Continue



American professional wrestling and entertainment company World Wrestling Entertainment, LLCHeadquarters in Stamford, ConnecticutTrade nameWWEFormerlyTitan Sports, Inc. (1980–1999)World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc. (1999–2002)World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (2002–2023)Company typeSubsidiaryIndustryProfessional wrestlingStreaming mediaPredecessorCapitol Wrestling Corporation Ltd.Founded January 1953; 72 years ago (1953-01)(as Capitol Wrestling Corporation Ltd.) April 1963; 62 years ago (1963-04)(rebranding as the World Wide Wrestling Federation) February 1980; 45 years ago (1980-02)(founding of Titan Sports, Inc.) June 1982; 42 years ago (1982-06)(purchase of Capitol Wrestling Corporation Ltd. by Titan Sports) FounderJess McMahon or Vincent J. McMahon[a](as Capitol Wrestling Corporation Ltd.)Vince McMahon and Linda McMahon(as Titan Sports, Inc.)Headquarters707 Washington Blvd Stamford, Connecticut, United StatesArea servedWorldwideKey peopleAri Emanuel(CEO, TKO)Nick Khan(President)Paul "Triple H" Levesque (Chief Content Officer)ProductsFilmsHome videoLive eventsMerchandiseMusicPay-per-viewPublishingTVVideo on demandServicesLicensingRevenue US$1.398 billion (2024)[2]Operating income US$681.1 million (2024)[2]Number of employees~890[3] (2024)ParentTKO Group Holdings[4][b]DivisionsWWE Books WWE LibrariesWWE Music GroupWWE NetworkWWE Performance CenterWWE Studios[7]SubsidiariesLucha Libre AAA Worldwide (51%)Tapout (50%)[8]WCW Inc.OthersWebsitewwe.com World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) is an American professional wrestling promotion. It is owned and operated by TKO Group Holdings, a majority-owned subsidiary of Endeavor Group Holdings.[9] A global integrated media and entertainment company, WWE has also branched out into fields outside of wrestling, including film, football, and other business ventures, such as licensing its intellectual property to other companies to produce video games and action figures. As in other professional wrestling promotions, WWE does not promote a legitimate sporting contest but rather entertainment-based performance theater, featuring storyline-driven, scripted, and partially choreographed matches; however, matches often include moves that put performers at risk of serious injury or death if not performed correctly. The pre-determined aspect of professional wrestling (an industry open secret) was publicly acknowledged by WWE in 1989 to avoid regulation by athletic commissions. WWE markets its product as "sports entertainment", acknowledging professional wrestling's roots in competitive sport and dramatic theater. The promotion was founded in 1953 as the Capitol Wrestling Corporation (CWC), a Northeastern territory of the National Wrestling Alliance (NWA). Due to booking disputes, CWC left the NWA and became the World Wide Wrestling Federation (WWWF) in April 1963. After rejoining the NWA in 1971, the WWWF was renamed the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) in 1979, and left the NWA again in 1983. Following a trademark dispute with the World Wildlife Fund, the WWF was renamed World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) in 2002. In 2011, the promotion ceased branding itself as World Wrestling Entertainment and began solely using the initials WWE, although their legal name remained the same.[10] WWE is the largest wrestling promotion in the world. Its main roster is divided into two touring brands, Raw and SmackDown. Its developmental brands, NXT and Evolve, are based at the WWE Performance Center in Orlando, Florida. The promotion's programming is available in more than one billion homes worldwide in 30 languages and its global headquarters is located in Stamford, Connecticut,[11] with offices in New York, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Mumbai, Shanghai, Singapore, Dubai, and Munich.[12] WWE's corporate entity, Titan Sports, Inc., was incorporated on February 21, 1980, by Vince McMahon: Titan acquired Capitol Wrestling Corporation Ltd., the holding company for the wrestling promotion, in 1982. Titan was renamed World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc. in 1999, and World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. in 2002. In January 2023, WWE began to explore a sale of the company, amidst an employee misconduct scandal involving McMahon that initially prompted him to step down as chairman and CEO.[13] In September, WWE merged with Zuffa, the parent company of mixed martial arts promotion Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), to form TKO Group Holdings, a new public company majority-owned by Endeavor Group Holdings, with McMahon as executive chairman:[14] the promotion's legal name was then changed to World Wrestling Entertainment, LLC.[15] In 2024, McMahon departed TKO amid a sex trafficking scandal and was replaced as executive chairman by Ari Emanuel.[16] Main article: History of WWE Part of a series onProfessional wrestling History History of professional wrestling By year Early wrestling championships Gold Dust Trio 1980s boom Black Saturday 1994 NWA World Title Tournament Monday Night War Attitude Era 2000 All Japan Pro Wrestling mass exodus The Invasion Wednesday Night Wars Notable promotions All Elite Wrestling All Japan Pro Wrestling All Japan Women's Pro-Wrestling All Star Wrestling American Wrestling Association Consejo Mundial de Lucha Libre Extreme Championship Wrestling DDT Pro-Wrestling Frontier Martial-Arts Wrestling Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling Jim Crockett Promotions Joint Promotions Lucha Libre AAA Worldwide Major League Wrestling Maple Leaf Pro Wrestling National Wrestling Alliance New Japan Pro-Wrestling Pro Wrestling Noah Ring of Honor Soft Ground Wrestling Stampede Wrestling Titanes en el ring Tokyo Joshi Pro-Wrestling Total Nonstop Action Wrestling UWF International Women of Wrestling World Championship Wrestling (Australia) World Championship Wrestling (United States) World Wonder Ring Stardom WWE Raw SmackDown NXT Evolve Others Notable menEarly 20th century Bert Assirati Billy Riley Billy Sandow Ed Lewis Frank Gotch George Hackenschmidt The Great Gama Jack Pfefer Joe Stecher Jim Londos Lou Thesz Orville Brown Salvador Lutteroth Toots Mondt Mid 20th century Blue Demon Bruno Sammartino Buddy Rogers "Classy" Freddie Blassie Dick "The Destroyer" Beyer El Santo Gene Kiniski Gorgeous George Karl Gotch Rikidōzan Sam Muchnick Stu Hart Verne Gagne 1970s Abdullah The Butcher Akira Maeda André the Giant Antonio Inoki Big Daddy Billy Robinson Carlos Colón Dory Funk Jr. Dusty Rhodes El Signo Giant Baba Gordon Solie Harley Race Jack Brisco Mil Máscaras Negro Navarro Nick Bockwinkel Terry Funk 1980s Bobby Heenan Dynamite Kid El Texano Genichiro Tenryu Hulk Hogan Jim Crockett Jr. Randy Savage Ric Flair Ricky Steamboat Road Warriors Roddy Piper Satoru "Tiger Mask" Sayama Stan Hansen Vince McMahon 1990s Akira Taue Antonio Peña Atsushi Onita Bret Hart Eric Bischoff Jim Ross Jushin Liger Keiji Muto (The Great Muta) Kenta Kobashi Kevin Nash Mick Foley Mitsuharu Misawa Paul Heyman Scott Hall Shawn Michaels Sting "Stone Cold" Steve Austin The Rock The Undertaker Toshiaki Kawada Triple H Vince Russo 2000s AJ Styles Batista Brock Lesnar Chris Jericho Eddie Guerrero Edge Hiroshi Tanahashi Jeff Hardy Jeff Jarrett John Cena Kurt Angle Místico Randy Orton Rey Mysterio 2010s and 2020s Bryan Danielson CM Punk Cody Rhodes Jon Moxley Kazuchika Okada Kenny Omega Nick Khan Roman Reigns Rossy Ogawa Seth Rollins Tony Khan Notable womenMid 20th century (1940 to 1974) Chabela Romero Irma González June Byers La Dama Enmascarada Mildred Burke The Fabulous Moolah Late 20th century (1975 to 1999) Aja Kong Akira Hokuto Bull Nakano Chyna Crush Gals (Chigusa Nagayo and Lioness Asuka) Dump Matsumoto Jackie Sato Lady Apache Madusa Miceli Manami Toyota Megumi Kudo Miss Elizabeth Sherri Martel Wendi Richter 2000s Awesome Kong Ayako Hamada Beth Phoenix Faby Apache Gail Kim Lita Madison Eagles Marcela Nanae Takahashi Sara Del Rey Stephanie McMahon Trish Stratus 2010s Alexa Bliss Asuka Bayley Becky Lynch Charlotte Flair Iyo Sky Kairi Sane Mayu Iwatani Meiko Satomura Mercedes Moné Princesa Sugehit Ronda Rousey 2020s Bianca Belair Giulia Liv Morgan Rhea Ripley Sareee Syuri Toni Storm Utami Hayashishita By region Australia Bolivia Canada China France India Iran Israel Japan Mexico New Zealand Puerto Rico Russia Saudi Arabia United Kingdom United States Styles British wrestling All-in style Mountevans rules Cruiserweight X Division French catch Hardcore Intergender Lucha libre Midget Mini-Estrella Puroresu Shoot style U-Kei Women's Concepts Attire Masks Wrestling singlet Wrestling shoe Blading Championship World Heavyweight Dirt sheet Glossary of terms Kayfabe Gimmick Face Heel Shoot Heat Job Push House show Match types Music Ring name Sports entertainment Tag team Weight classes Wrestling ring Culture Backyard wrestling Cauliflower Alley Club Cauliflower ear Comic books Fantasy wrestling Films Luchador films Magazines Paintings Gustave Courbet Thomas Eakins William Etty George Luks Rib Ribera Steakhouse Ten-bell salute Video games Wrestling personalities in politics Zubaz Media outlets Botchamania Box y Lucha Dark Side of the Ring Fighting Spirit Magazine Live Audio Wrestling OSW Review Power Slam Pro Wrestling Illustrated Solowrestling Súper Luchas WrestleCrap Wrestling Observer Newsletter Controversies Animals in professional wrestling Chris Benoit double-murder and suicide Death of Owen Hart Mass Transit incident Montreal Screwjob Killing of Bruiser Brody Killing of Rikidōzan Premature deaths Ring boy scandal Speaking Out United States v. McMahon Vince McMahon sex trafficking scandal WWE–Saudi Arabia relationship Lists Attendance records Championships Halls of fame Matches rated 5 or more stars by Dave Meltzer Moves Promotions Rivalries Rosters TV shows Wrestling families Related topics Combat sport Comparison of professional wrestling and mixed martial arts Martial arts Mock combat Pankration Shootfighting Sport wrestling Amateur Catch Shoot Submission Lancashire Luta Livre Pehlwani Stage combat Theatre Theatresports vte Main article: Capitol Wrestling Corporation WWE's origins can be traced back as far as the 1950s when on January 7, 1953, the first show under the Capitol Wrestling Corporation (CWC) was produced. There is uncertainty as to whom the founder of the CWC was. Some sources state that it was Vincent J. McMahon,[17][18][19] while other sources cite McMahon's father Jess McMahon as founder of CWC.[20][21][22] The CWC later joined the National Wrestling Alliance (NWA) and famous New York promoter Toots Mondt soon joined the promotion. Vincent J. McMahon with Verne Gagne and Bruno Sammartino in 1975 Vincent J. McMahon and Toots Mondt were very successful and soon controlled approximately 70% of the NWA's booking power, largely due to their dominance in the heavily populated Northeastern United States. In 1963, McMahon and Mondt had a dispute with the NWA over "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers being booked to hold the NWA World Heavyweight Championship.[23] Mondt and McMahon were not only promoters but also acted as his manager and were accused by other NWA promoters of withholding Rogers making defenses in their cities versus only defending in Mondt and McMahon's own cities thus maintaining a monopoly on the world title. In a now infamous situation, the NWA sent former five-time world champion and legitimate wrestler Lou Thesz to Toronto to face Rogers on January 24, 1963. Thesz recalls this was not planned and prior to the match remembered telling Buddy "we can do this the easy way or the hard way." Rogers agreed to lose the fall and title in a one fall match versus the traditional two out of three fall matchup that most world title matches were defended. Once word reached back to Mondt and McMahon, at first they simply ignored the title change. From January until April 1963, Rogers was promoted as the NWA World Champion, or simply the World Heavyweight Champion, in their area. The World Wide Wrestling Federation (WWWF) was not an immediate creation after Rogers's one fall loss to Thesz. Mondt and McMahon both eventually left the NWA in protest and formed the WWWF in the process. They brought along with them Willie Gilzenberg, long time boxing and wrestling promoter in New Jersey. In April 1963, the WWWF World Heavyweight Championship was created, with the promotion claiming that inaugural champion Rogers had won a tournament in Rio de Janeiro on April 25, 1963, defeating long time Capitol favorite Antonino Rocca in the finals. In reality, Rocca was no longer in the area, as he was working for Jim Crockett Sr. in the Carolinas. Rogers also had already suffered what would later be a career ending heart attack on April 18 in Akron, Ohio, and was in an Ohio hospital during the time the alleged tournament took place.[24] Rogers lost the championship to Bruno Sammartino a month later on May 17, with the promotion beginning to be built around Sammartino shortly after.[25] In June 1963, Gilzenberg was named the first president of the WWWF.[26] Mondt left the promotion in the late 1960s and although the WWWF had previously withdrawn from the NWA, McMahon quietly re-joined in 1971. The WWWF was renamed the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) in 1979. Vincent J. McMahon's son, Vincent K. McMahon, and his wife Linda, established Titan Sports, Inc., in 1980 in South Yarmouth, Massachusetts and applied trademarks for the initials "WWF".[27][28] The company was incorporated on February 21, 1980, in the Cape Cod Coliseum offices, then moved to the building on Holly Hill Lane in Greenwich, Connecticut. Main article: 1980s professional wrestling boom Vincent K. McMahon, former majority owner and executive chairman of WWE, in 1986. The younger McMahon bought Capitol from his father in 1982, effectively seizing control of the company. The actual date of sale is still unknown but the generally accepted date is June 6, 1982; however, this was likely only the date the deal was struck but not finalized. On WWF television, Capitol Wrestling Corporation maintained copyrights and ownership past the June 1982 date. The World Wrestling Federation was not solely owned by Vincent J. McMahon but also by Gorilla Monsoon, Arnold Skaaland and Phil Zacko. The deal between the two McMahons was a monthly payment basis, in which if a single payment was missed, ownership would revert to the elder McMahon and his business partners. Looking to seal the deal quickly, McMahon took several loans and deals with other promoters and the business partners (including the promise of a job for life) in order to take full ownership by May or June 1983 for an estimated total of roughly $1 million with the three business partners receiving roughly $815,000 among them and Vincent J. McMahon receiving roughly $185,000.[29] Seeking to make the WWF the premier wrestling promotion in the country, and eventually, the world, he began an expansion process that fundamentally changed the wrestling business.[30] At the annual meeting of the NWA in 1983, the McMahons and former Capitol employee Jim Barnett all withdrew from the organization.[23] McMahon also worked to get WWF programming on syndicated television all across the United States. This angered other promoters and disrupted the well-established boundaries of the different wrestling promotions, eventually ending the territory system, which was in use since the founding of the NWA in the 1940s. In addition, the company used income generated by advertising, television deals, and tape sales to secure talent from rival promoters. In an interview with Sports Illustrated, McMahon was quoted as saying: "In the old days, there were wrestling fiefdoms all over the country, each with its own little lord in charge. Each little lord respected the rights of his neighboring little lord. No takeovers or raids were allowed. There were maybe 30 of these tiny kingdoms in the U.S. and if I hadn't bought out my dad, there would still be 30 of them, fragmented and struggling. I, of course, had no allegiance to those little lords."[30] McMahon gained significant traction when he hired American Wrestling Association (AWA) talent Hulk Hogan, who had achieved popularity outside of wrestling, notably for his appearance in the film Rocky III.[31] McMahon signed Roddy Piper as Hogan's rival, and then shortly afterward Jesse Ventura as an announcer. Other wrestlers joined the roster, such as The Iron Sheik, Nikolai Volkoff, Junkyard Dog, Paul Orndorff, Greg Valentine, and Ricky Steamboat, joining existing stars such as Jimmy Snuka, Don Muraco, Sgt. Slaughter and André the Giant. Many of the wrestlers who would later join the WWF were former AWA or NWA talent. Hulk Hogan, pictured in 1989, was the WWF's top star during the 1980s professional wrestling boom. The WWF would tour nationally in a venture that would require a huge capital investment, one that placed the WWF on the verge of financial collapse. The future of McMahon's experiment came down to the success or failure of McMahon's groundbreaking concept, WrestleMania. WrestleMania was a major success and was (and still is) marketed as the Super Bowl of professional wrestling. The concept of a wrestling supercard was nothing new in North America; the NWA had begun running Starrcade a few years prior. In McMahon's eyes, however, what separated WrestleMania from other supercards was that it was intended to be accessible to those who did not watch wrestling. He invited celebrities such as Mr. T, Muhammad Ali, and Cyndi Lauper to participate in the event, as well as securing a deal with MTV to provide coverage. The event and hype surrounding it led to the term Rock 'n' Wrestling Connection, due to the cross-promotion of popular culture and professional wrestling. The WWF business expanded significantly on the shoulders of McMahon and his babyface hero Hulk Hogan for the next several years after defeating The Iron Sheik at Madison Square Garden on January 23, 1984.[32] The introduction of Saturday Night's Main Event on NBC in 1985 marked the first time that professional wrestling had been broadcast on network television since the 1950s when the now-defunct DuMont Television Network broadcast matches of Vincent J. McMahon's Capitol Wrestling Corporation. The 1980s "Wrestling Boom" peaked with the WrestleMania III pay-per-view at the Pontiac Silverdome in 1987, which set an attendance record of 93,173 for the WWF for 29 years until 2016.[33] A rematch of the WrestleMania III main event between WWF champion Hulk Hogan and André the Giant took place on The Main Event I in 1988 and was seen by 33 million people, the most-watched wrestling match in North American television history.[34] In 1983, Titan moved its offices to Stamford, Connecticut. Subsequently, a new Titan Sports, Inc. (originally WWF, Inc.) was established in Delaware in 1987 and was consolidated with the Massachusetts entity in February 1988.[35] Main article: Monday Night War Shawn Michaels became one of the biggest stars in WWF during this time, since an iconic ladder match at WrestleMania X in 1994.[36] The WWF was hit with allegations of steroid abuse and distribution in 1992. This was followed by allegations of sexual harassment by WWF employees the following year.[37][38] McMahon was eventually exonerated, but the allegations brought bad public relations for the WWF, and an overall bad reputation. The steroid trial cost the company an estimated $5 million at a time of record low revenues. This helped drive many WWF wrestlers over to rival promotion World Championship Wrestling (WCW), including 1980s babyface hero Hulk Hogan. During this period, the WWF promoted wrestlers of a younger age comprising "The New Generation", featuring Bret Hart, Shawn Michaels, Diesel, Razor Ramon and The Undertaker among others in an effort to promote new talent into the spotlight. In January 1993, the WWF debuted its flagship cable program Monday Night Raw. WCW countered in September 1995 with its own Monday night program, Monday Nitro, which aired in the same time slot as Raw.[39] The two programs would trade wins in the ensuing ratings competition (known as the "Monday Night War") until mid-1996. At that point, Nitro began a nearly two-year ratings domination that was largely fueled by the introduction of the New World Order (nWo), a stable led by former WWF performers Hulk Hogan, Scott Hall (the former Razor Ramon), and Kevin Nash (the former Diesel).[40] Main article: Attitude Era See also: Montreal Screwjob Stone Cold Steve Austin rivalry with Vince McMahon is often cited as having turned the tides for WWF in the Monday Night War against rival promotion WCW.[41] As the Monday Night War continued between Raw Is War and WCW's Nitro, the WWF would transform itself from a family-friendly product into a more adult-oriented product, known as the Attitude Era. The era was spearheaded by WWF VP Shane McMahon (son of owner Vince McMahon) and head writer Vince Russo. 1997 ended with McMahon facing real-life controversy following Bret Hart's controversial departure from the company, dubbed as the Montreal Screwjob.[42] This proved to be one of several founding factors in the launch of the Attitude Era as well as the creation of McMahon's on-screen character, "Mr. McMahon". Before the Montreal Screwjob, which took place at the 1997 Survivor Series, former WCW talent were being hired by the WWF, including Stone Cold Steve Austin, Mankind, and Vader. Austin was slowly brought in as the new face of the company despite being promoted as an antihero, starting with his "Austin 3:16" speech shortly after defeating Jake Roberts in the tournament finals at the King of the Ring pay-per-view in 1996.[43] On April 29, 1999, the WWF made its return to terrestrial television, airing a special program known as SmackDown! on the fledgling UPN network. The Thursday night show became a weekly series on August 26, 1999 – competing directly with WCW's Thursday night program titled Thunder on TBS. In the summer of 1999, Titan Sports, Inc. was renamed World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc. On October 19, 1999, World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc. launched an initial public offering as a publicly traded company, trading on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) with the issuance of stock then valued at $172.5 million.[44] The company was traded on the NYSE under ticker symbol WWE.[45] Main article: The Invasion (professional wrestling) By the fall of 1999, the Attitude Era had turned the tide of the Monday Night War into WWF's favor. After Time Warner merged with America Online (AOL), Ted Turner's control over WCW was considerably reduced. The newly merged company lacked interest in professional wrestling as a whole and decided to sell WCW in its entirety. Although Eric Bischoff, whom Time Warner fired as WCW president in October 1999, was nearing a deal to purchase the company, in March 2001 McMahon acquired the rights to WCW's trademarks, tape library, contracts, and other properties from AOL Time Warner for a number reported to be around $7 million.[46] Shortly after WrestleMania X-Seven, the WWF launched the Invasion storyline, integrating the incoming talent roster from WCW and Extreme Championship Wrestling (ECW). With this purchase, WWF now became by far the sole largest wrestling promotion in North America and in the world. The assets of ECW, which had folded after filing for bankruptcy protection in April 2001, were purchased by WWE in 2003.[47] In 2000, the WWF, in collaboration with television network NBC, launched the XFL, a new professional football league that debuted in 2001.[48] The league had high ratings for the first few weeks, but initial interest waned and its ratings plunged to dismally low levels (one of its games was the lowest-rated prime-time show in the history of American television). NBC walked out on the venture after only one season, but McMahon intended to continue alone. However, after being unable to reach a deal with UPN, McMahon shut down the XFL.[49] WWE maintained control of the XFL trademark[50][51] before McMahon reclaimed the XFL brand, this time under a separate shell company from WWE, in 2017[52] with intent to relaunch the XFL in 2020.[53] On June 24, 2002, episode of Raw, Vince McMahon officially referred to the start of the next era, called the "Ruthless Aggression" era.[54][55] Further information: WWF trademark dispute On May 6, 2002, the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) changed both its company name and the name of its wrestling promotion to World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) after the company lost a lawsuit initiated by the World Wildlife Fund over the WWF trademark.[56][57] Although mainly caused by an unfavorable ruling in its dispute with the World Wildlife Fund regarding the "WWF" initialism, the company noted it provided an opportunity to emphasize its focus on entertainment.[58] Main articles: WWE brand extension and WWE Draft John Cena gradually became one of the biggest stars of WWE during this time and since 2005 he went on to win a record 17 world championships in the promotion. In March 2002, WWE decided to create two separate rosters, with each group of wrestlers appearing on one of their main programs, Raw and SmackDown!, due to the overabundance of talent left over from the Invasion storyline and the ensuing absorption of WCW and ECW contracts. This was dubbed as the "brand extension". Beginning in 2002 a draft lottery was held nearly every year to set the rosters, with the first draft to determine the inaugural split rosters, and subsequent drafts designed to refresh the rosters of each show. WWE expanded the brand split by relaunching ECW as a third brand on May 26, 2006.[59] Two years later, WWE adapted a more family-friendly format and their programming received a TV-PG rating.[60] The final ECW program aired on February 16, 2010, after which it was replaced with NXT.[61] During this time many new and young wrestlers would join the company, many which would become household names for the next years to come such as John Cena, Randy Orton, Brock Lesnar, and Batista. On April 7, 2011, WWE, via the WWE Corporate website, the company ceased using the full name World Wrestling Entertainment and henceforth referred to itself solely as WWE, making the latter an orphan initialism. This was said to reflect WWE's global entertainment expansion away from the ring with the ultimate goal of acquiring entertainment companies and putting a focus on television, live events, and film production. WWE noted that their new company model was put into effect with the relaunch of Tough Enough, being a non-scripted program (contrary to the scripted nature of professional wrestling) and with the launch of the WWE Network (at the time scheduled to launch in 2012; later pushed back to 2014). However, the legal name of the company remained as World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.[10] Beginning with the August 29, 2011, episode, Raw - referred to as Raw Supershow - featured talent from both Raw and SmackDown (the "Supershow" epithet would be dropped on July 23, 2012).[62] Championships previously exclusive to one show or the other were available for wrestlers from any show to compete for; the "Supershow" format would mark the end of the brand split, as all programming and live events (until July 2016) featured the full WWE roster.[63] In 2013, the company built the sports medicine and training facility WWE Performance Center in the east Orange County, Florida in partnership with Full Sail University from Winter Park, Florida. The training facility is targeted at career and athletic development for the company's wrestlers.[64] Full Sail is also home base to WWE's NXT brand,[65] which served as a developmental territory for WWE.[66] On February 24, 2014, WWE launched WWE Network, an over-the-top streaming service that would feature archive content from WWE and its predecessors, all pay-per-views, (which would continue to be sold through television providers as well), and original programming.[67][68][69] Beginning in 2015 WWE started to push Roman Reigns as their face of the company since having him win the 2015 Royal rumble match, amidst mixed reception. By 2017 Roman Reigns became their highest merchandise seller.[70] Raw and SmackDown have been WWE's two main brands since the brand split was first initiated in 2002. On May 25, 2016, WWE relaunched the brand split, billed as the "New Era". Subsequently, Raw and SmackDown have each featured their unique rosters, announcers, championships and ring sets/ropes. A draft took place to determine which wrestlers would appear on what show. SmackDown also moved from Thursdays to Tuesday nights, which began on July 19 (the night of the aforementioned draft), and airs live instead of the previous pre-recorded format.[71] Due to the return of the brand split, a new World Championship, called the WWE Universal Championship was introduced at the August 21, 2016 SummerSlam event with Finn Bálor defeating Seth Rollins to become the inaugural WWE Universal Champion.[72] On November 29, 2016, WWE introduced a new program specifically for their cruiserweight division (wrestlers 205 lbs. and under) called WWE 205 Live.[73] The program focuses exclusively on those wrestlers who qualify for the division.[74][75] The cruiserweights – who first became a fixture in WWE with the Cruiserweight Classic tournament – were originally exclusive to the Raw brand before landing their own brand.[76] On December 15, 2016, WWE established a new WWE United Kingdom Championship, with the inaugural champion being decided by a 16-man tournament to air on WWE Network featuring wrestlers from the UK and Ireland during January 2017. WWE executive Paul "Triple H" Levesque said the eventual plan with the new title and tournament was to establish a UK-based brand with its own weekly television show.[77][78] WWE subsequently launched its UK-based brand as an offshoot of NXT, NXT UK, in June 2018, with Johnny Saint serving as inaugural general manager.[79] Starting in September 2019, NXT had a weekly, live, two-hour show Wednesday nights on the USA Network and WWE began promoting NXT as their "third brand".[80][81] However, in 2021 NXT was moved to Tuesday nights, having conceded the Wednesday Night Wars to rival promotion All Elite Wrestling (AEW), and in September of that year was reinstated to its original function as the developmental brand for the main roster (Raw and SmackDown), under the name "NXT 2.0". Further information: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sports In March 2020, WWE began to be impacted by the American onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In mid-March, three of the four major sports leagues closed locker rooms to the media as a precautionary measure. As other sports cancellations and postponements were being introduced, WWE began to film its weekly programs at the Performance Center without spectators and with only essential staff present, beginning with the March 13 episode of SmackDown – the March 11 episode of NXT had been recorded at the Performance Center with paying fans, thus being WWE's last event to have ticketed fans in attendance before the pandemic took full effect.[82][83] WrestleMania 36 was scheduled to take place on April 5 at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa but on March 16, was moved to Orlando to be held behind closed doors.[84][85] WrestleMania, as well as Raw and SmackDown for a period before and after WrestleMania, shifted from live broadcasts to a pre-recorded format.[86] NXT continued to air from Full Sail University, but under similar restrictions.[87][88] Live broadcasts returned on April 13, with the existing arrangements continuing; WWE stated to ESPN.com that "we believe it is now more important than ever to provide people with a diversion from these hard times", and that the company's programming "bring[s] families together and deliver a sense of hope, determination and perseverance".[87][88] It was subsequently reported that Florida Governor Ron DeSantis had deemed WWE a business critical to the state's economy, and had added an exception under the state's stay-at-home order for employees of a "professional sports and media production" that is closed to the public and has a national audience.[89][90] The decision was met with criticism from media outlets, with several media outlets pointing out that DeSantis's actions happened on the same day a pro-Donald Trump political action committee led by Linda McMahon, who was previously a part of Trump's cabinet, pledged to spend $18.5 million in advertising in Florida, and that, also on the same day, Vince McMahon was named part of an advisory group created by Trump to devise a strategy in re-launching the US economy.[91][92][93][94] On April 15, WWE started a series of cuts and layoffs in response to the pandemic, including releasing a number of performers (Karl Anderson, Kurt Angle, Aiden English, EC3, Epico, Luke Gallows, Curt Hawkins, No Way Jose, Sarah Logan, Mike Kanellis, Maria Kanellis, Primo, Erick Rowan, Rusev, Lio Rush, Zack Ryder, Heath Slater, and Eric Young), three producers (Dave Finlay, Shane Helms and Lance Storm), referee Mike Chioda, and multiple NXT/Performance Center trainees and staff. WWE executives also took a pay cut, and the company has also suspended construction on its new headquarters for at least six months.[95] The firings caused significant backlash by fans; with Business Insider calling them "livid". Both fans and several media outlets pointed out that while WWE claimed that these actions were "necessary due to the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic", the WWE also claimed to have "substantial financial resources. Available cash and debt capacity currently total approximately $0.5 billion". DeSantis's claimed WWE was "essential", which meant that the company's revenues loss would be limited.[91][96] Roman Reigns (center) has been a top star in the WWE since 2015, and at WrestleMania 38 in 2022 Reigns defeated Brock Lesnar to jointly hold the WWE Championship and the WWE Universal Championship as the Undisputed WWE Universal Championship.[97] In August 2020, WWE relocated from the Performance Center to Orlando's Amway Center for a long-term residency, broadcasting episodes of Raw, SmackDown, and pay-per-views through a virtual fan viewing experience called WWE ThunderDome. Inside the ThunderDome, drones, lasers, pyro, smoke, and projections were utilized to enhance the wrestlers' entrances on a level similar to that of pay-per-view productions pre-pandemic. Nearly 1,000 LED boards were installed to allow for rows and rows of virtual fans. It was free of charge for fans to virtually attend the events, though they had to reserve their virtual seat ahead of time.[98][99][100] During this time, Roman Reigns began his historic world title reign with the WWE Universal Championship, which would eventually surpass 1,000 days; being the longest world title reign in the WWE since Hulk Hogan from 1984 to 1988. WWE remained at the Amway Center up through early December before relocating the ThunderDome to Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Florida.[101][102] The ThunderDome relocated to Yuengling Center, located on the campus of the University of South Florida in Tampa, beginning with the April 12, 2021, episode of Raw.[103][104] In October 2020, NXT events were relocated from Full Sail University to the Performance Center in a similar setup dubbed the Capitol Wrestling Center. It had many of the same features as the ThunderDome, but with a small crowd of select live fans included, in addition to the virtual fans. The name is also an homage to WWE's predecessor, the Capitol Wrestling Corporation.[105][106] On May 21 WWE brought back fans full time, beginning with a 25-city tour, thus ending the ThunderDome residency. The July 16 episode of SmackDown started WWE's return to the road, taking place at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas. In January 2021, WWE moved WrestleMania 37, which was originally to be held in Inglewood, California on March 28, to Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida – WrestleMania 36's original location – as a two-night event on April 10 and 11, with fans in attendance, though to a limited capacity.[107] This marked WWE's first event during the pandemic to have ticketed fans in attendance with a maximum of 25,000 spectators for each night with COVID-19 protocols in place.[108] Also around this time, the WWE Network in the United States became exclusively distributed by Peacock on March 18, 2021 (ahead of Fastlane and WrestleMania 37). The merger of the WWE Network and Peacock did not affect the service outside of the United States.[109] The move to Peacock received some criticisms from fans particularly due to Peacock's heavy censorship policy, the company began the removal of some of the contents that were considered iconic moments of the Attitude Era that were deemed inappropriate by Peacock, these archived contents would no longer be available under any of WWE's authorized platforms.[110][111] Amdist the criticisms, in April 2021 WWE executive Triple H defended WWE's move to Peacock.[112] NXT was moved to a Tuesday night timeslot in 2021 and was rebooted as NXT 2.0 later that year, reinstituting its original function as a developmental brand. The Performance Center became NXT's permanent home base, replacing Full Sail. Maximum capacity crowds resumed and the Capitol Wrestling Center name was phased out.[113] In February 2022, the 205 Live brand was dissolved and the 205 Live show was replaced by a new NXT show called Level Up.[114] On February 24, 2022, WWE launched a partnership with On Location, a company known for providing premium hospitality experiences for marquee events. Through the partnership, spectators will have access to hospitality packages for WWE's five biggest events, including WrestleMania, SummerSlam, Royal Rumble, Survivor Series, and Money in the Bank. The 2022 Money in the Bank was WWE's first event to offer the premium hospitality packages. These ticket and travel packages include premier seating, premium hospitality offerings, and meet-and-greets with current WWE wrestlers and legends.[115] Former WWE Chairwoman and CEO Stephanie McMahon (right) with her husband WWE CCO and Head of Creative Triple H (left) On June 17, 2022, amidst an investigation by WWE's Board of Directors into reported "hush money" paid to a former employee by Vince McMahon following an affair, Mr. McMahon stepped down as chairman and CEO of WWE and was replaced by his daughter, Stephanie McMahon, as the interim chairwoman of WWE.[116][117] Despite the change Vince McMahon came out on WWE SmackDown, that night opening the show with a brief speech, the highlights of which "then, now, forever and most importantly together" was quoted by various news media as Vince letting people know that he was still in creative control from behind the scenes.[118][119] On July 22, 2022, Vince McMahon officially retired, stating on Twitter, "At 77, time for me to retire. Thank you, WWE Universe. Then. Now. Forever. Together."[120] Following Vince's retirement, Stephanie McMahon was officially named chairwoman while she and Nick Khan were named co-CEOs of WWE.[121] Triple H would take over as head of creative, while resuming his position as Executive Vice President of Talent Relations and later being promoted to Chief Content Officer.[122][123] Commentators have highlighted the significance of McMahon's retirement, saying that it marked the historic start of a new period in WWE's history.[124][125][126][127][128][129][130] The 2022 SummerSlam event held on July 30, 2022, was the first WWE pay-per-view event to be held under the leadership of Stephanie McMahon and Triple H.[131][132] On August 18, 2022; WWE Hall of Famer Shawn Michaels was promoted to WWE Vice President of Talent Development Creative.[133] On September 6, 2022, WWE announced Paul 'Triple H' Levesque's promotion to Chief Content Officer.[134] On January 6, 2023, Vince McMahon announced intentions to return to the company ahead of media rights negotiations. WWE's media rights with Fox and USA Network are set to expire in 2024.[135] That same month, JP Morgan were hired to handle a possible sale of the company, with companies such as Comcast (owners of NBCUniversal and long-time partners of WWE), Fox Corp (broadcaster of SmackDown), Disney (owners of ESPN), Warner Bros. Discovery (broadcasters of rival promotion AEW), Netflix, Amazon, Endeavor Group Holdings (owners of UFC), and Liberty Media being in the speculation for buying the company[136] with CAA and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund also on the list.[137] On January 10, 2023, Stephanie McMahon resigned as chairwoman and co-CEO.[138] On the same day Vince McMahon assumed the role of executive Chairman of the WWE while Nick Khan became the sole CEO of the WWE.[139] Further information: Acquisition of WWE by Endeavor On April 3, 2023; WWE and Endeavor reached a deal under which WWE would merge with UFC's parent company Endeavor to form a new company, which would go public on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) under the symbol "TKO". Endeavor would hold a 51% stake in "TKO", with WWE's shareholders having a 49% stake,[140] valuing WWE at $9.1 billion.[141][142] This marked the first time that WWE has not been majority-controlled by the McMahon family.[143] Vince McMahon was appointed to serve as executive chairman of the new entity, Endeavor CEO Ari Emanuel would become CEO, with Mark Shapiro becoming president and chief operating officer. Emanuel would not take on any creative roles with WWE's head of creative Paul Levesque appointed to remain in his role,[144] and with Nick Khan becoming president of WWE post-merger (not unlike Dana White's role as president of UFC).[142][141][145][144] The deal additionally granted McMahon life tenure as executive chairman, the right to nominate five WWE representatives on the 11 member board, as well as veto rights over certain actions by the new company.[146] In addition, McMahon would own 34% of the new company, with a 16% voting interest.[147] Emanuel stated that this merger would "bring together two leading pureplay sports and entertainment companies" and provide "significant operating synergies".[142] Vince McMahon stated that "family businesses have to evolve for all the right reasons", and that "given the incredible work that Ari and Endeavor have done to grow the UFC brand — nearly doubling its revenue over the past seven years — and the immense success we've already had in partnering with their team on a number of ventures, I believe that this is without a doubt the best outcome for our shareholders and other stakeholders."[141] Main article: TKO Group Holdings The logo of TKO Group Holdings The merger between WWE and UFC into TKO Group Holdings (TKO) was completed on September 12, 2023.[148] Although the company's legal name remained World Wrestling Entertainment, LLC, it remained united with UFC as part of the new entity "TKO". As part of the deal WWE and UFC remained separate divisions of the new entity featuring Professional Wrestling

Australia, starting in early December 2022, allowing all pay-per-view events and original programming to be available on a dedicated WWE channel, Foxtel Now, and on Binge, with no additional cost to Foxtel and Binge users. As announced on, January 23, 2024, Netflix will exclusively broadcast WWE's flagship weekly wrestling show Raw starting in January 2025 in the United States, Latin America, Canada and the United Kingdom. Netflix will also be the exclusive home of all WWE content outside of the U.S., which will include documentaries, original series, SmackDown, NXT and Premium Live Events such as WrestleMania, SummerSlam and the Royal Rumble.[226][227][228] Broadcasts See also: List of WWE television programming Program Original release Network Notes WWE Raw January 11, 1993–present Netflix One of WWE's two flagship programs that airs on Mondays. WWE SmackDown April 29, 1999–present USA One of WWE's two flagship programs that airs on Fridays. WWE NXT February 23, 2010–present The CW Developmental wrestling program that airs on Tuesdays. Saturday Night's Main Event December 14, 2024–present NBCPeacock Quarterly television specials that air on select Saturdays. WWE Speed April 13, 2024–present X Streams on X. Premium Live Events March 31, 1985–present Peacock Major standalone events that air primarily on Peacock and WWE Network once per month. Formerly known as Pay-per-view WWE uses a variety of special terms in promoting their product, such as describing the wrestling industry as sports entertainment. The fan base is referred to as the "WWE Universe" for the main roster shows, while for NXT shows, they are also referred to as the "NXT Universe". Main roster wrestlers are designated "WWE Superstars", while those in NXT are also referred to as "NXT Superstars". Retired wrestlers are described as "WWE Legends", while those who have been inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame are called "Hall of Famers".[229] TSI Realty Co. (1997–present): In 1997, WWE established a real estate brokerage and investment firm called TSI Realty Company.[230] WWE Books (2002–present): A book series that often publishes biographies of WWE personalities, behind-the-scenes guides to WWE, illustrated books, calendars, young adult books, and other nonfiction books. WCW Inc. (2001–present): A subsidiary that was originally created as W. Acquisition Company in 2000. It was renamed WCW Inc. in 2001 following the WWF's purchase of the rights to the video library and intellectual property for World Championship Wrestling. WWE Legacy Department (2001–present): A collection of professional wrestling videos and copyrights. WWE Studios (2002–present): Formerly known as WWE Films, a subsidiary that creates and develops feature film properties, including scripted, non-scripted, family and animated television and digital content. WWE Music Group (2006–present): A music group that specializes in compilation albums of WWE wrestlers' entrance themes. The group also releases titles that have been performed by WWE wrestlers. WWE Jet Services, Inc. (2013–present): A subsidiary formed to manage the financing and operations of the company's fleet of private jets. WWE Performance Center (2013–present): A subsidiary that serves as the usual training center for future WWE wrestlers. WWE Shop (2015–present): A website established as the place to buy officially licensed WWE-related apparel, gear, and several other of the merchandise's products. WWE Podcast Network (2019–present): A podcast network that features several WWE wrestlers hosting their own podcasts. WWE partnered with Endeavor Audio to launch the network.[231] Lucha Libre AAA Worldwide (2025–present): A subsidiary of a Mexican Lucha Libre (professional wrestling) promotion. Alpha Entertainment (2018): A limited liability company that was established in 2018 by Vince McMahon for the purpose of being the parent company of the new XFL. While McMahon stated that the XFL would remain as a separate company from WWE, it was revealed through WWE's 2018 10-K that the company hold a minority stake in Alpha Entertainment.[232] World Bodybuilding Federation (1990–1992): A subsidiary of Titan Sports which promoted professional bodybuilding through a television show, magazine, and annual pay-per-view events. Radio WWF (1993) A syndicated radio station hosted by Jim Ross and Johnny Polo. The station featured shows that would cover ongoing WWF storylines and behind the scenes incidents. Radio WWF hosts also provided commentary for two pay-per-views. Wrestle Vessel (1996–1999): A series of WWF-themed cruise ship experiences. WWE Home Video (1997–2023): A home video subsidiary that specialized in distributing VHS, DVD, and Blu-ray Disc copies of WWE pay-per-view events, compilations of WWE wrestlers' performances and entrances, and biographies of WWE performers. WWE Home Video releases were discontinued worldwide on December 26, 2023. XFL (2000–2001): A partially-owned subsidiary of the WWF which comprised eight league-owned professional football teams. The league included television broadcasts on NBC (the other co-owners of the league), UPN, and TNN. The World Entertainment (1999–2003): A subsidiary of World Wrestling Federation/Entertainment that operated a restaurant, nightclub, and memorabilia shop in New York City. World originally opened as "WWF New York", and was renamed "The World". Hard Rock Cafe took over the location in 2005. WWE Niagara Falls (2002–2011): A retail store that was located in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. The store featured autograph signings and appearances by WWE wrestlers, alumni, and Hall of Famers. WWE Classics on Demand (2004–2014): A subscription video-on-demand television service. Classics had footage from WWE's archive footage, including World Championship Wrestling, Extreme Championship Wrestling, and others. Classics offered around 40 hours of rotating programming per month, arranged into four programming buckets, and often centered on a specific theme. WWE Kids (2008–2014): A website and comic set, aimed at the children's end of the wrestling market. WWE Kids' comics were produced bi-monthly. WWE Universe (2008–2011): A social media website which was managed and operated by WWE. Its original name was "WWE Fan Nation" and was renamed "WWE Universe". WWE Magazine (1983–2014): WWE's magazine – originally released bi-monthly, it later switching to a monthly schedule, before being discontinued in 2014. Tout: A social media 15-second video service. In 2012, WWE invested $5,000,000 and entered into a two-year partnership. Stephanie McMahon was named a part of the Tout Board of Directors. The agreement between the two companies ended in 2014.[233] Marvel Experience: Marvel Experience is an interactive live event with Marvel characters appearing. WWE invested in the experience in 2013.[234] Phunware: A business that creates mobile apps. WWE invested in Phunware in 2014 and[235] uses the company for their app. FloSports: An over-the-top sport streaming service that WWE originally invested into in 2016. In 2019, WWE once again invested into FloSports. The sports that are available in FloSports include amateur wrestling, professional wrestling, track, grappling, mixed martial arts, boxing, softball, gymnastics, basketball, tennis, volleyball, cheerleading, and eSports.[236] Avid Technology: A technology and multimedia company. Avid specializes in audio and video; specifically digital non-linear editing systems, management and distribution services. WWE invested in Avid in 2016.[237] Drone Racing League: A league that contains remote-controlled lightweight aircraft races and appears as a spectator sport. WWE invested in Drone in 2017.[238] Cloud9: An esports organization, which has teams compete in many different video games including a WWE sponsor, Rocket League. WWE invested in Cloud9 in 2017.[239] DraftKings: WWE's fantasy sports partner.[240] Rad: A company that has a streaming platform focusing on non-fungible token technology for film, TV, and celebrities. WWE invested in Rad in 2021.[241] Jomboy Media: A multimedia company that produces a baseball show. WWE invested in Jomboy Media in 2022.[242] Premier Lacrosse League: A professional lacrosse league in the United States and Canada. WWE invested in the Premier Lacrosse League in 2022.[243] WWE has had a partnership with the Make-A-Wish Foundation that spans four decades.[244] Multi-time WWE champion John Cena has granted more wishes than any other celebrity in history, having completed his 500th wish in August 2015.[245] WWE has had a partnership with the United Service Organizations since the early 2000s.[246] The partnership allows WWE to host WWE Tribute to the Troops around the world and provide tickets to WWE events to service members.[247] In 2011, WWE launched its anti-bullying campaign, Be A S.T.A.R (Show Tolerance and Respect). The campaign, targeted towards children, consists of an interactive ceremony with WWE wrestlers visiting children at their schools and lecture the children on bullying.[248] Since 2012, WWE has partnered with Susan G. Komen for the Cure to raise awareness of breast cancer during the month of October. Their partnership includes offering special charity-related wrestler merchandise, as well as adding a pink color scheme to the sets and ring ropes; 20% of all October purchases of WWE merchandise go to the organization.[249] Since 2012, WWE has partnered with Hire Heroes USA to donate and implement a veterans hiring initiatives through WWE's partners.[250] Multiple times a year, WWE hosts a panel for companies and veterans to come together and discuss career opportunities.[251] In June 2014, Connor's Cure[252] – a non-profit charitable organization – was established by Triple H and Stephanie McMahon, who have personally funded it through the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Foundation. It is named in honor of Pittsburgh native Connor Michalek (October 17, 2005 – April 25, 2014) who had died two months earlier from medulloblastoma, a rare tumor that affects the brain and spinal cord. Beginning in 2015, WWE began recognizing September as Pediatric Cancer Awareness Month, adding a gold color scheme to the sets and ring ropes, and offering special Connor's Cure merchandise, with the proceeds going to charity.[253][254] Since 2014, WWE has partnered with the Special Olympics.[255] Since 2016, WWE has partnered with Boys & Girls Clubs of America.[256] In October 2018, a week before the Evolution pay-per-view, the WWE and the United Nations Foundation's Girl Up created Sports for a Purpose program aiming to create a culture of sports participation for girls around the world. The program launched in fall 2019. Stephanie McMahon stated, "WWE is proud to partner with Girl Up to create Sports for a Purpose, a new program designed to help our youth achieve gender equality in sports. Playing sports has a positive impact on girls' leadership skills, confidence and self-esteem, and we are excited to work with Girl Up to create this meaningful program."[257] Since 2019, WWE has partnered with Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to drive awareness and support for the research of leukemia.[258] Since November 2021, WWE has partnered with National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation, honoring Medal of Honor recipients. Funds are raised through ticket sales.[259] Main article: Tapout (clothing brand) In March 2015, WWE joined forces with Authentic Brands Group to relaunch Tapout, formerly a major MMA-related clothing line, as a more general "lifestyle fitness" brand. The apparel, for men and women, was first released in spring of 2016. WWE markets the brand through various products, including beverages, supplements, and gyms.[260] WWE will hold a 50% stake in the brand, and so will advertise it regularly across all its platforms, hoping to give it one billion impressions a month, and take some of the fitness market from Under Armour. WWE wrestlers and staff have been shown wearing various Tapout gear since the venture began.[261] Though an infrequent occurrence, during its history WWE has worked with other wrestling promotions in collaborative efforts. During the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, WWE had working relationships with the Japanese New Japan Pro-Wrestling (NJPW), Universal Wrestling Federation (UWF), Universal Lucha Libre (FULL), and the Mexican Universal Wrestling Association (UWA). These working relationships led to the creations of the WWF World Martial Arts, Light Heavyweight and Intercontinental Tag Team championships.[262][263][264][265] During the period of 1992–1996, WWE had talent exchange agreements with the United States and Japanese independent companies Smokey Mountain Wrestling (SMW),[266][267] Super World of Sports (SWS),[268] WAR,[269] and the United States Wrestling Association (USWA).[270] In 1997, the company did business with Mexico's AAA promotion, bringing in a number of AAA wrestlers for the Royal Rumble event and namesake match.[271][272] In 1997, WWE would also do business with Japan's Michinoku Pro Wrestling (MPW), bringing in MPW talent to compete in the company's light heavyweight division and in their 1997 Light Heavyweight Championship tournament.[273] From 1997 to 1998, WWE partnered with the National Wrestling Alliance (NWA), with WWE hosting NWA matches on its programming. These matches were presented as part of "an invasion" of WWE by NWA wrestlers. In 2015, WWE entered a partnership with Evolve – a U.S. independent promotion that WWE used as a scouting group for potential signees for the NXT brand.[274] In 2020, WWE would purchase Evolve for an undisclosed amount.[275] In 2016, WWE partnered with England's Progress Wrestling with Progress hosting qualifying matches for WWE's Cruiserweight Classic.[276] In 2017, Progress talent would participate in the WWE United Kingdom Championship Tournament[277] and at WWE's WrestleMania Axxess events.[278] Three years later in 2020, Progress programming began airing on the WWE Network. In 2017, WWE partnered with Scotland's Insane Championship Wrestling (ICW) with some ICW talent appearing in the WWE United Kingdom Championship Tournament and at WWE's WrestleMania Axxess events.[278] In 2017, WWE explored a deal to bring ICW programming onto the WWE Network[279] – ICW programming began airing on the WWE Network in 2020. In 2018, WWE partnered with Germany's Westside Xtreme Wrestling (wXw).[280] In October 2018, WWE hosted German tryouts at the wXw Wrestling Academy.[281] In 2020, wXw programming began airing on the WWE Network. In February 2023, WWE (specifically their NXT brand) launched a partnership with the Texas-based independent promotion Reality of Wrestling (ROW), which is owned by WWE Hall of Famer and NXT commentator Booker T.[282] In December 2023, WWE launched a partnership with All Japan Pro Wrestling (AJPW).[283][284] In early 2024, WWE expanded their partnership with AJPW, with NXT wrestler Charlie Dempsey going to Japan to challenge for AJPW's Triple Crown Heavyweight Championship which marked the first match under the new collaboration.[285] Throughout 2024, WWE launched partnerships with Dream Star Fighting Marigold (Marigold),[286] Pro Wrestling Noah (NOAH), and Game Changer Wrestling (GCW). In October 2024, WWE launched the WWE ID system to develop and support the training of independent wrestlers,[287] with the first WWE ID partner wrestling schools and promotions being Black and Brave Academy, Nightmare Factory, Elite Pro Wrestling Training Center, and KnokX Pro Academy, among others.[288][289] In January 2025, WWE announced a multi-year partnership with Total Nonstop Action Wrestling (TNA) that allows TNA wrestlers and NXT wrestlers to appear on NXT events, TNA Impact!, and select WWE and TNA Premium Live Events.[290][291] Throughout the company's history, WWE has had past arrangements with independent companies from the contiguous United States (such as Ohio Valley Wrestling) and Puerto Rico (such as the International Wrestling Association) with the companies serving as developmental territories.[292] The World Wrestling Federation had a drug-testing policy in place as early as 1987, initially run by an in-house administrator. In 1991, wrestlers were subjected to independent testing for anabolic steroids for the first time.[293] The independent testing ceased in 1996, being deemed too expensive as the company was going through financial duress at the time as a result of their competitors, World Championship Wrestling, being so overwhelmingly more popular and hurting the federation's business.[294] The Talent Wellness Program is a comprehensive drug, alcohol, and cardiac screening program initiated in February 2006, three months after the sudden death of one of their highest-profile and most popular talents, Eddie Guerrero, who died at 38-years-old.[295] The policy tests for recreational drug use and abuse of prescription medication, including anabolic steroids.[295] Under the guidelines of the policy, talent is also tested annually for pre-existing or developing cardiac issues. The drug testing is handled by Aegis Sciences Corporation; the cardiac evaluations are handled by New York Cardiology Associates P.C.[295] The Wellness Policy requires that all talent "under contract to WWE who regularly perform in-ring services as a professional sports entertainer" undergo testing; however, part-time competitors are exempt from testing.[296] After the double-murder and suicide committed by one of its performers, Chris Benoit, with a possible link to steroid abuse encouraged by WWE, the United States House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform requested that WWE turn over any material regarding its talent wellness policy.[297] In August 2007, WWE and its contracted performers defended the program in the wake of several busts of illegal pharmacy that linked WWE performers to steroid purchases even after the policy was put into place. Ten professional wrestlers were suspended for violating the Wellness Policy after reports emerged they were all customers of Signature Pharmacy in Orlando, Florida. According to a statement attributed to WWE attorney Jerry McDevitt, an eleventh wrestler was later added to the suspension list.[298][299][300] On September 13, 2010, WWE updated their list of banned substances to include muscle relaxers.[301] Main article: United States v. McMahon During the 1980s and 1990s, George Zahorian was thought to have routinely distributed steroids and other drugs to WWF wrestlers, supposedly with the approval of WWF owner Vince McMahon.[302][unreliable source?] In 1993, McMahon was indicted in federal court after the steroid controversy engulfed the promotion, forcing him to temporarily cede control of the WWF to his wife Linda.[303] The case went to trial in 1994, where McMahon himself was accused of distributing steroids to his wrestlers.[304] One notable prosecution witness was Nailz (real name: Kevin Wacholz), a former WWF performer who had been fired after a violent confrontation with McMahon. Nailz testified that McMahon had ordered him to use steroids, but his credibility was called into question during his testimony as he repeatedly stated that he "hated" McMahon.[305][306] The jury would later acquit McMahon of the charges and he resumed his role in the day-to day operations of the WWF.[307] Main article: Ring boy scandal During the early 1990s, Mel Phillips, WWF's ring announcer and ring crew head, was accused of molesting multiple "ring boys", under-aged children that worked as part of the WWF ring crew.[308] In 1992, Phillips was fired from the WWF.[308] Phillips had previously been temporarily dismissed from the WWF in 1988 for sexual misconduct, but was brought back that same year.[308] On October 29, 2020, it was reported by Business Insider that Vince McMahon and his wife Linda were aware of the allegations against Phillips but willfully turned a blind eye to them. According to Freedom of Information Act requests for court records regarding the ring boy scandal, Vince, under oath, stated that he was aware that Phillips had taken a "peculiar and unnatural interest in children" but refused to take action against him.[308] Further testimony revealed that Vince, after bringing Phillips back to the WWF in 1988, had made Phillips promise to "stop chasing after kids".[308] It was also reported by Business Insider that, under Vince and Linda McMahon's directive, the WWF began a campaign to discredit Tom Cole, one of the children who had accused Phillips of sexual misconduct, and Cole's family.[308] In response to the Business Insider report, Jerry McDevitt, WWE's attorney, stated that the accusations against Phillips were related to his unusual "foot fetish" but did not include "anything approximating conventional forms of sexual abuse such as rape, sodomy, etc."[308] He additionally described the claims that the McMahons knew about the accusations against Phillips but refused to take action and continued to employ him under the condition that he "stop chasing after kids" as "outlandish" and "classic libel".[308] Tom Cole died in February 2021.[309] In 1996, Titan Sports, the parent company of the World Wrestling Federation, sued World Championship Wrestling (WCW) over WCW implying that Scott Hall and Kevin Nash (Razor Ramon and Diesel) were invading WCW on the WWF's behalf. This led to a series of lawsuits filed by both companies as the Monday Night War heated up. The lawsuit went on for years, ending with a settlement in 2000. One of the terms gave then WWF the right to bid on WCW's assets if the company were liquidated. AOL Time Warner, the then-parent company of WCW, canceled WCW's television shows in March 2001 and sold the company assets to the WWF.[310][unreliable source?] On May 23, 2012, Total Nonstop Action Wrestling (TNA) sued former employee Brian Wittenstein and WWE. The suit alleged that Wittenstein violated a non-disclosure agreement and shared confidential information with the WWE which represented a comparative advantage in negotiating with wrestling talent under contract with TNA. He was subsequently hired by WWE, after which TNA asserted that Wittenstein violated the agreement by downloading confidential TNA trade secrets and providing that information to WWE. Although WWE fired Wittenstein and alerted TNA officials as to the disclosure of the information, TNA claimed that WWE had access to the information for three weeks prior to disclosure and in this time, the WWE used secret contract information and attempted to poach their talent in violation of Tennessee's Uniform Trade Secrets Act.[311] The lawsuit was formally withdrawn without prejudice, by the plaintiff, TNA, on January 15, 2013, under a "Notice of Voluntary Nonsuit" which offers no ruling on the merits of the suit and allows TNA to potentially refile at a later date.[312] On January 11, 2022, Major League Wrestling (MLW) filed an anti-trust lawsuit against WWE, accusing them of interfering in television and streaming deals and poaching talent. Through the lawsuit, it was disclosed that a streaming deal with Fox Corporation-owned Tubi was terminated due to WWE allegedly threatening to pull their programming from the sibling Fox broadcast network. The suit also alleges that WWE pressured Vice TV to withdraw from negotiations with MLW.[313][314] On May 23, 1999, Owen Hart fell to his death in Kansas City, Missouri during the Over the Edge pay-per-view event in a stunt that went wrong. WWF broke kayfabe by having television commentator Jim Ross repeatedly tell those watching live on pay-per-view that what had just transpired was not a wrestling angle or storyline and that Hart was hurt badly, emphasizing the seriousness of the situation.[315] While several attempts to revive him were made, he died from his injuries. The cause of death was later revealed to be internal bleeding from blunt force trauma. The WWF management controversially chose to continue the event.[316] Later, Jim Ross revealed Hart's death to the home viewers during the pay-per-view, but not to the crowd in the arena.[317] While the show did go on, it has never been released commercially by WWF Home Video. In 2014, fifteen years after his death, the WWE Network aired the event for the first time. A small photo tribute is shown before the start informing fans that Hart died during the original broadcast. All footage of Hart was edited out of the event. The statement reads: "In Memory of Owen Hart May 7, 1965 – May 23, 1999 who accidentally passed away during this broadcast."[318] Four weeks after the event, the Hart family sued the WWF over how dangerous and poorly planned the stunt was, and that the harness system was defective.[319] After over a year and a half into the case, a settlement was reached on November 2, 2000, which saw the WWF give the Hart family US$18 million.[320][321][322] In April 2000, USA Networks, Inc., the parent company of USA Network, had filed a lawsuit against World Wrestling Federation Entertainment Inc. in a bid to keep Raw is War and all WWF programming after the WWF opened up a bidding war a month prior.[323] Viacom's proposed bid included a $30-million to $50-million equity investment in the company and carriage on broadcast, billboards and radio of both wrestling matches along with the then-launched XFL. On June 27, 2000, the Delaware Supreme Court ruled in favor of the WWF.[324] The next day, Viacom won the rights to all WWF programming for $12.6 million including Raw is War on TNN/Spike TV, a revamped Sunday Night Heat on MTV and retained SmackDown! on UPN after the merger with CBS in 1999. The lawsuit centered on USA's contention that it did not have to match every aspect of a Viacom offer to satisfy a right of first refusal clause in its contract that allowed its deal with the WWF to continue.[325][326][327] In 2005, WWE's programming (excluding SmackDown!) moved back to USA Network (now owned by NBCUniversal) and maintains its relationship to this day.[328] Further information: WWF trademark dispute In 1994, Titan Sports had entered into an agreement with the World Wide Fund for Nature (also trademarked WWF), an environmental organization, regarding Titan's use of the "WWF" acronym, which both organizations had been using since at least March 1979. Under the agreement, Titan had agreed to cease using the written acronym "WWF" in connection with its wrestling promotion, and to minimize (though not eliminate) spoken uses of "WWF" on its broadcasts, particularly in scripted comments. In exchange, the environmental group (and its national affiliates) agreed to drop any pending litigation against Titan, and agreed not to challenge Titan's use of the full "World Wrestling Federation" name or the promotion's then-current logo.[329] In 2000, the World Wide Fund for Nature sued World Wrestling Federation Entertainment Inc. in the United Kingdom, alleging various violations of the 1994 agreement.[330] The Court of Appeal agreed that the promotion company had violated the 1994 agreement, particularly in regards to merchandising. The last televised event to market the WWF logo was the UK-based pay-per-view Insurrextion 2002. On May 5, 2002, the company launched its "Get The F Out" marketing campaign and changed all references on its website from "WWF" to "WWE", while switching the URL from WWF.com to WWE.com.[58] The next day, the official name change from World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc. to World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc., was publicized in a press release and during a broadcast of Raw, from the Hartford Civic Center. Following the name change, the use of the WWF "scratch" logo became prohibited on all WWE properties. Additionally, past references to the WWF trademark and initials in 'specified circumstances' became censored.[331] Despite the litigation, WWE was still permitted use of the original WWF logo, which was used from 1979 through 1994 and had been explicitly exempted under the 1994 agreement, as well as the similar "New WWF Generation" logo, which was used from 1994 through 1998. Furthermore, the company could still make use of the full "World Wrestling Federation" and "World Wrestling Federation Entertainment" names without consequence. In 2003, WWE won a limited decision to continue marketing certain classic video games from THQ and Jakks Pacific that contained the WWF "scratch" logo.[332] However, the packaging on those games had all WWF references replaced with WWE. Starting with the 1,000th episode of Raw in July 2012, the WWF "scratch" logo is no longer censored in archival footage due to WWE reaching a new settlement with the World Wide Fund for Nature.[333] In addition, the F in WWF initials are no longer censored when spoken or when written in plain text in archival footage. Since then, full-length matches and other segments featuring the WWF initials and "scratch" logo have been added to the WWE website and the WWE Classics on Demand and eventually the WWE Network service. This also includes WWE Home Video releases since October 2012, starting with the re-release of Brock Lesnar: Here Comes The Pain.[334] Although the WWF initials and logo are no longer censored in archival footage, WWE cannot use the WWF initials or logo in any new, original footage, packaging, or advertising.[335] Harry "Slash" Grivas and Roderick Kohn filed a lawsuit against WWE in June 2003 due to the music being used for its programming and DVDs without consent or payment. It also asserted a violation of the rights to original music used by ECW that WWE had been using during the Invasion storyline of 2001. The case was resolved on both sides with a settlement that saw WWE purchase the catalog outright in January 2005.[336] In 1993, Jim Hellwig, known in the WWF as "The Ultimate Warrior", legally changed his name to the mononym Warrior.[337][338] This one-word name appears on all legal documents pertaining to Warrior, and his children carry the Warrior name as their legal surname.[339] Warrior and the WWF engaged in a series of lawsuits and legal actions in 1996 and 1998,[340] where both parties sought a declaration that they owned the characters, Warrior and Ultimate Warrior, under both contract and copyright law. The court ruled that Warrior was legally entitled to use the gimmick, costuming, face paint designs, and mannerisms of the "Warrior" character.[341] On September 27, 2005, WWE released a DVD documentary focusing on Warrior's retrospective wrestling career, titled The Self-Destruction of the Ultimate Warrior. The DVD featured clips of his more notable feuds and matches along with commentary from WWE stars past and present (most of which are unflattering). The DVD has provoked some controversy due to Warrior's allegations of libel by WWE against him. Originally, Warrior was asked to help with the production of the DVD, but as he refused to work with WWE, there had been some resulting animosity between Warrior and WWE over the Warrior claiming bias on the part of WWE.[342] In January 2006, Warrior filed another lawsuit against WWE in an Arizona court over the depiction of his wrestling career in The Self-Destruction of the Ultimate Warrior DVD.[343] On September 18, 2009, Warrior's lawsuit in Arizona was dismissed. Warrior returned to WWE to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. During his induction, he mentioned that WWE should create an award to honor those behind the scenes called the Jimmy Miranda Award, named after a long time WWE employee who died. Warrior died three days after being inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame. WWE decided to create the Warrior Award, an award for people "who embodied the spirit of the Ultimate Warrior." The award was later given to Connor Michalek (a child who died from cancer), Joan Lunden (a journalist who was diagnosed with cancer), and Eric LeGrand (a former college football player who became a quadriplegic after an in-game injury). In October 2017, WWE used the tagline "Unleash Your Warrior" when promoting Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Since Warrior's death, WWE has been accused of whitewashing and ignoring Warrior's bigoted and controversial past comments.[344] Pro Wrestling Torch described Warrior in real-life having made public "vile, bigoted, hateful, judgmental comments", citing as an example that regarding Bobby Heenan's cancer diagnosis, Warrior said, "Karma is just a beautiful thing to behold."[345] Vice wrote that "completely whitewashing his past and elevating his likeness to a bland symbol of corporate altruism is shockingly tone-deaf, especially for a company that's at least outwardly trying to appear progressive, inclusive and diverse."[344] Under Section 9.13(a) of WWE's booking contract, commonly known as the "morals clause", the company has a zero-tolerance policy involving domestic violence, child abuse and sexual assault. Upon arrest and conviction for such crimes, a WWE talent shall be immediately suspended and their contract terminated.[346] On May 10, 1983, Nancy Argentino, the girlfriend of Jimmy Snuka, then 39 years old, died in their hotel room, hours after Snuka defeated José Estrada at a WWF TV taping at the Lehigh County Agricultural Hall in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Snuka was arrested 32 years later on September 1, 2015, and charged with third-degree murder and involuntary manslaughter for Argentino's death.[347][348] This eventually led WWE to suspend his Legends contract (a long-term deal to make infrequent, non-wrestling appearances) and removed his Hall of Fame page from its website.[349] However, Snuka never stood trial due to his poor health, and he died on January 15, 2017.[350][unreliable source?] In June 2003, Eddie Fatu (then known as "Jamal" and later "Umaga") was released after his involvement in a bar fight.[351] In the aftermath of Chris Benoit's murder of his wife and son, along with his suicide in June 2007, the WWE removed mentions of Benoit in its broadcasts and its merchandise.[352][353] On November 30, 2012, Thom Latimer, then known as Kenneth Cameron, was charged with battery of a law enforcement officer and disorderly intoxication in St. Petersburg, Florida which led him being released from his NXT contract by the WWE. Latimer had previously been arrested in January 2011 for driving under the influence.[354] On December 10, 2017, Rich Swann was arrested in Gainesville, Florida on charges of battery and kidnapping/false imprisonment.[355][356] The victim was identified as his wife, Vannarah Riggs. According to the arrest report, Swann and Riggs had gotten into an argument over Swann critiquing Riggs's performance at a show that night. When Riggs tried to get away from Swann, witnesses state that he grabbed her in a headlock and dragged her back into his car.[357][358] WWE suspended Swann indefinitely and was released on February 15, 2018.[359] He was originally scheduled to face Drew Gulak in a match to determine the number one contender to the Cruiserweight Championship, Enzo Amore, the following night on Raw, but the match was canceled in light of his domestic violence arrest.[358] On January 22, 2018, the Phoenix Police Department confirmed that Eric Arndt (Enzo Amore) was under investigation for an alleged sexual assault that was reported to authorities in October 2017.[360][361] Later that day, Arndt was suspended by WWE due to violating their zero tolerance policy for matters involving sexual harassment and sexual assault. WWE released a statement indicating that he would remain suspended until the matter was resolved.[362] In an interview on January 23, a woman accused Arndt of raping her in a Phoenix, Arizona, hotel room on October 19, 2017.[363] As a result, his scheduled title defense against Cedric Alexander at the Royal Rumble was canceled.[364] Arndt was fired from WWE the next day and the title was vacated.[365][366] On Twitter, Arndt "fully and unequivocally" denied the allegations against him.[367] On May 16, 2018, the Phoenix Police Department ceased their investigation due to insufficient evidence.[368] Starting in 2014, numerous former WWE talent filed multiple lawsuits against WWE alleging that WWE did not protect and hid information from their talent about concussions and CTE. The former talent claimed physical and mental health issues as a result of physical trauma they experience in WWE. The lawsuits were filed by attorney Konstantine Kyros. US District Judge Vanessa Lynne Bryant dismissed many of the lawsuits in September 2018.[369] In September 2020, the lawsuits were dismissed by the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.[370] The Supreme Court of the United States subsequently declined to hear the case in April 2021.[371] Main article: WWE in Saudi Arabia The events promoted in Saudi Arabia by WWE have been subjected to criticism due to allegations of sportswashing. WWE has been accused of contributing to Saudi Arabia's discrimination of LGBT people and women by holding events in the country.[372][373] WWE's relation with Saudi Arabia has been condemned by activist groups such as Code Pink and several politicians.[374][375][376][377] Prior to her death on May 15, 2019, former WWE wrestler Ashley Massaro alleged that she was sexually assaulted at a US military base during a 2006 WWE tour of Kuwait by a man posing as a doctor, and that WWE officials persuaded her to not report it to the appropriate authorities as they did not want it to affect the company's relationship with the military.[378] WWE officials would later claim they had no knowledge of Massaro's alleged sexual assault. After her death, an affidavit by Massaro describing the sexual assault allegations in detail was subsequently released by the law firm that represented her.[379] In response, WWE said that their executives had not been previously informed of the allegations described in the affidavit.[380] Despite previous denials from WWE about having knowledge of her allegation, in February 2024 an attorney representing former WWE Head of Talent Relations John Laurinaitis stated that: "most upper level management at sometime became aware of the [Massaro] allegations and ensured all proper WWE protocols were followed, including privacy for the alleged victim."[381] That month, Vice News reported that the Naval Criminal Investigative Service had investigated Massaro's allegations from June 2019 to January 2020, although no further information about the investigation other than its existence is known.[382] A further report by Vice News revealed that Massaro had accused Vince McMahon of "preying on female WWE wrestlers" and that she believed he had tried to sabotage her wrestling career after she rejected an advance from him.[383] See also: Vince McMahon sex trafficking scandal One of the first allegations against Vince McMahon was made on April 3, 1992, when Rita Chatterton, a former referee noted for her stint as Rita Marie in the WWF in the 1980s and for being the first female referee in the WWF (possibly in professional wrestling history),[384] made an appearance on Geraldo Rivera's show Now It Can Be Told. She claimed that on July 16, 1986, McMahon tried to force her to perform oral sex on him in his limousine; when she refused, he raped her.[385] Former wrestler Leonard Inzitari has corroborated Chatterton's allegation.[386] Several years later, on February 1, 2006, McMahon was accused of sexual harassment by a worker at a tanning bar in Boca Raton, Florida.[387] At first, the charge appeared to be discredited because McMahon was in Miami for the 2006 Royal Rumble at the time. It was soon clarified that the alleged incident was reported to police on the day of the Rumble, but actually took place the day before.[388] On March 25, it was reported that no charges would be filed against McMahon as a result of the investigation.[389] Both Chatterton and a separate tanning spa worker who alleged that McMahon sexually assaulted her in California in 2011 filed civil sex abuse lawsuits against him in late 2022.[390] McMahon would agree to pay Chatterton an undisclosed multimillion-dollar legal settlement.[391] In 2014, activist investor Emmanuel Lemelson stated that he believed the company had made material misrepresentations in its financial reporting[392][393] and called for new leadership or a sale of the company.[394] Lemelson's analysis was credited with an $800 million drop in the market capitalization of the stock.[395][396] In April 2022, the WWE board began investigating a $3 million hush-money settlement that McMahon paid over an alleged affair with a former employee of the company. The investigation also revealed other nondisclosure agreements related to misconduct claims by other women in the company against McMahon and executive John Laurinaitis, totaling $12 million.[397][398][399] This eventually led to McMahon retiring from all of his positions on July 22, 2022, and a change in leadership of the WWE for the first time since 1982;[400][401][402] he would later return to the company in January 2023 as executive chairman.[391] The company would eventually report $19.6 million in unrecorded payments made by Vince McMahon between 2006 and 2022.[403] In January 2024, McMahon's history of having a role with the WWE ended amid new allegation by ex-WWE employee Janel Grant.[404] Grant accused McMahon and John Laurinaitis of not only sexually assaulting her, but also sex trafficking.[16][404] The allegation also led to Slim Jim pausing its sponsorship of WWE events.[16] United States portalConnecticut portalCompanies portal Professional wrestling in the United States ^ The founder of Capitol Wrestling Corporation (CWC) is uncertain. While some sources claim that CWC was founded by Vincent J. McMahon, others claim that Jess McMahon founded the company.[1] ^ Vince McMahon is the largest individual shareholder, with a 4.06% stake in TKO Group Holdings.[5][6] ^ Krugman 2009, p. 11. ^ a b "TKO Reports Fourth Quarter and Full Year 2024 Results" (PDF). TKO Group Holdings, Inc. February 26, 2025. Retrieved February 26, 2025. ^ "How Many Employees Does World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) Have?". ^ "AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO FORM S-4 REGISTRATION STATEMENT". U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. August 10, 2023. p. 1. Archived from the original on June 23, 2024. Retrieved September 12, 2023. ...with WWE surviving the merger as a direct, wholly owned subsidiary of [TKO Group Holdings] ^ "SCHEDULE 14C INFORMATION". NASDAQ. August 22, 2023. p. 248. Retrieved August 25, 2023. ^ "TKO Group Holdings, Inc.: Shareholders Board Members Managers and Company Profile | US87256C1018 | MarketScreener". www.marketscreener.com. Retrieved July 25, 2024. ^ "Company Overview". WWE Corporate. Archived from the original on November 17, 2014. ^ Silverman, Alex (March 25, 2015). "WWE, ABG to Reposition Tapout Brand as Part of 50/50 Joint Venture". Sports Business Journal. Retrieved September 7, 2021. ^ "UFC And WWE To Close Merger Next Week, Make NYSE Debut As TKO Group". Deadline. September 7, 2023. Retrieved September 7, 2023. ^ a b Sacco, Justine; Weitz, Michael (April 7, 2011). "The New WWE" (Press release). Connecticut: WWE. Retrieved November 25, 2021. ^ "General WWE Contacts". WWE Corporate. Archived from the original on February 4, 2009. ^ "Company information". WWE Corporate. October 18, 2021. Archived from the original on March 6, 2022. Retrieved October 18, 2021. ^ Sherman, Alex (January 7, 2023). "Vince McMahon is back at WWE to ensure a smooth sale process. Here's who might want to buy it". CNBC. Retrieved January 10, 2023. ^ "SEC-Show". otp.tools.investis.com. Archived from the original on June 9, 2024. Retrieved June 12, 2023. ^ "Notification of Removal From Listing and/or Registration Under Section 12(B) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934". U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. September 12, 2023. Archived from the original on June 23, 2024. Retrieved September 12, 2023. ^ a b c Draper, Kevin (January 26, 2024). "Wrestling icon Vince McMahon resigns from WWE parent company after sex abuse suit". New York Times. Retrieved January 27, 2024. ^ Hornbaker, Tim (2015). Capitol Revolution: The Rise of the McMahon Wrestling Empire. p. 117. ASIN 1770411240. He Inaugurated his promotion on January 7, 1953, ... ^ Solomon, Brian (2006). WWE Legends. p. 6. ASIN 0743490339. McMahon formed a company he called the Capitol Wrestling Corporation, and presented his first regular wrestling show under the Capitol banner on January 7, 1953 ^ Sullivan, Greenberg & Pantaleo (2016). WWE Encyclopedia of Sports Entertainment. DK/Prima Games, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. p. 372. ISBN 978-1465453136. On January 7, 1953, he put on the first-ever Capitol Wrestling Corporation event ^ "Vincent J. McMahon official bio on wwe.com". From the time Vince

2014. ^ "Initiatives - WWE Network launches February 24". WWE Corporate. Archived from the original on October 1, 2014. Retrieved June 24, 2014. ^ "WWE Network hits 1 Million subscribers – Thank you WWE Universe!". WWE. January 27, 2015. Archived from the original on January 30, 2015. ^ Zucker, Joseph (May 15, 2014). "WWE Reaches Multi-Year Deal with NBC Universal for Rights to Raw and SmackDown". Bleacher Report. Archived from the original on May 14, 2017. ^ Middleton, Marc (June 21, 2016). "When WWE TV Deals Expire, John Cena Hosting Awards Show (Video), Big E – Jey Uso Swerved Video". Archived from the original on February 21, 2017. Retrieved May 20, 2017. ^ Middleton, Marc (November 17, 2017). "WWE and SKY Deutschland sign deal to distribute WWE's premier pay-per-view events and broadcast Raw and SmackDown live on SKY Sports starting in April 2017". Archived from the original on November 18, 2016. Retrieved November 17, 2016. ^ "WWE® and DAZN Announce Exclusive Multi-Year Agreement in Japan". Archived from the original on May 8, 2017. ^ "WWE and TV5 Announce Agreement to Televise Smackdown in the Philippines". Archived from the original on June 30, 2017. ^ "WWE and S-Sport Announce Multi-Year Agreement to Televise Raw and Smackdown in Turkey". Archived from the original on August 15, 2017. ^ "Groupe AB and WWE Extend Long-Standing Partnership". Archived from the original on August 14, 2017. ^ "WWE and Supersport Announce Multi-Year Agreement to Televise Raw and Smackdown". Archived from the original on September 13, 2017. ^ "WWE and Foxtel Extend Long-Standing Partnership". Archived from the original on August 13, 2017. ^ "WWE and Canal 1 Announce Agreement to Televise Taw and Smakdown in Colombia". Archived from the original on August 13, 2017. ^ "Flow and WWE Announce Multi-Year Agreement to Televise Raw and Smackdown Across the Caribbean". World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. August 24, 2017. Archived from the original on August 29, 2017. ^ a b "TVA Sports and WWE Announce Broadcast Agreement". World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. September 7, 2017. Archived from the original on September 14, 2017. ^ "WWE® and SPORT TV announce multi-year agreement to televise Raw® and Smackdown® in Portugal". World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. October 24, 2017. Archived from the original on April 15, 2020. ^ "IB SPORTS to broadcast WWE® programming live for the first time in South Korea". World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. December 15, 2017. Archived from the original on March 14, 2023. ^ "SPS HD to air WWE® programming for the first time in Mongolia". World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. December 18, 2017. Archived from the original on January 8, 2023. ^ "Facebook and WWE to launch LIVE in-ring series, Mixed Match Challenge, exclusively on Facebook Watch". WWE. Archived from the original on December 13, 2017. Retrieved December 14, 2017. ^ "Foxtel Group to become exclusive destination for WWE in Australia". WWE. Retrieved March 14, 2023. ^ "Netflix Nabs WWE 'Raw' Rights in Major $5B Deal". The Hollywood Reporter. January 23, 2024. ^ "Netflix to become new home of WWE Raw beginning 2025". ^ "Netflix Gets in the Ring, Locking up WWE's 'Monday Night Raw' in 10-Year, $5B-Plus Deal for Longtime TV Staple". January 23, 2024. ^ Spotswood, Beth (March 19, 2015). "WrestleMania expected to attract 120,00 fans to Bay Area". San Francisco Chronicle. Archived from the original on March 31, 2015. Retrieved March 21, 2015. ^ "TSI Realty Co. - Find the Company.com". ^ "WWE to Create Podcast Network With Endeavor Audio (Exclusive)". The Hollywood Reporter. August 22, 2019. ^ "WWE listed as minority owner of revived XFL despite claims of separate entities". mlive. May 4, 2018. ^ "WWE pacts with Tout Industries". Variety. July 11, 2012. Archived from the original on June 28, 2017. Retrieved October 29, 2017. ^ "'The Marvel Experience' Takes Fans Into Interactive World of Superheroes". Wrestling News. August 22, 2013. ^ Slade, Hollie. "Phunware Gets $30 Million Cash Injection To Dominate Mobile Cloud". Forbes. ^ Nason, Josh. "WWE PART OF $21.2 MILLION SERIES B FUNDING OF FLOSPORTS". Wrestling Observer. ^ "World Wrestling Entertainment tag teams with Avid". Avid. ^ Spangler, Todd. "Drone Racing League Raises $20 Million From Sky, Liberty Media, WWE". Variety. ^ Spangler, Todd. "Esports Startup Cloud9 Raises $25 Million From WWE, Others". Variety. ^ Rovell, Darren (May 13, 2020). "DraftKings stock price skyrockets on news of George Soros investment". The Morning Call. Archived from the original on November 28, 2020. Retrieved September 17, 2020. ^ Johnson, Mike (March 28, 2021). "WWE INVESTS IN NYC TECHNOLOGY COMPANY FOCUSING ON ENTERTAINMENT & CELEBRITIES". PWInsider. ^ Bucholtz, Andrew (August 14, 2022). "Jomboy Media announces they've raised another $5 million, with CAA, NEA, WWE, Dwyane Wade, Karl-Anthony Towns, C.C. Sabathia, and more involved". Awful Announcing. ^ Kelly, Jason (August 14, 2022). "Lacrosse League Attracts New Funding From WWE, Kevin Durant". Bloomberg. ^ "WWE releases full schedule of WrestleMania 29 week events in New York and New Jersey". Cleveland.com. April 1, 2013. Archived from the original on September 24, 2015. Retrieved February 1, 2015. ^ "Wish granted! WWE star John Cena to grant 500th Make-A-Wish request". ESPN. ESPN. AP. August 23, 2015. Archived from the original on June 17, 2016. Retrieved June 12, 2016. ^ "World Wrestling Entertainment to Promote 'Operation USO Care Package". WWE Corporate. WWE Corporate. ^ "WWE Impact works to inspire our Superstars, fans and employees through a variety of initiatives and partnerships across the globe. Some of Our Featured and Like-Minded Partners". WWE Corporate. WWE Corporate. ^ "WWE launches anti-bullying alliance". WWE Community. WWE Community. ^ "WWE, Susan G. Komen Tag Team for Third Year to Fight Breast Cancer". Variety. September 29, 2014. Archived from the original on October 4, 2014. Retrieved November 11, 2014. ^ "Transforming Military Service into Civilian Success". December 17, 2012. Archived from the original on October 29, 2017. Retrieved October 29, 2017. ^ "WWE and Hire Heroes USA host a Veteran Employment Panel and Networking Event during SummerSlam Week". WWE Community. Archived from the original on October 29, 2017. Retrieved October 29, 2017. ^ "Ways to Give – Personal Page – Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Foundation". givetochildrens.org. Archived from the original on September 4, 2014. ^ "WWE's Triple H and Stephanie McMahon Launch 'Connor's Cure' Charity". pittsburghmagazine.com. June 24, 2014. Archived from the original on September 11, 2014. ^ "Stephanie McMahon, Triple H announce 'Connor's Cure' charity fund in honor of Connor Michalek". WWE Community. Archived from the original on September 6, 2015. ^ "Special Olympics and WWE announce international partnership". WWE Community. Archived from the original on March 27, 2017. Retrieved March 26, 2017. ^ "Boys & Girls Clubs of America and WWE launch new national partnership". WWE Community. Retrieved June 12, 2019. ^ Girl Up and WWE create Sports for a Purpose program to promote girls' leadership – WWE.com ^ "WWE partners with Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) to help cancer patients and families". WWE. Retrieved October 3, 2019. ^ "National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation Announces Official Partnership with WWE®". WWE. Retrieved March 1, 2022. ^ "WWE Relaunching Prominent MMA Brand Tapout as 'Lifestyle Fitness Brand'". Sherdog. Archived from the original on July 4, 2015. ^ Graser, Marc (March 25, 2015). "WWE to Relaunch Tapout Clothing Brand in New Joint Venture". Archived from the original on January 20, 2018. ^ "WWF World Martial Arts Heavyweight Championship". Wrestling Title Histories by Gary Will and Royal Duncan. Solie.org. Archived from the original on August 12, 2009. Retrieved March 8, 2009. ^ "WWF Light Heavyweight Championship reign history". Wrestling Title Histories by Gary Will and Royal Duncan. Solie.org. Archived from the original on February 22, 2009. Retrieved March 8, 2009. ^ "WWF/UWF International Championship reign history". Wrestling Title Histories by Gary Will and Royal Duncan. Solie.org. Archived from the original on August 12, 2009. Retrieved March 8, 2009. ^ "10 championships you never knew existed in WWE". Archived from the original on January 21, 2017. Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ "A Look Back at Smoky Mountain Wrestling". Wrestling Observer. Archived from the original on October 31, 2007. Retrieved September 29, 2007. ^ "Fire on the mountain: The oral history of Smoky Mountain Wrestling". Archived from the original on February 2, 2017. Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ Shields, Brian; Sullivan, Kevin (2009). WWE Encyclopedia. DK. p. 296. ISBN 978-0-7566-4190-0. ^ Kreikenbohm, Philip. "WAR/WWF « Events Database « Cagematch – The Internet Wrestling Database". Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ "WWF's USWA Invasion". May 18, 2016. Archived from the original on February 11, 2017. Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ "Royal Rumble 1997 Results". Online World of Wrestling. Archived from the original on February 17, 2008. Retrieved February 4, 2008. ^ "Royal Rumble 1997". AWT. January 21, 1997. Archived from the original on February 15, 2008. Retrieved February 18, 2008. ^ Taylor C. Mitchell (April 16, 2014). "The Most Incredible Single Night of Wrestling, Ever". Voices of Wrestling. Archived from the original on July 20, 2016. Retrieved June 24, 2016. Until Great Sasuke allegedly told Japanese reporters that he was going to win the WWE Light Heavyweight Championship and refuse to defend it in the USA and threatened to only defend it in Japan. The WWE immediately fired The Great Sasuke and moved on to put their new championship around the waist of the young Taka Michinoku. One would have to speculate that this hurt WWE's new relationship with Michinoku Pro ^ Thomas, Jeremy (January 12, 2016). "WWE/WWN Live Partnership Boosing EVOLVE Seminar Numbers, More". 411Mania. Archived from the original on January 31, 2017. Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ "WWE buys EVOLVE, additional library content". f4wonline.com. July 2, 2020. ^ "Cruiserweight Classic qualifying matches at Progress Wrestling: photos". WWE.com. Archived from the original on March 27, 2017. Retrieved March 26, 2017. ^ Alan Boon (December 15, 2016). "What You Need to Know About WWE'S UK Tournament". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Archived from the original on March 27, 2017. Retrieved March 26, 2017. ^ a b "WrestleMania Axxess matches to feature Superstars from NXT, 205 Live, the U.K. Championship Tournament, Progress and Insane Championship Wrestling". WWE.com. Archived from the original on March 27, 2017. Retrieved March 26, 2017. ^ "A Much-Beloved U.K. Indie Wrestling Promotion May Head To WWE Network". January 17, 2017. Archived from the original on January 31, 2017. Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ "Wrestling News, NWA Women's Title Bout, PROGRESS Title Bout, WWE-WXW Relationship, WWE News – Fightful Wrestling". www.fightful.com. October 2018. ^ "WWE coach Robbie Brookside leads workout at Germany's wXw Wrestling Academy". WWE. Retrieved February 6, 2022. ^ "411MANIA". Booker T's Reality of Wrestling Announces Partnership With WWE NXT. ^ Brennan, Corey (December 23, 2023). "WWE NXT Talent To Face Off With AJPW Triple Crown Heavyweight Champion In 2024". Retrieved December 23, 2023. ^ Sean Ross Sapp [@SeanRossSapp] (December 23, 2023). "AJPW is going to be working with NXT, per a new video from AJPW. Things are going wild in Japan right now!" (Tweet). Retrieved December 23, 2023 – via Twitter. ^ Lee, Joseph. "More Details On WWE-AJPW Relationship, WWE More Open To Working With Other Companies". 411 Mania. Retrieved January 8, 2024. ^ Lowson, Thomas. "Working Agreement Between WWE & Marigold Will See Years of Promotional Crossover". MSN. Retrieved June 15, 2024. ^ Aguilar, Matthew (October 30, 2024). "WWE Reveals Details and First Independent Schools for WWE ID". ComicBook.com. Retrieved October 30, 2024. ^ Murray, Andy H. (October 29, 2024). "WWE Launches New Indie Developmental Program, 'WWE ID'". WhatCulture.com. Retrieved October 30, 2024. ^ "What is WWE ID aka WWE Independent Development? All you need to know about the new program in the Triple H era". October 29, 2024. ^ "WWE & TNA Wrestling announce multi-year partnership". WWE. Retrieved January 18, 2025. ^ Quiles Jr., Fernando (May 30, 2024). "Backstage Details on WWE Partnership with TNA Wrestling Amid Jordynne Grace Surprises". Sports Illustrated. Retrieved June 15, 2024. ^ "Great Ideas That Didn't Last: The WWE's Developmental Territory System". April 27, 2015. Archived from the original on February 2, 2017. Retrieved March 15, 2017. ^ "McMahon says he'll clean up steroids in WWF". The Baltimore Sun. July 14, 1991. Archived from the original on May 31, 2014. Retrieved May 30, 2014. ^ "WWE's Vince McMahon is still a tough target on drug-testing". ESPN. April 14, 2009. Archived from the original on October 27, 2013. Retrieved May 30, 2014. ^ a b c "WWE Talent Wellness Program" (PDF). Corporate WWE Web Site. February 27, 2007. Archived from the original (PDF) on October 25, 2007. Retrieved October 11, 2007. ^ "Brock Lesnar won't be punished by WWE; not subject to wellness policy". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. July 26, 2016. Archived from the original on July 28, 2016. Retrieved July 26, 2016. ^ "Congress wants WWE's info on steroids, doping". Archived from the original on November 17, 2007. Retrieved July 29, 2007. ^ "Fourteen wrestlers tied to pipeline". Sports Illustrated. August 30, 2007. Archived from the original on June 28, 2011. Retrieved October 11, 2007. ^ Farhi, Paul (September 1, 2007). "Pro Wrestling Suspends 10 Linked to Steroid Ring". Washington Post. Archived from the original on May 17, 2008. Retrieved October 11, 2007. ^ "WWE Suspends Yet Another Wrestler". Headline Planet. September 1, 2007. Archived from the original on November 7, 2007. ^ "WWE News: WWE officially updates Wellness Policy to ban the "non-medical use" of muscle relaxant Soma". Pro Wrestling Torch. September 17, 2010. Archived from the original on September 21, 2010. Retrieved September 18, 2010. ^ "Details On Sex & Drug Scandals In WWE". SEScoops. SEScoops.com. December 27, 2009. Archived from the original on January 20, 2018. Retrieved July 17, 2017. ^ "W.W.F.'s McMahon Indicted". The New York Times. November 19, 1993. Archived from the original on October 2, 2010. Retrieved October 17, 2009. ^ "Wrestling Promoter Fights Steroid Charges". The New York Times. April 28, 1994. Archived from the original on November 7, 2014. Retrieved October 17, 2009. ^ "Nailz the Wrestler Testifies He Was Told to Use Steroids". The New York Times. July 12, 1994. Archived from the original on April 9, 2016. ^ "NAILZ". Wrestleview. Archived from the original on November 7, 2014. Retrieved November 20, 2012. ^ "Wrestling Promoter McMahon Acquitted of Steroid Charges". Los Angeles Times. Associated Press. July 23, 1994. ^ a b c d e f g h Bixenspan, David (October 29, 2020). "WWE cofounder Linda McMahon, who runs Trump's biggest super PAC, once hired a suspected child molester on the condition that he 'stop chasing after kids.' He didn't". Business Insider. Retrieved February 25, 2024. ^ Powell, Jason (February 13, 2021). "Tom Cole dead at age 50, key accuser in the WWE/WWF Ring Boy scandal". Pro Wrestling Dot Net. Retrieved February 25, 2024. ^ "WWE: The 5 Most Interesting Excerpts from WWE-Related Lawsuit Filings & Case Law". Bleacher Report. October 7, 2011. Archived from the original on July 31, 2017. Retrieved July 19, 2017. ^ John Paul Nefflen. "TNA Entertainment LLC – Noncompete Trade Secrets Law". Burr & Forman Blog. Archived from the original on September 15, 2015. Retrieved July 10, 2012. ^ Caldwell, James. "TNA drops lawsuit vs. WWE this week". Archived from the original on February 22, 2013. ^ "MLW Files Lawsuit Against WWE, Alleges WWE Nixed Streaming Deal". Wrestling Inc. January 11, 2022. ^ "MLW Lawsuit Against WWE Details: Allegations Of Poaching Talent, Tubi Interference, FITE TV And VICE". Wrestling Inc. January 12, 2022. ^ "Owen Hart Tragedy". Wrestling Gone Wrong. Archived from the original on October 5, 2007. Retrieved January 5, 2008. ^ Powell, John. "Hart tragedy overshadows Taker's win". SLAM! Sports. Archived from the original on May 30, 2012. Retrieved January 5, 2008. ^ "Over the Edge 1999 results". Online World of Wrestling. Archived from the original on January 20, 2008. Retrieved January 5, 2008. ^ Fan, Ryan (March 10, 2021). "The Wrestler Who Died From a Stunt Gone Wrong". CrimeBeat. Retrieved March 22, 2024. ^ Margolies, Dan (November 11, 2000). "Deal approved in WWF case". The Kansas City star. Robb & Robb. Archived from the original on December 7, 2008. Retrieved January 20, 2008. ^ Skinner, Stephanie (November 27, 2000). "Record $18M settlement for Wrestler's family". Robb & Robb. Archived from the original on August 22, 2007. Retrieved January 20, 2008. ^ "Owen Hart Family awarded $18 million US". CTV. November 8, 2000. Archived from the original on December 7, 2008. Retrieved January 20, 2008. ^ "WWE Entertainment, Inc. Announces Settlement in Owen Hart Case". WWE Corporate. November 2, 2000. Archived from the original on September 4, 2012. Retrieved January 20, 2008. ^ Hofmeister, Sallie (April 13, 2000). "USA Networks Files Lawsuit in Fight to Keep Wrestling Rights". Archived from the original on August 14, 2023 – via Los Angeles Times. ^ "USA Cable v. World Wrestling Federation". 766 A.2d 462 – via CourtListener. ^ Carter, Bill (June 28, 2000). "Smackdown: Viacom Wins USA's Wrestling". The New York Times. Archived from the original on May 27, 2015. ^ Bloomberg News; Staff Reports (June 28, 2000). "WWF Wins Bid to Dump USA, Join Viacom" – via Los Angeles Times. ^ Higgins, John M. (July 3, 2000). "Court smacks down USA". Broadcasting & Cable. ^ "USA and WWE, a Tag Team Again". The Washington Post. April 5, 2005. ^ World Wrestling Federation Entertainment Inc. (October 13, 1999). "Amendment No. 3 to Form S-1". Exhibit 10.16: Agreement between WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature and Titan Sports, Inc. dated January 20, 1994. Archived from the original on December 26, 2013. Retrieved December 25, 2013. ^ John K. Carlisle (2003). "World Wide Fund For Nature vs. World Wrestling Entertainment" (PDF). Foundation Watch. Capital Research Center. Archived from the original (PDF) on April 29, 2011. Retrieved December 15, 2010. ^ "World Wrestling Federation Entertainment Drops The "F" To Emphasize the "E" for Entertainment". WWE. May 6, 2002. Archived from the original on January 19, 2009. Retrieved December 20, 2008. ^ "English Court Repudiates World Wide Fund for Nature; Ends Legal Block To Sale of THQ/Jakks WWE Videogames". WWE Corporate. April 17, 2003. Archived from the original on May 3, 2012. Retrieved June 9, 2012. ^ Williams, Kenny (August 8, 2012). "WWE Reaches Settlement With World Wildlife Fund". Wrestlingnewssource.com. Archived from the original on October 4, 2013. Retrieved August 10, 2013. ^ Bee, Daniel (October 10, 2012). "Exclusive: Will the WWF "Scratch Logo" Appear on Future WWE DVDs?". Wrestling DVD News. Archived from the original on March 17, 2013. Retrieved August 10, 2013. ^ Johnson, Mike (August 19, 2012). "Update On The WWE Scratch Logo Situation". PWInsider.com. Archived from the original on May 12, 2014. Retrieved August 10, 2013. ^ Stephens, Niel (February 1, 2005). "World Wrestling Entertainment Purchases Another ECW Asset". Rajah.com. Archived from the original on August 19, 2014. Retrieved August 18, 2014. ^ Grasso, John (March 6, 2014). Historical Dictionary of Wrestling – John Grasso – Google Books. Scarecrow Press. ISBN 9780810879263. Retrieved April 11, 2014. ^ Reynolds, R. D. (2004). The Death of Wcw – R. D. Reynolds – Google Books. ECW Press. ISBN 9781554902552. Retrieved April 11, 2014. ^ "Why the Ultimate Warrior Was Such a Legend". ABC. Archived from the original on April 9, 2014. Retrieved April 9, 2014. "The Ultimate Warrior, born James Brian Hellwig, legally changed his name to Warrior in 1993 ... It's also the last name of his wife and children." ^ World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. – WWE Quarterly Report (10-Q) Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements (Unaudited) Archived July 3, 2008, at the Wayback Machine. Sec.edgar-online.com (December 13, 1999). Retrieved on January 5, 2012. ^ Flynn, Daniel (June 28, 2004). "Interview with the Ultimate Warrior – Part 3 of 4". FlynnFiles.com. Archived from the original on April 19, 2008. Retrieved May 18, 2008. ^ Sokol, Chris (July 5, 2005). "Warrior speaks his mind in new shoot". Canadian Online Explorer. Archived from the original on January 1, 2013. Retrieved May 18, 2008. ^ WWE: Ultimate Warrior files lawsuit against World Wrestling Entertainment Archived January 28, 2008, at the Wayback Machine. Wrestlemag.com. Retrieved on January 5, 2012. ^ a b "WWE is Whitewashing The Ultimate Warrior's Bigoted Past". Vice Sports. October 27, 2017. Archived from the original on November 8, 2017. Retrieved November 4, 2017. ^ Keller, Wade (October 27, 2017). "Unleash Your Warrior under fire". Pro Wrestling Torch. Archived from the original on October 28, 2017. Retrieved November 4, 2017. ^ "Talent". World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. Archived from the original on July 27, 2022. ^ Gamiz, Manuel Jr. (September 1, 2015). "Wrestling legend Jimmy 'Superfly' Snuka to be charged in girlfriend's 1983 death". The Morning Call. Archived from the original on September 1, 2015. Retrieved September 1, 2015. ^ "Former Pro Wrestling Star 'Superfly' Snuka Charged in Girlfriend's 1983 Lehigh County Death". 6ABC. Allentown, Pennsylvania: ABC Inc. (WPVI-TV). September 2, 2015. Retrieved January 19, 2017. ^ Montgomery, James (September 3, 2015). "Jimmy Snuka's Contract 'Suspended' by WWE After Murder Charge". Rolling Stone. Retrieved September 20, 2015. ^ "WWE: Jim Ross Apologizes For Controversial Jimmy Snuka Comments". Pop Culture. Retrieved November 9, 2018. ^ "Rosey bio". Slam! Sports. Canadian Online Explorer. Archived from the original on July 14, 2012. Retrieved August 18, 2007. And then, in June, Jamal was released by WWE stemming from an incident at a night club, leaving Rosey on his own. ^ "WWE Superstar Chris Benoit Found Dead". WWE Corporate. June 25, 2007. Archived from the original on May 16, 2008. Retrieved May 21, 2008. ^ WWE's McMahon Should Have Apologized;by Darren Rovell; by Darren Rovell; CNBC, June 26, 2007 ^ Johnson, Mike. "WWE TALENT ARRESTED, RELEASED". PWInsider. Retrieved December 1, 2012. ^ "Richard Swann Mugshot 12/10/17 Florida Arrest". Arrests.org. December 10, 2017. Retrieved December 10, 2017. ^ Johnson, Mike (December 10, 2017). "205 Live star arrested". Pro Wrestling Insider. Retrieved December 10, 2017. ^ Currier, Joseph (December 10, 2017). "Rich Swann arrested for domestic battery and false imprisonment". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Retrieved December 10, 2017. ^ a b Johnson, Mike (December 10, 2017). "More details on Rich Swann arrest". Pro Wrestling Insider. Retrieved December 10, 2017. ^ "Rich Swann and WWE part ways". WWE. Retrieved February 15, 2018. ^ Satin, Ryan (January 22, 2018). "Enzo Amore Suspended Over Sexual Assault Allegations, Incident Under Investigation By Police". Pro Wrestling Sheet. Retrieved May 16, 2018. ^ "WWE fires Enzo Amore fired after police open sexual assault investigation". USA Today. January 23, 2018. Retrieved May 16, 2018. ^ "Enzo Amore suspended". WWE. January 22, 2018. Retrieved January 22, 2018. ^ "Enzo Amore Accuser Speaks Out, 'I Said 'No' Countless Times'". TMZ. January 23, 2018. Retrieved January 25, 2018. ^ Powell, Jason (January 22, 2018). "WWE pulls the Cruiserweight Title match from the Royal Rumble lineup". ProWrestling.net. Last Row Media LLC. Retrieved May 16, 2018. ^ "Enzo Amore released". WWE. January 23, 2018. Retrieved January 23, 2018. ^ Satin, Ryan (January 23, 2018). "Update on Reasoning Behind Enzo Amore's Release From WWE". Pro Wrestling Sheet. Retrieved January 24, 2018. ^ Schwartz, Nick (January 24, 2018). "Enzo Amore releases first statement after being released by WWE". USA Today. Retrieved January 25, 2018. ^ Satin, Ryan (May 16, 2018). "Enzo Amore Sexual Assault Investigation Dropped Due To Insufficient Evidence". Pro Wrestling Sheet. Retrieved May 16, 2018. ^ Collins, Dave (September 19, 2018). "Judge throws out lawsuit against WWE by ex-pro wrestlers over concussions". The Denver Post. Retrieved September 23, 2020. ^ Collins, Dave (September 9, 2020). "Former WWE wrestlers' lawsuit over brain damage is dismissed". Associated Press. Retrieved September 23, 2020. ^ Collins, Dave (April 26, 2021). "Supreme Court declines to hear wrestlers' brain damage cases". Associated Press. Retrieved July 14, 2021. ^ Barrasso, Justin (September 26, 2018). "An expert's take on WWE's Saudi Arabia partnership". Sports Illustrated. Archived from the original on September 26, 2018. Retrieved April 10, 2021. ^ Andersson, Jasmine (April 26, 2018). "WWE is hosting Greatest Royal Rumble in Saudi Arabia and LGBT+ fans are not happy about it". PinkNews. Archived from the original on February 11, 2021. Retrieved April 10, 2021. ^ "WWE: End Your Partnership With Saudi Arabia!". Code Pink. Archived from the original on April 19, 2019. Retrieved April 10, 2021. ^ Bixenspan, David (November 1, 2018). "Why Is WWE Creating Propaganda for Saudi Arabia?". The Nation. Archived from the original on November 1, 2018. Retrieved April 10, 2021. ^ Martínez, Sebastián (February 27, 2020). "Super ShowDown: los fans amenazan con darse de baja de WWE Network – Reacción de Bill Goldberg". Solowrestling.com (in Spanish). Archived from the original on February 28, 2020. Retrieved April 10, 2021. ^ Meltzer, Dave (March 5, 2020). "March 13, 2020 Observer Newsletter: 40th Annual Awards Issue". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Retrieved March 8, 2020. ^ Hohler, Bob (November 12, 2016). "Former WWE diva joins lawsuit, alleges sexual abuse, brain injuries". The Boston Globe. Archived from the original on November 14, 2016. Retrieved November 12, 2016. ^ Nason, Josh (May 22, 2019). "WWE releases statement on Ashley Massaro sexual assault claim". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Retrieved February 9, 2024. ^ Martinez, Phillip (May 23, 2019). "WWE Issues Statement on Ashley Massaro Sexual Abuse Allegations". Newsweek. Archived from the original on November 28, 2022. Retrieved May 26, 2019. ^ Carey, Ian (February 7, 2024). "John Lauriniatis lawyer: WWE knew about Ashley Massaro rape claim". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Archived from the original on February 7, 2024. Retrieved February 9, 2024. ^ Marchman, Tim (February 7, 2024). "Despite Denials, WWE Management Knew Wrestler Said She Had Been Raped on Military Base". Vice News. Archived from the original on February 9, 2024. Retrieved February 9, 2024. ^ Currier, Joseph (February 9, 2024). "Ashley Massaro accused Vince McMahon of preying on female WWE wrestlers". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Retrieved February 12, 2024. ^ Assael, Shaun & Mooneyham, Mike (2002). Sex, Lies, and Headlocks: The Real Story of Vince McMahon and the World Wrestling Federation (1st ed.). New York: Crown Publishers. pp. 116. ISBN 0609606905. OCLC 49276567. ^ Assael, Shaun & Mooneyham, Mike (2002). Sex, Lies, and Headlocks: The Real Story of Vince McMahon and the World Wrestling Federation (1st ed.). New York: Crown Publishers. pp. 115–117. ISBN 0609606905. OCLC 49276567. ^ "Vince McMahon 1986 Rape Allegation Resurfaces as Former Wrestler Corroborates Story".[permanent dead link] ^ King, Dale (February 3, 2006). "WWE chief accused of groping Boca tanning salon worker". Boca Raton News. Archived from the original on September 28, 2007. Retrieved July 2, 2007. ^ Meltzer, Dave (February 2, 2006). "McMahon situation to get more publicity". Wrestling Observer Newsletter. Retrieved July 2, 2007. ^ "Digest". Sun-Sentinel. March 25, 2006. Archived from the original on March 10, 2016. Retrieved March 9, 2016. ^ Palazzolo, Joe; Mann, Ted (December 13, 2022). "WWE's Vince McMahon Faces Fresh Demands From Women Alleging Sexual Abuse". Wall Street Journal. Retrieved January 6, 2023. ^ a b Palazzolo, Joe; Mann, Ted (January 20, 2023). "WWE's Vince McMahon Settles With Ex-Wrestling Referee Who Accused Him of Rape". Wall Street Journal. Retrieved February 22, 2023. ^ Copeland, Rob (October 28, 2015). "Hedge-Fund Priest: Thou Shalt Make Money". The Wall Street Journal. Retrieved December 19, 2015. (Subscription required) ^ Strauss, Gary. "World Wrestling pummeled four out of five rounds this week". USA TODAY. Retrieved April 3, 2021. ^ Kline, Daniel B. (June 7, 2014). "Should the McMahons Still Be Running WWE?". The Motley Fool. Retrieved July 31, 2021. ^ Schiavo, Amanda (April 11, 2014). "Why World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) Stock Finished Down Today". TheStreet. Retrieved July 31, 2021. ^ Strauss, Gary. "Kulicke & Soffa shares surge after investor urges buyback". USA TODAY. Retrieved July 31, 2021. ^ Calia, Mike (June 15, 2022). "WWE board investigates secret $3 million hush payment by CEO Vince McMahon, report says". CNBC. Retrieved June 15, 2022. ^ Mann, Ted; Palazzolo, Joe (June 15, 2022). "WWE Board Probes Secret $3 Million Hush Pact by CEO Vince McMahon, Sources Say". The Wall Street Journal. Retrieved June 15, 2022. ^ Palazzolo, Joe; Mann, Ted; Flint, Joe (July 8, 2022). "WWE's Vince McMahon Agreed to Pay $12 Million in Hush Money to Four Women". The Wall Street Journal. Retrieved July 23, 2022. ^ "Vince McMahon Retires". WWE. July 22, 2022. Retrieved July 22, 2022. ^ "Vince McMahon retires from W.W.E. after stepping down amid a board investigation". The New York Times. July 22, 2022. Retrieved July 22, 2022. ^ "WWE's McMahon says he is retiring amid misconduct probe". The Washington Post. July 22, 2022. Retrieved July 22, 2022. ^ Stebbins, Jack (August 10, 2022). "WWE discloses another $5 million in McMahon payments, delays earnings report". CNBC. Retrieved October 19, 2022. ^ a b Dorn, Emile; Dasrath, Diana; Knodel, Jamie (January 26, 2024). "WWE founder Vince McMahon resigns after ex-employee accuses him in lawsuit of sexual assault, trafficking". NBC News. Retrieved January 27, 2024. Fargiorgo, Joseph (2014). WWE: Wrestling, Wellness & Entertainment – An Analysis of Work and Health in Professional Wrestling (MA). Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph. Retrieved September 7, 2021 – via The Atrium at University of Guelph. Olson, Cristopher; Reinhard, Carrie Lynn D. (2021). "Wrestling with Eating Disorders: Transmedia Depictions of Body Issues in WWE's Women's Professional Wrestling". In Johnson, Malynnda; Olson, Cristopher (eds.). Normalizing Mental Illness and Neurodiversity in Entertainment Media (1st E-book ed.). London: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781003011668-15. ISBN 9781003011668. S2CID 233598773. Verma, D. S. (2020). Wresting Fans as Players, Performers as Characters: Conceptualizing WWE Storytelling and Production in Terms of Games and Play (Master). Faculty of Humanities Theses, Utrecht University. hdl:1874/399263. Archived from the original on September 7, 2021. Retrieved September 7, 2021 – via Utrecht University Repository. Wikimedia Commons has media related to World Wrestling Entertainment. Official website WWE Superstars - Wikipedia: Fact or Fiction? at Loudwire Retrieved from " 2Former professional wrestling championship WWE 24/7 ChampionshipThe 24/7 Championship beltDetailsPromotionWWEDate establishedMay 20, 2019Date retiredNovember 9, 2022StatisticsFirst championTitus O'NeilFinal championNikki CrossMost reignsR-Truth(54 reigns)[a]Longest reignReggie(1st reign, 112 days)Shortest reignTucker(1st reign, 4 seconds)Oldest championPat Patterson(78 years, 184 days)Youngest championBad Bunny(26 years, 342 days)Heaviest championThe Revival(Scott Dawson and Dash Wilder)(446 lb (202 kg) combined)Lightest championAlexa Bliss(102 lb (46 kg)) The WWE 24/7 Championship was a professional wrestling championship created and promoted by the American promotion WWE. It was a tertiary championship open to anyone—regardless of gender or WWE employment status—and carried the special rule that it could be defended "24/7", as in any time, anywhere, as long as a WWE referee was present. Because of this rule, the championship was available to all of WWE's brand divisions: their two main roster brands, Raw and SmackDown, and their developmental brand, NXT; at the time the championship was established, WWE promoted five brands, two of which were dissolved in 2022—205 Live and NXT UK. The title was similar to the WWE Hardcore Championship (1998–2002), which also had a 24/7 rule. This rule could be temporarily suspended by an authority figure, usually done during a scheduled title defense or non-title matches that involved the champion. Due to this rule, title changes often occurred outside of regular shows, with videos posted on the promotion's website and social media accounts. Many title changes were also done as humorous segments during televised shows. The title was unveiled by Mick Foley on the May 20, 2019, episode of Monday Night Raw, where Titus O'Neil from Raw became the inaugural champion. The final champion was Nikki Cross, also from Raw. She had won the title on the November 7, 2022, episode of Raw and then afterwards backstage, discarded the championship as trash, with WWE deactivating the title on November 9. Inaugural 24/7 Champion Titus O'Neil During the Money in the Bank pay-per-view and livestreaming event on May 19, 2019, WWE announced that a new professional wrestling championship would be introduced on the following night's episode of Raw,[1] where hardcore legend and WWE Hall of Famer Mick Foley unveiled the WWE 24/7 Championship. Like the former WWE Hardcore Championship and its "24/7 rule", the 24/7 Championship could be defended anytime, anywhere, as long as a WWE referee was present, hence its name.[2][3][4] Due to this, Foley said the title could be defended across all of WWE's brand divisions: Raw, SmackDown, NXT, NXT UK, and 205 Live (205 Live and NXT UK were dissolved in February and September 2022, respectively). He also said that WWE legends could return and challenge for the title. After the unveiling, Foley laid the title belt in the ring and said that whoever secured the championship first in a scramble would become the inaugural champion. Raw's Titus O'Neil became the inaugural champion by doing so, defeating Cedric Alexander, Drake Maverick, EC3, Eric Young, Karl Anderson, Luke Gallows, Mojo Rawley, and No Way Jose to claim the championship.[3][4][5] It was later confirmed that the title was not gender-exclusive and could also be won by non-WWE personnel after the respective wins of former WWE female wrestler Kelly Kelly and Fox sportscaster Rob Stone.[6][7] Although a stipulation of the championship, the 24/7 rule could be temporarily suspended by any authority figure. This usually occurred when the champion was involved in a non-title match. For example, after Elias won the title from R-Truth on the May 28, 2019, episode of SmackDown Live, the brand's commissioner Shane McMahon suspended the rule until after the scheduled tag team match later that same night, in which both Elias and Truth were involved.[8] The rule could also be suspended during an actual scheduled match for the title to prevent other wrestlers from getting involved. For example, when R-Truth unsuccessfully defended the title against Elias in a lumberjack match on the June 4 episode of SmackDown.[9] Another example was when reigning champion R-Truth was a guest on The Miz's "Miz TV" talkshow and during a subsequent scheduled match against Drake Maverick, both on the June 24 episode of Raw.[10] Former WWE wrestler No Way Jose said in a 2021 interview that he had proposed the idea for the 24/7 Championship to a writer about five months before the title's debut.[11] However, according to professional wrestling journalist Dave Meltzer, the idea for the title was proposed by the USA Network, where Raw and SmackDown had both aired, in an attempt to increase the ratings during Raw's third hour.[12] The viewership of both shows had been declining