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# DISTREE DAILY

## MIDDLE EAST

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Show dates: 12 - 14 May 2015, Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, Abu Dhabi | Day 3

## TSA announces Livescribe smartpen 3 for Android users

The Dubai-headquartered distribution company, TSA is participating at DISTREE ME to showcase various new products. One of the main highlights includes the Livescribe smartpen 3 now available for Android users.

Tarek Nabulsi, General Manager, TSA, says, "Livescribe smartpen has been in the business of merging physical content you generate — things like hand-written notes and voice recordings — with the digital world for years now. The Livescribe 3 'smartpen', which was launched in the fall of 2013, was certainly our most successful attempt to date."

The combo of the Livescribe 3 pen alongside specially designed notebooks meant that customers could take traditional notes, make drawings, do calculations, or anything else they do with a pen and paper and have them synced to their phone, tablet, or computer. That's assuming you were an iOS user as the Livescribe 3 only supported Apple's mobile devices.

"That changes today — Livescribe for Android is moving out of beta and into a 'preview' mode for users in the US, Australia, Middle East and New Zealand. A final, global rollout

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Saad Khan, GM, Redington Lifestyle

## Redington Lifestyle highlights key partnerships at DISTREE ME

**Redington Lifestyle's focus at DISTREE ME 2015 will be its recent partnerships with new brands such as Logitech, Mitashi and Exofab at DISTREE ME 2015.**

Saad Khan, GM, Redington Lifestyle, said, "Our focus at DISTREE will be our partnership with Logitech, which is a big announcement for us. We signed this deal in March 2015 and the event is a great platform to reiterate this association."

Established in 2012, Redington Lifestyle was created to cater to the opportunities present in the untapped regional accessories market, especially since no other volume distributor had a dedicated division at that time. According to the firm, the lifestyle division enhances the growth of the company's overall distribution business and creates various complementary opportunities for the retail channel.

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## MTC unveils Genx windows tablet at DISTREE ME 2015



Catering to the MENA region, the specialist distributor, Memory Technology (MTC-KSA) has been participating at DISTREE for the last six years. With a fresh line-up of important brands, the company hopes to meet new customers and partners in the GCC and Middle East through this event.

At DISTREE ME 2015, the company is launching the new Genx Windows tablet and Genx 4G LTE mobile. It believes technologies such as data transfer solution are impacting business more so in 2015.

"Through the courses offered by the Retail Academy sessions at the event, in addition to the one-on-one meetings with new customers, offer us a good growth opportunity," said Noor AlTabbaa, GM, Saudi Arabia at MTC.

Over the last few months, the distributor has added Toshiba storage and accessories products in addition to Philips and Energizer to its product portfolio.

"In 2015, we are working to add more products of global brands in KSA," he said.

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## Redington...

Having participated at DISTREE ME for the last three years, the distributor will have one-on-one meetings with all major retailers in the region for the new brands in its portfolio and is looking to showcase its entire range of products.

"We will be giving detailed presentations on our vendor and product portfolio at the event," Khan said. "This way the market will be aware and we can get listed with key retailers. We have a similar focus with Exofab and Mitashi, which are two of our new brands. The success of a brand depends on the relationship we have with the retailers and over the years we have been able to nurture strong retail relationships. We are also looking to get feedback from retailers on their interest in carrying new categories of products."

At the event, the distributor will be launching a number of new products ranging from TV panels,

**"The success of a brand depends on the relationship we have with the retailers and over the years we have been able to nurture strong retail relationships. We are also looking to get feedback from retailers on their interest in carrying new categories of products."**

gaming phones, new headphones and in-ear phones.

The distributor, which has been a winner at the MERA Awards consecutively for the last two years, plans to ramp up its retail offering and branch out into new geographies in the coming months.

## Innovative offerings



Mazen Khanafer, Managing Director, Shift Electronics

**Mazen Khanafer, Managing Director, Shift Electronics on the company's value proposition**

**Could you give us an overview of your company?**

Shift is the largest CE accessories distributor in the Middle East with the most comprehensive range of dedicated brands for consumer accessories.

We are a value-added distributor with a reach to every single retailer in the region from big box retailers, consumer electronics stores, mobile stores, telcos and duty free stores.

Shift registered a 100 percent growth in terms of sales in 2014 compared to 2013. We have four offices across the region with around 70 staff and 60 brands. Shift is the only CE accessories distributor with vast telco reach in the Middle East, including DU in the UAE, Zain and Ooredoo in Kuwait, and Ooredoo in Qatar.

**In what way do you expect DISTREE to make an impact on your business this year?**

Generating PR and awareness among influential retailers is how the event impacts business. The results are not necessarily measurable in terms of sales, but it adds value in terms of PR and strengthening the

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## TSA...

is planned for next month.”

According to the CEO, the smartpen will work with any Android device running Android 4.4.2 KitKat — it requires that version for the specific Bluetooth LE protocols implemented in it to connect with the pen. So while not every Android device will work with the Livescribe 3, most devices that’ve been released in the last year and a half should be compatible, said the company.

But the company said that the most important and advanced



Tarek Nabulsi, General Manager, TSA

features, like quick-activated voice recordings that sync up with what

is written and the option to turn handwriting into text that can be copied and pasted, are retained.

“Those are the kinds of options that really make Livescribe intriguing. It’s one thing to be able to easily digitise anything you write down and take it on your phone or tablet, but being able to search your written notes or associate them with voice recordings are pretty powerful features,” said Nabulsi.

The smartpen is now available in all GCC countries across stores such as Virgin Megastores, iStyle UAE and KSA, iZone KSA, iSpot Qatar and Sharaf DG.

Launched in 2004, TSA distributes to over 150 stores in the MENA region and is the exclusive distributor of many brands. With a branch in Lebanon, the firm has in-depth insight into the specific needs and preferences of the Gulf and Levant markets.

“We exclusively select gadgets and accessories that are cutting edge, unique, stylish and trendy – items that seamlessly combine functionality with lifestyle. TSA goes beyond distribution. We build brands, offer our vendors and consumers added value, and are committed to delivering exceptional customer service at all times.”

# Carrefour Informatique looks to ‘exchange experiences’



Slim Fakhfakh, CEO, Carrefour Informatique

**Slim Fakhfakh, CEO, Carrefour Informatique, on the effectiveness of DISTREE’s format and discusses retail trends in the region.**

**How long have you been participating at DISTREE?**

We have been participating at DISTREE ME for the last five years.

**What are your reasons for being here this year?**

The primary reason to be present at this event is to chase new suppliers. It also helps us discover new trends and gain an overview of the industry. Every year we participate for these reasons.

**In what way do you expect DISTREE to make an impact on your business this year?**

DISTREE ME is an opportunity to meet new suppliers directly and sign new partnerships beneficial for all stakeholders involved.

**How is your company presenting itself at DISTREE this year to differentiate it from competitors?**

Through our presence at DISTREE ME this year, we will try to introduce our company and highlight the main products we are dealing with and share our market experiences.

**What will be your focus at DISTREE this year?**

We will focus on exchanging ideas, experiences and learnings from the market with the attendees of the event.

**Which are the emerging technologies impacting your business in 2015? How can you optimize it?**

The mobility space has seen an overall growth in the industry. Devices such as smartphones and tablets have witnessed a great growth trajectory. We believe this will continue to be the basis of our future experiences with customers.

**What factors should be considered when a retailer plans to embark on the omni-channel route?**

When a retailer plans to embark on the omni-channel route, the

factors he should consider are the market demands and trends. He must stay updated with the current market trends and new products to be able to offer enhanced shopping experience for the customers.

**How long will it take for regional retailers to be at par with global counterparts when it comes offering an omni-channel retailing experience?**

It depends on two factors – the readiness of the market on one hand and the retailers’ ability and experience on the other.

**“DISTREE ME is an opportunity to meet new suppliers directly and sign new partnerships beneficial for all stakeholders involved.”**

**Have you been able to successfully sign up partnerships at the event in the past?**

Yes, our last participation at DISTREE enabled us to create new partnerships and meet well-known industry stalwarts of our field.

## Tech Armor presents portfolio through June

Tech Armor is showcasing its range of products at DISTREE ME 2015 through June, its official distributor in the GCC. The distributor is one of the Silver sponsors at the event and will be promoting the vendor’s entire range of phone accessories and guards.

Tech Armor’s Global Sales Director, Logan Webster, said, “We are a leading manufacturer of mobile device protection solutions including Ballistic Glass Screen Protectors for iOS, Android and Windows Phone devices. With over five million products sold since 2012, we are one of the fastest growing accessory manufacturers and our products are sold in over 30 countries and over 5,000 retail storefronts.”

The company has expanded into other categories for growth including, powerbanks, phone Cases, Apple certified cables, and recently desktop display privacy screens and blue light filters.

Webster had participated in the ‘60 seconds to convince’ session at the event, highlighting the company’s Edge to Edge Ballistic Glass to DISTREE attendees.

He said, “It’s a revolutionary product, which protects your phone if it falls. This is the only product offering lifetime replacement besides lifetime warranty. Whether you’re looking for a screen protector, a case, a power bank, a cable or a new iPhone charger, Tech Armor has all your mobile needs covered.”

# GCT enhances partner relationship



Milad Jabbour,  
President &  
CEO, GCT

**A participant at DISTREE since its inception, Milad Jabbour, President & CEO, GCT, outlines key regional trends and focus at the event.**

## What are your reasons for being at DISTREE ME this year?

We have been participating every year to showcase our latest products and are looking to meet with our current partners as well to get in touch with retailers.

## In what way do you expect DISTREE to make an impact on your business this year?

Year after year DISTREE is improving

the platform of communication and building stronger relationships with retailers and vendors, this can create a positive influence for our next challenges in this industry.

## How is your company presenting itself at DISTREE this year to differentiate it from competitors?

GCT has a strong presence in the region for the last 20 years. We have sold more than 20 million units of Genius products and we want to motivate our partners to promote our business through all possible marketing vehicles.

## What are the key trends influencing your approach to DISTREE and your offerings?

The current market focuses on online shopping; the launch of many new online portals has helped us get closer to our consumers. We have found this market trend very important as we can offer more to our consumer and observe the market much more closely and make changes much faster. Apart from participating with e-retailers, we are also focusing on tailoring the product mix for all the retailers in the market.

## What will be your focus at DISTREE this year?

We inspire our partners and aspire to learn from them, we are currently focusing on enhancing and developing our relationship with partners.

All our products are aesthetical, modern and suit the needs of the current generation. We will be launching our new lifestyle multifunction routers, cloud storage system, smart lifestyle technology products, audio products and mobility products. All these products are incremented with the latest developments in the IT industry.

## Which are the emerging technologies impacting your business in 2015? How can you optimize it?

The technologies that have impacted our brands include:

- The launch of IOT (Internet of Things) was a significant revolution in the IT industry that has impacted our business and our product line, the best part of this emerging technology is that we have already optimised it as a part of our brand's product line.

- The cloud storage system is the latest development in terms of networking storage devices.
- The Smart lifestyle products technology – our products are designed with perfection to suit different lifestyles in all environments.

## What kind of opportunities does DISTREE provide in terms of connecting you with the channel?

DISTREE provides many opportunities to GCT such as:

- The opportunity to engage and develop a platform to expand the retail channel in the region
- The chance to meet and greet industry executives
- Understand current market trends
- Provides recognition in the channel market

## Could you briefly highlight some of the achievements of your company in the past few months?

GCT has signed up with many new partners and we are focusing on enhancing our relationship with them through our partner programme. The partner programme better known as GCT Partner Programmes was launched in Q1 of 2015. This programme is devoted to connecting to our partners in retail, channel, and distribution.

## DISTREE MERA & DIAMOND AWARDS 2015

### DIAMOND AWARDS WINNERS

*(Voted live by retailers on site)*

**Business Solutions:** Samsung

**Cases & Bags:** Port

**Connected Products:** Jabra

**Smart Home:** TP-LINK

**Gaming:** Steel Series (Brightstar)

**Headphones:** Parrot

**Laptops:** HP

**Mobile Accessories:** Belkin

**Mobile Protection:** Panzerglass

**Multi-category:** Genius

**Portable Audio:** B&O Play (ABM)

**Home Networking:** Linksys

**Smartphones:** Huawei

**Software:** Kaspersky

**Storage:** Seagate

**Tablets:** Quantum

**Wearables:** Jawbone

**Outstanding Performance:** Huawei

### MERA AWARDS WINNERS

#### Distributor category

**Volume Distributor:** Redington

**Retail Distributor:** GCT

**Accessories Distributor:** Max Electronics

**Lifestyle Distributor:** Gadgitech

#### Retailer category

**Overall UAE Retailer:** Emax

**Specialist UAE Retailer:** Virgin

**Saudi Arabia Retailer:** Extra

**Bahrain Retailer:** Lulu

**Kuwait Retailer:** Al Ghanim

**Oman Retailer:** Lulu

**Qatar Retailer:** Carrefour

**Egypt Retailer:** Carrefour

**Jordan Retailer:** Smartbuy

**Lebanon Retailer:** Khoury Home

**Middle East e-tailer of the Year:** Souq.com

### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

**UAE Retail Executive:** Rahul Anand, Carrefour

**Saudi Arabia Retail Executive:** Tariq Siddiqui, Emax

**Bahrain Retail Executive:** Kannan, Lulu

**Kuwait Retail Executive:** Babu Wasim, Lulu

**Oman Retail Executive:** Pradeep Nair, Emax

**Qatar Retail Executive:** Anand Govindan, Emax

**Egypt Retail Executive:** Mohammed Tolba, CompuMe

**Jordan Retail Executive:** Nouredine Nusair, Carrefour

**Lebanon Retail Executive:** Joy Yazbeck, Khoury Home

**UAE Distributor Executive:** Liju George, Max Electronics

**Saudi Arabia Distributor Executive:** Rawad Ayash, Redington Gulf

**Rest of Gulf Distributor Executive:** Mohamed Youssef, BDL

**UAE Vendor Executive:** Vineet Wadhwa, Sandisk

**Saudi Arabia Vendor Executive:** Mark Zhao, TP-LINK

**Rest of Gulf Vendor Executive:** Husam Alif, Seagate

**Egypt & Levant Vendor Executive:** Wael Elkady, Quantum

### INITIATIVE AWARDS

**In-Store Experience:** Virgin for Yas Mall

**Marketing Initiative:** Acer for Saudi blogger outreach programme

**Product launch:** Emax for iPhone6 launch in UAE & Saudi Arabia

**Customer Promotion (joint winners)**

AJM Kooheji, Bahrain for Ctroniq promotion giving away F1 tickets. Extra, Saudi Arabia, for its Mega Sale

# Intelligent Technology exhibits 'plug & play portable gadgets'



Ankur Gupta, Sales Director,  
Intelligent Technology

**Ankur Gupta, Sales Director, Intelligent Technology, says the company is looking to expand its reach into the Middle East region.**

**How long have you been participating at DISTREE?**

This is our first year at the event.

**What are your reasons for being here this year?**

We are looking to expand our reach into the Middle East.

**In what way do you expect DISTREE to make an impact on**

**your business this year?**

An event like DISTREE helps us to know the trends in the target market and get a feel of things around.

**How is your company presenting itself at DISTREE this year to differentiate it from competitors?**

We would be the only 'everything under one umbrella' company at the event.

**What are the key trends influencing your approach to DISTREE and your offerings?**

We are aiming to focus on the customers' different needs. This should give us the leverage in the regional market.

**What will be your focus at DISTREE this year? Is there a specific theme in mind? Will you be launching any new solutions or products at the show?**

We are introducing lot of out-of-the-box products, which are easy to use and of great utility. Our theme at the event would be 'Plug & Play Portable Gadgets'.

**Which are the emerging technologies impacting your business in 2015? How can you optimize it?**

The market is slowly shifting towards consumer driver products, which was earlier more component driven.

**What kind of opportunities does DISTREE provide in terms of connecting you with the channel?**

Through DISTREE, we will get to know the opinions of our target buyers and it will be an ideal launch vehicle in the respective markets.

**Could you briefly highlight some of the achievements of your company in the past few months?**

In the security segment, we have developed state-of-the-art biometrics, which are very easy to use and enhance productivity and security at the same time. In the mobile accessories vertical, our Bluetooth speakers and power banks are most sought after by all LFRs, online retailers and large distributors.

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## Innovative..

business relationships. Through the DISTREE platform, we have the opportunity to simultaneously target and present our new brands and products to retailers.

**What are the key trends you are looking to leverage?**

We are looking at key trends such as personal mobility, which is changing the way we move on a daily basis, either as a fun activity or as a routine. We showcased the IO HAWK brand, which is an innovative self-balancing motorised personal transporter.

**What are the solutions you have for retailers?**

We have a solution from Zagg that addresses retailers' issue of lack of space in stores. Because of which, they are compelled to consolidate the offering and be more selective in their choices. However, Shift is introducing InvisibleSHIELD ON Demand by Zagg, which will allow retailers to remove at least 200-300 SKUs of screen protectors during the year and save important display space. The InvisibleSHIELD ON Demand offers retailers the ability to instantly produce a variety of screen protection films for virtually any device. The innovative machine maximises the space and investment.

**What are the other brands in your portfolio?**

We also carry TYLT products, which include powerful battery cases that offer 150 per cent charging and wall SMART Chargers, which also includes a 6000 MAH built-in battery.

Cleaning and sanitising solutions for the CE devices became a trend in the last few months. WHOOSH is the next generation screen cleaner that not only cleans screens but also makes them shine like new and provides a resistance to fingerprints. In fact, WHOOSH Screen Shine is the only screen and device cleaner that is guaranteed safe for all screens, 100 per cent non-toxic and fingerprint resistant.

We also have OLLOCLIP products in our portfolio. Catering to the 'selfie generation', they have come up with lenses solution for iPhone6/6plus that give the customers the possibility of transforming their camera and get immaculate images in fish eye, wide-angle and macro.

## Tucano products available in ME



Tucano, the Italian brand for bags, covers and accessories for computers, tablets, smartphones and digital devices, has launched key products for the Middle East markets, which is on display at DISTREE ME 2015.

The product line-up includes slim bags for MacBook and notebooks in a shiny colourful technical fabric and simple design called Work\_Out

Il, Contatto, a contemporary camera bag made with unparalleled mélange materials and Bisi Second Skin, which is a trendy clutch bag for notebooks up to 13-inch and tablets featuring a fashionable handle. The Sporty collection includes adjustable armbands, waistbands, wristbands, ultrathin power banks, sport cases and bike mounts. Giro is an innovative 360-degree rotating

case for iPad Air 2 with an ultra-thin minimal design to enhance the sheer lines of the device while making it possible to use it in every possible situation. These products are available across the Middle East markets.

According to the company, it has a varied target audience, "from tech addicted to Apple lovers, from dynamic business people to shutterbugs, as well as people who love to keep it. What unites them and make them choose Tucano is indeed a preference for practicality coupled with the style of Italian design: we are from Milan and we breathe it every day in the air and into our product collections."

Globally, Tucano products can be found at computer and electronics stores, in multimedia megastores, as well as in renowned international department stores, airports and in luggage outlets. Tucano solutions are also available on many e-commerce sites, including Tucano.com

## QUOTABLE QUOTES



“76% of consumers are interested in smart home, however the challenge is customers’ willingness to invest.”

**Dr. Rudi Aunkofer, Global Research Director IT, GfK Retail & Technology**



“We attend DISTREE to develop brand awareness and contacts for better business opportunity and to diversify the company’s portfolio. We get a chance to meet reputed brands and also stay updated on technology advancements within the industry.”

**Sumith Thekkayil, Category Manager, Digital & IT, Home Electronics**



“The three aspects to Quantum’s winning strategy - create compelling value for prospective customers, price it right and then work

to reduce costs and become the organisation people want to buy from, partner with and work for.”

**David Noon, Marketing Director, MENA Quantum**



“Shoppers are more effective when connected. As retailers how are you creating personalised shopping experiences?”

Retailers need to look at designing engaging shopping experiences.”  
**Khaled Kamel, Director, Samsung Electronics**



“We look for those partners who have strength on the ground. These partners have better understanding of the market and are in more control. This way

they are able to drive value and quality.”  
**Asad Sayed, Channel Sales Manager, Acer Middle East**



“DISTREE has become like family over the last 11 years. The industry is undergoing changes and the buzzwords today are omni-channel,

mobile revolution and connected stores. We hope at DISTREE you have had successful meetings, to help you make better decisions and become more profitable.”

**Farouk Hemraj, Director and Co-Founder, DISTREE Events**

## DISTREE Middle East 2015 highlights



Winners of ‘60 seconds to convince’ session - Port Designs



Emax Team after winning MERA awards