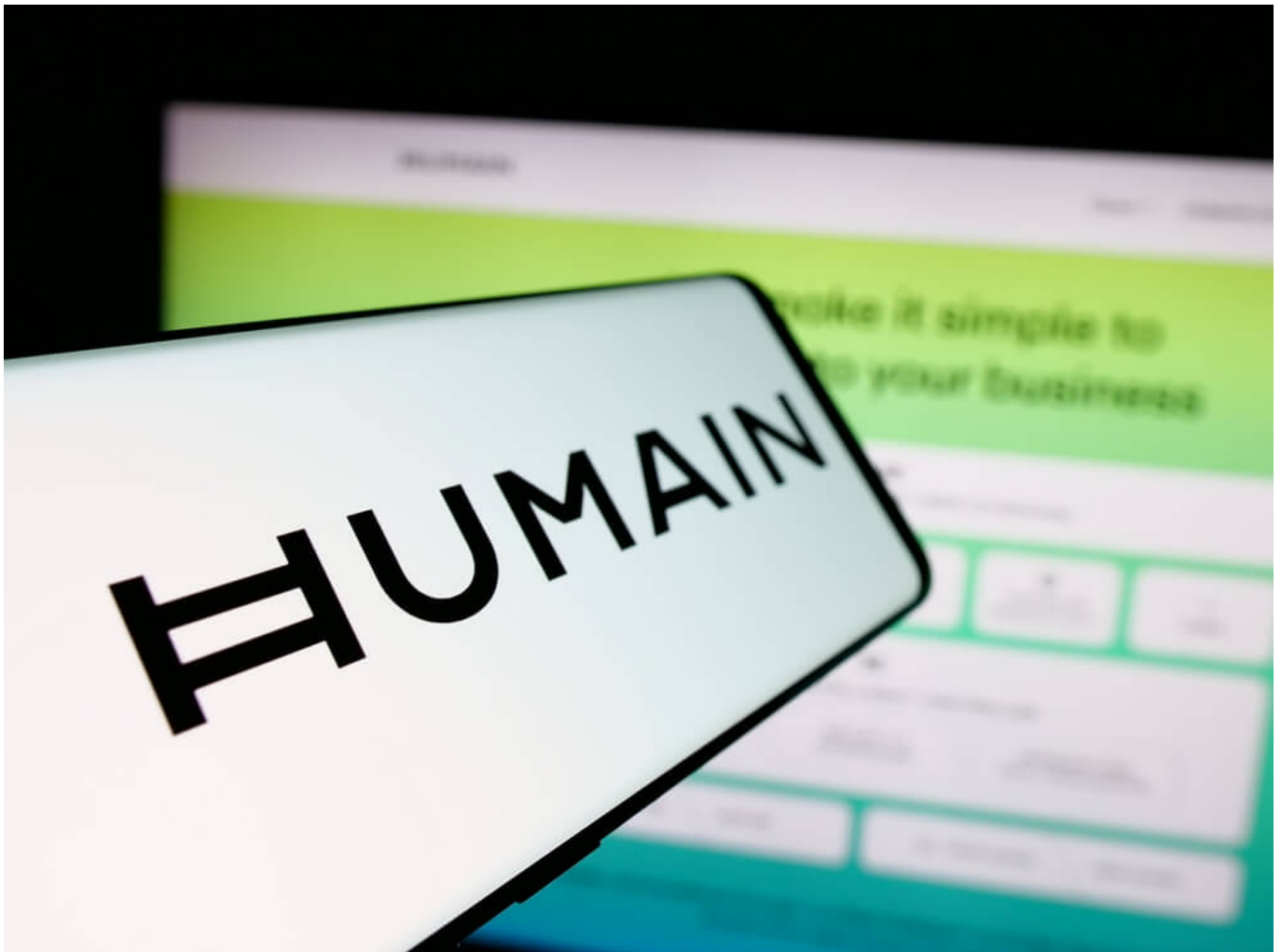




By: *Elise Quevedo*

AI with a human touch: How HUMAIN is empowering a new generation



Let's talk about how Saudi Arabia's HUMAIN initiative is redefining technology, leadership, and the future of innovation across the Middle East.

Six months ago, I wrote about **HUMAIN** (Saudi Arabia's initiative to position itself as a global leader in artificial intelligence). That piece, "The Kingdom's AI Gambit," explored what the initiative could mean for technology, the economy, and society.

Today, as I look back, HUMAIN has become a force of action, driving new partnerships, incredible leadership, and a powerful narrative that merges technology with human progress. I knew I was onto something when I chose to keep a close eye on this initiative.

A New Era of Leadership and Vision

Over the last half year, my biggest takeaway is that leadership is what sets HUMAIN apart. Under the guidance of Tareq Amin, HUMAIN's CEO, and its strong board of directors, Saudi Arabia has moved from strategy to execution with remarkable clarity.

Tareq's vision reflects what modern leadership in tech should look like by being adaptive, transparent, and understanding that collaboration is key.

He represents a new generation of leaders who view technology as a means to empower people. His participation at **FI19** (Future Investment Initiative), where he joined global leaders to discuss "Who is Leading the World in AI?", was another milestone, saying to the world that Saudi Arabia's place at the AI table had been earned and merited.

Partnerships That Shape the Future

Milestone announcements over the past few months have showed how quickly HUMAIN is

evolving into a whole new ecosystem beast.

HUMAIN and Replit formed a historic alliance to create a "Nation of AI Coders." This project will make coding accessible to everyone and foster the next generation of Saudi innovators by allowing students, entrepreneurs, and small enterprises to develop their own applications using natural language.

HUMAIN and AirTrunk, backed by Blackstone, have announced a partnership to develop state-of-the-art data centres across Saudi Arabia, starting with a USD \$3 billion campus. They will serve as the foundation of the Kingdom's digital infrastructure. All of which are critical in light of the recent AWS outage, which brought attention to the importance of strong data ecosystems.

HUMAIN and Qualcomm unveiled the HUMAIN Horizon Pro, powered by Qualcomm's Snapdragon X Elite, marking the deployment of the world's first fully optimised edge-to-cloud AI infrastructure. This 200 MW system empowers businesses and governments alike to harness AI both on-device and in the cloud.

HUMAIN and NVIDIA have expanded their collaboration to integrate advanced GPU technologies into HUMAIN's infrastructure, empowering faster model training and large-scale data processing that supports the Kingdom's AI ambitions.

HUMAIN and AWS have strengthened their current strategic relationship to enhance the scalability of cloud-based AI solutions and secure high-performance computing resources, ensuring greater resilience and accessibility across industries.

Together, these partnerships show that HUMAIN is operationalising AI, embedding intelligence into every layer of Saudi Arabia's future.

Resilience and Infrastructure. Lessons in Leadership

When AWS faced downtime a few weeks ago, the global ripple effects were immediate. Most of us who live in the digital world had a few "panic moments" when we could not access many websites.

In the digital age, infrastructure is as critical as innovation. HUMAIN's collaboration with AirTrunk couldn't have come at a better time.

Building data centres is now about sovereignty and security

And this is a perfect example of leadership in motion, anticipating challenges before they arise and investing in resilience rather than reacting to a crisis, which is what many enterprises do.

Building data centres is now about sovereignty and security. By developing world-class facilities within its borders, Saudi Arabia ensures its AI transformation is sustainable, self-reliant, and future-proof.

The Human Pulse of HUMAIN

What continues to make me curious about HUMAIN is that it never loses sight of the human element, that is what piqued my interest six months ago. I recently watched Tareq Amin's conversation with CNN's Becky Anderson.

He spoke about HUMAIN's "bold mission to enable Saudi Arabia's global leadership in AI and deliver real value creation." That phrase, "real value creation", captures the heart of this movement.

A new generation of Saudi women are being empowered by HUMAIN's initiatives

HUMAIN isn't chasing the hype many do; it's creating tangible progress. From education to entrepreneurship, it's building a culture where innovation thrives in classrooms, startups, and

communities alike.

In the tech sector of the Kingdom, women are also taking on new positions. A new generation of Saudi women are being empowered by HUMAIN's initiatives that emphasise inclusive innovation and STEM education to lead, create, and reimagine what leadership in AI looks like.

The World Is Watching

HUMAIN's growing influence is now shaping conversations far beyond the Middle East. Global media, investors, and policymakers are paying attention to how Saudi Arabia is turning vision into tangible outcomes.

Every partnership, every policy, every innovation feeds into a larger message that Saudi Arabia is setting trends.

As the Kingdom pioneers Arabic intelligence and full-stack AI innovation, it's clear that this story is about technology, transformation, leadership, and legacy.

The Next Six Months. What's Ahead?

So, what's next for HUMAIN? Based on what I've seen so far, the coming months will mark a new chapter of growth.

As HUMAIN builds on the success of its collaboration with Replit to increase AI awareness throughout colleges, schools, and entrepreneurial ecosystems around the region, education will continue to be at the centre of this transition.

The next generation of innovators who can create an AI-driven economy from inside will be nurtured by this emphasis on empowerment and skills.

The partnership with AirTrunk shows a long-term objective for digital sovereignty and independence

At the same time, global research collaborations are expected to gain momentum, bringing together private companies, universities, and government institutions to explore the boundaries of ethical and sustainable AI.

These alliances will strengthen knowledge sharing and also position Saudi Arabia as a global contributor to AI thought leadership and innovation.

Infrastructure will be an integral part of HUMAIN's growth. The partnership with AirTrunk shows a long-term objective for digital sovereignty and independence, one in which Saudi Arabia might become a significant provider of artificial intelligence-driven cloud solutions.

The continued rollout of robust, secure data centres will ensure that a resilient and scalable foundation matches Saudi Arabia's AI ambitions.

Technology and Leadership Go Hand in Hand

Six months into HUMAIN's journey, we can all agree on one thing: that technology alone does not transform a nation. Leadership does. It takes courage, clarity, and conviction to build the future. And that's exactly what Saudi Arabia is doing.



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From my perspective, the Kingdom is teaching the world an important lesson: that AI is not about machines learning to think but about people learning to lead. When innovation and leadership align with purpose, the result is progress that benefits everyone.

As HUMAIN continues to evolve, how far can this vision go? Can a single initiative transform global AI leadership and inspire other nations to follow suit?

My call to action to the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators is that the world needs your voice, your creativity, and your vision. The HUMAIN movement is a reminder that leadership begins with action.

Let's join forces to drive this transformation together.