[Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef" \o "Template:Pp-move-indef)[Template:Pp-semi-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-indef) [Template:Use American English](/wiki/Template:Use_American_English) [Template:Use mdy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_mdy_dates) [Template:Infobox company](/wiki/Template:Infobox_company) **World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.** ([d/b/a](/wiki/Doing_business_as) **WWE**) is an American publicly traded, privately controlled entertainment company that deals primarily in [professional wrestling](/wiki/Professional_wrestling), with major revenue sources also coming from film, music, product licensing, and direct product sales. WWE also refers to the [professional wrestling promotion](/wiki/Professional_wrestling_promotion) itself, founded by [Jess McMahon](/wiki/Jess_McMahon) and [Toots Mondt](/wiki/Toots_Mondt) in 1952 as [Capitol Wrestling Corporation](/wiki/Capitol_Wrestling_Corporation). As of 2014, it is the largest wrestling promotion in the world, holding over 300 events a year, and broadcasting to about 36 million viewers in more than 150 countries.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The company's headquarters are located in [Stamford, Connecticut](/wiki/Stamford,_Connecticut), with offices in major cities across the world.[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3) As in other professional wrestling promotions, WWE shows are not legitimate contests, but purely [entertainment-based](/wiki/Sports_entertainment), featuring [storyline](/wiki/Angle_(professional_wrestling))-driven, [scripted](/wiki/Glossary_of_professional_wrestling_terms#Work_(noun)), and choreographed matches, though they often include moves that can put performers at risk of injury if not performed correctly. This was first publicly acknowledged by WWE's owner Vince McMahon in 1989 to avoid taxes from athletic commissions. Since the 1980s, WWE publicly has branded their product as sports entertainment, which is considered to acknowledge the product's roots in competitive sport and dramatic theater.

The company's majority owner is its chairman and CEO, [Vince McMahon](/wiki/Vince_McMahon). Along with his wife [Linda](/wiki/Linda_McMahon), children [Shane](/wiki/Shane_McMahon) and [Stephanie](/wiki/Stephanie_McMahon), and son-in-law Paul Levesque (known professionally as [Triple H](/wiki/Triple_H)), the [McMahon family](/wiki/McMahon_family) holds approximately 70% of WWE's equity and 96% of the voting power. As of August 2014, due to ongoing problems with the company, Eminence Capital, a New York-based hedge fund, acquired 9.6% stake of WWE while the McMahon family retains 90.4% interest.<ref name=Eminence>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The current entity, incorporated on February 21, 1980, was previously known as **Titan Sports**, founded in 1979 in [South Yarmouth, Massachusetts](/wiki/South_Yarmouth,_Massachusetts). It acquired Capitol Wrestling Corporation (the holding company for the World Wrestling Federation, WWF) in 1982. Titan was renamed **World Wrestling Federation, Inc.** in 1998, then **World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc.** in 1999, and finally **World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.** in 2002. Since 2011, the company has officially branded itself solely as **WWE** though the company's legal name was not changed.[[4]](#cite_note-4)[[5]](#cite_note-5)

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## Company history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

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### Prior to Titan Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) WWE's origins can be traced back as far as 1952 when [Roderick James "Jess" McMahon](/wiki/Jess_McMahon) and [Toots Mondt](/wiki/Toots_Mondt) created the [Capitol Wrestling Corporation](/wiki/Capitol_Wrestling_Corporation) Ltd. (CWC), which joined the [National Wrestling Alliance](/wiki/National_Wrestling_Alliance) (NWA) in 1953. McMahon, who was a successful boxing promoter, began working with [Tex Rickard](/wiki/Tex_Rickard) in 1926. With the help of Rickard, he began promoting boxing at [the third Madison Square Garden](/wiki/Madison_Square_Garden_(1925)). It was not the first time he had promoted wrestling [cards](/wiki/Card_(sports)), as he had already done so during the 1910s.

In November 1954, McMahon died and Ray Fabiani, one of Mondt's associates, brought in [McMahon's son Vincent James](/wiki/Vince_McMahon,_Sr.).[[6]](#cite_note-6) The younger McMahon and Mondt were very successful and soon controlled approximately 70% of the NWA's booking, largely due to their dominance in the heavily populated Northeast region. In 1963, McMahon and Mondt had a dispute with the NWA over ["Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers](/wiki/Buddy_Rogers_(wrestler)) being booked to hold the [NWA World Heavyweight Championship](/wiki/NWA_World_Heavyweight_Championship).<ref name=won2011>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> Both men left the company in protest and formed the WWWF in the process, awarding Rogers the new [WWWF World Heavyweight Championship](/wiki/WWE_World_Heavyweight_Championship) in April of that year. He lost the championship to [Bruno Sammartino](/wiki/Bruno_Sammartino) a month later on May 17, 1963, after suffering a [heart attack](/wiki/Heart_attack) a week before the match.

Capitol operated the WWWF in a conservative manner compared to other pro wrestling territories:[[7]](#cite_note-7) it ran its major arenas monthly rather than weekly or bi-weekly, usually featuring a [babyface](/wiki/Face_(professional_wrestling)) champion wrestling various [heels](/wiki/Heel_(professional_wrestling)) in programs that consisted of one to three matches.<ref name=WON1991>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> After gaining a television program deal and hiring [Lou Albano](/wiki/Lou_Albano) as a manager for Sammartino's heel opponents, the WWWF was doing sellout business by 1970.

Mondt left Capitol in the late sixties and although the WWWF had withdrawn from the NWA, Vince McMahon, Sr. quietly re-joined in 1971. Capitol renamed the World Wide Wrestling Federation to the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) in 1979.[[8]](#cite_note-8) [Template:Anchor](/wiki/Template:Anchor)

### Titan Sports, Inc.[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

#### Golden Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Vincent J. McMahon's son, [Vincent K. McMahon](/wiki/Vince_McMahon), and his wife [Linda](/wiki/Linda_McMahon), established Titan Sports, Inc., in 1979 in [South Yarmouth, Massachusetts](/wiki/South_Yarmouth,_Massachusetts).[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10) The company was incorporated on February 21, 1980, in the [Cape Cod Coliseum](/wiki/Cape_Cod_Coliseum) offices. The younger McMahon bought Capitol from his father in 1982, effectively seizing control of the company. 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.<ref name=si>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

At the annual meeting of the NWA in 1983, the McMahons and Capitol employee [Jim Barnett](/wiki/Jim_Barnett_(wrestling)) all withdrew from the organization.<ref name=won2011/> 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*](/wiki/Sports_Illustrated), McMahon noted: [Template:Bquote](/wiki/Template:Bquote)

McMahon gained significant traction when he hired [AWA](/wiki/American_Wrestling_Association) talent [Hulk Hogan](/wiki/Hulk_Hogan), who had achieved popularity outside of wrestling, notably for his appearance in the film [*Rocky III*](/wiki/Rocky_III).[[11]](#cite_note-11) McMahon signed [Roddy Piper](/wiki/Roddy_Piper) as Hogan's rival, and then shortly afterward [Jesse Ventura](/wiki/Jesse_Ventura) as an announcer. Other wrestlers joined the roster, such as [Jimmy Snuka](/wiki/Jimmy_Snuka), [Don Muraco](/wiki/Don_Muraco), [The Iron Sheik](/wiki/The_Iron_Sheik), [Nikolai Volkoff](/wiki/Nikolai_Volkoff), [Junkyard Dog](/wiki/Junkyard_Dog), [Paul Orndorff](/wiki/Paul_Orndorff), [Greg Valentine](/wiki/Greg_Valentine) and [Ricky Steamboat](/wiki/Ricky_Steamboat). Many of the wrestlers who would join later were former AWA or NWA talent.

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](/wiki/WrestleMania). WrestleMania was a major success, and was (and still is) marketed as the [Super Bowl](/wiki/Super_Bowl) of professional wrestling. The concept of a wrestling [supercard](/wiki/Card_(sports)) was nothing new in North America; the NWA had begun running [Starrcade](/wiki/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](/wiki/Mr._T), [Muhammad Ali](/wiki/Muhammad_Ali) and [Cyndi Lauper](/wiki/Cyndi_Lauper) to participate in the event, as well as securing a deal with [MTV](/wiki/MTV) to provide coverage. The event and hype surrounding it led to the term [*Rock 'n' Wrestling Connection*](/wiki/Rock_'n'_Wrestling_Connection), due to the cross-promotion of pop-culture and professional wrestling.

The WWF business expanded significantly on the shoulders of McMahon and his [babyface](/wiki/Face_(professional_wrestling)) hero Hulk Hogan for the next several years. The introduction of [*Saturday Night's Main Event*](/wiki/Saturday_Night's_Main_Event) on [NBC](/wiki/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](/wiki/DuMont_Television_Network) broadcast matches of Vince McMahon Sr.'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, a record that stood for 29 years until Wrestlemania 32.[[12]](#cite_note-12) On October 19, 1999, World Wrestling Federation, Inc. launched an [initial public offering](/wiki/Initial_public_offering) as a publicly traded company, trading on the [New York Stock Exchange](/wiki/New_York_Stock_Exchange) (NYSE) with the issuance of stock then valued at $172.5 million.[[20]](#cite_note-20) The company has traded on the NYSE since its launch under ticker symbol WWE.[[21]](#cite_note-21)

#### Acquisition of WCW and ECW[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

By the fall of 1999, the Attitude Era had turned the tide of the Monday Night Wars into WWF's favor. After Time Warner merged with [AOL](/wiki/AOL), [Ted Turner's](/wiki/Ted_Turner) control over WCW was considerably reduced, and the newly merged company announced a complete lack of interest in professional wrestling as a whole, and decided to sell WCW in its entirety. Although [Eric Bischoff](/wiki/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.<ref name=wcw>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Shortly after [WrestleMania X-Seven](/wiki/WrestleMania_X-Seven), the WWF launched the Invasion storyline integrating the incoming talent roster from WCW and [Extreme Championship Wrestling](/wiki/Extreme_Championship_Wrestling) (ECW). With this purchase, WWF now became by far the largest wrestling promotion in the world. The assets of ECW, which had folded after filing for [bankruptcy](/wiki/Bankruptcy) protection in April 2001, were purchased by WWE in mid-2003.[[22]](#cite_note-22)

### World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc./WWE[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[right|175px|thumb|Current WWE minority owners/front office executives/wrestlers](/wiki/File:Triple_H_and_Stephanie_McMahon_2014.jpg) [Triple H](/wiki/Triple_H) and his wife [Stephanie McMahon](/wiki/Stephanie_McMahon) On May 5, 2002, World Wrestling Federation Entertainment announced it was changing both its company name and the name of its wrestling promotion to World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE). Although mainly caused by an unfavorable ruling in its [dispute with the World Wide Fund for Nature regarding the "WWF" initialism](/wiki/#Legal_disputes), the company noted it provided an opportunity to emphasize its focus on entertainment.[[23]](#cite_note-23) On April 7, 2011, WWE corporate announced that the company was ceasing use of the full name **World Wrestling Entertainment** and would henceforth refer to itself solely as **WWE**, making the latter an [orphan initialism](/wiki/Pseudo-acronym). 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*](/wiki/WWE_Tough_Enough), being a non–scripted program (contrary to the scripted nature of professional wrestling) and with the launch of the [WWE Network](/wiki/WWE_Network) (at the time scheduled to launch in 2012; later pushed back to 2014). However, the legal name of the company remains as **World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.**[[5]](#cite_note-5)

#### Brand extension[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) In March 2002, WWE decided to create two separate rosters, each appearing on one of their main programs, *Raw* and *SmackDown!*, due to the overabundance of talent left over from the [Invasion storyline](/wiki/The_Invasion_(professional_wrestling)). This was dubbed as the "[Brand Extension](/wiki/WWE_brand_extension)". Despite much of the originally drafted talent departing by 2004, WWE continued to separate the shows, taking on younger talent, and holding a [draft lottery](/wiki/WWE_draft) every year. On May 26, 2006, WWE announced the relaunch of ECW as a WWE brand. The [new ECW](/wiki/ECW_(WWE)) program aired until February 16, 2010.<ref name=SciFi>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Beginning with the August 29, 2011, episode of *Raw*, it was announced that *Raw* would feature talent from both *Raw* and *SmackDown*, and would be known as *Raw Supershow* (the "Supershow" suffix would be dropped on July 23, 2012). 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 extension, as all programming and live events since the initial announcement was made have featured the full WWE roster.[[24]](#cite_note-24) In 2013, the company built a [sports medicine and training center](/wiki/WWE_Performance_Center) in east [Orange County](/wiki/Orange_County,_Florida), [Florida](/wiki/Florida) in partnership with [Full Sail University](/wiki/Full_Sail_University) in [Winter Park, Florida](/wiki/Winter_Park,_Florida). The training facility is targeted at career development for wrestlers and athletic development.[[25]](#cite_note-25) On May 25, 2016, WWE announced the re-launch of the brand extension. Dubbed the "New Era", *Raw* and *SmackDown* will each feature their own unique rosters with a draft to determine rosters. *SmackDown* will also move from Thursdays to Tuesday nights beginning July 19, and will air live instead of the previous pre-recorded format.[[26]](#cite_note-26)

#### WWE Network[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) On February 24, 2014, WWE launched a 24/7 streaming network. The network includes past and present WWE shows, pay-per-views, and shows from the [WWE Library](/wiki/WWE_Library).[[27]](#cite_note-27) The network reached 1,000,000 subscribers on January 27, 2015 under one year of its launch, with WWE claiming that it was thus "the fastest-growing digital subscription service ever".[[28]](#cite_note-28)

## Terminology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

WWE uses a variety of special terms in defining their product, such as describing the wrestling industry as [sports entertainment](/wiki/Sports_entertainment). The fan base is referred to as "the [WWE Universe](/wiki/WWE_Universe)". A wrestler is known as a "WWE Superstar", while retired wrestlers are known as "WWE Legends".[[29]](#cite_note-29)

## WWE stock and corporate governance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

On October 19, 1999, WWF, which had been owned previously by parent company Titan Sports, launched an [initial public offering](/wiki/Initial_public_offering) as a publicly traded company, trading on the [New York Stock Exchange](/wiki/New_York_Stock_Exchange) (NYSE) with the issuance of stock then valued at $172.5 million.[[20]](#cite_note-20) The company has traded on the NYSE since its launch under ticker symbol WWE.[[21]](#cite_note-21) The company has actively marketed itself as a publicly traded company through presentations at investor conferences and other investor relations initiatives.[[30]](#cite_note-30) In June 2003, the company began paying a dividend on its shares of $0.04 per share.[[31]](#cite_note-31) In June 2011, the company cut its dividend from $0.36 to $0.12.[[32]](#cite_note-32) In 2014, concerns about the company's viability caused wide fluctuations in its share price.[[33]](#cite_note-33) As of 2015, the company's Board of Directors has eight members: Vince McMahon, the company's Chairman of the Board and CEO; Stuart U. Goldfarb, President of Fullbridge, Inc.; Patricia A. Gottesman, former President and CEO of [Crimson Hexagon](/wiki/Crimson_Hexagon); David Kenen, the former Executive Vice President of the [Hallmark Channel](/wiki/Hallmark_Channel); Joseph H. Perkins, former President of Communications Consultants; Frank A. Riddick, III, CEO of Shale-Inland Group, Inc.; Jeffrey R. Speed, former Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of [Six Flags](/wiki/Six_Flags); Laureen Ong, former President of [Travel Channel](/wiki/Travel_Channel); [Stephanie McMahon](/wiki/Stephanie_McMahon), [Chief Brand Officer](/wiki/Chief_Brand_Officer) of WWE; Paul "[Triple H](/wiki/Triple_H)" Levesque, Executive Vice-president, Talent, live events, and creative.[[34]](#cite_note-34)

## Contracts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

WWE signs most of their talent to exclusive contracts, meaning talent can appear or perform only on WWE programming and events. They are not permitted to appear or perform for another promotion, unless special arrangements are made beforehand. WWE keeps all wrestlers' salary, employment length, benefits, and all other contract details strictly private.[[35]](#cite_note-35) WWE classifies its professional wrestlers as [independent contractors](/wiki/Independent_contractor) and not as employees. A study by the [*University of Louisville Law Review*](/wiki/University_of_Louisville_School_of_Law) found that after applying the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 20-factor test, 16 factors "clearly indicate that wrestlers are employees". However, as a result of WWE terming them as independent contractors, "the wrestlers are denied countless benefits to which they would otherwise be entitled".[[36]](#cite_note-36)

## Wellness Program[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

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 testings for [anabolic steroids](/wiki/Anabolic_steroid) for the first time.[[37]](#cite_note-37) The independent testing was ceased in 1996.[[38]](#cite_note-38) The Talent Wellness Program is a comprehensive drug, alcohol, and cardiac screening program initiated in February 2006, shortly after the [sudden death](/wiki/Sudden_death_(athletes)) of one of their highest profile talents, 38-year-old [Eddie Guerrero](/wiki/Eddie_Guerrero).<ref name=wwepolicy>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The policy tests for [recreational drug use](/wiki/Recreational_drug_use) and abuse of prescription medication, including anabolic steroids.<ref name=wwepolicy/> 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.<ref name=wwepolicy/>

After the [double-murder and suicide](/wiki/Chris_Benoit_double-murder_and_suicide) committed by one of its performers, [Chris Benoit](/wiki/Chris_Benoit), with a possible link to steroid abuse encouraged by WWE, the [United States House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform](/wiki/United_States_House_Committee_on_Oversight_and_Government_Reform) requested that WWE turn over any material regarding its talent wellness policy.<ref name=steroid>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

In August 2007, WWE and its employees 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](/wiki/Orlando,_Florida). According to a statement attributed to WWE attorney Jerry McDevitt, an eleventh wrestler was later added to the suspension list.[[39]](#cite_note-39)[[40]](#cite_note-40)[[41]](#cite_note-41) Because of the Wellness Policy, physicians were able to diagnose one of its performers with a heart ailment that would otherwise likely have gone unnoticed until it was too late. In August 2007, then-reigning [United States Champion](/wiki/WWE_United_States_Championship) [Montel Vontavious Porter](/wiki/Montel_Vontavious_Porter) (real name Hassan Assad) was diagnosed with [Wolff–Parkinson–White syndrome](/wiki/Wolff–Parkinson–White_syndrome),[[42]](#cite_note-42) which can be potentially fatal if gone undiagnosed. The ailment was discovered while Assad was going through a routine Wellness Policy checkup.

On September 13, 2010, WWE updated their list of banned substances to include [muscle relaxers](/wiki/Muscle_relaxant).[[43]](#cite_note-43)

## Legal disputes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

### WWF name dispute[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

In 1994, Titan Sports had entered into an agreement with the [World Wide Fund for Nature](/wiki/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 furthermore agreed not to challenge Titan's use of the full "World Wrestling Federation" name or the promotion's then-current logo.[[44]](#cite_note-44) In 2000, the World Wide Fund for Nature sued World Wrestling Federation Entertainment Inc. in the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom), alleging various violations of the 1994 agreement.[[45]](#cite_note-45) The [Court of Appeal](/wiki/Court_of_Appeal_of_England_and_Wales) 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](/wiki/Pay-per-view) [Insurrextion 2002](/wiki/WWE_Insurrextion). 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](/wiki/Uniform_resource_locator) from *WWF.com* to *WWE.com*.<ref name=GetFOut>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The next day, a press release announced the official name change from *World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc*. to *World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.*, or WWE, and the change was publicized later that day during a telecast of *Monday Night Raw*, which was broadcast from the [Hartford Civic Center](/wiki/XL_Center) in [Hartford, Connecticut](/wiki/Hartford,_Connecticut).

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.[[46]](#cite_note-46) 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](/wiki/THQ) and [Jakks Pacific](/wiki/Jakks_Pacific) that contained the WWF "scratch" logo.[[47]](#cite_note-47) 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.[[48]](#cite_note-48) In addition, the 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](/wiki/WWE_Classics_on_Demand) service. This also includes [WWE Home Video](/wiki/WWE_Home_Video) releases since October 2012, starting with the re-release of *Brock Lesnar: Here Comes The Pain*.[[49]](#cite_note-49) In exchange, WWE is no longer permitted to use the WWF initials or logo in any new, original footage, packaging, or advertising, with any old-school logos for retro-themed programming now using the original WWF logo, but modified without the F.[[50]](#cite_note-50)

### Harry Slash and the Slashstones[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Harry "Slash" Grivas](/wiki/Harry_Slash_&_The_Slashtones) 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 violation of the rights to original music used by ECW that WWE had been using during [the Invasion storyline of 2001](/wiki/The_Invasion_(professional_wrestling)). The case was resolved on both sides with a settlement that saw WWE purchase the catalogue outright in January 2005.[[51]](#cite_note-51)

## Expansion beyond wrestling[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

In addition to licensing wrestling and performers' likenesses to companies such as [Acclaim](/wiki/Acclaim_Entertainment), [THQ](/wiki/THQ)/[2K Sports](/wiki/2K_Sports), and [Mattel](/wiki/Mattel) to produce video games and [action figures](/wiki/WWE_action_figures), WWE has branched out into other areas of interest in order to market their product.

### Subsidiaries[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

#### Active[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

* [WWE Libraries](/wiki/WWE_Libraries): a collection of professional wrestling videos and copyrights for other promotions.
* [WCW Inc.](/wiki/World_Championship_Wrestling): created in 2001 - owns the rights to the video library and intellectual property for World Championship Wrestling.
* [WWE Studios](/wiki/WWE_Studios): created in 2002 to create and develop feature film properties. Formerly known as WWE Films.
* [WWE Music Group](/wiki/WWE_Music_Group): specializes in compilation albums of WWE wrestlers' entrance themes. The group also releases titles that have been performed by WWE wrestlers.
* [WWE Home Video](/wiki/WWE_Home_Video): specializes in distributing compilation VHS, DVD, and Blu-ray Disc copies of WWE pay-per-view events, compilations of WWE wrestlers' performances, and biographies of WWE performers.
* [WWE Books](/wiki/WWE_Books): publishes biographies of and on WWE personalities, behind-the-scenes guides to WWE, illustrated books, calendars, young adult books, and other general nonfiction books.
* [WWE Performance Center](/wiki/WWE_Performance_Center): serves as the training and performance center for future employees.
* [WWE Network](/wiki/WWE_Network): a subscription-based video streaming service launched in 2014 using the infrastructure of [Major League Baseball Advanced Media](/wiki/Major_League_Baseball_Advanced_Media).
* WWEShop.com: a website established as the place to buy officially licensed WWE related apparel, gear, and other merchandise.
* WWE Jet Services, Inc.: formed in 2013 to manage the financing and operations of the company's fleet of private jets.

#### Defunct[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

* [World Bodybuilding Federation](/wiki/World_Bodybuilding_Federation): a subsidiary of Titan Sports that was launched in 1990 which promoted professional [bodybuilding](/wiki/Bodybuilding) through a television show, magazine, and annual pay-per-view events. It was closed in 1992.
* [XFL](/wiki/XFL): folded in 2001, was a partially owned subsidiary of WWF launched in 2000 which comprised eight league-owned [professional football](/wiki/Professional_football_(gridiron)) teams. The league included television broadcasts on [NBC](/wiki/NBC) (the other co-owners of the league), [UPN](/wiki/UPN) and [TNN](/wiki/Spike_(TV_channel)).
* [The World Entertainment](/wiki/The_World_(WWE)): a subsidiary of World Wrestling Federation Entertainment that operated a restaurant, night club, and memorabilia shop in New York City. It opened as "WWF New York" in 1999, was renamed as "The World", and closed in 2003. [Hard Rock Cafe](/wiki/Hard_Rock_Cafe) took over the location in 2005.
* WWE Kids: a website and comic set aimed at the children's end of the wrestling market, comics were produced bi-monthly. It was launched on April 15, 2008 and discontinued in 2014, the same year [*WWE Magazine*](/wiki/WWE_Magazine) discontinued.
* [WWE Niagara Falls](/wiki/WWE_Niagara_Falls): a retail and entertainment establishment that was located in [Niagara Falls, Ontario](/wiki/Niagara_Falls,_Ontario) and owned by WWE. It was open from August 2002 through March 2011.

### Charities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

* WWE has had a partnership with the [Make-A-Wish Foundation](/wiki/Make-A-Wish_Foundation) that spans three decades.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Multi-time WWE champion [John Cena](/wiki/John_Cena) has granted more wishes than any other celebrity in history, having completed his 500th wish in August 2015.[[53]](#cite_note-53)\* Since 2012, WWE has partnered with [Susan G. Komen for the Cure](/wiki/Susan_G._Komen_for_the_Cure) to raise awareness of [breast cancer](/wiki/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.[[54]](#cite_note-54)\* In June 2014, *Connor's Cure*[[55]](#cite_note-55) – a non-profit charitable organization – was established by [Triple H](/wiki/Triple_H) and [Stephanie McMahon](/wiki/Stephanie_McMahon), who have personally funded it through the [Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Foundation](/wiki/Children's_Hospital_of_Pittsburgh_of_UPMC). It is named in honor of [Pittsburgh](/wiki/Pittsburgh) native [Connor Mason Michalek](/wiki/Connor_Michalek) (October 17, 2005 – April 25, 2014) who had died two months earlier from [medulloblastoma](/wiki/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.[[56]](#cite_note-56)[[57]](#cite_note-57)\* WWE has sponsored the [Special Olympics](/wiki/Special_Olympics) since 2014.

### Tapout[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) In March 2015, WWE announced a partnership with [Authentic Brands Group](/wiki/Authentic_Brands_Group) to relaunch [Tapout](/wiki/Tapout_(clothing_brand)), formerly a major [MMA](/wiki/Mixed_martial_arts)-related clothing line, as a more general "lifestyle fitness" brand. The apparel, for men and women, was first released in spring of 2016. Through 2015, WWE will market the brand through various products, including beverages, supplements and gyms.[[58]](#cite_note-58) 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](/wiki/Impression_(online_media)) a month, and take some of the fitness market from [Under Armour](/wiki/Under_Armour). All employees and students of the [WWE Performance Center](/wiki/WWE_Performance_Center) will wear the clothes.[[59]](#cite_note-59)

## Championships and accomplishments[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

### Main roster[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Championship** | **Current champion(s)** | **Reign** | **Date won** | **Days held** | **Location** | **Notes** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| [WWE Championship](/wiki/WWE_Championship) | [Dean Ambrose](/wiki/Dean_Ambrose) | [1](/wiki/List_of_WWE_World_Heavyweight_Champions) | June 19, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Las Vegas](/wiki/Las_Vegas), [Nevada](/wiki/Nevada) | Cashed in his [Money in the Bank briefcase](/wiki/Money_in_the_Bank_ladder_match) and defeated [Seth Rollins](/wiki/Seth_Rollins) at [Money in the Bank](/wiki/Money_in_the_Bank_(2016)). |
| [WWE Intercontinental Championship](/wiki/WWE_Intercontinental_Championship) | [The Miz](/wiki/The_Miz) | [5](/wiki/List_of_WWE_Intercontinental_Champions) | April 4, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Dallas](/wiki/Dallas), [Texas](/wiki/Texas) | Defeated [Zack Ryder](/wiki/Zack_Ryder) on [*Raw*](/wiki/WWE_Raw). |
| [WWE United States Championship](/wiki/WWE_United_States_Championship) | [Rusev](/wiki/Alexander_Rusev) | [2](/wiki/List_of_WWE_United_States_Champions) | May 22, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Newark](/wiki/Newark,_New_Jersey), [New Jersey](/wiki/New_Jersey) | Defeated [Kalisto](/wiki/Kalisto_(wrestler)) at [Extreme Rules](/wiki/Extreme_Rules_(2016)). |
| [WWE Tag Team Championship](/wiki/WWE_Tag_Team_Championship) | [The New Day](/wiki/The_New_Day_(wrestling)) ([Big E](/wiki/Big_E_Langston), [Kofi Kingston](/wiki/Kofi_Kingston) and [Xavier Woods](/wiki/Xavier_Woods)) | [2 (2, 4, 2)](/wiki/List_of_WWE_Tag_Team_Champions) | August 23, 2015 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Brooklyn](/wiki/Brooklyn), [New York](/wiki/New_York) | Big E and Kingston defeated [Los Matadores](/wiki/Los_Matadores), [The Lucha Dragons](/wiki/The_Lucha_Dragons) and previous champions [The Prime Time Players](/wiki/The_Prime_Time_Players) in a [Fatal 4-Way](/wiki/Professional_wrestling_match_types#Basic_non-elimination_matches) [tag team match](/wiki/Professional_wrestling_match_types#Tag_team_match) at [SummerSlam](/wiki/SummerSlam_(2015)). Woods also recognized as champion via the [Freebird Rule](/wiki/The_Fabulous_Freebirds#Freebird_Rule). |
| [WWE Women's Championship](/wiki/WWE_Women's_Championship) | [Charlotte](/wiki/Charlotte_(wrestler)) | [1](/wiki/WWE_Women's_Championship) | April 3, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Arlington](/wiki/Arlington,_Texas), [Texas](/wiki/Texas) | Defeated [Becky Lynch](/wiki/Becky_Lynch) and [Sasha Banks](/wiki/Sasha_Banks) in a [Triple Threat match](/wiki/Professional_wrestling_match_types#Basic_non-elimination_matches) at [WrestleMania 32](/wiki/WrestleMania_32) to become the inaugural champion. |

### NXT[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Championship** | **Current champion(s)** | **Reign** | **Date won** | **Days held** | **Location** | **Notes** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| [NXT Championship](/wiki/NXT_Championship) | [Samoa Joe](/wiki/Samoa_Joe) | [1](/wiki/NXT_Championship#Reigns) | April 21, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Lowell](/wiki/Lowell,_Massachusetts), [Massachusetts](/wiki/Massachusetts) | Defeated [Finn Bálor](/wiki/Prince_Devitt) at a [house show](/wiki/House_show). |
| [NXT Tag Team Championship](/wiki/NXT_Tag_Team_Championship) | [The Revival](/wiki/The_Revival_(professional_wrestling)) ([Scott Dawson](/wiki/Scott_Dawson_(wrestler)) and [Dash Wilder](/wiki/Dash_Wilder)) | [2 (2, 2)](/wiki/NXT_Tag_Team_Championship#Reigns) | June 8, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Winter Park](/wiki/Winter_Park,_Florida), [Florida](/wiki/Florida) | Defeated [American Alpha](/wiki/American_Alpha) ([Jason Jordan](/wiki/Jason_Jordan_(wrestler)) and [Chad Gable](/wiki/Chad_Gable)) at [NXT TakeOver: The End](/wiki/NXT_TakeOver:_The_End). |
| [NXT Women's Championship](/wiki/NXT_Women's_Championship) | [Asuka](/wiki/Kana_(wrestler)) | [1](/wiki/NXT_Women's_Championship#Reigns) | April 1, 2016 | [Template:Age in days](/wiki/Template:Age_in_days) | [Dallas](/wiki/Dallas), [Texas](/wiki/Texas) | Defeated [Bayley](/wiki/Bayley_(wrestler)) at [NXT TakeOver: Dallas](/wiki/NXT_TakeOver:_Dallas). |

### Defunct[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)

### Other accomplishments[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Accomplishment** | **Latest winner(s)** | **Date won** | **Location** | **Notes** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| [Royal Rumble](/wiki/Royal_Rumble) | [Triple H](/wiki/Triple_H) | [January 24, 2016](/wiki/Royal_Rumble_(2016)) | [Orlando](/wiki/Orlando,_Florida), [Florida](/wiki/Florida) | Last eliminated [Dean Ambrose](/wiki/Dean_Ambrose) to win. This match was also for the [WWE World Heavyweight Championship](/wiki/WWE_World_Heavyweight_Championship). |
| [Money in the Bank](/wiki/Money_in_the_Bank_ladder_match) | [Dean Ambrose](/wiki/Dean_Ambrose) | [June 19, 2016](/wiki/Money_in_the_Bank_(2016)) | [Las Vegas](/wiki/Las_Vegas), [Nevada](/wiki/Nevada) | Defeated [Kevin Owens](/wiki/Kevin_Owens), [Alberto Del Rio](/wiki/Alberto_Del_Rio), [Chris Jericho](/wiki/Chris_Jericho), [Sami Zayn](/wiki/Sami_Zayn), and [Cesaro](/wiki/Antonio_Cesaro) to win. |
| [André the Giant](/wiki/André_the_Giant) [Memorial Trophy](/wiki/André_the_Giant#Legacy) | [Baron Corbin](/wiki/Baron_Corbin) | [April 3, 2016](/wiki/WrestleMania_32) | [Arlington, Texas](/wiki/Arlington,_Texas) | Last eliminated [Kane](/wiki/Kane_(wrestler)) to win. |

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal)

* [Capitol Wrestling Corporation](/wiki/Capitol_Wrestling_Corporation)
* [List of WWE alumni](/wiki/List_of_WWE_alumni)
* [List of WWE pay-per-view events](/wiki/List_of_WWE_pay-per-view_events)
* [List of WWE personnel](/wiki/List_of_WWE_personnel)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

* [Template:Official website](/wiki/Template:Official_website)

[Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes)

[Category:Companies listed on the New York Stock Exchange](/wiki/Category:Companies_listed_on_the_New_York_Stock_Exchange) [Category:American professional wrestling promotions](/wiki/Category:American_professional_wrestling_promotions) [Category:Companies based in Stamford, Connecticut](/wiki/Category:Companies_based_in_Stamford,_Connecticut) [Category:Companies established in 1980](/wiki/Category:Companies_established_in_1980) [Category:Entertainment companies of the United States](/wiki/Category:Entertainment_companies_of_the_United_States) [Category:WWE](/wiki/Category:WWE) [Category:Media companies of the United States](/wiki/Category:Media_companies_of_the_United_States) [Category:National Wrestling Alliance members](/wiki/Category:National_Wrestling_Alliance_members) [Category:Sports entertainment](/wiki/Category:Sports_entertainment)