

# disrn.com

A conservative news site founded by the owners of a popular satire site that has advanced misleading and inaccurate claims, including about the COVID-19 pandemic.



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

**Score: 57/100**

## Ownership and Financing










Disrn is published by Disrn, LLC, a privately held company registered in Michigan.

Adam Ford, founder of the Christian satire site The Babylon Bee, and Seth Dillon, the Babylon Bee's owner, founded and own Disrn.com, according to a 2019 article published on the website.

"So yes, the guy who founded the Babylon Bee and the guy who now owns the Babylon Bee have created a real news site for you. What a time to be alive," Ford wrote in the article.

Ford is also Disrn, LLC's CEO.

Disrn.com runs advertisements and sells T-shirts, mugs, and hats in a site store.

-  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)

## Content

Disrn primarily publishes short summaries of news stories reported by other outlets. The site's tagline is "Brief, Smart, Faithful." In a September 2019 article announcing the website's launch, Ford wrote that Disrn stood for "Discern." "We immerse ourselves in the hectic news cycle every day and pluck out just what you need to know, discerning the important and interesting from the superfluous and hopelessly spun. What you end up with is succinct, intelligent reporting on the issues you care about, minus all the noise."

The site publishes content that advances conservative, Christian views, with stories sorted into categories including Politics, Culture, Crime, Good News, Abortion, Guns, and Religious Liberty. The site also features a podcast, hosted by Ford.

Typical articles might include a report about the arrest of a Christian preacher in China; a story about the capture of five men in an Arizona "sexual exploitation

*Criteria are listed in order of importance.*

[More information.](#)

sting”; another, alleging that senate Democrats had blocked a Republican pandemic relief bill; and an opinion article arguing that “There is no ‘woke Christianity.’ There’s Wokism or there’s Christianity.”

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Credibility

Articles on Disrn.com are primarily based on the reporting of other news organizations, ranging from The Associated Press to conservative sites such as the National Review and Fox News. The website has also cited reporting by organizations that NewsGuard has found to have published misleading and unsubstantiated claims, such as The Federalist and Breitbart.

Articles generally link to the original article that is summarized. Headlines generally reflect content.

The website has repeatedly published debunked and unsubstantiated claims, including about the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, in September 2020, the site published an article titled, “Chinese virologist claims she has proof coronavirus came from Chinese lab,” which reported, “An escaped Chinese virologist plans to release evidence she says will prove that COVID-19 was manufactured in the Wuhan Institute of Virology” in Wuhan, China, where the COVID-19 virus first emerged.

A June 2020 article, titled “Norwegian scientist claims coronavirus was made in Chinese lab,” asserted, “A Norwegian scientist has claimed the novel coronavirus that has infected more than 6.7 million people worldwide was manufactured in a Chinese lab.”

The articles did not include evidence or interviews that rebutted these claims. However, an abundance of scientific evidence and research, as of September 2020, has determined that the virus most likely has natural origins. A study published in the journal Nature in February 2020 found the new virus’s genome is “96 percent identical” to a bat coronavirus. A March 2020 study published in Nature Medicine concluded that the virus “is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated virus.” In an April 2020 statement, the U.S

intelligence community said it “concur[s] with the wide scientific consensus that the COVID-19 virus was not manmade or genetically modified.”

In a July 2020 article, Disrn.com promoted the inaccurate claim that the anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine is an effective treatment for COVID-19. The article, titled “Hydroxychloroquine ‘significantly’ lowers coronavirus death rate, new study finds,” reported on the results of a study by the Henry Ford Health System, asserting that “The research center found that the use of the controversial drug touted by President Trump as a possible treatment for the virus undoubtedly ‘helped save lives.’”

The article did not provide any details about how the study was conducted, nor did it mention that, although U.S. President Donald Trump has praised the medication’s efficacy for coronavirus, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has cautioned against using it. In June 2020, after more medical research about the drug’s potential side effects and efficacy emerged, the FDA revoked its emergency use authorization that allowed hospitals to use the drug to treat COVID-19 patients.

The Henry Ford Health System study was criticized by medical experts because it was not randomized — a feature of study design in which patients are randomly assigned to receive a treatment. Larger, randomized clinical trials have found that hydroxychloroquine did not provide beneficial effects to COVID-19 patients. In June 2020, United Kingdom researchers ended the use of hydroxychloroquine in a large trial, called the RECOVERY trial, that had involved 4,600 patients. “We have concluded that there is no beneficial effect of hydroxychloroquine in patients hospitalised with COVID-19,” according to a statement by researchers Martin Landray and Peter Horby of the RECOVERY trial.

In a September 2019 article titled “Facebook commits ‘outrageous act of censorship’ against pro-life group,” Disrn reported that “Facebook had censored a pro-life activist group for its claim that abortion is ‘never medically necessary.’” Disrn defended the group’s

claim, suggesting that its argument was based on expert opinion: “Live Action [the pro-life group] claimed that an abortion is never a medical necessity, citing ‘thousands of OB-GYNs across the globe,’ according to the [Christian] Post. Facebook cited an ‘abortion doctor’ and an ‘abortion trainer’ in its assessment.”

According to medical experts, there are several circumstances under which abortion can be medically necessary. In the case of an ectopic pregnancy, as described by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the embryo implants outside the uterus, can not be moved, and is nonviable; allowing the pregnancy to continue would endanger the life of the mother, and abortion is considered medically necessary. “If the ectopic pregnancy has ruptured a tube, emergency surgery is needed. Sometimes surgery is needed even if the fallopian tube has not ruptured,” ACOG states on its website. “In these cases, the ectopic pregnancy can be removed from the tube, or the entire tube with the pregnancy can be removed.”

The Kaiser Family Foundation published a report on late-term abortions in December 2019, which named as reasons for them “Life threatening conditions” such as “early severe preeclampsia, newly diagnosed cancer requiring prompt treatment, and intrauterine infection (chorioamnionitis) often in conjunction with premature rupture of the amniotic sac (PPROM).” According to the report, “if these conditions arise before the fetus is viable, the pregnant individual may pursue termination of pregnancy to preserve their own health.”

In a September 2019 post on its site, ACOG released a joint statement with Physicians for Reproductive Health which read, in part, “As physicians, we are focused on protecting the health and lives of the patients for whom we provide care. Without question, abortion can be medically necessary.”

Because Disrn has promoted false and debunked claims, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not gather and present information responsibly.

The site does not articulate a corrections policy, and NewsGuard found no corrections published by the website.

In September 2019, when the website launched, co-founder Adam Ford told the Daily Caller about Disrn's perspective, "Our news articles will be objective, but we will report on things that Christians and conservatives care about."

Disrn does not disclose a Christian, conservative perspective on the website, which does not feature an About page. Although NewsGuard found several articles that seem to support conservative views, such as favorable coverage of President Trump, the website has also published stories that are critical of the administration's COVID-19 response and others that present Democratic views. Because its coverage has included some opposing points of view and because articles do not typically contain opinionated language, NewsGuard has determined that the website does not handle the difference between news and opinion irresponsibly.

NewsGuard sent three emails to Ford, Disrn's CEO, and another email to the site's general contact form, seeking comment on the site's publication of inaccurate and unsubstantiated claims and its lack of corrections, but received no reply.

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Transparency

While Disrn names Disrn, LLC on its Terms of Service and Privacy Policy pages, the website does not centrally disclose its ownership in a user-friendly manner, or make clear that Ford, of the Babylon Bee, is the company's CEO and site co-founder.

The site does not identify its editors.

Articles consistently name their authors and link to an author page providing biographical information.

Advertisements are typically distinguishable from editorial content.

NewsGuard sent two emails to Ford, and another to the site's general contact form, seeking comment on the site's failure to accessibly identify its ownership and editors, but received no reply.

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## History

Disrn launched in September 2019. Its parent company, Disrn, LLC, was founded in October 2018. The website's domain was registered in April 2019.

**Written by:** [Bron Maher](#)

**Edited by:** [Amy Westfeldt](#)

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

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