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## Venturi Closes First Round of Fund II at \$150M

By **Jason Lasrado** Forbes Middle East Staff Sep 04, 2025, 16:57 PM

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In a year marked by global market volatility, Venturi has announced the first close of Fund II at \$150 million, highlighting the strong conviction of investors in consumer growth stories across the Middle East and Asia. For the firm, more than numbers, the milestone is more about a vote of confidence in the resilience of emerging markets.

"Despite heightened global volatility, investors continue to view these markets as structural and not cyclical opportunities," said **Nicholas Cator, Founder & Managing Partner of Venturi Partners** tells *Forbes Middle East*. "Rising disposable incomes, favorable demographics, and rapid digital adoption are providing insulation against near-term headwinds.

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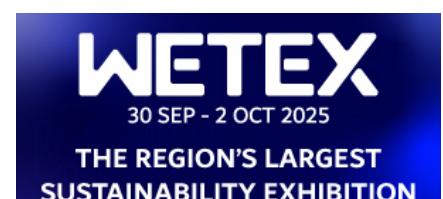
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The Middle East, too, reflects these resilient fundamentals."

The firm's current strategy is rooted in scaling purpose-driven consumer brands across India and Southeast Asia regions, which it believes will drive growth in the next decade. Cator adds that the close of Fund II also signals "trust in Venturi's ability to source, invest, and scale brands that matter to consumers."

### Joining the Bandwagon of Ethical Consumption

Believe is one of the seven companies currently in Venturi's portfolio. It is a Saudi-based halal beauty brand with global aspirations. The firm sees this as a frontrunner for the broader ethical consumer and halal movement sweeping across the Middle East.

"This movement is about much more than compliance," Cator explains. "It's about unlocking the next wave of growth by meeting the aspirations of a younger, values-conscious, and globally connected consumer base." With a global Muslim population of nearly two billion, the halal and ethical segment is increasingly shaping industry trends, both regionally and beyond.

### Cross-Pollinating Trends in the Booming Market

Fund II is focused directly on standout brands across India and Southeast Asia, while Venturi sees powerful cultural potential and consumer parallels with the Middle East. Digital-first experiences, along with health and wellness, are positioned as unifying themes across these markets.

"Clean-label foods, functional nutrition, and preventive healthcare are becoming lifestyle choices," says Cator. "At the same time, mobile-first adoption and social commerce are transforming how consumers discover and engage with brands. Add to this an inflationary environment, and the appetite for value-driven products is only getting stronger."

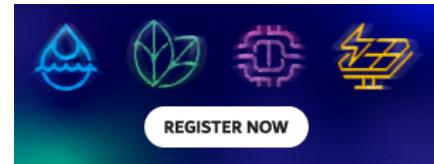
### Beyond Capital Support

Venturi Partners operates on a deeply hands-on model, and that's what sets it apart in the investment ecosystem. They believe that scaling successfully requires more than capital. "It's about building strong teams, embedding governance early, professionalizing systems, and staying deeply collaborative with founders", Cator added.

For instance, at Pickup Coffee, Venturi Partners helped institutionalize leadership structures and quarterly brand tracking tools. At Dali, it helped set up governance frameworks and reporting templates, giving investors and management clearer strategic visibility. With Believe, the team even relocated one of its members to Bangalore to work alongside the founders on financial planning and strategic decisions. "These practices create the balance between entrepreneurial drive and institutional discipline, which is what ultimately enables long-term sustainable growth," Cator reflects.

### What Lies Ahead

As Venturi Partners targets \$225 million by June 2026, the firm is also watching the evolution of cross-border capital flows between Asia and the Middle East with deep interest. The UAE-India corridor, powered by the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), is already



among the world's most dynamic. In 2024, India accounted for 13.5% of the UAE's non-oil exports, with bilateral non-oil trade reaching \$65 billion and on track to touch \$100 billion annually by 2030.

"This is not just about trade; we're going to see more cross-border private investments as well. With Fund II, we can only invest in companies based in India and Southeast Asia, but several of our brands are already looking at GCC expansion, whether by building local distribution or entering into joint ventures with regional partners." Cator explains.

For Venturi, the \$150 million first close is a milestone, but also a springboard. The firm is betting on the certainty of rising consumer aspirations across Asia and the Middle East, with capital and conviction flowing in their direction.



By **Jason Lasrado** Forbes Middle East Staff

I along with my team make the rankings and lists at Forbes Middle East, we collect and collate data, value and rank individuals. I have been making lists at Forbes Middle East for the past 5 years, prior to which I worked with investment banks, I have an MBA and I'm Chartered Management Accountant charter holder

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