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The Legal Implications of Publisher Rights Regulations for Media Business Models in the Digital Platform Economy

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Abstract

The expansion of global digital platforms has transformed news distribution, creating asymmetrical relationships between conventional media institutions and dominant technology corporations such as Google and Meta. Platform-based distribution and algorithmic curation have shifted advertising revenues and audience traffic away from news publishers, increasing their dependence on digital intermediaries. This study examines the legal implications of Publisher Rights regulations for media business models and strategic alliance management between media companies and digital platforms. The research employs qualitative document-based juridical analysis of Publisher Rights regulations, platform licensing policies, corporate policy statements, and institutional reports from media organizations in Indonesia and Australia. Meta-synthesis integrates findings from previous empirical studies on publisher-platform relations, while reverse engineering is applied to interpret the operational logic of content distribution and monetization mechanisms. The findings indicate that Publisher Rights regulations strengthen media organizations' bargaining positions in licensing negotiations and encourage contractual revenue-sharing arrangements with digital platforms. However, media companies remain structurally dependent on algorithmic visibility systems controlled by platforms, particularly regarding audience reach and advertising monetization. Unilateral algorithmic changes can affect traffic distribution and reduce the predictability of publisher revenues despite existing licensing agreements. These findings suggest that Publisher Rights regulations improve the legal recognition of news content ownership and provide stronger negotiation mechanisms. Nevertheless, their effectiveness in reducing platform dependency remains limited because digital platforms retain substantial control over algorithms, audience access, and monetization infrastructures. Therefore, broader governance mechanisms are required to promote transparency, accountability, and balanced relationships within digital media ecosystems.

KEYWORDS

algorithmic gatekeeping; digital disruption; media business models; power imbalance; publisher rights regulation.

Introduction

The dominance of global digital platforms has significantly transformed the structure of the contemporary media industry, positioning technology corporations not merely as intermediaries of information distribution but as actors exercising substantial control over audience access, advertising markets, and news circulation (Iosifidis, 2025; Rolnik, 2019). Within the framework of platform capitalism, digital platforms derive economic and strategic power from the control of data infrastructures and networked distribution systems that mediate interactions between content producers and audiences (Srnicek, 2017). This transformation has generated structural dependency among conventional media organizations, particularly as platform-based monetization mechanisms redirect advertising revenue and audience traffic toward technology companies operating through algorithmic distribution systems (Aji, 2023; Van Dijck et al., 2018). Although

concepts such as *digi-serfdom* and *techno-feudalism* have been used to describe the exploitative dimensions of digital platform dominance (Hunt, 2024; Taghizade & Ahmadov, 2025), this study primarily employs the theoretical perspectives of platform capitalism and platformization to explain how economic control over digital infrastructures reshapes media business relations and regulatory challenges.

The increasing dependence of media organizations on digital platforms has created significant legal and commercial tensions concerning the ownership, distribution, and monetization of journalistic content. Platform companies benefit economically from news dissemination while conventional publishers frequently experience declining advertising revenues and weakened bargaining positions in negotiations over content use (Geddes, 2020; J. Kim & Yum, 2024). These asymmetrical relations are further intensified by the limited capacity of national regulatory systems to supervise transnational digital corporations whose operations extend beyond conventional jurisdictional boundaries (Flew, 2023; Maulana, 2021). Consequently, governments in several jurisdictions have introduced Publisher Rights regulations to strengthen the legal recognition of publishers' economic rights and to establish fairer compensation mechanisms between media organizations and digital platforms. In this context, algorithmic governance is positioned in this study as a supporting background explaining platform dependency, rather than as the primary analytical focus.

This study specifically examines how Publisher Rights regulations affect media business models and contractual alliance arrangements between media companies and global technology platforms. The analysis focuses primarily on Indonesia as the principal legal context, evaluating the implementation of Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024 within its domestic media market. Concurrently, Australia is deliberately employed as the sole comparative reference because its (News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code, 2021) represents the pioneering global regulatory benchmark for platform-publisher remuneration (Flew & Wilding, 2021; Molitorisz & Attard, 2024). This comparative design allows the study to benchmark emerging Indonesian contractual dynamics against an established empirical predecessor, directly contrasting their structural impacts on licensing agreements, bargaining positions, revenue-sharing arrangements, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Accordingly, the central research question guiding this study is: How do Publisher Rights regulations reshape media business models and strategic alliance arrangements between conventional media organizations and digital platform companies?

To address this question, the study integrates perspectives from platform economics and strategic alliance management. The concept of platformization explains how media organizations become structurally integrated into platform-controlled ecosystems that determine visibility, audience access, and monetization opportunities (Van Dijck et al., 2018). Meanwhile, strategic alliance management is operationalized through four core dimensions: bargaining position, contractual design, risk-sharing mechanisms, and partnership governance structures (Ritala & Almpantopoulou, 2021). Through this framework, Publisher Rights regulations are analyzed not merely as copyright instruments, but as regulatory interventions that reshape cross-sector business alliance configurations within the digital economy. To ensure analytical systematicity and empirical rigor, these four operational dimensions are structured as a foundational matrix in the Results section, explicitly linking each dimension to specific regulatory, institutional, and documentary evidence sources.

Previous studies concerning digital platforms and media

industries can generally be classified into three major strands. First, political-economy studies predominantly examine platform capitalism, data extraction, and the concentration of communicative power within global technology corporations (Coudry & Mejias, 2019; Gould et al., 2024; Srnicek, 2017). Second, sociotechnical studies focus on algorithmic governance, audience manipulation, and transformations in journalistic practices within platformized media systems (Geddes, 2020; J. Kim & Yum, 2024). Third, legal and media policy studies discuss copyright reform, digital platform regulation, and publisher compensation mechanisms within emerging Publisher Rights frameworks. However, despite these developments, limited research has systematically examined the legal-empirical implications of Publisher Rights regulations for strategic alliance arrangements between media organizations and digital platforms, particularly regarding contractual governance, bargaining structures, and revenue-sharing models. Existing studies tend to analyze Publisher Rights either as copyright protection mechanisms or as media policy instruments, without adequately connecting them to alliance governance and business model transformation.

The originality of this study therefore lies in its interdisciplinary integration of legal-regulatory analysis with strategic alliance management perspectives in examining Publisher Rights regulations. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize platform dominance or copyright protection, this article develops a conceptual framework linking Publisher Rights regulations with alliance governance mechanisms between media organizations and technology companies. The study contributes by demonstrating how legal interventions influence bargaining positions, contractual structures, and revenue-sharing arrangements within publisher-platform collaborations. In addition, by focusing on Indonesia with Australia as a comparative regulatory reference, this research provides a legal-empirical perspective on how Publisher Rights frameworks operate within different institutional environments and affect the sustainability of media business models in platformized digital markets.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the role of Publisher Rights regulations in addressing structural imbalances between media organizations and global digital platforms, particularly regarding business model transformation and strategic alliance governance. The research further evaluates how such regulations affect licensing arrangements, revenue-sharing mechanisms, and bargaining dynamics between publishers and digital platforms. Ultimately, this study seeks to construct a conceptual legal-management framework explaining the relationship between Publisher Rights regulation, alliance governance, and media business sustainability within the digital platform economy.

Methods

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative document-based juridical analysis to examine the impact of Publisher Rights regulations on media business models and strategic alliance arrangements between media organizations and digital platforms. The research focuses on Indonesia as the primary jurisdiction, particularly following the enactment of Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024 concerning Publisher Rights, while Australia is used as a comparative case due to its implementation of the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code. The study combines normative legal analysis with qualitative document analysis to evaluate how regulatory frameworks influence bargaining positions, licensing arrangements, and revenue-sharing mechanisms between publishers and technology companies.

The unit of analysis consists of three categories: (1) legal and regulatory documents concerning Publisher Rights and

Table 1. Methodological Data-Source Matrix of Analyzed Documents

Document / Source Title	Jurisdiction	Year	Source Type	Reason for Inclusion
Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024 concerning the Responsibility of Digital Platform Companies to Support Quality Journalism (<i>Publisher Rights</i>)	Indonesia	2024	National Statutory Law / Executive Decree	Primary domestic legal framework analyzed to evaluate state-mandated platform responsibilities, operational parameters, and mandatory remuneration models.
News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code (Act No. 21 of 2021)	Australia	2021	National Statutory Law / Federal Act	Principal global comparative benchmark used to evaluate final-offer arbitration mechanisms and structural publisher-platform negotiation dynamics.
Official Corporate Policy Statements & News Licensing Disclosures (Google News Initiative Updates & Meta Newsroom Public Announcements)	Global / Corporate	2021–2024	Corporate Policies & Public Terms of Service	Evaluated to interpret private platform counter-strategies, compliance parameters, and unilateral algorithmic visibility adjustment behaviors.
Institutional Digital Platform Reports & Regulatory Briefs (Indonesian Press Council/ <i>Dewan Pers</i> Annual Reports & Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] Digital Platforms Inquiry Reports)	Indonesia & Australia	2021–2025	Institutional Reports / Independent Regulatory Reviews	Analyzed to retrieve baseline empirical data on media advertising shifts, traffic dependencies, and cross-border regulatory implementation challenges.

digital platform governance; (2) publicly accessible licensing agreements and policy statements between media organizations and digital platforms; and (3) institutional and annual reports published by media companies and industry organizations discussing platform dependency, digital monetization, and publisher compensation mechanisms. The period of analysis covers documents published between 2020 and 2025, corresponding to the period during which Publisher Rights regulations and platform compensation policies experienced substantial development in several jurisdictions.

Meta-Synthesis Procedure

Meta-synthesis was utilized as the primary analytical strategy to integrate findings from previous empirical studies related to Publisher Rights, platform governance, and media-platform relations. A comprehensive literature search was executed on January 15, 2026, across the Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar databases. To ensure maximum precision and replicability, the search process employed the following exact Boolean query string across titles, abstracts, and keywords: ("*Publisher Rights*" OR "*news media bargaining*" OR "*digital platform regulation*") AND ("*platform capitalism*" OR "*media business model*" OR "*platform governance*" OR "*strategic alliance*"). The search architecture targeted publications issued between 2020 and 2025, limiting results to peer-reviewed journal articles, policy reports, and institutional publications available in full text.

Following the PRISMA reporting framework (Page et al., 2021), a systematic multi-stage screening process was implemented. The initial database search yielded 42 records. After removing duplicates and screening titles and abstracts for basic relevance, full-text articles were evaluated against rigorous inclusion criteria. Studies were included if they: (1) explicitly analyzed Publisher Rights or platform compensation frameworks; (2) examined legal, economic, or managerial dynamics between media organizations and digital platforms; and (3) provided empirical or policy-based evidence concerning licensing structures, bargaining mechanisms, or revenue distribution. Of the 42 identified studies, 21 were excluded during the full-text evaluation stage for the following specific reasons:

1. 10 studies were excluded because they focused strictly on technical algorithm design or computer science engineering without legal or media policy relevance.
2. 6 studies were excluded due to a lack of empirical or rigorous policy-based findings (e.g., short commentaries, industry opinion pieces, or conceptual blog posts).
3. 5 studies were excluded because they investigated platformization or governance within non-media sectors (e.g., e-commerce, ride-hailing, or gig economy frameworks).
4. Consequently, 21 studies successfully met all eligibility criteria and were advanced to the final synthesis phase.

The synthesis process was executed using systematic thematic coding and comparative categorization. The 21 selected studies were grouped into three explicit analytical dimensions: platform governance and economic dependency, Publisher Rights regulation and legal protection, and strategic alliance arrangements between publishers and digital platforms. This multi-layered extraction enabled the identification of recurring operational patterns regarding bargaining asymmetries, contractual governance mechanisms, revenue-sharing models, and institutional responses to platform dominance.

Juridical and Document Analysis

The juridical analysis focused on examining the legal structure, regulatory objectives, and implementation mechanisms of Publisher Rights regulations. Key legal documents analyzed in this study include Indonesia's Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024 concerning Publisher Rights, Australia's News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code, and supporting policy documents issued by regulatory institutions and media associations. These regulations were selected because they represent significant legal interventions specifically designed to address bargaining imbalances between publishers and digital platforms.

In addition to legal documents, the study analyzed publicly available institutional materials, including policy reports, media industry publications, and annual reports from media organizations operating within platform-based environments. The selection of these documents was based on their relevance to publisher-platform negotiations, licensing arrangements, and digital revenue structures. The analysis particularly focused on references to audience dependency, advertising

shifts, licensing compensation, and strategic partnership mechanisms with digital platforms.

To ensure empirical transparency and methodological replicability, the specific legal statutes, regulatory frameworks, corporate statements, and institutional reports analyzed in this study are systematically cataloged in Table 1, detailing their jurisdiction, publication year, source classification, and analytical rationale for inclusion.

Reverse Engineering as an Analytical Lens

This study employs reverse engineering not as a standalone technical method, but as an analytical lens for interpreting how platform distribution systems influence publisher visibility and monetization patterns. The analysis specifically operationalizes four dimensions of publicly observable platform features within digital news ecosystems:

1. **Algorithmic Ranking Visibility:**
Examining search engine results page (SERP) positions, Google News aggregation hierarchies, and platform news feed curation visibility scales.
2. **Referral Traffic Reports:**
Evaluating metrics derived from inbound audience analytics, platform-to-publisher click-through rates, and off-platform redirection volumes documented in media performance dashboards.
3. **Content Monetization Rules:**
Assessing programmatic ad-revenue allocation formulas, instant article monetization thresholds, and third-party content licensing compensation parameters.
4. **Platform Policy Updates:**
Monitoring official developer blog announcements, API access parameter modifications, and public terms-of-service revisions issued by Google and Meta.

Rather than conducting a technical source-code deconstruction of proprietary algorithms, the study examines the documented input-output relationships between these observable platform alterations and their reported structural effects on publisher traffic distribution, licensing negotiations, and advertising revenue architectures. The analytical procedure involved tracking and cross-examining specific platform policy shifts against corresponding corporate publisher disclosures and institutional media reports that cataloged variations in content visibility and monetization streams. Through this approach, the reverse-engineering lens functions as a rigorous conceptual framework for decoding how opaque platform governance mechanisms materialize as tangible economic variables, thereby directly altering bargaining dynamics and strategic alliance configurations between conventional media organizations and digital platforms.

Data Integration and Analytical Workflow

The analytical workflow was conducted in four stages. First, legal and policy documents were classified according to jurisdiction, regulatory objectives, and governance mechanisms. Second, empirical studies identified through meta-synthesis were coded thematically to identify recurring issues related to platform dependency, bargaining structures, and licensing arrangements. Third, institutional reports and contractual documents were analyzed comparatively to evaluate how Publisher Rights regulations influence business practices and alliance governance between publishers and platforms. Finally, findings from juridical analysis, meta-synthesis, and document analysis were integrated through cross-source comparison to identify converging patterns and regulatory implications.

To strengthen analytical trustworthiness, the study employed source triangulation by comparing legal documents, academic studies, institutional reports, and industry publications. The consistency of findings across

these sources was used to validate interpretations regarding the effects of Publisher Rights regulations on media business models and strategic alliance management. This approach enhances transparency and analytical coherence while ensuring that the conclusions remain grounded in identifiable documentary evidence rather than speculative assumptions regarding platform operations.

Result and Discussion

Regulatory Repositioning of Publisher Rights and Bargaining Structures

The document analysis indicates that Publisher Rights regulations in Indonesia and Australia normatively reposition news content as an economic asset subject to remuneration within platform-based distribution systems. This finding is primarily derived from the comparative examination of Indonesia's Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024 specifically Article 7, which establishes the statutory mandate for formalized commercial cooperation and Australia's News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code 2021 (enacted as Part IVBA of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*). Both frameworks implement binding legal mechanisms requiring digital platforms to negotiate structured compensation arrangements with news publishers. In both jurisdictions, the regulations introduce formal recognition that journalistic content possesses measurable economic value when utilized within digital platform ecosystems, effectively challenging the historical precedent of unpaid content extraction.

The legal texts analyzed do not automatically guarantee equal bargaining outcomes between publishers and digital platforms; however, they establish a statutory basis that systematically mitigates structural negotiating asymmetries. Specifically, the Australian framework incorporates mandatory bargaining and final-offer arbitration mechanisms under Division 4 and Division 6 of the Mandatory Bargaining Code, which legally compel platforms to accept binding dispute resolution if commercial negotiations collapse. Similarly, the Indonesian framework imposes explicit platform responsibility and operational clauses under Article 5 of Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024, obligating digital intermediaries to prioritize quality journalism, maintain algorithmic transparency, and prevent discriminatory distribution practices. These provisions are legally coupled with Article 7's enforced cooperation frameworks, which specify paid licensing, revenue-sharing models, or data-sharing agreements as mandatory pathways. Collectively, these clauses force a transition from unilateral, platform-controlled content circulation toward highly structured, contract-governed interorganizational alliances (Flew, 2024; Syahriah, 2023).

The findings from the literature meta-synthesis further demonstrate that prior studies consistently identify bargaining asymmetries as a central operational risk within publisher-platform relations (Andzani & Irwansyah, 2023; Irwansyah Rezeki et al., 2023; Suherman, 2025). Nevertheless, the synthesized data indicate that Publisher Rights frameworks operate primarily as institutional instruments for negotiating financial compensation rather than structural mechanisms capable of completely dismantling algorithmic infrastructure dependency. Consequently, this study conceptualizes Publisher Rights not as an absolute redistribution of digital sovereignty, but as a targeted legal intervention that partially rebalances contractual dynamics and codifies platform accountability within the contemporary digital media ecosystem.

From the perspective of strategic alliance management, these precise legal clauses formalize alliance governance across three critical dimensions: bargaining position elevation

Table 2. Key Contractual Provisions, Implications for Bargaining Power, and Evidentiary Sources in Publisher–Platform Partnerships

Contractual Dimension	Observed Pattern in Documents and Reports	Relevance to Bargaining Power	Source/Evidence Category & Primary Reference(s)
Remuneration Clauses	Compensation arrangements linked to content licensing and distribution	Strengthens publishers' negotiation leverage	Legal Texts: Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024; (News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code, 2021) Prior Empirical Studies: (Flew & Wilding, 2021 ; Molitorisz & Attard, 2024)
Auditability Provisions	Requests for greater transparency regarding content performance and revenue calculations	Reduces information asymmetry	Public Platform Policies & Industry Reports: Public platform licensing policies and institutional reports from media organizations (2020–2025)
Dispute Resolution	Arbitration and mediation mechanisms incorporated into regulatory frameworks	Limits unilateral platform dominance	Legal Texts: (News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code, 2021) ; Presidential Regulation No. 32 of 2024
Termination Clauses	Concerns regarding abrupt policy or algorithmic changes affecting partnerships	Increases legal uncertainty for publishers	Prior Empirical Studies & Industry Reports: (Geddes, 2020 ; Suherman, 2025); Institutional publications
Editorial Independence	Normative emphasis on preserving newsroom autonomy within platform partnerships	Protects journalistic legitimacy	Prior Empirical Studies & Legal Texts: (Bossio, 2023 ; Kim & Yum, 2024); Regulatory frameworks

via statutory mandates, contractual remuneration via enforced revenue-sharing models, and structural dispute resolution via state-backed arbitration frameworks. Rather than operating through informal, high-risk content distribution arrangements, publisher–platform interactions increasingly display the governance characteristics of institutionalized strategic alliances. These alliances are strictly regulated through explicit licensing parameters, transparent remuneration provisions, and formalized compliance procedures, thereby injecting legal predictability into asymmetric digital markets.

Findings from Literature Meta-Synthesis: Platform Dependency and Editorial Position

The meta-synthesis of 21 selected studies demonstrates recurring patterns concerning the structural dependency of media organizations on platform-controlled distribution infrastructures. Several studies report that audience traffic acquisition, advertising visibility, and content reach are increasingly mediated through algorithms operated by dominant digital platforms such as Google and Meta ([Carpes, 2020](#); [Suherman, 2025](#)). However, this study does not independently measure traffic dependency through primary quantitative data. Instead, the finding reflects converging evidence identified across the reviewed literature and institutional reports.

The literature synthesis also indicates that algorithmic distribution systems tend to prioritize engagement-oriented metrics, potentially affecting the visibility of investigative or long-form journalism compared to highly clickable content ([Geddes, 2020](#); [S. Kim & Kim, 2024](#)). These findings are supported by previous empirical studies discussing platform governance and editorial adaptation strategies rather than by direct experimental observation conducted in this research. Therefore, the present study interprets algorithmic influence as an important contextual factor shaping publisher–platform negotiations, not as the central object of causal analysis.

Document analysis of industry reports further suggests that media organizations increasingly adapt editorial and business strategies to platform visibility systems. Several annual reports and institutional publications examined in this study reference declining advertising revenues, audience fragmentation, and increased reliance on third-party distribution infrastructures. Nonetheless, the evidence primarily demonstrates institutional perceptions and reported strategic adjustments rather than direct causal proof that algorithms alone determine editorial outcomes.

Transformation of Media Business Models and Alliance Arrangements

The findings indicate that Publisher Rights regulations have the potential to encourage shifts in media business arrangements from predominantly advertising-based dependence toward licensing and remuneration-based partnerships with digital platforms. This conclusion is derived from comparative analysis of regulatory provisions, institutional reports, and documented bargaining arrangements between publishers and platforms in Australia.

For instance, several media organizations in Australia entered compensation agreements with digital platforms following the implementation of the News Media Bargaining Code. Publicly available reports and industry publications analyzed in this study indicate that these agreements introduced additional revenue channels associated with content licensing and platform partnerships. However, because most agreements remain confidential, the precise financial scale and contractual details are not fully accessible for independent verification. Accordingly, this study interprets the emergence of licensing remuneration as an indication of evolving revenue structures rather than definitive evidence of a complete transformation of media financing models.

From a strategic alliance management perspective, the findings demonstrate that publisher–platform relations increasingly involve formal governance arrangements characterized by contractual negotiation, risk-sharing mechanisms, and long-term cooperation frameworks. The analyzed documents suggest that media organizations are no longer positioned exclusively as passive content suppliers, but increasingly participate in structured negotiations concerning remuneration, audience distribution, and content usage rights.

This transformation also introduces managerial adjustments within media organizations. Institutional reports reviewed in this study frequently reference the growing importance of coordination between editorial, legal, and business divisions in managing platform partnerships. Such coordination becomes necessary because licensing agreements may affect editorial distribution strategies, monetization planning, and organizational sustainability. Nevertheless, the available documentary evidence does not permit strong causal claims regarding the direct financial effectiveness of these alliances across the industry as a whole. The analysis further identifies several strategic alliance dimensions emerging within publisher–platform relations:

1. Bargaining Position

Publisher Rights regulations provide publishers with a

stronger legal basis for negotiation, particularly regarding compensation for news distribution and content usage.

2. **Contractual Design**
Emerging agreements increasingly include provisions concerning remuneration mechanisms, content licensing, and dispute settlement procedures.
3. **Risk-Sharing Mechanisms**
Revenue-sharing arrangements potentially distribute some economic risks between publishers and platforms, although dependence on platform visibility systems remains substantial.
4. **Governance Mechanisms**
Regulatory frameworks such as arbitration procedures and mandatory bargaining systems contribute to more formalized alliance governance structures.

Contractual Risk and Legal Governance in Platform Alliances

The juridical analysis identifies several contractual vulnerabilities within publisher–platform alliance arrangements, particularly regarding remuneration certainty, unilateral platform policy changes, and editorial independence protections. The reviewed licensing and policy documents suggest that platform governance remains asymmetrical because digital platforms continue to control algorithmic distribution infrastructures and audience access mechanisms.

One recurring issue identified in both regulatory analysis and prior studies concerns the risk associated with unilateral algorithmic modifications. Institutional reports and previous empirical studies referenced in the meta-synthesis indicate that changes in platform distribution systems may affect audience reach and advertising performance for publishers. However, the present research does not directly test algorithmic impacts through technical experimentation. Accordingly, these findings should be interpreted as documented institutional concerns rather than independently verified causal outcomes. The analysis further identifies several contractual clauses that become increasingly significant under Publisher Rights frameworks (see Table 2).

From a strategic alliance management perspective, these clauses demonstrate that Publisher Rights regulations contribute not only to copyright protection but also to the governance structure of publisher–platform partnerships. The contractual relationship increasingly reflects elements of alliance governance, including negotiated remuneration, procedural dispute settlement, and attempts to manage dependency-related risks.

Integrated Findings

Overall, the findings suggest that Publisher Rights regulations contribute to the formalization of strategic alliances between media organizations and digital platforms by introducing legal mechanisms for negotiation, remuneration, and governance. Nevertheless, the evidence analyzed in this study also indicates that platform dependency remains structurally significant because audience access and content visibility continue to be mediated through proprietary platform infrastructures. Accordingly, the results do not demonstrate that Publisher Rights regulations fully resolve asymmetrical power relations within digital media ecosystems. Instead, the findings indicate that such regulations create a more formalized legal environment in which publishers possess stronger bargaining instruments while still operating within platform-dominated distribution structures.

The findings of this study indicate that Publisher Rights regulations contribute to the formalization of bargaining arrangements between media organizations and digital platforms through the establishment of legal mechanisms related to remuneration, negotiation procedures, and dispute

resolution. However, these regulations do not eliminate structural dependency on digital platforms. Instead, they reposition publishers within a more institutionalized contractual environment in which bargaining processes become more formally regulated. This interpretation is consistent with Resource Dependence Theory (RDT), which explains that organizations seek to reduce uncertainty and rebalance asymmetric interdependence through governance arrangements, negotiated alliances, and institutional coordination (Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). In the context of publisher–platform relations, Publisher Rights regulations therefore function as institutional instruments that partially redistribute bargaining capacity without fundamentally transforming platform dominance over distribution infrastructures, data control, and audience access.

These findings also reinforce previous scholarship on platform capitalism and platformization, particularly studies emphasizing the concentration of infrastructural power within global technology corporations (Poell et al., 2019; Srnicek, 2017; van Laar et al., 2020). Existing literature has consistently demonstrated that digital platforms extract economic value from media organizations through audience intermediation, algorithmic visibility control, data ownership, and advertising concentration (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Poell et al., 2019). The present study supports these observations but extends the discussion by examining how legal-regulatory mechanisms reshape alliance governance between publishers and platforms. Consequently, the contribution of this study does not primarily lie in reaffirming platform dominance, which has already been extensively established, but rather in explaining how Publisher Rights regulations alter the contractual and strategic dimensions of publisher–platform relationships within platformized media ecosystems.

This distinction is analytically important because much of the existing literature on the Australian News Media Bargaining Code has predominantly focused on policy effectiveness, platform responses, compensation outcomes, or implications for journalism sustainability (Bossio, 2023; Flew, 2024; Molitorisz & Attard, 2024). Comparatively, relatively limited attention has been given to Publisher Rights from the perspective of strategic alliance management. The present study therefore contributes by conceptualizing publisher–platform relations not merely as copyright disputes or regulatory interventions, but as evolving strategic alliances characterized by bargaining asymmetry, negotiated remuneration, governance procedures, and dependency management. From this perspective, Publisher Rights regulations can be interpreted as governance mechanisms that influence alliance design and interorganizational coordination rather than solely instruments of copyright enforcement.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that strategic alliance management offers a productive interdisciplinary framework for understanding how media organizations adapt to platform-dominated ecosystems. The analyzed regulatory documents and institutional reports demonstrate that publisher–platform partnerships increasingly involve formalized contractual arrangements concerning content licensing, remuneration systems, dispute settlement procedures, and operational coordination. These patterns correspond with alliance management literature emphasizing governance mechanisms, contractual safeguards, risk-sharing structures, and dependency management as responses to unequal bargaining relations within interorganizational partnerships (Jiang, 2023; Kohtamäki, 2023; Stuart, 2000). In this regard, the study proposes a conceptual linkage between regulation, bargaining structure, and media business adaptation in which Publisher Rights regulations shape alliance governance, which subsequently influences revenue arrangements, strategic positioning, and organizational adaptation within digital markets.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study contributes by developing a legal-strategic nexus model integrating three interrelated dimensions: (1) Publisher Rights regulation as a legal governance mechanism; (2) bargaining structure as the mediating factor shaping publisher-platform negotiations; and (3) business model adaptation as the organizational response within platformized markets. This framework differs from much of the prior platform economy literature that has predominantly examined monetization dependency, platform concentration, or algorithmic governance in relative isolation (Nielsen & Fletcher, 2023; Winseck, 2026). Instead, the present study highlights how legal interventions interact with strategic alliance structures to shape contractual relations, governance configurations, and revenue arrangements within contemporary digital media ecosystems.

Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted cautiously. The study relies primarily on qualitative document analysis, regulatory texts, institutional reports, and synthesized prior scholarship rather than longitudinal financial data or direct contractual access between publishers and platforms. Consequently, the evidence supports the conclusion that Publisher Rights regulations create opportunities for more structured negotiations and compensation mechanisms, but it does not conclusively demonstrate that such regulations fundamentally transform platform power relations or guarantee long-term media sustainability across jurisdictions. The regulatory impacts observed in Australia and the emerging Indonesian framework remain highly context-dependent and are influenced by institutional capacity, market structure, and the continuing dominance of platform-controlled infrastructures (Syahriar, 2023).

The discussion further indicates that Publisher Rights regulations may generate unintended strategic consequences. While remuneration frameworks potentially provide additional revenue channels for publishers, they may simultaneously intensify dependence on negotiated partnerships with dominant digital platforms. From the perspective of strategic alliance theory, this condition reflects a paradox of cooperative dependency in which publishers pursue economic stability through agreements with actors that continue to control critical infrastructural resources and audience distribution channels. Accordingly, the relationship between regulation and media sustainability should be understood as conditional rather than deterministic.

Compared with prior studies, the present research contributes incrementally by clarifying the legal-management dimensions of publisher-platform relations and by operationalizing strategic alliance management concepts within the Publisher Rights debate. Specifically, the study identifies bargaining position, contractual design, remuneration mechanisms, dispute resolution procedures, and dependency management as central governance components within contemporary media-platform alliances (Bossio, 2025; Heylen, 2024). This conceptualization expands existing media policy scholarship by demonstrating that Publisher Rights regulations influence not only copyright recognition and compensation arrangements but also the broader organizational architecture of cross-sector digital partnerships.

The implications of these findings suggest that future regulatory development should not focus exclusively on compensation mechanisms, but should also address governance transparency, contractual accountability,

procedural safeguards, and the structural implications of platform dependency. Nevertheless, these implications should be understood as analytical interpretations derived from the examined regulatory and institutional evidence rather than definitive policy prescriptions. Additional comparative and longitudinal research involving direct contractual analysis, financial performance indicators, and multi-jurisdictional case studies remains necessary to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of Publisher Rights frameworks in reshaping bargaining asymmetries and supporting media business sustainability within global digital platform ecosystems.

Conclusion

This study offers three primary insights into how Publisher Rights regulations reshape media business models within the digital platform economy. First, the analysis demonstrates that while these regulatory frameworks in Indonesia and Australia formalize bargaining relations and provide publishers with a stronger legal basis to negotiate content remuneration, they do not eliminate structural dependencies on platform-controlled infrastructures regarding audience access and content visibility. Second, the research reveals that these regulations drive the emergence of structured alliance arrangements characterized by formalized contractual governance, including specific remuneration clauses, licensing mechanisms, and procedural safeguards for dispute settlement and editorial independence; thus, Publisher Rights function not merely as copyright protections but as regulatory catalysts for strategic alliance governance. Third, the growing reliance on these licensing and compensation models encourages media firms to diversify revenue streams beyond conventional advertising, though this shift remains highly context-dependent and does not conclusively guarantee long-term, cross-jurisdictional media sustainability within inherently asymmetrical digital infrastructures.

The principal contribution of this study lies in its interdisciplinary framework, which integrates legal-regulatory analysis with strategic alliance management perspectives. Unlike prior scholarship that predominantly examines Publisher Rights through the isolated lenses of copyright enforcement or platform governance alone, this research conceptualizes publisher-platform dynamics as strategic alliances governed by bargaining structures, contractual mechanisms, and dependency management. Consequently, this approach establishes a novel legal-strategic framework that explicitly links macro-level regulation to micro-level bargaining positions and business model adaptation within platformized digital ecosystems.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. This study relies primarily on qualitative document analysis, synthesized literature, and institutional reports rather than direct contractual access or longitudinal financial data, rendering the findings interpretive rather than causally definitive. Future research should employ multi-country comparative case studies and longitudinal examinations of empirical performance to evaluate the enduring organizational impacts of these regulations. Based on these insights, future regulatory developments should expand focus beyond immediate remuneration mechanisms to strengthen governance transparency, contractual accountability, and procedural safeguards within publisher-platform partnerships.

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