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<b>To</b>	
<b>Cc</b>	
<b>Bcc</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Reddit API Changes Set to Deplatform Blind Users on July 1</b>

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June 6th, 2023

Dear [Name],

My name is [name]. I am [what connects me to the issue]. I'm writing in regard to Reddit's new API pricing policy which will effectively kill all third-party Reddit apps on July 1. For reference, the API is how third-party apps "talk" with Reddit, allowing users of these apps to read posts and comments, upvote/downvote comments and posts, make and edit posts, and moderate subreddits. While the loss of third-party Reddit clients is an annoyance for many, it is devastating to blind Reddit users. [Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com) and the Reddit mobile apps are at best overly tedious and at worst virtually unusable depending on the combination of device, operating system, and screen reader (text-to-speech program used by blind and visually impaired people). Moreover, Reddit has shown little to no interest in improving the accessibility of their website and apps. As a result, a majority of blind users choose third-party clients where accessibility has been prioritized. These apps include RedReader on Android, Dystopia and Apollo on iOS, and RedditForBlind and Luna for Reddit on Windows. While developers of Dystopia, RedditForBlind and Luna for Reddit have not directly stated the number of their users and thus the price they will need to pay to continue operating, the cost of operating RedReader approximates \$1 million according to its developer who posted to r/RedReader (linked below). Meanwhile, the developer of Apollo for Reddit has calculated the cost to continue operating at \$20 million. This is obviously unsustainable.

["Update 3: Reddit effectively kills off third party apps" on r/RedReader](#)

["🚩 Had a call with Reddit to discuss pricing. Bad news for third-party apps, their announced pricing is close to Twitter's pricing, and Apollo would have to pay Reddit \\$20 million per year to keep running as-is." on r/AolloApp](#)

The proposed changes to Reddit's API will not only isolate blind users from a social network used by millions of people, thus disconnecting us from the wider world; they will also largely decimate communities for blind people—and disabled people in general—which have thrived on Reddit despite the company's perceived indifference. The subreddit r/Blind is an invaluable resource for blind and visually impaired people the world over. The information on this subreddit has helped countless people in various stages of blindness with such things as finding strategies to check their pet dogs for ticks, providing insights on how best to shop for clothes, giving suggestions to job seekers, or providing resources to people losing their vision who are unsure of what to do or how to cope. Additionally, r/TranscribersOfReddit and r/DescriptionPlease are two subreddits collectively composed of 6,000 volunteers around the

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world who have written 276,000 transcriptions around Reddit over the past six years according to their founder, u/ItsTheJoker, who also co-founded the non-profit which funds the infrastructure for the two subreddits. The work of these volunteers allows blind and visually impaired Redditors to not only read text in images throughout Reddit, but also receive descriptions of visual content within images and videos. All of these communities would be demolished by Reddit's API changes as blind people will find it extremely difficult to use Reddit. And, to add insult to injury, it has become clear that Reddit is apparently aware of the impact of their decisions according to u/ItsTheJoker, who stated the following in a message which I have received permission to reprint: [I]t's not that Reddit hasn't thought about marginalized communities, specifically the blind community. I have had multiple zoom calls with [a reddit staff member] about these requirements and the importance of API access (both for third party apps and for transcription)... They just don't care[.]”

I am writing in the hope that you can help to publicize the drastic impact of Reddit's API pricing on the blind community. Blind users have already effectively been deplatformed on Twitter, where API pricing shuttered third-party clients that improved accessibility for blind users. Furthermore, accessibility on twitter.com and the mobile apps has also precipitously declined after the entire accessibility team was fired. Twitter was also invaluable to blind and disabled communities. Without public awareness, the same will happen to the communities reliant on Reddit. I therefore hope you will consider using your platform as journalists who have covered Reddit for years to spread the word in an attempt to preserve our access to the platform. Should you be interested in more information, please feel free to reach out to me via email or call/SMS/WhatsApp/Signal my number listed below. I am also happy to connect you with other blind and visually impaired Redditors who can provide further input on this pressing issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
[Name]

PS: r/Blind will be temporarily shutting down from June 12-14 in solidarity with “thousands of other subreddits” who will either close temporarily or indefinitely in protest of Reddit’s changing API Policy. More information on the blackout as written by the r/Blind moderators can be found below.

["Reddit's Recently Announced API Changes, and the future of the /r/blind subreddit" on r/Blind](#)

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