

*It took more than three centuries for the modern newspaper to evolve after the creation of the Gutenberg printing press in the 1400s.*

This technology made it possible to mass produce print copy, rather than a writer penning messages on individual pieces of paper. Only after paper was created out of wood pulp, rather than cotton rags, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, did newspapers become readily available to the masses.

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### *1<sup>st</sup> Amendment*

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**Congress shall make no law...  
abridging the freedom of speech  
or of the press...**

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The rights and responsibilities that newspapers held became codified into law in 1791 with the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. And today, this fundamental right in the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment continues to protect our right to free speech in the United States.

### *Nationwide Literacy*

Newspapers brought an increase in literacy, as audiences had to read to comprehend the important issues and events of their day.

Newspapers evolved from one page broadsheets to weekly papers, then daily papers, then papers with several editions per day. The invention of the telegraph in 1844 also made it easier to transmit information across the miles. By 1900, newspapers were at their peak because they were inexpensive and, therefore, widespread in society.