

Compcom probes Meta, X and Google for unfair media practice

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The Competition Commission will investigate whether digital platforms like Meta and Google were unfairly competing with news publishers by using their content to generate ad revenue, it said on Tuesday.



A 3D printed Facebook's new rebrand logo Meta is seen in front of displayed Google logo in this illustration. Source: Reuters/Dado Ruvic

The Commission will be investigating among other things market features that may distort competition for advertising revenue between news media organisations and digital platforms, and whether these are affected by imbalances in bargaining power.



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"The inquiry comes at a critical moment for the media industry as news consumption rapidly shifts online and traditional sources of funding to print and broadcast advertising decline," commissioner Doris Tshepe told journalists.

Chief economist and acting deputy commissioner James Hodge said media consumers are increasingly relying on video-sharing platforms, news aggregators and social media for news access and revenue, and that there was a need to promote diversity in news and public interest journalism.

The inquiry will include general search engines such as Alphabet's Google and Bing, social media platforms such as Meta and X, news aggregation platforms, video sharing platforms such as YouTube and TikTok, and ad networks such as Google Ads.

It will also examine generative artificial intelligence such as OpenAI's ChatGPT and how it uses original news content in its output, the Commission added.

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