JANUARY 2013

Media And Information

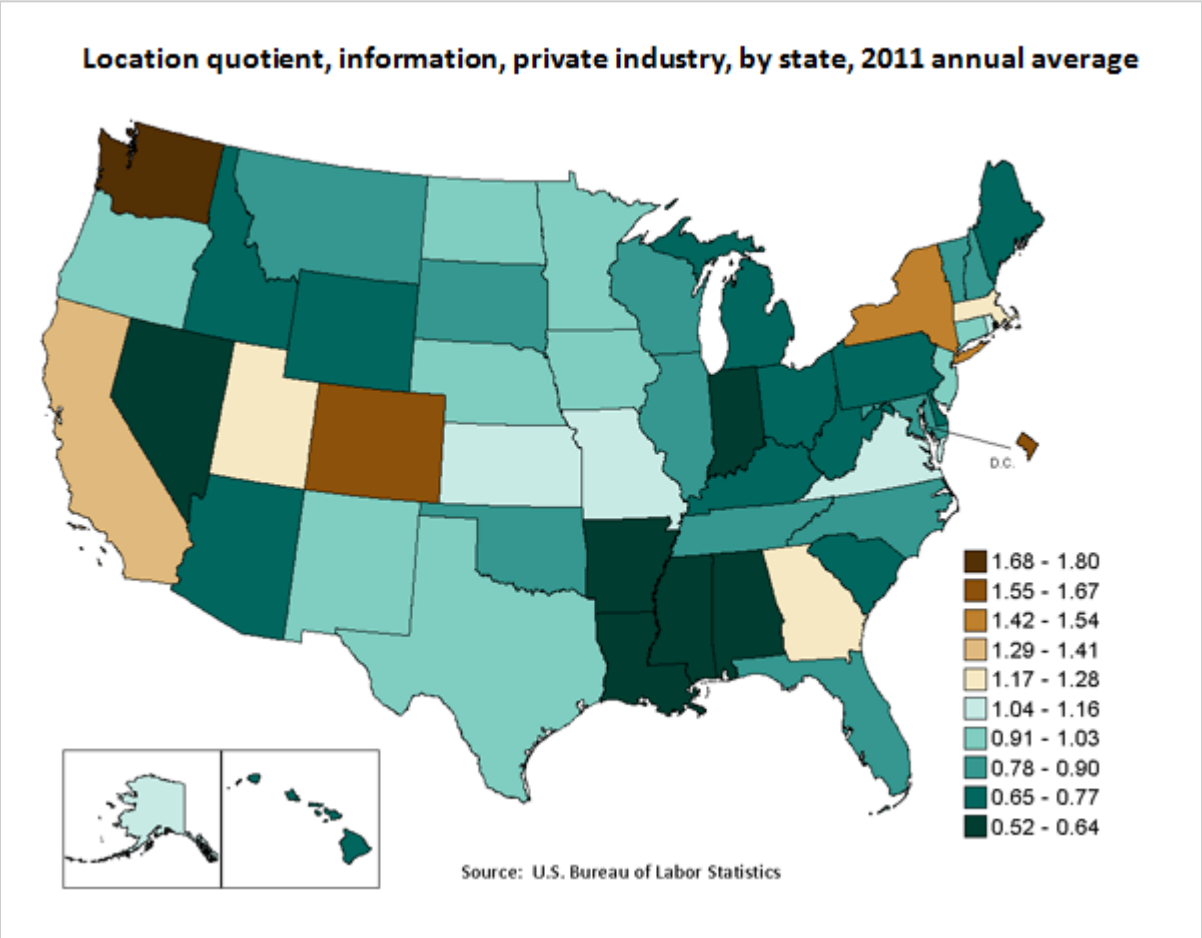
Media is a word that means many things, but generally refers to methods of storing and communicating information to large audiences. The media has been transformed significantly in recent decades as technological innovations have enabled more people in more places to obtain and share ever-increasing amounts of information easily and rapidly. At the same time, methods of communication that were common as recently as a decade or two ago have declined sharply. This edition of Spotlight on Statistics features a broad array of information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on various aspects of the media, defined either as an industry sector or a set of occupations involving communication.

Employment in Information

After growing for several years, employment in the information industry peaked in 2000 and 2001 and has declined every year since then. The two largest components of the information industry—publishing industries (except Internet) and telecommunications—have both followed the same pattern.

Where the Workers Are: Location Quotient by State

Washington (state), the District of Columbia, Colorado, New York, and California have the highest percentages of workers in information. The location quotient in these areas range from 1.8 to 1.4. By definition, the location quotient of the nation as a whole is 1.0. In any area with a location quotient greater than 1.0, the percentage of workers employed in the information industry is greater than that of the nation as a whole.

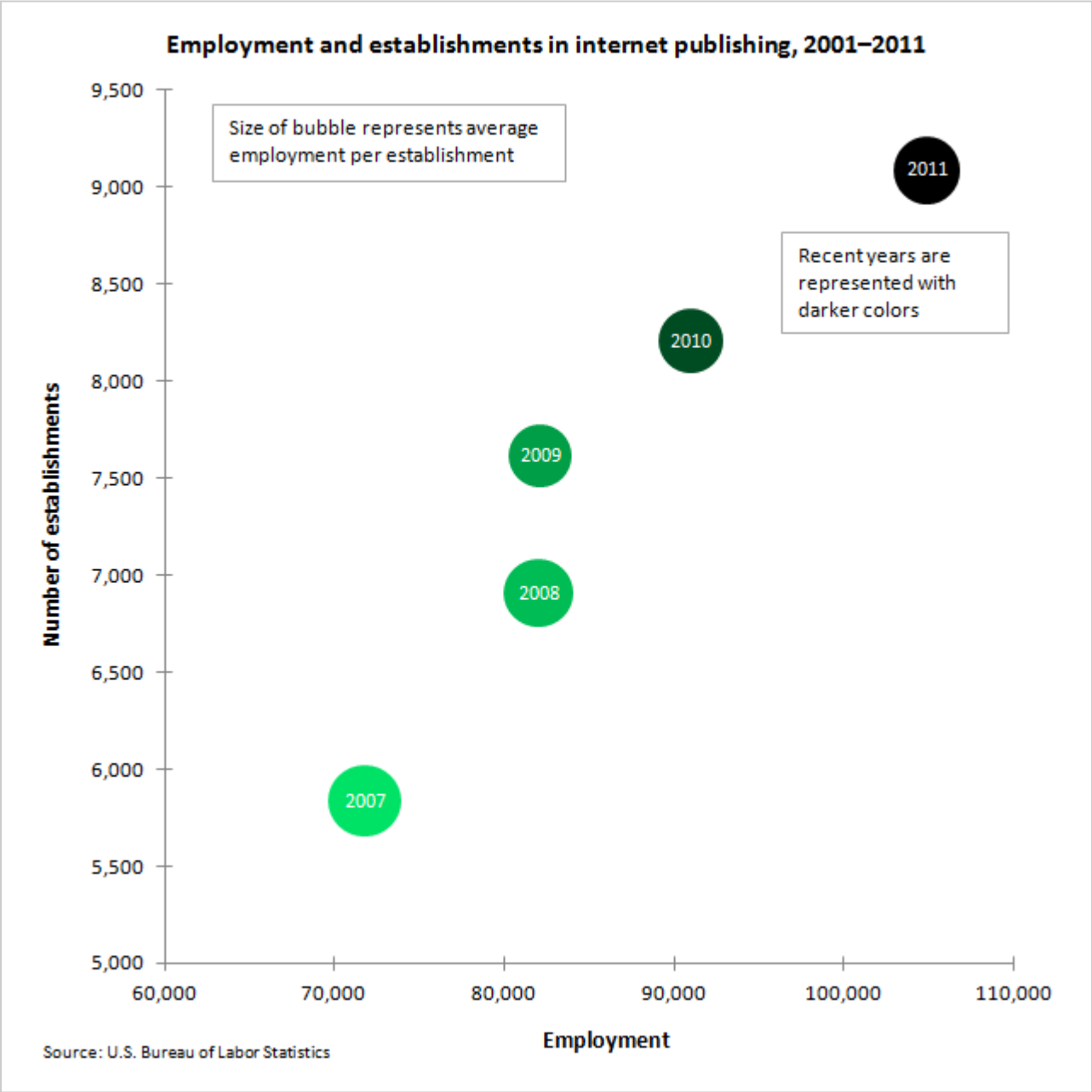


Employment and Establishments: Internet publishing

In recent years, the Internet publishing industry has seen increases in both the number of people employed and the number of establishments (places of employment, such as a stores, offices, or factories.) In television broadcasting, the number of establishments has increased over the past decade, while employment has declined. Motion picture and video production has experienced a decrease in the number of establishments, but an increase in employment. In other information industries—motion picture and video exhibition; radio broadcasting; newspaper publishing; sound recording; and book, periodical, and music stores—both the number of establishments and employment have decreased. During this period, the average number of employees per establishment has declined or changed little in all of these industries.

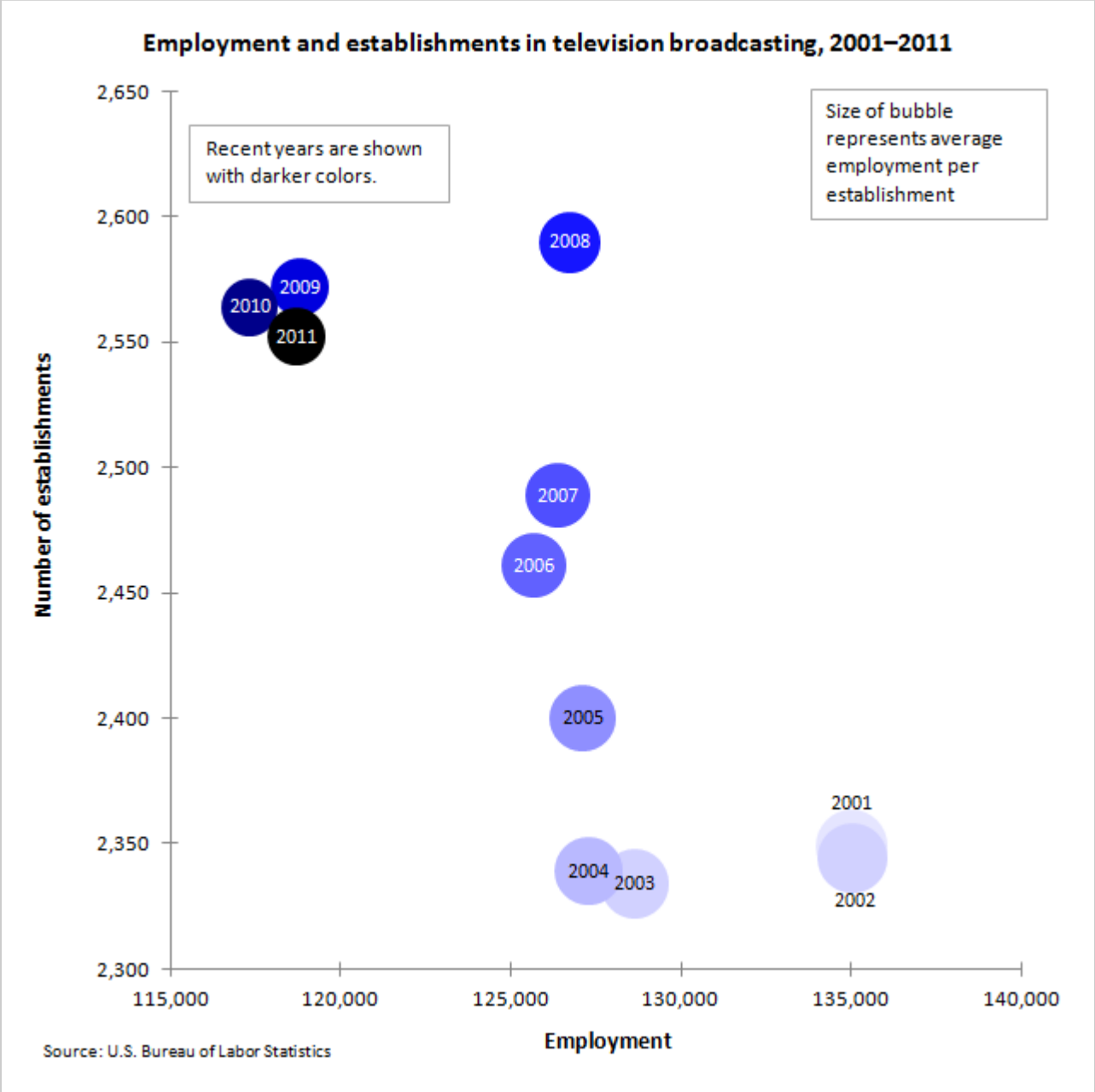
See charts for these information industries.

1. Internet publishing
2. Television broadcasting
3. Motion picture and video production
4. Motion picture and video exhibition
5. Radio broadcasting
6. Newspaper publishing
7. Sound recording industries
8. Book, periodical, and music stores


Employment and establishments in internet publishing, 2001–2011
Size of bubble represents average employment per establishment
Recent years are represented with darker colors
2011
2010
2009
2008
2007
9,500
9,000
8,500
8,000
7,500
7,000
6,500
6,000
5,500
5,000
Number of establishments
60,000
70,000
80,000
90,000
100,000
110,000
Employment
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

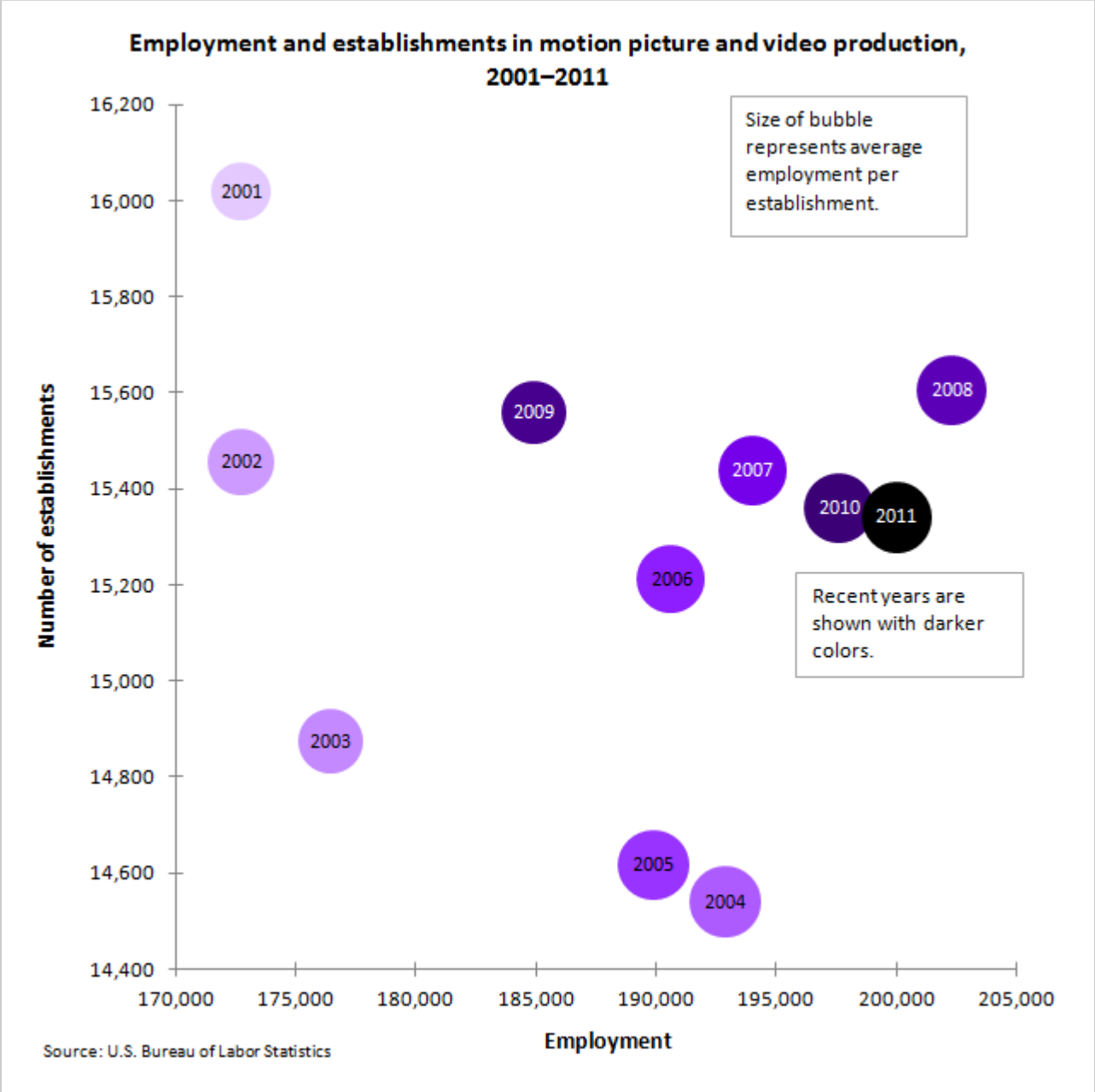
Employment and Establishments: Television broadcasting

Television broadcasting



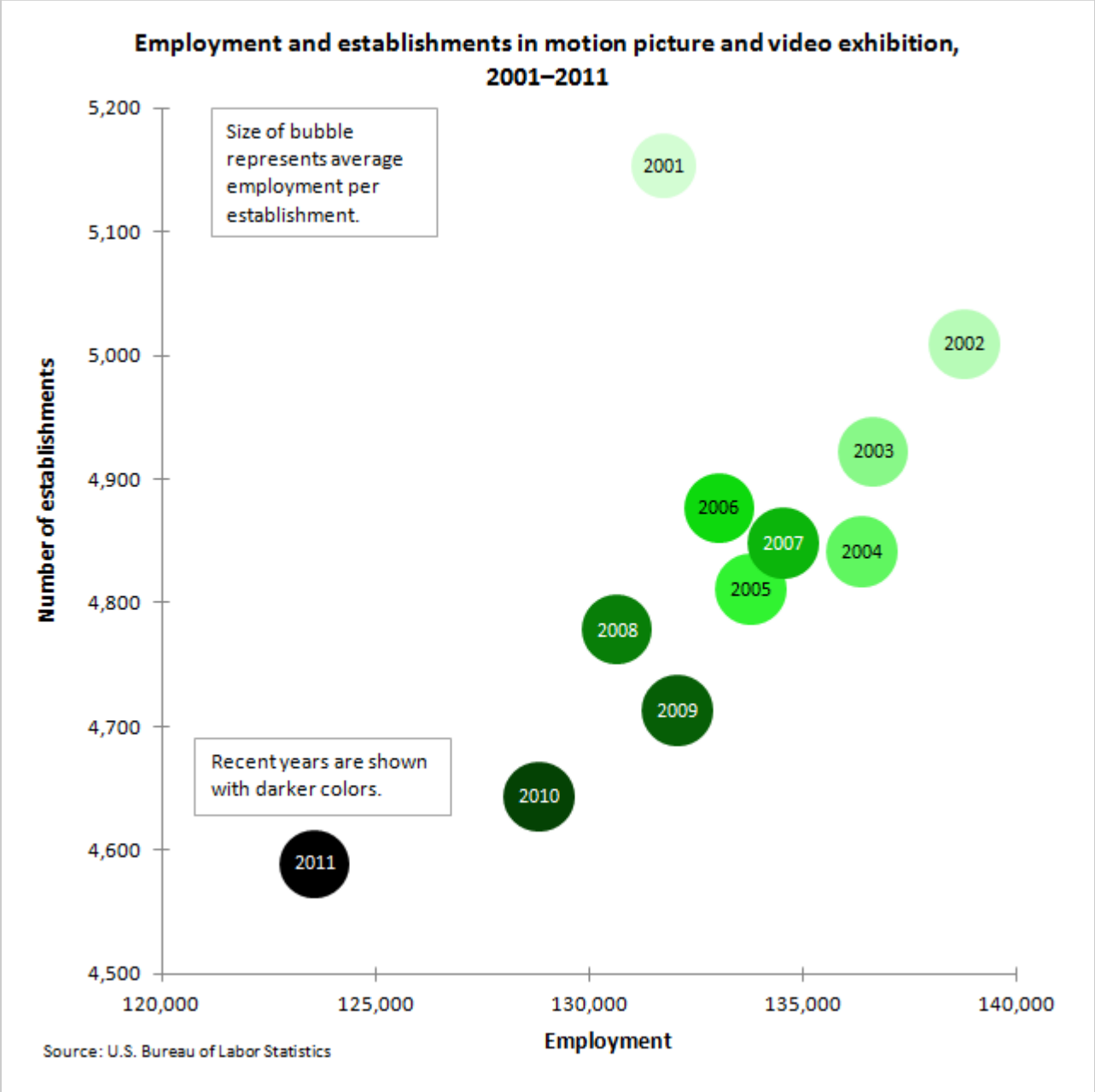
Employment and Establishments: Motion picture and video production

Motion picture and video production



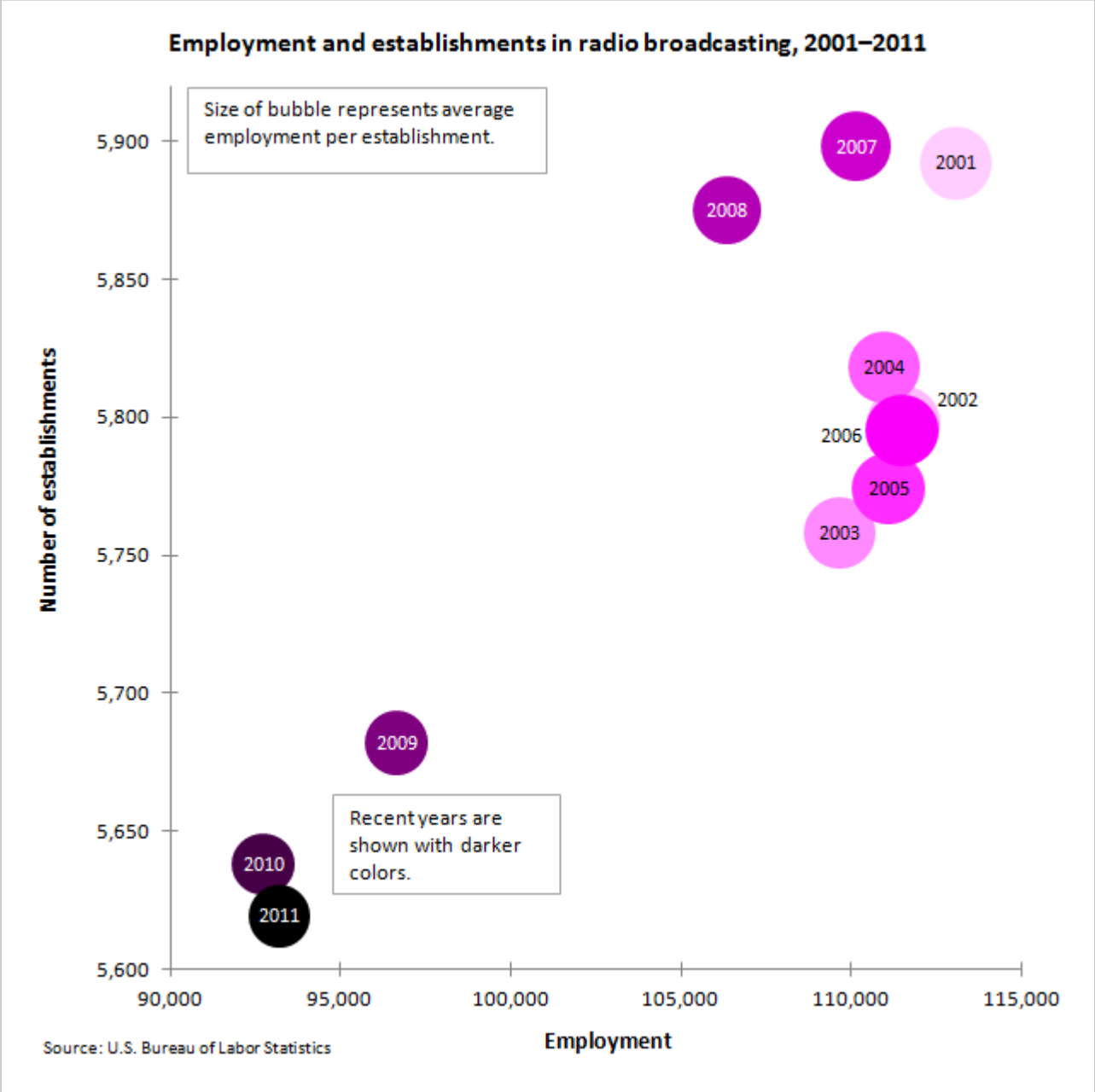
Employment and Establishments: Motion picture and video exhibition

Motion picture and video exhibition



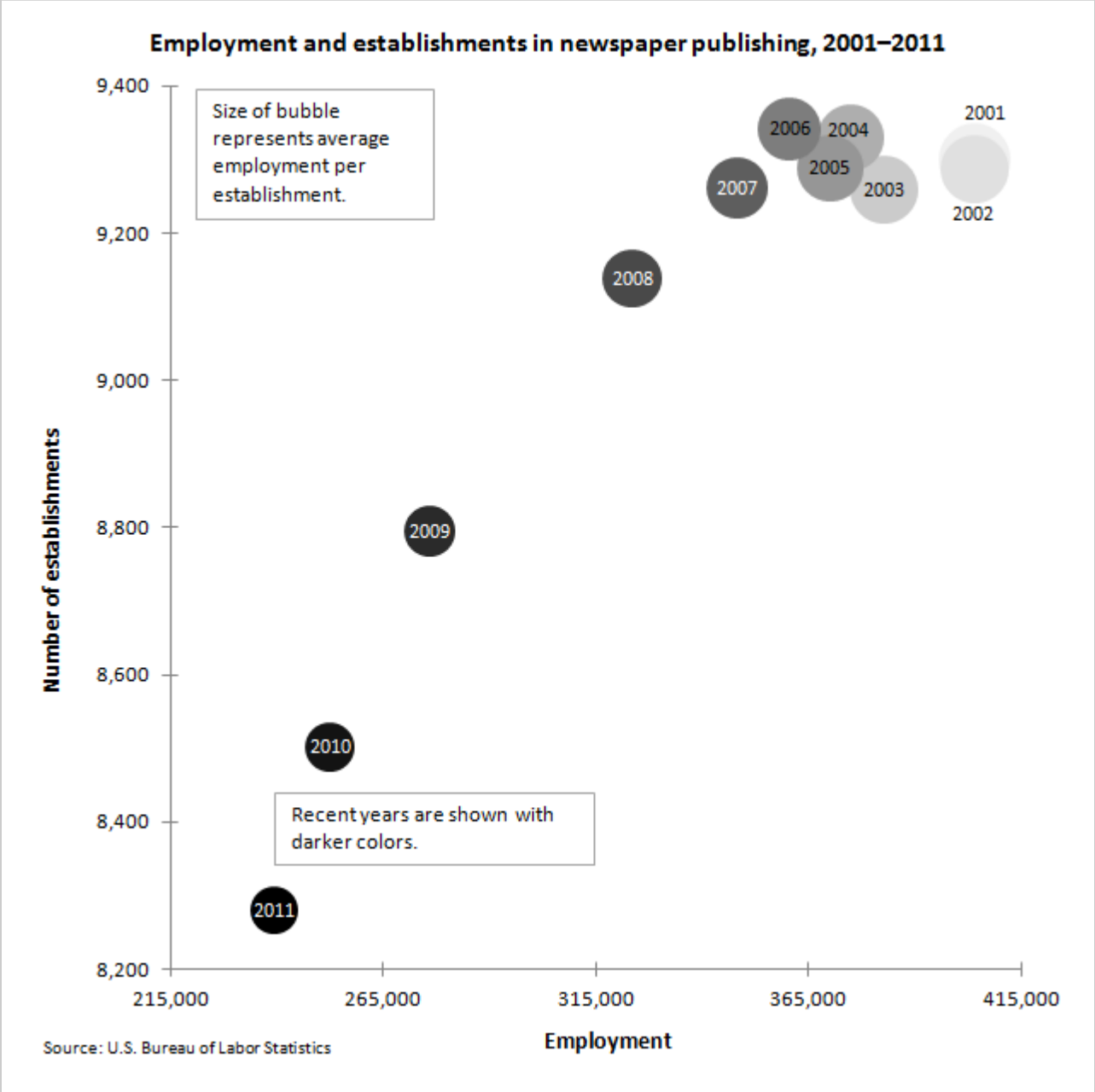
Employment and Establishments: Radio broadcasting

Radio broadcasting



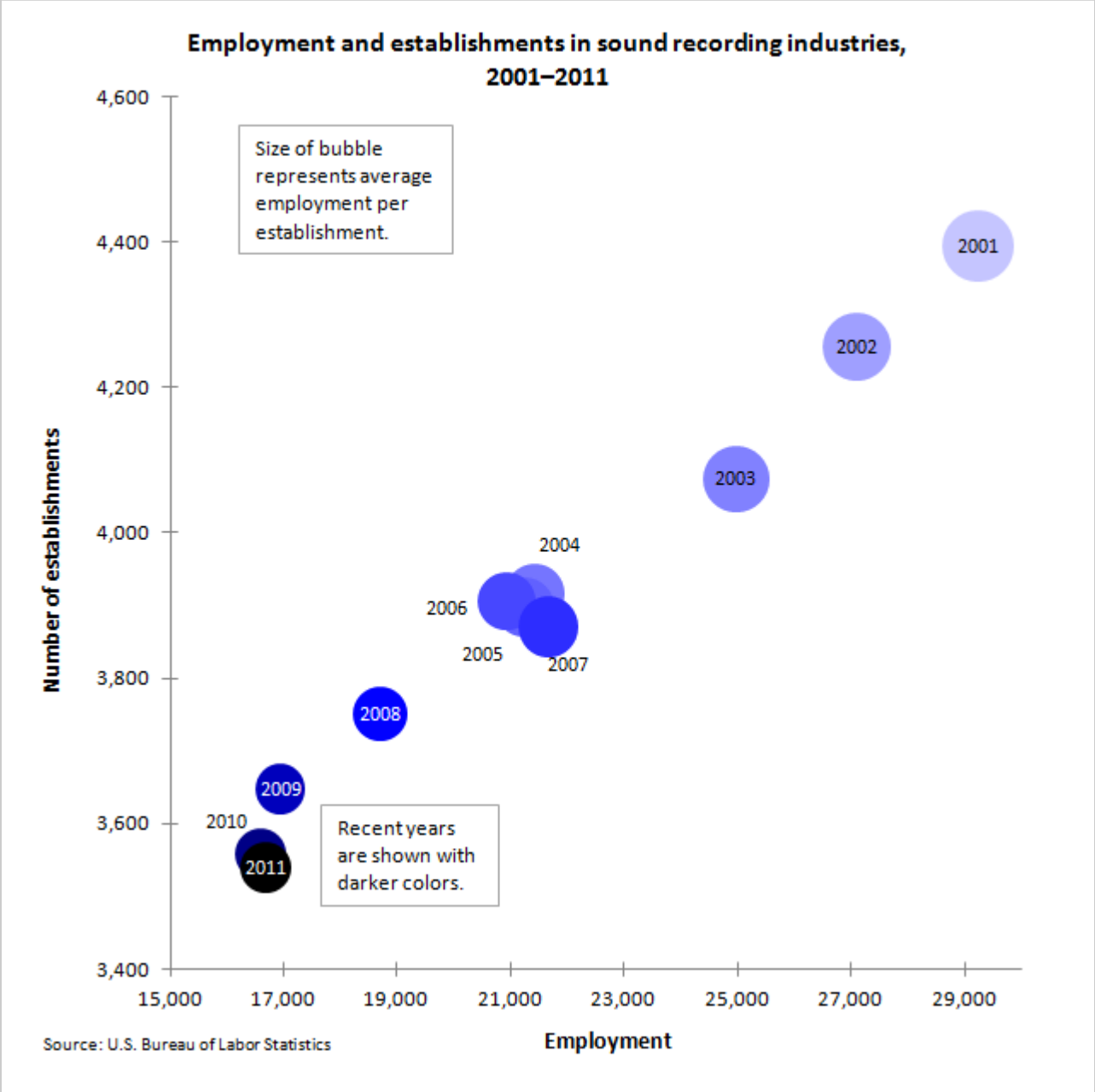
Employment and Establishments: Newspaper publishing

Newspaper publishing



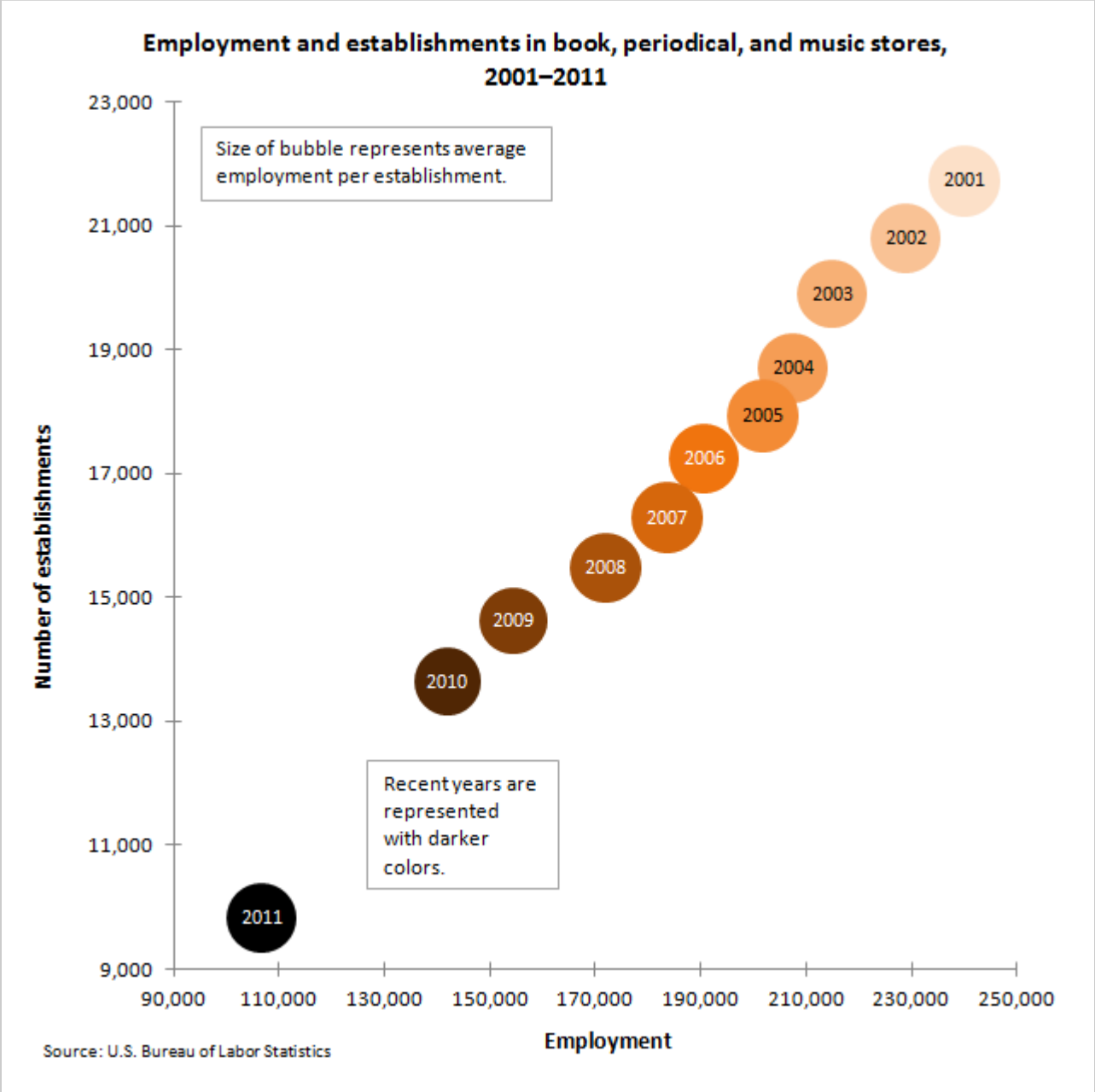
Employment and Establishments: Sound recording industries

Sound recording industries



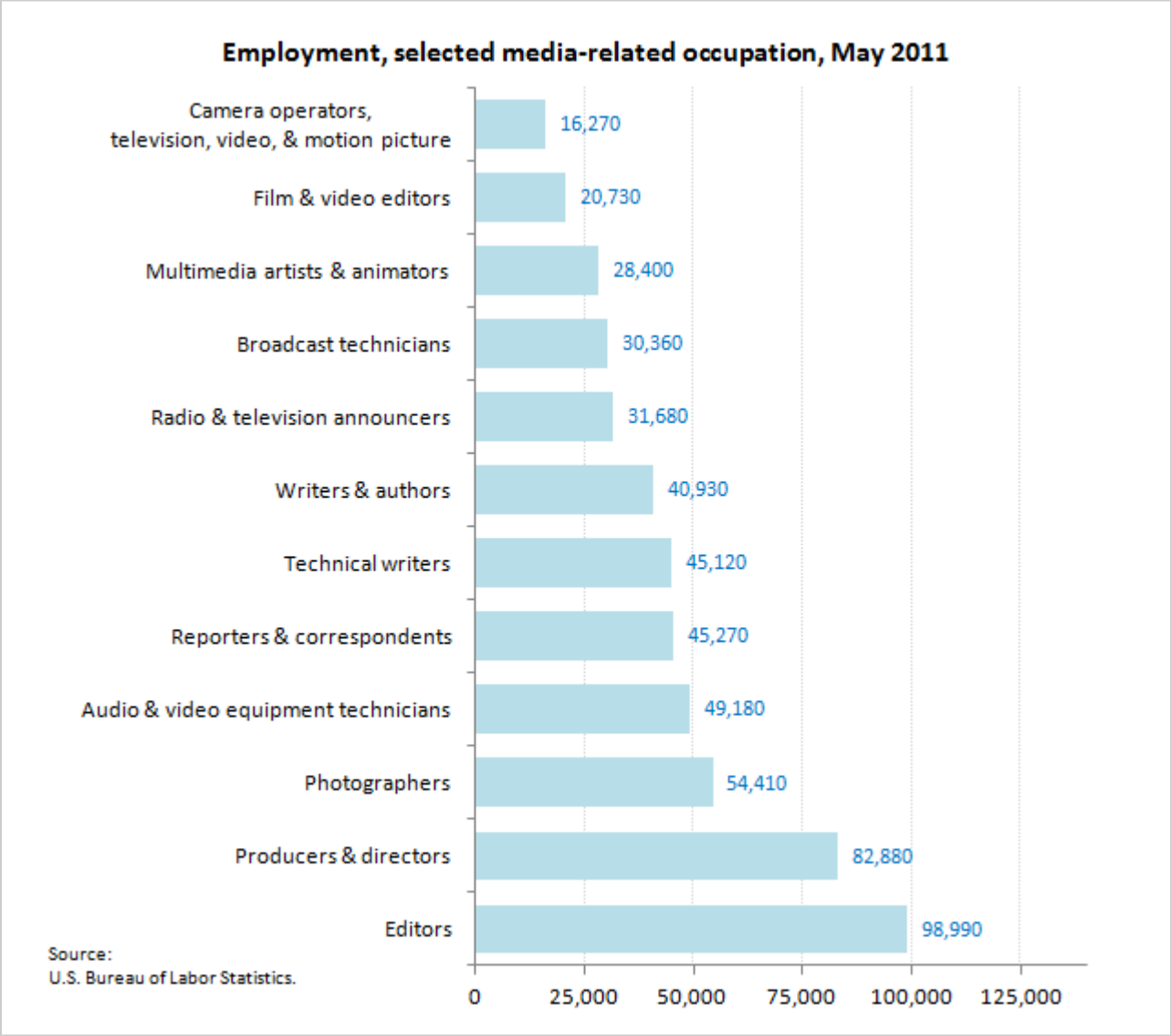
Employment and Establishments: Book, periodical, and music stores

Book, periodical, and music stores

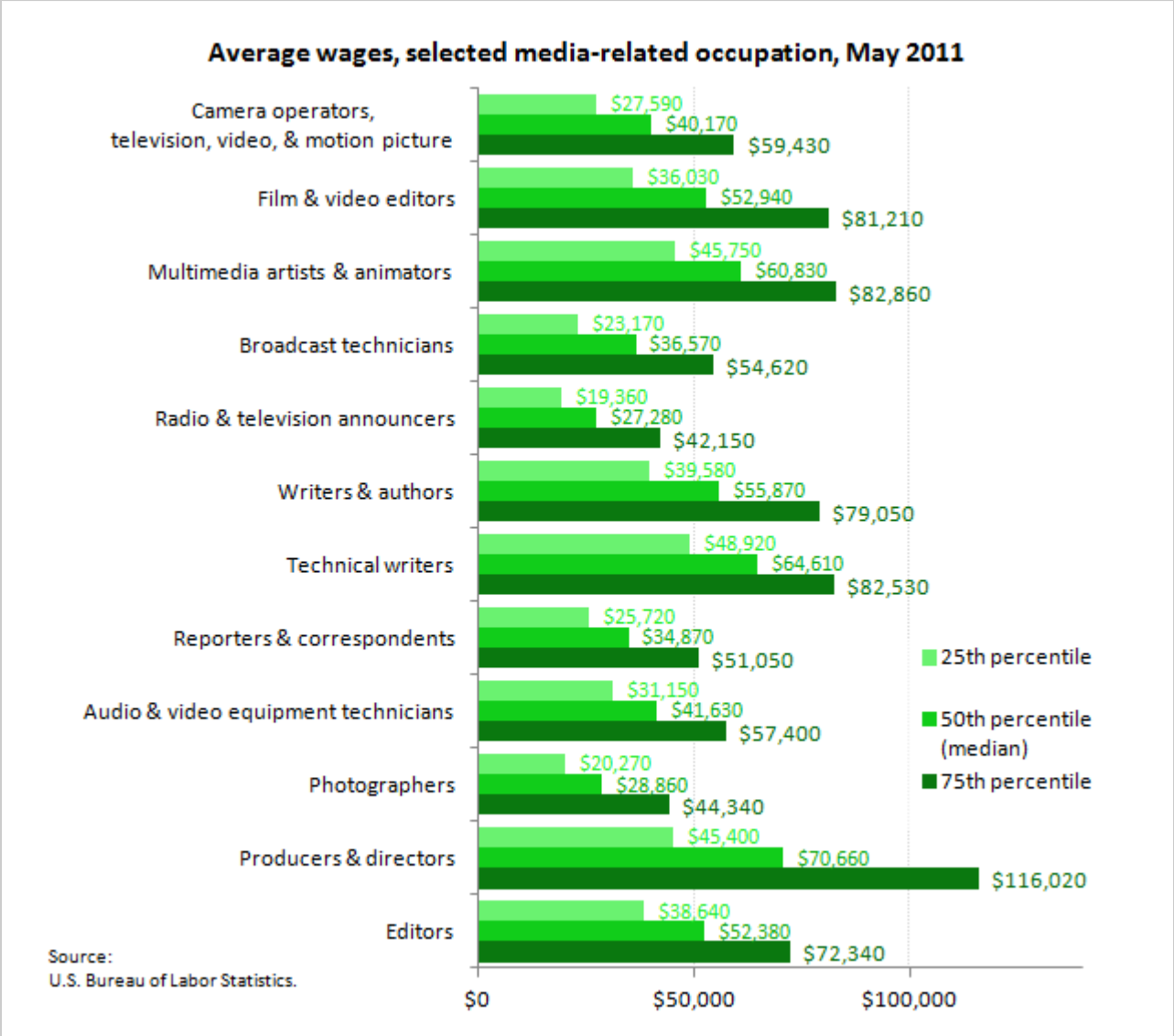


Occupations in Information: Employment and Wages

In terms of employment (these numbers do not include the unincorporated self-employed), the largest media-related occupations are editors (with employment of 98,990), producers and directors (82,880), photographers (54,410), and audio and video equipment technicians (49,180). Producers and directors have the highest annual wages among these occupations, $70,660 at the median, followed by technical writers ($64,610) and multimedia artists and animators ($60,830).

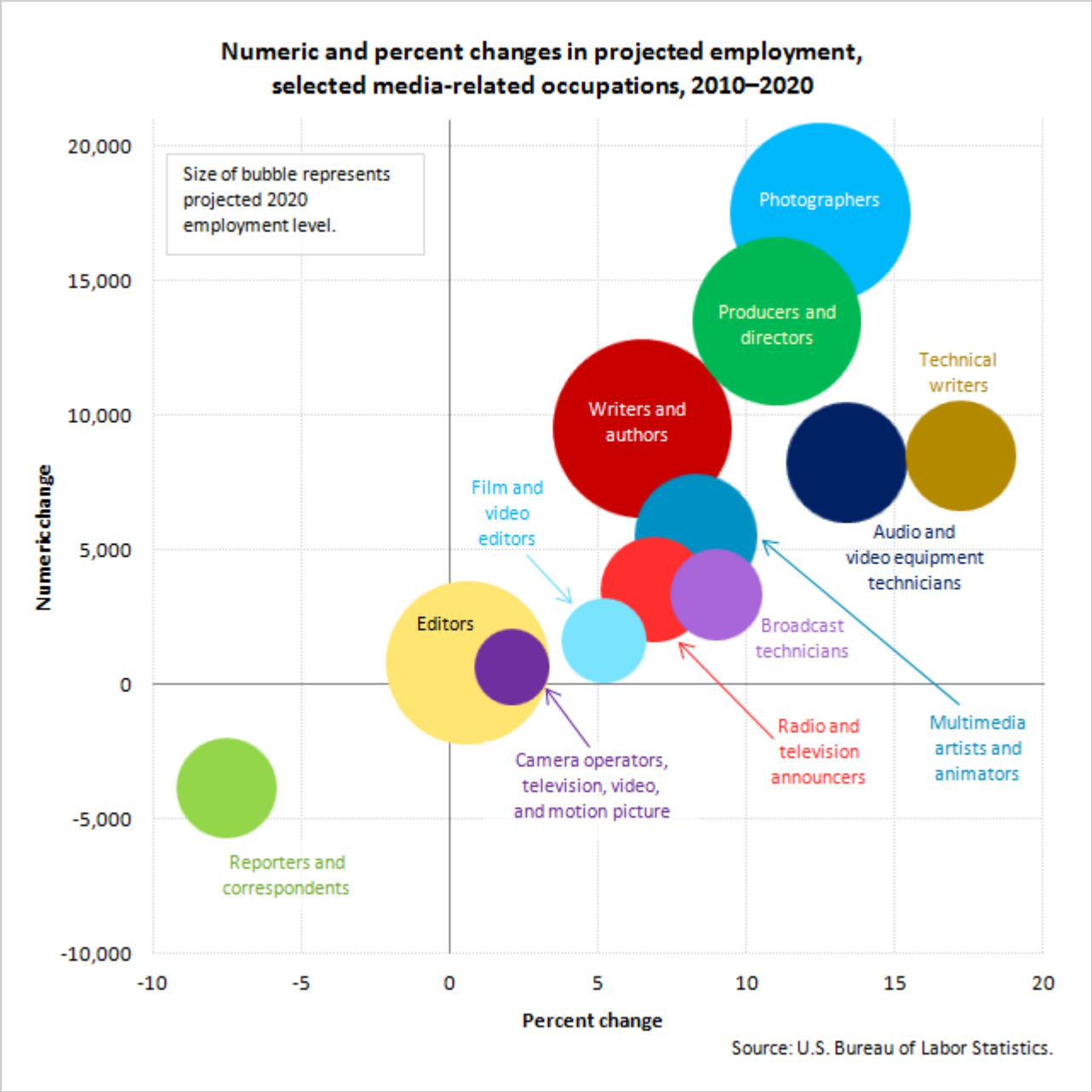


Occupations in Information: Employment and Wages



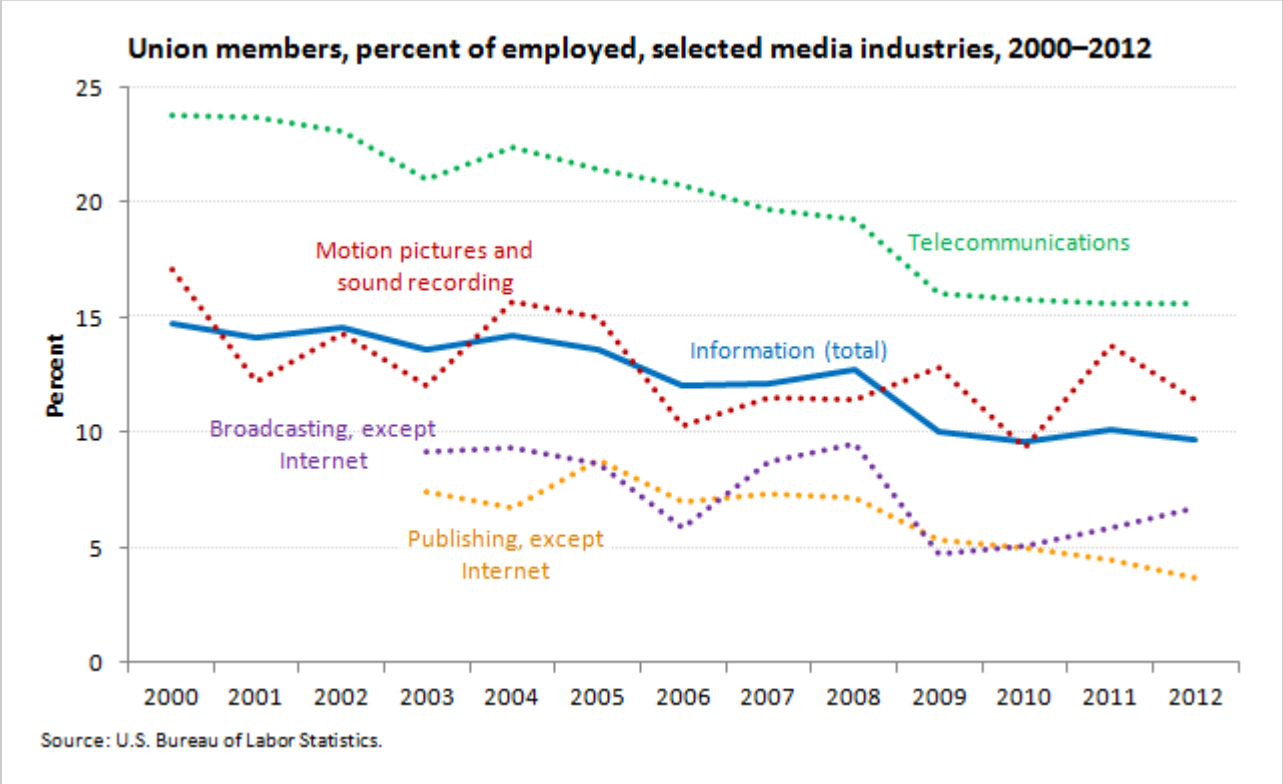
Occupational Employment Growth and Decline, Projected 2010–2020

Photographers, producers and directors, writers and authors, and editors are expected to be the largest media-related occupations in 2020. Over the 2010–2020 period, the number of photographers is projected to increase by 17,500, the largest increase among media-related occupations. The number of producers and directors is projected to increase by 13,500 over the same period, while the number of writers and authors is expected to increase by 9,500, and the number of editors should remain little changed. It is expected that there will be 3,900 fewer reporters and correspondents in 2020 than there were in 2010.



Union Membership

While the percentage of workers in the information industry who are members of unions is higher than the percentage of union members in private industry as a whole, the number has trended down in recent years. In 2000, 14.7 percent of workers in information were members of unions (compared with 9.0 percent of all private sector workers). In 2012, 9.7 percent of information workers were union members (compared with 6.6 percent of private sector workers).

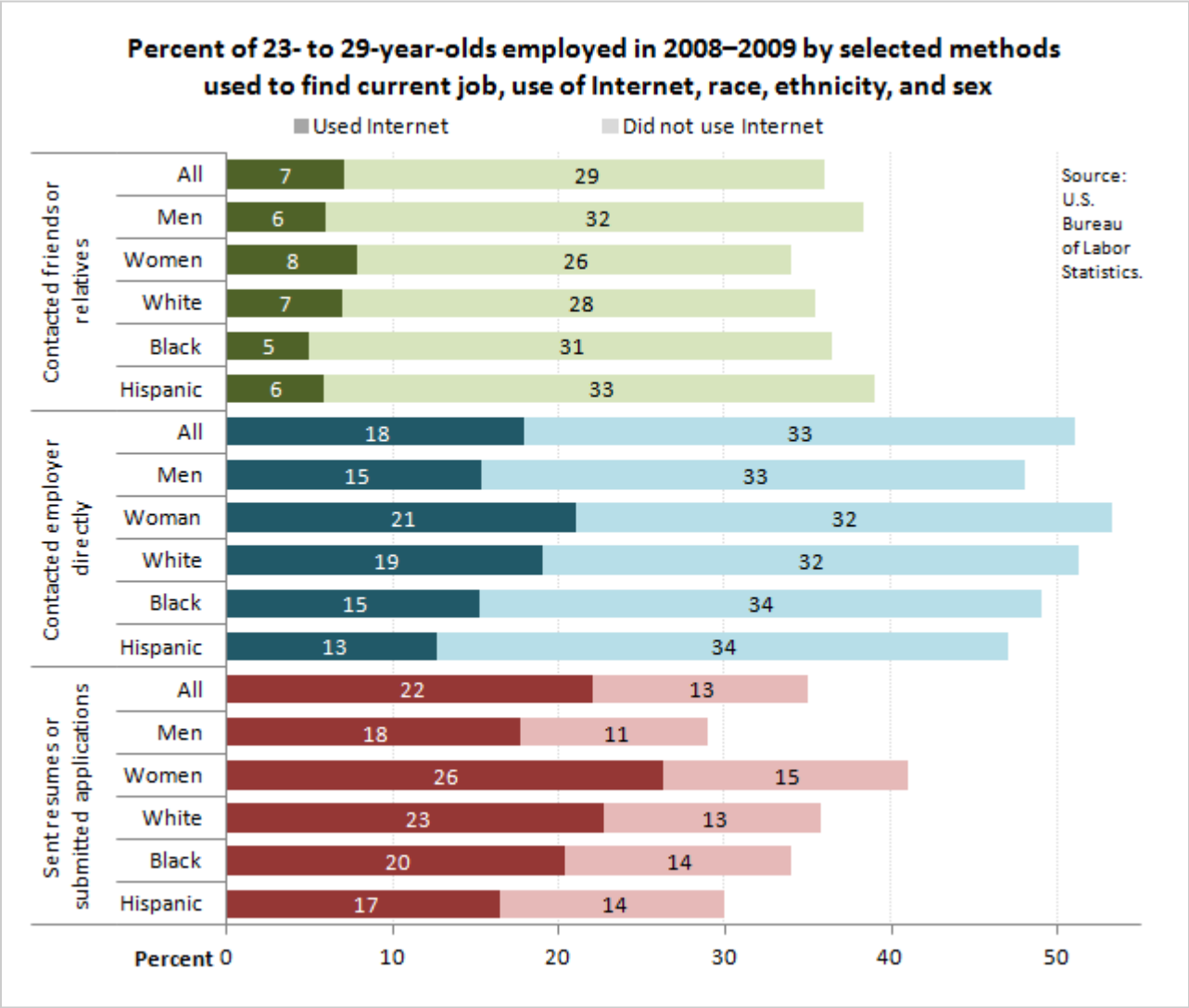


Seeking Employment via the Internet

The Internet has transformed the ways in which employers and potential employees find one another. Information about job openings used to make its way from employers to jobseekers by word of mouth, a help-wanted sign posted on a bulletin board or store window, or an ad in a newspaper. Those channels of job information are still used today, but the Internet is used increasingly by employers to announce job openings to a wider pool of candidates. Employers and jobseekers also use the Internet to find information about one another and about the broader labor market. Job candidates may use the Internet to apply for positions. For some employers today, the Internet may be the only way they advertise vacancies or accept applications, but the Internet is still a long way from being the universal means of matching employers with jobseekers.

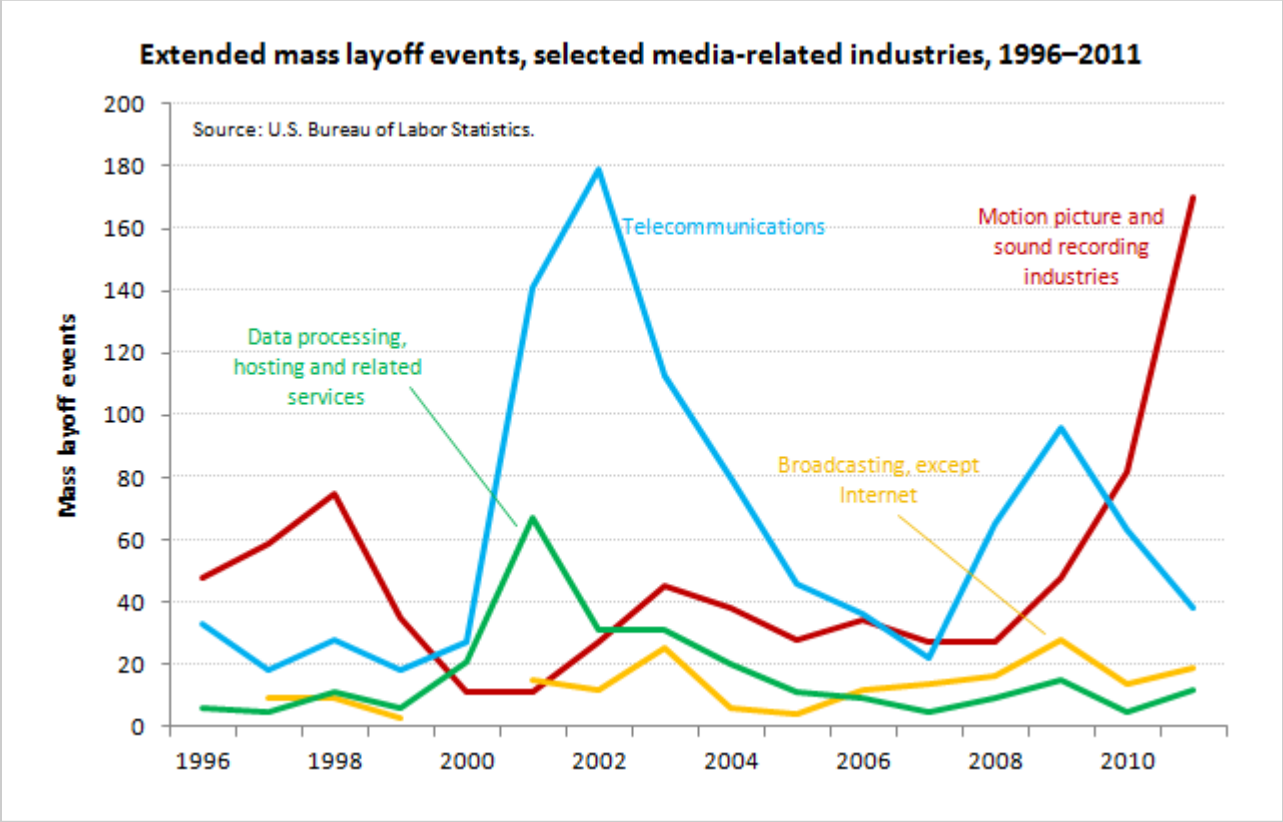
The chart shows three common methods people born in the years 1980 to 1984 used to search for their current job and whether they used the Internet. In a sense, this generation and the Internet grew up together, even if members of the generation did not always have easy access to the Internet at home, at school, or on a job. A BLS survey that represents people in this generation found that the three most common methods they used to find their current job (as of 2008–2009) were contacting the employer directly, contacting friends or relatives, and sending out résumés or submitting applications. The survey also asked whether participants used the Internet for any of these job-search methods.

Among those who contacted the employer directly, most did so by some means other than the Internet. Among those who contacted friends or relatives, means other than the Internet also were more common. Only among those who sent out résumés or submitted applications was the Internet the most common means, but a large share used means other than the Internet. Among all three job-search methods, women were more likely than men to use the Internet. Non-Hispanic Whites generally were more likely to use the Internet for job search than were non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics and Latinos.


Percent of 23- to 29-year-olds employed in 2008–2009 by selected methods used to find current job, use of Internet, race, ethnicity, and sex
Used Internet
Did not use Internet
Contacted friends or relatives
All 7 29
Men 6 32
Women 8 26
White 7 28
Black 5 31
Hispanic 6 33
Contacted employer directly
All 18 33
Men 15 33
Woman 21 32
White 19 32
Black 15 34
Hispanic 13 34
Sent resumes or submitted applications
All 22 13
Men 18 11
Women 26 15
White 23 13
Black 20 14
Hispanic 17 14
Percent 0 10 20 30 40 50
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

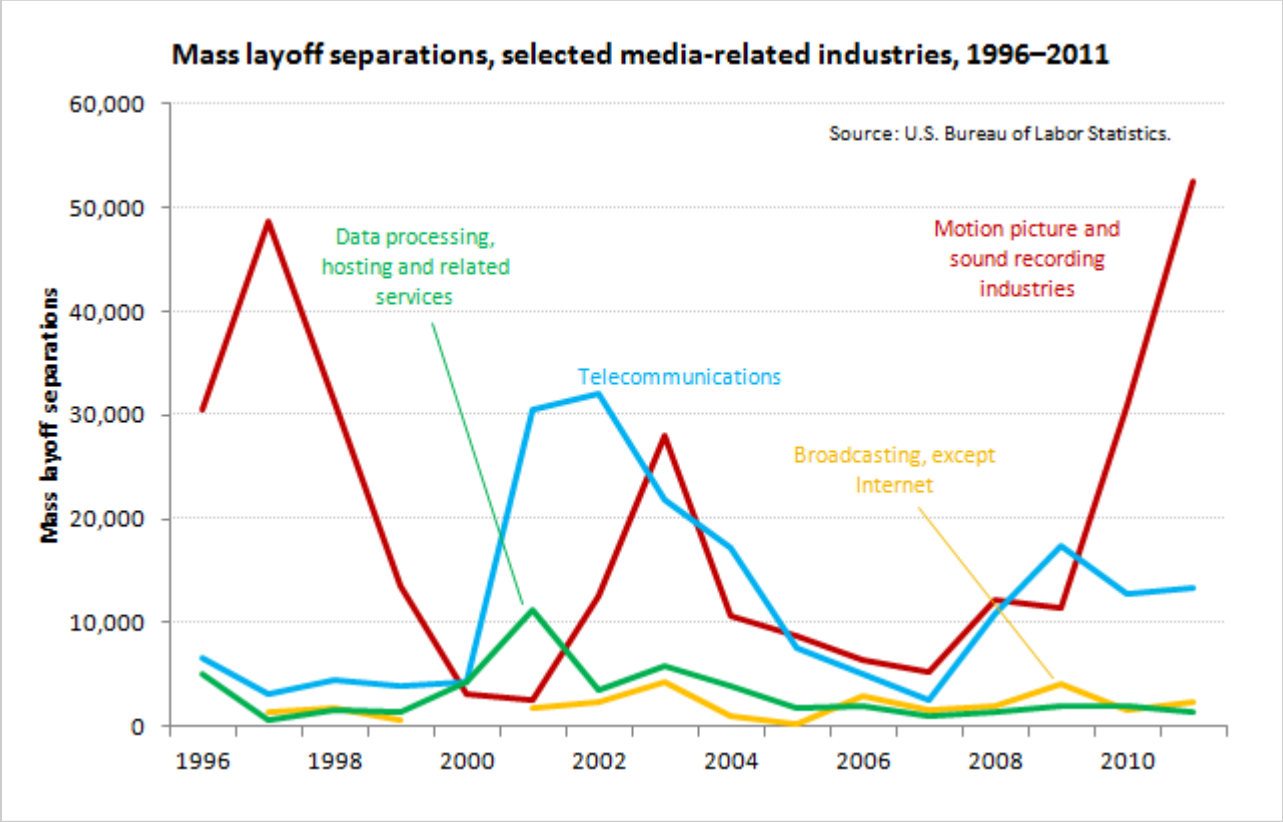
Extended Mass Layoffs in Information: Mass layoff events

In recent years, the number of extended mass layoff events and related separations of workers from their jobs (each of which involves 50 or more workers separated from their jobs for at least 31 days) has been notably higher in telecommunications (circa 2002) and motion picture and sound recording industries (circa 1997–1998 and 2011) than other information industries.



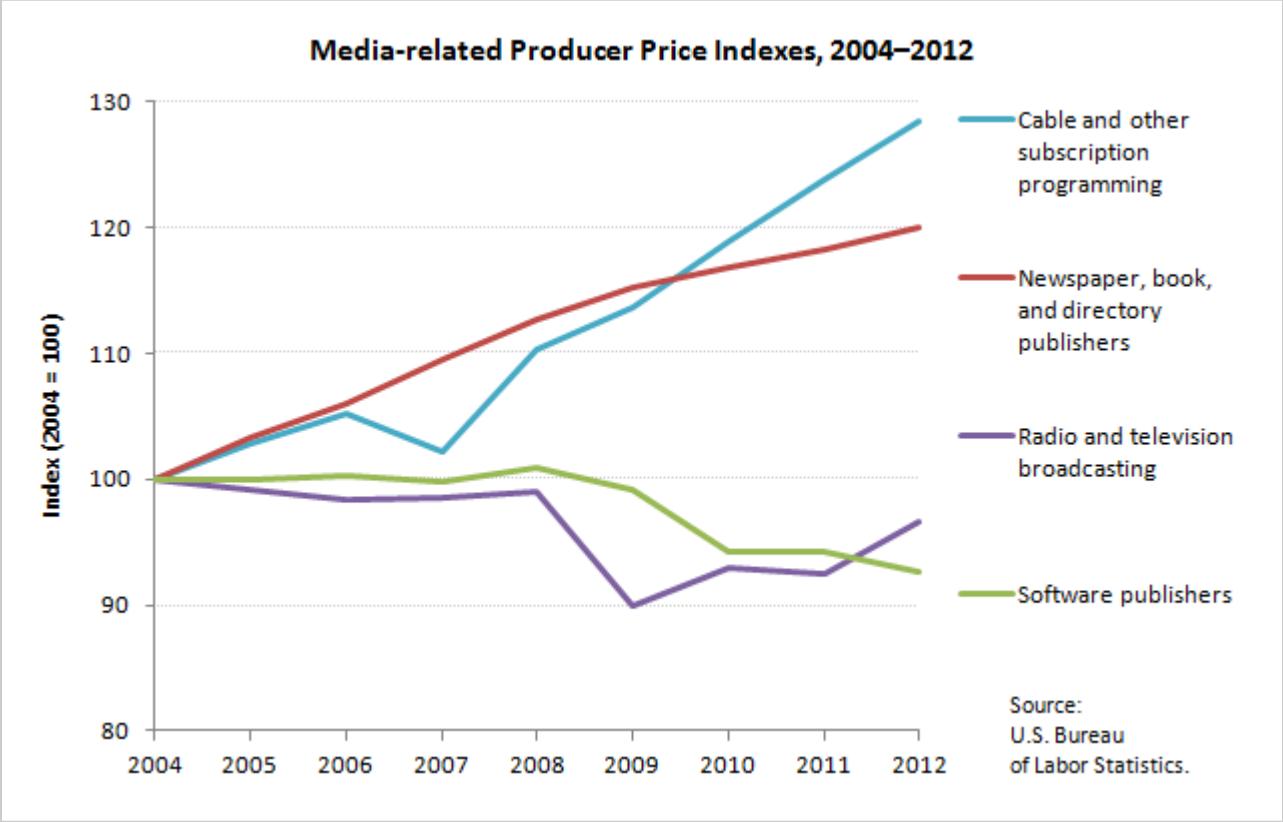
Extended Mass Layoffs in Information: Mass layoff separations

Mass layoff separations



Producer Prices

Since 2004, producer price indexes (which measure the average change over time in the selling prices received by domestic producers for their output) have increased by about 20 percent for cable and other subscription programming and newspaper, book, and directory publishers, while they have declined for radio and television broadcasting and software publishers.



Consumer Prices

Over the 1998–2012 period, the consumer price indexes for cable and satellite television and radio service and admission to movies, theaters, and concerts both increased by over 50 percent (a greater increase than that for all items).

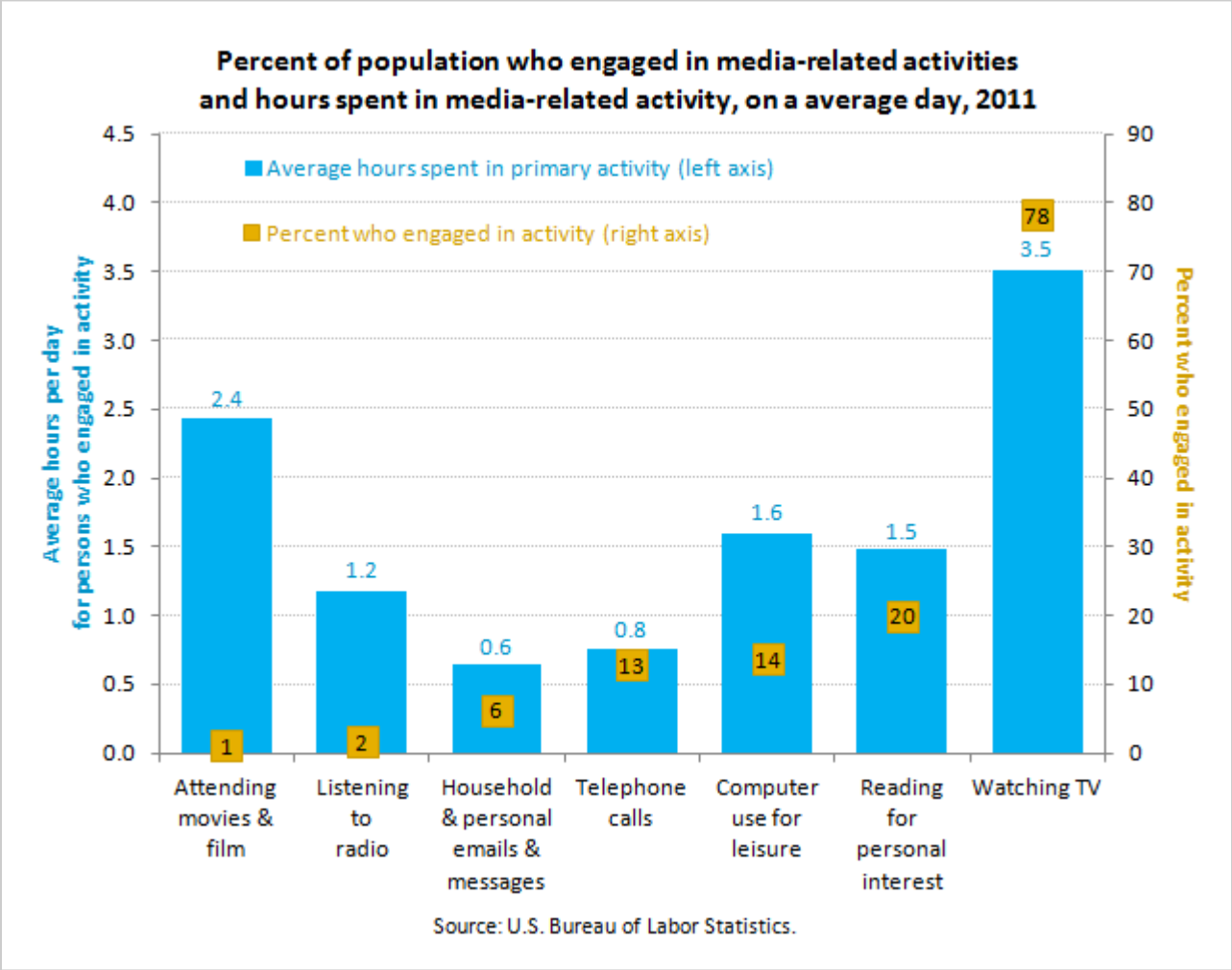
In contrast, several other media-related consumer price indexes increased less than the index for all items, and some —such as personal computers and peripheral equipment, televisions, computer software and accessories, and audio equipment—decreased over the period.

Labor Productivity

Labor productivity, which is the ratio of the output of goods and services to the labor hours devoted to the production of that output, has increased by a factor of 10 in wireless telecommunications carriers (except satellite) and by a factor of 6 in software publishers over the past two decades, and has also more than doubled in wired telecommunications carriers and cable and other subscription programming. Labor productivity has changed relatively little in newspaper, periodical, book, and directory publishers and radio and television broadcasting over this period.

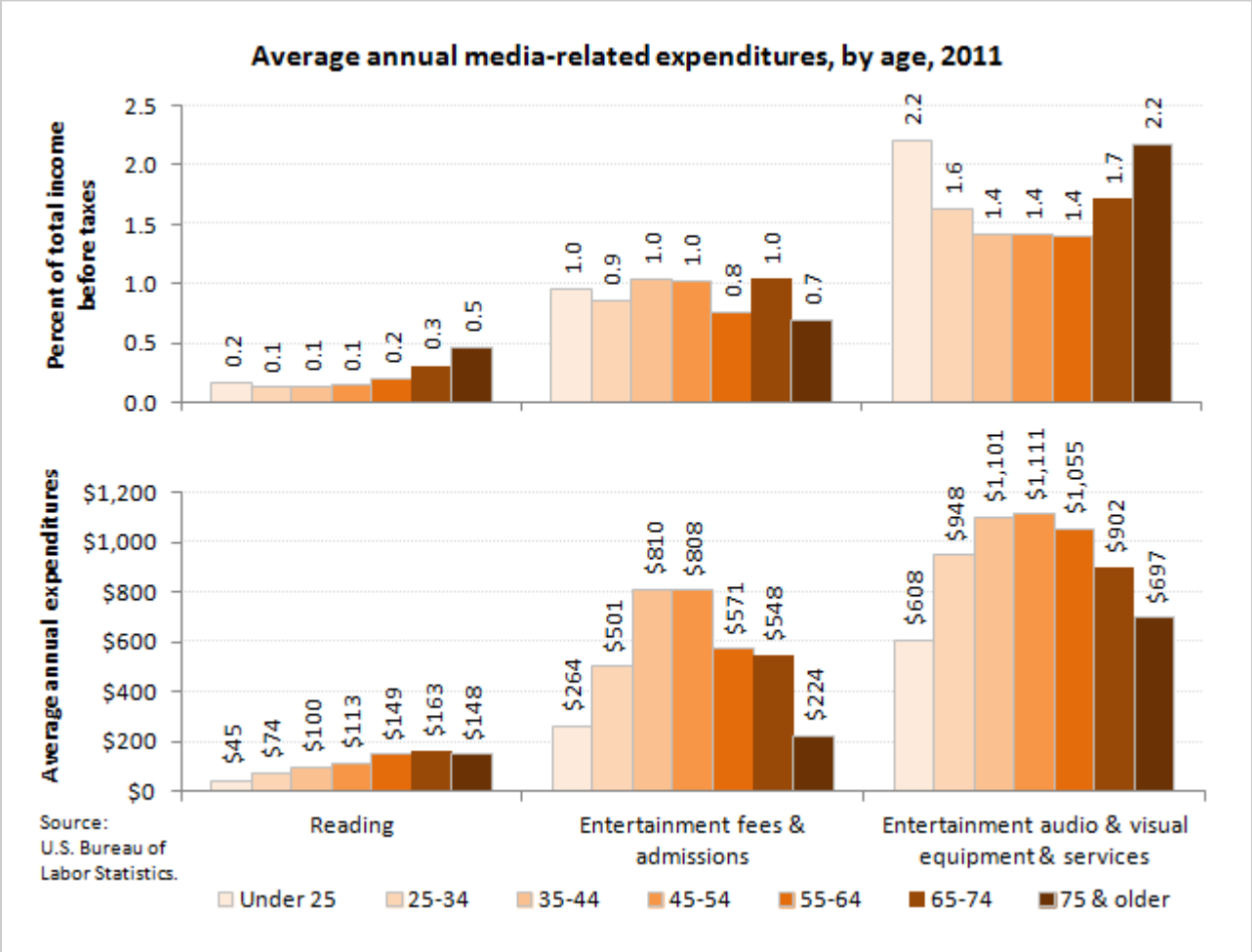
Media-Related Time Use

Watching television and attending movies and films were the two media-related activities that took the most time in 2011, 3.5 and 2.4 hours, respectively, among the people (in the civilian noninstitutional population, age 15 years and older) who engaged in those activities on an average day. On average, 78 percent of the population watched television on a typical day, while an average of just 1 percent of the population attended a movie or film. Listening to the radio took 1.2 hours for the 2 percent of the population that listened to radio as a primary activity on an average day, while the 20 percent of the population that engaged in reading for personal interest spent 1.5 hours doing so. (These estimates pertain only to primary activities. Some activities frequently are done at the same time and secondary to other activities, for example, someone might be driving as a primary activity while also listening to the radio.)



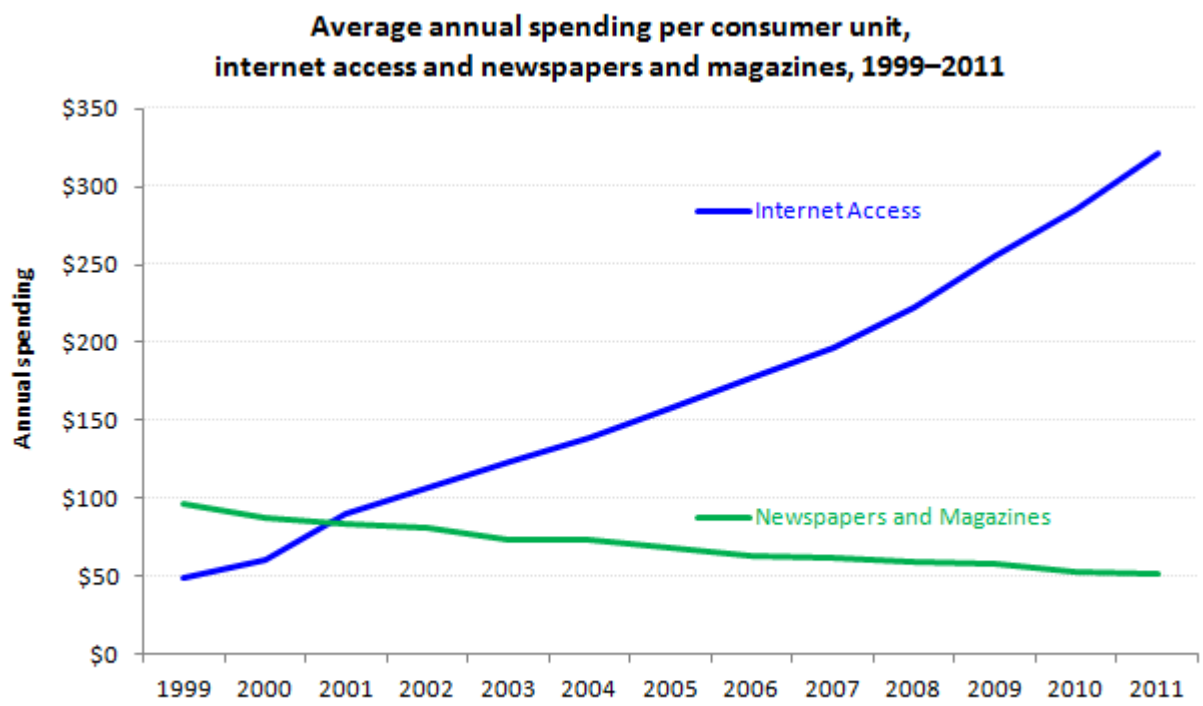
Household Expenditures

2001 was the first year in which average annual spending by consumer units (e.g., households) for Internet access was greater than spending for newspapers and magazines. Average spending for Internet access has continued to increase since that time, while spending on newspapers and magazines has declined. (These estimates include consumer units that do not purchase internet access or newspapers and magazines. Thus, they do not imply that Internet access cost $61 per year, on average, in 2000.)



Household Expenditures

People age 65 and older spent more money on reading than people in other age categories in 2011. Older people spent less on entertainment fees and admissions and entertainment audio and visual equipment and services.

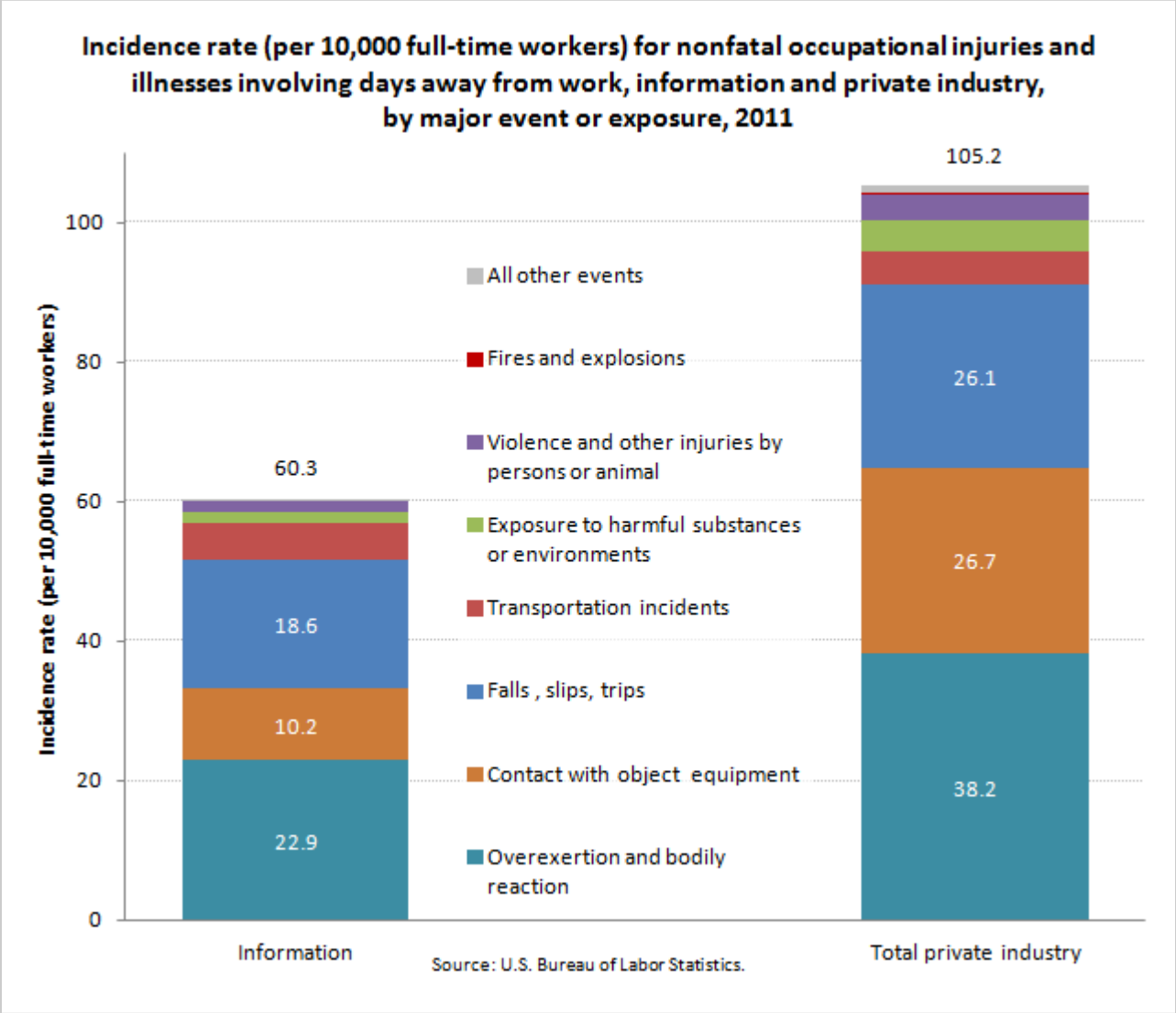


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Work-Related Injuries

The incidence rate for nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving days away from work was 60 per 10,000 full-time workers in the information industry in 2011, compared to 105 per 10,000 full-time workers for private industry as a whole. There were 14,030 days-away-from-work cases reported in 2011 for the information industry and 908,310 cases reported for all private industry.

For both the information industry and all private industry, the most common event or exposure leading to injuries and illnesses is overexertion and bodily reaction. In the information industry, overexertion and bodily reaction events or exposures occurred at a rate of 23 cases per 10,000 full-time workers—compared to an incidence rate of 38 for all private industry. About one-quarter (1,410 cases out of 5,330) of the overexertion and bodily reaction cases in information can be attributed to overexertion in lifting or lowering. The second leading event or exposure for the information industry is falls, slips, or trips with an incidence rate of 19 cases per 10,000 full-time workers, while for private industry the incidence rate was 26. About one-half (2,330 cases out of 4,330) of the slip, trips, or falls in the information industry can be attributed to falls on the same level.



More

- Industries at a Glance
- Bloggers and webcomic artists: Careers in online creativity (Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Fall 2012)