



LOCAL NEWS RESEARCH
PROJECT



SPATIAL INFORMATION FOR
SPICE
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Local News Map Data
February 1, 2025

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

The [Local News Map](#) is a crowd-sourced resource that tracks what is happening to local newspapers, broadcast outlets and online/digital news sources in communities across Canada. The map displays information going back to 2008, the start of a deep recession and a turning point for many previously profitable local news organizations. This report summarizing the latest information gleaned from the map is published every two months along with a spreadsheet displaying the latest data. Both are archived [here](#).

The map displays markers that represent changes to free local daily newspapers, paid subscription local daily newspapers, community newspapers (published fewer than five days per week), private/public radio stations, private/public television stations and online/digital news sources, including online radio stations, newsletters, web-based digital news sites and other emerging online formats.

The following types of changes to local news operations are recorded on the map:

- the closing or launch of a news outlet
- service improvements such as a new or extended local television newscast
- service reductions such as a reduction in the number of times a newspaper publishes per week
- mergers of local news outlets that result in the launch of a new entity and/or the closing of an existing news operation
- local free daily newspapers that become community newspapers
- local paid-subscription daily newspapers that become community newspapers
- local news operations that shift to making content available online only

Map markers only reflect the most recent change at a news outlet so a digital site that launched in 2016 would show up on the map/in the data as a “new” online/digital outlet. If that news operation subsequently expanded service by, for instance, opening bureaus in nearby communities, the marker would be changed to a “service increase” marker and appear that way in the overall data. The marker description would, however, include information about the history of the launch and any other previous changes.

A local news organization is defined as a news outlet that maintains independence from those it covers, demonstrates a commitment to accuracy and transparency in reporting methods, and is devoted primarily to reporting and disseminating timely, originally produced news about people, places, issues and events in a defined geographic area.

When users click on a map marker, a pop-up box displays the name and owner of the news outlet along with information on what changed, the community name, when the change occurred, language of operation and links to the source of information about the change. Filters allow users to sort the markers by news outlet ownership, media type and type of change.

The information that registered users add to the map about changes to local newspaper, radio, television and online/digital news sources is displayed using color-coded markers. Map administrators also regularly add markers. The fact that the pace of change is steady but slow helps ensure the accuracy of map data because, with fewer than a dozen markers typically

added each month, administrators are able to verify each crowd-sourced submission. This includes reviewing the contents of links that provide details of the change that has occurred. These links are published with the markers so the source of the information is clear to map users. The journalists, researchers, journalism students, media owners and community members who visit the site and are quick to point out errors also constitute a form of quality control for the data.

This project is the result of a collaboration between Professor [April Lindgren](#), lead investigator for the [Local News Research Project](#) at Toronto Metropolitan University's School of Journalism and Associate Professor [Jon Corbett](#), who leads the University of British Columbia's [SpICE Lab](#) (Spatial Information for Community Mapping). Funding for this project has been provided by the Rossy Foundation, the [Ken and Debbie Rubin Public Interest Advocacy Fund](#), the [Canadian Geospatial and Open Data Research Partnership](#), the Canadian Media Union/CWA Canada, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, a Mitacs Accelerate grant, Unifor and Toronto Metropolitan University.

Credits/citations: The Local News Map is a joint project of the Local News Research Project at Toronto Metropolitan University's School of Journalism and the University of British Columbia's SpICE Lab (Spatial Information for Community Mapping).

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Visit the map: <https://localnewsmap.geolive.ca/>

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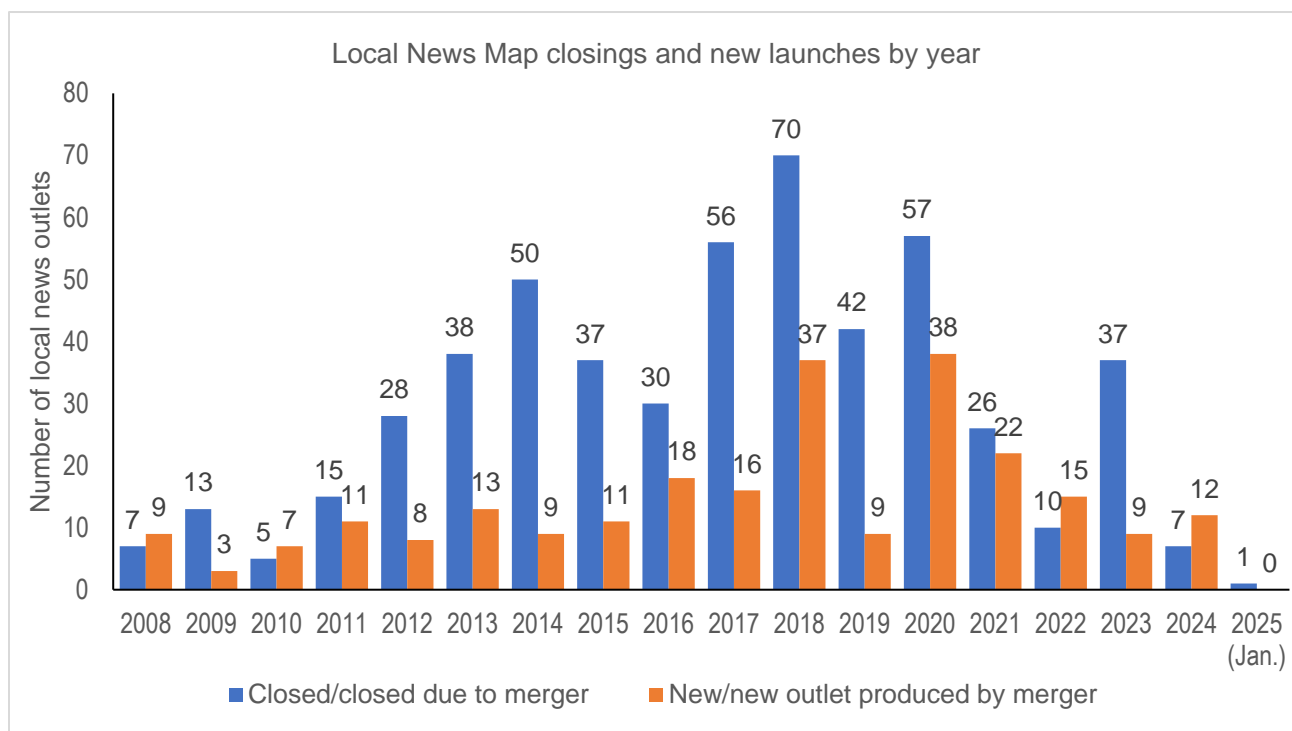
Contents

Worth noting.....	3
Overview of map data.....	8
Local news outlets that have closed since 2008	9
Newly launched local news outlets since 2008.....	9
Increases in service since 2008.....	10
Decreases in service since 2008	10
Breakdown of data by type of local media (2008 to February 1, 2025)	10
Provincial data for changes to local news media since 2008	12

Worth noting

General

- Between 2008 and February 1, 2025, 529 local news outlets closed in 351 communities across Canada. Of those:
 - 403 closings or 76 per cent of the total were community newspapers, which publish fewer than five times per week.
 - 111 were local community newspapers that closed after they were merged with other newspapers to produce regional publications.
- Between 2008 and February 1, 2025, 406 local news outlets launched of which 278 remain in operation. Of the total:
 - 247 opened in 173 communities and remain in operation.
 - an additional 31 outlets launched, remain open, but either increased or decreased service.
 - 128 outlets, almost one third of the total, launched but subsequently closed.



Note: This chart only reflects launch data for the 247 news outlets that opened since 2008, remain open, and are represented on the map as "new" or "new outlet produced by merger" map markers. It does not include the 31 outlets that launched and experienced a service increase or service decrease or the 128 outlets that subsequently closed.

A closer look at data on the launch of new outlets

As of the June 1, 2024 report, we have refined the process for calculating the number of new local news outlets. Until then, data were only available for newly launched outlets represented on the map as "new" or "new outlet produced by merger" map markers.

Going forward, however, data in these bimonthly reports will also capture the outlets that launched during our study period and subsequently announced a change in service. These

changes altered how the outlets are represented on the map. Instead of appearing as a new marker, they are represented on the map by a marker indicating they experienced an “increase in service,” “decrease in service,” “shifted to online,” “closed” or “closed due to merger.” While this approach is consistent with map protocols that require markers to reflect the most recent changes, we were concerned that it also resulted in an undercounting of new local news outlets.

To address this problem, we identified all outlets on the map that launched since 2008 including those that subsequently experienced changes that altered their representation on the map.

This approach, which in the future will be used whenever new information is added to the map, paints a more accurate picture of new outlet launches. Notably:

- 247 new local news outlets launched between 2008 and February 1, 2025 in 173 communities, remain open, and have not experienced any other service changes. **They appear on the map as "new" or “new outlet produced by merger” markers.**
- 159 local news outlets launched between 2008 and February 1, 2025, but subsequently experienced other changes in service. **They are currently represented on the map as the following types of markers.**

Current marker type	Number of outlets
Closed	111
Closed due to merger	17
Decrease in service	5
Increase in service	7
Shifted to online	19
Total	159*

*No launch year information could be found for 13 local news outlets.

Post-pandemic bad news continues to unfold

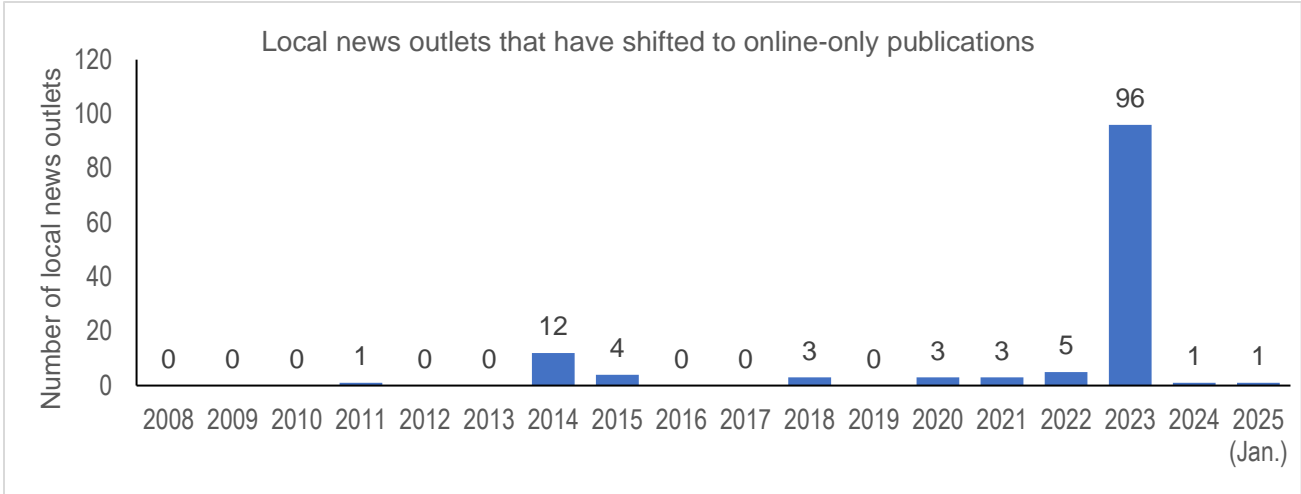
A special [report](#) published in mid-2022 that examined the effects of the pandemic on news media in Canada suggested difficult times may be ahead given the end of government COVID subsidies and uncertain prospects for a major recovery in advertising. Recent developments suggest those difficult times have been unfolding.

The notable exception is the lull in news outlet closings in 2024. The seven shutdowns we have on the map at this point is one of the lowest numbers recorded since we started tracking in 2008. It also represents a significant departure from 2023, when 37 local news outlets closed, including 29 community newspapers and eight privately-owned radio stations. Nearly half of the closings occurred in the Montreal area in August 2023 when Métro Média announced it was suspending publication of its 17 community newspapers. The company declared bankruptcy a month later.

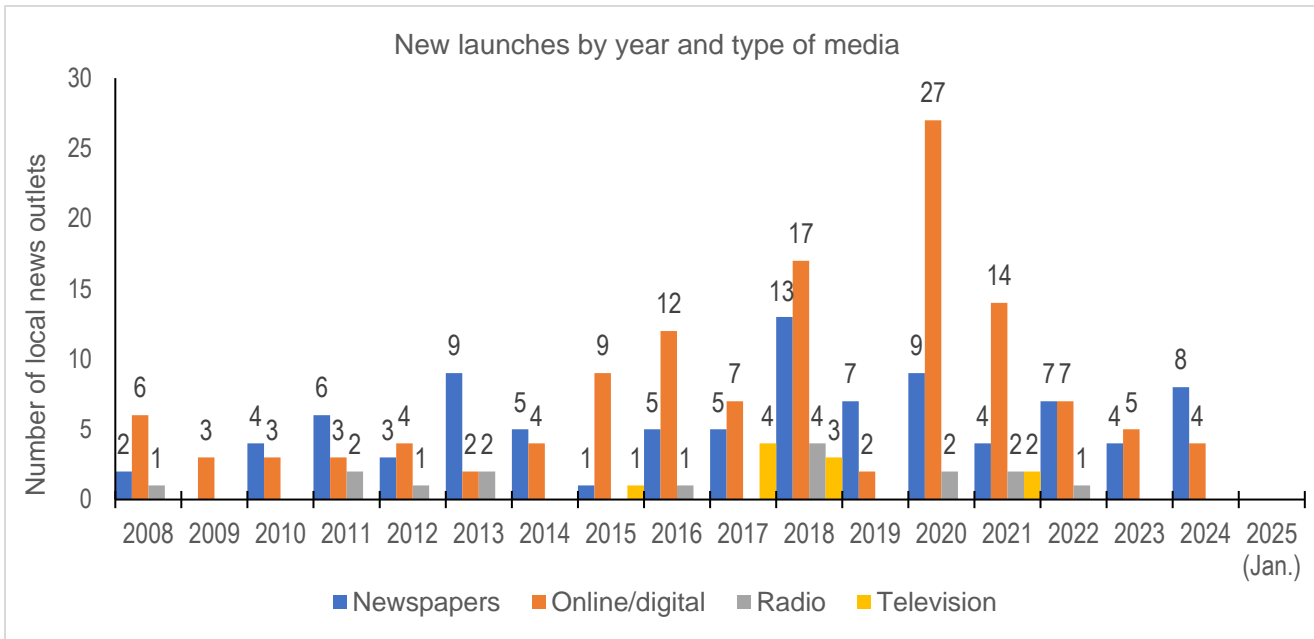
The good news about fewer closings in 2024, however, is offset by the post-pandemic wave of financial turmoil that buffeted smaller newspaper chains and news broadcasters between January 1, 2023 and February 1, 2025. These included:

- A wave of cuts affecting the provision of broadcast news:

- Corus Entertainment Inc., which owns Global News, announced layoffs that resulted in the loss of [55 media positions](#) across Canada as of mid-July 2024. The affected personnel included TV anchors, broadcast announcers, hosts, producers, videographers and digital broadcast journalists, among others.
- Examples of how the Corus cuts affect local news unfolded in [Kingston, Ont.](#) and [Kelowna, B.C.](#), where local newscasts were reduced by half to 30 minutes and production was moved out of the community.
- Bell Media-owned CTV announced in February 2024 that effective immediately CTV News @ Noon newscasts on all CTV stations except Toronto were cancelled along with the 6 p.m. and late night weekend newscasts on all CTV and CTV2 stations except Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa. CTV newscasts on federal stat holidays on all stations except Toronto also ceased. CTV and CTV2 stations in 21 markets were affected.
- In June 2023, BCE Inc. announced the [layoff of 1,300 people and the closing of six local radio stations](#). Bell Media, which is part of BCE, also told the federal telecommunications regulator that its 35 local television stations branded as CTV, CTV Two and Noovo, are under financial strain and asked for [major reductions in local news content requirements](#). If the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) agrees, Bell Media's television stations in major markets will no longer have to broadcast six hours of locally reflective news per week. In smaller markets, Bell wants permission to broadcast fewer than three hours of locally reflective news per week.
- Money woes at SaltWire Network, the largest newspaper owner in Atlantic Canada. The company filed for creditor protection in March 2024. In addition to publishing four daily newspapers - the *Chronicle Herald* in Halifax, the *Cape Breton Post* in Sydney, N.S., the *Guardian* in Charlottetown, P.E.I. and the *Telegram* in St. John's, N.L., SaltWire owned 14 weeklies throughout Atlantic Canada excluding New Brunswick. The publications remained open and in late August Postmedia received [court approval](#) to purchase all of them. Money-saving cuts ensued including, for example, [cancellation of](#) the *St. John's Telegram* newspaper's daily print editions. Subscribers now get just one print edition a week that is mailed to their homes.
- Money woes at Surrey, B.C.-based Black Press. Two months after entering into creditor protection, it [announced](#) on March 25, 2024 that the company had been restructured, sold and would continue its news operations under the new ownership. The company publishes 150 daily and weekly newspapers, magazines and websites in Canada and the United States, including dozens of community newspapers in Western Canada.
- A massive increase in the number of publications that have abandoned print and are now published online only. All of the 98 publications affected were community newspapers. Nordstar accounted for most of the changes - the company announced in September 2023 that all of its 71 community newspapers in Ontario would immediately become digital-only publications. The decision came as the company put its Metroland Media Group division into creditor protection under the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act.



- A slowdown in the number of local news outlet launches following a record year (38) for startups in 2020. Map data show that while 22 new local news outlets launched in 2021, the number subsequently fell significantly to nine in 2023 and 12 in 2024.



Note: This chart only reflects launch data for the 247 news outlets that opened since 2008, remain open, and are represented on the map as "new" or "new outlet produced by merger" map markers. It does not include the 31 outlets that launched and experienced a service increase or service decrease or the 128 outlets that subsequently closed.

Recent information added to the Local News Map

Since the last Local News Map update on December 3, 2024, nine new markers representing changes to local news media were added to the map including two from previous years that came to our attention. One other existing map marker was updated to reflect changes in service. Among the changes:

- 3 new markers were added for community newspapers that closed: *Thompson Citizen* in Thompson, Manitoba and *Indian Time* in Akwesasne, Quebec both closed in December 2024. The *Estevan Mercury* in Estevan, Saskatchewan closed in January 2025.
- 2 new markers were added for new community newspapers: *Leaside Life* launched in Toronto in December 2011 and *Saskatchewan Indigenous News* launched in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan in April 2024.
- 2 new markers were added for new online local news outlets: Hello Dartmouth launched in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia in November 2011 and Hello Oxford in Oxford, Nova Scotia launched in October 2024.
- A new marker was added for a community newspaper that decreased service: *Eagle Feather News*, a free monthly newspaper serving Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan, became a quarterly print magazine in July 2024.
- A new marker was added for a community newspaper that shifted online: *Inuvik Drum*, a weekly community newspaper serving the Beaufort Delta Region in the Northwest Territories, published its final print edition in January 2025 and became an online only publication.
- An existing marker was updated for a daily newspaper that became a community newspaper: *The Telegram*, a daily newspaper in St. John's, Newfoundland, became a weekly publication in August 2024.

Outlook for 2025

Major changes are afoot in 2025 that have significant implications for local journalism.

Eligible news organizations will benefit from two additional revenue sources, notably:

- a new Ontario government [directive](#) that as of Sept. 3, 2024 requires the province's four largest agencies to allocate at least 25 per cent of their advertising spending to Ontario-based news publishers that the Canada Revenue Agency recognizes as Qualified Canadian Journalism Organizations. Together, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), the Ontario Cannabis Store, Metrolinx and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) spend more than \$100 million a year on marketing. The Ontario government's own advertising will also be subject to the same 25-per-cent rule.
- Google's first \$100-million payment under the provisions of the [Online News Act](#). The money is being distributed to Canadian news publishers whose work has been repurposed or shared online by the tech giant. Distribution of the cash, the first of five annual payments, is administered by the Canadian Journalism Collective, a non-profit organization led by independent publishers and broadcasters. [News reports](#) say eligible publishers will get about \$13,798 per full-time equivalent journalist who works 2,000 hours per year while broadcasters will get about \$6,806 per eligible worker. CBC/Radio Canada will get no more than \$7 million while [\\$30 million](#) will be reserved for other broadcasters.

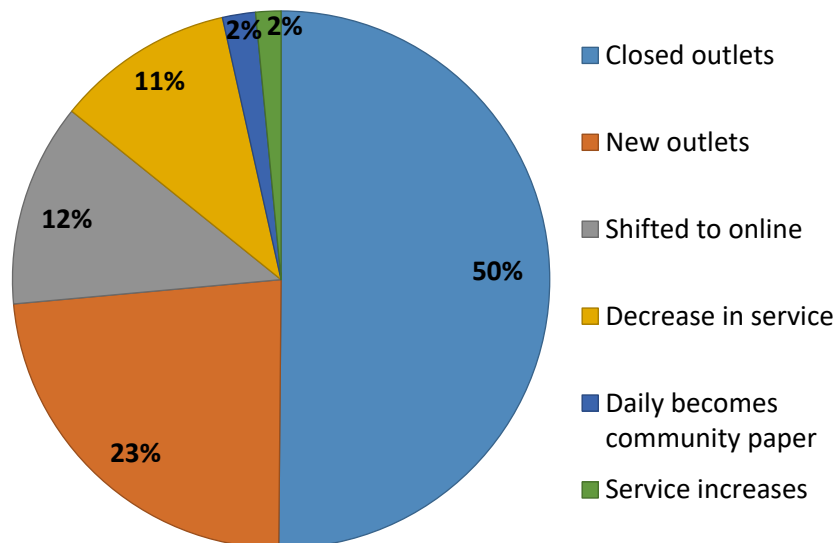
At the same time, however, there is considerable uncertainty about the future of existing government financial supports for journalism. Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre says if he wins the next federal election, he will defund the English-language service of the CBC, a move with implications for the 48 local stations and bureaus it operates from coast to coast. Poilievre is no fan of the current government's Local Journalism Initiative, which covers the cost of hiring reporters to report in underserved areas. And it's unclear whether other government-funded financial supports will survive under a Conservative government, including a [Canadian journalism tax credit](#) that, if it makes the cut, will save eligible newsrooms \$320 million over the five years ending in 2028.

Overview of map data

The map displayed a total of 1055 markers representing changes to local news outlets of all types between 2008 and February 1, 2025.

Breakdown of all markers by type of change that occurred:

closed	415
closed due to merger	114
daily (free) becomes a community paper	0
daily becomes a community paper	21
decrease in service	113
increase in service	16
new	216
new outlet produced by merger	31
shifted to online	129



Breakdown of all markers by type of media:

community paper	642
daily paper - free	30
daily paper - paid	66
online/digital	169
radio - private	58
radio - public	11
TV - private	52
TV - public	27

Breakdown of all markers by ownership¹:

Independent owners ²	225
Postmedia	110
Metroland	99
Black Press	45
Glacier Media	43
Bell Media	39
Transcontinental	38
Torstar	36
SaltWire Network	32
CBC/Radio-Canada	28
Métro Média	28
Sun Media	27
Village Media	21
Quebecor	18
Rogers Media	18
Great West Newspapers	17
Other	231

¹Only owners associated with more than 15 markers are listed except in the case of independent owners

²Owners with fewer than 3 media properties

Local news outlets that have closed since 2008

- Total number of closings: 529 (415 direct closings + 114 closings due to mergers)
- Number of communities where a local news outlet has closed: 351

Breakdown of closings by type of media:

community paper	403
daily paper - free	27
daily paper - paid	13
online/digital	32
radio – private	37
radio – public	6
TV – private	11
TV – public	0

Breakdown of closings by ownership¹:

Independent owners ²	89
Postmedia	57
Transcontinental	34
Glacier Media	33
Black Press	32
Métro Média	28
Sun Media	25
Metroland	24
SaltWire Network	24
Torstar	22
Other	161

¹Only owners associated with more than 15 markers are listed except in the case of independent owners

²Owners with fewer than 3 media properties

Newly launched local news outlets since 2008

- Total number of markers representing new outlets: 247 (216 new outlets + 31 new outlets produced by mergers)
- Number of communities where a new local news outlet has been launched: 173
- An additional 31 news outlets opened but then experienced service changes. These news outlets are represented on the map by “increase in service,” “decrease in service” and “shifted to online” markers.
- 128 local news outlets launched and closed over that same period. These news outlets are represented on the map by “closed” and “closed due to merger” markers.

Breakdown of new outlets by media type:

community paper	91
daily paper - free	1
online/digital	129
radio – private	13
radio – public	3
TV – private	5
TV – public	5

Breakdown of new outlets by ownership¹:

Independent owners ²	112
Village Media	19
Torstar	10
Big and Colourful Printing and Publishing	6
Overstory Media Group	6
Rogers Media	6
Black Press	5
The Discourse	5
Other	78

¹Only owners associated with more than 4 markers are listed except in the case of independent owners

²Owners with fewer than 3 media properties

Increases in service since 2008

- Total number of service increases: 16
- Number of affected communities: 16

Breakdown of service increases by type of media:

community paper	2
daily paper - free	0
daily paper - paid	2
online/digital	8
radio - private	1
radio - public	1
TV - private	2
TV - public	0

Note: Examples of service increases include longer local newscasts, the launch of a new local news program, increased frequency of publication for newspapers

Decreases in service since 2008

- Total number of service reductions: 113
- Number of affected communities: 62

Breakdown of service reductions by type of media:

community paper	23
daily paper - free	1
daily paper - paid	25
online/digital	0
radio - private	7
radio - public	1
TV - private	34
TV - public	22

Note: Examples of service decreases include shorter newscasts or fewer print editions per week for newspapers

Breakdown of data by type of local media (2008 to February 1, 2025)

NEWSPAPERS

- Total number of markers representing changes at daily and community (published fewer than five times per week) newspapers: 738
- Total number of daily and community newspapers that have closed: 443 (329 direct closings + 114 closings due to mergers) in 323 communities
- Total number of markers representing newly launched daily and community newspapers: 92 (61 new outlets + 31 new outlets produced by mergers) in 83 communities
- Total number of daily and community newspaper service decreases: 49
- Total number of daily and community newspapers that shifted to online: 129
- Total number of daily newspapers that became community newspapers: 21
- Total number of daily and community newspaper service increases: 4

Community newspaper markers on the map:

- Total number of community newspaper markers: 642
- Total number of community newspapers that have closed: 403 (292 direct closings + 111 closings due to mergers) in 307 communities
- Total number of new community newspapers: 91 (60 new outlets + 31 new outlets produced by mergers) in 83 communities
- Total number of community newspaper service decreases: 24
- Total number of community newspapers that shifted to online: 122
- Total number of community newspaper service increases: 2

Daily newspaper markers on the map:

- Total number of daily newspaper markers: 96
- Total number of daily newspapers that have closed: 40 (37 direct closings + 3 closings due to mergers)
- Total number of new daily newspapers: 1 (1 new outlet)
- Total number of daily newspaper service decreases: 25
- Total number of daily newspapers that became community newspapers: 21
- Total number of community newspapers that shifted to online: 7
- Total number of community newspaper service increases: 2

ONLINE/DIGITAL

- Total number of markers representing changes at online/digital news sources: 169
- Total number of newly launched online news sites: 129
- Total number of closed online news sites: 32
- Total number of online news sites service increases: 8

RADIO

- Total number of markers representing changes at radio stations: 69
- Total number of new radio stations: 16
- Total number of closed radio programs: 43
- Total number of radio station service reductions: 8
- Total number of radio station service increases: 2

TELEVISION

- Total number of markers representing changes to television stations: 79
- Total number of new TV stations: 10
- Total number of closed TV stations: 11
- Total number of TV station service reductions: 56
- Total number of TV station service increases: 2

Provincial data for changes to local news media since 2008

Breakdown of changes to local news outlets by province/territory

Province/territory	Number of closings/ closings due to mergers	Number of new/new outlets due to merger	Number of service reductions	Number of service increases	Total # of markers
Alberta	62	23	28	1	114
British Columbia	82	45	28	3	158
Manitoba	32	11	6	0	49
New Brunswick	11	7	8	1	27
Newfoundland and Labrador	23	0	3	1	27
Northwest Territories	2	1	2	1	6
Nova Scotia	24	12	6	2	44
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0
Ontario	151	116	132	5	404
Prince Edward Island	0	0	3	0	3
Quebec	102	18	37	1	158
Saskatchewan	39	13	9	1	62
Yukon	1	1	1	0	3
Canada (total)	529	247	263	16	1055

Breakdown of number of changes to different types of media by province/territory

Province/territory	Newspaper	Online/ digital	Radio	Television	Total # of markers
Alberta	81	13	8	12	114
British Columbia	88	38	21	11	158
Manitoba	40	1	3	5	49
New Brunswick	18	6	0	3	27
Newfoundland and Labrador	20	1	5	1	27
Northwest Territories	3	1	1	1	6
Nova Scotia	33	9	0	2	44
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0
Ontario	278	85	19	22	404
Prince Edward Island	2	0	0	1	3
Quebec	120	11	12	15	158
Saskatchewan	52	4	0	6	62
Yukon	3	0	0	0	3
Canada (total)	738	169	69	79	1055