

Platforms and Publishers: The End of an Era | Columbia Journalism Review

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The relationship between technology platforms and news publishers is entering a new moment. In interviews conducted since we published our last report, "[Friend and Foe: The Platform Press at the Heart of Journalism](#)," in June 2018, publishers spoke of what they called the end of a platform "era." This era, one defined by the belief that the massive audiences platforms offer would lead to meaningful advertising revenue for publishers, was a "bubble" and a "distraction," they said. This promise has proven to be a broken bargain. Finally, publishers believe "the scale game is over."

This acknowledgment, repeated throughout interviews conducted in early 2019, was a significant departure from years past. Throughout much of 2018, publishers were still optimistic that partnering with platforms on scale-based products and initiatives could help sustain the business of journalism—despite years of pushing their content to these platforms without consistent returns on their investment.

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