

# Virus hype sparks online surge

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People’s engagement through social media and e-marketplace platforms rose sharply from January to February, whipped up by the coronavirus outbreak, says the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC).

The trend was illustrated in a recent online survey conducted through the Prute Ti Maat (behaviour measurement) app developed by the NBTC.

Giant e-marketplace Shopee saw people consume an average of 41.4 megabytes (MB) of bandwidth per person in February, a 479% jump from January.

Lazada saw a rise of 122% in the consumption of bandwidth per person from January, while Grab posted a 74.3% rise.

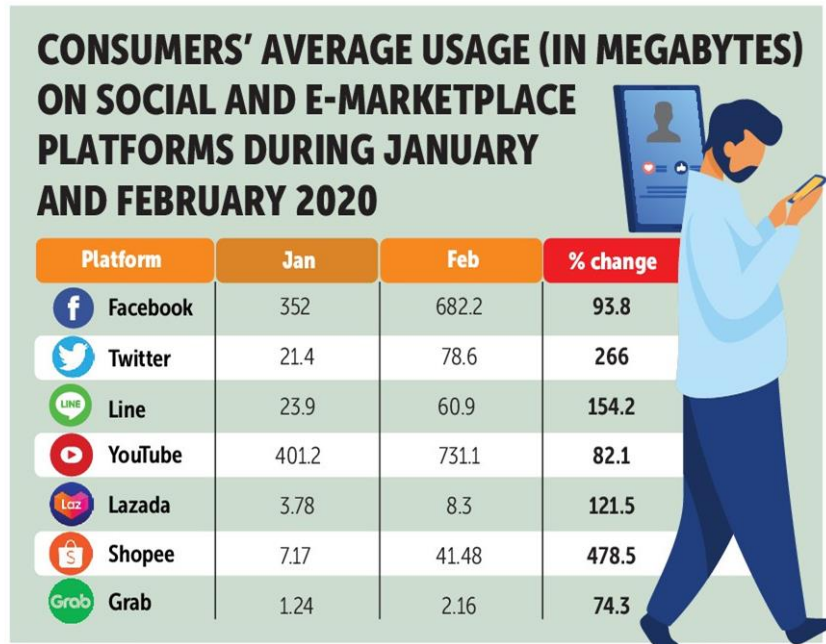
In social media, Twitter reported a 266% surge, followed by Line (154%), Facebook (93.8%) and YouTube (82.1%).

Prute Ti Maat is an app for tracking the behaviour of mobile users and helping consumers make decisions about which mobile package they should subscribe to, said Takorn Tantasith, secretary-general of the NBTC.

The regulator will also use the information to create more practical regulatory conditions consistent with actual usage amounts in various areas.

The recent survey included 2,554 respondents. More than 10,000 people have downloaded the app.

“The app only collects quantitative data reflecting the behaviour of mobile users and not personal data, pictures or



Source: NBTC

BKPgraphics

chat messages,” Mr Takorn said.

The NBTC plans to scale up the number of surveyed people through a cooperative agreement with the National Statistical Office.

The NBTC signed the agreement with the NSO last year.

The app shows user data based on usage and volume of phone calls and messages; the volume of data uploaded and downloaded; and the usage volume of mobile applications.

Additionally, the app shows the top five most used apps, as well as details of mobile networks used daily.

Consumers who download the app will benefit from knowing their

behaviour for mobile usage and can use the information to make lifestyle adjustments.

“People should not be concerned about the risks posed by this app, as it is designed and operated on the same concept as the net-care model, so it will not breach personal privacy,” Mr Takorn said.

The app’s development was completed through an academic information method, so it is trusted, he said.

The primary information provided can be used by the NBTC or other state agencies for public awareness in the future, said Mr Takorn.