

TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED

**A globally uncensored online space where
stories are heard**

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Executive Summary

Article 28 of the Turkish constitution promises “The press is free and shall not be censored.”¹ When will this ideal become more than an ancient claim and more of a reality? The July 16, 2016 coup d’état that attempted to remove the current president of Turkey, Recep Tayip Erdogan from power the government has been purging the country of basic democratic rights.² This has directly led to the suppression of millions of voices. Dozens of academics, professors, journalists, writers, artists and activists have been taken in for questioning, arrested, or have had to seek refuge overseas.

Sadly, it appears that the Turkish nation is being trained by the state to understand the world differently according to self-discipline, self-control, and complacency. The power to connect or communicate with others to share ideas, is being stripped away and those who resist are, by a power given to the government by Erdogan himself, are punished. Needless to say, there is a need to hear these stories. Journalism, literature, and art are all collaboration efforts. They are a way of gathering, writing, representing, and disseminating differing perceptions. Communities are formed and compassion is felt for one another in a way that few other forms of interaction can accomplish. Having this taken away is a violation to human liberty. Forms of censorship, repression, and threats to one’s well being have caused this entire dynamic between content creators and the public who consumes them to become interrupted and, frankly, dysfunctional. So many intellectuals have gone to jail under the hand of an increasingly authoritarian government that has used and abused Turkish Penal Code 301, which makes it punishable by law to insult ‘Turkishness,’ to aggressively censor and outlaw countless creators.³ Freedom of expression has been ousted as individuals’ personal identities, ideologies, and ideas have come under vigorous scrutiny. For this reason, we are introducing Turkishness Uncensored, to give a voice back to where it belongs: in the hands of creators of all mediums. This digital-only brand will be an outlet for journalists, writers, novelists, artists, activists, politicians, representatives of civil society - content creators - to come together as an active community in

¹ “The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey.” Accessed January 29 2020. http://www.hri.org/docs/turkey/part_ii_2.html.

² “Turkey’s Failed Coup Attempt: All You Need to Know.” Al Jazeera. July 15 2017. Accessed January 29 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/turkey-failed-coup-attempt-161217032345594.html>.

³ “Turkey: Governments Amendments Will Not Protect Free Speech: Article 301 Should Be Abolished.” Human Rights Watch. April 16 2008. Accessed January 29 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/04/16/turkey-government-amendments-will-not-protect-free-speech#>.

the fight against censorship across Turkey, and ultimately on a global scale as well. Turkishness Uncensored anonymously accepts content as well as assigns pieces to freelancers around the world who have a story to tell. A culturally diverse platform, we see content in countless mediums, tones, and from several backgrounds, all which share a similar concern with the increasingly stringent efforts to silence voices in Turkey. We want Turkish voices to be heard, and for people's pleas for a fair democracy to be answered, and this is the objective that Turkishness Uncensored seeks to realize. We are extremely passionate and confident in the success that Turkishness Uncensored is likely to see. In the current environment and cultural landscape, new voices and ideas are more important than ever. Yet, they mean nothing if they cannot be heard nor accessed. This is why Turkishness Uncensored is not only a voice for the Turkish people, but also represents hundreds to thousands of artists, writers, activists - everyone who has a story - around the world whose credibility has been taken away, and whose reputation has been tarnished for the sole purpose of telling the blunt, sometimes ugly truth. We seek honest, celebration, and strength, subversive of so many outlets who have made fake news the new norm.

Market Backdrop

As a brand that unites voices around the world, Turkishness Uncensored is a global voice. For this reason, the marketplace for our brand is vast, complicated, and requires a thorough amount of context in order to make sense of the importance of our brand, especially today. What we see ourselves as is a reactionary platform; a space that gives writers the opportunity that their own country took away from them following the 2016 coup. This is why Turkishness Uncensored will be zeroing in on the thousands of academics who have been laid off or who have had to relocate to Europe or North America just to get the opportunity that should have been a basic right: freedom of the press for journalists and reporters, and freedom of expression for all other content creators who have something to say about all this.

Environment

First and foremost, Turkishness Uncensored has been conceived of at a time of uncertainty, confusion, and disruption within the political, economical, and societal functioning within the environment. The most obvious cause, and perhaps even the trigger for the events that followed was the 2016 coup d'état that attempted to overthrow the current president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Paying an overall price of 241 deaths and 2,194 injuries, Turkey reacted furiously by authorizing investigation into hundreds, if not thousands of areas of everyday life. Military officials, pilots, police officers, civil servants, academics,

and everyday citizens have been stripped of life as they have known it for their alleged links to a “terrorist” group lead by the Turkish preacher and businessman, Fethullah Gulen.⁴ The deadly coup attempt marked a monumental turning point not only in the nation-state’s political history, but also in the area of human rights. The Turkey that has emerged is more stringent, authoritarian, and brutal than the country every could have been imagined to be. Before the coup, for close to twenty years, Erdogan has won elections by pairing a picture of a new Turkey: one that would restore the glamour of the Turkey of the Ottoman Empire. After the coup, all these enchanting visions seem to have been done away with by decrees and orders that has led to an unstable economy, a plunging of the lira, and an increase of authoritarian practices. In the last three to four years alone, not only students and academics have fled the country. We also see entrepreneurs, businesspeople, and thousands of wealthy individuals - those with the adequate means and resources - fleeing for one reason: disappearing democracy. In 2018, about 113,000 Turks emigrated, a startling increase from the 69,000 who had fled the previous year, according the the Turkish Institute of Statistics.⁵ Much of this comes from a general, collective fear of political persecution, terrorism, a deteriorating business climate, a deepening mistrust of the judiciary system, along with the arbitrariness that seems to now characterize the rule of law.

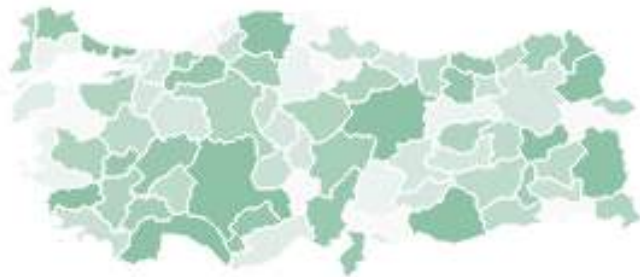
Here at Turkishness Uncensored, what we are most concerned with is the effects that the coup has exhibited on freedom of expression, especially that of the press. We see the effects of these government-led efforts to silence media criticism and writers-alike as a leader to five trends, which can be broken down and visualized in the following diagram:

⁴ Matthews, Dylan. “Turkey’s Coup: the Gülen Movement, explained.” Vox. September 13 2016. Accessed January 29 2020. <https://www.vox.com/2016/7/16/12204456/gulen-movement-explained>.

⁵ Gall, Carlotta. Spurning Erdogan’s Vision, Turks Leave in Drove, Draining Money and Talent. The New York Times. January 02, 2019. Accessed March 04, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/02/world/europe/turkey-emigration-erdogan.html>.

The first three are connected in which they involve the maltreatment and abuse of the country's journalists and writers. This includes the jailing and prosecution of journalists, physical attacks and threats against journalists and writers, and pressure by authorities on media companies to fire influential journalists and provoke their press accreditation. We see this manifested in just the few months following the coup, with thousands of people getting arrested or losing their jobs. In November of that same year, 2016, barely four months following that disastrous night, the number of journalists in detention on the sole basis of their writing and work activities rose to 144, marking Turkey one of the world leaders in jailing journalists. Some of the most prominent writers and commentators who fell victim to this still-new crack-down includes Nazli Ilıcak, Sahin Alpay, Ahmet Altan, and Mehmet Altan.⁶ Erol Onderoglu is one of many journalists who are currently in prison awaiting trial. He was a long-term spokesperson for Reporters Without Borders and had attended an editorial meeting for the Kurdish paper, Ozgur Gundem to mark World Press Freedom Day. The government was quick to accuse the newspaper of spreading Kurdish propaganda and soon after closed it. The prosecutor had requested a fourteen year sentence against Onderoglu. In expression of his discontent with his sentence, Onderoglu is quoted to have said, "For over

The Silencing of Voices in Turkey Following 2016 Failed Coup Attempt - 5 Major Trends



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Shutting Down of Media Companies

Prosecution & Jailing of Journalists

Physical Attacks & Threats Against Journalists and Intellectuals, Including Novelists

Pressure by Government Authorities For Media Companies to Fire Journalists & Revoke Press Accreditation

Removal of State-Owned Distribution Channels

⁶ "Mehmet Altan and Sahin Alpay Not Released Despite Top Court Decision." Expression Interrupted. November 01 2018. Accessed February 13 2020. <https://www.expressioninterrupted.com/top-court-rules-for-release-of-mehmet-altan-sahin-alpay/>.

a decade, we hoped that Turkey could belong to a European family...But then I found myself being handcuffed like an assassin.” Funny enough, Erdogan is known to have boasted that Erdogan has the “world’s freest press,” while also disclaiming that those in prison are not journalists but actually “terrorists, thieves, and child molesters.” Furthermore, Onderoglu points out to us that “Erdogan directly or indirectly controls 80% of the media in Turkey...Any criticism of him is seen as criticism of the state.”⁷ The very definition of being a journalist has been systematically done away with from the Turkish dictionary. Nowadays in Turkey, there seems to be little difference between a terrorist holding a gun or throwing a bomb, and a writer who uses a pen or typewriter to position and serve their ideologies - the consequences remain the same.

Many journalists who have been targeted are women, while many of those blacklisted have gone on to become activists. A lot can be said for this trajectory, which appears to be both targeted to blackout women writers and censor new, and confrontational ideas about this repressive system of law in Turkey. For example, Nurcan Baysal, one of the most widely-heard voices speaking for the traumas of Yazidi and Kurdish women had to experience the thunderous knocking of police at her door, and was put on trial for a number of her articles.⁸ Ayla Albayrak, who has written for the Wall Street Journal, was charged with spreading ‘terrorist propaganda’ after publishing an article about what had been transpiring at the time in the Kurdish-majority south-east. Later, she was sentenced in absentia with the court using Article 19, referring to their decision as an “unprecedented verdict for a reporter of a foreign media outlet.”⁹ Canan Kaftancioglu, a member of the CHP party in Istanbul has been under attacked by pro-government papers and social media channels. Here, Istanbul prosecutes stressed that Kaftancioglu who’ll be imprisoned for a series of tweets that she wrote, allegedly representing terrorist propaganda. In response to these accusations, Kaftancioglu has tweeted, “There is something clear: they are afraid of women, of women who do not mince their words are brave. I think they are right to be afraid.”¹⁰ These three examples alone show how transparent anti-feminism has become. We have heard it from the president himself anyway, directly targeting women and feminists in one of his many hateful speeches: “You have nothing to do with our

⁷ Lowen, Mark. Erdogan’s Turkey. BBC UK. April 13 2017. Accessed February 13 2020. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/1dt-sh/Erdogans_Turkey.

⁸ “Turkey Seeks Three-Year Jail Sentence for Journalist Baysal Over Tweets Criticizing Afrin Operation.” Turkey Purge. April 18 2018. Accessed February 13 2020. <https://turkeypurge.com/turkey-seeks-three-year-jail-sentence-for-journalist-baysal-over-tweets-criticizing-afrin-operation>.

⁹ “Constitution of the Republic of Turkey.” Refworld. Accessed February 19 2020. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b5be0.html>.

¹⁰ “Canan Kaftancioglu: Turkish Opposition Figure Faces Jail for Tweets.” BBC News. September 06 2019. Accessed February 19 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-49613074>.

religion or our civilization.”¹¹ Many journalists have who once held positions in mainstream media outlets have become activists. Author and former editor-in-chief of the daily Cumhuriyet, Can Dunder began the social media campaign #osguruz, and the journalists Rusen Cakir began Medyascope, which is an independent platform that delivers uncensored audiovisual journalistic content.¹² These examples demonstrate the clever tactics journalists are implementing to circumvent censors and in effect exploit cracks in the Turkish legal system. The police have observed signs of this unrest unraveling and have been frantically trying to develop new methods to stop journalists from obtaining images or footage. In Ankara, the capital of Turkey, on September 14, 2017, police officials circled around a group of demonstrators with riot shields and physically prevented reporters from taking pictures of the activists as they were beaten by police.¹³ This shows the lengths that are currently being taken to protect Turkey’s reputation. By 2019, Turkey has remained a world leader in imprisoning journalists, following China by only one for the top place.¹⁴ While in 2018 there were 68 imprisonments, there were 47 new ones in 2019, with a closing down of an additional 100 outlets.¹⁵ In the diagram seen below, we can see a comparative measurement of the countries in the world that have grown to lead censorship worldwide:

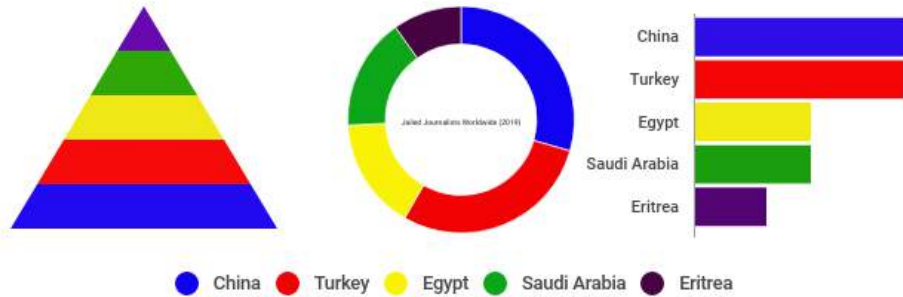
¹¹ Özcan, Esra. Mainstreaming the Headscarf: Islamist Politics and Women in the Turkish Media. Bloomsbury Publishing. November 14 2019. Accessed Online February 19 2020.


¹² <https://medyascope.tv>.

¹³ O’Connor, Tom. You Can’t Protest Against the Government in Turkey Under New Ankara Policy. Newsweek. November 02 2017. Accessed March 03 2020. <https://www.newsweek.com/you-cant-protest-government-turkey-new-ankara-policy-700333>.

¹⁴ China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Are World’s Worst Jailers of Journalists. CPJ: Committee to Protect Journalists. December 11, 2019. Accessed February 24, 2020. <https://cpj.org/reports/2019/12/journalists-jailed-china-turkey-saudi-arabia-egypt.php>.

¹⁵ McCarthy, Niall. "Where The Most Journalists Are Imprisoned Worldwide ." Digital image. December 12, 2019. Accessed February 02, 2020. <https://www-statista-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/chart/3310/china-incarcerates-more-journalists-than-anywhere-else/>.





Turkey Becomes World Leader in Jailing of Journalists

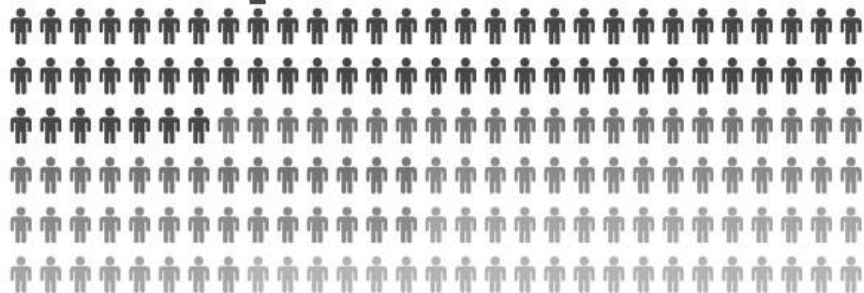
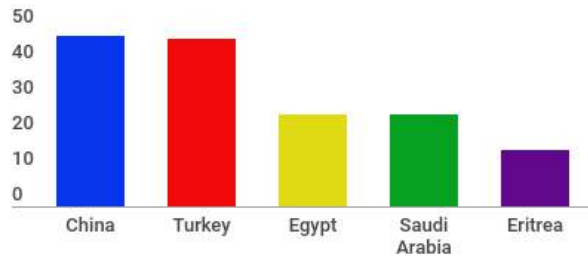
Tweet

CPJ Committee to Protect Journalists @pressfreedom

CPJ just released its 2019 prison census. On December 1, at least 250 journalists were behind bars worldwide. These are the worst jailers and how many journalists they have jailed:

Zuhai Tekiner
Olgun Matur
Nazli Ilicak
Mustafa Unal
Ismail Yildiz
Ahmet Sik
Aydin Dogan
Zehra Dogan Ozlem Agus
Canan Kaftancioglu
Nurcan Baysal
Ahmet Altan
Sahin Alpaly
Elif Shafak
Nazli Ilicak
Mehmet Altan
Erol Onderoglu
Ayla Albayrak
Can Dunder
Rusen Cakir
Deniz Yucel
Mazlum Osdemir
Kadri Gursel
Mustafa Gok
Nahide Ermis
Nedim Turfent
Unal Tanik

China 48
Turkey 47
Saudi Arabia 26
Egypt 26
Eritrea 16
Vietnam 12
Iran 11
cpj.org/jailed2019



Writers within the educational systems are not safe either. For example, in the same year as the coup, over 1000 university lecturers had signed a petition criticizing government policy in the southeast of the country, calling for a return to political negotiations with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). All involved were quickly targeted by Erdogan in his speeches at the time, and were, needless to say, subjected to criminal investigation for "insulting" the Turkish state.¹⁶ In a similar instance, for signing a peace petition, a number of professors lost the jobs and were blacklisted. Students that participated in this were immediately dismissed and also blacklisted, leaving university without a diploma. Mehmet Fatih Tras was one of many university assistants who had signed the petition and was then fired. Clearly troubled by the stifling hand of the state, he ultimately killed himself. Professor Sebnem Korur Finacanci, chair of the Human Rights Foundation and Ayse Gul Altinay, a professor of gender and women's studies, were both given two year prison sentences. Professor Fusun Ustel, one of Turkey's most prominent academics on nationalism and identity is also in prison.¹⁷ It would seem that the government actually prefers that people are uneducated, or as they like to coin the term, "pure." There are pure and elite people. Put into context, the deputy rector of one of the new universities in the country, Bülent Ari, has stated "I'd rather trust ignorant people who have not attended university or better yet, primary school...because their minds are pure." During this particular conversation, he went as far as demonstrating his unhappiness that data show that literacy rates are going up. To him, those with a higher education are more cultured, meaning that their minds are blurred and cannot really think straight. To him, if Erdogan was to be removed from office, it would be a "catastrophe."¹⁸ The irony here is what comes after. Following this brief, questionable speech, this intellectual was promoted by the government to the Council of Higher Education. Despite such a primal and naive opinion there is indeed an unmistakable animosity towards intellectuals following Erdogan's AKP government, as is proven by the countless writers, educators, artists, and activists being dismissed via all of these emergency decrees.

The book industry is no exemption. Since 2016, 29 publishing houses have been closed by countless emergency decrees. This means that over 135,000 books have been banned from public libraries,

¹⁶ Redden, Elizabeth. "Peace Petition Signatories Face Continued Prosecutions." Inside Higher Ed. July 01 2019. Accessed March 04 2020. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/07/01/about-700-academics-have-been-criminally-charged-turkey-their-signatures-petition>.

¹⁷ Shafak, Elif. "Police Officers Demanded to See My Books': Elif Shafak on Turkey's War on Free-Speech." The Guardian. July 15, 2019. Accessed March 04, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/jul/15/elif-shafak-books-writers-academics-women-hostility-erdogan-turkey>

¹⁸ Ibid.

bookstores, and educational institutions, including works by Louis Althusser and Nâzım Hikmet, Turkey's greatest and most beloved poet.¹⁹ Writers in Turkey no longer have the luxury of expressing themselves through disciplines across the humanities. Freedom of thought, individuality, and innovation has no room in a society as polarized as Turkey's. Alongside issues of class and wealth, gender inequality, and extreme Islam, fiction is becoming more and more. It is not safe anymore to be apolitical. Novelist and journalist, Ahmet Altan is currently serving a life sentence for allegedly sending subliminal messages to the coup plotters during a television appearance he and his brother, Mehmet had made the night before the failed coup. Human Rights Watch has said that the case against the brothers was "politically motivated" and that this event set a "frightening precedent" for press freedoms.²⁰ In his book that he wrote while in prison, *I Will Never See the World Again* (Other Press, October 01 2029), Altan addressed his attention to the repressive government, "You can imprison me but you cannot keep me here...Because, like all writers, I have magic. I can pass through your walls with ease." Baris Terkoglu and his co-author, Baris Pehlivan are yet another two writers who have been victims of this crackdown. Terkoglu, in describing how the pair's book, *Sızıntı: Wikileaks'te Ünlü Türkler* (The Leak: The Popular Turks of WikiLeaks), was born, a troubling scene is envisioned: "Early in the morning, when we wanted to deliver the manuscript to the publishing house, we were arrested. All our notes that had something to do with the book, as well as all computers - in other words basically everything - was confiscated. We then decided to write the book anew in jail. As we were not allowed to use a computer or typewriter, we wrote it all down with a pencil. As we were in different cells, we sent each other our texts." Both Terkoglu and his colleague, Pehlivan were accused of being members of a terrorist organization, and were recently released after serving eighteen months in jail.²¹ Elif Shafak's fictional representations of sexual violence that is widespread in Turkey, as well as her allusions to the Armenian Genocide, as is seen in her 2006 work, *The Bastard of Istanbul*, is part of broad clampdown on Turkish writers that only continues to grow. Referring to this as a civil rights crisis, Shafak stated to the British paper, *The Observer*, "In all my novels I have tried to give voice to the voiceless. I have written about outcasts, minorities, the displaced and exiled...I wanted to make their stories heard. So I really find it tragic that instead of changing the laws, building shelters for abused women and children, improving the conditions of victims, they are attacking

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Fahim, Kareem. "From Turkey's Bursting Prisons, Literature Breaks Out." *The Washington Post*. March 02 2019. Accessed March 06 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/from-turkeys-bursting-prisons-literature-breaks-out/2019/03/21/53dfdc08-41ed-11e9-a44b-42f4df262a4c_story.html.

²¹ Akyol, Kürsat. "Books Come Under Suspicion in Post-Coup Turkey." *DW*. November 14 2017. Accessed March 02 2020. <https://www.dw.com/en/books-come-under-suspicion-in-post-coup-turkey/a-41361598>.

fiction writers. That is very sad.” She was put on trial under Article 301 for insulting Turkishness, but ultimately pardoned due to lack of evidence.²² Asli Erdogan, who wrote *The Stone Building and Other Places* and *The City in Crimson Cloak* was quickly arrested under propaganda and terrorist charges following the coup, being accused of “incitement of the people.” The winner of the 2018 Simone de Beauvoir Prize, Erdogan now lives in Germany in exile, after being acquitted in 2017 from prison in Istanbul. In her book, *The Stone Building and Other Places*, Erdogan, despite not having been in jail yet, speaks of life in prison, breaking the silence that surrounds this trauma in Turkey. In the preface of this book Erdogan wrote, “It is quite natural that one day what I said and wrote would happen to me myself,” and this is what happened.²³

Another example is the writer of *Last Train to Istanbul*, Ayse Kulin. Predictably, she became subject to widespread online abuse for her illustrative depictions of sexual scenes.²⁴ Abdullah Sevki was even arrested for his explicit scenes of sexual assault on children.²⁵ Prosecutors have requested between five to ten years of prison sentence for the wrongs associated with this book. One prosecutor has even gone as far as accusing Baruch Spinoza and Albert Camus of being members of terrorist organizations, illustrating to us that no writer, Turkish or European, alive or dead, are safe from the authorities. With so many writers, as was the case with Asli Erdogan, going into exile across Europe, the possibility for a return to normalcy is growing dimmer and dimmer. The penalties for writers as the ones outlined in this segment are severe, and will definitely go to trial and receive startling prison sentences should they choose to even visit. Turkey continues to build new prisons. In 2019 prisons in Turkey had the capacity to hold close to half a million, by 2021, that number is likely to rise to close to a million. With such a sad situation and a loss of critical voices, it is no longer a matter of hoping for a better tomorrow. Today, it is a matter of what we can do now to resist and speak against these crimes against freedom of expression. With such a widespread and collective loss of artistic and intellectual freedom, one of the largest fears is depoliticization, or voluntary self censorship, in which we become so afraid that we silence ourselves. Either that, or writers will become so abstract in the expression of their ideas that words become convoluted and ideas mis-

²² Primiani, Alex. Turkish Writer Elif Shafak Speaks Against Turkish Censorship. Melville House. June 4 2019. Accessed March 02 2020. <https://www.mhpbooks.com/turkish-writer-elif-shafak-speaks-against-turkish-censorship/>.

²³ Heimann, Holger. “On Torture and Imprisonment in Turkey: Author Asli Erdogan Speaks.” DW. April 24 2019. Accessed March 02 2020. <https://www.dw.com/en/on-torture-and-imprisonment-in-turkey-author-asli-erdogan-speaks/a-48447352>.

²⁴ Mazumdar, Arunima. “‘Turkish is a Language of the Heart’: Ayse Kulin.” The Hindu. July 20 2019. Accessed March 02 2020. <https://www.thehindu.com/books/turkish-is-a-language-of-the-heart-aye-kulin/article28573362.ece>.

²⁵ “Prosecutors Demand Up to 10 Years for Author, Publisher of ‘Obscene’ Book.” Ahval News. June 26 2019. Accessed March 02 2020. <https://ahvalnews.com/censorship/prosecutors-demand-10-years-author-publisher-obscene-book>.

interpreted, which is just as dangerous to freedom of expression as silence itself. Lastly, some will become overly political, therefore taking the art away from storytelling. Writers are powerful through the voice and views they share with the public. If the state silences them, they lose their power. That is the case in Turkey. Today, more than ever before, literature is not all about telling stories and passing the time on a Sunday afternoon. It is also about silences and the silenced. Writing and reading has become one of the most effective sanctuaries for the disempowered as well as those have been marginalized around the world, which is another reason why Turkishness Uncensored is such an essential new name on the market. Below, we have included a detailed diagram that cites some of the most influential novels that have been censored by Turkish media, along with the alleged “wrongs” that the books have committed.



The last two trends that we contribute to being a trigger of the coup is the shutting down of media companies, or them being taken over, largely accomplished by appointing government-approved trustees, as well as the seizing of assets and the closing down of many media brands, and the removal of critical television stations from the most-used state-owned satellite distribution platforms. Such organizations have been particularly hard hit because of the nature of the work that is done: exposing realities of the world around them. In his speeches, Erdoğan often chillingly assails journalists as “terrorists,” while using language that incites fear in listeners.²⁶ By writing, for Erdoğan, journalists are responsible for nurturing terrorism, and therefore inciting revolutions and government takeovers because such intellectuals are viewed by the nation as “thinkers.” One of the oldest newspapers in Turkey, Cumhuriyet has long been associated with secular order in the country. This means that it was marked as an opposition paper under the present regime. In 2015, the paper published an article that described the forceful involvement by Turkish police of a convoy stocked with weapons, seen close to the Syrian border. A supplementary video featured police uncovering weapons hidden inside medicine boxes in these vehicles. The article looked to Turkey’s National Intelligence Organization (MIT) for being responsible for deploying the convoy and these weapons with the aim of sending them into Northern Syria. Almost immediately after the article was published, President Erdoğan appeared on live television to say, “The individual who has reported this as an exclusive story will pay a high price for this. I will not let this go.”²⁷ Two journalists from the paper, Can Dündar and Erdem Gül were each sentenced to close to six years in prison, with claims against them amounting to espionage.²⁸ These two sentences are much bigger than just an attack on an old newspaper or on two investigative reporters. It is more of an affront on the very definition of journalism and the nature of this profession in Turkey today. In the year preceding the coup, data shows that Turkey became a world leader in Twitter censorship. 72% of the removal requests that Twitter was received during this period came from Turkey.²⁹ In the few months following the coup, at least 130 organizations have been shut down. This includes at least 45 newspapers, 29 publishing houses, 16 tv stations and 3 news agencies.³⁰ 160 media outlets that the government believes were linked to the Gülen Movement, or Kurdish media, a

²⁶ MacLellan, Lila. “In a Chilling Assertion, Turkey’s Erdoğan Says Imprisoned Journalists are Not Journalists, but Terrorists.” Quartz. September 20 2017. Accessed February 27 2020. <https://qz.com/1083140/turkish-president-recep-erdogan-says-imprisoned-journalists-are-not-journalists-but-terrorists-a-chilling-assertion/>.

²⁷ “Turkey’s Erdoğan Vows to Punish Journalists Behind Syria Trucks Video.” REUTERS. June 1, 2015. Accessed February 10 2020. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-turkey-arms/turkeys-Erdoğan-vows-to-punish-journalist-behind-syria-trucks-video-idUKKBN0OH1UQ20150601>.

²⁸ “Turkey Jails Cumhuriyet Journalists Can Dündar and Erdem Gül.” BBC, May 6, 2016. Accessed February 10 2020. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36233282>.

²⁹ Brandt, Mathias. “Turkey Dominates Global Twitter Censorship.” Digital image. August 14, 2015. Accessed February 02, 2020. <https://www-statista-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/chart/3727/share-of-all-twitter-content-removal-requests/>.

³⁰ Shafak, Elif. ‘Police Officers Demanded to See My Books’: Elif Shafak on Turkey’s War on Free-Speech.

group that Erdogan has long accused of being the ideology behind the coup, have also been forced to close down.³¹ During this same period following the attempted government takeover, through the implementation emergency powers, the government has gone so far as to suspend the activities of close to 370 nongovernmental associations, among them a children's rights group, three lawyers' associations with a human rights focus, and a women's rights and humanitarian organization in the country's southeast.³² That being said, the government has committed some of Asia's most complicated, thorough, and long-lasting internet censorship. In April 2017, Turkey went on to ban Wikipedia after the site refused to remove pages that the Turkish government had found offensive. This included a number of references to Turkey's ongoing relationships with Syrian militants and terrorists. This went on for close to three years when, in December 2019, the high court in Turkey finally ruled that the ban was indeed unconstitutional, finally taking the side of free speech. In a statement a law professor at Istanbul Bilgi University, Yaman Akdeniz praised the decision, "We join the people of Turkey, and the millions of readers and volunteers who rely on Wikipedia around the world, to welcome this important recognition for universal access to knowledge." The ban has been understood as an attempt by Erdogan to go down on freedom of expression.³³ However, despite this one source being made available again to Turkish internet users, thousands of sites have remained blocked. Figures reported in January 2017 tell us that close to 70,000 social media accounts have been under surveillance since July 2016. Approximately 4000, of whom 1700 were arrested, were taken into custody as a result of the motives behind certain social media postings.³⁴ In 2019, according to the Istanbul Freedom of Expression Association, Turkish authorities have blocked over 245,000 websites.³⁵ On the next page, we have included detailed timelines that illustrate how censorship has progressed in Turkey, forming a press crisis. We can see the sharp increase in crackdowns, detainments, as well as the blocking of websites that are very often interpreted as critical for the valuable information that they offer to the larger public.

³¹ "Turkey: Silencing the Media." Human Rights Watch. December 15 2016. Accessed February 10 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/12/15/silencing-turkeys-media/governments-deepening-assault-critical-journalism>.

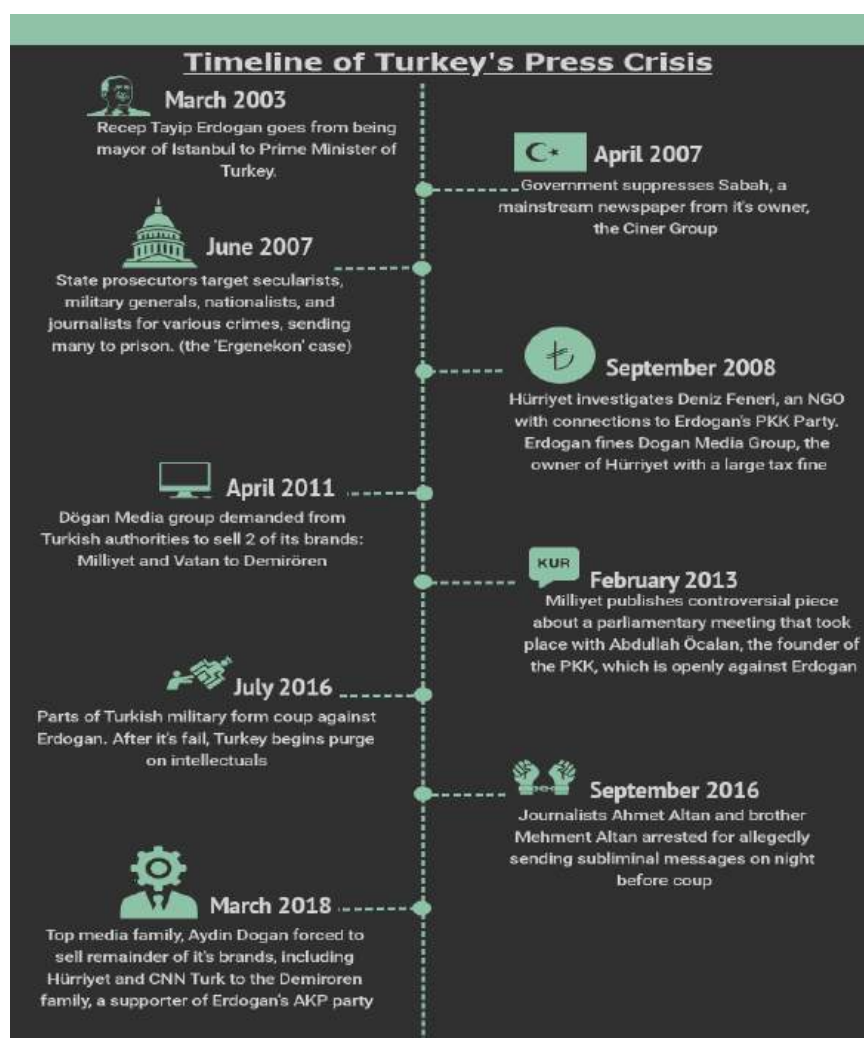
³² "Turkey: Mass Prosecution of Lawyers': Misuse of Terrorism Charge Undermines Fair Trial Rights." Human Rights Watch. April 10 2019. Accessed March 09 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/04/10/turkey-mass-prosecution-lawyers>.

³³ Zaveri, Mihir. "Turkey's Ban on Wikipedia Is Unconstitutional, Court Says." The New York Times. The New York Times, March 09, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/26/world/europe/wikipedia-ban-turkey.html>.

³⁴ Ogzun, Topak. The making of a totalitarian surveillance machine: Surveillance in Turkey under AKP rule. *Surveillance & Society*, 15(3/4), 535–542. August 2017. Accessed March 09 2020. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319463445_The_Making_of_a_Totalitarian_Surveillance_Machine_Surveillance_in_Turkey_Under_AKP_Rule.

³⁵ "Turkey: Turkey's New Internet Regulations Spark Fears of New Wave of Censorship." Voice of America. October 10, 2019. Accessed March 07 2020. *ProQuest*, <http://proxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/docview/2302643767?accountid=12768>.

Before moving forwards to our target market, we want to emphasize an important matter: censorship, fake news, and silencing of the press is not only a “Turkey problem.” It is a global concern. Journalism in many countries has continued to become more and more dysfunctional because of so many new, overlapping forms of censorship laws that has led to nation-wide suppression, self-censorship, surveillance, monitoring and forced control, gatekeeping, propaganda and disinformation, acts of terror supplemented by anti-terror laws, the criminalization of encryption and anonymity, hate speech and harassment, and finally organized crime.³⁶ Turkey has found itself on the front lines of these practices, bringing the rule of law, civil liberties, and democratic governance to a sharp decline. This kind of behavior has become equally transparent in states such Malaysia, Singapore, Russia, and Venezuela.³⁷



³⁶ Carlsson, U., & Pöyhtäri, R. (2017). Words of introduction. In U. Carlsson, & R. Pöyhtäri (Eds.), *The Assault on Journalism* (pp. 11–17). Göteborg: Nordicom. Accessed March 04 2020.

³⁷ Hem, M. (2014). *Evading the Censors: Critical Journalism in Authoritarian States*. Oxford: University of Oxford. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Accessed March 04 2020 https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-10/Evading_the_Censors_Critical_journalism_in_authoritarian_states_0.pdf.

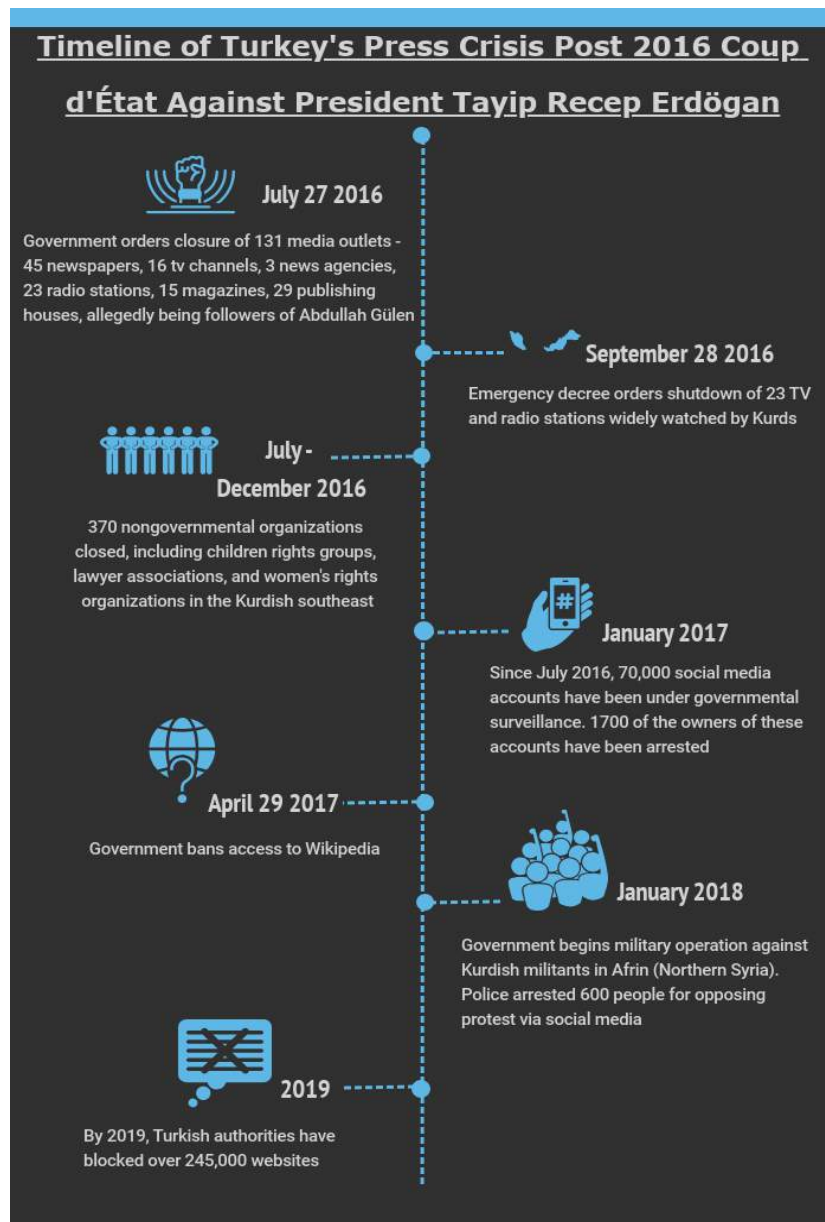
Authoritarian governments across the Middle East, for one, have been increasingly adopting new, more innovative approaches to online censorship, one of the direct outcomes of the recent Arab Spring. These new practices allude to separating citizens from the internet by denying access to popular websites. Ironically enough, these nation-states often have relied on the aid of Western technology to accomplish this much. Just two years ago, in 2018, Egypt's parliament solidified online censorship. Legislation offered complete power to the government to block social media users and accounts that engage in violations such as "incitement to break the law."

In Cairo, The Huffington Post and Human Rights Watch are only some of the most popular sites restricted to the majority of internet users. Authorities in Egypt have been using a technology known as Sandvine, which is designed for governments and large corporations to inspect platforms that could be possibly threatening to the reputation of the state. One of the site's tools is safeguards that ensure that the site of question respects "principles of social responsibility, human rights and privacy rights."³⁸ Many of us here in the United States do not seem to be too worried about censorship, especially in comparison to countries in the Middle East and Asia. However, if we take a more scrutinizing look, we will see that there are indeed slight signs and discrepancies here and there that leads us to believe that in the future, such stringent measures that have been adopted in other countries could indeed be implemented here. A single example of this that we can directly look to is from the former National Security Advisor, John Bolton. A few months back, he expressed alarm when he discovered that the Trump administration could possibly block his memoir. Published by Simon & Schuster on March 17, 2020, Bolton describes his discussions with President Trump over the Ukraine scandal. In *The Room Where it Happened: A White House Memoir* Bolton daringly recounts that he had told Trump's lawyer, William Barr that he suspected that Trump had granted personal favors to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey as well as President Xi Jinping of China. In this particular chapter, Bolton makes the claim that he had advised Trump against a possible plan to hold peace talks with the Taliban at Camp David. Some other topics Bolton criticized the administration for included the current administration's approach in dealing with nuclear proliferation in North Korea, calling it a "big mistake," and said that any negotiations with Kim Jong Un is "doomed to failure."³⁹ Elsewhere, countries have also been adopting new laws that would directly target the spreading of false news. In early 2019 Singapore introduced anti-fake news laws, both which were met with much con-

³⁸ Malsin, Jared. "World News: Throughout Middle East, Web is being Walled Off." Wall Street Journal, July 19, 2018. Accessed March 07 2020. *ProQuest*, <http://proxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/docview/2071449002?accountid=12768>.

³⁹ Jacobs, Jennifer. Sink, Justin. "Bolton Warns of Possible 'Censorship' of His White House Memoir." Bloomberg. February 17, 2020. Accessed March 07, 2020. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-02-17/bolton-raises-alarm-over-u-s-censorship-of-his-memoir>.

troversy. The law gives the government ministers the power to order social media outlets to put disclaimers next to posts that are assumed to be false. They can also order some content to be removed. If these tactics do not work, they can go as far as blocking websites which they feel are propagating false information on it that is contrary to “public interest.” According to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, the legislation is an “essential part” of fighting fake news and hate speech.⁴⁰



⁴⁰ Ives, Mike. Zhong, Raymond. "Singapore Plans Law to Fight False News, but Critics Fear Repression." The New York Times. April 01 2019. Accessed February 03 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/01/world/asia/singapore-fake-news-law.html>.

Target Audience

Ultimately, our total audience outreach will expand from North America towards all of Western Europe. We will begin small and, year-by-year, see ourselves becoming a global voice for Turkey in addition to other demographics, those of Middle Eastern descent especially. During our first year, we will be looking towards Turkish-Americans and Turkish expats in the United States. According to the Turkish Coalition of America, there are just over 350,000 Americans of Turkish descent living in the United States. On average, each year, there is a Turkish immigration close to 4000.⁴¹ We see the largest concentrations of Turkish people in New York, New Jersey, and California. However, we are also considering the fact that the Turkish community's influence and heritage is actually spread over about 500,000 more Americans of "Turkic" ancestry. This may include Americans of Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Kazakh, Kirgiz, Turkish Cypriot descent, as well as Uighur Turks from China, Turkmen of Iraq, along with the Turkic communities from territories of the former Soviet Union.⁴² That being said, at this stage we anticipate to target 20% of this total of 850,000, which would calculate to a readership in year one of about 170,000. Each year, we expect to reach a greater amount as a result of more brand awareness and word-of-mouth marketing. We perceive our brand as being most appealing to two groups who lie on opposite sides of the spectrum. On the one hand, Turkishness Uncensored appeals to high school and college students who either are of Turkish descent, or who are interested in Turkish Studies either for school or for their personal education. This claim is coming from observation of a report prepared by the Turkish Council of Higher Education, which states that more than 50,000 Turkish students are receiving education abroad, with up to 15,000 doing so in the United States.⁴³ And then, we also are confident that our brand will likewise appeal to working professionals who, again, are of Turkish descent, who are interested in Turkology, or whose career has led them to follow Turkish news and culture such as would be necessary if one worked for the Turkish embassy, education system, etc. We presume that Turkishness Uncensored is not only a platform that will ease stress from content creators, but also give our target audience a place where they can feel at home again. This assumption comes from the backed observation that the number of English-proficient households that use Turkish as a home-language overwhelmingly outweigh that of families who have opted to only speak English. The result of this is a Turkish community, including schools, that serve the Turkish community in the US, who have therefore taken responsibility of retaining the Turkish language and

⁴¹ Varenne, H. "Turkish-American Immigration History and Identity Formations." Taylor & Francis.

Accessed February 3, 2020. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1360200042000296672>.

⁴² "The Turkish American Community: A Bridge of Friendship Between the United States and Turkey." Turkish Coalition of America. 2020. Accessed March 02, 2020. <http://tc-america.us/community/the-turkish-american-community-463.html>.

⁴³ Varenne, H. "Turkish-American Immigration History and Identity Formations."

slowing assimilation.⁴⁴ This illustrates our presumption that no matter what the ethnicity or background, in the end of the day people want to be close to their roots. Turkishness Uncensored does that for Turkish people here. In terms of education levels, data shows that, in general, Turkish immigrants in the United States receive a more fluid and higher level of education, and are therefore better integrated, than those who receive education by European institutions such as in Germany or France.⁴⁵ More than 48% of Turkish people in the United States have at least a college degree, while about 25% have a graduate degree. A large number of Turkish Americans work in professional and managerial sectors. However, there is also a considerable segment of this population who have limited and professional skills. As a result, we see them finding themselves in low-wage and hourly jobs such as restaurants, grocery stores, and gas stations.⁴⁶

By year two, we expect to reach an additional 10% of the initial 850,000 individuals in our target audience. Our audience outreach will expand from Turkish Americans and Turkish expats in the United States to 10% of Middle Eastern and Muslim-Americans and expats. This includes students and working professionals coming from countries across the Middle East and Northern Africa including Israel, Iran, Morocco, and Algeria, where Arabic is one of the main languages, but not the only one spoken. In the United States, there is an estimation of close to 3.45 Muslim Americans, including 2.15 million adults, of younger age range than the overall US population, of which 10% we plan to render a new addition to our audience.⁴⁷ Close to 58% of this population are first generation Muslim adults, within 18% are second generation. 24% of this entire population claims to be United States natives with US-born parents.⁴⁸ A large proportion of these individuals position themselves in the middle to upper class in the United States, since Middle Easterners are one of the most educated immigrant groups. About 49% of Middle Eastern immigrants have at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 28% of native-born Americans.⁴⁹ In terms of immigration rate, about three in ten Muslims immigrants have arrived in the US since 2010.⁵⁰ By the end of year two we will start to make plans to target a potential audience abroad, as a result of the steady growth that we expect to already see.

⁴⁴ Otcu, G.B. (2009) "Language Maintenance and Cultural Identity Construction in a Turkish Saturday School in New York City. Ed.D. Thesis, Teachers College Columbia University. Accessed February 27, 2020. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ912633>.

⁴⁵ Akinci, U. 2002. "Germanification" of Turkish-Americans. Turkish Torque. 14 May. [www.tacsne.org/Germanification.htm].

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Demographic Portrait of Muslim Americans. Pew Research Center: Religion & Public Life. July 26 2017. Accessed March 09 2020. <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/demographic-portrait-of-muslim-americans/>.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Camarota, S. A. 2000. "Immigrants from the Middle East: A Profile of the Foreign-Born U.S. Population from Pakistan to Morocco." *Journal of Social, Political, and Economic Studies* 27 (3): 315-3. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30034246?seq=1>.

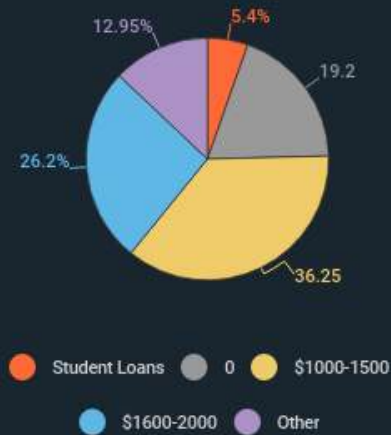
⁵⁰ Demographic Portrait of Muslim Americans. Ibid.

In the beginning of year three our goal is a reach of 35% of Turks and 15% of Middle Easterners in the US, and. We will also begin to target the Turkish population in Western Europe, which we have already noted is 4.5 million. The plan at this point is for Turkishness Uncensored to become a global platform. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey, more than 4.5 million Turkish people call Western-European countries home today.⁵¹ When we get to year four, our growth will begin to slow down to a constant rate as we concentrate on on the current marketplace to 38%, and we will expand to also include 10% of Middle Eastern people in Europe into our target audience too. According to the International Organization for Migration, there are over six million Middle Eastern migrants spread across Europe. The countries with the highest concentration includes France, Italy, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Greece. Most Arabs in these countries are coming from Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Libya, and Sudan.⁵² In the statistical diagrams below, we have included our audience demographics as well as a yearly breakdown:

⁵¹ Dinçer, Dedeglu. Genç H. Deniz. Turkish Migration to Europe: A Modified Gravity Model Analysis. Springer Open. October 26 2017. Accessed March 10 2020. <https://izajodm.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40176-017-0097-z>.

⁵² "Migration Data Portal." International Organization for Migration. Accessed February 27 2020. https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=stock_abs_&t=2019.

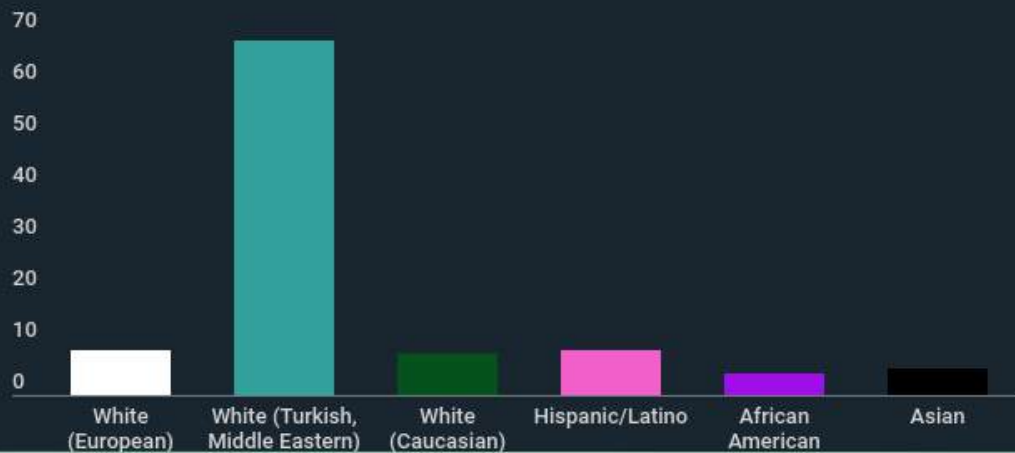
Average Monthly Income



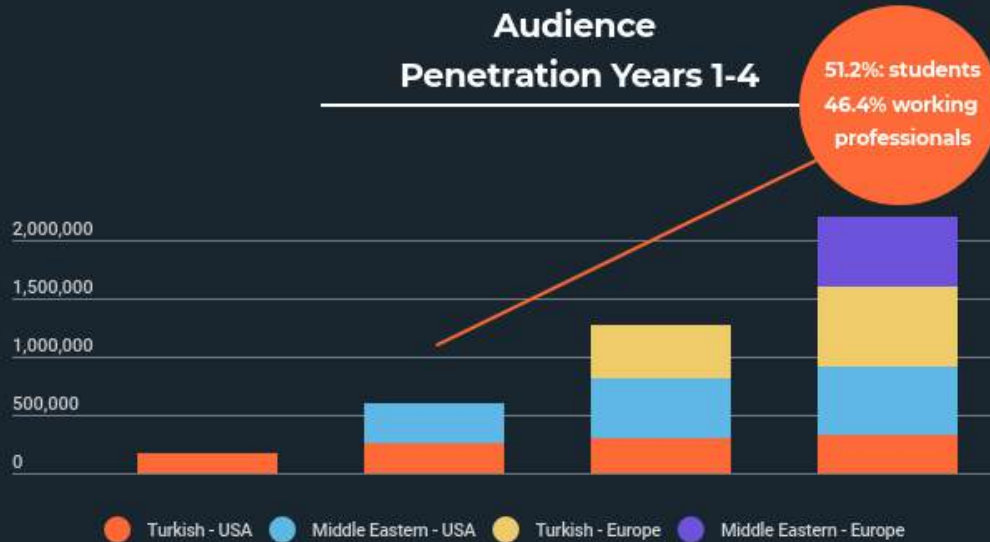
Willingness to Pay (yearly)



Audience Ethnicity (percentage)



Audience Penetration Years 1-4



Competition

Our primary competitors are The American Library Association, Al Jazeera, and Hürriyet Daily. However, what differentiates Turkishness Uncensored from these three main competitors is that we are not only a place to access content that would be otherwise taken down if publication was even attempted in Turkey. Also, we are not only a place to scroll through timely headlines every morning on the subway. Furthermore unlike Hürriyet, we are not only an English-Language news outlet for Turkish news and updates. We combine the missions of each of these platforms, and unite them with our own goal to make news and culture in Turkey more transparent, with the hope that other countries suffering a similar intellectual crisis (i.e. China, Saudi Arabia, Russia) will soon follow. There is a need for novelists, artists, and journalists alike to tell the truth of the state of Turkey, no matter what their ideas may be, and no matter in what medium that is. People are looking for truth and innovation, and that is exactly what Turkishness Uncensored intends to offer.

The American Library Association (ALA) is the largest, most widely known organization of its kind, with over 57,000. A nonprofit based in the United States, the objective of ALA is to promote libraries and library education internationally, tactfully publishing in a variety of formats including journals, books and newsletters. What has caught our attention here at Turkishness Uncensored, and what has caused us to consider this platform one of our competitors has to do with their priorities and overall mission: diversity, equity of access, education and continuous learning, intellectual freedom, and 21st century literacy.⁵³ Like us, ALA is primarily concerned with granting equal access to individuals for literature. Some of the strategic directions that the brand has adopted in the past few years includes advocacy, information policy, professional and leadership development, equity diversity and inclusion. This frame for the business was conceived of by a series of “kitchen table conversations” that included face-to-face and online forums designed to provide members with an opportunity to shape ALA’s vision and offer ideas on how to improve.⁵⁴ This is definitely a tactic that we can implement into our strategy during our first year: engage with our audience and hear what they are looking for in our platform. From there, we will not only gain a better understanding of the kind of content we should be producing, but also the approaches we should adopt in achieving these goals both in terms of business operations and when it comes to our physical product.

⁵³ "Mission & Priorities", American Library Association, June 9, 2008. Accessed February 05, 2020. <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/node/229/>. Document ID: b865e81a-b936-dfa4-0d2e-9677e16a411c.

⁵⁴ "ALA Strategic Planning", American Library Association, May 5, 2008. February 05, 2020. <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/node/222/>. Document ID: facccfed-c6b1-3944-79ad-83d6fe36aec2.

However, something that is quite distracting is that, despite being such a serious and professional website with thousands of visits each day, the website is not user friendly. Yes, it is clean with plenty of whitespace, but it is not immediately clear from the homepage exactly what the mission of ALA is. From the “About ALA” vertical, we learn that the organization is interested in diversity and fighting censorship, but it requires further reading, which many readers do not have the patience to immediately do. Web users want content quickly at their disposal. Also, on the homepage it is also not clear exactly what kind of content a reader can expect to find. There are few images, something we consider important for design and the purpose of capturing visitor’s attention. Instead, there are vague headlines like “Trends” and “Challenge Support” under verticals like “Featured Content.” This weakness not only could threaten new possible readers, but also leader to user’s frustration. Maybe, ALA is what they are looking for, but they do not know it because it is not immediately made clear upon interaction with the landing page. In terms of website traffic ALA Receives 37.2% web traffic with a 49.6% bounce rate and a site ranking of 21,9433. Time spent on site is on average 3:22. Top keywords are ala, hooda math, and banned books. Similar sites include TP Link Cloud, SLJ, and Oh Happy Day.⁵⁵ With a bounce rate so high and keywords that do not even pertain to the site’s mission, like “math” additional keyword research and possible reorganization of the site’s links and coding may be of benefit in order to ensure that the right sorts of users are visiting ALA and that it ranks higher in search engines.

A characteristic of ALA that has made us more aware of what other companies are doing in the market is the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom that represents banned and challenged books. This program is special because here, ALA receives reports from libraries, schools, and media outlets across the nations about attempts that have been taken to ban books in communities in the country. ALA puts together a list of these challenged books every year and makes it available to the public as a way to inform everyone about censorship efforts and the dangers they pose to freedom of expression.⁵⁶ ALA goes as far as turning this concern into an annual event whose purpose is not only to inform, but also to celebrate the freedom to read and for authors voices’ to be heard. Past and current events to censor books in libraries and schools are highlighted, bringing together a large community of librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, teachers, and readers from all walks of life. With this clear focus on effort across the country to remove, ore restrict access to books, Banned Books Week is an efficient way to draw national attention to the

⁵⁵ <https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/ala.org>.

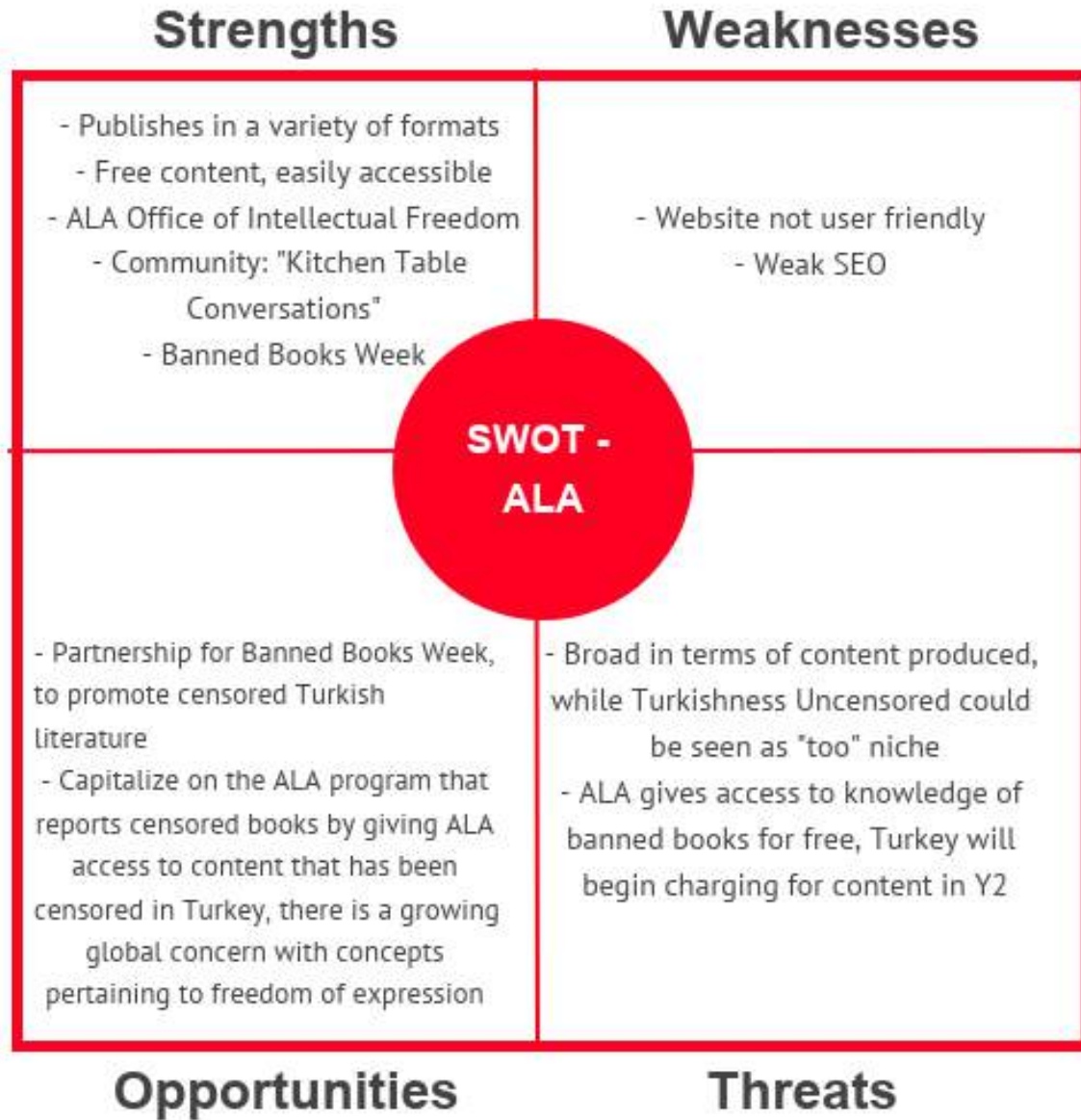
⁵⁶ "Frequently Challenged Books", American Library Association, March 26, 2013. Accessed February 05, 2020. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks>, Document ID: 82134c30-c54c-447f-be34-bfbcb7d094e5.

harms of censorship. According to data made available by the business, there are currently fourteen contributor and sponsors that advocate the event. Coverage by media reaches close to 2.8 billion readers and over 90,000 publishing industry and library subscribers.⁵⁷ Some of the genres that have been most challenged, and which ALA seems to focus most on includes children's books because they are often considered unsuited or inappropriate for the target age group, young adult books, classics, and books with diverse content such as ones that focus on people of color, disabilities, or of varying sexual orientations.⁵⁸ During Banned Books Weeks, attendees become engaged in a wide variety of ways, which can be exemplified in the "Dear Banned Author Letter-Writing Campaign." Readers are encouraged to write or tweet (#DearBannedAuthor) to banned or challenged authors, sharing what their stories meant to them. The goal here is not to raise awareness of books that are at risk of being censored, but instead to encourage intellectual conversations between authors and their readers about the power of words and how important it is today to have the freedom to do that. Turkishness Uncensored has a lot to takeaway from ALA's Banned Books Week, as we prepare for the launching of our own brand, which will inevitably lead to an event with a similar agenda to that of ALA's. Banned Books Week could also be an opportunity for Turkishness Uncensored to partner with for the purposes of Turkish novels that have been banned in Turkey. This not only benefits us, but could expand the audience for ALA by concentrating on a niche collection of books.

When one thinks about ALA and their focus on freedom of expression in the book industry, one may consider this quite broad, despite being focused only on books in the United States. As a result, we are considering this to be a possible threat to Turkishness Uncensored, since we are focused on a variety of mediums including books, journalism, art, etc, but only in the context of Turkey. This is something we plan to acknowledge and hopeful turn into an opportunity through a possible partnership with ALA. To avoid another threat, we must acknowledge that ALA is a nonprofit, broken down into four main components: operating fund, general fund, division fund, and round table fund. As a result, we must be careful in the way we choose to monetize our content, as to avoid isolating a potential audience. In the following chart is a diagram that briefly summarizes our SWOT analysis for the American Library Association, and how Turkishness Uncensored could be affected.

⁵⁷ "Banned Books Week (September 27-October 3, 2020)", American Library Association, December 11, 2012. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/banned>, Accessed February 5, 2020. Document ID: be933510-a8c2-4f72-9b65-9a8eb7b89f69.

⁵⁸ "Frequently Challenged Books", American Library Association, March 26, 2013. Accessed February 05, 2020. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks>. Document ID: 82134c30-c54c-447f-be34-bfbcb7d094e5.



In the area of Middle Eastern news, we consider Al Jazeera to be our second major competitor. An independent, English-language news channel headquartered in Qatar, Al Jazeera was launched in 1996. It is comprised of ten channels, with divisions in more than seventy bureaus around the world, and is broadcasted in more than 310 million households in over 100 countries including the United States, Brazil, Turkey, Russia, Kenya, Jordan, Kuwait, Tunisia, Morocco, Malaysia, and Japan, amongst dozens of others. The business brands themselves as being one of the most global networks in the world, represent-

ing the voice of millions of people. This claim is largely backed by Al Jazeera's staff of over 3000 individuals coming from more than 70 nationalities.⁵⁹ The mission of Al Jazeera is strong and inspiring, which could function as a model for the building of our brand. Some of the values that we find most applicable to us includes: 1. Adhere to journalistic values of honesty, courage, fairness, balance, independence, credibility, and diversity; 2. Endeavor to get to the truth; 3. Recognize diversity in human societies with all their races, cultures, and beliefs; and 4. Distinguish between news material, opinion, and analysis in order to voice speculation and propaganda.⁶⁰ Another aspect of Al Jazeera that we consider to be a strength is the easy accessibility. The company is funded through the Qatari government through loans and grants, so all content remains free to readers around the world. However, we are wary of the fact that the platform is indeed strictly government controlled, which makes it susceptible to bias and publishing content that may be in the interest of a specific group or political party. Often dubbed the Arabic CNN, Al Jazeera operates a 24-hour satellite news cycle, which means content is constantly being published and updated in respect to different timezones around the world. Also, Al Jazeera has a large presence in the journalism landscape through a number of programs such as 101 East, Empire, Listening Post, and The Bottom Line.

Al Jazeera has a stronghold in news of the Middle East, which could on the one hand be considered a strength, but also a weakness, because there could be a certain bias in which the direction of news favors Middle Eastern powers over others, such as those in the West. However, one of the biggest faults that continues to threaten the credibility and reputation of the company is that many Al Jazeera journalists have been detained and/or arrested. The events of December 2013 mark a touching time for reporters, Peter Greste, Mohamaed Famy, and Baher Mohamed. All three were arrested in their Cairo Marriott hotel rooms, being detained on charges of delivering "false news" and "aiding a terrorist organization" following the 2013 Egyptian coup. Al Jazeera quickly became one of several websites that the Egyptian government blocked access to after accusing the network of it having ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. A public outcry from many media outlet was the outcome, in which Egypt was then accused of limiting freedom of expression in an attempt to suppress opposition to President Al-Sisi.⁶¹ During this growing crisis, Al Jazeera, BBC, and several other news organizations hosted a Twitter and wide-spread social media campaign, #FreeAJStaff. Along with moments of silence characterizing this movement, there were also several posts that openly featured protests held at Egyptian embassies across various countries. At the end of

⁵⁹ "About Us." Al Jazeera. Accessed February 06 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/aboutus/>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ "AFP. Sisi's Egypt Cracks Down on News Websites." Al-Monitor. May 25 2017. Accessed February 04 2020. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/afp/2017/05/egypt-politics-media-internet.html#ixzz4tuX6UHqg>.

it, the journalists were sentenced between seven and ten years in prison, a clear attack on press freedom that continues today.⁶² Apart from the jailing of journalists that seems to be an underlying aspect of Al Jazeera, it has also often been criticized for “giving a voice” to extremist organizations, as was the case after 9/11 when the news station aired videos that it had received from Osama bin Laden and the Taliban.⁶³ Also, because it is, and is looked at as a Qatar, and Middle East-only organization that is controlled through Qatar Media Corporation, it has not made as big of a name for itself in the US as other global brands, like BBC. Data accessed via Alexa tells us that Al Jazeera receives 58.4% website traffic with a bounce rate of 58%. It ranks 3,744 in global internet engagement. Some of the top keywords include Johann Carl Friedrich Gaub, Omar Sharif, and Al Jazeera. Similar sites include Reuters, Independent Co. UK, and AP News⁶⁴ These statistics demonstrate that, although Al Jazeera does rank higher than the majority of sites on search engines, the most common keywords associated with it may only pertain to certain articles and not the website, collectively. This is an easy fix, by more research in SEO strategies and interface design, which is why, until these aspects are considered and improved, we shall consider this information to be a weakness for the brand.

Along those same lines, because Al Jazeera is the first channel most people would turn to read a story about the Middle East, it has the opportunity to attract readers to its other stories, outside of the Middle East towards other regions as well. Because there is a large visibility of Al Jazeera across the Middle East, it also has the potential to promote tourism to these countries, attract potential new advertisers, as well as boost Qatar’s investment and overall financial situation. There is a large opportunity in this for the brand to appeal to contributors, largely thanks to its reputation as being a station run by the most ethnically diverse staff in the world.

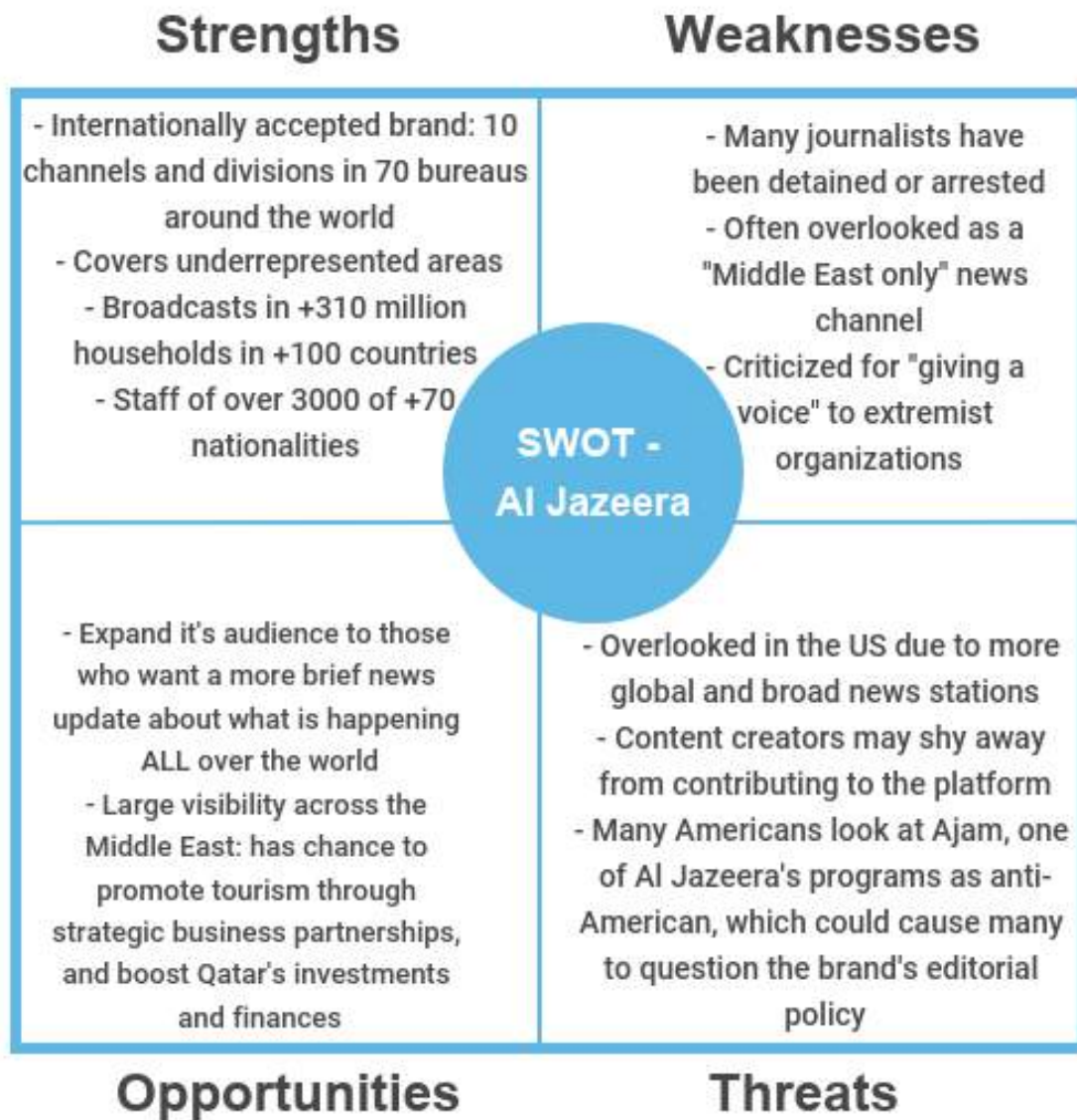
The threat that Al Jazeera faces is largely tied to it’s weakness in being largely looked upon as a Middle East-only company. That being said, it is often overlooked in the US, as more people turn to more prominent and broad news organizations like CNN and Bloomberg. Al Jazeera has a lot, as we have seen under its belt. It has been threatened, beaten, and blocked by several governments around the world, including Saudi Arabia. Many journalists and content creators may in effect shy away from contributing to the flat-

⁶² Loveluck, Louisa. Samaan, Magdy. "David Cameron 'Appalled' as Egypt Sentences Al Jazeera Journalists to Seven Years in Prison". *The Daily Telegraph*. June 23, 2014. Accessed February 22, 2020. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/egypt/10919226/Al-Jazeera-journalists-working-in-Egypt-sentenced-to-seven-years-in-prison.html>.

⁶³ “Full Transcript of bin Laden’s Speech.” Al Jazeera. November 01 2004. Accessed February 22, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2004/11/200849163336457223.html>.

⁶⁴ https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/aljazeera.com#card_topkeywords.

worm out of fear of prosecution. Also, many Americans look at Ajam, one of several of Al Jazeera's programs, as being anti-American, which could cause many individuals to go back and question again the authenticity of the brand's code of ethics.⁶⁵ Below, is a SWOT diagram summarizing the content that was mentioned in this section about Al Jazeera:



⁶⁵ <http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/al-jazeera-america-presents/Fall2013.html>.

Lastly, we are shifting focus to the Turkish market specifically, by acknowledging Hürriyet, as our third major competitor. Based in Istanbul and Ankara, Hürriyet is one of the most widely read English language news stations in Turkey, and amongst Turkish-Americans. What makes Hürriyet a strong name in the marketplace is its widespread popularity amongst Turkish-Americans, expats, and English-speakers in Turkey and throughout the region. The station appeals to Turkish people from various backgrounds, regardless of whether they speak Turkish or not. It is widely understood to be a secular, liberal, and taking a centre-left position on most political issues, in contrast to Turkey's other main English language outlet, The Daily Sabah, which is seen as closely aligned with the Justice and Development Party of Erdogan. Hürriyet's other competitor, the Gülen Movement-run Today's Zaman, was quickly shut down by the government following the 2016 failed coup attempt.

As was the case with ALA, the site's landscape is definitely one of the most obvious weaknesses. It is not wisely thought out. It is rather chaotic with more banner and display advertisements taking up each page than actual editorial content. Similar to Al Jazeera, Hürriyet journalists have also fallen victim to censorship and prosecution. Hürriyet's New York correspondent, Razi Caniklilfil was briefly detained in April 2016 upon arrival at Istanbul's Atatürk Airport from Paris. It seems that a local court in Ankara had issued an arrest warrant for the reporter in 2015 over his social media posts, following a complaint from the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges in Turkey (TOBB) head Rifat Hisarciklioglu. Luckily, the prosecutor's office decided not to proceed with charges against Caniklilfil. The United Nations Correspondent Association (UNCA) went on to condemn the efforts to detain the Turkish reporter stating, "Our UNCA member and colleague from the Turkish media Hurriyet, Razi Canikligil, was detained today in Istanbul by Turkish police. We are told he is accused based on articles and tweets he wrote about the Turkish authorities. The UNCA considers this a grave violation of freedom of the press."⁶⁶ In terms of analytics, the site receives search traffic of 46% with a bounce rate of 56.7%. Time spent on the site averages 2 minutes and 53 seconds, which is definitely not something to be proud of. Some of the keywords associated with the site include: turkey news, buying property in Turkey, and Frida Kahlo. Readers of Hürriyet also tend to visit Daily Saha, Ahval, and TRT World. This data can be understood as a weakness, in which Hürriyet does not seem to be capitalizing on search engine optimization.⁶⁷

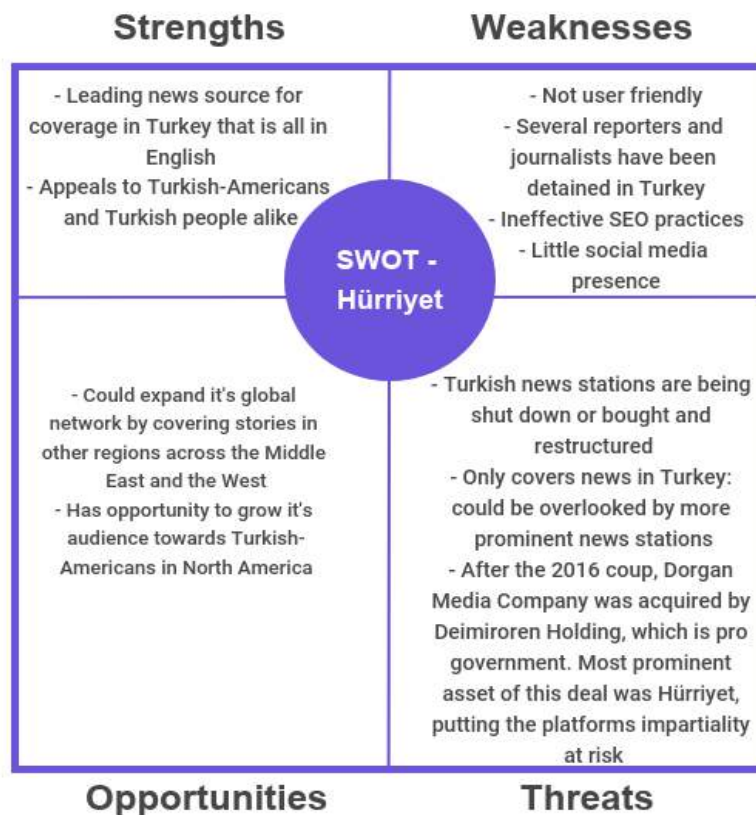
In terms of the opportunities that could be seen in the horizon for Hürriyet is the audience that it could possible reach. It could become, similar to Al Jazeera and other news corporations, a global network that

⁶⁶ "Hürriyet's New York Correspondent Briefly Detained in Istanbul." Hürriyet Daily News. June 21 2016. Accessed February 09 2020. <http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/al-jazeera-america-presents/Fall2013.html>.

⁶⁷ <https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/hurriyetdailynews.com>.

covers events as they occur in neighboring countries, such as in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Because the platform is all in English and therefore accessible to non-Turkish speakers, Hürriyet has the capability to grow its audience in the United States by creating more editorial content that connects with the West, that would in turn attract more readers.

The threat that Hürriyet faces is evident: it is stationed in Turkey and in that sense, is susceptible to being closed down if it publishes content that is even remotely critical of the current state. It is clear that the Turkish government is growing increasingly oppressive and limiting freedoms of the press. Many sites covering Turkish news are being shut down or restructured, and many of its staff is being detained. Hürriyet only covers news in Turkey that is very basic with little investigation, so it faces threats by more prominent stations like The New York Times and BBC which covers global news, including major events in Turkey. After the 2016 Turkish Coup, Dogan Media Company, was acquired by Deimiroren Holding, which is pro government. The most prominent asset of this deal was Hürriyet, which has inevitably put the newspaper's impartiality at risk.⁶⁸ Below is a summarized SWOT of the above information.



⁶⁸ "Editor-in-Chief Fikret Bila Writes on Hürriyet's Sale Process." Hürriyet Daily News, March 26, 2018. Accessed February 20 2020. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/editor-in-chief-fikret-bila-writes-on-hurriyets-sale-process-129316>.

When we apply the preceding SWOTs to our core values and objectives here at Turkishness Uncensored we come to the realization that not one of our competitors brings together activism, Turkish and minority culture, and strength in the same way that we do. Instead, we bring together the values of The American Library Association, Al Jazeera, and Hürriyet. Turkishness Uncensored is a platform that speaks to banned content, welcomes diversity, and celebrates being Turkish in a world where its state does not approve. In Turkey, as well as in many authoritarian countries, speech exists as a weapon in a world that is growing increasingly linked through networking. It seems like everyday, there is a new case where a writer or activist spoke against a repressive regime, and suddenly, that unlucky spokesperson disappears. What these cases demonstrate, and that which our competitors have failed to consider is today's delicate landscape for speech and self expression.

The idea of "free speech" has inevitably shifted. The reluctance of governmental authorities to amend laws such as Penal Code 301, has lead to a questioning of the influence of politics and the power given by legislation to the state on national culture. Our competitors have each observed what the suppression of freedom of expression can do, in varying degrees, between being victims and resisters. With Banned Books Week, ALA has risen to the occasion to spread awareness about the crisis involved in the censoring of literature. However, it does not go on to zero in on books that are being censored simply because they speak against a state. Nor do they touch upon what it means to not only be a writer who watches their work being blocked off from the public, but also be blocked off from the public themselves. Turkishness Uncensored takes this a step further by resisting these forceful practices, and offering not only writers, but artists, activists, and other intellectuals the space to tell their stories. When we look at Al Jazeera, they are one of the most diverse stations in the world and cover content that draws attention to Middle Eastern news and life and brings it to the West. However, this has come at a deadly - literally - cost. So many of Al Jazeera's staff have watched authorities in neighboring regions rip apart their content and jail them upon entrance into the country. Al Jazeera has been constantly blocked in many countries, especially those who still have a bad taste in their mouth from the Arab Spring, which started in Tunisia and spread across a number of countries throughout the Middle East such as Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Syria, and Yemen.⁶⁹ The direct result of these protests and nation-wide revolutions was, similar to in Turkey, tighter censorship and restrictions. However, Al Jazeera still remains constituent in the ways it produces its content, causing one to question the business's core ethics, such as the ways it protects its employees. Hürriyet, despite being very different from Al Jazeera, still suffers the same weaknesses that Turkishness Uncensored seeks to undo. This has a lot to do with more journalists being detained. Also, Hürriyet cannot

⁶⁹ "The Arab Spring: A Year of Revolution." NPR. December 11 2011. Accessed February 20 2020. <https://www.npr.org/2011/12/17/143897126/the-arab-spring-a-year-of-revolution>.

exactly be trusted as a reliable news source. For one, it is based in Turkey in its major cities, Istanbul and Ankara. That being said, it meets the constant risk of being shutdown by yet another emergency decree headed by Erdogan since it is owned by a pro-AKP media company today. As we can see, all three of our competitors have confronted or been confronted by the turmoils associated with a tightening of free speech and expression. Not enough has been done to subvert these governmental and state-wide actions to silence media and the general public. That is exactly what separates Turkishness Uncensored from its competitors: this ongoing peaceful and creative celebration of the values of stories and storytelling. Storytelling and press has historically opened up the world's borders, but with this takeover, as we have seen in Turkey over the press and intellectuals alike, global attention is being made towards the backwardness of many speech policies today. Some nations have officially or unofficially censored their citizens as a means of restructuring the nation, while others perform these restrictions as a form of social protection. However, a severe tension lies in the core of both probable reasons. The reality is that every nation has a different definition of what freedom of expression is, how a free citizen is to speak within these confines, and it varies in terms of platform and the nature of the story being told. Turkishness Uncensored does away with all of these obstacles and instead gives voices back to content creators who have either been censored themselves or have been frightened into self-censoring their ideas.

According to Freedom House, as of 2015, even before the coup d'état, Turkey has seen a decline in freedom, as many scholars have gone on to label it as a country that is "not free."⁷⁰ The noticeable increase in the number of books being destroyed and imprisoned writers in Turkey draws national and international attention to the ongoing limitations to freedmen Turkey both intellectually and personally. Though we may not be able to change these statistics, we can still offer hope for the creators that have been directly affected by the loss of democracy in Turkey. With such a shrinking space for dissent in many countries that have gone overlooked including Belarus, Crimea, Uzbekistan, there is a critical need for an accepting and inclusive digital environment to where people can feel safe and as though they matter in a way that the government in their own country no longer allows.⁷¹ We cannot change policies and overthrow a damaging government but we can definitely resist it in creative and peaceful ways that brings hope back to victims. Turkishness Uncensored, unlike at ALA, Al Jazeera, or Hürriyet, is built of the concept of freedom by offering content creators the space to use that freedom to tell stories. We link media freedom to other concepts that range from personal narratives, to journalistic investigations into patriarchal societies, to research of corruption, to the ongoing struggles for democratic peace amongst conflict. The diversity of our

⁷⁰ "Freedom of the Press 2015." Freedom House. Pg 8. April 2015. Accessed February 20 2020. https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FreedomofthePress_2015_FINAL.pdf.

⁷¹ Ibid. Pg. 12.

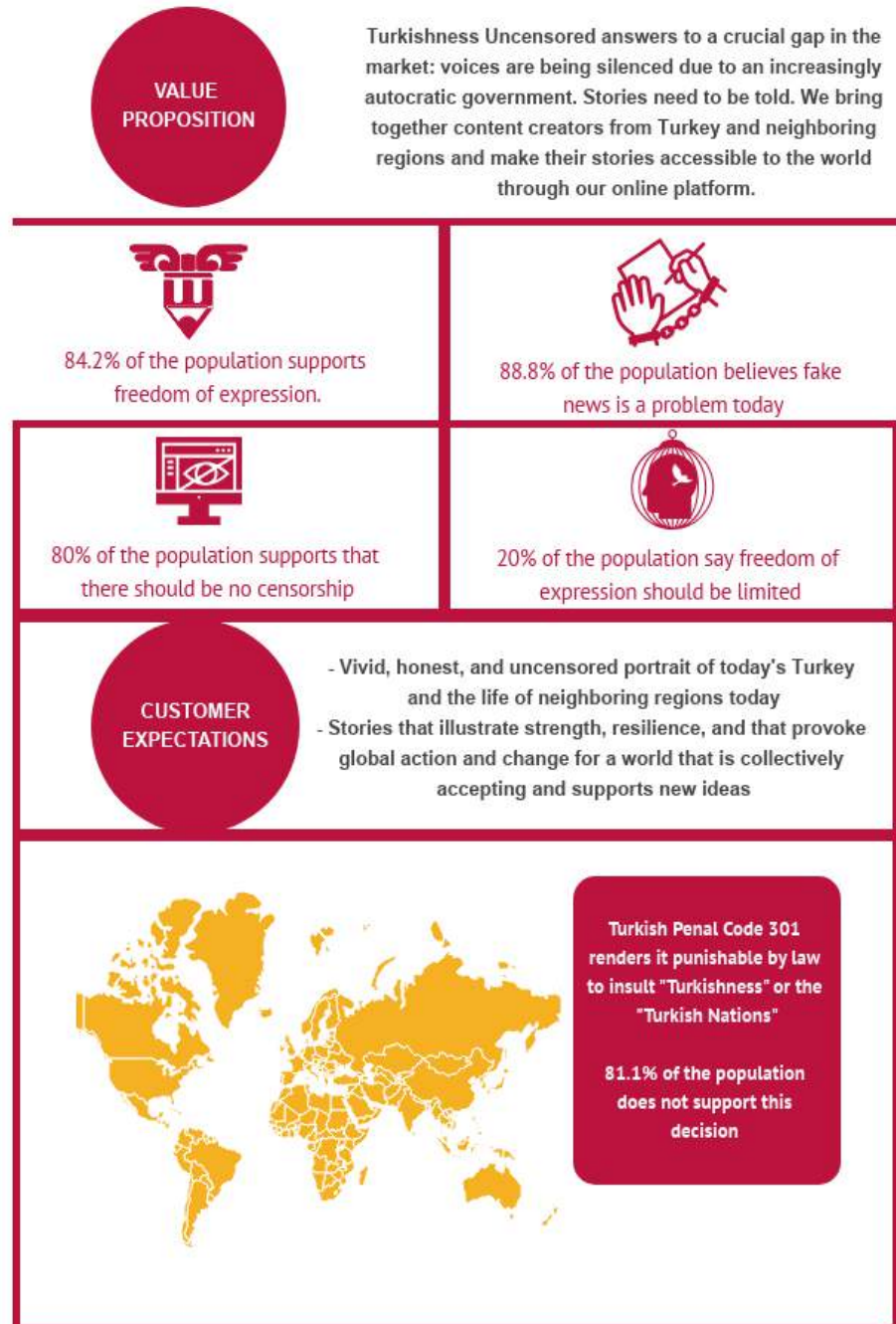
content is vast, but what ties it all together is this need for such content to be made available to those who are interested. Such blunt and critical stories could not go without being blocked, and their creators arrested had it been published on a platform in Turkey like *Hürriyet* or by a news channel that's known for being blocked in a number of regions as is the case with Al Jazeera. The ideal goal of media, which we strive to produce, is independent content without government interference. We believe that this aspect is critical and represents the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. Without it, censorship and self-censorship are the new norm, as it has been for too long now in Turkey, the environment that Turkishness Uncensored enters the industry in order to change. The influence of government on media and the production of content to tell stories in Turkey and throughout neighboring regions has gone overlooked by our competitors, despite their acknowledgment of the struggles that censorship presents to the public. The attacks on the press and different intellectuals has given rise to greater self-censorship, which is a place of great concern, because it basically means storytellers have given up and allowed the authoritarian state to instill self-censorship in them. Taken together, censorship by authorities, and self-censorship coming out of fear for one's well being have resulted in an effect leading to the absence of truth and stories that everyone should have the right to here, because it brings awareness to untruths, and the lack of freedom that seems to be on the rise throughout the world, with Turkey representing one of the most extreme cases. As we move forward in our business plan to the needs and preferences of our customers, including readers and possible stakeholders, we will consistently look at the point of convergence of censorship and self-censorship to demonstrate the need to fill the gap in the marketplace that undoes both. Some of the aspects that will bring us forward in our business proposal and further separate us from our competitors ties us back to the five major trends that we have observed in Turkey especially following the 2016 coup: 1. Prosecution and jailing of journalists; 2. Physical attacks and threats against journalists and intellectuals, including novelists; 3. Pressure by government authorities for media companies to fire journalists and revoke press accreditation; 4. Removal of state-owned distribution channels; and 5. Shutting down of media companies. These direct outcomes of the coup have been understudied and overlooked for way too long. We cannot keep waiting for "tomorrow" or for laws to suddenly change. The time is now to speak up and do something about it in a way that draws global attention and speaks for those who have been censored or threatened into self censorship. In such a time of uncertainty and anxiety in regards to where the future is going, the importance of stories, both fiction and nonfiction is greater now more than ever. As strength, resistance, and inclusivity come to be the core characteristics that represent us as a brand that subverts freedom of expression, we will move forward to look into the statistics and how we can build upon our ethical values to crop a business that will accomplish our short term and long term objectives.

By a thorough evaluation of our target audience and business partners, and how we can tie the statistics and information we gather to our studies of the present environment associated with freedom of the press, we will go on to develop a solid business concept and operational plans that will carry us forward into realizing a much needed brand that will fulfill a need in the marketplace where voices can again be heard, and ideas can be exchanged in a productive way to visualize a more accepting and safe future for storytellers and readers alike.

Customer Needs and Preferences

Turkishness Uncensored is a space where content creators of diverse mediums and backgrounds come together and speak truths through their storytelling - it is a place where all voices are heard. It is valuable to our target market because, as we have discussed in the previous section, countless outlets are being closed down. Survey data tells us that over 80% of the population support freedom of expression, with close to 90% believing that fake news is a problem today. These overwhelming statistics demonstrate the need to react and provoke changes so that fewer readers can worry to a lesser degree about whether or not the content they are consuming is aimed to serve a certain political or ideological purpose. With about 80% of individuals pushing that freedom of expression should be completely free about 20% cautiously warning that it should be limited, this is an ongoing debate that not even we can fully answer, but which Turkishness Uncensored will continue to explore as a global community. With the current laws, Penal Codes 301 specifically, making it illegal to insult the Turkish nation, we went on to ask people if they agree with these laws. Evidently, an overwhelming majority, close to 81.1%, answered that it should not be punishable by law to insult one's country, especially when what is being exposed are facts and situations that could protect people and expose truths. When we asked people how far governments should take censorship and what the limits were, we gathered an abundance of information about our audience, which we will incorporate into the direction of our content and how to engage with them. In their responses, some individuals reintroduced the discussion that censorship silences people's ideas. Others brought up the legal issues involved by stating that government should not have a significant say because it diminishes the amendments to free speech. Although we tend to think of free speech as a humanitarian right here in the West, in Eastern countries like Turkey and throughout the Middle East, it is controlled by the government, which is why we must be cautious with how we explore the idea. To others, censorship is a matter of whether the public or specific peoples are being endangered. In this case, we have heard that the government would have the responsibility to address ideas that could be perceived as harmful and threatening to citizens. This would include hate speech and extremism. States and nations are battling against one an-

other for the power of expression. While the power of states lies in governmental authority, that of writers, journalists and artists is dependent upon being publicly heard by the nation. If creators are silenced through censorship and governmental threats, then they lose their power to speak, and their views on critical issues go unheard. This makes it easier for authoritarian states to create complacency over nations, as has been demonstrated with Al Jazeera and Hürriyet. Below, is an infographic summarizing our value proposition and statistics taken from a survey of 221 people:



Turkishness Uncensored enters the marketplace in a critical time. It offers displaced Turkish content creators a place to anonymously have stories and works published that they otherwise could not on most other platforms. What customers gain is a vivid, honest, and completely uncensored portrait of today's Turkey as well as ongoing stories that have gone thus far unheard in neighboring regions like those in Northern Africa. Readers and subscribers benefit from finally being able to access content that has not been edited to be more "neutral" or fit a specific ideology. The beauty of Turkishness Uncensored is its value for inclusivity. We do not just preach ourselves as a diverse community of content creators who express a concern for the suppression of freedom of the press in Turkey and around the world, but actually demonstrate such. We do this through our content, our engaging communication with our readers, and through our staff and freelancers from all over the world. Diversity. Strength. Resistance. Innovation. We believe that these four traits will compel shareholders to invest in our company. As a business that fosters connection amongst different cultures, histories, and life outlooks, our advertisers are diverse and have made innovation, diversity, and strength some of their key characteristics. Because our revenue in year one will be generated 100% from advertisements, we are keen to welcome advertisers with whom we can begin a dynamic relationship that could reflect our brand's strategy and in effect help us to market ourselves to a global audience. Some brands that we are currently considering as probable shareholders includes American Express, Delta, UNICEF, and Azeema. What all these brands have in common is the global outreach that helps to make them marketable to consumers.

In American Express's mission statement, diversity and community are rendered one of the most important ideals: "The mission of our program is to bring to life the American Express value of good corporate citizenship by supporting diverse communities in ways that enhance the company's reputation with employees, customers, business partners and other stakeholders."⁷² As one of the world's most respected service brands, we are confident in endorsing American Express credit cards, which we believe would appeal to both spectrums of our target audience. Furthermore, American Express's membership rewards, or loyalty program is an essential part of the business in which the credit card company partners with airlines such as Delta, KLM, and British Airways so that customers can use credit points when they travel. Therefore, this partnership will be a strategic move for us, since many of our customers are regular travelers. As part of the American Express community, people become more than just consumers; they become a worldwide group of individuals that benefit from the services the brand has to offer. In several ad campaigns Delta shows visitors how shared experiences bring people closer together, therefore opening our minds to new possibilities and what the world is like outside our own comfort zone, through the eyes of

⁷² "American Express Mission Statement." September 02 2011. Accessed March 14 2020. <http://americanexpressnyc.blogspot.com/2011/09/amrican-express-mission-statement.html>.

people of different cultures. In a similar manner, one of our main objectives at Turkishness Uncensored is to offer cultural, political, and societal insight into the current situation in Turkey and how this relates to other “democracies” that are undergoing a similar crisis. As a brand that is forward-looking, we are choosing these brands because we believe they will help us to build our brand, to develop a solid social media presence, and to encourage audience engagement. We are determined to demonstrate to possible advertisers that we are about progress and changing the course of the future. We want to represent honesty and offer a gateway for people to tell their stories and publish what they would not otherwise have to resources to in Turkey. We are an outlet that does simply think about what is happening today in politics and around the world. Instead, we are looking towards a future that does not just promise freedom of expression, but also proves freedom of expression. Turkishness Uncensored envisions a future that is free of censorship, fake news, and governmental hypocrisy, and where constant fleeing is no longer a norm. We believe that these two principles of innovation and progress will closely align us with the above-mentioned brands’ strategies, rendering them profitable advertisers for us.

With the understanding that many of our readers move around often and are international citizens, we want to capitalize on that by offering airlines and travel agencies the opportunity to promote themselves on our site. One brand we are considering to advertise with to answer to this portion of the market is Delta Airlines. With more than 180 million customers annually, Delta represents productivity, progress, and inclusivity. To this last point, a recent practice that Delta has adopted is incorporating sign language in one of the valued languages amongst employees. What draws our attention to this particular airline is the fact that they are not *just* an airline. For Delta, travel is not only about tourism and taking selfies. It is about bringing people of different backgrounds together, encouraging acceptance, leading to the creation of a better world for us all. For one, Delta is committed to sustainability through their promise to invest \$1 billion over the next ten years towards innovations that would ultimately reduce carbon emissions and waste, establishing new projects that would drive the planet towards a more sustainable future. Diversity and inclusion is reflected in the company’s practices, by adopting these to hiring processes and their efforts to view the world from a more multicultural perspective. Since Delta’s founding in 1924, it has remained an advocate for community engagement, connecting different regions around the world by donating 1% of profits to the places where Delta flies.⁷³ With over 60% of Delta customers being college graduates, we are confident that advertising with Delta will likely help us to boost brand awareness and loyalty, generate revenue, build relationships on a personal level with customers, as well as symbolizing support and positivity for communities worldwide. With Delta, we are brainstorming a brand campaign with Delta that

⁷³ “About Delta.” Delta. Accessed March 14 2020. <https://www.delta.com/us/en/about-delta/overview>.

will demonstrate to viewers the importance of shared and unique experiences and the capability that they have to bring people closer together. Posted on our site as an advertisement or video, this campaign will show how wonderful travel is in helping us to gain a wider perspective on the world by capturing vivid imagery in different spots around the world, including Turkey, from different traveler's viewpoints. We believe that an advertisement like this, in the form of a video will be impactful to viewers, inspiring people to venture beyond their comfort zones to explore the world that we all share.

Because we believe that our visitors are concerned with more humanitarian issues, other than the current crisis of freedom of expression, we are also interested in looking towards these organizations as potential shareholders as well. One company that we are considering is UNICEF. Present in over 190 countries and territories, this humanitarian aid organization is committed to saving children's lives, defending their rights, and helping them to fulfill their potential from early childhood through adolescence.⁷⁴ UNICEF strategic partners in the past has initiated international action in third world countries in need of attention such as Zambia, Thailand, and India. As a result, we could look to establishing a similar relationship with UNICEF to bring awareness to underprivileged sectors of society in rural areas of Turkey such as around Anatolia. As a globally accepted and advocated brand UNICEF will be beneficial in our efforts to build a reputation as a business that puts humanity and the well being of everyone before all else. With a focus on child survival, education, and social policy we are building a partnered brand campaign that will be beneficial for Turkishness Uncensored and UNICEF alike. This could look like an interactive video that appears both on our site as well as on UNICEF's that zeroes in on children in Turkey. Titled "Bringing Education Closer to Children in Turkey," this video could visit some of the most rural regions of Turkey such as the villages along the Black Sea and on the Eastern Side of the country where Kurds make up a large majority. It would look at the schooling system and the journeys that many children travel each day from far off villages in order to arrive at school. This would not only fit into UNICEF's brand message, but also that of Turkishness Uncensored in its focus on the Turkish education system, and how valuable so many families and children consider basic primary schooling.

A partnership with the UK-based website, Azeema may occur in the form of a barter upon launch. Re-viewing the mission statement, Azeema challenges and confronts issues that circulate around representation and diversity. The site creates a space that is inclusive and celebratory of cultures around the world. This digital outlet releases a print magazine once a year in which it explores communities and minorities with a focus on the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and neighboring diasporas.⁷⁵ Needless to say,

⁷⁴ "What We Do." UNICEF. Accessed April 01 2020. <https://www.unicef.org/what-we-do>.









⁷⁵ "About." Azeema. Accessed April 01 2020. <https://www.azeemamag.com/about>.

Azeema and Turkishness Uncensored both represent a niche segment of the market: individuals of the East, while being based in the West. Therefore, we could benefit from one another's objectives through our creation of content. In exchange for publishing pieces done by Azeema on our site in the form of native advertising, our content could also appear on Azeema, both on their site, and possibly a feature in their print magazine at the end of the year. Because our audience will expand by year two to target Middle Eastern consumers and those from Arabic-speaking countries, we welcome pieces that look away from Turkey and towards issues of freedom of the press in the countries that Azeema is focused on. And, on Azeema, we may choose to publish an article that celebrates Turkish woman writers. A title headline, for example could be "If You Don't Like My Story, Then Go Write Your Own," written by a woman journalist who has faced censorship threats in Turkey. This could appear in the form of an interview between one of our staff editors and a woman journalist in the space to share her experiences of what it means to be both a woman, and a journalist from Turkey, both of whose freedom of expression is threatened. An article sample can be found in the appendices.

These four potential shareholders - American Express, Delta Airlines, UNICEF, and Azeema - demonstrate the importance of value formed through humanitarian concerns. Through the objectives highlighted in their mission statement and the content that each brand has gone on to create, we are confident that the relationships we foster with these companies will give us leverage to build our brand and provide a gateway to offering something valuable to our consumers that few other companies reflect. Our consumers are educated, curious about other perspectives and cultures, and are motivated to make a difference in the world. With a growing relationship with already established brands, we will build trust in our readers and give them an incentive to invest their attention in our content. They achieve this through their lifestyle, the products they purchase, the literature that they read, and the art that they look at. Turkishness Uncensored evokes discussions between readers concerning topics that are not always transparent or readily available on other platforms. We satisfy our audience's curiosity by bringing them directly to the source: through our content they visit what state suppression over nation can really do, and the stories that so often go unheard because of it. By subscribing to our site, readers have the opportunity to access stories, artworks, and investigative pieces that may inspire them to join organizations or to share their own stories considering this concern. The literature they read and the art they view on Turkishness Uncensored is trustworthy, emotional, and demonstrates the power of words and visuals. These are valuable creations that we feel each individual deserves to read and see. Through partnerships and business decisions, Turkishness Uncensored becomes an esteemed space for Turkish, Middle Eastern and other people from different nationalities and walks of life to come together without fear or anxiety that their ideas will be

done away with. With a brand that esteems original content and an audience that values the power of stories, content creators of all medium finally find a place where their thoughts and hopes for the future can be heard, acted upon, and supported in a way that no other platform has done before.

The infographic on the following page illustrates how our value proposition connects us with advertisers and shareholders, through humanitarian concerns, business objectives, and community relationships:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
|  | <p>American Express</p> <p>“The mission of our program is the bring to life the American Express value of good corporate citizenship by supporting diverse communities in ways that enhance the company's reputation with employees, customers, business partners and other stakeholders.”</p> | <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Endorse Amex credit cards and membership rewards programs across Turkishness - Uncensored's site in there form of banner advertisements |
|  | <p>Delta Airlines</p> <p>“We—Delta's employees, customers, and community partners together form a force for positive local and global change, dedicated to bettering standards of living and the environment where we and our customers live and work.”</p> | <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand campaign that that will demonstrate to viewers the importance of shared and unique travel experiences - Video, viewers gain wider perspective on the world by capturing vivid imagery in different spots around the world, including Turkey, from different traveler's viewpoints. |
|  | <p>UNICEF</p> <p>“Present in over 190 countries and territories, this humanitarian aid organization is committed to saving children's lives, defending their rights, and helping them to fulfill their potential from early childhood through adolescence.”</p> | <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring awareness to underprivileged sectors of society in rural areas of Turkey - Interactive video that appears both on our site as well as on UNICEF's that zeroes in on children in Turkey: "Bringing Education Closer to Children in Turkey," |
|  | <p>Azeema</p> <p>“An annual print magazine, platform and growing community exploring Women within the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, diasporas and BEYOND. AZEEMA challenges and confronts issues surrounding representation and diversity by creating a space that is inclusive and celebratory of our cultures. We are an inclusive space, with no borders.”</p> | <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Native advertising - Barter deal - "If You Don't Like My Story, Then Go Tell Your Own" |

Company Description and Concept

Turkishness Uncensored's value proposition is as original as its approach is to content creation, product design, and aesthetics. Our audience have been brought up in households where their parents or other family members would tell stories in Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish, and even Armenian. This entire idea of community and strength is quite important in the heritage where our readers come from. In the world of Turkishness Uncensored readers care about the art and politics of their culture. Our content creators bring beautiful items of Turkish culture and translate it into their art as well. Our stories do not represent only Turkey or the beliefs that underly a specific region, but rather establishes an interconnectivity between us all. We exist to create a new world where everyone can belong, providing a stimulating place of communication that is authentic, inclusive, and forward-looking. Our site demonstrates character through design and diversity through tone, making any and all potential readers feel that there is more to an issue than just personal opinions and ongoing debates: it is about respect, encouragement, and how we can peacefully create a more positive and inclusive world where self-censorship and censorship no longer exists in everyday vocabulary. Readers are connected with alternate realities, or how life can be in another place under different circumstances, rendering our platform a place of virtual experiences. Through these varying lens' Turkishness Uncensored offers unprecedented access to stories around the world that link back to one central issue: freedom. In effect, our value proposition is a direct reflection of exactly who we are and what we do as creators of a global community of storytellers, listeners and activists. Few websites and platforms are as diverse and empowering as Turkishness Uncensored. As a vocal and critical proponent that speaks to censorship in Turkey and around the world, by publishing stories that delve deep into gender issues, political prosecution, minority rights, and class struggle, our business conveys strength, honesty and brings awareness to an issue that has thus far been swept beneath the rug. It is forward looking and reinforces the need for voices to be heard, and for action to be taken. These core values are reinforced through our content and our ongoing relationships which speaks to people of different backgrounds and draws attention to the harsh realities that underly being silenced or self-censored out of fear. Every piece of content that we publish - and we mean every single one, is built on the same belief. That a story should be a collection of emotions and encourage discussion. That, above all, a story should evoke activism, and inspire change for a better future.

Our value proposition emphasizes the importance disseminating stories. This promise that we offer to our customers has been made following the careful research of the marketplace and our environment. Journalists, authors, artists, and those with a public voice for the nation are indeed being silenced or practicing self-censorship out of fear. In our market backdrop in the preceding section, we have gone into exhaustive

detail on the ways in which censorship laws and increasingly autocratic rule in Turkey has lead to the shutting down on media companies and publishing houses, as well as the laying off and blacklisting of journalists, academics, and writers all over Turkey. Fear has been created in multiple forms: life sentences in prison, as was the case with Ahmet Altan, exile in Europe, such as with Elif Shafak, and simply looking for other means of putting food on the table, which constitutes a majority of these citizens. Upon becoming aware of the overwhelming number of journalists, writers, artists, and academics who have been arrested or blacklisted for their voices, primary research has illustrated to us that close to 75% of individuals consider this current climate in Turkey to be an urgent concern. This gives us the “go button” to pursue this business, being confident that there is a big market for it and people who are looking for it. However, we have also previously mentioned that what is going on in Turkey is not a “Turkish” issue. From countries like Singapore, Egypt, and even the United States, we have statistical and legal evidence that censorship is a world-wide problem. Neither the East nor the West are safe from it. When asked their opinion if Turkishness Uncensored would be relevant to other countries around the globe, close to 90% of survey takers agreed that it would, further establishing the need in the marketplace for a platform that would answer these critical issues. This is why Turkishness Uncensored is so powerful today. It is indeed a virtual “safe place” for Turkish writers. On our platform, they no longer have to fear what the repercussions may be for their statements and for sharing their personal experiences being a Turkish writer living under a government who threatens them with legal consequences. What results from this is not only so many Turkish intellectuals being given their voice back, but also the availability and accessibility of this content for readers. Never before has there been a single space on the internet for the fostering of communal strength, resistance, and advocacy for a change in state laws. Turkishness Uncensored is sensitive to topics circulating around gender inequality, sex issues, patriarchy, education, amongst many other concerns that underly Turkish society. We want writers to feel free to tackle these tough and often taboo issues, and it is critical for people to listen and respect these matters and how our content creators have dealt with them personally and professionally. With the freedom to have this work publish and the ability for anyone in the United States and Europe to read it speaks to the greater notion that even writers can be arrested. Creators can easily be prosecuted and brought to trial. They can lose their jobs and remain without work for months at a time. But one thing can never be taken away: the right to think and form ideas. We are aware of this at Turkishness Uncensored, which is why we are forming this business to allow a place for these ideas to take form, and for an audience to consume them.

With freedom of expression being the core ethic that ties Turkishness Uncensored, our content seeks to uncover and traverse a number of often forbidden topics. Some will demonstrate the need that, sometimes, a law is efficient in preventing certain occurrences, like child pornography, while other ideas will

measure the effects that censorship has had on the creativity of their mediums. We are well aware of the marketplace: it is crowded and competitive with every outlet trying to gain the loyalty of similar sections of the population. So, instead of focusing on a specific feature, or tone to characterize our content, we pride ourselves in our open-mindedness. On our site you will read criticism. There will be celebratory remarks. There will be differences of opinion. We want people to read both sides of a story, not just from someone of privilege, and not just from an angry refugee living in exile in Macedonia. This is why we have instead opted to focus on diversity and community. This will discourage narrow-mindedness and make people aware that different possibilities are there and there is never one side to any story. Our dedication to rendering every voice a voice of importance appeals to many of our target readers who are most likely open minded individuals who are interested in new ideas, or else they would not be visiting a site that is born out of a battle to fight censorship to begin with. We, as well as our readers are well aware of the issues of censorship laws and the threats they post to storytellers and one's access to hear these stories. Turkishness Uncensored confronts this obstacle through anonymously published content by individuals around the world who have all had a different, yet vaguely overlapping experience with being suppressed or having to commit self-censorship as a safety mechanism. It is indeed what has been happening for years in the environment, as we discussed in the previous section that has given rise to this need for a space where stories can be disseminated, and power of words and art can be given back to those who have suffered by having it taken away.

Turkishness Uncensored's design landscape and editorial content will be a manifestation of the diversity and strength that we represent as a brand. That being said, we not only value truth and critique, but also are respectful of different ideas and the depiction of content creator's voices in their medium - journalism, satirical cartoons, art, short stories, etc. With freedom of expression, strength, and resistance being at the core of our values, our editorial calendar is organized on the basis of such. Unlike the content of our competitors, most of who value neutrality almost as much as they do honest, we do not censor voice, nor opinion, unless it is borderline hate speech. Content for our brand is highly voiced and opinionated, so that different perspectives and world views can be clearly articulated in regards to the Turkey that each of our content creators have come to know on a personal level. Another aspect of our editorial map that differentiates us from our competitors is the concern we have for the safety of our staff and our content creators. We do not want to be another brand known for the jailing of our writers or designers. We cater to the what our audience is looking for. Our primary research has shown us that when consuming content online, over 45% are looking for honest, a similar statistic finds relevance important, while about 43% are interested in relevance. Following these three characteristics, readers also mention timeliness, impact, oddity, trust, and ease of use. These are all traits that we will consider in the publishing of our content.

There is a concern today that content is not authentic. People want to read things that are applicable to today, not about something for the moment just to forget about tomorrow. Turkishness Uncensored contact has impact, spreads awareness, and addresses key issues today such as how women are treated in Northern Africa, religious extremism in the gulf countries, the class struggles in Lebanon, and the overwhelming political corruption in Turkey. All this content, despite being about different countries, are built from not only facts, but also personal experiences, and therefore emotion. Readers are affected by our stories and more likely to become activists themselves by possibly sharing their own stories by submitting content to us, or becoming more engaged on our platform and across our social media. Because we are a platform that is resistant to many of Turkish laws such as Penal Code 301, we are extremely careful about disclosing the identity and contact information of our team. As a result, all content will be authored under "fake names" with an illustration, similar to on the New Yorker, of the creator, accompanying the piece. In order to get into contact with our writers, one must go through our legal team and sign confidentiality agreements to not only protect our writers privacy, but also their identity, so that, should and when they go to Turkey on assignment or to visit, they are not held, or arrested upon arrival. The attached visual is a sample of our first year editorial calendar, which includes sample headlines.

At Turkishness Uncensored, content is not limited to timeliness but also seeks to be disruptive by exploring different topics, with our freelancers using their art mediums to speak for change. We welcome evergreen content, in order to satisfy a diverse audience whose interests vary between anthropology and cultural studies (25.6%), world literature (43.6%), arts (53.2%), mathematics (11.5%), science (11.5%), law (12.2%), fashion and beauty (14.1%), music (18.6%), and communications and journalism (44.2%). Therefore, our content will appear in various forms from long articles, to poetry, to interactive videos. With such a large amount of content being published daily, readers often visit us through the day. It can be a form of escape where they can read on one woman's everyday life in Northern Syria, or a newsy article that tackles Erdogan's relationship with the Syrian president and how it affects today's Kurdish population. This will ensure that no segment of our audience is being isolated. Because students are often looking for uplifting content such as art or something that they can relate to working, working professionals are often visiting us for our involvement in the areas of politics and economics. Every Turkish, and ultimately every Middle Eastern in the United States and across Western Europe are sure to find something they are interested in, whether it be a portrait of the everyday lives of Moroccan women, a critical piece analyzing how life has changed in Istanbul since the 2016 coup, or a slideshow that brings viewers into the lives of children in rural villages in Eastern Turkey. This all comes down to the fact that if these writers had tried to publish this in their own countries they would likely be arrested and the content would be immediately taken down by the authorities. Even in cases like these though, the government can only get

involved to a certain point. What is really needed is education, awareness, and providing resources. With Turkishness Uncensored becoming this resource, content creators and content consumers are given the education and awareness that fosters a global community, international understanding, and widespread inclusivity of people of different beliefs and backgrounds. The data and analyzation that we have undertaken to acutely understand the market we are entering by looking at current the current state of the Turkish legal system and how it has had a detrimental effect on content creators has helped us to build a solid foundation upon which to establish ourselves in response to this by also applying it to other countries, both in the East and in the West. Statistics gathered from outside sources along with primary information in the form of surveys have furthered our pursuit to build a brand that satisfies our audience. By discovering customers' concerns, interests, and engaging in what they have to say about the topic of censorship become the trigger for the realization of Turkishness Uncensored. Below, we have included a diagram of our target audience's preferences:



Zeroing in on our platform's structure, there will be three main verticals - Turkey, World, and Art & Culture - which will all be broken down into segments appropriate for the subject matter we want to organize in that section. While Turkey will be dedicated to our investigative, news-worthy, and timely articles, Art & Culture will probably be our most popular and therefore the one filled with the most content. This is because we are not a platform solely dedicated to the "written" word. Not all people can tell stories this way. Some rely on poetry, other take snapshots of the world around them, while many take their ideas to a canvas with a paint brush. This is how we will be organizing content on this vertical - by medium. Our last vertical, World, is similar to our Turkey vertical. It is specifically for journalism that covers stories in other parts of the world, like in Syria for example. Art or poetry created that addresses other countries is not in this vertical, but combined with our Art & Culture section. In the first six months following launch, we are estimating to publish twenty five pieces of content a day. These pieces will all be submitted by our freelancers. Upon receiving submissions, our editorial department will go on to review each, and make the decision to: 1. Politely decline the pitch; 2. Accept with necessary revisions and edits; or 3. Keep pitch on file and come back to in a month that the subject of the pitch would feel more suitable. Published content will be posted starting at 8 am each morning, eastern standard time, with our last piece being put up at 9 pm. At the end of this six month period, we will reassess where we are in terms of web traffic and engagement. We anticipate that by this time we will have developed a foundation in the landscape that will allow us to publish more content each day, which is why we will double our output by posting double in the second half of the year - fifty pieces of content everyday. By years two and three, as our business grows and generates more profit, we will move onto a 25% increase by putting out 63 content pieces daily, and in our fourth year we will increase again by 10% to 70, in order to satisfy a growing, international audience. Because the large majority of our audience is of Turkish or Middle Eastern descent, we acknowledge that English is most likely not the only language that is spoken in their household. Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish, Persian, Armenian, and Hebrew are only one of several other languages that we know are also used between families and friends. As a result, we want to answer to this characteristic by offering our readers the choice to translate our pages between English, Turkish and Arabic, so that which ever language they feel most comfortable reading in, they will have the choice to do so, rather than adjusting for us.

Usability and utility are going to be critical to us as we navigate how to build a website and a mobile site that ensures ease of use. We will achieve this through thoughtful and simple design implementation. First of all, structure: each piece of content, from the search bar to an advertisement must be placed logically, in the place that makes the most sense, which largely depends on how we will be featuring our content. Efficiency is another important principle that we will be adopting in order to achieve a design that is both

original, but is not too overwhelming. Our goal with these practices is to create content that is both of high quality and is credible. Most visitors are mobile readers, so they may not be reading everything word-for-word, but rather scanning. As a result, we will be implementing design practices to be sure that there are fixed points and anchors such as links and icons that will likely capture readers' attention and guide them on where to continue their visit as they are moving down a page. Another simple principle that we are adopting comes out of the fact that users, including each one of us, are impatient and expect immediate gratification. We take this very personally in the fact that if our website does not meet or exceed a user's expectations, we, as designers, did not do our job properly, ultimately leading to a possible new subscriber. Nonetheless, it is unlikely for a user to make the most logical of choices. They do not always search for information the quickest way, nor do they find what they are looking for in a typical order. On visiting a webpage, we rarely scan it linearly, going from one section to another. It is a personal choice, in that we choose to go to what is most reasonable or appealing. As soon as one finds a link that captures their attention, it is likely they will click on it, even if it does not take them exactly where they were planning to go. We will be capitalizing on this hypothesis by creating captivating, yet easy to understand headlines that will lead readers to continue to click multiple places within our site. Also, users are independent, and want to have control of what they are viewing. This means no popups in their browser to distract, and consistency. Upon landing on our page, readers should not have to stop and think about what we are about. It should be immediately clear that in one article we are talking about what lives are like for women living under a patriarchy, for example. By adopting proper SEO practices and creating clear headline through both typography and semantics, who we are and what we are about will be self-explanatory. Furthermore, we are not here to squander possible subscribers' patience. We are not playing games, by making first time users share their private data just to explore who we are because we do not find it reasonable to ask users to enter their name nor their email if they are still new to our site and just want to test it out. Lastly, we strive for simplicity. This means white space, clear-to-read text, and non-obtrusive advertisements that distract users' attention. All-in-all, with this structured strategy set in place and a careful observation of user behavior and engagement with our content, Turkishness Uncensored is committed to both providing its audience with authentic, high quality content and providing an optimal user experience. In the following three pages can be found our 2021 editorial calendars with possible headlines. A sample of our website, including a homepage, about page, and sample articles has been designed on Squarespace and can be found in the appendices.

**TURKISHNESS
UNCENSORED**

**2021
Edit Calendar**

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH |
| WE WILL NOT BE SILENT issue | DEMOCRACY issue | BEAUTY OF BEING EUROPEAN AND ASIAN issue |
| APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
| TURKEY IN THE WEST issue | FUTURE OF TURKEY'S PRESS ISSUE | ESCAPES issue |
| JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER |
| WOMAN'S issue | MINORITIES issue | WORDLESS issue |
| OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER |
| STORYTELLERS issue | COMING TOGETHER issue | MOST INFLUENTIAL INTELLECTUALS OF THE YEAR issue |



TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED

JANUARY

STUDENTS

How I Prepared for Life
in the West Without
Parents
(*personal story*)

Course Syllabus for Be-
ing a Student Oversees
(*listicle*)

APRIL

TURKEY IN THE WEST

The West Brings
Turkish People
Together
(*personal story*)

The West is Not
Immuned to
Authoritarianism
(*personal story*)

JULY

WOMAN

Women Unite Against
Global Wave of
Repression
(*personal story*)

Silence Traumatizes
Turkish Women
(*poem*)

OCTOBER

STORYTELLERS

You Can Imprison Our
Bodies, You Cannot
Imprison Our Minds
(*personal story*)

Course Syllabus for Be-
ing a Student Oversees
(*listicle*)

FEBRUARY

DEMOCRACY

The Government
Caused the Fires, I Just
Painted Them
(*personal story*)

Ataturk Gave Us Our
Tattoo Politics
(*article*)

MAY

FUTURE OF TURKEY'S PRESS

Words Backlash On
Those Who Wrote
Them
(*investigative*)

Who Benefits from a
Cultural Boycott?
(*investigative*)

AUGUST

MINORITIES

Is This A Betrayal of My
Kurdshness?
(*poem*)

A Letter to Istanbul, My
Beloved City
(*letter/memoir*)

NOVEMBER

COMING TOGETHER

Now is the Time for
Global Sisterhood
(*article*)

Coming Together in
Istanbul's Streets
(*pictures*)

MARCH

BEAUTY OF US

A Portrait of the Lives of
Moroccan Women
(*personal story*)

A Piece of Me
(*Photos*)

JUNE

ESCAPES

Why Art Matters In the
Age of Anger
(*video slide show*)

Escaping a Society that
Has Lost Hope
(*short memoir*)

SEPTEMBER

WORDLESS

A Painter Who Dared
To Dream
(*interactive slideshow*)

I Found Refuge in the
Color Yellow
(*personal story*)

DECEMBER

INFLUENTIAL VOICES OF THE YEAR

Decolonizing Beauty
(*Interactive article/slide-
show*)

Memories-
Understanding Identity
(*Interactive article*)

Sales & Marketing

As a digital-only brand, the marketing strategy that Turkishness Uncensored adopts will primarily be driven by the online engagement that we can evoke from our potential audience through a number of useful tactics including building brand awareness, targeting our audience, and social media engagement. Despite the majority of our marketing strategy occurring digitally, marking the transformation the media landscape has undergone in recent years, starting in our company's second year the introduction of the Turkishness Uncensored annual summit will bring in-person interaction as a valuable new tactic within our overall business strategy. Below, we have broken down our long term goals and the ways in which marketing will help us to achieve success early on through a variety of useful tactics.

At our beginnings, what we are most concerned with is achieving brand awareness. The way we plan to get a head start in the marketplace is by first capitalizing on our staff's relationships with writers, journalists, artists - content creators - around the world. We rely on our staff to reach out via email, phone, and if possible, in-person business meetings. During these interactions, we expect our staff to confidently and fluidly detail who we are and what we stand for. This will include our mission such as our core ethics and what kind of values we stand for. Through these one-on-one meetings, ideas will be shared and we will continue to get a more holistic insight on the sorts of stories that are out there and what are needed to be told on Turkishness Uncensored. Following this crucial step, we will go on to administering assignments that we feel best suit our brand, and are most likely to spark interest in the current environment. This direct reaching out to content creators all over the United States and Europe who we feel have a story to tell, will help us to not only to gain voices for our brand that speaks to our cause for freedom of speech, but will also assist us in gaining a reputation in the marketplace. It is part of human nature to get excited or be curious about a certain idea and want to share it with others such as friends, family, colleagues, or even on social media. This is an organic, costless way that will promote our brand and help information about us to spread quickly to the right kind of audience, without generating an expense to us. With this, a chain reaction begins. Word-of-mouth marketing will likely follow. Writers know other writers. Journalists still communicate with past colleagues. And artists are inspired by other artists. An excellent way to create buzz around our brand, we are optimistic about the snowball effect that is likely to occur because the more relationships we build at this earlier stage the more likely we are to continue to generate more awareness to our business, who we are, and what we have to offer consumers. This could be very powerful for us as a brand that wants to ultimately be accessed globally. Together, building brand awareness and word-of-mouth marketing will effectively lead to targeting our potential audience, and help us to stand out in industry as the only brand that exists to fight against censorship in Turkish media.

Credibility is a characteristic that we strive to represent, but which we acknowledge will happen gradually as we continue to build the relationships through trust with our readers. It is not easily achieved for brands just starting out, which is why we will be looking towards new distribution channels as another one of our marketing tools. Building brand partnerships with already-established media companies will ultimately aid in our efforts to build a reputation as a credible name. Upon launch, we are looking to partner with the UK-based outlet, Azeema, as we have described in our section on Customer Needs and preferences, Azeema is a platform that we share many similarities with. As a result, our target audiences overlap, which is why a business deal with them will help our name to grow and become credible towards the readers we are interested in bringing to our brand. Appearing on such a reputable source as Azeema will show our consumers that our brand can be trusted because, if Azeema trusted Turkishness Uncensored enough to engage in a partnership, consumers can expect to have a positive experience with our brand as well. By our name and content appearing on other platforms through barter deals, Turkishness Uncensored will build brand equity and will likely become more recognizable across the online space. Creating strategic alliances as such not only with brands that have similarities to our own, but also with even airlines, as we mentioned in the previous section, we are able to reach areas in which we normally could not compete with, therefore creating more marketing exposure and earning us new potential customers. As we become a more credible source through relationships with other widely read websites, customer's perceptions will shift as our brand makes it into their attention more and more. With a name and brand that stands out from our competitors, we are confident that we will stand apart and be a memorable new name that will spark readers' interest. We have chosen Azeema due to the brand's similarities in mission to our own. Furthermore, this tactic will add intrinsic value to our brand. With multiple stakeholders involved in our company, unique assets are brought to our name, leading to an increased value. Similar to word-of-mouth marketing, brand partnerships will also help us to generate more buzz. More people are likely to become curious and find interest in us, if we are connected to a platform that they are already loyal readers to. A partnership with Azeema at launch in the form of branded content will be a way for us to quickly transform our brand in a way that will allow us to effectively engage with our audience. Furthermore it will open new opportunities for us to compete with larger media outlets like Al Jazeera.

The third component of our marketing strategy will be audience outreach. We will be implementing a number of useful tactics as a means to target our potential readers. Initially, our plan is to target only 20% of Turkish-Americans and Turkish expats in the United States. However, as our brand grows, we plan to expand our target to also include Turkish expats across Western Europe, as well as Middle-Eastern Americans across the United States and Western Europe. In terms of age range, we target both extremes of the

spectrum - students and working professionals, both of which we believe will be interested in the content that we published, being both timely and evergreen. With a clear understanding of the demographics of Turkish as well as Middle Eastern people across the United States and Western Europe, we are confident that a solid set of tactics including social media outreach, influencer marketing, events, branded content, and partnerships, will lead us to the creation of a community of readers that share a similar ideology - freedom, strength, and resistance against censorship and authoritarian rule in Turkey and around the world.

Social media will be the biggest player in this game as we implement a number of outlets to engage and communicate with our potential audience, generating much more exposure for our company. Instagram will be our primary source for sharing visual content with our younger audience, such as students and millennials. This cost-effective resource has the potential to help us grow our business by fostering relationships with our followers on a more personal level through direct messaging, comments, and story replies. By promoting our brand on this platform in the form of consistently posting and adding to our stories, we are likely to drive traffic back to our website. This will be attained through visibility and encourage viewers, in our caption, to access full content on our site. Our marketing department is responsible to responding to comments and making sure interactions on our page between users are productive and moving, as hateful comments will not be tolerated and anyone who does not abide by these basic rules will be blocked without warning. By regularly utilizing the 'insights' feature available on our professional account, we will be able to get an idea of what kind of content our readers are enjoying most based on views, likes, and comments. The "stories" feature are another popular way that we will use to promote our content. There are multiple formats one can be sed from images to short video clips. This will be useful for our interactive content as well as infographics that we may want to post. A carousel-type post will allow us to post full videos and share one topic through multiple stories. The IGTV and #linkinbio tools are other useful ways that we plan to direct Instagram users to our brand. The topics of these IGTV videos will vary according to our editorial calendar. For example, for the month of September, because it is our Wordless issue, we may feature a sped-up video of one of our freelancers in her home studio painting a portrait or a landscape. At the end of this video there would be a brief biography on who this particular painter is and what is her "story." All IGTV videos will then in turn be promoted on our stories. A campaign we are excited about starting with our followers beginning in year two is the #ReadwTurkishnessUncensored interactive bookclub. This will be an excellent way for us to engage with our audience in a way that we have not established before. The hashtag engages our audience and fellow bookstagrammers, furthering our gaol to create a solid presence on Instagram. It begins with a collection of books that,

together with our staff, we choose every month to compliment our current project, such as books that focus on students and education in January, or one's written by women for July. What ties all of these books together is the fact that they have, either in the past or today, been banned in Turkey. This could include any book written by Orhan Pamuk, as well as those written by Albert Camus. We will partner with independent bookstores around the nation every month as well. Upon announcement of our book club choice for the month, we will also include a promotion code that will offer a discounted price for purchase of the book at azure chosen book store. This will also be a way for us to continue to build relationships and further our brand awareness through partnerships around the nation, as we show our support for indie bookstore. Readers are encouraged to grasp onto monthly book picks by using the hashtag #ReadwTurkishnessUncensored to submit their reviews to our staff who will choose the month's winner. The most witty and insightful reviews will be featured on our site at the end of our month. Interacting with our current followers will aid in fostering a stimulating community for discussion as well as introducing influencer marketing into our campaign. This kind of user-generated content will be a fun and original way to earn fresh, and interesting posts about Turkishness Uncensored. Using the "paid partnership" tag, we plan to approach influencers to strike a deal for them to promote our brand on their account in the form of a post or by tagging us in their story. Below, we have included some mockups of what we visualize our Instagram post looking like to our followers:

Employing the use of Facebook and Twitter to our marketing tactics will give us access to engage with an older audience, a good percentage of working professionals. Daily posts and status throughout the day will be part of our way to create a voice on the platform, such as a question that followers can respond to an intellectual conversation can result from. Because Facebook is a platform where people like to talk to each other and is not an impersonal business, establishing a "human" voice and not a "buy me" voice is critical. Our presence on Twitter, which we believe will bring together our audience of students and working professionals, will take the form of posting content from our site in order to promote and gain traffic, similarly to on Instagram and Facebook. Below we have included a sample Facebook post that promotes on of the articles from our May project, "Future of Turkey's Press":



TurkishnessUncensored  Following



TurkishnessUncensored 

Merhaba! * May Book * " The Bastard of Istanbul." This 2006 hit is currently banned form Turkey on the grounds of it's references to the Armenian Genocide. Pick it up at our Indiebookstore pick, [@thestrandbookstore](#) (use coupon code (readwturkishnessuncensorednyc101), or visit the link in our bio. Don't forget to tag us your review at the end of the month for a chance to be published on our site! #readwturkishnessuncensored. Happy reading! #turkishnessuncensored



7,074 likes



Turkishness Uncensored

18 mins · 

The profession "writer" is causing more and more Turks the place they once called home, as is for this Turkish novelist from Gaziantep, currently living in exile in Vienna for the last 10 years.



TurkishnessUncensored.com
Words Backlash on Those Who Wrote Them

  177

28 Comments 25 Shares

 Like

 Comment

 Share



One way we plan to encourage more engagement, between us and our community of readers is will happen in the form of our "Günaydin" morning tweets. This means that every morning, eastern daylight time, at nine, we will post a quote from one of our freelance writers, or from a silenced voice from Turkey or

another country where voices have been treated in a similar way by the state. Below, we have included some examples of quotes and possible discussions that they could evoke from our followers:

Quote: “Dear Banksy, I’m writing this illegal letter to you from a dungeon which has history of bloody tortures, in a town with a lot of bans, in a denied country.” - Zehra Dogan (painter) (written from Diyarbakir Prison).

Discussion topic: What is the strength of bans when ideas and emotions can clearly still get out?

Quote: “In a brutal country like ours, where human life is ‘cheap’, it’s stupid to destroy yourself for the sake of your beliefs. Only people in rich countries can enjoy such luxuries.” - Orhan Pamuk (novelist)

Discussion topic: What constitutes a ‘cheap’ life?



Quote: “Isn’t connecting people to distant lands and culture one of the strengths of good literature?” Elif Shafak (novelist and activist)

Discussion topic: Share a book that has effected you in a deep, cultural way.

Beginning in year two, we will be proudly introducing our Turkishness Uncensored annual summit in June in New York City. At the Turkishness Uncensored Summit, culture, activism, international community, career, and politics become one. This is an inspiring, if not life-changing three-day event focused and excited to provoke world change. Participants will have the option to attend a variety of workshops, panel discussions and performances, and connect with a likeminded and accepting community. What our fans walk away with are new skills, tools, contacts, and the incentive to act upon their dreams. New worlds and opportunities are opened as we show that, no matter what changes occur in our own countries, who we are, what we think, how we feel, and where we decide to go next is up to us, and no one can take away our ideas, goals, and future decisions.

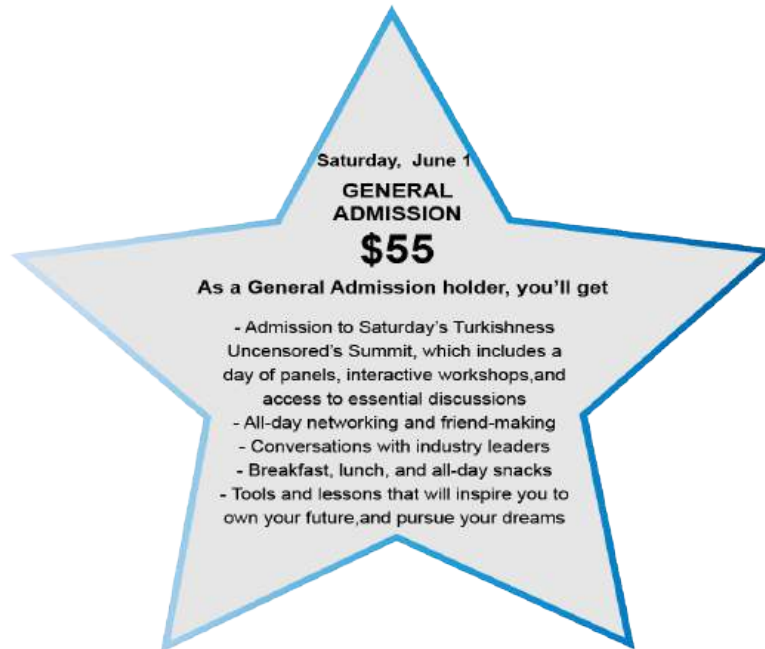
Our primary priority is to build an authentic space for both our attendees and ourselves by actively constructing original integrations for each of our sponsors. Each of these relationships takes place through clear organization and the establishing of the objective of each individual advertiser and how we could incorporate their missions within our own. Some of our new sponsors for our event's launch will include the American Turkish Society, Turkish Cultural Center Queens, New York University's department of Comparative Literature, as well as The Strand bookstore. For one, The American Turkish Society would be a sensible partner for us because of the organization's pursuit to enhance ties between the United States and Turkey through cultural exchange, philanthropy, and networking.⁷⁶ Furthermore, all of these sponsors' ideas and speech topics will serve as an overarching reflection of what the Turkishness Uncensored team sees as pertinent to audiences' interests. During our search for sponsors we were not so much focused on the physical content that they could bring to our brand. Instead, we were looking at which organizations had the ability to adapt their engagement with attendees in a way that would also appeal to our partners. At the end of each day, we will be offering our sponsors an in-depth summary of the data we have compiled so that each have an understanding of the level of audience engagement that we receive. This will include brand list metrics, social metrics, and the value of media depending on the social KPIs that we obtain.

Taking place over the course of three busy days with the help of our full time staff, the Turkishness Uncensored annual summit will sell one-day tickets for \$55 and three day passes for a discounted \$100. They will be made available in January through our site, and across our social media accounts including

⁷⁶ "About Us." The American Turkish Society. Accessed March 14 2020. <https://www.americanturkishsociety.org/mission>.

Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@TurkishnessUncensored). By years three and four this rate will go up. Year three will be \$65 for one day, with passes increasing by \$20. In year four, the price of three-passes will remain the same, while one day tickets will go up by \$10. The logic behind this pricing system is to encourage people to attend all three days, not just one, in order to gain the full experience. This unprecedented event brings together activists, writers, politicians, researchers, artists, and students from all over the nation, and sometimes even from Europe to one exhibition space. What is included in the ticket price is a full day, from 9 am to 5 pm, of panels and lectures, hands-on workshops and activities, access to cornerstone conversations. Some lectures that we plan to host in our first year includes a range of topics that confronts a variety of subjects regarding the humanities in Turkey, the Middle East, and the diaspora. “How do we Face the Future” will be a panel discussion between some of the highest regarded professors of Comparative Literature at Columbia University, during which they will explore global identity, culture, and politics from the Middle East today. “Dangerous Ideas,” which will go into concepts of revolution and tradition inspired by the social movements of Turkey throughout history and the way they have shaped the country’s youth to date will be one of our keystone talks between members of The American Turkish Society. One last example is “Scholarship and Activism for Justice,” which will bring together a number of activists to discuss social inequity today and what sorts of change is necessary to establish a more accepting society. In between panels and activities will be opportunities to pass through our hall of exhibitors, such as indie book store representatives, painters, designers, nonprofit fundraisers, etc. There will also be several lounge spaces with chairs and magazines to relax, and just take in this fun day. Many eager students may also take this time to introduce themselves to some of our special guests which may include a number of authors and other participants. We are especially looking forward to having the opportunity to bring our active community together in a way to exchange ideas, hopes, and plans for a future free of suppression and self-censorship. On the third day, students and young people just kicking off their career will have an opportunity to meet and discuss one-on-one with industry experts for career goal development during which they can have their resume’s reviewed and edited, or just express what which direction they would like to head into as the future generation. By the end of day three, we are confident that all attendees, including our visiting lecturers, will walk away with countless new ideas, perspectives, and stories that they can hold close to their heart, and which will inspire them to act upon systems of resistance and peacefully fight for freedom of expression. Meals will be included in ticket prices, being made up of an assortment of traditional Turkish cuisine. Breakfast will include a variety of fruit, cheeses, simit, and Turkish coffee. Some of our sponsors and partners in this event will include an array of media brands, including Azeema. Snacks will be available halfway through the event: freshly squeezed juice, and a variety of biscuits. Lunch will take place in the form a buffet with different kebab, rice dishes, and salads, with several vegan options upon request. By the end of the event, through highlighting the arts and

advocating activism across nations, attendees and sponsors reenter reality with a more perceptive and hopeful outlook on how the future could grow into less censorship and self-limiting practices, and more freedom and inclusivity. On the following page are our summit advertisements:



In the following pages, we have included two go-to marketing strategies that we have separated according to strategies and how we will implement them year-by-year:



TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED

GO-TO-MARKET PLAN Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4

Y1

Brand Awareness
- Content Creators, Readers

Partnerships at launch - Azeema

Target Audience Outreach - US: Turkish American / Expat Students and Working Professionals

Y2

Expand reader-base to include Middle Eastern Americans/Expats
- Students and Working Professionals

Seek out new partnerships with brands (American Express, Spotify, United Airlines, indie bookstores)

Introduce Turkishness Uncensored Annual Summit

Social Media Outreach (influencers; #turkishnessuncensored)

Y3

Expand reader-base to include Turkish and Middle Eastern Expats in Western Europe

Continue to build credibility as reliable source through partnerships

Grow annual summit (events, speakers, popularity)

Grow social media engagement

Y4

Continue to generate awareness as a global voice for the Turkish cause

Expand social media engagement through virtual clubs, debates, reading groups

Continue to grow annual summit by inviting more speakers

Operations

For the operations section of our business plan, we will be organizing our goals and objectives year-by-year, with year one being separated further, into months. This will allow us to assess where we should begin, how quickly we should be moving along, and where we picture ourselves by the end of the year. There will be a lot of movement each year between establishing an affordable workspace, pursuing quality content creators to add to our freelance team, increasing our full time staff as our business grows, experimenting with advertisement rates and sponsors, as well as making the critical decisions necessary on which kinds of overhead costs we are able to stretch our budget more on such as travel expenses, office supplies, or furniture. Efficiency, productivity, submission, editing, and publication time, cost reduction, quality, customer satisfaction, and sustainability are only a few of the objectives that our operations strategy will be most capitalizing on. Given the overall market and environmental factors under which Turkishness Uncensored will be realized, our operations plan will be dependent upon the changes that we see happening about us economically, culturally, and politically. This could lead to adjustments in our staffing, budgeting strategy, as well as our decision on how to approach our global market, which is something to keep in mind as we detail our operations goals below.

We project year one as being a roller coaster of getting our business up and running. Loan money will be obtained in the beginning of the fiscal year, in January. Throughout the month we will be working on communicating with possible lenders and loan options that we believe will be most understanding of the losses we assume we will be having between years one and two, but who also have faith that we will break even in year three and become profitable by year four. After research and weighing the pros and cons associated with specific lenders, we have come to an agreement that the SBA 504 Loan Program is the most appropriate for our business needs. It is an effective resource for us because it offers our business, a means for financing, as well as promoting our growth and goal to create jobs.⁷⁷ We imagine the structure of the loan occurring in three parts, in the form of two liens and a contribution. The first \$500,000 will be obtained through Chase by lines of credit.⁷⁸ Our banking relationship with Chase, such as through our credit history has made it possible for us to secure the maximum loan amount that the bank offers. Helping us to finance half of our business, a Chase business line of credit of the best option for us

⁷⁷ “Office of Financial Assistance | Resources. “ SBA: The U.S. Small Business Administration. Accessed April 12 2020. <https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/ofa/resources/4049>.

⁷⁸ “Chase Business Line of Credit.” Chase. Accessed April 12 2020. <https://www.chase.com/business/loans/line-of-credit>.

when we think about short-term capital, the purchase of inventory, and paying suppliers. The next \$400,000 dollars will be a second lien with 504 loan. This will be a twenty year, fixed rate loan that will be obtained through CDC, and funded through a debenture that SBA connects us with, therefore covering 40% of our total cost. The last \$100,000, or 10% will be a borrower contribution. We have chosen such a high amount in loans, one million dollars because by the end of year two, we are expecting to incur losses that are close to \$800,000. In terms of interests rates, the SBA 504 loan program is correlated with the current market rate for 5-year and 1-year Treasury issues. That being said, we will continue to may back \$5500 every year, since the current treasury bond rates are .50 with a yield of .36%.⁷⁹ A loan of one million dollars will give us the extra cushion in case we develop more expenses such as for launch than we may have initially expected.

After securing a reliable one million dollar loan, we will turn our attention to seeking an affordable work space that would be appropriate for the amount of staff that we are planning to hire. Workspace seems to be the best option. Our New York-based full time staff will be thirteen people in our first year. We will not be renting an office in Manhattan due to the high costs associated with working in the city. However, we do not want to be burden to our employees by making them travel far to work, so we are looking to be based in an area that has easy access to the city by public transit. For these reasons, we are choosing to begin a membership at the Workspace offices at the Gotham Center in Long Island City. Overlooking the Queensboro Bridge, employees have plenty of transportation options, including the E, F, M, R, N, W, 7 and G trains, along with the Q30, and Q101 buses, along with the East River Ferry putting Manhattan and other boroughs such as Brooklyn within reach. The rent for this space, which should be comfortable for a staff of up to twenty, and therefore remain appropriate as we hire more staff in years two, three, and four will remain constant at \$7,540 every month.⁸⁰ With a busy January of establishing lender and loan agreements, and confidently renting a workspace, we are ready to move on to hiring staff to finally make Turkishness Uncensored a functioning, and moving business.

The following two months will be a mix of hiring staff and using our staff's connections to build relationships that will help us form a reliable list of freelancers who would be willing to contribute to Turkishness Uncensored. We are budgeting for a staff of thirteen: a management team consisting of five, and a sales team made up of eight talents. At Turkishness Uncensored, we will accept submissions from all around

⁷⁹ United States Rates & Bonds. Bloomberg. Accessed April 12 2020. <https://www.bloomberg.com/markets/rates-bonds/government-bonds/us>.

⁸⁰ "Private Office #15-134." Wework. Accessed April 12 2020. <https://www.wework.com/buildings/a1ea45dc-4123-466d-a5b8-9558dde6a767/reserve/f9e2424d-4af7-4506-9c24-13046293e00e>.

the world of writers, journalists, artists, activists, etc who feel as though they have a particular story to tell, as was explained in the previous section. That being said, we have divided our staff into six small, key departments, excluding freelancers. This includes management (editor-in-chief, executive assistant to the editor-in-chief, chief operating officer, executive assistant to the COO, and chief financial officer), editorial (managing editor and editorial assistant), digital production (director of digital production and photo editor), marketing and publicity (marketing and publicity) legal (fact checker), and office (office manager). Each department has one director for the most part, which some departments, like office and IT, are a one person team, and therefore simply will be reporting to our management team.

As we mentioned, the staff who is overlooking business operations will be a tight-knit professional family of five strategists. Our editor-in-chief is in charge of creating our editorial boards and overseeing all of our department editors, including approving the assignments our editors give to freelancers. Before any content is immediately published, our editor-in-chief must approve of it in order to make sure that it is appropriate for the brand. More intricately, our editor-in-chief creates and enforces the parameters and policies that lead to the creation of our content to ensure of its originality and that it is reflective of our ideology as a voice for freedom of expression. He also oversees the overall planning and conception of both the written and visual elements of our product. As our team's leader, the editor-in-chief curates our weekly pitch meetings, during which we determine which content to publish at what time. Because we want to give everyone and anyone the equal opportunity to be published by us, we do not outright reject unappealing pieces. Instead, we make recommendations for improvements and encourage writers to return with an improved draft. With a team of two fact checkers already, the editor-in-chief will be the third eye to make sure that there are no possibilities for copyright infringements such as through plagiarism or ghostwritten content. We also discard of any content or sections of content that may be defamatory to a certain individual or group, unless is based on facts, which is often accomplished through cross-checking quotes and examining references. Similarly, the editor-in-chief also communicates often with our marketing and publicity manager in order to be the extra innovator with ideas that could lead to new marketing campaigns and higher social metrics to ensure loyal readership. However, despite the countless roles and responsibilities laid on our editor-in-chief's shoulders, probably the most important is that they are representative of our brand and are able to adequately communicate our message and ideology both professionally and passionately across social media and at marketing events. Whatever the editor-in-chief needs, but cannot get to, we look to for the executive assistant for help. Quite simply, they provide executive, administrative, and development support that balances our management and sales teams to ensure that things run smoothly and deadlines are met. Furthermore, our executive assistant manages our editor-in-chief's calendar of appointments. For this reason, it is extremely important that communication is fluid between

all departments, so that the executive assistant can ensure that all appointments are coordinated in a timely manner. With the help of the chief financial officer, the executive assistant also is in charge of completing expense reports. In addition to this, our executive assistant composes and prepares daily correspondences, arranges travel and itineraries, as well as compiles documents for travel-related meetings. Equally important to our team is our chief operating officer. This role is highly critical to the building of our brand and our pursuit to promote our company culture and vision as clearly as possible. The voice of our chief operating officer is one of the most critical because they help us to design and implement our business strategies and plans for future growth of our company. They set comprehensive goals both on the creativity side of our brand as well as on the business side in order to achieve and equal balance between all departments.

Our larger sales team of eight talents will be working together in the same space as our management team. This way, we ensure a community environment where everyone is “in the loop.” Even though we will be using email and softwares like Slack to communicate with one another and bounce ideas, we value face-to-face contact. This is inevitable with all departments and teams occupying the same area. Creative decisions and business decisions overlap as we bring the logistical aspects of our business with that of the content we are producing, in order to ensure that everyone knows how the business is running and have an idea of what their own goal is and how it affects the progression of our short term and long term goals. We will have a full time editor and assistant editor who will revise and perfect such submissions and publish them into our CMS. By doing this, we will save money in office space and materials, possible benefits, as well as giving as many writers and journalists an opportunity to share their stories in their chose medium. Data collected in 2018 has shown that 58% of organic searches come from mobile devises. This demonstrates that people are accessing content from their mobile phones than from any other source of content. Between 2013 and 2019 alone, time spent on media on a desktop has undergone a decline. This is not surprising, given the increase of people owning a smartphone nowadays. During this period of only six years, average daily media consumption on devices has increased by close to 37%.⁸¹ This not only answers to our decision to be a digital-only brand but also to our efforts to stress design and user interface by employing a full time staff of digital editors and designers. Because we are a digital-only brand, our design and production team is especially important. These individuals will be responsible for the overall layout, user interface, and oversee the usability of our site. Our director of digital production will be responsible for overseeing and managing the rest of our staff including our editorial team, our marketing

⁸¹ He, Amy. “Average US Time Spent with Mobile in 2019 has Increased: US Adults Spend More Time on Mobile than They Do Watching TV.” EMarketer. June 04 2019. Accessed April 12 2020. <https://www.emarketer.com/content/average-us-time-spent-with-mobile-in-2019-has-increased>.

and sales team, and our office and legal team, completing quarterly reports to evaluate individuals' performance. In order to ensure a user-friendly space and to evoke originality and freedom of expression, our photo editor will be vital to us. Their role is to allocate and coordinate assignments, as well as approve images as they arrive from freelancers. They work with the rest of our digital team, and have a keen eye for aesthetics and how the positioning of a certain photo on a website could determine whether or not the content will be consumed or not. Similar to our other editors, the photo editor will not be the one going out to sights to take photos, which will also be made possible by our travel budget. As photos are submitted to us from our freelance team, they will be working in Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign to edit photos before adding content and publishing them on our site. They will be managing assignments and communicating with freelancers to ensure that we are taking the sorts of photos that most represent our brand. With the help of our legal team they negotiate fees and rights to photos as well as the logistics that go into obtaining permission to shoot photography at particular sites.

The responsibilities aligned with marketing and publicity will be given, in our first year at least, to one employee. The role requires one to be an excellent leader and communicator, as well as being strategic thinker with creative, out-of-the-box ideas, strong public relations, and solid press relationships across multiple platforms such as in the arts and in nonprofit organizations. During the start of our business, they will work with us to outline a macro strategy for generating publicity around Turkishness Uncensored. They will contact possible advertisers, media personalities and stakeholders to brainstorm campaigns to generate traction to our platform. They make contact with content creators and industry leaders in Turkish culture and politics to generate interest in our new company. Depending on the allocation of our budget each year, the marketing and publicity director will manage and maximize all financial resources dedicated to each campaign we do. It will be their job to develop and test out different strategies and tactics to ensure the best success for Turkishness Uncensored. Using marketing research, they will pitch social media strategies, provide outreach to readers, organize and coordinate our big annual summit beginning in our second year, and attend other events like popups where we can gain more popularity in the industry. Because the larger majority of our content is coming from freelancers and is user generated it is especially important to our credibility that we fact check. This is why we will have a team of one fact checker who will be responsible for verifying the names, dates, and fact of the investigative journalistic pieces that we will receive. This is not so important for the short stories and more creative pieces, but for newsy and timely content, we need to remain alert and aware as not to become misleading or lose credibility. Furthermore, our fact checker provides our freelancers, editors, and multimedia producers with research assistance. They use the program, Chorus CMS to look over features and content that is on its way

to being published. Because we are a small team in our first year, we also expect our fact checker to provide administrative support, such as in the form of mailings, as needed.

During this same period, we will be asking of each on the members of team to act as temporary marketers. As we outlined in the marketing chapter of our business plan, it is critical that we generate brand awareness. This does not only apply to our potential target audience and sponsors, but also towards potential contributors. Our content is completely driven by the submissions we receive from freelancers. This cannot be possible without content creators knowing that we now exist. That is why are acknowledging and acting upon this concern early, so that by the time we launch, we will have a sufficient amount of content to carry us forth. So, as mentioned staff will be expected to reach out and build relationships with content creators that fit into our brand. To avoid repetition, a more in-depth discussion on how this will unravel can be found in our marketing section.

Between the months of April and May we will move on to testing the site before proceeding with a live launch. This period will consist of editing article for grammar and accuracy, as well as reevaluating the flow of the site. The three questions that we will be consistently asking ourselves are: 1. Why would I visit this site? 2. Is the content ready for a visitor? 3. Does each page come together to address our audience? At this stage, we acknowledge that our content will not be close to ready to be published. Here, we are primarily concentrated on checking that the “bigger picture” is there. This means generally making sure that content is both appealing to students and working professionals of various Turkish backgrounds. Site speed will be the concern of our web designer. We want to be sure that access to our site does not turn into a pony ride of loading and reloading because of large files and inadequate amounts of content. With the understanding that the majority of readers will be accessing content on the go - on the subway, in line, during breaks - mobile friendliness will be one of our key concerns at the start of our business in terms of design and interface mobility.

June will be dedicated to selling ads and building relationships with brands for potential partnerships and barter-deal native advertising. This will tap into our marketing and publicity strategies. We plan to attend marketing events and build relationships with brands whose mission and core ethics run similar to our own, and with which we can foster productive and intellectual conversations surrounding diversity, inclusivity, and the threats to freedom of expression. One form of advertising that will not only be one of our revenue sources but will also help us to gain credibility will be through affiliate marketing, including links. We are looking to recommend products that would appeal to both young adults and students as well as working professionals, along with a brand that is shares a similar brand message to our own. A focused

discussion on how we will approach potential advertisers, which brands we are currently holding conversations with, and some examples of advertising campaigns that we are considering can be referred to in our section on Customer Needs and Preferences. The structure of advertisements on our site will include a leadership board (728x90) at a rate of \$65, a rectangle (336x280) for \$82, a skyscraper (160x600) for \$65, and a half page ad (336x600) with a rate of \$110. Payments for ad space will be charged on a monthly basis. We expect to measure the success of these ads based on the amount of visitors we receive on our site in the form of impressions and how many viewers actually click the ad and are taken to the advertiser's site. This will be quoted as a dollar received per one thousand impressions. This practice will effectively drive traffic to our site from other sources. One other method that we believe help us not only generate revenue, but also gain credibility and brand awareness is by selling sponsored posts in the form of native advertising. This kind of advertising comes across transparently on our site, telling our readers that such content is being paid for, but build in line with our brand. Therefore, communication still occurs between us and our readers in which they will know which content is ours and which content has been paid for to be posted. In terms of the positioning of ads on our site, we do not want to overwhelm our readers with an influx of advertisements, so we will keep advertisements limited to one banner ad on each page, along with separate smaller ads across the page. As a result, readers will not be too distracted while they are consuming content, but will also not be able to ignore the advertisements on each page. That being said, it is important that our ads are placed in a way that our content is not pushed below the fold. For this reason, we are planning for a lot of our ads to be wrapped about content to ensure better viewability. Placing ads in the middle of our content is one of many ways that we will grab our visitor's attention and hopefully cause them to click on the ad. Given that it will not be a large, banner-like ad, it will not be super intrusive. This increases the chances that visitors will either click on the ad and we will therefore generate more revenue, or they will continue engaging with our site's content - it is a win-win deal. Another profitable place for ads will be under our navigation menu, but will be keeping this at a minimum, as we do not want to push our own content to the exterior. Such ads will be slim enough as not to affect our site's content but clear enough so as to grab visitor's attention. Whitespace, such as along the sides of the page is another hotspot for ads. These will like be boldly colored with graphics that are likely to capture attention. Such ads will be long and vertical in a way that best compliments the placement of the rest of the content on the site.

From July onwards, we will begin assigning freelancers who are not working based on submissions, to stories. Close to five months after starting our project to build a team of freelancers, we are confident that at this time we will have a sufficient amount of contributors to rely on to supply our brand with diverse content across a wide range of mediums - journalism, poetry, interactive videos, etc. This will include a

lot of research on the part of our editorial team on the news and information that our prospective audience would most benefit from. During this time, there will be a lot of back and forth interaction between our marketing and editorial departments. Each week, these two teams will have a meeting to discuss which new contacts have been made and what can be done in terms of that month's content. As mentioned in our editorial section, each month will be devoted to a new project (i.e. We Will Not Be Silent, Democracy, Coming Together, Escapes, etc). The way we organize our editorial calendar, will largely be a result of the discussions taking place in these meetings. On the one hand, our marketing team's research of the environment tells us what our target audience is interested in at the moment, while our editorial team acts on these observations through coordination with freelancers on in the form of story assignments. Also, there are still the submissions that we receive every month to consider, which our editorial team will consistently review and organize depending on how appropriate the particular story is to the current project. It will also be a time for us to put our relationships with Turkish expats around the world into practice by communicating and working with them via phone meetings and Zoom about what their experiences and stories could contribute to Turkishness Uncensored's voice. During this same time our marketing and publicity team will be implementing tactics to supplement our strategy to build brand awareness, form effective partnerships, and target our audience, including social media campaigns and events and influencer marketing. As highlighted, year one of Turkishness Uncensored will be overwhelmingly characterized by business deals, the formation of relationships with brands and freelancers, the pulling together of a staff that is skilled, capable and that shares the Turkishness Uncensored ideology, followed by content that aims to resist censorship around the world. A direct result that will be coming from the fact that our content will be primarily coming from freelancers around the world will be travel expenses. This is because while many of published content is submitted to us, we also give assignments to freelancer whom we believe would offer a particular idea we have the perfect voice. There will be assignments that we give freelancers now and then that may require them to fly to Istanbul, Rabat, Beirut, or another eventful city to interview or be an eyewitness to certain events. This will most likely be the case for our investigative journalists that will need to obtain first-person information from sources. With that being said, we are estimating expenses of \$2000 for travel. This will include airline costs, hotel fees, meals, air, rail and bus fares, and local transportation costs for taxi fares or Ubers between the airport or station and a hotel. Also part of this will be the expenses that occur when operating and maintaining a car such as the cost of gas, oil, water, repairs, parking fees and tolls. Some of the smaller expenses associated with our \$2000 budget are cleaning and laundry expenses, computer rental fees, telephone or fax expenses, and tips on eligible bills. Below is a diagram of year one's business plan:

Our plans for year two are substantially concentrated on creating new positions, experimenting new marketing and sales opportunities, as well as forming new avenues of revenue generation. Three new job spaces that we will be looking to fill includes a digital marketing assistant, marketing and publicity assistant, and web designer. Our digital marketing assistant will be reporting to our director of digital production. Their responsibilities will basically be those that the director of digital production found they did not have enough time to get to during year one, which is why they need an assistant for the future. After meeting with our director of digital production and discussing exactly how they want to divide their role with that of the assistant we have come to summarize the responsibilities of the new role as follows: screen, log, and sub-clip footage, facilitate video production by working with department coordinator, performing quality control of all final video deliveries to ensure execution is as intended, flag content, branding, and technical concerns to supervisor and key teammates, encode assets based on platform requirements, digitally package and deliver film, art and other content through Aspera, manage the export and vetting of licensor supplied metadata, manage incoming libraries of content by categorizing and backing up files to local storage, completing work orders like clip creations, liaising with encoding houses when required, as well as a number of administrative duties such as coordinating bi-weekly the technical

TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED

YEAR 1- BUSINESS PLAN



January

- Obtain \$1m loan: SBA 504 Loan Program
- Rent WeWork Space



April & May

- Prepare website and social media channels for launch



July-December

- Assign stories to freelancers
- Continue to build relationships and brand awareness through direct outreach and word-of-mouth



February & March

- Hire Staff (Management: 5, Sales: 8)
- Outreach to possible contributors for building brand awareness and word-of-mouth marketing



June

- Sell ads
- Build relationships for future partnerships
- Native advertising through barter deals

calls, generating weekly reports, and arranging shipping and messenger services. During our second year,

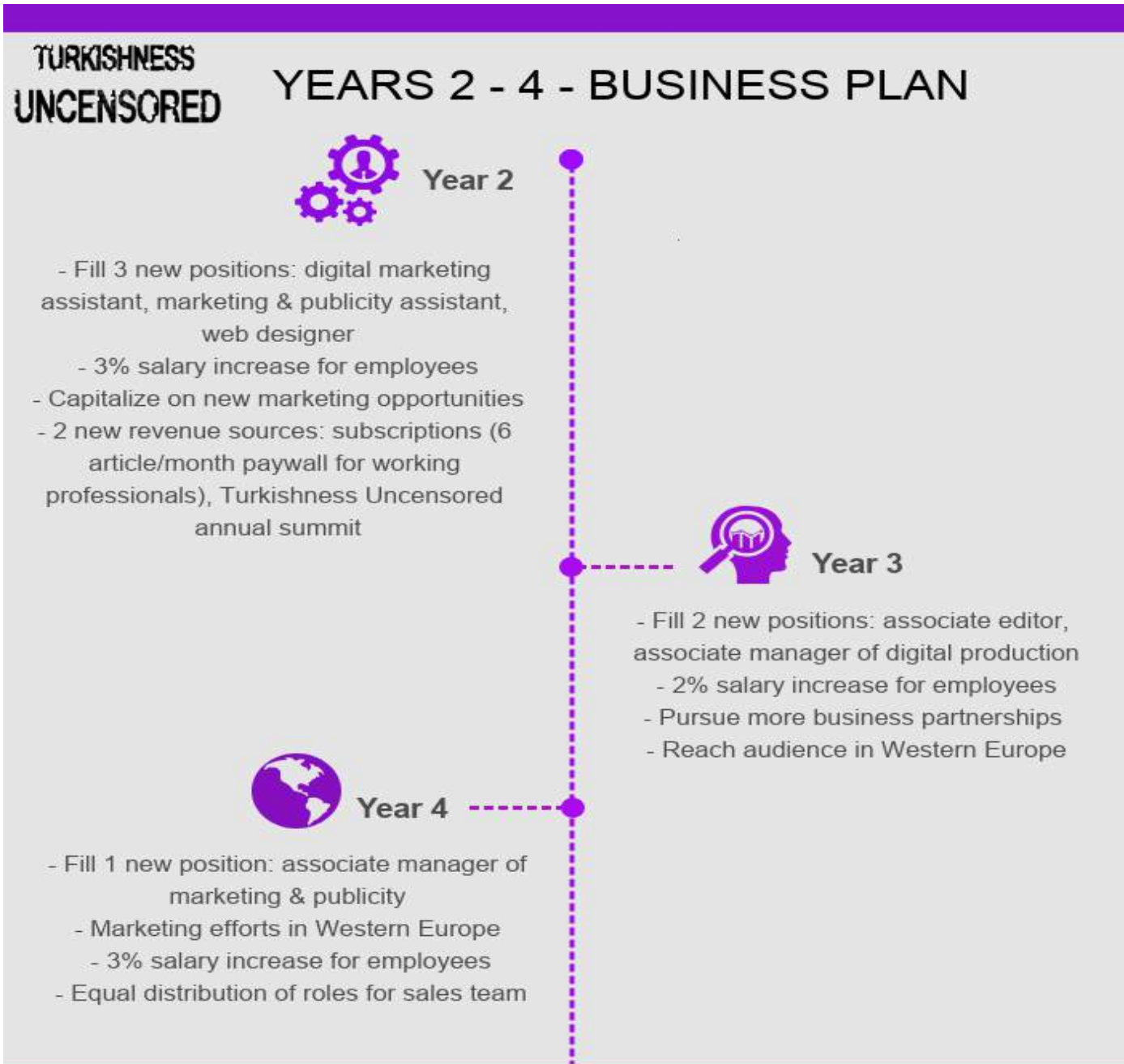
because we will be adding new revenue streams, it is critical that our marketing and publicity director has the aid they need in order to ensure that our marketing goals can be exceeded. As a result, we will also be adding a marketing and publicity assistant to our team. This role will largely be administrative but also will collaborate on special assignments with the head of the marketing department. They will schedule meetings, manage calendars, arrange travel for our freelancers and staff, complete expense reports, handle phone calls, and do mailing. Maintaining publicity track tools, coverage reports, speaker engagement grids, and industry event calendars will be critical to this position, especially in year two as we will be launching our special Turkishness Uncensored annual summit. Another set of responsibilities that our assistant will be expected to perform well in is researching and tracking press related coverage, maintaining distribution lists for press outreach, management of invoices and materials for summit, and researching and updating outlets and contributor/freelancer contact information. Lastly, the marketing assistant will be largely involved in our social media campaign, including posts, engagement with followers and maintaining our #ReadwTurkishnessUncensored bookclub on Instagram. The last new position that we will be adding in the second year of business is a web designer. While in year one, our goal in terms of the appearance of our site was all about functionality and our audience's response to it. In year two, we want to add another talent, a web designer, who can collaborate with other members of our digital team to render our site for aesthetic and one that expresses our personality. The job of the web designer will be to write thought out, testable, and efficient code by using software development practices. We are looking for them to not change the appearance of the website that we already have, but to adjust the layout, user interface by using standard HTML or CSS as necessary. Furthermore, we will ask them to integrate data from various back-end services and databases to apply to the functionality and the way our site is perceived by users. For all continuing employees, there will also be a growth in salaries by 3% after year one, 2% after year two, and again, 2% after year three. The benefits for both our sales team as well as our management team will remain constant year after year at 22%. Freelancers, despite making up the majority of our sales budget, are not eligible for benefits, so that is a place where we will be saving money. As detailed in our marketing and sales chapter, year two will be a time to explore and adopt new marketing opportunities. This will include the launch of the Turkishness Uncensored annual summit, as well as the exploration of new social media tactics that will boost audience engagement and help us to gain more traction to our website. In terms of our new revenue sources, as mentioned there will be the the summit organized by our marketing and publicity department, as well as the introduction to a paywall that will require readers to subscribe and pay a monthly fee in order to continue to access content. More information about this new practice will be further discussed in the following chapter that goes into our financials.

Our operations goals in year three will be similar to that of the previous year: increase amount of full time, on site staff, and continuing to build relationships with content creators internationally. During this time we will also be setting forth our efforts to bring Turkishness Uncensored to countries in Western Europe such as Germany, France, and the UK. The two positions that we are looking to fill is for an associate editor and as associate manager of digital production. With the knowledge that at this point we are going to be reaching an even greater audience overseas, we are well aware that we will be receiving, and therefore publishing more content in order to keep up with the rise in subscriptions that we are anticipating. So, as a way to relieve the stress off of our managing editor and editorial assistant, and after a review of our projected expenses in year three we have decided to add a new member to this busy team of two. Ideally, our associate editor will help the lead editor with reviewing submissions, assigning freelancers to stories, and organizing the editorial calendar. They will also work with the marketing and publicity department in deciding which content to promote via social media and the best tactics to gain web traffic to particular stories. A lot of our associate editor's job is based in how well they can communicate with freelancers and articulate what we are looking for every month. In this way, they are constantly making new connections with local and international writers, activists, artists, and other intellectuals to generate new leads. They also take a big part in weekly pitch meetings where they will present the editorial team's ideas on what content our readers are most engaged with, based on data analysis. These pitches are put together into a monthly report that will be useful to the editorial team as they continue to brainstorm new topics, themes, and projects that are appropriate for Turkishness Uncensored's goal to be a representative platform that advocates inclusivity, activism, and freedom of expression. Our associate editor is also a leader in that they supervise our editorial assistant and give performance feedback with quarterly evaluations. That being said, we are looking for someone who is able to help us maintain a sharp focus on our short term as well as our long term objectives, including building upon a culture that values creativity, initiative, and authenticity. The other position we are looking to fill will be an addition to our digital production department, bringing our department up from a team of three (director of digital production, digital production assistant, web designer) to a strong team of four. This role require a very experienced person whose primary objective will be leadership and working on the branding of our company. They will have experience with all aspects production management. This could include being a liaison within our creative department as well as our management teams, managing influencers and various sots of talent, and facilitating with production partners. On a day-to-day basis, this person will be expected to work between our director and assistant to publish stories and tailor stories in a way that is friendly to our CMS. They will be active in motoring sources for news such as via Twitter and Dataminr and respond in a timely manner by confirming information and communicating with our editorial team about breaking stories that we should immediately look to cover. They will implement use the best practices in relation to search engine

optimization such as through writing simple headlines and text, and after position content for maximum engagement on the mobile web, on apps, and through social media. They will work together with our assistant to double check that all stories have the appropriate elements such as photos, audio, and video are properly sourced and have relevant social embeds. They will make use of real-time data through Google Analytics and Charterbeat as a way to drive publication decisions. Because this is a critical year for us in creating more of a global environment, the expectations for our marketing and publicity team will be higher as we are looking for our department to brainstorm creative new ways to reach Turkish and Middle Eastern students and working professionals overseas. This could be through partnerships with European brands or creating content that is tailored specifically for a European audience, which would be further discussed in our pitch meetings between the marketing and editorial departments. Given that each and every one of our departments are going to be expected to take on multiple responsibilities and will most likely be doing extra work that they may not have initially anticipated, we will be increasing salaries by 3% to show our employees that their work and commitment to Turkishness Uncensored is valued. In terms of how we see our revenue coming in by the end of year three, we are expecting more to come from subscription sales as well as from our annual summit.

In year four, we are expecting a more stable, equal distribution of roles, and a more defined perspective on how our departments work together and which jobs are entirely on them. We hope for our revenue to continue to grow exponentially, as we and seek new marketing opportunities. With the addition of one new position, an associate manager of marketing and publicity, our full time staff will reach nineteen New York-based employees. Similar to when we added an associate editor to our team in year two, an associate manager of marketing and publicity in year two, this new addition to our team will work between our department's director and assistant. They will help the department create, execute, manage, track, and analyze promotional plans and tasks for our website and social media content. They will collaborate with all departments including production, legal, and editorial to achieve promotional goals. They will help in maintaining and growing publicity and advertising contracts and ongoing relationships. They will also help the assistant outline marketing budgets and sales estimates that will be beneficial as we look for new ways to target our audience. They will in some ways function as a partial advisor to our content creators on how they can market themselves and see more traction to their articles specifically. In addition to this, each week they will be expected to work on sales, marketing and publicity drafts, such as the advertisements we will create for our annual summit. Lastly, the ideal candidate will come equipped to research new sales opportunities and provide extra administrative support to our assistant as needed, especially on the busiest of times like in our summer months when we are preparing for our yearly event. Furthermore,

as we have done every year thus far, there will be a salary increase, this time of 3% since we are continuing to generate greater revenue than in the previous year.



Measuring the success of our ads will be quite simple. The most direct way to track if our ads are generating enough revenue and that we are meeting our goals is point of traffic data. We will use the acquisition tool offered by Google Analytics to give us the metrics of direct traffic, or direct visits coming to our site, referral traffic, or readers coming via external links, organic traffic, or that coming from search, and social traffic, or visitors who came across our brand via social media. Cost per lead is another metric that will be used dependent upon the strategies we implemented across channels. To figure out our costs per lead we will pull together the average monthly costs of our campaigns and compare the generated value with the total number of leads on each channel the ad managed to reach. Overall traffic will give us a birds eye view on the performance of our advertisements on our site. Here, we will measure total visits any of our landing pages. We will be paying a lot of attention to bounce rate in hopes that this metric will remain low and consistent over time. Google Analytics will also be effective in aiding us to determine new sessions. This metric will allow us to track how many visitors to our site are new, and how many are recurring. This could be especially important should we choose to eventually change or make updates to the layout or functionality and we see a drop in recurring visits, we will know to return and rethink the changes we had made to our site. Projected ROI will be the most important metric for our success measurements. We will check this regularly in order to maintain consistency and an intricate understanding of our digital performance and the health of our ad campaigns. On the following page, we have included a summary of years two through four of our business plan:

Financials

Turkishness Uncensored's business is focused the production and distribution of high-quality, engaging content to satisfy a growing global demand. Our brand does business with other brands to leverage their strong goals, recognize distinctive intellectual property, and a global scale spread to produce and distribute content that resonates deeply with a diverse audience. As the publishing industry continues to evolve, with changes in technology and the environment, leading to rapid growth in content services, shifts in consumer viewing habits, Turkishness Uncensored finds itself well positioned to address and capitalize on these changes. However, it also faces risks and new sources of competition associated with these developments. Accordingly, we are fixated on both strengthening our position within the marketplace and pursuing growth opportunities, including the increase of content and services offered directly to consumers, and building strong relationships with our audience, partners, and investors. Here at Turkishness Uncensored our financial plans will be carried through a detailed management process that will link our systems, as we continue to improve upon our divisional operations in order to be ensured that we are effectively using our access to new information to reach our goals and ultimately increase revenue opportunities through sales and marketing. we are committed to preparing and presenting our company's consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States (U.S. GAAP). The preparation of all of our statements in the following section involves the use of both estimates and assumptions completed by our management department. This affects the amounts that we therefore report in the consolidated financial statements as well as the supplementary notes. Turkishness Uncensored bases its estimates on historical experience, current business and environmental factors as well as various other assumptions that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. These are all considered to be necessary in order to form a solid basis and understanding for determining the values of assets and liabilities. It is indeed possible that the actual values are different from our initial assumptions. On a rolling basis, the company evaluates and performs the necessary research need to ensure the adequacy of its reserves and the estimates used in the calculations. For example this could include accounts receivable reserves for returns, accounts receivable allowance for doubtful accounts, pension and post retirement obligations, uncertain tax positions, the timing and amount of future income taxes and related reductions, inventory reserves, cost of goods sold from subscriptions and staffing based on estimated gross profit rates, sales tax contingencies, unredeemed incentive programs, and assets and liabilities acquired in business partnerships.

To go on, the financial projections associated with Turkishness Uncensored have been carefully organized to consider potential losses, unexpected expenses, and anticipated profits. Our company operates within highly competitive markets that are subject to rapid change, especially customer preferences and changes within the environment, such as with adjustments of law in Turkey, or through shifts in our audience's preferences. As a result, we are aware that there are considerable uncertainties associated with Turkishness Uncensored's efforts to develop a successful and consistent publishing platform. That being said we will be following the accounting principles associated with GAAP as a form of guidance. It will help us to operate Turkishness Uncensored successfully. We will comply with these principles by reporting yearly income statements, balance sheets and other financial data will be reported in a timely manner. Some of the ethics that we value most include revenue recognition, matching, materiality, and consistency. To satisfy the materiality principle, we will ensure that all of our financial statements are complete with detailed and honest information on how our business is being run. We will remain consistent in the way this data is reported year-by-year., including any changes or big decisions being made that could effect the profitability of our business. Attached, we have included spreadsheets of our financial projections for the first four years of our business. This includes an income statement, balance sheet, cash flow statements, and detailed worksheets of our revenue streams - advertising, subscriptions, and events. Here, we will explore how we will be generating revenue year-by-year and the research that stands behind our cost buildup assumptions. As we planned our financials, we kept a number of key matters in mind: relevant software and hardware to create content, the size of our target market which could develop for students and working professionals, relevant methods of delivery and relevant content, and pricing models. All of these aspects are still evolving and will most likely change on a recurrent basis until a noticeable and reliable pattern develops, and therefore becomes more defined. For readers of our annual reports, we caution that results or expectations expressed, including, without limitations, those that relate to future business prospects, plans, digital initiatives, strategies, new editorial standards, goals, revenues, improved efficiencies, general costs, potential savings, operating margins, working capital, liquidity, capital needs, the cost and timing of projects, interest costs, cash flows and income, are all subject to risks and uncertainties that may possibly cause actual results to differ materially from those initially predicted. Each of the following parts of this section are divided year by year with supplementary graphs to illustrate how our company is growing and where it can be expected to go in the future.

As stated in Operations, a one million dollar loan taken out in three increments through the SBA 505 loan program. It will help us to run our business in the first two years of our business, until our point of breakeven in year three. This large amount will be highly critical in allowing us to hire a sufficient staff of thirteen in year one, and adding new positions in year two. It will also give us the funds we need to rent an

appropriate workspace in New York City, which will be \$7,540 every month, or \$90,480 yearly. Our rent will remain constant year-by-year, as we have no projected plans to change location. Overhead expenses that will need to be budgeted for includes office supplies such as computers and stationary, as well as travel that will fluctuate based on the stories we assign to freelancers.

Revenue recognition will be our primary concern as we are developing our business and strategizing the most profitable practices. This will be best organized in our balance sheet and income statement with by demonstrating the flow of our cash. To satisfy the revenue recognition principle, we plan to identify the payments of our website, determining how cash is being used, and recognize revenue as it comes in. In year one, Turkishness Uncensored will rely on advertising as the complete source of revenue. It will be derived from various ad “tiers,” that are comprised of display ads, video ads, native ads, and branded content. We are taking into consideration the market environment and what our competitors are doing as we make our financial decisions. As our audience and content quantity increases, so will our advertising rates and the number of ads we produce on our website. We will increase ad space with more content. This will gradually allow us to increase the number of ads every year. That being said, in order to offer sufficient value to our advertisers, as well as giving our users an optimal experience, we are engaged in a number of efforts. This includes our support for industry efforts to improve the measurement of viewing and audience engagement across platforms, working with affiliates to increase the use of technology that inserts advertising on streams of programming such as on mobiles. We will also look to develop data-driven advertisements for products such as American Express credit cards. We will grow our number of native advertisements we have on our site, which presents content featuring characters from our associated partners. Turkishness Uncensored’s advertising revenues are a function of the size and demographics of our audience delivers to our advertisers, the number of units of time sold and the price per unit. As our audience grows and changes, we will be raising our prices in the coming years to place us in the market more competitively. This is one of the main reasons why during our first year of business, we will be primarily focused on advertising and building partnerships. As we mentioned in our section on competition, ALA, nor Al Jazeera, nor Hürriyet include a paywall, nor do they expect visitors to pay or offer personal information such as names or email addresses. Also, this is our first year of business, and during this time we are looking to generate brand awareness through capitalizing on staff relationships with industry professionals through direct outreach and word of mouth marketing. The target of this strategy includes content creators, our potential audience, as well as possible stakeholders and investors. With this serving as context, revenue in year one will be concentrated on advertising. Our first and perhaps most traditional form of advertising will be in the form of display. This will be measured based on page views and impressions on desktop and mobile. Because impressions are not action-based, but rather have to do with users

potentially coming across advertisements on our page, we are projecting the value for this section to be high. The average total amount of ad impressions during year one is expected to reach close to four million. The distribution between desktop and mobile shows that a lot more of our page views are likely to occur as bauble are sliding through websites on their phones: 176,812 on desktop and 196,836 on mobile. We will use our ad server in order to calculate the metrics associated with our sell through rate. Our ad impressions per desktop PV is set at 10.130 on desktop, and 10.980 on mobile. This would mean that our average ad impressions on desktop would 1,791,106 and on mobile would be 2,161,259. We have set the sell through rate (STR) at the following percentages: brand STR - 52%, programmatic STR - 2%, and house STR - 5%. The associated costs with our costs per thousand (CPM) will be set in accordance with how much our ads will generate in revenue for every batch of thousand people who are exposed to the ads on Turkishness Uncensored: brand eCPM - .80, and programmatic eCPM - \$1.50. The most efficient way that we will be measuring CPM is through the click-through rate (CTR), which will show to us the number of clicks and advertisement receives in relation to the total amount of impressions on the advertisement. Our blended eCPM, or our effective eCPM on our revenue sheet represents the cost of ad impressions that took place, in spite of the various pricing models that are being adopted. The total impressions we believe will occur in this segment is 2,331,895. At the end of every month, we will calculate the revenue of our display advertising separately between brand, programmatic, and house. By multiplying the costs determine in our STR by our blended eCPM, we are estimating that brand revenue will be \$1,444, and programmatic will be \$119, bringing our monthly revenue to \$1,763 and our annualized display revenue to \$21,153.

With partners like UNICEF, we will also engage in video advertising. Revenue here will be calculated similar to that of display by zeroing in on STR (75%) and eCPM, which will be broken down between brand (\$15.28), programmatic (\$3.00), and house video (\$3.00). In our first year, there will not be much experimentation with video, which leads to us believe our monthly revenue in video will be \$68, or \$814 a year. Our statements on native advertising does not take into consideration barter deal styled partnerships that we plan to engage in, such as with Azeema as we have already previously noted in our marketing section. With the pricing for native tout brand sold in eCPM \$4.24 and programmatic sold eCPM \$5.89, our monthly native tout revenue is likely to be over \$20,206, with \$8,457 being associated with brand, and \$11,748 with programmatic, leading to an annualized revenue of \$242,470. The last type of revenue source that will take place in year one will be in the form of branded content. This early in our business, we are only anticipating to do two campaigns per month, each at the cost of \$5,500, giving us an annualized revenue of \$132,000. Adding up the totals for each revenue source: display \$18,893, video - \$814, native tout - \$242,470, and branded content - \$132,000, our total revenue in year one will be well

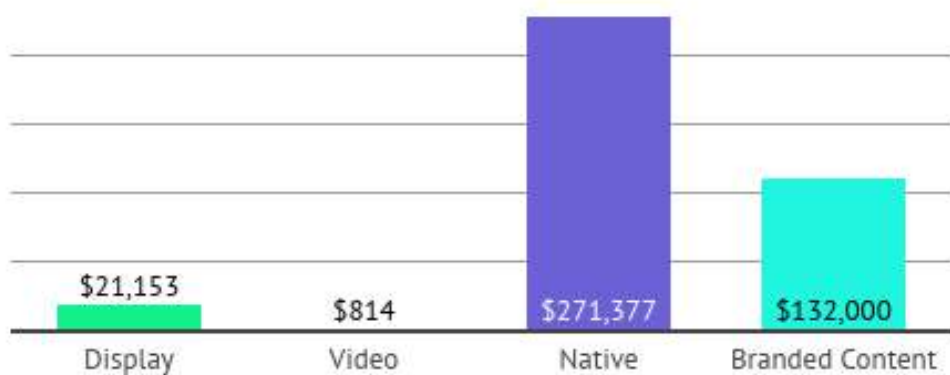
over \$394,000. However, with the expenses that will likely be incurred throughout the year, we will quickly discover that relying solely on advertising to make Turkishness Uncensored grow is simply not realistic, which will lead us to introducing subscriptions and events.

Apart from obtaining a large sum loan and a rent space during our first year, the salaries for our staff will be a large decision that will have to be made in year one, as it will also affect our future decisions such as raises and benefits. Over time, our full time staff will grow in accordance to the profitability of our business. Our salary range is determined by market pay rates, but we will also give consideration to the education, knowledge, skill and experience of each individual. In this way, we are cautious that our pay relates to the accomplishment of our mission and value proposition. Our salary ranges will increase year-by-year as a way to reflect the businesses needs. Another aspect that we are looking at is our employees' availability to come to work, and the competition that exists in the industry between different sorts of talent. However, most importantly in order to stimulate a productive and inspiring environment, we want our pay system to reflect the work culture that we desire - strong, innovative, and inclusive. With that in mind, paying a single employee solely based on their performance and accomplishments alone, we will not be developing the kind of team environment that we would like. As a team of five, the pay for our management department in year one totals \$280,000: editor-in chief (\$80,000), executive assistant to the editor-in-chief (\$35,000), chief operating officer (\$70,000), and executive assistant to the COO (\$60,000). The benefits for our team will be 22% of our sum of salaries, which in this case calculates \$61,600, rendering our total management salaries for year one \$341,600. With a team of eight, the salaries for our sales team reaches \$485,000: managing editor (\$65,000), editorial assistant (\$35,000), director of digital production (\$60,000), photo editor (\$50,000), marketing & publicity director (\$65,000), web master/IT manager (\$50,000), office manager (\$35,000), and fact checker (\$45,000). Similar to our management team, benefits will be 22% of the sum of our salaries in sales, which would be \$89,100 here, leading our total cost of sales salaries to be \$574,100. So, at the end of year one our total cost of salaries will be \$915,700. We are hoping that in the following year, by increasing salaries and continuing to offer 22% benefits, employees will remain motivated to help us achieve our goals as a business.

In the end of year one, although we had a good year in terms of our revenue from advertisements, it has not been enough to cover our expenses and costs, which is what we had initially expected: a large loss. We will work to improve the value of traditional, multichannel publishing services through our introduction of subscriptions in year two, along with the beginnings of our annual events. Turkishness Uncensored will also look to expand the amount of its content, by approaching other potential readers (i.e. Middle Easterners in the US). As mentioned, our cost of sales salaries, under our cost of goods sold reaches

\$574,100, which already surpasses our revenue of \$425,344 rendering our gross profit -35%. Our overhead costs, which includes rent (\$90,480), management salaries (341,600), events (\$0), and travel (\$2,500), adds up to a total overhead of \$434,580. After analyzing our EBIDTA, depreciation, EBIT, interest rate, and EBT, by the end of year one our net income leads us to have a loss of \$600,516. This will cause us to reassess our revenue streams, and ultimately introduce two new ones in order to ultimately achieve our long term goal of becoming a profitable brand. Before moving on to our summary of our second year finances, on the following page, we have included an illustrative diagram of our year one financials, including costs, revenue, operations, and losses:

Revenue



Entering into year two, we have a negative net income of \$35,088, but our loan keeps us afloat as we still have \$621,405 in cash. This year, our focus financially is to build more partnerships and gain subscribers. This will be sought after through the introduction of two new revenue streams. We will be adding a paywall and subscriptions, as well as launching our first annual summit. By adding more content quicker on our site everyday, we believe that this will be an incentive more people to subscribe. After conducting a survey that was taken 221 individuals, we found that 79.4% were willing to pay for the content we offer. That being said, revenue being generated via advertising will decrease, as we turn more attention to gaining subscribers and bringing attention to our annual summit. That being said, advertising will account for 80% of revenue, while 15% will come from subscriptions, and the remaining 5% from events. As we review the income statement, our cost of goods sold gives us a gross profit margin of 36%. While rent remains stabilized, management salaries, travel, the expenses associated with our event, and travel for freelancers will increase to compensate for the growth in our company and the projected sales we expect to increase by the end of the year. Because we expect to see more content being created along with an increase in the amount of stories being assigned to freelancers, we notice that our budget for travel will also have to increase, which is why we see this overhead cost has doubled to \$4,000. Below, we have detailed the finances involved in our two new revenue streams as well as the strategies we will be implementing to see more efficiency to reach a breakeven in year three and ultimately a profit that helps us to sustain our business as we explore more business opportunities.

Between years one and two, staff will receive a raise of three percent. As a result, the salaries for our management team increases to \$351,848, including benefits (\$63,448). On our sales team, three new positions are added, causing our salaries to grow by about 80%. The positions and salaries associated are as follows: digital production assistant - \$36,050, marketing and publicity assistant - \$36,050, and web designer \$72,100. The budget allotted to our freelancing staff will increase by 30% to coincide with the increase in content that will likely be generated - \$104,000. This brings our total cost of sales salaries to \$788,847, and our total cost of salaries for year two to \$1,140,695. Furthermore, the increase in the amount of employees to run our business will demonstrate the growth of our company and our need for more talent to keep up.

As we continue to target and anticipate a greater readership, we expect year two to also be more profitable in terms of advertising. We will continue to implement the same types of advertising this year as we did in year one. So, by the end of December, we are seeing an annualized display revenue of \$30,013. The breakdown of this goes as follows: total average ad impressions 5,191,102, STR of 62%, blended eCPM

of .78, total impressions of 3,218,483, and total monthly revenue of \$2,501. The rest of our revenue generated from advertising includes video (\$1,069), native tout (\$535,115), and branded content (\$288,000). The end of year two will be more than double of year one in terms of revenue: \$854,147. That being said, based on such large losses from last year, we already predict that if this was the only revenue stream, it would not be enough to get us to reach a breakeven and eventually a profit. This is why we will also introduce subscriptions via a paywall. At this point in our business, we believe that as our audience continues to grow, we are now in the position to add monetary value to the content we make available. The way that we see this paywall happening is through offering six free pieces of content every month, after which users will be encouraged to subscribe. However, we do not want to isolate a possible audience who may not receive income on their own, but rather rely on family or student loans and grants. This mostly speaks to our audience of students. Survey results have already shown to us that about According to survey results, 24.6% of the population do not have job, and either rely on family to get by, or finance themselves through student loans. To answer to this issue, subscriptions will remain free for our population of students. Upon the popup of the paywall after reaching the six article limit, users will be encouraged to either pay or, if they are a student, create a subscription using their verified university email address. With a majority of individuals willing to pay for access to content on Turkishness Uncensored, and 42.4% finding it feasible to pay \$24 each year, or \$1.99 a month, we are choosing to make this our subscription price. Revenue from individual purchases of our digital content will be recorded ratably over the life of the subscription and recognized at the point of sale. After observing an average monthly unique visitors of 125,000 in year one, we anticipate to see growth by about 69%, or 179,700 in our second year. We see a 20% average subscriber rate with subscribers in our first month at 9,000 and a growth of 11,000 to reach a total of 20,000 by the twelfth month. When we look at the revenue that results from the introduction of subscriptions it is \$17,910 in January and \$39,800 in December. Our total annualized subscription revenue is \$357,603.

Our second new form of revenue will occur with the introduction of our annual Turkishness Uncensored summit in June, which will be curated by marketing and publicity department. We are particularly excited about this new addition to our business plan because it is sure to deepen our connections with our audience and sponsors. It will reinforce the multiple characteristics at the heart of our value proposition, and also help us as a brand to discover more about ourselves. Attached we have included a detailed sheet of the expenses and, income and budget reconciliation that will take place during this three day event. It is both pragmatic and realistic in which it emphasizes how our associated costs affect the revenue we reach by the end of day three. Here, our total income and total expenses are broken down in accordance to how much we have budgeted and what the result was. At the end of the event in year two, we are anticipating

an income of \$101,400: event registrations (\$38,100), vendor sponsorships (\$11,300), and exhibitor registration fees (\$52,000). Analyzing these numbers, we see that sponsorships are a critical part of income, and will likely affect how profitable our event is. This could be in the form of banners hung in our venue, or by offering sample sized items from sponsored brands. In order to ensure that the right brands are being sponsored in our event, we will use surveys to collect additional information from our attendees at the time of registration. This is not only for the sake of our event, but also for that of our brand and what we can do in the future with these brands, which is something our marketing and publicity department will continue to work on. Following our income, we have illustrated how our expenses will be distributed, leading to a total of \$28,712. The expenses that compromise this total are site fees such as our event space that we will be renting at the Brooklyn Expo center, which will cost us \$6,000. While our marketing and publicity team are organizing the festivities and establishing partnerships with the brands to boost the event's popularity, there will also be the hiring of twenty four people in order to ensure the event is run successfully. This includes cleaning spaces, welcoming guests and offering goodie bags. Each staff member will be paid \$20 hourly, bringing our estimated cost to \$408. AV equipment, tables, and chairs will together cost us \$170, leading our total site fees to reach \$18,700. We will decorate the area further with flowers and special lighting. On the tables, there will be stationary that guests are encouraged to use throughout the day to take notes, and journal their experiences. Altogether, decorations are estimated to cost \$1,650. Publicity such as through printing, mailings, and supplementary materials will come close to the cost of our decorations, \$1,625. The last section of our budget sheet will occur in the form of food and drinks. As expressed in our marketing section where we have laid out the details associated with the event, there will be catering, as well as several homemade Turkish dishes cooked at home from us. Asking all of our full time staff members to contribute a food item, we will save money on catering, as well as make the event appear more community-like. Some of the dishes that our management and sales teams have offered to cook for us includes Manti (mini ravioli), Kofte (meatballs), döner (Turkish-style sandwich), dolma (rice and meat wrapped in grape leaves), borek (spinach or meat puff), simit (pretzel-shaped bread covered in sesame seeds), Kuzu Tandir (lamb), and Yaprak Sarma (a vegetarian snack). After summing up our expenses between site fees (\$15,962), decorations (\$1,370), publicity (\$800), and look and drink (\$10,500), our total expenses after budget reconciliation is \$5,953.

By the end of year two, despite our advertisement revenue growing by more than 40%, and the introduction of two new revenue sources, we are still in the stage of having more expenses than the income we are bringing in. While our losses in year one neared \$700,000, in year two it has flattened to \$35,088. In year three, we expect to finally breakeven and see profit growth. We will continue to rely on strategic business

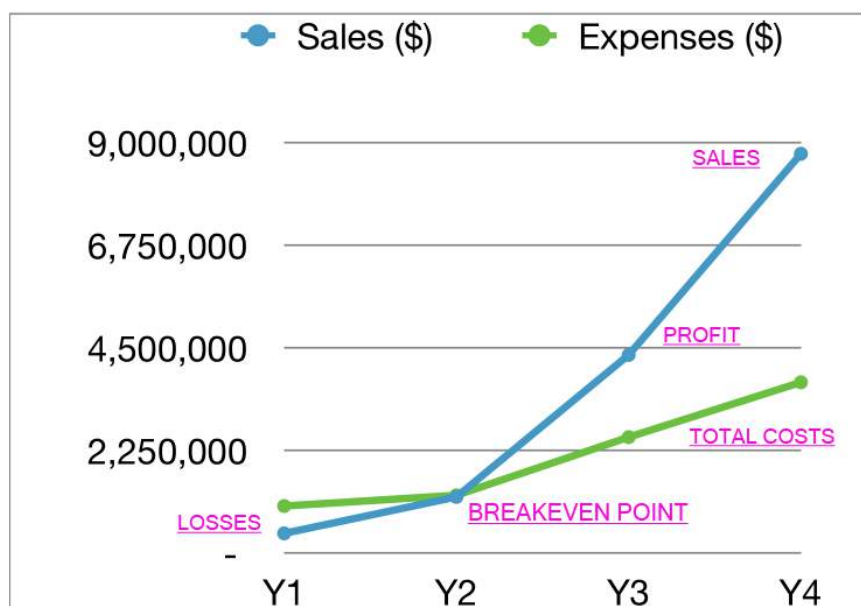
relationship in the form of partnerships and through seeking new marketing opportunities in other industries, such as nonprofit organizations. On the following page, we have visualized the growth in our business through the introduction of new streams of revenue during year two, that will ultimately lead us to a breakeven and profit by the end of year three and beginning of year four:

Looking at year three, we will continue to grow in revenues of advertisements, subscriptions, and events, by focusing on the opportunity to become a global voice, therefore increasing our readership, leading to a growth in subscriptions and international partnerships. This will lead us to break even to a point that our sales are greater than our losses. In the graph below, we have modeled at what point this can be expected to occur, therefore demonstrating the fast rate at which Turkishness Uncensored is growing.

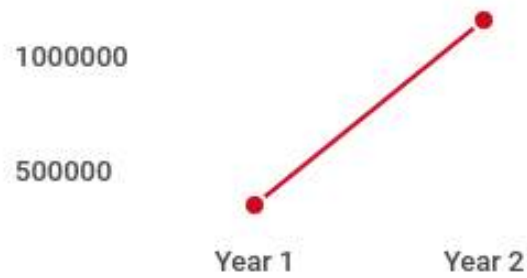
As our business becomes more successful, we reach a net income of \$1,804,285, which covers our losses in years one and two. Few changes will be made in the way we choose to measure our success. We will continue to evaluate our revenue in accordance with GAAP principles, and keep track of our expenses as they come in. Advertising will be 48% of revenue, while 44% will go to subscriptions, and the remaining 8% will be our annual event. Total advertising revenue in year three increases by 32% from \$894,638 to \$2,776,210. We expect to be reaching a larger audience and earn more subscribers. Our average monthly unique visitors with a subscription at this time is \$511,400, with an average subscriber rate of 35%. To compensate for the increase in content, monthly subscription fees will be increased to \$2.99. This brings our total annualized subscription revenue to \$1,529,086. For the second year of our summit, ticket costs will increase as well as the number of sponsors and exhibitors we will see. Our expenses will stabilize and allow us to gain a greater profit than we did the previous year. With expenses totaling \$5,334 after budget reconciliation, and total income reaching \$35,650 we will see a reconciliation of \$30,316. Staff will see a two percent raise and we will hire an associate editor with a salary of \$53,045 and an associate manager of digital production whose pay will be \$55,000. Our budget for freelancers will be \$135,000. At the end of the year, our overhead is \$461,079 - rent (\$90,480), management salaries, events, and travel (\$5,500).

That being said, in year four, with the increase in reach and popularity, we will see a net income of \$4,990,287. Revenue will be spread across with ads still being our primary source: advertisements - 47%, earned subscription income - 45%, events - 8% events. However, what we are acknowledging here is because we have taken out a one million dollar loan to get our business up and running, we have close to ten million in cash still at the beginning of year four. What should be acknowledged though is that we are not hoarding cash. As one can see, with the introduction of new and successful revenue sources being introduced as well as the targeting of a wider audience that will start in the United States and ultimately reach

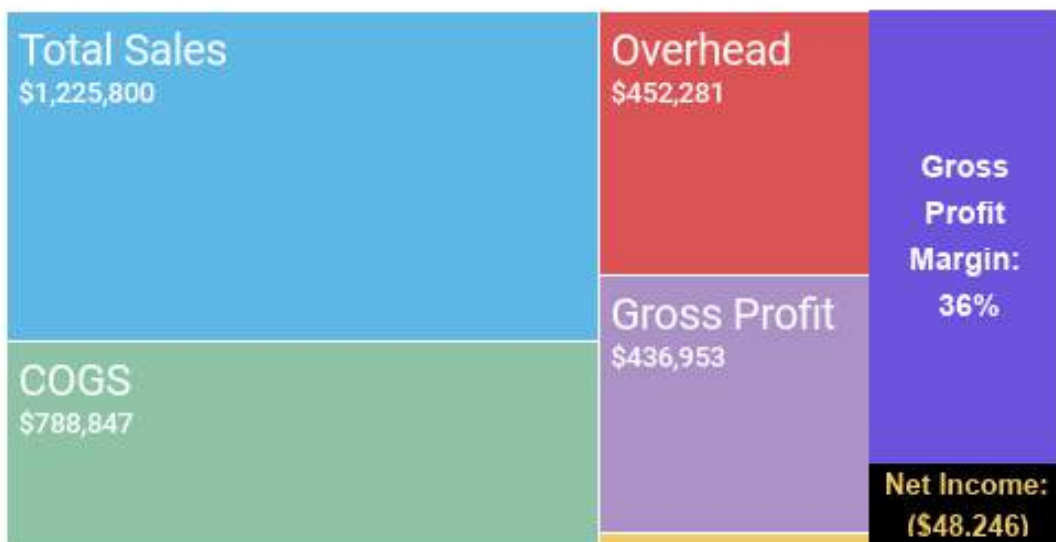
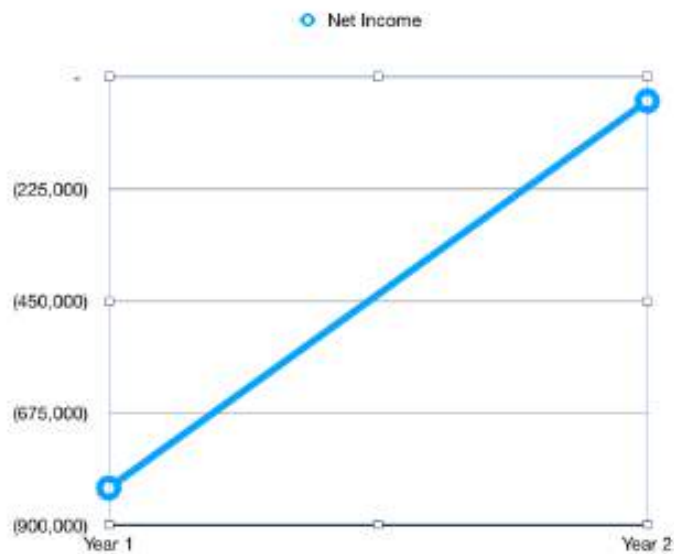
Western Europe. Clearly, our business is growing fairly quickly, and we have larger plans beyond year four that will require a large amount of cash. This will be discussed further in the following section on owner's expectations. We notice that our revenue is growing at a constant rate that will ensure our sustainability, with the confidence that we have established a strong brand identity. Beyond year four, based on our losses and revenue thus far, have come to be aware that we cannot anticipate changes in trends and develop new avenues of our business, or adapt to new technologies that respond to the the various new ways customer preferences change. As a result, we acknowledge that this could have an adverse affect on our revenues or profitability. Our financial results would plummet if we fail to successfully differentiate our offerings and meet our target market's needs as concerns change in relation to freedom of expression, the fore value of our business. In conclusion, we have audited the accompanying consolidated balance sheets of Turkishness Uncensored, and the related statements of operations, comprehensive income and loss, changes in stockholders' equity, and cash flows for each of On the following page, we have visualized the growth in our business through the introduction of new steams of revenue during year two, that will ultimately lead us to a breakeven and profit by the end of year three and beginning of year four: the four years. We have conducted all of these audits in the first four years of our business in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board. Such standards have required us to plan and perform the audit to obtain logical assurance about whenever the financial statements do not have any material misstatements. Along the following four pages, we have included the breakdown of our revenue streams and cost build up in years three and four:

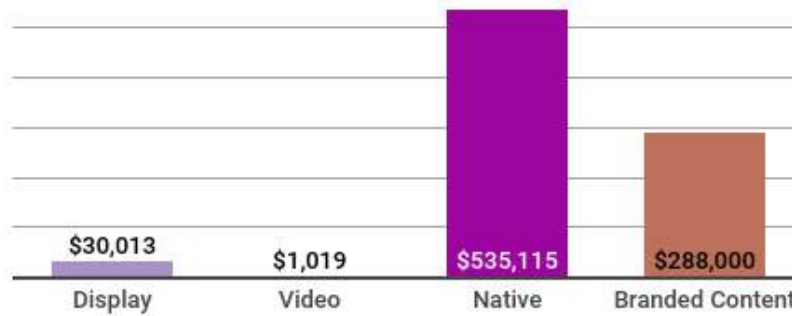
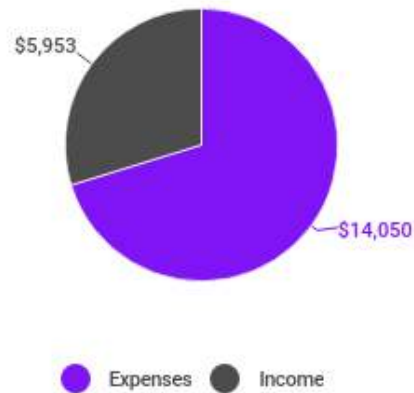
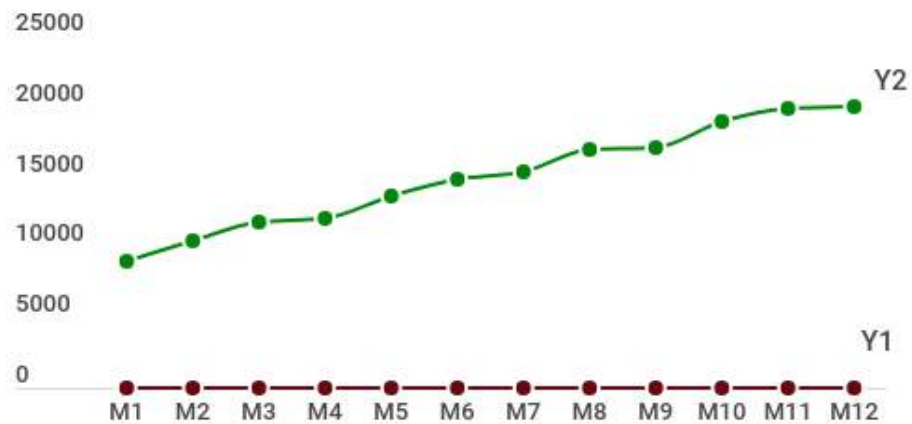


Revenue Growth



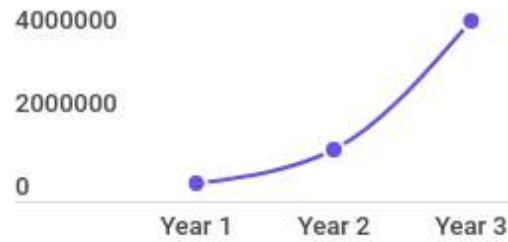
Net Income Growth



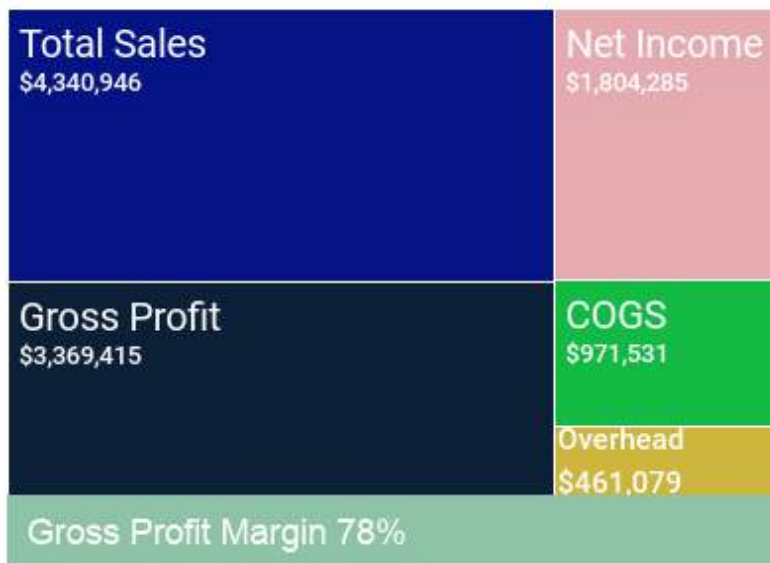
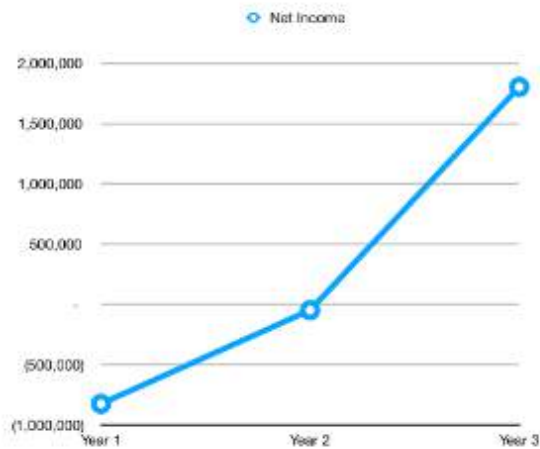
Revenue**Revenue :Ads****Budget: Event****Subscriptions (by month)**

Year 3

Revenue Growth

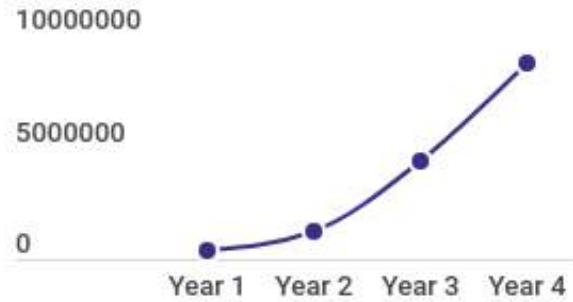


Net Income Growth

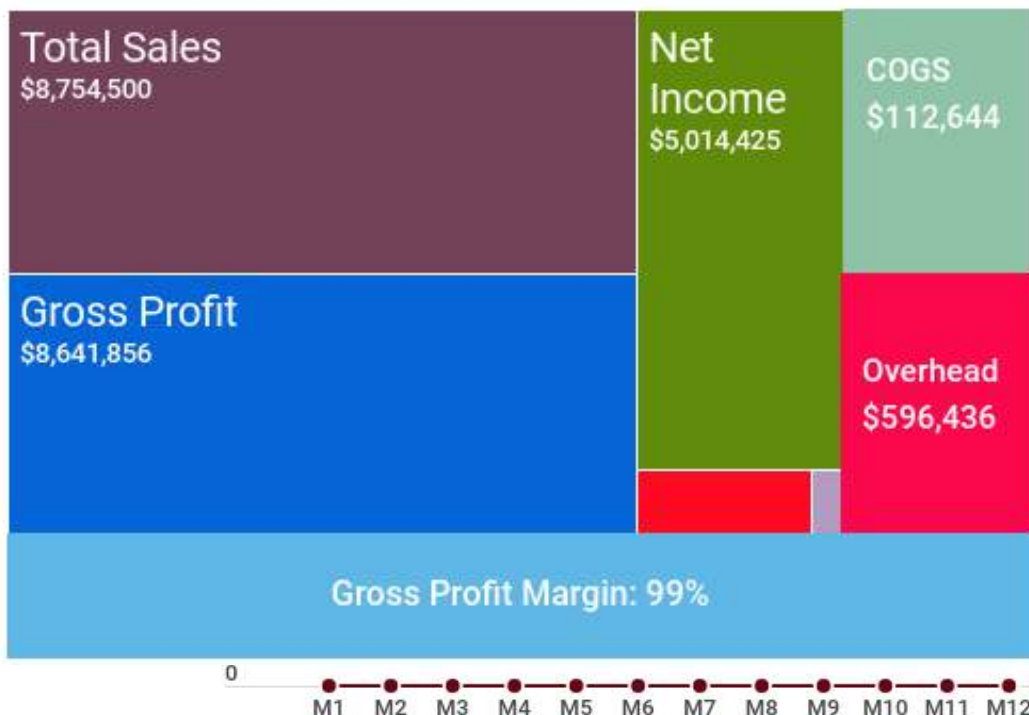
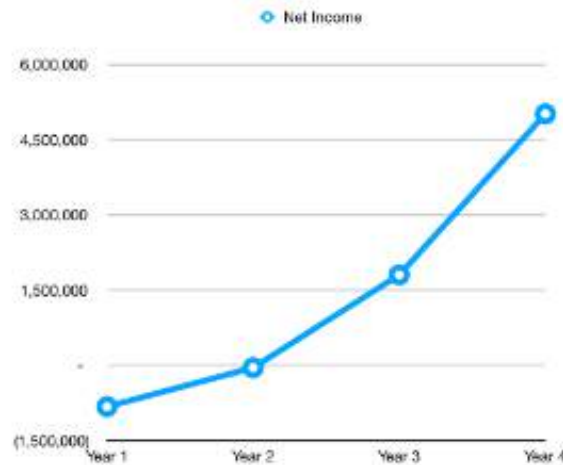


Year 4

Revenue Growth



Net Income Growth



Owner Expectations

With the understanding that our business has continued to exponentially grow, we believe that our decision to take out a one million dollar loan to start our business as opposed to a smaller loan, will work in our favor, allowing us the opportunity to add more staffing as needed, as well as look to take part in business acquisitions. Beyond year four Turkishness Uncensored will envision a greater audience outreach as well as taking more risks in terms of business partnerships and marketing opportunities in the form of events. As reported in operations, our three-part loan requires us to payback over the course of ten to twenty years. At the moment, our payments are consistent with \$5500 each year. Because we are targeting Turkish and Middle Eastern students and working professionals across the United States and Western Europe at this point, we will consider hiring an additional full time sales and management team that will be based in Hamburg, Germany. The team would include a managing editor, editorial assistant, a team of three in digital production, three in marketing, a photo editor, a fact checker, and an office manager, bringing our cost of goods sold and our management salaries to close to double what they are now. There will also be the need for another WeWork office in the city, that includes office equipment, supplies, and the adequate salary to compensate for the the high expectations we have of our staff. The logic behind this possible decision has to do with our acknowledgement that by being based in Europe, this new team would have a greater understanding of European brands, and the ability to communicate with a European-based audience in a way that we may not have initially thought of.

Furthermore, our Turkishness Uncensored Annual Summit has proven to be a great success, leading us to look for more ways to engage with our audience on a more personal level. That being said, we will look to get involved in TedTalks as well as doing visits at major universities such as Columbia University in New York and The University of Vienna in Austria, where our editors would give lectures in the department of Turkish Studies on the freedom of expression Crisis taking place in Turkey today and what it means in the realm of academia. Another space that we are looking to occupy is by starting a YouTube channel where we would do reporting, or our freelancers, especially those working in the area of journalism or fiction, would do readings or discuss a certain topic. This could gain a lot of traffic, because of the level of engagement involved between us and our readers in the from of comments and shares. With these long term goals in our horizon, Turkishness Uncensored is confident that with time, story tellers and audience all around the world will come together and become one, collective voice against censorship, rendering freedom of expression a value and untouchable right. That being said, we would an increase in budget to answer to the amount of events we will be adding. Because our digital team is only set at four people at

the moment (director of digital production, associate manager of digital production, digital production assistant, and photo editor), we will consider increasing our staff so that they are not overworked. This may continue to apply to our editorial team, marketing and publicity, as well as the possibility of adding another fact checker. This all answers to our reason to be saving cash. With a business that is growing as quickly as ours and reaching a greater audience each year, it is necessary to answer to the demand we are observing through the increase in advertising revenue, the amount of readers who are getting paid subscriptions, and the growth in attendees we are seeing at our annual summit.

If we continue to grow and see profits closing in on about \$7 million a year, we will consider a business acquisition, which will likely be costly, but also profitable for us in the long run. We are looking into a merger with a company that will not increase our revenue, but also build our reputation as a brand that advocates freedom of expression across all mediums - journalism, art, novels, academia, and activism. That being said, our long term goal is to merge with a nongovernmental nonprofit organization whose mission statement closely aligns with our own. It is an outlet to a new world of fiction, investigation, song, paint - creativity. We represent a new way of life where each story bares importance and affects the way each and every one of us moves forward in this peaceful protest against censorship. Voice Project is a New York-based advocacy group that defends freedom of expression around the globe. As supporters of the art of activism, Voice Project represents the early responders to injustice and oppression, be it in terms of the environment to fighting global poverty.⁸² With a full database that illustrates imprisoned artists around the world, Voice Project runs multiple campaigns that serve to draw worldwide attention to the wrongs being done against artists for the content they create in their medium. Turkishness Uncensored would be a logical, and innovative addition to Voice Project because we offer a more focused a new and innovative perspective, due to our large focus on Turkey and its's neighboring regions. Because our specialization is not on other counters like Uganda or Kenya, we believe that a merger with Voice Project will expand our audience, and result in more people around the world looking at us more as a global voice that speaks to anyone whose story has been silenced as a result of censorship practices enforced by their state. Together, Turkishness Uncensored and Voice Project are likely to become an outlet and place of acceptance for content creators around the world, as we expect more stories to be told, and more readers to be brought into the light on what the freedom of expression can truly look like today.

No matter the anger and frustration that the silenced in Turkey and abroad have felt, by representing a platform where stories can be shared and change can be provoked, Turkishness Uncensored has created a

⁸² "Our Work." Voice Project. Accessed April 12 2020. <http://voiceproject.org/our-work/>.

safe, empathetic environment of inclusivity, resistance, and strength. Bringing together blondes from liberal suburbs and dark hairs immigrants from conservative, patriarchal communities, we are a place of no faces. What we see, hear, and read are stories and voices that have something to say to the world. Turkishness Uncensored is more than just a publishing platform, it is the outlet to one of the most critical, but abused human rights - freedom of expression. With a goal to be at the front lines defending those who have a story to tell, our business brings hope to a reality that has, till now, been absent of critical voices.

Appendices

<https://turkishnessuncensored.squarespace.com/>

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4/21/20

Words Backlash on those Who

W. A. T.

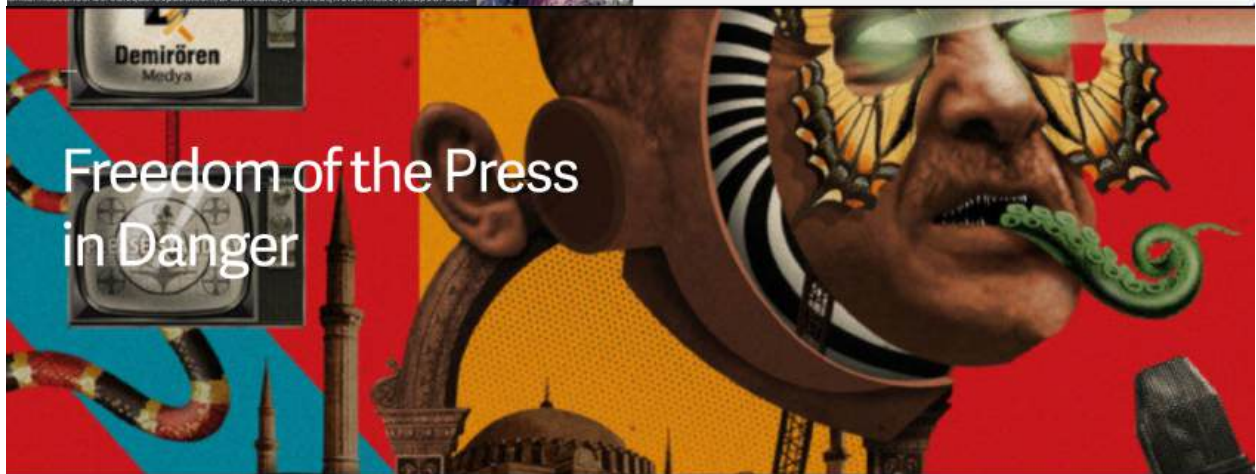


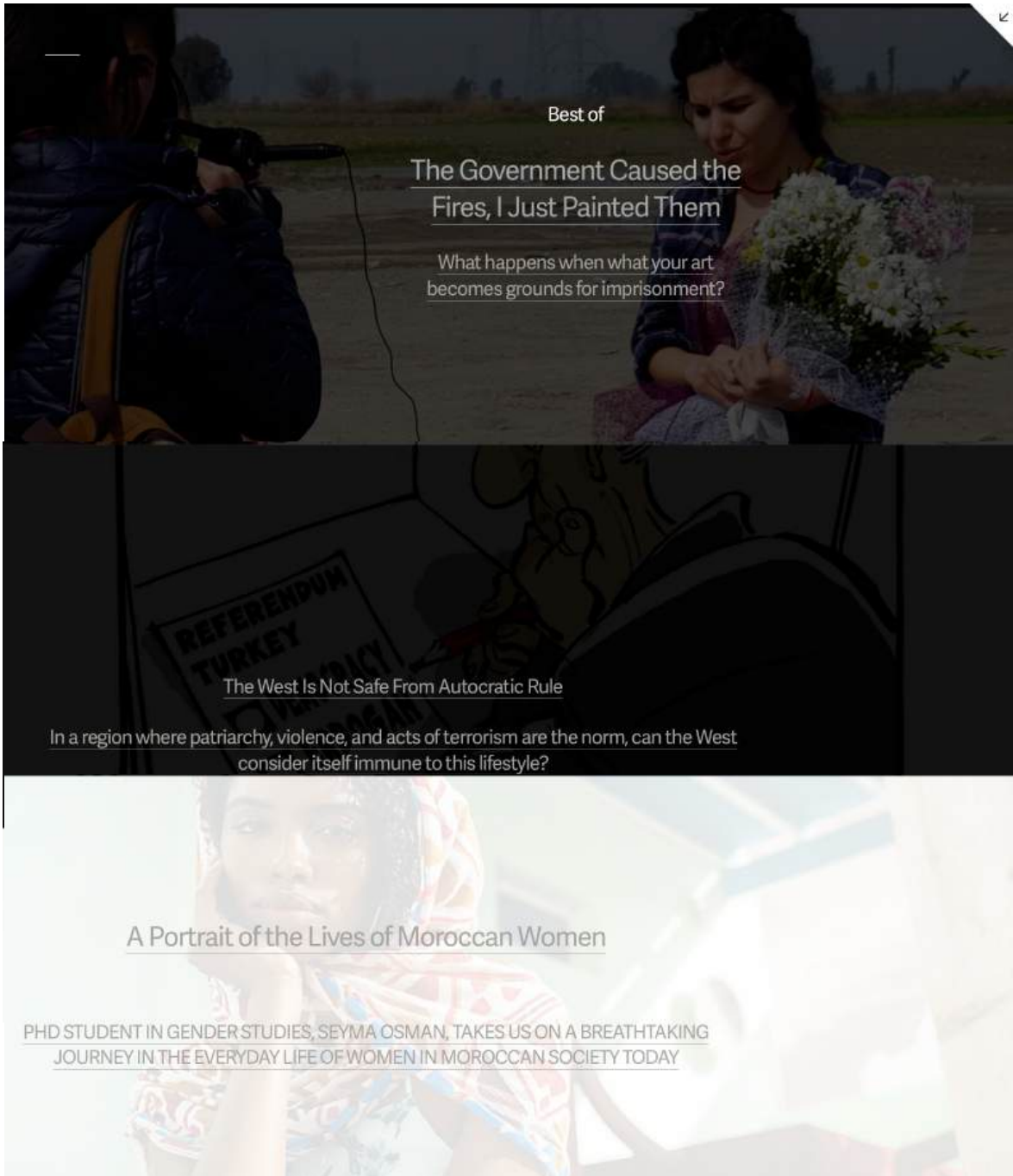
Wrote Them

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7/25/19

'The Government Caused the Fires, I
Just Painted Them'





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TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED



Apr 21

Ataturk Gave Us Our Tattoo Politics

Today, more and more Istanbulites are getting Ataturk tattoos as a form of resistance against an increasingly authoritarian government under the AKP party

Once upon a time, when I would walk down Iskitail, Istanbul's main shopping street, pedestrians walking by me would freeze in their tracks just seeing my bare arms lined with tattoos. The city's loud, blazing noise; cars, buses and trucks screech to stops as passengers flood in and out of the streets, many teary eyed from the city's overpopulation and pollution. However what they all share is this curious, if not, daunted express when they set their eyes on my bare arms - tattoos. Tattoos everywhere.

Our founding father, the founder of the modern-day Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, even 70 years after he rose to power, still looms in our memory with nostalgia and longing. Because of him, we are an independent nation, not completely Islamic, nor completely European. He carved the Ottoman Empire into pieces following the First World War and we emerged triumphantly and gladly offered Ataturk absolute power. Because of him a crumbling Islamic empire proudly transformed into a secular republic. Because of him, the 1,292-year-old caliphate has been done away with, we traded the Arabic alphabet for the Latin one, the headscarf was banned, and women were finally ensured the right to vote, even before many countries in the West earned that right.



No Country is Immune to Socialist Nationalism

Today, more than ever, writers, academics, and intellectuals are needed more than ever



As a tattoo artist on the Asian side of Istanbul, a small studio in Ateshir, Atatürk's legend has become a source of commodity. Countless young Turks are coming into my shop to have Atatürk's likeness or signature permanently inked to parts of their bodies. Just the other week I think I had close to 10 people coming in requesting Atatürk's portrait. For young people and old alike, Atatürk paved our way to modernity, almost at the same rate that the current president, Erdogan, is trying to take away once again.



I see Atatürk's blooming popularity and reemergence in the way of art - tattoos - as a weapon to the startling and urgent increase in culture classes we are all watching happen before our eyes. All around, we are noticing a creeping, if not haunting déjà vu of Islamization that the ruling Justice Development Party, or AKP has begun. Backlash is growing as many of us have taken to the streets, Atatürk's image in our hands, seeking to remind the current regime, that we are a democracy, not an Islamic nation.





Erdogan and his cult of radical, if not conservative Islamists. More and more, the AKP government has been turning its attention and pointing people in the direction of religion. AKP entered Turkey promising to ban the death penalty, eat restrictions on freedom of speech, expand cultural rights for the Kurdish minority, and open negotiations for Turkish membership into the European Union. Little has been thus far done. Since the 2016 coup, Turkey has become one of the most isolationist, anti-democratic force in society.

Ataturk, with his fair-slicked back, face hard and stern, cheeks sunken, and gaze piercing, can be found just about everywhere from murals, to flags, to banknotes, and now on our skin.

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TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED



Apr 21

You Can Imprison Our Bodies, You Cannot Imprison Our Minds

Just like all artists, this journalist and novelist can disappear through prison walls with his mind. Ahmet Altan will not be silenced.

Trending Now





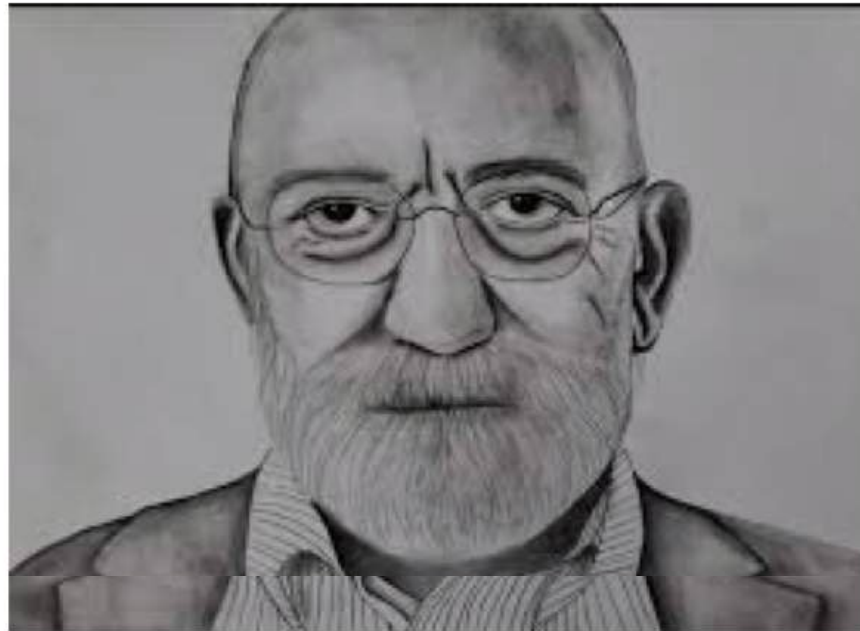
Ataturk Gave Us Our Tattoo Politics
Apr 21, 2020



You Can Imprison Our Bodies, You
Cannot Imprison Our Minds
Apr 21, 2020



Words Backlash on those Who Wrote
Them
Apr 21, 2020



Born in Ankara, Turkish journalist and novelist, Ahmet Hüsrev Altan has become all too familiar with the danger of the rise of authoritarianism over the course of his life. The corroding effects of the decline of democracy in Turkey has both preoccupied the writer as well as has become one of the primary inspirations of his writing. Writing from his cell in Istanbul where he is currently serving a life sentence, Altan has been heard to often say "they have the power to imprison me but no one has the power to keep me in prison. Because, wherever you lock me up I will travel the world with the wings of my endless mind. Like all writers, I have magic. I can pass through walls with ease."



The "they" that Altan refers to can be understood as authoritarian regimes and their sideways, corrupt nature. The AKP party. No thanks to the failed July 2016 coup, which left close to 300 people dead in the streets, our beautiful country has become the world's leading jailer of journalists. My friends, my colleagues, my family, my neighbors have been exiled, blacklisted, arrested, beaten, killed, and imprisoned; I am only now awaiting my turn. The linguist Necmiye Alpay, the novelist Ahmet Altan, the scholar Mehmet Altan, the liberal journalist Şahin Murah Sabuncu, are only a few of the names one could find on this list, which continues to double day by day.





What is important is the need for stories, both fiction and nonfiction. It shakes the world and shifts ideas, provoking thought, discussion, and change. For writers from countries of wonky governmental organization, like myself, honesty and truth become dangerous crimes should it interfere with authoritarian interests, as is the case in many of the countries that participated in the Arab Spring such as Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Pakistan, and Egypt.

Places like these love silence, because in silence and loss of voice, manipulation and power tactics operate more effectively and without question or dispute. It becomes a contagious disease that spreads quickly and suffocates lungs of oxygen and resistance. But one thing that these powers got wrong is that silence also abhors loneliness. And in that, silence comes together and forms a mass collective that ultimately builds itself back up, ultimately emerging stronger.

I believe this will give rise to a new Turkey: a collectivity of opportunists activists, speakers, writers, artists, journalists, professionals, students, tea growers, simit sellers throwing chaos into order, celebrating being a diverse Turkey, breaking apart a regime that has wanted, for far too long, a Turkey of a single voice. Despite the sadness I feel for my country, nationalism, will come to an end. We are an age of optimism, and we have recognized the symptoms of oncoming revolution. It is only a matter of time until action is triggered, and change is evoked.

◀ Ataturk Gave Us Our Tattoo Politics

Words Backlash on those Who Wrote Them ▶

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TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED

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Apr 21

Words Backlash on those Who Wrote Them

THE PROFESSION "WRITER" IS CAUSING MORE AND MORE TURKS THE PLACE THEY ONCE CALLED HOME





I am a Turkish writer. I live in Paris. I write about Turkey and what being Turkish means to me. I was born in the Anatolia region, in a large city known for its food, Gaziantep. I went to a Turkish school and moved to Istanbul when I was nineteen to pursue a degree in literature, where I also learned English. It has been over a decade since I returned to my city. I live in exile, unable to return to the country of my birth. As a writer, I have brought this pain upon myself.

I have written about hidden and forgotten places on the outskirts of major Turkish cities - ugly places where flowers don't grow and people do not speak to one another. Those who live here are often ashamed sex workers, young people shunned by their religious families, and abandoned women and children. These segments of society are misfits, and have become dehumanized. My country has selectively forgotten about them. I have chosen to bring these outcasts back into society and to celebrate their involvement in humanity.



I have been open in my disgust for the current politics under the AKP party, headed by an authoritarian president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. I have watched as my writer colleagues have been put to trial and arrested. Some have committed suicide, demonstrating that they would rather die than be silenced under an increasingly autocratic regime. Nationalist groups have taken to the streets to burn our pictures and throw our books in fires.

I have also written a great deal about sex and how it is treated in Turkey. If I return, I will inevitably be arrested and put on trial for obscenity. I know this for a fact. The country is against anyone, writer or not, speaking about and recording these issues for people around the world to have access to. Sexual abuse, underage marriage, and incest is a reality, and I come from it.

This is not just a "me" issue. My story bares similarities to countless of others who write books, paint pictures, and doodle cartoons. Our profession is dangerous and, in the most dire of circumstances, deadly, coming close to the nightmares many

police officers and army recruits must endure.

The suppression of civil liberties has not only been heartbreaking to me as a Turkish citizen, but also to me as a humanitarian. Islamism and brutal nationalism are on the rise. With that, inevitably comes sexism, homophobia, racism, and hate crimes. Each is the product of the other.

These are only a handful of the issues that come to mind when my pen is inches from the page. I often write after I paint, as I am also an artist - yet another profession that is looked down upon in Turkey. I make hot chocolate, and sit on my veranda overlooking the Montparnasse train station in the sixteenth district of Paris. I think about what life was like back in Gaziantep and what has brought me to this small apartment in the middle of Paris.

Here in Paris, and in the West in general, we think that democracy is something natural and that there is no other way that life could be. Few understand or dare to consider that, at any moment, a manipulative political figure can sweep into government and turn the free nation-state as we know it into a dictatorship. Democracy is fragile, and can easily break with a crack by even the most gentle of hands.

< You Can Imprison Our Bodies, You Cannot
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'The Government Caused the Fires, I Just
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TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED



Jul 25

'The Government Caused the Fires, I Just Painted Them'

What happens when what your art becomes grounds for imprisonment?





Born in the Kurdish-majority city of Diyarbakir in Eastern Turkey, Zehra Doğan, after three years in prison, was finally freed. The Kurdish journalist and artist was scrutinized for her watercolor painting, which had depicted a Kurdish neighborhood scene after Turkish security forces had set it on fire after large destroying the area.

In the painting, we can see large, astonishing fog caused by fires taking up the skyline, vividly contrasted with images of the red Turkish flag. Doğan pleaded that her painting was a representation of a photograph taken of the catastrophe, but, as expected, the authorities were adamant about pressing charges and arresting the young woman. They linked her the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has long been accused of as a terrorist organization that had a hand in the 2016 coup that failed to overthrow Erdogan.

Only moments following her sentence, Doğan tweeted "I was given two years and ten months in prison only because I painted Turkish flags on destroyed buildings. However, the Turkish government caused this. I only painted it." Not surprisingly, this tweet was almost immediately deleted.





Doğan's arrest sparked a much-needed surge of sympathy and outrage around the world from activists, intellectuals, and everyday individuals alike. The infamous street artist, Banksy for example painted an enormous tribute to the jailed artist on the Houston Bowery Wall in March 2018, which he called Free Zehra Doğan. The long line of tally marks we see here are meant to represent each day of Doğan's imprisonment. In one set, a portrait of the imprisoned artist is shown behind bars.

Clearly thankful for this tribute, Doğan illegally contacted Banksy that she was successful in smuggling out of bars while she was doing time in the Diyarbakir Prison in southeast Turkey. She expressed her thanks to Banksy for bringing attention to her cause, and even described the pains she was enduring. Being given no art supplies in her cell, she found herself drawing on old newspapers and bed sheets using not crayons or oil paints, but rather plant matter and menstrual blood.

This is inadvertently an attack on both art and artistic expression, neither of which should be acceptable in a democracy. For the past three years, since December 2016, Turkish authorities have forced close to half a million people, by military force, out of their home. Many citizens are interpreting this crackdown as a collective punishment. In one of her last statements before being put behind bars, Doğan made a fair point: "The judge has punished the wrong actor: Not the one who destroyed the town, not the now ho show the photo, but the one who painted the photo. They made this painting, not me."



To Doğan, "This painting was worth my time in prison because I managed to show the reality of Nuzaybin." Bars may contain the body, but they can never contain the truth. Doğan makes this clear, boldly stating "I will continue the struggle."

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TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED



Apr 21

A Portrait of the Lives of Moroccan Women

PHD STUDENT IN GENDER STUDIES, SEYMA OSMAN, TAKES US ON A BREATHTAKING JOURNEY IN THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF WOMEN IN MOROCCAN SOCIETY TODAY

Featured



Ataturk Gave Us Our Tattoo Politics
Apr 21, 2020



You Can Imprison Our Bodies, You
Cannot Imprison Our Minds
Apr 21, 2020



Words Backlash on those Who Wrote
Them
Apr 23, 2020



Mar 11

Women Come Together In the Fight Against Opression

AT A LECTURE SERIES AT BILKENT UNIVERSITY, A COLLEAGUE OF MINE REFUSED TO SUPPORT OUR FEMINIST MANIFESTO: "FRANCE IS NOT TURKEY"

Featured



Atatürk Gave Us Our Tattoo Politics

Apr 21, 2020



You Can Imprison Our Bodies, You Cannot Imprison Our Minds

Apr 20, 2020



Words Backlash on those Who Wrote Them

Apr 25, 2020



Everywhere and everywhere, and everywhere, and everywhere is overwhelming. What continues to be a growing concern is, how did these societies reach the point where gender and sexuality is considered taboo in public, but is acted quickly upon in the dark.

Women Come Together In the Fight Against Opression >

Back when I was a professor at Bilkent University in Ankara, a research fellow from Paris was a self-proclaimed non feminist. However, she did not mock those of us who were, and was quite understanding for our cause. Her reasons? We lived in Turkey, and she did not. What I do not think she understood was the fact that this is a universal issue, and not limited to those of the East. Of course, I am not saying that the degrees of abuse are the same everywhere, as they vary by region and even within nations. But, what needs to be taken into consideration is that gender awareness and equality is needed everywhere from the West to the East, and across seas:

Many women have expressed, including myself, frustration with this patriarchy. Today, being a feminist is about defending not only women's rights, but also that of men who lack the power to create change. Back in the day, we expected "tomorrow" to mean the day that our struggles will finally be relieved. If this were true women's concerns would have been gone a long time ago, with the end of World War II. But, here we are almost a century later and women still remain inferior to men, along with minorities. Now, we are not expecting any more tomorrows. We are focused on today. We have learned from history, and now it is our turn to evoke change in society on a global scale.



In some countries in Eastern Europe, as well as in South America, certain political figures who believe this imbalance of treatment is a protective mechanism. To them, women just cannot handle the stress of politics nor the complexities of certain professions like medicine or mathematics. Some conservatives go as far as slandering International Women's Day by creating madness and disruption on city streets during peaceful protests and demonstrations.

The demise of equal treatment because of gender has is a direct effect of the nuances and growing discrepancies between states and nations. Gender equality kills hope and destroys peace. It is unfair, painful, and could be dangerous should matters like this continue. Ignoring this further, or waiting for yet another "tomorrow," if the world goes on simply waiting and waiting for the day that women and men are equal in all parts of society, truth and understanding is also delayed.

◀ A Portrait of the Lives of Moroccan Women

Apr 21

The West is Not Safe From Autocratic Rule

In a region where patriarchy, violence, and acts of terrorism are the norm, can the West consider itself immune to this lifestyle?



Free rights. Free rights. Free rights. We hear about this all too often in discussions, on television, in schools, and in the workplace. Few of us, though, really take the matter to heart. In Turkey, we actually take this seriously. It is a problem, and we all know it, and fear what new "emergency decrees" will emerge. The crackdowns on media and journalists that have resulted from the 2016 coup have led to nationwide disharmony, the closing down of numerous media outlets, and the loss of hundreds of jobs. Turkey is an extreme example, but, rest assured, it could happen to any country, even those in Europe and North America who seem to take freedom of the press and democracy for granted.

Turkey has quickly become a nation-state that is clearly divided between absolute extremists and lackadaisical liberals - a definite right and a definite left. People do not talk, and ideas are rarely exchanged on the streets. Everyday is a battle between the commute to work, and a woman's walk in the middle of the night home from a failed date. Being Turkish is about strength, but it is also quite exhausting to be guarded all the time. To survive in Turkey, you must be political, tough, and clever. Anything you say, write, post, or do in public can be traced, brought to the authorities, and, before you can utter a plea, you will find yourself put on trial for insulting "Turkishness," a phrase we have come to fear, but never truly, even vaguely, understand. So, what do we do? We self-censor.



Voices are publicly criticized, intimidated, and threatened by ultra-nationalists. Many are accused as traitors and beaten on their doorsteps by their own neighbors who they shared bread with a week ago. Abuse against journalists, especially women, is on the rise. It is not a surprise that violence in broad daylight is too.

This case is not isolated in Turkey though. Where there are nationalists and populists, there is the treat of a dictatorship moving forward. No country is immune to this humanitarian virus. Macedonia, Poland, Albania, and even the United States, especially under Trump, have all undergone various forms of nationalist practices. Lack of trust for the government and inconsistency leads to unrest and reactionary politics - a perfect breeding ground for manipulation and ultimate takeover by autocratic rule.

Politicians who wave any social media, women's rights, and minority rights as an enemy to larger public interest create an uneasy political atmosphere in which no one is not being censored due to this new wave of self-censorship.



The Turkey of today is fixed with so many personal stories from journalists, to dress shop owners whose businesses are arbitrarily closed down by the government. Paranoia, fear, trauma, and escapist coping mechanisms line the streets everywhere. Similar to most unhappy nations, we retreat to memories of a happier time, but with so much pain, it's hard to be optimistic all the time.

LIFE SIMILAR

In a place where there is no fair rule of law, independent academia, or free and diverse press, the government calling itself a democracy, is not enough to sustain that democracy, meaning authoritarianism is not too far off.

There was a time that even I thought that countries like mine needed more of a focus on feminism, human rights and education. With these three components, everything else would fall into place. Well, I was wrong. Just because it underlies many other democracies, every country is different. Culture have different practices and people respond differently to movements like this, depending on their upbringing. What I am trying to say, is that what is going on now in Turkey, could happen in the West, they are not free from it like a child getting a vaccination. The west is only solid and fearless up to a certain point. Political disruption and cultural shifts can turn ways of life topsy turvy. It is a circumstance of humanity, not geographic area. What we must do is come together, East and West, and encourage humanism in any possible way that we can. The possible loss of diversity is painful as it is, and my country is an example of just that.

No Country is Immune to Socialist Nationalism >



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TURKISHNESS
UNCENSORED



Apr 21

No Country is Immune to Socialist Nationalism

Today, more than ever, writers, academics, and intellectuals are needed
more than ever





In Erdogan's Turkey, writers and academics continue to be confronted with a rise in soaring hostilities towards their books and publications. Several have been attacked on Turkish social media, pushing for authorities to put such intellectuals on trial for "obscenity," relying on Article 301 of the constitution, which makes it punishable by law to insult "Turkishness," to make their case.

This sort of hysteria has tarnished the future of many of these writers in Turkey, including Elif Shafak, Ahmet Altan, and the Pulitzer Prize winner Orhan Pamuk. For Elif Shafak, this meant her new novel, *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World* became subject for immediate investigation, along with her 2006 novel, *The Bastard of Istanbul*. The main themes of *10 Minutes 38 Seconds* that were scrutinized included the author's blatant depiction of sexual harassment, gender violence, and child abuse, while *The Bastard of Istanbul* was criticized for referencing the Armenian Genocide.



With over 135,000 books being banned from public libraries, Turkish authors such as Nâzım Kıkmet, as well as world renowned authors including Albert Camus and Baruch Spinoza have been accused of being members of terrorists organizations. In the grand scheme of things, I see this as being not only both anti-liberal and antidemocratic but also as a stimulus to even greater dangers: anti-intellectualism and anti-feminism. Our society is becoming divided into those who support the elites, and those who support a breakdown of the establishment. Writers, intellectuals, and artists typically find themselves in this camp. For the elites, political power is associated with values, not education and the formulation of theories and ideas. Even the deputy rector of Beykent University in Istanbul, Bülent Ari has been quoted "I'd rather trust ignorant people who have not attended university or better yet, not even attended primary school, because their minds are pure." Evidently, this man is displeased with the proven fact that literacy rates in Turkey have gone up. To this barbarian, "If Erdogan leaves it will be a catastrophe." Not by surprise, soon after this interview was conducted, he was promoted by the government to the Council of Higher Education.



Under President Erdoğan's AKP government's emergency state decrees, close to 8000 academics have been fired from institutions over the country with 700 of these scholars being criminally charged for signing a peace petition, ultimately finding themselves blacklisted, with their passports revoked and travel bans confining them to the country that has stabbed them in the back. One such university assistant who signed this doomed petition killed himself soon after he was fired. Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı, chair of the Human Rights Foundation, as well as Ayşe Gül Altınay, a professor of gender and women's studies were each given two year prison sentences. One of Turkey's most esteemed professors of nationalism and identity, Füsün Üstel, is still in prison.

For women, this crackdown has proven even more brutal to the point that many have gone out to seek exile across continents. Rights for Kurds and Yazidi's have been long present in Turkey's history, but not as much as it has become today. Nurgan Baysal, a female journalist, who has long explored the traumas of Yazidi and Kurdish women was recently put on trial. Another female journalist, Ayila Albayrak who has been a contributing writer for the Wall Street Journal from Turkey, was charged with "terrorist propaganda." Reason being? She was accused of writing an article about the missions being planned out in the Kurdish-majority south-east, and was sentenced in absentia.



Erdogan has been particularly critical and women and feminists: "You feminists have nothing to do with our religion or our civilization." These feminists are infamously accused of being "pawns of the west" as well as "rootless cosmopolitans." The grand majority of such activists are most often accused of insulting the president and spreading terrorist propaganda. One social media tweet that resonates most with me is one that was posted by Canan Kaftancıoğlu, the provincial chair of the Republican People's Party. "There is something clear: they are afraid of women, of women who do not mind their words and are brave. I think they are right to be afraid." Meanwhile, Erdogan is pushing our women and wives to have bigger and bigger families. "Have not just three but five children." Why does he want this? If he can encourage us all to return to "traditional" values, the population will increase and he will have a stronger hold over the country, with the majority-minority ratios being in his favor the way it used to be. Nationalism will stabilize to a bloated blueberry and Erdogan's power will be further solidified.

During a period where truth is so often tested and thrown into question, writers like myself are continued to be endangered. We fictive and nonfictive storytellers are being confronted with challenges and a bleak future, should this war against freedom continue to inflate. As truth seekers, we need to defend our rights more soundly, and resist blasts to our voices. Stories are our sanctuary, and we must protect it.

< The West is Not Safe From Autocratic Rule



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TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED

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Who We Are



A Globally Uncensored Space

In Article 28 of the Turkish Constitution we are promised "The Press is free, and shall not be censored." When will this effort be realized?

Ever since the June 2016 attempted coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish government has been purging Turkey of its democracy. The result has been suppression of academics, teachers, journalists, artists, and activists including Orhan Pamuk, Ahmet Altan, Mehmet Altan, Ezhel, Zehra Dogan, and Elif Shafak.

Turkishness Uncensored undoes what the Turkish government has prohibited: freedom of expression and truth for all.



A Voice of Our People

There is a need to hear, see, and advocate for these destroyed and suppressed stories.

Turkishness Uncensored gives a voice back to those who have been silenced by welcoming content creators from all over the world to investigate, research, illustrate, write, and reimagine freedom in Turkey.



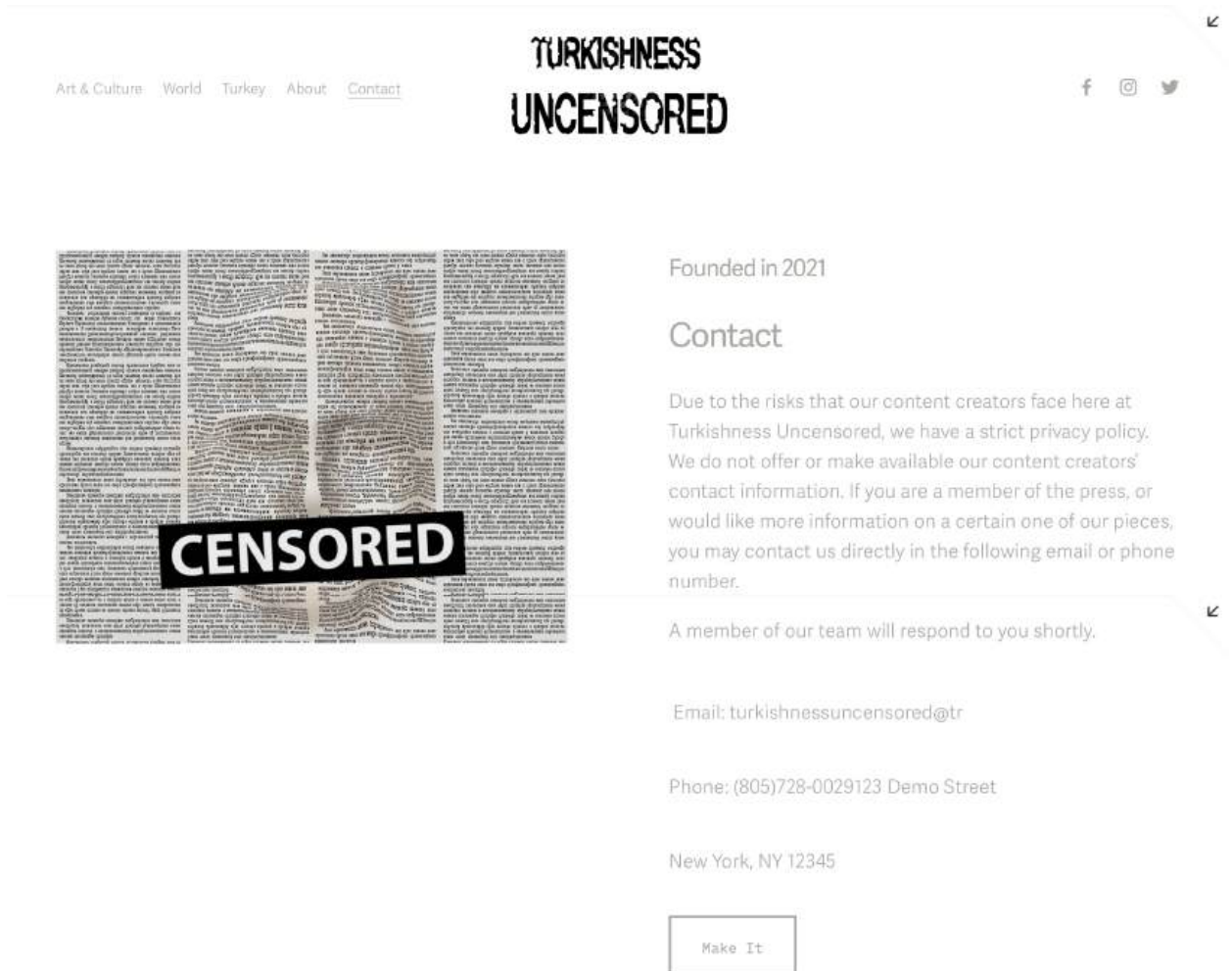
Activism at Turkishness Uncensored

By offering a space for novelists, educators, essayists, activists, painters, and musicians to publish their content and ideologies, be it directly targeted at the Turkish government or subversive of Turkish ideals, we promote activism and bring together a global community of like-minded individuals who share a common belief in the need to tell stories as honestly, and freely as can be.

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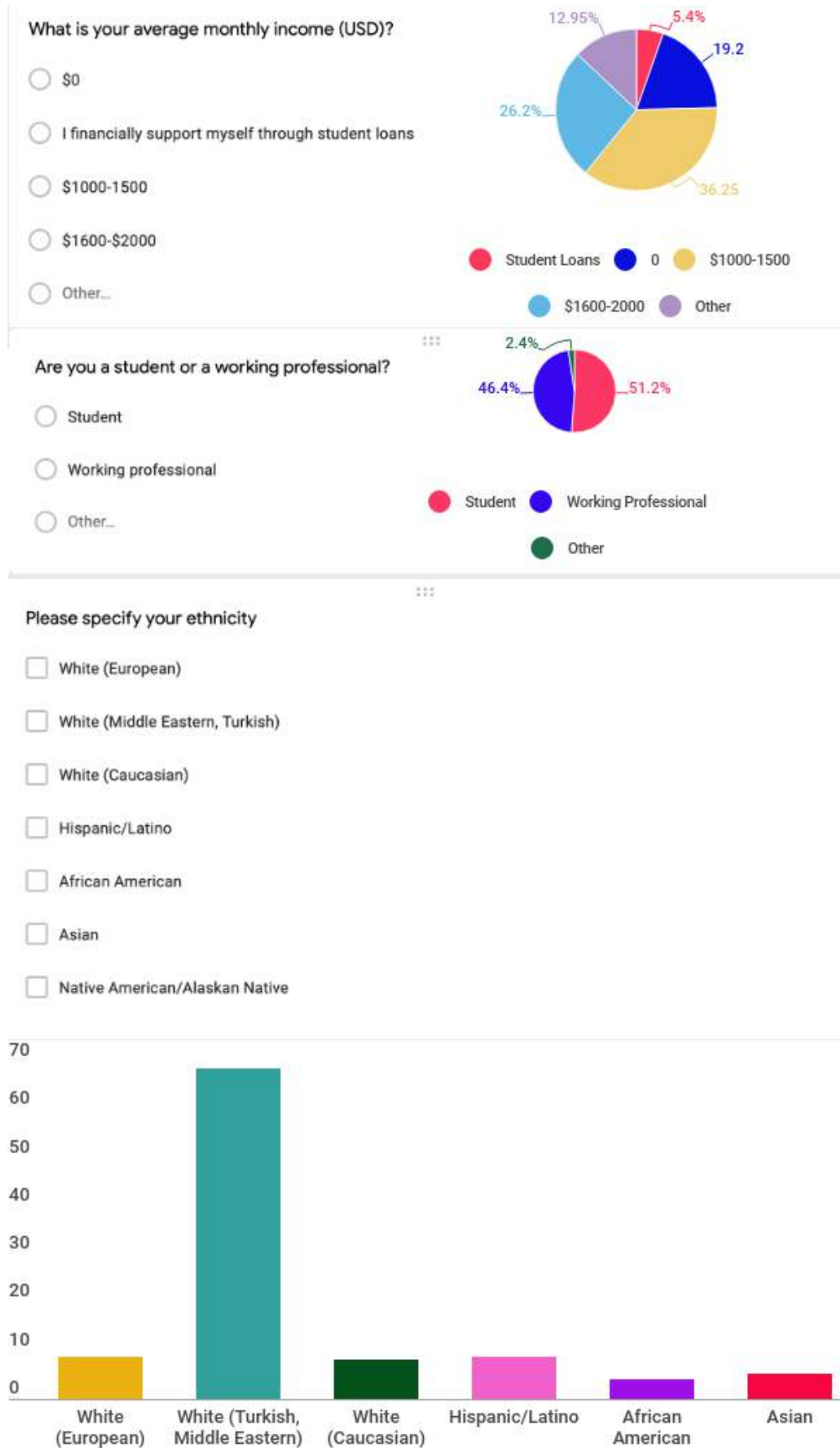
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Primary Research (Survey Results of 221 individuals)

TURKISHNESS UNCENSORED Survey

Article 28 of the Turkish Constitutions promises "The press is free and shall not be censored." Ever since the June 2016 coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish government has been purging the country of its democracy. This has resulted in the suppression of dozens of academics, teachers, journalists, writers, activists and artists being arrested. More than 2,500 journalists have been laid off as a result of these shutdowns, and close to 900 have had their press cards revoked and even their passports confiscated. Over 180 news outlets and 29 publishing houses have been closed down. Many Turks have been detained and have gone to jail under the hand of an increasingly authoritarian regime that uses Penal Code 301, which makes it illegal to insult "Turkishness" or the "Turkish Nation." Turkishness Uncensored seeks to disrupt this space. It brings together a community of content creators who have been silenced by the Turkish government as well as by authorities in other regions, like Morocco, that are going through a similar press crisis. With the understanding that so many stories have gone unheard as a result of censorship and self-censorship, Turkishness Uncensored is a virtual platform where content creators can finally share their stories, and readers can finally have access to them, demonstrating a subversive, peaceful resistance against censorship practices.

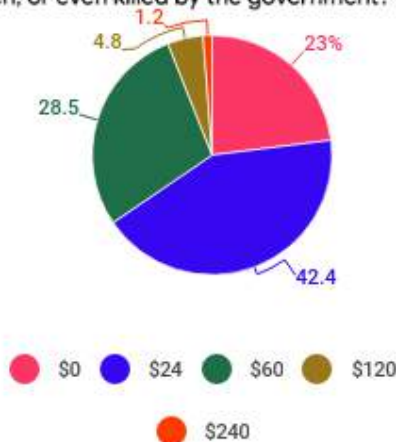


I need to learn more

Unacceptable and undemocratic.

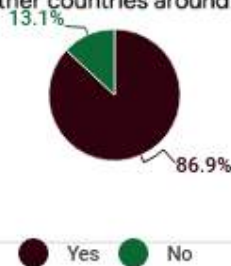
Would you be willing to pay for a subscription to an online news and literary platform that provides a space for journalists, novelists, artists, musicians, and activists to publish their content about Turkey, specifically, without fear of being arrested, detained, beaten, or even killed by the government? If so, how much, yearly?

- ☐ \$60/year
- ☐ \$120/year
- ☐ \$240/year
- ☐ \$0/year
- ☐ \$24/year



Do you believe this platform, which would exist as a form of resistance to Turkey's treatment of the writers and content creators, is relevant in the United States, and in other countries around the world?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



Any additional comments, concerns, recommendations or opinions on censorship in Turkey? Leave your ideas here

Short answer text

I do not want to be part of any part of a world that prevents people from expressing their opinion

I do like to Turkey I knew, free and democratic, and had promising future.

I think the prices listed are very expensive. I would pay but much less.

Turkey was a beacon of hope and a bridge between east and west, islam and christianity, sadly it took a wrong turn after the failed coup, Turkey can return to working with the international community by releasing all intellectuals and academic, celebrate their successes and achievements, and imbrace democracy.

I hope turkey and the turkish people live in a free and prosper world

censorship when over used, leads to dictatorship

Need to learn more about it in order to have an opinion
free turkey is better than an ugly dictatorship

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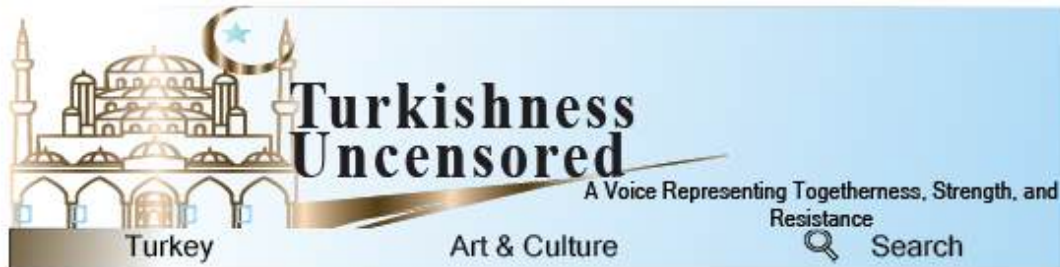
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Short answ



The Forbidden Turkey

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Have access to critical, uncensored, unprohibited, powerful voices from writers, artists, journalists, and activists across Turkey, without fear of persecution or of being silenced by an increasingly authoritarian government.

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Deep My Body, Deep My Mind

TIMA SEKT AGIR

A Diary Of Kurdish Children From

'The Government Caused the Fires,' I Just Painted Them,' Zehra Dogan

'Huzun Takes Up A Residence In Istanbul' Pinar Ogrenci

Elif Shafak Talks Turkishness In 'The Bastard of Istanbul'

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Who We Are



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A Voice of Our People



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Focus Groups (Interviews):

Interviewee: Ghassan

1. First impressions of this potential site?

Answer: Speaks Turkey, Turkish

2. What makes this interesting?

Answer: The Variety and the Different Stories

3. What changes would you like to see?

Answer: I'd like to see how Turkishness it compares or Correlates to other struggling democracies

4. What about this site would keep you coming back on a weekly, or daily basis?

Answer: Seeking new developments and newness the happenings in Turkey

5. What sections are most appealing to you?

Answer: What appealed to me is the title and quote which can also be the quote of the week.

6. What do you think about the design?

Answer: I do like the design, I do like it's minimality, not cluttered, and I do like how it covers almost every topic.

7. Do you believe our mission statement: "A voice representing togetherness, strength, and resistance" is demonstrated by our sample content and headlines? Why or why not?

It covers each headline and topic and addresses the country's concerns

8. Any other questions, comments, recommendations or concerns?

Only recommendation I would make is a Translate Tab, it allows the reader to Translate the page from English to Turkish, French, Spanish or Arabic.

Interviewee: Sylvia

1. First impressions of this potential site?

Answer: The different expressions and the mosque and turkey.

2. What makes this interesting?

Answer: People are telling different stories and the people have different expressions on their faces some are angry and some are happy.

3. What changes would you like to see?

Answer: No Changes

4. What about this site would keep you coming back on a weekly, or daily basis?

Answer: Different stories and hearing about what they go thru and the struggles in life on a daily basis.

5. What sections are most appealing to you?

Answer: A Diary of Kurdish Children from Cizre

6. What do you think about the design?

Answer: I would not change anything.

7. Do you believe our mission statement: "A voice representing togetherness, strength, and resistance" is demonstrated by our sample content and headlines? Why or why not?

Answer: Why, because each topic is expressing their voice, their concerns, strengths, and resistance.

8. Any other questions, comments, recommendations or concerns?

Answer: Photos should be bigger and the color should be brighter because some people can not see it well

Interviewee: Evîn

1. First impressions of this potential site?

The title of the site gives the impression that your site is promoting "Turkishness" and that it is exclusively about celebrating being Turkish.

2. What makes this interesting?

Access to uncensored stories and a unique opportunity to get to know those storytellers whom we otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to know about if it weren't for your platform.

3. What changes would you like to see?

Title, show different faces and titles from the minorities who are living in Turkey, maybe an events tab where I can go to see if there are intimate, exclusive opportunities to meet these people and hear their stories in person. A reading? Coffee hour? An arts exhibit? That would be very cool to have access to that

4. What about this site would keep you coming back on a weekly, or daily basis?

The fact that I cannot find these people, their stories, and their products elsewhere because of how dangerous and hard it is for them to share these parts of themselves publicly in such a suppressive political climate. But your platform offers this opportunity to the storytellers and the viewers, that's rare and unique.

5. What sections are most appealing to you?

Art, memoir, opinion

6. What do you think about the design?

I like the layout a lot. It is clean and easy to follow, but I would diversify the images. Right off the bat it comes off as AKP propaganda if I don't read the headline, especially the one with the women waving the Turkish flag around.

7. Do you believe our mission statement: "A voice representing togetherness, strength, and resistance" is demonstrated by our sample content and headlines? Why or why not?

Yes, it is strong and empowering, but I don't see "togetherness" on your page, all I see is Turkishness

8. Any other questions, comments, recommendations or concerns?

Show more inclusivity and show stories that offer what you are promising to a potential subscriber

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