

# apnews.com

The primary news site of The Associated Press, the world's largest cooperative of media organizations, whose content is seen by more than half the world's population every day.

## Ownership and Financing

The AP, which operates as a nonprofit, is owned collectively by its member newspapers and broadcasting stations. Its president and CEO is Gary Pruitt, who was previously the president and CEO of publicly traded publishing company McClatchy. Executives from nearly 20 media companies serve on AP's board of directors. The chairman is Steven Swartz, the president and CEO of Hearst Communications.

According to The AP, its primary source of revenue comes from its subscription contracts and content licensing agreements with newspapers, news sites, and radio and TV stations, of which approximately 1,300 are AP members. In 2017, TV stations accounted for almost half its revenue, newspapers contributed approximately 25 percent, and internet companies, generated 10 percent.

## Content

The AP facilitates the sharing of breaking news and in-depth investigations among its members and subscriber publications. The AP covers every U.S. statehouse and 101 countries. The organization states it publishes 2,000 articles per day as well as 70,000 videos and 1 million photos annually, according to its 2017 Annual Report.

Its coverage includes business, entertainment, health, international news, politics, science, and technology, which it publishes in a variety of mediums such as audio, infographics, interactives, photos, text, and videos. More than half of the world's population sees its content every day, according to The AP.

The AP is one of two international media outlets to operate a full-time news bureau in North Korea, and it gathers up-to-the-minute results for thousands of elections across the U.S. It deploys reporters to collect and verify election returns in "every county, parish, city and town across the country, covering races down to the legislative level in every state and declaring winners in over 5,000 election contests," its site states.

The AP sets standards and provides services for journalists. Every year it publishes The Associated Press Stylebook, which many news outlets and reporters use as a guide for standardizing grammar, punctuation, and terminology. The AP aspires to objectivity. In 2015, The AP Stylebook issued a change ending the use of "climate denier," and replaced the term with less emotionally charged language: "[T]hose who reject climate science say the phrase denier has the pejorative ring of Holocaust denier so The Associated Press prefers climate change doubter or someone who rejects mainstream science," the editors said.

Newsrooms can also pay to use AP's technological services, including its content management system and content planning tool.

## Credibility

AP articles are typically fact-based and well-sourced. The AP provides a corrections policy, under which reporters are instructed to notify an editor about any errors found in their own or others' work. Corrections, identified in an editor's note, are regularly noted in articles on the site. "A correction must always be labeled a correction in the editor's note. We do not use euphemisms such as 'recasts,' 'fixes,' 'clarifies' or 'changes' when correcting a factual error," according to AP's policy. As a wire service upon which other news outlets rely for content, AP asks its subscribers to correct any erroneous information they re-published.

The news cooperative has been enlisted by institutions including Facebook and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to bolster fact-checking initiatives. In 2017, AP received a \$245,000 grant from the



**This website mostly adheres to basic standards of credibility and transparency.**

Score: 95/100



**Does not repeatedly publish false content** (22 points)



**Gathers and presents information responsibly** (18)



**Regularly corrects or clarifies errors** (12.5)



**Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly** (12.5)



**Avoids deceptive headlines** (10)



**Website discloses ownership and financing** (7.5)



**Clearly labels advertising** (7.5)



**Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest** (5)



**The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information** (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance. [More information.](#)

fact-checking initiatives. In 2017, AP received a \$245,000 grant from the Knight Foundation to add full-time, fact-checking journalists whose work is distributed to AP subscribers and to provide training and support in fact-checking for local newsrooms. Every week, AP compiles a “Not Real News” roundup from some of the most popular untrue headlines. It also debunks and clarifies the facts.

In 2013, The AP’s Twitter account was hacked and a false tweet was posted about fictional attacks at the White House. The tweet falsely reported that President Barack Obama had been injured. A measure of the AP’s influence was the impact that false report had on the Dow Jones Industrial Average: It dropped momentarily by nearly 150 points.

The AP has won multiple Pulitzer Prizes, 31 of them for photography. In 2019, it won a Pulitzer in the international reporting category, for its coverage of the Yemeni Civil War. In 2016, it won in the public service category for a series of stories exposing slavery in the Southeast Asian fishing industry.

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## Transparency

APnews.com links to an About Us section on AP.org, which describes The AP’s business model, history, and financials. A Contact Us page provides a form for users to report errors and phone numbers for reaching its 254 news bureaus around the world.

AP.org also explains how its corrections policy applies to various formats, including graphics and video, and explains its policies governing the use of anonymous sources, attributing information, reaching sources for comment, and using others’ content. The AP states that its employees cannot express political opinions publicly, participate in any political activity, or have financial involvements in industries they cover.

AP publishes author names for most articles. However, it does not usually provide contact or background information about writers — which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for providing information about content creators. (Occasionally, stories include writers’ social media handles at the bottom.) Some stories have no bylines and are credited to AP.

In response to a NewsGuard inquiry, AP Vice President and Editor at Large for Standards John Daniszewski said: “If it’s fast breaking news, like a building explosion, we will start the story with no byline and when we get someone to the scene who can provide information — whether it’s a reporter, photographer, or videographer — then we’ll put the person’s byline.” In limited circumstances when a reporter’s life could be in danger, Daniszewski said, AP may choose to publish an article without the author’s name.

As for the lack of contact or biographical information, Daniszewski said the organization is considering compiling a database of its writers and their biographies for the site.

In a section called AP Explore, the organization publishes a series explaining how AP has reported stories about significant topics. The articles cover topics including the Apollo Program and “Divided America.”

The site distinguishes advertising from editorial content.

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## History

The Associated Press began in 1846 when five New York City papers agreed to share news about the Mexican-American War. The cooperative, originally named The New York Associated Press, sold its work to other newspaper groups. In 1862, a group of Midwestern newspaper publishers formed the Western Associated Press, which incorporated as the Associated Press in 1892.

The AP’s site says that it was the first to break news about historic events including President Abraham Lincoln’s assassination and the Pearl Harbor attack. The AP published its first styleguide, now known as the “Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law,” which sets industry standards for newswriting, in 1953.

By 2009, some publishers using AP’s content were complaining about the amount they were being charged, citing the industry’s widespread financial struggles. Some dropped their wire service subscriptions altogether and others transitioned to Reuters America, which offered competitive pricing. One of the largest media companies to drop AP, Tribune Publishing, returned after a two-year hiatus. The AP’s finances

have largely remained healthy, and it has worked with customers to restructure its costs and services in response to complaints.

*Disclosure: NewsGuard Deputy Managing Editor Amy Westfeldt worked as a reporter and editor at The Associated Press for more than 25 years.*

*Correction: An earlier version of this Nutrition Label gave the incorrect year for the release of the first AP stylebook. It was published in 1953.*

*Editor's Note: Upon further review, this Nutrition Label has been updated to indicate that the AP does not provide contact or biographical information about content creators and therefore does not meet NewsGuard's disclosure standard for that criterion.*

*Additional Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated to include AP's Pulitzer Prize for international reporting, awarded in April 2019.*

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**Send feedback to NewsGuard:** [Click Here](#)

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## Transparency

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