

Fact Sheet

Details on Season Two

- Season Two will begin airing on September 22nd, 2017 across national and private television stations in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Most broadcasters will broadcast the program twice daily, with catch-up and VOD rights for a limited time following the airing by 6 days, with a new episode debuting each subsequent weekend.
- Each episode will contain three parts
 - In-studio segment
 - Live action films and dubbed materials from *Sesame Street*
 - Story time (animated)
- Over 50 hours were spent with a team of artists, designers, engineers, landscapes and digital experts to design the set.
- The cast and the crew spending 250 hours shooting and working on the studio segment for season two, while the post production crew spent 900 hours to edit and prepare the show for air.

Key Focus

- The show is designed to support children in becoming smarter, stronger and kinder, and to enhance school readiness and Arabic language acquisition.
- *Iftah Ya Simsim* is a pioneering Arabic edutaining TV series, providing educational content that supports the holistic - social, emotional, physical and cognitive - development of Arabic speaking children (ages 3-7 years) to ensure progressive and sustained growth and productivity at school, at home and within the community.
- Season two is designed to promote creativity and problem-solving abilities that encourage children to become independent, analytical thinkers and self-initiators,
- The new season explores early vocabulary and concepts around science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM).
- It also addresses important social and personal values like perseverance, cooperation, sharing, team work, initiative and caring.
- Another key aim of the show is to enhance children's Arabic language skills through storytelling, music, rhyme and humor.
- Everything proposed in the season two of *Iftah Ya Simsim* is subject to the Sesame Street brand attributes: playful, authentic, heartfelt, simple and funny.

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Objectives

- To focus the creative and educational elements on a tighter and more compact experience for the child, thereby increasing the potential for educational impact.
- To conform to the viewing patterns of today's pre-school child, who functions inside of a shorter narrative timeframe.

Episodes

Season two of *Iftah Ya Simsim* comprises 52 fifteen-minute episodes focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics, Arabic and Values. The episodes are aimed at:

- Guiding children to discover the science behind light, water, space and how to protect the environment and showing the importance of recycling – in a fun way.
- Teaching children about the importance of technology today and how to communicate through different platforms.
- Instructing children about engineering in an active and fun atmosphere, such as learning about two-dimensional geometric shapes, three-dimensional shapes and lines.
- Helping children learn mathematics in a creative way – such as counting from 10s to 100, addition and subtraction using objects and how to use measuring instruments and mathematical concepts in their daily lives.
- Introducing children to folk arts in the different Arab countries, encouraging logical thinking and exploring different musical elements and instruments.
- Encouraging children to feel and express feelings of self-worth and confidence – by overcoming hard tasks and recognizing skills.

Characters

The *Iftah Ya Simsim* characters include three original Muppets – No'Man, Shams and Melsoon – and three *Sesame Street* favourites – Gargour (Grover), Ka'aki (Cookie Monster) and Elmo.

- **Shams** is a quick-witted seven-year-old. When she has a question, she is relentless in finding the answer.
- **No'man** is a 6-year-old character. He is big, lovable and kind. He exudes a wide-eyed sense of innocence and a real feeling of 'wow' at the everyday wonders of the world.
- **Melsoon** is a parrot-like character. He knows things well beyond his years – whatever years they may be – and he frequently shares his knowledge to help out his friends.

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- **Elmo** is a three-and-a-half-year-old friendly red monster who loves playing in the neighborhood. He is imaginative, confident and loves life.
- **Gargour** is a funny and furry blue monster who believes that the world might just collapse upon itself...if it wasn't for him! With a solution for every problem, Gargour always appears with a heroic entrance and a classic line to "save the day!" – and he means it.
- **Ka'aki** is a voracious monster with an insatiable appetite. His primary obsession is cookies.
- **Rashid** and **Amal** are human characters on *Iftah Ya Simsim*. They interact with all the residents and love reading stories to children.

Celebrities featured on Season two:

Season Two will feature appearances by a number of celebrities including:

- HH Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed (Cabinet Member and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)
- HE Noura Al Kaabi (Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs of the United Arab Emirates)
- H.E. Dr. Ali Al Karni (Director General , Arab Bureau for Education in the Gulf States (ABEGS) – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)
- H.E. Dr. Ali Al Rayyes (Director of the GCC Joint Program Production Institutions - Kuwait)
- Mr. Homaid Al Shimmari (Deputy Group CEO and Chief Human Capital & Corporate Officer Mubadala)
- Mr. Sultan Al Amimi (Director of the Poetry Academy/Writer and researcher)
- Mr. Fayez Al Saeed (Singer / Composer)
- Mrs. Balqees Fathi (Singer)
- Mr. Omar Hussein (YouTube personality)
- Miss Amna Al Qubaisi (Student / Speed - Karting contestant)
- Miss Hamda Al Qubaisi (Student / Speed - Karting contestant)

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About Iftah Ya Simsim

- First season was launched in September 2015, *Iftah Ya Simsim* is a pioneering Arabic edutaining TV series based on the popular *Sesame Street*, and an extension of their work in the Gulf region.
- It consisted of 28 twenty-six-minute episodes which aired on 19 stations. The program and related educational materials reinforced healthy lifestyles and choices for children and parents and covered topics about nutrition, exercise, sleep, hygiene and well-being.
- Ramadan series 2017 was aired on 28 stations across GCC and MENA region. It consisted of 30 episodes with a run time of 12 minutes, aimed at educating children about financial empowerment in an engaging manner.
- Established online presence including website, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Conducted live events in book fairs, cultural events, science festivals and schools.
- Season two of *Iftah Ya Simsim*, which was filmed and produced at twofour54's Abu Dhabi studios earlier this year, is now in post-production and is set to air in September 2017.

About Bidaya Media

- Bidaya Media, a not for profit company, was established to produce edutainment content for children.
- Based in twofour54 at the Abu Dhabi Media Zone, Bidaya Media FZ LLC is a media company that produces edutainment content for children.
- Bidaya Media designs and delivers simple educational messages that are vital to the holistic growth of children into well-rounded and productive individuals and citizens.
- A key project in the Bidaya Media portfolio is the development of the *Iftah Ya Simsim* series in Abu Dhabi.