

**Sree Sreenivasan Remarks Presented at
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SREENIVASAN: Hi, everybody, and thanks – yeah, sorry. And thanks for having me here. And I cannot believe there are this many people interested in copyright. This is terrific. This might be everybody in the world who’s interested in copyright is in this room.

M: (laughter) We’re all here.

SREENIVASAN: We were planning to just have a conversation among the four of us, so this is really heartening to do this. So my name is Sree Sreenivasan. I’m Dean of Student Affairs and a Professor of Digital Media at Columbia’s journalism school, and also I’m involved with a new hyperlocal startup in New York called DNAinfo.com. And so I’m going to talk to you about copyright from the perspective of someone who deals a lot with young people and journalists, trying to deal with and explain copyright stuff to them. And then, of course, we actually have a copyright lawyer, which is great, and I know you’re going to have a line of people after this.

But I want to echo what Rafat said, that the idea of sharing your content, and having it embedded, and getting out there, is the single biggest innovation, but is also the single hardest thing for traditional journalists to understand. Your work has always had to speak for itself – or always spoke for itself, if you’re a journalist. You didn’t have to worry about where this was running, or anything else. You knew that if you worked at the *New York Times*, your work was read by 1.6 million people – though that’s not true, but you believed that, and life was good. When in fact, with all these changes, and all the metrics and tools you now have, you know exactly – or you have a better sense, anyway – that nowhere close to 1.6 million people are reading your work, and you have this kind of understanding of it.

And I tell people all the time that it’s very important for us to understand the value of the kind of things that Rafat’s talked to you about, while maintaining access and revenue and everything else that comes from controlling your copy. And I want to give you two examples that I think illustrate this issue.

The first is that there is a very good article about the changes at Facebook, and privacy with Facebook, that a lot of people refer to these days. And it’s an article that’s something like *Three Steps to Fix the New Privacy Changes* at – how many people remember this story, reading it? And universally it’s known as the story that ran in the – it’s the *New York Times* tech section story about this. If you have a computer and you Google it, you can find it.

Well, turns out it's actually a story by ReadWriteWeb, readwriteweb.com, which is an excellent Website about what's going on. I say there are three or four Websites that everybody should know, should add to their media diet. One is Rafat's site, paidContent, the other is mashable.com, third is ReadWriteWeb, and then, depending on your interest, you could add either lifehacker or a couple of other sites like that. But anyway, ReadWriteWeb has a content syndication partnership with the *Times*, and that story is actually a ReadWriteWeb story, but everybody understands it's a *Times* piece, because it ran in the *Times* section. And so that's an example of a smaller publication leveraging the audience, the access, the name recognition, everything else, of a bigger publication. And I know your stuff runs all over the Internet, right?

ALI: Yeah, we actually – we can talk about that later, but we killed all our syndication deals, for reasons that I can –

SREENIVASAN: OK, maybe – I'd love – so – but you used to do this, then. So we can talk about that. OK. So that's one example. The other example that I tell people is about, I used to do a lot of technology reporting, local technology reporting in New York, before I did my startup, and I was asked to review Hulu when it launched. And I was working at WNBC, and everybody in the world reviewed Hulu except the local technology reporter at WNBC, and that was me, because I knew this would be a terrible product. You've got NBC and News Corp. getting together to try and respond to YouTube. What a terrible idea. They're going to screw this up so badly, I just knew it. And I refused to even log in, because if I did, then I'd have to tell the truth. So I just wouldn't do it. And my boss would get e-mails from their bosses saying, how come you've got – done nothing about Hulu, and you have a technology reporter? So anyway, finally, after six months, I did log on, and I saw something amazing – a really good, useful, helpful product that you did not – at least I did not expect. And the moment that I understood the power of Hulu, and the vision that these people have, was when we went in to see, my kids and I, to watch *The Fiddler on the Roof* on this. And, by the way, there's nothing more globalization than watching two little Hindu kids singing *Matchmaker, Matchmaker*. (laughter) But that's another story. I have six-year-old twins, and they were at that time probably three or four, and they loved *Matchmaker, Matchmaker*.

But the magic of Hulu, to me, and the promise of Hulu, and why it has in fact become such a juggernaut, was that these lawyers got together and allowed not only for you to share the movie, or e-mail the movie, or anything else, but to clip an audio segment and embed it. Not embed the whole movie, but just embed the song you wanted, or the dialogue you wanted. And I would have loved to have been among the lawyers in that room when they were negotiating this. I mean, it went against everything else we know, where you got to have total control. And I thought was a very big moment when they decided to do that, and then transfer that into Hulu. And I don't know if all those same features are still there today, but –

anybody know? Are they still there? You can still embed a certain clip, a smaller clip within Hulu, into your own –

M: I think it's pretty selective, whatever they –

SREENIVASAN: OK, so that's a change. But in the beginning you could choose your own clip from a larger clip and embed it, e-mail it, etc. So I think those are two examples of how big companies and smaller companies are doing innovative work.

When I teach reporters and editors about this stuff, I talk a lot about making sure your work is – has the following features, that it is embeddable, clickable, sharable, linkable. And unless you are able to do at least some of these things – and maybe we'll hear from Rafat about why some of those is not a good idea – the more you can do that, the more your work can stand out in a very crowded field. A reporter said to me yesterday – he works at one of the biggest news organizations in America, and it just occurred to him, finally, that even great content can die on the vine unless we have innovative ways to get people to find the content, and then tell lots of people about that content. Otherwise you're going to get lost in that. And that's at one of the biggest news organizations. So imagine a startup that you've never heard of, how much work has to be done on behalf of journalists to get the work out. And it's very difficult for journalists to understand that. So I spend a lot of time thinking about that in terms of how we go.

We already got some great stats from Ed, but just to give you a sense of this, there are three billion photos added on Facebook every month. I just wrote a column, Facebook celebrated its sixth birthday. So three billion photos a month, five billion pieces of content are being added every week on Facebook. This is just Facebook. And you've seen the other stats – 400 million users, 200 million logging in every day.

And on YouTube, last year they hit 20 hours of footage being added every minute. They are much closer to 24 hours, or have crossed that. That's the equivalent of 100,000 movies being launched, the content equivalent of 100,000 movies being launched by Hollywood every week. Just think about that. That gives you a real sense of where all of this is going, and I think the issue therefore of copyright and who owns stuff is going to be very important.

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