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Brussels, 9 October 2009

Additional paper on the Post-i2010 Consultation: priorities for new strategy for European information society (2010-2015)

The Creative Media Business Alliance (CMBA) is pleased to submit its comments on the European Commission's open consultation on "post-i2010 strategy" and its goal to propose a new digital agenda to meet the challenges of the Information Society.

The CMBA was launched in 2004. Its members are some of Europe's top media and creative businesses and industry associations, to whom it provides a platform for contributing to ongoing discussions and joint efforts at EU level to foster creativity, growth and employment in the Information Society.

We welcome the Commission's initiative in exploring a strategy to boost Europe's ICT potential and unlock the benefits of the Information Society for European growth and jobs. However, we are disappointed to see that 5 years on and despite our comments at the time of the Lisbon Agenda, there is still a mistaken belief that, to achieve a dynamic and competitive Information Society, it is sufficient to focus on the development of ICT technology and distribution networks. This approach undervalues the importance of the created content that technology and networks are made to distribute.

In this context, we note with dismay that although the topic of "copyright" on which our industry is based features quite prominently in the i2010 consultation questionnaire, it is often referred to in negative terms and portrayed solely as an obstacle to innovation. Moreover, the questionnaire contains not a single reference to those creative content companies which make the new roads of the Information Society actually worth travelling for European consumers. In our view the wording of some of the questions (we highlight as a particularly egregious example question 6.3) is slanted and appears to take for granted that immediate accessibility should supersede content protection. The questionnaire also fails to acknowledge the significant contribution to growth and employment that content companies make by investing in, producing and disseminating a huge array of content that educates, informs and entertains Europe's citizens, and which contributes towards making Europe a global leader.



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We believe that it is high time to treat the Information Society as a normal part of society, and not as an isolated entity. This would give due credit to the central role of the creative industry in the success of any new digital agenda. If Europe's creativity is not properly rewarded, its competitiveness will be negatively impacted. We now have an opportunity to harness the energy of the content industry to help Europe achieve its goals. By looking at the issue beyond ICT in isolation, the Commission can create a world-leading system in Europe which can benefit fully from the power of the content industry.

We therefore urge you to bear in mind the above points when analysing the questionnaire results, and look forward to working further with you to continue to develop Europe's Information Society, its distribution networks, access to content, and all the positive aspects these have on European society as a whole.