

Noorul Hijaz Tharola

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Communication strategy | Executive positioning | Corporate narrative | AI-enabled communications

Summary

Senior communications professional with UAE experience since 2018 across technology, AI, financial services and complex B2B businesses. Advises CEOs and senior leaders on corporate narrative, reputation and executive profile, combining strategy with hands-on executive writing, media relations and crisis communications. Has run an in-house government communications function, owned portfolio P&L and led multidisciplinary teams of up to 12. Trained in journalism; co-founded and operated a coffee shop and gaming centre.

EXPERIENCE

IN2 Communications

Mar 2026 - Present

Lead - Strategic Communications and Emerging Technologies

- Managed senior-leadership thought leadership, executive positioning and LinkedIn presence; owned website content and paid and organic campaign architecture.
- Led AI enablement through tools governance, evaluation, approval, literacy and training; developed proposals and RFP responses and contributed to commercial applications for in-house tools.

Edelman Middle East

Oct 2023 - Feb 2026

Associate Director

Led communications for DP World GCC and Drydocks World from Edelman; coordinated with DP World's Global Media Relations Centre of Excellence. Portfolio also included Marine Services and AI clients Presight and MBZUAI.

- Advised C-suite and senior leadership on reputation, executive messaging and proactive and reactive media strategy. Led thought leadership across interviews, op-eds, LinkedIn and speaking, with end-to-end briefing for keynotes, panels and fireside chats.
- Held portfolio P&L accountability for budgets, resource allocation and commercial performance.
- Led a team of up to 12 across account management, creative, digital, data and reporting, including line management, development plans and mentoring.
- Led communications for the global launch of MBZUAI's open-source reasoning model K2 Think across international technology and business media.
- Ran Presight's day-to-day PR and AI Startup Accelerator communications, from the global call for applications through judging, cohort announcement, bootcamp and the GITEX showcase.
- Coordinated global narrative and local execution across the Middle East, Europe, Asia and the Americas; oversaw crisis planning and response, risk identification, issues mapping and response frameworks.
- Ran on-site international media operations at COP28 and the DP World Global Freight Summit. Directed reporting on share of voice, sentiment, message pull-through and channel performance.
- Served as an AI Ambassadors Champion, running training and adoption clinics and supporting practical AI use in client delivery.

ASDA'A BCW (now Burson)

Jan 2023 - Oct 2023

Communications & Editorial Consultant

Seconded to e& (Etisalat) during its transformation from telecom operator to technology group.

- Developed the corporate narrative and B2B/B2C media strategy, including financial results, joint ventures and acquisitions. Worked with investor relations on annual-report and financial-results narrative.
- Owned leadership editorial content, including releases, Q&As, op-eds, video scripts and talking points for speeches, keynotes and fireside chats; provided executive media counsel.

Department of Municipalities and Transport, Abu Dhabi

Dec 2021 - Jan 2023

Communications Specialist - PR & Content

- Provided editorial and PR counsel and ran the in-house communications function, covering strategy, media relations, stakeholder engagement, executive content and agency management.
- Drafted annual reports and coordinated English-language content across departments. Wrote executive speeches, thought leadership, interview materials, presentations and talking points for high-profile meetings with foreign diplomats.
- Managed seconded agency delivery across social media, design and videography, directing workflows, resources and standards across English and Arabic channels.
- Delivered internal communications content, including newsletters, mailers, intranet content and town hall materials, supporting leadership messaging and employee engagement.

Seven Media Middle East, UAE

Feb 2018 - Dec 2021

PR Account Director

- Provided strategic counsel on media relations and integrated campaigns for B2B and B2C clients, including Aberdeen Standard Investments, Trade Bank of Iraq and Holborn Assets.
- Led Hyundai Motor Company's Middle East and Africa account for the regional lead agency, coordinating distributors and local agencies.
- Led World Energy Congress 2019 communications, including speeches and op-eds, and directed PR and media operations for Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019, World Road Congress and Fintech Abu Dhabi.
- Led a team of four, with responsibility for line management, development plans and mentoring.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Koyako Hospitality & Entertainment, India

May 2012 - Aug 2016

Co-Founder & Managing Partner

Co-founded and operated a coffee shop and gaming centre, owning P&L, budgets, brand, marketing, PR and day-to-day operations, with responsibility for the full staff team.

Intermanagement Manpower Service Limited, India

Oct 2009 - Apr 2012

Operations & Client Services Manager

Set up and ran the Chennai branch office; supported operations, business development and client management across GCC recruitment accounts.

The PRactice Strategic Communications, India

Jun 2008 - Sep 2009

Senior Account Executive

Managed Bengaluru International Airport's first-year media relations. Led a 12-member PR team for the TiE Entrepreneurial Summit 2008.

EDUCATION

MBA, Marketing | Hult International Business School, Boston, USA | 2017

BA, Journalism & Copy Editing | Sacred Hearts College, MG University, Cochin, India | 2008

CERTIFICATIONS

AI Fluency: Framework & Foundations | Anthropic

Generative AI Foundations | upGrad x Microsoft

Fundamentals of Digital Marketing | Google