

REGIONAL FOCUS

Driving innovation

SSR Personnel's Peter French MBE and Andrew Hudson delve deep into the technological trends and initiatives fostering rapid growth in the Middle East

“ROBOTICS FUNDING IS MAKING SURE THAT THERE IS A STABLE HUMAN-MACHINE WORK ECOSYSTEM TO DRIVE REVENUE IN ADVANCED ROBOTICS COUNTRIES.”

Acknowledgements: Tarry Singh, AI Researcher & CEO, DK AI Lab, Analytics Insight, Middle East Economy

The Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region has been embracing AI and its subsets, including GenAI, capable of generating text, images or other media, using generative models. Like with any emerging technologies, though there are concerns, governments and businesses in the region are recognising the potential for good and are investing in their development and implementation.

The UAE has been a frontrunner in the AI race and its government has launched the Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031, which aims to position the country as a global leader in GenAI by 2031 and to develop a world class AI ecosystem. The strategy focuses on transport,

healthcare, education and the environment.

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Smart Police Stations (SPS)

Dubai opened its first smart police station (SPS) in September 2017. Today, there are 22 SPS across Dubai, the world's only unmanned police stations. The SPS is a self-service station where you can register a complaint and 26 defined categories, including criminal

records, traffic penalties, community services, certificates and permits. For complaints and crimes, you can record a video statement and can connect on video with an officer.

One of the key advantages of the SPSs is their accessibility. They are open 24/7, providing round-the-clock access to services. Furthermore, offering services in multiple languages, with plans to expand to even more languages, ensures that a diverse and multicultural population can interact with the police. In 2022, there were 107,719 transactions lodged which included 16,083 reports through SPS. During the first half of 2023, there were 65,942 transactions processed at SPS including 16,205 reports and 4,967 criminal related enquiries.

Due to the nature of not having to interact with another person, Dubai Police has seen a positive impact, with more people now willing to report crimes and use SPS. This initiative was implemented in line with a focus on digital transformation and for official services to become paperless.

Robotics: A bright future

Dubai's Robotics and Automation Program seeks to raise robotics' contribution to The Emirates' GDP to 9% by 2032; over the next decade, some 200,000 robots will support manufacturing, consumer services, tourism, logistics and healthcare. The use of robots and automation in the workplace has been increasing in countries around the world. This

trend is driven by advancements in technology, increased investment in robotics and the desire to improve efficiency in various industries.

China now ranks fifth in the world behind South Korea (1,000 per 10,000 employees), Singapore (670), Japan (399) and Germany (397). China and South Korea are the countries that have made the most progress in the race to industrial automation in recent years (Statista). Many governments are investing in robotics and automation to maintain competitiveness in the global market.

The global robotics market is expected to hit US \$275b in 2025. There is a myth that the more robots, the less job opportunities there are

for human employees. Robotics funding is making sure that there is a stable human-machine work ecosystem to drive revenue in advanced robotics countries.

Analytics Insight reports the agricultural sector is encouraging the introduction of modern applications through disruptive technologies with the combination of robotics and AI. Farmers are reaping the benefits of robotics applications in the global agricultural sector to drive revenue and accelerate the productivity of different high quality crops utilising multiple kinds of robots.

According to GlobalData, the service robotics market could reach US \$216b by 2030. It is growing at

