

The RIAA and to a lesser extent the MPAA would like us to believe that every song or movie illegally downloaded equates to a lost sale for that product. Of course that is not true.

Many of us have illegally downloaded songs, CDs or movies that we never would have purchased, but were curious enough to sample them because it was free. In turn many of us have also purchased a product that we never would have otherwise purchased had we not decided to sample it first through an illegal download.

Arguments are made to both sides of the balance sheet, but the inescapable truth is that not every illegal download erases a certain sale.

It's different for written, copyrighted content on the Web.

Today, any and every single website can gain revenue for every pageview and every click generated by a page supporting AdSense, Yahoo Publishing or any of the other competitors. For small and unknown websites, we may be talking only a \$2 CPM, or less than .2 cents a page view, but the inescapable reality that every page view lost because content is stolen and posted on an unauthorized site and read in full, is money truly and actually lost by the content creator.

If I were to copy and paste the [entire NY Times article that I referenced in my blog](#), that would have been stealing. There is no hypothetical loss involved. It's not a "maybe a lost sale", like the music or movie industry. It's a loss of real money every single time it happens. I don't know what the NY Times earns in PPC or CPM priced ad revenue per page, but however many people clicked through, that earned the Times their money.

If I had cut and paste the article, and someone had come to and stayed on the page to read the article, I would have gotten paid my share of the CPM paid for ads on my blog. The Times would have lost the money of those who wanted to read or sample that article. That would have been wrong.

Which leads me to the point. **The entire content industry is missing a unique opportunity to eliminate most content piracy and more importantly, to generate a whole lot more revenue by offering revenue sharing.** If the NYTimes, to use them as an example, were to offer 50 pct of the revenue generated from traffic delivered by affiliated websites, not a single website with half a clue would steal your content. Instead, every blogger, splogger and small content creator would look to find ways to link to your content and drive you traffic. Companies like LinkShare offer revenue sharing programs for product sales, why not offer the same for advertising sales?

Rather than trying to find ways to push people to AdSense or Yahoo PPC ads, websites would work to create traffic to revenue sharing sites instead. Why? Because if someone on my site clicks on a Google text ad, then I get paid once. For one click. One and done.

If I get paid for the traffic I send as someone navigates through your site, I get paid by the CPM for page views generated by the user I send, plus my share of a PPC exit click through if there is one.

Then of course there is rich media. Audio and video CPMs are huge these days. There isn't enough inventory to match the demand from advertisers. Splitting rich media advertising revenue could mean a huge payday for all involved.

Given that the destination site, in this example the Times, probably has more depth of content than an individual driven website or blog, the chances of an extended number of page views and multimedia views that the sending site gets paid on increases. Which means the revenue potential for the sending site increases. More reasons to find ways to work through your site rather than PPC engines like AdSense.

Of course, this isn't limited to newspaper sites. Any site that is advertising or subscriber supported would benefit. Yes, Yahoo and Google could easily get in the mix and pay for delivered traffic, but it would cost them a fortune. It would be interesting if they paid for more than the types of traffic they pay for now. If they did, it would be a huge change in the financial dynamics of the net.

Would I pay 50pct of my ad revenue generated to people who link to Icarocket.com, Box.Net, NetIdentity.com or blogmaverick.com. Yep. I would even have to consider offering an annuity for users that you send that are first time users that turn into recurring users.

Traffic on the net is becoming more and more valuable. A little bit of sharing can go a long way.

Stay tuned and let me know your thoughts