

Press Release

Corint Media enforces press publishers' right against Microsoft in court

After nearly two years of talks on licensing of press content use by Microsoft Bing search engine, Corint Media board of directors decides to take legal enforcement action

Inconsistent behavior and announcements by Microsoft's corporate management do not correspond to talks

Berlin, April 1, 2022 Yesterday, the Corint Media Supervisory Board of decided to take legal action against Microsoft to enforce the press publishers' right. Corint Media had recommended this step after more than two years of talks without any acceptable result on an appropriate remuneration for the use of press content by Microsoft Bing and MSN.

Corint Media representatives express surprise at Microsoft's contradictory behaviour. The president of Microsoft Corporation, Brad Smith, had repeatedly spoken out publicly in favour of supporting efforts to balance competition between press publishers - who are fundamental to the functioning of a democracy - and digital monopolists. He welcomed appropriate legal regulation as a fundamental step toward a fairer digital ecosystem for consumers, businesses and society. ([Blog post by Brad Smith](#))

Markus Runde and Christoph Schwennicke, Managing Directors of Corint Media, commented:

"Microsoft has only offered the press publishers represented by Corint Media an unreasonably low amount for the licensing of press content. This is apparently based on the equally disproportionate and inappropriately low "offers" that Google still thinks it can impose on the market in individual contracts in an abusive manner. The clear discrepancy between the public statements of Microsoft's management and actual practice is astonishing. Publicly, the company has repeatedly declared its support for press diversity and announced that it would honour press protection rights by making payments. Unfortunately, reality falls completely short of this announcement."

The action against Microsoft is part of a consistent and stringent legal enforcement of the press publishers' right by Corint Media against all exploiters, both under copyright and antitrust law. The collecting society had already filed a complaint with the Federal Cartel Office in 2020 against Google's and Meta/Facebook's market-abusing behaviour. This complaint has already been taken up by the Bundeskartellamt with regard to Google by means of the so-called basic decision pursuant to Section 19a GWB and the opening of proceedings against Google News Showcase. In contrast, the Office is currently still examining the applicability of Section 19a GWB to Meta/Facebook. Accordingly, in January and February 2022, the largest users, the market dominators Google and Meta/Facebook, were for the last time requested by Corint Media to pay appropriately for the use of press releases under the applicable law.

In the context of the proceedings on Google conducted under Section 19a GWB, the Bundeskartellamt had stated on 5 January 2022 ([Press Release](#)) that "**Alphabet/Google is an application case for the new supervision of large digital groups (Section 19a GWB)**" and noted the "outstanding cross-market significance".

About Corint Media

Corint Media, based in Berlin, is a European company in the private media industry. It represents the copyrights and neighbouring rights of almost all German and several international private television and radio stations as well as numerous press publishers.

The media companies represented by Corint Media include TV stations such as Sat.1, ProSieben, RTL, WELT, SPORT1, CNBC, Eurosport, VOX and CNN, radio stations such as ANTENNE BAYERN, radio ffn, Klassik Radio, Radio Hamburg, Hit Radio-FFH, RADIO PSR, R. SH, RPR1 and RTL RADIO, as well as press publishers such as Axel Springer, Verlagsgesellschaft Madsack, Mediengruppe Pressedruck, Aschendorff Mediengruppe, Rheinische Post Mediengruppe, sh:z Schleswig-Holsteinischer Zeitungsverlag and Badischer Verlag.

Corint Media is one of 13 collecting societies authorised in Germany and is under the supervision of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA).

Corint Media GmbH

Lennéstr. 5, 10785 Berlin, Germany
info@corint-media.com
Phone: +49 (0)30 206 200 0
Fax: +49 (0)30 206 200 33

Contact

Bernd Delventhal, Head of Communication
press@corint-media.com