



# Viewers Enjoy More Local Broadcast News Today Than Ever Before

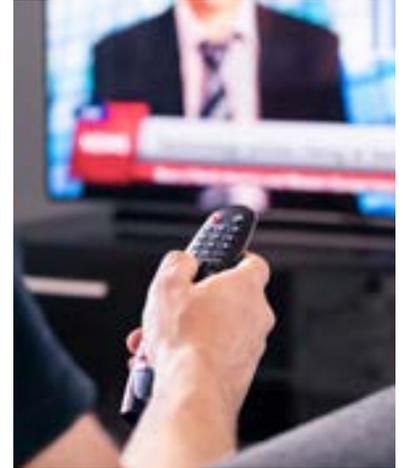
Local Broadcast TV News Production  
Increased 35% Over Last Decade

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## INTRODUCTION

Local broadcast journalists are a pillar of our democracy. Particularly as local newspapers have struggled, local TV and radio stations continue to ensure communities are informed and have a powerful voice to fight back against injustice. From the first moon landing to 9/11, from racial justice protests to coverage of the pandemic, broadcasters provide a window into the most pivotal moments in history.

In an age of social media disinformation and cable news politicization, local broadcast television consistently ranks [as the most-trusted news source](#) compared to other media. And now, a recent NAB analysis of Nielsen data shows that America's broadcasters are delivering more local news than ever before. From fact-based journalism and public affairs programming to emergency information that keeps Americans safe, local broadcasters bind communities together rather than dividing them.



## KEY FINDINGS

NAB examined the number of programs classified by Nielsen as "local news" as well as the hours of local news aired across the country, comparing data from the same month (November) in 2011, 2016 and 2021.

Across the United States, more local TV news airs now than 10 years ago:

The number of local news telecasts airing in November 2021 across the country increased by **nearly 16%** from November 2016 and by **35%** from November 2011, with **154,445** local newscasts airing in November 2021 compared to 114,005 in November 2011.

More than **107,000** hours of local television news content aired in November 2021 across the country, an increase of **over 40%** from November 2011 and **more than 16%** from November 2016.

The number of Spanish-language local news telecasts airing in November 2021 more than doubled the number airing in November 2011, with nearly **8,300** Spanish-language newscasts representing approximately **4,600 hours** airing in November 2021.

## CHALLENGES

Unfortunately, the quality local journalism broadcasters provide is at risk. Outdated and arcane broadcast ownership restrictions and the unyielding dominance of big tech platforms in today's media marketplace threaten the very foundation of the local broadcasting business.

Broadcasters continue to operate under [decades old ownership restrictions](#) that prevent them from growing and using their resources more efficiently to provide more local journalism. Other media businesses and technology platforms are free from these restrictions while local TV stations are forced to compete in the marketplace with one hand tied behind their back.

At the same time, local broadcasters are losing an estimated \$2 billion [annually](#) when their content is accessed through Google and Facebook. Local news is costly to produce, and not only do these tech giants pose major threats to advertising revenue, but they are gatekeepers of online content, exerting power over what internet users access and how advertisers reach them.

Since the start of the pandemic, [more than 360 newspapers have gone out of business](#). Between the unchecked market power of big tech titans and antiquated broadcast ownership restrictions, broadcasters are at risk of suffering the same fate unless Congress and the Federal Communications Commission take action. And without trusted local news, communities suffer. The [2022 State of Local News Report](#) notes, "In communities without a credible source of local news, voter participation declines, corruption in both government and business increases, and local residents end up paying more in taxes and at checkout."

## CONCLUSION

Amid harsh business challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, big tech competition and regulations that restrict stations' growth, local broadcasters have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to delivering news Americans trust to local communities across the country. In recent years, television broadcasters have invested significantly to markedly increase their local news offerings to meet demand.

However, outdated laws force broadcasters to compete with one arm tied behind their back for advertising dollars and audience. NAB continues to advocate for broadcast ownership rules that reflect the current competitive marketplace, as well as passage of both the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act and the Local Journalism Sustainability Act. These bills, which have bipartisan support from lawmakers in both chambers, would help level the playing field for news outlets against big tech companies and ensure that broadcasters can continue serving as a trusted source of local news and investing in their news operations.

