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Dan Abrams's dream of bringing back a modern version of Court TV is taking a step closer to reality.

A+E Networks has agreed to take a substantial minority investment in Mr. Abrams's LawNewz Network, which specializes in airing real-life courtroom drama live on its website. Neither A+E nor Mr. Abrams would discuss the financials of the deal, but a source familiar with the matter said the investment valued the company at \$15 million.

The website, which launched in early 2016, has been renamed the Law&Crime Network as part of the deal. Banking on the success of crime programming like "Making a Murderer," "The Jinx," and the podcast "Serial," Mr. Abrams's site plans to produce additional live coverage of trials around the country as well as original documentary programming.

There's an eye toward developing the network further as a digital streaming offering that could be bundled with other programming and distributed across web-connected devices. A+E already has the Crime + Investigation channel, which is largely available internationally.

"A+E Networks has a long legacy as a leader in true crime and justice reporting," said Rob Sharenow, A+E's president of programming. "We are looking forward to partnering with Dan and his team to create new and innovative trial programming."

LawNewz.com began its live streaming efforts earlier this year and saw substantial growth in viewership around notable courtroom proceedings like O.J. Simpson's parole hearing in July, the Michelle Carter "suicide texting" trial and the murder trial of Cincinnati police officer, Ray Tensing.

In September, the site recorded 1.64 million unique visitors in the U.S., according to comScore Inc., nearly double its audience from the same month a year before.

Mr. Abrams, 51, cut his teeth as a law reporter on Court TV where he covered the original O.J. Simpson murder trial, and later worked in a variety of roles for NBC, MSNBC and ABC News. In 2009, he launched Abrams Media, publishing a suite of websites, including media blog Mediaite and others focusing on gossip, tech and fashion.

He is currently the host of the A&E cable network's "Live PD," which broadcasts real-time footage from police departments around the country.

Court TV launched in 1991 as a round-the-clock channel focused on live coverage of notable court cases, legal dramas and documentary series. Time Warner acquired full control in 2006 and rebranded it as the reality-show focused TruTV the following year. – **Wall Street Journal**



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of Pennsylvania**

127 State Street Harrisburg, PA 17101
717-214-2000 (f) 717-214-2020
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