



Monthly Newsletter | December 2025

Dear Members & Friends,

As we approach the close of 2025, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our members, friends, and sponsors for their unwavering support throughout the year. I am equally thankful to our dedicated Board, whose leadership and commitment have continued to steer the Chapter's vision forward.

I am pleased to announce that my successor as Chair has now been confirmed, effective late March. Please join me in congratulating **Samer Mahdi**, who will step into the role of Chair-Elect. Further details about Samer's appointment and responsibilities can be found below.

Following our Board's strategic meeting in November, we are excited to share that several updates will be made to strengthen our leadership team—these will be communicated later in the year. We also have an engaging events pipeline ahead, beginning with a social bowling evening on **22 January**. Registration is now open. Additionally, an **end-user-only** event will be hosted at the Google Dubai office on **23 January**. If you are an occupier/end user, please reach out to reserve your place.

Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season, and I look forward to reconnecting in January.

Savas Cizmeci
Chapter Chair

Upcoming Events

22 January 2026

Chapter Social - Bowling
Brass Monkey Bluewaters
Dubai

[Register](#)

23 January 2026

End-User Roundtable
Dubai

[Email your interest](#)

3-5 March 2026

Asia Pac Summit
Kuala Lumpur

[Register](#)

Event Spotlight



Bowling & Networking

Join the Middle East Chapter for a lively **Bowling & Networking Evening** to kick off the new year! This is your opportunity to reconnect with fellow members and industry professionals in a fun, relaxed environment. The event is happening on **Thursday 22 January 2026**, at **Brass Monkey, Bluewaters, Dubai**. The evening includes bowling at 7:00 PM,



followed by a sharing-style dinner, drinks, and dedicated networking from 8:00 PM. Don't miss out on this fantastic evening of fun and connection—**secure your spot today!**

[Register](#)

Board Member Spotlight: New Chair-Elect Confirmed



Following a vote by the Chapter Board in November, the Chapter is delighted to confirm that **Samer Mahdi, Strategic Portfolio Director** at **Baker Hughes**, has assumed the position of **Chair-Elect** with immediate effect. Samer is a valued member of the Board, having most recently served as Universities Liaison, a role in which he significantly strengthened the Chapter's ties with academic institutions across the UAE. He will take over as Chair of the Chapter in April 2026.

Upon his appointment, Samer shared his vision for the Chapter: *"Thank you to the board and our community for the trust and support. The Middle East has so much potential, and I want our chapter to reflect that energy. We'll keep things active, practical, and fun and we'll create opportunities to learn, connect, and grow. I'd love for everyone to be involved and help spread the word, invite colleagues, bring new voices in, and let's keep the momentum going."* The Chapter Board looks forward to Samer's leadership and the continued growth of the corporate real estate community in the Middle East.



DEADLINE 9 JANUARY

The Chapter invites you to help shape their comprehensive 2026 learning agenda! As the CRE landscape evolves, we seek innovative content to inspire and educate members. **Share your expertise** with industry leaders. We are interested in submissions on: Wellbeing, AI & Technology, Geopolitical Risk, Sustainability, and Finance. Send a synopsis, key takeaways, speaker info, and preferred location (UAE/KSA/Both) by **Friday, 9 January 2026**.



ACCELERATED MCR

The MCR Accelerated Programme provides a structured 15- to 18-month fast-track to achieve your **Masters of Corporate Real Estate (MCR)** designation. This intensive pathway covers six advanced-level classes designed to elevate your strategic career. The format is predominantly virtual, complemented by select in-person learning opportunities. **Register now** to start accelerating your professional recognition and leadership skills in corporate real estate.



WHY WOMEN LEAVE

Women dominate architecture classrooms in India, yet they nearly disappear by the time leadership roles are reached. With just 9% representation in the workforce and 1-2% in leadership, the **industry is losing critical talent** at an alarming rate. This piece explores why women leave, examines what is broken in real estate culture, and argues that failing to address this vanishing act is costing the industry more than it realizes.

Sponsor Spotlight



The Middle East Chapter extends its gratitude to **AVI-SPL** for their loyal and supportive sponsorship. Their commitment has played an integral role in the success of our Chapter, enabling us to deliver valuable events, essential networking opportunities, and critical educational content to our members throughout the region. The support from partners like AVI SPL is foundational to our mission of advancing the corporate real estate profession. We truly value their dedication to the Chapter's vision!

Interested to become a sponsor? Learn more about the benefits of partnering with the Middle East Chapter and elevate your brand within the corporate real estate community. Email [Sharon Withe](#) to learn more.

New Member Spotlight



The Chapter extends a warm welcome to our newest member, **Khaled Ghazzawi**! Khaled brings over 15 years of experience across real estate sales, development, and property/facilities management within the UAE. He currently leads the Group-wide Corporate Real Estate portfolio at Emirates NBD, overseeing strategic transformation across multiple geographies. Khaled is recognized for his leadership in driving digitalization, AI adoption, and aligning operations with global standards such as the RICS. A holder of an MSc in Real Estate, he is passionate about



Please join us in welcoming **Zeena Albishtawi**, Commercial Leasing Director at Diriyah Company. Zeena is a seasoned professional bringing over 18 years of diverse experience to our network. She began her career in the banking sector in Jordan before transitioning into the real estate industry, where she has established herself as an expert. For the past five years, Zeena has been a key contributor at Diriyah Company in Riyadh, KSA, playing a vital role in the development of one of Saudi Arabia's landmark giga-projects. In addition to her demanding role, she is also currently

sustainable built environments. Please
join us in welcoming Khaled to the
Chapter community!
[Linkedln](#)

pursuing an Executive MBA. Welcome to
CoreNet Global and the Middle East
Chapter Zeena!
[Linkedln](#)

**We want your ideas! Help us make the Middle East Chapter the best it can be. Email
us your suggestions today.**

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