

Im going to simplify this as much as possible. I probably should have just included this in the first post. Here are the best and worst cases of Newscorp opting out of the Google Index

1. Best Case: They opt out and see an increase in revenues and commitment to their sites because people choose to go directly to their sites. For those sites behind a paywall, they generate more revenue than when the site was free. Other sites notice their success and copy Newscorp, choosing to opt out of the Google index. The opt out choice turns out to be the better business move for any and all sites looking to increase revenues. Google's position as the leading search engine is called into question. The Search business becomes competitive again. Content companies now understand how to best monetize their content efforts.

Far fetched ? Maybe. But not totally inconceivable.

2. Worst Case: They opt out of Google's Index. Their traffic drops 99pct. No one buys their pay offerings. They all feel like idiots. Then the last idiot left in the office gets out the text editor and changes the robots.txt file or completely deletes it. They turn off the paywalls. Make the content free again. Life as they knew it before they opted out and started charging for content returns to normal as quickly as Google can reindex the Newscorp sites.

The upside of Option 1 is far more impactful than the downside is bad. There is no reason not to take the chance.