

# ZEINA HALLASSOU SAKR

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

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Born on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1978 in Beirut, Lebanon

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## BIOGRAPHY

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I am a communications expert with over 20 years' experience in the industry, I have managed leading corporate, government and consumer clients in the MENA region and globally. A journalist turned Public Relations professional; I trained in several internationally recognized and accredited communications programs and believe that we never stop learning.

My experience in the communications industry spans strategic planning, media training, crisis communications and agency management. Over the past few years, I have worked with a multitude of clients in the GCC and MENA region, including the Atlantis Hotels and Resorts, One&Only Resorts, Kerzner Group (globally), Al Shayaa retail, Logo video games, Hotels.com, Movenpick Hotels & resorts, Guinness World Records, Masafi, Phillip Morris, Visa, Global Village, Lancome, DAMAC Properties, Versace, KPMG, Millennium & Copthorne (globally), Mourjan Marinas, ADACH, Mubadala, Procter & Gamble and many others.

## KEY SKILLS

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- Excellent communication skills and ability to build rapport easily with people, as well as demonstrated ability to lead and manage an effective team.
- Building brand identity coupled with marketing skills in the new age of marketing.
- Defining new media of marketing in restricted environments, and understanding of a multi-faceted business operation.
- Developing and implementing marketing communications strategies
- Developing crisis management plans
- Creating, planning and organizing events and PR campaigns
- Strong Arabic, English and French media relations locally and regionally
- Managing teams across virtual networks - consumer & market research & analysis.
- Mentoring and training staff.
- Communication and negotiation skills with well developed presentations.
- Planning, forecasting and budget reviews for long term strategy.
- Team player with outgoing personality who works efficiently under pressure to meet deadlines and achieve targets

## EDUCATION

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2001 - 2004      AUST      Beirut, Lebanon

*Bachelor of Arts – Journalism (Minor in Public Relations)*

- Graduated with Distinction

1997 - 2000      Notre Dame University      Zouk, Lebanon

*Bachelor of Arts – Advertising & Marketing*

1994 - 1996	Thevenet College, Jesus & Mary	Rabieh, Lebanon
	<i>Technical Baccalaureate – Graphic Design</i>	
1985- 1993	Collège des Saint Coeurs – Sioufi	Beirut, Lebanon
	<i>Elementary, complementary and secondary classes</i>	

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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Aug 2019 – Apr 2020    DAMAC/DICO    Dubai, UAE  
Corporate Communication Director

- Heading the Communication department of DAMAC Properties and DICO Group (the investment arm of Hussain Sajwani)
- Strategic thinking and planning for both companies as well as the focus on Chairman's positioning globally
- Crisis communication management
- Media training of all top executives
- Managing the communication of Hussain Sajwani's foundation

Feb 2018 – Aug 2019    Havas PR ME    Dubai, UAE  
Head of Corporate and Health

- Spearheading the Corporate and Health PR departments
- Strategic thinking and planning for key clients such as Nawah Energy Company, Schindler, Volvo, Peugeot, Bahrain Ministry of Finance, PriceWaterhouse Cooper, COREX the Expo 2020 French pavillion, IDEMIA, Agthia, Sanofi, Roche...
- Responsible for business development and new business pitches
- In charge of the full team functionality and structure
- Mentorship and training
- In charge of departments financials and growth

Jan 2018 – Present    Freelancing    Dubai, UAE  
Communication Consultant

- Doing freelance projects in PR and Social Media Strategic consultancy projects
- Restructuring and mentoring consultancy projects for communication agency
- Some of the projects I worked on: DAMAC Properties and Hussain Sajwani-DAMAC Foundation, 1765 Hospitality Management (managing communication and marketing for their F&B outlets such as Malolo Poke), BPG Cohn&Wolf, Reely digital agency, Global Village, H&K; WPP group among others.

March 2015 – Jan 2018    BPG Cohn&Wolfe    Dubai, UAE  
Business Director

- Responsible for business development and new business pitches
- Spearheading BPG C&W image, awards, internal and external PR
- Strategic thinking and planning for key clients such as Philip Morris International, DHL, DXH (the Dubai Health Authority medical tourism brand), Global Village, Al Shaya Group, Movenpick Hotels, Hotels.com...
- In charge of the full team functionality and structure

- Mentorship and training to the wide BPG C&W team
- In charge of regional offices performance and growth

Feb 2012 – March 2015 One&Only resorts

Dubai, UAE

MENA & Indian Ocean PR Director

- Responsible for Indian Ocean properties from a Global perspective as well as acting PR Director on property
- Remained in charge of handling the other 5 properties from a MENA standpoint
- Handling 7 resorts: Mauritius, Maldives, Cape Town, Bahamas, Mexico and 2 properties in Dubai
- Develop and implement communication strategies to promote One&Only resorts within the MENA region. Strategies to tackle One&Only brand as well as its different properties around the world.
- Strengthen media relations for One&Only resorts across Arabic, English and French media around the region
- Develop messaging documents and press kits in different languages for all One&Only properties as well as the brand
- Develop and implement events, broadcast opportunities and PR strategies to support the overall communications plan for each property in different parts of the MENA region
- Working closely with on-property PR and marketing personnel

Nov 2009 – Feb 2012 Four Communications

Abu Dhabi, UAE

Senior Account Director

- Develop and implement marketing communications strategies for clients such as Abu Dhabi Airport Company, Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation, Millennium & Copthorne (globally), Mourjan Marinas, The Hideaways Club, Flash events (such as Stevie Wonder, Shakira, Eric Clapton concerts...) , FIFA Club World Cup, ADACH, Abu Dhabi municipality and many others
- Develop and implement events and PR strategy's as well as handle media relations for clients locally and regionally
- Develop proposals and present pitches for new clients

Feb 2008 – Nov 2009 1841 (Neopromo)

Dubai, UAE

Account Director / Partner

- Helped establish the company and recruit employees
- Created processes, procedures and systems for the agency
- Handled creating and implementing marketing strategies for clients
- Conceptualize and manage the national and regional campaign launches, events and onground activities for different clients
- Develop crisis communications plan for clients when needed
- Managed the Public Relations teams at agency
- Key member of Business Development Team
- In charge of all internal and external communications
- Pitched for, won and handled accounts such as Al Hanoo real estate and Sheikh Zayed book award, Mubadala, Levant Jewelry, Globmed Dubai and many others.

Dubai, UAE

PR Consultant

- Initiated and managed communications strategies for P&G brands: Braun Household, Gillette and Wella Consumer.
- Managed the media relations and events for P&G brands
- Initiated and managed consumer activations for P&G brands across the MENA region
- Initiated public affairs plans for Abu Dhabi Government account.
- Deeply involved in the planning of Intercontinental Hotel Group account globally and in the execution for MENA region on the Arabic front
- Involved in business development; won Google account

Beirut, Lebanon

## Communication and Event Manager

- In charge of all in-house events, as well as covering all activities happening in Lebanon on all front (cultural, sports...)
- Coordinated with the agency for all advertising and PR activities.
- In charge of the Marketing strategy and planning for the launch campaign of the magazine

Beirut, Lebanon

*Account Manager— Representative of Bates PanGulf*

- Accounts handled included, Starbucks, Aramex, Alfa Romeo, Bank al Mawarid...

Beirut, Lebanon

Reporter – Cultural and artistic department

- Responsibilities included research, interviews and article writing on subjects concerning fashion, books, theatre, entertainment, etc.

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

- “Al Oula”, AUST’s first Arabic newsletter; in which I acted as Project Leader and Editor-in-Chief.
- “W for Women”, my senior project; an English entertainment and leisure magazine for women.
- “Social media influencers, a threat to the journalism profession?” A series of articles and lectures given to students and newsletters across universities in Dubai.

## LANGUAGES

Arabic, French and English; all fluently read, written and spoken.

## SPECIAL SKILLS

Computer literacy– Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint)

Mentorship and training expert. Excellent communication skills and ability to build rapport easily with people, as well as demonstrated ability to lead and manage an effective team.

## REFERENCES

References will be made available upon request.