



INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

NEWS RELEASE (embargo, 6 October)

GLOBAL PUBLISHERS UNITE TO ANNOUNCE INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO CONTENT:

PUBLISHERS AND SEARCH ENGINES: FACING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TOGETHER

DEBATE

**Friday 6 October 2006
10:00-12:00**

Hall 4.0 Room Europa, Frankfurt Book Fair

A new and exciting scheme that aims to improve the relationship between publishers and search engines is being announced officially today, 6 October, on the occasion of the Frankfurt Book fair. Book, newspaper and periodical publishers will be invited to participate in the pilot.

The new project, **ACAP (Automated Content Access Protocol)**, is the initiative of The World Association of Newspapers (W.A.N.), the European Publishers Council (E.P.C.) and the International Publishers Association (I.P.A.). Associations and organisations involved in the preparation and development of ACAP include the European Newspaper Publishers Association (ENPA), the Federation of European Publishers (FEP), the International Federation of the Periodical Press (FIPP), the European Magazine Publishers Associations (FAEP) and other national and international associations and organisations representing books, newspapers and magazines as well as news agencies. ACAP is a tool through which the providers of content published on the world wide web can communicate permissions information (relating to access and use of their content) in a form that can be readily recognised and interpreted by a search engine “crawler”, so that the search engine operator is enabled systematically to comply with such a policy or licence.

Book fair Debate and Presentation

W.A.N Chairman, Gavin O'Reilly, will be giving a detailed presentation on ACAP and debating its advantages together with Google. Both Gavin and I.P.A Director Jens Bammel (event organizer) will be available for interviews:

Jens Bammel, Tel: +41 79 230 0961

(more follows)

Effectively, ACAP will provide a technical solution that will dramatically enhance existing protocols designed to help website owners tell search engine “crawlers” which areas of a site can be indexed. ACAP will address the issue of the increasing level of sophistication used for online publishing. It will not only allow web site administrators to exclude spiders, but will also specify terms: “yes, please crawl my site, but please observe the following conditions.” Existing protocols cannot do this.

ACAP’s core principles are:

- enabling, not obstructing
- based on existing technologies and existing infrastructure
- flexible
- scalable
- extensible
- as fully automated as possible
- open standards based
- fully inclusive

W.A.N Chairman Gavin O’Reilly said: “ACAP is not about good and evil, but about the management and promotion of quality content within the framework of our current and future digital strategies. Ultimately, ACAP will benefit everyone: publishers, search engines and, most of all, consumers, by creating a fair and content-rich online experience for all of us: no standards wars; no proprietary monopolies; open collaboration: win, win for all.

“Via ACAP, we look forward to fostering mutually beneficial relationships between publishers of original content and the search engine operators, in which the interests of both parties can be properly balanced. Importantly, ACAP is an enabling solution that will ensure that published content will be accessible to all and will encourage publication of increasing amounts of high-value content online. This industry-wide initiative positively answers the growing frustration of publishers, who continue to invest heavily in generating content for online dissemination but currently have limited options for making it accessible.”

ACAP is being designed to be applicable to every type of content published online, including video and audio, although the focus for the initial pilot project is on the specific needs of the print publishers behind it. It is intended, however, that the completed system will evolve and develop to meet the changing needs of content owners, search engines, consumers and technology.

Francisco Pinto Balsemão, Chairman of the E.P.C, said: “It’s hard to make content available for access and use on the network without any rules; it’s hard to follow rules if you don’t know what they are; it’s hard to learn how to read and understand rules if you are a machine: the solution is ACAP. ACAP will unambiguously express our preferred terms and conditions about access and use of our content in a machine readable format. In doing so, it will facilitate greater access to our published content, making it more, not less available, to anyone wishing to use it.”

The pilot of ACAP will be launched with a select number of partners by the end of the year. W.A.N., the E.P.C. and I.P.A. will run the project for a period of up to 12 months and it will be managed by Rightscom Ltd.

(more follows)



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Note to Editors

The European Publishers Council is a high level group of Chairmen and CEOs of European media corporations actively involved in multimedia markets spanning newspaper, magazine and online database publishers. Many EPC members also have significant interests in commercial television and radio.

The World Association of Newspapers groups 72 national newspaper associations, individual newspaper executives in 100 nations, 13 news agencies, and nine regional press organizations, representing more than 18,000 publications in all international discussions on media issues, to defend both press freedom and the professional and business interests of the press.

The International Publishers Association is a Non Governmental Organisation with consultative relations with the United Nations. Its constituency is of book and journal publishers world-wide, assembled into 78 publishers associations at national, regional and specialised level.