



Cross-platformization: How U.S. right-leaning media curate their posts on Twitter and Truth Social

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Abstract

This study examines how seven right-leaning media organizations utilize cross-platformization strategies to reach audiences across multiple platforms; in this case, Twitter and Truth Social. Focusing on both content volume and story packaging, we collect right-leaning media organizations' social media posts and content from the 2022 U.S. midterm election. Combining computational and qualitative methods, we find that outlets posted only a small share of total stories across the two platforms and were selective in their content, often posting only on Twitter or Truth Social. For content

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posted on both platforms, the outlets posted content that ideologically aligned with the users of that platform. More specifically, right-leaning outlets on Truth Social tailored their posts to ideologically aligned users.

Keywords

social media, right-wing extremism, media organization, alt-tech

Introduction

Social media platforms have become instrumental to public conversation in contemporary society and people's lived experiences (van Dijck et al., 2018). Their influence on other media is no exception. As news content is often distributed and consumed on social media (Stocking et al., 2022), news media organizations adapt to the logics of social media in their production of content (Hase et al., 2023; Hermida and Mellado, 2020). As a body of literature, news platformization research discusses the opportunities and challenges news organizations face on social media (Nielsen and Ganter, 2018; van Dijck et al., 2018) and compares news media's social media posts with their news stories in terms of selection and presentation (e.g. Haim et al., 2021; Lischka, 2021). While there are some similarities across social media platforms, such as allowing their users to create profiles, articulate networks, engage with public content streams, and share private messages (Bayer et al., 2020), they are different in affordances, user demographics, and community norms (e.g. Jaidka et al., 2018). In this multi-platform context, a handful of studies have considered how news organizations platformize content on mainstream platforms (e.g. Hase et al., 2023).

However, to the best of our knowledge, no research has examined how right-leaning media organizations navigate mainstream and right-wing alt-tech platforms. Such platforms, like Gab, Truth Social, and Rumble, have gained significant traction on the political right, branding themselves as bastions of free speech and attracting conservative-minded users (Kor-Sins, 2023; Siapera, 2023). Many media organizations along the right-leaning spectrum, including Breitbart¹ and The Daily Wire, have created accounts on at least one of these alt-tech social media platforms and listed these accounts on their websites. Right-leaning media outlets leverage social media to amplify partisan narratives and achieve disproportionate engagement online (Benkler et al., 2018; Faris et al., 2017), creating a media environment that can cultivate right-wing attitudes (Wojcieszak, 2009) and mobilize conservative audiences for offline political action, from civil unrest to hate crimes (Karell et al., 2023; Müller and Schwarz, 2021; Wahlström and Törnberg, 2021). These practices may be especially noticeable in right-wing alt-tech spaces, which are more homogeneous compared to mainstream platforms.

Drawing on theoretical and methodological concepts from platformization (Hase et al., 2023) and news media research (Hase et al., 2023; Hermida and Mellado, 2020), we explore two forms of media content platformization on mainstream and alt-tech platforms: content volume and story packaging. We collected (1) Twitter and Truth Social posts, two popular microblogging platforms with relatively comparable affordances, and

(2) content URLs from seven right-leaning media outlets during the 2022 midterm election in the United States.² We first study whether content (in the form of URLs) was shared on Twitter, Truth Social, or both (*content volume*). We then applied semantic similarity analysis and qualitative textual analysis to examine whether content, when shared on both platforms, was framed differently on each platform (*story packaging*). We found that, while outlets promoted less than half of their stories on social media, stories that were shared on social media tended to be shared only on one platform (Twitter or Truth Social, but not both). Furthermore, these outlets tended to tailor their content to align with the ideological positioning of the platforms' users. Our results suggest two strategies that right-leaning outlets employ on social media: (1) a repeat approach, such as the one taken by *The Federalist*, wherein content shared on one platform is likely to appear on the other, with the same framing, and (2) a curated approach, such as the one utilized by Fox News, which tended to focus on one platform and tailored their messages when attempting to promote a story through both platforms. Subtle changes in story packaging between their main websites and social media posts also suggest a shift toward a more informal tone on these platforms, emphasizing the "social" nature of these spaces.

Literature review

Multi-platform media systems and cross-platformization

For this study, we define platformization as the pervasive influence of social media on social institutions and their practices (van Dijck et al., 2018) due to growing platform use by institutional actors and citizens. Helmond (2015) highlighted how the "platformization of the web" has shaped the information and interaction infrastructure online as platforms aggressively seek to turn the internet into commodifiable data. Building on this, we argue that platformization scholarship should take into account the growing number of social media platforms, particularly as platforms seek to distinguish themselves to appeal to different audiences. Platforms may do so by providing varied affordances, having different governance strategies, targeting specific audiences, or a combination thereof (Boccia Artieri et al., 2025; van Dijck et al., 2024). This is especially relevant for political discourse, as platforms may be distinguished not only by their features but also by ideological skews that shape which content is promoted or disincentivized by platform owners and users alike.

One industry that engages with platformization is news media. As audiences increasingly rely on social media platforms to find or consume information, news media outlets recognize these platforms' potential to broaden reach but are wary of their unchecked influence (Nielsen and Ganter, 2018). The result is an ever-changing intermingling of social media logic and traditional news media logic, creating a hybrid media environment in which media outlets and platforms coexist in a competitive yet interdependent way (Chadwick, 2017; Klinger and Svensson, 2015).

The ever-evolving and increasingly complex social media landscape necessitates constant adaptation by media organizations. We use "cross-platformization" to describe media organizations' efforts to adapt to a multi-platform world, in which many platforms have distinguished themselves by emphasizing their unique affordances and branding

(Bossetta, 2018). In this world, users' social media repertoire is characterized by diversity, as they "platform-swing" to fulfill their distinct personal expressive and social interaction needs across different platforms (Carter et al., 2023; Tandoc et al., 2019). In turn, media organizations must also adapt to these media consumption habits by maintaining a presence across multiple platforms.

This information ecosystem requires content creators to build a multitude of audiences, often across multiple platforms. For example, they may post content across platforms to increase reach or tailor it to platform-specific features or users (Ma et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2016). Media outlets are no exception, as many create accounts across multiple platforms to maximize content reach and tailor content to each platform's user base. Right-leaning media outlets, in particular, are motivated to optimize their cross-platformization strategies by leveraging both alt-tech platforms, where they can reach their most loyal readers, and mainstream platforms, where they can broaden their reach and spur conversation and debate beyond their ideological echo chamber.

Two forms of cross-platformization. Content volume and story packaging are two key forms of cross-platformization. Content volume refers to the emphasis a media outlet places on a given platform, as indicated by the proportion of total stories shared there. The different emphases a news outlet places on the platforms where it posts content may reflect a judgment about profitability. If a platform is more effective at driving traffic to the news site (i.e. an on-site strategy; Sehl et al., 2021), it may yield a greater "return on investment," which incentivizes the outlet to maintain a stronger presence on the platform. In other words, an outlet's social media editor(s) may make strategic decisions on what platform to heavily invest in to increase site visits and, ultimately, subscriptions (Neilson and Gibson, 2022).

Whereas content volume is focused on relative presence on a given platform, story packaging concerns how news outlets vary the presentation of the same story across different platforms, potentially to appeal to different user bases or to leverage distinct platform affordances. Other studies use terms like "presentation" (Anter, 2023; Welbers and Opgenhaffen, 2019) and "adaptation" (Hase et al., 2023), which are consistent with our conceptualization of story packaging. Hase et al. (2023) identify four adaptation strategies: excluding links to their websites, adding interactive features, adding engaging language, and adding personalization. Essentially, story packaging is a method of framing news content. As Shah et al. (2009) argue, framing is how "politicians and journalists characterize an issue in ways that help shape its reality for an audience, creating an acceptable range of meaning" (p. 85). We, thus, sometimes refer to outlets "framing" content in our analysis.

In addition to content differences in how an outlet may present the same story across two platforms, a media organization may also present a given story differently in the original headline than in a social media post. Hågvær's (2019) quantitative analysis and qualitative interviews reveal that a new story's social media headline may differ from the actual headline on the news website about 30% of the time, and that its promotional text tends to be linguistically more diverse. Similarly, Welbers and Opgenhaffen (2019) demonstrate a more colloquial and subjective style of news language on social media. Anter's (2023) systematic literature review of story packaging across platforms reveals that news

outlets' posts on Instagram and TikTok are more informal and intended to engage users, whereas news posts on Twitter and Facebook do not seem to emphasize interactivity. This differentiation in story packaging according to platform characteristics reflects news outlets' "off-site strategy," which is geared toward increasing engagement on social media platforms directly (Sehl et al., 2021). These strategic efforts to boost user engagement with news content can ultimately cultivate a likable brand image and grow new audiences (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2022).

Right-leaning media and social media platforms

In the contemporary media environment, the increasing prominence of right-leaning media is closely related to the growing influence of far-right ideologies and right-wing populist politics, deep-seated distrust toward legacy media, and ideologically aligned social media spaces and platforms. The spectrum of right-leaning media, from more established to alternative (Heft et al., 2019), has played a significant role in propagating "network propaganda," emphasizing identity-affirming misinformation and disinformation (Benkler et al., 2018) and frequently utilizing extreme and toxic frames to advance political and ideological objectives (Kalmar et al., 2018; Yang, 2025). By elevating peripheral ideologies and rhetoric into mainstream political discourse, right-leaning media (re-)shape the relationship between political elites and partisan media (Wong and Trilling, 2023) and challenge traditional press outlets (Ihlebak and Figenschou, 2022) and democratic norms (Yang, 2024).

Social media has been an important tool for right-leaning media to distribute content, build audiences, and make profits (Schroeder, 2019; Wong and Trilling, 2023). For example, both The Daily Wire and Western Journal reportedly relied on a coordinated network of right-wing Facebook pages to drive traffic to their websites (Legum and Zekeria, 2020). Right-leaning media outlets also respond more to audience metrics and have employed entertainment content to enhance user engagement on Facebook (Mukerjee et al., 2023; Peng et al., 2023). However, compared to studies of right-leaning media entities on mainstream social media, we know less about their activities on alt-tech platforms.

The term "alt-tech" was initially coined to describe non-commercial, user-governed platforms aspiring to a utopian vision of online social interaction (Gehl, 2015, 2017). However, the term has since been used to describe a starkly different phenomenon: what Karell et al. (2023) call "hard-right social media." These platforms brand themselves as free-speech safe havens for conservatives who perceive themselves to be "censored" on mainstream platforms (Kor-Sins, 2023). This branding, and the relative independence of alt-tech platforms, allows users on right-wing alt-tech platforms to promote more extremist viewpoints under the guise of free speech and platform independence (Salazar, 2018). In addition, the commercial and ideological imperatives of modern alt-tech platforms create a unique set of incentives for news outlets' platformization strategies, distinct from those of their non-commercial predecessors. It is these contemporary for-profit platforms, such as Gab, Gettr, and Truth Social, that our study investigates. As of 2022, roughly 16 million citizens regularly get their news from alt-tech platforms such as Bitchute, Gab, Gettr, Telegram, and Truth Social (Stocking et al., 2022).

The rise of right-wing alt-tech platforms has expanded the already robust right-leaning media ecosystem, providing popular right-leaning media outlets with access to a dedicated audience that rallies around core ideals, figures, and an absolutist perspective on free speech (Childs et al., 2022; Peucker and Fisher, 2023). Given the cohesive and insular right-leaning media ecosystem (Benkler et al., 2018), right-leaning media outlets likely leverage their substantial presence and influence to engage audiences on alt-tech platforms. However, there is a dearth of evidence regarding whether and how right-leaning media outlets communicate differently across mainstream and alt-tech social media platforms.

To compare right-leaning media's cross-platformization across mainstream and alt-tech platforms, we focus on Twitter and Truth Social. Our 2022 study window largely preceded Elon Musk's acquisition of Twitter, which closed on Oct 27, 2022, near the end of our data collection (we return to the implications of this transition in the section "Discussion"). During the bulk of our analysis period, both platforms occupied a similar affordance profile when compared along structural dimensions used in recent cross-platform analyses (e.g. Hase et al., 2023; Li et al., 2024). Following Hase et al.'s (2023) four-dimensional framework, both exhibited low algorithmic curation: Twitter offered an algorithmically curated home feed alongside a chronological view, while Truth Social offered a chronological-only feed. Both afforded high hypertextuality, with linking permitted in posts and user bios. Both platforms afforded high interactivity through replies, redistribution (retweets and reTruths), and likes, though only Twitter offered native polls. Both also exhibited moderate visuality, centered on short text (280 characters on Twitter, 500 on Truth Social) supplemented by images and video. Following this framework, both platforms fell under a "continuous, breaking news" logic.

Thus, where Twitter and Truth Social diverged lies outside of this affordance framework. The platforms differed in ownership and governance (Twitter as a publicly-traded firm until Oct 2022; Truth Social as the property of Trump Media & Technology Group), content moderation regimes (Truth Social brands itself as a free-speech alternative for users who feel "censored" on mainstream platforms; Kor-Sins, 2023), audience size (hundreds of millions of monthly active users on Twitter, several million on Truth Social), and audience ideological orientation (politically diverse on Twitter, conservative-aligned on Truth Social; Siapera, 2023; Zhang et al., 2024). Studying cross-platformization between two platforms with comparable affordances but contrasting audience and governance characteristics allows us to examine editorial differences while affordance constraints remain roughly comparable.

In this study, we compare right-leaning media outlets' presence on Twitter, a mainstream social media platform known for its political and news prominence, and Truth Social, an alt-tech platform created by President Donald Trump (between his first and second terms) and shown to help Trump garner mainstream and right-leaning media attention (Zhang et al., 2024). Yet despite the spread of right-leaning media accounts across both mainstream and alt-tech platforms, little is known about how these outlets distribute their content across them. Do they post their full slate of stories on both platforms, or do they treat each platform as a distinct distribution channel, sharing only a subset of stories on each? We begin with the question of content volume, asking:

RQ1: How much content did right-leaning media outlets share on Truth Social and/or Twitter?

Content volume, however, tells us only where outlets invest their cross-platform efforts. Volume alone does not reveal whether a given story is packaged the same way once it appears on both platforms. Do outlets simply duplicate the same post across Twitter and Truth Social, or do they tailor headlines, framing, or emphasis to match each platform's audience? We turn next to story packaging, asking:

RQ2: How did the right-leaning media outlets frame their news article content similarly or differently across the two platforms?

The case: 2022 U.S. midterm election

The 2022 U.S. Midterm election was the first federal election since 2020, and the Jan 6, 2021 insurrection, and is the first opportunity that candidates espousing “the Big Lie” (i.e. the conspiracy theory suggesting that the 2020 election, and Biden’s win, was illegitimate) could run for office. There were also several key changes to the information environment that likely shaped how politicians used social media platforms. Following the insurrection, several mainstream social media platforms suspended thousands of users who shared election-related misinformation (including, but not limited to, “the Big Lie”), including then-President Donald Trump, who was temporarily suspended from Facebook (Facebook Oversight Board, n.d.) and suspended from Twitter (Twitter, 2021), though his account was later reinstated by Musk (BBC, 2022). The suspension of thousands of users across several mainstream platforms likely contributed to the growth of alt-tech platforms (Buntain et al., 2023). This is also the first election following the development of Truth Social, the social media platform Trump developed after his suspension from Twitter, which he used to attract news media attention (Zhang et al., 2024).

Method

We conducted this study in four parts: data collection, data filtering, data pairing, and comparison (see Figure 1), and a qualitative analysis. First, we collected news story data from Media Cloud, an open-source media tracking database, as well as news post data from Twitter and Truth Social via their respective APIs. News story data from Media Cloud (Roberts et al., 2021) represents all stories available through an outlet’s RSS feeds, of which its news-sharing posts on social media should be a subset. Next, to answer RQ1 on content amount, we filtered Twitter and Truth Social posts to identify those that contained a URL from the Media Cloud data. Third, to address RQ2 on story packaging, we conducted a semantic similarity analysis to compare the extent to which two posts from Twitter and Truth Social accompanying the same news URL are similar. These three computational steps are illustrated in Figure 1. Finally, we further explored these distinctions in our qualitative analysis.

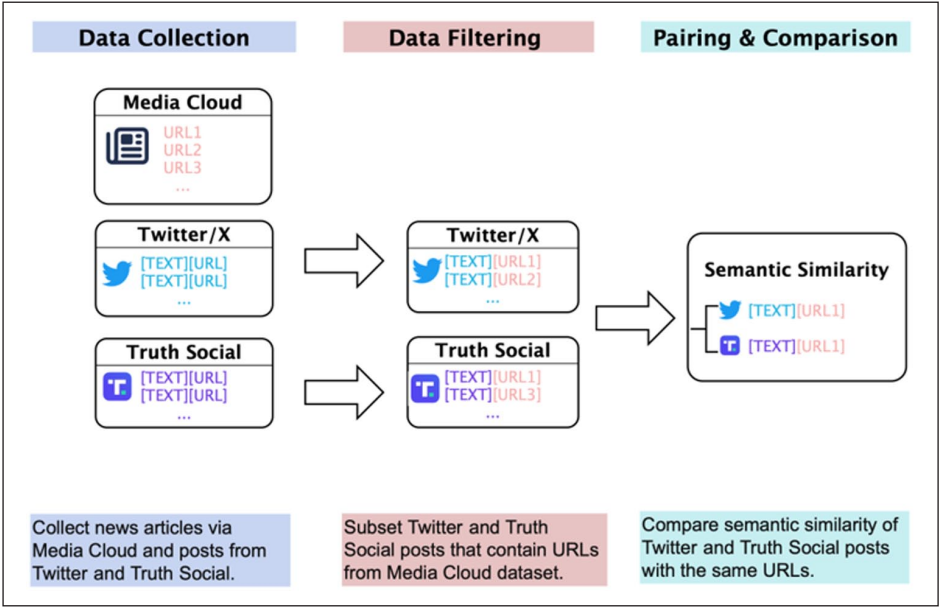


Figure 1. Computational approach to collecting, filtering, and pairing content URLs on Truth Social and Twitter.

Data collection

To study how right-leaning media organizations communicated across different platforms, we began with a list of 35 outlets identified as right-leaning by the literature (i.e. Faris et al., 2017; Heft et al., 2021; Yang, 2025). We excluded outlets that did not have a Twitter *and* a Truth Social account, which left us with 11 outlets: Breitbart, Dan Bongino, Daily Signal, *The Federalist*, Fox News, Gateway Pundit, the Media Research Center (MRC), One American News (OAN), The Sean Hannity Show, *Washington Examiner*, and *Washington Times*. Of these, we excluded The Sean Hannity Show and Dan Bongino because these were hosted by one individual, Gateway Pundit as it yielded no Twitter results, and Daily Signal as it was not on Media Cloud.

This left us with seven media outlets representing different segments of the right-leaning media ecosystem: legacy outlets (Fox News, *Washington Times*, and *Washington Examiner*), digital-first outlets (Breitbart, MRC, and *The Federalist*), and an alt-right outlet (OAN; see Wong and Trilling, 2023).

Once the seven outlets were selected, we collected URLs for news stories from each outlet using Media Cloud. Then we used the Twitter 2.0 AcademicTrack API and Truth Social API to collect all the social media posts from these media accounts that were posted from Aug 1, 2022, to Nov 30, 2022 (posts were collected from the API in early Dec 2022). This step yielded a total of 94,941 Truth Social posts and 165,617 Twitter posts. Of these, 91,969 Truth Social posts (97%) and 160,403 Twitter posts (97%) had

URLs, nearly all of which were directed back to the news organization's website or an affiliate website.

Data pre-processing and analysis

As Twitter used a *t.co* link shortener for all URLs on their platform, we unrolled each URL to get the original URL. This process was not necessary for Truth Social posts. Since our interest lies in examining how right-leaning media outlets promote their content on different social media platforms (Twitter vs Truth Social), we filtered the Twitter and Truth Social posts in our datasets to only include those containing URLs from the Media Cloud dataset, specifically links to news articles from our seven right-leaning media outlets. To answer RQ1 about content volume on each platform, we identified three initial categories of messages. First, there were messages with content URLs unique to Twitter. Second, there were messages with content URLs that were unique to Truth Social. Finally, there were messages with content URLs posted to both Truth Social and Twitter.

Of this last category, we examined whether the same content URLs were contextualized differently on Twitter and Truth Social, to address RQ2 about content packaging. We employed a semantic similarity analysis, a popular computational approach for assessing how similar two messages are (Chandratilake et al., 2018). Specifically, we used Sentence-BERT (SBERT),³ a modification of the pre-trained BERT network that uses Siamese and triplet network structures to derive semantically meaningful sentence embeddings (Reimers and Gurevych, 2019). SBERT stands out for its efficiency in generating sentence-level embeddings, making it particularly useful for tasks involving the measurement of semantic similarity between sentences. This capacity enables the analysis of datasets from platforms such as Truth Social and Twitter, where content primarily consists of succinct posts. We first pre-processed the data to remove capitalization, punctuation, and hyperlinks (at that point, we already knew the hyperlinks were identical for each pair of posts on Twitter and Truth Social). Then, for each pair of posts with the same URL, we applied SBERT to obtain the embeddings and computed cosine similarity based on the embeddings.

We also used a TF-IDF-based approach as a robustness check. These two approaches produced similar results, suggesting that cosine similarity, in general, is a useful approach for communication researchers to compare short messages across similar social media platforms. For the analysis in this paper, we use the SBERT approach; however, we note that scholars should validate their approach with a comparison of both (in some instances, TF-IDF may perform better; see Sitikhu et al., 2019). For more, see Supplemental Appendix A.

Using the cosine similarity scores between two messages with the same content URL, we further split the data into four datasets:

1. Identical: Posts with the same URL and exactly identical messages on Truth Social and Twitter (cosine similarity = 1).
2. Near-Identical: Posts with the same URL and near-identical messages on Truth Social and Twitter ($1 > \text{cosine similarity} > 0.85$).

3. Similar: Posts with the same URL and a similar message ($0.85 \geq \text{cosine similarity} \geq 0.50$).
4. Dissimilar: And posts with the same URL but dissimilar messages on Truth Social and Twitter ($\text{cosine similarity} < 0.5$).

To determine these divisions, we both relied on previous research (Starbird et al., 2018) and conducted our own comparisons of different thresholds.⁴

Qualitative analysis

In addition, we were also interested in understanding *how* these messages differed. We, therefore, conducted a qualitative framing analysis of the messages that had the greatest engagement on Twitter and Truth Social (top 20 measured in total shares, likes, and comments per media outlet); this sample contained identical, near-identical, similar, and dissimilar posts. We focused on these posts because social media platforms' algorithmically curated feeds tend to prioritize engagement (Milli et al., 2025) in combination with personal viewing habits, which increases the likelihood of exposure to these posts. In other words, the high engagement with these posts reflects what key users in the right-wing political media system attend to. Moreover, many previous studies have successfully used a similar sampling strategy (e.g. Beers et al., 2023; Shin et al., 2018).

Two coders independently analyzed the top 20 most popular posts, noting common themes and differences/similarities in story packaging across all platforms and media outlets. To this end, a dataset containing the top 20 posts per media outlet appearing on both Twitter and Truth Social for all seven media outlets was generated. It included BERT similarity scores and engagement metrics, including replies, reposts, and favorite/like counts. Each coder independently recorded their observations while reviewing the entirety of this dataset and met repeatedly to discuss individual findings, identifying the themes that were common or different across both sets of findings. Coders focused on language features that were more emotive, contained more hyperbole, or were more extreme or sensationalized, as well as whether outlets framed political actors differently on the two platforms.

These written observations and discussions resulted in the media outlet-level descriptions available in Supplemental Appendix B. After discussing these interpretations further, the coders grouped the findings into general frames that were common both within and across outlets and platforms (i.e. axial coding; LaRossa, 2005). The most popular posts were aggregated based on likes, retweets, replies, and quotes for Twitter, and replies, reblogs, and favorites for Truth Social. We report select aggregate engagement scores in the qualitative results section below to contextualize the relative engagement each media outlet received.

Results

Content volume

Table 1 presents the proportion of content URLs by the right-leaning outlets collected from Media Cloud that were on Twitter only, Truth Social only, or both. Overall, we find

Table 1. Proportion of URLs from each outlet that were also shared on Twitter and/or Truth Social.

Right-leaning media outlets	All MC URLs	URLs on Twitter only	URLs on Truth only	URLs on both
Breitbart	9937	2422 (24.37%)	238 (2.39%)	183 (1.84%)
Fox	20,243	307 (1.52%)	6375 (31.49%)	113 (0.56%)
MRC	2779	47 (1.70%)	6 (0.22%)	4 (0.14%)
OAN	6332	719 (11.35%)	10 (1.58%)	8 (1.26%)
<i>The Federalist</i>	1575	1460 (92.7%)	1422 (90.29%)	1333 (84.63%)
<i>Washington Examiner</i>	467	7 (1.50%)	209 (44.75%)	6 (1.28%)
<i>Washington Times</i>	9478	5929 (62.56%)	899 (9.49%)	827 (8.73%)

that, for all seven outlets, fewer than half of the URLs were ultimately shared on Twitter or Truth Social, suggesting that only a fraction of the stories were promoted on these platforms. For the URLs that were shared, we identify three right-leaning outlet groups based on URL sharing patterns on Twitter and Truth Social. The first group consists of *The Washington Times*, MRC, Breitbart News, and OAN. When sharing content on a platform, they shared more of their content on Twitter. However, it should be noted that OAN is somewhat different, as their posts often pointed to Rumble, a video-based social media platform, rather than the outlet’s website. The second group includes *The Washington Examiner* and Fox News, which shared more of their content on Truth Social. Lastly, the third group is represented by *The Federalist*, which shared URLs on both platforms in similar amounts.

Story packaging

For outlets that shared URLs on both Twitter and Truth Social, we also wanted to understand whether outlets would present the same stories (indicated by the same content URLs) differently across the two platforms. We therefore used a pairwise semantic similarity score, finding that right-leaning media organizations vary how they share the same content URL with different messages on each platform. Table 2 presents the average semantic similarity score for each media outlet.

These findings suggest the media outlets *The Federalist* and Breitbart were among the media outlets that are most likely to have semantically similar messages on Truth Social and Twitter when sharing the same URLs (OAN also had a high average BERT similarity score, but only had eight paired posts). On the other side, Fox News is the least likely to share the same message on Twitter and Truth Social when the same URL is being shared. Based on these scores, the social media posts from Twitter and Truth Social can be split into six categories: Twitter-only URLs, Truth-only URLs, and URLs appearing in both but with either identical, near-identical, similar, or dissimilar messages. These results are in Table 3.

For the messages that included the same link, it is worth exploring why and how content may have framed the URLs differently. For this reason, we now turn to our qualitative analysis of the top 20 most popular paired posts per media outlet.

Table 2. Average similarity score and overall number of Twitter and Truth Social paired URLs for right-leaning media outlets.

Right-leaning media outlets	BERT similarity (mean)	BERT similarity (SD)	Number of post pairs
Breitbart	0.91	0.18	203
Fox News	0.64	0.23	120
MRC	0.90	0.16	4
OAN	0.92	0.05	8
<i>The Federalist</i>	0.99	0.05	1159
<i>Washington Examiner</i>	0.78	0.15	6
<i>Washington Times</i>	0.63	0.27	3308

Note. As URLs and messages were sometimes repeated by an outlet, some outlets had more paired posts than paired URLs (because URLs were repeated), and one had more paired URLs than paired posts (because exact messages on one platform were repeated).

MRC: Media Research Center; OAN: One American News.

Story packaging: Qualitative analysis of content on both platforms

Outlets generally fell along a spectrum between those that largely duplicated posts regardless of the platform and those that used editorial discretion to adjust posted headlines depending on the platform. Our qualitative analysis revealed three takeaways. First, although different media outlets tended toward certain posting patterns, there was a surprising amount of variance in story packaging both within and between outlets. Second, although there was variance across outlets, Twitter posts generally included more incendiary and sensational frames. In contrast, posts on Truth Social tended to include more contextual cues and humanization of conservatives. Lastly, although outlets varied in terms of which framing they emphasized overall (MRC, e.g. strongly emphasized delegitimizing mainstream media), several themes were consistent across all platforms and outlets.

Category 1: Outlets that primarily share similar posts across platforms. Our qualitative analysis showed that three outlets—*The Federalist*, Breitbart, and *Washington Examiner*⁵—primarily shared similar posts across platforms. *The Federalist* had almost universally identical top posts across platforms. This outlet also drew verbatim from the story packaging on its website across all posts on both Twitter and Truth Social. In general, this outlet achieved more reach than others, with a top Twitter engagement score of 30,494 and a top Truth Social engagement score of 9938. These *Federalist* stories reflected central right-leaning narratives with a focus on politicians and elections (e.g. the Maricopa election count) framed within fears of fraud or interference, government overreach and corruption, claims of perceived censorship of conservatives by Big Tech and the mainstream media, and anti-China and anti-communist rhetoric. Similarly, Breitbart overall had very high similarity, with the lowest cosine similarity score being 0.78 for a story framing the Mar-A-Lago raid as corrupt political targeting by Democrats. Unlike *The Federalist*, Breitbart did not rely on the story packaging of its website across both

Table 3. Overall number of Twitter and Truth Social posts, and semantic similarity scores, for right-leaning media outlets.

Right-leaning media outlets	# of tweets	Twitter only (percent of all tweets)	# of posts truth	Truth only (percent of all “truths”)	# of post pairs	Semantic similarity of Twitter and Truth Social posts with the same URL			
						Identical (x = 1)	Near Identical (1 > x > 0.85)	Similar (0.85 ≥ x ≥ 0.5)	Dissimilar (x < 0.5)
Breitbart	4891	2899 (59.27%)	445	57 (12.8%)	203	56	112	25	10
The Federalist	1563	124 (7.93%)	1604	79 (4.9%)	1159	577	573	6	3
Fox News	25,229	205 (0.81%)	8368	7236 (86.5%)	120	1	25	58	36
OAN	1979	713 (36.00%)	1585	5 (0.31%)	8	0	7	1	0
MRC	3228	53 (1.61%)	154	3 (1.95%)	4	1	2	1	
Washington Examiner	18,456	1 (0.00%)	7560	231 (3.06%)	6	0	2	4	0
Washington Times	42,703	24,288 (56.88%)	1074	77 (0.07%)	3308	323	677	1099	1209

Notes: As URLs and messages were sometimes repeated by an outlet, some outlets had more paired posts than # of posts on a platform. For example, in the case of *Washington Times*, a URL posted on Truth Social was repeated ad nauseam on Twitter, with varying levels of semantic similarity in terms of content. MRC: Media Research Center; OAN: One American News.

platforms. Breitbart achieved middling reach for their posts across both platforms, with peak engagement scores of 15,446 and 9535 on Twitter and Truth Social, respectively.

Although the Breitbart posts we examined did not include any truly dissimilar posts, there were four posts with similarity scores between 0.7 and 0.85. The stories these posts focused on include the Mar-A-Lago raid, Truth Social on the Google Play store, FCC comments on TikTok, and a complaint filed by Breitbart to the IRS alleging attempts “to tamper with the 2022 midterm elections.” Among some posts, there were subtle shifts in how stories were framed on each platform. For instance, in the story about the Mar-A-Lago raid, the Truth Social post adopted a more combative tone, likening the United States to a “3rd World Banana Republic.” These variations underscore Breitbart’s adjustments based on platform characteristics, even as the overarching narratives remained aligned with right-leaning viewpoints.

The *Washington Examiner* had some variance, ranging from 0.5 to 1, in its popular posts across platforms; however, headlines remained similar.⁶ On Twitter, the most popular post achieved a peak of 1994 interactions on Twitter; on Truth Social, it received 335 interactions. The outlet published stories on both platforms about an array of topics, from Andy Biggs’ challenge for House Speaker to the dynamics of inflation and Trump’s actions. Though the popular posts were very similar, several were only moderately similar (with scores between 0.5 and 0.81) between the platforms. The variance often lay in the details, with tweets incorporating user tagging, the “BREAKING” label, and more sensational language. A post about a potential Hobbs-Lake debate, for example, was near-identical save tagging the two parties (e.g. “Democrat @katiehobbs”) on Twitter (Truth posts excluded Hobbs’ name, saying only “Democrat refuses to debate Trump-backed Kari Lake in Arizona governor race”), the addition of “NEW” on Twitter, and a full URL on Truth Social. The tendency to use Twitter features to include additional, albeit small, contextual cues also framed the story, driving a sense of urgency.

Category 2: Outlets that adjusted posts across platforms. While three outlets slightly modified their content to fit the affordances of that platform, our qualitative analysis shows that Twitter and Truth posts from four outlets showed greater variance: *Washington Times*, Fox News, MRC, and OAN. The *Washington Times* similarity scores were widely varied, from 0.23 to 1, and had low levels of reach on both Twitter and Truth Social. The outlet did receive more engagement on Truth (with a peak engagement count of 4223) than it did on Twitter (1219), keeping in mind that raw engagement metrics are not comparative given the disproportionate size of the platforms’ user bases.⁷ Notable variations emerged in the moderately similar posts (scores ranged between 0.54 and 0.76), with posts on Twitter often adopting a more confrontational tone than on Truth Social. For instance, *Washington Times*’ coverage of the Mar-A-Lago raid on Twitter invoked militarized language, such as “siege” and “occupied,” in addition to “raided” and “breached” verbiage. Truth Social posts were more personalized, citing a quote from Donald Trump describing the location as a “beautiful home.” For dissimilar posts (scores ranging from 0.23 to 0.48), *Washington Times* adjusted the story’s depth based on the platform and topic. For example, in posts about border control, The *Washington Times* uses the word “terrorism” on both platforms, but provides additional details via terms like “illegal entries, gang members, convicted criminals, fentanyl” on Truth Social. This differential

language suggests The *Washington Times* adapts its content based on the platform and the story's nature.

More than other outlets highlighted here, Fox News consistently adapted the content of its posts depending on the platform, with similarity scores ranging from 0.33 to 1. While only 10% of Twitter posts mirrored the website's headlines, 95% did so on Truth Social, possibly due to character count allowances. Engagement metrics showed Fox News secured a peak of 23,509 interactions on Twitter, surpassing that of 2392 on Truth Social.

With one exception, Fox News' tweets used attention-grabbing, all-caps introductions, contrasted with the straightforward posts on Truth Social. Posts about Ron DeSantis highlighted this difference, with posts on Twitter endorsing his potential presidential candidacy, while posts on Truth Social exhibited more restrained rhetoric. Typically, posts on Truth Social leveraged direct reporting, whereas Twitter employed detailed and sometimes charged language. In a tweet about Meghan Markle, for example, the post leads with "THAT'S RICH" and identifies her as "the Duchess," tying her to Prince Harry. But on Truth Social, she was framed as an "environmental activist" attending a "female empowerment event," both of which could be considered dog whistles for Truth Social users.

Similarly, the MRC, which owns Newsbusters and MRCTV, displayed a distinct content adaptation strategy as the similarity in their most popular posts varies from 0.19 to 1. Regarding story packaging, MRC often mirrored its website headlines on Twitter (30%) but rarely did so on Truth Social. MRC posts achieved low shareability overall, with engagement scores peaking at 1454 on Twitter and 110 on Truth. Of note, three dissimilar posts by MRC emphasized a more incendiary tone on Truth Social than on Twitter. For instance, in posts about a San Francisco assault, the Truth Social post used hyperbole: "Crime is out of control in San Francisco," whereas the tweet was *relatively* more straightforward: "Welcome to SF: Asian Woman, 70, Beaten in Broad Daylight After Leaving House." In other words, the San Francisco crime story was *relatively* more fact-based, straight reporting on Twitter, whereas the Truth post strategically framed the famously liberal city as crime-ridden.

Discussion

Our findings highlight several key trends with regard to the cross-platformization of articles in the right-leaning media ecosystem. First, a surprisingly large number of stories written by right-leaning media were not shared on Twitter or Truth Social. This suggests that outlets make selective choices about the types of stories they do try to promote and those that are intentionally not promoted.

Second, when stories are shared, we find that outlets are likely to share content on one of the platforms, either Truth Social or Twitter, but not both. More media organizations posted more on Twitter (RQ1), suggesting that this mainstream platform remains popular for content dissemination compared to the alt-tech accounts of right-leaning media used on Truth Social. This finding aligns with Hase et al.'s (2023) findings in a U.S. context, with the exception of OAN (which was Trump-endorsed, Archer, 2023).

Third, we do find that there is some level of consistency when sharing stories across two platforms. This is especially true in the case of *The Federalist*, which shared near-identical messages. But for outlets that shared their stories more on one platform than another, their multi-platform engagement tended to be more curated. In other words, platforms like Fox News were more likely to post on one platform (in this case, Truth Social), but when sharing content on Twitter also, their discursive strategy varied across platforms.

Our qualitative analysis dug deeper into understanding how right-leaning media adjust the framing of a story differently when sharing the same URL across the two platforms, which we describe as story-packaging (RQ2). Elaborating on this analysis, our qualitative results show that outlets like *The Federalist* did not necessarily take into account platform affordances when creating posts. For example, tweets often displayed more detailed posts despite having a shorter character count than Truth Social. For outlets that did vary their posts, there was some variation in the framing of topics (such as the use of militarized terms) or the inclusion of details, which may contribute to the survivability of extreme and topical narratives beyond what has been shown (Childs et al., 2022; Kalmar et al., 2018; Yang, 2025); however, it is important to note that such variations were a small portion of our overall dataset. Generally, posts on Twitter tended to be more engaging for users than content on Truth Social, with two exceptions (OAN and *Washington Times*), which could be explained by Twitter's larger user base.

Taken together, these findings clarify our analytical understanding of affordances and audiences for these outlets. Because Twitter and Truth Social occupied similar affordance profiles during our study window, the editorial differences we observe cannot be straightforwardly explained by what each platform technically affords. Instead, the variation we find, both in content volume and story packaging, is more likely a function of audience ideology and outlet positioning than of affordance differences. This finding is consistent with the view that platform logics inform but do not determine editorial choices (Hase et al., 2023).

Finally, right-leaning media outlets echoed common conservative talking points and packaged them across platforms using a combination of explicit rhetoric (often demonizing outgroups), dog whistles, and conspiratorial undertones that likely strike an affective register with their base. These outlets do not focus on purely entertainment-related posts across platforms, as Peng et al. (2023) noted. Instead, common frames among the outlets included themes related to politics and elections (aligning with the time period of data collection), government overreach, immigration (often framed in terroristic terms), crime/law and order, and culture wars. While the frames do not change between the website headlines and social media posts in our dataset, the story packaging sometimes does.

These findings suggest that right-leaning media outlets have yet to fully embrace the multi-platform digital ecosystem, despite its potential value. While some studies have emphasized the importance of social media to right-wing media organizations (Schroeder, 2019; Wong and Trilling, 2023), our study suggests that the accounts created by such media outlets are under-utilized, especially when considering that only a fraction of articles are promoted on a social media platform, alt-tech, or otherwise.

Despite finding limited examples of cross-platformization tactics utilized by right-wing media organizations, our results suggest that this pattern is more nascent, rather than non-existent. *Washington Times*, for example, did share many articles on both

platforms, and we found some differences in the story packaging on Twitter and Truth Social. Over time, other media organizations may adopt similar strategies, particularly if these alt-tech platforms grow in popularity or newsworthiness. As concerns about polarization persist (Benson, 2024), it is important for platformization researchers to consider the linkages between alt-tech platforms and right-wing media organizations, particularly if the former develops new affordances or strategies for collaborating with the latter. This also reinforces the importance of considering audience ideology in platformization studies (Boccia Artieri et al., 2025; van Dijck et al., 2024), particularly when the platforms treat ideology as a selling point to potential users.

Our findings should also be read against the evolving distinction between mainstream and alt-tech platforms. Our data collection straddled Elon Musk's Oct 2022 acquisition of Twitter, and the platform has changed substantially, with documented increases in hate speech (Hickey et al., 2025), right-leaning self-identification among U.S. Twitter/X users (Newman et al., 2025), and referrals to untrustworthy websites between the 2020 and 2024 U.S. elections (Dahlke et al., 2026). These changes suggest that the structural distinction between mainstream and alt-tech platforms may have partly eroded along dimensions such as moderation and content composition, even as platforms continue to diverge in audience size and investment in mainstream news. If this convergence continues, the cross-platformization strategies that right-leaning outlets pursue may need to be theorized less as adaptation across categorically distinct platform types and more as adaptation across a fragmenting but increasingly ideologically aligned ecosystem.

No study is without limitations, and ours is no exception. While we explore the shared URLs in greater depth with semantic similarity and qualitative analysis, it is worth exploring what stories were only shared on Twitter or Truth Social. Additionally, our analysis covers a handful of outlets over a narrow window of time, and future studies can explore platformization across a wider array of outlets and events. However, for the goal of this study (to understand platformization strategies among right-leaning media outlets), we argue that the case of an election is a conservative test (as outlets are expected to produce similar content). The fact that we found platformization strategies in a topic that produces highly similar content highlights a need to better understand how news and media organizations account for a multi-platform ecology in many ways.

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Data availability statement

Data available upon request (owing to copyright and terms of service policies, data cannot be shared publicly).

Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. We recognize standard formatting requires italicization of publication names. However, we have opted not to follow this convention due to the volume of times publication names are mentioned in this manuscript (i.e. it may be distracting for some readers in this context).
2. In Apr 2023, owner Elon Musk renamed Twitter to "X." However, at the time of data collection, the platform was still named Twitter.
3. In this study, we employed the sentence-transformers/all-MiniLM-L6-v2 model, available from Hugging Face.
4. For near-identical messages (between 0.86 and 0.99), we also considered thresholds of 0.90, 0.80, and 0.75. To distinguish dissimilar messages from similar ones, we also considered thresholds of 0.45 and 0.55.
5. These groupings were based on the qualitative analysis, which focused on the posts with the most engagement. Thus, these groupings do not perfectly align with the semantic similarity measures, which were conducted on the full corpus of data.
6. For all Truth Social posts, it used story packaging from its website verbatim; but this only occurred twice on Twitter. This is likely due to Twitter affordances for customization.
7. Twitter has a much larger user base than Truth Social.

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