



EPC | European
Publishers
Council

13 November 2013

News Release

COMMISSION SUPPORTS NEW TECHNICAL FRAMEWORK TO EXPAND LEGITIMATE USE OF CONTENT ONLINE

Today, Wednesday, 13 November, the European Commission is presenting a new “roadmap” that will expand the legitimate use of content online enabling both professional and amateur creators to benefit from their online creation, to stop infringement and indeed to facilitate re-use of other content easily and legally.

This presentation is the result of work undertaken by “*Licences for Europe*” - an initiative jointly led by Commissioners Michel Barnier (Internal Market and Services), Neelie Kroes (Digital Agenda) and Androulla Vassiliou (Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth) set up to inform discussions about the revision of the 2001 Copyright Directive. The main purpose of these working groups is to seek to deliver rapid progress in bringing content online through practical industry-led solutions.

EPC Executive Director Angela Mills Wade said: “We are delighted to have been involved in such an important process and to have helped to develop innovative ways in which to manage digital assets in the European digital economy.”

With considerable input from the EPC and from the Linked Content Coalition (LCC: global multimedia digital rights technology project first initiated by EPC), the Commission working groups have focused on the need for content identification and interoperability of online licensing technology. The problem is that, although online content is protected by copyright in theory, in practice the technology has not until now been developed to allow rights and permissions to be communicated online in a machine-readable way for all types of content in all formats.

Angela Mills Wade continued: “Both the EPC and the LCC have played an active part in this process to accelerate the development of automated licensing solutions across

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the EU. We welcome the European Commission's recognition of the vital importance of this work for the future of digital content for professional creators, amateur creators and consumers alike.

Work is already underway to "upgrade" the digital network and solve the problem of the existence of millions of "digital orphans" (where the creator of the content cannot be identified) in the form of Web Content Declarations (WCD), new tools being developed by the LCC to provide a standard way on either global or sector basis for any rightsholder to declare their rights in an authorized, machine-readable, accessible format on the web. The LCC is also calling for the use of hubs, such as the UK's Copyright Hub launched in July 2013: the tool for linking many potential users to rightsholders.

Angela Mills Wade added: "We are committed to innovation in our sector to improve use of and access to digital content. But we also need the EU and national governments to play their part. On a practical level, governments should hold calls for tenders to develop tools and technology to support the implementation of Web Content Declarations and we need them to encourage interoperable national or regional hubs. With an estimated figure of 2.4 billion web content users and re-users today, there is an unimaginable source of untapped commercial potential for the creators, the users and indeed for the global digital economy. We are playing our part but this isn't something we can achieve alone."

Meanwhile, the EPC is supporting both the LCC work on a project that is co-funded by the European Commission to develop and test the new technologies, as well as the UK Copyright Hub. More on this to follow in the next few weeks.

In terms of the next steps on the Copyright Directive review, the European Commission is expected to launch a consultation lasting until mid-January 2014, with a Communication likely in the first quarter of next year.

For further information, including more details on the technical project work, please contact Angela Mills Wade on Tel: +44 1865 310 732 or Heidi Lambert on Tel: +44 7932 141 291.

www.epceurope.eu

www.linkedcontentcoalition.org

<http://ec.europa.eu/licences-for-europe-dialogue/>

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-835_en.htm?locale=en

<http://www.copyrighthub.co.uk>

Ends

13 November 2013



Note to editors:

Presentation delivered to European Commission's Licences for Europe Working Group plenary, Wednesday, 13 November 2013, Brussels

Angela Mills Wade, Executive Director, European Publishers Council (EPC)

Building the rights Data Network - enabling user access

Today there are 2.4 billion Web content users and re-users from almost none only 20 years ago.

Users have become creators and re-users - there are around a billion "self-publishers" on file-sharing sites, blogs, and social media.

The point is that self-publishing is not just an "amateur" or social pastime.

Web self-publishers, such as creators posting their new songs or videos online, are protected by copyright, but commonly can't monetise their works, or stop infringements of their rights, if they want to. This content could be contributing to economic growth in the digital market.

Self-publishers often can't (or can't easily) yet identify their own works or get licences for re-using existing content. Even though copyright law is applicable online, it is difficult to implement due to the scale, speed and complexity of publishing, access and re-use in the Web.

Computers are good at dealing with scale, speed and complexity.

Which is why EPC called our original Big Idea for the Digital Agenda "The answer to the machine is in the machine"

And it was this requirement, to find better ways to identify and communicate rights information on the network, that led to the formation of the Linked Content Coalition in 2012, a global multi-media project with support from 30 partners from all sectors and some tech companies.

The LCC technical Framework, published in April 2013, showed that all types of rights data, however complex, from any and all sectors can be expressed in a **single, extensible format**.

And through the effective use of interoperable identifiers and metadata across all media types and sectors we can **facilitate and expand the legitimate use of content** in the digital network.

Two key things need to happen next to "up-grade" the digital network

Firstly, **Web Content Declarations** of rights and licenses ("WCDs")

and secondly an interoperable Network of **hubs** to simplify user access to content.



First, the **WEB CONTENT DECLARATION**

This will provide a common or standard way, on either a global or sector basis, for a rightsholder to declare their rights in an authorised, machine-readable, accessible form on the Web.

The absence of the means to **identify content and rights** cripples any attempts to build up the network efficiently - in effect, the digital data supply chain is being 'strangled at birth'.

Creative Commons is the best in class to date, but has no party or content IDs, and only states free use in machine-interpretable form, not in commercial terms. WCD will support CC licenses and expand the approach to cover commercial use.

The technical building blocks, web standards like html, xml, linked data standards etc, and name IDs all exist but what's missing are interoperable profiles for each type of content, with different IDs and vocabularies, but using only one common schema, and a way of mapping databases for interoperability.

Scale, and interoperability at scale of identifiers and information about rights will ease discoverability, access, use and re-use.

So, **GETTING WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF WCDs WILL BE A KEY DRIVER OF GROWTH IN THE DIGITAL NETWORK**, and this will happen in two main ways:

- Through hubs and
- Through new tools

First the tools: The huge self-publishing market (which without WCDs creates millions of "digital orphans" daily) provides new **commercial incentives** for the design of tools: such as WCD plug-ins, Apps - at the point of creation via content management systems, mobile devices including cameras, and at the point of upload and entry to the networks; and new registries or service hubs.

The established registries run by COs, or publisher databases can create WCDs automatically with relative simplicity. Through shared "creation identifiers" the WCDs can join existing linked data, and establish an open standard for search engines, and other processing tools, throughout the network.

The UK's Copyright Hub launched July 2013, following the Hargreaves and Hooper reports, and other hubs, can be catalysts for adoption of WCDs.

So what do I mean by a hub? - A hub is simply a **tool for linking many potential users to many rightsholders. For example, content aggregators are hubs.**

The innovation of the UK COPYRIGHT HUB is that it is User-focussed: to make it easy for people to discover rights data of any kind, to enable licensing where appropriate. And although it focuses on UK users, it covers international rights and is rolling out in three key stages:



The Initial phase only provides information and linking around 35 sites at present.

Stage 2 in 2014 will introduce “federated search” to enable queries to be sent to multiple databases and for the results to be aggregated for users.

Stage 3 in 2015 will provide links for people to register data about their content and rights.

Of course Rights hubs are not essential for Web user access as users can get access anywhere through Web tools and search engines but hubs will not only aid navigation of rights data, combine data from multiple sources but also enable **Support services** - such as licensing, tracking, payment, conflict resolution (etc) according to the nature of the hub.

Although the Web crosses borders, national or regional hubs can be ideal “points of entry” for local users especially if the hubs have access to global content like UK Copyright Hub, playing a significant role in the development of the rights Data Network.

There are also clear benefits in hubs serving local or language repertoires to an international user audience (e.g. new Danish Film Producers hub).

The UK’s hub is already a network of hubs, and a network is already developing naturally in the marketplace, but to be effective across the European Union or globally, hubs should be federated and avoid duplication of effort and function, and especially the maintenance of multiple unsynchronised datasets.

SO, WHAT CAN THE EU OR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS DO TO HELP ADOPTION OF WCDS AND HUBS?

What we need is for governments to match our efforts. We in the content industry undertake to continue innovating and developing technology to overcome the obstacles that are currently holding the digital economy back.

Meanwhile, there are specific things that governments can help with:

- i. National or international competitions or calls for tenders to develop tools and technology to support implementation of Web Content Declarations.
- ii. Encourage national or regional hubs, and interoperability between them.
- iii. Design or support initiatives to integrate “orphan works” and public domain registry services and databases with WCDs and the evolving Hub network.

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