

# CCIFQ INTERVIEWS

## Questions to an entrepreneur in Qatar



## MAXIME ARDILOUZE

*SKYMAKERS - Qatar*

**Hello Maxime, please describe your mission to Qatar:**

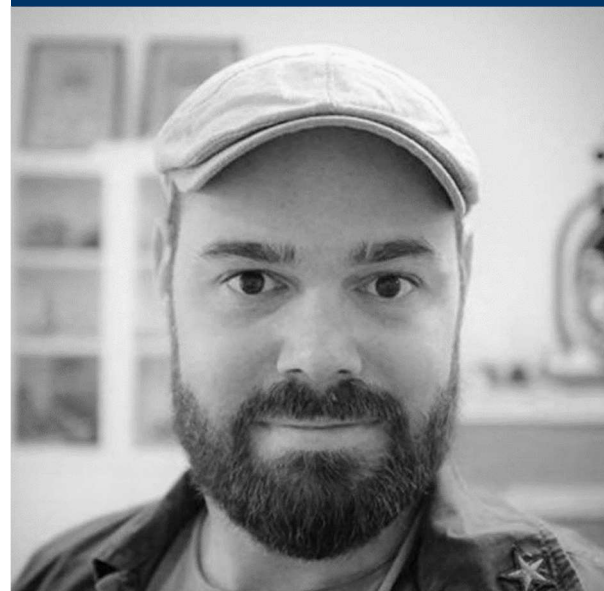
I am the Managing Director of Skymakers, a company belonging to TBM Trading whose owner is Talal Bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah. The group has activities in hospitality, retail and has 3 amusement parks.

I also take care of the Interior design of the other companies of the group, for large volumes (like towers) as well as for smaller residential or retail areas.

Skymakers is the only construction company of our group. It has been in business for two years now.

## BIOGRAPHY

*Maxime Ardilouze is General Manager of SKYMAKERS. In Qatar for 7 years, he set up the company in 2018 with his sponsor TBM Trading.*





## How is your sector doing now?

As a result of the blockade, some projects were delayed and by the time they had found sources of supply, the projects had to refinance. The sector is therefore not at its best and many projects are pending.

The advantage that we offer is that our stretch ceiling system is a faster and more economical alternative to plasterboard. We are about 4 times faster than drywall, dust-free and noise-free during installation, so our solution is preferred to make up for the delays suffered by the construction sites.

Somehow, I take advantage of the situation!

## What exactly are the points of attention in your sector currently?

You really need to be financially solid, because for each project you will be asked for a bank guarantee, of around 50% of the contract amount. So, you need a sponsor who can support you financially, especially for big projects.

We also have to have all our products approved by local laboratories, although we have all the European certifications, which requires time and financial means.

## How did this collaboration come about? Was your partner looking for a French company?

I was first an interior designer for my sponsor. This person is very invested in design, he likes to go sourcing new materials in salons, and wants to bring the best and most innovative products or services in his country. So, we often discussed and we both agreed that this stretch ceiling system was well suited to Qatar. After several researches we found

Clipso, a French company willing to work with us.

It's true that being French is a big advantage in terms of interior design and architecture. For Skymakers, it's a big advantage to be a Frenchman who represents a French company, we are much more credible in front of the client, perhaps more involved with the heart and the client must certainly feel it.

## Did having a French interlocutor in front of them helped Clipso trust this Qatari partnership?

I first hired a Frenchman here to take care of the projects, and he already mastered this material, so the relationship was immediately well established thanks to our knowledge of the product. The fact that we are French has really facilitated relations and we quickly found the compromises to make the partnership work.

Clipso also helped us with the installation part: our installers are trained by the French company, and this allows us to obtain a 10-year warranty on the material and installation.

## Do you have the Made in Qatar label?

Clipso provides us with the raw material: the canvases. We are developing our own profiles in Qatar ourselves. So, we have a Made in France product, that allows us to have all European certifications (fire, acoustic standards, etc.), and that gives us the possibility of working on private and government sites (the Education City stadium for example). But this product is customizable in Qatar since we can print on it here, and this possibility allows us a much greater responsiveness. And also reduces costs since we bring the rolls by boat and not by plane.

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« *THE BEST ADVICE I CAN GIVE FOR A COMPANY IN MY INDUSTRY IS TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SPONSOR, TO FIND THE RIGHT QATARI PARTNER.* »

Therefore, we started the validation process to have the Made in Qatar approval, thanks to our fixing profiles that are produced here. It's more or less simple to obtain certification: it requires having done all the procedures for local standards.

**What are the advantages of the Made in Qatar?**

There is a preference for Made in Qatar products, with equal specificities. So, with this label, your submission might be on top of the pile.

**Do you export from Qatar?**

Clipso, our manufacturer, is very happy with our collaboration and would like us to take care of the export to Kuwait from Qatar, by storing here, which is of course simpler, faster for the deliveries and more economical than from France.

We are going to work our own Wall covering collections. Ultimately, we want to develop our own designs and end up with a collection of Made in Qatar wall coverings.

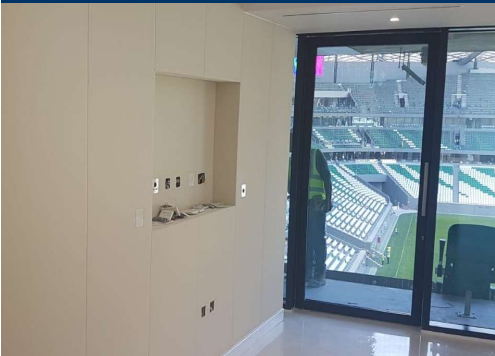
**What advice would you give to a company wishing to set up in Qatar?**

The best advice I can give for a company in my industry is to choose the right sponsor, to find the right Qatari partner. In my situation a good partner is one who has a large network, which can help 50% of the start. There is a real culture of discussion here, and if your sponsor introduces you to potential customers during a Majlis, it is much more effective than sending a flyer...

To work on major projects, choose a sponsor capable of supporting you for the Bank Guarantees.

**What advice would you give to a company that wants to get in touch with partners like yours?**

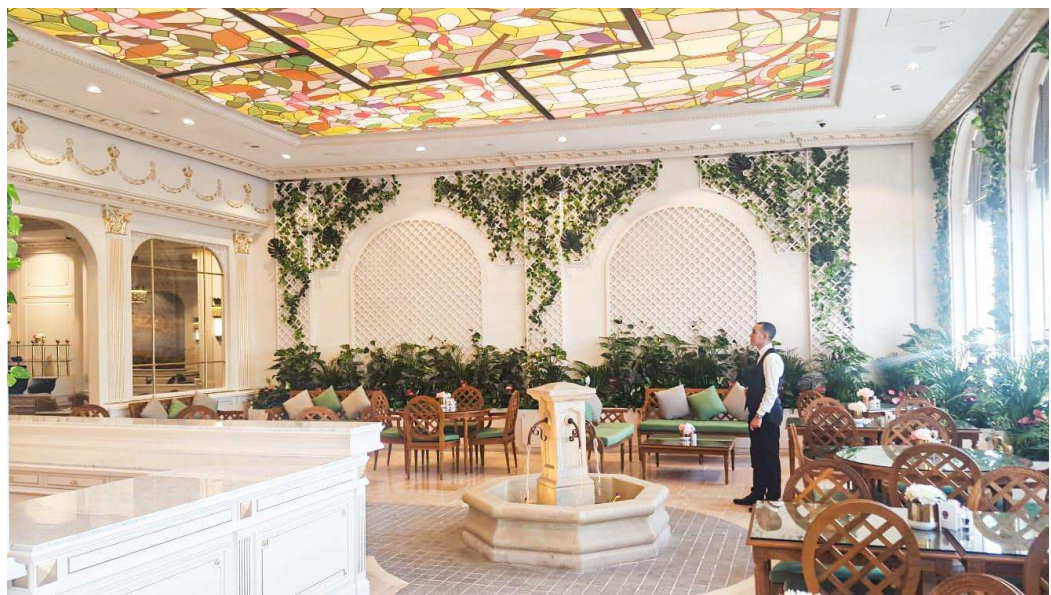
Contact the CCI of course! She will put you in touch with her network of members who will tell you about their sponsors and their various advantages.



*Education City Stadium - mur tendu acoustique*



*Katara Planetarium - mur tendu imprimé*



*Angelina Doha Festival City - plafond tendu imprimé rétro-éclairé*