



# CBS Evening News Sees Ratings Surge Despite Anchor Criticism

## Description

The recently reimagined “CBS Evening News” experienced a notable surge in viewership following the departure of anchor Norah O’Donnell. However, industry pundits anticipate that this transient increase in audience numbers, described by some as “óstodgy,” is unlikely to be sustainable.

“Viewership for the 'Evening News' was never predicated on Norah's appeal, which was decidedly tepid. Audiences merely indulged their curiosity,” remarked a long-time television producer in an interview with The Post, before critiquing new anchors Maurice DuBois and John Dickerson.

“They emanate an aura of antiquation and lack vibrancy.”

During their inaugural broadcast on Monday, the program attracted an average of 5.2 million viewers, reflecting a 14% uptick from O'Donnell's averages in the preceding year, as indicated by preliminary ratings data obtained by The Post.

“CBS Evening News” garnered a ratings increase on its first show with co-hosts Maurice DuBois (left) and John Dickerson (right). CBS Mornings

Nevertheless, the broadcast remained firmly entrenched in third place, trailing competitors ABC and NBC.

“Dickerson and DuBois are, in many respects, the inferior counterparts of David Muir and Lester Holt,” a second network insider opined, alluding to the widely respected evening news anchors of ABC and NBC.

The initial source added, “Their dynamic resembles that of ‘The Odd Couple,’ yet the latter was characterized by genuine chemistry.”

Describing the debut as “uninspiring,” another insider noted that the program's capability to retain its audience would become evident by the end of the week.

A CBS News representative declined to provide commentary.

O'Donnell helmed the struggling broadcast for five years, during which time it witnessed a staggering 25% decline in ratings. This recent increase was, therefore, a welcome shift.

“CBS Evening News” under Norah O'Donnell experienced a significant ratings decline during her tenure as anchor. CBS via Getty Images

However, sustaining even a modest ratings increase proves challenging in the contemporary landscape of television news. When CBS appointed Katie Couric as anchor, her debut drew an impressive 14 million viewers, yet by the end of that week, the numbers plummeted to 8 million.

While viewership habits have evolved dramatically with the proliferation of streaming services, the significance of nightly newscasts has diminished correspondingly.

This new format emerges from the strategic vision of CBS News President Wendy McMahon, previously of



ABC, and Bill Owens, executive producer of “60 Minutes.” Their goal is to enhance in-depth storytelling while simultaneously curtailing production costs with less renowned talent.

In its first two episodes, the program featured segments scrutinizing the ramifications of the war in Gaza, the poignant narrative of a terminally ill patient turning to medical aid to end their life, and an exploration into ICE’s preparations for impending immigration raids in New York City.

However, some critics caution that audiences may be alienated by an overly intricate and ambitious reporting structure within the confines of a 30-minute segment.

Critics remained skeptical about the “CBS Evening News” retaining its initial momentum following the debut ratings spike. Christopher Sadowski

“The capacity for audiences to engage with a report-heavy format featuring numerous segments may well be overstated,” one former television executive commented.

Another insider highlighted fundamental issues, pointing out that the utilization of a singular camera for two anchors lent the production an amateurish quality, exacerbated by an overly dimly lit set.

“The presentation resembles a boosted iteration of local news,” the insider concluded.

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## Vocabulary List:

1. **Surge** /sɜːrdʒ/ (noun): A sudden and powerful upward or forward movement.
2. **Transient** /ˈtrænz.i.ənt/ (adjective): Lasting only for a short time; impermanent.
3. **Emanate** /ˈɛməˌneɪt/ (verb): To come out from a source; to emit.
4. **Antiquation** /ˌæn.tɪˈkweɪ.ʃən/ (noun): The state of being outdated or old-fashioned.
5. **Scrutinizing** /ˈskruː.tɪˌnaɪz/ (verb): Examining something very carefully.
6. **Alienated** /ˌeɪ-liəˈneɪtɪd/ (verb): Made someone feel isolated or estranged.

## Comprehension Questions

### Multiple Choice

1. Who were the new anchors of the “CBS Evening News” following Norah O’Donnell?

Option: Maurice DuBois and John Dickerson

Option: David Muir and Lester Holt

Option: Katie Couric and Wendy McMahon

Option: Norah O’Donnell and Bill Owens



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2. How did the ratings of the “CBS Evening News” change after the departure of Norah O’Donnell?
- Option: Decreased by 25%
  - Option: Increased by 14%
  - Option: Remained the same
  - Option: Fluctuated
3. Who described the new anchors as having an “aura of antiquation and lack vibrancy”?
- Option: Long-time television producer
  - Option: Second network insider
  - Option: Former television executive
  - Option: CBS News representative
4. Who was the CBS News President involved in the strategic vision for the reimagined format of the “CBS Evening News”?
- Option: Wendy McMahon
  - Option: Norah O’Donnell
  - Option: John Dickerson
  - Option: Lester Holt
5. What key aspect does the new format of the “CBS Evening News” aim to enhance?
- Option: In-depth storytelling
  - Option: Visual effects
  - Option: Comedic elements
  - Option: Production costs
6. What concern did some critics raise regarding the reporting structure of the new “CBS Evening News” format?
- Option: Audiences may be alienated by an overly intricate format
  - Option: The program is too short
  - Option: The anchors lack chemistry
  - Option: The set is too brightly lit

### **True-False**

7. The ratings of the “CBS Evening News” increased following the departure of Norah O’Donnell.
8. Maurice DuBois and John Dickerson were considered superior to David Muir and Lester Holt.
9. The new format of the “CBS Evening News” aims to reduce production costs by hiring more renowned



talent.

10. A CBS News representative provided commentary on the recent ratings surge of the “CBS Evening News.”

11. The new format of the “CBS Evening News” features segments on a range of current issues including the war in Afghanistan.

12. Some critics raised concerns about the amateurish quality of the production due to the use of multiple cameras for the anchors.

### Gap-Fill

13. Norah O’Donnell helmed the “CBS Evening News” for five years and witnessed a staggering \_\_\_\_\_ % decline in ratings.

14. The new format of the “CBS Evening News” is spearheaded by Wendy McMahon and Bill Owens, with the goal to enhance \_\_\_\_\_ storytelling.

15. The debut of Katie Couric as anchor drew an impressive 14 million viewers, but the numbers plummeted to \_\_\_\_\_ million by the end of the week.

16. The “CBS Evening News” program attracted an average of 5.2 million viewers on its inaugural broadcast, reflecting a \_\_\_\_\_ % uptick from O’Donnell’s averages in the previous year.

17. The overall viewership habits have evolved dramatically with the proliferation of \_\_\_\_\_ services.

18. The utilization of a singular camera for two anchors in the production of the “CBS Evening News” lent an \_\_\_\_\_ quality to the program.

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Maurice DuBois and John Dickerson 2. Increased by 14% 3. Long-time television producer 4. Wendy McMahon



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5. In-depth storytelling 6. Audiences may be alienated by an overly intricate format

**True-False:** 7. True 8. False 9. False 10. False 11. False 12. False

**Gap-Fill:** 13. 25 14. in-depth 15. 8 16. 14 17. streaming 18. amateurish

## Answer

### CATEGORY

1. Entertainment - LEVEL6

### Date Created

2025/01/30

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