



The billboard is three metres deep and contains 11,500 gallons of water | Photo source [Havas Middle East/Adidas](#)

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ADIDAS HAS CREATED A BILLBOARD FOR WOMEN TO SWIM IN

 ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Adidas' new ad campaign encourages women in the UAE to swim with a unique billboard

Spotted: Adidas wants to encourage more women in the Middle East to swim. Despite the preponderance of lovely beaches, a recent survey found that only 12 per cent of women in the UAE are comfortable wearing a swimsuit, and 59 per cent of women aged 18-42 felt that the media creates an unattainable body image of female swimmers. So, when Adidas launched its inclusive swimwear collection, they decided to create a campaign to encourage the acceptance of difference.

Adidas worked on the campaign with ad agency Havas Middle East. It includes a specially-commissioned film, *Beyond the Surface*, which was [described](#) by Joao Medeiros, executive creative director at Havas Middle East as “a celebration of every woman, both from the region and globally... from every walk of life.” In addition, the agency has created a “liquid billboard” at one of Dubai’s most popular public beaches.

The aim of the billboard was to draw attention to Adidas’ commitment to make sport as inclusive as possible. The billboard is three metres deep and contains 11,500 gallons of water, which women are invited to dive into. Inside is a camera which streamed footage from the pool live to a digital display above the Dubai Mall Ice Rink, right next to the Adidas flagship store – amplifying the action to a wider audience.

Giovanna Altomare, marketing operations manager at Adidas explained that the company, “loved the creative idea because our whole point was to inspire the women in Dubai (and hopefully all around the world) to take a leap of faith and embrace the water.” Fabio Silveira, general manager at Havas

Middle East added that the campaign worked very well due to the, “tension between a billboard, which is by definition a place for everyone to look at it, and the women who swam, who said they felt fully comfortable – like they were alone while being watched by the world.”

Adidas’ Watch Us Move initiative is part of a broader move towards inclusivity in sport, and in society at large. There is growing awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusivity in all business sectors. Along with this is a growing number of innovations to help organisations. These include a new [platform for measuring](#) workplace diversity and inclusion, and a deodorant with an [inclusive package design](#).

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Takeaway:

The campaign is part of Adidas’ roadmap, ‘Watch Us Move,’ which aims to break sport taboos by developing revolutionary new products and services. For example, when Adidas found out that huge numbers of teenage girls were giving up on sport because of fear of period leakage, they created leak-proof performance tights. It is also a demonstration of the important of understanding the cultural context of the market. Adidas was not only able to identify a major barrier to entry for women swimmers in the UAE, but to address this in a culturally sensitive way to create a compelling message.