

Merlin promises magic margins



Released on: May 6, 2009, 12:50 am

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Industry: [Electronics](#)

Merlin Digital will attend Digital Consumer Channel (DCC) MEA 2009 with a lifestyle technology product range that the company claims represents some of the most innovative consumer electronics kit available in the market today. Merlin reckons that its products also offer retailers a compelling margin proposition and a solid growth opportunity during the current economic conditions.



Rohit Bachani, group head MENA region at Merlin

Rohit Bachani, group head MENA region at Merlin, said: "Associating with the Merlin brand lends an image of being at the cutting edge to the participating retailer. Merlin products have proven to be best sellers in their categories at international super stores such as Dubai Duty Free, Plug-Ins, Carrefour and CompuMe to name a few."

"New innovative products tend to be recession proof, a fact that can be proven, with Merlin sales in the region looking to grow a healthy 15% to 20% in a slowing economy. Merlin resellers enjoy healthy margins and industry leading retail and marketing support, ensuring that a very profitable partnership is created between Merlin and its resellers," Bachani added.

Merlin plans to increase brand awareness at DCC MEA, explain the breadth of its product portfolio and target potential retail partners in new geographies. The company will also look for feedback from its existing partners as it attempts to lay the foundations for continued growth in the region.

"The MEA market does not seem to have suffered to the same extent from the global crisis as many other geographic locations. We expect growth all through the MEA region for the Merlin range due to a very competitive product mix and young target population," continued Bachani.

Merlin reckons that its products have a novelty effect, which can act as a magnet for foot traffic within a retail outlet. Merlin's portfolio covers a wide range of product areas including storage products, boys' toys and high-technology gifts, car multimedia and bluetooth products, digital photo frames, iPhone and iPod accessories and laptop stands plus much more.

"Merlin does have a professional channel programme- with very attractive margins at every step in the chain including our distributors and our retail partners. We have seen the margins that our partners make on competitor products and Merlin stands out very favourably, not just on the margins, but also on other essentials such as warranty, product support and training and marketing," explained Bachani.

Merlin offers full merchandising support to retail partners and continues to launch new products on an ongoing basis. Full details of new products are made available on the company's e-commerce enabled website - www.merlin-digital.com - often accompanied by video clips. Merlin's business in the MEA region continues to grow at 15% per annum despite the current economic conditions.

"Our company is known for treating our channels as true partners in the marketing sense. We are very responsive to their business needs - adjusting our targets and margins as per the market sensitivities," concluded Bachani.

ICT and CE-focused retailers and vendors from across the Middle East will gather next month at the fifth annual Digital Consumer Channel (DCC) Middle East & Africa (MEA) event, which will take place from May 19th to 21st 2009. The region's premier event for the consumer electronics (CE), communications and ICT retail channel continues to go from strength to strength, offering a compelling mix of one-on-one

meetings, conference sessions, awards and networking opportunities for retailers, distributors and vendors.

Retailers will have the opportunity to review the latest products from the 50-plus vendors set to attend this year's event. With retailers attending from 15-plus countries, attending DCC MEA offers vendors insight into markets across the region and the opportunity to accelerate or improve their go-to-market retail strategy.

The 'Middle East Retail Academy: 2009 Awards' Gala Dinner and live voting session will also take place at DCC MEA on 20th May 2009. The awards recognise excellence in the region's consumer electronics and IT retail channel. A total of 22 awards are up for grabs in 2009 with categories for vendors, retailers and distributors.

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