

Sixty Australian newspapers to stop printing

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Falling readerships and the rise of Google and Facebook as dominant players in advertising has made news organisations less profitable

Rupert Murdoch's Australian flagship media group News Corp announced Wednesday it will stop printing around 60 regional newspapers, as the troubled sector received a fresh blow from a COVID-19 advertising downturn.

News Corp said papers in the states of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia would cease printing and move online.

"We have not taken this decision lightly," News Corp Australasia Executive Chairman Michael Miller was quoted as saying by the group's Australian newspaper title.

"The coronavirus crisis has created unprecedented economic pressures and we are doing everything we can to preserve as many jobs as possible."

"The suspension of our community print editions has been forced on us by the [rapid decline](#) in advertising revenues following the restrictions placed on real estate auctions and home inspections, the forced closure of event venues and dine-in restaurants in the wake of the coronavirus emergency, " he added.

Many Australian media groups had already been shifting to focus to online content before the pandemic began.

The announcement follows a series of media closure announcements, including national wire AAP, which is due to cease work later this year.

The move has echoed a global trend.

The largest US newspaper publisher, Gannett, said on Monday it was making unspecified furloughs and pay cuts for its staff.

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