

Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker & Rep. Peter Pettalia receive Michigan Press Association's "Sunshine Award"

The Michigan Press Association honored State Senator Tonya Schuitmaker (R-Lawton) and State Representative Peter Pettalia (R-Presque Isle) for their support of sunshine and transparency in government.

MPA announced these awards during the national celebration of Sunshine Week in March. MPA President Bill Speer (Publisher-**Alpena News**) and Public Policy Chairman Dirk Milliman (Publisher-**Three Rivers Commercial-News** and the **Crawford County Avalanche**) formally presented the awards during the MPA board meeting at the Capitol last week.

Both Schuitmaker and Pettalia have been stalwart supporters of the public's right to know during their legislative careers. They received the award based on their support of last year's Freedom of Information Act expansion and their leadership in promoting the importance newspaper public notices in keeping Michigan's citizens informed about government activity. These actions directly support MPA's

mission of defending free speech, promoting an open and responsive government and fostering an informed citizenry.

"The MPA Sunshine Award is presented to legislators who champion good open government and understand the role the newspaper plays in watching government and informing the people," said Milliman. "Last year's winners, Rep. Tom McMillin and Rep. (now Sen.) Mike Shirkey were instrumental in pushing changes to Michigan's Freedom of Information Act into law. This year's winners, Rep. Peter Pettalia and Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker embody those same beliefs - transparency



in government, the rights of the people to know what their government is doing and a robust free press as a cornerstone to democracy, on both the local and state level. We applaud them for their efforts and their leadership in helping educate and move others in that same direction."

Some say the future of media is the big social platforms

Edited from original article by Alyson Shontell of BusinessInsider.com

Traditionally, media companies have operated independently and controlled their own destinies. They owned the whole content supply chain, from research to writing to publication to distribution. In the digital era, they built their own websites, which drew loyal readers (direct traffic), and they sold most of the ads that ran on their sites, keeping 100 percent of the revenue.

Those days are gone.

Now the fate of some publishers increasingly depends on social platforms such as Facebook, where billions of people discover news to read and videos to watch. And the social platforms are equally interested in the media business.

There are three reasons media and social platforms are converging:

- 1. Engagement.** Having original, native content keeps people in apps like Facebook and Snapchat longer.
- 2. Mobile.** Increasingly, content is be-

ing consumed on mobile devices, not desktops. Social platforms offer better mobile experiences than many publishers do.

- 3. Money.** Advertising companies spend about \$80 billion on television ads in the US. Those ad dollars are finally shifting toward digital video content in a meaningful way. All the social platforms want a chunk of it. That means they need video content to sell ads across. Those videos can be generated by users, media companies, or internally.

Though publishers might be worried that the platforms are going to siphon off the ad dollars that keep them alive, publishing straight to platforms isn't a new concept.



Facebook's plan:

Facebook wants media companies to start publishing articles on its platform first and their websites second. For Facebook, the decision to focus on media is "100 percent" being driven by the industry's movement toward mobile, a person familiar with the company's plans said.

Snapchat's plan:

In January, Snapchat launched Discover, a section of its app reserved for select media companies. It chose 11 launch partners and stuck their logos on its app. It then asked them each to create five articles a day in a Snapchat-friendly format

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