The website of Cable News Network (CNN), the first U.S. television network dedicated to news, which pioneered the 24-hour news cycle.

**Ownership and Financing**

The Atlanta-based network and site are owned by Turner Broadcasting System. Turner is operated by WarnerMedia, a division of AT&T, the telecommunications company that purchased Time Warner Inc. in 2018.

The website generates revenue from advertisements and sponsored articles.

**Content**

Like the television network, CNN’s website provides around-the-clock news coverage, ranging from breaking, political, and enterprise stories to reports on health and fitness. The website publishes continuous updates in both text and video.

Categories at the top of the CNN.com homepage include US, World, Politics, Business, Opinion, Health, Entertainment, Style, Travel, Sports, and Videos. The World section features news pages tailored to nine countries, regions, and continents, including China, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. Business features topics such as Tech, and Politics tags content for the 2020 elections.

In addition to its United States edition, CNN hosts an international version edited by staff based in London, Hong Kong, Abu Dhabi, and Atlanta, as well as Arabic- and Spanish-language sites.

A “Videos you should see” section at the bottom of the homepage features clips of stories that were broadcast on the television network and typically include a headline and a paragraph of text.

CNN publishes extensive political coverage, including a mix of news and commentary on U.S. President Donald Trump and the 2020 presidential election. Typical stories include “Trump administration pushes UN to drop mentions of reproductive health from official documents,” “Hackers find voting machines used throughout the US are vulnerable to attack,” and “Ilhan Omar says Biden isn’t progressive enough to be Democratic presidential nominee.” Coverage of a whistleblower complaint that prompted an impeachment inquiry of President Trump generated a dozen or more headlines on the homepage for several days in September 2019, including breaking news stories, commentary, video clips, and fact checks.

CNN’s Politics section includes a Facts First subsection, which tracks alleged misstatements by President Trump, as well as those by former Vice President Joe Biden, U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and other politicians and high-level government officials.

Typical headlines on other news topics include “A school resource officer is fired after arresting two 6-year-old children,” “Beekeeper groups sue EPA over pesticide decision,” “Two teens have been charged in the fatal, unprovoked attack on a man at a Maryland fair, police say,” “South Korea’s young men are fighting against feminism,” and “Hundreds mourn ‘dead’ glacier at funeral in Switzerland.”

The website livestreams CNN's television channel, which is accessible to viewers through a paid subscription to a cable service provider.

**Credibility**

CNN employs more than 4,000 journalists around the globe, approximately 350 of whom work for the digital organization. The website and network conduct original reporting, using on- and off-screen journalists, producers and camera crews. The website cites reliable sources such as law enforcement, government officials, people with firsthand knowledge of events, subject experts, and documents. Headlines accurately reflect story content.
CNN has won several broadcast journalism awards, including a Peabody Award in 2018 for its coverage of the loss of the Islamic State's power in Iraq and Syria. The network won the George Polk Award in 2018 for its undercover reporting on modern-day slave auctions in Libya.

Noted anchors include Christiane Amanpour, Anderson Cooper, Chris Cuomo, and Don Lemon, as well as Wolf Blitzer, Jake Tapper, and media critic Brian Stelter.

CNN.com does not post a corrections policy. The website, however, routinely publishes corrections, which generally appear as notes in italics at the bottom of stories and explain the mistake.

CNN has had a tense relationship with President Trump since he launched his presidential campaign in 2015. In January 2017, then-President-elect Trump accused the network of reporting “fake news.” He has regularly called CNN “Fake News CNN” in tweets and at news conferences, and the White House briefly suspended the press pass of chief White House correspondent Jim Acosta in 2018 after a heated on-air exchange at a press conference.

The White House took Acosta’s pass away after the correspondent exchanged words with President Trump at a live televised press conference, and a White House intern was told to take the microphone from Acosta. The White House released video footage of Acosta and the intern that some critics said was doctored, and which White House adviser Kellyanne Conway later said was merely “sped up.”

CNN sued, and the White House agreed to formally reinstate the pass after a federal judge ordered the restoration of Acosta’s status on a temporary basis. Supporters defended Acosta as doing his job as a reporter; detractors said he was overly aggressive.

The network made some significant reporting mistakes in its coverage of the Trump administration in 2017, including one that led to the resignations of three senior reporters in an elite investigative unit.

On June 7, 2017, CNN.com published a story based on a single anonymous source that stated that former FBI director James Comey was expected to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee that he had not told President Trump at an earlier meeting that the president was not under FBI investigation. However, Comey released his prepared testimony after the story appeared, saying he had told the president that he was not a target of an investigation. On June 8, Comey testified that he told President Trump on three occasions that he was not under investigation. The statement and testimony contradicted CNN’s report and affirmed President Trump’s assertions. CNN corrected its story online and on the air.

On June 22, 2017, CNN, also citing one anonymous source, reported erroneously that a Senate committee was probing a Russian investment fund whose leader had met in January 2017 with hedge fund founder Anthony Scaramucci, who was then a member of President-elect Trump’s transition team. That same day, Scaramucci tweeted “I did nothing wrong” in reference to a meeting with Kirill Dmitriev, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund.

CNN retracted the story the next day, saying in an editor’s note that the article “did not meet CNN’s editorial standards.” In addition, the unnamed source told CNN that the network did not portray the information accurately, according to a report in The Washington Post. The network accepted the resignations of the three journalists involved in the story, one of whom headed the investigative team, and apologized to Scaramucci.

In December 2017, the network corrected a story that misreported the date of an email the Trump presidential campaign had received, which included instructions about how to retrieve a trove of hacked Democratic National Committee documents from WikiLeaks. The reported date, Sept. 4, 2016, was significant because it occurred before WikiLeaks made the archive public. However, the email was actually dated Sept. 14, 2016, one day after the documents were released. CNN had based its report on two sources who saw the email, which had been given to congressional investigators. It issued an editor’s note saying, “The new details appear to show that the sender was relying on publicly available information. The new information indicates that the communication is less significant than CNN initially reported.”
In 2019, President Donald Trump’s campaign sent a letter threatening to sue CNN for purportedly producing biased coverage of the president, citing a multipart Project Veritas report that posted undercover video from inside CNN’s newsroom. The October 2019 report by the conservative group quoted one CNN employee as saying that network President Jeff Zucker had a “personal vendetta” against the president, and said that Zucker told staff at a morning meeting to focus CNN’s coverage on the Trump impeachment inquiry, a story that was a focus of many media organizations in 2019.

In response to the Trump campaign lawyer’s letter, Matt Dornic, CNN’s vice president of communications and digital partnerships, said in an emailed statement, “This is nothing more than a desperate PR stunt and doesn’t merit a response.”

In a $275 million defamation lawsuit, a Covington, Kentucky, teenager said that the network “put its anti-Trump agenda first” in January 2019 coverage of the boy’s attendance at a March for Life rally in Washington. The federal lawsuit said that Nick Sandmann was wrongly portrayed as racist when he was videotaped wearing a cap emblazoned with President Trump’s motto “Make America Great Again” and smiling at an Omaha tribal elder who was attending the Indigenous Peoples March. CNN filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit in May 2019. The network settled with Sandmann for an undisclosed amount in January 2020. Sandmann filed similar lawsuits against The Washington Post and NBC. A judge dismissed the lawsuit against the Post in July 2019, but reviewed his ruling and reinstated part of it three months later. The Washington Post and NBC cases were pending as of January 2020.

In a 2018 interview with CNN host David Axelrod, CNN president Jeff Zucker defended the network’s coverage of President Trump. “I think that our job at CNN is to tell the truth,” Zucker said. “The problem is, in this day and age, I do understand that sometimes when you’re pro-truth, it comes off as anti-Trump.”

CNN has hired several conservative commentators, including S.E. Cupp and, briefly, in 2016, former Trump campaign manager Corey Lewandowski; as well as journalists who have worked at conservative publications, including Kaitlan Collins from the Daily Caller, and Sarah Westwood, from the Washington Examiner. The network hired Sarah Isgru Flores, a former Department of Justice spokeswoman for the Trump administration, as a political editor in 2019, then changed Flores' role to that of a political analyst after critics inside and outside the network questioned her objectivity, noting that Flores had once called CNN “the Clinton News Network.”

Although CNN.com features labeled commentary in a separate Opinion section, NewsGuard found that CNN.com frequently posts video clips that feature liberal or anti-Trump commentary by the network’s anchors, including Lemon, host of “CNN Tonight with Don Lemon,” Cuomo, of “Cuomo Prime Time,” and Tapper, host of the weekly “State of the Union” program.

The video clips are not specifically labeled as opinion, and some are posted alongside news videos on the website.

For example, in an Oct. 2, 2019, video clip that appeared on CNN.com’s homepage, titled “Don Lemon to President Trump: What’s the Matter with you?”, Lemon described a New York Times article that quoted more than a dozen unnamed White House and administration officials as saying that President Trump had suggested shooting migrants in the legs and stocking a moat with snakes or alligators to stop them from crossing the U.S. border.

“When I read this tonight, I honestly, I thought this was the craziest thing that I ever heard, especially coming from the president,” Lemon said in the clip. “Seriously, Mr. President? What is the matter with you? A moat full of snakes or alligators? That’s some Harry Potter stuff right there. It’s not funny, but it’s just laughable.”

On Aug. 11, 2019, a week after the mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, and a day after convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein's apparent suicide in jail, Tapper noted in a video clip and text transcript available on the website, that President Trump did not tweet about the massacres. Instead, Tapper said, the president used “his massive Twitter platform, 63 million followers, to spread a deranged conspiracy theory tying the death of Jeffrey Epstein in prison to the president’s former political rivals the Clintons. President Trump could use his megaphone for anything. But the president often uses it to amplify that which is the worst of us: personal attacks, bigotry, and lies.”
insane conspiracy theories." The clip and transcript were not labeled as opinion.

Also in August 2019, CNN.com published a clip in its Videos You Should See section about the mass shootings. Titled "Hear Brooke Baldwin's Tearful Plea For Change," the clip included unlabeled opinion. This has been a horrible week for America," Baldwin said in the clip from CNN's "Newsroom" show. "I never thought in my 20 years of journalism that I would get a call last Sunday morning from my boss asking me to go cover a mass shooting and I actually had to ask the question, 'Which one?'

“That was a first for me,” she added. “And I am worried that it might not be the last unless there is real change in Washington.”

Because CNN.com regularly features commentary by its anchors in text and video clips on the website that often advance liberal and anti-Trump opinion, and are not clearly labeled as such, NewsGuard has determined that CNN does not meet its standard for handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Following a telephone call and exchange of emails with NewsGuard in October 2019, CNN declined to comment about its labeling of opinion in its video clips.

Transparency

The website's About Us page states that CNN is owned by Warner Media and notes that Warner is a subsidiary of AT&T.

A CNN Profiles page names and provides biographies for its leadership and reporting staff. Articles are credited to their authors, and the names link to their profiles and archives of their work.

Advertisements and sponsored content are distinguishable from editorial content. CNN also differentiates content published on its e-commerce platform from editorial content through disclaimers, different branding, and site design.

History

CNN was launched in 1980 by media businessman Ted Turner, with what was then the radically new proposition of broadcasting news 24 hours a day. The daily news cycle enabled the network to report stories live as they unfolded, which gave it an edge during the Gulf War in 1991.

The network's website launched in 1995, declaring soon after that its mission was to hold an "unerring commitment to objective and accurate news." More than 20 years later, it remains one of the most-frequented online news sources in the United States.

In October 2018, a self-described President Trump "superfan," Cesar A. Sayoc Jr., mailed 16 homemade pipe bombs to those he considered to be enemies of the president, including CNN and several Democratic politicians, former President Barack Obama, and 2016 Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. Sayoc pleaded guilty to 65 counts in the case and was sentenced in August 2019 to 20 years in prison.

CNN suspended commentator Ryan Lizza for six weeks in 2017 for unspecified charges of sexual misconduct. Lizza was fired by the New Yorker for the charges, which were never detailed. The network also suspended conservative commentator Paris Dennard, in August 2018, after The Washington Post reported he had been fired from Arizona State University in 2014 for making sexually explicit comments and gestures to two women. Dennard did not deny the actions, but said he was joking. The Post reported. Dennard's one-year contract expired in November 2018. Both he and CNN told The Hollywood Reporter it was not renewed.

Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on Jan. 7, 2020. Previously, upon further review of older and newer content on the website, and following a tightening of NewsGuard's standards, this label was updated on Oct. 24, 2019, and its rating was changed, to reflect NewsGuard's determination that CNN.com does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.
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