What’s CNN’s Future Under Paramount Skydance?

Over 40 years ago, former CNN owner **Ted Turner** attempted to buy CBS but failed. Now, it’s CBS’s turn to take a big merger swing.

CBS parent Paramount Skydance has emerged victorious in its bid to purchase Warner Bros. Discovery, the parent company of CNN. The announcement is raising many questions about the news network’s future if the deal goes through—and those questions are rippling through the organization.

Amid reports of apprehension among CNN staffers about the network’s potential new owners, CNN’s CEO, **Mark Thompson,** issued a memo, shared with TVNewser, urging everyone not to jump to conclusions until things are clearer.

“Let’s not forget our duty to our audience. We’re still near the start of what is already an incredibly newsy year at home and abroad, one that will culminate with critical U.S. midterm elections and who knows what else. Let’s continue to focus on delivering the best possible journalism to the millions of people who rely on us all around the world,” Thompson added.

Besides Thompson’s memo, WBD CEO **David Zaslav** held a town hall held this morning, which reportedly tried to sell employees on the idea of Paramount. CNN did not respond to TVNewser’s request for comment regarding the town hall.

The wariness observed among CNN employees toward their potential new owner stems from concerns about whether they can maintain their editorial independence without political interference. Paramount’s owners, the Ellison family, have had

a favorable relationship with the **Donald Trump** administration. Naturally, there are questions about whether ownership will affect how the network covers the president.

Additionally, with Paramount promising billions in corporate synergies, there are questions of whether there will be layoffs, how the news networks could potentially be combined, and what the leadership will look like.

CBS News recently appointed **Bari Weiss** as its editor in chief and has undergone significant changes under the leadership of Weiss and Paramount Skydance CEO **David Ellison**, who stepped into the Paramount CEO role following Skydance's $8 billion merger with the company last year.

Among the notable changes, the network hired **Kenneth R. Weinstein** as CBS News ombudsman. Plus, since Weiss's arrival, numerous on-air and off-air talent have departed the network. She remade the CBS Evening News, which is now helmed by **Tony Dokoupil**, and her leadership led to the temporary pulling of a 60 Minutes story about the abuse at CECOT, a prison in El Salvador.

Though it remains unclear for now if CNN's reporting would be subjected to the same editorial structure or how the news networks would operate independently, all the happenings at CBS News have clearly caused uneasiness at the house that Turner built.

But for now, as CNN might say, this story is still developing.

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