



## Access to abundant, trustworthy journalism: Vital for a participatory democracy.

The internet promised open, easy access to the information that uniquely matters to us. Today, however, that access is controlled by a few powerful platforms upon which we rely for, well . . . pretty much everything. In exchange, these for-profit platforms control our identity and threaten our privacy. On top of that, quality publishing is suffering a loss of billions in advertising to the platforms and [up to \\$16 billion in ad fraud](#).

No one organization can tackle all of these problems. But we have a collaborative approach that will help support publishing in a user-centric, sustainable way. It can work around these ecosystem problems in an effort to show there is a better way, in hopes that we can change the trajectory we are on.

The **Information Trust Exchange Governing Association (ITEGA.ORG)** offers a different, better tool for providers to share and distribute content that users want. A 501c3 non-profit public-benefit corporation, ITEGA provides common, shared rules and technologies for governing the use of personal data, privacy and identity -- without government regulation or private-platform dominance. End users will be able to choose among many places to manage their personal data, creating a competitive marketplace for privacy and content distribution that is driven by the public interest.

ITEGA will enable content providers to improve the relevance and value of service to end users by:

- Standardizing *opt-in* exchange of user interests for content customization
- Discouraging or prohibiting opaque, back-channel collection and mingling of personal-identifying information
- Making it easier to *accurately* give users the right information at the right time

ITEGA will protect end users' privacy and identity by fostering:

- Standards for user control and anonymization of personal data
- Structures for enforcing privacy promises made by service providers.
- Competitive marketplaces for privacy offers and tools.

*"Managing identity and privacy for the public is an important unmet challenge. There is no institution better positioned than local news organizations to provide this service to the public in the context of a trusted third party like ITEGA."*

- Douglas K. Smith, Executive Director, Columbia Journalism School's Sulzberger Executive Leadership Program

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**THE INFORMATION  
TRUST EXCHANGE  
GOVERNING ASSOCIATION**

<http://www.itega.org/mission>

**Identity, privacy, personalization and user sharing  
for the news and information industries**

**BULLET-POINT BACKGROUND**

**Problem**

- News organizations are losing control of their users to tech platforms; status quo fails
- Public losing trust in online content and content providers
- Content providers are losing direct access to their users
- Content providers are losing the ability to earn revenue via advertising
- Readers/viewers/users seek simple, standard experiences that work across multiple sources and platforms, yet can be personalized.

**Solution**

- An “ICANN for identity”
- Standardization for exchange of user log-in (and identity) attributes for single-sign-on, shared subscriptions and *transparent* ad targeting by universal ID format’ an “ICANN for identity.”
- Trusted rules and protocols manage identity, data exchange similar to ICANN, original Visa, EduRoam, standard-gauge railroads, standard-60-cycle AC, BlueTooth SIG.
- But it must not be controlled by a single, for-profit entity that becomes a “tollgate” for its own account. Open, competitive market for users and service providers is a must.
- ITEGA membership required; competition on services, price, applications

**Benefits**

- Making an (open) marketplace for digital information exchange/payment
- Champion and foster non-profit, public governance of identity exchange
- Identity services distributed among a plurality of providers
- Gather publishers and new producers around common identity/privacy standards
- Enabling individuals to opt-in to controlled sharing of their identifying information with trusted content and service providers
- Enabling content providers to offer personalized information to those who opt-in
- Enabling content providers to form and share markets around these opted-in users
- Option to develop or support small-payment aggregation services
- Move beyond platforms’ (Google/FB) *de facto* lock on user identity / privacy
- A neutral opportunity to be standards compliant (or face regulatory scrutiny?)

## Operational status

- Information Trust Exchange Governing Association ([ITEGA](#)); California 501(c)(3) – similar to ICANN/Mozilla form. Public-benefit purpose: adopt, govern business and tech standards for sharing user data; lessen burdens on government to do so; promotes open, stable Internet. (see: [Articles of Organization](#) and [Bylaws](#))
- Technical specifications developed by year-2015-6 task groups (40+ participants).
- Prototype user-data exchange now ready to operate
- User-data exchange “anonymizing” for cohort-based advertising
- News personalization application (in testing) is platform for user-interest discovery
- Major publisher has offered sites for prototyping
- Key nonprofit technology company participating

## Next steps

- Prototype Shibboleth 2-based cross-site authentication plus standardized formats for exchanging privacy-by-design user attributes (network subscription, access rights, interests, payment auth).
- Membership commitments from publishers, public media and digital news sites
- Support from foundations
- Collaboration with respected technology player(s) and trade associations
- Foster prototyping of additional federated authentication and user-data exchange services

**Infotrust  
eXchange**

[itega.org](http://itega.org)

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## **ITEGA AND PRIVACY**

- End-third-party cookies
  - Opaque to users; identity “crumbs” all over Internet
  - Misappropriates proprietary value to ad-tech
  - Brands are frustrated; want alternative
- Stop “creepy” follow-me advertising
  - Elevate status and value of quality sites and environment
  - Built user-data exchange that ensures anonymous interest cohorts
  - Begin to think [“advisortising”](#)
- Get ahead of EU regulations impacting United States in April 2018
  - Disengage from paid-blocking and cookie-sharing
  - Prepare to offer value exchange for levels of privacy

**How a news-industry trade group may be helping regulators (and the ITE) to support quality and privacy:**

<https://informationtrust.wordpress.com/2017/01/04/how-a-news-industry-trade-group-may-be-helping-regulators-and-the-ite-to-support-quality-and-privacy/>



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## BENEFITS TO NEWS ORGANIZATIONS

- Enable joint action and “multihoming” – mitigating the rise of “hub power” (see *Tim Wu, at right*)
- Marketplace operating standards without collusion (like airlines and FAA flight rules; ICANN and domain addressing)
- Opportunity to sell content on a bundled or per-item basis to non-local subscribers
- Improve relevance and value of advertising through deeper knowledge about user interests and preferences.
- Aggregate proprietary users into anonymous interest cohorts available to advertisers
- Better serve “drive by” users by gaining basic information about their origin and differentiating access.
- More easily establish trackable sharing of content and users with other publishers
- More flexible control over access to premium content by designated users
- Transparent governance of user identity, privacy and payment standards
- Alignment with networks of minimum-certified, “accountable” publishers

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### RELATED LINKS

- [Challenge, solution, next steps, result](#)
- [Functional roles of ITEGA and its members](#)
- [Executive summary \(2 pages\), and launch plan \(55 pages\)](#)
- [Index to ALL linked documents](#)

### A one-pass for everything?

“I have a personal theory about traditional media, like newspaper and magazine sites, which is that they are crazy to go it alone and try to build their own little army. They should be more focused on getting readers to subscribe to a one-pass for everything that’s worth reading before Facebook essentially does this for them.”

- *Tim Wu, in an Oct., 2016 [Atlantic interview](#) about his book, *The Attention Merchants*.*

### Hub action best defense against dominant hubs?

See “Managing our Hub Economy,” by Marco Iansiti and Karim R. Lakhani, (Harvard Business Review, Sept. 2017) to learn how the rise of tech plat-forms is skewing value capture away from traditional firms; authors suggest multiple hubs in each sector, advising that “[c]ollective action can also restructure economic networks” and “other stakeholders need to work together to ensure hubs look after interests of all network members.” They add: “[I]ndeed, strategic joint action by companies that are not hubs may be the best competitive antidote to the rising power of hub firms.”

- *Accessed Oct. 2, 2017 from: <https://hbr.org/2017/09/managing-our-hub-economy>*



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## **BUILDING ITEGA: STANDARDS, GOVERNANCE, PROTOTYPING**

- A neutral forum for Internet stakeholders to develop and implement business rules and shared technology protocols – standards to protect privacy, manage identity, foster trust and facilitate the exchange of value on the web.
- Network governance to ensure that ITEGA members – publishers, content providers, information-technology vendors and others – are truthful and identified, and can be trusted with *our* identity.

### **(Diagram)**

A minimum-viable proof-of-concept demonstration (under construction) includes the following:

1. Creating and storing of standard user attributes on a distributed basis (at least two publishers involved)

*As just one example/method for obtaining user attributes:  
LifeStream® content personalization*

2. The ability to exchange profiles in some fashion among and between publishers, "profile aggregators" and other publishers or advertisers/agencies
3. Authentication of a unique but anonymous user to information resources on multiple sites -- "EasyPass" for information
4. Logging of user activity
5. Hooks that demonstrate how payment and variable pricing (including subscription and per click) are enabled