



PAGE 3: B. ABOUT YOU

Q1: Respondent details

Name	Bastiaan Quast
Organization	The Internet Society
Email Address	-
Phone Number	-

Q2: Country or Customs territory

SWITZERLAND

Q3: Organization

NGO

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Q4: Title of case story

Promoting Content In Africa

Q5: Case story focus

E-commerce development and efforts to bridge the "digital divide".

Q6: Case story abstract

Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are seeing that the growth of internet adoption is not always keeping pace with the availability. Adoption levels are well below saturation levels, and this is in part caused by a lack of locally relevant and available content. There are a number of platform as well as infrastructural causes for this lack of content availability. This report discusses some of the key issues to local content development. Based on this discussion, we present a number of recommendations that can help promote content in Africa.

Q7: Who provided funding?

NGO

Q8: Project/Programme type

Regional

Q9: Your text case story

This study focuses on content and services that make the internet relevant and attractive, with the impact of bringing new users online, and increasing the usage of those already online. To achieve this, there are two related issues involved - first, the availability of relevant content, and second, the distribution of that content. Content is furthermore most relevant when it is in the local language - this applies in particular to international content and services, but also to local content that may not be available in all languages in a country.

RELEVANT CONTENT AVAILABILITY

1. Language

- An increased focus on local language content can engage Sub-Saharan users in all aspects of the Internet, including websites.
- Governments can fulfil a leading role by making their websites available in the official national languages, leading by example.
- Platforms such as social media can provide support for posting items in multiple languages, allowing users and posters to interact more easily between languages.

2. Legal Considerations

- In order to limit the amount of content blocking and filtering, governments should be well informed about the adverse consequences and limited effectiveness of such policies.
- Clear frameworks for intermediary liability can help remove uncertainty for content platforms and even data centres.

3. Payments

Several solutions are needed for issue of payment for content:

- Availability of Gift or Prepaid Cards for app store credit allows users to purchase content such as apps using cash money.
- Payout to content developers for apps or ads on e.g. websites can be achieved using intermediaries such as Google, Facebook and Apple using a method whereby credit can be converted into currency.
- Transferring of app store credit could help solve the demand and supply side problems simultaneously, by allowing developers to transfer their earned credit in return for cash payments.
- Regardless of the means, we support seeking a solution that allow everyone to be able to buy and sell content, through websites or apps, in order to be able to monetise the development of local content.

4. Advertising

- Advertising can monetise services without the need for direct payments by users, however, currently there are no African languages that are supported by any major ad platform.
- Policies expressly forbidding advertising on websites where the content is in a non-supported language acts as a further barrier. Removing this restriction would allow websites to at least include advertisements in a supported language.
- In order to fully utilise the potential of advertising, advertising platforms should start supporting advertisements in African languages, so that effective targeting is made possible.

5. Innovation Hubs

- Innovation hubs can become a focal point for innovation, governments could help by providing some space or funding for the hub to be started.

CONTENT INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Carrier-Neutral Data Centres

- Carrier-Neutral Data Centre construction can benefit from greater transparency about the location of fibre-optic cables of possible connectivity providers, through the creation of an Atlas of Passive Infrastructure.
- Vague and bad regulatory environments deter the building of CNDCs, so creating a clear legal environment helps remove uncertainty.
- Governments can act as anchor tenants in CNDCs.

2. Local Content Delivery

- Local hosting lowers the capacity need of ISPs on submarine cable, eventually lowering the cost of Internet access to users.

For all developing countries we have studied, the majority of content - both international and locally developed, is hosted outside the country, typically overseas. For instance, in Rwanda, for all .RW websites, only a very small fraction are hosted in Rwanda, and the rest are hosted predominantly in Europe and the US. Based on work that we did recently in Rwanda, overseas hosting can have a significant impact on the cost and latency of accessing the content, which acts to depress usage. Thus, having good local and regional content distribution platforms can significantly increase the usage of available content.

3. Internet Exchange Points

- In order to make sure content does not needlessly leave the country, a wellfunctioning IXP is critical.

4. Mobile Requirements

- Apps should be designed to function without Internet access, and also be able to store content offline for later viewing.
- Content delivery should be as efficient

For full report: <http://www.internetsociety.org/doc/promoting-content-africa>

Q10: Lessons learnt

Barriers to local content hosting in Sub-Saharan Africa include:

- Training of engineers locally to operate equipment
- Legal restrictions on those who host the content of others
- Access to power and fibre cables within the country
- Import procedures that raise the time and cost of acquiring the equipment
- Content must be in local languages

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