

Methodology

This study used digital news articles to compile information on layoffs occurring at the largest U.S. daily newspapers and digital-native news outlets between Jan. 1, 2017, and April 30, 2018.

Selecting news outlets

In total, the study examined reported layoffs at 145 news outlets – including 35 digital-native news outlets and 110 newspapers.

Newspapers: The newspapers were selected based on circulation data provided by the Alliance for Audited Media, and include all papers whose total Sunday circulations (print and digital combined) were over 50,000 in the fourth quarter of 2017. The Wall Street Journal was then added to the list, as it is one of the largest papers in the U.S. but does not have a Sunday edition. The following 110 newspapers were included:

The Advocate (Louisiana)	The Columbus Dispatch
Akron Beacon Journal	The Commercial Appeal
Albuquerque Journal	The Daily Gazette (New York)
Arizona Daily Star	Daily Herald (Illinois)
The Arizona Republic	Daily News (New York)
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette	Daily Press (Virginia)
Asbury Park Press	The Dallas Morning News
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution	Dayton Daily News
Austin American-Statesman	The Daytona Beach News-Journal
The Baltimore Sun	The Denver Post
The Birmingham News	The Des Moines Register
The Blade (Ohio)	Detroit Free Press
The Boston Globe	El Nuevo Día
Boston Herald	The Florida Times-Union
The Buffalo News	The Fresno Bee
The Canton Repository	The Gazette (Colorado)
The Charlotte Observer	The Grand Rapids Press
Charlotte Sun	Hartford Courant
Chattanooga Times Free Press	Honolulu Star-Advertiser
Chicago Sun-Times	Houston Chronicle
Chicago Tribune	The Indianapolis Star
The Cincinnati Enquirer	

The Journal Gazette/The News-Sentinel (Indiana)	The Post-Standard (New York)
The Journal News (New York)	The Press Democrat (California)
Journal Star (Illinois)	The Press-Enterprise (California)
The Kansas City Star	The Providence Journal
Knoxville News Sentinel	Reading Eagle
Las Vegas Review-Journal	The Record (New Jersey)
Lexington Herald-Leader	The Republican (Massachusetts)
Lincoln Journal Star	Richmond Times-Dispatch
LNP	Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
Los Angeles Times	The Sacramento Bee
The Mercury News	San Antonio Express-News
Miami Herald/El Nuevo Herald	The San Diego Union-Tribune
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel	Sarasota Herald-Tribune
The Morning Call	The Seattle Times
New York Post	South Florida Sun-Sentinel
The New York Times	The Spokesman-Review
The News & Observer	The Star-Ledger
The News Journal (Delaware)	Star Tribune
The News Tribune (Washington)	Star-Telegram
The News-Press (Florida)	The State (South Carolina)
Newsday	St. Louis Post-Dispatch
The Oklahoman	The Tennessean
Omaha World-Herald	The Times (Indiana)
The Orange County Register	The Times-Picayune
The Oregonian	The Virginian-Pilot
Orlando Sentinel	The Wall Street Journal
The Palm Beach Post	The Washington Post
The Patriot-News (Pennsylvania)	The Wichita Eagle
The Philadelphia Inquirer	Times Union
Pioneer Press	Tribune-Review (Pennsylvania)
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	Tulsa World
The Plain Dealer	USA Today
The Post and Courier (South Carolina)	Wisconsin State Journal

Digital-native news outlets: Researchers assessed all domains from 11 comScore categories (Business/Finance, Directories/Resources, Entertainment, Games, Lifestyles, News/Information, Regional/Local, Services, Social Media, Sports and Technology) with at least 10 million average monthly unique digital visitors in the fourth quarter of 2017 as identified in Pew Research Center’s research on the [state of the news media](#) for the [digital news sector](#). From that set of entities, they then selected digital-native news outlets using the following criteria:

1. Must be “born on the web,” i.e., not the website of a legacy news brand (Note: may be owned by a legacy media company).
2. It is a publisher of original content about news, defined as current events affecting public life (can include both original reporting and commentary/analysis). Sites are judged by an assessment of the material appearing on their homepage. A review of top stories on the home page must render some evidence of original reporting, such as interviews, eyewitness accounts or referral to source documents, by a dedicated reporter/editorial staff. Sites are also judged as news publishers if they self-describe as an organization that produces news, either in the subject headers/navigation bar and/or in their “about” or advertising section through usage of terms like “news,” “journalism,” “covering” or “informing.”
3. It is not entirely focused on reviews, advice, recipes or unedited raw data.
4. It is not primarily a user-generated or aggregated content platform (such as Medium, Reddit or Wikipedia). Branded content such as NBA.com was also excluded.

The following 35 entities were included:

12UP.COM	ELITEDAILY.COM
247SPORTS.COM	GAMESPOT.COM
BGR.COM	GIZMODO.COM
BLEACHERREPORT.COM	HUFFINGTONPOST.COM
BREITBART.COM	IBTIMES.COM
BUSINESSINSIDER.COM	IGN.COM
BUSTLE.COM	INVESTOPEDIA.COM
BUZZFEED.COM	JEZEBEL.COM
CNET.COM	MASHABLE.COM
DEADSPIN.COM	MAXPREPS.COM
DIGITALTRENDS.COM	POLITICO.COM
EATER.COM	QZ.COM

REFINERY29.COM

SBNATION.COM

SLATE.COM

THEDAILYBEAST.COM

THEVERGE.COM

THRILLIST.COM

TMZ.COM

TOPIX.NET

UPROXX.COM

UPWORTHY.COM

VOX.COM

Searching for news articles citing layoffs

Researchers then sought to identify any publicly reported instances of layoffs at these 145 news outlets. A number of steps were taken when searching for news articles mentioning layoffs. A round of searches was first conducted on Google News using the following criteria:

- For each news outlet, researchers used the following search query: the name of the news outlet listed in the AAM dataset in quotations (e.g., “Chicago Tribune”) and “~layoff” – a Google Search tool that captures variations of the word “layoff” and related terms, including “lay off”, “layoffs”, “lay-offs”, “laid off”, “laid-off”, and “job cuts”.
- Articles were filtered by publication date, ranging from Jan. 1, 2017, to April 30, 2018. However, searches were conducted by fiscal quarters to better ensure that every layoff that occurred in the time period was identified.
- Researchers performed searches in Incognito mode on Google Chrome so that previous browser activity did not bias search results.
- The search for articles was limited to the first page of results.

Researchers separately searched for news articles on Mediagazer – an aggregator site for media news – and Pew Research Center’s Daily Briefing of Media News, a newsletter compiled by Center staff that features the day’s headlines about the news media industry and often includes headlines citing layoffs in larger newsrooms. This additional search was done as a check on the Google searches.

Identifying newsroom layoffs

Researchers were careful to include only layoffs directly impacting the news organizations’ employees. For example, layoffs at a parent or holding company were excluded unless the announcement or coverage specified that the layoffs affected a given news outlet studied. Layoffs in an organization’s international branch or newsroom were included unless they affected a different product within the news organization. This was done to guarantee that the analysis did not overcount layoffs, since many outlets share the same parent company. Cuts to vacant positions

and terminations of employees were also excluded. Mentions of buyouts that were offered or taken were counted but recorded separately and are not included in these data.

The news articles examined did not always mention the kinds of positions being eliminated, so the layoffs analyzed here may include the full range of employees at newspapers and digital-native news outlets, rather than just newsroom employees. Additionally, there may have been other reasons for the reported layoffs not covered by media accounts, and the results of the analysis are limited to the information provided by the news articles examined.

Once all instances of layoffs were recorded, researchers determined the number of people each round of layoffs affected. Many news articles gave an exact number of people who were laid off, but several gave approximations or ranges.

When a news article cited a range of laid-off staff, the stated minimum and maximum were recorded. For articles that provided an exact number or estimate of laid-off staff, the stated number was recorded as both the minimum and maximum. When only the maximum was mentioned (e.g., “up to 10”), the stated maximum was used and one was recorded as the minimum. Conversely, when only the minimum was mentioned (e.g., “at least 10”), the stated number was used as both the minimum and maximum. This was done to be as conservative as possible. The study relied on the estimated maximum number of layoffs for any individual outlet.