

In today's #vatniksoup, I'll introduce an American propagandist and political commentator, Ben Swann (@BenSwann_). He's best-known for spreading conspiracy theories related to 9/11, vaccines & Pizzagate, and for running several Kremlin-funded disinformation channels.

1/20



Homeschooled with nine brothers and sisters, Benny turned out to be a talented young man, earning his Master's degree in history at the age of 16.

He was also working as a youth pastor at his local Baptist church at the age of 15.

The Amazing Swann Family: Where Are They Now?

By <u>Joyce Swann</u> Printed in <u>Practical Homeschooling</u> #93, 2010.

Tweet





was a columnist for *Practical Homeschooling* from its premier issue in Spring 1993 until the fall of 1999. During that time, I wrote about my personal philosophy of home education and the trials and triumphs of homeschooling my ten children from first grade through Master's degrees.

I am best known as a "proponent of accelerated education," although, in fact, I am not any such thing. When I made the decision to homeschool, I did determine that I would have a 12-month school year for my family. However, I based my decision on practical considerations. I thought that if we were to take a three-month summer break, the children would forget much of what they had learned the previous school year. I wanted them to constantly progress, but I did not envision a marked acceleration.

Originally, I had thought that they would graduate "a little early." I was not prepared for them to enter college at 12 and begin graduate work at 15. Three hours a day, five days a week, just didn't seem like it was going to be that big a deal. Yet, they did graduate early. Because of the way their birthdays fell, two were actually 17 when they received their Master's degrees. The other eight received their Master's degrees at 16. What I hadn't factored in was that homeschooled children are able to get so much done in those three

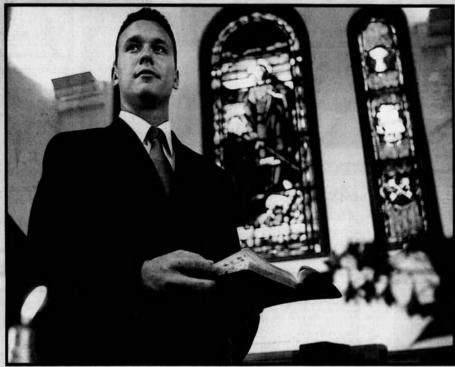
All of the children's educations were entirely through distance learning, and we used the same



Alexandra Swann

curriculum for all the children. We used Calvert School in Baltimore for grades 1-8

Ben's family was heavily involved in TV, and he also started working for various channels, first as a cameraman and later as an investigative journalist. Eventually he launched his own news segment called Reality Check, in which he promoted libertarian views and Ron Paul.



Ben Swann, the Las Cruces bureau news reporter Channel 14-KFOX (ca-ble Channel 8), is also the youth minister at Trinity-First United Methodist

Church in El Paso. The 25-year-old Swann became the youth minister in August 2001.

By Leonard Martinez

El Paso Times

PREACHING THE GOOD NEWS

TV reporter splits time between scoops, spirituality

Not many television news reporters can claim that they are ministers.

Ben Swann, 25, juggles both jobs, reporting news five days a week on Channel 14-KFOX (cable Channel 8) and serving as a Methodist youth minister the other two days.

As a reporter, Swann sees in graphic detail what most people of faith simply acknowledge, that the world is filled with a lot of hurr, fear and depression — many people in distress.

"It's almost a reality check to be in the position I'm in," Swann said. "A lot of times ministers end up almost in a bubble of church life where they only see what people show them."

Swann also sees parallels in handling two jobs as different as night and day.

"You have to be a good communicator whether it's communicating spiritual ideas or sharing ideas

of a story in a simple way,"
Swann said, "You have to care
about people with both. You have
to find that human element."
Swann started out at 15 as a
youth pastor at a Baptist church
in Canutillo, where he grew up.
He spent four years there and later traveled across Texas preaching at revivals.
Swann returned to the El Paso
area but could not find a full-time
pastor position.

area but could not find a full-time pastor position.

Swann had four brothers working in television at the time, and one suggested het py it also. He wound up at Channel 4-KDBC.

In 1998, Swann left Channel 4 to work at KFOX as a cameraman.

He left television in 1999 and accepted a job as associate pastor and youth minister at a Presbyterian church in Portland, Ore, Church politics drove him back to El Paso after six months.



Reality Check: An endorsement for fairness in dealing With Ron Paul

Published: Nov. 18, 2011 at 10:46 AM GMT+2

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2012 Election - Videos Jun 15 - Written By Jason Grimley

Ben Swann Interviews Senator Rand Paul



Ben Swann recently interviewed the lately polarizing Senator Rand Paul. Swann has been one of the few news outlets that provided honest reporting throughout this election cycle. We here at Lions of Liberty are huge fans of Mr. Swann and have linked to his hard hitting "Reality Checks" in the past. Swann proves that it is possible to become a news reporter and manage to not sell your soul to the corporate elitists that control the "official" dissemination of information in this country. During this interview with Senator Paul, Swann questions the Senators recent endorsement of Mitt Romney, auditing the Federal Reserve, and his father's delegate presence at the GOP Convention in Tampa. At the end of the

Swann produced some good investigative journalism, questioning Barack Obama about the so-called presidential drone "kill list", and breaking details about the IRS targeting controversy, but he slowly descended deeper into the world of conspiracy theories.

4/20

The Washington Post

This article was published more than 8 years ago

POLITICS Biden administration The Fix The 202s Polling Democracy in America Election 2024

How a libertarian TV host became the focus of a Bush-Rubio fight



By David Weigel

January 14, 2016 at 9:08 a.m. EST

Share D

Atlanta-based TV commentator Ben Swann is used to seeing his work recycled. Early in his career, in New Mexico, he racked up awards for spot news reporting. After President Obama took office, he launched a video series called "Reality Check," the sort of behind-the-news feature that assures his audience that they are being rescued from the lies of the day.

The twist: Swann is an extremely skeptical libertarian.

MOST I





Reality Check Exclusive: Cincinnati agent giving orders in IRS scandal?

Updated: May. 22, 2013 at 5:31 AM GMT+3

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In 2013, he left TV for a while, launching a Facebook page called "Full Disclosure" and social media channel "Truth in Media". Through these, Benny spread various conspiracy theories and echoed talking points from propaganda and fake news outlets such as RT and InfoWars.



FOX AFFILIATES | SHOPTALK

Anchor Ben Swann to Leave WXIX

By Kevin Eck on Apr. 3, 2013 - 12:21 PM

Ben Swann, anchor for Raycom's Cincinnati FOX Affiliate WXIX, has announced he is leaving the station when his contract expires in May.

"After 2 ½ years at WXIX Fox 19, the time has come for me to explore other opportunities," Swann said in a station announcement posted to the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Swann also hosts a popular series on facebook titled "Full Disclosure" where he asks questions about controversial subjects he says are ignored by the national media.

"Ben has informed us he would like to take his career in a different direction," FOX19 general manager Bill Lanesey told the Enquirer. "We will miss Ben's work ethic and intellect and appreciate him giving us enough notice so we can begin the search for his replacement as soon as possible."

Swann came to WXIX from KTSM in El Paso, TX. He also worked at KFOX as an anchor, reporter, managing editor and photographer.

Swann told TVSpy he will announce his next move soon.

The report was also posted to Swann's website, Truth in Media, which he created in 2013 and where he posts his CBS 46-funded "Reality Check" segments, many of which echo talking points from websites like RT and InfoWars that are rarely seen in mainstream media.

Recent "Reality Check" topics, which all aired at the 11 p.m. hour in Atlanta, include "Why 'Health Issues' Prove Clinton Campaign 'Untrustworthy' on Many Levels" and "5 Problems with CIA Claim That Russia Hacked DNC/Podesta Emails."

Swann is also "crowdfunding" an episode about how "U.S and partners intentionally created ISIS," through his Facebook page, which has more than 419,000 followers. He's raised over \$12,000 of his \$55,000 goal.

Between 2013 and 2015, Ben also appeared regularly on RT America. In 2014, he hosted the Ben Swann Radio Show on a far-right, antisemitic and conspiratorial network called the Republic Broadcasting Network.



MEDIAMATTERS FOR AMERICA

NEWS & ANALYSIS

RESEARCH & STUDIES

CBS Atlanta Anchor Who Gave "Pizzagate" Conspiracy Theory Credence Previously Worked With Anti-Semitic Outlet

Anti-Defamation League Criticized Swann's Former Network For Featuring "Programs Hosted By Anti-Semites"

WRITTEN BY TIMOTHY JOHNSON PUBLISHED 01/19/17 1:55 PM EST



In 2015, he returned to TV, reviving his "investigative journalism" segment Reality Check With Ben Swann. The show lasted for under two years, as he was suspended in Jan 2017 for running a story on the Pizzagate conspiracy theory. This theory suggests that...

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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Georgia Entertainment Scene

50 Years Of Atlanta Hip Hop

Black History Month

GEORGIA ENTERTAINMENT SCENE

CBS46 hires Ben Swann as evening anchor, replacing Scott Light



Credit: Rodney Ho

Ben Swann comes from a Cincinnati station and begins June 15. CREDIT: CBS46

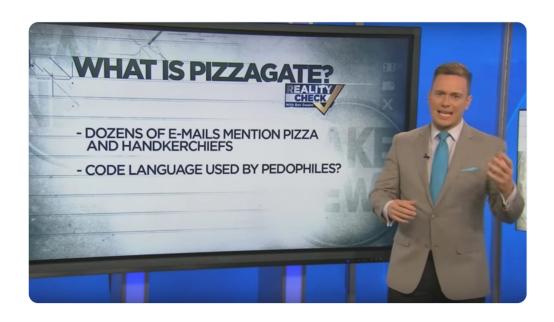
By Rodney Ho

June 8, 2015

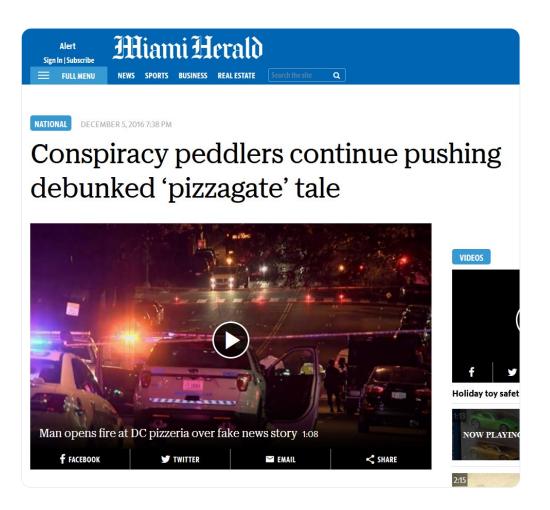


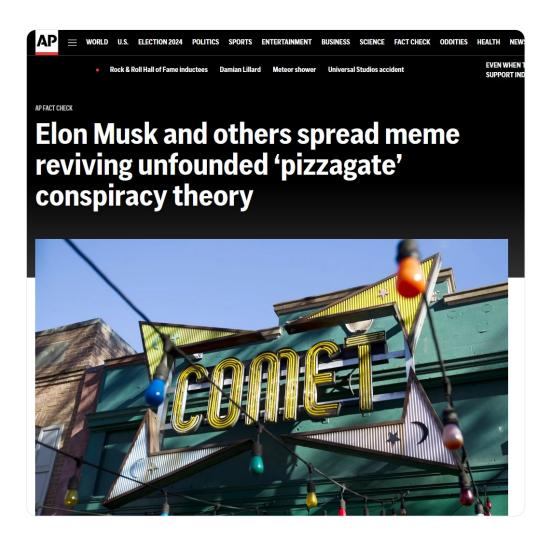






...a pizza restaurant in DC was organizing a child sex trafficking ring in its (non-existent) basement. This narrative came from hacked DNC e-mails, was heavily promoted by pro-Kremlin networks and was fully debunked long before Swann "investigated" it.





Benny was reinstated after he took down his conspiratorial Truth in Media site, but was finally fired after his employer found out he was trying to revive the website without the network's knowledge and permission.

It seems Ben was deep in that rabbit hole already!

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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GEORGIA ENTERTAINMENT SCENE

CBS46's Ben Swann returning Monday January 30 after post-'Pizzagate' hiatus



Credit: Rodney Ho

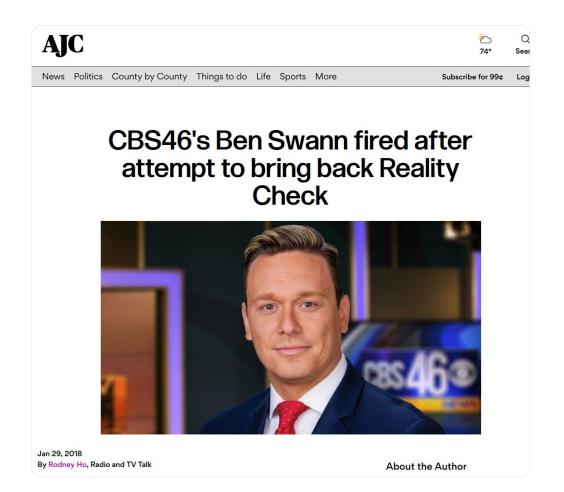
By Rodney Ho

Jan 27, 2017









And oh boy, is that rabbit hole deep. Swann has spread conspiracy theories about the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting (the one that cost Alex Jones dearly), 9/11, and alleged cover-up of connection between the MMR vaccine and autism.

10/20

The bill came due Wednesday afternoon, when the New York Times's Maggie Haberman spotlighted Swann's cameo in an ad by the pro-Jeb Bush super PAC Right to Rise. Swann's October "Fact Check" segment on Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio's voting record in the U.S. Senate was the one RTR used to quickly explain his absences.

Matter-of-factly, Haberman noted that Swann had "examined questions about whether 7 World Trade Center could have collapsed as authorities said it did, and allegations that the gunman in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings didn't act alone."



He's also spread straight up Kremlin propaganda, including denying chemical weapon attacks conducted by the al-Assad regime and Russians in Syria, and denying the strong evidence that MH17 was shot down with a Russian Buk system by the Russians and pro-Kremlin separatists.

The story even reached a segment on Atlanta's CBS affiliate called "Reality Check with Ben Swann," which has been shared over 61,500 times in the past six days.

"The reports from Aleppo Syria are incredible. The suffering. The humanitarian crisis," said Swann. "But if that's true, why are these people in Aleppo celebrating in the streets?"

This mirrors a narrative within several stories written by Kremlin state media outfit RT in the past several weeks.

"While residents of Aleppo are celebrating the liberation of their city, the mainstream media has been painting the opposite picture with sensational headlines decrying alleged atrocities and a 'meltdown of humanity' they claim is happening there," Kremlin state media outfit RT wrote on its website.

RT: We have seen sweeping headlines from the Western media, like the "international outrage" or "world waiting for answers from Russia". Is it fair to make these accusations before credible evidence has been put forward?

Ben Swann: That is exactly the problem – any credible evidence does not seem to exist at this point. ABC network has a story up that there is an enormous array of facts that Russia supported the rebels accused of downing that airliner. If you just do a simple Google search you will find that Washington Post, New York Times, basically every major news network in the US has reported that there is no question that Russia is involved. We now see the administration is stepping back on some of its comments about the involvement of Russia, even going as far as to say that there is no evidence right now that shows that the missile or training [originated] in Russia.

RT: US officials have said there's no direct evidence linking Russia to the plane crash. Do you think Western media will now continue blaming Moscow for the incident?

BS: They absolutely will. Fox News is now reporting, which is a huge step, that there is no clear evidence that links Russia. Here is what we are going to see happen: the administration gives this kind of soft explanation that they do not have evidence, but with a nudge and a wink they [will] say "but we really know [that Russia was involved]". Media picks upon that, they will begin to report it a little bit, and then in a few weeks we will see that this becomes a non-story in many ways, because it no longer fits the narrative that the administration was hoping for and the media was hoping for, and they will move on to the next story.

After being fired, Swann relaunched Truth in Media and started several other online projects, including a failed social media website called Isegoria and Sovren, a self-described "uncensored, blockchain-based, decentralized news and entertainment platform."

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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GEORGIA ENTERTAINMENT SCENE

Ben Swann reintroduces his Truth in Media site and Reality Check program



By Rodney Ho

Jan 31, 2018







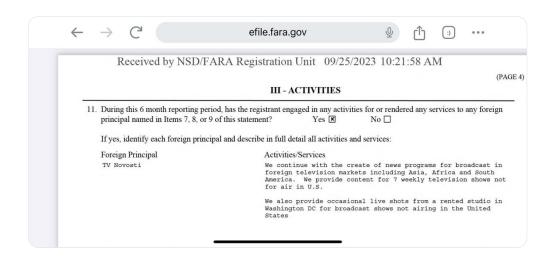




Benny also filed for the Foreign Agents Registration Act, which showed that his company, Rebel Media Productions LLC, was paid 6,8 million USD by the Kremlin. His statement claimed he would "produce propaganda TV content" for the South American, Indian, and Chinese markets.

13/20

1. Name of Registrant Rebel Media Productions LLC	2. Registration Number	
3. Primary Address of Registrant 66 W. Flagler St, Miami, FL 33130		
4. Name of Foreign Principal TV Novosti	5. Address of Foreign Principal Borovaya, 3, Build 1 Moscow RUSSIA 111020	
6. Country/Region Represented RUSSIA		
7. Indicate whether the foreign principal is one of t ☐ Government of a foreign country ¹ ☐ Foreign political party ☑ Foreign or domestic organization: If eith		
☐ Partnership ☐ Corporation ☐ Association	Committee Voluntary group Other (specify)	
☐ Individual-State nationality		



Swann was to produce four shows for TV Novosti, a parent company of RT, that has been sanctioned by the UK and the EU, but not the US. Interestingly, Truth in Media is a different company and it is not known how this outlet is being funded.

ANO TV-Novosti Person of Interest · Sanctioned entity ANO TV-Novosti is subject to sanctions. See the individual program listings below. Type Company Name ANO TV-Novosti · Avtonomna nekomertsiina orhanizatsiia "TV-novyny" · RT - Russia Today UK · RT France TV channel is an international Russian news channel owned by ANO "TV-NOVOSTI" · RT en Español TV channel is an international Russian news channel owned by ANO "TV-NOVOSTI" · 15 more... Other name Avtonomnaya nekommercheskaya organizatsiya "TV-novosti" · AHO 'TB- новости" · АНО "ТВ-новости" · Автономна некомерційна організація "ТВ-Новини" · Автономна некомерційна організація "ТВ-новини" · 2 more... Incorporation date 2005-04-06

организации

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Russia

Russia

IV--FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Broadcasting and online media platform · Автономные некоммерческие

9. (a) RECEIPTS-MONIES

Legal form

Jurisdiction

Registration number

Country

During the period beginning 60 days prior to the date of the registrant's obligation to register² under FARA, has the registrant received from any foreign principal named in Item 7 of this statement, or from any other source, for or in the interests of any such foreign principal, any contributions, income, or money either as compensation, or for disbursement or otherwise?

Yes **▼** No □

If yes, set forth below in the required detail and separately for each such foreign principal an account of such monies.³

Foreign Principal	Date Received	From Whom	Purpose	Am	ount	Sub	ototal
TV Novosti	05/11/2022	Wire	Pay employees laid off by RT America who were unable to be paid by T&R productions	\$	304,896.00		
TV Novosti	07/25/2022	wire	Pay employees laid off by RT America who were unable to be paid by T&R productions	\$	304,896.00		
TV Novosti					>	\$	609,792.00

\$ 609,792.00

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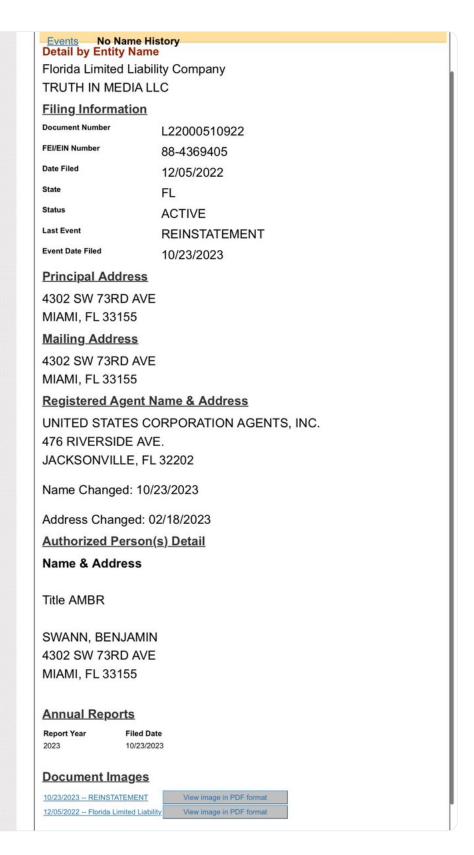
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Total



Ben's also funded by two other foreign entities, the Russian Kart LLC and an Armenian Stark Industries LLC (referencing Iron Man?). Themes promoted include the "US/NATO provoked wars", "economic warfare waged by the US", and "transgender issues in the US".

Received by NSD/FARA Registration Unit 08/05/2022 1:27:57 PM 11. LEGAL ADRESSES AND BANK REQUSITES OF Валюта счета: USD THE PARTIES Код SWIFT: Банк: PJSC 'BANK URALSIB' Client Юридический адрес Банка: Efremova street,8, Moscow Limited Liability Company "Kart" Основной Банк-корреспондент: JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A., NEW YORK,NY, US (Kart LLC) Код SWIFT банка корреспондента: Legal address: 6, build. 3, 2/1, Verkhnyaya Krasnoselskaya street, Moscow, 107140, Russia Исполнитель Settlement account: Rebel Media Productions LLC Transit account: Рег. номер -Currency: USD инн SWIFT: Адрес: 66 West Flagler Street - Suite 900 Bank: PJSC 'BANK URALSIB' Miami, FL 33130 Bank legal address: Efremova street,8, Moscow Владелец счета: Rebel Media Productions LLC Main Correspondent Bank: JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, Счет N.A., NEW YORK, NY, US Routing number: Correspondent Bank SWIFT: SWIFT: 1 Contractor Bank of America, N.A. 222 Broadway, New York, NY 10038 Rebel Media Productions LLC Company reg.No: Federal Tax ID Number 8 Address: 66 West Flagler Street - Suite 900 Miami, FL 33130 Account holder: Rebel Media Productions LLC Account number: Routing number: (paper & electronic) SWIFT code:

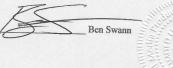
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Заказчик\ Client Директор ООО "Старк Индастриз"\ Director of Stark Industries LLC

Татевик Аракелян \T. Arakelyan

Исполнитель \ Contractor Директор Rebel Media Productions LLC \ Director of Rebel Media Productions LLC

Bank of America, N.A. 222 Broadway, New York, NY





- The Contractor shall at the Customer's request perform work on independent creation of a television program in English named "The M.O. W/Manila Chan".
- 2. Total number of television program episodes: 50
- Timing of each episode 25 minutes.
- 4. We talk about the biggest stories from around the world when it comes to western countries, the United States and NATO continuing to spread war around the world. Each episode, our host will interview experts about how these policies are impacting people in the middle, across Africa or throughout Asia. War isn't just about bombs however, we will also look at the economic warfare waged by the United States and it allies and the impact of sanctions on the lives of people globally.
- 5. The cost of creation of episodes of the "The M.O. W/Manila Chan" TV program is 1 270 400 (one million two hundred seventy thousand four hundred) US Dollars. The cost of one episode is 25 408 (twenty five thousand four hundred eight) US Dollars.
- The Contractor shall perform the work specified in this Appendix within the period from August 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023

General director
ANO "TV-Novosi"

A.L. Nikolov

"TB-HOBOCTU"

Director Rebel Media Productions LLC

Ben Swann

2. Program "The 360 View"

- Total number of television program episodes: 50.
- Timing of each episode 25 minutes.
- We talk about the biggest stories from around the world when it comes to culture battles in the west. From the halting of free speech in Canada to Transgender issues in the United States, there is a culture battle raging that much of the rest of the world finds simply fascinating. A key feature of this show will be to use YouGov or a similar survey company to survey people in 4 or 5 different geographical locations throughout the world to see how they view a particular issue. We would then bring in guests who represent the majority views to discuss these cultural issues.

Swann and Rebel Media are responsible for the production of four English-language shows: 360 View, Cost of Everything, The M.O. and The Whistleblowers. Ben's FARA document stated that the shows are not available in the US, which is a false statement, as they actually are.

8. Describe fully the nature and method of performance of the above indicated agreement or understanding.

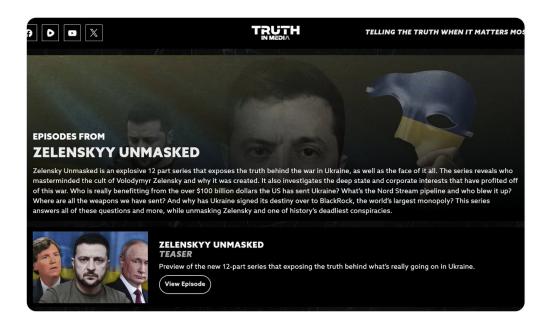
Rebel Media Productions LLC will create 4 half hour length television quality shows for distribution in foreign television markets, India, China, Africa and South America. Each contract with TV Novosti, Kart LLC and Stark Industries LLC provides for the creation of 50 episodes of each show (Cost of Everything, 360 View, The M.O. and The Whistleblowers) for distribution by each company. Rebel Media does not broadcast nor disseminate the content, rather we are simply the production house for the content. Again, this content is not for broadcast or dissemination in the United States.

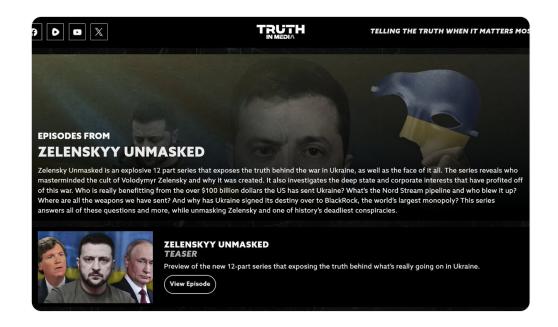


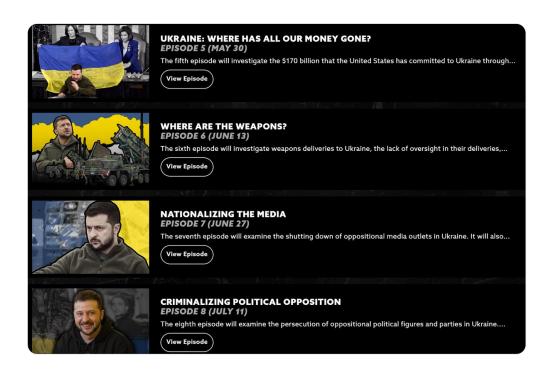


In 2024, Truth in Media started publishing an anti-Ukraine propaganda series "Zelenskyy Unmasked". The show combines various conspiracy theories ranging from the "deep state" to "global elites" and of course to BlackRock. We'll probably see some COVID-19 theories, too!

17/20



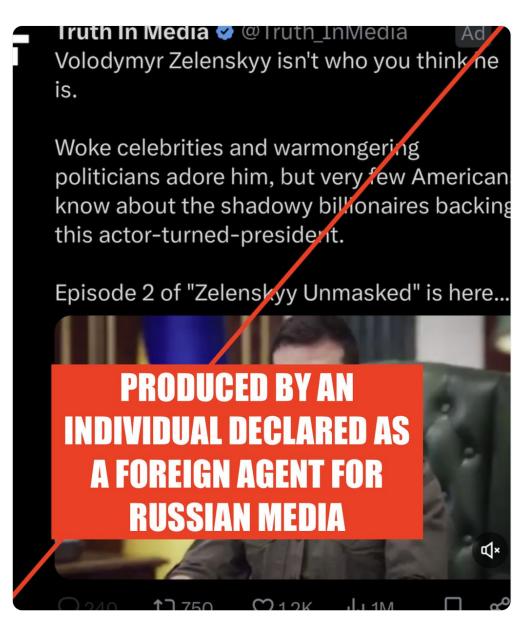






Like most of Ben's projects, this "documentary" seems to offer little new information, and it's just parroting the Kremlin's propaganda classics. This defamation campaign is also being promoted on X & it seems that the ad is shown in relation to any Ukraine-related content.

18/20



Olga Lautman (@OlgaNYC1211) has been doing fantastic investigation on Swann's project, including Truth in Media, and you can find her ongoing investigation here:

19/20

https://twitter.com/OlgaNYC1211/status/1781414421920649389

To conclude, Ben Swann is an actual foreign agent and propagandist, who has received millions of dollars to produce pro-Kremlin propaganda while living comfortably in Atlanta.

It also seems that he's made some false statements in his FARA filings.



Find us also on other socials:

(Photo by Yuri Kadobnov/AFP via Getty Images)

instagram.com/vatniksoup/



"And now representative from Georgia's 14th congressional district congresswoman Greene takes the floor"

. . .