

Jim VandeHei

Co-Founder and CEO of Axios; Co-Founder and Former CEO of POLITICO

Jim VandeHei is a media entrepreneur and expert on American politics. He is the co-founder and CEO of *Axios*, a disruptive media company delivering news and insights on politics, business, media and tech. The company, whose name means “worthy” in Greek, specializes in high-quality news and analysis easily shared among the country's most influential readers and across social platforms. As CEO, VandeHei aims to radically overhaul the traditional media business with a forward-thinking approach to the way viewers consume news in the 21st century. This approach is chronicled in VandeHei's book *Smart Brevity: Saying More with Less*, which he co-authored alongside *Axios* co-founder, Mike Allen. In the book, VandeHei and Allen share transformative communications methods for punching through the noise to get people to pay attention to what matters most. Their Smart Brevity approach was pivotal to *Axios* becoming a powerhouse media property in just five years, leading to a \$525 million acquisition by Cox Enterprises. VandeHei was also the co-creator and executive producer of *Axios on HBO*, a documentary news series that ran for four seasons, profiling the world's top leaders and covering the most consequential topics of the day. The series fused the Smart Brevity of *Axios*' digital reporting with cinematic, documentary storytelling.

In addition to starting *Axios*, VandeHei was the co-founder and former CEO of *POLITICO*, the digital media company that upended and revolutionized political and policy journalism in Washington, New York, and Europe. Called a “media phenomenon” by *Washingtonian*, the all-politics-all-the-time site has been a smashing success since its 2006 launch. In his nine years at the publication's helm, VandeHei was a chief architect of both the site's editorial and business models. Under his leadership, *POLITICO* expanded into New York and Europe, where it was recently named the most influential publication on the continent for top government officials.

In presentations, VandeHei offers a dynamic, panoramic take on politics, policy, and the art of navigating the modern media madness, and his unique, insightful perspective flows from covering the presidency, campaigns, and Congress for two decades. Exclusively represented by [Leading Authorities speakers bureau](#), he combines the expertise of an on-the-beat political reporter with the entrepreneurial savvy of the man who started two media companies to shine light on what makes the powerful really tick. With a candid, close-up view of what really happens in Washington politics and governance, VandeHei brings a frontline journalist's insight and insider knowledge to every speech. He is better positioned than virtually anyone else to pull back the curtain and address what audiences really need to know about the White House, Congress, politics, and the media.

Accolades. In 2017, *Vanity Fair* named VandeHei to its “New Establishment List,” the magazine's annual compilation of industry titans, and *Entrepreneur* magazine named him one of the year's “50 Most Daring Entrepreneurs.” *Vanity Fair* also formerly listed him among the 100 most powerful “Information Age” thinkers for helping to create “the model for the new media success story.” In 2015, VandeHei and *POLITICO* co-founder John F. Harris were named the 2015 Editors of the Year by the National Press Foundation. VandeHei was also selected as the first representative of a primarily online news organization to serve on the Pulitzer Board.

The Real News in Real Time. At *POLITICO*, VandeHei directed the editorial coverage of the largest White House and Congressional teams in the country, and he co-moderated two presidential debates in 2008, including the first debate to incorporate questions voted on by a live online audience.

Before founding *POLITICO*, VandeHei spent more than a decade covering the power politics of Washington. He cut his teeth at *Roll Call*, where he routinely broke exclusive national stories. He moved to the *Wall Street Journal* in the late 1990s, and then the *Washington Post* in 2002.

His expertise in a variety of areas — Congress, the White House, campaigns, lobbying, policy, and media — allows VandeHei to tailor his speeches to the specific needs and interests of his audience.