Agenda and Meeting Record

Who	W3C Credible Web CG
When	15 October 2019 1pm ET
Video	https://zoom.us/j/706868147 Please try to be on camera
Telephone	+1 669 900 6833 or any dialin, code 706 868 147
Text Chat	Optional (http *not https*) irc.w3.org channel #credweb archive
Chair	Sandro Hawke
Scribe	Both Subbu and Sandro, accidental double scribing
Present	Jean-Claude Goldenstein (CREOpoint), Jesse Kranzler (Trust Metrics), Sandro Hawke, Olaf Steenfadt (RSF), Connie Moon Sehat (Credibility Coalition/NewsQA), Reto Gmür (Factsmission), Chandran Sankaran (Repustar), John Gray (CredCo Misinfosec WG), Scott Yates (JTI and Certified Content Coalition), Aviv Ovadya (TTP), Subbu Vincent
At Risk	
Regrets	Ting Cai (Bing), Chris Guess (Duke)

1. Welcome

2. Attendance

Sandro: Please put your name (and affiliation if relevant) in the "Present" box above

3. Scribe

4. Calendar

See https://credweb.org/ for items

Sandro: Next week is Misinfosec report about the AM!TT framework.

5. Announcements

Wikiconf coming up, misinfo theme

6. Introductions

7. Presentation and Discussion: JTI

As Scribed by Subbu (also scribed by Sandro, below)

JTI presentation: Olaf, CEN Draft for public comment [here](#), commenting ends Friday Oct 18th

- Chase the bad or support the good
- What is good journalism
    - There seems to be consensus on this on what good or professional journalism looks like
    - Compliance is a question
    - Disinformation helps journalism take a look in the mirror
- On professional norms
    - Trust is personal and complex
        - Trustworthiness is more useful to focus on
    - How to provide tangible reward and competitive advantage to journalism that complies to norms
    - Indicators for trustworthy journalism
    - Standard settings without objectification
        - Process of manufacturing/product looked at from a standard setting process
        - Plan to publish JTI as a standard, and it will be subject to revision ongoing
    - Planning this as catalytic for media, platforms, citizens, advertisers, regulators, and media development actors (philanthropy..)
    - Public part the JTI indicators process
    - UX labels are not automatically good

Discussion - Q&A
- Olaf: we're looking at standards as a useful instrument
- History of standards:
    - Usually being sourced and developed by smaller entities and SMEs trying to protect their work

- We want a standards initiative to be really beneficial to the work of small media entities
- Standards for us connects to product safety / often standards come from safety
- We're less interested in quality
- Scott
  - We're asking for input on the CEN draft from journalists and public
  - 43 page document
    - Media entity defined as the conforming entity in big company that may have tabloids and a legitimate news outlet
  - Editorial guidelines needed for everyone from 1-person outlet to bigger ones
    - JTI is working with ethical journalism network
- Chandran
  - Who is the target audience? Those who care about journalism or those completely in the fringes, don't care about this at all.
  - Olaf: we've not thought about it this way. Its a set of standards.
    - If you are single journalist too, this is a set of standards you could follow
    - Compliance is totally voluntary; we're setting up for incentives
  - You are broadening the tent, so who considers themselves a journalism? I am a broadcaster of points of view to 10k followers, should I include myself in this
    - Olaf: Whoever wants to try and adopt this and comply with this is most welcome
      - A case in Argentina where a former TV anchor is now a one-man show on YT
  - Jean-Claude: Can standards be used for some enforcement, do something, like 35 people die in India because of misinfo on Whatsapp, can whatsapp use this to prevent such things -- since safety is a theme
    - Olaf: Toxic content is part of where we are; we were at G7. Information disorder - getting information right is critical to get everything else right (climate change)
  - Jean-Claude: polluters pay works in chemical industry; why can't we try that for the information industry?
    - Olaf: Europe is prescriptive on law, safety (America is different) // one way or other standard setting is related to regulatory context
  - Scott: public commenting ends on Friday
  - Olaf: on whitelists <missed this>
    - Sandro: can you only get ad revenue if you are on the JTI verified whitelist? How is that not a blacklist? (for those not on it)
    - Olaf: we don't even have choice here // the question is who is drawing up these criteria for journalism // our contention is its journalists who need to be doing it and not someone else
  - Olaf: we are drafting an annex to the standards document, explaining what it means to be not compliance; they are not automatically bad ;
  - Aviv: you've added a lot of color to my reading of this document

- Any advice on how this can be adopted by small organizations in less time? Any training
- Olaf: we're doing a workshop in Togo in Africa / Craig Newmark is funding it
- Olaf: we are putting this in front of media execs in challenging/volatile environments
- Olaf: going through the checklists is helpful / media execs are saying this is useful - not as hard as they thought
- Aviv: will there be a big public launch?
  - Olaf: may not be - staged launch - we want to keep far as far away from government // there is another RSF brand on information and democracy - that is not JTI
  - Aviv: is there a training+tool opportunity for one person or small operators?
    - This is for small or large news publishers ; take the answers to the 20x questions and publish on their own sites
    - If there is a site all about quilting, its not about News, so platforms cannot downgrade it for not being part of JTI
      - People need to be NEWS publishers to want to go through this process
  - Reto: even if someone follows good journalism practice can they be trusted?
    - Trustworthiness is not a value-neutral term
    - We might be mixing two topics
    - Can trustworthiness be fully covered by the standards? Can this be best practices state of the art conformance
    - Olaf: compliance with standards will most probably enhance trustworthiness - but agree with terminology issues here
    - Olaf: reducing risk of falsehoods and misinfo
    - Olaf: ownership transparency is important - people agree; JTI delivers the simple relevant important stuff
  - Subbu: does the public have a seat at the table
    - Olaf: there is a risk of paternalistic solutions .// social vs personal
    - Scott: this is standards setting where the public just want this to be there like in other areas but don't want to get into the nitty gritties
  - Chandran: Will you broaden the tent to losts of content producers whose work is consumed at news but who dont think of themselves as news producers or journalists
  - Olaf: standards will go upto three years; up for renewal
    - Tool for self-reporting will be available // it exists already
    - Will lead to a global registry
    - Certification infrastructure needed
      - Aviv: audits?

- Olaf: who certifies the certifier? That needs to made to work

Subbu - exited here.

As Scribed by Sandro (also scribed by Subbu, above)

Presenting Olaf Steenfadt

This is more about rewarding the good journalism than getting rid of the bad

Fortunately there's rough consensus about what is good journalism

Probably wouldn't call it "trust" but rather "trustworthiness" if starting again

We used the old CEN standardization process (European subset of ISO)

Early on, we decided to only look at a process level, not individual articles. These are questions which are objectifiable

Every standard is under review, in practice. Once this is published, it will move into revision phase. Beauty and burden of this effort.   Getting this conversation going.

In public consultation phase, to see if this is workable in practice

There's an online survey to walk you through the provisions of the standard

Largely for self-assessment, but there will also be a layer of audit + certification. This will use standards-based auditing.

The outcome will be a data channel, which can be used for many purposes, eg tech platforms.

Every citizen may be able to check conformity as well. We were thinking of a label, [T] or something, but we moved away from that due to consumer protection activists about how labeling can backfire.   Some of the bad news outlets, that would get a red flag, that will actually be appealing to the more rebellious types.   We haven't made a decision yet.

We also see cases of governments which are increasingly thinking of ways to support healthy media environment, eg with funding.   Might be accused of buying/influencing the media. So having this kind of 3rd party evaluation could take a lot of the political pressure away. About to test this in some countries, like Canada, which recently passed a law to support local media. Not so much certification, as a benchmark to help select beneficiaries.

Advertisers also look at brand safety and workable solutions, to align their spending and help not harm their brand. Might help re-monetize journalism worthy of the name.

Subbu: Agreed with point on Trust vs Trustworthiness. Would you informally call this a J Standards Initiative?

Olaf: In a way yes, but "Standards" is also a term that has issue, like ISO tries to reserve the term in a way. In many industries, usually standards are being developed by SME trying to protect their innovations. That's our belief that this instrument should be beneficial to the smaller outlets. Also, historically, standards aren't so much about quality (which we tried to avoid as a term) but about product safety. When free trade started, standards were all about creating product safety, and that's also what we're looking for in our field.

From Scott Yates

We're in public consultation period, so we're looking for feedback, esp from working journalists.

(Scrolling through the standard)

Issue around which thing is the conforming entity - it's a media outlet

Coming up with model set of Editorial Guidelines, so you can just borrow some if you haven't developed your own.

Question about whether small outlets should get a "discount", but no.

Chandran: Is the target audience people who already believe and care about journalism? Who are the adopters? Are you trying to bring in the fringe?

Olaf: Not so much, but this is non-judgemental. It's just a set of criteria you conform with or you don't. It might lead to whether or not you consider yourself as performing acts of journalism. If so, this is probably what you should be following. That's maybe the distinction we would like to make. But it's totally voluntary, with benefits and incentives.

Chandran: Including bloggers raised the question for me. If I have 10k followers, do I feel included in this journey?

Olaf: Whoever wants to try and conform is welcome. Even corp publishing, like maybe Lufthansa Inflight Magazine, they could try, and they might comply. Famous journalist fired and made very successful blog. He might find this very useful.

Jean-Claude: Thanks Olaf you said standards won't be mandatory and also that products standards exist for safety not quality. Why not have mandatory standards like for the Boeing 737

Max to improve reliability? In the case of platforms people die e.g, I heard 34 in India due to Whatsapp

Olaf: Yes it can be serious. Of course this is highly political. Toxic information space is the main curse of our times. We've been invited to G7 in August, and Macros framed it, Humankind is faced with so many existential threats, but Information Disorder is kind of a prerequisite. How on earth can we solve climate change if we don't get this in order.

Jean-Claude: If a chemical company produces toxicity a la Seveso "the polluter pays." What about Christchurch? Is that a parallel to Seveso?

Olaf: The regulatory environments are quite different in EU and US. Laws about cards must be safe, and manf complying with industry standards are usually okay, if they go outside their risk of liability is higher. So standards do play a role. There is a huge appetite in political quarters right now to regulate the platforms.

End of recording

Subbu: strengthening good vs penalties for bad. Jean-claude's question was more bout penalties. No penalties for bad actors. DIfferent conversations.

Olaf: I agree. Also, white listing does not equal black listing. White or black or neutral.   We are drafting an annex helping to explain how this isn't about demoting people not in compliance.

Sandro: what if 90% of the revenue or platforms require you to be on the whitelist? Isn't that a black list?

Olaf: taking revenue away is not the same, and what choice is there? Shouldn't it at least be journalists in charge of deciding.

Aviv: to clarify, is there a FAQ?   You've added a lot of color to the document that would be useful to a broader audience.

Olaf: the website has some, and the Annex will have some.

Aviv: Is there any plan to combine the standards with a simple implementation that can be adopted by a 1 person operation, like training AND filling out the form at once.   You end up learning about the guidelines while agreeing to them?

Olaf: that would be super helpful, it's a goal.   We've been running a workshop in West Africa training people on this. (Funded by Newmark, thanks)

End of meeting time.

Aviv: will there be a big public launch?

Olaf: not sure, and far away from governments. IPCC Information and Democracy is abit different.

Aviv: As there is a launch or series of launches, there is an opportunity to create a single tool, and I'm wondering if that's in scope.

Scott: This is for people who are publishing. 206 questions right now. You'll be able to publish your answers. On Sandro's question, is it a black mark if you don't get the white mark of passing JTI. THere's a lot of the internet that's not news, and wouldn't pass JTI. The people who want to go through the process can. Might never be visible to the general public.

Reto: re black/white, standardization that makes legislation unnecessary, about good professional practices, reduces liability, … but even if someone follows good practice, there might still be good reason not to trust that person. Trust is not a value-neutral term. Not being a journalist isn't necessarily bad. But if you add "trust" then that brings in a value loaded term, mixing too topics. To be a trustworthy journalist, one needs to be a journalist first.   Maybe we need another term, like "best practice journalist", or "journalist adhering to state of the art", maybe better that Trustworthy

Olaf: agreed about terminology. I think compliance will enhance trustworthiness, but it's not foolproof.   It's not so much about mistakes as how you deal with mistakes, like corrections policy. We hope this reduces the risk of falsehoods. Maybe it's much simpler than that. Like everyone agrees ownership transparency is important, and JTI is specific about what exactly you need to disclose.

Subbu: I see one of the tensions, on journalism reform from within the industry, is the public/demand side, is not factored in as a strong entity. Does the public have a seat at the table in demanding that organizations follow these standards? Is there some engagement like that going on?

Olaf: This is a question I'd rather give back to you. That's about behavioral science. If I enter a car that I believe is safe, I see the benefit of increased odds of survival. In online info, the damage can be to democracy, and it can be years later. So how do you get the message across. This is what fact checking and media literacy deal with a lot. Maybe people like falsehoods. This line of thinking can lead to a very paternalistic solution.

Scott: Subbu, as you know at the Trust Project, that input was terrific work. But this is for the industry by the industry.   I don't know who decided who was in the room to decide how much arsenic is safe in drinking water, and I don't really want the public in the room. For JTI one wants the practitioners in the room.

Chandran: I'm eager to read the document. There's increasing consumption of content that they would consider news but which is not what's traditionally considered news, lots of news not generated by journalists, a whatsapp message thread about poisonous snakes circulated to 10k people, not generated by journalists but still consumed by consumers. Somehow we want the principles of JTI to be inviting to folks generating content consumed as news. For the industry by the industry, but inviting more people into the tent.

Olaf: That's a telling scenario. JTI wont help to downrank that because it's distributed elsewhere. But if someone sees that and goes to check, then the algorithmic logic of JTI should kick in.

Reto: If people want to distribute trustworthy credible content, … Journalism is always supposed to Trustworthy.

Chandran: the standards for defining what Journalism means.

Scott: Good stopping place?

Aviv: Plan for evolution going forward? How will that work? What's the cycle? Emergency fixes?

Olaf: A standard is always up for revision, emergency fixes are doable. Expires after 3 years then up for renewal. We'll offer the survey immediately, which will make a global registry right away. Then taking more time, the certification/auditing infrastructure. We have to draw up terms of service etc. Who licenses auditing firms to do this. There are regimes in place, but making them work is the next task.

Aviv: There will be this self-service tool that then goes into registry

Olaf: It exists already.

Aviv: Waiting for email … oh, it's in my spam folder. JTI email is being blacklisted.

Jean-Claude: Who is working on standards to control the spread of disinfo?

Sandro: next week's presentation

Scott: never a cholesterol emergency. There are emergency situations with journalism, but none of the standards have an emergency quality

Aviv: Concerted effort by actor to skirt the rules. Then the platforms get trapped until JTI is fixed.

Scott: I think that's more certification issue.   3 year revision if you don't do anything.

Sandro: Do we know who will pass? What happens if the list of folks on the whitelist doesn't seem right?

Scott: hopefully the certification process can help keep this working well.

http://jti-rsf.org

JTI Spec https://jti-rsf.org/assets/statics/docs/JTIForPublicComments.pdf