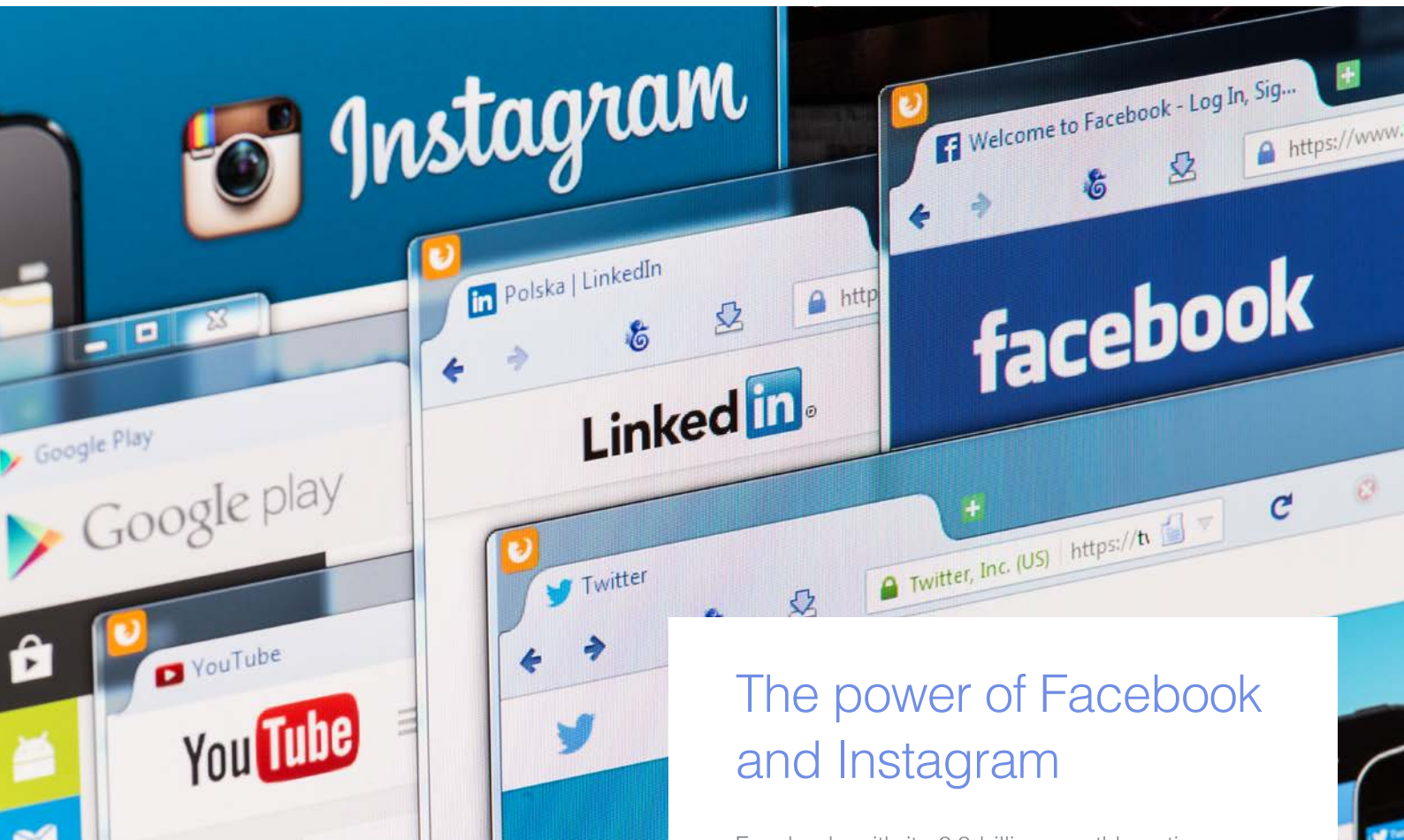


# BUT WHO REALLY RUNS THE WORLD?

*In our increasingly interconnected world, the real leaders are no longer just our presidents, but also the leaders of the major technology companies. The bosses of giants such as Facebook, Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Alibaba and Twitter have emerged as unavoidable forces influencing our daily lives.*



## The power of Facebook and Instagram

To see for yourself, just compare the figures for use of these platforms with the populations of our countries. The evidence is striking: the people who can be reached by a communication often far outnumber those reached by the message they might receive from a government or their president.

Facebook, with its 2.9 billion monthly active users worldwide, is the most popular social network. France, for example, has 40 million active users (compared with 186 million in the United States), representing almost 60% of its population (50% in the United States). Facebook subsidiary Instagram has 23.7 million active accounts in France (compared with 157 million in the United States).



A striking example of the reach and influence of these platforms is Cristiano Ronaldo, the most followed personality on Instagram with 595 million followers. If we compare this figure with the sum of the populations of the United States, France and Russia, we can see that Cristiano Ronaldo's reach on Instagram exceeds that of these three countries combined. This highlights the immense power and reach of social networks and influencers on platforms such as Instagram.

Users all over the world are connected to these platforms and use them to share, but above all to view content, interact with other users and follow their favourite personalities.

The global reach of these platforms goes far beyond national borders and allows technology leaders to reach billions of people around the world. Far more than any President in the world.

## The disruptive influence of Elon Musk

Elon Musk, founder of Tesla and SpaceX - and today the richest man in the world - has become a global symbol of technological innovation and entrepreneurship. With 144 million followers on Twitter, he has a huge resonance chamber, with a significant impact on the financial markets and on business life. History has shown that. One tweet from him and Tesla's share price plummets by 10%. Similarly, when Elon Musk shows his support for a company like Etsy, this translates directly into a significant increase in its stock market value (+18%). These two examples speak for themselves: the words and actions of technology leaders can have considerable financial repercussions.



## The undisputed reign of Google

Google, with its 93% market share of search engines, is one of the most powerful players in the digital world. Every month, the platform records 88.3 billion visits (or 33,500 per second), a total far greater than the world's population. To consolidate its hegemony, Google can also count on a whole ecosystem of services. Gmail, for example, its email service, has 1.8 billion users.

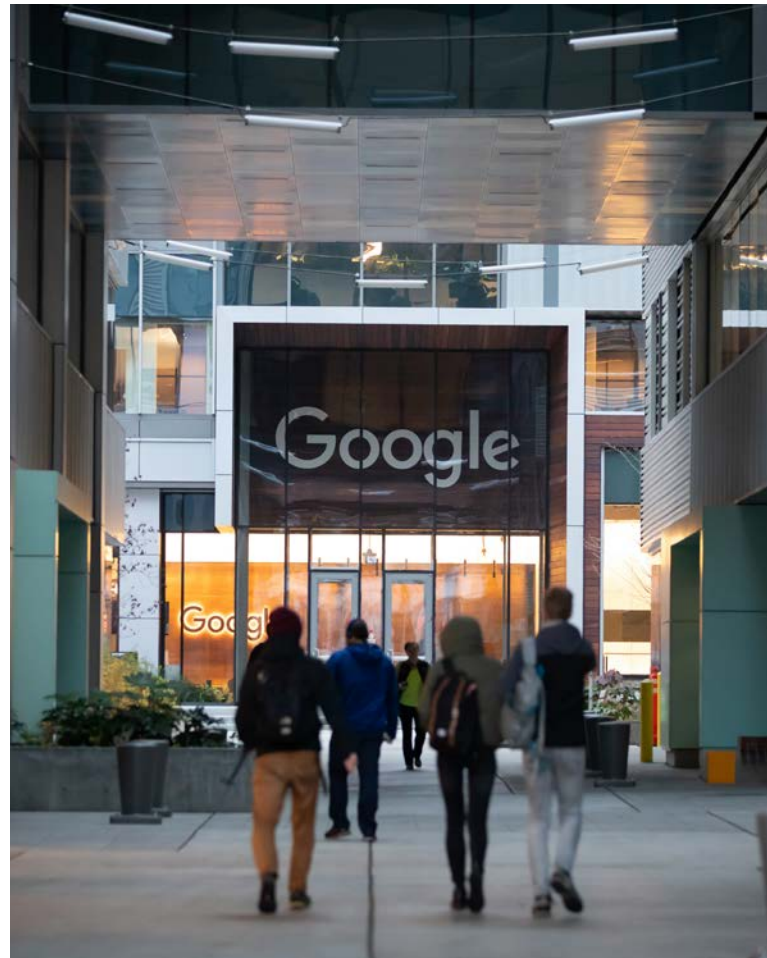
A goldmine for the platform, whose algorithms collect our data to personalise search results and thus influence our behaviour. In comparison, not even the leaders of the world's greatest powers can reach such a large number of people in such a direct and targeted way.

In so doing, the captains of this industry have acquired gigantic power in our globalised society, influencing our lives in a variety of ways. Their impact is global and their influence on the public sphere is growing. An influence further consolidated by relentless technological innovation and the deployment of disruptive business models.

However, this power is not without controversy. Scandals such as the Cambridge Analytica affair and the sudden disappearance of Jack Ma, the founder of Alibaba, demonstrate this. They highlight the challenges facing technology empires and their leaders.

## The Cambridge Analytica affair and the question of privacy

One of the most significant controversies in recent history is the Cambridge Analytica affair. In 2018, it was revealed that the personal data of millions of



Facebook users had been collected without their knowledge and used for political manipulation. This case highlighted concerns about privacy and data protection. It also highlighted the need to establish responsibilities in terms of data protection and transparency.

## The disappearance of Jack Ma and the challenges of regulation

Another remarkable fact: in 2020, Jack Ma, the emblematic figure of online commerce in China, disappeared from public life after expressing criticism of the Chinese government and after Alibaba's parent company, Ant Group,



attempted a major IPO. This situation has raised many concerns. Where are the limits to the power wielded by technology leaders? Where do we draw the line when it comes to regulation? The complex relationship between digital giants and governments also raises questions about the role of corporate governance.

## A matter of responsibility

The social responsibility of technology companies has become crucial, as they play a major role in the dissemination of information. Their power to influence public opinion is infinite. The Netflix

documentary «The social Dilemma» perfectly addresses the subject. In this context, challenges such as combating hate speech, moderating problematic content and promoting diversity and inclusion are now on the agenda. Not to mention misinformation. The models put in place can have profound repercussions on society, which underlines the importance of putting in place ethical practices.

In the digital age, the real leaders of the world are no longer exclusively politicians, the military and elected representatives, but also the heads of the major technology companies. Leaders or founders of major platforms such as Sundar Pichai (Google), Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Elon Musk (Twitter) or Jeff Bezos (Amazon) now enjoy an audience like no other. By reaching billions of people around the world, they are also undeniably shaping our lives.

Today, their influence is felt in every aspect of our lives, from communication to consumerism to politics. However, this power is not without controversy. Scandals such as Cambridge Analytica and the challenges of regulation underline the issues facing these leaders. It is essential to strike a balance now between technological innovation, social responsibility and regulation. Simply to ensure that the power of these giants is exercised ethically and for the benefit of society as a whole. But also to preserve our freedoms.



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