

Scope item 1: Evaluate trends, adoption, and use of the relevant digital platforms to aggregate and display news content online and the importance of digital revenue sources for news media organisations.

Scope item 1 Questions:

a.) What is your view on the future trends for traditional print and broadcast media consumption, and its relative importance for news organisations/broadcasters.

Consumers will continue to slowly move away from print media and consume more digital media by Gen Z & A. The collaboration of digital channels like digital out of home, mobile (geo fencing) & TV sync will continue and upward trend.

b.) What is your view of the current levels and mix of digital media adoption by consumers and use by new media?

Continued uptake in digital media consumption by consumers & publishers.

Which digital mediums are likely to emerge as the predominant forms of news media consumption in the medium-to-long term for consumers and news media organisations?

Search & Social are merging as consumers are using social media as search engines to find content about relevant news topics.

For instance, what is the mix of consumption on digital platforms, news media sites and subscription, and what are the different consumer journeys online to content?

A user might search for content on search or social and then move on to the website for more information. At this point they might also re share the content on their social media platforms like FB (Facebook), What's App, Teams etc.

c.) How is the transition to digital media likely to affect consumption of community-based news, vernacular publications, and new entrants to news media publishing?

Depends on the circulation of those newspapers versus the availability of internet connection, data of the community. This is not going to take away loyalty that consumers have to their community-based platforms like community radio stations, mailers, newspapers, what's app groups etc.

d.) What is your view on domestic consumption of foreign news publications, the role of digital platforms distributing this news media and if it has any impact on the consumption of local media? Please elaborate.

Local consumers are less likely to consume foreign news publications as there would be no relevance. Where there would be relevance is if foreign delegates/diplomats/immigrants move to SA and they want to still be aware and in the know how of what is happening in their country. The % of local consumers that might also read foreign publications is if they have local family that moved to other countries.

e.) How do you think the funding models of online news media are likely to evolve over time and what funding models do you consider optimal for the sustainability of news media? What influence is corporate or special interest funding having on the news agenda?

News media has put themselves in a dis position from the onset when online content was free. Some online publishers have changed to a model where you can get the blurb, but if you want to see full content must pay. With tuff economic times it is very less likely that users will pay for online content. Users will also rather use data for other use than paying for and then have to use data for consuming online news.

Scope item 2: Evaluate whether market features distort competition for advertising revenue, consumer data and subscription fees between news media organisations and the relevant digital platforms that display and distribute news media content as intermediaries to consumers, including news aggregators.

Scope item 2 Questions

f.) In general, how do you see news media organisations relationship with digital platforms? Are there areas of competition and areas of complementarity? How do digital platforms use news media content in their ecosystem and how is the relationship between digital platforms and news media organisations formalised?

They work together as inventory is bought on news websites and ads are then served through digital platforms on the site. News sites might also have sponsorship opportunities that allows for client to advertise or run on their social media platforms.

g.) In your view what are the most important factors shaping competition between digital news media and digital platforms for ad revenue, consumer data and subscription revenue? Please elaborate.

I would not say it is a competition as digital platforms serves a different purpose in how it runs media. The digital platforms used are related to a specific KPI and the same would be to run media on a news site. As an example, if a campaign KPI is to generate leads you might use a digital platform such as FB lead forms for lead gen and you might use DV360 as a programmatic for reach/traffic or creating awareness. For the DV360 part you will run on news or other relevant sites to create awareness and then use the FB lead forms when it gets to a user now wanting to buy a car.

h.) What competitive distortions, if any, do you consider exist for user attention, engagement and ad revenue given the competing interests if digital platforms? Please elaborate.

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution or monetization.

i.) What user data is required for successful targeted advertising and what data do digital platforms and news media organisations get in the current relationship? Please elaborate.

From a digital perspective it all depends on the campaign KPI's. If its very targeted where you can use 1st party data, but that is loaded into the platforms by clients. You can create audience buckets by using CM360 floodlight tags and retarget to the audiences and you can create look a like audience

based on current audience data and retarget to the right audience, the right message at the right time. You can use past campaign performance data from the platforms and compare a date range or period to get insights for future campaigns.

j.) Provide insights into the competition for subscription-based news media and the interaction between aggregators and news media organisations. What is your view on the future sustainability of this business model and the role in the overall distribution mix?

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2.3. Scope item 3: Evaluate whether the commercial relationship between news media and relevant digital platforms is characterised by imbalances in bargaining power and the impact of such imbalances on competitive outcomes affecting the news media industry, including pricing and non-price outcomes;

Scope item 3 Questions

k.) Would you characterise digital platforms as distributors/intermediaries or buyers of news media content or both? Please elaborate on your answer.

Both and it's driven by the campaign objectives. Distributor could be where you run a reach/traffic campaign and you want to distribute to as many users as possible and buyer of news media content could be where a client wants to serve ads on a specific news site.

l.) In your experience what are the bargaining power dynamics between news media organisations and digital platforms that distribute online new media content? Please elaborate and indicate the salient dynamics.

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution or monetization.

m.) What are your views on the snippet policy employed by the digital platforms you depend on to distribute your online news content? If it is the case, what snippet policy would better represent a fair balance of power?

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution or monetization.

n.) Do you consider the current share of advertising revenue, where digital platforms share revenue, to be fair? If not, elaborate on why?

It's not about share of revenue being fair, its more about the budget being spend on the right digital platforms or publisher direct to achieve the client KPI's/objectives.

o.) Are there any other terms or conditions that may reflect an imbalance in bargaining power?

Elaborate

No

p.) What are your views on the bargaining power of global news media organisations relative to local news media organisations and the terms and conditions they can extract? Where possible provide examples of what you consider to be unfair and why.

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution/journalism or monetization.

2.4. Scope item 4: Evaluate whether competition for the distribution, display and monetisation of news content online between news media organisations through relevant digital platforms is distorted by market features including, but not limited to, ranking algorithms, paid results, search engine optimisation, consumer and social network preferences and commercial relationships with news media organisations;

Scope item 4 Questions

q.) In your view what aspects of the digital platform environment shapes competition between news media organisations the most? Please elaborate.

It should not be a competition as digital platforms serves a different purpose than news media organisations.

r.) What do news media organisations do to have their news content curated, and prominently displayed and ranked on a digital platform? Do news media organisations engage in search optimisation, or sponsor a prominent display on the platform? Please elaborate.

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution/journalism or monetization.

s.) What are the factors that influence the curation and ranking of news content, and does this impact on competition between news media based on factors other than quality and relevance?

This would be managed on news media side and we would not have sight or control over this. Who ever is managing the news media website will manage this. This could be the webmaster and through Google Analytics and SEO (Search engine optimization) manage this.

t.) To what extent do new, small and vernacular language media organisations face challenges in achieving visibility on digital platforms and what impact does this have for media diversity?

This would be a question to the media owners for direct buys. From a digital platform perspective, it can be managed through targeting options within the platform and to what level it allows to do targeting. From a creative perspective the creative can be designed in vernacular and run through the digital platforms and target the area and demographic (to what is available in the platforms).

u.) Is the curation and display of news content by digital platforms resulting in growing

concentration of the news media or the opposite effect?

No as there is a place and purpose for both.

v.) What is the prominence of donation funded news media in South Africa and how, in your view, does this impact what types of news media displayed?

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2.5. Scope item 5: Evaluate whether ad tech Supply Side Platforms (SSPs), Demand Side Platforms (DSPs) and intermediary Ad Exchanges (AdEx) used to surface digital advertising on websites or apps of the South African news media sector will impact on the adoption and competition considerations in scope items 1 to 4.

Scope Item 5 Questions

w.) How dependent are news media organisation on Adtech intermediaries for sourcing advertising for their digital inventory and if so, the reasons for that dependency?

Where there might be an Adtech dependency would be if news media inventory is booked through a network like Google Display Network or a direct IO buy through DV360. The other option which has no Adtech buy of inventory would be when inventory is bought directly with a news media organisation. In this instance there might be a requirement to use as CM360 ad server creative tags. This tag is to record impressions and clicks in the Adserver.

x.) In your view, what major issues in the ad tech stack affect the online distribution of news media content?

None if any issue it would be when a news media owner are not able to use a CM360 AdServer tag.

y.) In South Africa are there any exclusivities, impediments to interoperability or bundling and tying practices in the ad tech stack have had an adverse impact on Adtech competitors and impedes effective competition in the marketplace?

Not that I am aware off.

z.) How does the Adtech stack assign advertising across different inventory, and are there conflicts of interest by Adtech companies owned by digital platforms?

Adtech stack assigns inventory based on how it is booked. Example: DV360 programmatic you can target publishers based on objectives and targeting and the relevant inventory will become available. You can also in DV360 programmatic buy inventory with a publisher directly through an IO.

aa.) What is share of the advertising Rand for each layer in the Adtech stack and the media organisations themselves, and is the distribution of share equitable to the value provided?

There is no clear split as it is all client campaign objective and KPI's dependant.

2.6. Scope item 6: Evaluate whether the current and future integration of generative AI systems in relevant digital platforms, including the AI review and assimilation of news media content, will impact on the adoption and competition considerations in scope items 1 to 4;

Scope item 6 Questions

bb.) What is your view of the future use of generative AI within the algorithms of search, social media and news aggregators for surfacing and ranking of content, and how do you expect this to impact on the selection and ranking of news media content?

Generative AI transforms digital platforms, offering personalised content, enhanced engagement and bias mitigation.

News content generation with real-time quality assessment, optimizes user experiences, but requires ethical considerations and collaboration with news outlets for a more tailored news environment.

cc.) What is the trend in the use of AI chatbots to explore news stories and how do you expect news consumption through generative AI to evolve (if at all)? Please elaborate.

The use of AI chatbots for news exploration is growing, offering personalised updates and interactive experiences. Generative AI is expected to evolve even further, providing dynamic and tailored news experiences based on user preferences. However, unethical behavior in AI systems can introduce biases and influence news consumption, highlighting the importance of responsible development and oversight. dd.) How will the integration of AI into digital platforms and the emergence of AI chatbots

dd.) How will the integration of AI into digital platforms and the emergence of AI chatbots likely impact on referral and advertising revenues of news organisations in the future?

The use of AI in advertising and AI chatbots might have two effects on news organizations. First, it could make ads more interesting for/resonating with people, possibly bringing in more money for news sites.

However, if not handled carefully, the AI might show people only news that they already agree with (what is called Filter Bubble), making it harder for news organizations to get different kinds of readers. Finding a good balance between showing interesting news and making sure people see different perspectives will be really important for news organizations to do well in the future.

ee.) What is the current use of news content to train AI and to what end? Is there a compensation model for this training content and should there be? What is the likely impact

of using the content for training whilst potentially competing with news organisations for user attention?

Currently, news content is extensively used to train AI models, primarily for natural language processing tasks such as sentiment analysis, summarization, and content categorization.

The goal is to improve the AI's understanding of language nuances, context, and user preferences.

While no real direct compensation model is used locally for news organizations providing training data, discussions on fair compensation and data ownership ethics should be had.

Scope item 7: Evaluate the impact of scope items 1 to 5 on the quality and consumer choice of South African news media, as well as the impact on news media organisations that are small and medium-size enterprises (“SMEs”) and/or businesses owned by historically disadvantaged persons (“HDPs”);

Scope Item 7 Questions

ff.) How do think the features of digital news content distribution has impacted on the quality and diversity of news journalism in South Africa?

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution/journalism or monetization.

gg.) Are there features of digital platforms that either promote or undermine the participation of SMEs and HDP-owned news organisations? Are there particular features of digital platforms that may promote or undermine vernacular language publications online?

N/A as this question is for media owner. Our clients advertise on media owner platforms/sites but are not involved in their content/sites/analytics/distribution/journalism or monetization.

hh.) What incentives do digital platforms have in place to promote the publication and distribution of high-quality investigative journalism? Please elaborate.

None

ii.) In your view what are the challenges to SME, HDP, community-based and vernacular

N/A as this question is for media owner.