

# Furqan Ahmed

Marketing, Experiential and Brand Manager

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A strong and cross-cultural global marketing leader with over 13 years' experience in the premium automotive sector who has worked in two continents. Core areas of expertise span across corporate and brand strategy, brand image and awareness growth, retail performance marketing, brand storytelling, customer engagement and project management, functioning at both local and regional levels across Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Sub-Saharan African markets.

I have a demonstrated ability to execute high-impact campaigns, elevate brand presence across global markets and drive business strategy to outperform brand growth, whilst successfully managing, coaching and developing large teams.

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## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Brand Strategy & Positioning
- Integrated Marketing Campaigns
- Budgeting & ROI Analysis
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Public Relations Management
- Event Management & Sponsorships
- Agency & Vendor Management
- Digital Transformation
- Digital & Social Media Management
- Leadership & Team Development
- CRM & Customer Journey Mapping
- Events Strategy and Management

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Proven **Brand Image** growth in two markets over consecutive years, most notably contributing to a **0.3 increase** in 2018 during a year of no new model introductions despite aggressive competitor launch activities.
- Proven **Brand Awareness** growth in Saudi Arabia **from 43% to 59% by 2024** by implementing an AO multi-channel digital strategy with no additional budget requirement by re-structuring existing agency retainer.
- **First to market launch** of EV products in two markets to simultaneously educate and stimulate demand resulting in over-performance of retail sales in first month of MI (**RSA: >23% and KSA: >56%**).
- Market readiness and business case development for the introduction of a new business unit aimed at generating profit for the Events portfolio, **achieving profit and 100% sales to target** in the first year of operation.
- Retail performance excellence with consistent over-performance in lead enquiries in Saudi Arabia with **>80% in qualified lead generation MoM for 26 consecutive months**.
- **ROI on Sponsorships:** National Cricket Team (Proteas) achieving **ROI of 7:1**, and Factory Motorsport Team achieving **ROI of 3:1**.
- Dominant Events portfolio growth at **International Motorshows** achieving an **increase of 127% test drive growth YoY**, and a 233% increase in retail sales at the last iteration of the JIMS.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### National Marketing Manager | Audi Saudi Arabia

Jan 2023 – Feb 2025

- Developed and executed brand communication strategy across digital, press, and event channels in KSA, improving brand recall from 43% to 59%, closing the gap to BIC by 7%. Brand Image improvement from 7.7 to 8.2.
- Led multiple agency teams in delivering integrated campaigns, resulting in increased engagement from target HNW customer segments.
- Managed a > SAR 20M marketing budget with 100% compliance and strategic alignment with regional and global Audi standards.
- Oversaw creation and localization of content for new product launches and retail campaigns across various business units, ensuring message consistency and premium positioning (large focus on local production).
- Introduced media effectiveness tracking, enabling performance-driven optimization across all channels to boost earned media results.

### Events and Sponsorships Manager | Audi South Africa

Jun 2017 – Dec 2022

- Directed strategic planning and execution of national and regional sponsorships and experiential events, including new product launches and sponsorships. Annual events plan of approximately 40 events, spanning local, regional and international territories.
- Managed a > ZAR 30M events budget with 100% compliance and strategic alignment with global Audi standards, with a guest satisfaction index of >93% across all events executed.

- Improved customer engagement and loyalty by executing premium experiences aligned with Audi's brand DNA, and amplifying experiences with marketing integration across PR, CRM, digital marketing and social media.
- Business case development for the Audi Driving Experience, a profit centre project spanning two years. The AO profit centre achieved profitability in its first year of operation, and achieved 100% sales achievements (all available customer slots sold out).
- Evaluated and negotiated high-profile sponsorship opportunities, aligning investments with brand exposure metrics spanning Cricket South Africa (ROI: 7:1) and a factory-owned Motorsport team (ROI: 3:1).
- Managed an integrated influencer and brand ambassador program, enhancing event reach and customer affinity achieving sustained earned media >100%.
- Led benchmarking against competitor events to ensure continued leadership in brand experience.

### **Brand Consultant – Social Media and Retail | Audi South Africa**

Nov 2016 – May 2017

- Coordinated digital campaigns and social media strategy, ensuring targeted delivery of retail-focused messaging.
- Managed Audi SA's social media platforms, increasing audience base and engagement and improving sentiment monitoring.
- Liaised with PR, Product and marketing teams to synchronize communication efforts across digital and traditional platforms.

### **National Retail Sales Analyst | Audi South Africa**

Feb 2016 – Oct 2016

- Monitored dealer sales trends and KPIs, providing insights for performance improvement.
- Managed national dealer sales targets and forecasting, aligning with Audi's strategic market goals.

### **Executive Assistant to Sales & Marketing Director | Volkswagen Group South Africa**

Mar 2014 – Feb 2016

- Supported executive decision-making through high-level presentations and performance reporting to HQ in Germany.
- Tracked marketing department budgets and ensured effective resource allocation across functions.

### **Events and Sponsorships Co-ordinator / Brand Consultant | Volkswagen South Africa**

Feb 2012 – Feb 2014

- Managed national and international events including incentive trips, launch activations and brand ambassador selection.
- Collaborated with agencies to deliver brand-consistent experiences and digital campaign assets.

## **Education**

BTech: Marketing | Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University | 2007 – 2011

NDip: Marketing | Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University | 2007 – 2010

## **Certifications**

Volkswagen Group Leadership License | 2020 – 2021

Project Management | University of Cape Town | 2021