

Submission of

The Independent Web Creators of Canada – Créateurs Web Indépendants du Canada

November 25, 2016

Re: “Canadian Content in a Digital World” Consultation

NB. A previous version of this document was submitted with a faulty link. We kindly ask that you disregard the previous submission.

Dear Mme. Joly and Staff,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to contribute to this public consultation, ***on our own terms***. We are pleased to share with you 4 short podcasts we recorded for the purposes of this consultation where two of our executive team members, President Emilia Zboralska PhD (ABD), and Vice President and Creator, Dan Speerin, discuss the issues from the perspective of digital-first creators: <https://soundcloud.com/user-892316150>

The IWCC-CIWC is a not-for-profit association that seeks to build a strong Canadian digital media industry through education and policy. The IWCC provides information and advocacy by building relationships with other associations, guilds and governing bodies to give Canadians better access to national and international media resources. Our goal is to help build opportunities for diverse voices in Canada’s media landscape and to increase opportunities to recognize Canadian content globally.

Below, we provide a summary of the issues discussed and ideas proposed in each episode, along with individual links to each episode.

Episode 1: How Did We Get to #DigiCanCon?

<https://soundcloud.com/user-892316150/ep-1-how-did-we-get-to-digicancon>

In this episode, we discuss how we *got* to the current moment as an industry. We discuss some of the key problems associated with the traditional system, including the underrepresentation of the designated groups. We discuss how these patterns are apt to repeat themselves if we put the same frameworks around #DigiCanCon. We begin to discuss how new media forms require distinct methods of support. We also make clear that the very reason we have such a vibrant digital-first sector is precisely because a *whole generation of creators* were left out of the traditional broadcasting space and needed an outlet. And even now that this generation and its content is developing its own form, culture, and audiences—it has not been given the tools it needs to ‘grow up’.

Episode 2: Why Not Our Generation?

<https://soundcloud.com/user-892316150/ep-2-why-not-our-generation>

In this episode, we dive into the topic of Canadian content on the web and discuss the limits to the notion that the web solves Canada’s small market problem. We show why the web does not encourage the creation of hyper-local content, and why this content is very difficult to monetize. We also discuss why Canadian-based, broad digital content, like beauty vlogging, is also challenging to monetize because of the domination of the online monetization system by American advertising corporations. We also delve into our problematic ‘digital dimes to analog dollars’ predicament wherein the value of digitally-based advertising has not yet caught up to the value of traditional television advertising, even though the latter is on the decline. We also discuss the increasing consolidation of the web space by transnational corporations. We ask--what happens when there are only a few media buyers left *in the world?*

Episode 3: Funding = Incubation

<https://soundcloud.com/user-892316150/ep-3-funding-incubation>

In this episode, we discuss the shape and form that the future of support should take. We make a case for why web series are excellent sources of talent incubation. We discuss why underrepresentation of the designated groups has continued into the online space. We discuss the problems with the current funding system, and how certain groups without institutional knowledge are at a disadvantage. We talk about how the community media system can be better utilized to incubate creative talent, and how it can be integrated into the pipeline of innovation. We discuss the danger that art and culture creation is continuing to become a privileged space that greatly advantages

those with strong economic means. We also propose different ideas for the funding of digital content, including a FACTOR-like model for online creators. We also discuss the need to lower barriers to entry to the current digital funds, and to provide more micro-budget funding to give a greater number of artists, especially those from the margins, an opportunity to experiment, learn and ultimately succeed.

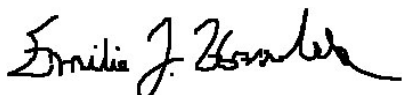
Episode 4: Ability is Not Access

<https://soundcloud.com/user-892316150/4-podcast-gatekeepers>

In the final episode of our podcast series, we dispel the myth that gatekeepers do not exist on the web. We talk about the fact that “ability” to upload content onto the web does not equate to true “access”. We demonstrate that genuine access is mediated by a wide range of factors including socio-economic status, quality of professional networks, economic resources, platforms and advertising restrictions. We discuss how infrastructure and community is still important to the digital creators of today. Throughout the conversation, we make several suggestions for how we can ensure that Canadian content is *visible* on the web, including increasing access to promotional and marketing support, ‘value swaps’ with other countries, and providing advertising incentives to Canadian companies.

We thank you again for allowing us to have a voice in this consultation and we welcome any questions.

On behalf of the IWCC,



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