



The background

- 1994 – a “train wreck coming”
- Access to info from anywhere – no longer print
- Clickshare: “Making the market for digital info”
- Mass market advertising seen as the sole answer
- CONCLUSION: Market not ready; hibernate

- 2005 – The Media Giraffe Project

MEDIA GIRAFFE Project

“Find and spotlight people making innovative, sustainable use of media to foster participatory democracy and community.”

- Profiles database
- Convenings as Journalism That Matters
- Facilitating “news literacy”





Blueprinting the Information Valet Economy

Using the RJI process:

- Ideas
- Research
- Experiments
- Solutions

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May 5, 2009

<http://www.infovalet.org>





What was Information Valet Project?

- Research effort incubated at D.W. Reynolds Journalism Institute
- Urgent task: Advance methods to sustain journalism
- Address identity, privacy, advertising, commerce
- Sharing users and content



Initial “hypothesis”

It is possible to organize an information-industry collaborative to build, own and operate a shared-user network layered upon the basic Internet which will:

- Allow end users to own, protect and optionally benefit by sharing their demographic and usage data with the help of their trusted, competitively chosen “Information Valet.”
- Update the role, effectiveness and compensation for online advertising and marketing services.
- Allow users to easily share, sell and buy content through multiple websites with one ID, password, account and bill.



THE PROPOSAL

BUILDING THE INFORMATION VALET ECONOMY: Sustaining news and information through a shared-user network

A research proposal for the
Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute,
August, 2008-May-2009

By Bill Densmore¹
April 21, 2008

To sustain an information valet economy — and along with it both participatory democracy and journalism — the next-generation Internet needs a user-focused system for sharing identity, and for exchanging and settling value for digital information.

This system should provide payments for the sharing of text, video, music, game plays, entertainment, advertising views, etc., across the Internet. It could, for example, manage background payments for newspaper content that is repurposed for advertising gain by bloggers.

Excerpting "The State of the Media, 2007": Finding an economic model

The [Project for Excellence in Journalism](#) produces an exhaustive annual report entitled "The State of the News Media". The 2007 report includes [this statement](#):

The evidence is mounting that the news industry must become more aggressive about developing a new economic model. The signs are clearer that advertising works differently online than in older media. Finding out about goods and services on the Web is an activity unto itself, like using the yellow pages, and less a byproduct of getting news, such as seeing a car ad during a newscast. The consequence is that advertisers may not need journalism as they once did, particularly online. Already the predictions of advertising growth on the Web are



News as a service not a product

- Helping user find access to info from anywhere
- Creating a conversation, community ... network
- Not just about the story; smaller, larger remix
- The news social network
- New concept: The "InfoValet" – trusted advisor/broker
- The valet: Attending to personal info needs



MIT SUMMARY – the idea

“During the June 19, 2007 discussion, a consensus emerged. For journalism and some forms of entertainment to grow or be sustained into the digital age, the Internet must support three functions.”

- **User-centric authentication**
- **Value exchange for viewing or using content**
- **Combine authentication, value exchange for IP sharing**
- **(<http://www.mediagiraffe.org/wiki/index.php/Mit-gathering-short>)**



PROCESS STEP ONE: Gather ideas

- *Dec. 3-5, 2008 convening at Columbia, MO*



- More than 50 people attended
- TEXT/VIDEO: <http://www.ivpblueprint.org>

CONVENING QUESTION: Challenge: How to sustain values, purposes of journalism?

- Mass markets splintering
- Search advertising effective competitor
(Google's Schmidt: "invent something")
- Classifieds done better on the web
- We go anywhere for information-without-walls
- What sustains journalism in this environment?



The end of the mass market

- Create intimate, personalized, customized, permission-based relationship
- Between the consumer and “InfoValet”
- Whether that consumer is part of a "mass" irrelevant to their needs and value
- Make money providing service, not just a marketplace
- Less worry about pay walls and "losing eyeballs” with interest-based advertising.

APPLICATIONS RESEARCH

- Steve Mott assembles data on the digital-information and payments marketplaces
- Martin Langeveld considers applications
- Jeff Vander Clute studies technologies



What's needed? Three elements

- PRIVACY management for consumers; getting value for your 'persona'
- ADVERTISING made more effective through interest-based customization
- COMMERCE for content – enabling subscription networks and vicarious (per-click) sale to the right person at the right time.



CONCLUSION:

Keep it simple!

- **PATH CHOSEN**

- SPINOUT: Classic corporate form; SV based
- Founder control “friendly” to journalism
- RJI/Mizzou a founding stakeholder
- AP cooperating and strongly supportive



FIRST APPLICATION

A customized, user-authorized service which interactively manages local newspaper branding, advertising, personalized news links and social-networking features.

<http://www.circlabs.com>
Beta: mid-Nov.





Measuring success – outcomes

- Reinvented relationships between citizens and
 - *publishers – now InfoValets – mass market*
 - *advertisers – interest-informed, 1-to-1*
- New business for news organizations
- New ecosystem for news aggregation, customization, sharing
- New revenue besides advertising
- A news social network





CIRCULATE



[Top: Michael Jackson raised from the dead](#) (AP) ✖ ★

[Football: Michael Vick gets new puppy](#) (Philadelphia Inquirer) ✖ ★

[Economic conditions to ease in Midwest](#) (Quad-City Times, \$) ✖ ★

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Times

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... Consumers circulate

... News circulates

... Advertising circulates

... Subscribers circulate