

PRESS TV JOINS THE INCs

PressTV is unique in many ways. It offers viewers an alternative outlook on current affairs exceeding the boundaries of mainstream media. It looks for the "complete" story. Much of mainstream media today revolves around presenting the same news story, in the same light, in similar format. PressTV is headquartered in Iran, a country that is currently much in the news – that's another reason to watch PressTV.

Are further language services planned?

PressTV was launched specifically as an English-language news channel – it is a branch of Seda Sima's international division which consists of 35 radio stations broadcasting in 31 languages plus four TV channels which broadcast in six other languages. But we are launching a new function on our website that translates the site into any language.

Which audience do you target?

We are aiming at opinion formers, and individuals whose appreciation for news goes beyond what is currently available in mainstream news broadcasts. Of our present viewers, a large majority are intellectuals with a relatively high income.

And audience feedback so far?

Actually, many are pleasantly surprised by the concept of PressTV and have told us so – feedback has been predominantly positive and supportive. In terms of audience measurement, our most accurate data has been recorded via our website where viewers are able to watch the channel live and on demand. Although we only launched in July, viewer figures have been rising consistently putting us right on track and we

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Reporting should lead to the discovery of truth
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have extensive distribution plans that have already been put in motion.

Are there enough potential viewers for your station to grow successfully?

Many of our viewers are curious about the Middle East and Iran, while also turning to our channel to view a "new kind of news". Individuals are now asking for alternative news that crosses borders and offers perspectives not evident in mainstream media. Who else can accurately offer this perspective other than a channel based in the region itself?

What are you doing to convince viewers and critics that your output is unbiased?

PressTV's sole focus is not the Middle East, yet when it is the topic of conversation, PressTV requires that all perspectives be represented equally. It is of the utmost importance for us to portray all sides of the issues. Without any discrimination we employ individuals of all nationalities and creeds to diversify our viewpoint and to guard against bias in our output.

In your view, can objectivity and editorial independence really exist?

Reporting should lead to the

discovery of truth. I believe this to be the objective of reporting.

How are you reacting to the multi-platform trend?

We are very aware of these trends. PressTV has a very successful and active website that progresses daily. We have also begun implementing numerous plans to expand our audience via the new technologies available in the market to better address the changing lifestyles of our viewers in different parts of the world.

What role does the channel have in Iran's public diplomacy?

I hope that one day PressTV will play an influential role in bridging the gap of misunderstanding between many Western societies and Iran and the Middle East.

If you had three wishes for your channel, what would they be?

I would hope that PressTV has a positive impact on world opinion on Iran, I hope that PressTV accumulates a large interactive audience, of course. Lastly I hope that one day in the near future, instead of consistent coverage of crises and war, we have consistent reports of peace and brotherhood.

Mohammad Sarafraz, thank you. ■

▼ Mohammad Sarafraz, CEO, Press TV

Launched 2 July 2007

Key personnel Mohammad Sarafraz (CEO), Nader Rad (Director Live Programmes), Mehdi Homayounfar (Director Documentaries), Saeed Tahami (Director News)

Financed by IRIB; budget not disclosed

Staff 600 worldwide (45 journalists)

Where available worldwide - see

www.presstv.ir for a full list

Mission To offer expansive news coverage, unbiased reporting of controversial global news and in-depth analyses of current affairs

