

MEDIA REPORT 4

Summary

In the AP News article, “Europe is cracking down on Big Tech. This is what will change when you sign on” written by Kelvin Chan, reports on how the European Union is setting up the Digital Services Act that aims to protect European users when it comes to privacy, transparency, and the removal of harmful or illegal content. With the Digital Services Act, the EU can alter what shows up when searching and scrolling on big social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, FaceBook, and other tech giants like Google and Amazon. When users sign off on this Act: users can turn off AI-recommended videos, it will be easier to flag harmful content, users will know why their post was taken down, users can report fake products, and kids won’t be targeted with Digital advertisements.

Automated recommendation systems decide based on people’s profiles what they see on their feeds. When users have the option to turn off AI-recommended videos, social media platforms “Following” and “Friends” feeds will show posts from accounts users follow in chronological order. Algorithmic recommendation systems have also been blamed for creating so-called filter bubbles and pushing social media users to increasingly extreme posts. The Digital Services Act would also make it easier to flag harmful content by making it easier to report a post, video, or comment that breaks the laws or violates the platform's rules so that it can be reviewed and/or taken down if required. TikTok has given their users additional reporting options where people can choose from categories such as hate speech, harassment, suicide and self-harm, and misinformation/frauds or scams. The app by Chinese parent company ByteDance has also added a team of moderators and legal specialists to review videos flagged by users, alongside automated systems and existing moderation teams that already work to identify such material. The Digital Services Act would allow users to know why their post was taken down. Companies like TikTok state that European users will get more information about a

broad range of content moderation decisions and Google is expanding the scope of its transparency reports by giving more information about how it handles content moderation for more of its services including search, maps, shopping, and play store. The Digital Services Act would allow users to report fake products. The Digital Services Act aims to stop the flow of counterfeit Gucci handbags, pirated Nike sneakers, and other dodgy goods. Amazon has set up a new channel for reporting suspected illegal products/content and also is providing more publicly available information about third-party merchants. The Digital Services Act would allow kids to not be targeted with digital ads. The EU is cracking down on digital ads that target children due to privacy and manipulation concerns. TikTok states that it restricted the types of data to show advertisements to teens(users who are 13-15) in the EU including Britain, Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein no longer see ads based on their activities on or off TikTok.

Personal Opinion

Overall, I agree with the fact that the EU is setting up the Digital Services Act because it will protect European users when it comes to privacy, transparency, and the removal of harmful or illegal content. The Digital Services Act would also alter search and scroll results on big social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, FaceBook, and other tech giants like Google and Amazon. Overall I believe that the Digital Services Act is a positive effective regulation because it would foster a safer online environment for the people using the internet in the EU. However, I do not wish for the overregulation of the internet because that can limit the free flow of information/ideas online and can lead to censorship of unpopular views. I do believe that the Digital Services Act has the right amount of regulation while also allowing people to freely enjoy being on the internet.

While I believe that the EU is doing the right thing by setting up the Digital Services Act, I think another issue is that other countries and places should also have something in place to

foster a safer online environment for the people. I think that big tech companies and governments all around the world should come together and communicate and help each other set up a more inclusive, safe, friendly, and enjoyable internet where people all around the world can communicate across distances, share information, and answer any questions.

Citation

Chan, Kelvin. "Europe is cracking down on Big Tech. This is what will change when you sign on". AP News, September 18, 2023.

<https://apnews.com/article/big-tech-crackdown-europe-digital-services-act-0fa3146efd38b88383899f9560c0ee5a>