

## PRESS RELEASE

# THE COST OF PROPOSED E-PRIVACY RULES: JOURNALISTIC DIVERSITY AND USER ACCESS TO CONTENT

**Brussels, 6 September 2017** – The European Magazine Media Association (EMMA) and the European Digital Advertising Alliance (EDAA) organised the Future Media Lounge event on Tuesday, 5 September at the Renaissance Hotel, Brussels. This edition examined how the proposed e-Privacy regulation places severe limitations on the digital advertising business model used by online publishers across Europe to generate revenue. Such restrictions could limit the freedom, independence and diversity of the press across Europe as well as the open access consumers' currently have to journalistic content online.

The Future Media Lounge brought together the online media and advertising players with policy makers to examine a workable way forward on ePrivacy, including: Marju Lauristin (MEP, S&D), rapporteur on the e-Privacy regulation, Xavier Bouckaert (CEO, Roularta Media Group), Despina Spanou (- Director for Digital Society, Trust and Cybersecurity - European Commission), Angela Mills Wade (EDAA Board Member and Executive Director of the European Publishers' Council), Sophie In't Veld (MEP, ALDE), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (MEP, EPP), Daniel Dalton (MEP, ECR), Prof. Dr. Christoph Fiedler (Managing Director for European Affairs and Media policy, VDZ).

Publishers explained that e-Privacy proposals should not require the provision of a subscription-based "alternative" to advertising-supported content nor mandate that content be made available for free. Rather, publishers should be free to determine the conditions for access to their content, including requiring that users agree to data processing for data-driven advertising purposes. *"Press freedom and the diversity of views which underpins our democracy. Breaking news or in-depth investigative reports, sports coverage or feature writing is not just popular to read and share across social media, but expensive and risky to produce. Data-driven, interest based advertising is highly effective and produces the most value to both advertisers and those press publishers who rely on advertising revenues to support the production of professional, fact-based journalism. European regulators need to make the link between what European citizens value and how it is funded and ensure that legislation doesn't cut off indispensable revenues"* said Angela Mills-Wade, EDAA Board Member and Executive Director of the European Publishers' Council.

Additionally, this edition highlighted practical policy solutions that could balance consumer and industry interests - incorporating the GDPR's principle of legitimate interest would mean digital advertisers and therefore publishers could operate whilst respecting stringent measures to ensure consumer privacy. Increased transparency regarding cookies and allowing space for dialogue between publishers and consumers and aligning the e-Privacy regulation more closely with the GDPR to address the uncertainty in how data should be processed. Xaxier Bouckaert, CEO of Roularta Media Group explained that *"to continue on a successful path we ask legislators for flexibility so that we can continue doing what we do best, bring professional press content to the reader: we ask you to not condition all digital operations to strict consent and mandatory login business models."*

Therefore, EMMA and EDAA hope that going forward the e-Privacy regulation allows European publishers the freedom to determine the most suitable business model for their specific online content and services offering, in the understanding that data-driven advertising underpins our ability to enable access to free content, offer a diverse media landscape and undertake independent journalistic endeavors.

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