



NYU Studio 20 Consultancy with Tech Policy Press

Media Partners, Distribution and Social Strategy
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TO: Justin Hendrix, CEO of Tech Policy Press

RE: NYU Studio 20 Consultancy

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In consultancy with *Tech Policy Press*, the NYU Studio 20 team has conducted market research and competitive analysis, as well as a thorough assessment of TPP's media partnerships and social media strategy.

The result of this research is a series of recommendations intended to: strengthen TPP's position and brand recognition in the tech policy landscape; increase the number of distribution channels for TPP's content; expand the reach and engagement around TPP's social media presence.

Hypotheses

- *Tech Policy Press* operates in a highly competitive information ecosystem with competitors ranging from legacy news brands and tech-focused digital outlets to academic research publications
- With its wealth of expert contributors, TPP has the potential for a wide range of content sharing partnerships across journalism, academia and professional disciplines
- There are simple and achievable social strategies that can improve TPP's visibility and engagement on social media, both on existing platforms and in new ventures

Findings

Market Research & Competitive Analysis

Contrary to our hypothesis, *Tech Policy Press* does not have very many direct competitors. Even in a crowded field, TPP provides a level of depth and informed journalism around tech policy that others do not.

Every legacy brand has a tech beat (for example, NYTimes Tech and BBC Tech). Though these outlets do cover tech policy, they function on a scale that demands widespread accessibility. Therefore, the content is not presented with the same voice to the same audience as TPP.

Additionally, tech-focused brands like TechCrunch or WIRED, which do touch on policy issues occasionally, are also driven by the consumer and business side of tech news. As a result, the audience expectations of those publications does not require the in-depth analysis of policy and governance found on TPP.

In terms of audience appeal, TPP's content is more closely aligned with a trade publication than with general interest journalism. As such, the rigor of TPP is akin to the content one might expect from Nieman Lab or an academic research consortium. Yet these are not competitors, in a traditional sense.

Perhaps then, TPP's most direct competitors are other digital-first outlets covering technology, like Casey Newton's Platformer or Slate's Future Tense. However, as we will see in the next section, these publishers are more likely to manifest as partners than competition.

Assessment of Media Partnerships

Tech Policy Press has several existing media relationships, including official partnerships and ad hoc collaborations.

- “New Voices” is a publishing partnership between TPP and the Aspen Tech Policy hub, an incubator that trains the next generation of tech policy entrepreneurs
- TPP’s Justin Hendrix has a guest authorship at *Just Security*, which is based out of the Reiss Center on Law and Security at the NYU School of Law
- TPP is occasionally republished in Future Tense, a joint venture between Slate, Arizona State University and the New America think tank
- TPP operates in a loose consortium with several newsletters, including *Everything in Moderation* and *New Public*, which is published through UT Austin

This list affirms our hypothesis that *Tech Policy Press* has significant appeal to academics, policy professionals and technologists. As a result, our recommendation is for TPP to lean into its voice.

There are a number of trade-based and research publications that TPP could pitch its articles to, including:

- **The National Law Review** – TPP has at least 12 lawyers among its contributor base; any story that digs deeper into the [legal and procedural ramifications of tech policy](#) could work here
- **Nieman Reports** – Any TPP story that examines the impact of technology and tech policy on journalism could fit with Nieman Reports, which offers [paid contributions of opinion or features](#)
- **Georgetown Law Technology Review** – Accepts [submissions](#) that “focus on the intersection of technology and the law”

A partnership with these publications would increase the reach of TPP’s content and, in some cases, open up new revenue streams. Given TPP’s expert contributor base, there is no shortage of opportunity in academic publishing.

The nonprofit sector is another possibility for content-sharing partnerships. Think tanks like New America and policy institutes like the Center for American Progress publish a lot of content related to tech policy. If TPP were featured or cited by these organizations, a new audience could find TPP’s stories. The same could be said for advocacy groups like the Tech Transparency Project and Free Press, though there is inherent risk in partnering – even unofficially – with such groups.

Another way to increase visibility around TPP’s content is to offer free syndication, similar to a Creative Commons license. TPP has already expressed interest in having a republish feature on its website and we highly recommend investigating this further.

Evaluation of Social Media Strategy

Tech Policy Press currently draws █████ of its traffic from social media, █████. And yet, TPP’s social presence is limited to an unverified Twitter account with fewer than 3,000 followers. This leads us to believe that TPP’s content is finding traction elsewhere on Twitter and that there is room for growth on social.

On Twitter, Justin’s personal account, with nearly 90,000 followers, helps boost TPP content. However, TPP is often linked by other accounts, including contributors, universities and policy institutes. We believe TPP can leverage these relationships for further promotion. Specifically, we recommend:

- TPP should have **specific social sharing guidelines** for its contributors, not just of their own submissions, but also of new podcast episodes and other TPP content
- When TPP is linked to, the official *Tech Policy Press* account should **quote tweet with context**, not just retweet. This will place the TPP brand and logo more prominently in the timeline.

In addition to these strategy recommendations, there are simple design changes that could increase the appeal of TPP's Twitter account. These include a more visually appealing banner image, a more descriptive profile bio and a more dynamic podcast distribution approach.

Regarding other platforms, we think TPP's content has potential on LinkedIn, where long-form content is more widely accepted and the audience is more professional in nature. While Justin does post some TPP content from his personal profile, developing the official *Tech Policy Press* account on LinkedIn could be beneficial.

Initially, we explored the possibility of TPP expanding to Facebook and Instagram for content distribution. However, after becoming more familiar with TPP's voice, we don't believe these platforms are well-suited for it. Additionally, given that Meta is a significant part of TPP's coverage area, the potential conflict of interest in using Facebook or Instagram is not worth the cost-benefit.

Lastly, we believe TPP's structure of expert contributors and a highly knowledgeable audience is perfect for Discord, where the audience and creators could connect and discuss the issues. Platformer has had success with its own Discord server, Sidechannel, which currently has more than 6,500 members.

Sidechannel, which Newton hosts in partnership with a few other newsletter writers, has created an informal space for his readers to build a community of their own. The Discord strategy likely boosts brand affinity and loyalty among those newsletter subscribers. It can work for TPP as well.

Summary of Recommendations

Tech Policy Press holds an interesting position in the market. With a journalistic mission, an expert voice and the knowledge of a trade publication, TPP has differentiated itself from the majority of its would-be competitors.

We recommend that TPP own that niche. Using its existing partnerships as a model, TPP should seek out other academic and research-based publications to utilize its content. There is potential for republishing, citation or even paid contributions. TPP can also open its site for free syndication in the spirit of Creative Commons.

In terms of reach, TPP can capitalize on its connection to expert contributors, think tanks and research institutions to spread its content on Twitter and LinkedIn. TPP should have content sharing guidelines for its contributors to make sure no promotional opportunities are missed.

To build a more loyal and connected audience, we recommend that TPP launches a Discord server. This will give the TPP readership direct access to Justin and TPP's contributors, while maintaining a level of personal connection that is not possible on public social media platforms.

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