

**STAY, SPEND, SCALE:
FROM SUMMER SLUMP TO
GROWTH SURGE!**

AIM OF THIS REPORT

This report reframes the narrative around summer in the GCC. While it has long been viewed as a quiet period marked by resident departures and reduced commercial activity, new data reveals a different reality: key audiences are staying, engaging, and spending.

Drawing on recent research and regional behavioural shifts, this report unpacks why summer is a high-potential window for marketers. It challenges outdated assumptions, presents compelling evidence for why brands should activate during this season, and outlines practical steps for doing so effectively. It also demonstrates how Platformance helps advertisers unlock this underused period. We combine strategy, insight, and technology to drive full-funnel growth and future-ready campaigns.



RETHINKING THE GCC SUMMER NARRATIVE

A Season of Misunderstood Opportunity

For years, summer in the GCC has been treated as downtime. A season where marketers scale back, advertisers pause, and media planning shifts elsewhere. The heat, the holidays, the supposed exodus of residents – all have contributed to the myth that no one is watching, listening, or spending.

But this view is increasingly out of date. Recent insights from YouGov tell a new story. One that reveals a more active, vibrant, and commercially relevant summer in the GCC than previously imagined. A season not of silence, but of potential. One where smart marketers are already moving in, claiming attention and shaping future demand.

This data dismantles the outdated perception of the region emptying out. It highlights an important insight: the people who stay matter. They are high-value audiences. Families. Professionals. Decision-makers. They are the backbone of consumer spending and brand engagement in the GCC. More importantly, they are paying attention.

70%

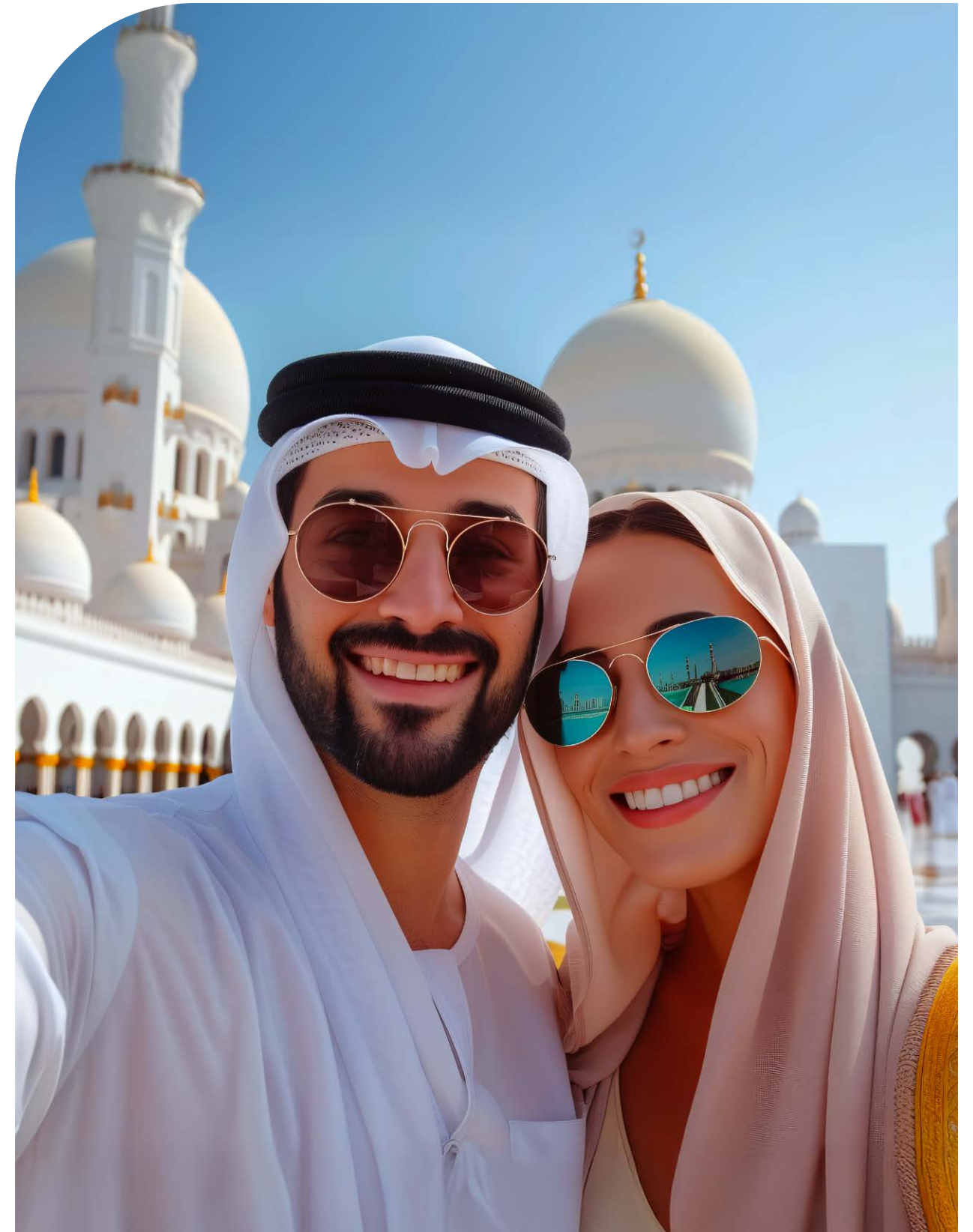
Of people in the UAE plan to spend more time in-country this summer than they did the year before.

73%

Of people in the KSA plan to spend more time in-country this summer than they did the year before.

High earners and families with children are more likely to stay than leave.

Leisure and entertainment options are the top reasons for staying, followed by work obligations and **high travel costs**.



THE GCC SUMMER SHIFT: WHAT'S CHANGED AND WHY IT MATTERS

A New Resident Behaviour Model

GCC residents are adapting to the climate. Instead of fleeing the heat, they are embracing lifestyle shifts that make staying in the region not just tolerable, but preferable. From indoor activities to evolving food habits, the focus has shifted inward, making home and the local environment central to summer life.



Indoor entertainment dominates:

Malls, cinemas, indoor sports, staycations



Increased home life:

Time by the pool, indoor gatherings, digital media consumption



Health and wellness adaptation:

Lighter diets, hydration trends, skincare and grooming routines

This is not just a social shift. It's a commercial one. These lifestyle trends are opportunities for brand storytelling, content alignment, and product positioning. In short: the summer audience is present and primed.



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The Role of Infrastructure Investment

The continued investment by GCC governments in leisure and entertainment infrastructure is reshaping the region's seasonal rhythm. Summers are no longer a reason to escape, they are becoming a reason to stay.

In the UAE, this includes expansive indoor malls, event venues, cultural attractions, and high-end hospitality.

UAE

In Saudi Arabia, Vision 2030 initiatives have driven massive development in domestic tourism and year-round attractions.

KSA

This infrastructure isn't just drawing tourists. It's keeping residents engaged and grounded, especially in summer months.



Who Is Staying Matters More Than How Many

It's not just that many are staying. It's who they are.

High earners are more likely to stay than low earners in UAE:



Families with children are more likely to stay than singles in UAE:



1 in 5 in the UAE say they're staying because travel is too expensive.

High earners are more likely to stay than low earners in KSA:



Families with children are more likely to stay than singles in KSA:



1 in 4 in KSA say they're staying because travel is too expensive

These groups are priority segments for advertisers:
Affluent yet value-driven, as well as engaged across digital and physical environments. The idea that summer is a brand wasteland simply doesn't stand up to scrutiny.



WHY SUMMER ADVERTISING WORKS

Low Noise, High Impact

Media clutter decreases in summer. That’s a strategic advantage. When competitors pull back, your message travels further. It lands harder and with greater impact. That makes attention easier to win and action easier to drive. This is not just theory. Our paid media arm, Calibrate, observes a 15-20% Cost per Lead drop over the early summer months, May to July. This holds true across verticals. CPL then tends to rise again as of mid August when Back to School activities kick in. The takeaway is clear: early summer is a prime window for lead generation at lower cost.



Learn When Others Wait

Summer is ideal for experimentation:
Creative A/B Testing
Audience segmentation
Piloting new formats like CTV or Gaming
The stakes are lower. The learnings are richer. And the outcomes are more actionable. This is how you enter Q4 with confidence and data-backed direction.

Cost Efficiency = Smarter Media Buys

Summer is also a season of efficiency. With lower advertiser demand and surplus inventory, CPMs typically fall by 10 to 20 percent, both globally and across the GCC, that means:

- More impressions for the same budget
- Greater share of voice without inflated pricing
- Higher frequency within key audiences to drive conversion

This creates the perfect environment to:

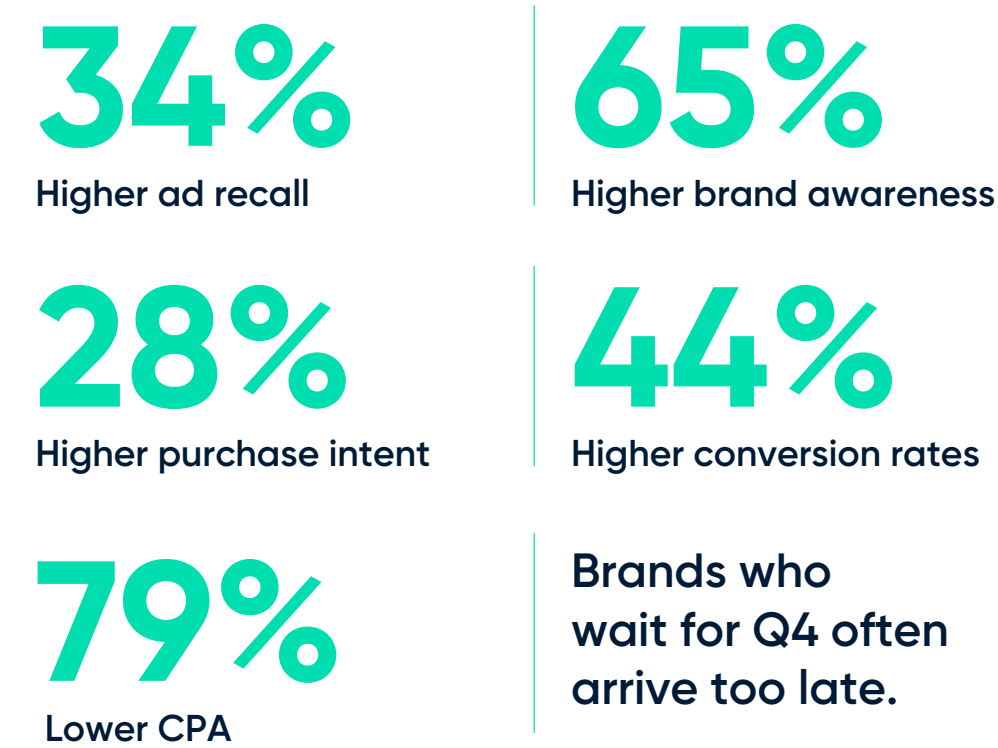
- Test new messaging
- Introduce new products
- Run educational or consideration-building campaigns

Your spend goes further. Your message lingers longer. Your campaign sets the foundation for Q4 performance.



Early Engagement = Future Growth

Consumers don’t only decide what to buy during the Q4 frenzy. They decide months earlier. Particularly for products which have long conversion cycles, from tech to travel. Summer is when consideration begins. It’s when brands can begin to shape preferences, reinforce emotional connection, and build the mental availability that drives conversion later. Sustained presence through summer drives results. TikTok data shows how brands that maintain sustained engagement strategies, including over the 'quiet' summer months, achieve up to:



WHY PLATFORMANCE IS YOUR SUMMER ADVANTAGE

Summer offers the opportunity.
We offer the advantage.

As a marketing growth technology platform, Platformance is built to drive business growth. We are uniquely positioned to help you build future demand, drive performance and de-risk experimentation, all within a unified, accountable framework.

One Platform. Full Activation.

Other partners make you choose between brand and performance. We don't. With Platformance, you can:

Run awareness to conversion campaigns.

Use creator, programmatic, affiliate, native & influencer media.

Consolidate everything across mobile, CTV, gaming & open web.

Access unified reporting and optimisation.

You don't need five vendors for five channels. You need one platform that actually works together, providing reach, flexibility and control.



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Built-in Testing & Experimentation

Our platform is built to help you learn fast:

Structured creative and audience split tests.

Pilot nascent formats (like CTV, gaming, shoppable video) in low-risk budgets.

Brand lift and performance data integrated.

You won't just advertise. You'll grow smarter and faster than your competition.

Local Insight. Regional Power.

Platformance is built in and for the GCC. That means:

Deep reach across KSA and UAE audiences.

Arabic-first creators, culturally relevant placements and season-aware media strategies.

Regional performance benchmarks to guide budget allocation.

You get local insight, not global assumptions.



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A True Partner, Not Just a Vendor

We co-create with you. From idea to execution:

Strategic input on summer messaging, creative and KPIs from an experienced team.

In-flight optimisation and reporting, at your fingertips.

A team that challenges assumptions and helps you think beyond tactical campaigns.

We become part of your team—challenging assumptions and delivering bold campaigns.



Pay For Outcomes That Matter

Think of us as your digital sales channel. Our commercial model aligns with your growth:

Outcome-based pricing.

Success metrics that map to business results.

Proven ability to scale acquisition across verticals.

No waste. No vanity metrics. Just results.



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THREE THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER

1

Launch a Demand Generation Campaign:

Focus on emotional storytelling, category leadership or brand salience. Use rich media, creator content, and high-impact formats. From a tactical standpoint, we recommend focusing on frequency over reach to increase memorability.

2

Run Creative and Audience:

Tests Use our tools to compare messages, visual styles, and audience segments. Learn what performs now to execute better in Q4.

3

Test Emerging Channels CTV:

Gaming. Shoppable video. These are rising fast and cheap today. Test them now before demand drives prices up.

YOUR QUICK SUMMER CHECKLIST



Campaign

Launch a Demand Generation Campaign, awareness, perception shift, category leadership.



Allocate

H2 budget to high-attention channels (CTV, Gaming, Native).



Launch

Launch a bold creative concept or message that you'd avoid in Q4.



Results

Measure results through uplift, brand search and direct traffic.



Insights

Document insights for smarter execution in the second half of the year.

FINAL WORD: SUMMER IS AN EDGE, IF YOU TAKE IT

Summer in the GCC is not downtime. It's **underestimated prime time**. A window of opportunity where attention is up, costs are down, and your audience is still here - watching, scrolling, spending. While others wait for the fourth quarter, Platformance helps you win in the third.

Start early. Learn fast. Grow first.
Platformance. Your partner for business growth.

SOURCES

Calibrate Commerce:
Internal data, 2024

TikTok 2024

YouGov
"Sizzling Summers", 2023



