



"Helping ignite culturally relevant heart worship, especially in places where Christ-followers are restricted, persecuted or unknown."

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www.heart-sounds.org
office@heart-sounds.org

Heart Sounds International in North Africa

Greetings, Friends of Heart Sounds International. We met recently in Germany with John (not his real name), the leader of a very effective ministry in North Africa. John is a former professional soccer player and coach. His notoriety in the world of soccer has opened many doors for him in the country. Five years ago Chuck Oakley and I



were invited to his nation to assess the possibility of setting up an audio and video studio there. A mission agency then gave a gift to get the first phase of the studio funded. Chuck returned with a team from his Atlanta-area church to set up a video editing studio at the training base for the nation. I had the privilege of interviewing John recently.

FF: John, what a joy to see you. Please give an update of what's been happening with media in

your nation over the last few years.

John: Hello, Frank. It all goes back to that initial burden we had to find a way to record the seminars at our training base. We wanted to share the teaching all over the country and to produce radio programs for broadcasting, which at the time could not be done.



I then got a leaflet from HSI and a friend working with a certain mission agency wrote to you to come with a team to set up a studio. That was four to five years ago, I can't remember, exactly. What happened over the years, especially with Chuck's mentoring and training of our team, has been remarkable. Our video ministry has now produced 150 programs that have already been aired. We have been approached by various satellite broadcasting channels to get these programs to them.

FF: Did the audio ever happen as well? Didn't you ask us to set you up with audio?

John: Yes! But in actual fact we needed to do both simultaneously. It was such wisdom on Chuck's part to send us software that could cover both video as well as audio recording all in the same program. So we learned one program instead of separate audio and video. And that was cheaper to have an all-in-one program. And we did get into audio and recently completed 52 testimony oriented audio programs that have also been broadcasted across the region. Ten other programs are in preparations.

And there's more. Another of our workers has produced 65 programs. Another worker has produced 26 programs on the miracles of Jesus.

FF: Amazing! How do you go about this? Do you do this mostly in the studio or live?

John: Both. But the live recording is our new focus. We are taking a step of faith to record our actual church services to broadcast across the Arab world. We have nine churches that want to have their services broadcasted. To see actual church services on TV is an unprecedented and new thing.

FF: I recall in the past the reluctance of your fellow countrymen to allow their faces to be seen across the Arab world. Has that changed?

John: We still have many that are reluctant. Others are more bold. One of our follow up team members tried something more cautious. He decided to put his phone number on the air. He is getting 500 calls per month from across the Arab world.

FF: This is stunning. Are you able to trace the results of all this media? I realize sometimes that may not be easy to track.

John: Frank, this is going to surprise you. In actual fact we have planted fifteen new churches as a result of the broadcasts. It has expanded how we now structure the team at our headquarters. We now have twelve full-time and eight part-time people doing follow up from all the results we get from the broadcasts.

The initiative that you and HSI started five years ago has really been gratifying. The media gets into people's homes that are totally isolated or forbidden to visit. In a private setting people are very open to hear the Gospel.

FF: John. We never could have dreamed that all this would have happened from that humble beginning five years ago. Share one final story.

John: Glad to do so. A woman went to a mosque to pray. Someone appeared to her in a bright light. She had a vision right in the mosque. When she shared this with the religious leader of the mosque he thought she might have an evil spirit and made plans to have it cast out. While visiting her brother she was flipping through the cable channels and came to one of our programs being broadcasted on the Life Channel. She then had the very same experience. Once again the bright light and the appearance of a Man. She knew in her heart this was Jesus. She made a decision for Christ.

FF: Wow! Hey, before we go, I almost forgot to ask you about any upcoming needs with the studio. How about a quick update.

John: Thanks for asking. First of all, I forgot to tell you that our video ministry is now officially registered with the government as a legitimate business. But this is what we are facing right now: Sometimes we need to record at 4 AM in the morning to avoid all the typical outside noise where we are at the present headquarters. So we've been talking about moving things to a quiet area. We have another property that would be

ideal for us. But it will require setting up a second studio. To do things properly we will need between \$25-30,000. When I get back to my office I'm putting that equipment list in the mail for you!! Pray for us.

FF: This has been wonderful. I can't wait to share all this with Chuck as well as our HSI readers. And yes, let's pray. Right now.

Warmly,
Frank Fortunato
HSI Coordinator

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