

RDI PROJECT DEVELOPS COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS FOR ONLINE LICENSING:

PART EU-FUNDED COPYRIGHT PROJECT SURPASSES ALL EXPECTATIONS

RDI, the part-EU-funded project, working to make it possible for any user to find out anything about any rights information on any online content is exceeding its expectations and is set to result in real commercial implementations.

Speaking at a conference in Brussels yesterday (19.11.14) to update delegates on progress on the digital copyright project Rights Data Integration (RDI), MEP Emma McClarkin said: "Copyright is at the heart of all our work on the digital agenda within the European institutions. We want the best content possible for the European Union. We need online business models to work for creators so they can make a living whilst producing the diversity in content, language, specialisations and formats that enriches European society. We need to make sure that regulators are aware of projects like RDI and that these initiatives are supported and widely deployed."

RDI is half way through a two-year project jointly funded by the European Union¹ and media industry partners to enable and encourage greater legitimate use of all types of digital content.

RDI was set up as a test case for the LCC Rights Reference Model (RRM)² to prove the efficacy of the new automated rights technology developed by experts across all media content sectors and published in 2013. Not only has the LCC model been proven in RDI, but the RRM been adopted by the Copyright Hub³, a global initiative to make licensing simpler. Elements of the RDI technology are also set to be used commercially in a number of different implementations.

There are many different standards for expressing rights information and this makes it difficult for potential users to establish whether they can use a piece of content. It would be impractical to expect every content owner to adopt a new universal standard. In its first stage, RDI has proved that the LCC RRM can be used as a universal translator so that rights information can be expressed in a common language regardless of how the information was first expressed.

The next stage of the project will demonstrate that the RRM can accommodate different types of queries about rights. For example, the question "I'd like to use your image in my corporate brochure" might get the response: "You can use my image if you credit me as the rights owner and only use it on the front page".

¹ Partly funded by European Union's ICT Policy Support Programme as part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme

² www.linkedcontentcoalition.org

³ www.copyrighthub.co.uk

RDI is demonstrating three different ways in which people could identify content which they might want to re-use:

- i) I find an image through a standard online search. The image need have no information about its ownership associated with it but we can use the image itself to identify who can grant rights to use it;
- ii) I find a piece of music that I'd like to use in my corporate video using a standard online search. The music could be hosted on any site but has a Digital Object Identifier (DOI)⁴ associated with it which directs me to the rights owner;
- iii) I want to identify a film clip I can use in a course I'm developing for students. I visit a dedicated online rights store, use a text search to identify the appropriate clip, and can ask for rights information without leaving the site.

RDI Project Director Andrew Farrow said: "Our approach is very simple. People create stuff, people want to use that stuff, and we want to make that process as easy as possible. There is no underlying assumption about business models, no obligation to adopt a particular technology, no requirement to adopt a new standard. We just want to show that it is possible to automate some or all of the rights supply chain."

In terms of its EU context, Commissioners Ansip and Oettinger have said that they have put copyright at heart of their digital agenda plans. RDI relates directly to the overall objectives of the European Digital Agenda and will help identify solutions to the Commission Communication on the Digital Single Market that tackles the unfulfilled potential of a digital single market.

Per Strömbäck, editor of digital society blog Netopia.eu and moderator of the RDI conference panel discussion said: "Licensing is a key issue for a functioning online content market. If there is a way to make it happen, a lot will be won for creators, services and audience, but also for society in terms of culture, jobs and growth."

For further information, contact Andrew Farrow, RDI Project Coordinator, on Tel: +44 7803 025 767 or Heidi Lambert on Tel: +44 7932 141 291 or visit www.rdi-project.eu where you will find more information about the project as well as presentations from the Brussels conference.

NOTE TO EDITORS

RDI uses a "hub and spoke" architecture to allow rights users to discover and access information from rightsholders via a central transformation hub.

The content being used in RDI comes from a wide range of different media sectors (text publishing, musical works, sound recordings, news, still images and audiovisual). Some of the information being exchanged comes from the original creators of content, some from managers of the rights to that content, and some from organisations providing services to rightsholders. Collectively we refer to these organisations or individuals as "sources".

⁴ www.doi.org

Information about creations is provided by sources to the hub using both open standards (e.g. ONIX, RightsML, PLUS) and proprietary standards. Although RDI is backed by many who hope to see greater legitimate commercial use of copyright works, it supports any business model, including “free use” where agreed by rightsholders, use of works in the public domain. Some Creative Commons licenses and “orphan work” declarations will be included in the pilot to show this. It also supports permissions that cover rights other than copyright (for example, “neighbouring rights” or the use and management of unique artifacts).

The hub will transform the data into a common format using a data structure based on the LCC Framework and then into a format accepted by exchanges providing the interface for rights users. The hub and spoke architecture is a convenient structure to prove the interoperability of different data formats but other approaches might be more appropriate in different operational environments. Some data flows will also be demonstrated direct from rightsholders to exchanges to show this.

RDI does not directly affect the content of rights laws and agreements - it only makes it possible to process the results of those agreements in more highly-automatable ways. Nor is RDI advocating a one size fits all approach. Complex, “professional” rights transactions should be conducted in whatever manner best suits them, but lower value/higher volume transactions should be automated as much as possible.

The following organizations are participating in RDI.

Sources

age fotostock Spain SL*, Album Archivo Fotografico S.L.*, Axel Springer SE, Capture Ltd/British Library, Consolidated Independent Ltd*, EDISER S.R.L*, Elsevier, Getty Images*, the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations (IFRRO)*, International Press Communications Council (IPTC), Pearson PLC, Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL), PLUS Coalition*, Producentforeningen - Danish Producers Association*

Transformation Hub

Consorzio Interuniversitario per il Calcolo Automatico dell'Italia Nord Orientale (CINECA)*
Rightscom Ltd*

Exchanges

mEDRA S.R.L.*
RightsDirect BV*
Center of the Picture Industry (CEPIC)*

Dissemination

Europe Analytica Ltd (representing European Publishers Council)*
European Writers Council (EWC)*

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Useful links:

www.rdi-project.eu

www.linkedcontentcoalition.org

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

<http://ec.europa.eu/cip/>

* organisations that are members of the RDI Consortium