W DUBAI THE PALM
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

November 19, 2026

Agenda

10:00 **Registration & Exhibition**

10:30 **Opening Keynote**

The opening keynote will set the stage for TECHNOVATION Dubai by looking at how innovation, consumer understanding, responsible communication, and appropriate regulation can work together to accelerate progress toward a smoke-free future.

Gijs de Best, President SA, Indochina, CIS & MEA Region, PMI

10:50 **Designed for People: Creativity, Culture, and the Future of Innovation**

Bringing together perspectives from business, design, media, and culture, this panel will explore how design, creativity, and cultural understanding can help shape innovation that is relevant to people's lives. The discussion will examine how ideas become meaningful experiences that resonate with consumers and reflect local contexts and aspirations.

Christos Kiritsis, Vice President Smoke-Free Products Category SA, Indochina, CIS & MEA Region, PMI

Natasha Carella, Director, Dubai Design Week

Moderator: *Maisa Eid, Journalist*

11:30 **From Confusion to Clarity: Helping Adult Consumers Make Informed Choices**

Finding clear, credible information can be challenging for consumers navigating new products, evolving evidence, and conflicting messages. Bringing together perspectives from science, public health, and consumer advocacy, this discussion will explore what consumers want to know and how responsible communication can help them make informed choices.

Tomoko Iida, Senior Director Scientific Engagement SA, Indochina, CIS & MEA Region, PMI

Wassim Kari, Cofounder and CEO, Sohati

Dr. Mohammed Eltaweel, Consultant Psychiatrist & Substance Use Disorder Specialist, Medical Director Hedoa Psychiatric Hospital

Moderator: *Oleksii Kalynichenko, Director Communications SA, Indochina, CIS & MEA Region, PMI*

12:15 **Lunch & Exhibition**

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13:15 **Scaling Innovation for Growth and Progress**

Innovation is often discussed in terms of technology, but its real impact is measured by what changes for people and societies. Across emerging economies, innovation is reshaping industries, expanding access, and creating new opportunities for growth. With insights from business leaders and entrepreneurs from the region, this panel will explore how innovation can move from niche solutions to large-scale impact.

Richa Rustagi, Managing Director Lower Gulf, Iraq, and Kuwait, PMI
Wassim Bou Malham, Founding Partner and Chief Strategy Officer, Factory People
Moderator: *Maisa Eid, Journalist*

14:00 **The Framework for Progress: Access, Trust, and Accountability**

As innovation expands consumer choice, policymakers face a complex challenge: how to enable access to new products while maintaining market integrity. Drawing on perspectives from policy, enforcement, and public health, this discussion will explore how regulation can balance access, protection, and accountability. It will examine the role of standards, enforcement, consumer information, and youth safeguards in building trust, tackling illicit trade, and supporting responsible markets.

Guy Bentley, Director of Consumer Freedom, Reason Foundation
Stefano Betti, Deputy Director-General, Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade
Mirza M. Abeer, CEO, Association for Smoking Alternatives in Pakistan
Moderator: *Frederik Cyrus Roeder, Managing Director, Consumer Choice Center*

14:45 **Closing Remarks: From Innovation to Impact**

The closing session will bring together the key themes of the day, reflecting on what it takes for innovation to move beyond ideas and create meaningful impact. Drawing on perspectives from culture, communication, and society, the session will explore why trust, understanding, and responsible engagement are essential to turning innovation into progress that people can see, understand, and embrace.

Fred de Wilde, CEO PMI International

15:10 **Exhibition and Networking Reception**