Japan IGF Bimonthly Event: Mar 2017

Date and time : Thu 23th Mar 2017 18:00-20:00 JST
Venue   : JPNIC office meeting room, Tokyo, Japan
Participants   : 34 onsite, 1 online

Survey: 24 responses
- Gender: Male 79%, Female 13%, No Response 8%
- Stakeholders: Internet operations related 46%, Business 17%, Government8%, Internet Users 13%, Academia 4%, Others 4% No Response 8%
- Satisfaction : Satisfied 41.7%, Generally Satisfied 37.5%, Average 16.7%, Slightly Unsatisfied 0%, Unsatisfied 0%, No Response 4.2%

Program:

Fake News and Internet Governance

1. Observations on fake news by different stakeholders (15 minutes each)
    - Observation by media journalist: Hirokazu Taira (Asahi Shimbun)
    - Observation by academia: Hiroyuki Fujishiro (Hosei University)
    - Observation by online news platform: Shigeki Matsuura (SmartNews, Inc)
2. Discussions on fake news
    - Questions asked at the end to the speakers
3. AOB: Whether to develop a code of Conduct for IGCJ

Next Meeting: 25th May 2017

Summary:

The first part was scene setting, to share an overview of fake news with the audience by each speaker as media, academia, and news platform respectively. The discussions which followed covered the following points about fake news.

- Distinction of roles of "Intermediary", "Media Platform" and "Media". Clarification of responsibilities for stakeholders in providing news is important.

- News platform must have a correct understanding of its responsibilities in the accuracy of the contents it provides, under the national law.

- Discussions on how we can deal with the nature of the Internet in relation to fake news. e.g., information spreads fast and once spread, it cannot be completely

deleted on all parts of the Internet easily. A few measures were discussed.

- Maintaining good balance in taking measures was discussed: Being too cautious could ultimately lead to an extreme measure of not using the Internet, and there was a call for positive preventative measures, with good middle ground.

- An observation made that business incentives (credibility, trustable image) could also be effective measures against fake news.

- Two questions were asked to the speakers at the end. They could choose to respond to either one:
    A) What can you each do as a stakeholder to take measures against fake news
    B) Is there an area where different stakeholders can collaborate to address fake news more effectively?

Additional details:
- Points raised in presentations by the speakers
    - Recent updates on fake news with specific examples such as the recent US election.
    - Issues surrounding fake news which are unique from conventional media, and
    - Countermeasures taken by online news platform.

- Responsibilities of news platform
    - Under the current Japanese law, Provider Liability Limitation Law only exempts indemnity liability. Violation of rights will not be exempted, even if you are not the source and serve as a platform for information online.
    - Clarification made on how information selected by AI should be treated as to responsibilities of a platform.
    - Clarification made on whether responsibilities of platform apply for images, and not limited to written contents.

- Counter measures discussed against fake news
    - Whether anonymity in information sharing has correlation to credibility of information shared
    - An observation made that conducting a professional research in tracking down how the fake news starts and the paths of their spreads may help understand

countermeasures against fake news.

e.g., There is already a research conducted in the US

➢ Precautions general Internet users can take were shared

e,g.,Check the contents of the link before retweet (Many people share links on twitter without reading), check the news source of news provided by news platform as a reference of reliability of the source.

● Regulation and restrictions may not be the only measures.

➢ There was a recent case where a major sponsor has declared to withdraw its advertisements from platform, as an example of losing credibility as platform could have such business impact.

● Last words from each speaker.

<u>Fact checks and recovery of trust:</u>

・ As someone coming from the media, what we can do are fact checks, what we would like to do is to recover trust.

<u>First, clarify ambiguity on distinction between "media" and "platform". Then, raise user literacy as well as awareness of corporate responsibilities of those who provide information online:</u>

・ Online information should be presented in such a way to have clear distinctions, so that children and elderly can clearly identify the difference. Today, it is difficult for users to distinguish media and platform for information online, as they are often ambiguous.

・ Once there is such a clear distinction, readers can make judgments based on the information source online, and it will be a matter or raising news literacy of individuals. Combining measures of "clarifying corporate responsibilities of information provided online (through media and platform)" and "raising literacy of online users" could help.

<u>Keep a good balance of preventative and reactive measures. Stakeholders of online news can do cross-checks between organisations:</u>

・ There are both preventative and reactive measures. To accommodate a variety of feeds on the Internet, reactive measures are preferable where possible. There are also a range of degrees on preventative measures, and they should also take into considerations at an adequate level.

- Preventions to a certain extent is possible by cross-checks between organisations providing online information. This is something Smartnews, Inc is likely to be able to contribute.
- Would like to help in awareness raising of individuals for preventative measures.