

**BE WITH THE BEST  
BE WITH AURION  
AND OPEN THE DOOR  
TO SUCCESS.**



**“We design the ideal Company  
Package for your business in UAE”**

*Syam P. Prabhu, BA (Law), LLB, LL.M  
Founder & Managing Director, AURION*

**OUR PORTFOLIO**



**INCORPORATION /  
RENEWAL /  
LIQUIDATION**



**PRO SERVICES  
IN FREE ZONES  
& MAINLAND**



**ISO  
STANDARDS  
CONSULTING**



**TAX RESIDENCY  
CERTIFICATE /  
VAT ASSISTANCE**



**TRADEMARK  
REGISTRATION**



**KNOWLEDGE  
MANAGEMENT**

Associate  
Member



Quality  
Certification



**DUBAI:**

Office # 213 & 214, Bldg 6 EA,  
Dubai Airport Freezone,  
Tel.: +971 4250 4150

**SHARJAH:**

Office 2 & 3, Z Bldg,  
(Formerly HSBC Bank office),  
SAIF Zone, Tel.: +971 655 79726

**Email:** [contact@aurionuae.com](mailto:contact@aurionuae.com)



**“We are creating opportunities for innovators and creators”**

**Dr Khalid Omar Al Midfa, Chairman, Sharjah Media City – Shams**

**Shams has launched a business centre earlier this year. How does it add value to your existing service offering and how does Shams empower both aspiring and established entrepreneurs with its services and support?**

Shams marked its fifth anniversary this year with the inauguration of a new, state-of-the-art business centre that places cutting-edge technologies and facilities at member companies’ disposal. This is in line with our commitment to supporting business and encouraging creativity. The centre consists of three buildings, housing a physical incubator for entrepreneurship, innovation and smart projects. Our mandate consists of paving the way for game-changing ideas and creating opportunities for innovators and creators, allowing them to hone their media skills and transform their visions into concrete, viable media projects with a meaningful message. We are also committed to channelling these ideas and embedding them into a sophisticated economic system.

**You have earlier stated that Shams aims to become the regional centre of media technology. How do you plan to achieve this?**

One of Shams’ most important directions is to present its vision of a media sector based on innovation and creativity, which is in line with the position of the Emirate of Sharjah as a global centre for culture and civilisation. It strives to do this by qualifying human cadres that support the innovation system and establish new ways of working that can propel the media scene to greater heights. To train and nurture media talent, Shams holds regular workshops aimed at refining the skills of media professionals and entrepreneurs in the sector. We believe in creative ideas and we have the capacity and enthusiasm to turn these into viable projects.

Shams creates talent and entrepreneurs by providing opportunities for their ideas to take flight. Every pioneering project starts with an idea, and we take these concepts and shape them into tangible initiatives that can set new standards in the media sector. Our future is bright and I see Shams becoming established as a leader in the local and regional media sector within the next few years.

**“Incorporating a business in an established free zone has several advantages”**

**Syam P. Prabhu, Founder and Managing Director, Aurion**



**What challenges do entrepreneurs usually face when setting up a company? How can they avoid such pitfalls?**

As there are more than 40 free trade zones in the UAE offering various packages for business incorporation, it becomes challenging for an investor to choose the right one for their business.

Entrepreneurs often get lured by cheap free zone company formation packages. But such packages may have lot of limitations and hidden costs that may come up after the company starts operating.

Incorporating a business in an established free zone has several advantages such as value-added tax exemption, ability to take a physical office premise, availability of warehouses, and easy bank compliance processes.

Furthermore, it becomes quite overwhelming for foreign investors to get an understanding of all the UAE business laws

relevant to their business activity. Aurion educates investors with up-to-date knowledge about the necessary rules related to their business operations in the UAE.

It is also challenging for a new business to open bank accounts due to compliance policies. In order to support entrepreneurs in opening their bank accounts, we help them build their profiles projecting their business experiences and source of funds.

**What initiatives has Aurion taken to contribute to the UAE’s thriving start-up ecosystem?**

Aurion strives to educate clients on the latest company laws and also assists them in administrative work. The team of expert business consultants at Aurion organises regular business workshops for clients.

As part of our 15th anniversary celebrations, we conducted Consultants Conclave 2022 and discussed ways of improving ease of doing business in the free trade zones.

**“We are always ready to give 360-degree support to our clients”**

**Rupa Jha, CEO and Founder, Black Swan**

**What are the key jurisdictions where you can help businesses set up operations?**

Black Swan helps entrepreneurs set up their businesses in Dubai, Oman, Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries.

We are in the market since 2016 and until now we have incorporated more than 1,000 companies.

We are a registered agent with more than 20 free zones in the UAE such as IFZA, Shams, Meydan, Rakez, DMCC, Dafza, Kezad, Jafza, Umm Al Quwain Free Zone, Saif, and Hamriyah Free Zone.



**Tell us a bit about Black Swan. How diverse is your service portfolio? Are there any expansion plans for the firm?**

Our vision is to help businesses enter dynamic and promising markets easily and chart the road to success for international brands and companies. The GCC region is growing fast, providing amazing opportuni-

ties to global businesses with its world-class lifestyle and infrastructures.

We want to help entrepreneurs relocate to Dubai and launch their businesses with ease.

Black Swan has a competent team of business consulting professionals who are always ready to give 360-degree support to their clients — from consultation to incorporation, visas and bank account opening. We also support our clients in bringing their families, recruiting employees and choosing an office. We offer all these services under one roof. ▶



**Be conservative  
with financial  
projections of  
your business.”**

**Varoon Sinha**  
Smart Zone



**Mohammad  
Sheikh Azharuddin**  
Black Swan Business  
Setup Services



**Varoon Sinha**  
Smart Zone

often frustrating business plan.

“Start with knowing your industry, competitors, and customers. Define your mission and vision, purpose, problem, solution, and benefits. Describe your business model, sales and marketing strategy, and management team. Be conservative with financial projections and realistic with expenses, time and resources. Lastly, keep it presentable and well-documented,” he says.

This is all highly positive, but planning for the worst is also something to consider from the business plan stage.

“Planning your exit strategy is as important as running your company — because it’s the end goal. A robust exit strategy helps entrepreneurs maximise personal profit or minimise losses. Regardless of the exit type, it’s always advisable to follow these three tips: Get a business valuation, consider your options, and plan for the best and worst-case scenarios,” Sinha adds.

With a firm business plan in place, entrepreneurs can then arrange the company’s registration.

“Like anywhere else, potential business owners have to go through the basics – selecting the business activity, jurisdiction, obtaining licensing, company registration, and obtaining approvals,” says Harisankar S., Group Business Head, Capital International Group.

“Some aspects to keep in mind when setting up a business in the UAE are that the location for setting up a business has to be chosen wisely. For example, free zones are beneficial in terms of tax and customs duty exemptions, but the licence has to be renewed annually. Choosing the right corporate PRO agent is important as the paperwork involved in company formation can be slightly overwhelming, especially for new entrepreneurs.”

Although there can be a lot to think about, the fact remains that it is an exciting time to set up business in the UAE right now, particularly since the launch of several new visas recently.

**NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO START A BUSINESS**

“With ongoing efforts to attract high-quality talent and bring ▶

**KNOW THE LAWS**

**B**efore launching any business, you must be aware of various business laws, such as VAT and corporate tax.



**Steven Charles  
Wilson**, Business  
Consultant, Axiom  
Mark, says, “Before  
launching operations in  
the UAE, it is imperative  
for entrepreneurs to

be aware of the advantages of each jurisdiction, namely mainland, free zone and offshore, considering their scope of business, and its impact on VAT regulations and proposed corporate tax which will be implemented in 2023.”

Indeed, corporate tax rates are something new for business owners to consider and are dependent on whether the business is in the mainland or a free zone.



**Neha Thomas**, Head  
of Marketing, Creative  
Zone, explains, “The  
tax rates are fixed at 9  
per cent for businesses  
operating on the  
mainland generating a

taxable income above Dh375,000. There are certain exemptions to corporate tax payment for free zone entities, provided they continue to comply with all regulatory requirements within the respective jurisdiction and do not carry out business with the mainland.”



There are certainly  
many laws to be  
aware of, depending  
on the framework of  
a company. **Syam P  
Prabhu**, Founder and  
Managing Director,

Aurion, says that along with corporate tax, there is VAT legislation in the UAE, which states that a 5 per cent value added tax shall be imposed on every taxable supply and deemed supply made by the taxable person. In addition, there are laws such as free zone regulations, with each free zone having its own rules and regulations developed within the general framework of federal laws of the land. There could also be Economic Substance Regulations (ESR).

Prabhu says, “The companies within the scope of the ESR regulations must submit the notification and ESR report to the regulatory authority. ESR applies to all licensees and exempted licensees doing any of the ‘related activities’ mentioned in the law.”

This is not an exhaustive list, as there are also labour, customs and other laws to consider. For precise details, it is important to discuss with a business consultant.

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# A 5-point checklist for starting your business in UAE free zones

Tips for investors to successfully open and operate a company in the UAE

**By Syam P Prabhu**  
Special to GN Focus



## SELECT THE BUSINESS ACTIVITY AND SOURCE THIRD-PARTY APPROVALS

There are more than 3,000 business activities available in the free zones and the mainland. Investors often get confused with the overwhelming number of business activities to choose from.

Some of the activities require permission from different authorities prior to incorporation. A company is legally permitted to conduct the business activities mentioned in the trade licence. Hence, choosing the right business activity with necessary third-party approvals is a very crucial step in running a company in the UAE.

## SELECT THE RIGHT FREE TRADE ZONE

The selection of a free zone is the next important aspect when it comes to incorporation of a company in the UAE. There is a host of premium and budget-friendly free zones offering various competitive company incorporation packages in the country.

Entrepreneurs must make wise decisions based on their budget and requirements when it comes to selecting the right free zones for launching their company. Investors often get carried away by promotional activities and select a free zone that offers them the cheapest package. However, it is pertinent to note that the cheapest is not always the best, and in order to run a full fledged business, the investor may have to incur more expenses due to the limitations of low-cost company incorporation packages.

## GET A UAE RESIDENCE VISA

Investors should be ready to take the UAE residence visa as it's needed for all types of transactions within the country; such as for opening a bank account. Having a residence visa in the UAE is a mandatory requirement for business owners to legally stay in the UAE and conduct business.

There are various types of visa options available for business owners, such as 10-year Golden Visa, 5-year Green Visa and the normal 3-year residence visa.

For business owners, Golden Visa with a 10-

year validity is a great option, allowing investors to focus more on the growth of their businesses than other ancillary issues.

## UNDERSTAND UAE LAWS

Entrepreneurs must try to understand various UAE laws relating to business activity including value added tax law, ultimate beneficiary ownership (UBO) declaration, economic substance regulation, and the newly announced corporate tax.

Investors must learn the free zone regulations that govern the company operations as well as the general framework of federal laws depending on the nature of the business.

Business owners must also be aware of the UAE labour laws that stipulates the rights, duties, contracts, and remedies of employees and employers. The basic knowledge of common customs laws of GCC as well as the customs policies of the emirate in which the company is established are highly beneficial for business owners.

## OPT FOR THE GUIDANCE OF BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

Business consultants have up-to-date knowledge about the latest free zone regulations, company incorporation packages, and other business laws governing the company incorporation and smooth functioning of the company's administration.

Business owners need to keep in mind a host of things before launching a new company in a free trade zone in the UAE. That's why it's critical to approach an experienced consulting company to get the right guidance before launching a business.

— The writer is Founder and Managing Director, Aurion

**A company is legally permitted to conduct the business activities mentioned in the trade licence."**



# Start up your dream venture

This ready reckoner is your guide to launching a business in the UAE with profiles of top business set-up consultants

## ALWAYS IMPROVING

### Key free zones represented

- Dubai Silicon Oasis, Duke, Meydan, DMCC, DWTC, DIFC, SRTIP, Shams, Fujairah Creative City, DAFZA, Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City, Rakez, JAFZA

### Number of licences issued in 2022

- 300

### Competitive packages and offers for start-ups

- The company offers comprehensive support which includes licence, administrative and legal registrations, year-round legal follow-up, resident visa for the investor and their employees and family, medical examination, fingerprinting, Emirates ID, opening of professional and personal bank accounts, health insurance and retirement plan at the best rates with packages negotiated directly with various administrations and institutions in the UAE.

### Top 5 success factors

- Communication
- Its team is always available for its customers
- Legal, financial, business expertise
- Employees are also seasoned entrepreneurs
- Clients are guaranteed to get answers for all their queries

### Contact details

- Creer-societe-dubai.fr; Youtube.com/c/GaNuiParkVivreaDubai; 058 594 5978



### Key free zones represented

- Aurion is the registered agent of 16 free trade zones: Dubai Airport Free Zone, Dubai CommerCity, IFZA, Sharjah Airport International Free Zone, Meydan Free Zone, Dubai Multi Commodities Center (DMCC), Dubai Technology & Entrepreneur Center (DTEC), RAKEZ, RAKICC, Hamriyah Free Zone, Sharjah Media City - Shams, Sharjah Publishing City, Kezad, Ajman Free Zone, Ajman Media City, Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone, and more.

### Competitive packages and offers for start-ups

Avail professional business set-up consulting in the UAE at the lowest cost from the experts in the sector. As part of its 15th Anniversary, investors can avail a host of business incentives such as:

- Dedicated PRO service agent for all business support requirements in the UAE
- 50% off on service fees for PRO services and allied business support services
- Combo offer package includes company set-up, ISO certification/ trademark registration. The combo offer helps global investors easily establish a company and streamline business operations to achieve better profits.

### Top 5 success factors

Aurion goes by the motto of Trust, Excellence, and Delivery

- Trust among clients
- Excellence in business advisory
- Delivering the services promptly
- Data privacy and cybersecurity
- Transparency in business

### Contact details

- Aurionuae.com, 04 250 4150



## AXIOM MARK

### Key free zones represented

- The company works closely with all free zones in the UAE including Ajman Free Zone Authority (AFZA), Dubai Airport Free Zone Authority (DAFZA), DMCC, Dubai Silicon Oasis (DSO), Hamriyah Free Zone, IFZA, Dubai South Free Zone (DWC), Jebel Ali Free Zone (JAFZA), Meydan Free Zone, RAKEZ, Sharjah Airport International Free Zone (SAIF), Sharjah Media City (SHAMS), Umm Al Quwain Free Trade Zone and more. Depending on the client's requirement, it offers the right choice of free zone.

### Number of licences issued in 2022

- It has successfully established over 1,000 entities in the UAE.

### Competitive packages and offers for start-ups

- Dubai licence package without visa: Dh9,999; package includes: 100% owned licence, one year lease agreement, eligibility to upgrade to visas, and one-year use of flexi-desk.
- Dubai licence package with visa: Dh14,499; package includes: 100% owned instant licence, local agent fees, immigration card and investor visa including medical and ID.
- Offshore licence package: Dh5,500

### Top 5 success factors

- Strategic focus
- Team of professionals
- Flawless operations
- Unique marketing methods
- Effective financial reporting

### Contact details

- Axiom-mark.com; 04 3705787; 056 2189542

## BLACK SWAN

### Key free zones represented

- IFZA, SHAMS, DMCC, DAFZA, JAFZA, DIC, RAK, DWC

### Number of licences issued in 2022

- 175

### Top 5 success factors

- Fast adaptability to change
- Team first attitude

**CREATIVE ZONE**

# Get 360-degree support to launch your business in the UAE

**C**reative Zone is Dubai's largest and best business advisory set-up firm, helping start-up owners, entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) grow and develop their business in the UAE. Since its establishment in 2010, Creative Zone has been serving as a one-stop-shop for over 50,000 entrepreneurs, offering flexible payment plans of business solutions — from planning, business registration, banking support, legal, tax, and accounting advice, to co-working office space solutions, and PRO services.

Over the years, Creative Zone has been continuously perfecting their operations by improving, optimising, and adding the most prominent companies as its strategic partners to contribute to shaping the UAE as the top location for company set-up.



Inauguration of Creative Zone's new office at Downtown Dubai

Apart from business solutions, Creative Zone also offers personal and concierge services for people seeking employment or relocation in the UAE. Backed up by more than 200 professionals, Creative Zone will ease your journey to the UAE by providing visa and pass-

port-related services, assistance in acquiring Emirates ID and a medical test, document clearing, tax certificates, and other value-added services.

Creative Zone aims to bring in economically contributing companies to the UAE and provide

360-degree support on nurturing, mentoring, funding, and guiding these SMEs to fix their roots to the ground.

The vast number of positive reviews and testimonials that Creative Zone have been getting for the last 12 years has helped them expand their business from its home base in Dubai to the wider GCC, covering Qatar and Saudi Arabia, strengthening its position as one of the Middle East's most sought-after business consultancy firms.

With extra efforts to build a conducive business environment, Creative Zone continues to integrate the most up-to-date business strategies and solutions that can contribute to the UAE's business landscape, streamlined with the government's efforts to position the region as the most dynamic business hub in the future.

**AURION**

# Providing services for 16 major free zones in the UAE

**A**urion is a renowned name in the UAE for business consulting and advisory services. The award-winning company is also the registered agent and corporate service provider of 16 major free trade zones. Guided by Syam P Prabhu, a postgraduate in law, team Aurion educates global investors with the latest company laws so that they can operate their company successfully in the UAE.

The company has been serving global investors for the past 15 years in the field of incorporation of companies from its offices located at the Dubai International Airport Free Zone and Sharjah Airport International Free Zone. It offers tailor-made solutions considering each investor's precise business requirements and budget.

The highly qualified legal and tax experts at Aurion gives investors the confidence to set up their companies in the region.

Each client is assigned with a dedicated PRO agent to provide the required corporate service support, visa assistance, and assistance for the opening of a bank account in the UAE.



Syam P Prabhu,  
Founder and  
Managing  
Director, Aurion

The work process at Aurion is certified by the world-class certifying body QS Zurich, Switzerland. As part of its 15th anniversary cele-

brations, Aurion has announced a 50 per cent discount on its professional service fees for all incorporations until October 31, 2022.

Aurion provides unmatched business support solutions to global investors with a diverse portfolio of services ranging from ISO standards certification consulting, trademark registration, knowledge management, VAT registration, and tax residence certificate. The company's services are focused on enhancing business productivity, improving the quality of business operations, and reducing the operating cost for entrepreneurs.

Aurion strives to maintain the top rank among business set-up consultants by adopting the latest technologies. The investors are made aware of the latest legislation and laws touching their business sectors. On the occasion of completing 15 years in the field of company incorporation in the UAE, the company hosted a Consultant Conclave-2022 conference, where a team of consultants discussed ways of improving the ease of doing business in the free trade zones in the UAE.