

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

How a UK Fintech Startup Launched in Dubai in Just 3 Days

From boardroom decision to fully operational DMCC free zone company — complete with visas, bank account, and office space — all within a 30-day investor deadline.

3 Days COMPANY REGISTERED	60% COST SAVINGS	5 Visas IN 2 WEEKS	30 Days FULLY OPERATIONAL
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THE CLIENT

Client Background

Our client is a fast-growing **UK-based SaaS startup** specialising in fintech payment solutions for emerging markets. With a 15-person remote-first team distributed across London, Lisbon, and Nairobi, they had just closed a **Series A funding round** and were ready for their next major move: establishing a physical presence in the Middle East.

Dubai was the natural choice. The city's strategic position between Europe, Africa, and Asia — coupled with its zero corporate tax for qualifying free zone entities and world-class infrastructure — made it the ideal launchpad for their expansion into **Middle East & Africa (MENA) markets**.

Client Snapshot



HEADQUARTERS

London, United Kingdom



TEAM SIZE

15 Employees (Remote-First)



OBJECTIVE

Dubai Presence for MENA Expansion



INDUSTRY

Fintech / Payment Solutions (SaaS)



FUNDING STAGE

Series A



DEADLINE

30 Days (Investor Mandate)

THE PROBLEM

The Challenge

Despite the clear opportunity, the founder quickly realised that setting up a company in the UAE is **far more complex than registering a business in the UK**. With investor pressure mounting and a hard 30-day deadline, every week of delay meant missed revenue.



Complex Regulations

Navigating the UAE's multiple jurisdictions and rules for foreign tech companies.



Free Zone Choice

Selecting the optimal free zone from 15+ options with different costs, visas, and benefits.



International Visas

Processing employment visas for a diverse team with varying document requirements.



Corporate Banking

Overcoming hurdles to open a bank account as a new foreign entity in the fintech sector.



30-Day Deadline

Meeting a strict investor deadline to become operational or risk the next funding tranche.

OUR APPROACH

The Solution: A Turnkey Setup by Setup Dubai Business

When the client reached out to **Setup Dubai Business**, we immediately assigned a **dedicated account manager** with deep experience in technology company formations. Within the first consultation, we mapped out a complete project plan with clear milestones and a day-by-day timeline to meet the 30-day deadline.



Free Zone Comparison & DMCC Recommendation

We evaluated all relevant free zones against the client's specific needs: fintech licensing compatibility, visa quota, cost, location prestige, and banking ease. DMCC emerged as the clear winner — offering a globally recognised brand, flexible licensing for tech/SaaS companies, and 23,000+ member companies.



Full Company Registration & Trade License

We handled the entire registration end-to-end: company name reservation, Memorandum of Association drafting, initial approval, trade license application, and final registration. Our DMCC relationship allowed us to fast-track approvals.



PRO Services for Visa Processing

Our PRO team managed employment visa applications for 5 team members across 3 nationalities. This included attestation coordination, establishment card processing, entry permits, medical tests, Emirates ID, and visa stamping.



Corporate Bank Account Facilitation

Leveraging our longstanding relationships with major UAE banks, we pre-prepared the banking package including a business profile, financial projections, and compliance documentation. We secured introductions to Tier-1 bank relationship managers.



Flexi-Desk & Office Space

We set up a DMCC flexi-desk arrangement satisfying the free zone's physical presence requirement while keeping overhead minimal. This included a prestigious JLT address, meeting room access, and mail handling.



Dedicated Account Manager

A single point of contact managed the entire process, providing daily progress updates via a shared dashboard. The client never had to chase status updates or coordinate between agencies.

“We spent two weeks trying to figure it out ourselves and barely made any progress. Between the government portals, the conflicting advice online, and the sheer number of documents required, we were completely overwhelmed.”

— James Richardson, CEO & Co-Founder

THE OUTCOME

The Results: Operational in Dubai Within 30 Days

By combining deep regulatory expertise, strong government relationships, and a relentless focus on the client's deadline, Setup Dubai Business delivered results that exceeded expectations:

<p>✓ 3 Business Days</p> <p>DMCC company fully registered with trade license issued — a process that typically takes 1–2 weeks.</p>	<p>✓ 5 Visas in 2 Weeks</p> <p>All five employment visas processed, including medical tests and Emirates ID — across three nationalities.</p>	<p>✓ Bank Account in 10 Days</p> <p>Corporate bank account opened with a leading UAE bank with multi-currency capabilities.</p>
<p>✓ 60% Cost Savings</p> <p>Total setup cost 60% less than competitor quotes and DIY estimates.</p>	<p>✓ Under 30 Days</p> <p>Met the investor deadline with days to spare, unlocking next funding tranche.</p>	<p>✓ First Client in Week 5</p> <p>Signed first MENA paying client — a Saudi-based digital bank.</p>

DIY vs. Setup Dubai Business: Comparison

MILESTONE	DIY / AVERAGE	WITH SETUP DUBAI BUSINESS
Free Zone Research & Selection	2–4 weeks	1 consultation (same day)
Company Registration & License	1–3 weeks	3 business days
Visa Processing (5 employees)	4–8 weeks	2 weeks
Corporate Bank Account	4–12 weeks	10 days
Office / Flexi-Desk Setup	1–2 weeks	Included (same day)
Total Time to Operational	3–6 months	Under 30 days

“Setup Dubai Business turned what felt like an impossible 30-day deadline into a seamless experience. Within three days of our first call, our company was registered. Within a month, we had visas, a bank account, and an office address in JLT. What really set them apart was the proactive communication — we never had to chase a single update. They understood the fintech landscape, anticipated every bottleneck, and delivered ahead of schedule. I’d recommend SDB to any founder looking to set up in Dubai without the headaches.”



James Richardson

CEO & Co-Founder — UK Fintech Startup

PROJECT TIMELINE

From First Call to Fully Operational: The 30-Day Journey

- 01 DAY 1**
Initial Consultation & Analysis
In-depth needs assessment, free zone comparison, and strategic recommendation of DMCC.
- 02 DAY 2**
Documentation & Name Reservation
All formation documents prepared, company name reserved, and MOA drafted for approval.
- 03 DAY 3–4**
Company Registration & License
DMCC application submitted and approved. Trade license issued and flexi-desk activated.
- 04 DAY 5**
Bank Account Application
Pre-prepared banking package submitted to two Tier-1 UAE banks. Meetings scheduled.
- 05 DAY 5–7**
Visa Processing Initiated
Establishment card obtained and entry permits applied for all 5 employees.
- 06 DAY 8–14**
Bank Meetings & Medical Tests
Founder accompanied to bank meetings. Employees arrive for medical tests and biometrics.
- 07 DAY 15–20**
Visas Stamped & Bank Activated
All 5 employment visas stamped. Emirates IDs received. Bank account fully activated.
- 08 DAY 21–25**
Operational Handover
Final compliance documentation completed. VAT registration initiated. All credentials delivered.
- ✓ DAY 26**
Fully Operational
Company operational with 4 days to spare, beginning outreach to MENA prospects.

Ready to Launch Your Business in Dubai?

Whether you're a tech startup, an established enterprise, or a solo entrepreneur — our team will get you set up fast, compliantly, and affordably.

[Book a Free Consultation](#)

Call us: +971 55 378 8000 • **Visit:** www.setupdubaibusiness.com/contact-us

This case study is based on a real client engagement. Company name and personal details have been changed for confidentiality. Results may vary depending on specific business activity, nationality, and free zone requirements. Setup Dubai Business is a licensed business setup consultancy operating in the UAE.