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# Machine-Facing Pages and Machine-Facing Page Disclosure

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## 1. Disclaimer and Scope

This paper introduces terminology for describing machine-facing activity within digital ecosystems. It is intended to provide conceptual clarity, not to prescribe technical requirements or organisational behaviour. The definitions and frameworks presented here are descriptive and non-normative.

Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD) is an optional transparency mechanism that organisations may adopt at their discretion. It does not constitute a compliance obligation, accreditation criterion, or regulatory expectation.

Nothing in this document should be interpreted as directing how digital systems must be designed, implemented, or operated. The purpose is solely to establish a shared vocabulary that supports clearer understanding of the machine-facing surfaces that influence automated interpretation.

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## 2. Abstract

AI systems increasingly interpret information along two parallel channels: one designed for humans, and another shaped primarily by machine-facing signals. This phenomenon—*dual-surface communication*—has become a defining feature of modern information environments. Yet the machine-facing surfaces that influence AI interpretation frequently operate without human visibility, creating an asymmetric understanding of what an organisation actually publishes online.

This paper introduces the concepts of **Machine-Facing Pages (MFPs)** and **Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD)** as a universal, scope-neutral vocabulary for describing this hidden layer. MFPs already exist across the digital ecosystem, from structured data and API responses to auto-generated documentation, telemetry endpoints, and other signals not intended for human consumption. Their presence is not inherently problematic. The risk arises when these surfaces remain undisclosed, leaving humans unaware of the material AI systems may be using to form conclusions.

**MFPD is proposed as the minimum transparency layer required for a safe and trustworthy AI ecosystem.** It is a simple, non-prescriptive declaration that any publisher—regardless of scale, architecture, or domain—can make to clarify what machine-facing activity they publish and maintain. The ethical responsibility to disclose such activity mirrors the transparency expectations already familiar through GDPR and related frameworks.

By naming this risk surface and offering a feasible, universally applicable disclosure mechanism, this paper aims to support clearer communication between digital publishers, AI systems, and the public who rely on them.

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### 3. Introduction

Modern digital publishing increasingly operates across two distinct surfaces: one intended for human audiences, and another interpreted primarily by AI systems. Much of this machine-facing material is not deliberately created as “content” in the traditional sense. Instead, it emerges through structured data, metadata, API responses, automated documentation, and other technical signals that AI systems routinely ingest and interpret.

This dual-surface communication has become a foundational characteristic of the contemporary web. Yet while the human-facing layer is visible, navigable, and subject to well-established norms of disclosure and oversight, the machine-facing layer remains largely unseen. Its presence is not inherently problematic; many organisations make extensive and legitimate use of structured or machine-readable signals to support search functions, product catalogues, accessibility tooling, or interoperability requirements.

The risk arises from **asymmetric visibility**. Human audiences often cannot observe, evaluate, or even become aware of the machine-facing material that may meaningfully influence how AI systems understand an organisation, a service, or a set of claims. This obscured surface now forms part of the representational environment through which AI systems generate conclusions, summaries, and inferences.

This paper does not propose new requirements for how organisations must design or structure their systems. Instead, it introduces a clear vocabulary for describing this hidden surface and a simple, universally applicable transparency mechanism that allows organisations to clarify what machine-facing activity they publish and maintain. By naming the phenomenon and reducing interpretive ambiguity, we aim to support safer interactions between digital publishers, AI systems, and the humans who are increasingly beginning to depend on them.

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### 4. Definitions

The following definitions establish a shared vocabulary for describing machine-facing activity across all digital publishing contexts. These terms are designed to be universal, scope-neutral, and applicable to organisations of any scale, structure, or domain.

### 3.1 Machine-Facing Page (MFP)

A **Machine-Facing Page (MFP)** is any digital surface, signal, or output that is primarily interpreted by AI systems or other automated agents rather than human audiences.

An MFP may arise intentionally or incidentally through technical systems such as structured data, metadata, API responses, autogenerated documentation, telemetry endpoints, or other machine-readable formats.

MFPs already exist across the digital ecosystem; they may not always require conscious design or human-facing visibility to function as such.

### 3.2 Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD)

A **Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD)** is a simple, non-prescriptive declaration in which an organisation clarifies what machine-facing activity it publishes and maintains. MFPD is universally applicable: any digital publisher—regardless of architecture, scale, or technical sophistication—can describe the existence and general purpose of their machine-facing surfaces without altering their systems.

The aim of MFPD is transparency, not alignment or structural change.

### 3.3 Dual-Surface Communication

**Dual-surface communication** describes the condition in which an organisation simultaneously publishes human-facing and machine-facing material, each contributing differently to how their digital presence is interpreted.

This phenomenon is structural to modern information environments and does not imply intent, error, or misalignment. It simply acknowledges that human and machine interpreters often receive different views of the same underlying system.

### 3.4 Asymmetric Visibility

**Asymmetric visibility** refers to the imbalance that arises when machine-facing material meaningfully influences AI interpretation while remaining largely inaccessible **and almost always unknown** to human oversight or inspection.

This asymmetry is a key source of representational risk—not because machine-facing activity is inherently problematic, but because it may remain undisclosed, uninspected, or misunderstood.

### 3.5 Publisher

A **publisher** in this context is any actor—individual, organisational, commercial, governmental, or otherwise—whose digital systems emit signals, pages, or artefacts that AI systems may interpret.

This definition is deliberately broad to reflect the diversity of modern digital ecosystems and to ensure that no class of actor is excluded from transparency considerations.

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## 5. The Risk Surface

AI systems form interpretations from whatever material they can access. In contemporary digital environments, this increasingly includes surfaces, signals, and outputs that human audiences cannot easily observe. As a result, organisations may unintentionally publish two parallel versions of themselves: one visible to people and another shaped by machine-facing material that is rarely reviewed, evaluated, or even recognised as publishing activity.

This disparity creates a representational risk rather than a behavioral one. The concern is not that organisations are acting improperly, but that AI systems may rely on signals humans cannot see—and therefore cannot contextualise or correct. A publisher’s machine-facing surfaces may include structured metadata, autogenerated documentation, system outputs, product feeds, or other technical artefacts that, while benign in purpose, meaningfully influence how AI systems describe, summarise, or evaluate them.

Because this machine-facing layer is often uninspected, inconsistencies can emerge between the human-facing and machine-facing representations of the same entity. These inconsistencies may affect search results, automated summaries, recommendation engines, regulatory assessments, and other AI-mediated interactions that shape how organisations are understood in practice.

The risk surface therefore arises not from deceit or design, but from **dual-surface communication** operating without a shared framework for visibility. Without basic transparency, publishers may remain unaware of the signals shaping AI interpretation, and end-users cannot meaningfully understand the basis on which AI systems form conclusions. Recognising and naming this dynamic is the first step toward reducing misinterpretation and improving trust across the digital ecosystem.

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## 6. Purpose of Introducing These Terms

Machine-facing activity has existed for decades, but until now it has lacked a clear and universal vocabulary. Organisations often publish human-facing and machine-facing material simultaneously, yet only the human-facing layer benefits from established norms of explanation, documentation, and oversight. The machine-facing layer, by contrast, has typically been treated as a technical by-product rather than a dimension of public communication.

The purpose of introducing the terms **Machine-Facing Page (MFP)** and **Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD)** is to provide publishers, policymakers, and practitioners with language that accurately describes this structural feature of **rapidly evolving digital ecosystems**. These terms do not prescribe how organisations should design their systems,

nor do they imply that existing machine-facing behaviour is inappropriate. Rather, they make visible a layer of communication that has previously been difficult to discuss, assess, or even recognise.

By naming this phenomenon, we enable clearer conversations about how AI systems form interpretations, why inconsistencies may arise between human and machine views of the same entity, and how organisations can communicate more transparently about the machine-facing material they publish and maintain. The introduction of shared terminology does not impose new obligations; it simply reduces ambiguity and supports a more coherent understanding of the machine-facing layer across all sectors.

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## 7. Examples of Machine-Facing Pages

Machine-Facing Pages appear in many forms across digital ecosystems. They may be intentionally created to support interoperability or technical operations, or they may emerge incidentally from system behaviour. The following examples illustrate the breadth of machine-facing activity; they are representative rather than exhaustive, and they do not prescribe how any organisation should design or structure its systems.

- **Structured data and metadata** used by search engines, catalogues, or internal indexing systems.
- **API responses** that return machine-readable information for external services, mobile apps, or partner integrations.
- **Autogenerated documentation** produced by developer tooling, software frameworks, or internal documentation pipelines.
- **Dynamic product feeds** and catalogue endpoints used by ecommerce platforms or inventory management systems.
- **Telemetry or diagnostic outputs** designed to support system monitoring, stability analysis, or automated reporting.
- **Knowledge-base surfaces** maintained by support systems, SaaS platforms, or internal helpdesk tools that expose structured or semi-structured material to automated agents.
- **Government service schemas** that provide machine-readable definitions of public services, eligibility rules, or procedural steps.
- **Mobile application endpoints** that communicate state, configuration, or metadata to background services or automated interpreters.

These examples highlight how diverse, routine, and widespread machine-facing activity has become. Many organisations publish such materials without considering them “content” in the human sense, yet these surfaces may meaningfully influence how AI systems interpret and represent their activities.

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## 8. Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD)

While machine-facing material is a routine feature of modern systems, its existence is rarely communicated beyond technical teams. As a result, organisations may publish machine-facing signals that meaningfully influence AI interpretation without ever presenting a clear account of those signals to human audiences. Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD) provides a way to address this asymmetry without imposing structural or behavioural requirements on publishers.

An MFPD is a simple, non-prescriptive declaration in which an organisation describes the machine-facing activity it publishes and maintains. It does not require system redesign, content alignment, or the creation of new machine-facing material. Instead, it offers a clear and accessible explanation of the surfaces that already exist—whether intentional or incidental—and the role they play in automated interpretation.

MFPD is universally applicable. Any digital publisher, regardless of size, architecture, or sector, can describe the general nature of their machine-facing surfaces. For some organisations this may involve a brief statement about structured data or API endpoints; for others it may involve acknowledging dynamic, autogenerated, or highly distributed technical outputs. The form and level of detail remain entirely at the publisher’s discretion.

The rationale for MFPD is both ethical and infrastructural. Ethically, disclosing machine-facing behaviour helps reduce the informational asymmetry between what humans see and what AI systems interpret—a transparency expectation increasingly familiar through GDPR and related frameworks. Infrastructurally, it supports a more predictable interpretive environment for AI systems by clarifying the existence of signals that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

MFPD is not a compliance mechanism and does not prescribe how publishers should manage their digital systems. It is simply the **minimum transparency layer** needed to make dual-surface communication visible, understandable, and accountable within an AI-mediated world.

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## **9. Optional Good Practices**

Although Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD) requires no operational changes, some organisations may find it useful to reflect on how their human-facing and machine-facing surfaces relate to one another. The following practices are entirely optional. They are examples of approaches that certain publishers may choose to explore, but they are *not* expectations, recommendations, or indicators of compliance.

### **8.1 Awareness and Internal Mapping**

Some organisations may benefit from developing a broad internal understanding of the machine-facing surfaces their systems emit. This could involve identifying structured data, autogenerated outputs, or API endpoints that contribute to automated interpretation. For many publishers, this awareness already exists within technical teams; MFPD simply provides a way to express it externally if desired.

### **8.2 Clarity of Purpose**

Where practical, certain publishers may choose to consider whether their machine-facing surfaces accurately reflect the information they intend automated systems to interpret. This does not imply alignment or redesign—only that clarity of purpose can sometimes support more predictable interactions with automated agents.

### **8.3 Consistency Review (Where Feasible)**

In some contexts, organisations may elect to examine whether differences between their human-facing and machine-facing surfaces could unintentionally create interpretive divergence. For many systems, such differences are unavoidable and entirely appropriate. In other cases, a simple review may help ensure that the signals intended for automated systems do not conflict with the organisation’s human-facing representations.

### **8.4 Documentation (If Helpful)**

Publishers with complex ecosystems may find it useful to record, for internal use, the role or origin of certain machine-facing surfaces. This documentation is optional and may support future updates, audits, or transparency statements. It is not required by MFPD and may not be relevant for simpler systems.

### **8.5 Potential Organisational Benefits (Optional and Non-Prescriptive)**

Although MFPD imposes no operational requirements, some organisations may find that providing clarity about their machine-facing surfaces leads to indirect benefits. These may include more predictable AI-mediated interactions, reduced representational drift, and fewer instances where outdated or incidental signals disproportionately influence automated interpretation.



Such benefits are not guaranteed and are not part of the disclosure mechanism itself, but they reflect the broader value that can arise when organisations develop a clearer understanding of the machine-facing material they publish and maintain.

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## 10. Ethical and Ecosystem Considerations

Machine-facing activity forms part of the interpretive environment in which AI systems operate, yet it often remains invisible to the people affected by it. While Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD) is not an ethical mandate, it does speak to a broader expectation of transparency that has become familiar across digital ecosystems.

Providing a clear account of machine-facing material can help reduce the information imbalance between human users and automated systems, allowing individuals, organisations, and institutions to understand more clearly how AI-driven interpretations arise. This is especially relevant in settings where automated outputs influence public understanding, service delivery, or decision-making.

At an ecosystem level, even modest increases in transparency can support more predictable interactions between publishers and AI systems by clarifying the existence of signals that might otherwise remain unnoticed. Such clarity benefits not only AI developers and regulators but also the wider public, who increasingly rely on AI-mediated representations of organisations and services.

These considerations do not impose obligations or define standards of behaviour. They simply acknowledge that transparency—when chosen—can contribute to a healthier interpretive environment for all participants in an AI-mediated world.

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## 11. Conclusion

Machine-facing activity has become an inherent feature of modern digital environments, shaping how AI systems interpret and represent organisations, services, and information. Until now, this layer has lacked a clear vocabulary, making it difficult for publishers, practitioners, and policymakers to discuss, assess, or contextualise its role.

By introducing the terms **Machine-Facing Page (MFP)** and **Machine-Facing Page Disclosure (MFPD)**, this paper offers a simple, universal language for describing a phenomenon that already permeates the digital ecosystem. The intention is not to prescribe behaviour or impose expectations, but to reduce ambiguity and support a clearer understanding of how dual-surface communication influences automated interpretation.

MFPD provides a minimal transparency layer that any organisation can adopt at its discretion. For some, it may serve as a straightforward contextual statement; for others, it may form part of a broader reflection on how machine-facing signals contribute to the representations AI systems generate. In all cases, the choice of approach remains entirely with the publisher.

As AI systems continue to play a larger role in mediating information, even small improvements in transparency can support more predictable, comprehensible, and trustworthy interactions across the ecosystem. Naming and describing this hidden surface is a first step toward fostering that clarity.

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