

The expansion of Al-Jazeera in the United States is an important opportunity to grow economically if branding is done correctly. With an already powerful presence in much of the Middle East, this expansion is vital to the company's future success. AJA must utilize social media and its relationship with Google and YouTube, combat its Islamic, conservative reputation, and target the American youth to attract the American audience. With expanding interest, AJA can renew contracts with network providers and look for new partners. It should also explore non-traditional broadcast methods such as streaming, as cable usage is falling.¹ The most important objective is to revamp AJA's image so that network providers will have an economic incentive to broadcast the channel.

Social media must play a key role in the branding and expansion of AJA. This will help AJA target the American youth and dissociate from AJ. An important use of this will be the AJA "The Stream" modeled after its English counterpart. AJA should create a subsection of their sources that focus on the youth, and establish a substantial form of contact with them. Draw tweets, blogs, etc from smart American youths and engage them in a portion of the show. From there, these individuals will expand the program's popularity in their social circles and set AJA on a track for success. To maintain credibility as hard-hitting and informative, only a section involves the youth so heavily. With falling ratings for CNN, MSNBC, and other agencies, AJA must seize this opportunity to be a new alternative amongst older generations as well.² Constant presentation of the issue from Republican and Democratic standpoints will be vital to exploit discontent with biased reporting. A unique perspective to be considered includes the world's view of America as well. Furthermore, AJA should retain its US focus but cover international news as well with its resource around the world. Lastly, while AJE will be phased out, AJE has more popularity on key social media sites.³ Constant mentions of AJA social media sites and frequently featured stories from AJA rather than AJE will help promote the AJA branch more.

AJ must also carefully use their relationships with Google and YouTube. Featured videos from AJA on Youtube's homepage and greater exposure in Google searches will give AJA stories more traffic. 32% of Americans get their news very often from key word searches.⁴ Even something as simple as a pre-installed news app on Android phones should be explored. These tactics will increase exposure and make AJA appear more popular and reliable.

Further emphasizing the importance of the youth, AJA should insert itself into universities across the country. There should be bases in cities such as Chicago, Boston, and Providence in addition to NYC. There should be outreach to school papers and political groups, and potentially the creation of liaisons between AJA and schools.

By rapidly building popularity, AJA can protect contract renewals with various networks. Arguments about market saturation can be spun as well; AJA can argue that it is the dissatisfaction with news and cable in general leading to limited growth. Introducing the new agency might increase interest. Also, AJA explore options with Netflix, Amazon Prime, etc. These businesses are stealing more of cable's customers. This allows AJA to highlight the falling popularity of cable companies in negotiations, and potentially give them something their competitors cannot provide. Also, with the recent addition of AJ to Time Warner Cable, the future of AJA looks promising.⁵

Based on experience in Canada, companies broadcasting AJA should not worry about losing subscribers.⁶ The Canadian government was a major help in this, and we should look to similar support from the White House. The Obama administration is so different from the Bush administration, and should welcome AJA's addition to US news. AJA can promote freedom of the press and ideas that it is un-American to deny AJA access to cable. In Canada, national regulators required the providing of certain channels and this greatly helped AJE there.⁷ AJA should pursue similar government intervention in the US.

¹ Magid, Larry. "Households Abandoning Cable and Satellite for Streaming." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 19 Mar. 2013. Web. 8 Oct. 2013.

² Yu, Roger. "Al Jazeera America: Will U.S. viewers buy it?" *USA Today* 21 Aug. 2013. Web. 10 Oct. 2013.

³ "Al Jazeera English Facebook" Al Jazeera English. Web. 11 Oct. 2013.

⁴ Mitchell, Amy, Tom Rosenstiel, and Leah Christian. "What Facebook and Twitter Mean for News." *State of the Media*. The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2012. Web. 20 Oct. 2013.

⁵ "State of the Media 2013: Overview Infographic." *State of the Media*. The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2013. Web. 16 Oct. 2013.

⁶ Stelter, Brian. "Time Warner Cable Reaches Agreement to Distribute Al Jazeera America." *New York Times* Oct. 2013. Web. 25 Oct. 2013.

⁷ Grim, Ryan. "Al Jazeera English Blacked Out Across Most Of U.S." *The Huffington Post*. TheHuffingtonPost.com, 30 Jan. 2011. Web. 27 Oct. 2013.

⁸ Stelter, Brian. "Time Warner Cable Reaches Agreement to Distribute Al Jazeera America." *New York Times* Oct. 2013. Web. 25 Oct. 2013.