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CONSUMER FEEDBACK IN MANAGING DIGITAL INTERACTION IN THE PUBLISHING BUSINESS

ЗВОРОТНИЙ ЗВ'ЯЗОК СПОЖИВАЧІВ В УПРАВЛІННІ ЦИФРОВОЮ ВЗАЄМОДІЄЮ У ВИДАВНИЧОМУ БІЗНЕСІ

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Крупський О.П., Коростильова К.Д., Стасюк Ю.М. Зворотний зв'язок споживачів в управлінні цифровою взаємодією у видавничому бізнесі. Науково-методична стаття.

У статті розглядаються можливості використання зворотного зв'язку зі споживачами для визначення напрямків управління цифровою взаємодією у видавничому бізнесі. Проведено онлайн-опитування 171 користувача веб-сайту видавничого підприємства з подальшим аналізом даних методами описової статистики. Встановлено, що 57,9% респондентів негативно оцінюють навігацію сайту, а 81,3% вважають за необхідне його подальше вдосконалення. Найбільш виражені потреби пов'язані зі структурованим доступом до видань, розширенням параметрів сортування, попереднім ознайомленням із змістом продукції та розвитком додаткових пропозицій. Запропоновано розмежовувати коригувальні управлінські рішення, спрямовані на усунення існуючих бар'єрів взаємодії, та розвиваючі рішення, орієнтовані на розширення функціональних можливостей цифрового сервісу. Таке розмежування дозволяє перетворювати зворотний зв'язок користувачів на конкретні напрямки управлінських дій.

Ключові слова: цифровий споживчий досвід, користувацькі потреби, usability, управлінські рішення, цифровий сервіс, читацький досвід, клієнтоорієнтоване управління

Krupskiy O.P., Korostylova K.D., Stasiuk Yu.M. Consumer Feedback in Managing Digital Interaction in the Publishing Business. Scientific and methodical article.

The article examines how customer feedback can be used to identify directions for managing digital interactions in the publishing business. An online survey of 171 users of a publishing company's website was conducted, followed by descriptive statistical analysis. The findings reveal that 57.9% of respondents negatively assess website navigation, while 81.3% consider further improvements necessary. Users particularly value structured access to publications, flexible sorting options, product previews, and additional offerings. The study proposes distinguishing between corrective managerial decisions aimed at eliminating existing interaction barriers and developmental decisions focused on expanding digital service capabilities. This distinction provides a basis for translating user feedback into specific directions for managerial action.

Keywords: digital customer experience, user needs, usability, managerial decision-making, digital services, reader experience, customer-oriented management

The digitalization of consumer interactions is changing not only the tools used in marketing communications but also the requirements for managing customer touchpoints (Chikukwa et al., 2026). In this environment, a website is no longer primarily an information resource. It supports the search for and comparison of offerings, provides access to product content, and directly influences the customer's experience of interacting with a company. The quality of this experience is associated with customer satisfaction, engagement, and subsequent attitudes towards digital services (Cunha & Krupsky, 2025; Halim et al., 2023; Pellegrino, 2024). This is particularly relevant to the publishing business, where digital technologies are changing how publishing products are presented and how publishers interact with readers, creating new opportunities to shape the reading experience beyond traditional sales channels (Kalmykov, 2024a, 2024b).

Unlike many conventional retail products, books and other publishing products cannot be fully evaluated through their external characteristics or brief descriptions. Readers often need additional information about the content before deciding whether a particular publication meets their interests and expectations. This creates a specific challenge for online bookstores, where the opportunity to examine a book directly is limited. Choi et al. (2019) found that access to e-book previews positively influences purchasing decisions and that previews interact with customer reviews in shaping consumer behaviour. Park et al. (2025) also examined how familiar offline book-browsing practices can be adapted to online environments to improve user experience. These

findings suggest that the digital presentation of publishing products should be considered in terms of both information accessibility and opportunities for readers to evaluate content before purchase. For publishers, this makes the organization of product information and preview functionality an important part of managing digital customer interactions.

However, the mere presence of a digital channel does not ensure convenient interaction with consumers. Website design, usability, and the organization of access to information influence users' perceptions of the website, their satisfaction, and subsequent behaviour (Jongmans et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2023; Mamakou et al., 2023). Navigation and search functions are particularly important because they directly determine users' ability to find the products they need and continue interacting with the digital platform (Papanikolaou et al., 2026). Management must therefore assess not only the overall quality of digital services but also identify specific barriers and user needs.

Identifying these barriers, however, does not resolve the question of how management should respond to them. A negative assessment of website navigation may indicate difficulties with its existing structure, while requests for additional features may point to opportunities that the current digital service does not provide. Both types of feedback are relevant to managerial decision-making, but they imply different changes to the digital platform. Becerra et al. (2024) demonstrate the importance of translating customer perceptions into specific service improvement actions rather than treating customer evaluations as sufficient grounds for managerial intervention. Their approach also shows that identifying customer requirements and selecting actions are distinct stages of the decision-making process. For publishing companies, the challenge is to distinguish between feedback that calls for changes to existing digital interactions and feedback that indicates opportunities to develop new service capabilities.

Although existing research has examined digital customer experience, website usability, and the use of customer feedback for service improvement, the managerial interpretation of different types of user expectations remains insufficiently specified. For publishing companies, this concerns the distinction between problems arising from the existing organization of digital interactions and expectations associated with additional service capabilities. Addressing this distinction requires moving beyond general assessments of customer satisfaction towards identifying the nature of the changes suggested by user feedback.

Analysis of recent publications on the problem

Digital customer experience is shaped not by a single interaction with a website but by a series of interactions that accompany users at different stages of their journey. Online customer experience is multidimensional and depends on both the characteristics of the digital environment and the nature of consumers' interactions with it (Kacprzak &

Hensel, 2023). From a managerial perspective, improving this experience involves identifying problematic touchpoints and making targeted changes to the relevant service elements (Kandil et al., 2024). Digital experience should therefore be considered not only as an outcome of interaction that can be measured through satisfaction but also as an object of management requiring the identification of specific areas for improvement.

At the website level, this perspective shifts attention to the characteristics that users encounter directly when searching for and selecting products. Design and usability influence website evaluations, user satisfaction, and loyalty (Jongmans et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2023), while e-service quality and user experience are associated with overall satisfaction with e-commerce interactions (Mamakou et al., 2023). Internal search is particularly important: its organization determines how quickly users can move from identifying a need to finding a relevant offering, while the analysis of search behaviour helps identify opportunities for UX optimization (Papanikolaou et al., 2026). For publishing companies, the functionality of the digital environment must also accommodate the presentation of specialized product content and support interaction with readers. In this respect, the digital transformation of publishing changes not only the technologies used to distribute products but also the ways in which the reader experience is shaped (Kalmykov, 2024a, 2024b). Publishers' communication practices are also expanding through digital formats of audience interaction, as demonstrated by research on the use of meme marketing in the communication activities of publishing companies (Sokol et al., 2026).

However, information about user behaviour or satisfaction acquires managerial value only when it is used to determine changes to the service. Customer feedback can be used to improve service quality (Ziegler et al., 2023), while taking account of changing consumer needs helps specify directions for service development (Feng et al., 2026). From this perspective, feedback not only records problematic experiences but also provides information about the changes users expect. Unlike an aggregated satisfaction assessment, such information makes it possible to understand not only the current state of interaction but also what exactly a company should change.

Negative evaluations of an existing service function and positive expectations regarding a new function provide different types of information for managerial decision-making. Dissatisfaction indicates a perceived shortcoming in an interaction that users can already experience. Management can therefore examine the existing service process, identify possible causes of the problem, and consider changes aimed at reducing the identified difficulties. A request for a new feature has a different meaning. It expresses an anticipated benefit rather than an assessment of a service element already in use, and its implementation may require additional resources, technical capabilities, or changes to the company's offering. Research on customer feedback and service improvement provides a basis for

identifying service deficiencies (Ziegler et al., 2023), while approaches based on evolving customer needs draw attention to opportunities for service development (Feng et al., 2026). Becerra et al. (2024) further demonstrate that identifying customer requirements and selecting improvement actions are separate analytical tasks. Consequently, the frequency of a particular response should not be treated as a sufficient criterion for choosing a managerial intervention. The nature of the expressed need must also be considered.

Managerial decision-making involves comparing alternatives and selecting a course of action in light of the objectives and conditions under which it will be implemented. The use of consumer data, in turn, provides an informational basis for marketing decisions and managing customer interactions (Basu et al., 2023; Naumenko et al., 2025; Pinto et al., 2020). In the context of digital interactions, this means moving

from a collection of individual user evaluations towards identifying directions for developing a digital platform.

The reviewed studies approach digital customer interactions from different perspectives. Some explain how consumers experience websites and evaluate their usability, while others examine customer feedback as a source of information for improving services or supporting managerial decisions. Research on digital publishing adds an industry-specific dimension by considering how readers access and evaluate publication content. These perspectives are related, but they do not address the same managerial questions. To clarify their contributions and identify the issues most relevant to the present study, Table 1 summarizes the main research directions and their implications for managing digital customer interactions.

Table 1. Research Perspectives on Digital Customer Experience, Customer Feedback, and Managerial Responses

Research perspective	Representative studies	Main contribution to the research problem	Issue requiring further consideration
Digital customer experience	Kacprzak & Hensel (2023); Kandil et al. (2024)	Explains the multidimensional nature of online interactions and the need to improve individual customer touchpoints	How identified interaction problems can inform differentiated managerial responses
Website usability and information access	Jongmans et al. (2022); Guo et al. (2023); Papanikolaou et al. (2026)	Examines how website design, usability, and search functionality affect user evaluations and interactions	How specific usability problems should be translated into changes to the digital platform
Digital interaction in publishing	Kalmykov (2024a, 2024b); Choi et al. (2019); Park et al. (2025)	Addresses digital publishing and the importance of product information, previews, and reader experience	How readers' expectations can be interpreted as directions for managing publishers' digital services
Customer feedback and service improvement	Ziegler et al. (2023); Feng et al. (2026); Becerra et al. (2024)	Shows how feedback and customer requirements can inform service improvement	How to distinguish responses to existing deficiencies from opportunities to introduce new capabilities
Customer information and managerial decisions	Basu et al. (2023); Homburg & Wielgos (2022); Naumenko et al. (2025)	Connects customer information, digital capabilities, and managerial decision-making	How fragmented user assessments can be organized into actionable directions for managing digital interactions

Source: authors' own elaboration

The studies summarized in Table 1 help explain how consumers evaluate digital services and how customer feedback can support service improvement. They also reveal a question that deserves closer attention: how should managers interpret different types of user needs when deciding what to change? A negative assessment of an existing website function points to a problem that users have already encountered. Support for a new feature, by contrast, indicates an expected benefit that has yet to be demonstrated in practice. Although both responses can inform managerial decisions, they provide different grounds for action.

For publishing companies, this distinction matters because improving access to existing publications and introducing additional ways of interacting with readers may require different managerial responses. The present study therefore examines how specific user assessments and expectations can be organized into directions for managing digital interactions, without

assuming that the most frequently requested changes should automatically receive the highest investment priority.

Formulation of research objectives (task setting)

The aim of the article is to substantiate an approach to identifying directions for managerial responses in digital customer interactions based on customer feedback. To achieve this aim, the following objectives are set: to assess users' experiences when interacting with a company's digital platform; to identify the main barriers and needs related to its structure and functionality; to analyse users' expectations regarding potential improvements to the digital service; and, on this basis, to systematize the identified needs and substantiate the corresponding directions for managerial decision-making.

Materials and methods

The empirical basis of the study consists of the results of a survey of users of a publishing company's digital platform, conducted through an online

questionnaire using Google Forms. The survey involved 171 respondents who had experience interacting with the company's website; 170 valid responses were obtained for a separate question concerning the frequency of website visits. Adult users predominated in the sample: 77 respondents (45.0%) belonged to the 25+ age category, while 39 (22.8%) were aged 18–25. The 14–16 and 16–18 age groups were represented by 13 (7.6%) and 18 (10.5%) respondents, respectively. Another 24 participants (14.0%) were adults purchasing publications for children aged 6–10 or 10–14. At the company's request, its name is not disclosed, as the study used internal information concerning interactions with users. The questionnaire covered the frequency of website use and assessments of navigation convenience, the need for further website improvements, expectations regarding the website structure, sorting options, opportunities to preview the content of publications, and expansion of the product range. Depending on the nature of the indicator, questions included single-choice and multiple-choice responses, as well as ordinal rating categories. The complete list of questions and aggregated response results were recorded in the original survey materials.

Descriptive statistics were used for the analysis, including the calculation of absolute frequencies and relative proportions of responses. For multiple-choice questions, percentages were calculated based on the total number of respondents and interpreted as the prevalence of the corresponding need; therefore, their sum could exceed 100%. At the next stage, the identified evaluations, barriers, and expectations were systematized according to the nature of the required changes in digital interactions and matched with the corresponding directions for managerial responses. This made it possible to move beyond describing individual responses and distinguish between corrective decisions aimed at eliminating existing interaction problems and developmental decisions

focused on expanding the functionality of the digital platform.

Presentation of main results and their justification

The survey results indicated a relatively stable pattern of interaction between respondents and the digital platform of the company under study. Of the 170 users who answered the question about website visit frequency, 64 (37.6%) reported using it regularly, several times a month, while another 71 (41.8%) visited it occasionally. Only 35 respondents (20.6%) indicated that they visited the website very rarely. Thus, most respondents reported at least occasional use of the website, suggesting that their assessments were informed by previous interactions with the platform.

However, regular website visits are not accompanied by correspondingly positive assessments of its usability. Navigation was rated as rather inconvenient by 55 respondents (32.2%) and very inconvenient by another 44 (25.7%). Only 37 users (21.6%) provided positive assessments, while 35 (20.5%) selected the neutral option. Overall, 57.9% of respondents evaluated website navigation negatively, making it possible to identify navigation as one of the main problems affecting the current user experience.

The overall assessment of the need for changes confirms this problem. Further website improvement was considered necessary by 139 of the 171 respondents (81.3%), while only 12 (7.0%) expressed the opposite view and another 20 (11.7%) were undecided. Taken together, these findings reveal a certain contradiction: the website has an established audience that continues to use it, yet the existing user experience does not fully meet users' expectations (Table 2). This discrepancy points to the need for further analysis of which elements of digital interaction users consider most important to improve.

Note: A total of 170 responses were obtained for the question on website visit frequency; for all other indicators, $n = 171$.

Table 2. User Assessments of Interactions with the Company's Digital Platform

Indicator	Response option	n	%
Frequency of website visits	Regularly (several times a month)	64	37.6
	Occasionally	71	41.8
	Very rarely	35	20.6
Navigation convenience	Very convenient	9	5.3
	Rather convenient	28	16.4
	Neutral	35	20.5
	Rather inconvenient	55	32.2
	Very inconvenient	44	25.7
Need for further website improvement	Yes	139	81.3
	No	12	7.0
	Difficult to say	20	11.7

Source: authors' own elaboration

Users' expectations were most clearly reflected in their responses concerning the website structure. Among the proposed new sections, the greatest support was given to "Pre-orders", selected by 89 respondents (52.0%), a news and publisher information section, selected by 85 (49.7%), and "Popular Series", selected by 81 (47.4%). A separate section for reader reviews

was chosen by 63 respondents (36.8%), while 62 (36.3%) selected a section for branded merchandise. Only 3 respondents (1.8%) indicated that they did not need any new sections. As the question allowed multiple responses, these percentages reflect the prevalence of individual preferences rather than mutually exclusive groups of users.

The need for structural changes is primarily associated with simplifying access to the desired publications. When asked directly whether new sections would make searching easier, 157 of the 171 respondents (91.8%) answered positively; only 6 (3.5%) responded negatively, while 8 (4.7%) were undecided. Thus, users perceive the expansion of the website structure not simply as an increase in the number of content sections but primarily as a way to facilitate searching. This clarifies the nature of the navigation problem identified earlier: users' expectations concern not only general navigation convenience but also the organization of access to product content.

A separate group of expectations concerns features that support the selection of publications before purchase. The opportunity to read the first chapter of a manga free of charge was rated as very useful by 98 respondents (57.3%) and rather useful by 42 (24.6%). Thus, 81.9% of respondents evaluated this feature positively, while 18 (10.5%) expressed a neutral opinion and 13 (7.6%) evaluated it negatively. From the perspective of managing digital interactions, this finding is important because users expect the website not only to help them find publications but also to provide additional information about their content before making a purchase decision.

The need to simplify product selection is also evident in users' expectations regarding sorting options. Price was the most frequently requested criterion, selected by 104 respondents (60.8%). Sorting by genre was supported by 87 respondents (50.9%), by popularity by 75 (43.9%), by release date by 68 (39.8%), and by publication status ("completed/ongoing") by 61 (35.7%). As the question allowed

multiple responses, the resulting distribution indicates not the dominance of a single criterion but users' need to organize the available assortment independently according to different parameters.

At the same time, some expectations extend beyond navigation and searching the existing product range. The creation of a separate section for branded merchandise was supported by 157 of the 171 respondents (91.8%), while 14 (8.2%) opposed it. This finding complements the responses concerning the desired website structure but has a different managerial implication. The difference between these percentages reflects the distinct wording and response formats of the two survey questions: the first asked respondents to select preferred additions from several alternatives, whereas the second assessed support for a dedicated merchandise section directly. The results should therefore not be interpreted as contradictory measures of the same preference. While improvements in navigation, sorting, and the presentation of publications are primarily intended to facilitate interaction with the existing assortment, a separate branded merchandise section would involve expanding the digital channel's product offering itself. These directions should therefore be distinguished when determining subsequent managerial decisions.

The identified needs concern different components of digital interaction: some relate to access to information and searching for publications, while others involve supporting product selection or expanding the capabilities of the digital channel. The managerial interpretation of customer feedback therefore requires linking each specific user request to the corresponding direction of change in the digital platform (Table 3).

Table 3. Transforming User Feedback into Directions for Managing Digital Interactions

Identified need or barrier	Survey evidence	Direction of managerial response	Expected improvement in digital interaction
Navigation difficulties	57.9% negative assessments	Revising the website structure and navigation logic	Simplifying navigation between website elements
Need for structured access to content	91.8% believe that new sections would make searching easier	Developing the website's functional structure	Facilitating access to desired publications
Need for more flexible search options	Price – 60.8%; genre – 50.9%; popularity – 43.9%	Expanding sorting options	Simplifying product selection according to user-defined criteria
Need to preview products before purchase	81.9% positively assess the opportunity to read the first chapter	Introducing a preview feature	Expanding access to product information before purchase
Interest in additional product offerings	91.8% support a separate branded merchandise section	Developing a dedicated branded merchandise section	Expanding opportunities to interact with the company's product offerings

Source: authors' own elaboration

The proposed systematization shows that user feedback can guide managerial responses in different ways. In some cases, it reveals existing barriers to digital interaction; in others, it identifies needs for expanding the platform's functionality. This provides a basis for distinguishing between corrective decisions aimed at eliminating identified interaction problems

and developmental decisions associated with creating new digital service capabilities.

Discussion.

The findings suggest that the availability of an online channel alone is insufficient to ensure a satisfactory user experience. What matters is how well its functionality responds to users' needs. In the case examined, regular or occasional website use is

accompanied by predominantly negative assessments of navigation and a strong demand for further website improvement. This situation is consistent with the understanding of online customer experience as the outcome of multiple interactions between users and the digital environment (Kacprzak & Hensel, 2023), as well as findings on the role of usability in shaping website evaluations and user satisfaction (Jongmans et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2023). At the same time, our findings provide a more specific understanding of this relationship in the publishing business: an established audience and repeated visits to a digital platform do not, in themselves, indicate that the user experience meets readers' expectations.

The identified needs show that improving digital interactions cannot be reduced to a general requirement to make a website "more convenient". Users associate such improvements with specific features: structured access to publications, additional sorting options, opportunities to preview product content, and the development of additional product offerings. Particularly revealing is the combination of negative navigation assessments and strong support for new website sections as a means of facilitating search. This is consistent with studies that consider search organization and UX important components of effective digital interactions (Papanikolaou et al., 2026), but our findings allow the problem to be specified in terms of managerial actions. For a publishing company, this involves not only technical optimization of the interface but also organizing the digital environment according to how readers search for, evaluate, and select publications.

An important aspect of these findings is the shift from recording individual user assessments to interpreting them as a basis for decision-making. In this approach, customer feedback is used not as a final indicator of satisfaction but as an information resource for determining the nature of the managerial intervention required. This extends the approach to using feedback for service improvement (Ziegler et al., 2023; Feng et al., 2026). A company's managerial capability to address digital changes involves more than the mechanical implementation of technological solutions; it requires aligning these solutions with organizational objectives, the characteristics of communication processes, and development priorities (Akter et al., 2023; Krupskiy et al., 2025; Makedon et al., 2022). In this context, working with customer feedback forms part of a company's broader managerial capability to use digital resources and customer information to achieve business outcomes (Homburg & Wielgos, 2022). The distinction proposed in this study between corrective decisions aimed at eliminating identified barriers and developmental decisions focused on expanding the functionality of the digital platform makes this approach more specific at the level of managing customer interactions. These directions should not be understood as mutually exclusive categories of website modifications. A new function may also address an existing usability problem, while correcting a current deficiency may create additional opportunities for interaction. The

distinction therefore concerns the primary managerial purpose of a proposed change rather than its technical form.

Research Limitations.

The study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the empirical analysis is based on a survey of 171 users of a single publishing company's website. The results therefore reflect the characteristics of its audience and digital platform and cannot be directly generalized to other publishing companies or digital services. Second, the analysis relies on self-reported user assessments and expectations rather than observed behaviour. Respondents' support for particular website improvements does not necessarily indicate that these features will be actively used or produce measurable changes in purchasing behaviour.

Another limitation concerns the analytical approach. Descriptive statistics made it possible to identify the prevalence of specific user needs and barriers but did not establish relationships between individual characteristics, website usage patterns, and preferences for particular improvements. Moreover, the proposed distinction between corrective and developmental managerial decisions was derived from the interpretation of survey findings and has not yet been tested through the implementation of corresponding changes. Consequently, the study identifies potential directions for managerial action but does not assess their economic effectiveness or establish investment priorities.

Future research could examine the applicability of this approach across different publishing companies, compare stated user preferences with actual website behaviour, and evaluate changes in user experience and conversion rates following the implementation of specific managerial decisions.

Conclusions and prospects for further research

Customer feedback acquires managerial value when it makes it possible not only to identify problems in digital interactions but also to determine what specific changes a digital platform requires. In the case examined, critical assessments of navigation are accompanied by demands for structured access to publications, additional sorting options, and opportunities to preview product content before purchase. At the same time, some user expectations extend beyond eliminating existing barriers and concern the development of new digital channel capabilities.

On this basis, the study proposes distinguishing between two directions for managerial responses. Corrective decisions address previously identified barriers to digital interactions and aim to eliminate them, while developmental decisions arise when customer feedback indicates opportunities to introduce new features to the digital platform. This distinction does not establish a predetermined order of investment priorities, nor does it imply that the change receiving the greatest user support will automatically generate the greatest economic benefit. Its practical value lies elsewhere: in transforming a collection of fragmented user assessments and preferences into clear directions for managerial action.

Abstract

Digital interaction with consumers not only creates additional points of contact with the audience for a company but also necessitates the translation of user evaluations and expectations into specific management decisions. The purpose of this study is to substantiate an approach to identifying appropriate managerial responses in digital interactions with consumers based on their feedback. The empirical basis consisted of the results of an online survey of 171 users of a publishing company's digital resource. Descriptive statistics were used for the analysis, including the calculation of absolute frequencies and relative proportions of responses, followed by a systematization of the identified barriers and needs according to the nature of the required changes. It was found that regular or periodic use of the website is accompanied by a critical assessment of its navigation: 57.9% of respondents rated it negatively, and 81.3% consider further improvement of the website necessary. Among the most prominent expectations identified were structured access to publications, expanded sorting options, the ability to preview the content of a product, and the development of additional product offerings. Based on the results obtained, we propose distinguishing between corrective management decisions aimed at eliminating existing barriers to digital interaction and developmental decisions related to the creation of new functional capabilities for the digital resource. The theoretical significance of this study lies in clarifying the role of customer feedback as an informational foundation for determining the nature of managerial responses in digital interactions with consumers. In practice, the results obtained can be used to transform disparate user evaluations and preferences into differentiated courses of managerial action. The scientific novelty lies in the proposed distinction between corrective and developmental decisions based on the nature of the identified user barriers and needs. The limitations of the study are related to the use of data from a single publishing company and self-reported user evaluations and expectations. Further research should focus on testing the proposed approach at other companies and comparing stated needs with actual user behavior after the implementation of the corresponding changes.

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