



**Nabi Saleh,  
Executive Chairman,  
Gloria Jean's Coffees**

**<http://www.gloriajeans.com/>**

A decade ago Gloria Jean's Coffee was a little-known brand, but now it has spread around the world with 46 franchise stores in five Middle Eastern countries: the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Jordan, Qatar and Bahrain, where they have one store.

The company also has a regional supply hub in Jebel Ali (UAE) to support ongoing store growth in the region. Gloria Jean's expansion has been spearheaded by Executive Chairman, Nabi Saleh. Nabi was born in Iran and brings an understanding of Islamic Middle Eastern society.

**Nabi Saleh insists: 'You must – and this is mandatory – bring your clients to Australia to see your country and your operation. It is a key to building trust.'**

'It is also mandatory for every company to have a clear mission and values statement.

'Your client will want to see if there are commonalities in values and identity to form a long-term partnership. This should happen before going to the brand, because the brand is only another version of something that has been around a long time.

'Doing business in Bahrain is the same as elsewhere in the Middle East. It's about partnering and you want to build it over a period of time.

'It's a journey. There is a season of sowing, a season of dormancy and a season of harvesting.

'That's life and you have to go through the season of dormancy.

'You must research the country and your product as to how it will fit in. Do a thorough due diligence, in a realistic not an optimistic way. Don't just hope.

'You must have an ear to hear. Listen to what they are telling you. Just because it worked in Australia don't assume it will work there.

'Australians are not researching well enough before they enter the culture. Bahrain and the rest of the Middle East want you to understand their mindset and their culture. Research is vital.

'We have partnered very strongly with Austrade. It is now very much a commercially-focused body and it is very effective. It is important to remember that every country has their version of Austrade, so people should make sure they use their services.

'Using agents and brokers hasn't been of great help. They usually have a handful of companies they have relations with and they push the business to them, come what may.

'You should try to use local journals and magazines to get publicity about what you are trying to achieve.'