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INSIDER

The Leading IT Solution Provider in Bahrain

amthal GROUP

FIRST DEVELOPER FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

Windows Server 2012 Certified
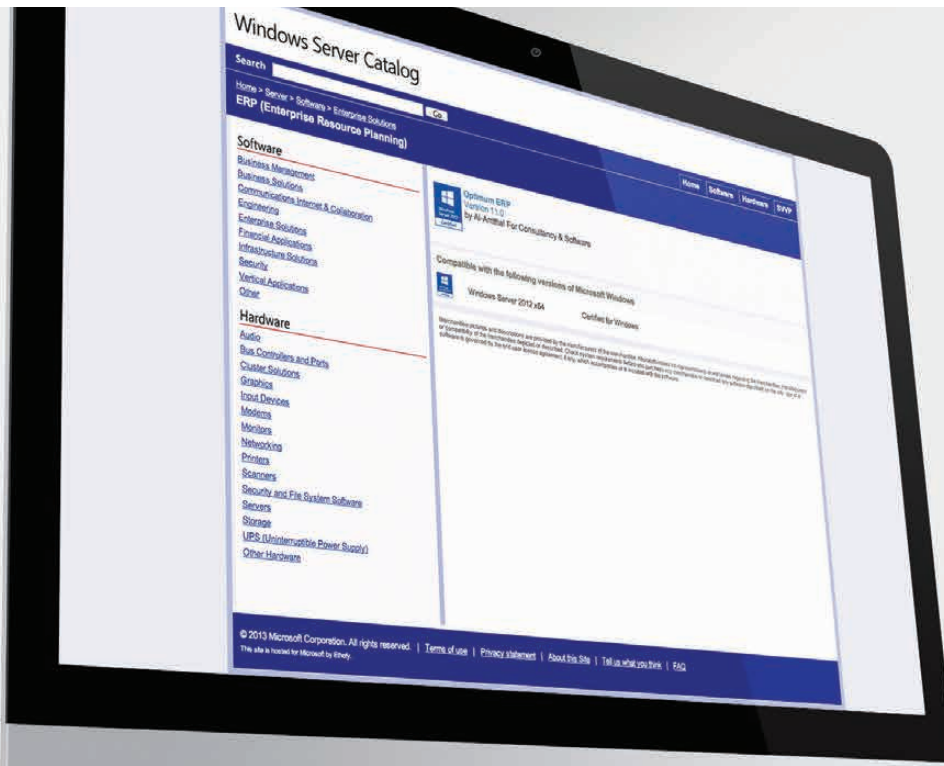
Optimum CERTIFIED FOR WINDOWS SERVER 2012

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Editor's Note

"Dear Readers,

It is with much joy that we have published this edition of our Amthal Group newsletter with the exciting news of OPTIMUM becoming certified for Windows Server 2012. According to the Windows Server Catalog listings at the time OPTIMUM ERP (Version 11.0) became listed, there are only 64 products worldwide under the same category of EAD (Enterprise Application Development) that have been certified for Windows Server 2012 and only 9 specifically for ERP.

This makes us very proud as OPTIMUM is also the first such certified product that has been developed in the Middle East. You will find more information about this excellent news in this newsletter so enjoy to gen up on the latest developments.

Beate Schoek-Awachi
Editor-in-Chief

ECNET: Providing the best Marketing Strategies, Creative Branding, efficient Public Relations, cutting-edge E-commerce Services

Optimum: a leading Developed Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system

NCLink: complements and supports the activity of the other two divisions in business process re-engineering (BPR) by mapping and selecting the best infrastructure required.

Department in Focus

Busy HR department looking after Al-Amthal's most valuable assets

The Amthal Group has a busy HR department that handles all aspects of employee affairs. Mrs. Beate (Zahra) Schoek-Awachi heads the department in the capacity of GM- HR & Marketing.

When asked about the strengths of the department, Mrs. Zahra said, "There is no need to reinvent the wheel when using the OPTIMUM HR management system. The system walks us through all steps and procedures of human resources management, starting from recruitment over payroll to appraisals."

Strict but sensitive

Ms. Zahra Awachi also told us about the more difficult aspect of the HR department area. *"HR management is not a simple task. We have to be strict with employees in implementing the rules and regulations of the company; and at the same time an HR manager must also be highly sensitive to their needs and grievances. An attentive ear, sympathetic heart and unbiased implementation of the company policies are the key to our success with our employees."*

Mrs. Zahra Awachi added, *"When becoming ISO 9001:2008 certified last year, we had put a lot of effort into our quality management system (QMS). For the HR department this meant that all policies and procedures had to be in place and accessible for our employees; so we incorporated those into our own software system OPTIMUM, which includes an excellent and user-friendly Self Service functionality. As ISO standards require continuous review and improvement of all QMS aspects, our system actually helps us tremendously in maintaining such high quality standards"*

"We are always busy; but we must find time for everything and everybody. That includes our regional offices in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman."

Certified for Windows Server 2012

Al-Amthal's Optimum ERP product becomes FIRST Middle Eastern developed product to receive latest Microsoft Server 2012 certification

Al-Amthal's new version of Optimum ERP product (Version 11.0) has received the Microsoft Certification for Windows Server 2012, making it the first Middle Eastern developed product of its kind to receive the latest Microsoft server certification. The Microsoft Server 2012 certification demonstrates that the OPTIMUM ERP (Version 11.0) solutions meets Microsoft's highest technical bar for Windows fundamentals and platform compatibility, which assures that Al-Amthal is keeping up-to-date with the latest technologies and current practices in the industry.

On this occasion Mr. Hani Awachi, CEO of the Amthal Group said: *"This is another milestone achievement for the Amthal Group demonstrating that we are keeping up-to-date with the latest technologies and current practices in the industry. It is also a great source of pride that we are yet again the first locally developed product from the Middle East of its kind to receive this latest Microsoft certification."*

"We are hugely proud of this latest achievement and the ongoing hard work and dedication of our team, whose experience and know-how continues to underpin our growth across the region and our ability to effectively service an expanding list of blue-chip companies across the GCC and broader Middle East region."

"The latest certification supports the evaluation of OPTIMUM from many professionals and ERP users that we have received, who consider OPTIMUM one of the best solutions in the market, not only locally, but also internationally."

-Hani Awachi, CEO

Interview with Head of ERP Development Section

Head of ERP Development Section, Mr.Vinod Nair

What is the significance of the Certified for Windows 2012 award?

The Certified for Windows Server 2012 certification is awarded to hardware and software solutions that meet Microsoft standards for compatibility and recommended practices with the Windows Server 2012 operating system. Certified applications have been tested by Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) using technical specifications and tools required by Microsoft.
In other words this certification means OPTIMUM ERP systems have proved its worth as a reliable system meeting the high standards set by Microsoft.

What technical changes have taken place in your existing software?

OPTIMUM Version 11 has been developed with Microsoft.net Framework 4, which helped us to enhance the system, starting from security to the look and layout of the System. We've added a lot of features to the new OPTIMUM version, such as cross-browser compatibility, full screen mode, swapping branches, notifications, and many more to each module.

In what way are your customers going to benefit from this certification?

As far as our customers are concerned, this is an assurance that their decision to opt for OPTIMUM has been endorsed by such a big name as Microsoft. This certification adds value to our credibility and acceptability among our existing and potential clients.

How long did it take to reach this level?

We have been Microsoft Gold Certified Partner since 2009 and have been following their standards for a long time, Microsoft has tested many modules of OPTIMUM before. In 2011 Optimum ERP became certified for Windows Server 2008 R2. Now, Microsoft has changed their testing standards for Windows Server 2012, thus OPTIMUM has been enhanced a lot with .net Framework 4.

How rigorous is the process to get this certification?

The process of qualifying server applications for Windows Server 2012 is similar to that for Windows Server 2008 R2. There are five Requirement Chapters for Logo certification, each chapter contains specific requirements that the application must meet.

Technical requirements include tests for the following:

- **Windows Installer best practices**
- **Setup and primary functionality tests**
- **Drivers and security**
- **Best practices**
- **Windows fundamentals**
- **Install and uninstall**
- **Security**
- **Reliability and high availability**
- **Hyper-V compatibility**

In order to be eligible for the Windows Server Application Certification Program Logo, the Microsoft Platform Ready Test Tool must be used to validate the Logo requirements. The test results will be generated by testing Server and Client components simultaneously and will be packaged using the MPR Tool into a single, passing package which can be uploaded to Microsoft for verification.

What is the next level, or what comes next?

We at Al-Amthal strive to be abreast of the emerging technology. Twelve years ago we started with Visual Basic. Thereafter, we shifted to whatever new technologies had evolved at the time. Now we are up-to-date in technology, concepts, international practices and accreditations. As a trusted software vendor, we are committed to being up-to-date at all times, in all respects.

Improved Customer Service

As part of its Quality Management System Al-Amthal has introduced improved measures of customer service enhancement via its new CRM system, which handles all customer requests and queries through a full automated ticketing system. The ticketing system allows our customers to log into a state-of-the-art customer support portal where customers raise a ticket regarding any concern they may have in connection with OPTIMUM, ECnet or NClink products and services.

The new CRM system has undergone significant changes and uplifts which have made the system even more user-friendly and productive. The system allows customers to register any inquiry, request or complaint online. An e-ticket number is automatically generated by the system and directly passed to the support coordinator, who acknowledges the receipt of each ticket immediately and passes it on to the account officer concerned.

From then on all correspondence is registered by the system and followed-up by the coordinator for quality purposes. The system also enables our customers to assign an importance level to their issue, to follow up on the status of each ticket they have raised and attach documents for clarification. The issues raised are segregated into two categories, i.e. support or customization that further assists in resolving the issue in a timely manner.
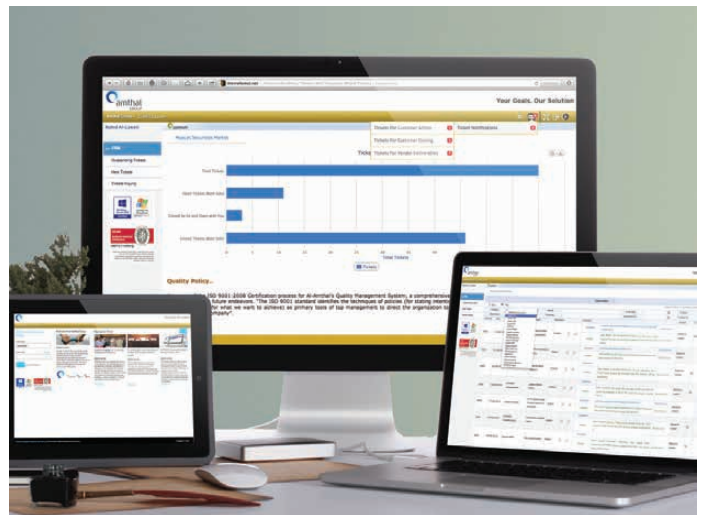
Any support follows a strict scheduling procedure for follow-up and task handling in order to keep our customers informed on any development or necessary adjournment. Managers and supervisors get daily reports on the status of tickets raised by customers. Thus, each issue receives its due attention and alerts of delays are immediately reported. The system will keep on reminding the staff concerned until the ticket issue is closed to the customers' satisfaction.

Al-Amthal gives paramount importance to customer satisfaction and the new CRM system facilitates us to implement that quality policy efficiently and effectively.

New Time & Attendance Software Release- my*time*

The Amthal Group has released its latest time and attendance management system, my**time**, part of the WOLKE suite that has already introduced its first module "my**account**", which is part of a business solution suite running on cloud technology.

my**time** allows data management at anytime from anywhere while being most user-friendly. It is a solution designed to manage employee's time in and time out according to their defined shifts. The system incorporates all practical functionalities needed such as:

- **Late-in monitoring**
- **Break monitoring (leaving during working hours)**
- **Early-out monitoring**
- **Absence monitoring**
- **Overtime calculation**

my**time** provides its users with its own state-of–the-art time attendance devices through which employees' attendance can be monitored using swipe cards of fingerprints. Managers can take actions for their staff for being late, leaving early, going on breaks, overtime or being absent.

Reports can be generated for any day, any period through which every single detail of the company's employee time and attendance may be traced.

save time
with my**time**
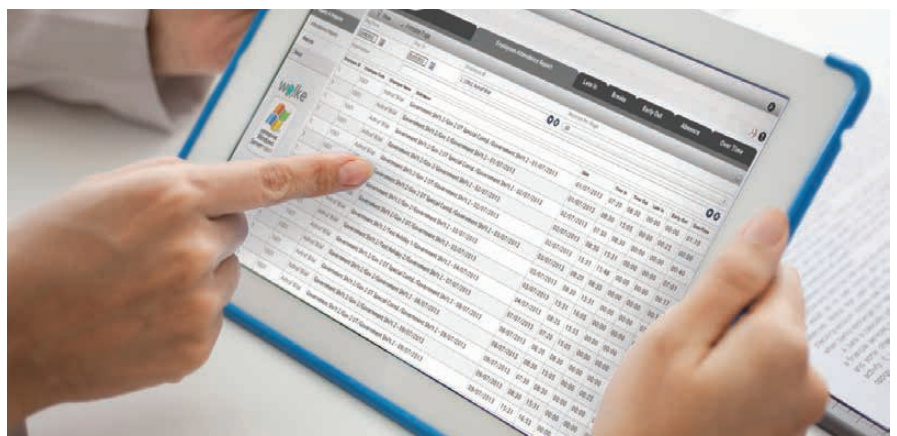
my**time** is available on two platforms: browser-based intranet/internet, or cloud computing. It has got bilingual capability: Arabic and English. Customers can log into the system with the language of their choice.

my**time** has a powerful central security control and multi-level access hierarchy. This makes the system secure and flexible at the same time.

Interview with Geoffrey Morris,
Managing Director of NCLink Cartwright W.L.L.

Could you tell us what was the reason for setting up NClink Cartwright W.L.L.?

NClink Cartwright W.L.L. or NCLC as it has now become known is a joint venture between the Amthal Group subsidiary NClink Co W.L.L. and Cartwright Associates Ltd through their CAMEC club.

NCLC is the umbrella under which we aim to introduce an innovative Business Development concept to provide the very best business management applications for prominent GCC companies. Through this it aims to help our clients broaden their markets, enhance their revenues and increase engagement with their customers.

How do NCLC partners benefit from the association?

The companies who are partners or associates of NCLC, immediately become part of a group that markets its solutions and services proactively.

How do NCLC clients benefit from the association?

Through its partnerships NCLC reaches out to prominent companies in the region, demonstrates the qualities of its

partner's solutions and gears these solutions to companies' specific needs through a perception study. This approach means that the NCLC team dynamically connects with its clients on a proactive basis rather that the old fashioned passive approach.

Amongst its flagship solutions are partners that provide:

- Location based management for vehicle tracking, asset tracking and employee protection.
- Analysis programmes to help banks financial institutions and commercial companies in identifying any business process areas which might need improvement.
- Predictive simulation and simulation modeling with special focus on military & security services, Airlines/Airports and Universities through its WITNESS programme.
- OPTIMUM bilingual ERP products for commercial and financial management of a wide spectrum of businesses.
- Risk management analysis, training for various skills and cyber security capability.

In other words, NCLC brings together the best of solutions providers and makes them available to progressive companies in the Middle East and North Africa.

What makes you different from other similar organizations?

We are different from other similar companies in the following respects:

- Responsive to clients real needs
- Price consciousness
- Dynamic marketing
- Experts with long experience of the region and our solutions
- Our perception study
- Constant search for new solutions to offer our clients

Can you explain how this Perception Study works?

At NCLC our aim is to provide to our clients those solutions which meet their specific needs. The perception study is designed to ensure that this objective is met.

Once a decision is reached by a client as to the benefits of NCLC solutions we will jointly carry out a short perception study to establish the best product structure and process. The perception study would cover amongst others:

- Identification and documentation of issues
- Background analysis of specific problem and needs
- Detailed discussion with staff including their feedback
- Costs/ Pricing
- Final recommendations
- Contact structure

Only after completing the study and agreeing on the recommendations with our clients would we proceed to offer the right solution, at the right price and in the right time frame.

> " *NCLC is the umbrella under which we aim to introduce an innovative Business Development concept* "

How experienced are you in the Middle East?

NClink Cartwright W.L.L. (NCLC) is a joint venture between the Amthal Group and Cartwright Associates Ltd.

Amthal Group, established in 2000, is one of the leading providers of ERP business management solutions. These solutions have been developed by its team of programmers with subject matter expertise especially with the Middle East markets in mind. It has regional offices in Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Cartwright Associations (CAMEC) was established in 2007 to develop financial service advisory support for overseas solutions providers and security services.

Both partners to the joint venture possess a wealth of experience in the Middle East market, and are aware of its unique challenges and appropriate solutions.

What about your own personal experience in the Middle East?

I am from the UK, and I have a depth of experience in the Middle East region that I have gained through senior management positions with major banks and companies such as Standard Chartered, Citibank, UMA, Al Ghaneim Kuwait, and outside the region with HSBC, Societe Generale, Buckland Development Ltd, Alpha Intelligence Management etc.

I am confident that this exposure to the business world will be my greatest asset in heading the operations of NCLC.

Optimum Projects

🇴🇲 CMA (Capital Market Authority)

From left to right: Mr. Ahmed Al-Qarshoubi, Senior Director for Financial Affairs and Mr. Amer Al-Lawati, Regional Office Manager for Al-Amhal Group

The **Capital Market Authority** (**CMA**) of the Sultanate of Oman has signed up for a full suite of OPTIMUM ERP solutions. The CMA is the regulatory, supervisory and organizing governmental institution responsible for overseeing the capital market and insurance sectors in the Sultanate.

The OPTIMUM modules that will support the CMA back office operations are General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Fixed Assets, Inventory, HRMS, Time Attendance and Utilities and Setup.

"Our product, the OPTIMUM Solutions, is capable of taking care of all financial, HR, and attendance affairs of the CMA due to its parameterization feature. We are sure that our valued customer will find our system worthy of their investment,"

Hani Awachi - CEO Amthal Group

🇶🇦 Musanada UGL

Mosanada UGL in the State of Qatar has signed up for OPTIMUM ERP solutions. Mosanada UGL is the only facilities management specialist in the Middle East with experience of handling large-scale, complex projects. Mosanada UGL is a joint venture between Aspire Katara Investments, Qatar Olympic Committee and UGL Services. The company provides integrated facilities management services in Qatar, from inception of build design through to disposal of the property.

From left to right Mr. Nixon Rebeiro, Mr. Mark Cooke Mr. Hani Awachi and Mr. Simon Whitaker

Mosanada UGL has opted for the following modules of OPTIMUM.

- HRMS
- Accounts Payable
- Business Intelligence Reporting
  (OPTIMUM Excel Add-on)
- Time and Attendance
- General Ledger

"Our products are highly flexible and adaptable to suit the requirement of any type of business. We are proud that reputed companies like Mosanada UGL has recognized the potentials of our system and chosen them. OPTIMUM ERP system, due to its various features and benefits, will definitely prove to be a worthy investment for all our customers," said Mr. Nixon Rebeiro, Branch Manager of Al-Amtal in Qatar.

GPS (Global Payment System)

From left to right: Ms. Sana Abdul Rauf, Mr. Syed Noman Masud, Mr. Abdul Basit Khonji, Mr. Rabab Sayed Adel

The Global Payment Services (GPS), a leading company specialized in outsourcing end-to-end services related to the payment card industry in the Middle East, has signed up for OPTIMUM General Ledger, Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable Modules from Al-Amthal.

"Our new customer, Global Payment Services offers comprehensive and integrated processing services to banks and financial Institutions in the Middle East. OPTIMUM GL, AP and AR modules will provide them staunch back office support by making their accounting process highly efficient and effective. All our products are parameterized and so they can be adapted to meet the challenges posed by any kind of business," said Mr. Hani Awachi, CEO of Al-Amthal, on the occasion.

RMoU

From left to right: Ricardo Bastianello, Amer Al-Lawati, Mohammed Shaban Al Zadjali, Zeyana Sultan Al-Toqui, Hilal Abdulrahman Al Rawahi

The implementation of OPTIMUM ERP solutions has been completed in The Riyadh Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Gulf Region, known as the Riyadh MoU, located in the Sultanate of Oman. The system suite implemented consists of General Ledger and Budgeting, HR & Payroll, Procurement & Purchases, as well as Vendor Management.

YummiYummi

From left to right: Ronald Villanueva Deldoc, Gerald Anton Trevor Fonseka, Amer Al Lawati, Ahmed Taher,

A professional team of implementers from Al-Amthal has completed the implementation of the full OPTIMUM ERP suite at Torque Trading & Control System (YummiYummi Catering & Hospitality), one of the largest catering companies in the Sultanate of Oman.

NCLINK PROJECTS: THE ONE AL HENDI REAL ESTATE

From left to right Mr. Fadhel Al Sammak, Mr. Ahmed Al Hendi

NClink has successfully closed a deal with the reputed firm, The One Al Hendi Real Estate and Contracting Company for myaccount accounting package on Cloud technology.

my**account**, the adapted version of the Microsoft certified OPTIMUM ERP solution, suitable for SMEs, which retains the power and benefits of the larger version, is able to operate with ease and convenience on Cloud just like a monthly hosting package, which provides a very economical option for smaller companies that do not want to compromise on quality.

Inside News

Al-Amthal Team beats Youth Soccer Team

In an exciting football match between the Amthal Group team and the "Youth Soccer Team", Al-Amthal beat their opponents with a superior 8 to 1. The Al-Amthal players were Ammar Hussain, Mohsin Badrani, Ahmed Dagher, Hussain Fuad, Jassim Makki, Ali Alaryash, Seyed Noman as well the the group's CEO, Hani Awachi.

Ramadan Ghabga Fun for Al-Amthal Staff

The Amthal staff gathered for their annual Ramadan Ghabga on Thursday the 25th July 2013 at the Rendezvous Restaurant in the Seef Mall. It was an evening of fun and entertainment with quizzes, goodies and plenty of leisure time to socialize. The Al-Amthal family once again affirmed their fraternity and camaraderie in the event, which was followed by delicious culinary delights.

## Facelift for The Coffee Room
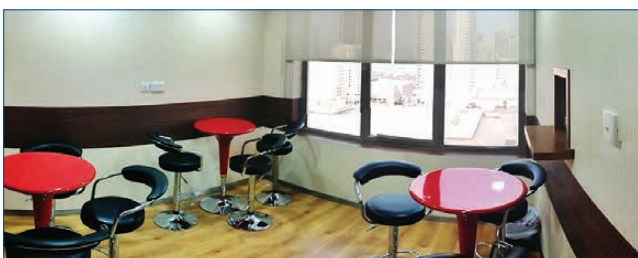
The Al-Amthal staff in Bahrain can now enjoy a better ambience in their office staff-room. The recent makeup of the frequently occupied little cafeteria has given it a cozy and more stylish look, and the Al-Amthal staff can now relax and take their break in a more comfortable atmosphere.

ECnet Supports Trainee's Goals
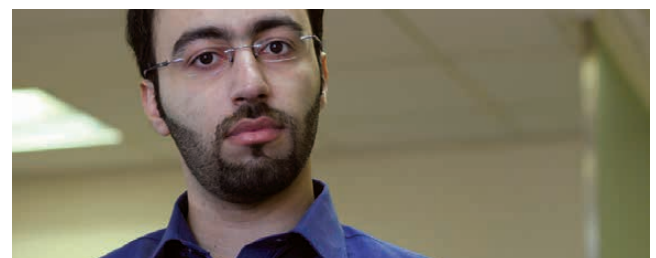
ECnet has provided on-job training to a student of the University of Bahrain as a web developer, working on real-life projects. Mr. Ahmad Mohammed worked with the ECnet Team for the summer months as part of his internship, which has left him better equipped to face to enter the challenging job market.

First ISO Surveillance Audit
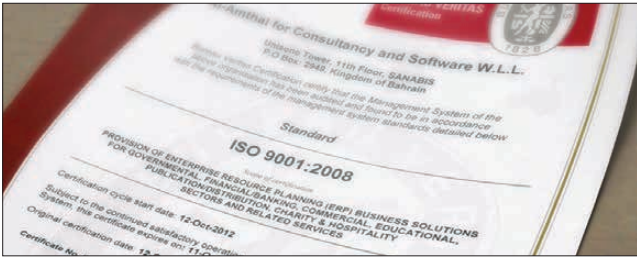
As part of the continuous validation for the ISO 9001:2008 certification, Bureau Veritas conducted the first obligatory ISO Surveillance Audit of Al-Amthal's Quality Management System on 5 August 2013.

During the audit, the team leaders convinced the auditors that all procedures and policies are being reviewed, monitored and measured for quality assurance in compliance with the set international standards for its quality management system.

New Arrivals

Two of the Amthal Group's employees were overjoyed with their special new arrivals. Ashraf Bilal, OPTIMUM Business Consultant, became a father for the second time, this time of a beautiful baby girl named Farah.

Sergio El Halabi, Art Director of ECnet, stepped into this adventurous territory for the first time with the birth of a gorgeous baby boy named Michelangelo.

Boss's Birthday

It was a usual busy day for Mr. Hani Awachi, CEO of the Amthal Group, but the staff didn't fail to spot its importance - his birthday. With a few strategic phone calls, a small party was arranged at the end of the day to celebrate the boss's birthday.

Mr. Hani was delighted to cut the lavishly decorated birthday cake and he thanked everybody for their best wishes and felicitations. It was a spontaneous but jovial party that demonstrated the fraternity and appreciation that exists in the Al-Amthal family.

GM's Birthday

For the GM- HR & Marketing, Mrs. BeateSchoek-Awachi, the birthday was not a surprise, but the celebration was. The staff arranged a surprise party for her to wish her many happy returns of the day.

As the custom goes Mrs. Beate cut the cake amid the cheers of the gathering. The event once again depicted the camaraderie and fraternity among the Al-Amthal family, giving them all some nice moments to cherish.

ECnet Website Now Crosses Platforms !!!

The ECnet website (www.ecnetonline.com) has got a facelift to go beyond the barriers of platform; now it works equally well with any browser of any PC or tablet. The cross-platform feature makes the website readily available to many more customers all around the world.

New Recruits

Bahrain Office

Ayesha Masood
New Implementation Coordinator in our Bahrain office. She holds an accounting qualification and is currently pursuing ACCA.

Qatar Office

Jawad Tirmizi
has joined as Implementation Officer in the Qatar office. He is a BSc degree holder in Commerce. His experience encompasses many reputed companies

Oman Office

Omair Al Shammakhi
has joined as the new Admin Messenger. He has got many courses to his credit on topics such as public relations, statistics, English, and Staff Affairs. He gained wide experience in similar positions in the private and governmental sector.