



THE SAMIR KASSIR FOUNDATION

JORDAN INDEPENDENT MEDIA MARKET STUDY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2025 update of the Market and Institutional Mapping of Independent Media in Jordan (MIIM) builds on the baseline study completed in November 2022. The purpose of this phase is to assess the changes that have taken place in the independent media sector in Jordan over the past three years, focusing on organizational development, funding models, market access, and the overall media environment.

The study combines desk research with structured interviews conducted with eleven independent media outlets representing different types of media organizations including news websites, podcast networks, and production companies. Two additional interviews were held informally with advertising agencies to validate findings related to the commercial advertising market.

In comparison with the 2022 study, the 2025 findings indicate both continuity and gradual progress. Several independent outlets have strengthened their internal structures, adopted written strategies, and improved their managerial and production capacities. Some have expanded their teams, introduced clearer job descriptions, and developed more organized business plans. Others have maintained their operations despite funding cuts and legal restrictions. The overall picture shows a sector that remains fragile but has become more structured and better equipped to manage projects and partnerships.

Funding continues to be the main challenge. Grants remain the dominant source of income for most independent outlets, although a small number have succeeded in diversifying their revenue streams through content production, training, or advertising services. Compared to 2022, there has been a limited but notable increase in attempts to generate income through digital monetization and subscription models. Nevertheless, financial sustainability remains uncertain and highly dependent on donor availability and project-based funding cycles.

The legal environment has become more restrictive since 2022. The implementation of the 2023 Cybercrime Law has added new layers of liability for journalists and online platforms. Many outlets reported investing in legal oversight and moderation systems to ensure compliance and avoid prosecution. This has increased operational costs and encouraged self-censorship, particularly in reporting on sensitive or political issues.

The advertising market has continued to shrink for traditional and independent outlets. According to [Statista \(2025\)](#), the total advertising expenditure in Jordan is projected to rise gradually but will remain

concentrated in digital platforms such as global social media networks. Media agencies confirmed that most large brands prefer to advertise on these platforms or with major television networks, while independent outlets remain outside formal media plans. Advertising with independent media is still perceived as a reputational or political risk rather than a commercial opportunity.

Despite these constraints, several positive trends have emerged. Independent media outlets have become more professional in their operations and reporting practices. Many have invested in audience research and analytics, improved the quality of their content, and expanded their reach through podcasts and social media. The growing number of audio and video productions reflects a gradual adaptation to audience habits and the increasing demand for digital storytelling.

The 2025 update also confirms that collaboration among independent outlets remains limited but is improving. A few have begun to co-produce content, partner with private-sector clients, or engage with joint initiatives for advertising opportunities. These efforts are still at an early stage but represent a step toward shared commercial and institutional strategies.

The main challenges identified during this study remain consistent with those reported in 2022: restricted access to funding, limited advertising opportunities, legal and regulatory pressure, and the absence of reliable measurement systems that would make independent outlets more competitive in the market.

At the same time, the progress made in organizational development and content diversification demonstrates that independent media in Jordan continue to evolve despite difficult conditions. Their sustainability depends on continued institutional support, flexible donor funding, and the creation of a fairer media market that allows independent voices to operate on equal footing with commercial outlets.

The findings presented in this report confirm that independent media in Jordan remain an essential component of the national media landscape. While the environment has become more challenging, the professionalism and resilience of these outlets continue to provide a foundation for future growth and collaboration within the sector.

INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of the 2022 MIIM Jordan Market Study, the media landscape in Jordan has entered a new phase marked by volatility, uncertainty, and structural transformation. What was once a cautious equilibrium between limited expression and donor dependency has shifted toward a period of visible constraint. The combination of regional conflict, changing donor priorities, and new domestic regulations has redefined the boundaries of independent journalism and civic communication in the country.

The regional events that followed the outbreak of the war in Gaza on 7 October 2023 have deeply affected the atmosphere in Jordan. The country's close historical and social ties to Palestine, together with its geopolitical position, have translated into increased sensitivity toward public expression. According to the CIVICUS Monitor website, journalists and activists covering protests or expressing views related to the war were questioned, detained, or prosecuted under new cybercrime provisions. Several online outlets received informal warnings to avoid coverage that could "provoke public sentiment." This has reinforced a growing climate of self-censorship and narrowed the range of acceptable public debate. ([CIVICUS Monitor, 2024](#))

In August 2023, Jordan enacted Cybercrime Law No. 17 of 2023, replacing the earlier 2015 law. The Library of Congress notes that the new legislation introduces broad and ambiguous categories of offences such as "spreading false news," "undermining national unity," and "insulting religion." ([The Library of Congress, 2023](#)) Amnesty International observed that the law empowers the Public Prosecutor to initiate proceedings without a complainant and imposes prison sentences of up to three years for content deemed offensive or disruptive to public order. ([Amnesty International, 2024](#)) Reporters Without Borders described the law as "a tool for repressing journalists," citing multiple cases of arrests and trials following online commentary critical of public institutions. These legal measures have had a tangible chilling effect on independent reporting and have blurred the line between professional journalism and criminal liability. ([Reporters Without Borders, 2024](#))

Parallel to these political developments, the financial ecosystem that has traditionally supported Jordan's civil society and independent media has undergone a major contraction. In 2025, the United States implemented sweeping reductions in its foreign assistance portfolio, including a freeze on most non-humanitarian programs and the restructuring of USAID. Reports by Reuters and the Kaiser Family Foundation describe sweeping reductions and a temporary freeze in USAID's global programming, affecting dozens of partner countries. Jordan, one of the main recipients of U.S. development assistance, was among those directly impacted. Local organizations and media

initiatives that had relied on U.S. grants for training, institutional support, and investigative projects faced sudden suspensions and early terminations of funding cycles. This abrupt withdrawal forced many outlets to downsize operations, seek alternative donors, or attempt a transition toward market-based revenues. The change has accelerated an already existing trend away from donor dependency but has also left significant gaps in institutional capacity and financial resilience. ([Reuters](#), 2025) and ([KFF](#), 2025)

The combined pressures of legal restriction and funding scarcity have reshaped the operating logic of independent media in Jordan. Outlets that emerged after 2018 as part of a donor-supported ecosystem have entered a period of contraction and redefinition. According to DW Akademie's 2024 regional assessment of independent media in the MENA region, several regional initiatives have either reduced their investigative output or shifted toward low-risk, digital-first formats such as podcasts, short explainers, and cultural storytelling videos. The report describes a visible retreat from politically sensitive journalism and a corresponding rise in creative, youth-oriented production designed for social platforms. ([DW Akademie](#), 2024) Many of the outlets profiled in the 2022 MIIM study have since restructured as small production teams or creative collectives rather than formal newsrooms, reflecting both a strategic response to financial uncertainty and an attempt to minimize regulatory exposure. Despite the fragmentation of the field, these adaptive efforts have preserved pockets of experimentation, particularly among younger media practitioners who continue to explore new visual and audio storytelling methods as a means of remaining present in an increasingly constrained environment.

Despite this difficult environment, the Jordanian audience continues to evolve rapidly in its digital behavior. DataReportal estimates that internet penetration has reached 92 percent of the population, with approximately 6.45 million active social-media users. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat remain the primary channels for daily media consumption, while Facebook continues to decline in engagement among younger users. ([DataReportal](#), 2025) Although TikTok maintains a strong cultural footprint among youth, the platform has been officially banned in Jordan since December 2022 and is accessible only through VPNs. ([Roya News](#), 2023). This has redirected a portion of creative and entertainment content toward alternative short-video formats on Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, where Jordanian users and creators continue to generate significant engagement. The overall shift toward mobile-first, short-form content has created new opportunities for reach, but it has also concentrated visibility within algorithmic systems that remain largely beyond national regulation.

The 2025 MIIM Jordan Study is written within this complex context. It aims to update and expand the 2022 baseline by examining how independent media in Jordan have adapted to the changing legal, political, and financial environment. It seeks to understand whether the private advertising market, represented through the Agency for Equality (AE) and similar mechanisms, can provide a viable complement or alternative to donor support. More broadly, it investigates how independent media define sustainability under these conditions and what strategies enable them to continue serving the public interest.

By combining desk research with field interviews, this study will map the current composition of Jordan's independent media sector, assess its economic models, and analyze the surrounding advertising market. It will also explore the attitudes of journalists, business owners, and advertisers toward collaboration, and the risks such engagement may entail. Ultimately, the study aims to provide evidence that can guide future interventions under the MIIM program and support a more grounded understanding of the possibilities and limitations of market-based sustainability for independent media in Jordan today.

OBJECTIVES

The 2025 study aims to update and expand the findings of the 2022 MIIM Jordan Market Study, with a particular focus on how independent media in Jordan have adapted to the shifting legal, political, and financial landscape. It seeks to map the current structure of the sector, assess its economic models, and explore the possibilities and limitations of market-based sustainability in the present context.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Update the mapping of independent media outlets in Jordan, identifying new, inactive, or restructured entities and tracing changes in their editorial and institutional profiles since 2022.
2. Examine the financial and operational models adopted by these outlets, including their engagement with advertising, production services, and other market-based income streams.
3. Analyze the current state of the advertising and marketing environment, and assess private-sector perceptions of independent media as potential partners.
4. Review recent legal and regulatory developments, particularly the enforcement of Cybercrime Law No. 17 of 2023, and evaluate their impact on editorial freedom and institutional resilience.
5. Understand audience behavior and digital consumption trends, including shifts toward mobile-first and short-form content and the implications of platform restrictions such as the TikTok ban.
6. Identify feasible strategies and partnerships that could enhance the financial sustainability and independence of Jordan's media sector in the years ahead.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to update the 2022 MIIM Jordan Market Study and to document how independent media outlets have adapted to the evolving legal, political, and financial landscape in Jordan. The research focused on understanding the current operating environment of independent media, their financial and structural transformations, and their attitudes toward advertising and alternative revenue models.

The research was conducted in two main phases: desk research and field research, following the same framework used in the previous MIIM studies on Lebanon and Jordan commissioned by SKF and ERIM. This structure ensured methodological continuity and allowed for comparability with previous findings.

1. DESK RESEARCH: UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE AND IDENTIFYING THE ACTORS

The desk research phase was carried out over a two-week period between September and October 2025. It involved a comprehensive review of all available secondary sources related to the independent media landscape, the advertising market, and the broader media ecosystem in Jordan.

As in 2022, the availability of up-to-date and detailed data on Jordan's independent media sector remained limited. The scarcity of official records and the lack of transparent financial disclosures among media outlets continued to pose a challenge. To address this, the researcher cross-referenced multiple sources, prioritizing the most recent, locally validated, and methodologically transparent information available.

The desk study reviewed a range of materials, including policy papers, media monitoring reports, donor publications, and recent academic and civil-society research. Particular attention was given to:

- The implications of Cybercrime Law No. 17 of 2023, which has had a direct impact on journalistic activity and online content production.
- The restructuring of USAID and the suspension of many U.S.-funded programs in 2025, which significantly affected the financial ecosystem supporting independent media.

- Updated audience and digital behavior data drawn from DataReportal (2025), Int@j, and other local digital market studies.
- Regional findings from DW Akademie's 2024/25 MENA report, which contextualize Jordan within broader regional trends of media contraction and adaptation.

This review helped identify active and emerging independent media outlets, map structural changes since 2022, and adapt the field questionnaire accordingly. The compiled mapping formed the basis of the sample selection for the field research.

2. FIELD RESEARCH: INTERVIEWS AND ANALYSIS

The field research formed the core of the 2025 study. It aimed to collect qualitative data directly from independent media outlets to understand their financial strategies, operational challenges, and perceptions toward advertising and audience-based income models.

A list of active outlets was compiled based on the updated mapping conducted during the desk research phase, and a sample was selected in consultation with SKF. A standardized questionnaire, adapted from the 2022 version (*see Appendix B*), was used to guide all interviews.

All interviews were conducted between September and October 2025, either in person or online, depending on the availability of respondents. The duration of each interview ranged between 45 and 90 minutes. Interviewees were briefed on the purpose of the study and were offered the option to provide responses off the record or to refrain from answering specific questions. Off-the-record statements were used only as background context and not attributed to any outlet by name.

Compared with 2022, this phase had a tighter schedule. The core fieldwork focused on independent media outlets, using a standardized questionnaire and qualitative interviews. Donors were not part of the main sample. Two short, anonymized check-ins were held with media agencies to inform the market context, but these were not treated as full interviews and did not follow the standard instrument. The study also examined the role of the Agency for Equality (AE), established after the 2022 phase under MIIM, which expanded its operations to Jordan in 2024.

All interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically. Responses were coded to identify recurring patterns related to funding, staffing, audience engagement, and attitudes toward sustainability mechanisms such as subscriptions, advertising, and co-production.

3. DATA VERIFICATION AND EDITORIAL PROCESS

As part of the research process, all desk and field data were triangulated to ensure internal consistency and reliability. Digital research tools were used to refine search accuracy, validate citations, and confirm cross-references. Artificial intelligence–assisted language tools were employed at the editing stage solely to improve clarity and maintain stylistic alignment with the 2022 report. All interpretations, findings, and conclusions are those of the author and based entirely on verified sources and first-hand interviews.

4. LIMITATIONS

The main limitation in 2025 was the restricted timeframe. As a result, the formal interview sample covered 11 independent media outlets and two media agencies. Perspectives from donors were not collected in this phase.

Another challenge was the continued scarcity of updated quantitative data on advertising expenditure and audience metrics in Jordan. Many of the available reports remain outdated or generalized, requiring extensive cross-verification between local and international sources.

Despite these limitations, the information gathered through desk research and interviews provides a strong and representative overview of the current state of independent media in Jordan. Triangulating multiple data sources and aligning the findings with verified regional studies helped ensure the accuracy and reliability of the analysis.

5. REPORTING

The findings of both the desk and field research phases are synthesized in the following sections. Each section begins with a brief overview of trends identified during desk research, followed by qualitative evidence gathered through interviews. The study concludes with practical recommendations for strengthening the sustainability and independence of Jordan’s media sector within the framework of the Media Independence and Innovation Mechanism (MIIM) and its partnership with the Agency for Equality (AE).

FINDINGS

1. ALTERNATIVE MEDIA PLATFORMS: WHO ARE THEY?

In the course of the 2025 research, all identified independent and alternative online media outlets were interviewed. One of the main objectives was to better understand how these outlets define themselves today and whether their editorial identity has changed since 2022.

The majority of outlets continue to describe themselves as independent, community-focused, and progressive. They emphasize human rights, social justice, and accountability, and see their role as providing balanced and reliable information to the public. While some platforms have expanded their editorial focus to include lighter or entertainment content to attract wider audiences, most continue to consider public-interest journalism as their core mission.

- **Outlet A**, an online magazine, continues to identify itself as a long-form digital publication rather than a daily news website. It focuses on in-depth features and investigative reports that address social justice, gender equality, and political accountability. Its team described their editorial line as critical, independent, and rights-based.
- **Outlet B**, an online news platform, defines itself as an independent digital newspaper committed to transparency and neutrality. Its newsroom continues to cover daily political, social, and economic developments and maintains a reputation for credibility and professional reporting. Among all interviewed outlets, this platform was consistently described by others as one of the few voices maintaining strong editorial independence in the country. Its team has upheld this stance despite facing repeated challenges, including the loss of advertisers and noticeable restrictions on its social-media visibility following coverage of sensitive political events. Despite these pressures, the outlet continues to prioritize credibility and public-interest reporting over financial or political considerations.
- **Outlet C**, a community-based radio and news network, continues to describe its editorial identity as locally driven. It focuses on marginalized groups and local communities, promoting human rights and public participation through balanced and inclusive reporting.
- **Outlet D**, an independent podcast network and training platform, produces audio programs on social, cultural, and civic themes. The team notes that its content is society-oriented and progressive but not politically partisan.

- **Outlet E**, a podcast-production company, defines itself as a human-rights-oriented platform that creates thematic series promoting political dialogue, women's empowerment, social awareness, and children's rights.
- **Outlet F**, a digital content studio, presents itself as liberal, gender-sensitive, and human-rights-oriented. Since 2022, the company has expanded its activities into multimedia production and digital campaigns focused on social development and environmental issues.

Three larger, privately owned media organizations, **Outlet G**, **Outlet H**, and **Outlet I** were included in the 2025 update to reflect the broader media environment. All three operate independently from government control and produce general news, social programs, and entertainment content in Arabic. While their structures and scale are larger than most alternative outlets, they maintain professional editorial departments and a clear separation between news and advertising.

Two newer digital initiatives, **Outlet J** and **Outlet K**, were also included in this round. Both are small independent platforms that rely heavily on social-media distribution. They focus on youth issues, local affairs, and social commentary, describing their work as civic-minded and non-partisan.

All of the outlets interviewed produce their content primarily in Arabic. Some operate dedicated English-language websites alongside their Arabic platforms, while others occasionally translate selected articles into English.

2. HOW DID THEY FUND THEIR WORK IN THE BEGINNING?

The majority of the outlets interviewed in 2025 are registered as Limited Liability Companies (LLC) with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply, and most are licensed by the Media Commission. This remains the preferred registration model for independent media and social enterprises in Jordan, as it provides legal protection and allows a degree of operational flexibility. Registration as an LLC enables outlets to function with minimal direct government interference beyond the requirements of financial auditing, which fall under the Ministry of Trade and Industry. However, it also subjects them to the standard 20 percent income tax on profits and the 16 percent sales tax once their annual revenue exceeds 30,000 JOD. Several outlets reiterated that this framework can discourage donor funding, as some international organizations are unable to fund for-profit entities.

Outlet A was established in 2007 as a citizen-media initiative and became a registered LLC in 2009. It began as a self-funded volunteer project and later received small grants that supported training and capacity building. Its first major institutional support came from an international foundation that enabled expansion into in-depth journalism. The outlet remains licensed with the Media Commission, and its editorial focus and ownership structure remain unchanged.

Outlet B launched in 2012 as a self-funded daily news website. The founders initially financed operations through personal funds and small local advertisements. In 2013, the outlet was blocked for several months after refusing to register under the amended Press and Publications Law and was restored only after completing registration. It continues to rely primarily on advertising revenue and periodic personal contributions from the founders. The outlet rejects donor or government funding as a matter of editorial principle. Other media actors described it as one of the few platforms maintaining an independent editorial line, though this stance has limited its access to advertisers and reduced online reach.

Outlet C was launched in 2001 as an online community-radio initiative that later expanded to FM broadcasting. A related non-profit organization was established in 2007 to manage both the radio and the website, while the radio itself is registered as an LLC. Its income model combines donor grants with limited commercial services such as media training and production.

Outlet D was established in 2016 with initial support from an international democracy-promotion fund. It is registered in Jordan as an LLC fully owned by a foreign parent company. From the beginning, it positioned itself as a regional Arabic-language podcast network and later expanded its reach by acquiring another regional audio-production company in 2022. The outlet is not registered with the Media Commission, as it operates primarily as a production company.

Outlet E was launched in late 2020, initially self-funded by its founders. It later registered as an LLC and obtained a Media Commission license. Early projects focused on commissioned podcast series addressing social and human-rights issues for international organizations. By 2025, the outlet had built ongoing partnerships with regional and international institutions and began offering corporate-content production services. It has since transitioned from fully donor-funded work to a mixed model that includes commercial production contracts.

Outlet F began in 2017 as an online show that ran for four seasons and built a substantial social-media audience. After the show ended in 2020, the team converted the brand into a digital-media production company registered as an LLC. The founder initially financed operations from personal savings and later secured small grants from international organizations. In 2020, the company opened its first studio. In 2024, the founder also registered a non-profit association to access additional donor programs. As of 2025, the outlet reports both grant funding and production services as its core income sources.

Outlet G was established in 2011 as a privately owned satellite channel and digital platform. It is registered as a private shareholding company and licensed by the Media Commission. Its initial investment came from its founders, and its growth has been driven by advertising and commercial partnerships. It has developed one of the largest digital-news operations in Jordan, combining television broadcasting with an extensive online and social-media presence, including a separate English-language website.

Outlet H was founded in 2004 as one of Jordan's first online-news outlets. It is registered as an LLC and licensed by the Media Commission. The platform began as a self-funded project and continues to depend entirely on private advertising, without government or donor support.

Outlet I launched in 2023 as a private, self-funded radio station registered as an LLC and licensed by both the Media Commission and the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission. The founders financed the initial setup personally. Its revenue comes from advertising and digital monetization, and its programming focuses on youth, social, and cultural issues rather than political content.

Outlet J was founded in 2023 by a small group of journalists and content creators. It is registered as a special limited-partnership company. The outlet relies on small advertisements, social-media campaigns, and occasional paid productions for non-governmental or private entities. It has not received donor funding to date, apart from a small equipment grant from an international project prior to the 2025 funding freeze.

Outlet K was originally established in 2013 under different management and registered as an LLC in 2019. It was relaunched by the current founder after a period of inactivity. The outlet operates with limited financial resources and a small team, producing short news reports and commentary primarily for social-media platforms. It was not included in the 2022 baseline and now functions as a small independent digital-news outlet.

The data collected in 2025 confirm that most alternative media platforms in Jordan began as self-funded initiatives launched by journalists and content creators seeking editorial independence. As they grew, each outlet adopted its own registration and funding model according to scale and sustainability needs. With the exception of Outlet B, which continues to reject all forms of external funding, almost all other outlets either currently receive or have previously received project-based grants or service contracts from international organizations.

In terms of structure, the more established outlets such as Outlets A, D, E, G, H, and C maintain written vision and mission statements, defined internal roles, and formal editorial and operational policies. Newer or smaller outlets, including Outlets I, J, and K, still rely on informal planning and multitasking within small teams.

Only a limited number of outlets have formal business strategies or written operational plans. Outlets A, D, E, and G have developed clear internal strategies and business plans that guide their content, staffing, and revenue diversification. Others such as Outlets F, C, and H continue to operate mainly through short-term or project-based planning, though several noted that strategic reviews are underway.

All interviewed outlets confirmed that they maintain some form of portfolio or media kit used for presenting their work to potential donors, advertisers, or partners. Several acknowledged that these materials are outdated and said they would benefit from training on analytics, performance

indicators, and proposal design to improve future partnerships.

Table 1 below shows the team size for each media platform interviewed in 2025.

Table 1. Team size for every media platform, 2025

Platform	Full-Time	Part-Time / Freelancers	Volunteers	Total Team Size
Outlet A	18	15	0	33
Outlet E	6	8	0	14
Outlet B	5	10	0	15
Outlet C	23	8	12	43
Outlet D	28	20	0	48
Outlet F	6	5	1	12
Outlet G	220	35	0	255
Outlet H	40	10	0	50
Outlet I	12	6	10	28
Outlet J	4	4	0	8
Outlet K	3	4	0	7

As in 2022, all outlets emphasized that staff members often hold multiple responsibilities. Most depend on freelancers, part-time contributors, or project-based hires to remain flexible and control costs. Larger organizations such as Outlets G and H maintain structured hierarchies and clear job descriptions, while smaller or emerging platforms rely on shared roles and overlapping duties among a few core staff.

3. WHO IS THEIR AUDIENCE?

All outlets interviewed in 2025 confirmed that their main audiences are Arabic-speaking Jordanians, concentrated in Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa. Most described their core followers as young adults aged 18 to 35 who consume content primarily on mobile devices and through social media. While the core demographic remains similar to 2022, audience habits have shifted toward short-form video, podcasts, and interactive visual content, with visibility increasingly determined by platform algorithms.

- Outlet A reported that its readers are mainly university-educated youth, journalists, and civil society professionals interested in rights-based journalism and cultural affairs. The audience is balanced by gender, with a slightly higher share of women. Most readers are based in Jordan, with secondary audiences in Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, and the Gulf. The majority reach the outlet's stories through social media referrals rather than direct website visits. The most-read topics include governance, gender, accountability, and public freedoms.
- Outlet B targets a general national audience following daily political, economic, and social developments. Its core readership includes public-sector employees, teachers, and politically active youth. Most of its audience resides in Jordan, with some followers in Palestine and the Gulf. While its loyal reader base remains stable, the outlet reported a drop in social-media visibility after covering regional political events, which reduced organic reach though returning visitors remained strong.
- Outlet C continues to serve community-based and marginalized audiences, including residents of smaller towns and rural areas. Its main listeners are in Jordan, with some reach in Palestine and Syria through online streaming. Programming attracts both men and women, and listener participation remains active through call-ins and comments. The outlet reported increased youth engagement, especially among students and local activists outside Amman.
- Outlet D stated that its listeners are primarily between 20 and 40 years old. The largest audiences are in Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, and the Gulf, with additional listeners from the Arab diaspora in Europe and North America. Women form a slight majority. The most popular shows are storytelling and documentary-style podcasts, which attract younger users seeking high production quality.
- Outlet E reported that its listeners are mostly young women, university students, and early-career professionals. The audience is concentrated in Jordan and Palestine, with notable growth in Lebanon, Egypt, and the Gulf, and about one quarter located outside Jordan. The most popular programs focus on gender, family, and social awareness. Growth has been strongest on global podcast platforms, while engagement through Instagram supports audience retention.
- Outlet F described its audience as mainly aged 18 to 34, based in Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt, with smaller clusters in Iraq and the Gulf. Men make up roughly 60 percent of followers. The most viewed content types are political humor, short sketches, and digital awareness campaigns.
- Outlet G reaches audiences across all age groups in Jordan, with its largest digital following among viewers aged 18 to 35. Women represent about half of its online audience. Its English-language website attracts international readers, the Jordanian diaspora, and expatriates across the region, including the Gulf and Europe. The outlet reported more than ten million combined followers across Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, with growing engagement in short-form video content.

- Outlet H attracts readers from all Jordanian governorates, while its English site serves expatriates, diplomats, and international organizations. About 70 percent of visitors access its sites via mobile phones, with traffic from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt in addition to domestic readers. It monitors performance through digital analytics tools and records the highest traffic during breaking news and political coverage.
- Outlet I reported that its main audience consists of socially active youth and professionals aged 20 to 40, with women forming a slight majority. Its strongest reach is in Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa, with growing online listenership in Palestine and Saudi Arabia. Talk shows and music programs that mix social themes with entertainment attract the highest engagement.
- Outlets J and K both target younger audiences aged 18 to 30, primarily through TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. Outlet J's followers are mostly male, concentrated in Jordan, Iraq, and the Gulf. Outlet K reports a more balanced gender mix, with most followers in Jordan and Palestine. Both said their audiences engage most with humorous or socially relevant stories, especially those addressing daily life, civic issues, and local challenges.

Across all outlets, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube remain the primary platforms for audience engagement. TikTok continues to grow despite its official ban in Jordan since December 2022, with users maintaining access through VPNs. Several outlets noted that algorithm changes since 2023 have reduced organic reach, especially for political or issue-based content, prompting them to adjust formats and invest more in direct audience relationships through newsletters, WhatsApp channels, and live events.

When asked how they track their audience, all outlets confirmed using digital analytics tools rather than traditional surveys. The most common platforms are Google Analytics, Meta Insights, YouTube Studio, TikTok Analytics, Spotify for Podcasters, and Google AdSense. Larger outlets such as Outlets A, D, E, and G have dedicated analytics staff or small internal teams responsible for tracking performance and producing reports. Others, including Outlets F, C, and B, rely on manual monitoring of engagement indicators to guide both editorial and advertising decisions. Smaller or newly established outlets such as Outlets J and K depend mainly on the built-in analytics provided by their social-media platforms.

Overall, the 2025 findings show that the audience of Jordan's independent and alternative media remains young, urban, and digitally engaged. Compared to 2022, outlets demonstrate a clearer understanding of who their audiences are and how they interact online, but most still lack the technical capacity to perform in-depth audience research or to systematically integrate data analysis into editorial and business planning.

4. WHAT ARE THEIR CURRENT BUSINESS MODELS?

The 2025 findings confirm that independent and alternative media outlets in Jordan continue to operate in a fragile and shifting financial environment. While a few have expanded commercial production, branded content, or digital monetization, most still rely heavily on donor grants or personal funding. Compared with 2022, outlets reported fewer unrestricted grants and longer approval periods, forcing them to adopt new strategies for survival and to seek income diversification through training, podcast sponsorships, and social campaigns.

- Outlet A continues to rely almost entirely on international donor grants, which account for about 90 percent of its total income. The remaining 10 percent comes from training, commissioned research, and editorial consultancy services. This composition has remained consistent since 2022, though the organization noted that funding has become harder to secure, with longer contracting processes and fewer multi-year projects. It estimated its current annual income at around 400,000 JOD, slightly lower than in 2022, and described the donor environment as increasingly competitive and unpredictable. The outlet reduced full-time staff and increased reliance on freelancers to improve sustainability and is preparing to launch a membership program.
- Outlet B operates on a self-funded commercial model based entirely on local advertising and the personal contributions of its founders. The outlet continues to reject donor and government funding as a matter of editorial principle. Advertising income has declined over the past two years due to reduced visibility on social platforms and the unwillingness of some advertisers to associate with politically critical content. The outlet did not share its annual income figure but described its operations as sustainable within a modest financial capacity. This structure remains unchanged from 2022.
- Outlet C and its affiliated community-media organization continue to depend primarily on donor grants, which make up roughly 90 percent of their total income, while the remaining 10 percent comes from advertising, commissioned productions, and training programs. This ratio is consistent with 2022, although the management reported that government approval procedures for foreign-funded projects have become slower and more complicated, delaying the start of new activities. The outlet estimated its annual income at about 200,000 JOD and said that total funding volume has decreased slightly compared with 2022 due to shifting donor priorities.
- Outlet D has seen its revenue composition reverse since 2022. Whereas three years ago around 60 percent of income came from commercial audio-production services and 40 percent from grants, the current balance is about 60 percent donor funding and 40 percent commercial work, including commissioned podcasts, branded productions, publishing, and advertising sales. The outlet explained that this shift reflects a slowdown in regional advertising markets and increased competition in the Arabic-language audio sector. Despite heavier reliance on donor projects, it remains one of the largest independent podcast networks in the region, reporting total annual

revenue above one million USD. The company described 2025 as a year of stabilization after rapid expansion in earlier cycles.

- Outlet E follows a mixed funding model that combines project-based donor support with commercial production services. About 80 percent of its current income comes from international and regional grants, while 20 percent comes from commissioned and sponsored podcasts. This represents clearer diversification than in 2022, when the company relied almost entirely on small NGO contracts. The outlet reported annual revenue exceeding 200,000 JOD in 2025 and noted that demand for Arabic-language podcast production continues to grow, particularly among corporate clients, although rising production costs have limited overall profitability.
- Outlet F operates under a hybrid model in which donor projects provide about 78 percent of total income and digital-production services account for the remaining 22 percent. In contrast to 2022, when its sources were less defined, the outlet now reports a structured income mix supported by both small donor grants and client work for NGOs and private companies. Annual income reached 160,000 JOD in 2025, following strong growth between 2021 and 2024, when earnings increased from 40,000 to 250,000 JOD before declining slightly. The company cited rising equipment and staffing costs as key financial pressures but said service contracts remain a stable source of revenue.
- Outlet G remains a fully commercial media company that generates its revenue from television and digital advertising, sponsored programs, and brand partnerships. It also operates a production house that services both its own network and regional clients. Outlet G confirmed that it does not receive any government funding and continues to rely entirely on commercial income. Although the outlet did not disclose its annual turnover, interviewees identified it as the most financially stable organization in the sample, maintaining steady growth through digital advertising and regional content partnerships since 2022.
- Outlet H continues to operate as a commercially run online outlet financed solely through advertising from private companies. It manages two websites, one in Arabic and one in English, with English-language advertising aimed at international audiences now contributing about 20 percent of total revenue. The outlet reaffirmed that it has never accepted government funding. While it did not share its annual income, analytics confirm that it remains among the most visited news websites in Jordan, maintaining stable advertising performance and a steady client base since 2022.
- Outlet I is a privately owned and self-financed radio station that relies mainly on local advertising and program sponsorships, complemented by modest online monetization through YouTube and Facebook. The founders personally funded the launch and continue to cover part of operating costs. The outlet occasionally produces paid social-awareness campaigns for private clients and reported annual income of about 200,000 JOD in 2025, up from roughly 100,000 JOD in 2024. Management described its financial position as modest but stable, supported by gradual audience growth and loyal advertisers.

- Outlet J remains a small, self-funded platform. It generates limited income from short-form content collaborations, social-media sponsorships, and local advertising. The outlet has not yet achieved profitability but is building partnerships with potential donors and NGOs to produce civic-oriented digital campaigns. It reported total revenue of around 20,000 JOD in 2025, reflecting early-stage development. The founders said sustainability will depend on expanding its production base and securing consistent content contracts.
- Outlet K operates on a small commercial scale, relying on personal funding from its founder and a limited stream of online advertising and sponsored posts. The outlet has not yet developed a long-term business plan and continues to depend on volunteers and unpaid contributors to maintain coverage. Current annual income is estimated between 35,000 and 40,000 JOD. The team said that advertising remains inconsistent and that financial sustainability continues to be a challenge.

The financial picture that emerges in 2025 reflects continuity more than change. A small number of commercially oriented outlets, including Outlets G, H, and B, continue to sustain themselves without donor support, while the majority remain dependent on project-based funding. Hybrid models such as Outlets D, E, and F show that diversification is possible but still limited by market size, rising production costs, and competition for advertising. Overall, independent media in Jordan have strengthened their managerial structures and diversified modestly, yet long-term financial stability remains uncertain and highly sensitive to shifts in donor priorities.

5. WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN FUNDING?

Interviewed outlets continue to describe a narrow and volatile funding environment. Grants remain small in volume, short in duration, and tied to project outputs, which limits long-term planning and leaves core teams under constant pressure to bridge gaps between awards. Most outlets report that limited or no core funding forces them to stretch staff across fundraising, production, and administration, which reduces editorial time and affects delivery quality during busy cycles.

Donor fatigue is more visible than in 2022. Several outlets noted fewer open calls, tighter eligibility criteria, and longer award cycles. Competition has increased among national and regional peers for the same limited pools of funding. Some outlets said they paused or cancelled planned series while waiting for decisions. Where awards exist, heavier compliance and audit requirements have raised administrative costs that are difficult to cover within project budgets.

Approval delays for foreign-funded projects continue to create cash-flow risk. Outlets that operate under or in partnership with non-profit entities report that approvals can take long enough to disrupt payroll, vendor payments, and production calendars. Delays also affect external collaborators, such as freelancers and studios, who require faster payment terms than most projects can guarantee.

Accessing commercial advertising remains difficult. Brand buyers and media agencies continue to concentrate their spending on large, entertainment-focused publishers and global platforms. Several outlets reported that advertisers view independent media as high-risk and low-reach compared to mainstream channels, which leads to very low response rates to proposals. One outlet reported losing advertisers over the past year as clients shifted budgets to social platforms and avoided perceived reputational risk. Even when deals are agreed, late payments are common and increase working-capital needs.

Costs have increased across the production chain. Outlets cited higher salaries needed to retain editors and producers, rising studio and equipment expenses, and growing fees for software, hosting, and distribution. Smaller teams said they cannot absorb these increases without either cutting output or accepting lower margins on commissioned work. Podcast producers highlighted heavier competition for the same sponsorships and branded-content briefs while production costs continued to rise.

Company form and contracting remain practical hurdles. Limited-liability companies continue to face barriers with donors that prefer to contract non-profits. Some outlets resolve this through service contracts or by partnering with a registered association, although this adds coordination and overhead. Others said they declined to share specific financial details on this point. Where outlets do work with multiple legal vehicles, financial management and audit complexity increase.

In sum, the funding environment in 2025 reflects continuity with sharper constraints. The core issues identified in 2022 persist, while donor fatigue, approval timelines, competition, advertiser risk aversion, and production costs have intensified. A minority of outlets diversified modestly into services and limited advertising, yet the majority remain dependent on project-based income, sensitive to external timelines, and exposed to cash-flow risk. The net effect since 2022 is greater pressure on working capital and planning horizons, not structural relief.

6. WHAT ARE THEIR ATTITUDES AND CAPABILITIES TOWARDS ADVERTISING?

Advertising continues to represent a limited and unreliable income source for most independent media outlets in Jordan. While several outlets express interest in developing this stream, most describe the local advertising market as heavily centralized and inaccessible. Agencies remain concentrated in the capital and maintain close relations with major television networks and entertainment brands. For smaller or critical outlets, advertisers remain cautious, and partnerships are often constrained by reputational and political considerations.

Most outlets note that since 2022, advertising budgets have continued to migrate toward global digital platforms, particularly Meta and TikTok. This has reduced local spending and raised the cost

of reaching audiences through paid promotion. Few independent outlets possess a dedicated sales or marketing function, and most manage potential ad partnerships on a case-by-case basis.

- Outlet A remains selective toward advertising, maintaining a strong emphasis on editorial integrity. In 2025 the team stated they do not currently accept ads on the platform, preferring to focus on donor-supported content and production services. They occasionally co-produce campaigns for clients but publish them externally rather than through their own channels to ensure clear separation between funding and journalism. Outlet A has no rate card and would welcome support to develop one that aligns with its mission. Its overall position remains consistent with 2022, prioritizing independence over revenue expansion.
- Outlet B continues to rely fully on commercial advertising, working with a range of private-sector clients through banner and sponsored-content placements. The outlet maintains a rate card and manages all sales directly. Its main concern continues to be external interference and uneven market access that affect fair competition. The outlet remains committed to independence, though heavy reliance on advertising affects growth during regional uncertainty. Compared with 2022, its approach and challenges remain largely unchanged.
- Outlet C remains open to advertising that aligns with its mission and community focus. It sells limited radio spots, sponsorships, and advocacy-related campaigns, producing all ad materials in-house. Proposals are prepared on demand rather than through a fixed rate card. While the outlet continues to attract advertisers, some brands remain cautious because of perceived political sensitivity. Its attitude toward advertising is pragmatic yet cautious, balancing sustainability with editorial credibility.
- Outlet D is among the most commercially capable outlets, offering multiple formats including sponsored episodes, branded content, and full campaign production. It has a formal rate card for multiple markets and regularly delivers reports with detailed performance metrics. In 2024–2025 it implemented several projects through regional partnerships, demonstrating a mature approach to collaboration with advertisers. The outlet’s main concern is the limited maturity of the podcast advertising market, though it continues to expand its production services and subscription models. Advertising capacity has grown considerably since 2022.
- Outlet E combines donor funding with commercial projects and reported regular cooperation with private clients. It has a written price list and produces both audio and video content internally. Its main challenge is high market competition and limited local budgets, yet it continues to execute campaigns and provide reports. The outlet welcomes collaboration with agencies and brands that respect editorial boundaries. Since 2022, its advertising practice has professionalized, supported by growing production capability.

- Outlet F actively seeks advertising opportunities that match its social and editorial values. It offers branded-content, influencer, and social-media packages and has completed multiple campaigns through regional initiatives between 2024 and 2025. It maintains an updated rate card but adapts prices to each client's scope. Its concerns relate to advertisers' reluctance to associate with rights-oriented or critical content, which limits deal flow. Compared with 2022, the outlet has diversified formats and improved partner reporting, showing higher commercial maturity.
- Outlet G operates one of the most structured commercial systems in the landscape. It maintains comprehensive media kits and rate cards and sells multiple ad types including display, branded content, sponsorships, and broadcast placements. The outlet produces many of its campaigns in-house and tracks performance through analytics tools. Following regional events in 2023–2024, it suspended advertising from several boycotted companies, which caused short-term losses but strengthened audience trust. It remains confident in its market position and views advertiser growth as a key revenue driver for the next two years.
- Outlet H continues to rely on advertising as its sole revenue source, selling banners, sponsored content, and digital campaigns to private clients. It keeps a rate card and produces campaign reports for partners. The outlet reports persistent economic pressure and shrinking market size as main challenges, particularly during regional crises that reduce spending. Its position remains consistent with 2022, commercially driven but vulnerable to external constraints.
- Outlet I is primarily funded through advertising and online monetization, generating the vast majority of its revenue from these sources. It holds a media kit and rate card and provides performance reports for advertisers. Advertising formats include radio spots, sponsorships, product placements, and website banners. Its main concerns are ongoing scrutiny and economic pressure, though the outlet remains optimistic about continued growth. Advertising operations have stabilized since 2023, showing stronger management compared with earlier years.
- Outlet J operates mainly as a regional digital platform and derives more than half of its income from advertising and content-production services. It has a price list and occasionally offers discounts for strategic partnerships. The outlet produces all ad materials internally and delivers campaigns for small and medium companies, particularly outside the capital. Key challenges include delayed payments and restrictions on certain topics. Since 2022, the outlet has formalized its business setup and built a studio to expand ad-production capacity.
- Outlet K remains commercially oriented, sustaining operations through advertising and production services. It maintains a media kit and price list and provides campaign performance reports for clients, including during election periods. The outlet sells banner ads and sponsored content while producing most creatives internally. Its main concern is the shrinking advertising market and reduced corporate budgets. Overall, its capabilities and practices remain similar to 2022, with moderate improvement in reporting and analytics.

The 2025 findings show broad continuity in how independent and commercial outlets approach advertising. Most maintain openness to ethically aligned sponsorships, with several mid-sized outlets strengthening in-house production and reporting capacity. Outlets D, E, and F demonstrate clear progress in building structured advertising systems, while Outlets G and H continue to dominate the commercial segment. Despite modest professionalization across the sector, market limitations, political pressure, and brand-safety concerns continue to constrain advertising growth.

7. PRODUCING CONTENT ON BEHALF OF A THIRD PARTY AND CO-PRODUCTION

In 2025, several outlets treat co-production and commissioned content as a structured service line, while others accept it selectively to protect editorial independence. Most work is delivered in-house, using cost-based pricing with documented performance reports when applicable. Openness to agency collaboration is common, provided that timelines, roles, and editorial boundaries are clearly defined.

- Outlet A undertakes limited commissioned work and prefers to publish on client channels rather than its own platform. The team prices on a cost-plus basis and has produced at least one pilot for a brand client. It does not maintain a rate card and prioritizes separation between editorial output and client deliverables.
- Outlet B is open to third-party campaigns, but it reported not having executed such work during the past three years. Production capacity exists internally, and projects would be priced per product or campaign when undertaken. The outlet keeps a rate card and favors direct client relationships. There is openness to agency collaboration under defined conditions.
- Outlet C produces commissioned radio and digital content in-house for civil-society and advocacy partners. Projects are scoped and priced on a case-by-case basis, with after-action reporting provided. The outlet does not use a fixed rate card and remains open to agency collaboration under safeguards for editorial independence.
- Outlet D regularly co-produces branded podcasts and communication campaigns for clients and provides documented performance reports. Pricing follows a cost-plus model, and all production is handled internally. The outlet has a written price list and collaborates with agencies, though multi-party negotiations can delay execution. Co-production is considered a core service alongside its own audience products.
- Outlet E carries out commissioned audio and video work for civil-society and private clients, using cost-based pricing with modest mark-ups. All production is completed in-house, and campaign reports are delivered to partners. The outlet keeps a written price list covering multiple markets and is open to agency collaboration that aligns with its editorial values.

- Outlet F functions as both a platform and a production house, executing commissioned video and social campaigns internally. It completed pilot projects with regional agencies between 2024 and 2025. Pricing is set per project, and an updated price list exists, adjusted to client scope. The outlet remains selective to preserve brand alignment.
- Outlet G operates a dedicated production arm that delivers television, digital, and sponsored content for external clients. Work is produced largely in-house, with performance reporting available for campaigns. The outlet holds a media kit and rate card and is open to agency partnerships. Co-production is an established, routine part of its commercial model.
- Outlet H provides sponsored content and promotional packages for private-sector clients, produced and published internally. Projects are priced per product or campaign, and the outlet maintains a rate card. Commissioned work remains a practical revenue line, approached with standard commercial terms.
- Outlet I produces commercial radio spots, sponsorship reads, and website placements in-house, with campaign reports available. The outlet holds a media kit and rate card. It has not yet worked through external agencies but remains open to future collaboration under clear deliverables and timelines.
- Outlet J executes commissioned video and social-media campaigns for local clients, including during election periods, supported by its new studio. Work is produced internally, priced on a cost-plus basis with occasional strategic discounts. A price list exists, and the outlet is open to agency collaboration. It identified capacity building and timely payments as key needs.
- Outlet K conducts sponsored campaigns and usually produces deliverables internally. Pricing is set per project, and campaign reports are provided. The outlet does not keep a standing rate card, preferring client-specific quotations. It is open to agency cooperation when it improves execution speed.

Overall, co-production in 2025 is widely accepted as a complementary revenue stream anchored in in-house production and cost-based pricing. Larger producers operate with formal price lists and systematic reporting, while smaller outlets rely on bespoke quotations. Openness to agency collaboration is high, provided editorial safeguards, clear scopes, and timely contracting are in place.

8. SUBSCRIPTION MODELS

Since 2022, Jordan's independent-media sector has continued to experiment cautiously with audience-based and digital monetization models. Most outlets remain primarily dependent on advertising and grants, but a small group has introduced or expanded subscription and membership features. While direct digital monetization through platforms such as YouTube and podcasting has grown slightly, paid memberships still represent a modest share of total income. Interest in regional aggregation initiatives such as shared-subscription models has increased, reflecting a gradual shift toward longer-term audience-driven sustainability.

- Outlet A is preparing to launch its first membership program after studying audience patterns and technical requirements. The initiative aims to build community support while maintaining editorial independence. Pricing and tiers were still under development at the time of the interview, and the outlet confirmed that memberships will complement grants rather than replace them. Outlet A remains open to participating in a regional subscription aggregator if revenue sharing and governance are clear.
- Outlet B continues to offer its content free of charge and has not introduced any membership or paywall. Management views subscriptions as unsuitable for its public-interest mission and audience profile. Its digital revenues come mainly from advertising and limited service contracts. The outlet is conditionally open to joining a shared regional platform provided editorial freedom is preserved.
- Outlet C maintains an open-access policy without subscriptions. The outlet emphasized that charging users would contradict its community mandate and reduce reach among vulnerable audiences. Digital monetization remains minimal, and the team signaled readiness to join a regional non-profit platform if technical support is available.
- Outlet D continues to offer paid membership options on international podcasting platforms, where subscribers pay monthly or annual fees for exclusive content. These memberships form a modest but steady income stream. Revenues remain secondary to grants, advertising, and production services. The outlet is technically equipped and open to regional subscription integration.
- Outlet E launched an Arabic podcasting platform that allows users to record, edit, and publish through a paid subscription system. The service offers monthly and annual tiers and currently counts around one thousand paying users, representing one of the most advanced audience-driven revenue models in the sample. The outlet plans to expand into enterprise-level services while continuing to operate the consumer platform and is open to regional partnerships that ensure fair revenue distribution.

- Outlet F has not implemented a subscription model. Its team studied audience behavior and concluded that willingness to pay remains low, while sponsorships and grants are more reliable. The platform monetizes primarily through digital advertising and production services. Management expressed interest in testing aggregated membership options if supported technically and financially.
- Outlet G operates the broadest subscription portfolio in the sample, including multiple branded digital platforms that combine free and premium tiers. These generate recurring revenue alongside advertising and production work, with additional paid products under development. Subscription has become a standard element of the outlet's commercial model and demonstrates local proof of concept for audience-supported digital services.
- Outlet H does not operate any subscription mechanism. The outlet emphasized that audiences remain reluctant to pay for news and that paywalls could negatively affect both traffic and advertising revenue. It remains open to regional initiatives once user payment infrastructure improves.
- Outlet I offers no subscription model and relies on advertising and social-media monetization. Management acknowledged that digital income currently covers only a small share of annual revenue. The team expressed interest in learning about subscription mechanisms and regional aggregators to diversify future income.
- Outlet J focuses on advertising and content-production services without any membership system. Given its young, local audience, the team believes paid access would reduce reach and engagement. They remain open to joint initiatives that bundle audiences across platforms and lower technical barriers.
- Outlet K does not apply subscriptions and depends on advertising and commissioned production. The outlet views subscription as an unlikely revenue stream for its current model but would consider joining a regional revenue-sharing system if payment and audience management were centralized.

Across the sample, subscriptions and memberships remain the exception. Only a few outlets currently generate direct audience payments, while most continue to depend on advertising or grants. Technical capacity and payment infrastructure are primary constraints. Nevertheless, a clear trend toward exploring audience-based revenue is visible, and nearly all outlets expressed openness to participating in a regional subscription platform if governance and revenue distribution are transparent. This indicates that collective approaches may offer a viable path for gradual adoption of paid-content models in Jordan's independent-media sector.

9. COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS, AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Collaboration within Jordan's independent-media sector remains limited but shows gradual progress since 2022. Most outlets continue to operate independently while expressing openness to partnerships under clear conditions. Cooperation with regional initiatives has provided a reference point for structured engagement between independent media and the advertising market. At the same time, many outlets have strengthened their internal systems, adopting written strategies, clearer job descriptions, and business-development functions that were largely absent in 2022.

- Outlet A collaborated once on a pilot campaign for a client, which it considered constructive though not repeated. The outlet remains open to future partnerships that respect editorial independence and operational transparency. Internally, it has formalized its governance structure and is preparing a new business plan for 2025–2027 to improve financial management and planning.
- Outlet B has not worked directly with regional agencies but expressed openness to collaboration under clear and transparent terms. The outlet values its editorial independence and prefers direct engagement with advertisers. Its internal structure remains lean, yet clearer role division and operational documentation have been introduced to sustain efficiency.
- Outlet C has previously partnered with civil-society and advocacy organizations on commissioned projects and remains open to regional collaboration under safeguards for editorial independence. Over the past two years, the organization has updated its strategy and business plan, reinforcing managerial systems and monitoring frameworks to improve institutional sustainability.
- Outlet D reported earlier cooperation with a regional initiative that faced delays due to multi-party negotiations. The outlet later proceeded independently to maintain project timelines but remains open to renewed collaboration if procedures are streamlined. Internally, it has strengthened its analytics capacity by developing a data dashboard and assigning a junior analyst to track performance.
- Outlet E has not yet participated in regional initiatives but expressed willingness to do so in future collaborations. The outlet has reinforced its institutional capacities by hiring a fundraising specialist, establishing clear job descriptions, and refining its business plan to align donor projects with commercial production. These steps have improved both managerial coherence and long-term planning.
- Outlet F carried out two pilot campaigns with a regional partner during 2024–2025 and described the experience as productive and well-managed. The outlet remains open to future cooperation

within a clear framework. It also adopted a written strategy and strengthened its financial and administrative systems with donor support, improving governance and accountability.

- Outlet G has not collaborated directly on external campaigns but expressed readiness to participate in future joint projects. The network's scale enables in-house partnerships across its subsidiaries, supported by formal collaboration protocols for external productions. It continues to invest in institutional development, maintaining defined performance indicators and structured evaluation systems across departments.
- Outlet H has not yet worked with regional partners but welcomes cooperation that supports its commercial expansion. It maintains a stable internal structure and uses external companies for analytics and reporting. Management aims to develop staff skills in business development and advertiser engagement to enhance sustainability.
- Outlet I has not yet partnered with regional initiatives but is open to collaboration under defined deliverables and timelines. The outlet continues to build managerial and editorial capacity, including a written strategy and key performance framework. Its team receives ongoing training to strengthen production and marketing skills.
- Outlet J has not worked directly with external agencies but remains open to partnerships that contribute to capacity-building and wider advertiser access. In 2025 it expanded its staff, formalized roles, and launched a digital studio that enhances production capabilities. The outlet identified a need for training in legal compliance, accounting, and marketing to consolidate growth.
- Outlet K has not collaborated on regional projects but indicated willingness to cooperate on campaigns that can be executed swiftly and professionally. Internally, the outlet maintains a structured business plan and analytics reporting through its managing editor. It seeks training in business development and audience analysis to improve performance.

Across the sector, cooperation among independent media and with regional mechanisms remains cautious but increasingly pragmatic. Outlets that engaged in pilot campaigns reported positive experiences and clearer operational systems as a result. Many others expressed willingness to collaborate provided that responsibilities, timelines, and payments are predictable. Institutional capacity has improved overall: most outlets now have written strategies, clearer governance frameworks, and identified training needs. These developments mark a shift toward more structured and professional management within Jordan's independent-media ecosystem.

10. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT AND EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

The legal environment for independent media in Jordan has become notably more restrictive since 2022. The enforcement of the amended Cybercrime Law (2023–2024) has expanded liability to cover user comments and online engagement, compelling outlets to increase moderation and adopt internal compliance procedures. Journalists report higher operational costs, closer legal oversight, and a climate of self-censorship when addressing political or sensitive issues. While most outlets have adapted to remain compliant, the need to balance risk management with editorial independence continues to shape their daily work.

- Outlet A confirmed that legal constraints have grown tighter, with new regulations reinforcing self-censorship among independent outlets. The team has introduced internal legal review and digital-safety training to ensure compliance while maintaining a critical editorial stance. Although the environment is more restrictive, the outlet continues to publish accountability and rights-based content within the law's limits.
- Outlet B reported being among the most affected outlets. It faced lawsuits in recent years and described the Cybercrime Law as a major obstacle to journalism. Management noted that the outlet's independent reputation has led some advertisers to withdraw, but the editorial team remains committed to professional and transparent reporting.
- Outlet C indicated that the new law has increased administrative costs due to stricter comment monitoring on social media and website posts. The organization now employs additional moderation to avoid liability and has strengthened coordination with its legal adviser. Despite these measures, it continues to prioritize human-rights coverage and community reporting.
- Outlet D has not faced direct legal action but recognized the sector-wide impact of tighter restrictions. The outlet has strengthened fact-checking and review procedures for commissioned productions and conducts periodic staff sessions on responsible content and legal compliance. It continues to address sensitive themes through narrative storytelling that reduces exposure to potential legal risk.
- Outlet E stated that it has not been affected directly by the new regulations but monitors developments closely. Management expressed concern about the law's chilling effect on expression and highlighted the need for continuous legal-awareness training for staff and collaborators. The outlet remains cautious in selecting partners and subjects that could draw unnecessary scrutiny.
- Outlet F reported indirect effects of the Cybercrime Law, particularly in topics perceived as politically sensitive. Although it has not faced litigation, the outlet now relies on external

legal review for select projects and adjusted its editorial workflow to include pre-publication compliance checks. These procedures have added cost but strengthened internal discipline.

- Outlet G confirmed that compliance requirements have increased following the 2023 law. It now invests in legal training for staff and applies tighter moderation of user comments across its online platforms. The outlet continues to produce balanced news and entertainment content while maintaining close coordination with legal advisers to safeguard neutrality.
- Outlet H reported that it was sued recently under the new legal framework after publishing a report on a public-interest issue. In response, it closed comment sections on some social-media posts perceived to be controversial and strengthened internal legal review. Management described the environment as more complex and resource-intensive but manageable through professional standards.
- Outlet I explained that the updated legislation has obliged it to hire staff specifically to monitor online interaction and comments. The team now moderates audience engagement more closely to prevent liability while maintaining factual, issue-oriented coverage. The added cost has constrained resources but ensured continuity of operations.
- Outlet J stated that it is currently facing a lawsuit under the Cybercrime Law after a user comment was posted on its page. The case has prompted the outlet to implement stricter moderation and introduce legal oversight before publishing interactive content. Management described the experience as burdensome but emphasized its commitment to transparency and adherence to legal procedure.
- Outlet K reported no direct legal cases but acknowledged that the current atmosphere encourages self-censorship. The outlet exercises caution in its political and social reporting and routinely reviews content wording to avoid potential violations. Management remains concerned that the new laws could discourage investigative journalism in the future.

Overall, the Cybercrime Law and related regulations have imposed heavier compliance obligations on independent outlets, raising operational costs and reinforcing self-censorship. In response, most have introduced moderation systems, legal consultation, and periodic staff training to minimize risk. These adaptations demonstrate resilience but also reveal how legal pressure continues to narrow the space for critical, investigative, and citizen-driven journalism in Jordan.

11. FUTURE REVENUE MODELS AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Since 2022, outlets have moved cautiously toward hybrid models that combine advertising, production services, and limited audience payments. Digital monetization has grown unevenly, with podcasts and multi-application ecosystems showing the clearest progress. Most outlets still expect grants and advertising to dominate in the near term, while they test new products, strengthen analytics, and seek practical skills to convert reach into revenue.

- Outlet A plans to maintain grants as its core income while introducing a membership program and expanding digital production services. The outlet is building on its thematic focus areas to attract mission-aligned donors and audiences. Improving its media kit and pricing structure remains a short-term goal to enhance commercial readiness.
- Outlet B expects advertising to remain the dominant source of revenue but sees potential in digital video and social-media monetization once market conditions improve. The outlet is cautious about the economic outlook yet recognizes the need for stronger marketing and production capacities to sustain growth.
- Outlet C aims to increase advertising and content-production income while retaining project-based grants. Its forward strategy includes podcast development, digital youth content, and community training initiatives that can generate service income alongside its social mission.
- Outlet D continues to balance branded productions, advertising, and platform subscriptions. It has invested in analytics dashboards and workflow automation to manage multiple clients efficiently. Growth is expected to come from new partnerships and show formats rather than a single dominant stream.
- Outlet E is expanding its Arabic-language podcasting platform from an individual subscription model to a broader business offering. Subscription revenue and commissioned productions are expected to grow in parallel, supported by workflow improvements and investor backing. The outlet aims to make digital services a sustainable complement to donor funding.
- Outlet F remains largely donor-funded but is developing commercial lines through branded content, marketing campaigns, and studio rental. Management views technology and automation as opportunities to reduce production costs and enhance analytics. Donor partnerships will continue supporting institutional consolidation while commercial growth accelerates.
- Outlet G anticipates steady expansion through its integrated digital ecosystem of advertising, multi-platform subscriptions, and influencer partnerships. Ongoing investment in data systems improves content targeting and audience segmentation. The outlet expects creator collaborations to further diversify its commercial base.

- Outlet H continues to rely on advertising but is adding production services and digital campaigns for private-sector clients. Short-form video and podcast pilots are being explored to engage younger audiences. Staff training in sales and content marketing is identified as a key requirement for growth.
- Outlet I aims to raise its digital-revenue share over the next three years by expanding production services and securing equipment support. The outlet is exploring branded-content collaborations and podcast products. Technical and financial assistance remain critical to this transition.
- Outlet J plans to expand advertising, content production, and studio services while reaching new geographic areas. Management is strengthening digital monetization and partnerships that promote local storytelling. Skills development in marketing, legal, and accounting functions is a current need.
- Outlet K intends to sustain its advertising model while adding production and consulting services for commercial clients. It is investing in analytics and digital-content capabilities to better serve advertisers. Training and technology upgrades are expected to enhance speed and reporting accuracy.

Across the sector, outlets are converging toward mixed models that blend donor support, advertising, and digital innovation. Analytics, workflow systems, and clearer client offerings have become standard among the more established actors. The pace of digital transformation depends on market size, skills availability, and access to investment, but progress is evident in podcasting, audience engagement, and platform-based revenue. Sustained capacity building and collaboration will determine whether these shifts translate into lasting financial independence.

MEDIA AGENCIES

Jordan’s advertising-agency landscape continues to mirror the wider regional trend: a cautious, risk-averse market that favours predictability and safe placements. Interviews conducted in 2025 with two leading media agencies, both of which requested anonymity, confirm that the majority of advertising budgets now flow to social-media and search platforms, with only limited spending directed to local news or television outlets. Both agencies described a contracting client base and a growing reliance on AI-driven targeting and performance metrics to optimise reduced budgets.

Agencies reported that most large brands avoid independent or politically sensitive media outlets, choosing instead to advertise with mainstream commercial platforms that guarantee “safe” content and favourable coverage. One agency noted that some corporate advertisers still place occasional campaigns with prominent news websites primarily to maintain good relations and prevent critical reporting, not necessarily to improve audience reach. Independent media remain outside formal media plans, perceived as high-risk and offering limited return on investment.

Since 2019, agency spending patterns have shifted sharply toward digital performance channels. Google Ads, Meta platforms, and TikTok account for the majority of placements, while press releases and sponsored news items represent the main form of cooperation with local outlets. Traditional broadcast and print media continue to lose share, though television retains symbolic visibility for large national campaigns. Both agencies said that since 2024 they have begun experimenting with AI-based advertising tools, including automated bidding, audience clustering, and generative creative systems for short-form video. However, data-infrastructure limitations and inconsistent measurement frameworks still constrain large-scale adoption.

Table 2. Jordan Advertising Expenditure by Medium (US \$ million, 2022–2028 projections)

Year	Total	Print Ads	TV & Video Ads	Radio / Audio Ads	Out-of-Home Ads	Social Media Ads	Search Ads	Other Digital *
2022	≈ 330	55	68	32	40	100	35	—
2023	≈ 360	50	70	33	42	130	45	—
2024	≈ 390	45	72	34	43	170	55	25
2025	≈ 420	42	75	35	45	210	60	30

Year	Total	Print Ads	TV & Video Ads	Radio / Audio Ads	Out-of-Home Ads	Social Media Ads	Search Ads	Other Digital *
2026	≈ 460	40	78	36	47	250	70	35
2027	≈ 500	38	80	37	48	290	80	40
2028	≈ 540	35	82	38	50	330	90	45

Source: Statista Market Insights (Aug 2025); values converted from local currencies using average exchange rates of each year.

* Other Digital includes influencer, in-app, live-stream, and retail-platform advertising.

KEY TRENDS (2022–2028)

- Total advertising expenditure is projected to rise from about US \$ 330 million in 2022 to US \$ 540 million by 2028, driven almost entirely by digital growth.
- Social-media spending overtook television in 2024 and is expected to exceed one-third of total market value by 2028.
- Print advertising continues its steady decline, losing more than 40 percent of its 2022 value.
- Search and other digital formats (influencer, in-app, retail platforms) together account for more than 60 percent of total spend by 2028.
- Out-of-home and radio remain stable niche segments with modest but consistent growth.

AGENCY OBSERVATIONS

- Large brands prioritise brand safety and regulatory compliance over experimentation, excluding most independent outlets from media plans.
- Agencies attribute the market contraction since 2019 to lower corporate budgets, regional economic uncertainty, and the growing dominance of global digital platforms.
- AI-assisted programmatic buying and automated reporting are emerging but limited by data availability and local expertise.
- Both agencies anticipate that digital channels will absorb nearly three-quarters of client spending within three years if current growth rates continue.

Jordan's media-agency sector remains conservative but increasingly digital. Agency behaviour is shaped by risk management, limited measurement transparency, and the overwhelming pull of global ad-tech platforms. Independent and alternative media continue to be excluded from standard media plans, receiving only sporadic project-based placements. The future of agency spending lies in digital integration, automation, and AI-driven optimisation. However, the growing dominance of foreign platforms threatens to erode the advertising revenue available to local publishers unless transparent metrics and audience-measurement tools are developed for the domestic market. Building such infrastructure will be critical if Jordanian independent media are to participate meaningfully in the country's evolving advertising economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the recommendations made in 2022 remain relevant today. The 2025 update shows that Jordan's independent media sector has become more structured, but continues to face the same core challenges: limited funding, shrinking advertising markets, and tightening legal restrictions. What has changed is that most outlets now have stronger internal systems, clearer editorial focus, and growing experience with digital production and co-financing models. The next phase requires collective effort to move from survival to stability.

The following recommendations are based on the 2025 interviews, desk research, and the lessons of the 2022 study:

- Continue supporting independent media outlets through capacity-building and mentorship in business development, advertising, and long-term strategic planning.
- Help newer outlets formalize their mission, vision, internal policies, and five-year strategies to improve transparency and attract both advertisers and donors.
- Provide tailored legal and compliance training to help journalists and managers understand the implications of the Cybercrime Law and manage risk without compromising editorial integrity.
- Advocate for flexible, multi-year donor funding that supports core operations and organizational growth rather than short-term projects.
- Work with donors to design funding models that allow for-profit LLCs to receive institutional support through service contracts or hybrid frameworks that comply with local regulations.
- Encourage mentorship between established outlets and emerging initiatives to share expertise in financial planning, audience research, and production management.
- Facilitate innovation grants that allow outlets to test new products, formats, or digital tools before seeking full-scale investment.
- Explore partnerships with private investors or social-impact funds that combine public-interest journalism with sustainable revenue models.
- Strengthen the role of the Agency for Equality as a sector bridge, helping independent outlets access advertisers and agencies through transparent, ethical collaboration.

- Promote the creation of joint advertising bundles or shared media packages among independent outlets to increase reach and simplify coordination with advertisers.
- Offer targeted training in rate-card design, audience analytics, reporting, and pitching to brands, ensuring media outlets can compete more effectively in the commercial market.
- Build a living database of brands, NGOs, and companies whose values align with independent media and who are open to advertising or co-production partnerships.
- Encourage collaboration with small and medium-sized enterprises that seek affordable, values-driven advertising options.
- Support the development of audience-based revenue systems such as memberships and micro-subscriptions that reward loyal audiences and provide predictable income.
- Foster partnerships between independent media and technology providers to upgrade monetization systems, analytics, and AI-assisted production tools.
- Invest in podcast networks, short-form video, and Arabic-language digital storytelling that appeal to younger audiences and expand the commercial base.
- Promote shared resource centers where outlets can access joint legal support, studio facilities, and marketing services.
- Facilitate stronger networking between independent media, civil-society groups, and private companies to build trust and enable cross-sector partnerships.
- Encourage regional collaboration through MIIM and AE to share data, develop collective audience-measurement tools, and negotiate fairer treatment with global digital platforms.
- Maintain clear editorial independence in all sponsored or branded content to preserve credibility with audiences.
- Integrate sustainability, inclusivity, and social-impact principles into media partnerships, ensuring that commercial work also contributes to public awareness and positive change.

Independent media in Jordan have proven resilient and innovative despite financial and political constraints. Many now operate with stronger management and clearer editorial purpose. With continued support focused on institutional strengthening, donor flexibility, and fair market access, independent media can move beyond survival and take on a stronger, more sustainable role within Jordan's information ecosystem.

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APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE NEW MEDIA OUTLETS

1. How would you describe the editorial nature or content focus of your platform?
2. What is the structure of your team today (full-timers, part-timers, freelancers, volunteers, individual creators)?
3. Do you have a written strategy, mission, or vision statement? A business model? Clear job descriptions and roles?
4. When did you launch the platform, and how did you fund your work at the beginning?
5. What is your current legal or organizational status (LLC, NGO, production house, unregistered, individual creator)?
6. What are your current sources of revenue (grants, advertising, branded content, subscriptions, production services, platform monetization, other)?
7. What was your annual income when you started (or in 2022, if applicable), and what is it now? How has it changed?
8. What are your major costs (staff, production, rent, equipment, taxes, digital services)?
9. How does your current funding model affect your work in terms of quality, resources, editorial independence, and sustainability?
10. Have there been significant changes in your operations, audience, or revenues during the past two to three years?
11. Have you expanded or reduced your team size, scope of work, or content focus since you launched?
12. Do you have a dedicated person or team for analytics and reporting?
13. What tools do you currently use to track performance (Google Analytics, YouTube Studio, TikTok Analytics, Meta Insights, Spotify, etc.)?

14. Can you produce campaign reports that meet advertiser requirements such as KPIs, reach, engagement, and ROI?
15. Who is your main audience (age, gender, location, interests)? How do you know this?
16. Do you currently sell ads or sponsored content on your platform? If yes, with whom have you worked?
17. Do you have a rate card, price list, or media kit for advertisers?
18. What types of advertising do you sell or would consider selling (display, sponsored content, branded content, podcast ads, influencer campaigns)?
19. What are your main concerns regarding advertising (brand safety, editorial independence, client trust, government pressure)?
20. Have you ever conducted a campaign for a third party? Did you produce reports on its performance?
21. Have you co-produced or co-created content as a source of revenue? How do you determine pricing?
22. Do you produce ads or branded content in-house? If yes, what type (video, audio, written, social-media content)?
23. Have you worked with the Agency for Equality (AE) or any other advertising agency? If yes, what was your experience?
24. Would you be open to future collaboration with AE, and under what conditions?
25. Do you have subscriptions, memberships, or paywalls? If yes, how many paying members or subscribers do you have, and on which platforms?
26. Do you monetize directly through digital platforms (YouTube AdSense, TikTok Creator Fund, Instagram Reels, podcast platforms)? If yes, what share of revenue comes from this?
27. What revenue models do you see as most promising for your platform in the next two to three years?
28. What type of support (training, financial, or technical) would help you become more attractive to advertisers or partners?

29. How have recent laws or regulations (such as the 2023–24 Cybercrime Law) affected your operations, partnerships, or content?
30. Who else would you consider to be an independent media platform in Jordan?
31. If a regional subscription-based website for independent media were launched, would you be open to joining it under a revenue-sharing arrangement?
32. Would you like to share any additional information about your platform, challenges, or future plans that we have not asked about?

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