

# These 15 Billionaires Own America's News Media Companies and Decide What Is Censored

BY WEATHER INTERNAL ON



While a billionaire secretly funding a lawsuit to take down a news outlet may be a new way of using money to influence the media business, billionaires have long exerted influence on the news simply by owning U.S. media outlets.

Source: *These 15 Billionaires Own America's News Media Companies*

News that billionaire **Peter Thiel** is funding **Hulk Hogan's trial against news website Gawker** set the media and technology worlds on fire last week, sparking a conversation about the ultra-wealthy's role in controlling the news. While a billionaire secretly funding a lawsuit to take down a news outlet may be a new way of using money to influence the media **business**, billionaires have long exerted influence on the news simply by owning U.S. media outlets.

Some billionaires, like Rupert Murdoch and **Michael Bloomberg** are longtime media moguls who made their fortunes in the news business. Others, like Amazon founder **Jeff Bezos**, bought publications as a side investment after building a substantial fortune in another industry. Billionaires own part or all of several of America's influential national newspapers, including The **Washington Post**, The Wall Street Journal and the **New York Times NYT +0.44%**, in addition to magazines, local papers and online publications.

Several other billionaires, including **Comcast CMCSA +3.84%** CEO **Brian Roberts** and **Liberty Media LMCA +0%** Chairman **John Malone**, own or control cable TV networks that are powerful but not primarily news focused.

Here's a look at some of the billionaires who own news media in the United States:

### Michael Bloomberg – **Bloomberg LP** and **Bloomberg Media**



Michael Bloomberg, the richest billionaire in the media business, returned to his eponymous media company in September 2014, eight months after stepping down as mayor of

New York City. One notable sign of his influence on the publication: Michael Bloomberg doesn't appear on Bloomberg's Billionaires Index. **FORBES** pegs his net worth at \$45.7 billion. Bloomberg cofounded his financial data company in 1981 with **Charles Zegar** and **Thomas Secunda**, both of whom are now billionaires as well thanks to their minority equity stakes in Bloomberg LP. The company expanded into business news coverage and has more than 2,000 reporters around the world. In 2009, Bloomberg LP bought Business Week magazine from McGraw Hill for a reported \$5 million plus



assumption of debt.

**Rupert Murdoch – News Corp NWSA -8.38%**

Rupert Murdoch, former CEO of 21st Century Fox, the parent of powerhouse cable TV channel Fox News, may well be the world's most powerful media tycoon. He is executive co-chairman of 21st Century Fox with his son Lachlan and is also chairman of News Corp, which owns The Wall Street Journal and other publications. Altogether, his family controls 120 newspapers across five countries. Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal also owns 1% of News Corp, after cutting down his holdings from 6% in early 2015.

**Donald and Samuel "Si" Newhouse – Advance Publications**

Donald Newhouse and his brother Samuel "Si" Newhouse inherited Advance Publications, a privately-held media company that controls a plethora of newspapers, magazine, cable TV and entertainment assets, from their father. Advance owns newspapers in 25 cities and towns across America and is the country's largest privately-held newspaper chain. Conde Nast, a unit of Advance Publications, publishes magazines including Wired, Vanity Fair, The New Yorker and Vogue. Si stepped down as chairman of Conde Nast in 2015.

**Cox Family – Atlanta Journal-Constitution**

Cox Enterprises, owned by the billionaire Cox family, counts The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and a number of other daily papers among its many media investments. James Cox, the company founder and grandfather of current chairman Jim Kennedy, bought his first newspaper, the Dayton Ohio Evening News, in 1898. The Cox Media Group Division today owns the Journal-Constitution and six other daily newspapers, more than a dozen non-daily publications, 14 broadcast television stations, one local cable channel and 59 radio stations.

**Jeff Bezos – The Washington Post**

Amazon founder Jeff Bezos bought The



Washington Post for \$250 million in 2013. Since beginning his run for president, Trump has accused Bezos of using the Post to get tax breaks for Amazon and sending reporters after Trump. Bezos **denied the allegations** at a tech conference at the Washington Post in May. The Post's reporters also **defended themselves**, saying that the paper has covered Amazon's tax problems and that the Post's editorial board's stance on taxing online retailers hasn't changed since Bezos bought the paper.

### John Henry – The Boston Globe

Billionaire Red Sox owner John Henry purchased the Boston Globe in October 2013 for \$70 million. Henry agreed to purchase the Globe just days after Bezos acquired the Washington Post. The Globe was previously owned by the New York Times for twenty years. At the time of his purchase, Henry said he didn't plan to influence the paper's sports coverage.

### Sheldon Adelson – The Las Vegas Review-Journal

In December 2014, Las Vegas casino billionaire Sheldon Adelson secretly bought the Las Vegas Review-Journal. The newspaper's **own reporting** outed the billionaire buyer, who reportedly arranged the \$140 million deal through his son-in-law. Since then, there have been reports of Adelson influencing coverage of himself at a newspaper that in the past was often critical of the billionaire.

### Joe Mansueto – Inc. and Fast Company magazines

Morningstar MORN +0.11% CEO Joe Mansueto made his \$2.3 billion fortune at the investment and research firm he founded in 1984. One month after taking Morningstar public in 2005, Mansueto bought Inc. and Fast Company magazine from G&J USA. In a **statement at the time**, he wrote, "I wasn't looking to buy a magazine. Or two, for that matter....I bought them because I'm passionate about their missions. Their past, present, and future contributions."

### Mortimer Zuckerman – US News & World







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Hogan \$140 million in damages. Gawker aims to appeal the ruling.



Source: <https://www.webpagefx.com/>

# Media Conglomerate #1: National Amusements

Unless you're directly involved in business and / or entertainment, you've probably never heard of National Amusements before.

The company owns movie theaters throughout the world — about 950 total — but it owns much more than just movie theaters.

NA's huge collection of properties is staggering. Whether they own a company entirely, possess majority shares, or even own minority voting shares, the scope of NA's reach is enormous for a company that's known less than its subsidiaries.

To start our look at NA, let's check out one of the biggest names in modern business — Sumner Redstone.

## Head: Sumner Redstone

Sumner Redstone is current owner of National Amusements and all of its properties. While his daughter Shari has the title of President, Sumner Redstone retains most of the control over the company.

NA was first founded by Sumner Redstone's father Michael Redstone, making National Amusements one of the most powerful and successful corporate dynasties in the United States.

None of the Redstones publish their salaries. After all, National Amusements is a private company.

However, finance experts can guess at Sumner Redstone's overall net worth.

His net worth refers to the total financial value of what Sumner Redstone owns, minus any outstanding debts.

As he nears his 94th birthday in 2017, Sumner Redstone (and his estate) is worth an estimated \$4.6 billion, according to *Forbes*.





While a decent amount of that value comes from his stake in National Amusements, much more of it comes from the companies that he owns.

## TV and Film Assets

The most famous assets of National Amusements are almost all Viacom and CBS properties.

Combined, they make up the lion's share of NA's television and film acquisitions.



Still, that's only a portion of what NA owns.

## Print Assets

National Amusements has a modest collection of print publishers, but they're pretty well-known.

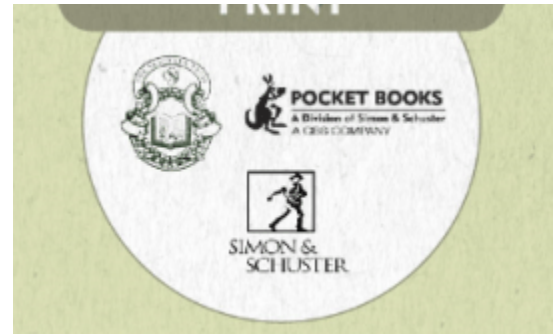
The most well-known is Simon and Schuster, which National Amusements acquired when it purchased Viacom in 1999.



## Video Game Assets

Along with other entertainment assets, National Amusements controls CBS Games.

Since its acquisition, CBS Games has rebranded to CBS Interactive, which now controls well-known gaming websites that we'll look at next.



## Internet Assets

With CBS Interactive, National Amusements controls giant chunks of the video game news and sports news industries.

These brands include GameSpot, metacritic, c|net, and 247-Sports.

## Media





## Conglomerate #2: Disney

Disney is probably the most well-known media name on this list.

The company has a hand in just about every medium in the world from children's cinema to sports.

When it comes to television and film, there's a good chance you're watching something owned by the Disney company — even if it doesn't have Disney's name.

Why?

They own so, so much.

Let's start with the company's leader.

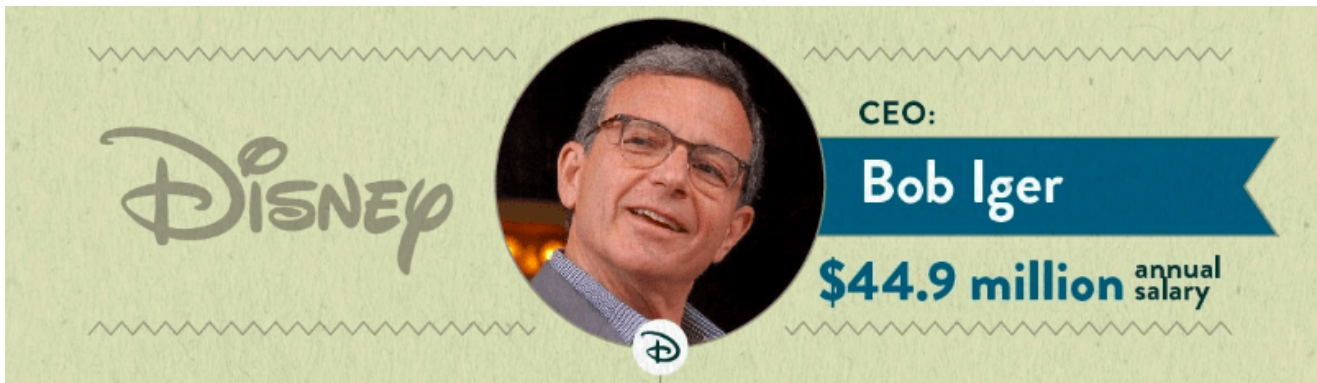
### Head: Bob Iger

Disney announced Bob Iger as CEO on March 13, 2005, following the departure of Michael Eisner.

Since then, Iger has run a campaign of mergers and acquisitions to expand Disney into an even greater media powerhouse, especially with the acquisition of Marvel (\$4 billion) and Lucasfilm (\$4 billion).

His published salary is \$44.9 million. That breaks down to:

- \$1.73 million per paycheck
- \$172,692.32 per day
- \$21,586.54 per hour



Why does Iger make so much money?

He (technically) oversees all of the following companies.

## TV and Film Assets

First, let's look at the bread and butter of Disney — television and film.

Considering they have theme parks built to their entertainment assets, it's clear that Disney is best known for its TV and film properties.

There are so many different companies that you really just have to see it for yourself.





## Print Assets

Disney's print assets are a mix of proprietary publishers, Lucasfilm acquisitions, and Marvel properties.

The mix gives Disney a controlling interest in massive publishing niches, especially comic books and science fiction novels.

Disney also owns ESPN, which has its own publishing arm for all things sports.



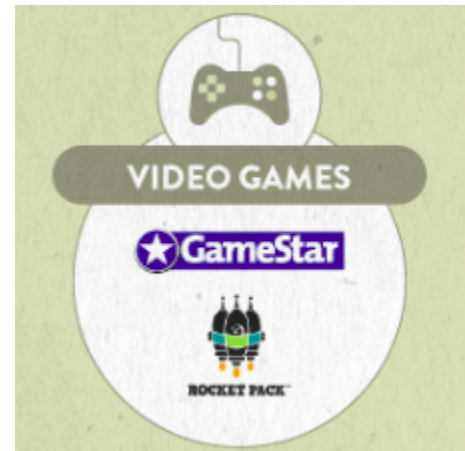


## Video Game Assets

Finally, Disney owns a few video game assets.

They're not huge, but they're enough to keep Disney mildly competitive and up-to-date in the video game industry (especially mobile gaming).

GameStar, a subsidiary of Disney Interactive Studios, is one of the best-known video game developers bought by Disney.



## Media Conglomerate #3: TimeWarner

At the time of publication (11/7/16), it's possible that ATandT will soon buy TimeWarner for around \$80 billion.

If that happens, ATandT will acquire everything below and more.

In the meantime, let's take a more in-depth look at TimeWarner and what it owns.

**Head: Jeff Bewkes**

Jeff Bewkes is the CEO of TimeWarner. He makes \$32.5 million per year.

That works out to:

- \$1.25 million per paycheck
- \$125,000 per work day
- \$15,625 per hour [MORE](#)





*The*  
**SIX CORPORATIONS THAT OWN**  
*(almost)*  
**ALL MEDIA**

Today, consumers have access to more media and entertainment choices than ever. But in reality, a huge portion of those choices belong to one of six media conglomerates. In this context, "media" refers to publishing outlets for television, film, books, video games, and other modern forms of information delivery.

**NATIONAL AMUSEMENTS**

Owner:  
**Sumner Redstone**  
**\$4.6 billion** net worth

**MEDIA ASSETS:**

