



SOCCEREX MENA

2025

EVENT BROCHURE

In association with

**SPORTS
EXPO**

everything sports



INTERVIEWS

SPEAKERS

EXHIBITOR LIST

AGENDA

FOREWORD

A message from the Egyptian Minister of Youth and Sports

“Hosting Soccerex, the renowned international football conference, as part of the prestigious Sports Expo Egypt, creating a unique platform for showcasing the future of sports in Egypt and the region. This event highlights Egypt’s commitment to advancing the sports industry, opening new avenues for investment, and positioning the country as a global hub for sports and an attractive destination for sports-related opportunities—paving the way for a bright future for Egyptian sports.” - **H.E. Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports**



Dear Soccerex MENA Attendees,

It is my absolute pleasure to welcome you to **Soccerex MENA**, in association with **Sports Expo**, hosted here at the home of the pharaohs, in the vibrant city of Cairo. This event marks another exciting chapter in our mission to bring together the **global football community**, fostering new connections, sharing insights, and driving innovation within our beautiful game.

The world of football is evolving at an unprecedented pace. From emerging technologies and the rise of women’s football to the increasing influence of the **MENA region** on the global stage, this is a transformative time for our industry. At Soccerex MENA, we aim to provide a platform where **leaders, innovators, and stakeholders** can come together to explore these changes, share best practices, and help shape the **future of football**.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to **Hazem Hamada** and his incredible team at **Sports Expo**. Their **passion, vision, and dedication** have been instrumental in bringing this event to life, and their commitment to promoting **sports development** across the region is truly inspiring.

A special thank you also goes to **His Excellency Dr Ashraf Sobhy, the Minister for Youth and Sport**, whose **support and leadership** have been pivotal in ensuring the success of Soccerex MENA. His unwavering focus on nurturing **youth talent**, building **world-class infrastructure**, and promoting **healthy lifestyles** is creating a legacy for generations to come.

On behalf of the entire **Soccerex team**, I thank you for joining us and for your **ongoing support** of our mission in keeping football connected. I look forward to **meeting many of you**, sharing insights, and together, helping to drive the **beautiful game** forward. Enjoy the event!

Patrick McCreanor
CEO, Soccerex

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24 - 26 FEB 2025

EGYPT INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS CENTER

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SOCCEREX MENA

AGENDA DAY ONE

STUDIO ONE

The Pharaohs in focus

A discussion on the history of Egyptian football, 100 Year anniversary, and its proud history and heritage

With a legacy that includes African Cup of Nation dominance and remarkable performances on the world stage, the Pharaohs stand as a symbol of pride and unity in Egyptian and African football.

The session will reflect on the team's storied past, celebrate its successes, and discuss its future in the context of modern football.



Argentine Football Association

The Argentine Football Association, the first football federation born in the Americas with a rich football history and legacy, invites you to discover the vision of a global football property. Pathways and insights on how a regional FA has become a Global Sports Leader. Dive into the World's Champion Global expansion outside and inside the pitch.

AC Milan in the Middle East: building a legacy beyond football

Focus: AC Milan's long-term strategy, fan engagement, commercial partnerships, and grassroots development in the region



2034 and beyond

Saudi Arabia's Vision for the FIFA World Cup

With Saudi Arabia set to host the 2034 FIFA World Cup, this panel will explore the nation's ambitious plans for organizing the world's biggest football tournament.

The discussion will focus on Saudi Arabia's preparations, infrastructure development, and commitment to delivering an event that showcases the country's culture, innovation, and passion for football.

It will also examine the tournament's anticipated impact on football's growth in the Middle East and globally.

Trailblazers

A discussion dedicated to the leaders in women's football

This engaging panel will spotlight the inspiring leaders driving the growth of women's football in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. With unprecedented momentum behind the sport globally and regionally, this session will delve into the strategies, challenges, and opportunities shaping its future. The panel will celebrate achievements, address barriers, and highlight the innovative approaches being taken to empower women and girls through football.

Levelling the playing field

Driving Equality in Football

Football is often celebrated as a universal language, but achieving true equality within the game remains a pressing challenge.

This panel will examine the strides being made and the obstacles that persist in ensuring inclusivity and equality across all aspects of football, from gender and race to socioeconomic access.

Featuring thought leaders, players, and advocates, the discussion will focus on actionable strategies to make football a more equitable sport at every level.

SOCCEREX MENA

AGENDA DAY ONE

STUDIO TWO

KNVB WorldCoaches

The Social power of Football

WorldCoaches is a programme based on the KNVB's extensive international coaching experience and its belief that no matter where in the world, football can be used as a means for social development. Our trained WorldCoaches play a key role in this by inspiring and coaching children in their athletic and social development.

The Rise and Rise of African Football

CAF discuss their critical role in the rise and development of African football

This dynamic panel will focus on the Confederation of African Football (CAF) and its critical role in the development and global rise of African football.

From fostering grassroots initiatives to enhancing professional leagues and elevating the continent's presence on the world stage, CAF's influence is pivotal.

The discussion will explore past achievements, current strategies, and future goals for unlocking the immense potential of African football.



Like a dry sponge: Developing the Next Generation of MENA Stars

The MENA region is rich with untapped football talent, and youth development is at the heart of creating the next generation of global stars.

This panel will bring together coaches, academies, and federation leaders to discuss strategies for nurturing young players, building robust talent pipelines, and providing the necessary infrastructure for success.

The discussion will highlight regional challenges, success stories, and the role of innovation and collaboration in creating a sustainable future for MENA football.

The Jewel of Africa

The Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) is the pinnacle of football in Africa, showcasing the continent's rich talent, passion, and culture on a global stage.

This panel will explore AFCON's evolution, its significance in the global football landscape, and its role in driving football development across Africa.

Experts will discuss the tournament's impact on the MENA region, the opportunities it presents for players, sponsors, and broadcasters, and the future of AFCON as a key driver of African football's growth.

Pyramids FC

The Rise of Pyramids FC – Creating and Building a Legacy

Pyramids FC formerly known as Al Assiouty Sports Club, is an Egyptian Football club that plays in the Egyptian Premier League. Since the club's new establishment, Pyramids FC is one of the most fast growing, high performance football clubs in the Egyptian Premier League with increasing regional popularity. The Club has maintained its position within the top 4 clubs within the Egyptian League (last 3 seasons) and achieved 2nd position within the African Confederation Cup in 2020.



Beyond The Game; The Sports Anchored Community of the Future

24/7/365 venues via:

Sports Anchored Mixed Use

Multiuse/ multievent venue design

Immersive Tech that aids in navigating, weaving it together, enhancing the experience, and adding hybrid sports and live broadcast events

Sunday Oliseh Presentation

"Exploring Opportunities in the MENA Football Industry – Egypt as a Strategic Gateway"

SOCCEREX MENA

AGENDA DAY TWO

STUDIO ONE

Bottom (goal) line: Unlocking Football Finance Opportunities in the MENA Region

This panel will provide an in-depth look at the financial mechanisms powering football clubs and the unique revenue opportunities emerging in the MENA region.

As clubs and leagues navigate the challenges of sustaining profitability and growth, this session will highlight key revenue sources such as broadcasting rights, sponsorships, ticketing, and merchandising, while exploring innovative financial models, investment strategies, and the MENA region's expanding role in the global football economy.

Beyond the Game: Innovating Fan Engagement in the Digital Age Sponsored by Sportian

As football continues to evolve, fan engagement has become a cornerstone of the sport's growth and popularity. This panel will explore how clubs, leagues, and organizations are leveraging innovative strategies to connect with fans, enhance their experiences, and build loyalty both on and off the pitch.

From digital platforms and immersive technologies to traditional community outreach, the session will examine how the MENA region is embracing fan engagement to elevate the game's profile and create lifelong supporters.

Forging MENAingful relationships: Unlocking sponsorship opportunities in the MENA region

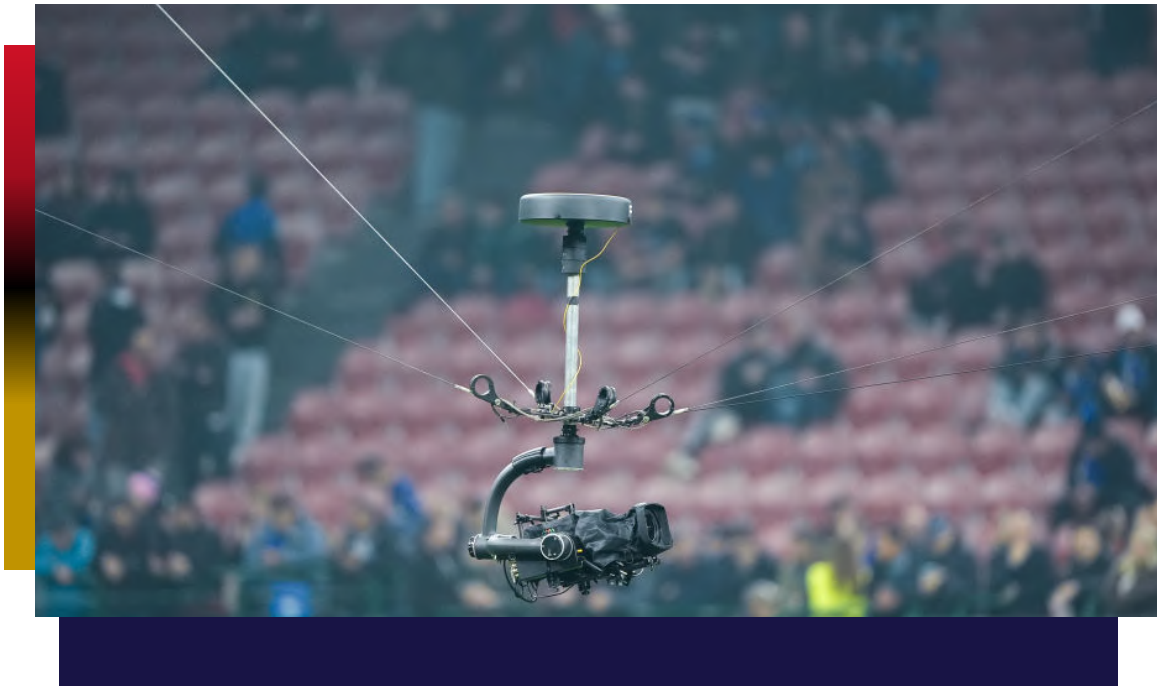
Football sponsorship is a multi-billion-dollar industry that plays a crucial role in funding clubs, leagues, and global tournaments. This panel will explore the vast opportunities for brands in the MENA region, where football's popularity is skyrocketing.

The session will cover how clubs, leagues, and federations in MENA are increasingly becoming attractive to global and regional sponsors, the strategies driving this shift, and how brands are capitalizing on the region's football boom to reach new audiences.

The Game Changer: Exploring Technology's Role in Modern Football

Technology has become a transformative force in football, enhancing performance, fan experiences, and operational efficiency. This panel will explore the latest innovations reshaping the sport, from advanced data analytics and wearable tech to immersive fan engagement platforms and AI-driven decision-making.

With a focus on how these advancements are being adopted globally and in the MENA region, this session will showcase the future of football in a tech-driven world.



Tech-Driven Talent: The Future of Scouting and Performance Analysis in Football

Technology is revolutionizing football scouting and performance analysis, enabling clubs to identify talent more efficiently and optimize player performance like never before.

This panel will dive into the role of advanced data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), wearable technology, and video analysis in scouting and performance management.

Experts will discuss how clubs and academies are using these tools to gain a competitive edge, and how the MENA region is embracing these innovations to enhance their football development strategies.

SOCCEREX MENA

AGENDA DAY TWO

STAGE TWO

Expanding Horizons: Developing Regional and Global Scouting Networks

Scouting is the lifeblood of football's talent pipeline, connecting emerging players with clubs and opportunities across the globe.

This panel will focus on building and enhancing regional and global scouting networks, with a particular emphasis on the MENA region's growing influence in the football ecosystem.

Experts will share strategies for identifying talent, leveraging technology, and navigating the unique challenges of cross-border scouting.

Breaking Barriers

The Rapid Rise of Women's Football in the MENA Region

Women's football in the MENA region is experiencing unprecedented growth, fuelled by increased investment, grassroots initiatives, and a growing cultural shift.

This panel will spotlight the transformative journey of women's football in the region, the challenges still to be addressed, and the opportunities that lie ahead for athletes, clubs, and federations.

Experts will discuss the strategies driving this evolution and the role of global partnerships in accelerating progress.





The Flag bearers of African Football Excellence: Al Ahly SC

As one of the most successful and celebrated football clubs in the world, Al Ahly SC is a cornerstone of African football and a symbol of excellence in the MENA region.

This panel will dive into the club's illustrious history, its achievements on the continental stage, and its vision for the future.

Experts will explore Al Ahly's dominance in African competitions, its role in Egyptian football, its passionate fan base, and its innovative approaches to staying ahead in the ever-evolving world of football.

It's okay not be ok: A discussion centred around player wellness

Player wellness has emerged as a critical focus in modern football, encompassing physical health, mental well-being, nutrition, and recovery.

This panel will examine the comprehensive strategies clubs, federations, and players adopt to optimize performance while safeguarding long-term health.

Experts will explore innovative approaches to player care, the importance of mental health, and the role of technology in enhancing wellness across the football ecosystem.



Foundations for the Future: How Mega Events Prepare Countries for Future Success

From Player to Administrator

You've had an incredible journey from playing for the Libyan National Team to working as an Assistant General Coordinator at CAF. Can you tell us about that transition and what inspired you to pursue a career in football administration?

Let me take you through the journey that shaped my transition into the world of football. It all began during my high school years in Libya, where girls attended all-female schools. At the time, the sports programs available to us were limited to track and field, basketball, and volleyball. Eager to see football included, I tried to convince the organizers during my participation in these events to arrange football tournaments for girls. However, I was met with resistance. They argued that girls playing football went against our traditions and societal norms, and my efforts initially failed.

Despite the disappointment, I persisted. In my final year of high school, the organizers finally agreed to create a football tournament for girls. But even then, I noticed a lack of enthusiasm from the women responsible for organizing it. They claimed that girls weren't interested in playing football, but I knew that wasn't true. The real issue was that our sports teachers only focused on teaching basketball and volleyball, as those were the socially accepted sports for girls in our society. Football was never given a chance to thrive.

Everything changed when I was selected to play for the Libyan national team. This opportunity opened doors for me, and the women's committee in the Libyan Football Federation encouraged

me to join the federation. My role was to organize school tournaments and create opportunities for girls to play football. This responsibility gave me a sense of purpose and allowed me to give back to the sport I loved.

What truly inspired me to pursue a career in football was my endless passion for the game. Being on the green pitch with a ball at my feet, or even just watching others play, fills me with emotion. When I see players step onto the field, I see a reflection of my own struggles and dreams in their eyes. It's incredibly moving to be part of something so beautiful—a game that brings people together and allows them to share their passion. Organizing tournaments and enabling the next generation to experience the joy of football has been deeply rewarding. It's

a reminder of why football is called "the beautiful game," and I feel privileged to play a part in making that beauty accessible to others.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced as a female footballer in Libya, and how did those experiences shape your perspective in your current role?

One of my biggest challenges has been facing a community that often believes women are not strong enough to stand alongside men, especially in leadership roles. A clear example of this was when I applied for the CAF C coaching license. I was the only woman among more than 30 men in the course. The environment was tough, and I faced many hurdles, but those challenges only fueled my determination to push harder.



On the final day of the course, during my closing speech, I addressed my colleagues and emphasized that every Libyan girl and woman has the right to prove her abilities in the sports industry—whether as a coach, referee, or in a leadership position.

This experience of breaking through cultural barriers and standing up to a conservative community became the base of my commitment to promoting inclusivity and advancing sports development. It also instilled in me a fighting spirit, driving me to give my best in every step I take to make sure I will deliver exceptional tournaments, ensure the safety and participation of clubs and players, and create a unique and memorable experience for all stakeholders.

This journey has taught me that perseverance and belief in oneself can overcome even the toughest obstacles, and I am determined to keep paving the way for more women to thrive in sports.



The Growth of Football in MENA

With football continuing to grow in the MENA region, especially for women, what key developments have you seen in recent years?

One of the most significant developments I've noticed is the growing collaboration between governments, private investors, and football federations. This partnership has become a fundamental driver of progress in the sport. For instance, I've observed a noticeable increase in interest from governments and other stakeholders to allocate financial resources specifically for the development of women's football. This shift is crucial for creating sustainable growth.

Another positive step is the requirement for clubs to have women's teams as a mandatory criterion to participate in continental competitions, particularly in CAF tournaments. This policy not only promotes inclusivity but also encourages clubs to invest in women's football. Additionally, following the inspiring vision of CAF President Dr. Patrice Motsepe to elevate football across the continent, there have been more competitions and a significant increase in prize money. This progress has not only created more opportunities for players and teams but has also motivated them to strive for excellence and perform at their very best.

Lastly, women's football is receiving more media attention and coverage than ever before. For example, last year, BeinSports took a significant step by inviting exceptional women players to their studios to analyze games. This kind of visibility not only highlights the talent within women's football but also inspires the next generation of players. These developments, taken together, are creating a brighter future for women's football, and I'm excited to see how they will continue to shape the sport.

CAF has been instrumental in driving football development across Africa. What are some of the initiatives CAF is currently working on to support both men's and women's football in the region?

One of the key initiatives CAF is actively working on is the African Schools Program, which focuses on both boys and girls. This program includes safeguarding workshops for team officials, players, and referees, as well as coaching license courses and other developmental programs aimed at nurturing young talent across Africa. These efforts are designed to create a strong foundation for the future of African football.

Another exciting initiative is the CAF GIFT Program, launched in collaboration with UEFA, which aims to strengthen development opportunities for young female players and empower women and girls across the continent over the next three years. The program recently kicked off in the CECAFA region (Council for East and Central Africa Football Association), and I am excited to see it expand to UNAF (Union of North African Football) and eventually reach every corner of Africa. It's inspiring to witness these initiatives take their first steps and contribute to the growth and empowerment of African football.

What do you see as the biggest opportunities for MENA federations to further enhance football infrastructure and talent development?

MENA region breath football. I've noticed that there have been significant strides in recent years, especially with Qatar hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Now, countries like Morocco and Saudi Arabia, officially named as hosts for the 2030 and 2034 FIFA World Cups, are putting incredible efforts into enhancing their stadiums and infrastructure. These developments are impressive. Also, there are still opportunities for further

interest. For instance, building accessible community pitches would provide better opportunities for grassroots football to flourish. In addition, I hope to see more support for startups to encourage them to invest in sports. Like the project that FIFA and Qatar launch FIFA World Cup 2022™ Legacy Fund to drive groundbreaking initiatives for the NGOs.

When it comes to talent development, I believe there is great potential to expand scouting networks, given the MENA region's strategic location. Collaborating with top clubs for player exchanges and creating more opportunities for women's football could unlock untapped talent and elevate the sport across the region. These steps would not only strengthen the football ecosystem but also inspire the next generation of players.

Women's Football & Leadership

Women's football is gaining momentum worldwide. How do you see the landscape evolving in Africa and the MENA region in the next five to ten years?

I would say it is a great opportunity for Morocco to become the first African nation to host the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup. This follows the FIFA decision to award Morocco multi-year hosting rights, allowing them to organize the newly expanded annual tournament from 2025 to 2029. This milestone will undoubtedly elevate women's football to more professional and competitive levels, marking a significant step forward for the sport in Africa and beyond.

Representation in leadership is key to long-term progress. What advice would you give to young women looking to break into the football industry—whether as players, coaches, or administrators?

My advice is to believe in yourself, trust in your passion, and pursue your dreams even if they seem out of reach. For

example, I dreamed of playing in top clubs like Lion and winning the Women's Champions League, but I couldn't. Those dreams are like fuel to help you grow and achieve milestones that you wouldn't imagine. The most important thing is to always make those who do not believe in you amazed by your capability, your knowledge, and your brilliance because later you will gain their respect. Finally, strive to leave a lasting legacy that inspires the next generation and ensures your achievements are remembered for years to come.

Looking Ahead

What's one major change you'd like to see in African and MENA football in the near future?

From an organizational perspective, my vision for football clubs and federations is to see a significant shift in female representation on their boards. Ideally, at least half of the board members should be women, ensuring more inclusion and diversity. For example, I was impressed to see two female members elected to the newly formed Tunisian Football Federation. This reflects a real effort to ensure that women are not limited to just one seat but are given a stronger voice in decision-making processes.

Finally, what excites you most about Soccerex MENA and its role in shaping the future of football in the region?

I'm happy to see Soccerex here in the MENA region, it is such an exceptional event that will bring together football stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas and knowledge. By creating a platform where all parties can connect closely, it fosters cooperation across various sectors. This gathering provides a unique environment that not only serves as a powerful tool to drive the development of football in every aspect but also deepens our understanding of how each country's culture integrates into the world of sport.

FOOTBALL



Hassan El Kamah Commercial Director, CAF

How has CAF's commercial strategy evolved in recent years, and what are the main areas of focus moving forward?

Over the past few years, CAF has undergone a significant transformation in its commercial strategy. We have focused on optimising sponsorship deals, enhancing broadcast rights distribution, and improving fan engagement across Africa and beyond. Moving forward, our priority is to create sustainable revenue streams by leveraging digital platforms, expanding partnerships, and enhancing the overall commercial value of CAF competitions.



How do you balance global visibility with the need to remain authentic and relevant to local communities and fan bases?

Balancing global visibility and local authenticity requires a dual approach. On one hand, we present African football as a global asset by collaborating with international broadcasters and brands. On the other, we ensure our content reflects the grassroots passion and cultural nuances that define African football. For example last AFCON our main theme was focusing on the Pride of African Football. A nation that is proud of their players who lead global leagues around the world, cultures, and identities.



What role do CAF competitions, like the Africa Cup of Nations, play in elevating African football on the world stage?

CAF competitions are the ultimate showcases of African football's talent and spirit. The Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), in particular, serves as a platform to demonstrate the skill, passion, and diversity of African players and teams to a global audience. AFCON was watched by over 1.5B audience around the globe with over 175 countries. The competition also fosters international partnerships and attracts top media partners and sponsors such as TotalEnergies, Visa, Orange, Unilever, Puma, beIN, Canal + , Sky Sports, BBC, and more.

These tournaments are not just about football—they celebrate African identity, culture, and unity. They're key to positioning African football as a major player in the global sports ecosystem.



What challenges does CAF face in attracting global sponsors, and how are you addressing them?

One of the biggest challenges is shifting perceptions about African football's commercial potential. While African football has passionate fans and immense talent, we need to improve infrastructure, visibility, and media rights distribution to attract top-tier sponsors. We are addressing these challenges by enhancing production quality, improving data-driven audience insights, and working closely with brands to create customised sponsorship opportunities that align with their objectives.

How is CAF leveraging digital innovation to grow its commercial revenue and engage more fans?

Digital innovation is a key pillar of our commercial strategy. We are investing in content creation, streaming services, and fan engagement platforms to connect with younger audiences. Initiatives like exclusive digital content, social media activations, and interactive experiences are helping us monetise our growing digital audience. Additionally, we are exploring new revenue streams such as NFTs, e-commerce, and direct-to-consumer platforms to further enhance CAF's commercial footprint.

SOCCEREX MENA

EVENT SCHEDULE

1

DAY

9am

REGISTRATION

STUDIO ONE

10.30am

Welcome to Soccerex MENA

Welcome Remarks: His Excellency Dr. Ashraf Sobhy **Minister for Youth and Sport**, Patrick McCreanor CEO **Soccerex**, Hazem Hamada CEO **Sports Expo**, Moderators: Sirayah Shiraz **Sports Presenter**, Ibrahim Abdel Gawad **ON Time Sports**

11am

The Pharaohs in focus

A discussion on the history of Egyptian football, 100 Year anniversary, and its proud history and heritage

Ibrahim Abdel Gawad **ON Time Sports**, Khaled El Darandaly **Egyptian Football Association**, Essam El Hadray **Egyptian Football Association**, Hany Ramzy **Egyptian Football Association**

12pm

Argentine Football Association

Presentation from the current World Champions

Menna Raafat, Leandro Petersen **Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer**

12.30pm

AC Milan in the Middle East

Building a legacy beyond football

Sirayah Shiraz **Sports Presenter**, Greta Nardeschi **AC Milan Regional Director, MENA**

1pm

Al Ahly Sporting Club

Sherif Fouad, Mohamed Serageldin **Al Ahly Sporting Club**, Eng. Khaled Mortagy **Al Ahly Sporting Club**, Mohamed Kamel **Al Qalaa Al Hamra**

2pm

Networking lunch

3pm

2034 and beyond

A look at Saudi Arabia's ambitious plans for organising the world's biggest football tournament

Ahmed Abas **EY**, Mark Lomas **Freelance Journalist and Editor**, Mark Lawrie **Trivandi**, Trevor Watkins **Pinsent Masons**

4pm

Trailblazers

A discussion dedicated to the leaders in women's football

Sirayah Shiraz **Sports Presenter**, Mariam H. Abouhegazy **Right to Dream Egypt**, Eniola Aluko MBE **Mercury/13**, Mona Adel **Adidas**

5pm

Levelling the playing field

A discussion on equality in football

Gerry Cox **Hayters TV**, Jeff Lahart **Special Olympics**, Amjid Khazir **Media Cultured**, Dr Hossam El-Din Mostafa **Egyptian Paralympic Committee**

SOCIAL EVE

9pm

20



 **LaBella**
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 Sports & Entertainment Architecture



DAY 1

STUDIO TWO

11am

KNVB

WorldCoaches - The Social power of Football

Caroline Iskander **Aspire Community Transformation**, Nelly Darrag **Embassy of Netherlands in Egypt**, Abdelrahman Tarek Yehia **Aspire Community Transformation**, Jesse Beesems **Royal Netherlands Football Association**, Passant Tarek Mehawed **Aspire Community Transformation**, Mohamed Anas **Right to Dream Egypt**

12pm

The rise and rise of African football

CAF discuss their critical role in the rise and development of African football

Ibrahim Abdel Gawad **ON Time Sports**, Hassan El Kamah **CAF**, Sarah Mukuna **CAF**, Sherif Hassan **CAF**

1pm

Like a dry sponge

Developing the next generation of MENA stars

Darren Isted **Hashtag Digital Media**, Mohammed Wasfy **Right to Dream Egypt**, Cyril Klosek **PSG**, Majdi Allulu **Grintafy**, Leonel Delgado **Al Nassr FC**

2pm

Networking lunch

3pm

The jewel of Africa

A panel dedicated to AFCON, the pinnacle of football in Africa

Eniola Aluko MBE **Mercury/13**, Sunday Oliseh **Former Nigeria International**, Scott Wilson **Designwerk**, Herve Dassoundo **CAF**

4pm

Pyramids FC

The Rise of Pyramids FC – Creating and Building a Legacy

Mostafa Tantawy **Media Expert**, Mamdouh Eid **CEO**, Omar Medhat **Commercial Director**, Mohamed Negm **Marketing & Sponsorship**

5pm

Beyond The Game; The Sports Anchored Community of the Future

Mark Lomas **Freelance Journalist and Editor** Cristian Petschen **LaBella Associates**, Brad Bartholomew **LaBella Associates**

6pm

Sunday Oliseh Presentation

Exploring Opportunities in the MENA Football Industry – Egypt as a Strategic Gateway

SOCIAL
EVE

9pm

Disclaimer: Event schedule is subject to change, see soccerex.com for the latest version.



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Professional
Footballers'
Association

SOCCEREX MENA

EVENT SCHEDULE

DAY 2

STUDIO ONE

11am

Bottom (goal) line

Unlocking football finance and opportunities in the MENA region

Trevor Watkins **Pinsent Masons**, Brian Wesaala **Football Foundation for Africa**, Ahmed Abas **EY**, Mikael Silvestre **Talent Lyfe**

12pm

Beyond the game

Innovating fan engagement in the digital age
Sponsored by Sportian

Nathan Kaplan **IMG Arena**, Blanca Valdivielso Paño **LALIGA**, Inigo Bonilla Barroso **Sportian**,
Tamer Yousry **TimeOut Sport and Entertainment**

1pm

Forging MENAingful relationships

Unlocking sponsorship opportunities in the MENA region

Olivier Brémont **Sports, Entertainment & Consumer Goods Leader**, Carlos Perez **IMG**, Marianne Dimitry **CAF**, Amr Elrawi **Game Changers**

2pm

Networking lunch

3pm

The game changer

Exploring technology's role in modern football

Olivier Brémont **Sports, Entertainment & Consumer Goods Leader**, Dave Mace **AWS**, Yara Abdallah **FIFA**,
Tom Janicot **Sportec Solutions AG**, Jake Schuster **Gemini Sports**

4pm

Tech driven talent

The future of scouting and performance analysis in football

Gerry Cox **Hayters TV**, Mohamed Adel Elbadry **KoraStats**, Mohamed Alaa **International Sports Lawyer**
FIFA Licensed Football Agent, Nick Santos **Orlando City / Orlando Pride**

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INCLUSION

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DAY 2 STUDIO TWO

11am

Expanding horizons

Developing regional and global scouting networks

Darren Isted **Hashtag Digital Media**, Robinson Adakosa **N-Youth League**, Miguel Reis **SL Benfica**, Hassan M. Yusuf **Real Madrid Foundation Education Football Program in Saudi Arabia**

12pm

Breaking barriers

The rapid rise of women's football in the MENA region

Sirayah Shiraz **Sports Presenter**, Budreya Faisal **Banaat FC**, Rasha Elghorour **CAF**, Ngala Maimo Wajiri **CONIFA Africa**

1pm

The flag bearers of African excellence

A focus on Al Ahly SC

Ibrahim Abdel Gawad **ON Time Sports**, Omar Abo Shakra **Red Bull UAE**, Ahmed Hossam Awad **Al Ahly SC**, Mona Adel **Adidas**

2pm

Networking lunch

3pm

It's okay not to be ok

A discussion centred around player wellness

Mikael Silvestre **Talent Lyfe**, Sebastien Bassong **former Cameroon International**, Nick Dann **Zephyr Sports Group**, Anna Pereira **The Wellness Universe**

4pm

Foundations for the future

How Mega Events Prepare Countries for Future Success

Rashid Al Khater **Freelance Journalist and Editor**, Jassim Al Jassim **Operations Director Qatar 2022 and Operations Executive Director LOC - Qatar Supreme Committee**, Peter Griffin **Trivandi**, Cristian Petschen **LaBella Associates**

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<https://korastats.com/>



Q&A

Yara Abdalla

FIFA Media Ticketing Operations Manager



Football in the MENA region has seen tremendous growth in recent years. What do you think are the key drivers behind this expansion?

Football in MENA is growing because of significant investments in new stadiums, hosting prestigious events like the World Cup, and expanding youth development programs. The region's deep passion for the sport, along with strong government backing, has created a solid foundation for this growth.

The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar was a landmark event for the region. How do you think it has influenced the perception and development of football across MENA?

The World Cup highlighted MENA's culture, hospitality, and ability to deliver world-class events. It inspired many countries in the region to invest in football infrastructure and programs, setting a new standard for future tournaments and enhancing global respect for MENA's role in football.

As someone working closely with media operations, how do you see the role of media evolving in shaping football's growth in the region?

Media plays a vital role by showcasing local talent, engaging younger audiences, and bringing global attention to the region's football stories. It also helps bridge cultural differences, creating a broader appreciation for the region's contributions to the sport.

With an increasing number of international tournaments and leagues engaging with the MENA market, how does FIFA ensure the region's unique cultural and logistical aspects are considered?

FIFA collaborates with local experts to understand and respect traditions while addressing logistical challenges like climate, language, and transportation. This approach ensures that tournaments run smoothly and provide culturally rich experiences for players and fans.

The MENA region has a passionate and diverse football fanbase. How does FIFA work to create meaningful engagement with local audiences?

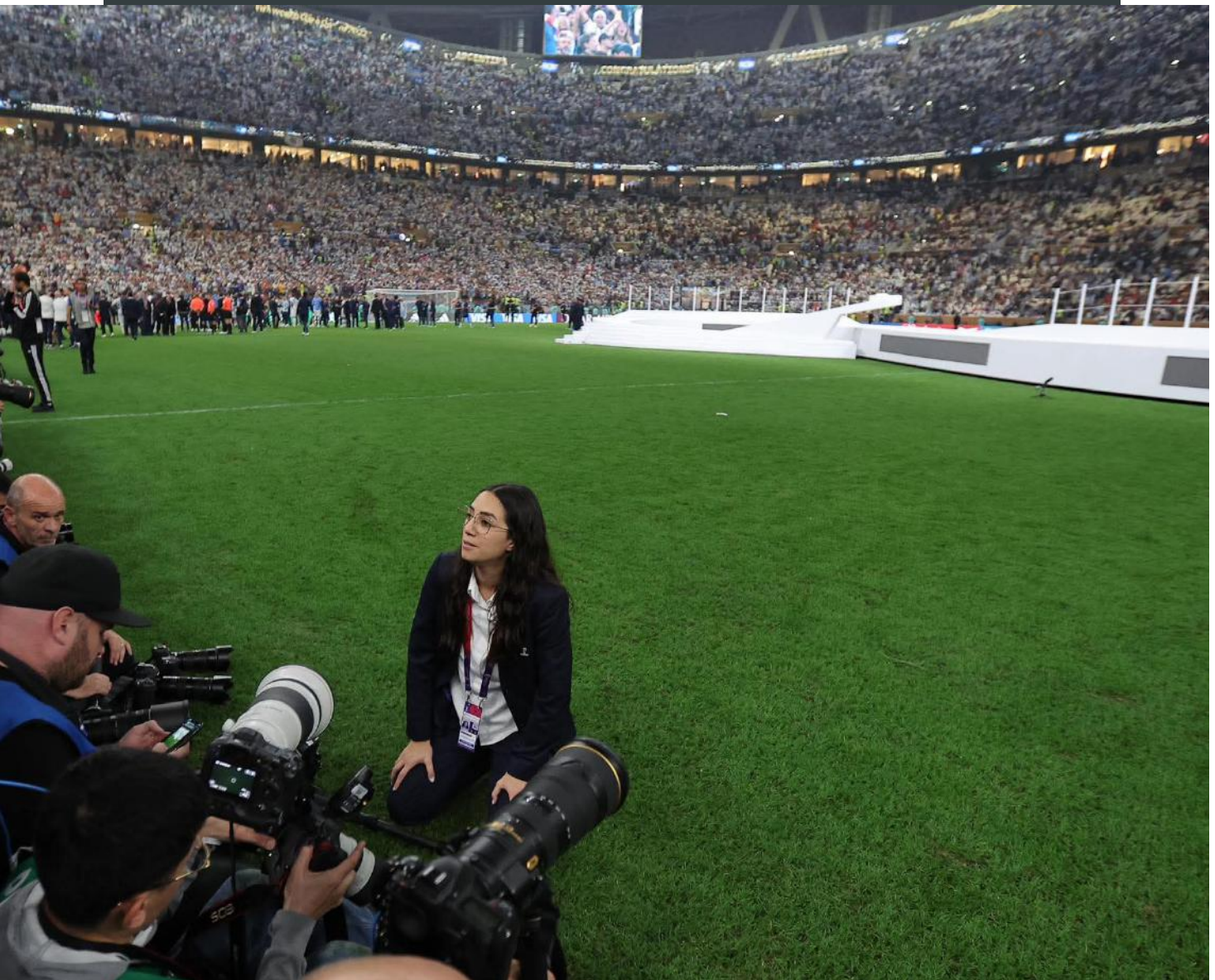
FIFA works with regional partners to create tailored fan experiences, such as interactive fan zones and localized digital campaigns. Accessible match broadcasts strengthens the connection with fans and celebrate their enthusiasm.

Women's football is gaining momentum in the region. What steps do you see being taken to further support its growth and visibility?

Women's football is advancing rapidly thanks to the establishment of professional leagues, greater media coverage, and FIFA's dedicated development programs. The Moroccan team's success at the last FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia demonstrated the impact of media support in connecting fans with players, creating role models, and inspiring more women and girls to embrace the sport. Grassroots initiatives continue to nurture this progress by offering young talents opportunities to participate and grow.

The investment in football infrastructure across the region has been significant. What impact do you think this will have on the sport's future development?

Modern stadiums and facilities not only attract international events but also inspire local talent to pursue football. These investments drive economic growth, boost tourism, and inspire a sense of pride in the region's football achievements.



FIFA has been introducing new initiatives to support grassroots football globally. How do you see these initiatives benefiting young talent in the MENA region?

Grassroots programs provide young players with coaching, equipment, and pathways to professional opportunities. Collaborations with schools and academies ensure these efforts are sustainable and impactful for the next generation of talent.

Looking ahead, what excites you most about the future of football in the MENA region, and what role do you think media will play in driving this growth?

The combination of passion, investment, and talent makes the future of football in MENA incredibly exciting. Media will be crucial in connecting fans, showcasing rising stars, and sharing the region's inspiring football stories with the world.

EXHIBITOR PROFILES



Champs Land, specializes in the customization and sale of high-quality soccer uniforms. As an authorized dealer of top global brands and creator of its own line, Jogatti, Ekipstar delivers tailored solutions with fast turnaround, exceptional customer service, and innovative designs. Empowering every team to showcase their identity on and off the field.

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Designwerk. Delivering game-changing 360 brand experiences to the sports industry for 20 years, Designwerk is a defiantly independent, award-winning and full service creative agency. We transform ambitious brands into industry leaders by raising the bar on brand experience and brand expression. Clients include CAF, Chelsea FC, Laver Cup, and UEFA.



FC Masar, Egypt's first purpose-driven football club, with the vision of empowering youth, creating pathways for the next generation, and setting new standards for football development in Africa. A member of Right to Dream group, FC Masar is part of a network of academies & clubs spanning Ghana, Denmark, Egypt, and USA.

EXHIBITOR PROFILES



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FOOTGENiX, a dynamic brand in motion that inspires, ignites and evokes hope of future football stardom in Egyptian football professionals and amateurs. We focus on advancing players' cognitive and physical abilities through data-driven technologies and equipment utilized by elite clubs worldwide.



Grintafy, is the leading football talent discovery platform in the Middle East, dedicated to connecting football aspiring professionals with clubs and opportunities worldwide. Founded in 2019, Grintafy has already reached nearly 2 million players. At Grintafy, we believe that passion for football transcends age and experience, Grintafy is your one-stop platform through our partnerships with local and



Hashtag Digital Media, produces unique digital interactive magazines and print publications for sporting events and major organisations.

Customers access a traditional printed magazine experience but with a host of added digital benefits, including rich media such as video, links to transactional pages and embedded content.

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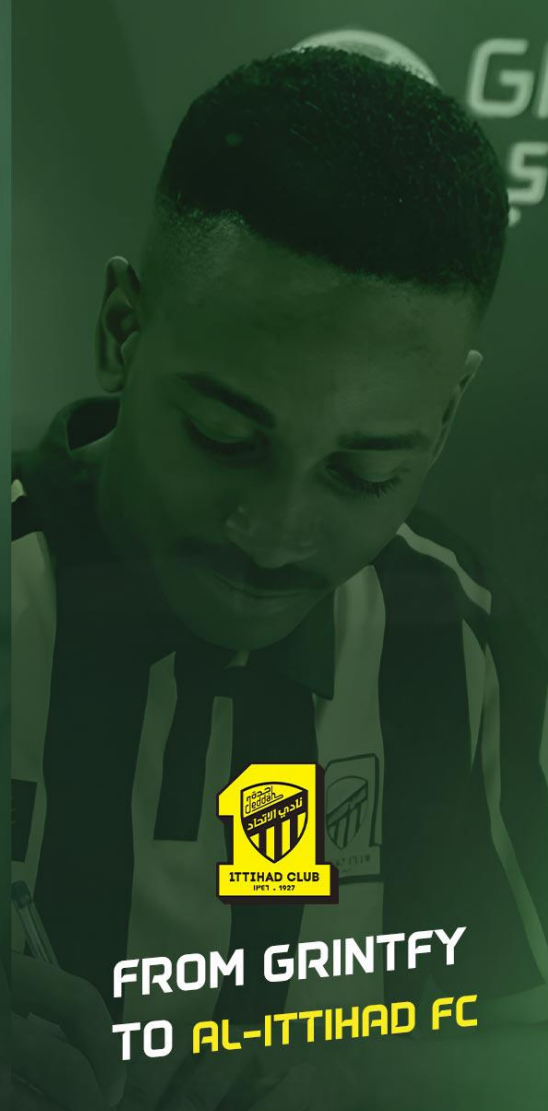
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KORASTATS®

korAddiction, is revolutionizing football analytics with comprehensive data solutions for clubs, scouts, broadcasters, and fans. From match insights to player analysis, our innovative platform empowers decision-making and enhances performance. Partner with us to redefine success on and off the pitch.



LaBella, is an international architecture, engineering and planning firm, dedicated to delivering innovative solutions across a variety of market sectors. With over 40 offices around the world and a dedicated team of more than 2,000 experienced professionals, we specialize in sports focused and anchored mixed-use developments that transform neighborhoods and communities. Our diverse group of experts allow us to offer all services you may need "under one roof," from the very beginning of a project all the way through execution.

EXHIBITOR PROFILES



Nigeria Youth League Cup, is a National U19 football league. It's a youth elite competition in a league format showcasing Nigeria's best youth U19 teams representing NPFL (Nigeria Premier Football League) U19, elite youth teams. NYLC is sanctioned by the Nigeria Football Federation. The maiden 2024/25 season started 15 September 2024 & ends April 2025. All 841 games are recorded with Hudl cameras and on the Wyscout platform. We are open to partnerships and Sponsorships & Investment opportunities.



Premier Relocation offers door to door moving and relocation services. Personalised solutions include door to door move, customs formalities, property search and settling-in support as well as storage, pet and car transport. Experienced professionals ensure clients have a stress-free relocation while adapting to their new environment.



Rapiscan Systems, is a leading global provider of security inspection solutions, with more than 100,000 products installed in over 170 countries. Rapiscan Systems has an extensive portfolio of Baggage and Parcel Inspection, Cargo and Vehicle Inspection, Hold Baggage Screening, People Screening, Trace Detection, Radiation Detection, Tray Return System and enhanced security solutions, which are supported by a global service network. Rapiscan Systems promotes excellence in security and efficiency, continually investing in research to develop technological advancements that address present and future threats and meet the most rigorous compliance standards worldwide.

Q&A

Eng. Hazem Hamada

CEO of Sports Expo



As Sports Expo 2025 and Soccerex MENA Cairo bring together global sports leaders, businesses, and enthusiasts, we sat down with Eng. Hazem Hamada, CEO of Sports Expo, to discuss the vision behind the event, what attendees can expect, and the future of the sports industry in Egypt and the region.

Sports Expo has grown significantly over the years, establishing itself as a leading sports business event in the region. What makes Sports Expo 2025 a must-attend event?

Sports Expo has grown into the region's leading sports business platform, bringing together top figures, innovators, and decision-makers. This year, with the addition of Soccerex MENA Cairo, we are expanding our influence in the global football industry. Attendees will have the opportunity to network with industry leaders, discover cutting-edge innovations, and explore exciting business and investment opportunities. Whether you're an entrepreneur, athlete, or sports enthusiast, this event will offer invaluable experiences and connections.

Soccerex has a long-standing reputation in football business events worldwide. What does its partnership with Sports Expo bring to this year's edition?

Soccerex is the most recognized football business event worldwide, and having its MENA edition in Cairo solidifies Egypt's role as a regional hub for the industry. This partnership brings international football legends, top-tier clubs, and key stakeholders in football business to the expo, opening doors for collaboration and investment in Egypt's growing sports market.

Egypt has long been a powerhouse in African and Middle Eastern football. Why was it chosen as the host country for Soccerex MENA?

Egypt has a rich football heritage, a passionate fan base, and a strategic location connecting Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. It is home to some of the biggest clubs in Africa and has a long history of producing world-class talent. With ongoing investments in sports infrastructure and a vision for growth, Egypt is the perfect destination for an event of this scale.

The expo brings together a diverse range of exhibitors and stakeholders from across the sports industry. What types of businesses and organizations will be present this year?

Sports Expo 2025 will host a wide range of exhibitors, including sports technology companies, fitness brands, stadium developers, e-sports organizations, and sportswear manufacturers. The event is designed to showcase the latest innovations that are shaping the future of the sports industry and offer a platform for industry professionals to engage, collaborate, and drive new opportunities.

This edition of Sports Expo promises to be highly interactive. What unique activations can attendees look forward to?

This year, we're making the expo more engaging than ever. Visitors can experience interactive sports activations in various disciplines, including emerging and fast-growing sports. There will also be dedicated activation areas where attendees can engage with different sports experiences, making the event more immersive and dynamic.

The sports industry is rapidly growing in the MENA region. How does Sports Expo contribute to its development?

Our goal is to position Egypt as a key player in the global sports industry by attracting investment, fostering innovation, and creating new business opportunities. Through networking, knowledge-sharing, and strategic partnerships, we are building a sustainable ecosystem that benefits athletes, businesses, and fans alike.

Youth development and education are vital for the future of sports. What initiatives are included in this year's expo to engage young talent?

We strongly believe in nurturing the next generation of sports professionals. This year, we are hosting an Art and Activation Gallery, engaging thousands of students from different schools. Additionally, the Youth Social Responsibility (YSR) Conference will feature panel discussions with business leaders, athletes, and startups, emphasizing the impact of sports on education, leadership, and social development.

Soccerex MENA is expected to attract major football figures and stakeholders. How do you see this benefiting the local and regional football industry?

Soccerex MENA will be a powerful platform for football industry professionals, clubs, and investors to exchange expertise, explore new business models, and drive the development of football in the region. The presence of international football legends, decision-makers, and clubs will provide unmatched exposure and opportunities for collaboration, helping to elevate the regional football scene to new heights.

With Soccerex MENA making its debut in Cairo, what lasting impact do you expect it to have on the football business landscape in the region?

Hosting Soccerex MENA in Cairo is a milestone moment that will enhance Egypt's reputation as a hub for football business and investment. It will bring together key stakeholders to discuss the future of football in the region, strengthen ties between international and local football institutions, and create new opportunities for growth. This event is not just about a few days of networking—it's about shaping the industry for years to come.

EXHIBITOR PROFILES



Spectatr.AI specialises in AI-driven real-time sports highlights and content management for soccer. Serving leagues, clubs, athletes, and broadcasters, our AI Agents streamline workflows—from automating fan engagement on social media to providing sports intelligence. Our solutions deliver personalised content optimised for any device, helping clients acquire 3X fanbase and elevate brand value. Stay ahead, connect with fans, and expand your digital presence with Spectatr.AI



Sportforia is a global platform that brings the thrill of classic sports moments to fans worldwide. We specialize in streaming sports archives, allowing audiences to relive their favorite games, events, and moments with ease. By showcasing unique content, we create new value for sports fans and content owners alike.



At **Vixon**, we are changing the game in sports training by merging neuroscience, advanced technology, and athletic performance. We are a startup dedicated to optimizing athletes' performance by focusing not only on physical development but also on the brain—an essential element for excelling in high-pressure situations.



Founded in 2019, **korAddiction Sports & Entertainment S.A.E** is a forward-thinking Egyptian company dedicated to revolutionizing sports development and entertainment in the region. With a strong focus on football, the company exclusively partners with European innovators and suppliers, ensuring that Egyptian athletes and fans experience the same elite training methodologies used across Europe.

FOOTGENiX – An Advanced Cognitive Training Hub

At the heart of korAddiction's vision is **FOOTGENiX**, Region's first and most advanced cognitive football training facility, based in Maadi, Cairo. Launched in September 2021, FOOTGENiX integrates Europe's top football technology, shaping a growing database of over 2,000 players aged 14-17.



FOOTGENiX features cutting-edge training, scouting and development systems, including:

- **SoccerBot360** – A 360-degree tactical and decision-making simulator.
- **Elite Skills Arena** – Precision tools for technical mastery.
- **Rezzil VR** – Virtual reality for cognitive and situational awareness.
- **Smartgoals** – Interactive drills for agility and reaction speed.
- **BlazePods** – Light-based drills enhancing coordination and reflexes.
- **VEO Cameras** – AI-powered video analysis for performance tracking.
- **Targett Football** – Tracking shin guards providing real-time performance data.

FOOTGENiX offers an elite scouting and development platform, helping players analyze, refine, and maximize their potential using European training standards.



TEQBALL Empire – Egypt is Curved

korAddiction's **TEQBALL Empire** brand is leading the development of Teqball in Egypt. As the sole distributor of official Teqball tables, it is making the sport accessible to footballers, clubs, and recreational athletes. Through activations and tournaments, korAddiction is fostering a growing Teqball community.

Fan Engagement & Entertainment

Beyond player development, korAddiction enhances fan experiences with cutting-edge technology. From RoboKeeper, a robotic goalkeeper challenging even professionals, to interactive activations using advanced training equipments, korAddiction creates thrilling sports events for tournaments, corporate activations, and fan zones.

#playthefuture

Omar Abo Shakra

Red Bull Sports Marketing Manager

Can you tell us about your journey into sports marketing and how you came to work with Red Bull in the MENA region?

"My journey into sports marketing began as an athlete from a young age, which fueled my passion for sports and brand strategy. After studying Finance and Marketing and gaining experience in various roles, I seized the opportunity to join Red Bull. The brand's dynamic approach to sports was a perfect fit for my interests, particularly in Egypt and the broader MENA region, where I recognised a unique chance to engage with passionate fans and emerging markets."

What role does Red Bull play in the football landscape of the MENA region, and how does it differentiate itself from other brands?

"Red Bull plays a pivotal role in the MENA football landscape by supporting athletes, clubs, and events while also creating unique experiences that resonate with fans. We differentiate ourselves through innovative activations and a strong focus on grassroots initiatives, fostering genuine connections with local communities."

Red Bull is known for creating unique experiences and events. Can you share any standout campaigns or activations you've worked on that have resonated with football fans?

"One standout campaign was the Red Bull Four 2 Score and Red Bull Street Style tournaments, which brought together local talent and celebrated street football culture. These events featured competitions, workshops, and live music, creating unforgettable experiences that deeply resonated with football fans in the region."



Football is a growing force in MENA. How does Red Bull decide which football initiatives to invest in across the region?

"Our decision-making process for football initiatives involves a thorough understanding of local market dynamics, fan engagement potential, and alignment with our brand values. We prioritise projects that foster community and create a lasting impact, ensuring our investments resonate with fans."

With Red Bull's involvement in football clubs globally, do you foresee potential collaborations or investments in MENA-based football clubs?

"Given Red Bull's history of successful partnerships and investments in football clubs globally, I foresee potential collaborations in MENA. As the football landscape continues to evolve, we remain open to exploring strategic partnerships that align with our vision and values."

How does Red Bull balance its global brand identity with the need for local relevance, especially in football?

"Red Bull balances its global brand identity with local relevance by adapting our messaging and initiatives to fit cultural contexts. We invest in local talent, collaborate with regional athletes and influencers, and actively participate in community events to ensure our presence feels authentic and relatable."

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THE ARGENTINA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION GLOBAL EXPANSION



In the highly competitive landscape of football business, excelling in sponsorship and brand expansion is a significant achievement. The Argentine Football Association (AFA) has set a new benchmark, closing 2024 with an unprecedented 65 international sponsors. This remarkable achievement not only highlights AFA's strategic prowess but also earned them the prestigious Globe Soccer Award in Dubai, recognizing them as the Leader Association in Brand Expansion.



This interview with Leandro Petersen, Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer at AFA, dives deep into the strategies, milestones, and vision that propelled AFA to this historic record. From breaking sponsorship barriers and redefining global brand outreach to leveraging the impact of winning the FIFA World Cup 2022 on their business, Leandro shares invaluable insights into the success story that positions AFA as a global leader in football marketing.

What has been the key to driving such unprecedented growth?

Leandro Petersen (Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer at AFA - Argentine Football Association): *The key to the remarkable growth in sponsorship for AFA lies in its ability to provide value and benefit to its sponsors through strategic partnerships and effective brand exposure,*

By creating a mutually beneficial relationship, AFA has been able to attract a wide range of international brands seeking to enhance their visibility and reach within the target audience of the organization. Additionally, the organization's commitment to delivering high-quality events, engaging content, and meaningful interactions with its audience has helped to establish AFA as a desirable platform for sponsors looking to effectively engage with their target market. Through consistent growth and successful collaborations, AFA has demonstrated the importance of building strong relationships, delivering value, and staying ahead of industry trends to drive sponsorship growth and overall success in the competitive landscape of the global market.

How is AFA increasing its presence and business activities in international markets? What steps have been taken to grow your brand globally, especially in regions such as China, Asia, the USA, and the MENA region?

Leandro Petersen: *The Argentina Football Association (AFA) has strategically expanded its presence and business activities in international markets through a multifaceted approach aimed at increasing brand awareness and market penetration. The AFA Brand growth strategy in regions such as China, India, Asia, the USA, and the MENA region involves the following key steps:*

1. Market Research and Analysis: AFA conducts thorough market research to understand consumer preferences, cultural nuances, and competitive landscapes in each target region.
2. Local Partnerships and Networks: AFA establishes strategic partnerships with local distributors, retailers, and influencers to leverage their networks and expertise in navigating of each market.
3. E-commerce and Online Presence with Taylor made Social Media Accounts.
4. Participation in Trade Shows and Events: AFA actively participates in industry trade shows like Soccerex.
5. Sponsorships and Brand Ambassadors: AFA collaborates with current players and past legends to serve as brand ambassadors and promote its branding capabilities. By implementing these strategic steps, AFA is effectively expanding its global footprint and strengthening its position in international markets.



GLOBAL EXPANSION OF THE AFA BRAND



THE ARGENTINA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

GLOBAL EXPANSION

Does AFA have plans to launch international football academies? If so, what would be the goals of these initiatives, and how could they contribute to the global development of Argentine football and attract international talent and sponsors?

Leandro Petersen: Yes, the Argentine Football Association (AFA) does have plans to launch international football academies. The primary goal of these initiatives would be to expand the reach and influence of Argentine football globally by developing young talent outside of Argentina. By establishing international academies, AFA aims to assist on the legacy building and nurture promising players from diverse regions, providing them with training and guidance in the Argentine footballing style and philosophy.

These academies would not only serve as talent development centers but also as hubs for promoting the values and techniques that have made Argentine football renowned worldwide. Through these initiatives, AFA seeks to accelerate the global development of Argentine football by exporting its expertise, coaching methods, and playing style to new markets.



PARTNER PROFILES



Argentine Football Association, has achieved a Global recognition as the World's Leader Football Federation, with more than 65 international Sponsors, Argentina is today among at the TOP level of international sports entities globally. With the constant pursue of overcoming, and transforming challenges into successful reality.



CONIFA

CONIFA, is a global acting NPO and right holder. that governs international football teams from nations, de-facto nations, regions, indigenous, ethnic peoples and sportingly isolated territories. The organisation was founded in 2013 and today CONIFA represents 970 million people from all over the world – the organisation are solely operated by volunteers, contributing to a better world through sports & culture.

fcbusiness

fcbusiness, For more than 20 years, fcbusiness has been a leader in the football industry in the UK and Europe. We provide in-depth interviews and features with some of the game's top figures, helping to drive growth during this time. We stay attuned to the latest trends and concerns while offering insights and information that assist our readership — decision-makers across the football industry — in making informed and decisive choices when purchasing goods and services for their clubs.



FilGoal.com is the premier sports portal in Egypt and the MENA region, boasting over 10 million users across web and app platforms. With more than 22 million followers on social media, FilGoal is the go-to destination for sports enthusiasts, delivering the latest news, sports data, and engaging content.



Football Foundation For Africa, The Football Foundation for Africa (FFA) is an international social enterprise that drives investment in grassroots development in Africa. It aims to create better opportunities for Africa's youth and protect the foundations of African football, namely youth, talent, and passion, by promoting better governance of the beautiful game at all levels.



FPF Founded on March 31, 1914 by the Associations of Lisbon, Portalegre and Porto, under the name of the Portuguese Football Union, its main objects are the representation of Portuguese football at national level and International; the competitive management of National Teams; one organization of competitions at local, district and national level or guaranteeing the development of football in the territory Portuguese in accordance with the sporting spirit, values educational, material, cultural and humanitarian, through training programs for different sports agents.



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Special Olympics INTERVIEW



Jon-Paul St. Germain

Special Olympics' Vice President of Sport Development

Can you tell us about the mission of Special Olympics and how it has evolved over the years?

Special Olympics mission and goal has remained the same since its origin in 1968. We are an inclusive sports organization that uses the transformation power of sport to demonstrate the capabilities and gifts of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and building more accepting communities. Special Olympics has significantly evolved over the years to be a more inclusive by offering opportunities for individuals with and without IDD to train and compete together to build friendship and acceptance directly through a shared Unified Sports experience and we have developed amplifying programs in the areas of youth education, leadership training, and health screenings.

How does Special Olympics use football as a platform to drive social inclusion and empower athletes with intellectual disabilities?

Football is Special Olympics' largest team-based sport – as well as the world's most participated sport. It is played in over 200 programs, across 7 regions, by over half a million people with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics uses football as a catalyst for change by creating awareness of social inclusion initiatives, highlighting the inaccessibility of sport to those with intellectual disabilities, and showcasing how those elements can be amended. It also partnering with international, regional, and national football federations and organizations to educate them and their stakeholders on the importance and power of inclusion. Through greater accessibility to sport,

people with intellectual disabilities are provided with opportunities to enhance their social, emotional, and physical characteristics. Leading to more confident and competent footballers, while also having more inclusive coaches, volunteers, teammates, etc., and healthier, fitter athletes who experience more regular training and competition opportunities.

Our Unified Sports initiative creates teams where footballers with and without intellectual disabilities train and compete equally together. This results in greater social inclusion in communities and schools, enhances the quality of the sport that is offered, and is one method of driving on-field leadership initiatives for people with and without intellectual disabilities.

With regards to football specifically, Special Olympics is focusing on greater collaboration with national football federations and professional leagues within the MENA region to provide more access and opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to engage with football and recruit more football coaches and officials to support Special Olympics MENA national programs.

We wish to continue our growth of female football in the region and create more opportunities for athletes of all ability levels to participate. Through this we will offer best-in-class intellectual disability education for coaches, volunteers, and other stakeholders to ensure they are equipped with the best tools to create a more accessible and inclusive environment in their clubs or organisations.



With Soccerex MENA focusing on football's growth in the region, what opportunities do you see for Special Olympics to strengthen its programs across MENA?

Special Olympics already has a fantastic program in the MENA region. In 2019, Special Olympics hosted the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi.

Why is Soccerex MENA an important platform for Special Olympics, and what do you hope to achieve through this collaboration?

Soccerex MENA brings together key decision makers from around the region and the world. This platform enables Special Olympics to meet and educate



Soccerex MENA attendees on the enormous impact they can have by partnering with our Special Olympics and our grassroots delivery system. In short, Soccerex MENA enables us to tell the story of Special Olympics football in a region where we need to raise our profile for us to be able to create more opportunities and a legacy for our current and future footballers.

Can you share some of the initiatives Special Olympics has implemented to encourage greater participation of women and girls in football?

In 2024, Special Olympics collaborated with Nike to create Unified Football Leagues to offer women and girls the opportunity to regularly train and compete. This initiative was conducted in Kenya, Namibia, Serbia, Guatemala, and Chile. The project led to over 3,000 hours of football training, resulting in improved social, emotional, physical, technical, and tactical development of footballers, as well as diagnoses for some individuals who are now aware of the intellectual disability they have and who previously did not have access to medical assistance or the support they needed in education settings.

This is only one example of how Special Olympics is encouraging greater participation of women and girls in football and globally Special Olympics is constantly increasing accessible opportunities for women and girls to consistently access football at a local level.

How do you collaborate with football clubs, organisations, and governing bodies to promote Unified Sports and create more inclusive opportunities for footballers?

Unified Sports and create more inclusive opportunities for athletes. We have had a lot of success in working with football federations on increasing access to coaches, officials, equipment and training and competition venues in addition to support for new competition opportunities in the form of tournaments and leagues. Special Olympics provides expert content in coaching methodologies for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and how to best conduct inclusive training and competitions for teams composed of individuals with IDD

and without IDD. Together, we cross promote the story telling content of the transformative power of football to change lives.

What message would you like to share with the global football community at Soccerex MENA

As football is the world's most popular sport that is played in every corner of the globe it is in a unique position to transcend differences and create a more accepting world for all. However, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are the most marginalized and isolated segment of any national population, often dehumanized and denied access to basic services, including sport. Participating in football provides visibility and enables individuals to demonstrate their capabilities and be seen as valuable contributors to their community and help create inclusive mindsets for all. Special Olympics is ready to partner with the global football community to eliminate barriers for people with IDD and help them gain access to physical, social and mental well-being through football. Let's use the world's most popular sport to positively change the world!



PARTNER PROFILES



Ft Lauderdale United FC, our Club stands as a beacon in Fort Lauderdale, committed to nurturing players and unifying the community under the banner of soccer. Through our dedication to excellence and an unwavering pursuit of success, we aim to redefine the path to professional soccer, ensuring that passion meets opportunity.



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Hayters TV, is a heritage brand in UK sports reporting, covering football at the highest level for 70 years. Our video content from the Premier League, Champions League and international football, both men's and women's, generates half a billion views each year via our own social channels, and we reach millions more via our client list of global broadcasters and digital publishers.



INSIDE
WORLD FOOTBALL

Inside World Football, is a web-based magazine for the business and politics of football that is also delivered via app and a daily newsletter. The magazine has rapidly developed to become a 'must read' for federations, leagues clubs, sponsors and football aficionados who need to know what's going on behind the scenes in world football.



KNVB WorldCoaches, WorldCoaches is a programme based on the Royal Netherlands Football Association's extensive international coaching experience and its belief that no matter where in the world, football can be used as a means for social development. Our trained WorldCoaches play a key role in this by inspiring and coaching children in their athletic and social development.



LaBella, is an international architecture, engineering and planning firm, dedicated to delivering innovative solutions across a variety of market sectors. With over 40 offices around the world and a dedicated team of more than 2,000 experienced professionals, we specialize in sports focused and anchored mixed-use developments that transform neighborhoods and communities. Our diverse group of experts allow us to offer all services you may need "under one roof," from the very beginning of a project all the way through execution.



A Global Football Community

Founded in 1999, Right to Dream (RTD) is a global football community of world-class academies, professional clubs, and partners operating across Ghana, Denmark, Egypt, and the US. Through a fully funded model, Right to Dream creates equal opportunities for young talent, regardless of gender and background.

"Our commitment to equality means that the same life-changing opportunities are available to all our student-athletes worldwide," says Sir Mohamed Mansour, Chairman of Right to Dream.



Next Generation of Egyptian Talent

Building on its successes in West Africa and Scandinavia, Right to Dream expanded to Egypt in 2022. The academy has already achieved significant milestones: two graduates have joined the RTD International Academy, which brings together the top football talents from all Right to Dream academies, while two others secured academic scholarships in the US.

"What we're witnessing in Egypt represents a fundamental shift in football development in the region," says Sir Mohamed.

"We're investing in the futures of young men and women, creating sustainable pathways for Egyptian talent to fulfill their potential and inspire their communities."

Trailblazers in Women's Football

Right to Dream is breaking new ground in women's football, offering opportunities at every level through girls' academies in Ghana, Denmark and Egypt, the US Academy launching next year, and professional teams in Egypt (FC Masar) and Denmark (FC Nordsjælland).

In 2024, both women's professional teams made history with domestic doubles. FC Masar also won bronze in the CAF Women's Champions League, while FCN made their UEFA Women's Champions League debut.

"Our achievements in women's football show the power of investing in young female talent," says Dan Dickinson, Right to Dream CEO.

"We're building pathways and nurturing a new generation that can shape the future of the women's game."



A Holistic Approach

Right to Dream develops well-rounded individuals through a model that combines elite football training, academic excellence and character development, nurturing leaders both on and off the pitch.

"We create an environment that empowers young talent to reach their full potential and grow into leaders and role models, not just on the field but in their communities," says Michael Essien, Individual Player Coach at FC Nordsjælland.

The model has seen graduates thrive on multiple fronts—from playing football at the highest level to earning scholarships at Ivy League schools and launching initiatives that benefit their communities.

A unique connection between the academies and professional clubs strengthens this ecosystem. *"Our clubs provide a clear pathway for academy graduates to develop their game, gain invaluable experience, and continue their growth within a supportive environment,"* adds Michael.



Looking Ahead

From nurturing the next generation of Egyptian talent to advancing women's football and preparing for San Diego FC's MLS debut, Right to Dream is expanding its reach while ensuring every young talent has the right to dream and the tools to make that dream a reality.

"By investing in sustainable pathways and a holistic development model, we're building a unique global football community that sets a new benchmark for youth development and empowers the next generation to lead and inspire," says Dan.

PARTNER PROFILES



Premier Relocation, offers door to door moving and relocation services. Personalised solutions include door to door move, customs formalities, property search and settling-in support as well as storage, pet and car transport. Experienced professionals ensure clients have a stress-free relocation while adapting to their new environment.



Right to Dream, is a global football community of academies and professional clubs spanning Ghana, Denmark, Egypt, and the US. We are dedicated to expanding people's understanding of excellence through football and we believe that every talent deserves a fair shot at pursuing their dreams. Through a holistic model that blends elite football training, world-class education, and character development, we create pathways for talent to excel on and off the pitch.



At **Robokeeper Egypt**, we bring events to life by supplying the latest in sports entertainment technology. Our cutting-edge equipment ensures unforgettable experiences for event vendors and their audiences. Whether it's corporate activations, festivals, or private celebrations, we provide everything needed to captivate, engage, and entertain. Robokeeper Egypt: Turning every event into a show-stopping success. Do you have what it takes to score against the world's fastest goalkeeper? 📖🔥 Challenge Accepted?



The mission of **Special Olympics**, is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.



Sportian, is a global end-to-end technology solutions provider that seeks an overall growth of the sports and entertainment industry. Created through a joint venture between Globant and LALIGA, Sportian stands for everything that makes sports and entertainment great.



SportsAndGulf.ae Magazine is your premier destination for sports news, insights, and stories from the Gulf region and beyond. We cover a wide array of sports, with a strong focus on the athletic achievements, emerging talents, and groundbreaking events that shape the Gulf's dynamic sports culture.

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IN HIGH-LEVEL SPORTS, EVERY SECOND COUNTS. VIXON COMBINES APPLIED NEUROSCIENCE AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO PREPARE YOUR PLAYERS LIKE NEVER BEFORE. OUR SPORTS TOPS WITH LED LIGHTS TRANSFORM ANY TRAINING SESSION INTO AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE AIMED AT ENHANCING THE COGNITIVE AND PHYSICAL ABILITIES OF ATHLETES IN REAL GAME SITUATIONS.

■ REAL GAME SIMULATION

DYNAMIC COLOR CHANGES THAT RECREATE UNPREDICTABLE SCENARIOS: 5V5? 4V6? A WILDCARD THAT CHANGES THE GAME? YOUR PLAYERS WILL NEED TO ADAPT INSTANTLY, IMPROVING THEIR DECISION-MAKING AND FOCUS UNDER PRESSURE.

■ SPORT VERSATILITY

IDEAL FOR SOCCER, BUT ALSO APPLICABLE TO SPORTS LIKE BASKETBALL, RUGBY, AND MORE.

■ COGNITIVE IMPROVEMENT ON THE FIELD

DESIGNED TO TRAIN CRITICAL SKILLS SUCH AS REACTION SPEED, REAL-TIME STRATEGY, AMONG OTHERS.

■ SMART TECHNOLOGY

WITH THE UPCOMING VIXON AI LAB, YOU WILL HAVE ACCESS TO ADVANCED PERFORMANCE DATA AND A TRAINED AI THAT WILL SUPPORT YOUR COACHES WITH PERSONALIZED STRATEGIES. (COMING SOON)

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- ⌚ **REAL-TIME CHANGES:** ADJUST DYNAMICS AND STRATEGIES INSTANTLY DURING TRAINING.
- 👤 **CUSTOMIZABLE PROFILE:** SET UP UNIQUE PROFILES FOR EACH TEAM AND PLAYER, TAILORING THE EXPERIENCE TO THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS.

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We are **Sports.com**, a 24/7 on demand media company, showcasing highlights, news, real-time stats & live scores. Complementing our curated content partnerships we provide our audience with exclusive BTS, Innovative Shows & Podcasts.



The **WAFF Foundation** is the social responsibility arm of the West Asian Football Federation (WAFF), leveraging football to drive positive change across the region. Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, it fosters inclusion, equality, and youth empowerment, enhancing community well-being and creating lasting impact for communities in West Asia.



The **WorldSBN**, (World Sports Business Network), is a Global Sports and eSports industry professional Networking, composed by Top-Tiers, Executive-level, and Leading experts from multiple areas of work related to pro-sports/eSports industry, from 65 different countries.