

Yousef Shamoun | Co-founder & CEO at ZenHR and Akhtaboot

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Summary

In 2007, Yousef co-founded [Akhtaboot](#), a leading online recruitment portal serving the MENA region. Since then, the company pivoted into [ZenHR](#) which, in addition to recruitment, provides a cloud-based HR software solution that tackles the full HR value chain from "Acquire" to "Retire" tailor-made for the MENA region. ZenHR raised two rounds of funding from local and regional VCs and grew to more than 65 employees and 4 regional offices in Amman, Dubai, Riyadh, and Abu Dhabi. In 2009, Yousef also co-founded [Jawaker](#), the largest online social gaming website focusing on the MENA region.

Yousef is a member of the Endeavor network (www.endeavor.org), Entrepreneurs Organization (www.eonetwork.org), and HR High Performance Forum in Jordan. Yousef also serves on the board of ZenHR, Jawaker, Entrepreneurs Organization, and St. Vincent De Paul Society.

Yousef earned his Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from McGill University in Canada in 2002, he then completed his MBA with a focus on Finance and Entrepreneurship from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C, in 2006.

Professional Experience

Co-founder & CEO | ZenHR (www.zenhr.com) January 2017 – Present

ZenHR is a cloud-based Human Resources Management System (HRMS) that is specifically designed to serve everyone from SME to Enterprise customers in the MENA market. ZenHR currently has the largest market share in the HR Software as a Service (SaaS) category in MENA.

- Fully executed the pivot from Akhtaboot to ZenHR.
- Responsible for the overall strategy and the penetration of the MENA region.
- Grew ZenHR by 310% in 2018, 176% on 2019, and 38% in 2020.
- Since inception, maintained healthy unit economics based on global SaaS standards.

Co-founder & CEO | Akhtaboot (www.akhtaboot.com) June 2007 – Present

Akhtaboot is an online career network serving the MENA region. Akhtaboot is headquartered in Amman, Jordan with offices in Riyadh, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi.

- Responsible for managing the overall strategy at Akhtaboot.
- Responsible for the penetration of three markets (Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE).
- Maintained healthy double-digit annual percentage revenue growth every year since 2010.
- Launched the Akhtaboot Cares Initiative (ACI), Akhtaboot's Corporate Social Responsibility arm. The ACI focuses mainly on providing career-related services to educational institutions and NGOs. The ACI also runs Akhtaboot's annual job fair – Jordan's largest job fair ten years in a row.
- Launched the first job fair for People Living with Disabilities in Jordan in 2016.

Co-founder & Board Member | Jawaker (www.jawaker.com) October 2008 - Present

Jawaker is the largest regional social gaming website – hosting the most popular Middle Eastern games. Jawaker is headquartered in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

- Review and approve annual budgets.
- Provide assistance and support with key hires.

- Helped secure funding from Abu Dhabi-based VC.

Education

Georgetown University | Washington D.C., USA 2004 - 2006

MBA with a focus on Finance and Entrepreneurship

GPA: 3.5 / 4.0

Courses included:

- Corporate Finance I & II
- Investment Banking and Going Public
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Entrepreneurship: Implementing the Plan

McGill University | Montreal, Canada 1997 - 2002

Bachelor in Mechanical Engineering (Minor: Management)

Awards: Received a merit based scholarship.

National Orthodox School | Amman, Jordan Class of 1997

GCE (O-Levels and A-Levels)

Graduated top of the class with scientific excellence: 4 A-Levels (3 As, 1 B), and 6 O-Levels (6 As).

Training Courses and Workshops

SaaStr Annual | San Francisco, USA February 2019

SaaStr Annual is the largest B2B software conference in the world, it includes three full days of content sessions from 300 of the top speakers in SaaS. SaaStr Annual provides actionable thought leadership to help grow SaaS businesses from \$0 to \$100M ARR faster.

Wharton School of Business – Elevating Finance + Operations | Philadelphia, USA March 2018

The Wharton School faculty of the University of Pennsylvania and EO built an Executive Education program specifically for EO members. This program gives participants the opportunity to dive deep into their business's overall financial health and operating metrics.

London Business School – EO Growth Forum | London, UK March 2017

This is an exclusive EO Executive Education program in partnership with the London Business School designed to provide the tools to create personal business growth strategies needed to gain a competitive advantage in this complex global economy. This 5-day program is unique because it is taught in the case study method.

London Business School – EO Growth Forum | London, UK March 2016

This is the same program as mentioned above, albeit with a different set of case studies and learnings.

Stanford - Endeavor Leadership Program | Stanford University August 2013

The Stanford - Endeavor Leadership Program is the first course designed specifically for Endeavor Entrepreneurs by the Stanford Graduate School of Business (GSB) and Endeavor. The program aims to draw from the best of the GSB's world-class faculty and network to specifically help Endeavor Entrepreneurs build leading companies in a competitive global marketplace.

Bank Rotation | Bank of Jordan - Shmeisani Main Branch September 2004

Received 6 months of training in different departments at the Bank of Jordan. Training rotation included front office and deposits department, letter of credit and commercial protocol (incoming and outgoing), loans

(corporate, personal, car, and housing), credit facilities department (know your client, documentation/collateral, cash flow, etc.), accounting, and engineering departments.

Accomplishments and Awards

ZenHR selected as one of the 100 best Arab startups shaping the 4th Industrial Revolution March 2019

Following the successful Arab start-up initiative in 2017, the World Economic Forum and the Bahrain Economic Development Board have partnered to look for the [100 Arab Startups](#) that are shaping the 4th Industrial Revolution in 2019.

Akhtaboot selected among top Arab startups shaping MENA | World Economic Forum March 2017

This is a list compiled by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and International Finance Corporation (IFC) that identifies "[100 Arab startups shaping the fourth industrial revolution](#)".

Akhtaboot Makes "Arabia Fast Growth 500" List | AllWorld Network December 2011

Akhtaboot made the "Arabia Fast Growth 500" List, a project of AllWorld Network, which highlights the ranking of the fastest-growing 500 companies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Turkey, and Pakistan.

Akhtaboot Makes "Jordan Fast Growth 30" List | AllWorld Network May 2011

Akhtaboot made the "Jordan Fast Growth 30" List, a project of AllWorld Network which aims to highlight and rank the fastest-growing 30 privately held businesses in Jordan.

Volunteer Experience

[Mentor](#) | King Abdullah II Fund for Development "KAFD" May 2020 - Present

KAFD's Mentor Program aims to provide personalized career guidance and one-on-one support from career experts and specialists in different industries. Job seekers can reach out to their chosen mentor directly to discuss their career-related questions and goals.

Trainer | US Department of State January 2015

Conducted 4 workshops to 250 students from the American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanese American University (LAU), and American University in Cairo (AUC) on "Managing an Online Presence" as part of a conference titled "Beyond the Ivory Tower: Entering the Workforce with an Entrepreneurial Spirit".

Languages

- Arabic | Mother Tongue
- English | Fluent