

Kuwait

The

Emirate of Kuwait boasts roughly 10% of the world's proven oil reserves and its impressive consumer purchasing power bestows a high standard of living, clearly discernable to any business or tourist visitor.

Lavish malls and luxurious fashion temples such as Sheikh Majed Al-Sabah's Villa Moda are thriving, while five-star resorts and upmarket restaurants adorn the coast of the Persian Gulf. Security is an obvious spending priority for the government and consequently of no real issue in the everyday lives of residents.

Dr Ken Taylor, chairman of Shell in Kuwait, is just one of many expatriates who enjoys life there. Kuwait Shell Ltd, which he manages, was established in 1999 to tighten long-established relationships with Kuwait. Shell has been present in Kuwait's oil sector since its international marketing partnership with Gulf Oil in 1948. By 1961, when Shell gained an offshore concession agreement covering 1,500 square miles, the partnership had moved beyond marketing and into oil and gas exploration.

Despite the changing commercial environment and political conflicts, Shell has almost continuously added value within Kuwait's oil industry on two fronts. By utilizing its global distribution network, it has traditionally been one of the major purchasers of Kuwait's crude oil. However, the company's greatest contribution is through the products and technology that it offers within Kuwait. Today, Shell is supplying



Mr. F.J. Stephens signing on behalf of the Royal Dutch/Shell group of Companies, a concession agreement with His Highness Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, the ruler of Kuwait. January 1961

Photo courtesy of Kuwait Shell Limited

chemical catalysts to Kuwait National Petroleum Company through its wholly-owned subsidiary Criterion Catalysts. Meanwhile, Shell Global Solutions is providing direct technical assistance and licensing to enhance the performance of Kuwait's refineries. "With regards to future business activities, Shell is competing for a role in the operation and development of Kuwait's Northern Fields in a consortium led by ExxonMobil and including ConocoPhillips and Maersk," says Dr Taylor.

A strong argument for picking the consortium, including Royal Dutch Shell plc, the world's fourth largest company, is that the company is committed to maximizing employment, wealth-creation and technology transfer benefits to the countries where they operate. Around 90% of Shell's worldwide staff are nationals of the countries of operation. Shell in Kuwait bridges local and global expertise by sending local staff to Shell companies abroad for training.

The product of visionary leadership and a passion to deliver value

One of Kuwait's most innovative companies sets out its vision for tomorrow's learning

Delivering

HR and integrated IT solutions to help its clients achieve success and prosperity in the knowledge era is leading Kuwait company HumanSoft's mission. Fahad Al-Othman, the company's founder and chairman, says: "The world is going through a tremendously special and historical phase in HR and IT. Knowledge has become the ultimate economic resource replacing the more traditional resources, such as oil and coal.



Fahad Al-Othman
HumanSoft

"While knowledge is created, managed and used by people, IT has revolutionized every sphere of our lives, including the management and development of knowledge and HR. The two elements are inseparable and must be addressed harmoniously in order to achieve economic diversification and growth."

The company's ethos is to maximize human resources. "60% of the region's population is under 21," says Mr Al-Othman. "Our aim is to turn them into skilled HR; the productive assets countries need to diversify into new economic sectors. We have created a group of companies that have the benefit of comprehensiveness and specialization. They are involved in several of the most important lines of businesses for HR and IT development."

One of the company's core endeavors is to identify the international

professional standards most needed in the region and customize them for their own markets.

"Our experience in IT training is what has enabled us to grow, in less than ten years, from a single training center in Kuwait to the multi-subsidary KSE-listed leading regional organization we are now. We started in 1996 as the Kuwait franchise of the U.S.-based New Horizons Computer Learning Centers, heavily promoting the certification of leading IT companies such as

Microsoft, Oracle and Cisco.

"However, since IT vendor training was created for practicing IT professionals and not for the segment of young adults who are non-English-speaking computer novices, we developed a program that uses customized vendor training as a core and integrates it with preparatory training, job simulation projects, personal and language training. "At the time, this was a novel concept that enabled us to tap an entirely new market for IT vendor training."

Mr Al-Othman has no doubts on what has made his company so successful. He says: "It is within our corporate culture to be entrepreneurial, innovative and passionate about what we do. Although profit is a necessity and a reward, our main aim is to deliver value—for our communities, our employees and ourselves."

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