

Media Ownership in New Zealand from 2011 to 2020

*A longitudinal data analysis
of the information gathered by
AUT's research centre for
Journalism, Media and Democracy*

Saing Te

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In the case of New Zealand, the task of monitoring media corporations has become increasingly challenging. Data on media company revenues, circulations, and market share are no longer easily available from company or industry websites. The reasons for this deserve comment; they indicate a sharp decline in corporate accountability.

Martin Hirst, Wayne Hope, and Peter Thompson, “Australia and New Zealand.” In *Global Media Giants*, edited by Benjamin Birkinbine, Rodrigo Gómez and Janet Wasko, 2017.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACP	Australian Consolidated Press (later rebranded ACP Magazines)
APN	Australian Provincial Newspapers Holdings (later rebranded APN News & Media)
ARN	Australian Radio Network
ASX	Australian Securities Exchange
Commission	The Commerce Commission
CSM	Coliseum Sports Media
HT&E	Here, There & Everywhere (formerly known as APN News & Media)
KPEX	Kiwi Premium Ad Exchange consortium
Māori TV	Māori Television
MWHL	MediaWorks Holdings Limited
NBR	The National Business Review
News Corp	News Corporation
NZ Herald	The New Zealand Herald
NZME	New Zealand Media and Entertainment (previously Wilson & Horton Limited and later, APN News & Media)
NZX	New Zealand Stock Exchange
NZPA	New Zealand Press Association Limited
Oaktree Capital	Oaktree Capital Management
ODT	The Otago Daily Times
QMS	QMS Media Limited
RNZ	Radio New Zealand
Sky TV	Sky Network Television Limited
TRN	The Radio Network
TVNZ	Television New Zealand Limited

Foreword

Dr Merja Myllylahti and Dr Greg Treadwell

This report was commissioned by the Journalism, Media and Democracy (JMAD) research centre, and it was authored by Doctoral Candidate Saing Te during her Summer scholarship. The report offers a unique longitudinal analysis of the JMAD New Zealand Media Ownership Reports from 2011 to 2020. It observes some of the main shifts in media ownership and ownership patterns. Four major themes or phases of ownership can be recognised from this work. In general, the ownership has moved from multinational, corporate ownership to financial and independent media ownership, although there are exceptions. For example, Newshub is owned by entertainment corporation Discovery.

- Phase 1: multinational, corporate ownership
- Phase 2: a short period of media mogul ownership
- Phase 3: media financial & private equity ownership
- Phase 4: independent media ownership

Two cases illustrate these phases and shifts in ownership patterns well. During the ten-year period, Stuff changed its name and ownership: the company has been owned by media corporations, media moguls, and financial institutions. In 2020, it was bought by CEO Sinead Boucher, and the company became independent. Similarly, NZME has gone through a name change and multiple ownership shifts. In 2012, its largest shareholder was Independent News & Media, a media corporation. In 2015, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp took (shortly) a major stake in the company. By 2020, 46.5% of NZME shares were owned by five financial institutions, and the majority of its shares were in the hands of financial institutions. What comes to media moguls, it is worth noting that while New Zealand has not had a similar media mogul ownership as Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, media moguls — both Gina Rinehart (Fairfax Media) and Rupert Murdoch (APN, Sky TV) have held substantial media assets in New Zealand. In 2012, Rinehart became the largest shareholder in Fairfax Media, but she sold all holdings in 2015. In the same year, 2015, Murdoch's News Corp purchased 15% of APN (NZME) shares which were later sold.

Preface

On the tenth anniversary of Auckland University of Technology's research centre Journalism, Media and Democracy (JMAD) and its New Zealand Media Ownership Report, this study was commissioned to extract key patterns of media ownership over the past decade. A related objective was to build a timeline to observe the periods when there has been a substantial change in media ownership. As such, this report looks closely at the ownership of four commercial companies— New Zealand Media and Entertainment (formerly APN News & Media), Stuff (formerly Fairfax Media), MediaWorks and Sky TV — and their control over the New Zealand media environment. It also briefly discusses the role of public broadcasting plus small and alternative media in the country. It also considers the impact 'Big Tech' has had on the media landscape. At the end of the report is a timeline detailing shifting ownership patterns and media sector arrangements from 2011 through to 2020.

The annual JMAD reports document how commercial imperatives and technological advances have affected the ownership and direction of media companies in New Zealand. In general, the digital shift resulted in audiences migrating away from traditional media towards other digital services, many of which were 'free'. Since media consumption was no longer bound by time and space, the marketplace for news, information, and entertainment expanded. The digital transformation also enlarged advertisers' choice. Now, a host of new competitors including global tech behemoths and small local independent outlets have appeared and vied for the limited attention of the New Zealand audience. However, these developments have not reduced the prevailing levels of media concentration.

The convoluted nature of the ever-evolving media industry is complex and often changes, as such detailing the main interest is complicated. Notwithstanding these challenges, the research presented in the JMAD reports shows that there is a disjuncture between the importance ascribed to journalism and the investment in preserving and enhancing its viability. Overall, the shifting ownership patterns and the financial struggles of many media outlets underscore the fact that plurality, diversity, and quality in the media landscape are not guaranteed. But the rise of independent digital media sites and the take up of digital news subscriptions and voluntary contributions suggest there is some appetite for high-quality journalism. Still, in this constantly evolving, networked world, leadership is needed to ensure and improve the public's access to pertinent information.

Introduction

Writing in 2008, Bill Rosenberg found that “four companies, all overseas owned, dominate the New Zealand news media. There is a near duopoly in two of the three main media — print and radio — a monopoly in pay television, and only three significant competitors in free-to-air television including the state-owned channels.”¹ In the first JMAD report published in 2011, Merja Myllylahti observed that little had changed. The ownership of New Zealand newspapers, magazines, television and radio were still dominated by the same four multinational companies. Moreover, the duopolies and monopoly were still largely in place. The key media outlets were APN News & Media (controlled by the Irish media organisation, Independent News & Media and Denis O’Brien’s Baycliffe Limited), Fairfax Media (controlled by Australian financial institutions), MediaWorks (controlled by the Australian equity firm, Ironbridge), and Sky TV (controlled by American multinational mass media corporation, News Corporation). APN News & Media and Fairfax Media were trans-Tasman media firms and the market leaders of print in New Zealand. APN News & Media along with MediaWorks dominated radio broadcasting. On pay television, Sky TV had a monopoly. And given the absences of cross-media ownership policies, APN News & Media and MediaWorks both dominated their adjacent markets. The former had a large influence in print publishing and radio broadcasting, while the latter had major control over radio and television broadcasting. Myllylahti noted in 2011 that these media firms were “primarily owned by international financial institutions and a handful of foreign media moguls.”²

By the end of 2020, in New Zealand, APN News & Media and Fairfax Media no longer existed and, in its place were the trading company, New Zealand Media and Entertainment (NZME) and the independently owned, Stuff. Also, in the news industry, following the ascendance of online platforms, there were more media offerings such as *The Spinoff*, *Newsroom*, and *The Dig*. As a result, there are more players in the marketplace. From 2011 to 2020, MediaWorks also saw changes to its operations and core businesses. It started the decade as a television and radio broadcaster but by the end of the decade, it had acquired an advertising business and sold its television operations to the American multinational giant, Discovery, Inc. In pay television, Sky TV started the decade largely under the control of Rupert Murdoch’s News Limited (a subsidiary of the global media giant, News Corporation) but in 2013, it sold all its shares in the broadcaster. Over time, as more local and global competitors emerged Sky TV lost its stronghold on the market. Also notable during the period was the expansion of large and powerful media organisations such as Google and Facebook. So, by the end of 2020, New Zealand media ownership was starkly different from what it was in 2011. In general, for the period under review, New Zealand media ownership was characterised by the selling out of media companies by notable families, the influence of multinational corporations, growing financialisation, the expansion of Facebook and Google, and the rise of independently owned and locally operated news and current affairs outlets.³

¹ Bill Rosenberg, *News Media Ownership in New Zealand* (2008), 1.

² Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2011* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2011), 5.

³ Also see Wayne Hope, “New Zealand Media Ownership: History and Obfuscation,” *Briefing Papers*, December 12, 2017.

The Ailing Print Industry and Digital Transformation

Concentration of ownership, as in any industry, increases the political and commercial power of the owners — in this case at both national and international levels — and delivers to them the ability to fix prices, control coverage, and undermine the conditions that give journalists the strength to resist improper pressures on what they report: strong unions, secure jobs, the ability to change employers, and good working conditions. But it does not follow that competition in itself necessarily brings diversity of voices — particularly in countries with populations as small as New Zealand or Australia, but even in larger countries like the US the diversity is limited. Debate where it occurs is usually within a more or less narrow band of opinion. Thus if we focus on competition, it must be on the competition of ideas, and that will only be genuinely released when the commercial aspects of news media production are minimised or removed altogether. Hence we have the vital need for public-interest broadcasting, whether government or community owned. Perhaps we also need public-interest print media. There is a gap waiting to be filled — that is for a quality national daily newspaper.

Bill Rosenberg, *News media ownership in New Zealand*, 2008

In *Journalism in Crisis*, Núria Almiron wrote that with few exceptions, the beginning of the 21st century saw many large media firms have more “financial links and dependencies.”⁴ She explained that “the problem was the high level of leverage of all media companies due to an irrational race for growth supported by expectations and capital markets.”⁵ Almiron went on to observe, “The solution offered for indebtedness was even more debt, and the dramatic drop of quotations allowed for more concentration of the market as weaker and/or smaller firms are susceptible to be swallowed up by larger ones.”⁶ This was the case for Fairfax Media, the former owner of the New Zealand publications *The Dominion Post* and *The Press*. Andrea Carson noted that the value of the media company was once over AU\$7 billion but by 2013, this figure had fallen to about \$1.3 billion.⁷ Eventually, in July 2018, following years of mismanagement and power struggles it was taken over by Nine Entertainment. This put an end to Australia’s oldest media empire.⁸ Afterwards, in May 2020, it was announced that Nine Entertainment had sold the New Zealand assets of Fairfax Media — Stuff (formerly Fairfax New Zealand) — to its current chief executive Sinead Boucher for one dollar.⁹

For the period under review, APN News & Media also had tough financial environments, which forced them to downsize, asset strip, and cut costs. In September 2014, the company bundled its remaining New Zealand

⁴ Núria Almiron, *Journalism in Crisis: Corporate Media and Financialization*, trans. William McGrath (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2010), 152.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Andrea Carson, “Billions Lost, Boards to Blame: Colleen Ryan on the Rise and Fall of Fairfax,” *The Conversation*, June 30, 2013.

⁸ Colleen Ryan, *Fairfax: The Rise and Fall* (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2013).

⁹ Luke Malpass and Tom Pullar-Strecker, “Stuff CEO Sinead Boucher Buys the Company, Announces ‘Great New Era’,” *Stuff*, May 25, 2020.

businesses together and relaunched it as New Zealand Media and Entertainment (NZME).¹⁰ Then, in June 2016, it demerged NZME and in the following month, the organisation was listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange (NZX) and Australian Securities Exchange (ASX). Consequently, by the end of 2017, APN News & Media sold all its traditional publishing assets. It went on to specialise in outdoor advertising and radio broadcasting, rebranding itself into Here, There & Everywhere (HT&E).

The demise of APN News & Media and Fairfax Media can also be attributed to the ascendancy of the internet as well as a lack of leadership. For instance, Colleen Ryan wrote that the fall of Fairfax Media was brought about by the failure of its board, who were consumed by power but lacked knowledge of the business.¹¹ In general, the development of the internet, coupled with the uptake of technological devices brought about a decline in print circulation and advertising revenue (particularly, classified advertisements). Traditional media companies had gone on to reconfigure their approach to producing news, developing new digital and e-commerce portfolios but these were largely unable to offset the losses from print (Appendix A). As a result, they had to cut costs. Examples of and details about cost-cutting measures as well as the boardroom politics and power plays were discussed, as they unfolded, in the annual JMAD publication.

News and Financialisation

Overall, data gathered in the JMAD reports showed that from 2011 to 2019 inclusive New Zealand's newspaper industry was largely controlled by multinational companies, which were primarily controlled by international financial institutions. Foreign media moguls did have a presence, but they were not the primary players. For instance, late in 2011, John B Fairfax's family investment company, Marinya Media, sold all its shares in Fairfax Media.¹² Additionally, late in 2010, Gina Rinehart's Australian company Hancock Prospecting had started amassing shares in Fairfax Media. By February 2012, her company had the largest shareholding in the media company, acquiring a 14% shareholding.¹³ There were reports that Rinehart was considering a full-takeover of Fairfax Media in 2013, however, in 2015, she had sold her stake in the company.¹⁴

In the first JMAD report, Myllylahti found that in 2010, financial institutions held a 24.1% stake in Fairfax Media and a 54.6% stake in APN News & Media.¹⁵ The following two years saw financial institutions more than double their control of Fairfax Media (they obtained a 52.7% shareholding in the company).¹⁶ By 2015, this figure had risen to 84.3%.¹⁷ At APN News & Media, the influence of financial institutions continued to intensify, reaching 87.0% by the end of 2014.¹⁸ The growing relationship between finance capital and large media companies suggests that the conventional notion of outlets being controlled by a media mogul is no

¹⁰ Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2014* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2014).

¹¹ Ryan, *Fairfax: The Rise and Fall*.

¹² Ben Butler, "John B. Fairfax Sells out of Company That Bears His Name," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, November 11, 2011.

¹³ Sarah Thompson, Anthony Macdonald, and Jake Mitchell, "Gina Rinehart Sells out of Fairfax Media," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, February 6, 2015. Also see Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2012* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2012).

¹⁴ Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2014; New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2015* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2015).

¹⁵ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2013* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2013).

¹⁶ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2012*.

¹⁷ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2015*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

longer accurate.¹⁹ This is also in keeping with the observations of Eli Noam and the International Media Concentration Collaboration. They found that “for the developed world, larger and growing faster is the ownership by fairly anonymous financial institutions that own, on behalf of their fund investors, narrow slices of a very big pie.”²⁰ This leads to the question of whether the demands for ever-increasing profits by shareholders, comes at the expense of editorial independence, innovation, and long-term growth.²¹

In 2016, NZME and Fairfax New Zealand planned to merge their companies to create a larger entity. In their May 27, 2016 application to the Commerce Commission (Commission), the publishers remarked that the proposal was in “response to the dramatically transforming media landscape.”²² They drew attention to the fact that New Zealand’s “internet penetration and smartphone ownership are among the highest in the world.”²³ Then, they went on to explain that the merger would enable them to compete against Google and Facebook — the market leaders in digital advertising. It would also improve their operational efficiency, enhancing their journalistic offerings.²⁴ In the application, they outlined a list of local competitors, these included online news publishers, magazines, and blogs, and went on to detail their global rivals. They pointed out that digital convergence meant that they were now competing against large international media websites, such as *The New York Times* and *The Daily Mail*.²⁵ Moreover, there were aggregator websites like *Google News* and *Yahoo! News* that recycle their work. These sites also direct people towards and by extension, away from content.²⁶ Despite the arguments and claims put forth by the two companies, the merger proposal was declined. The Commission stated that it was “not satisfied that the merger will not have, or would not be likely to have, the effect of substantially lessening competition in a market. The Commission is also not satisfied that the merger will result, or will be likely to result, in such a benefit to the public that it should be permitted.”²⁷

NZME and Fairfax New Zealand pursued the case to the High Court and then, the Court of Appeal, albeit unsuccessfully. The appeals centred around the level of consideration the Commission gave to non-economic factors. The appellants argued that the Commission went beyond its mandate by overlooking the economic gains from the proposal over fears of a loss of media plurality or diversity. However, the Courts accepted most of the justifications made by the Commission and refused to authorise the merger. This series of events and outcomes bring two main questions to the fore: Is it possible to reconcile the financialised aims of media companies with their public interest role? And, how do we define the scope of that market?

¹⁹ Of note, Sir Julian Smith has controlled the Allied Press since 1986. The New Zealand company produces the Otago Daily Times (ODT), ODT online, Channel 39 and community newspaper publications and magazine titles. In a recent interview with Newsroom’s South Island correspondent David Williams, the now retired Smith remarked that in the future he would like to see the ownership of the company remain in the family. At present, his sons and niece work in industry. David Williams, “Mediaroom: Papers, Paywalls and Public Money,” *Newsroom*, September 18, 2018.

²⁰ Eli Noam and The International Media Concentration Collaboration, eds., *Who Owns the World’s Media?: Media Concentration and Ownership around the World*(USA: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1333.

²¹ Penelope Abernathy, *News Deserts and Ghost Newspapers: Will Local News Survive?*(Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

²² Fairfax New Zealand Limited and Wilson & Horton Limited, “Notice Seeking Authorisation or Clearance of a Business Acquisition s and Authorisations Pursuant to S 67(1) of the Commerce Act 1986,” May 27, 2016, 2.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 80.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ See Merja Myllylahti, “An Attention Economy Trap? An Empirical Investigation into Four News Companies’ Facebook Traffic and Social Media Revenue,” *Journal of Media Business Studies* 15, no. 4 (2018).

²⁷ Mark Berry et al., “Determination: NZME Limited and Fairfax New Zealand Limited [2017] NZCC 8,” (The Commerce Commission), 1.

For instance, in February 2018, 28 community newspapers were closed or sold by Stuff (Appendix B). At the time, the Australian chief executive Greg Hywood explained, “The business has to sustain its earnings and if there are parts that aren’t doing their bit we have to make the decision to rationalise them and that is what we have done.”²⁸ His comment highlights how the popular metaphors of journalism as ‘watchdogs’ and the ‘fourth estate’, that is, holding those with power to account, are not necessarily fitting descriptions of how the industry actually works.²⁹ The lack of journalists in rural communities brings into question the coverage of local council activities and can have implications for transparency and accountability.³⁰ Research also suggests that community and rural papers help to foster participation and a sense of belonging in the wider community.³¹ And as Rasmus Kleis Nielsen noted, “Local journalism does not always play its roles well, but the roles it plays are important.”³²

Notwithstanding the challenges of the ever-evolving media environment, both media companies have retained their dominance of the print news market (Appendix C). The recent data gathered by the market research company Roy Morgan showed that newspaper titles published by NZME and Stuff dominate the print news market (Table 1). However, in 2019 and 2020, the audience for print was largely declining. In 2020, the readership of every metropolitan newspaper fell, with Stuff’s *Waikato Times* declining the most, losing about 28% of its 2019 print audience. However, the readership of some community newspapers grew. For example, the audience for NZME’s *Whanganui Chronicle* was up by 41.9%. The information gathered by the New Zealand Audit Bureau of Circulations also supports some of Roy Morgan’s findings (Table 2). It showed that the two traditional publishers controlled the market and that readership was declining. However, for each surveyed period the average net circulation had fallen but with one exception – *The Ashburton Guardian*.

The figures obtained from Roy Morgan also showed that traditional publishers have control over online news. Additionally, statistics gathered by Myllylahti revealed that for the two-surveyed period, the most visited media website from desktop and mobile was stuff.co.nz, with a total number of 87 million in 2017 and 118 million visits in 2020 (Table 3).³³ *The NZ Herald’s* website, nzherald.co.nz, followed with 63 million site visits in 2017 and 116 million in 2020. Of the listed websites, site visits to Stuff and NZME far exceeded those of their local competitors. However, each news and current affairs website demonstrated signs of growth. The websites of Newsroom and Newshub grew the most. Overall, these results indicated that over time, there are more digital news consumers, suggesting that media is increasingly moving online.

²⁸ Susan Edmunds and Tom Pullar-Strecker, “Stuff to Sell or Close 28 Community and Rural Newspapers,” *Stuff*, February 21, 2018.

²⁹ See Maxwell E McCombs and Donald L Shaw, “The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1972); Melvin Mencher, *News Reporting and Writing* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000).

³⁰ In 2019, NZ on Air and RNZ launched a new Local Democracy Reporting service with the Newspaper Publishers’ Association. See Merja Myllylahti and Wayne Hope, eds., *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2020); Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2016* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2016); Merja Myllylahti and Sarah Baker, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2019* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2019).

³¹ Luke Dickens, Nick Couldry, and Aristeia Fotopoulou, “News in the Community?,” *Journalism Studies* 16, no. 1 (2015).

³² Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, “Introduction: The Uncertain Future of Local Journalism,” in *Local Journalism: The Decline of Newspapers and the Rise of Digital Media*, ed. Rasmus Kleis Nielsen (London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2015), 2.

³³ Myllylahti and Hope, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020*.

Table 1: Total Cross-Platform Audience (Print & Online) for Newspapers in the 12 months to June 2019 and 2020³⁴

Publication	Print			Online			Total Cross-Platform Audience		
	12 months ending June 2019	12 months ending June 2020	% Change	12 months ending June 2019	12 months ending June 2020	% Change	12 months ending June 2019	12 months ending June 2020	% Change
	000's	000's		000's	000's		000's	000's	
NZ Herald	782	674	-13.8%	1,545	1,537	-0.5%	1,885	1,844	-2.2%
The Dominion Post	297	245	-17.5%	309	282	-8.7%	485	432	-10.9%
Northern Advocate	63	71	12.7%	77	70	-9.1%	118	129	9.3%
Waikato Times	145	104	-28.3%	140	138	-1.4%	250	214	-14.4%
Bay of Plenty Times	83	73	-12.0%	120	112	-6.7%	172	155	-9.9%
Rotorua Daily Post	52	40	-23.1%	60	63	5.0%	87	94	8.0%
Gisborne Herald	50	42	-16.0%	52	49	-5.8%	73	73	0.0%
Taranaki Daily News	54	52	-3.7%	80	91	13.8%	114	118	3.5%
Whanganui Chronicle	31	44	41.9%	34	44	29.4%	56	85	51.8%
Hawke's Bay Today	88	92	4.5%	85	115	35.3%	146	177	21.2%
Manawatu Standard	44	37	-15.9%	63	67	6.3%	98	93	-5.1%
Wairarapa Times-Age	32	26	-18.8%	18	42	133.3%	45	59	31.1%
The Press	227	185	-18.5%	189	195	3.2%	344	314	-8.7%
Otago Daily Times	138	111	-19.6%	153	194	26.8%	238	253	6.3%
Nelson Mail	32	29	-9.4%	63	71	12.7%	78	89	14.1%
Ashburton Guardian	16	19	18.8%	17	25	47.1%	29	40	37.9%
Timaru Herald	26	22	-15.4%	42	39	-7.1%	60	54	-10.0%
Southland Times	75	49	-34.7%	63	72	14.3%	121	101	-16.5%
Sunday Star Times	265	217	-18.1%	63	69	9.5%	309	273	-11.7%
Sunday News	58	35	-39.7%	40	32	-20.0%	90	66	-26.7%

Source: Roy Morgan. (2021). Readership in New Zealand, 12 Months to June 2020. Retrieved January 9, 2020 from <http://www.roymorgan.com/industries/media/readership/readership-new-zealand>. Also see Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2020).

³⁴ The publications in the blue shaded boxes are newspaper titles published by NZME, publications in the grey shaded boxes are newspaper titles published by Stuff, and the publication in the green box is owned by the Allied Press.

Table 2: Press audit results from 2017 to 2019³⁵

Publication	Average Net Circulation to 31/12/2017	Average Net Circulation to 31/03/2018	Average Net Circulation to 30/09/2018	Average Net Circulation to 31/03/2019	Average Net Circulation to 30/09/2019
Daily Press > 25,000					
The Dominion post	46719	45723	42703	39626	36652
NZ Herald	115213	113752	108790	104266	100073
The Otago Daily Times	32417	32145	31728	30948	30067
The Press	47470	46441	43225	39758	37002
Daily Press < 25,000					
Ashburton Guardian	4438	4461	4431	4357	4306
Bay of Plenty Times	11735	11562	11156	10758	10162
The (Rotorua) Daily Post	5987	5897	5643	5467	5207
The Gisborne Herald	5626	5576	5390	5186	5037
Greymouth Star	3639	3566	3531	3473	3433
Hawkes Bay Today	17322	17112	16647	16242	15690
Manawatu Standard	7872	7600	7025	6450	5983
The Northern Advocate	10809	10696	10371	10042	9676
The Southland Times	16491	15953	14619	13164	11897
Taranaki Daily News	13396	13001	12093	11226	10426
The Timaru Herald	8081	7819	7149	6435	5825
Waikato Times	18235	17755	16600	15489	14380
Wairarapa Times-Age	5188	5185	5164	5129	5084
Whanganui Chronicle	8275	8167	7918	7773	7498
Weekly Press					
Herald on Sunday	82848	82373	79887	77751	75232
Sunday News	15364	14547	13202	12062	11115
Sunday Star-Times	75005	73024	68723	63538	58005
Non-Daily Press					
The Marlborough Express	4901	4737	4333	3915	3575
Northland Age	3328	3254	3121	3009	2869
The Beacon	6285	6201	6080	6010	5942
The Nelson Mail	8565	8298	7584	7044	6510

Source: The New Zealand Audit Bureau of Circulations. (2021). Newspaper Audit Results. Retrieved January 9, 2020 from http://newspaper.abc.org.nz/audit.html?org=npa&publicationid=%25&mode=embargo&npa_admin=1&publicationtype=19&memberid=%25&type=%25.

³⁵ The publications in the blue shaded boxes are newspaper titles published by NZME, publications in the grey shaded boxes are newspaper titles published by Stuff, and publications in the green boxes are published by the Allied Press.

Table 3: New Zealand news sites total visits

Website	Total visits from desktop and mobile (millions)		% of change
	May- Jul 2017	Jul-Sept 2020	
Stuff	87.0	118.0	36%
NZ Herald	63.0	116.0	84%
TVNZ	19.4	29.3	51%
Newshub	8.7	24.3	179%
The Spinoff	3.7	5.2	41%
Newsroom	0.6	3.3	445%
RNZ	-	0.4	-

Source: As cited in Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2017* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2017); *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2020).

The data also showed that unlike the print market, Stuff and NZME face more competition online. Today, publishers are broadcasters and vice versa. Put differently, traditional media companies no longer offer a standalone product or service. Moreover, the establishment of *The Spinoff* in 2014—a digital online magazine covering a range of issues including politics and pop culture and *Newsroom* in 2017—a news and current affairs site—illustrated that media production is increasing (Appendix D). Another significant emergence is weblogs or blogs (Appendix E). Some well-known bloggers can earn revenue through advertising and other streams, but most blogs are largely a voluntary activity.³⁶ The prominent blogs provide analysis and commentary as well as expert knowledge and insights. In some instances, blogs have challenged and outdone mainstream media. For instance, in October 2013, *the Whale Oil Beef Hooked* run by the right-wing blogger Cameron Slater exposed the extramarital affair of Auckland Mayor Len Brown and in 2015, left-leaning Martyn Bradbury's *The Daily Blog* broke the story about Prime Minister John Key's hair-pulling pranks on an Auckland waitress.³⁷ But blogs do not necessarily temper or reverse the crisis in journalism and politics. For instance, the revelations in Nicky Hager's 2014 publication, *Dirty Politics*, found that Slater had working relationships with public relations companies, National Party members, parliamentary staff, and mainstream media.³⁸ So, while there is optimism about blogs enhancing the public debate there are also legitimate concerns over their contents and level of influence.

For digital media businesses, there is also competition from 'Big Tech'. In *Who Owns the World's Media?*, Eli Noam and the International Media Concentration Collaboration wrote that "as media move online and worldwide, the pressures toward rising concentration are an economic reality. The Internet, the hoped-for-solution, is becoming part of the feared problem."³⁹ Exemplifying this position, data obtained by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission stated, "for a typical AU\$100 spent by advertisers on online advertising in 2019, \$53 went to Google, \$28 to Facebook and \$19 to all other websites and ad tech.

³⁶ Henry Farrell and Daniel Drezner, "The Power and Politics of Blogs," *Public Choice* 13 (2018): 27.

³⁷ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2013*; *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2015*.

³⁸ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2014*.

³⁹ Noam and The International Media Concentration Collaboration, *Who Owns the World's Media?: Media Concentration and Ownership around the World*, 9.

This is an increase to both Google and Facebook from \$49 and \$24 respectively in 2018.”⁴⁰ Similarly, in 2017, the Commission noted that in New Zealand, Facebook and Google have an increasing share of digital agency advertising expenditure.⁴¹ Additionally, according to data obtained by Myllylahti for 2019 and 2020, the dominant website in New Zealand was google.com (Table 4).⁴² The multinational company was often followed by YouTube and Facebook. It is important to point out that Google acquired YouTube, the video-sharing website, in 2006 for a reported US\$1.65 billion.⁴³ In 2019 and 2020 the most active social media platform was YouTube. It was followed by Facebook, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram. All three platforms share the same owner. These trends suggest that the two digital behemoths, Facebook and Google, dominate the digital media marketplace.

Table 4: Most visited websites and active social media platform in 2019 and 2020

Ranking	2019		2020	
	Most-visited websites	Most active social media platforms (survey based)	Most-visited websites	Most-used social media
1	Google.com	YouTube	Google.com	YouTube
2	Youtube.com	Facebook	YouTube.com	Facebook
3	Google.co.nz	FB Messenger	Facebook.com	FB Messenger
4	Facebook.com	Instagram	Stuff.co.nz	Instagram
5	Trademe.co.nz	Pinterest	NZHerald.co.nz	Pinterest
6	Netflix.com	Snapchat	Netflix.com	WhatsApp
7	Stuff.co.nz	WhatsApp	Google.co.nz	Snapchat
8	Wikipedia.org	LinkedIn	TradeMe.co.nz	LinkedIn
9	Reddit.com	Skype	Wikipedia.com	Twitter
10	NZHerald.co.nz	Twitter	Metservice.co.nz	Skype

Source: As cited in Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2019* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2019); *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2020).

The business models of these internet giants are built on complex algorithms, sustained by copious supplies of data. New data is gathered and added to existing data, which is then used to improve the algorithms. These companies strive for a continuous cycle of development and enhancement. Also, Facebook requires users to log in to access their products, allowing them to gain specific insights and paves the way for targeted messages, content, and advertisements. The collected information and insights are then sold to advertisers and third-party businesses. Moreover, these platforms have continued to acquire smaller businesses and develop new offerings that support them to expand in existing and new markets.

⁴⁰ Australian Competition & Consumer Commission, *Digital Platform Services Inquiry. Interim Report: September 2020* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2020), 3.

⁴¹ Berry et al., "Determination: NZME Limited and Fairfax New Zealand Limited [2017] NZCC 8."

⁴² Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2016*; Myllylahti and Hope, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020*.

⁴³ "Google Buys Youtube for \$1.65bn," *BBC News*, October 10, 2006.

Their dominance raises questions over competition and consequently, whether there are effects on consumer choice, the price of advertising, and innovation.

Since much of the digital advertising revenue is captured by Facebook and Google it complicates the business of traditional media.⁴⁴ These internet giants are aggregators of news and information, that is, they republish and distribute other organisations' products, largely without bearing any of the cost. As Noam and the International Media Concentration Collaboration pointed out, "Media content is typically expensive to produce but cheap to reproduce. Media platforms such as networks are expensive to create but cheap to extend to additional users."⁴⁵ These platforms also act as 'gatekeepers' by suggesting content for users to consume or experience via search engines and social media networks. So, while Facebook and Google are not direct substitutes for many traditional media platforms, they are arguably the biggest competitors. Of note, towards the end of the decade, political leaders world-wide were starting to develop an understanding of the need for greater fairness and transparency into how these tech giants operate. These issues continue to unfold on the political scene and in the courtroom.⁴⁶

As Noam and the International Media Concentration Collaboration mentioned, the new modern media marketplace evoked a sense of optimism, especially about the future of journalism. It was thought that technological advances would enable the development of more digital products and services — and in New Zealand it has. At present, there are more independent news-related sites than at any other time since the JMAD reports began (Appendix D). The ubiquitous nature of the internet has also led to new global competitors. For instance, the British daily newspaper, *The Guardian*, has become one of the most viewed sites for global news.⁴⁷ In 2019, it expanded its New Zealand coverage by hiring one full-time journalist in the country.⁴⁸ At first, this development suggests an enhancement of the public sphere but it also brings into question what impacts this will have on local journalism. That is, will New Zealand consumers support the *Guardian* over the offerings of local organisations? Stated differently, the issue is financial sustainability — can local media entities survive and excel in a globally connected media environment?

It is important to point out that there are also Māori, ethnic, and smaller news outlets. In terms of representation and perspectives in journalism from Māori voices, the Government funds Māori language news and current affairs out of its statutory Treaty of Waitangi obligations.⁴⁹ Of note, in 2018, Māori TV announced that for the first time in its 14 years of operation it was undergoing "significant changes." Subsequently, all four of its news and current affairs programmes — *Kawekōrero*, *Native Affairs*, *Rereātea* and *Te Kāea*— were amalgamated into one programme, *Te Ao Māori News*.⁵⁰ There are also Māori audience targeted newspapers (e.g., *Tihei Kahungunu*), magazines (e.g., *Te Karaka*), and newsletters. In addition,

⁴⁴ See Merja Myllylahti, *Google, Facebook and New Zealand News Media: The Problem of Platform Dependency* (The Policy Observatory, 2018).

⁴⁵ Noam and The International Media Concentration Collaboration, *Who Owns the World's Media?: Media Concentration and Ownership around the World*, 10.

⁴⁶ See Adam Satariano, "Big Fines and Strict Rules Unveiled against 'Big Tech' in Europe," *The New York Times*, December 15, 2020; Ben Brody and David McLaughlin, "Google Hit with Third US Antitrust Suit in Two Months," *Aljazeera*, December 17, 2020; Tony Romm and Elizabeth Dwoskin, "U.S. Vs. Facebook: Inside the Tech Giant's Behind-the-Scenes Campaign to Battle Back Antitrust Lawsuits," *The Washington Post*, December 23, 2020.

⁴⁷ It is part of the Guardian Media Group that is owned by the Scott Trust. The revenue obtained from the newspaper does not go to shareholders, rather it is reinvested into its journalism. See The Guardian, "About the Guardian," <https://www.theguardian.com/about>.

⁴⁸ Duncan Grieve, "The Guardian Launches New Zealand Expansion," *The Spinoff*, November 1, 2020.

⁴⁹ For a more in-depth discussion about Māori media see Atakohu Middleton, "Māori-Language and Māori-Interest Media."

⁵⁰ Māori Television, *2018/19 Annual Report* (Māori Television, 2019).

there are publications targeting specific ethnic groups and issues such as the *Chinese Herald*, *The Indian News*, and the *Multicultural Times*. These outlets are often smaller than traditional media companies. Chris Atton explained that alternative and community media “is on media that bypass the usual channels of commercial production and distribution, and that are most often organised and produced by ‘ordinary’ people, local communities and communities of interest.”⁵¹ So, they provide content and perspectives that are not necessarily represented in mainstream news and can challenge concentrations of media power. However, they tend to have limited resources, reduced scope, and range.

The most recent JMAD publication detailed the impacts that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on New Zealand media organisations. Of note, in April 2020, the magazine industry was in crisis following the announcement that the German conglomerate Bauer Media Group would exit New Zealand.⁵² Using the advertising downturn from the coronavirus pandemic as a justification, it dropped magazines out of circulation and laid off some 237 staff.⁵³ By that time, the media conglomerate was the largest and most influential magazine publisher in the country.⁵⁴ It had acquired several magazine publishers of New Zealand titles, purchasing ACP Media (e.g., *Metro*, *North & South* and *Women’s Day*) in 2012 and APN Specialist Publications NZ Limited (e.g., *New Zealand Woman’s Weekly*, *The Listener*, *Simply You*, *Simply You Living* and *Crème*) in 2014.⁵⁵ As such, there was a sense of trepidation over the future of the industry when it folded. However, in June 2020, it was announced that Bauer Media’s trans-Tasman titles would be sold to the Australian investment firm, Mercury Capital. A month following, Mercury Capital stated it would sell some titles and resume publishing others.⁵⁶ Of note, several former Bauer Media employees have since launched their own magazines.⁵⁷

Overall, in 2020, some 637 media personnel were let go from the media industry.⁵⁸ At NZME, the workforce was cut by about 15%, which equated to about 200 staff. This was despite receiving NZ\$8.6 million from the wage-subsidy scheme.⁵⁹ For many in the news industry, advertising revenue had fallen but readership and subscription numbers were up for digital news sites.⁶⁰ It remains to be established if these results signify a trend or whether increased subscriptions were brought about by the increasing public reliance on journalism for news and information regarding the pandemic.

⁵¹ Chris Atton, "Introduction: Problems and Positions in Alternative and Community Media," ed. Chris Atton, *The Routledge Companion to Alternative and Community Media* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aut/detail.action?docID=2051843>. 1.

⁵² Bauer Media Group, "Bauer Media Group Discontinues Its Publishing Business in New Zealand," news release, April 2, 2020, <https://www.bauermedia.com/news/press-release-publishing-new-zealand>.

⁵³ Myllylahti and Hope, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020*.

⁵⁴ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2016*.

⁵⁵ In March 2020, Bauer Media acquired the Australian publisher Pacific Magazines (the publisher of titles, such as *New Idea*, *That’s Life!* and *Girlfriend*).

⁵⁶ Hannah Blackiston, "Bauer Media Completes Sale to Mercury Capital," *Mumbrella*, July 17, 2020.

⁵⁷ See Anuja Nadkarni, "The Resurgence of New Zealand’s Magazine Scene," *Stuff*, August 18, 2020.

⁵⁸ Myllylahti and Hope, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020*.

⁵⁹ Ibid; "NZME to Cut 200 Jobs as Advertising Revenue Plummets," *RNZ*, April 14, 2020.

⁶⁰ "NZ Herald Premium Subscribers Hit 93,000, NZME Looks to Sell Grabone," *The NZ Herald*, November 16, 2020; "New Zealand Herald and NZME Readership Soars During Covid-19 Crisis - Nielsen Data," *The NZ Herald*, September 10, 2020.

The Challenges of Broadcasting: The Sale of MediaWorks' Television Operations

Crises are, as it were, the irrational rationalisers of an always unstable capitalism.

David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism*, 2011

In New Zealand, there are three publicly funded broadcasters: Television New Zealand (TVNZ), Māori Television (Māori TV), and Radio New Zealand (RNZ). Of these three, TVNZ is a public-funded commercial entity. That is, as Myllylahti puts it, “Approximately 95[%] of its operations are funded by advertising, and its primary mandate is to pay a dividend to the New Zealand government.”⁶¹ It operates the channels TVNZ 1, 2, DUKE and its online on-demand platform. Also included are the digital news sites of 1news.co.nz and renews.co.nz. In 2011, its net profit was about \$2.1 million and its operating revenue was about \$377.9 million, of which advertising accounted for \$302.7 million.⁶² By 2019, its net profit grew slightly to \$2.9 million but its operating and advertising revenue had fallen to \$310.7 million and \$293.2 million. These figures suggest that its performance is relatively consistent and are indicative of the changing viewing habits of the audience. In its 2019 annual report, chief executive Kevin Kenrick wrote that the broadcaster was performing “well” relative to other local media outlets and underscored that its point of difference was its local content. Consequently, the broadcaster stated that it would not pay any dividends for the next three years, using the funds to reinvest in its operations.⁶³

Māori TV was established in 2004 to revitalise Māori language and culture. It is funded by the Government and Te Māngai Pāho. In 2019, the broadcaster’s total revenue was \$36.9 million, of which \$19.3 million came from the government and \$16.0 million from Te Māngai Pāho. Unlike its larger, commercial counterpart, TVNZ, Māori TV’s advertising revenue equated to \$685,000. The broadcaster has two channels, Māori TV and Te Reo (Maori language-learning) as well as its on-demand service, and Te Ao Māori News Online.⁶⁴ Over the years, the Māori media sector has undergone several reviews and internal restructuring. In 2017, Myllylahti remarked that “Māori TV had a turbulent period from 2014 to 2017 under Paora Maxwell’s management and many talented staff left the broadcaster when he headed the corporation.”⁶⁵ In 2018, it was reported that since its inception, the broadcaster has had no increase in funding from Te Māngai Pāho (who also provides funds for 21 iwi radio stations). In the same year, it was also announced that it was undergoing its largest review in 2019, as part of a reorientation towards a ‘digital-first’ approach.⁶⁶

RNZ was established in 1995 as an independent public service organisation. It broadcasts over the networks: RNZ National, RNZ Concert, the AM network, and RNZ Pacific. It also provides breaking news and

⁶¹ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2016*, 7.

⁶² TVNZ, *Annual Report for the Financial Year 2011* (TVNZ, 2011).

⁶³ *Annual Report for the Financial Year 2019* (TVNZ, 2019).

⁶⁴ Māori Television, *2018/19 Annual Report* (Māori TV, 2019).

⁶⁵ Merja Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2017* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2017), 38.

⁶⁶ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2018* (Journalism, Media and Democracy: Auckland University of Technology, 2018).

current affairs content on its platform RNZ News.⁶⁷ From 2007 till 2017, RNZ's funding remained unchanged, receiving about \$32 million per year from NZ On Air. In 2017, it was announced that the broadcaster would receive an additional \$2.84 million per annum for four years. This put an end to its decade-long funding freeze.⁶⁸ RNZ also had a period of restructuring, which resulted in the loss of 13 personnel in July 2015. Like other media outlets, it has adapted to the changing media environment by developing multimedia assets and pursuing content partnership deals with other outlets.⁶⁹ During this time, the broadcaster was rebranded from Radio New Zealand into the acronym "RNZ".

In the first JMAD report, Myllylahti wrote that New Zealand's public media space was shrinking following the repeal of TVNZ's charter and the closures of the commercial-free digital channel TVNZ7 and free-to-air broadcaster Stratos Television.⁷⁰ Broadcasting Minister at the time Jonathan Coleman explained that TVNZ was not able to function with a dual mandate of adhering to the charter and operating as a commercial entity. As such, the TVNZ Amendment Bill was enacted to allow the broadcaster to set its own mandate.⁷¹ The closures of TVNZ7 and Stratos were put down to funding issues. There was public outcry over the closure of TVNZ7, with some arguing that it served to largely benefit Sky TV.⁷² TVNZ7 had been launched in March 2008 to provide news and information coverage and Stratos Television had been delivering nationwide news and culture programmes since 2007. Their closure left Māori Television as the only non-commercial public television broadcaster.⁷³ Of note also in February 2013, TVNZ's flagship programme *Close Up* was replaced by *Seven Sharp*, which was marketed as offering a "fresh perspective". Later in November, the current affairs show *Sunday* was shortened by half an hour to allow time for *New Zealand's Got Talent*. Arguably, the pursuit of 'undemanding viewing' was aimed at attracting a larger audience. In 2019, there was speculation that the government was looking to make changes to TVNZ and RNZ, possibly a merger or the establishment of a new entity.⁷⁴ In 2020, this matter was still unresolved, although there were reports that the government was continuing its pursuit of a combined public broadcaster.⁷⁵

At the start of the period under review, the New Zealand based media company MediaWorks was a free-to-air television, radio and interactive media operator. It was a major player on radio networks and the television market, competing against NZME in the former marketplace and TVNZ in the latter. The *New Zealand Media Ownership 2011* report recorded that MediaWorks operates *TV3*, *FOUR*, and ten radio networks. It also noted that the company was heavily indebted and had been going through debt restructuring. In 2011, the company was embroiled in controversy over its deferment of a \$43 million government debt. Critics were perplexed as to why the government would offer the company, which was largely owned by the Australian private equity investment firm Ironbridge Capital, a 'bailout'. Following the outcry, the company indicated that it was in a solid financial state and did not need government assistance. This incident cast a spotlight on the relationship between the government, a foreign-owned media

⁶⁷ RNZ, "About RNZ (Radio New Zealand)," <https://www.rnz.co.nz/about>.

⁶⁸ Tom Pullar-Strecker, "Budget 2017: Radio NZ Funding Freeze Comes to an End," *Stuff*, May 25, 2017.

⁶⁹ In 2019, RNZ has more than 50 content partnership deals with other media services. See RNZ, *Annual Report 2019-2020* (RNZ, 2020).

⁷⁰ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2011*. Also see *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2012*.

⁷¹ NZPA, "TVNZ Charter Extinguished," *Stuff*, July 12, 2011.

⁷² See Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2011*.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Myllylahti and Baker, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2019*.

⁷⁵ Myllylahti and Hope, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020*.

enterprise, and a venture capitalist.⁷⁶ Also of note, around that time there were speculations that Sky TV would purchase MediaWorks' television channel *TV3*.

In 2012, MediaWorks financial struggles continued. Its earnings fell, it had large write-offs on its goodwill, and the interest on its loan rose. Despite various attempts to resurrect the broadcaster, in June 2013, it was placed into receivership and its assets sold to a new holding company, MediaWorks Holdings Limited. In reflecting on the management of the company, Myllylahti stated that it was funded by "debt rather than equity." She went on to explain, "Leverage helps both the investor and the company to operate, but it increases the likelihood of high interest expenses and credit default."⁷⁷ Following the sale of MediaWorks' assets, the Australian equity firm Ironbridge Capital, who had been the major owner of MediaWorks since 2007 was no longer involved with the company. Instead, the American private equity firm Oaktree Capital Management (Oaktree Capital) emerged as its largest owner and in June 2015, it took full control of the company.⁷⁸ The ownership changes also brought about a reorientation of the company's business, with more emphasis placed on ratings and advertiser appeal.⁷⁹ For instance, in October 2014, it was announced that the controversial broadcaster Paul Henry would front a new breakfast show, taking over *Firstline* on TV3.⁸⁰ In September 2015, it launched a gossip website *Scout*.⁸¹ Then, in May 2016, channel FOUR was replaced with the light entertainment channel Bravo.⁸² Of note also was the diminishing content on current affairs.⁸³ In May 2015, veteran journalist John Campbell's show *Campbell Live* was axed and replaced with a new current affairs program, *Story*.⁸⁴ Then, in 2016, TV3 reduced the budget for the flagship news and current affairs show *60 Minutes* by 40% and indicated that it would not renew its contract with the CBS television network to continue the show next year.⁸⁵ Arguably, like TVNZ, its television offerings were "dumbed down" to grow its audience.

In February 2017 — following a turbulent year, which saw the resignation of veteran newsreader Hilary Barry and consequently, its chief executive Mark Weldon — TV3 was rebranded as Three. Explaining the new logo, chief content officer Andrew Szusterman stated, "The world has changed [since 2003]; it was a world where there was no Netflix, there was no Amazon, there was no Hulu, there was no Lightbox, there was no Asos, and so '3' as a brand hasn't really evolved with that even though our content has."⁸⁶ These changes coincided with better results for the company, however, it was still making a loss. For example, for the financial year period ended December 31, 2018, it posted a loss of NZ\$5.5 million, which was an improvement from the loss of NZ\$5.7 million in 2017 and the loss of \$14.8 million in 2016.⁸⁷ In May 2019, it

⁷⁶ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2011*.

⁷⁷ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2013*, 13.

⁷⁸ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2014*; Paul McBeth, "Oaktree Takes Full Ownership of Mediaworks," *The NZ Herald*, June 6, 2015.

⁷⁹ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2013*; *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2014*.

⁸⁰ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2014*.

⁸¹ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2015*.

⁸² *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2016*.

⁸³ In 2015, MediaWorks also launched an integrated newsroom, Newshub. The brand consisted of television, radio, and an online news presence. See John Anthony, "Newshub Restructure Would Result in Fewer Than Five Redundancies, Source Says," *Stuff*, May 16, 2019.

⁸⁴ However, the show was short lived, going off air in November 2016 and in its place, was the new primetime current affairs and entertainment show *The Project*.

⁸⁵ Rod Vaughan, "Troubled Times for TV Current Affairs as Tvnz Chops Sunday in Half," *NBR*, July 11, 2018.

⁸⁶ Simon Wong, "From 3 to Three: Mediaworks Re-Brands Channel," *Newshub*, February 8, 2017.

⁸⁷ Damien Venuto, "Mediaworks Financial Results: Loss Narrows to \$5.5m," *The NZ Herald*, May 22, 2019.

was reported that the news division of MediaWorks was going through a restructure, with some suggesting that the focus on attracting audiences would come at the expense of hard journalism.⁸⁸

Earlier, in November 2018, it was announced that MediaWorks had signed a conditional merger agreement with Australian outdoors advertising firm QMS Media Limited (QMS). Of the merged entity, QMS would have a 40% stake in the business, while Oaktree Capital would hold the majority shareholding with 60%.⁸⁹ Then, in October 2019, following sustained financial losses, MediaWorks announced plans to sell its unprofitable television assets. At the time, former MediaWorks news chief Mark Jennings commented that at one point the company was offered for sale for about \$400 million but now that it is in a distressed asset sale it is unlikely to receive a financial windfall.⁹⁰ The financial statements for the year to December 2019 showed the scale of the company's problems. It reported a loss of \$25.1 million, much of which was attributable to an impairment on its property, plant and equipment assets. Its total liabilities for the same period also grew by \$158.34 million, totalling \$296.34 million.⁹¹ A spokesperson for the company was cited as stating "our FY19 results are outdated since Covid-19 has completely changed both our business and the market that we operate in."⁹² In an email to staff, chief executive Michael Anderson wrote, "[Covid-19] has also completely changed the market that we operate in and this means that we must adapt to ensure our survival and sustainability in the coming months."⁹³ Consequently, MediaWorks announced it was laying off 130 staff, primarily from its radio and sales teams. Earlier, in April, the company had requested all existing employees to take a voluntary pay cut of 15% for six months.⁹⁴ MediaWorks also applied for the wage subsidies, receiving \$8.6 million.

In June 2020, it was reported that American multinational media company Discovery, Inc. was keen to purchase MediaWorks' Three television business, including Newshub.⁹⁵ Then, in December, the sale was finalised. At the time, Discovery was operating six pay-television channels in the country and had been broadcasting in New Zealand since 1994.⁹⁶ Newshub reported that the acquisition paved the way for Discovery to combine its trans-Tasman businesses and increase its presence across the region.⁹⁷ This transition saw MediaWorks exit from the New Zealand commercial television broadcasting to focus on its radio and outdoor business.

In commercial radio broadcasting, MediaWorks and NZME controlled the market. From 2011 through to 2020, Myllylahti showed that the duopoly has not been challenged.⁹⁸ As stated earlier, in September 2014, APN News & Media separated its New Zealand operations under the new entity NZME, which included APN New Zealand, e-commerce business GrabOne, and The Radio Network (TRN). Later TRN was rebranded into

⁸⁸ Tom Pullar-Strecker and John Anthony, "Newshub Restructure May Result in 6pm News Bulletin Getting 'Softer', Head of Journalism School Says," *Stuff*, May 15, 2019.

⁸⁹ Myllylahti and Baker, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2019*.

⁹⁰ Mark Jennings, "Mediaworks' TV Sale: Who Can Save TV3 Now?," *Stuff*, October 18, 2019.

⁹¹ Duncan Bridgeman, "Mediaworks Posts \$25.1m Loss, Casts Doubt on Ability to Keep Going," *The NZ Herald*, June 12, 2020.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ "Mediaworks Announces 130 Job Losses," *RNZ*, May 25, 2020

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Damien Venuto, "Mediaworks TV Sale Nears Completion to US Giant Discovery, Sources Confirm," *The NZ Herald*, June 5, 2020.

⁹⁶ "Mediaworks Confirms Sale of TV Business to Discovery Inc," *The NZ Herald*, September 7, 2020.

⁹⁷ "Discovery, Inc to Combine Businesses across NZ, Australia Following Completion of Mediaworks TV Ltd Acquisition," *Newshub*, December 1, 2020.

⁹⁸ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2011; New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2020*.

NZME Radio. During the Covid-19 pandemic, NZME stopped the broadcasting of the country's only sports-dedicated radio station, *Radio Sports*. At the time of writing, its radio brands include *Newstalk ZB, ZM, The Hits, Coast, Radio Hauraki, Gold, Flava, Hokonui* as well as the digital radio service *iHeartRadio*. In its annual report for 2019, it states that it has 2.0 million radio listeners each month.⁹⁹ Its financial results for 2015 to 2019 showed that the revenue from radio has fallen. In 2015, revenue from Radio & Experiential totalled \$120.2 million but by the end of 2019, it had fallen to \$110.9 million. However, from 2016 to 2019 this revenue stream was relatively consistent, earning somewhere between \$110.1 to \$114.8 million each year. It needs to be highlighted that the losses incurred from its radio portfolio were less than in print (Appendix A).

MediaWorks operates nine stations, which consist of *Mai, The Edge, George FM, The Rock FM, More FM, The Sound, The Breeze, Magic* and *rova*. Its financial results for 2016, 2017 and 2018 showed that revenue from radio exceeded television. In 2016, revenue from its television assets were \$130.1 million and from the radio operations, \$155.3 million. For the 2017 financial year, its television revenue figures had fallen to \$129.3 million but its radio revenue had grown to \$159.3 million. The following year, its television revenue had risen to \$133.7 million while its radio revenue dropped to \$153.8 million.¹⁰⁰ In February 2021, MediaWorks website proclaimed that it has 2.4 million listeners every week.¹⁰¹

This overview shows that broadcasters were having to adapt to the changing media landscape as the audience fragmented and advertising competition increased. MediaWorks exit from the television market lessens its presence over the New Zealand media environment and paves the way for the American media giant Discovery, Inc. to expand its influence. For the period 2011 to 2020, radio broadcasters fared better than television broadcasters. This suggests that there is more product differentiation in radio content, making it harder to replicate or to find close rivals. However, the struggles in the media industry have not escaped the government. One possible solution for the public broadcasters, TVNZ and RNZ, is a merger. However, the establishment of a merged entity is not an easy task as there are conceptual and practical problems to overcome. But if this proposal proceeds, it will bring back the debate on media diversity and plurality across the media landscape as a whole.

⁹⁹ New Zealand Media Entertainment Limited, *Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2019* (NZME: 2020).

¹⁰⁰ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2017; New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2018*; Myllylahti and Baker, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2019*; Venuto, "Mediaworks Financial Results: Loss Narrows to \$5.5m."; "Mediaworks Financial Results: Radio Carries Television and Digital," *StopPress*, May 31, 2017.

¹⁰¹ MediaWorks, "Radio," <https://www.mediaworks.co.nz/home/advertise/radio.html>.

The Battle for Pay-TV: The Waning Control of Sky TV

... in an information-rich world, the wealth of information means a dearth of something else: a scarcity of whatever it is that information consumes. What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.

Herbert Simon, *Designing Organizations for an Information-Rich World*, 1971

According to Myllylahti, in 2011, “Sky TV’s satellite services already cover 51[%] of New Zealand homes.”¹⁰² It has been operating in the country since 1990 and has some 110 channels and premium channels for sports and movies. At the time, its main competitors were two free-to-air broadcasters, the state-owned TVNZ and MediaWorks. It was largely controlled by Nationwide News Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of News Corporation (News Corp), which held a 43.7% shareholding. This was followed by the New Zealand based firm, Todd Communications Ltd with 11.1%. In 2012, Todd Communications ended its 22-year involvement in the company, selling its share for a reported NZ\$218 million to the investment bank Credit Suisse Holdings. Shortly after those shares were sold to institutional investors.

For a long time, Sky TV was operating in an unregulated market environment and it had been expanding its portfolio. For example, in February 2006, following authorisation from the Commission, the sport and entertainment company acquired the free-to-air broadcaster, Prime. Also notable, late in 2011, Sky TV entered a joint venture with state-owned TVNZ to launch a low-cost subscription TV service, *Igloo*. In the partnership, Sky TV owned 51% and 49% was controlled by TVNZ. The Commission was subsequently tasked to explore whether the joint venture “would lessen the level of competition in the market substantially compared to the situation without the joint venture.”¹⁰³ It found that “the joint venture is unlikely to result in a substantial lessening of competition.”¹⁰⁴ Commenting on the dominance of Sky TV, Myllylahti found, in 2012, that Sky TV had a market share of 49%, higher than most developed nations. By comparison, the leading pay television company in the United Kingdom and Ireland had 37% market share, Australia had 27%, the United States of America had 19.5%, and Canada 18%.¹⁰⁵

The ownership structure of Sky TV was shaken up in March 2013 when News Corp sold all its shares.¹⁰⁶ Thereafter, financial institutions became prominent shareholders. In 2014, Myllylahti reported that financial institutions held 84.2% of the company’s shares. Then, in September 2017, six financial institutions controlled about 49.9% of Sky TV’s shares and by the end of 2020, this dropped to five financial firms

¹⁰² Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2011*, 15.

¹⁰³ The Commerce Commission, *Investigation Report: The Joint Venture between Television New Zealand Limited and Sky Network Television Limited, Igloo*, 5.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰⁵ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2012*.

¹⁰⁶ *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2013*.

owning 38.6% of the company. For much of the decade, there were rapid changes in the ownership of Sky TV as financial institutions conducted quick trading.

Over time, the delivery and consumption of video content evolved, shifting from fixed television schedules to video-on-demand and online streaming. That is, consumers via the internet can watch programs and events wherever and whenever they want. As a result, there was a host of new competitors in the marketplace of entertainment and sports viewing. For instance, in June 2013, it was reported that Coliseum Sports Media (CSM) had partnered with TVNZ to acquire the broadcast rights to the Premier League from 2013/14 to 2015/16 in New Zealand.¹⁰⁷ Then, in the following year, it was announced that CSM and Spark had entered a 50-50 joint venture to launch a subscription-based sports streaming service, *Lightbox Sport*. There were also new streaming video-on-demand services. Early in 2012, Australia's leading online movie rental company *Quickflix* entered the market. Then, in 2015, *Netflix*, *Yahoo TV*, and NZME's *WatchMe* were all launched.¹⁰⁸ They were followed by *Prime Video*, *Apple TV+* and *Disney+*.

In February 2015, in response to the changing marketplace, Sky TV launched the subscription video-on-demand service, *Neon*. Then, in June 2016, the company announced plans to acquire Vodafone New Zealand. In its application seeking clearance to merge, the companies argued that the larger entity would enhance New Zealand's media environment.¹⁰⁹ However, the Commission declined to grant clearance, explaining that it "was unable to exclude a real chance that the merger would result in a substantial lessening of competition in the relevant broadband and mobile services markets."¹¹⁰ Following the ruling, Sky TV and Vodafone relented on their consolidation ambitions. Of the proposed merger, Myllylahti pointed out that it was "a new situation" because there exists no "national regulatory structure to deal with this kind of convergence."¹¹¹ Here, the integration would have been between two organisations specialising in different products and industries — a media company and a telecommunication provider.

Of note, in 2017, Sky TV's chief executive officer John Fellet stated that piracy was its "biggest competitor". It went on to take legal action against TVNZ, Stuff, and NZME.¹¹² Sky TV's financial figures for 2017 were indicative of how competitive the marketplace of pay television had become, with its revenue and net profit after tax dropping to \$893.5 million (2016: \$928.2 million) and \$116.3 million (2016: \$147.1 million).¹¹³ For the period under review, 2016 was the first year that Sky TV's net profit after tax fell, while 2017 marked the first year that its revenue declined.¹¹⁴ Thereafter, the broadcaster's revenue and net profit continued to drop. In 2018, it wrote down the value of its assets by \$360 million, resulting in a net loss of \$240.7 million (adjusted net profit after tax was \$119.3 million). The following year, it wrote off a further \$670 million from its 'goodwill', posting a net loss of \$607.8 million (adjusted net profit after tax was \$97.4 million).¹¹⁵ In

¹⁰⁷ Ian McPherson, "Coliseum and Tvnz Oust Sky as EPL Broadcasters," *SportsPro*, June 19, 2013.

¹⁰⁸ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2015*.

¹⁰⁹ Sky Network Television Ltd and Vodafone Europe B.V., "Commerce Act 1986: Section 66: Notice Seeking Clearance," June 29, 2016.

¹¹⁰ Mark Berry et al., "Determination: Vodafone Europe B.V. And Sky Network Television Limited [2017] NZCC 1. Sky Network Television Limited and Vodafone New Zealand Limited [2017] NZCC 2" (The Commerce Commission), 7.

¹¹¹ Myllylahti, *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2016*, 57.

¹¹² *New Zealand Media Ownership Report 2017*, 34.

¹¹³ Sky Network Television Limited, *Annual Report 2017*(Sky TV: 2017).

¹¹⁴ *Annual Report 2011* (Sky TV: 2011); *Annual Report June 2013*(Sky TV: 2013); *Annual Report June 2015*(Sky TV: 2015).

¹¹⁵ *Annual Report 2019*(Sky TV: 2019).

2020, the broadcaster reported another net loss after tax of \$156.8 million, which included an impairment charge of \$177.5 million (adjusted net profit after tax was \$41 million).¹¹⁶

In summary, technological developments have impacted heavily on the production and consumption of entertainment and sport. Consumers are no longer bound by time or place. In New Zealand, the marketplace of pay television has widened. The rise of on-demand video and online streaming platforms has brought about more competitors for Sky TV, lessening its control over the pay-television market. This brings attention to the ever-evolving nature of the business and the importance of knowing about this.

¹¹⁶ 2020 Annual Report(2020).

Conclusion: Protecting Independent Journalism

The first JMAD report documented how, historically, four key commercial companies — APN News & Media, Fairfax Media, MediaWorks, and Sky TV — have dominated New Zealand newspapers, radio, and television (although they also had other media interests). Then, the subsequent reports show that over time these four stated companies control over the New Zealand media environment have waned. For the period 2011 to 2020, media ownership changes were largely characterised by the influence of multinational companies, growing financialisation of media firms, and the rise of locally owned and operated news and current affairs outlets.

By the end of 2020, in print publishing, the giant Australian media companies have exited the New Zealand market. At the time of writing, NZME, previously APN News & Media, is a listed company, with its substantial shareholders being Australian financial institutions. It retains both newspaper and radio interests. Stuff, previously Fairfax Media, is independently owned. Both publishers dominate domestic news and current affairs consumption in print and online. Also notable for the industry was the growing presence of independently owned and locally operated news and current affairs websites along with the expansion of Facebook and Google.¹¹⁷ For MediaWorks, the 2010s was a period of sustained financial struggle. At one point, it was placed in receivership. On December 1, 2020, its television division, including *Newshub*, was sold to American media giant Discovery, Inc. Sky TV has long held a monopoly over the coverage of various content such as sports and movies but following the advances in, and uptake of, broadband its influence has lessened. As new rivals emerged, its annual revenue, profit, and share price fell. These transformations in the industry have highlighted the ever-evolving nature of the business of producing news, information, and entertainment. The consequence is that media businesses no longer provide a standalone product or service. Increasingly, competition is coming from adjoining markets, giving rise to concerns over the emergence and influence of conglomerate multimedia firms.

Initially, it was thought that the internet would pave the way for media plurality since the low entry barrier allowed more players into the marketplace. And while this has happened, the resources, level of visibility, and audience reach of these smaller proprietors are substantially less than their larger counterparts. Moreover, large media outlets have developed various content partnerships with other organisations, leading to the question of media influence on public opinion. That is, how much of the same information circulates the media environment? The optimism surrounding the internet's contribution to content diversity has also tapered as the digital shift has paved the way for 'Big Tech' to dominate world-wide. Of note, during the Covid-19 pandemic, prime minister Jacinda Ardern often bypassed traditional media forums to use Facebook Live for public communication. The unregulated nature of social media and its impingement on the news industry gives rise to concerns over framing, agenda-setting, and propaganda.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Also of note, in September 2020, veteran journalist Bernard Hickey started a subscription-only daily newsletter about Aotearoa's political economy called 'The Kaka' via Substack. Substack is a medium that disperses subscription-based content that connects writers with readers. Consumers can search for newsletter contents they like and subscribe.

¹¹⁸ See Maxwell McCombs, "A Look at Agenda-Setting: Past, Present and Future," *Journalism Studies* 6, no. 4 (2005); Robert M. Entman, "Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power," *Journal of Communication* 57, no. 1 (2007); George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016); Jarred Prier, "Commanding the Trend: Social Media as Information Warfare," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (2017); Douglas Kellner, "Donald Trump and the Politics of Lying," in *Post-Truth, Fake News: Viral Modernity & Higher Education*, edited by Michael Peters et al., (Singapore: Springer, 2018).

Concern over media concentration came to the fore following the proposed merger of Sky TV and Vodafone NZ, and NZME and Stuff. While the Commission refused to allow these acquisitions, the proposals spotlight the future of different communication sectors and bring to attention the issue of competitiveness of local media services against international players. The merger proposals also raise questions about how to conceptualise media concentration in this globally connected world. The government does wield some influence in the industry, with its ownership of TVNZ, Māori TV, and RNZ. But like their commercial counterparts, these broadcasters dealt with challenging financial environments alongside changes in their control and direction. At present, the government is reviewing the future direction of RNZ and TVNZ as well as the Māori media sector. The outcomes of government decisions are likely to reshape the New Zealand media environment and its market structures.

Timeline – Event highlights from 2011 to 2020

Jan 2011	Sky TV launches isky.co.nz.
Feb	MediaWorks launches the daily deal website Cudo.
Mar	APN News & Media ownership in the daily deal site GrabOne increases to 75%. It is reported that MediaWorks took up a 2009 Government provision to defer payment of \$43million for its radio spectrum licences.
Apr	Fairfax Media and APN News & Media announces that they are pulling out of NZPA. Telecom NZ sells its 49% share in Yahoo! Xtra.
May	Yellow launches the new digital community directory YellowLocal.
Jun	NZ Post launches the online directory Localist.
Jul	The TVNZ Charter is abolished. Fairfax Media launches the website Auckland Now to provide coverage on sport, news, and entertainment for the Auckland area.
Aug	Fairfax Media announces the 34% sale of TradeMe
Sep	APN News & Media launches the news service APNZ.
Nov	John B. Fairfax confirms that his company, Marinya Media, will sell all its 9.7% share in Fairfax Media.
Dec	Fairfax Media's initial public offering of TradeMe raises A\$364m.
Mar 2012	The streaming TV and movie service Quickflix launches.
May	Vincent Burke and Laurie Clarke launch the free-to-air platform Choice TV on Freeview. The Commerce Commission launches an investigation into Sky TV's contracts with internet service providers.
Jun	APN News & Media acquires 82% of the e-commerce business brandsExclusive, for A\$36m. Government stops funding TVNZ 7, resulting in its closure.
Aug	APN News & Media acquires 100% of GrabOne. Barry Colman sells NBR to Todd Scott (management buyout). APN News & Media writes-down its New Zealand publishing assets by A\$485m. APN News & Media announces the closure of Aucklander. Veteran journalist Bernard Hickey launches a website offering public interest journalism, journalism.org.nz.
Sep	The German conglomerate Bauer Media Group buys ACP Magazines from Nine Entertainment. APN News & Media relaunches its website for and a tablet format of the <i>NZ Herald</i> . TVNZ announces the closure of <i>Close Up</i> . Fairfax Media launches Stuff Nation, which allows users to contribute to its content.
Oct	Vodafone NZ completes its acquisition of TelstraClear. Kordia Networks merged with Orcon, forming Kordia NZ.

- MediaWorks pays-in-full its deferred payments to the government.
- TRN announces that *iHeartRadio* will be launched in Australia and NZ in 2013.
- Fairfax Media announces that its Sunday papers will merge with its digital media in Auckland.
- The Shopping Channel* launches on Sky TV and Freeview.
- Nov Todd Corporation announces the sale of its 11% interest in Sky TV for \$218m.
- Bernard Hickey places on hold his plans for journalism.org.nz due to a lack of funding.
- APN News & Media's *The Listener* places its full weekly edition online and behind a paywall.
- Dec The free-to-air nationwide broadcaster Stratos Television ceases its operations.
- Sky TV along with TVNZ launched Igloo.
- Feb 2013 TVNZ replaces its current affairs programme *Close Up* with *Seven Sharp*.
- Privately owned regional paper the *Whakatane Beacon* places its publications behind a paywall.
- Mar News Corp sells all its stake in NZ Sky TV.
- Apr Tertiary student Ben Uffindell launches the online satirical newspaper *The Civilian*.
- APN News & Media sells the *Christchurch Star* and *Oamaru Mail* newspapers to Christchurch-based Mainland Media.
- Jun MediaWorks goes into receivership.
- CSM and TVNZ acquired the broadcast rights to the Premier League from 2013/14 to 2015/16.
- Jul It is uncovered that the phone records of Fairfax Media's press gallery report Andrea Vance were given to a ministerial inquiry.
- Investigative journalist Nicky Hager states that the phone calls of freelance journalist Jon Stephenson and his associates were monitored by the New Zealand Defence Force.
- Aug TVNZ closes its youth channel, *TVNZ U*.
- Financial advisory firm KordaMentha announces that a conditional sale and purchase agreement is reached between MediaWorks (in receivership) and MediaWorks Holdings Limited (MWHL).
- The Government Communications Security Bureau and Related Legislation Amendment Bill passes, allowing the government more powers to surveil journalists and media organisations.
- Sep TVNZ sells down its share in Igloo to 34%.
- Oct The Commerce Commission issues a formal warning to Sky TV over contracts with telecommunications retail service providers.
- It is reported that MediaWorks' TV3's *Nightline* will be replaced by *The Paul Henry Show*.
- Vodafone NZ launches a full television service using the ultra-fast broadband network.
- The blog site *Whale Oil Beef Hooked* operated by Cameron Slater breaks the news of Auckland Mayor's Len Brown's extra-marital affair.

- Te Arawa journalists and NZME launch *Māngai Nui - Voices of Te Arawa*, the first Māori newspaper in mainstream media.
- RNZ launches the youth-focused website, thewireless.co.nz.
- Nov APN News & Media announces that it intends to sell its New Zealand magazine business to the German multimedia conglomerate Bauer Media Group.
- MediaWorks came out of receivership after selling its assets to MWHL.
- TVNZ's cuts its *Sunday* broadcasting time in half to allow for the screening of *NZ's Got Talent*.
- The public journalism project Public Eyes (also known as the Aotearoa New Zealand Foundation for Public Interest Journalism) launches.
- Feb 2014 APN News & Media acquires all the shares of ARN and TRN (owned by the US giant Clear Channel).
- Mar MediaWorks launches its video-on-demand service, *3NOW*.
- There is controversy surrounding the appointment of Paora Maxwell as the chief executive of Māori TV.
- Jun MediaWorks launches the free-to-air music television channel *The Edge TV* and the time shift service *Four Plus 1*.
- Fairfax Media announces that its print works sites in Auckland and Hamilton will close within three months.
- Jul Discovery, Inc. acquires The Living Channel New Zealand.
- Aug Spark launches the subscription internet television service *Lightbox*.
- Sky TV bans a series of Slingshot's advertisements because of its global mode service.
- Nicky Hager publishes *Dirty Politics*, revealing the influence that politicians, public relations professionals, and blogs can have on journalism.
- APN News & Media's Ellerslie print works began printing several of Fairfax Media's titles, including the *Waikato Times*, *Sunday Star-Times*, and *Sunday News*.
- Sep APN News & Media announces that it is considering an initial public offering and share market float for its New Zealand business.
- APN News & Media announces that it will introduce a metered paywall across its New Zealand digital news brands by March next year.
- APN News & Media's New Zealand assets (including TRN and GrabOne) are renamed as New Zealand Media & Entertainment (NZME).
- Oct Sky TV secures a conditional agreement for the right to air New Zealand Rugby Union and other South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Argentina (SANZAAR) union matches, for five years.
- TVNZ announces that it is planning to outsource most of its Māori and Pasifika programmes from 2015.
- Nov Canadian media company Blue Ant Media acquires a majority stake in Choice TV.
- Fairfax NZ managing director Simon Tong states that Stuff may charge for some specialist content.

Dec	<p>APN News & Media writes-down the value of its New Zealand newspaper titles by \$54m.</p> <p>Spark's Lightbox and CSM form a joint venture called Lightbox Sport.</p> <p>CSM reveals that it secured rights to the global, professional golfing tours (i.e., PGA TOUR LIVE and WORLD GOLF PASS).</p> <p>MediaWorks announces plans to merge its radio, online, and television newsroom while pursuing digital revenue streams.</p>
Jan 2015	<p>MediaWorks announced that it will take over the production of Sky TV's <i>Prime News</i> bulletin from March.</p>
Feb	<p>Sky TV launches the internet television service <i>Neon</i>.</p>
Mar	<p>Netflix launches in the country.</p> <p>NBR launches <i>NBR Radio</i>, a pre-recorded broadcast that is streamed.</p> <p>YahooNZ reports that it would cut all ten of its editorial positions.</p>
Apr	<p>MediaWorks announces that American investment management firm, Oaktree Capital now had a 77.8% share of the company.</p> <p>MediaWorks' management confirms that it is reviewing the future of TV3's current affairs program, <i>Campbell Live</i>.</p> <p>MediaWorks confirms plans to shorten TV3's <i>Sunday</i> evening news hour in favour of an hour-long mix of news and current affairs programme, <i>3 Degrees</i>.</p>
May	<p>Fairfax Media announces that its New Zealand newsrooms would focus on providing a 'digital-first' news delivery.</p>
Jun	<p>Scoop introduces an 'Ethical Paywall' (public creative commons + commercial use licenses).</p> <p>The American investment firm Oaktree Capital takes full ownership of MediaWorks.</p> <p>Fairfax Media's neighbourhood website Neighbourly launches nationally.</p>
Jul	<p>Yahoo NZ launches <i>Yahoo TV</i>, a free streaming platform that offers exclusive premieres, box sets and TV on demand.</p> <p>Freeview launches a new service allowing viewers to stream content from <i>TV One</i>, <i>TV2</i>, <i>TV3</i>, <i>FOUR</i>, <i>Māori TV</i> and about 20 other channels from the internet directly to their TV.</p>
Aug	<p>NZME delivers Fairfax Media's newspapers in the Hawke's Bay area. The distribution partnership is expected to extend to the Waikato region.</p>
Sep	<p>Scoop's operating company transfers into a charitable trust, the Scoop Foundation for Public Interest, dedicated to the promotion of public interest journalism.</p> <p>iHeartRadio NZ partners with the NBR to add <i>NBR Radio</i> to its platform.</p> <p>NZME announces that it planned to create one "world-class" newsroom in Auckland</p> <p>Fairfax Media teams up with Sky Sport, allowing rugby fans to live stream the World Cup games on stuff.co.nz for a fee.</p>
Oct	<p>It is reported that TVNZ is restructuring its newsrooms.</p> <p>MediaWorks, Stuff, NZME and TVNZ create the Kiwi Premium Ad Exchange consortium (KPEX).</p> <p>The Radio Amendment Bill is introduced, ending RNZ's eight-year-long funding freeze.</p>

Nov	NZME launches the video streaming service <i>WatchMe</i> . Radio New Zealand rebrands itself on-air as the acronym 'RNZ'.
Dec	MediaWorks announces that its current affairs programme, <i>3D</i> (previously <i>3 Degrees</i>), has been cancelled.
Jan 2016	The Pacific Media Centre and Evening Report editor Selwyn Manning launch the Pacific content news website <i>Asia Pacific Report</i> .
Mar	The start-up publishing platform, iAppNetwork, launches.
Apr	The <i>ODT</i> is the first major news publisher to introduce a metered paywall. Māori current affairs show <i>The Hui</i> airs.
May	APN News & Media and Fairfax Media announce the possibility of a merger between NZME and Fairfax's NZ media assets. MediaWorks forms a joint venture with NBC Universal.
Jun	NZME demerges from APN News & Media and floats on the ASX and NZX. Sky TV and Vodafone NZ announce merger plans. The Canterbury Migrants Centre launches the fortnightly newspaper <i>The Migrant Times</i> .
Jul	It is reported that Māori Television is rebranding to grow its broadcast and online audience. RNZ and Fairfax Media enter into a partnership to provide Stuff's audience with audio and video content from RNZ and <i>The Wireless</i> .
Aug	NZME announces a joint online venture with the Chinese Herald that would see the development of the new digital platform the <i>Chinese New Zealand Herald</i> . Fairfax Media writes-down the value of its Australian and New Zealand media divisions by nearly A\$1b (of which A\$95m is against its New Zealand publishing businesses).
Sep	NZME and Fairfax Media sign a merger implementation agreement subject to various approvals. TVNZ rebrands <i>TV One</i> to <i>TVNZ 1</i> , <i>TV2</i> to <i>TVNZ 2</i> , and <i>One News</i> to <i>1 News</i> . TVNZ announces plans to stream its TV channels on a single site. MediaWorks partners with Vevo to become its exclusive premium video sales partner in New Zealand. NZ on Air announces the establishment of a single funding agency, the NZ Media Fund to allocate its investments. The Voyager Media Awards drops the category of blogs from its awards.
Oct	NZME and the Chinese Herald launch the website chinesenzherald.co.nz .
Nov	The Commerce Commission's draft determination declines the preliminary merger proposal between NZME and Fairfax NZ.
Dec	Amazon launches the video-streaming service <i>Prime Video</i> .

Jan 2017	MediaWorks launches a new digital audio streaming platform called ' <i>rovd</i> '.
Feb	Spark signs a partnership deal with Netflix, offering free access to its standard services with a two-year broadband contract. The Commerce Commission refuses to sign off on the merger of Sky TV and Vodafone NZ. The crowd-funding platform PressPatron launches. It aims to help audiences support news organisations.
Mar	The publication dates of the <i>Marlborough Express</i> drops from seven to three. Tim Murphy and Mark Jennings launch the digital-only news and current affairs site <i>Newsroom</i> . <i>Newshub</i> launches a new weekday news bulletin on <i>Three</i> called ' <i>Newshub Live at 4pm</i> '.
Apr	NBR launches <i>NBR Rear View</i> to offer radio content. Parliament is presented with a petition signed by 32,337 people to increase funding to RNZ.
May	RNZ's eight-year funding freeze came to an end with the announcement that an additional \$2.84 million in the Budget is being assigned to the national broadcaster. The Commerce Commission declined the proposal to merge Stuff and NZME. The two companies appeal the decision to the High Court.
Jun	Sky TV and Vodafone NZ abandon their merger ambitions. <i>The Nelson Mail</i> drops its Tuesday and Thursday editions Māori TV and Fairfax Media announce a partnership deal that will feature Māori Television's news videos on stuff.co.nz.
Jul	The publication of Mana magazine is placed on hold indefinitely. The Spinoff launches 'The Spinoff Longform Fund', a new funding campaign for investigative journalism
Aug	Fairfax Media renames its New Zealand operations, 'Stuff'. The All Blacks announces a content deal with Amazon's <i>Prime Video</i> .
Sep	<i>The Auckland City Harbour News</i> ceases its print publication in favour of digital.
Oct	The bi-weekly newspapers, <i>Central Leader</i> , <i>the East Bay Courier</i> , and the <i>Eastern Courier</i> became weekly papers. Vodafone NZ announces a partnership with Sky TV to offer a new, integrated TV experience called 'Vodafone TV'. In Australia, the Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Broadcasting Reform) Bill becomes law and results in a series of reforms to Australia's media laws including the repeal of the "two-out-of-three" rule and the 75% reach rule.
Nov	Fairfax Media acquires all the shares to Neighbourly. Keith Ikin is appointed the new chief executive of Māori TV.
Dec	The High Court upholds the Commerce Commission's decision to deny NZME and Stuff the right to form a merged entity. The two media companies indicate that they will take the case to the Courts of Appeal.

Feb 2018	NZME announces that it would introduce paid ‘premium’ content on its website.
Apr	TVNZ and Spark win the right to broadcast the 2019 Rugby World Cup.
May	<p>Peter Newport launches the online news service <i>CruX</i>, targeting the communities of Queenstown and Wanaka.</p> <p>The Allied Press buys <i>Clutha Leader</i> from Stuff.</p> <p>TVNZ secures exclusive rights to broadcast the 2021 America’s Cup.</p> <p>It is reported that Māori TV has had no increases in production funding from Te Mangai Paho since 2004 and is struggling to keep up with its competitors.</p>
Jun	<p>The All Blacks’ in-depth documentary series <i>All or Nothing</i>, under Prime Video, premieres.</p> <p>The Spinoff TV premieres.</p>
Jul	It is confirmed that in the 2018 Budget, RNZ is allocated \$4.5 million, NZ on Air, \$4million, and Innovation Fund, \$6 million.
Aug	<p>At the Disputes Tribunal, NBR is ordered to make the payment on its contract with BusinessDesk.</p> <p>Eric Chuah and Gaurav Sharma launch the fortnightly newspaper focusing on migrant and multicultural communities <i>Multicultural Times</i></p>
Sep	<p>The Courts of Appeal uphold the Commerce Commission’s ruling on the merger of NZME and Stuff.</p> <p>It is announced that the government would allocate \$10 million to the Pasifika channel over the next three years.</p> <p>Australian investment company Allan Gray sells all its shares in NZME.</p>
Oct	<p>The last and final episode of <i>The Spinoff TV</i> airs.</p> <p>NZME and Stuff decide against taking the merger case to the Supreme Court, putting an end to the saga.</p> <p>The Minister for Māori Development, Nanaia Mahuta, announces a review of the entire Māori broadcasting sector to ensure that it is “fit for purpose.”</p>
Nov	<p>MediaWorks announces a conditional merger agreement with the Australian based outdoor advertising company QMS Media Limited.</p> <p>Māori TV announces that it is undergoing “the most significant changes” in its 14 years of operation. It is confirmed that all four of its news and current affairs programmes (<i>Kawekōrero</i>, <i>Native Affairs</i>, <i>Rereātea</i> and <i>Te Kāea</i>) will be amalgamated into <i>Te Ao Māori News</i> by February 2019.</p> <p>MediaWorks announces the merger of RadioLIVE and Magic brands to create ‘Magic Talk’.</p> <p>The iAppNetwork announces that it has established 15 new full-time journalism roles in New Zealand.</p>
Dec	<p>In Australia, Nine Entertainment Corporation merged with Fairfax Media, forming Nine. It also announced that the sale of Stuff is “on the agenda.”</p> <p>It is reported that RNZ has integrated <i>The Wireless</i> into its main website, after failing to widen its youth audience.</p>

- Mar 2019 Spark launches the streaming service Spark Sport, allowing its customers to watch live and on-demand sports.
- Apr The NZ Herald launches digital subscriptions for its premium content (a premium paywall). BusinessDesk launches its subscription-based site.
Milford Asset Management co-founder, Brian Gaynor, took a 40% shareholding in BusinessDesk.
Newsroom launches the daily podcast *The Detail*. It aims to explain “news that matters” in detail and context. It is funded by the RNZ/NZ On Air Innovation Fund.
- May RNZ and NZ On Air launch a \$1 million pilot scheme, Local Democracy Reporting. It is aimed at boosting the reporting of local democracy issues across New Zealand.
Following the Christchurch Mosque attack, The Christchurch Call agreement is signed by various governments and tech companies. The agreement aims to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online.
- Jun The Spinoff launches a brand-new membership programme.
Newsroom reports that it had been blocked in China and suggested that it is likely due to the publication of a story by Professor Anne-Marie Brady and the Chinese government’s “Black Friday crackdown on foreign media.”
- Aug The closure of KPEX is announced.
Sky TV buys RugbyPass from the US-based private investment firm Cooper & Company for \$62m.
Scoop launches the new online platform *The Dig*, dedicating it to public interest and in-depth engaged journalism.
The Whaleoil/blog announces its closure.
TVNZ plans to invest about an additional \$20 million per year in local content, including online news, over three-years.
Stuff launches the free online video-on-demand service *Play Stuff*.
- Sep MediaWorks merged with QMS Media and thereafter, QMS will hold a 40% shareholding and Oaktree Capital will hold the remaining 60%.
Newsroom reports that the *Chinese NZ Herald* website is a propaganda outlet for the Chinese government. NZME denies this claim.
American Company’s streaming service Acorn launches. It offers British, Canadian and Australian “quality dramas”.
- Oct Sky TV secures broadcasting rights with the rugby unions of New Zealand, Australian, South African and Argentinian until 2025.
BusinessDesk launches a new website, offering individual, group, and corporate subscriptions.
MediaWorks announces that it is looking to sell its television networks.
- Nov *The Guardian* confirms that it has hired its first full-time New Zealand based reporter and that the paper will have a dedicated New Zealand section on its home page.
Apple launches the streaming app *Apple TV+*.
Disney launches the streaming service *Disney+*.

It is reported that a government advisory group looking into New Zealand's broadcasting sector found that the current status quo is "unsustainable". There is speculation that the government might look to disestablish TVNZ and RNZ in favour of an entirely new public media entity.

Jan 2020	It is reported that Cabinet is going ahead with the plan to create a new, super-sized public broadcaster.
Feb	<p>Sky TV buys Spark's streaming TV service, <i>Lightbox</i>.</p> <p>It is reported that RNZ is planning to cut RNZ Concert and replace it with music for a younger audience as part of a new multimedia music brand. Shortly afterwards, public outcry compels the broadcaster to reverse its decision.</p>
Mar	<p>During the lockdown, the government ruled that nondaily print media were not essential services and should close.</p> <p>NZME closes the radio station <i>Radio Sports</i>.</p>
Apr	<p>Bauer Media announces the closure of its New Zealand's publishing business.</p> <p>The Epidemic Response select committee devotes one day to public hearings on the state of media businesses.</p> <p>Broadcasting Minister Kris Faafoi announces short-term measures to assist the media, worth about \$50 million.</p> <p>The government revises its ruling on nondaily print publications, now deeming it an essential service.</p> <p>The case for merging RNZ and TVNZ is placed on hold.</p>
May	Stuff chief executive Sinead Boucher purchased the company from Nine Entertainment for \$1.
Jul	<p>Bauer Media announces that its New Zealand magazine titles were brought by the Australian private equity firm Mercury Capital. As a result, some publications would restart immediately.</p> <p>Sky TV relaunches its entertainment platform <i>Neon</i>, following its purchase of <i>Lightbox</i>.</p> <p>Stuff announces that it is ceasing all activity on Facebook and Instagram effective immediately.</p>
Sep	MediaWorks sells its television operations to American multinational mass media giant, Discovery, Inc.
Oct	It is reported that the government is going ahead with its merger plans for TVNZ and RNZ despite criticisms.
Dec	<p>Following the election, in the "Briefing to the Minister for the Broadcasting and Media" portfolio, it is revealed that work had recommenced in August on the merger between TVNZ and RNZ.</p> <p>Discovery, Inc. completes its acquisition of MediaWorks TV Ltd.</p>

Appendix A: NZME's segment revenues and results for 2015 to 2019

Table 5: NZME's segment revenues and results for 2015 to 2019

End of Financial Year	2015 \$'000	2016 \$'000	% change from previous year	2017 \$'000	% change from previous year	2018 \$'000	% change from previous year	2019 \$'000	% change from previous year
Print	262.0	239.1	-9%	221.3	-7%	211.6	-4%	192.4	-9%
<i>Advertising</i>	147.8	132.7	-10%	121.0	-9%	114.2	-6%	102.2	-11%
<i>Circulation and subscription</i>	87.0	86.1	-1%	83.3	-3%	81.5	-2%	76.3	-6%
Radio & Experiential	120.2	114.8	-4%	110.1	-4%	108.2	-2%	110.9	2%
Digital & E-Commerce	48.0	52.2	9%	56.3	8%	60.0	7%	60.4	1%
<i>Advertising</i>	-	-	-	56.0	-	58.9	5%	55.8	-5%
<i>Circulation and subscription</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.7	-

Source: New Zealand Media Entertainment. (2017). *Annual Report: For the year ended 31 December 2016*. Retrieved on January 23, 2021 from <https://www.nzme.co.nz/media/1107/nzme-full-year-2016-annual-report.pdf>; New Zealand Media Entertainment. (2018). *Annual Report: For the year ended 31 December 2017*. Retrieved January 23, 2021 from <https://www.nzme.co.nz/media/1341/annual-report-2017.pdf>; New Zealand Media Entertainment. (2019). *Annual Report: For the year ended 31 December 2018*. Retrieved January 23, 2021 from <https://www.nzme.co.nz/media/1433/nzme-annual-report-2018.pdf>; New Zealand Media Entertainment. (2020). *Annual Report NZME Limited: For the year ended 31 December 2019*. Retrieved January 23, 2021 from https://www.nzme.co.nz/media/1494/nzme_2019_annual_report_signed.pdf

Appendix B: List of Fairfax Media and Stuff Brands

List of Fairfax Media's Publications at the end of the financial year of 2011

Metropolitan Newspapers

1. The Dominion Post
2. The Christchurch Press
3. Waikato Times

National Newspapers

1. Sunday Star –Times
2. Sunday News

Regional Newspapers

1. Manawatu Standard
2. Taranaki Daily News
3. The Marlborough Express
4. The Nelson Mail
5. The Southland Times
6. The Timaru Herald

Community Newspapers

Auckland & Northland

1. Auckland City Harbour News
2. Central Leader
3. Dargaville & Districts News
4. East & Bays Courier
5. Eastern Courier
6. Manukau Courier
7. North Harbour News
8. North Shore Times
9. Northern News
10. Nor-West News
11. Papakura Courier
12. Rodney Times
13. The Bay Chronicle

14. Waiheke MarketPlace

15. Western Leader
16. Whangarei Leader

Waikato/Bay of Plenty/ Hawke's

Bay Community Newspapers

17. Cambridge Edition
18. Franklin County News
19. Hamilton Press
20. Hauraki Herald
21. HB Country Scene
22. Matamata Chronicle
23. North Waikato News
24. Piako Post
25. Rotorua Review
26. Ruapehu Press
27. South Waikato News
28. Taupo Times
29. The Hastings Mail
30. The Napier Mail
31. Urban & Country

Taranaki/Manawatu

32. Central District Times
33. Central Districts Farmer
34. Feilding Herald
35. North Taranaki Midweek
36. Rangitikei Mail
37. South Taranaki Star
38. The Tribune

Wellington

39. Horowhenua Mail
40. Kapi-Mana News
41. Kapiti Observer
42. The Hutt News
43. The Wellingtonian
44. Upper Hutt Leader
45. Wairarapa News
46. The New Zealander (International)

South Island

47. Central Canterbury News
48. Clutha Leader
49. Discover Marlborough/Nelson
50. D-Scene
51. High Country Herald
52. Kaikoura Star
53. Mid Canterbury Herald
54. Motueka-Golden Bay News
55. Newslink
56. Otago Southland Farmer
57. South Canterbury Herald
58. Taieri Herald
59. The Christchurch Mail
60. The Invercargill Eye
61. The Leader – Nelson Leader
62. The Leader – Richmond & Waimea Leader
63. The Marlborough Midweek
64. The Mirror

65. The Northern Outlook
66. The Saturday Express
67. Waitaki Herald

New Zealand Magazines

1. Avenues
2. Boating New Zealand
3. CIO
4. Computerworld
5. Cuisine
6. Fish & Game New Zealand
7. MIST00
8. New Zealand Fishing News
9. New Zealand Gardener
10. New Zealand Horse & Pony
11. New Zealand Trucking
12. NZ Autocar
13. NZ Gear Guide
14. NZ House & Garden
15. NZ Life & Leisure
16. NZ Lifestyle Block
17. NZ PCWorld
18. Ponies
19. Resellernews
20. Sunday (host Sunday Star–Times)
21. The Cut
22. The TV Guide
23. Unlimited
24. World
25. Your Weekend

Stuff Brands for 2020

Metropolitan Newspapers

1. The Dominion Post
2. The Press
3. Waikato Times

National Newspapers

1. Sunday News
2. Sunday Star –Times

Regional Newspapers

1. Manawatu Standard
2. Marlborough Express
3. Taranaki Daily News
4. Nelson Mail
5. The Timaru Herald
6. The Southland Times

Community Newspapers

1. Central Leader
2. Cambridge Edition
3. East & Bays Courier
4. Eastern Courier
5. Feilding-Rangitikei Herald
6. Franklin County News
7. Hauraki Herald
8. Hamilton Press
9. Horowhenua Mail
10. Kapi-Mana News
11. Kapiti Observer
12. Manukau Courier
13. Marlborough Midweek
14. Matamata Chronicle

15. North Harbour News

16. North Shore Times
17. North Taranaki Midweek
18. Northern News
19. Northern Outlook
20. Nor-west News
21. Rodney Times
22. Piako Post
23. Papakura Courier
24. Saturday Express
25. South Waikato News
26. Taranaki Star
27. Taupo Times
28. The Bay Chronicle
29. The Hutt News
30. The Nelson Leader
31. The Tasman Leader
32. Upper Hutt Leader
33. Western Leader
34. Whangarei Leader

New Zealand Magazines

1. The TV Guide
2. NZ House & Garden
3. NZ Gardener
4. Sunday magazine
5. Your Weekend

Source: Fairfax Media (2011). *2011 Annual Report*. Retrieved on January 22, 2021 from https://www.annualreports.com/HostedData/AnnualReportArchive/F/ASX_FXJ_2011.pdf; Stuff (2021). 'Print Brand'. Retrieved on January 22, 2021 from <https://advertise.stuff.co.nz/brands/print/>.

Appendix C: Roy Morgan Readership estimates for newspapers for 2012 to 2019

Table 6: Print Readership results for Newspapers in the 12 months to August 2012 and 2013

Newspaper	12 months ending August 2012	12 months ending August 2013	% Change
	000's	000's	
NZ Herald	670	620	-7.5%
Dominion Post	274	269	-1.8%
Waikato Times	103	104	1.0%
The Press	239	235	-1.7%
Otago Daily Times	108	105	-2.8%
Southland Times	68	64	-5.8%
Sunday Star Times	477	446	-6.5%
Sunday News	155	136	-12.3%
Herald on Sunday	354	324	-8.5%

Source: Roy Morgan. (2013). Newspaper readership in New Zealand (Monday to Saturday average). Retrieved January 9, 2021 from https://www.aot.ac.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/107053/JMAD-2013-Report.pdf

Table 7: Print Readership results for Newspapers in the 12 months to June 2014 and 2015

Newspaper	12 months ending June 2014	12 months ending June 2015	% Change
	000's	000's	
NZ Herald	609	589	-3.3%
Dominion Post	264	274	3.8%
The Press	215	213	-0.9%
Otago Daily Times	104	102	-1.9%
Sunday Star Times	421	415	-1.4%
Sunday News	115	118	2.6%
Herald on Sunday	327	290	-11.3%

Source: Roy Morgan. (2015). Roy Morgan Readership results for NZ Newspapers & Magazines. Retrieved January 9, 2021 from <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU1509/S00236/roy-morgan-readership-results-for-nz-newspapers-magazines.htm>

Table 8: Total Cross-Platform Audience (Print & Online) for Top 10 Newspapers in the 12 months to June 2016 and 2017

Newspaper	12 months ending June 2016	12 months ending June 2017	% Change
	000's	000's	
NZ Herald	1695	1674	-1.2%
Dominion Post	527	488	-7.4%
Sunday Star Times	410	378	-7.8%
The Press	373	372	-0.3%
Waikato Times	205	215	4.9%
Otago Daily Times	189	195	3.2%
Bay of Plenty Times	143	158	10.5%
Hawkes Bay Today	122	130	6.6%
Northern Advocate	121	124	2.5%
Sunday News	93	123	32.3%

Source: Roy Morgan. (2017). NZ Herald is New Zealand's most widely read publication – print & online. Retrieved January 9, 2021 from <https://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7304-roy-morgan-new-zealand-readership-results-magazines-and-newspapers-june-2017-201708111429>

Table 9: Total Cross-Platform Audience (Print & Online) for Top 10 Newspapers in the 12 months to June 2018 and 2019

Newspaper	12 months ending June 2018	12 months ending June 2019	% Change
	000's	000's	
NZ Herald	1806	1885	4.4%
Dominion Post	500	485	-3.0%
Sunday Star Times	401	309	-23%
The Press	364	344	-5.5%
Otago Daily Times	222	238	7.2%
Waikato Times	203	250	23.2%
Hawkes Bay Today	117	146	24.8%
Southland Times	86	121	40.7%
Sunday News	83	90	8.4%

Source: Roy Morgan. (2019). Total Cross-Platform Audience (Print & Online) for Top 10 Newspapers in the 12 months to June 2018 and 2019. Retrieved January 9, 2021 from <https://www.aut.ac.nz/study/study-options/communication-studies/research/journalism,-media-and-democracy-research-centre/projects/new-zealand-media-ownership-report>

Appendix D: List of local websites that provide news and current affairs

NZME: nzherald.co.nz

Stuff: stuff.co.nz

Newshub: newshub.co.nz

1 News: 1news.co.nz

RNZ News: rnz.co.nz

The Otago Daily Times: odt.co.nz

The National Business Review: nbr.co.nz

ICG Media (née Tangible Media): stoppress.co.nz

Scoop: Scoop.co.nz

Interest.co.nz: interest.co.nz

BusinessDesk: businessdesk.co.nz

The Spinoff: thespinoff.co.nz

E-Tangata: e-tangata.co.nz

Chinese New Zealand Herald: chineseherald.co.nz

Newsroom: newsroom.co.nz

Re:News: renews.co.nz

The Multicultural Times: multiculturaltimes.news

Crux: crux.org.nz

Te Ao Māori News: teaomaori.news

The Dig: thedig.co.nz

Appendix E: List of notable blogs in New Zealand

Examples of New Zealand community blogs include:

PublicAddress: <https://publicaddress.net/>

Pundit: <https://www.pundit.co.nz/>

The Daily Blog: <https://thedailyblog.co.nz/>

The Standard: <https://thestandard.org.nz/>

Villainesse: <https://www.villainesse.com/>

Examples of individual blogs:

Bill Bennett's Bill Bennett: <https://billbennett.co.nz/>

David Farrer's Kiwiblog: <https://www.kiwiblog.co.nz/>

Chris Trotter's Bowalley Road: <http://bowalleyroad.blogspot.com/>

Richard Harman's Politik: <https://www.politik.co.nz/>

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