

The Winning Teams

Issue 6



Saudi team Syphir and UAE team Hayati Healthcare were announced as dual winners of the MIT Arab Business Plan Competition 09 during a gala dinner on the night of June 11, 2009 at Jumeirah Emirates Towers in Dubai, both teams receiving a USD 25,000 in prize money. Syphir involves the development of a webmail application to rank all e-mails in order of their perceived importance; whereas, Hayati Healthcare offers short-term loans for medical procedures.

Egyptian team Rice Straw Fertilizer ranked second and received prize money of USD 10,000 for a project that converts burnt rice straw into high quality compost, while Jordanian team Blog Souq came in third place with prize money of USD 5000 for an innovative stock market concept for blogs.

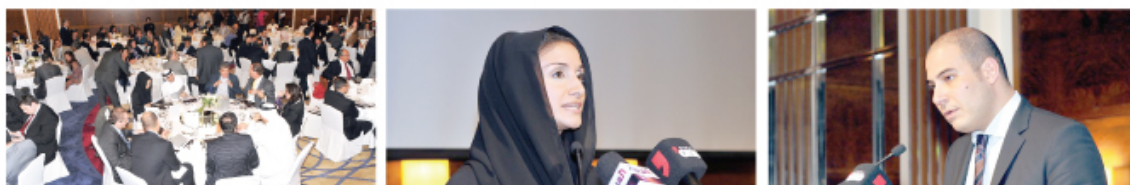
Oral Presentations



During the day of June 11th and prior to the awards ceremony, the nine finalist teams were running oral presentations for their projects in front of a panel consisting of Ziad Oueslati from Tunisia, Hussein Shobokshi from KSA, and Hisham El Sherif from Egypt.

Each team was given a 30-minute slot: 10 minutes to present followed by a 20-minute Q&A session with the jurors to receive a grade accounting to 50% of the final score (knowing that the business plans account to the first 50%).

Gala Dinner and Networking Reception



The Gala Dinner was held in the Godolphin Ballroom of Jumeirah Emirates Towers and was attended by 150 business profile guests from all over the region.

Najla Al-Awadhi, member of the UAE parliament, gave an inspiring keynote speech that underlined the importance of encouraging youth and other disadvantaged groups to take initiatives and actively participate in the economic development of their societies.

Fadi Jameel, representing Abdul Latif Jameel Community Services Program, the main sponsor of the Competition, provided a short overview of the programs supported by ALJ Group, which continue to set a shining example for other Arab corporations in giving back to their communities.

Prior to the dinner, a networking reception took place where the finalist teams presented a 1-minute elevator pitch about their projects, and it was great opportunity for them to mingle and network with investors and venture capitalists among the attendees.