

# The One Million Dollars Shark Tank Pitch

By *Kamal Jahid*

“Hello everyone. My name is Kamal Jahid, and I’m the founder of MEQNES.

The Swiss have their watches, the Germans their cars, and the Americans their finance and technology. Morocco, our country, is celebrated for its artistry and unparalleled leathercraft.

In 2008, as I prepared to embark on a trip to Poland, my grandfather handed me a leather bag he had purchased in the 1960s. “I hope it will bring you luck and success,” he told me. With that, I began my journey as a Moroccan living abroad. That leather bag became my travel companion, and every time I used it, strangers would stop me, asking where they could buy one. My answer was always the same: it was a gift from my grandfather, and they’d have to visit Morocco to find one like it.

One day, while in transit through Paris on my way back to Poland, a tall, well-dressed man approached me. “You have a beautiful bag,” he said, “where did you buy it?” Once again, I told him the story, and to my surprise, he offered me \$1,000 to sell it to him on the spot. Although flattered, I politely declined, and we parted ways after exchanging business cards.

As I boarded my flight, I began to wonder: Morocco, renowned for its exquisite artistry and deep-rooted leatherworking traditions, lacked a national luxury brand recognized globally. Inspired by this realization, I decided to create MEQNES, named after my birthplace, the city of Meknes. The letter “K” was replaced with “Q” to signify quality. Alongside my friend and business partner David, we tested the idea with a Kickstarter campaign. Confident in our vision, we set a bold goal of \$50,000 to be raised in 30 days—enough to sell 100 bags at \$500 each.

Kickstarter is an all-or-nothing platform, and to our delight, we raised \$10,000 in the first week, \$20,000 in the second, and \$30,000 by the third. Our dream felt closer than ever. But then, in the final week, progress slowed. With just 5 days remaining, we were stuck at \$46,500. We pushed forward, yet as the clock ticked down, we still hadn’t reached our target.

Feeling defeated, I flipped through my family album for comfort. Seeing a photo of my grandfather brought a tear to my eye—and a sudden idea. I remembered the man I had met in Paris and rushed to find his business card. With just three hours left in the campaign, I called him, and to my immense relief, he agreed to contribute. Our goal was met, and MEQNES was born.

We shipped 100 bags to 25 countries, and since then, MEQNES has drawn clients from around the world, with features in prominent publications like *Forbes* and *Vanity Fair*. Now, I am looking for investors to help us grow further. MEQNES is more than a brand—it is a legacy, an investment in the Moroccan Dream. Your support will leave a mark, and together, we will be judged by the generations to come on what we build here.

Of course, this is bold. But to achieve the vision of MEQNES, boldness is essential. If you're not bold enough, then perhaps our paths do not align.

Thank you for your attention. I will now answer any question you might have.”