

DIRKS, VAN ESSEN & APRIL

Newspaper Acquisitions



INSIDE

Balancing Acts 1, 9-10
 2024 Deal Activity..... 1-8
 Quote of the Quarter3
 Transitions at DV&A.....11
 Quick Tip.....11

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"A newspaper's true worth is not measured by the number of Pulitzer Prizes it has won, but by the number of lives it has touched and influenced."
 – Jim Rohn

Balancing Acts in Media: Newspaper Sales, Closures, and Nonprofit Growth

As we enter Q4 2024, the newspaper industry is experiencing shifts that provide substantial opportunities for owners to reassess the value of their businesses. Despite the challenges posed by the digital era, recent trends show that local newspapers can continue to thrive through strategic adaptations.

Times Media Group's February 2024 relaunch of [Tempe's original newspaper](#) is a key example of a traditional print outlet being revitalized to meet modern demands. This move reflects a broader trend of community engagement driving readership and profitability. ([Mordor Intelligence](#)). Owners with strong ties to their local markets are in a prime position to benefit

from these revivals, which demonstrate the ongoing demand for hyper-local news.

In addition, philanthropy is emerging as a contributing force for sustainability in the evolving media landscape. Recent initiatives, such as the Local News Revitalization Fund, launched by the American Journalism Project in early 2024, highlight how philanthropic support can bolster local news organizations. By providing grants and resources aimed at strengthening community journalism, this initiative reflects a broader trend where funders recognize the critical role of local news in fostering informed communities ([American Journalism Project](#), [Local Media Assoc.](#), [DRK Foundation](#)).

Balancing Act | Continued on Page 9

M&A Activity through September 2024

DV&A tracked the sale of over 300 newspaper titles sold in 39 deals

A look at the first three quarters in 2024 highlights a variety in deal activity and the diversity in buyers. Buyers have included traditional media companies, individual investors, non-profit organizations, and local community groups.

Owners of newspaper clusters continue to build larger regional footprints, allowing them to leverage management over more revenue and find value through

consolidation of back-office functions.

Smaller operators are facing increasing difficulties due to a lack of scale needed to manage expenses. This is driving them to sell, often with a larger company coming in as the successful buyer.

In the 39 deals we have tracked so far in 2024, there have been 28 separate buyers. Public deal information follows.

M&A Activity | Continued on Page 2

DIRKS, VAN ESSEN & APRIL

M&A Activity | From 1

JANUARY 2024

Heartland Media Group purchases Carroll Co. Comet

It was announced that Heartland Media Group purchased Carroll County Comet in Delphi, IN in January 2024. Don Hurd, CEO of Heartland's sister company, Hoosier Media Group, said that the Comet is now a part of their network of "hyper-local" newspapers around IN, all with the goal of being "highly engaged" with their community.

Local Ownership for Alt-weekly in Cleveland

Cleveland Scene Magazine in Cleveland, OH, owned by Chava Communications, has been sold to Cleveland Magazine parent company Great Lakes Publishing. The sale returns the alt-weekly to local ownership and, for Great Lakes, enhances an existing portfolio of regional publications.

"This move aligns with our mission to provide compelling content that resonates with everyone in our local community," said Great Lakes Publishing president Lute Harmon, Jr., in a press release.

While editorial resources may be shared across Great Lakes Publishing titles, Scene will continue operating as a print and digital product separate from Cleveland Magazine.

Coon Rapids Enterprise under new ownership

The Sheldon-based company Iowa Information Media Group took over ownership of the Coon Rapids Enterprise at the beginning of this

year. The company owns the Carroll Times Herald, Jefferson Herald and more publications across western IA.

The Coon Rapids Enterprise began in 1881 and has been published for 142 years. Previous owner / publisher of the Enterprise, Charles Nixon plans to retire after 42 years of work, with over 60 years of the publication in his family line.

Gazette takes over daily newspapers in New York's Columbia, Greene counties

The Schenectady, NY-based Daily Gazette Co. took over operations for The Register-Star in Columbia County and The Daily Mail in Greene County, and the papers' joint website, Hudson Valley 360 from the Watertown-based Johnson Newspaper Corp.

"We are truly excited to take on full operational control of The Daily Mail, Register-Star and Hudson Valley 360," said Gazette President and Publisher John DeAugustine. "These products will be wonderful additions to our family of newspapers and only add to our mission of creating outstanding local journalism for generations to come."

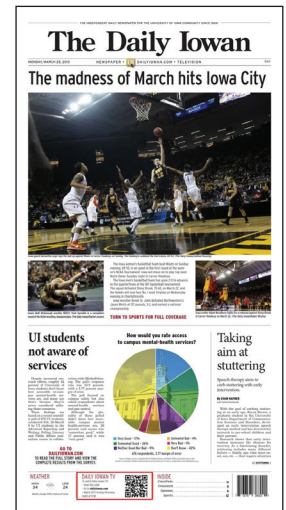
College newspaper, The Daily Iowan, purchases two nearby weeklies

The Daily Iowan purchased two weekly newspapers near Iowa City, IA — the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Sun and Solon Economist. The acquisition from Dubuque-based Woodward Communications marks the first newspaper purchase for the DI.

The Sun will retain its office in downtown Mount Vernon.

The Daily Iowan, a part of

the Iowa City-based non-profit corporation Student Publications, Inc., is the nationally recognized and award-winning student newspaper housed on the University of Iowa's campus. The UI's School of Journalism and Mass Communication will jointly operate the Mount Vernon and Solon newspapers to provide student journalists with opportunities to contribute to the publications and gain local reporting experience. The papers' local editors will continue to lead the editorial direction.



Page 1 Printers sold to CherryRoad Media

Slayton, MN based Page 1 Printers was purchased by CherryRoad Media.

Jeremy Gulban, chief executive officer at CherryRoad said, "This acquisition adds to our portfolio of serving the newspaper and commercial printing space, expanding our presence in the Midwest."



Twin-City News to acquire Saluda Standard-Sentinel

The Twin-City News acquired The Saluda (SC) Standard-Sentinel, the newspaper that has served the Saluda County community since 1900. The newspaper merged with the Twin-City News of Batesburg-Leesville at the first of the year.

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FEBRUARY 2024

Nelson Media acquires Journal-Eureka, saves it from closing

Another Woodward Communications-owned local newspaper, the 167-year-old Anamosa Journal-Eureka, in Anamosa, IA, was sold to Nelson Media Company; the last minute deal came after the Journal-Eureka had already announced its impending closure following its Feb. 1 edition, however on Feb. 2 Nelson Media CEO Chris Nelson stepped in to draw up a tentative agreement to purchase the paper, all before noon that day.

“Local content is the heartbeat of the community,” said Mr. Nelson. “We want to have really good news in our newspaper, but we’re also going to hold the powerful accountable ... what makes our democracy so wonderful is the ability (to have) free speech.”

Sweet Tea Media purchases Blade-Empire Publishing Company

Sweet Tea Media, owned and operated by Kevin and Angie Zadina of Seward, NE, finalized a deal with the Blade-Empire Publishing Company (KS) shareholders to purchase the assets that include The Concordia Blade-Empire, the Beloit Call, The Miltonvale Record and Print 5.

Brad Lowell, longtime editor and publisher of The Concordia Blade-Empire and president of Blade-Empire Publishing Co., passed away on Friday, September 1, 2023, at the age of 85.



MARCH 2024

Sarasota Magazine purchased by Florida company DreamLarge

DreamLarge has acquired Sarasota Magazine (FL), the leading lifestyle publication in the Sarasota region. The acquisition marks a significant milestone for both companies, with DreamLarge broadening its presence in the media industry and Sarasota Magazine poised for a new era of growth and innovation. Sarasota Magazine was previously owned by SagaCity Media. SagaCity Media, Inc. is the parent company of premium local lifestyle media brands in Seattle, Portland, Houston, Aspen, Vail and Park City.


Under DreamLarge’s stewardship, Sarasota Magazine will continue to operate independently, preserving its editorial integrity and commitment to excellence while benefiting from the resources and expertise of its new parent company.

Hearst acquires Austin magazines, launches new media unit

Hearst Newspapers, owner of the San Antonio Express-News (TX) is continuing its expansion into Austin with the acquisition of two magazines and associated websites.

The company, which earlier this year launched Austin Daily, a newsletter and online product reporting on Austin’s culture and politics, has acquired Austin Monthly and Austin Home magazines from Open Sky Media. Terms were not disclosed. Hearst will roll the two Austin publications into HTA Media, a new Austin-based media organization.

The magazine acquisitions are Hearst’s second and third from Open Sky.



Quote of the Quarter
DV&A

OPTIMISM & Influence

Each quarter, we spotlight an uplifting or forward-thinking quote from a leading industry professional.

“Existentially, the thing that keeps me up at night is the state of community connection in America. We need institutions to hold us together at a time of such division. I’m betting that a statewide newspaper, using the craft of journalism, can be one of those institutions and play a role in a much-needed revival.”

- Steve Grove, CEO / Publisher
Minnesota Star Tribune

Originally published:
[Local Media Association](#)

Carpenter Media Group Acquires BPM

Carpenter Media Group (CMG) acquired U.S. and Canadian publisher Black Press Media (BPM) in a stock purchase with Canadian financial partner Canso Investment Counsel, LTD. New corporate entities were formed in the U.S. and Canada to hold the stock and assets. CMG and Canso will share total ownership equally, and CMG will manage the companies.

BPM owns more than 150 newspapers and media operations in Western Canada, WA and HI, including The Star-Advertiser in Honolulu, the sixth-largest U.S. daily newspaper by print circulation. Other assets include websites, lifestyle and tourism magazines, Amazon last-mile delivery franchises and national tourism website Hawaii.com. BPM serves about 4.5 million print readers and 13 million digital readers daily.

CMG is a leading community media company with operations in TX, LA, MS, TN, GA, NC, VA, and KY. Todd Carpenter, of Natchez, MS, is principal and chairman. Tim Prince, of Mountain Brook, AL, is CEO. CMG has offices in Natchez, MS and Tuscaloosa, AL, with key people working from various operations throughout the group.



APRIL 2024

O'Rourke Media Group acquires Times Publishing Newspapers, Inc.

Times Newspapers, Inc. in Bucks County, PA was acquired by O'Rourke Media Group, based in Gilbert, AZ.

Times Publishing's group of papers include the Doylestown Observer, Fairless Focus, Langhorne Ledger, Morrisville Times, Newtown Gazette, Northampton Herald, New Hope News, Lower Southampton Spirit, Warwick Journal and the Yardley Voice.

"I'm excited about our acquisition of the Times Publishing Newspapers. Donna Allen and her team have done an amazing job consistently and creatively growing print advertising revenue," said Jim O'Rourke, OMG CEO-Owner. "We're thankful for the opportunity to acquire and continue to run this group."

The strategic acquisition of Times Publishing Newspapers, Inc. represents continued expansion in the East/Northeast region of the U.S. for OMG. The company also operates local newspapers, websites and niche publications in DE, VA, and VT.

Schneps Media acquires Fire Island News

Schneps Media, the largest local news group in NY state, acquired the Fire Island News, the longest-running newspaper covering the barrier island and Great South Bay and Suffolk County communities.

Schneps purchased the Fire Island News for an undisclosed sum

from Chris and Laura Mercogliano, who ran the newspaper for nearly a decade.

The Fire Island News also covers and distributes throughout the communities of the Great South Bay. The publication had previously been biweekly for the past decade and has traditionally been published between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Schneps Media will be expanding the print newspapers' frequency to ten issues during the summer season and expand to serve the Great South Bay communities on a monthly basis throughout the rest of the year starting Fall 2024. It also continually publishes content online at FireIslandNews.com.

Schneps Media owns dozens of other newspapers, magazines and online media outlets across the NY metro area, Philadelphia, and FL, in addition to hosting more than 50 events annually.

Carter Publishing sells the Kernersville (NC) News to Paxton Media Group

Meredith Owensby Harrell has sold Carter Publishing Co., Inc. d/b/a Kernersville News (NC) to Paxton Media Group. The Kernersville News was founded in 1938 and has been owned by the Carter/Owensby-Harrell family since its inception. It is currently a twice weekly and TMC product.

The Kernersville News will join the nearly 20 other Paxton-owned newspapers in NC managed by Group Publisher Jana Thomasson. "We are excited to serve the readers and advertisers

of the Kernersville News," said Jana Thomasson. "Our company and staff are committed to providing local news, sports and marketing opportunities to the community."



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Carpenter Media Group acquires The Daily Iberian

New Iberia Newsmedia (LA), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Carpenter Media Group (CMG) acquired The Daily Iberian from Wick Communications of Sierra Vista, AZ.

The acquisition included The Daily Iberian, its website and all affiliate publications. CMG also owns nearby newspapers in LA including The (Lake Charles) American Press, The (Bogalusa) Daily News, and L'Observateur (LaPlace). CMG owns and manages newspapers and media companies in AK, GA, HI, NC, MS, TN, TX, VA, and WA.

MAY 2024

Schneps Media Acquires Anton Media

Schneps Media, the largest local news group in NY state, has acquired Anton Media Group, the publisher of The Port Washington News and other local community newspapers and magazines across Nassau County.

In addition to the Port Washington News, the company also publishes the Great Neck Record, Manhasset Press, The Roslyn News, Glen Cove/Oyster Bay Record Pilot, Syosset-Jericho Tribune, Nassau Illustrated News, Nassau Observer, Long Island Weekly, Blvd and a group of magazines.

"We are very excited to be carrying the torch of such prestigious media outlets," said Joshua Schneps, CEO of Schneps Media.



Daily Gazette publisher on track to own paper by year's end

The owners of the Daily Gazette (Schenectady, NY) have agreed to the framework of a deal to sell the company to Gazette publisher John DeAugustine, the Hume-Lind family announced in May 2024. The planned sale would end the Hume-Lind family's 130-year tenure owning the publication.

DeAugustine said he expects the sale to be completed by the end of 2024.

Mid-Atlantic Media acquires Chesapeake Family Life

Mid-Atlantic Media, LLC expanded its media holdings with the acquisition of the Annapolis, MD, Chesapeake Family Life publication.

Chesapeake Family Life, a regional parenting magazine covering Annapolis and its Chesapeake Bay area suburbs, was sold by Jefferson Communications, LLC. and its Owner/Publisher Donna Jefferson. Terms of the deal were not released.

Mid-Atlantic Media CEO and Publisher Craig Burke said that the acquisition of Chesapeake Family Life is a welcomed addition to the media company's strategic plans. Mid-Atlantic Media is a growing media company centered in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. corridor and greater Philadelphia metropolitan markets, with services that encompass the mid-Atlantic region.

Nebraska Public Media takes over two news properties

Nebraska Public Media (Lincoln, NE) has acquired The

Reader and El Perico from Pioneer Publishing. Nebraska Public Media plans to provide an archive of past content and develop a plan to continue to add new content to the digital sites.

Pioneer Publishing founder John Heaston gifted the properties to Nebraska Public Media.

Carpenter Media Group to Acquire 10 Titles and Print Facility from CNHI

Carpenter Media Group (CMG) acquired ten newspapers spread across AL, GA, and MS, as well as a print facility in Valdosta, GA from CNHI, LLC. Terms were not disclosed.

The titles acquired include The Meridian (MS) Star, Dalton (GA) Daily Citizen, Milledgeville (GA) Union-Recorder, Valdosta (GA) Daily Times, Moultrie (GA) Observer, Thomasville (GA) Times-Enterprise, Tifton (GA) Gazette, Athens (AL) News Courier, Cullman (AL) Times, and the St. Clair (AL) News Aegis.

Donna Barrett, CNHI's president and CEO, said she is proud of what the newspapers and their teams have accomplished in serving their communities with meaningful local news. "It has been our honor to have these newspapers as part of CNHI." Barrett said. "We know their good work will continue under Carpenter Media Group."



El Rito Media acquires Alamogordo Daily News, the Carlsbad Current Argus, and Ruidoso News

Two years ago, a group of Republicans and Democrats, contrarians all, formed El Rito Media, LLC for the purpose of

DIRKS, VAN ESSEN & APRIL

undertaking an experiment. Their question was whether a formula could be devised for saving local newspapers? Local newspapers were disappearing, but the members of El Rito considered local newspapers to be vital to the wellbeing of local communities.

El Rito's

initial purchase in 2022 was the Rio Grande Sun in Española, NM. One year ago, it bought The Artesia Daily Press in Artesia, NM.

Now, the experiment continues as El Rito Media, LLC purchased three additional newspapers in NM: the Alamogordo Daily News, the Carlsbad Current Argus, and the Ruidoso News from Gannett. This will bring El Rito's ownership of local newspapers in the state to five.

"Gannett's mission is to empower and enrich communities across the country, and our business decisions are driven by our commitment to best serve them," said Michael Anastasi, Gannett VP of Local News. "We are grateful for the support of our readers and advertisers throughout the years and thank our employees for their dedication and hard work."

Sunnyside Sun staff bring ownership home

After five years of out-of-state ownership, the Sunnyside (WA) Sun announced that two members of its management staff have purchased the local newspaper.

Ileana Martinez and Job Wise, incoming owners of the Sunnyside Sun, are long-standing employees of the newspaper with a combined experience exceeding 25 years. The entrepreneurs were approved for the Revolving Loan Fund (RFL) program through the City of Sunnyside in March to aid in the



acquisition of the business.

Since 2018 the Daily Sun News has been owned by Andy McNab, a retired newspaper publisher from Grangeville, ID.

Ballantine Communications acquires Farmington (NM) Daily Times

Ballantine

Communications Inc., which owns The Durango Herald and The Journal in Southwest CO, purchased the Farmington Daily Times from Gannett Co.

Inc.

BCI also owns the Tri-City Record in Farmington, NM. The company said it planned to merge the Farmington Daily Times with the Tri-City Record effective June 1

to strengthen local news coverage across San Juan County, NM.

"We look forward to welcoming the Farmington Daily Times' readers and winning them over with our commitment to credible and comprehensive local reporting," said John Blais, CEO and publisher for BCI, in a letter to employees announcing the deal.

View Newspaper Group acquires J-Ad newspapers

View Newspaper Group (MI) Owner and President Rick Burrough announced the locally owned newspaper company has acquired the business operations of J-Ad newspapers in MI, which includes the

weekly publications Hastings Banner, Hastings Reminder, Lowell Ledger, Lowell Buyers Guide, Battle Creek Shopper News, Marshall Advisor & Chronicle and Sun & News, which covers Middleville and Caledonia.

"The Jacobs family has been great stewards of the J-Ad group of newspapers for nearly 80 years," said Burrough.

JUNE 2024

Boone Newsmedia, Carpenter Media Group announce publication

ownership changes

Boone Newsmedia, Inc., (BNI) and Carpenter Media Group (CMG) announced future ownership of eight local media companies that had been jointly owned by the two companies.

In a series of transactions effective June 1, CMG acquired BNI's interests in the following affiliates: Bainbridge (GA) Media, publisher of The

Post-Searchlight; Brookhaven (MS) Newsmedia; publisher of The Daily Leader; Elizabethton (TN) Newsmedia, publisher of the Elizabethton Star; Frankfort (KY) Newsmedia, publisher of The State Journal; Oxford (MS) Newsmedia, publisher of The Oxford Eagle; and Tryon (NC) Newsmedia, publisher of the Daily Bulletin.

BNI acquired CMG's interest in the following affiliates: Tidewater (VA) Publications, publisher of The Tidewater News; and Washington (NC) Newsmedia, publisher of the Washington Daily News.

In addition, CMG acquired the Ironton (OH) Tribune and related print and digital publications from BNI.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed.



Pamplin Media Group sells to Carpenter Media Group

Dr. Robert B. Pamplin Jr. sold Pamplin Media Group to Carpenter Media Group, effective June 1, 2024.

"After 25 years operating Oregon's largest newspaper group, we made the decision to sell the company," said Pamplin. "Due to age and health reasons, it made sense to pass the company on to someone else who will carry on the tradition of balanced journalism, the old-fashioned way."

The transaction includes the following OR publications and websites: Portland Tribune, Lake Oswego Review, West Linn Tidings, Wilsonville Spokesman, The News-Times (Forest Grove and Hillsboro), The Times (Tigard and Tualatin), Beaverton Valley Times, The Outlook (Gresham), Sandy Post, Estacada News, Columbia County Spotlight (Scappoose and St. Helens), The Herald-Pioneer (Canby and Molalla), Woodburn Independent, Newberg Graphic, Madras Pioneer, Central Oregonian (Prineville), Milwaukie Review, Oregon City News, Sherwood Gazette, Southwest Community Connection (Portland), The Bee (Portland), Business Tribune and Your Oregon News.

JULY 2024

Blank Slate Media sells to Schneps Media

Schneps Media has acquired Blank Slate Media (NY), publisher of Great Neck News, Manhasset Times, Roslyn Times, Williston Times, Port Washington Times, New Hyde Park Herald Courier and theisland360.com.

The titles competed directly with Anton Media Group, which Schneps Media recently acquired. The combined entity will dominate Nassau County by providing greater reach and more robust coverage of each neighborhood.

Steven Blank, Blank Slate

Media's owner, will take on the title of publisher and editor of the combined division.

New Seattle-based media group buys Portland Mercury, The Stranger

A recently formed media group is taking over as majority owner of the Portland Mercury (OR) alternative weekly, along with its sister publication, The Stranger, in Seattle (WA). Noisy Creek Inc. will also acquire the events guide associated with each publication, EverOut, and the ticketing platform Bold Type Tickets from the Mercury's parent company, Index Newspapers.

Noisy Creek is funded by 20 people, including majority shareholder Brady Walkinshaw, who is the former CEO of media outlet Grist and former Democratic state lawmaker in Washington.

Reaves & Williams acquires The Current, Lewis County Press Newspapers

Reaves & Williams Publishing Group (RWPG), headquartered in Cookeville, TN has announced the acquisition of Lewis County Press (LCP). Titles include: The Current, Fulton, KY and South Fulton, TN; The Coalfield Progress, VA; The Dickenson Star, VA; The Post, VA; Marlow Review, OK; Blackwell Journal Tribune, OK; DeWitt Era Enterprise, AR; Press News Journal, MO; Monroe County Appeal, MO; Ralls County Herald Enterprise, MO; and Lamar Democrat, MO.

Paxton Media Group Acquires Four Titles from Rust Communications

The community newspapers in Dyersburg, TN and Brazil, Greencastle, and Greene County, IN were acquired by Paxton Media Group from Cape Girardeau, Missouri-based Rust

Communications. Terms were not disclosed.

Rust acquired the Greencastle (IN) Banner Graphic in 1999, the Brazil (IN) Times in 2001, and the former Linton (IN) Daily Citizen and Bloomfield (IN) Evening World in 2003. The Daily Citizen and Evening

World were merged in 2005 to form the Greene County Daily World. Interestingly, Rust purchased the Dyersburg (TN) State-Gazette from Paxton Media Group back in 2000, so the operation will be back in familiar hands.

Paxton Media Group (PMG), based

in Paducah, KY, is a family-owned company founded in 1896. It is currently led by President and CEO Jamie Paxton who is the fifth generation of the Paxton family to hold the title of president of the company.

Times Media acquires two California news groups

Times Media Group (TMG), the fast-growing publisher of more than 60 publications and websites across AZ and CA, has announced the acquisition of two well-known Southern CA news groups: Laguna Beach-based Firebrand Media and Century Media Group, which serves multiple Inland Empire communities.

Firebrand Media publishes the Laguna Beach Independent, the Newport Beach Independent and the Coast Real Estate Guide, as well as the award-winning regional publications Laguna Beach Magazine and Newport Beach Magazine, all local publications serving the two popular beach communities.



DIRKS, VAN ESSEN & APRIL

Century Group Media has operated weekly community newspapers in California's Inland Empire for the past 37 years. The deal with TMG includes the Redlands Community News, Yucaipa News Mirror, Calimesa News Mirror, Fontana Herald News, The Record Gazette serving Banning and Beaumont, and the outlets' websites.

AUGUST 2024

Carpenter Media Group Acquires 16 Titles and Print Facility from Phillips Media Group

Carpenter Media Group (CMG) acquired Phillips Media Group's 16 community newspapers spread across AR, MO and IL, as well as Nowata Printing Company in Springfield, MO. Terms were not disclosed.

The titles acquired include the Quincy (IL) Herald Whig, Baxter (AR) Bulletin, Harrison (AR) Daily Times, Newton County (AR) Times, Big Nickel, Bolivar (MO) Herald-Free Press, Buffalo (MO) Reflex, Cedar County (MO) Republican, Christian County (MO) Headliner News, Kirksville (MO) Daily Express, The Marshfield (MO) Mail, NEMO Trader, Sedalia (MO) Democrat, Warrensburg (MO) Star-Journal, The West Plains (MO) Daily Quill, and the Hannibal (MO) Courier Post.

"We feel fortunate to succeed Rupert Phillips and his team in these communities with these newspapers that are so

important to each one" said Todd Carpenter, chairman of CMG.

Times Hudson Valley Media to add two publications

The Times Hudson Valley Media group will expand to five publications later this month with the acquisition of The Cornwall Local and The News of the Highlands, weekly newspapers serving Cornwall and the Town of Highlands in Orange County, NY.

"We are honored for the opportunity to continue the tradition forged by Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff and his family," Carl Aiello, founder of the Times Hudson Valley Media group, said.

Mullen Newspaper purchasing Independent Observer

Jesse Mullen, owner of the Mullen Newspaper Company, based in Deer Lodge, MT, has purchased the Independent Observer weekly newspaper in Conrad, MT. Mullen Newspaper Co. operates nine other weekly newspapers in MT, including the Valerian, also based in Pondera County as well as the Shelby Promoter, Cut Bank Pioneer Press and the Glacier Reporter in Browning.

Owner Jesse Mullen said. "With our joint resources, we will continue to provide great journalism and marketing opportunities for our faithful customers in Pondera County."

SEPTEMBER 2024

Mid-Atlantic Media acquires Pittsburgh Parent

Mid-Atlantic Media, LLC has expanded its media holdings with the acquisition of Pittsburgh (PA) Parent magazine.

Pittsburgh Parent, a regional parenting magazine

covering Pittsburgh, PA, and the surrounding suburbs, was sold by Honey Hill Publishing Inc. and its Owner/Publisher Lynn Honeywill-Norris. Terms of the deal were not released.

Mid-Atlantic Media CEO and Publisher Craig Burke said that the acquisition of Pittsburgh Parent is another welcomed addition to the media company's strategic plans. "We're adding these parenting publications to our media portfolio in a smart, strategic way. This is our sixth parenting publication acquisition, and all of them are regionally close to one another."

Hoffmann Media Group Acquires Napa Valley Register from Lee Enterprises

The Napa Valley Register, St. Helena Star and Inside Napa Valley magazine (CA) have been sold to the Hoffmann Media Group, publisher of a dozen local newspapers and healthcare-related digital products in FL and MI. Terms were not disclosed. Lee had owned the publications since 2005.

Hoffmann Media Group, headquartered in Fort Myers, FL, is a subsidiary of the Hoffmann Family of Companies, a privately-held firm with a wide variety of holdings.

"We're excited to bring these publications back to private ownership and local management," said Geoff Hoffmann, co-CEO of the Hoffmann Family of Companies.



Balancing Acts in Media

Balancing Act | From 1

However, while these revitalizations and new funding sources offer hope, many other local papers have struggled to survive. In 2024 thus far we have tracked 22 newspapers that have closed their doors, with one transitioning to digital-only operations. This trend underscores the continued financial pressures facing traditional media, even as others find ways to adapt.

Strategic Acquisitions and Shifting Ownership

Amidst the challenges, 2024 has seen notable activity in the sale and acquisition of newspapers. A variety of buyers, ranging from traditional media companies to local community groups and nonprofit organizations, have stepped forward to sustain local journalism while adapting to new market realities.

One notable move was the management agreement between News Media Corporation and Carpenter Media Group. This arrangement has enabled Carpenter to take over management responsibilities for a cluster of local papers, focusing on leveraging regional efficiencies to maintain profitability ([Rochelle News-Leader](#)). This exam-

ple highlights the ongoing strategy of building larger regional footprints to streamline operations.

Deal Activity in 2024

In the 39 deals we've tracked so far this year, there have been 28 different buyers, leading to the transfer of 300+ newspaper titles. These acquisitions reflect the push towards regional consolidation, which allows owners to reduce costs through shared resources and back-office functions, making it easier to navigate the challenging economics of local journalism.

Consolidations

Alongside corporate consolidation, some efforts have focused on combining existing publications to sustain local news coverage. In Oregon, Country Media, Inc. merged two weeklies, the Newport News-Times and Lincoln County News Guard, into a new publication called the Lincoln County Leader, which began its run in 2024. This merger allowed the combined staff of the two papers to continue serving their communities under a unified title. Country Media had previously acquired newspapers in Newport, Florence, and Cottage Grove, Ore-

gon, from their Illinois-based owner and already owned the Lincoln City paper. Additionally, the company combined the St. Helens Chronicle and The Clatskanie Chief into a single publication, aiming to maintain local reporting while streamlining operations. Country Media, Inc. continues to manage several local newspaper properties across Oregon and California, balancing the challenges of sustaining community journalism.



Newspapers Shut Down

The wave of sales in 2024 comes alongside a significant number of newspaper closures. Many local papers, some with over a century of history, have been unable to withstand the financial pressures of declining advertising revenue and the ongoing shift towards digital news consumption. Below is a look at some of the closures this year:

Balancing Act | Continued on Page 10

At DV&A, we provide comprehensive services tailored to meet your needs:

SALES

Maximize your returns with our expert sales strategies.

ACQUISITIONS

Our team will help you identify and secure valuable newspaper assets.

CONSULTING

Navigate the complex landscape of the newspaper industry.

FAIR-MARKET APPRAISALS

Get accurate, fair-market valuations.

ESTATE PLANNING APPRAISALS

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Balancing Acts in Media: Closures and Nonprofit Growth

Balancing Act | From 9

Virgin Islands Daily News: After 180 years, this historic paper in the U.S. Virgin Islands announced its closure in January 2024, marking the end of an era for local reporting in the region ([AP News](#)).

Carroll County News: In Indiana, this regional publication shut down in early 2024, citing financial difficulties that made continued operation untenable ([Purdue Expo-ment](#)).

Courant Community Papers: In Connecticut, the community-oriented branch of the Hartford Courant ceased operations in January 2024, ending decades of local reporting for surrounding communities ([Patch](#)).

Hometown Journal: Ohio’s *Hometown Journal*, which had served the state for 96 years, published its last issue early in 2024 due to insufficient advertising revenue ([WFMJ](#)).

Scarsdale Inquirer: A fixture in New York’s Westchester County, the *Scarsdale Inquirer* suspended operations in January 2024, leaving multiple communities without a local news source ([lohud](#)).

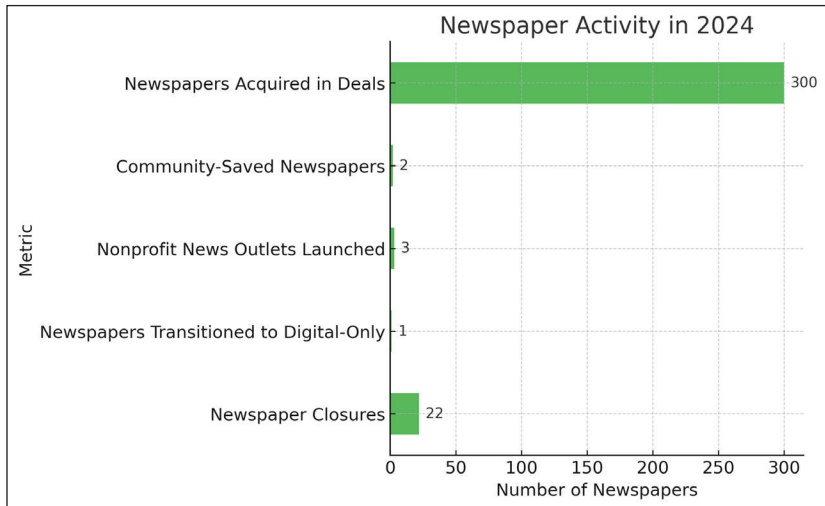
Dixon Tribune: In California, the *Dixon Tribune* closed in February 2024, ending a long history of local journalism ([Independent Voice](#)).

Anderson Valley Advertiser: This well-regarded weekly in Mendocino County ended its print edition and transitioned to a digital-only format in March 2024, citing the high costs of print production ([MendoFever](#)).

Leland Progress: Mississippi’s *Leland Progress* closed in July 2024 after facing mounting financial challenges ([Clarion Ledger](#)).

Marion Press: The *Marion Press* in Michigan also ceased operations in August 2024, leaving its community without a primary local news source ([My1043.net](#)).

The Spectator: This Ozarks-based weekly paper published its final issue in September 2024, citing



ongoing financial losses ([Arkansas Online](#)).

Greer Citizen: The *Greer Citizen*, a well-known upstate South Carolina paper, also closed in September 2024 ([Post and Courier](#)).

Nonprofit Growth and Revivals

While closures have been numerous, a countervailing trend has emerged with the growth of nonprofit news organizations and efforts to revive dormant local publications. These initiatives are playing a crucial role in maintaining coverage in areas that might otherwise become “news deserts.”

Notus: Launched in January 2024, *Notus* aims to amplify under-represented voices and focus on stories that often go uncovered by larger outlets. This nonprofit’s mission is to strengthen civic engagement through comprehensive local reporting.

The Tempe News: After years of dormancy, *The Tempe News* relaunched in October 2024, offering both digital and print formats to reconnect with readers in Arizona ([The Tempe News](#)).

Swampscott Tides: In Massachusetts, the *Swampscott Tides* was established in July 2024, aiming to fill the gaps left by corporate media cutbacks and focusing on hyper-local reporting.

Pikes Peak Media Company: Colorado Springs saw a similar revival effort when *Pikes Peak Media Company* took over two local publications, aiming to restore local news coverage in a community that had faced significant media consolidation.

Winner Advocate: The *Winner Advocate* in South Dakota, which was on the brink of closure, was saved by a community-led effort. This demonstrates the potential for local investment to sustain journalism when other options fall short ([KELOLAND](#)).

The Road Ahead

As the newspaper industry continues its transformation in 2024, the emphasis on community engagement and philanthropic support offers a promising path forward. While sales and mergers help some publications endure, widespread closures highlight the vulnerability of many small newspapers.

Amidst these shifts, legacy publishers are strengthening their operations, focusing on deeper audience engagement and new revenue models. The rise of nonprofit outlets, community-driven efforts, and traditional publishers investing in their portfolios clearly shows a strong desire to preserve local journalism.

Transitions at DV&A

Van Essen Moves to Advisory Role; Senior Associate Added

Owen Van Essen, a prominent figure in newspaper mergers and acquisitions, is stepping into a semi-retired role at Dirks, Van Essen & April, while staying on as an advisor. Van Essen has had a long and influential career, helping shape the firm

into a leader in the industry, representing about half of the country's daily newspaper transactions. While he's transitioning out of his leadership role, Van Essen is confident that the firm will remain in good hands under Sara April, the company's current president.

Having worked closely with April for nearly 20 years, Van Essen praises her as a "wonderful partner," noting her deep understanding of the business and the strong relationships she's built within the industry. Together, they've navigated numerous high-profile deals, and Van Essen believes April's leadership will ensure that the firm continues to thrive as the best in the business.

The firm's success stems from



Sara April,
President



Owen Van Essen,
Sr. Advisor



Kelli Bultena,
Sr. Associate

its deep industry knowledge, built through long-term relationships and a team of experts who have all worked in the newspaper business themselves.

The firm announced earlier this month that newspaper veteran Kelli Bultena is joining the firm as a Senior Associate. With over 25 years of experience in the media and publishing sector, Bultena brings a wealth of knowledge and a strong client-focused approach to the team.

As co-owner and publisher of two community-focused weekly newspapers, including one founded in 2010, Bultena has held various roles throughout her career, ranging from advertising manager

to reporter and editor, before successfully selling her publications in 2022. She served as president of the South Dakota News Media Association from 2017 to 2018. Bultena's firsthand experience as a publisher gives her a unique perspective on understanding

client needs in today's evolving media landscape.

"I'm thrilled Kelli has joined the DV&A team. She's a perfect fit for this role," said DV&A's Sara April. "Kelli and I developed a strong working relationship during the sale of her company in 2022 and we quickly learned we speak the same language. Her experience, professionalism, and innate ability to multitask under pressure with optimism and positivity make her a dream addition to the firm."

Under the leadership of April, DV&A continues to thrive by prioritizing client service and leveraging the firm's deep understanding of the market dynamics affecting print media.

QUICK TIP

Taming the Inbox: How Email Organization Can Help Reduce Stress

In the fast-paced world of publishing, staying on top of an overflowing inbox can feel like a never-ending battle. With multiple deadlines, client communications, and internal updates coming in daily, it's easy for important messages to get lost in the shuffle. While it may seem like one more task on your already busy plate, organizing your emails can actually be a simple way to alleviate some of the stress that comes with

managing a heavy workload.

One small but effective step you can take is creating subfolders in your inbox. By sorting emails into specific categories—like "urgent," "follow-up," or even by project name — you can easily find what you need when you need it. This helps prevent the overwhelm that comes from sifting through hundreds of emails to locate a key piece of information.

Another tip is to set aside a

few minutes each day to sort your incoming messages. It doesn't require much time, and the habit can help you stay ahead of the clutter. Many people find that just having a few main folders to work with drastically cuts down on the mental load that comes from trying to manage everything all at once.

While organizing your emails might not seem like a game-changer, it's one small act that can have a big impact on your workflow.

Black Press Media Sold

More than 150 newspapers and media operations in Western Canada, Washington and Hawaii. Black Press serves 4.5 million print readers and 13 million digital readers daily.

To Carpenter Media Group



Gannett Sold

Farmington (NM)
Daily Times

**To Ballantine
Communications Inc.**



Gannett Sold

Alamogordo Daily News (NM),
Carlsbad Current Argus (NM),
and Ruidoso News (NM)

To El Rito Media



CNHI, LLC Sold

The Meridian (MS) Star,
Dalton (GA) Daily Citizen, Milledgeville (GA)
Union-Recorder, Valdosta (GA) Daily Times,
Moultrie (GA) Observer, Thomasville (GA)
Times-Enterprise, Tifton (GA) Gazette,
Athens (AL) News Courier,
Cullman (AL) Times, and the
St. Clair (AL) News Aegis

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Rust Communications Sold

Dyersburg State Gazette (TN),
Brazil Times (IN),
Green Castle
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Green County Daily World (IN)

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Quincy (IL) Herald Whig, Baxter (AR) Bulletin,
Harrison (AR) Daily Times, Newton County (AR)
Times, Big Nickel, Bolivar (MO) Herald-Free
Press, Buffalo (MO) Reflex, Cedar County (MO)
Republican, Christian County (MO) Headliner
News, Kirksville (MO) Daily Express, The Marsh-
field (MO) Mail, NEMO Trader, Sedalia (MO)
Democrat, Warrensburg (MO) Star-Journal, The
West Plains (MO) Daily Quill, and the Hannibal
(MO) Courier Post

To Carpenter Media Group



Lee Enterprises Sold

The Napa Valley Register (CA),
St. Helena Star (CA) and
Inside Napa Valley
magazine (CA)

To Hoffman Media Group



Wick Communications Sold

The Daily Iberian (LA)

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