

Blue Colorado?

A red wave is coming

- Pundits predicted a “red wave”
- Situation was ripe for a Republican year
 - Midterm elections typically favor the party not in control of the White House
 - Soaring inflation
 - Crime spike

Red wave didn't arrive



Democrats overperformed

- In Colorado
 - Won all statewide races
 - Secured supermajority in the Colorado House
 - Gained several seats in state Senate
 - Won 8th Congressional District
 - Came close in 3rd Congressional District
- In U.S.
 - Kept the Senate
 - Lost the House but narrowly

Why?



Maybe this guy



A more permanent realignment

- Democrats stand to dominate Colorado for a “generation”
- A generation: 20-30 years
- Colorado is now “solidly blue”
- 800,000 new residents are “liberal Democrats”
- 2018, 2020 results – not a protest vote

A new look

- 46-19 Democratic supermajority in the House
- 23-12 split in the Senate
- 31 new members in the House
- 12 new members in the Senate

Republican priorities

- Affordability of products and services
- Decrease crime
- Create a "student focused" education system
- Lower energy costs by utilizing alternative energy options, such as nuclear power
- Roadblocks: 8 Republicans voted against Julie McCluskie for speaker

Democratic priorities

- Affordable housing
- Public safety and crime
- Health care
- Childcare
- Sustainability

And maybe water?



Land use: A regional approach

- Polis plans to push for a "dynamic approach to land use," with the goal of expediting the building of properties.
- He wants to "cut red tape to allow building of housing of all types and for all incomes, while protecting the character of our communities and giving property owners more rights."
- Moreno says housing is "an issue of statewide concern rather than a local one." The 2023 legislature will work on a consistent approach to housing, instead of it being strictly a local issue, "where you get mixed results," he said.

BRACE YOURSELF



Property taxes

- Assessed values will increase by 26.5% this year
- Big property tax hike is coming
- Polis: Add \$200 million to an existing \$700 million pot to buy down property taxes in 2023 and 2024
- “Targeted smart property tax code” – meaning statewide luxury tax on homes?
- Republicans: Hold off on 2023 revaluation until 2025, in effect freezing property taxes for the next two years. Going forward, assessments would be done only every four years

Health care

- Colorado Option
- Drug importation from Canada
- Prescription drug affordability review board
- Surprise billing: Consumers get unexpected fees or charges when they seek routine outpatient care, with fees tied to facilities

Medicaid

- 325,000 Coloradans face losing Medicaid coverage
- Most will lose eligibility because income exceeds limit
- Disenrollment to occur over several months
- To be eligible, single person must earn below \$18,075 and \$36,908 for a family of four

Crime

- Polis wants legislature to pass tougher penalties on car theft
- Mandatory jail time for car thieves and make automobile theft a felony
- Allow people accused of driving without a license to pay a fine and avoid court
- Move domestic violence cases from municipal to county courts
- Make phone calls in prisons free

Gun bills

- Allow counties to ban weapons discharges on private property
- Ban “assault weapons”
- Ban sale of “assault weapons” to those under the age of 21
- Allow gun victims to sue firearms manufacturers
- Maybe review concealed carry

More gun bills

- Allow owner, manager or employee or customer legally in a business to use force, including deadly physical force, against someone who has made an illegal entry into a business
- Bar Coloradans, including officers, from enforcing federal laws “that infringe on the right to bear arms.”

- Proposal requires food and beverage or retail business to pay employees "predictability pay" when they are sent home and don't work the scheduled hours
- [House Bill 1134](#) requires home warranty service contracts to offer homeowners option to replace gas-powered appliances with electric-powered ones
- [House Bill 1065](#) puts special districts and school districts, including school boards, under authority of state ethics commission.
- [Senate Bill 75](#) removes identifying information of victims and witnesses who are minors from criminal justice records released to the public, replacing names with "child victim" or "child witness."
- [House Bill 1146](#) bans employers from punishing employees who accept cash tips from patrons of the business.
- [House Bill 1071](#) allows licensed psychologists to apply to prescribe themselves

Denver mayor's race



“Political journalism constitutes one of the most prominent domains of journalism, and **is essential for the functioning of democracy**. Ideally, political journalism should function as an information **provider, watchdog, and forum for political discussions**, thereby helping citizens understand political matters and help prevent abuses of power.”

- Jesper Strömbäck, Adam Shehata, Oxfordre.com

“A review of research related to these four concepts suggests that political journalism has a strong tendency to frame politics as a strategic game rather than as issues, particularly during election campaigns; that interpretive journalism has become more common; that political journalism has a penchant for conflict framing and media negativity; and that there is only limited evidence that political journalism is influenced by political or partisan bias. Significantly more important than political or partisan bias are different structural and situational biases.”

- *Jesper Strömbäck, Adam Shehata, Oxfordre.com*

What political journalists cover

Government actions

- How public policy is shaped
- How tax money is collected and spent

Interplay among political actors in producing a public policy

- Campaigns, elections
- Political discussion, debates
- Protests, public forums

Legislative process

How a bill becomes law

- Bills introduced
- Bills passed, vetoed
- Referendums and initiatives

How politics shape proposals

Partisanship – Republican versus Democrats,
progressives versus conservatives



Layers of government

- Federal government
- State government
- County
- City
- Districts

BRACE YOURSELVES



YOUR JULY BILL IS COMING

MEMEFUL.COM

Arizona state government

- Executive branch - Governor's Office, state agencies
- Legislative branch – House and Senate
- Judicial – Arizona courts
- The Arizona Corporation Commission – the “Fourth Branch”

Executive branch

- Governor's Office
 - Department of Corrections
 - Department of Economic Security
 - Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
- Department of Education
- Secretary of State
- State Mining Inspector
- Attorney General's Office

County governments

- Board of Supervisors
- County Attorneys
- County Sheriffs
- County Assessors
- County Treasurers
- County Superintendents
- Superior Courts

County departments

- Public Health
- Environmental Services
- Medical Examiner
- Parks

Cities

- Mayor
- Council
- Departments
 - Airport
 - Convention Center
 - Fire
 - Housing
 - Library
 - Parks
 - Police

Other governments

- Central Arizona Water Conservation District
- Taxing districts
 - Electrical and power
 - Stadium
 - Irrigation water conservation
 - Irrigation water delivery
 - Agricultural improvement
 - Sanitary
 - Flood protection
 - Fire
 - Flood control
 - Multi-county water conservation

Government powers

- Tax, spend, and borrow money
- Establish courts
- Charter banks and corporations
- Provide public education
- Regulate property rights
- Build roads
- Make and enforce laws
- Take private property for public purposes, with just compensation – eminent domain

Why cover government?

- You're paying for government's existence
- Your taxes pay for government operations
- Government decisions affect how you live - even whether you get to live
 - Your barber needs a government license
 - Your grocery store needs to label food properly
 - Your pharmacist needs a license
 - Your medicine is highly regulated
 - You can't swing a dead cat without violating a government code



WE DIDN'T TELL THEM TO SHUT DOWN

WE JUST ASKED THEM TO GET A PERMIT

COVID-19 Response

- Closed bars, gyms and movie theaters
- Delayed drivers license expiration dates by six months
- Halted all elective surgeries
- Listed which businesses are [“essential” and can remain open](#), which includes golf courses and payday lenders.
- Delayed evictions until July 22.
- Expanded telemedicine coverage for all services, for hospitals to increase their bed capacity and plan how to better use on-hand staff and resources
- Told Arizonans to “stay at home”

Inform the public

- Tell citizens what their government does in their name – Vietnam war, Iraq war, etc.
- Hold officials accountable
- Uncover wrongdoing, mismanagement, waste
- Analyze official decisions

Meeting agendas

- Call or email the government PIO to ask for meeting agendas
- Most meeting agendas are posted online

City of Phoenix

- City council meetings:
<https://www.phoenix.gov/cityclerk/publicmeetings/city-council-meetings>
- City council meeting materials mailing list:
<https://action.phoenix.gov/j1.pl?a06431395e1fce54d08f3ce16e85899d7b48a2baf2efe0aa5b6a09798323efbd>
- Upcoming events:
<https://www.phoenix.gov/majorevents#events>
- Contact for major events:
<https://www.phoenix.gov/majorevents#contact>

Watchdog journalism

Orlando Sentinel Editor Charlotte Hall:

“Watchdog journalism is a state of mind for the whole newspaper: Journalism that gives power to people.”

Watchdog journalism ethos

- Hold institutions accountable – stories should reflect aggressive and skeptical coverage of government actions
- Represent readers' interest – know your audience
- Transparent – acknowledge deficiencies, readily correct mistakes

Keep in mind

- Everybody pushes an agenda – nobody's a bystander in politics
- Entities seek to preserve their existence – they act to safeguard their existence via laws, rules, codes
 - Industry insiders serve on boards and commissions
 - Unions seek to expand their influence to expand their membership to expand their influence
 - Lawmakers work to sideline people's ability to enact laws

What to look for

- Conflicts
 - Lawmakers allow themselves to gather signatures online, but they won't allow initiative organizers to do the same
 - Cities seek to undo a law that took away their ability to regulate AirBNBs
- Follow the money: How is government spending your taxes?

91 people decide how to spend \$12B

"THEN AND NOW" - FY 2010 vs. FY 2020 General Fund Spending

Comparison of 10 Largest General Fund Budgets ^{1/}
(\$ in Millions)

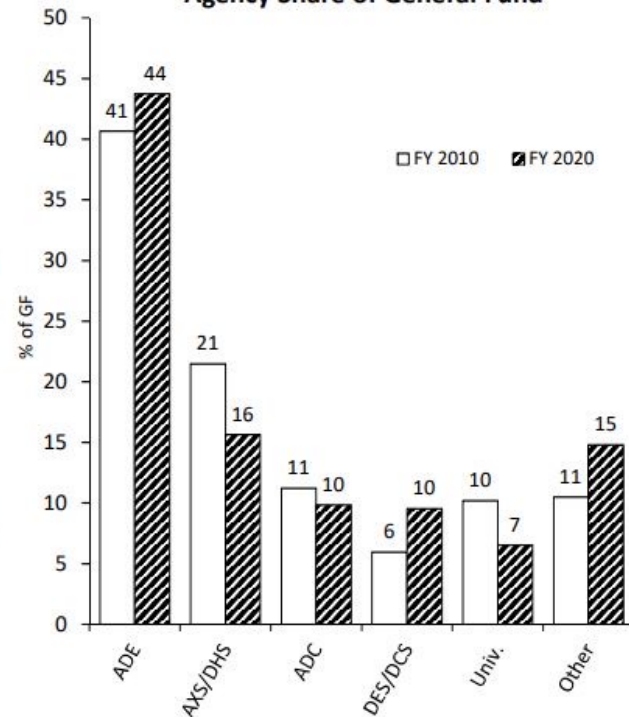
	FY 10 Actuals	FY 20 Approp.	\$ Change FY 10-20	% Change FY 10-20
K-12 Education (ADE)	\$ 3,162.5	\$ 5,200.2	\$ 2,037.7	64.4
AHCCCS / DHS ^{2/}	1,670.3	1,857.9	187.6	11.2
Corrections	871.3	1,167.1	295.8	33.9
Universities	791.6	774.3	(17.3)	(2.2)
Economic Security	461.7	749.7	288.1	^{3/} 62.4
Child Safety	-	384.7	384.7	^{3/} NA
School Facilities Board	104.7	325.7	221.0	211.0
Judiciary	115.2	130.2	15.1	13.1
Public Safety	39.9	92.4	52.5	131.7
Other	560.6	1,207.6	647.1	115.4
TOTAL	\$ 7,777.7	\$ 11,889.7	\$ 4,112.0	52.9%

^{1/} Represents individual agency General Fund spending only. Excludes administrative adjustments, revertsments, and any Budget Stabilization Fund deposits.

^{2/} AHCCCS and DHS budgets displayed together to provide comparison of total healthcare spending in FY 2010 and FY 2020.

^{3/} DCS was part of DES prior to FY 2015.

Agency Share of General Fund



Ducey could have sole discretion over a large pot of state, federal aid funds

The passage of a federal stimulus package to help state and local governments weather the COVID-19 pandemic gives Gov. Doug Ducey discretion over at least part of a \$1.5 billion sum — adding to tens of millions he already had at his disposal as part of an emergency spending plan passed by the Legislature in March.

At that time, some state lawmakers on both sides of the aisle were uneasy over the size of the checks they were cutting to the governor with little direction on how to spend them. Now, the amount of money at Ducey's disposal to help mitigate the fallout of the virus has increased significantly — and Arizona, like other states, will be in the dark about how this money can be used until late April, when the federal government allocates the funding.

What happens when you're not skeptical of sources

FROM THE EDITORS: The *Times* and Iraq

“We have found a number of instances of coverage that was not as rigorous as it should have been. In some cases, information that was controversial then, and seems questionable now, was insufficiently qualified or allowed to stand unchallenged. Looking back, we wish we had been more aggressive in re-examining the claims as new evidence emerged - or failed to emerge.”

FROM THE EDITORS: The *Times* and Iraq

- Editors at several levels who should have been challenging reporters and pressing for more skepticism were perhaps too intent on rushing scoops into the paper.
- Accounts of Iraqi defectors were not always weighed against their strong desire to have Saddam Hussein ousted.
- Articles based on dire claims about Iraq tended to get prominent display, while follow-up articles that called the original ones into question were sometimes buried.
- In some cases, there was no follow-up at all.

When you practice watchdog journalism correctly



2018 Gallup/Knight Foundation Survey

- Most U.S. adults, including more than nine in 10 Republicans, say they personally have lost trust in the news media in recent years. At the same time, 69% of those who have lost trust say that trust can be restored.
- Asked to describe in their own words why they trust or do not trust certain news organizations, Americans' responses largely center on matters of accuracy or bias. Relatively few mentioned a news organization's partisan or ideological leaning as a factor.

- Accuracy and bias also rank among the most important factors when respondents rate how important each of 35 potential indicators of media trust are to them. Transparency also emerges as an important factor in the closed-ended ratings of factors that influence trust: 71% say a commitment to transparency is very important, and similar percentages say the same about an organization providing fact-checking resources and providing links to research and facts that back up its reporting.

- An experimental approach not only showed the importance of accuracy, bias and transparency, but also revealed a complex relationship between partisanship and media trust. Both Republicans and Democrats were less likely to trust news sources with a partisan reputation that opposes their own. However, they did not express much greater trust in news sources that have a reputation for a partisan leaning consistent with their own.

- 69% of U.S. adults say their trust in the news media decreased in the past decade
- 4% say their trust has increased
- 26% indicate their trust has not changed

- Republicans (94%) and political conservatives (95%) are nearly unanimous in saying their trust in the media decreased in the past decade.
- However, declining trust is not just confined to the political right — 75% of independents and 66% of moderates indicate they are less trusting than they were 10 years ago

- U.S. adults on the left of the political spectrum are less likely to say they have lost trust in the media
- But least four in 10 Democrats (42%) and liberals (46%) say they have done so
- Democrats and liberals are about as likely to say their trust in the media has not changed as to say it has decreased

- More men (76%) than women (64%), more whites (72%) than nonwhites (63%) and more noncollege graduates (73%) than college graduates (61%) say they have less trust in the media than they did a decade ago
- There are meaningful age differences

- 69% of U.S. adults who say they have lost trust in the news media over the past decade say their trust can be restored
- 30% of those who have lost trust — equivalent to 21% of all U.S. adults — say their trust in the media cannot be restored

60 percent

of survey respondents believe reporters get
paid by their sources
sometimes or very often

—Columbia Journalism Review

About half

of respondents could identify a news hoax

—News Co/Lab

One-third

plus of students said the threat of
misinformation

made them trust all media less

—Project Information Literacy

9 in 10

Republicans say they have lost trust in the
media in recent years

—Knight Foundation

69 percent

of adults who say they have lost trust in the news media over the past decade say their trust can be restored

—Knight Foundation

The industry

- Nearly 20% of local daily and weekly newspapers in the country have closed since 2014
- More than 2,000 counties do not have a daily newspaper

- 54% of participants identified publishers' focus on revenue over journalistic mission as being among the biggest threats to their profession.
- Almost as many participants— 53%—cited propaganda or public relations output dressed up as news.

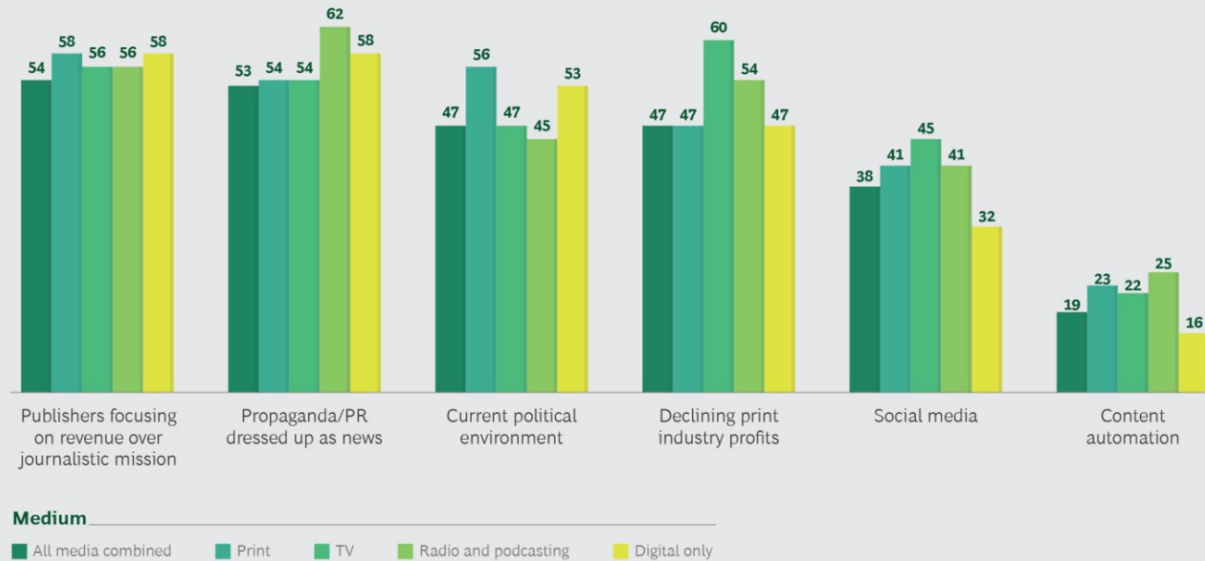
-Zucerkman, Sheerin, Green: <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2019/united-states-journalism-future-is-brighter-than-you-think>

Financial pressure, propaganda PR

EXHIBIT 1 | Journalists Say That Financial Pressure and Propaganda and PR Are the News Industry's Biggest Threats

What are the biggest threats currently facing the news industry?

Percentage of respondents



Sources: BCG Journalist Survey June 2019 with 404 participants; BCG analysis.

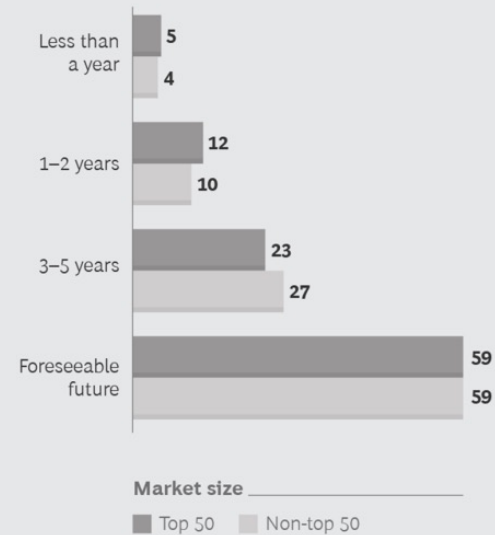
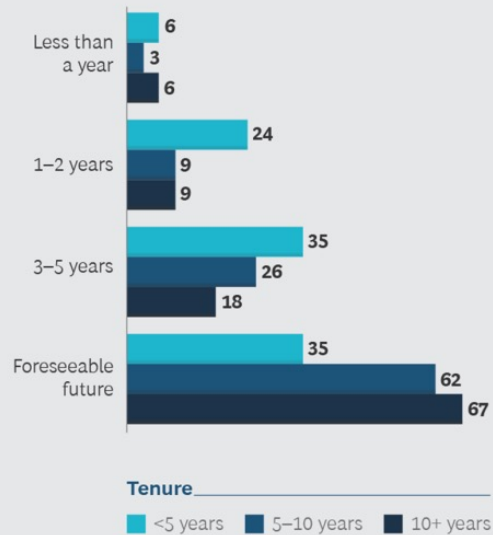
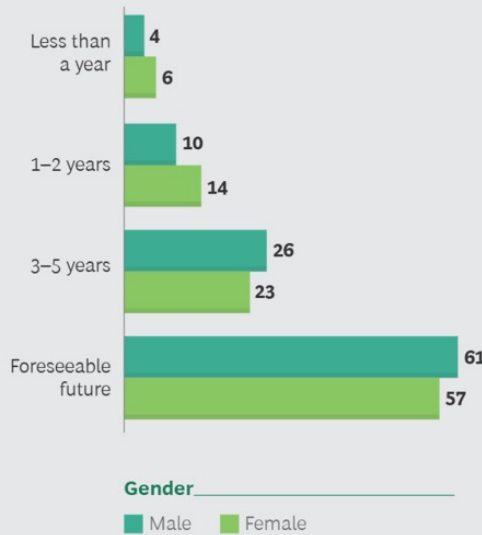
Note: Survey participants could cite as many of the six listed options as they liked as being among the biggest threats. Print journalists n = 268; television journalists n = 156; radio and podcasts journalists n = 133; digital journalists n = 19. Journalists were allowed to pick more than one medium, so numbers do not sum to 404.

Staying in the profession?

EXHIBIT 2 | Experienced Journalists Are the Ones Most Likely to Stay in the Profession

How long do you see yourself working as a journalist?

Percentage of respondents



Sources: BCG Journalist Survey June 2019 with 404 participants; BCG analysis.

Note: Male journalists n = 219; female journalists n = 185. Tenure <5 years n = 63; 5-10 years n = 211; 10+ years n = 130. Top 50 market n = 269; non-top 50 market n = 135.

National estimates for this occupation:

Employment estimate and mean wage estimates for this occupation:

Employment (1)	Employment RSE (3)	Mean hourly wage	Mean annual wage (2)	Wage RSE (3)
37,140	2.4 %	\$26.70	\$55,530	1.5 %

Percentile wage estimates for this occupation:

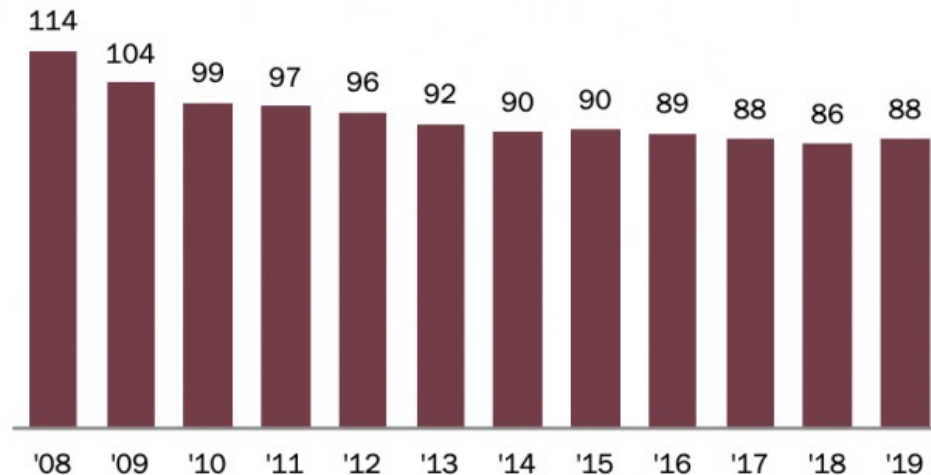
Percentile	10%	25%	50% (Median)	75%	90%
Hourly Wage	\$11.30	\$14.30	\$19.84	\$32.06	\$48.53
Annual Wage (2)	\$23,490	\$29,730	\$41,260	\$66,680	\$100,930

Industries with the highest levels of employment in this occupation:

Industry	Employment (1)	Percent of industry employment	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)
Newspaper, Periodical, Book, and Directory Publishers	19,530	5.88	\$22.38	\$46,550
Radio and Television Broadcasting	11,680	5.39	\$31.16	\$64,820
Other Information Services	3,860	1.30	\$31.38	\$65,280
Motion Picture and Video Industries	500	0.12	(8)	(8)
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	340	0.01	\$25.79	\$53,630

Newsroom employment in the United States declined 23% between 2008 and 2019

Number of U.S. newsroom employees in news industries, in thousands



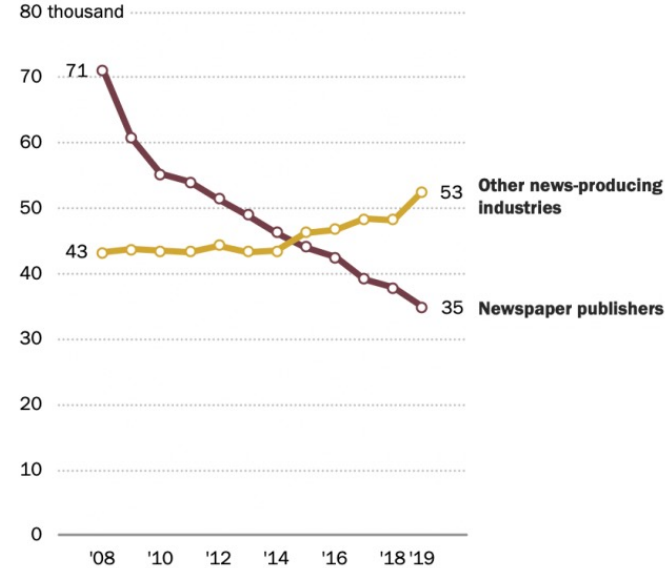
Note: The OES survey is designed to produce estimates by combining data collected over a three-year period. Newsroom employees include news analysts, reporters and journalists; editors; photographers; and television, video and film camera operators and editors. News industries include newspaper publishers; radio broadcasting; television broadcasting; cable and other subscription programming; and other information services, the best match for digital-native news publishers.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics data.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Newsroom employment at U.S. newspapers dropped by 51% between 2008 and 2019

Number of U.S. newsroom employees by news industry, in thousands



Note: The OES survey is designed to produce estimates by combining data collected over a three-year period. Newsroom employees include news analysts, reporters and journalists; editors; photographers; and television, video and film camera operators and editors. Digital-native sector data is based on "other information services" industry code, whose largest segment is "internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portals."

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics data.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Newsroom employees by news industry, 2008 to 2019

Number of U.S. newsroom employees in each news industry

Year	Total	Newspaper publishers	Broadcast television	Digital-native	Radio broadcasting	Cable television
2008	114,260	71,070	28,390	7,400	4,570	2,830
2009	104,490	60,770	28,040	8,090	4,330	3,260
2010	98,680	55,260	28,640	8,090	4,100	2,590
2011	97,350	54,050	28,050	9,520	3,540	2,190
2012	95,770	51,430	27,830	10,750	3,610	2,150
2013	92,240	48,920	25,650	11,250	3,700	2,720
2014	89,820	46,310	26,300	11,180	3,820	2,210
2015	90,400	44,120	28,430	11,710	3,380	2,760
2016	89,220	42,450	28,190	12,830	3,190	2,560
2017	87,630	39,210	28,900	13,260	3,320	2,940
2018	86,100	37,900	28,670	13,470	3,370	2,690
2019	87,510	34,950	30,120	16,090	3,530	2,820

Note: The OES survey is designed to produce estimates by combining data collected over a three-year period. Newsroom employees include news analysts, reporters and journalists; editors; photographers; and television, video and film camera operators and editors. Digital-native sector data is based on “other information services” industry code, whose largest segment is “internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portals.”

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics data.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

“The total estimated advertising revenue for the newspaper industry in 2020 was \$8.8 billion, based on the Center’s analysis of financial statements for publicly traded newspaper companies. This is down 29% from 2019. Total estimated circulation revenue was \$11.1 billion, compared with \$11.0 billion in 2019. This is the first year in our data that circulation revenue has been higher than advertising revenue.”

-Pew Research

Estimated advertising and circulation revenue of the newspaper industry

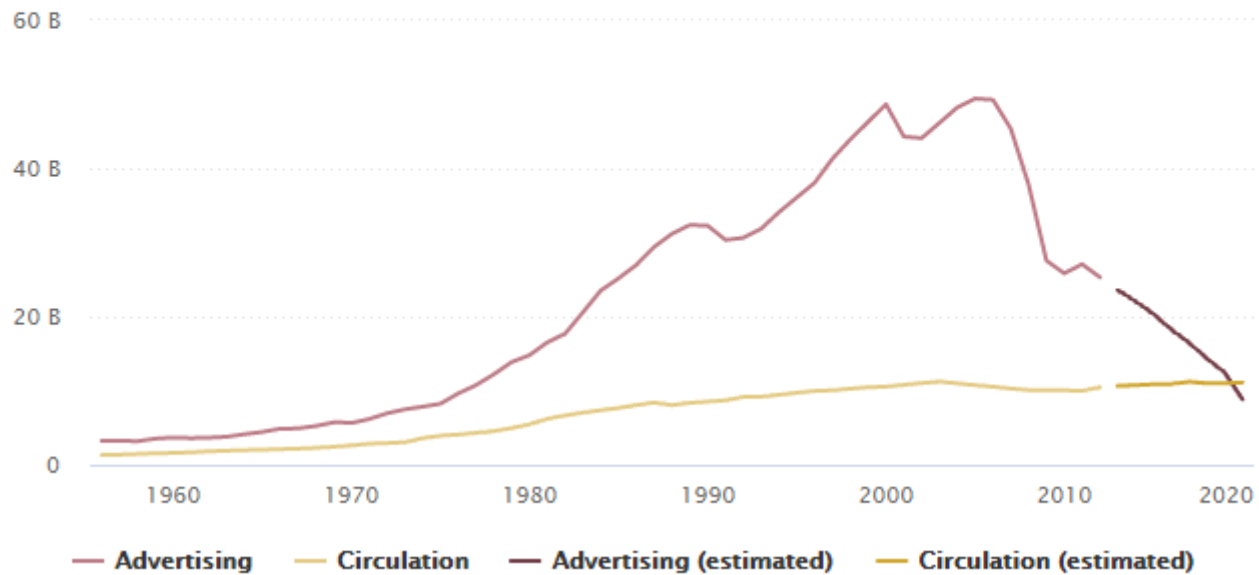
[Chart](#)

[Data](#)

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Total revenue of U.S. newspapers (in U.S. dollars)



“Digital advertising accounted for 39% of newspaper advertising revenue in 2020, based on this analysis of publicly traded newspaper companies. The portion stood at 35% in 2019 – but at 17% in 2011, the first year it was possible to perform this analysis.”

-Pew Research

Share of newspaper advertising revenue coming from digital advertising

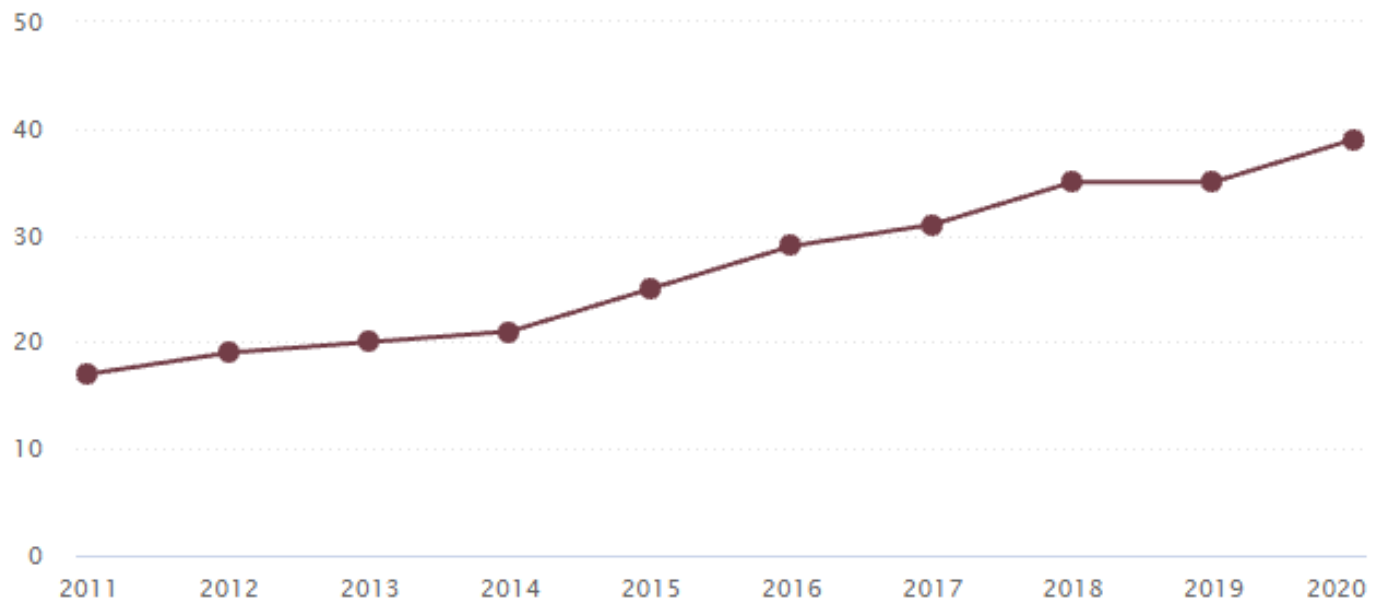
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Percent of newspaper companies' advertising revenue coming from digital advertising



“According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, 30,820 people worked as reporters, editors, photographers, or film and video editors and operators in the newspaper industry in 2020. That is down 12% from 2019 and 57% from 2004. Median wages for editors in 2020 were about \$50,000, while for reporters, the figure was about \$36,000.”

-Pew Research

Total number of newsroom employees in the newspaper sector

