

Chapter 8

The Role of Digital Platforms in Shaping Competitive Intelligence Strategies

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly evolving digital economy, competitive intelligence (CI) has moved beyond traditional market monitoring to become a dynamic, platform-driven capability. This chapter explores how digital platforms—from social media to enterprise SaaS and data analytics ecosystems—are reshaping the way organizations gather, interpret, and act upon intelligence. It unpacks the transformation of CI strategies as businesses increasingly rely on real-time, algorithmic, and participatory forms of knowledge extraction. Rather than treating digital platforms merely as tools, the chapter considers them as active environments that shape competitive behaviors, enable new forms of collaboration, and challenge conventional notions of information control. Drawing from contemporary cases, the analysis emphasizes the critical role of digital literacy, ethical reflexivity, and

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adaptive leadership in harnessing these platforms effectively. Ultimately, it argues for a reimagined model of CI—one that is agile, inclusive, and grounded in a nuanced understanding of digital realities.

INTRODUCTION

In today's economy, where volatility is no longer an exception but a defining feature, competitive intelligence (CI) has evolved from a behind-the-scenes activity into a mission-critical function deeply woven into the fabric of strategic leadership. The rise of digital platforms has been one of the most transformative developments in this evolution. What began as a shift in tools—moving from printed reports and manually compiled datasets to real-time dashboards and AI-powered analytics—has turned into a more profound transformation in how organizations perceive, pursue, and practice intelligence (Cano-Marin et al, 2023). No longer confined to static information retrieval, CI is increasingly shaped by platforms that are dynamic, participatory, and algorithmically driven. These platforms do not merely deliver data; they mediate how data is created, shared, and acted upon. This shift demands a rethinking of foundational assumptions. Traditional CI frameworks often rested on a linear model: data is collected, analyzed, then translated into decisions. But in a platform-mediated world, that sequence is no longer linear. Platforms accelerate cycles, dissolve boundaries between internal and external intelligence, and blur the distinction between signal and noise. Consider the instantaneous ripple effects of a tweet from a CEO, the strategic insights buried in customer reviews across e-commerce platforms, or the geopolitical implications discernible through platform-driven disinformation campaigns. Intelligence now flows in real-time, often unstructured, and sometimes manipulated—yet it remains essential. The challenge is not merely how to access data, but how to make sense of it meaningfully and ethically.

Digital platforms are also changing the nature of competition itself (Kayyali, 2025 a). Companies are no longer just competing in markets—they're competing within ecosystems, where visibility, velocity, and the ability to harness user-generated content can determine a brand's rise or fall. In this new terrain, CI is not an optional luxury but an adaptive survival

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