

Tech critical for UAE education

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DUBAI — The UAE is known to bring in radical changes equipped with innovation that leads to the development of society; this was evident when the conventional education sector displayed the latest technology solutions this week at the Global Educational Solutions and Suppliers (GESS Dubai) exhibition.

The event displayed a wide range of solutions affirming that the UAE is equipping students to face a smarter and better future. The latest trends are now clearly visible as smartcreens replace black boards and chalks in the UAE's smartclass.

Francisco Salcedo, senior vice president at Etisalat Digital, said: "Etisalat is committed to empowering educational institutions offering the latest digital solutions that will help re-imagine what is possible inside the classroom, blending physical and digital realms from Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) to the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), advanced robotics, 3D printing, wearable tech and more."

Etisalat Digital creates a comprehensive ecosystem of strategic and relevant partners to deliver a managed end-to-end solution, offering a turn-key approach that addresses all key elements in the digital education value chain with flexible business models. "Our solutions include state of the art devices, learning platforms, high-quality digital content, teacher training and professional development. By utilising these technologies, we can provide personalised learning to each student, create close integration of pedagogy, content and technology and, ultimately, allow students to learn 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity,



GESS Dubai 2019 displayed a wide range of solutions affirming that the UAE is equipping students to face a smarter and better future. — Supplied photo

and collaboration with the use of robotics, computer programming and sharing tools," added Salcedo.

The event — GESS Dubai 2019 — concluded on Thursday with a record of 600 exhibitors had a overwhelming response. This year the show hosted exhibitors and country pavilions from Bahrain, China, Denmark, Finland, Germany, India, Italy, Jordan, Korea, Turkey, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

As the leading Apple Solution Expert (ASE) in the UAE, MDS CTS has been working closely with Apple to digitally transform the teaching and learning experiences for educational institutions in the country. "We are working with many educational institutes and training centres across the UAE with five of these schools being recognised as Apple Distinguished Schools. MDS CTS has also been leading a strong Accessibility initiative in partnership with Apple,

600

**Exhibitors attended
GESS Dubai 2019**

which aims to offer students with special needs, the opportunity to become active independent learners," said George Habel, Apple Practice Manager, MDS Computers Group.

"Education is evolving at an unprecedented rate to support the new learning models of this generation. The current generation of students are driving the demand for technologies that boost engagement and the ability to work wherever they would like, and in a variety of social, collaborative environments. Technology is helping teachers to be more innovative in their teaching methods and engage students with practical ways

of learning to unleash their creative potential. Learning is no longer confined only to the classrooms or just during school hours. With powerful products such as the iPad or Mac and with several tools and learning apps, students can experience customised learning experiences as well as learn from anywhere and reach out to teachers any time. Schools and educational institutes in the UAE have been at the forefront in adopting technology to help students develop skills to prepare for the future," added Habel.

GESS 2019 witnessed tremendous participation from Finland, Australia, UK among other countries. AI is changing the way students learn. The use of intelligent systems that answer questions, offering essential guidance and directing students to additional resources, is also increasing. Ali Shabdaar, business development director - MEA at Zoho Corporation, said: "From primary



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Senior vice-president, Etisalat Digital

schools to higher education institutions, grading and evaluating answer sheets is a daunting task for instructors and teaching assistants alike. Even though AI can't completely replace human assessment yet, it can automate most of the fundamental grading processes, freeing up teachers' time and ensuring students receive unbiased grades."

Stressing on the importance of the role of technology in boosting the learning experience in the classrooms, Venkatasubramanian Hariharan, Business Unit Director B2C, Canon Middle East, said: "It has been reported that by 2020 there will be 175,000 class spaces coming up in the UAE. At Canon, we believe four walls of the classroom is not just education, it's beyond the four walls. The way technology is moving you see right from education intelligence to big data and interactive displays, there are multiple things coming more and more in the schools."

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