

Appendix D: Domain analysis

To qualitatively assess the impact on website traffic via Twitter/X, we used the domain quality score developed by Lin et al. (2023) to categorize information quality, as NewsGuard only allows displaying five domain ratings in total, limiting our ability to fully analyze the dataset. Table D1 displays the top 10 domains with the largest increases in traffic, ranked from the highest to the lowest percentage increase. Conversely, Table D2 outlines the 10 domains that experienced a decrease in traffic. In both tables, the “Baseline Volume” column represents the total daily shares each domain had prior to the platform’s acquisition, while the “Change” column indicates the percentage increase or decrease in sharing frequency following the acquisition.

Our analysis revealed a notable trend: Among the top ten domains with increased sharing after the acquisition, eight have information quality scores in the lowest two quartiles, indicating a surge in lower-quality information. This finding suggests that the domains most benefiting from increased sharing post-acquisition are predominantly those with lower reliability, potentially leading to a decline in overall information quality on the platform. Conversely, the top ten domains that saw a decrease in sharing are primarily higher-quality sources, with only one scoring below 0.2 and six situated in the top three quartiles of information quality. This contrast highlights a shift in content visibility that favors lower-quality sources while potentially marginalizing more credible information providers.

Table D1. *Ranking of domains by positive change in sharing frequency before and after Elon Musk’s acquisition of Twitter/X.*

Domain	Change %	Baseline Volume	Information Quality
newspunch.com	308	16,807	0.124
weibo.com	174	190,873	0.478
thegatewaypundit.com	166	198,310	0.109
naturalnews.com	152	10,752	0.0
smartnews.com	95	259,468	0.790
lifenews.com	93	264,780	0.192
occupydemocrats.com	58	41,846	0.176
judicialwatch.com	56	148,444	0.108
rumble.com	52	599,866	0.162
imolaoggi.it	43	22,944	0.197

Note: This table lists the top 10 domains that experienced the largest positive change in sharing volume following Elon Musk’s acquisition of Twitter/X. Domains are ranked from the highest to the lowest percentage increase in sharing volume. The “Baseline Volume” column indicates the total daily shares each domain received before the acquisition, serving as a reference for initial traffic levels. The “Change” column shows the percentage increase in sharing frequency post-acquisition traffic levels. The “Change” column shows the percentage increase in sharing frequency post-acquisition.

Table D2. *Ranking of domains by negative change in sharing frequency before and after Elon Musk’s acquisition of Twitter/X.*

Domain	Change %	Baseline Volume	Information Quality
sputniknews.com	-92	571,160	0.369
dailywire.com	-50	661,992	0.384
gnews.org	-49	158,391	0.189
buzzfeed.com	-46	1,818,540	0.699
gettr.com	-44	663,563	0.43
engadget.com	-43	451,125	0.869
indiatoday.in	-43	468,460	0.776
thehill.com	-42	595,881	0.827
cnet.com	-38	632,007	0.951
independent.co.uk	-37	1,841,896	0.734

Note: This table lists the top 10 domains that experienced the largest negative change in sharing volume following Elon Musk’s acquisition of Twitter/X. Domains are ranked from the highest to the lowest percentage decrease in sharing volume. The “Baseline Volume” column represents the total daily shares each domain had prior to the acquisition, providing a reference for initial traffic levels. The “Change” column displays the percentage decrease in sharing frequency post-acquisition.