



21 July 2022

*Don't miss anything!*  
Weekend News List



- > **MEIRA news! Why Meira is looking at KSA and IR in the Middle East 'through the looking glass' (IR Magazine)** [\*Read it here\*](#)
  - > **GCC Asset Sales to increase transparency and capital market development: S&P report (Arab News)** [\*Read it here\*](#)
  - > **ESG in the GCC Region: Accelerating Integration (BDI)** [\*Read it here\*](#)
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*What's new?*  
**MEIRA updates**



### **Silicon Valley: An IR perspective**

I just came back after 10 days in San Francisco, which for starters I expected definitely to be much warmer! It was my last MBA study tour, after visiting Oslo and London back in April. And what better way to conclude this journey than by visiting the home of entrepreneurship, especially when it is the first time that you visit the USA?



The first few days passed quite fast, but that's what happens when you put together a bunch of like-minded people with no other purpose than to explore what the city has to offer. Together with my colleagues, we made the most of the weekend and why not, we decided to do a couple of cheesy touristic activities. After having lunch at Fisherman's Wharf, we immersed ourselves as if we were in one of the Stranger Things episodes and played arcade games for most of the afternoon. You know what they say: Work hard, play hard! And we certainly do both in the MBA.

Monday arrived and we had our first real interaction with what it means to be an entrepreneur in Silicon Valley. Robots, AI, data, and algorithms were part of every conversation. However, what became clear to me is that, if you want to be successful you need to develop your storytelling skills. No matter if you work for a blue-chip company or if you have your business idea just written on a tissue, you are competing, in the case of Silicon Valley (SV) fearlessly, for attention and numbers cannot tell the full story. Why does your business matter? Who is the team behind it? Why you? What makes you different? Does it sound familiar to any IRO out there? I guess so. It reminds me of one of my

"What unites people? Armies? Gold? Flags? Stories. There's nothing in the world more powerful than a good story. Nothing can stop it. No enemy can defeat it."

Although I must say that sometimes one can think that some of the personal and business stories could sound like the last Hollywood movie script, I kept reminding myself that I was not that far from LA. Perhaps the movies that I grew up watching were more similar to reality than I thought!

Tuesday arose chillily and after a warm cup of coffee and some pancakes we took our bus to Presidio Park to meet Consuelo Valverde, the founder of SV Latam. Consuelo launched the first VC firm in Silicon Valley with a focus on Latin America. We were hungry to know the ins and outs of running a VC fund and Consuelo and her team did an amazing job not only in explaining the day-to-day operations but also an innovative risk assessment methodology to measure the probability of success of any business. However, as Consuelo highlighted, no matter how good the valuation model is, at the end of the day, what makes a difference between a successful or unsuccessful business is the team behind it and its ability to sustain long-term growth. And again, isn't that the main purpose of any good IRO? Being able to explain the business strategy, its operations, purpose, and goals and ultimately, creating a sense of confidence in the team running it, is the main responsibility of IR.

If I were to pick just one day out of the 10 days that I spent in SV, that would be Wednesday. It was THE day! We were finally visiting Palo Alto and meeting some of the most innovative organisations. We first visited SRI International, a not-for-profit research center that works to advance R&D from the laboratory to the marketplace. Their main purpose is to be the link between research institutions such as universities and corporations. Thanks to them now you can ask anything to Siri on your iPhone! SRI International is another great example of the important role that professional independent bodies like MEIRA play in their particular field to drive actual change and innovation.

We then moved to have a very engaging presentation by the founder of Hackers/Founders, a community for entrepreneurs that support each other in navigating the SV ecosystem. It became clear that what makes SV the Mecca of entrepreneurship is the local community that exchanges ideas and shares common challenges and goals. We also had the opportunity to visit Plug & Play, one of the biggest incubators in the world. It was very exciting to see some familiar names (FAB, SABIC, Aramco, Ooredoo, among others!) decorating the walls of the head office in Palo Alto as proud partners and supporters.

and Visitor Center in Cupertino. You could imagine Steve Jobs walking the same floor and breathing the same air. For someone like me, who admire him for his vision and design-driven approach, being there was like being a kid in a candy store!

On our last day, we were given the opportunity to put things into perspective. Walking around some of the least privileged neighbourhoods of San Francisco, we were able to understand that, as "soon-to-be" business leaders, everything we do has an impact. Businesses don't operate in isolation and everything we do has a direct impact on the environment and society. We all have a role to play, and IR is certainly at the center of the ESG revolution.

All in all, a unique opportunity to understand that we are more interconnected than ever before. That any business, regardless of its size or funding stage, requires good IR professionals if they wish to remain competitive in the long-term and that innovation will always be priced at a premium.

Special thanks to the Team MEIRA and the Board for making this possible and supporting this amazing learning experience.

Alicia Gallego Martinez  
Senior Manager, Policy & Strategic Communications, MEIRA

*Mark your calendar*

## Events





Registration is open to MEIRA members, sponsors, partners, and representatives from stock exchanges and regulatory bodies. If you are not a MEIRA member yet, contact us today and participate in this unique IR forum.

[Register here](#)



### **Sponsorship opportunities are still available**

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### **The submission for the MEIRA Best IR Reporting Awards will close soon!**

The submission process for the 2022 MEIRA Best IR Reporting Awards has begun. Members and IR practitioners can send their submission forms and their 2021 annual reports to [awards@meira.me](mailto:awards@meira.me). The process will run until the end of July 2022.

[For more information, click here](#)

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