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Prepared Remarks of
Federal Trade Commissioner
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Thank you to Attorney General Weiser and to all of you for having me.

It wasn't long ago that the stories we would read and hear about technology were mostly about how it was changing our lives for the better. New products and services were making us more connected and helped us to save time and money. And the leaders of these companies were self-described disruptors looking to put their users first.

But now we read and hear different stories, especially when it comes to dominant technology platforms. The startups of years ago are now large and powerful corporations. Seven of the top ten largest corporations by market capitalization are either an American or Chinese technology firm. They are no longer small and scrappy, but use their considerable ~~economic~~ government benefits and impose ~~self~~ serving contractual terms over users and suppliers.

Many of these firms are now able to map our minds by harvesting massive amounts of data. Journalist Julia Angwin wrote how one of these firms could "build a ~~complete~~ portrait of a user by name, based on everything they write ~~in~~ email, every website they visit and the searches they conduct."

More and more Americans are waking up to the notion that we are losing control. We want answers and accountability.

Enforcers, like state attorneys general and federal agencies, are rightfully focusing more attention

Massive data collection is feeding algorithms that are making more decisions about our society like which college a student is admitted to or whether an inmate gets parole. Mathematical models now help determine not only whether we can get a job, a loan,

journalists or create news content, but they've had a dramatic impact. According to one calculation, there are half as many journalists working in newsrooms today, compared to 2008.

For better or worse, news and journalism have long rested on a robust advertising market. In recent years, advertising technology and behavioral targeting reshaped advertising markets. The battle for advertising dollars is not waged on the basis of the quality or popularity of news content. It's increasingly driven by a contest on who has more data. Since the data hoarder – not the content creator – is capturing a big slice of the pie, there's less to go around to those with ideas. For local news outlets that lack the bargaining leverage, their struggles mean less transparency and accountability for town halls, police departments, and school districts all over America.

It's not just news and journalism, it's books, too. A few weeks ago, the Author's Guild reported that median writing-related earnings by American authors plummeted by 42 percent over the last decade. Even with the rise of ebooks and self-publishing, which would theoretically allow

leading to coordinated pricing effects, how adtech is reshaping the information content, and how incumbent firms evaluate the acquisition of nascent startups.

It's becoming increasingly clear that we need to reduce conflicts of interest and exclusionary conduct, increase transparency and auditability of algorithms, and address structural reforms. FTC fact gathering can help us lay the groundwork for more effective enforcement, legislation, and regulations to protect our economy, society, and democracy.

Let me conclude by reminding all of us that over the last century, competition enforcement actions, like the Bell Labs consent decree, created the conditions for scores of startups to innovate and flourish. While we often focus on the costs of action and regulation, we should also be asking ourselves about the cost of inaction and whether we are missing out on the innovation and progress that come with a competitive marketplace.

Thank you.