

IMPRESS Code Review: Call for Evidence

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Compliance with professional norms in journalism, great to have, hasn't payed off in terms of digital reach and revenues.

A co-regulatory framework to tackle this market-failure needs four critical parts:

the journalistic community comes up voluntarily with a unified benchmark (this is happening with the code review but 103 publishers with 169 publications is a drop in the ocean; self-assessment according to its criteria is open to third-party audits, to add compliance and accountability (and offer journalists a deep look into the mirror); machine-readable, real-time signals inform human and algorithmic decision-making in news distribution and consumption, and intermediaries and platforms are obliged by law to take on these signals, based on a transparent process, and provide due prominence for compliant sources.

These components are at the heart of JTI which IMPRESS were an active contributor to.

For us at TFSMC if publishers had a recognisable standard which was machine readable this would support the publisher in generating value from a piece of content.

Alignment to the JTI would be a substantive step forward.

The JTI does not have an ecommerce component to it.

Depending on the appetite for innovation at IMPRESS it may be an opportunity to include align standards to how to treat and work with reader revenue models for publishers. This will include can include business models with readers / customers and contributors (employees and freelancers) as well as the ability to have standard tool / technical requirements.

As reader revenue models become more prevalent how do publisher terms and conditions for the subscription / license for the content get considered. The length of time a reader has access to it, what they can do with and whether a reader / consumer will have the right for a refund if the content doesn't meet expectations.

On the creator side, how does the reader revenue generated from content get distributed? Would an open transparent immutable record of the engagements and value (revenue) generated from content and the subsequent automated distribution of funds be appropriate for the freelancer / journalists? Very much an automated version of point 8 in the NUJ Freelance charter.

Setting standards on the e-commerce tools side will diminish the prospect of the formulation of gatekeeper monopolies, reduce the treat of stranded assets for the technology provider, increase the inter-interopability across vendors and increase innovation. An example of a technology that could be used is FourZeroTwo - the technology market was a wide array of early stage solutions that innovator publishers are exploring but a move to have some form of supporting standards will aid publishers in the long run.