



## Out with the old, in with the new?

Right out of Towson University, in 2007, Brian Stelter began his career as a New York Times media reporter. By 2013, he was CNN's senior media reporter and host of [Reliable Sources](#). His rapid rise was fueled by what Forbes calls [entrepreneurial journalism](#). While in college, Stelter started the Cable Newser blog (renamed [TV Newser](#)), gained the interest of the New York Times and sold the blog to [Mediabistro](#).

[Entrepreneurial media outlets](#) come in different shapes and size, though they are generally digital natives that emphasize individual voice and new story forms, and encourage engagement.

- [Buzzfeed](#) was founded in 2006 as a lab to create viral content. It has since become a site that blends lists, news articles, long-form journalism, opinion pieces, quizzes, videos and GIFs by staff writers and community contributors.
- [The Huffington Post](#) was founded in 2005 and features a blend of original and aggregated content intended to be shared. It has developed a reputation for engagement. Sold to AOL in 2011 for more than \$300 million, it won a [Pulitzer Prize](#) in 2012.
- [FiveThirtyEight](#) was founded as an independent site in 2008 by statistician Nate Silver. It was first picked up by the New York Times and then in 2014 was re-launched as an ESPN-owned site. It analyzes statistics to reveal insights on topics such as politics, sports, economics and the environment.
- [Upshot](#): The Upshot, a publication of The New York Times, was founded in 2014 to help readers understand big, complicated stories by writing in a direct, plainspoken way and by analyzing data sets.

Are the best jobs for today's student journalists the ones that don't yet exist?

Assignments on different levels:

**Flashlight:** Check out [Newspaper Death Watch](#) by author Paul Gillin. Note the publications that have folded since 2007, the ones that have merged and the innovators. In each category, do the publications have anything common?

**Spotlight:** Nonprofit news models are growing. At [The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting](#), student fellowship grants fund stories on underreported topics abroad. Take a look at its [2014 student fellow projects](#). Write your own proposal for a travel grant that includes a story idea, tentative budget and ways you will integrate multimedia into your project. Where does the Pulitzer Center get its funding?

**Searchlight:** The Poynter Institute's Andrew Beaujon reports [that local newspapers](#)

are consistently cutting newsrooms. Take a look at Justin Auciello's project *Jersey Shore Hurricane News*, a one-reporter operation launched by a city planner and land use consultant. Select a topic in your local community that is underreported. Who in your community might fund that reporting? Cover an event relating to your topic.

**Extra credit:** Select a big national story currently in the news. Find an article that covers that story in each of the following young media outlets:

- Buzzfeed
- Gawker
- VICE
- FiveThirtyEight
- PolicyMic
- POLITICO

How did each publication frame its story? How did each use multimedia or data? Does each employ a specific style? Are there similarities between them? Would you consider these sites entrepreneurial journalism? How do they differ from traditional journalism?