



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on January 6, 2012

Lowe's Faces Backlash for Pulling Ads from "Muslim" Reality Show

The retailer dropped its advertising from the TLC network's [All-American Muslim](#) after the conservative [Florida Family Association](#) (FFA) posted an alert warning that the show amounted to "propaganda" that was "clearly designed to counter legitimate and present-day concerns about many Muslims who are advancing Islamic fundamentalism and Sharia law."



The show, which premiered in November, follows a group of Muslim families in the Detroit suburb of Dearborn, a community with a large Arab-American population. The FFA alert said that the show "profiles only Muslims that appear to be ordinary folks while excluding many Islamic believers whose agenda poses a clear and present danger to liberties and traditional values that the majority of Americans cherish."

The alert suggests that the show offers a "Muslim tolerant" bias at the expense of Christians — particularly those who have converted from Islam — while avoiding a perspective that might reflect negatively on Muslim-Americans. Declared the alert: "Clearly this program is attempting to manipulate Americans into ignoring the threat of jihad and to influence them to believe that being concerned about the jihad threat would somehow victimize these nice people in this show."

The alert concludes with a request for individuals to contact sponsors of *All-American Muslim* and urge them to "stop supporting this show with your advertising dollars."

While Lowe's was not the only business advertising on the show, it was apparently the most high-profile company to pull its sponsorship, prompting a backlash of protest against the retailer.

Kamal Nawash of the [Free Muslim Coalition](#) called Lowe's decision "unjustifiable," insisting in an interview with the *Christian Post* that "Muslims are a diverse population and people often disagree within the same family. *All American Muslim* was able to capture the similarities of Muslims to the general America population while capturing their uniqueness."

Across the nation from Detroit, California Democratic State Senator Ted Lieu got into the act, declaring that Lowe's actions represented "naked religious bigotry" and warning Lowe's that he was considering legislative action if the retailer didn't apologize to Muslims and re-up its advertising. "The show is about what it's like to be a Muslim in America, and it touches on the discrimination they sometimes face," Lieu wrote in a letter of protest to Lowe's CEO Robert Niblock. "And that kind of discrimination is exactly what's happening here with Lowe's."



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Dawud Walid, Michigan director of the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#) (CAIR), added his group's "extreme disappointment" to the mix, calling Lowe's response to the FFA alert a "capitulation to bigotry." Walid seemed to distance his group from calls for an all-out Muslim boycott of Lowe's, however, telling [CBS News](#) that he planned to contact some non-Muslim friends of CAIR "to explain the situation to them."

Walid added that the show itself is not without fault, telling the [Christian Science Monitor](#) that many Muslims he talked to felt the portrayal of the Muslim-American community was skewed because it included only five families, all Lebanese Shia Muslims. "Muslims complain to me that these five families are not diverse enough, and also that they have scenes of nightclubs which sell liquor, which is counter to normal Islamic teachings," he said. He added that his group's general support for the show "is not to be construed as an endorsement of these families on the show, but rather the bigger principle that to capitulate to the extremist arguments of the FFA is just wrong-headed."

Lowe's quickly responded to the backlash over its decision, issuing an apology for having "managed to make some people very unhappy." Continued the retailer in a prepared statement: "Individuals and groups have strong political and societal views on this topic, and this program became a lightning rod for many of those views. As a result we did pull our advertising on this program. We believe it is best to respectfully defer to communities, individuals and groups to discuss and consider such issues of importance."

Terrorism expert Walid Shoebat, a one-time member of the radical Palestine Liberation Organization who is now a Christian, insisted that Lowe's made the right decision in distancing itself from the reality show. For one thing, he explained to [OneNewsNow.com](#), the premise of the program is untenable. "The show is a fantasy really made up of a few families that speak English, when I've never met an Arab-American family that speaks English in their households who are first generation from the Middle East," he noted.

More crucial, however, said Shoebat, is the presence on the show of a prominent Islamic Imam. "Husham Alhusayni, who is a main character, is the leader of a Karbala Islamic Center in Dearborn," Shoebat told OneNewsNow. "In the Arabic language, he supports the Jerusalem Document, which calls for the eradication of world Zionism, [insisting] that Zionism is basically a disease that needs to be removed."

Such hate-filled rhetoric is something the producers of the Muslim reality show would never allow on the program, he said.

Ultimately, it seems that *All-American Muslim* may die of its own accord at the January 8 conclusion of its first season. The [Associated Press](#) noted that the show's ratings "are considered disappointing for TLC," although "the attention caused by this month's controversy didn't improve them. Based on ratings alone, a second season would be considered unlikely."



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