

# NY Daily News slashes newsroom staffing in half

July 23 2018, by Damian J. Troise

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New York Daily News staff photographers Todd Maisel, left, and Andrew Savulich walk out of the newspaper's office after being laid off, Monday, July 23, 2018, in New York. The tabloid will cut half of its newsroom staff, saying it wants to focus more on digital news. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

The New York tabloid Daily News cut half of its newsroom staff Monday including Jim Rich, the paper's editor in chief.

The paper was sold to Tronc Inc. last year for \$1, with the owner of the Chicago Tribune assuming liabilities and debt.

In an email sent to staff Monday, Tronc said the remaining staff at the Daily News will focus on breaking news involving "crime, civil justice and public responsibility."

The newspaper has been a key fixture in New York City for the last century. It has won 11 Pulitzer Prizes, including last year for its work with ProPublica on the abuse of eviction rules in New York City.

There had been reports that the cuts were coming, and an early-morning tweet from Rich hinted at what was to come.

"If you hate democracy and think local governments should operate unchecked and in the dark, then today is a good day for you," Rich wrote.

New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo urged Tronc to reconsider the layoffs, saying they were made without notifying the state or asking for assistance.

"I urge Tronc to reconsider this drastic move and stand ready to work with them to avert this disaster," Cuomo said in a printed statement. "I understand that large corporations often only see profit and dividends as a bottom line. But in New York, we also calculate loss of an important institution, loss of jobs, and the impact on the families affected. I hope Tronc does the same and recalculates its decision. New York State stands ready to help."



New York Daily News photo assignment editor Reggie Lewis, left, and an unidentified coworker leave the newspaper's office after they were both laid off, Monday, July 23, 2018, in New York. The tabloid will cut half of its newsroom staff, saying it wants to focus more on digital news. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Revenue and print circulation have been sliding at the newspaper for years, even as it provided critical coverage of health issues in public housing and for first responders after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Revenue slid 22 percent between 2014 and 2016, and the paper had already been letting people go. Tronc declined to say how many journalists lost their jobs Monday.

"Since the year began, we've worked hard to transform the New York Daily News into a truly digitally-focused enterprise - one that creates meaningful journalism, delivers it more quickly and more frequently,

and develops new approaches to engage our readers," Tronc said in an email that was sent to the newsroom. "We've gained a deeper understanding of our readership. We've redefined our structures. But we have not gone far enough."

Managing Editor Kristen Lee was also ousted.

Robert York, editor of Tronc-owned The Morning Call in Allentown, Pennsylvania, will take over as editor of the Daily News.



New York Daily News staff photographers Todd Maisel, left, and Andrew Savulich walk out of the daily newspaper's office after being laid off, Monday, July 23, 2018, in New York. The tabloid will cut half of its newsroom staff, saying it wants to focus more on digital news. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

"The reporters at the Daily News are some of the very best in the business. I am heartbroken for them today, and for New York," said New York Attorney General Barbara Underwood. "We need strong local newspapers to hold those in power to account."

Tronc owns the Chicago Tribune, The Baltimore Sun, the Orlando Sentinel, and other media operations.

It has clashed with the leadership of other newspapers it has acquired during heavy staff cuts, including the Los Angeles Times. The paper last month was returned to local ownership after nearly two decades of control by the company that is now known as Tronc.

The Times once had more than 1,200 journalists and more than 25 foreign bureaus. Now it employs about 400 journalists with bureaus in Sacramento, Washington and a handful of foreign and national outposts.

Shares of Tronc Inc., down about 8 percent this year, rose slightly in afternoon trading on the Nasdaq.



Copies of the New York Daily News are for sale at a news stand in New York, Monday, July 23, 2018, after the paper told employees that the newspaper is reducing its editorial staff by 50 percent. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)



New York Daily News staff photographer Todd Maisel takes a phone call outside the daily newspaper's office after being laid off, Monday, July 23, 2018, in New York. The tabloid will cut half of its newsroom staff, saying it wants to focus more on digital news. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

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