

Abstract

The development of the Internet has led to digital revolution. A growing number of industries have emerged due to the revolution, causing platform economy to bloom. Owing to the network effects, digital platforms are able to maintain competitive advantages, making more and more services and information production rely on the power of digital platforms. The news media industry is also deeply affected by the phenomenon. On the one hand, news publishers are able to deliver messages through platforms, but on the other hand, platform algorithms shape people's habits of news consumption. Under this circumstance, news quality would have a huge impact on not only the mass but also the function of democratic society.

In recent years, the international community has realized the seriousness of the issue, and some countries have started to conduct research and implement related policies to maintain the public value of news media. For instance, Australia, the first country to develop a new mechanism to solve the problem, enacted the “News Media Bargaining Code”, trying to balance the unequal negotiation status between digital platforms and the news media industry, which caused Canada and New Zealand to follow suit. The U.S. is attempting to exempt news media industry from joint antitrust conduct so that they can negotiate collectively with digital platforms. The EU and its member states are requiring digital platforms to obtain licenses from news producers from the perspective of neighboring copyright, and Korea is reviewing the inadequacy of existing copyright-related laws and regulations. The U.K. and Japan are also taking certain measures against digital platforms by means of competition regulation and transparency reporting.

In Taiwan, the news media industry is largely affected by huge digital platforms. News publishers have conducted digital transformation in recent years, which includes strengthening the usage of online platforms and collaborating with multinational platforms, so as to develop potential audiences. However, the issue of digital platforms utilizing news involves multiple aspects. Although in 2022,

the Fair Trade Commission published the White Paper on Digital Economic Competition Policy in December 20, and the Executive Yuan established “the Coordinating Group for the Co-Prosperity Development of Domestic Industries and Large-Scale Digital Platforms” and designated the Ministry of Digital Affairs (which was inaugurated in August 2022), to be in charge of news bargaining issues, the overall impact of digital platforms on news media industry has not been fully scrutinized. Furthermore, more research should be done to examine whether measures taken by the international community are applicable in Taiwan.

In order to maintain news values and improve news content, ridding the entire news industry of platform algorithms and click-through rates, few steps should be taken. First, it is necessary to investigate on the current situation of the news media industry in Taiwan. Second, consumers’ opinions on this issue should be collected. At last, by conducting a comprehensive study on the relevant legal policies around the world, we are able to bring up suitable measures for the news media industry in Taiwan. The commissioning unit can take these measures as references to regulate the problems caused by the digital transformation of news media, so as to create a better news environment.

Keywords: news media bargaining, digital ad revenue share, broadcast media digital transformation, digital platform, news ecosystem