



November 2021

Antisemitism on the rise (p.3)

Denmark: 4 out of 10 ad revenue to Google, Facebook and LinkedIn (p.4)

Twitter favors the political right (p.5)

The limitation of A/B testing (p.6)

Warns against digital exclusion (p.7)

Harassment causes a chilling effect on journalism (p.8)

Antisemitism on the rise

A joint research report by Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Expo Foundation and HOPE not hate finds that antisemitism is rising on the most prominent digital platforms.

[Download the report.](#)

Four main findings

1. Antisemitism everywhere

While the amount of different types of antisemitism varies between platforms, it remains possible to locate all forms and extremes of antisemitism on all platforms.

2. Moderation matters

The amount of overt and extreme antisemitism on a platform is closely linked to the amount of moderation and the strictness of the platform's terms of use.

3. Decentralized distribution

Some major platforms have become increasingly successful at removing antisemitic organizations but still struggle to remove antisemitic content that emanates from decentralized and non-formalized movements.

4. Adapting for different platforms

Many antisemites change the tone, style and content of their antisemitism depending on the platform they are using to try and stay within the moderation line. The nature of online spaces can and has changed the nature and tone of antisemitism.

Denmark: 4 out of 10 ad revenue to Google, Facebook and LinkedIn

The Danish Ministry of Culture has published a report highlighting the media development in Denmark in 2020.

[Download the report.](#)

Four main findings:

1. Three dominant players

Google, Facebook and LinkedIn's share of advertising revenue on the Internet in Denmark grew from 62 percent in 2019 to 64 percent in 2020. The three players' share of total advertising revenue increased from 38 percent to 42 percent, a growth of four percentage points. Thus, more than four out of ten ad krone now go to Google, Facebook and LinkedIn.

2. Steep decline

Total advertising revenue fell by DKK 660 million (-5%) in 2020. However, the decline was more significant for the Danish players: Advertising revenue calculated without Google, Facebook and LinkedIn fell by DKK 1 billion (-12%).

3. Digital advertising growing

Digital advertising revenue continues to grow: Digital ad revenue in 2020 accounted for 66 percent of total ad revenue. This is five percentage points more than in 2019 and an increase of 37 percentage points compared to 2010.

4. Digital video is a significant part

In a few years, display advertising on digital videos (web TV) has become a significant part of advertising revenue in Denmark and grew in 2020 by DKK 92 million (+18%) to DKK 602 million. Display advertising on digital videos has now surpassed revenue from the traditional newspapers' print ads.

Twitter favors the political right

Twitter has conducted a thorough study of their personalization algorithms with support from three universities in the U.S. and U.K.

[Download the report.](#)

Three main findings

1. Amplifies the political right

In six out of seven countries studied, the mainstream political right enjoys higher algorithmic amplification on Twitter than the mainstream political left.

2. Biased towards right-leaning media

Studying the U.S. media landscape revealed that algorithmic amplification favors right-leaning news sources.

3. But more centrist than you think

Twitter's algorithmic personalization does not amplify extreme ideologies more than mainstream political voices.

The limitation of A/B testing

A new research paper published in Digital Journalism looks into the effect of using A/B-testing for optimizing headlines. The researchers used Chartbeat to analyze 141.000 headlines A/B-tested by 293 news websites.

[Download the research paper.](#)

Four main findings:

1. No silver bullet

No single feature of a headline's writing style makes a significant difference in predicting success. The vast majority of features didn't improve the model's predictive performance at all. There is no silver bullet that universally improved a headline's performance.

2. Clickbait works (unfortunately)

The research found some evidence for the old industry wisdom: Negative headlines sometimes did better than shorter and simpler ones. Clickbait-y words like 'here' and 'this' sometimes help.

3. External factors are more important

The most effective headline often depends on factors entirely outside the writing. Thousands of repeating tests, with the exact same headlines, resulted in different outcomes. It seems that many audiences' decisions around what to click to read are out of journalists' control.

4. Limited effect

The researchers argue that headline A/B testing is quite effective at finding headlines that garner more traffic from the audience during the window of time when the test is run. But: the value of interpreting and extrapolating A/B test results has limited value and may even lead to bad recommendations.

Warns against digital exclusion

The Swedish non-profit organization, Internetstiftelsen, has published its annual report about Sweden's digital development.

[Download the report.](#)

Four interesting findings:

1. Digital exclusion

Age is the decisive factor for whether swedes use the internet. While 95+ percent of people born in the 1950s or later are internet users, only 57 percent of the elderly (born in the 1920s and 1930s) are online. 43 percent of the elders are not using the internet at all. This may result in digital exclusion in a society that is becoming increasingly digitalized.

2. Being social online

26 percent find that digital screen time gives a feeling of being more social. 11 percent get the feeling of being more lonely. The other 62 percent do not feel that time affects them feeling social or lonely.

3. Worry about deepfakes – but not fake news

76 percent of Swedes are worried about deepfakes online. 32 percent are very worried. The concern is most significant among the oldest internet users. 17 percent find it easy to distinguish between fake and factual information online.

4. Confused by ads

64 percent have started reading an article online, which they then discovered is an advertisement. 58 percent have started reading a post on social media that turned out to be an ad.

Harassment causes a chilling effect on journalism

A report conducted by the Norwegian Union of Journalists shows the chilling effect of threats, violence and harassment on journalism.

[Download the report.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Extensive self-censorship

Among Norwegian journalists, almost half (47%) have encountered harassment, threats, or violence due to their work. 37 percent say the incidents have affected their journalism through self-censorship. The more often journalists experience harassment, threats and violence, the more extensive the self-censorship is.

2. Stress reactions

Of the journalists who have experienced adverse incidents, 77 percent have had psychological reactions. The most common reactions are feeling exhausted (50%), poor sleep (45%) and depression (30%).

3. Few report the incidents to the police

Few journalists report harassment, threats and violence to the police. In the rare events that the police are involved in, few cases result in prosecution. Almost no one gets convicted.