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MEIRA Newsletter - 26 March 2020

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MEIRA Newsletter

26 March 2020

If you would like to collaborate in our next newsletter, contact us at pr@meira.me

Weekend reading list

- > Expectations for IR teams (during market turbulence). *IHS Markit* [Read more](#)
- > Most CFOs fear Covid-19 could trigger global recession. *IR Magazine* [Read more](#)
- > Ask Mark Mobius: Questions on the Coronavirus. *Mark Mobius* [Read more](#)

MEIRA Updates

MEIRA Announcement: COVID- 19 Contingency Plan

We are all living in unprecedented times and we wanted to take this opportunity to assure all our members and colleagues that MEIRA has taken all the available measures to maintain the safety of our executive team.

Following the recommendations from the UAE Government, the MEIRA executive team is currently working remotely until further notice. However, we would like to guarantee that the digital calendar of events and the regular publications will continue as usual and that all the team members are available by telephone and email.

As our "internal motto" says: **onwards and upwards!**

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Greetings MEIRA Members, Partners and friends,

It's certainly not easy for social beings to work remotely but if this is what it takes, let's do it, get on with it and make the most of it, while not forgetting to stay in touch with one another or to maintain that exercise regime, gym or no gym. Let's not go to pot as stir-crazy as we may feel!

MEIRA Chapter meeting - updates from your Chapter Heads

On our part, this week, MEIRA was delighted to convene a most instructive conference call of your Chapter leaders and here's what we talked and thought about in a most engaging and purposeful session, something we will repeat and continue to share:

1. We're now all, more or less, working remotely - it's possible but our ongoing communication remains the key for all of us.
2. Your audience will remember your efforts to keep channels open and remain responsive, even if we don't have all the answers.
3. Company guidance is dependent on the nature of your business, what you know, what's material and what you are able to tell the market through your various channels, not least the regulatory ones - above all, keep the market in mind.
4. Some markets outside the region are being advised to take longer to consider any financial impact of the current situation. In the UK, for example, the regulator has suggested that companies due to report take an additional 2 weeks to do so, while statutory reporting requirements, like full year-end closing and AGMs, have an extra 2 months' leeway.
5. AGMs in our region have certainly continued on the basis of either hybrid (both physical presence until recently and online) or virtual meetings. In future, such options will surely be more likely to be a viable alternative that companies can consider given some clear advantages - not least, ironically, possibly greater shareholder participation, particularly from minority shareholders.
6. One really important IR message to reiterate is continued resilience, if not business-as-usual, with reassurance around what is important to investors. Again your metrics depend on your business but balance sheet strength and cash-flow are the big common ones. More companies are certainly having to review dividend policies and other use of cash - this will inevitably have to continue as business thinks hard about the best ways to preserve cash for longer.
7. After all this, the adverse social and economic impact will be felt everywhere and there will be a prolonged knock-on effect that will last far beyond now and 2020, I'm afraid.
8. We need to start thinking about our plans, including any contingencies, how to not just last but come out the other side, if not stronger, certainly ready. Some things we just can't see or control but we can become more resilient, if not future-proof.
9. Part of the learning will surely be to re-think what we do and possibly do things differently in the future, if not next time - and there will be a next time and it may be different again.
10. MEIRA remains open for you, let's keep talking, keep going and we too will find other ways, if not new ways to deliver our annual programme around: membership benefits, primarily based on more and better content: newsletters - every week(!); White Papers - check out the latest one this week; webinars - next one coming up on 1 April; MEIRA IR Guide in train, can't wait(!);

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the old 2019 programme. This will be replaced by the new 2020 version of the CIRO programme with effect from June; and of course, other planned events, including later in the year. Inshallah.

Business-as-usual, MEIRA: New 2020 CIRO Agreements

In some ways, this is just the start in a new operating environment and it goes without saying again that we will learn from this sobering experience. Life goes on and while not quite the business-as-usual that we know, we will endure and we will come out the other side stronger. An important part of this ongoing effort was this week's MEIRA signing of two big agreements, one with the UK IR Society, a long-time partner, with whom we offer the CIRO programme in the region and importantly, one with the Financial Academy, the training arm of the CMA, the capital markets regulator in Saudi Arabia. It is a major MEIRA milestone to be able to formally deliver our flagship training offering throughout the Kingdom in an exciting initiative that we should all be proud of, something that we will build on as we continue to promote the CIRO programme, in partnership with the IR Society, UK, as part of all IR professional bodies' efforts to raise the profile of strategic IR, foster continuous professional development and contribute to broader capital market development where we can. This will never stop.

Last but not least, and we won't say it again(!), don't forget to complete your IR team details needed to participate fully in the Institutional Investor Research buy-/sell-side survey which remains open until 17 April - don't miss out, do it now!

Stay well and sane, stay fit and productive, all you good people out there, we're with you - above all, let's keep going, MEIRA - happy Mother's, Father's, Family Days to all of you, we'll need it, so just love it!

Best wishes,

Team MEIRA

Publications

MEIRA White Paper: Investor communication in a time of uncertainty

We are committed to continuing delivering content to our members and partners and as part of the White Paper series, we are delighted to launch our latest piece.

Each day, IROs are presented with new and seemingly impossible challenges to overcome. The outbreak of the COVID-19 has impacted the capital markets but also the entire world and its population. During a crisis, a successful IR function should focus on proactively engaging and communicating with the investment community. This white paper presents some practical

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INVESTOR COMMUNICATION IN A
TIME OF UNCERTAINTY
24 March 2020

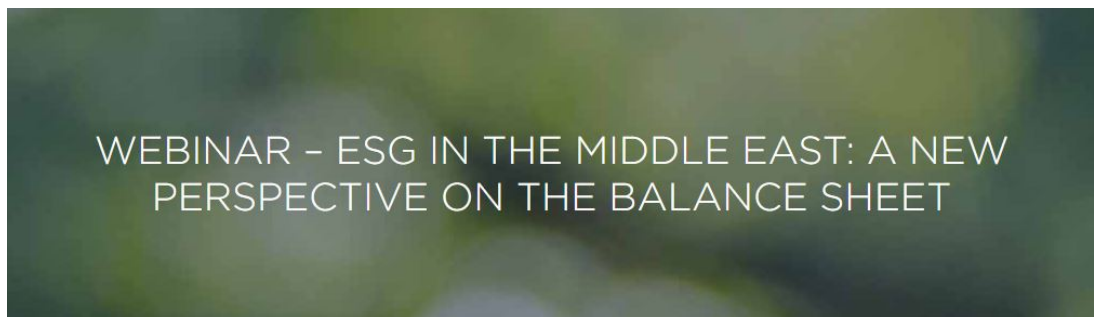
some international case studies on how corporates are addressing the current pandemic challenges.

This white paper is exclusive for MEIRA members and partners. It is available on our member's area on the website where you can download it along with some other relevant pieces. To access, visit meira.me/ir-resources/ and login with your credentials.

If you need assistance, contact info@meira.me.

Events

Upcoming events



1 April - MEIRA Webinar - ESG in the Middle East: a new perspective on the balance sheet

MEIRA, in collaboration with Instinctif Partners, is organising an exclusive webinar on Wednesday 1 April at 12:30 pm UAE timing, titled "ESG in the Middle East: a new perspective on the balance sheet".

The participants will have the opportunity to understand the importance of disclosing non-financial information on their ESG performance and how it links to investor and broader stakeholder relations. In addition, our speakers will share insight on investors' approach to incorporating ESG metrics in investment decisions and some practical tips on how to meet investors' expectations on non-financial reporting.

[More information and registration here](#)

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MEIRA ESG Webinar: 1 April (Online)

MEIRA Annual Conference & Awards Dinner: 23 September (Dubai, UAE)



2020 MEIRA IR Awards Best Practice Category **Don't forget to participate!**

The 2020 Emerging EMEA Executive Team survey will be extended until 17 April. IR winners in the Middle East will be announced at the MEIRA IR awards ceremony, which will take place on September 23, 2020. Between March 2 and April 3, both buy-side and sell-side can give their views on the IR performance of corporates and individual IR professionals based in the Middle East.

There is still time to secure the highest possible ranks in the survey results. Don't forget to Insert the "[Survey Vote](#)" marketing banner on your corporate website and your signature hyperlinked to [Institutional Investor website](#).

Training

CIRO programme

The Certified Investor Relations Officer programme, delivered in partnership with the London based UK IR Society, is an internationally recognised qualification in Investor Relations.

CIRO Calendar 2020

> Abu Dhabi: 9 - 10 - 11 June

> Dubai: November

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The Introduction to Investor Relations course

This one-day course provides an introduction to financial markets, Investor Relations and the financial environment in which Investor Relations professionals work.

[Read More](#)

Introduction to IR Calendar 2020

> **Abu Dhabi:** 9 June

> **Dubai:** November

[Register now!](#)

Are you looking for a bespoke or in-house training?

[Contact us](#)

Members



Do you want to join MEIRA?

Don't miss the opportunity to join our IR community and become a member today.

You just need to fill our [membership form](#) and send it to info@meira.me in order to finalise the process.

We are looking forward to welcoming you!

[Membership form](#)

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About Middle East Investor Relations Association

The Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA) is an independent non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the Investor Relations (IR) profession and industry standards in corporate governance. The mission of MEIRA is to enhance the reputation, efficiency and attractiveness of the Middle East capital markets.

This involves a commitment to fostering increased dialogue among its members and to encourage them to share and adopt best practice techniques within the field of IR. In partnership with stock exchanges, regulators and other market participants, MEIRA supports companies through its professional development and certification programmes as well as its membership community and network of country chapters.

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