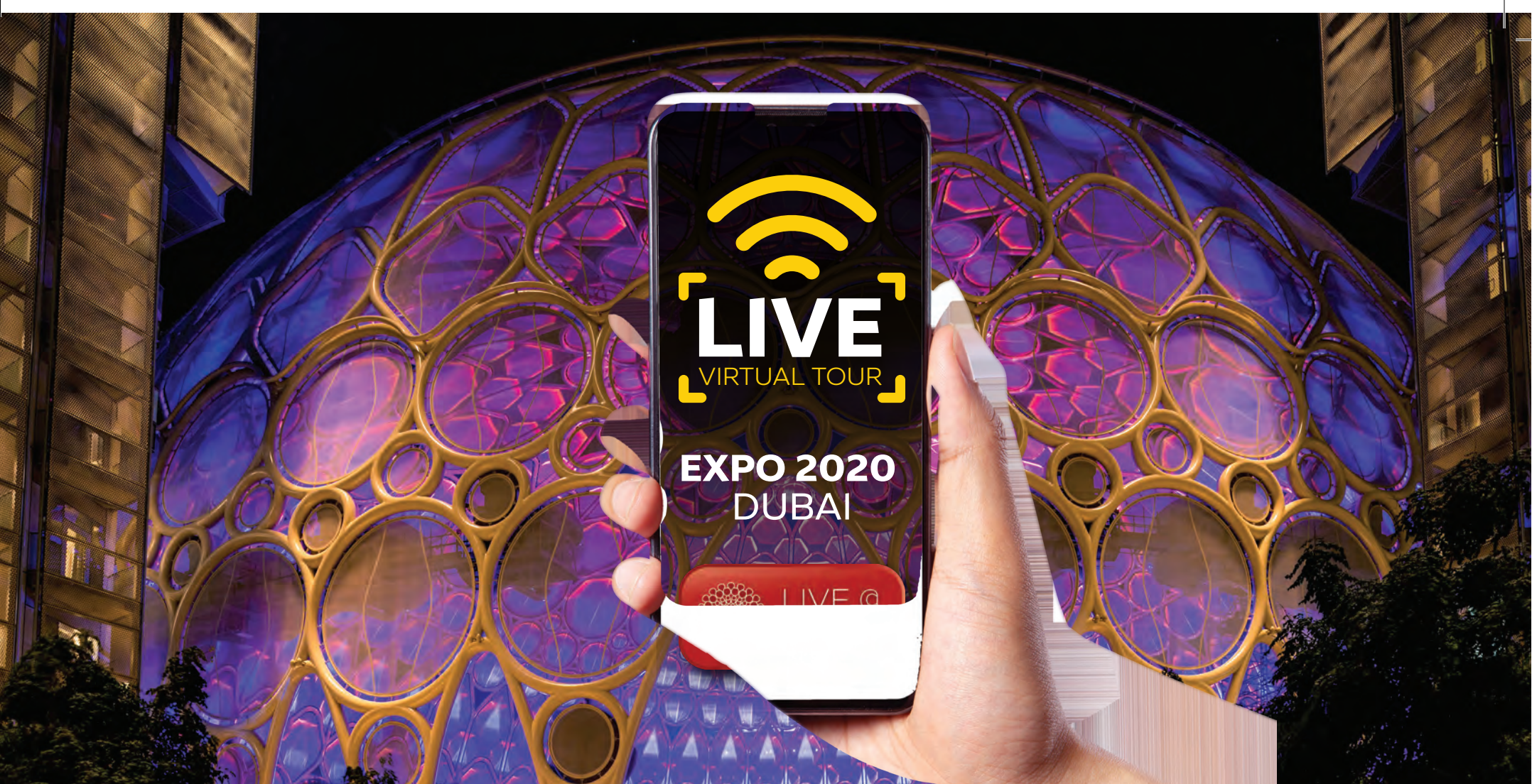
With the onset of the global pandemic, borders closing and lockdowns in place, it was clear that many visitors, particularly from outside the UAE, would be unable to attend Expo 2020 Dubai. At the same time, global audiences were turning to virtual spaces for connection and becoming more comfortable with online interactions and communication.

To open up Expo 2020 to those who could not physically travel and ensure participants’ content was accessible far and wide, the team enhanced the virtual offering that had been planned from the bid phase, upgrading systems and boosting technology to ensure disruption-free access to as many virtual visitors as possible, regardless of restrictions on physical movement.

The platform was modified to live on as a lasting ‘time capsule’ for future generations.

Over the course of the event, Expo 2020 Dubai received

251.2 MILLION VIRTUAL VISITORS



VirtualExpoDubai.com website

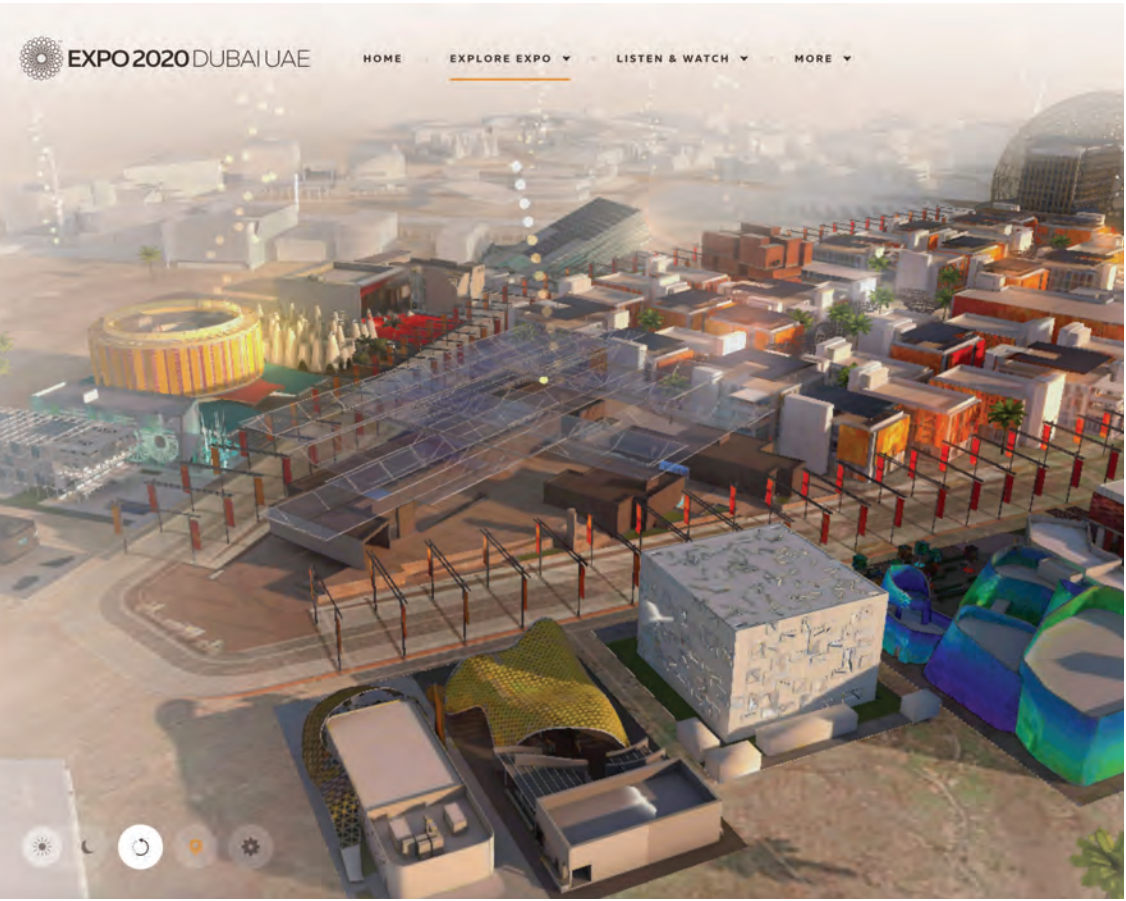
The website presented a 3D-stylised exterior representation of the site, with the majority of pavilion interiors having a 360-degree virtual offering that enabled visitors to ‘walk through’ and experience the site as close to reality as possible.

A total of 269 pavilion and site feature tours were made available for virtual visitors to view and experience on the website, using a conventional browser. The most popular pavilions by virtual visitation included Japan, India, UAE, Italy, USA, China, Republic of Korea, Germany, Saudi Arabia and Australia. Tours were provided in two formats: a longer, enriched version for VirtualExpoDubai.com and an abbreviated version for the Expo Dubai Xplorer app. All tours were available in Arabic and English.

A key objective of VirtualExpoDubai.com was to ensure almost every event, concert, performance, talk and ceremony was streamed live and stored as video on demand, so users could enjoy the Expo experience at any time, from anywhere.

Expo Dubai Xplorer app

A stylised virtual world representation of the Expo 2020 physical site, the Expo Dubai Xplorer app enabled both on-site and off-site visitors to engage with digital and augmented-reality content. Featuring treasure hunts, puzzles and incredible creatures, visitors took part in quests with Expo characters to explore the whole world in one place; they collected Expo Digital Passport stamps while visiting different Country Pavilions; and pledged ‘Seeds of Change’ to the causes of their choice [see Chapter 6].



Live@Expo

Taking virtual visitors through an interactive, live-streamed tour of the Expo site, exploring pavilions, installations and site features, as well as meeting the people of Expo 2020 Dubai and its participants, Live@Expo spanned 100 episodes, running four times a week from October 2021 until the end of March 2022.

All stops on Live@Expo tours had a greeter, allowing audiences to understand the intention of the experiences from its representatives, with added gameplay and interactive moments such as trivia polls and quizzes to bolster audience engagement.

18 million
virtual visitors

100
episodes

Audiences were highly engaged with the content, with social channels continuously registering high interactions and positive feedback from viewers who appreciated being able to view Country Pavilions and learn about the world, and a number of viewers making physical ‘guest appearances’.

Expo 2020 Dubai Minecraft

Virtual Expo included a dedicated Expo 2020 Dubai Minecraft Adventure Map, as well as a presence in Minecraft: Education Edition that featured several lesson plans for teachers to use in their classrooms, enabling students from across the world to dive deeply into Expo and its themes using play.

The Expo 2020 Dubai site was recreated in Minecraft, with gameplay featuring quests, time-travel portals, puzzles, mini-games and treasure hunts, to allow players to explore Expo 2020 Dubai and its themes as well as World Expos and their history.

Gameplay was anchored in the experiences and subthemes of the three Thematic Pavilions as well as three historic World Expo structures (Crystal Palace, the Eiffel Tower and the Atomium), and was created around

the Expo 2020 Dubai mascots: Latifa and Rashid and robot guardians Alif, Terra and Opti. NPCs (Non-Player Characters) included Expo scientists, changemakers and robots as well as characters from previous Expos including architects and famous World Expo visitors.

For the Education Edition, nine lesson plans were created through a collaboration with a Minecraft-focused digital entity: one for each of the three subtheme and age groups as defined by the Expo 2020 School Programme [see Chapter 6].

As of April 2022, Expo 2020 Dubai Minecraft was in the top five maps for Minecraft players, with more than one million downloads, with the offering continuing in legacy.

School tour animation series

Expo 2020 Dubai invited children from all over the world to embark on an in-depth, edutainment journey into each of Expo 2020’s Thematic Pavilions, complete with virtual guided tours, animation and games, and led by animated robot mascots Opti, Terra and Alif.

Immersive, interactive, innovative and engaging, around 6.1 million users accessed the interactive game version, while more than 2.2 million watched the linear tours in one of seven languages.



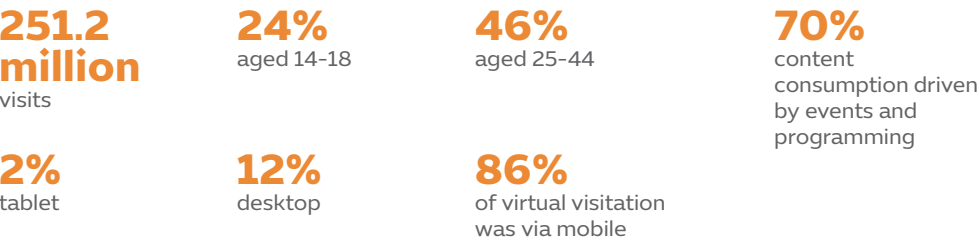
Expo 2020 Dubai podcasts

The Expo 2020 Dubai podcasts (Inside Expo, Innovate with Purpose, and People and Planet) provided an audio medium featuring behind-the-scenes stories about Expo 2020 Dubai, Expo Live Global Innovators and the Programme for People and Planet, enhancing visitors' understanding of Expo and its offerings, in addition to extending audiences to reach global podcast listeners. As of 1 April 2022, more than half a million virtual visitors downloaded the official Expo 2020 Dubai podcasts.

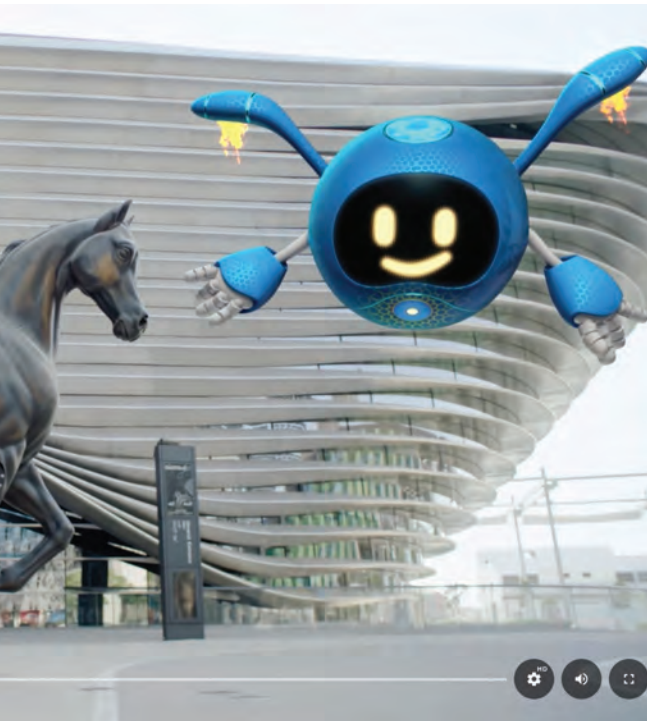
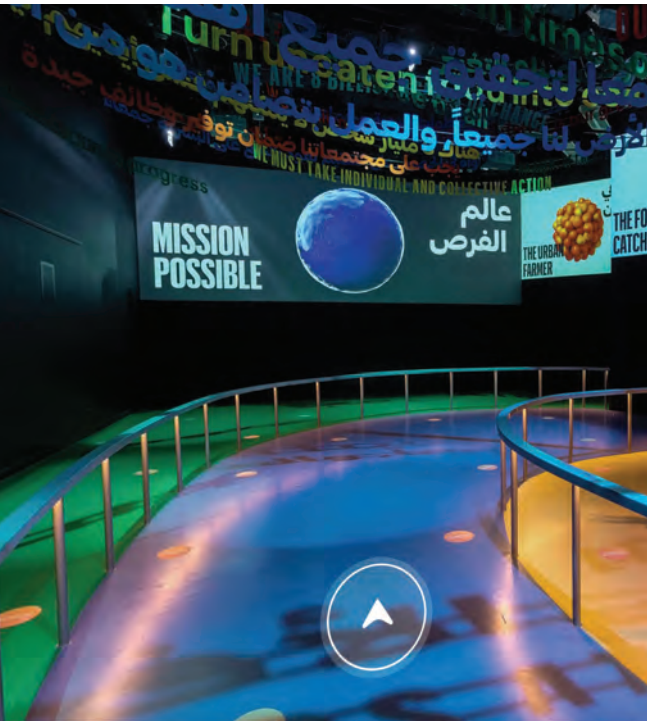
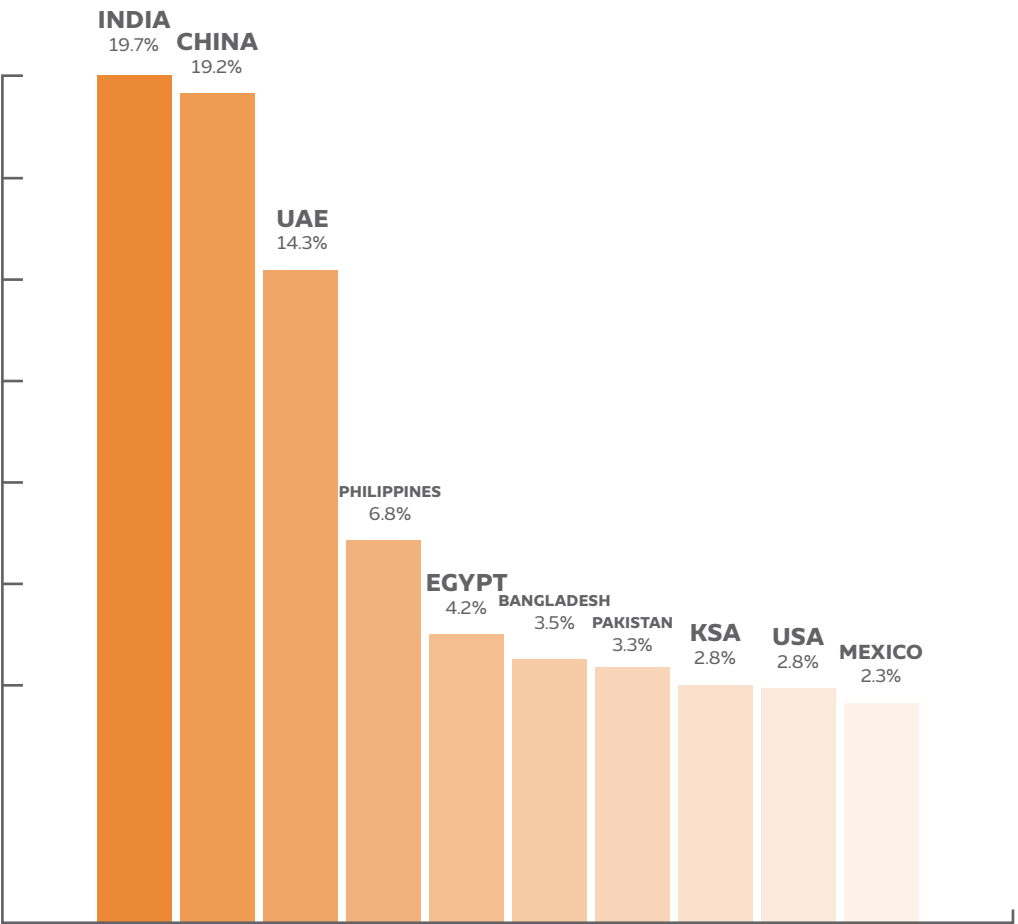
A lasting 'time capsule'

The vast majority of Expo-owned content will remain accessible on VirtualExpoDubai.com, as a time capsule of the event, ensuring curious minds – including educators, youth, researchers and mega-event organisers – have access to Expo's subthemes, events, messages and impact, long after Expo's doors closed.

A global virtual community



TOP 10 COUNTRIES FOR VIRTUAL VISITATION



Dissolution

Post-event, Expo's focus turned to ensuring technology's critical role in Expo's legacy, while continuing to support the organisation in its transition phase. This involved decommissioning hundreds of services and collecting thousands of physical assets – from staff laptops to ticket scanners and venue display screens – as well as backing up and archiving the huge amount of data generated by Expo. A valuable source of knowledge and learning, this information included creative content, policies, guides and procedures, as well as plans, designs and financial records.

A vision of the future

Innovation is at the core of the UAE's development strategy. In the words of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai: "Our goal is to create an integrated environment for innovation, which will foster the generation, incubation, and implementation of ideas and will continuously measure their effectiveness. Innovation is the capital of the future."

In February 2018, His Highness announced the National Strategy for Advanced Innovation, designed to transform the UAE into a global laboratory for experiments and ideas. Expo 2020 was fully aligned with this strategy, from driving commercial partnerships, to supporting new sectors such as Artificial Intelligence and Robotics, and engaging with the next generation.

Expo's technology efforts also laid the foundation for transforming the Expo 2020 site into a global technology hub in its legacy phase [see Chapter 8]. Its advanced technology infrastructure and high-speed telecommunications are attracting some of the world's leading tech and smart city brands, while flexible, scalable and future-proof networks, which reduce the need for costly upgrades and additional investments, will see more corporations, SMEs and entrepreneurs find a cutting-edge home at Expo City Dubai.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

From ‘always-on’ storytelling and brand campaigns, to tactical activations, sponsorships and media partnerships, Expo’s message reached audiences around the world, building awareness and excitement, driving visitation, stimulating emotions, ideas and actions, and ultimately enhancing the event’s long-term impact.

To achieve this, Expo established a robust Marketing and Communications strategy in the run-up to and during the event, which included developing a range of award-winning content platforms and providing world-class media services that drove widespread coverage of Expo and its participants.

Brand

The Expo 2020 brand was seen – and continues to be seen – by a global audience and was used to inform all Expo 2020’s physical and digital touchpoints, ensuring every interaction with the event was a visually cohesive experience.

The delivery of an exceptional Expo would not have been possible without the support raised through Official Partnerships, which included the protected right to associate themselves officially with Expo 2020 and its relevant Intellectual Property. Therefore, all names, words, marks and logos relating

to Expo 2020 Dubai, its programmes and initiatives were legally protected and owned by Expo 2020.

Participants were also given exclusive rights to associate with the Expo 2020 Dubai brand, with Official and Non-Official Participant Brand Guidelines providing clear instructions.



Pre-event time brand



Event-time brand



The Expo logo: A gift from history

March 2016 marked a significant milestone in the Expo 2020 story, with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, revealing the official Expo 2020 logo in a public, televised event at the foot of the Burj Khalifa.

The ring-shaped logo was inspired by a 4,000-year-old piece of jewellery found at Saruq Al Hadid, a spectacular desert landscape and one of the area’s most significant and enigmatic ancient archaeological sites, discovered by His Highness in 2002.

To date, more than 23,000 artefacts have been excavated at the Saruq Al Hadid site, including exquisitely carved daggers, copper and bronze axe heads, arrowheads, models of snakes, ceramics and ornate jewellery. Evidence of more than 5,000 years of activity, the items also revealed the story of a highly advanced civilisation that traded extensively with the region, and a thriving oasis in the desert that served as a meeting place for cultures and ideas.

The discovery of this ancient site and its importance for understanding the deep and rich history of the Emirates is the subject of a documentary ‘Saruq al Hadid: Dubai’s Iron Age’, which premiered during Expo 2020 Dubai and is available to watch on Expo 2020’s YouTube channel, Expo TV and Virtual Expo.

“The Expo 2020 logo represents our message to the world that our civilisation has deep roots. We were and will always be a pot that gathers civilisations and a centre for innovation.”

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, 2016

Key marketing campaigns - pre-event

In the lead-up to opening, Expo 2020's marketing efforts continued to build momentum, reaching people around the world through a variety of channels.

'Hands' campaign
January 2018

Marking exactly 1,000 days before the original opening of Expo 2020, this multi-channel campaign showed hands of all sizes, colours and ages come together to form easily recognisable shapes. Celebrating the power of human collaboration and inspiring people to think about what Expo 2020 could enable them to build and create, the campaign made in excess of one billion impressions on social media in more than 195 markets.



'The World is Better Together'
May 2019

Filmed in the UAE, India and Kenya, a 60-second film showed world-famous footballer Lionel Messi and people around the planet connecting through the universal language of football as they kept the Expo 2020 ball airborne through teamwork. As part of the initiative, Expo 2020 also gave 2,020 durable footballs to children in Jordan, Kenya and the Philippines, totalling 6,060 balls.



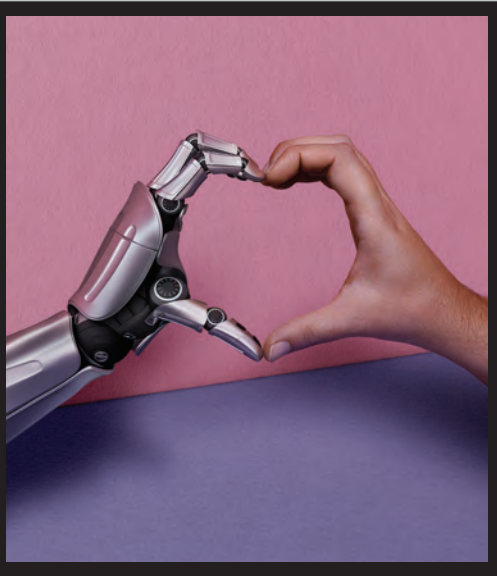
'The Magic of Expo'
July 2021

Shot on site and showing real experiences, this showcased the beauty and diversity of the programming that Expo would offer. The campaign included hundreds of different assets and adaptations speaking to different audience segments and interests and had a clear call to action – buy your tickets now!



'Welcome the Future'
March 2019

We humans have achieved a lot in our time, from probing ocean floors to walking in outer space – but we're not done yet. This was the message of the 'Welcome the Future' campaign, in which a 90-second film highlighted that everyone on the planet has a contribution to make to a better world. The hero video received almost 1.6 billion impressions and in excess of 338 million views.



'Be There'
October 2019

Starring rapper, singer, songwriter and producer will.i.am in English and Emirati artist Hussain Al Jassmi in Arabic, the 'Be There' campaign compared the potential of Expo 2020 with some of humankind's greatest feats. Featuring mesmerising scenes of virtual reality and technological wonder – from a child petting a winged CGI horse to luminescent butterflies flapping their wings – it also launched 'The World's Greatest Show' key visual, used for global distribution across digital and printed Out of Home channels. Created in seven different languages across 12 different markets, 'Be There' received in excess of 1.2 billion video views and drove an additional 7.8 million new users to the Expo 2020 website.



'What to Expect'
May 2021

In the months before opening, a series of simple yet visually compelling short films enabled visitors to understand – and get excited about – what they could expect when Expo opened its doors. This hyper-targeted campaign appealed directly to Expo's target markets, including the UAE and wider GCC, France, Germany, Russia, India and the USA, and received more than 210 million views.



Community engagement

In 2019, one year ahead of Expo’s original opening, a nationwide engagement programme was launched that sought to further accelerate the sense of national pride, excitement and ownership that had been ignited at the very start of the Expo journey.

Taking place under the banner ‘Hayyakum’ – a traditional Arabic word meaning ‘welcome’ – the programme was a call to action that would be heard across the nation, and featured a series of community events and activations and opportunities for direct engagement.

In May 2019, members of the Expo tribe, as well as Partners and volunteers, distributed approximately 25,000 boxes containing sweets from around the world, a letter and other small Expo-branded gifts, to households and communities across the seven emirates. Taking place during the Holy Month of Ramadan, the initiative brought the deep-rooted Emirati traditions of hospitality and generosity to life, whilst also providing an invaluable opportunity for Expo 2020 to connect with people on a personal level, asking them to join us in getting ready to welcome the world.

Later that year saw the launch of ‘The World’s Greatest Show in the Making Tours’ – where fun and informative guided bus tours enabled visitors to get a sneak preview of the Expo site still under construction, including a stop at the Expo 2020 Visitor Centre for a small taste of the Expo visitor experience. Fully booked within three hours of the booking system going live, thousands of people comprising 91 nationalities enjoyed a total of 104 tours across 22 days. Media coverage reached as far as India and China, and visitors recorded an average score of 9.5 for ‘likelihood of visiting Expo 2020’.

Due to popular demand, the tours returned a few months later, this time welcoming more than double the amount of visitors for 148 tours across 27 days. This included a number of dedicated tours for Partners and their staff, as well as local media outlets representing a range of communities.

November and December 2019 saw two colourful Expo-branded ice cream vans visiting more than 140 communities and residential areas, as well as universities, government offices, community events, media outlets and public spaces across the UAE. In total, more than 60,000 free ice creams in sustainable wrappers were distributed, with fun Expo-branded photo props helping drive organic social media coverage.

Expo 2020 wristbands featuring the phrase ‘Bring the World Together’, were also a highly visible way for people across the UAE and beyond to show their support and that they were ready to play their role in welcoming the world. Created in three colours to represent Expo’s three subthemes, the wristbands quickly became a ‘must have’ item and were seen on the wrists of UAE leadership, visiting dignitaries, celebrities and other prominent figures. Tens of thousands of wristbands were sold in the lead-up to Expo’s opening and during the event itself, with special editions released to mark a number of significant occasions.



Sponsorships and ambassadors

A number of sponsorships and ambassadors contributed significantly to raising local, regional and international awareness of Expo 2020 Dubai through prominent marketing and advertising campaigns and high-profile visits and events, both before and during the six months of Expo.

Sponsorships included:

- AC Milan
- Arsenal
- Dubai Camel Racing
- Formula 1
- City Football Group
- Rajasthan Royals
- Special Olympics UAE
- UAE Football Association

With World Expos all about focusing attention on issues of global interest, Expo 2020 recruited leading global figures Hussein Al Jassmi and Lionel Messi as ambassadors to take its message to the world and explore opportunities for collaboration and engagement.



The countdown to opening

With the Opening Ceremony just weeks away, Expo’s marketing efforts took the audience on an emotional journey from 1 September until 1 October:

1 month to go: A reminder of 27 November 2013, when the UAE won the bid to host the 2020 World Expo in Dubai, reinvigorated excitement and national pride

20 days to go: A spotlight on the UAE’s youth, their expectations and hopes for Expo 2020 and the future

15 days to go: A peek at the plans for the magical Opening Ceremony, showcasing Expo 2020 coming to life from its heart, Al Wasl

10 days to go: The launch of Expo’s Official Theme Song, ‘This is Our Time – هَذَا وَقْتُنَا’, which quickly gathered huge popularity across the country

5 days to go: A short time-lapse film showing progress since 2013 and signalling Expo 2020’s readiness to welcome the world

3 days to go: A nationwide show of excitement with buildings lit up in support, entities and individuals using the Expo logo as their profile picture on social media, and the country bedecked in colourful Expo branding, from flags and banners to 3D structures and public transportation ‘wrapped’ in Expo’s logo



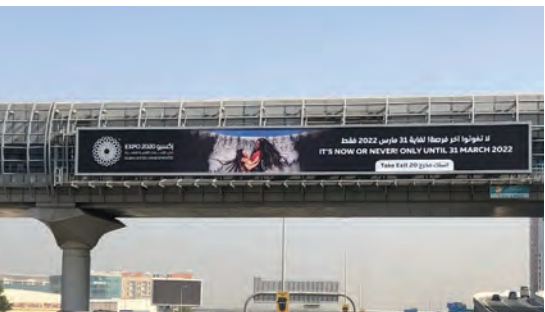
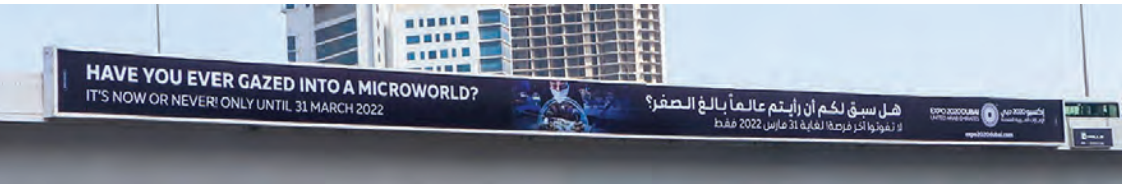
Event-time marketing

Event-time marketing efforts focused on advertising and promoting Expo 2020 Dubai in its entirety to the public. It was critical to informing potential visitors about what they could experience every day at Expo 2020, while also considering the needs and objectives of various stakeholders, including participants and Partners. Expo 2020 Dubai developed and deployed a ‘hyper-targeting’ marketing model to ensure the right message reached the right people.

It also employed a variety of tactics to attract both residents and tourists to Expo 2020 Dubai. This included a weekly advertisement published in local Arabic and English publications, as well as flyers distributed in hotels and public taxis with information on Expo events, pavilions, family activities, and offers for F&B and tickets. Radio advertisements and competitions were also used to raise awareness.

Out-of-home advertising in strategic locations across the UAE also ensured maximum levels of brand visibility among both residents and tourists and communicated programming highlights and key information. Ongoing tactical campaigns focused on ticket promotions, F&B promotions and upcoming concerts and events.

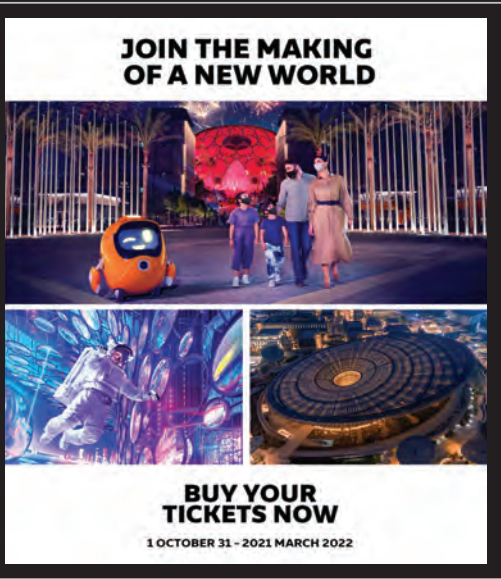
Expo 2020 Dubai’s influencer engagement was particularly noteworthy.





UAE Golden Jubilee

UAE National Day 2021 was a particularly special edition, marking 50 years since the founding of the nation. A four-day campaign highlighted the different shows, activities and experiences taking place across the site, encouraging visitors to see Expo as the best place to celebrate this milestone occasion.



Now or Never

Launching 60 days before Expo closed, this 360 marketing campaign created a sense of urgency, reminding visitors of the different experiences they could enjoy 'now or never'. It ran across a range of touchpoints from out-of-home and social media to radio and print, ensuring maximum visibility and reach.



Countdown to closing

Launching on 1 March 2022, the final countdown campaign saw profile pictures across Expo's social media channels change to show the number of days remaining. This was accompanied by daily content looking back at some of the event's highlights and reminding visitors of their favourite memories.

Opening Ceremony

Key visuals were developed and deployed across a variety of platforms and an extensive out-of-home network that included Times Square in New York. Featuring Al Wasl Plaza as it came to life, the campaign reflected the absolute readiness to welcome the world for six unforgettable months and included a link enabling people to view the ceremony virtually and be part of a significant moment in the history of the UAE. The same approach was taken for the Closing Ceremony.



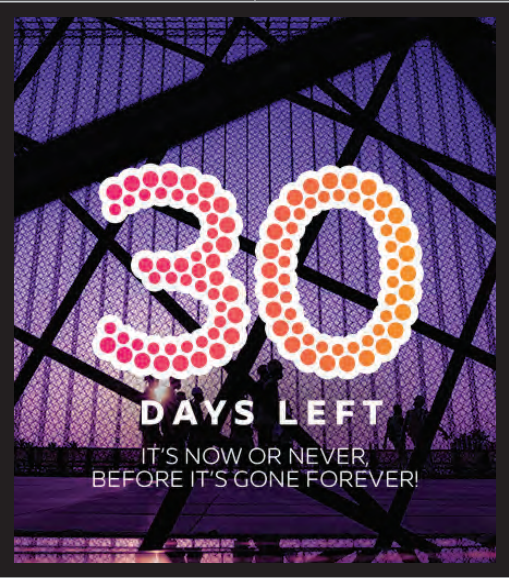
Live the Magic

A series of 10 videos saw well-known UAE personalities DJ Bliss and Payman Al Awadhi enjoy a variety of Expo activities and ask their fellow visitors about their experiences, highlighting that this was truly an Expo for everyone. Running from December 2021 until February 2022, the videos received a total of 20 million views.



Global Goals Week

The Global Goals Week campaign ran across Expo's social media channels for almost eight weeks, achieving more than 15 million views and encouraging visitors to understand how they could be part of the first Global Goals Week to take place outside the United Nations in New York.

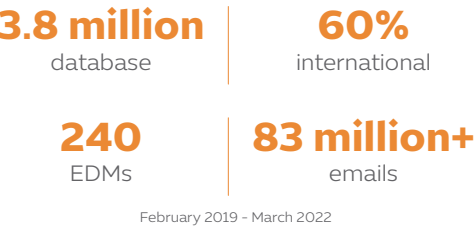


Website

The Expo 2020 website was a key communication tool. It updated audiences on progress and initiatives ahead of the World Expo’s opening, adapting as the event drew near to ensure a mobile-first approach that focused on ticketing. During the event, it was the primary source of information on programming, including an up-to-date events calendar, as well as the latest offers, promotions, and dining options. Content was available in seven languages – Arabic, English, Mandarin, Spanish, Russian, German and French – based on Expo 2020 Dubai’s key markets.

The website also encouraged people to sign up for tailored newsletters based on their

interests and priorities. Between February 2019 and March 2022, 240 Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) campaigns were launched, covering topics ranging from ticketing announcements and F&B promotions, to news relating to Expo’s entertainment offering, various programmes and initiatives, and Partners.



The Expo 2020 website applied accessibility standards to ensure the achievement of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines WCAG 2.0 Level AA – a conformance level used in most accessibility rules and regulations around the world, indicating it was usable and understandable for the majority of people with or without disabilities.

Social media

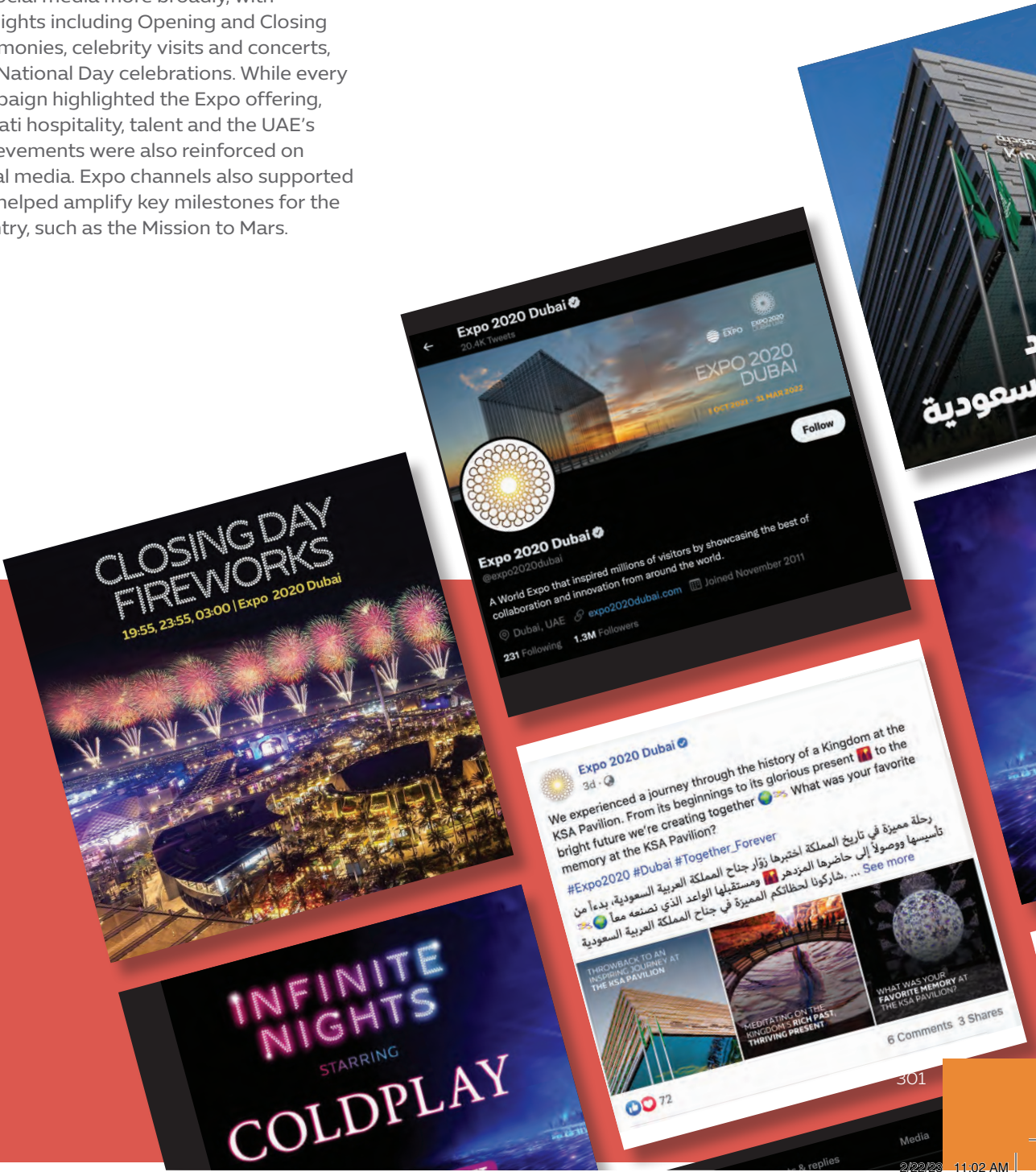
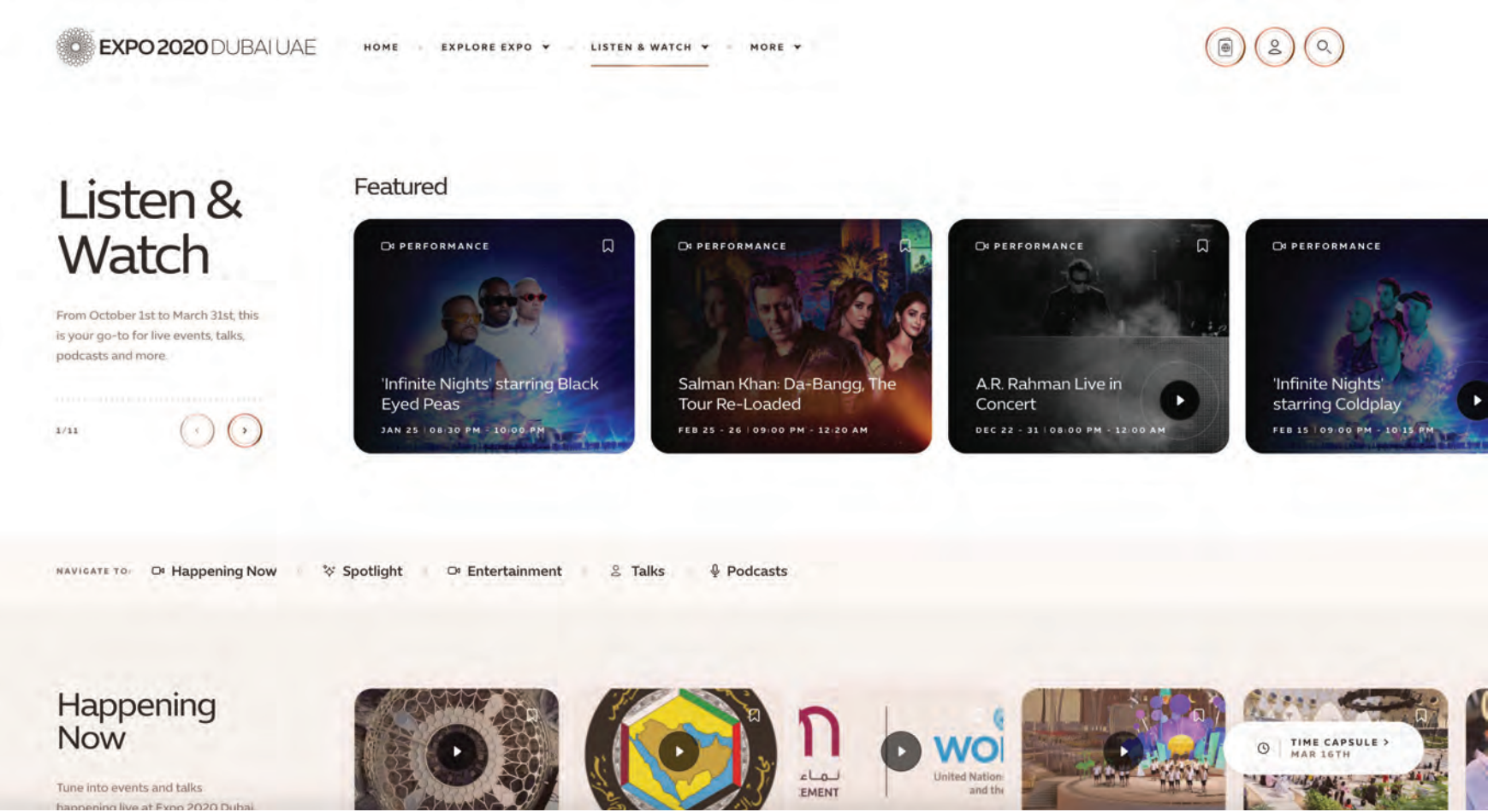
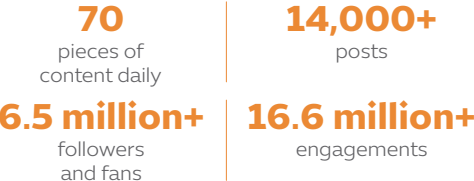
Expo 2020 Dubai established its presence and communicated with audiences via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube prior to the event, adding TikTok to the list in November 2021.

On average, 70 pieces of content were produced for social media every day. Activity grew between 1 September 2021 and 1 April 2022, with more than 14,000 posts resulting in a 30 per cent increase in followers and fans, which totalled to 6.53 million across Expo 2020 Dubai’s social platforms.

Engagements were 16.6 million-strong, with Expo 2020 Dubai garnering well above average engagement rates per post. Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook performed at 15, 5.4, 5.3 and 2.3 times higher than average industry benchmarks.

Expo 2020 Dubai’s Instagram and Facebook stories were equally successful across the seven months, garnering 291 million impressions and resulting in more than 2.27 million engagements. The content was attention-grabbing, as evidenced by the 82 per cent of users who tapped through the stories to the end.

Entertainment and events content received the highest engagement on social media more broadly, with highlights including Opening and Closing ceremonies, celebrity visits and concerts, and National Day celebrations. While every campaign highlighted the Expo offering, Emirati hospitality, talent and the UAE’s achievements were also reinforced on social media. Expo channels also supported and helped amplify key milestones for the country, such as the Mission to Mars.



Public relations and communications

Through targeted outreach to local and international media, Expo’s Public Relations (PR) and Communications efforts focused on providing world-class communications services for Expo 2020 Dubai and the various departments within the organisation.

The team drove all media communications from initiation, to creation and delivery, working within a strategic roadmap and acting as guardian of the Expo 2020 strategic message. It oversaw all external communications, with the primary objective of engaging local, regional and international media through the production of relevant, easy-to-use content with a clear, message-driven narrative.

With the twin strategic objectives of helping Expo meet its visitation targets and enhancing the reputation of Dubai and the UAE, its functions included:

- Building understanding and anticipation by marking key milestones in the journey to the event, from the awarding of major contracts and the confirmation of new participants to revealing some of the site’s most iconic structures as they came to life
- Raising awareness of Expo’s themes and purpose, with announcements and updates from, and relating to, Partners and participants providing additional opportunities and channels
- Identifying strategic speaking opportunities to position and promote Expo 2020 Dubai
- Delivering nuanced strategic campaigns that increased understanding of Expo 2020 and the UAE as the host nation, enhancing credibility within specific audiences and markets
- Building a robust roster of third-party voices that could serve as Expo 2020 advocates
- Developing media partnerships with key outlets in target markets and audience segments to produce tailored content for deeper message penetration
- Establishing an ‘always on’ Press Office to handle proactive and reactive media engagement and maintain strong media relations ahead of the event
- Creating a dedicated Media Advisory Council, building close relationships with key media, providing updates on progress, strategy and narrative and getting insights directly from editors



Press office

Operating in both the pre-event and event-time phases, the Press Office was tasked with responding to incoming media requests, managing journalists and media events across the site and working closely with participants’ Media Liaison Officers, Partners and government entities’ communications teams to leverage each other’s content, channels and networks.

Spokespeople

To support Expo’s media engagement and outreach, almost 100 members of the Expo Tribe were trained as official spokespeople and subject-matter experts, enabling them to speak to a variety of audiences across a broad spectrum of Expo-related topics in a clear, consistent and compelling way. A bespoke training programme ensured spokespeople were proficient in dealing with all aspects of media engagement and public speaking, including broadcast interviews, press conferences and presentations, as well as non-verbal communications and dealing with more challenging media questions.

Global Media Briefing

The Expo 2020 Global Media Briefing (GMB) was a powerful opportunity to share key messages with media from around the world and enable them to gain a more in-depth understanding of Expo’s offering, including the rich programming calendar which would provide a wealth of content opportunities.

Coinciding with the original ‘One Year to Go’ celebrations in 2019, the first edition hosted more than 300 media from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and North America, who travelled to Dubai for a glimpse of the Expo site and an introduction to the event’s world-class media operations facilities.

A second edition of the GMB was held virtually in July 2021 and attended by more than 1,000 media, planners and content creators from over 100 countries. This was also a powerful platform for Expo 2020 to announce details of its ticketing strategy, including release dates and pricing.

Global Optimism Surveys

Launching in September 2019, the Global Optimism Outlook Report was a strategic consumer awareness campaign. A survey conducted in 23 markets around the world in conjunction with YouGov, it looked to track optimism levels across countries and continents, with a positive focus that aimed to celebrate humanity’s progress. The findings served as a powerful tool for Expo 2020 to drive the news agenda and highlight Expo 2020 as a relevant global event with universal appeal. With localised releases of the report across different markets, the campaign achieved 597 pieces of coverage in 30 countries, including in top tier media in key markets, with an estimated reach of 1.3 billion.

Media partnerships and official broadcasters

Commercial agreements with a range of top tier global outlets enabled Expo’s message to reach business and leisure audiences around the world.

These included the ‘Road to Expo’ series, developed with CNN, showcasing the progress of the event as the opening approached; the ‘Game Changer’ series, created in collaboration with the BBC, highlighting the work and impact of Expo’s Global Best Practice and Expo Live programmes; bespoke Arabic language content created for Sky News, and a Discovery Channel documentary telling

the story of Expo 2020 Dubai from concept to completion.

Expo 2020’s message was further amplified through official associations with a number of strategically chosen, local, regional and international broadcasters. These agreements included onsite, live broadcast transmission across the six months of the event for a minimum of four hours per day from dedicated and exclusive studios.

Official broadcasters included China Media Group; CNN; Sky News Arabia; MBC; Abu Dhabi Media and Arabian Radio Network.



Expo News Service (ENS)

The in-house news service during the six months of the event, ENS included three teams, each led by an experienced senior journalist, overseeing a pool of editors, reporters and translators.

Across 182 days, reporters attended a variety of events and activations, seeking out stories, conducting interviews and filing content in both English and Arabic. This content was then uploaded to the ‘Tawassul’ platform [see next page] and available to all registered media, with priority content also issued through the Press Office.

ENS was also responsible for preparing press releases around key milestones and announcements, including the weekly update on visit numbers, programming highlights and media advisories.

ENS worked closely with the Photography and Broadcast teams to leverage content and offer comprehensive packages of material to media in a variety of mediums.

Crisis communications

The ability to communicate effectively during a crisis, across the lifespan of the event, was vital to Expo 2020 Dubai, not only in terms of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its visitors and workforce, but also in maintaining its reputation and legacy. It was essential that accurate information was made available to the public, media and stakeholders in a timely manner and with the correct tone.

Expo’s thorough approach to crisis communications planning and preparation included extensive media training of Expo spokespersons; developing robust processes and protocols in close coordination with participants, Partners and other stakeholders; conducting daily intelligence

and issues monitoring; developing a proactive mitigation strategy; and conducting a series of crisis simulations, table-top exercises and test events.

Informed by the various crisis simulations that took place in the lead-up to the event, a wide range of holding statements were prepared and approved in advance, enabling Expo 2020 to communicate essential, accurate information quickly, avoiding rumours or misinformation, from the earliest stages.

Expo TV

Launched in November 2019, Expo TV was a dedicated TV channel offering Expo 2020 content, including news, features and in-depth interviews with Expo spokespeople and other stakeholders, such as participants, Expo Live grantees and Partners. During the event, the channel was operated by the Host Broadcaster, offering live coverage of some of Expo 2020’s most engaging events and activities. Featuring in homes, offices, hotels and other spaces across the UAE, Expo TV was seen by an audience of millions.

Host Broadcaster

As the Host Broadcaster, Dubai Media Incorporated (DMI) was responsible for producing the ‘world feed’ coverage – live and packaged video content that could be used by national and international broadcasters across the six months of the Expo. This included live coverage of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies; live coverage of headline events; highlight packages of each National Day; daily and weekly highlight packages; and live feeds from beauty cameras located across the site and Dubai more widely. Content

was also produced for the dedicated Expo TV channel.

The Host Broadcaster also provided production and transmission facilities and associated services for accredited broadcasters, with a rate card for bespoke coverage.

Photography

Pre-event, still photography of the site, along with drone footage and other b-roll and renders, was captured and uploaded to the Expo 2020 Brand Portal on a regular basis, accessible by participating nations, Partners and other stakeholders.

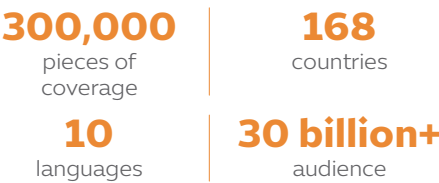
During the event, an official photography team shot more than 5,000 images a day, capturing history-making moments, candid shots and everything in between. The best images were edited and made available to accredited media worldwide through the Media Asset Management system and used to feed Expo 2020’s website and social media. To maximise coverage, participants were encouraged to give official photographers – identifiable by their bibs – priority access to their pavilions and events.

All accredited media were welcome to film and photograph within the Public Realm and to support this, a range of camera platforms and positions across the site, including performance venues, were created, providing accredited broadcasters and photographers with the best vantage points.

Media monitoring

Detailed quantitative and qualitative media monitoring and analysis provided Expo 2020 with an objective view of areas of success, opportunities for improvement, topics to prioritise and emerging issues to monitor. This was conducted in a variety of languages across print, online and broadcast media. A bespoke online portal enabled Expo to isolate specific messages, themes, spokespeople or issues, and filter data on geographical and sectoral levels, as well as receive alerts in real time.

Between June 2021 and April 2022, Expo 2020 was mentioned in more than 300,000 pieces of coverage, spanning 168 countries and 10 languages and reaching an audience of 30+ billion. After the UAE, the top three countries for coverage were Egypt, KSA and the US.



Media Services & Operations

Expo Media Centre (EMC)

The eight-storey EMC was a world-class hub for media during event-time, located adjacent to Al Wasl at the heart of Expo 2020. Facilities and services offered to accredited media at the EMC included broadcast technical spaces and services; TV and radio studios; editing suites; production control rooms; fibre connectivity to on-site performance areas; electronic news gathering (ENG) kits and crew; space for media organisations to set up remote newsrooms; media briefing and conference rooms; interview and meeting spaces; camera loan and repair services; and food and beverage options.

These facilities, as well as camera positions across the site, requests for special tickets for specific events, and participant pavilion access requests, could be booked through the Media Bookings System.

Tawassul

Taken from the Arabic word meaning ‘connect’, Tawassul was Expo 2020’s dedicated Media Information System. In the lead-up to the event, it served as an essential tool in providing registered users with important operational information updates on elements such as the media accreditation process and permits.

During the event, it was Expo 2020’s primary news platform, enabling media to view and download daily content, including press releases, photo releases, media advisories, quotes from participants, dignitaries and performers, and media conference highlights.

Media Asset Management (MAM)

Accessible to all registered media, the cloud-based MAM system contained all audio-visual content produced in the lead up and during the event by Expo 2020 Dubai as well as the highlights, features, and raw footage produced by the Host Broadcaster.

Using artificial intelligence to index and catalogue high-resolution content, Expo’s industry-leading MAM system was named ‘Innovative Project of the Year’ at the 2021 Broadcast Pro Summit and Awards.

Media Briefings

Held three times a week across the duration of the Expo, Media Briefings took place physically in the Expo Media Centre, open to all accredited media, and were also

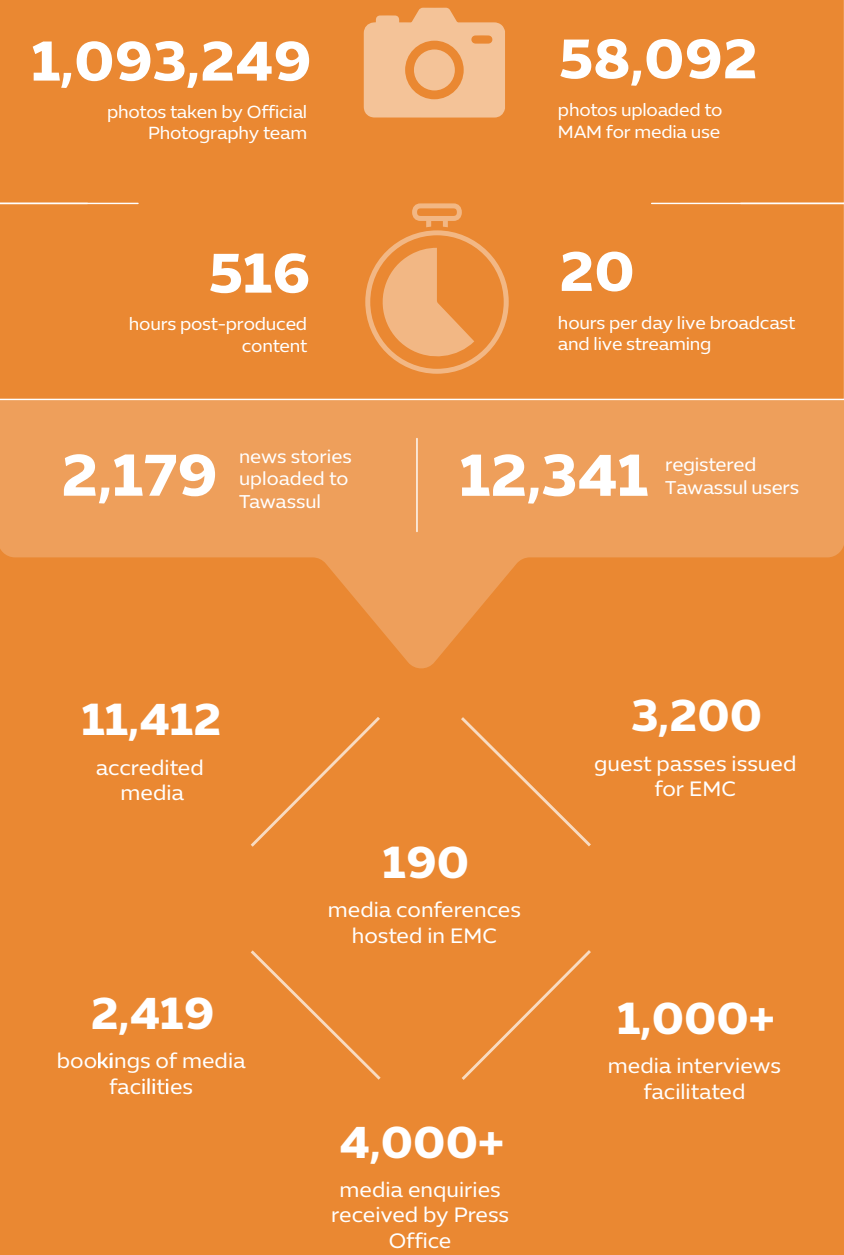
streamed live. These briefings highlighted the main activities of the days ahead, with guest speakers, both internal and external, also invited to participate on a weekly basis, providing more detailed insights into a particular topic or upcoming event.

Visitation numbers were also announced once a week, and members of the media were able to ask questions, either physically or by submitting them online. Simultaneous translation was also provided in French, Arabic and English, as relevant.

A summary of each briefing was also uploaded onto Tawassul and onto the digital screens in the Media Centre, keeping the global media community up to speed on the daily events schedule and flagging important events and changes.



EVENT-TIME MEDIA ENGAGEMENT
EXPO 2020 DUBAI



Mascots

Mascots have been a feature of World Expos since 1984. For Expo 2020, the aim was to create a family of rounded characters who would reflect the event's values and themes and bring the spirit and culture of the UAE to life.

During an early visit to confirm the site for Expo 2020 Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum chose to move the plot slightly to avoid harming a ghaf tree that provided shade for camels. The tree went on to inspire a short animation featuring 'Salama' the wise ghaf tree, who had witnessed different generations' lives unfold, including two children, Latifa and Rashid, who play in her shade.

Three 'Guardians', Opti, Alif and Terra, were also created to showcase the personality of Expo's three subthemes and related districts. Designed by an Emirati team, the mascots were first unveiled in 2019 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, in front of 200 school children and a VIP audience.

Expo developed five animated episodes for local television that followed the adventures of the mascots as they tackled a range of challenges, while during the event, the mascots featured in an array of site-wide activations [see Chapter 7].

Once celebrated for his monstrous coal-chewing, gas-guzzling and smoke-spewing machine, Mr Scrap is an evil scientist fuelled by rage as the world moves towards sustainability. He has vowed to destroy any symbol of sustainability.

Mr Scrap's loyal sidekick, Floppy is a robot minion with a few loose bolts and a sputtering engine. They've been together for ages, and no one is more loyal than Floppy, but as Mr Scrap becomes more evil, will Floppy stay by his side?

Wherever friendly little robot Opti's wheels go, opportunity and hope follow closely behind. Don't be fooled by his diminutive stature, because at his core is a portal through time and space.

Rashid is the nine-year-old brother of Latifa. With a vivid imagination, a love for the environment and a strong spirit that helps him find the courage to fight for what's right, Rashid adores family stories and has memorised tales that have been passed down through generations.

The wise ghaf tree Salama is a beacon of life within the vast desert. She has offered a place of refuge for countless years.

The leader of the guardians (at least he thinks so), shapeshifting Alif will always get you where you need to go, whether you're digging to the core of the Earth or surfing stardust on cosmic waves.

Eight-year-old Latifa is passionate about science and technology. Her quick wit, resourcefulness and intelligence help her find a logical and grounded solution to any test. She doesn't believe in the word 'impossible' and never accepts 'no' for an answer.

Terra, the sharpest and smartest of the guardians, is highly protective of nature and knows its deepest secrets. It may take a little while for her to warm up to you but once she does, she'll be your fiercest and warmest guide.

Expo 2020 Dubai official song

Launched just 10 days ahead of Expo 2020's opening, the Expo 2020 theme, *'This Is Our Time'*, brought together veteran pop star Hussain Al Jassmi, fellow Emirati and rising talent Almas, and Lebanese singer Mayssa Karaa for an uplifting ode to the event.

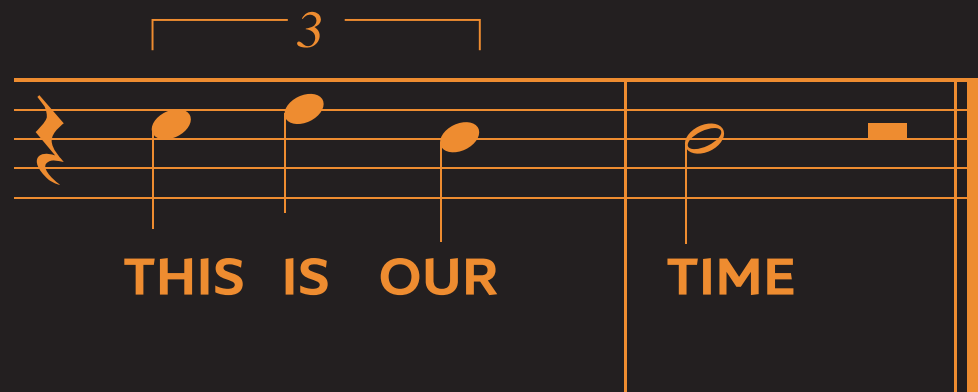
Produced by Canadian Grammy Award winner Greg Wells, and featuring lyrics by singer-songwriter Saif Fadhel, the track begins with Khaleeji percussion before making way for a steady dance beat in which synths and Middle Eastern strings intertwine. The three singers then each perform verses in English and Arabic.

The song reflected the culture of the UAE but also the inclusive and diverse spirit of Expo 2020, sparking feelings of pride, excitement and optimism. It featured in both the Opening and Closing ceremonies and could be heard playing daily across the site and on radio stations around the country.

1 million+
YouTube views

500,000+
streams on music platforms

#1
in UAE iTunes Chart



This is Our Time هذا وقتنا Expo Theme Song | Lyrics

VERSE 1
HJ: Follow me
HJ: One voice, one family
HJ: The world as it stands,
HJ: in the palm of our hands it's
HJ: our time

VERSE 2
MK: Take a seat
MK: To the greatest show you'll
MK: ever see
A: We've come so far
A: but the future is ours to decide
A: what we need

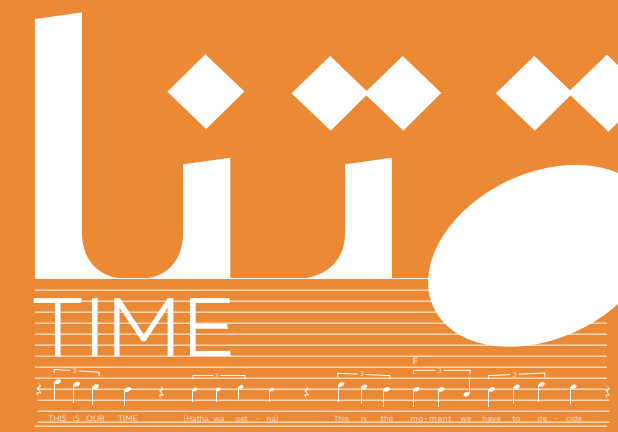
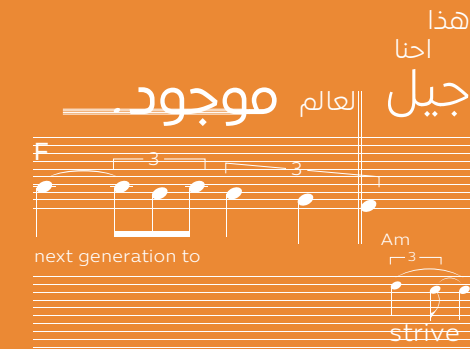
BRIDGE 1
HJ: We've got to all come together
MK: Let's join our voice
MK: It's now or never
A: We are the next generation to
A: strive
A: For a new day

CHORUS 1
All: This our time
All: هذا وقتنا
(Hatha wa getna)
MK: This is the moment we have to
MK: decide
A: It's time to stand up and vow
HJ: To be what the world needs now
MK: This our time
All: هذا وقتنا
(Hatha wa getna)

HJ: This is the moment we open our eyes
A: If we can dare to believe
MK: And wake up to find
HJ: This Day
HJ: This is our time.

VERSE 3
A: يا هلا بالكل
Welcome everyone (Hayyakum)
(Ya halla, bill kill)
A: بـحـيـكـم نـكـمـل
With your love we are complete
(Be Hap com, Nick mell)
HJ: نيتنا و هممتنا نحدد قصتنا
Our intention and our mission to renew our story
(Ne yetna, Himnetna, na ja did, gess satna)
HJ: ونكمل
And continue (Wen Camel)

VERSE 4
MK: نتأمل والكون يلهمنا أن نعمل
(Nat Emmell, well con, yell hemna, en namell)
We wonder and the universe inspire us to act
All: ونعيش اليوم الفكرة
(Wa na eish, eleyom, el fickra)
We live the idea today
All: ونشوقها بكرة
(Wen shouf ha, book ra)
We will see it tomorrow
All: مستقبل
(Mustakbell) As future



BRIDGE 2
HJ: أبعد لا تسأل عن أي حدود
(lb Da, la tess ell, an ay hoodood)
Be creative and don't think of barriers
HJ: قادر تتخيل؟ بأفكارك جود
(Ga derr, Tet kale, Be aff kar ek, jood)
If you can imagine, be generous with your ideas
MK: هذا احنا جيل العالم موجود
(Hatha, Eh Na, Jeel, ei aaalem, mo jood)
This is our the generation of the world
A: قدھا وقـدود
(Ged ha, wa, ga dude)
Certainly we can do it (we can achieve the impossible) Idiom

CHORUS 2
All: This our time
All: هذا وقتنا
(Hatha wa getna)
MK: This is the moment we have to decide
HJ: It's time to stand up and vow
A: To be what the world needs now

All: هذا وقتنا
(Hatha wa getna)
All: This our time
HJ: بإبداع تغير
(Be ibda naah berr)
Creatively we express
HJ: وتأثير ونغير
(Wa na ether, ,wa na gayerr)
We influence and change

HJ: أفكار كثير تجمعنا
(Afkarr, Katherr, Tij maane)
Lots of ideas bring us together
MK: وتزيد قوتنا محبتنا إرادتنا
(Wa tizz eed, Ga watna, maa ha batna, i raa da tetna)
Increase out strength love and our will
A: هذا وقتنا

هذا
وقتنا
THIS IS OUR
TIME

(Hatha wa getna)
This is our time

BRIDGE 3
MK: أبعد لا تسأل عن أي حدود
(EHH lem, la tess ell, an ay hoodude)
Be creative and don't think of barriers
HJ: قادر تتخيل؟ بأفكارك جود
(Ga derr, Tet kale, Be aff kar ek, jude)
If you can imagine, be generous with your ideas
A: We are the next generation to strive
MK: For a new day

CHORUS 3
All: This our time
All: هذا وقتنا
(Hatha wa getna)
A: This is the moment we have to decide
A&MK: It's time to stand up and vow
A&MK: To be what the world needs now

HJ: هذا وقتنا
(Hatha wa getna)
All: This our time
HJ: بإبداع تغير
(Be ibda naah berr)
Creatively we express
HJ: وتأثير ونغير
(Wa na ether, ,wa na gayerr)
We influence and change

A: أفكار كثير تجمعنا
(Afkarr, Katherr, Tij maane)
Lots of ideas bring us together
A: وتزيد قوتنا محبتنا إرادتنا
(Wa tizz eed, Ga watna, maa ha batna, i raa da tetna)
Increase out strength love and our will

All: This our time

TICKETING AND SALES

Background research

Initial pricing research covered both domestic and international markets and looked to better understand the overall landscape of attractions in Dubai; potential barriers and triggers to visit Expo 2020; price sensitivity; and preferences around different ticket types. The research revealed that the majority of respondents had never visited Expos before, and were unclear about the concept and product. In addition, Expo 2020's potential visitor base was highly diverse. As a result, Expo 2020 devised a simplified ticket strategy that was easy to understand by wide audiences.

Ticket pricing and products

Expo 2020 adopted a simple and dynamic pricing model to maximise visitation.



1-Day Ticket

Adult (18-59)

AED 95 | USD 26



Multi-Day Pass

Adult (18-59)

AED 195 | USD 53



Season Pass

Adult (18-59)

AED 495 | USD 162



Complimentary tickets were extended to the following groups:

Kids and Youth Pass

below the age of 18



Person of Determination Pass

Half price for one accompanying companion



Senior Citizen Pass

60 years and above



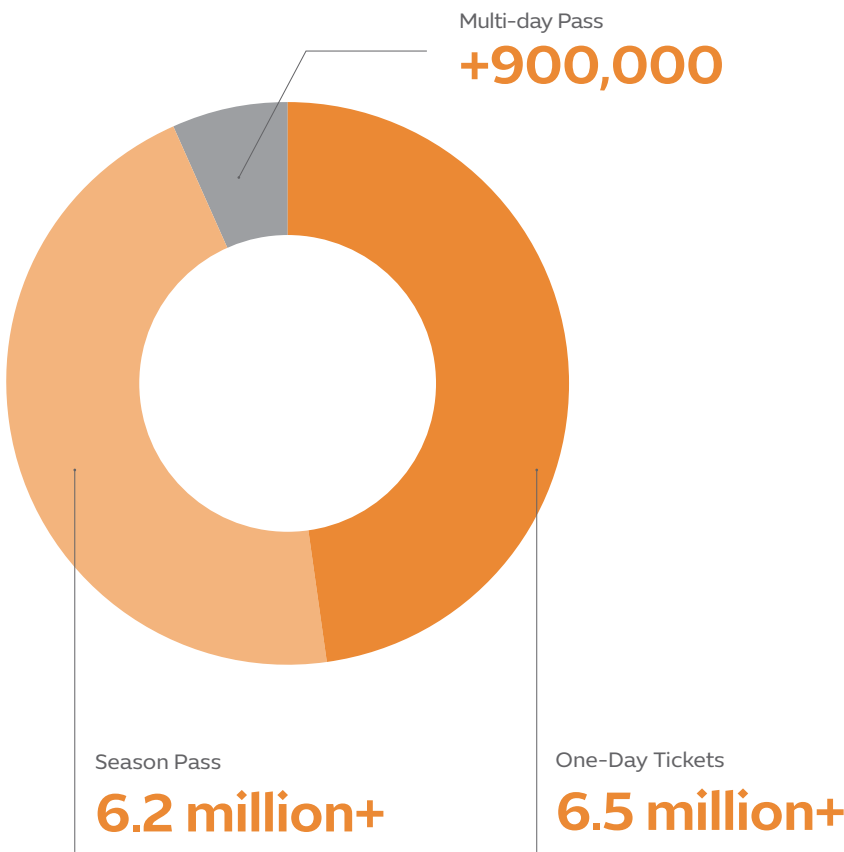
Student Pass

Students of all ages



Ticket sales

A total of 13.65 million tickets were issued (paid and complimentary)



For more information on ticket sales and visitor numbers, see Appendix

Additional packaged products provided further incentives and catered to certain niche audiences.



JUBILEE
EXPERIENCE
AED 10,000

A celebration of the UAE Golden Jubilee, this limited-edition bundle included keepsakes such as 24-carat gold Jubilee pins and Expo passports, dedicated VIP parking and Concierge services, as well as multiple tickets, vouchers and other benefits. The Jubilee Experience package was sold through a range of channels including Virgin Megastore and the Expo 2020 Dubai website.



PREMIUM EXPERIENCE
SEASON PASS
AED 1,750

Targeting a market willing to pay a premium for a more elevated experience - particularly business visitors with additional leisure interests - this pass included business lounge access, priority access to Expo business events and other convenience-based benefits. Premium ticket holders could also make use of a dedicated Concierge service, which included planning and managing visitor itineraries, booking pavilion visits and VIP access, and facilitating F&B reservations and transportation requests.



FAMILY
PACKAGE
AED 950

Catering to families, this bundle included season tickets and a nanny pass, as well as F&B discounts.

Sales planning

With a clear visitation target of 22.9-25.4 million visits, Expo 2020 took a multi-capillary sales approach, with tickets being available across multiple touch points. This included working with a wide array of ticket resellers and establishing one of the largest global networks of ticket resellers for a six-month event. The network ranged from new-age online players to brick-and-mortar retailers and also leveraged the global reach of Expo's Partners and stakeholders, including UAE airlines, who supplied complimentary tickets to all international visitors arriving in the country during the event.

Domestic sales approach

Expo 2020 Dubai was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, held in the year of the UAE's Golden Jubilee and a significant milestone for the country. Building on – and contributing to – this incredible wave of national pride, Expo 2020 naturally focused on the domestic market for visits, targeting repeat visitation and working directly with key market segments (including government, schools, corporates and universities), specific Expo 2020 Partners and selling online, at the gate and via the Expo 2020 contact centre.

To further supplement this approach, Expo 2020 also launched a range of nationwide activations, raising awareness of Expo's diverse offering with direct opportunities for purchasing tickets. This included road-shows, which took place in various corporate offices and Free Zones in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah; activations in residential and public areas; participation in sports and other interest-based events around Dubai and the UAE; and virtual events targeting university students.

Expo 2020 also provided special volume-based, discounted ticket rates to key entities in the UAE, including entities represented in the Expo 2020 Dubai Higher Committee, Partners, not-for-profit organisations, government-related entities and other corporates. These discounted tickets incentivised entities to purchase early for their employees, while also reflecting Expo 2020's appreciation for their support and ultimately driving visitation.

International sales and
marketing approach

The ongoing pandemic and the resulting effects on global travel heightened uncertainty around international visitation, making planning a challenge. Expo's extensive international sales and destination marketing strategy, including international marketing campaigns and in-market engagement with the travel and trade industry, therefore focused on those markets not impacted so heavily by lockdown restrictions.

Promoting Expo 2020 as a destination, working closely with tourism boards across the UAE, and engaging with the international travel trade was critical in driving ticket sales and visitation. This included participating in a range of industry events, including Arabian Travel Market, the region's largest travel and tourism event, and IMEX, a major travel trade fair held in Germany.

In addition, and based on information provided by tourism boards and UAE airlines, Expo 2020 identified the top agents in the UAE's various source markets and designated them Authorised Ticket Resellers (ATRs), giving them the right to promote, sell and distribute tickets, and convert visitors in the destination and key international source markets.

Authorised Ticket
Resellers (ATRs)

With 96 per cent of international visitors arriving by air, airlines – including Emirates, flydubai and Etihad – formed a critical part of Expo's international sales strategy, amplifying awareness of the event and breaking the pricing barrier to visit for millions of tourists by offering complimentary tickets.

Tour Operators, Travel Agents and Online Travel Agents also played a key role in the creation of awareness for Expo 2020, while also selling tickets in different source markets, often bundled with other products and services.

A number of Destination Management Companies were also appointed as ATRs, leveraging their position as a respected source of local knowledge, expertise and resources.

Hotels were the last touchpoint in the destination to sell tickets and convert visitation from international tourists. Select hotels were appointed as ATRs to capture incremental business via their direct channels and enhance conversion and ticket sales from the booking phase to check-in at the hotels.

In total, Expo's international sales strategy included a network spanning 80 markets, 321 Authorised Ticket Resellers and around 4,000 sub-contractors.

In-destination sales

Additional promotional sales activations at key locations serving international tourists, such as Port Rashid Cruise Terminal and the arrivals halls of UAE airports, provided further opportunities for ticket sales. Tactics included the installation of screens promoting Expo's calendar of events, the distribution of Expo 2020 maps and 'What's On' calendars, shuttle buses to transport passengers directly to the site, and promoters welcoming passengers and providing information.

Dynamic ticket pricing

Expo 2020 approached ticket pricing with the understanding that prices would need to be adapted during the event to remain relevant and appealing [see Chapter 7]. The dynamic pricing strategy included:

- **Offering incentives for early purchase:**
Expos have historically had challenges in driving visitation in their opening weeks. To mitigate the risk of lagging demand, Expo 2020 created 'early bird' incentives for B2B channels to drive visitation
- **Mitigating periods of low demand:**
Expo 2020 anticipated there would be periods where demand would soften. To drive sales and visitation during these periods Expo created special, 'below-the-line' promotions targeted at very specific, and often niche, audiences
- **Festive and holiday related promotions:**
Tying in with key holidays (religious, cultural and national)
Expo launched mass market offers and added-value promotions

