

# glennbeck.com

The website of conservative media personality and radio host Glenn Beck, which often publishes unsubstantiated claims that advance conservative views.



Proceed with caution: This website fails to adhere to several basic journalistic standards.

Score: 52/100

## Ownership and Financing

GlennBeck.com is owned by Mercury Radio Arts Inc., a multimedia production company Beck launched in 2002.

The company also owns Blaze Media, a conservative news network with television and radio programming, as well as the website TheBlaze.com.

The site earns revenue through advertising.

## Content

GlennBeck.com largely operates as a promotional website for Beck, a prominent right-leaning commentator. Nearly all content on GlennBeck.com features clips from Beck's radio show and his TV show on Blaze TV.

The website's broadcasts and articles are generally critical of Democrats and media outlets that are perceived as liberal, while supportive of U.S. President Donald Trump and Republicans. The website often covers national politics and controversial social issues such as gun rights, racial inequality, and LGBTQ issues.

Most articles include clips from Beck's TV or radio programs and a few short paragraphs describing the clip. Typical headlines on the site have included "GOVERNOR NORTHAM AGAINST 2ND AMENDMENT IN VIRGINIA: Gun rights rally mirrors MLK's fight for freedom," "Glenn Beck: The World Health Organization is nothing more than a Chinese Communist Party FRONT MAN," and "Glenn Beck: Bernie Sanders and 'Bros' are more dangerous than we ever imagined."

The site also publishes multi-part radio serials, which provide conservative takes on historical, cultural, and political topics, from the origins of labor unions to the



Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)



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.](#)

alleged infidelity and socialist beliefs of Martin Luther King Jr.

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Credibility

GlennBeck.com's articles and videos have distorted factual accounts and made unsubstantiated claims, including about the nationwide protests against police brutality that followed the death in police custody of George Floyd.

For example, in a June 2020 post titled "WHO'S SPURRING THE RIOTS? Is the far left, Antifa to blame for violence, looting & destruction?," Beck claimed without substantiation that antifa members were responsible for violence and rioting that occurred at anti-police brutality protests in Minnesota following the police killing of George Floyd.

In a video that accompanied the article, Beck quoted a USA Today article about violent protests that followed Floyd's May 2020 death in Minneapolis, including references to clashes with police, smashed windows, and the destruction of cars. "Does this sound like something spontaneous that we haven't seen before? Or does this sound exactly like antifa we've seen on the streets of Washington, Washington State and Oregon and New York City?" Beck asked, adding, "It is antifa."

Another June 2020 article on the site, headlined "Terrorist organization ANTIFA wants to destroy America and is responsible for violent riots," began, "Liberation Begins when America Dies.' Terrorist Organization ANTIFA is DANGEROUS and its members DO want to destroy our nation. Former Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent for 60 Minutes, Lara Logan, tells Glenn about the extremist group and why some around the world fear – thanks to ANTIFA and today's violent riots – that America will cease to be a beacon of hope for others."

There is no evidence that members of antifa, or far-left militant groups that often confront white supremacists at demonstrations, organized the protests that occurred in Washington in late May and early June 2020 following Floyd's death in Minneapolis.

In June 2020, The New York Times reported that after interviewing several major U.S. police departments and reviewing hundreds of newspaper articles about arrests nationwide, “a review of the arrests of dozens of people on federal charges reveals no known effort by antifa to perpetrate a coordinated campaign of violence.”

In a June 2020 video that appeared in a post titled “WE KNEW THIS TIME WOULD COME: Racism masked as anti-racism is destroying cities & the economy,” Beck made the unsubstantiated claim that George Floyd had disposed of illegal drugs before he was arrested on May 25, 2020. “It’s not like they just pulled him over because he was driving while black. He was in the midst of a crime and dropped a bag of drugs as they were running after him,” Beck said.

Beck did not cite evidence for his claim. A toxicology report released by the Hennepin County Medical Examiner’s Office showed that Floyd’s blood tested positive for fentanyl and methamphetamine at the time of his death. And some users who posted videos of Floyd’s arrest on YouTube claimed that at one point, Floyd dropped a small white object from his left hand while sitting against a wall.

However, the object is too blurry to be identified, and police did not report finding drugs in Floyd’s possession or at the scene of his arrest in Minneapolis. Floyd was arrested after a store owner reported that he had allegedly used a counterfeit \$20 bill to buy cigarettes. Police never said that Floyd possessed “a bag of drugs,” as Beck claimed, or that he dropped something while running away from officers.

GlennBeck.com has also made unsubstantiated claims about the COVID-19 virus. In a May 2020 post titled “President Trump is taking hydroxychloroquine as a COVID-19 preventative... So, WHO CARES?!” the website promoted the use of hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malaria drug also used to treat lupus, and inaccurately claimed that the drug generally does not cause side effects.

In a video clip from Beck's Blaze TV show that accompanied the article, Beck said that if President Trump is "taking hydroxychloroquine, you can take just that by itself and it's fine. It's a drug that has been around forever. There's no heart palpitations or anything else." Later, Beck added that "there's no harm in taking it," and "hydroxychloroquine is — by itself — is not a dangerous drug. It's like Prozac. And it's been out forever. People can take it without real side effects."

Contrary to Beck's claim in the video, hydroxychloroquine has been known to cause serious side effects, including heart problems. In April 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration published guidance on the drug, writing that "we would like to remind health care professionals and patients of the known risks associated with both hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine." The FDA added, "Hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine have not been shown to be safe and effective for treating or preventing COVID-19. ... "Hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine can cause abnormal heart rhythms ... and a dangerously rapid heart rate called ventricular tachycardia."

In the same video, Beck praised President Trump for taking hydroxychloroquine to avoid contracting COVID-19, despite the fact that there was no evidence at that time whether the medication was proven to prevent the disease. "He should be taking anything that we know is relatively safe that might keep him out of trouble," Beck said.

Government and health authorities say that there is no evidence that the medication prevents people from contracting COVID-19. In addition to the FDA's guidance cited above, the New England Journal of Medicine released a study in June 2020 that concluded, "After high-risk or moderate exposure to Covid-19, hydroxychloroquine did not prevent illness compatible with Covid-19 or confirmed infection when used as postexposure prophylaxis within 4 days after exposure."

Because articles and videos on GlennBeck.com regularly distort facts to advance unsubstantiated or false claims, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not gather and present information responsibly.

The site does not state a corrections policy, and NewsGuard could not find examples of corrections in stories. Jon Boldt, the site's content coordinator, told NewsGuard in a November 2018 email that "since it's opinion based, there really aren't many reasons to issue corrections. From time to time we will update an article with updated information."

Boldt did not respond to two emails from NewsGuard in June 2020 inquiring about the site's editorial practices, and about the content cited above.

GlennBeck.com clearly discloses its political perspective, writing on Beck's About page that Beck "is a leading voice for conservatism and is a staunch defender of the Constitution, individual liberties, and free markets." Because the website's content reflects its disclosed perspective, and because GlennBeck.com does not label its content as either news or opinion, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not handle the difference between news and opinion irresponsibly.

Headlines, while often emotive and opinionated, are generally accurate and reflect the content of articles.

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#### Transparency

GlennBeck.com's only reference to Mercury Radio Arts, its parent company, is in a small copyright notice on the bottom of each page, nor does the site provide any information about the company. This does not meet NewsGuard's standards for disclosing ownership.

Although the site features a detailed biography of Beck, it does not say that he, or anyone else, is in charge of the editorial content.

Articles are generally attributed to "Blaze TV Staff" instead of authors. The site does not publish a staff list or provide information about its content creators. Beck often does not identify the other people who appear in his videos.

Asked in November 2018 about the site's lack of disclosure about its owner, Boldt told NewsGuard, "I'd assume the domain name is a clear indication of who

owns the site. If you look at the bottom left on the homepage, you can see it says it is owned by Mercury Radio Arts, which is Glenn's company.”

Asked about the lack of disclosure of editorial leadership, Boldt said, “Everything that goes on the site runs through me first, but the site is glennbeck.com not jonboldt.com so I take a backseat when it comes to taking credit for things. The vision and direction for the site comes from Glenn and I execute that vision.”

Boldt did not respond to two emails from NewsGuard in May 2020 inquiring about the site’s failure to identify content creators.

Advertising is distinguishable from editorial content.

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## History

According to his biography on GlennBeck.com, Beck started in radio as a Top 40 DJ and moved to talk radio in 2001, “after a series of life-changing events.” Beck’s radio show, The Glenn Beck Program, became nationally syndicated in 2004 and is aired on more than 400 radio stations in the U.S.

Beck previously hosted a nightly commentary show for CNN, and then moved to host a show on Fox News from 2008 to 2011.

In 2010, Beck founded The Blaze, a conservative media network that includes a website, radio and TV programming.

*Editor’s Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on July 4, 2020, and its rating was changed, to reflect NewsGuard’s determination that GlennBeck.com does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for gathering and presenting information responsibly, and for identifying content creators, but does meet NewsGuard’s standard for avoiding deceptive headlines. The criteria checklist has been adjusted accordingly.*

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

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