

Can a national nonprofit news “utility” — funded by taxing Big Tech — help save local news? | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Julia Angwin

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One of the most meaningful changes in our economy in the past decade has been the astronomical growth in online advertising — and the corresponding destruction of newspaper advertising.

In the past decade, online advertising soared to [\\$189 billion](#) from [\\$31 billion](#). During roughly the same time period, newspaper ad revenues collapsed, falling from about [\\$20 billion in 2010 to \\$10 billion in 2020](#), as advertisers moved to cheaper, more-targeted online ads.

This dramatic shift has caused many to question whether the tech giants that dominate online advertising — namely Google and Facebook — have gained too much power. Policymakers around the world are considering everything from [breaking up the tech giants](#) to [taxing digital transactions](#).

Meanwhile, various efforts to shore up funding for journalism, which is struggling to support itself on ad revenues alone, are just getting started. Australia recently passed novel legislation that forced Google and Facebook to negotiate directly with news publishers to pay for their news content — with [mixed results](#), as aptly reported by Columbia Journalism School professor Bill Grueskin. Efforts to get Google to pay directly for news content have run aground in [Spain](#) and [Germany](#).

[...]

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