

# Fleeing Russian bombs while battling Facebook. A Meta problem Ukrainian journalists did not need. | Coda Story

By Natalia Antelava

May 2, 2022

Valerii Garmash, a 42-year-old Ukrainian coder and entrepreneur, remembers the devastation Russians left behind in Slovyansk, his hometown in eastern Ukraine: streets littered with burned cars, shattered glass and pieces of shrapnel.

This was 2014, during the first Russian invasion of Ukraine. After the Ukrainian army pushed Russian-backed forces out of the city, Garmash joined a group of volunteers who quickly got to work, scrubbing and fixing their hometown. But one thing they couldn't fix was the fallen television tower that had once overlooked the city. Russian-backed militants used it to beam the Kremlin's message at residents of Slovyansk during the three month long occupation and destroyed it before they left.

Valerii Garmash, entrepreneur and coder from Slovyansk in eastern Ukraine created one of the city's best loved local news sites. But its voice is now being silenced by Meta's "one-fits-all" approach.

"How will we get the local news?" Garmash remembers asking a local journalist as they cleaned up a street in Slovyansk that July. "There will be no local news," she replied.

[...]

Source: [Fleeing Russian bombs while battling Facebook. A Meta problem Ukrainian journalists did not need. | Coda Story](#)