Request for Information

Introduction

This request for information seeks to gather information about the products and services available from qualified providers with expertise in helping local online publishers additionally monetize digital content, either through transactions (pay for content) and/or through collection of user data for enhanced advertising targeting or other "access to content" programs.

The Newspaper Association of America will use this RFI feedback to evaluate opportunities and alternatives to structure a more thorough review of solutions available to those in the online news and information gathering business. <u>NAA members leading these efforts are seeking to evaluate companies that can have solutions available within the next 6-9 months</u>.

Background

The newspaper industry is exploring opportunities to further monetize digital assets (text, video, photos, etc.). That could include charging users for access to content (subscriptions, micropayments, etc.), allowing levels of access to users providing additional information about themselves through registration, allowing free access to users who subscribe to the printed newspaper (or other media product), allowing access to users who agree to view specific advertising offers, allowing access to users who participate in "frequent reader" or other "rewards based" programs, etc. In addition, the industry is exploring "passport" capabilities that would allow users access to content on multiple member sites with one registration.

Industry leadership has directed the Newspaper Association of America to evaluate a range of technology solutions for use by members as a whole or by individual newspaper/media companies. A task force comprised of industry executives from several newspaper and multi-media companies will participate in the evaluation of technology solutions.

Requested Information

To aid in the evaluation of potential suppliers, the task force would like to address the following questions:

1) What are the available options for providing access to digital content based on the exchange of some currency, which could include cash, user information, print newspaper subscription status, usage frequency, rewards points, etc?
2) What are the key requirements for a platform that supports the goal stated above?
3) What are the technological capabilities of current solution providers and, if applicable, what additional development is required?
4) What is the business model for current solution providers?
5) What insights can providers offer on consumer behavior/preferences regarding payment for services or willingness to provide personal information?

Capabilities

Respondents to this RFI should be prepared to describe their ability to create, modify and support technology to enable any/all of the following capabilities:

- Accept or retrieve content from participating newspapers/media companies.
- Manage single sign-on that allows consumers to navigate across participating media company Web sites
- Process content in industry standard formats for news (NITF, NewsML2)
- Track proper source of original content
- Manage and protect intellectual property rights of content
- Provide effective and efficient browser based user interface
- Provide appropriate database technology for content management
- Manage a variety of transactional capabilities (e.g. micropayments, subscriptions, etc.) based on a range of criteria (e.g. existing subscriber or member, number of pages viewed or stories accessed previously, etc.)
- Communicate with banks using standard formats (please include capabilities to accept credit card information, process transactions, reconcile payments, etc.)
- Provide PCI compliant customer information protection
- Provide an information barter environment with appropriate privacy and other protections (i.e. access to content in exchange for more detailed user info)
- Provide simple customer registration/logon process
- Tie a customer and their information to a particular newspaper (their home paper)
- Provide references to relevant content from participating newspapers
- Provide design with advertising positions
- Include AdsML based e-commerce

Response Guidelines

Respondents should include an Executive Summary (no more than 2-3 pages) which must contain:

- A response indicating awareness and understanding of the requirements and objectives for this initiative.
- A brief "vision" statement on why your company sees an opportunity in this space

- A brief description of the product and services being proposed
- The name, title and address of the representative responsible for the preparation of the proposal.
- The name, title and address of the representative empowered to discuss the response with the company if different than the preparer.
- If not in production, timeline on when product will be available commercially

In preparing the response, respondent is required to be concise and supply all the requested information according to the following template (no more than 8 – 10 pages):

1) Company profile (history, size, years in business, primary revenue stream)
2) Product description (including status – in the market, under development, proposed for future development)
3) Product capabilities
4) Description of any planned enhancements, with timetable
5) Research or data analysis that would demonstrate insights about consumer behavior related to this product/service
6) Business model
7) Current client list (including which clients are using service in a production environment).

Vendors should feel free to provide any pertinent information regarding any additional features of their product(s) that are not otherwise requested/identified.

We request that responses be sent no later than July 17, 2010 to:

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