

MBC to replace Choueiri Group with in-house advertising and sales unit

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MBC GROUP, the largest media company in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA), announced today that it will be launching 'MBC Media Services', an in-house commercial advertising and sales unit in partnership with Engineer Holding Group ('EHG'), a media and investment group which owns the Al Arabia advertising 'out of home' business in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

This will signal an end to a relationship with its long-term partner Choueiri Group, and its subsidiary AMS.

MBC Media Services will be majority controlled by MBC GROUP and will begin operations at the start of the new year. The broadcaster says the new approach will allow MBC to work more closely with its clients, which include many of the world's largest consumer brands, their marketing and advertising companies, and media buyers. As a result, MBC will no longer outsource its advertising and sales business from January 2021, after the current 5-year

contract with Arabian Media Services ('AMS'), a Choueiri Group company, ends this year.

That relationship has lasted for more than 15 years, and the relationship between MBC and Choueiri Group almost since MBC1 first launched in London in 1991. The group moved its headquarters to Dubai in 2002.

In 2017, MBC Chairman Waleed bin Ibrahim was among about 200 leading businessmen, princes and politicians arrested under the orders of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and held in the five-star Ritz Carlton in Riyadh. Al Ibrahim was released in January of 2018. Many of those held were released after handing over assets to the state. In May 2018 MBC issued a statement that said: "It's worth noting that Waleed Ibrahim retains his original stake in MBC Group, continues to act as its Chairman and enjoys management control."

Waleed bin Ibrahim Al Ibrahim, Chairman, MBC GROUP said: "The media industry has witnessed remarkable changes over the past two decades, driven by technological advancements and the rapid adoption by consumers of social media platforms and mobile devices. We want to move faster to address these market forces and by establishing our own dedicated in-house commercial business unit we will be able to offer better integrated solutions across our television, digital and OTT platforms. I am delighted that we will be partnering with EHG, which owns Al Arabia, one of the best know 'outdoor' advertising specialists in the Kingdom. I would like to thank AMS and the Choueiri Group who have been great partners and acknowledge their commitment and service over many years."

Abdulelah Al-Khereiji, Founder & Chairman, EHG said: "We are very proud to be partnering with a prestigious institution like MBC, which has played a leading role in the development of the media sector in our region. We look forward to pooling our capabilities to better serve our society, our clients and the advertising industry."

Marc Antoine d'Halluin, Chief Executive Officer, MBC GROUP said: "Our new joint venture with EHG and the launch of MBC Media Services, will enable the Company to develop cross-media solutions for our clients and deepen the way we combine our television and digital audiences. As we continue on our journey of continuous innovation, as illustrated by the success of Shahid VIP, and develop further as a multi-platform media group, we are also taking all the necessary steps to make effective daily audience measurement a reality in the countries in which we operate, to better service our clients. These important operational developments, will keep MBC at the forefront of our industry and continue to provide the very best way for our clients to reach consumers in this exciting fast-growing regional market."

Tags: MBC GROUP, Engineer Holding Group, MBC Media Services, Choueiri Group, AMS, Marc Antoine d'Halluin, Abdulelah Al-Khereiji, Waleed bin Ibrahim Al Ibrahim