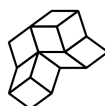# Requirements for a Healthy Ecosystem in Advertising (RHEA)

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supramundane *agency.*

Advertising is a critical input to much of the digital economy, not least of which media. In fact, it has proven essential to the point of being described as "the business model of the internet." Unfortunately, however, advertising has not been governed with the care that such an important piece of infrastructure deserves. Advertising is unpopular with technologists who want to do good, activists and civil society organisations often simply propose to eliminate it or limit themselves to superficial proposals that don't engage with the technology or economics (e.g. "just use contextual"), and regulators have found the advertising system highly opaque and complex to engage with. It is common that publishers and marketers would only partially understand the system they use, which in turn stokes fear of what may happen if anything were to change. The field is highly concentrated around a Google/Meta duopoly and fraught with a long list of ills, but a comprehensive vision for a stakeholder-centric alternative has yet to emerge.

This document outlines what an alternative could be. It doesn't claim to be complete and certainly not detailed, but it offers a path forward that can hopefully be iterated upon and deployed.

- *the subsidy system*
- *very little academic research worth considering, in some cases preposterously wrong*
  - *so opaque that no evidence-based decision-making is possible*
  - *the general climate of opacity makes it impossible for actors to make informed decisions as market participants, either as buyers or as sellers*
- *energy costs (for fraud, but also for oversized creatives)*
- *privacy*
  - *limited evidence to support that the data processing is needed*
  - *often used to predict a sale that would have happened anyway (HBR)*
  - *the data advantage is most likely about faking lift than it is about creating genuine conversions*
-

- ☐
  Intro / Goals
  - ☐
    Better for publishers: describe the subsidy system and how we need to end it
  - ☐
    Better for advertisers: traceability problems, lots of marketing options are bad
  - ☐
    Better for people: credible privacy
  - ☐
    Governed ad safety (link to defunding climate reporting + stealing content)
  - ☐
    from RHEA
- ☐
  Privacy
  - ☐
    Exemptions + technical guarantees for the processing
  - ☐
    Single controller operations (apart perhaps from some very limited technical services like serving)
  - ☐
    Article 40/41
  - ☐
    Could consider using the Data Act and data exchanges (?) to support some form of targeting
    - ☐
      Use sortition-based privacy (see Asia, also Max von G.)
- ☐
  Marketplace
  - ☐

- *Beckn specialised for this*
  - *SDAs — why this makes them actually possible*
  - *Some geo*
  - *PPA*
  - *Fraud prevention*
  - *KYC requirements*
  - *Money: can this use a digital currency and protocol that supports splitting well?*
- *Creatives*
  - *Locked down, but that's okay because purchases are made in small batches*
  - *Content-addressed and all content is available at purchase time (this allows extra charges for creative size to be addressed)*
- *Governance*
  - *Bring back some GARUDA*
  - *I don't think that we want browsers involved*
  - *Split the components of the architecture so that we can have different governance for different elements — AT-style*