

About Al Jazeera



Al Jazeera has the largest viewership of all the Arab media channels worldwide. Launched in 1996, it had strongly contrasted the long tradition of Arab state-run television. It attracted most of its audience by breaking taboos and providing a public voice via its live-in-calls. Thereby it became source of controversy and heated debate.

It currently offers several channels all over the world. For that reason it runs more foreign offices than any other Arab television. It should be noted that Al Jazeera English (founded in 2006), which is also run by the Al Jazeera Media Network, is not a mere translation of the Arabic version, but offers a completely different program. Since its beginning, the main channel has featured free reporting and only about forty minutes of advertising each day. Besides its focus on news, the channel presents talk shows and educational programs on current issues.

Al Jazeera's media coverage has been heavily criticized for having impacted the Arab uprisings and inflamed Sunni sectarianism. It claims to be independent of the state of Qatar while observers have accused the channel of being a vehicle for Doha's foreign policy.

In 2003, the Saudi owned channel Al-Arabiya was launched to compete with Al Jazeera, which is often accused of providing presentation more favorable to Western policies.

Nevertheless, many media outlets in English, Arabic, Turkish and Bosnian feature references to Al Jazeera's website which offers news archives as well as various interactive tools covering diverse topoi. Several applications are also available for smartphones and the channel's graphic design outstrips any competing outlets.

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