

EXHIBIT A

THE WRAP

Covering Hollywood

Al Jazeera America Mess: Low Ratings, Distribution Woes Still Dog Embattled Network

TV | By **Jordan Chariton** on May 14, 2015 @ 2:25 pm

Follow [@jordanchariton](#)



“It’s been a disaster zone,” one insider tells TheWrap about the network, which demoted CEO Ehab Al Shihabi last week

New Al Jazeera America CEO Al Anstey issued a memo to staff this week vowing to unite his team and boost morale. Employees greeted the note with cautious optimism, but internal morale is the least of the newly installed executive’s problems with bad press

over claims of anti-Semitism and gender bias, as well as major cable distribution and online deficiencies.

“It’s been a disaster zone,” one insider told TheWrap about the network, which demoted CEO Ehab Al Shihabi last week. But another insider countered that, “ever since they announced Ehab was let go, there’s a better vibe in the newsroom.”

To say Anstey’s new role is challenging is an understatement: He inherits Al Jazeera America which nearly two years since its launch is still plagued with low ratings — around 30,000 viewers a night.

Also Read: [Al Jazeera Accused of Anti-Semitism, Sexism in \\$15 Million Discrimination Lawsuit](#)

“It does not have anything like enough clearance at the moment to build a national audience,” Al Tompkins, Poynter Institute’s senior faculty for broadcasting and online, told TheWrap of AJAM’s distribution. The channel is currently only available in 60 million homes.

Although it’s offered on Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Dish Network, DirecTV, and Verizon FiOS, the network is not available in high-definition on most of them, a major obstacle since the technology has long been the norm. It’s also not available on Cablevision and RCN in the Tri-State Area around New York.

Channel position is also not working to the network’s advantage. While it’s offered on some big cable operators, Al Jazeera America is often not found amid the cluster of competitors like Fox News, MSNBC and CNN, discouraging sampling among channel changers.

Also Read: [Al Jazeera America Senior Executive Marcy McGinnis Resigns -- Read Parting Note](#)

And then there’s the network’s online dilemma. AJAM’s agreement with cable operators limits the amount of broadcast content it can post on its website, which is a problem in

the growing digital age, when its aforementioned competitors are posting hundreds of clips a week in addition to original programming.

“If you notice on the website, there’s just much less content, as opposed to CNN or Fox News,” an insider told TheWrap, posing a big challenge for the network to reach people online, especially cord cutters who consume their news there almost exclusively.

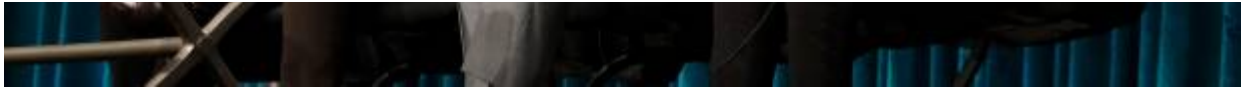
“[It’s] totally hamstrung online by not being able to post coverage,” Tompkins added, while being sure to compliment the network as well: “Their work has been, at times, inspired.”

Also Read: [Al Jazeera America Appoints New CEO Amid Network's Chaos](#)

Industry veteran and University of Maryland professor Mark Feldstein concurs, noting that, despite the challenges, the network has done some “superb journalism.” The problem is, the masses aren’t necessarily looking for that anymore.

“If solid, substantive, serious journalism was what the American people wanted, ABC, NBC and CBS would be doing it too — they’re not. Not nearly like they used to. They’re becoming more and more tabloid over the years,” he said. “I think there is a lack of a public appetite for serious news.”





A bigger problem, however, may be the Al Jazeera brand, he said, which is “tainted” because of its association among many Americans with Islamist terrorism.

Also Read: [Cable News Ratings: Fox News Only Network Up in April](#)

“There’s, frankly, too much public suspicion for a news network funded by an Arab country, in this country, for it to ever have a significant audience” irrespective of the quality of its journalism, Feldstein said.

Still, there’s at least momentary cause for confidence. “People seem to be in better spirits, but are taking a wait-and-see approach,” one insider said. Anstey, who previously served as an executive at Al Jazeera English, is well liked by executives.

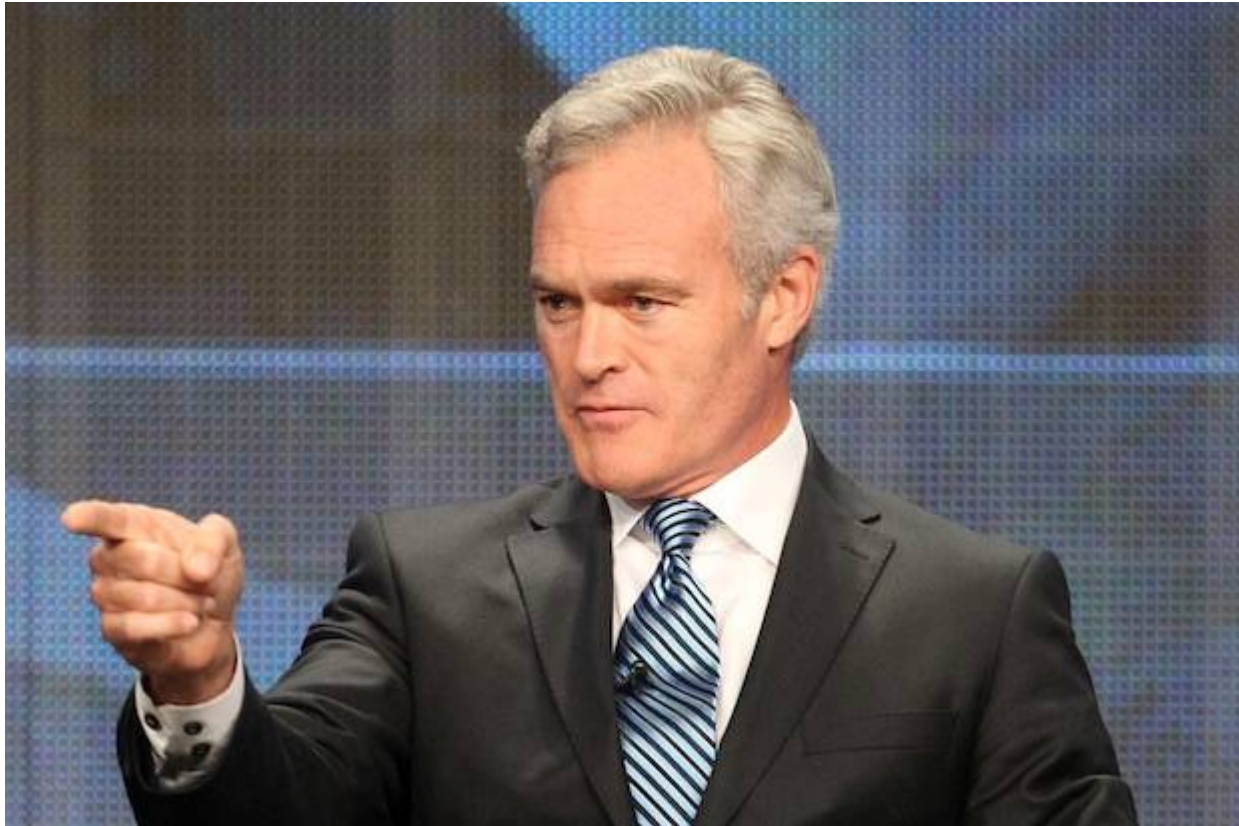
“In the next couple of weeks I will hold a briefing and answer all the questions you may have openly, honestly, and with the aim of bringing the team together with a unified mission and spirit,” Anstey wrote to staff Monday.

Also Read: [Al Jazeera America Prez on Brand Challenges: We're Overcoming Them Quicker Than We Thought](#)

But it might be getting the network wider distribution — and up to speed online — that poses the greatest challenge. Anstey certainly has his work cut out for him.

“Al Jazeera America will be looking to bring our award-winning content to more people, by making the channel accessible to more viewers,” a network spokesperson told TheWrap. “Promoting AJAM and growing our audience are important priorities for us.”

24 TV Newscasters Ranked by Popularity (Photos)



;

1 of 32

Anderson Cooper, Lara Logan and Brian Williams are up there — but who ranks No. 1?

Scott Pelley, "CBS Evening News" Q Score: 19

[View In Gallery](#)



YOU MAY LIKE...

Promoted Links by Taboola

How to Reduce Risk of Hacking for Your Small Business: Free Report

WorkIntelligent.ly by Ricoh

Selling Internationally? Get Advice from the Experts!

eCommerceWeekly

3 Incredibly High-Paying Cash Back Cards You Should Not Ignore

LendingTree

'Star Wars: The Force Awakens': One Record It Won't Break

Warning: These Medications Raise Blood Glucose

Diabetes Forecast Magazine

Wrong Miss Universe Winner Announced (Video)

AL ANSTEY AL JAZEERA AMERICA EHAB AL SHIHABI

0 Comments theWrap

Login ▾

♥ Recommend  Share

Sort by Best ▾



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

MEDIA ALLEY



Media Alley looks at the media landscape from print to digital, legacy media to new media.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

5 GOLDEN GLOBE® NOMINATIONS
BEST PICTURE
BEST DIRECTOR
BEST ACTRESS GATE BLANCHETT | BEST ORIGINAL SCORE ROONEY MARA

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD NOMINEES
BEST ACTRESS
CATE BLANCHETT
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
ROONEY MARA

REPLAY VIDEO

CAROL

ATTEND A SCREENING



5 MEDIA PLAYERS WHO WILL DOMINATE IN 2016, FROM MEGYN KELLY TO KEITH OLBERMANN

2016 ELECTION

December 28, 2015 By **Jordan Chariton** [a day ago](#)

December 26, 2015 [3 days ago](#)

New York Times Columnist Creates Catchy Donald Trump Christmas Carol

December 26, 2015 [3 days ago](#)

Don Lemon Has Eyes On Launching a Bill Maher, Chelsea Handler-Like Show (Video)

December 26, 2015 [3 days ago](#)

Jailed Washington Post Reporter Jason Rezaian Spends Christmas With Wife, Mother

December 26, 2015 [4 days ago](#)

Fox News Attracts Oldest Audience, CNN Youngest in TV News 2015

December 26, 2015 [4 days ago](#)

Miss Philippines Urges Fans to Stop Fighting After Miss Universe Announcement Debacle

MOST POPULAR MOST SHARED MOST COMMENTED



Country Singer Craig Strickland Missing After Going Duck Hunting in Massive Storm

23970 Views



Bran Stark Is All Grown Up in 'Game of Thrones' Season 6

on 6 First Look (Photo)

9076 Views





Tom Hardy in Talks to Star in Christopher Nolan's WWII Movie 'Dunkirk'

7436 Views

Miami Herald: It's a wrap

3429 Views



Lemmy Kilminster, Motörhead front man, Dead at 70

2505 Views



Taylor Swift vs. Adele: Which Music Star Won 2015?

2416 Views



'Making a Murderer' Viewers Target Prosecutor Ken

Kratz – On His Yelp Page

2301 Views

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

3 GOLDEN GLOBE® NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
JENNIFER JASON LEIGH
BEST SCREENPLAY | BEST ORIGINAL SCORE

6 CRITICS' CHOICE AWARD NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
BEST ACTING ENSEMBLE
BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

PARTNERS

THE DAILY BEAST

AirBnB Spends Millions To Rent San Fran

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Finds His Voice

Cristin Milioti: More Than 'The Mother'



How Should Dogs Wear Pants?

Buff Dudes Gym Wildlife Video

Top 10 Most Pirated Movies Of 2015

BuzzFeed

These Christmas Miracles Actually Happened

What Happens When Flies Land In Your Food?

The 11 Best Celebrity Instagram Interactions In 2015



© The Wrap News Inc. 2015 | Privacy Policy

CONNECT

Facebook

Twitter

YouTube

FEATURED BLOGS

[Waxword](#)

[Steve Pond](#)

[Alonso Duralde](#)

[Media Alley](#)

[Party Report](#)

[Hollywood, D.C.](#)

[TheGrill Conference](#)

[Obits](#)

[Hello! Hollywood](#)

INFORMATION

[Masthead](#)

[Newsletter Subscription](#)

[About Us](#)

[OscarWrap 2016](#)

[OscarWrap 2015](#)

[EmmyWrap 2015](#)

[CannesWrap 2015](#)

[Fall TV Preview](#)

[Press Releases](#)

[Contact](#)

[Advertise With Us](#)

[Jobs](#)

