

# Crowd Sourced Terror: How the Changing Media has Changed Islamic Terrorism

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2017

## **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to investigate how changing media technologies have changed modern Islamic terror with particular focus paid to the innovations of the terror group's al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. It will chart the shift from the old media landscape where the means of communication was dominated by States and large media corporations to the onset of new media and web technologies which have opened up new communication opportunities for terrorist organisations. Investigating how circumventing the established media has afforded these groups better access to their target audience and greater control over their narrative than ever before. Attention will be paid to the technological innovations and the groups that first realised their potential and exploited them as a means of communication. It will track terror media campaigns from the televised interviews and terror spectacles deployed by Al-Qaeda, through the web innovations of Zarqawi and Awlaki to discussing the role of the current pioneers in this field the Islamic State. It will examine the role the latter has played in shifting the paradigm to relying on social media as a primary weapon of choice for dissemination. Several major propaganda releases will also be analysed in the scope of this paper to illustrate the changes at a tangible level. As well as charting the shifts of terrorism that occurred during these technological advancements the paper will conclude with a brief investigation on which direction terrorism and media will likely take.