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Comp 4081 - Vision Statement

One of the important issues that concerns me in today's world is government and corporate corruption. This includes all levels of corruption, manipulation of truth in media, government propaganda, abuse of funds, ect. We are all familiar with the high levels of corruption world wide, but even more unsettling, is how large entities will silence and censor whistle blowers either physically or on the Internet. Although, far from a total solution, I am proposing web software to aid whistle blowers, by protecting their identities, alerting others to these incidents, and help in the fight against net neutrality opposition and government/corporate corruption.

We would not be the first to tackle this problem. Google, a strong proponent of net neutrality has been running their transparency report(1) for some years now. And of course, there is also the notorious Wikileaks. My proposal addresses some issues as to why Wikileaks failed. First, to avoid shutdown or censorship ourselves, we would not host any material ourselves. Second, unlike wikileaks, we would carefully filter and reject submissions of information that could endanger lives. We want to focus specifically on cases of corruption, taking submission from first hand accounts only. Many whistleblowers are afraid of going to media reporters for fear of their identity being released. We would help protect the identity of submitters by deleting all personal information following approval. Submitters would be required to be self published, on another website, or blog. Upon approval, we would flag the story to a world map on our homepage, this serves as a visual aid to alert site visitors to stories specifically in their country. Also upon approval, the software would immediately run an nslookup on their site noting all alternative IPs. Many governments will censor websites either by complete shutdown,IP blocking or TCP filtering, or simple DNS filtering. Although we cannot address the first two cases, the last (which is more common than you might think), we can assist with by offering direct IPs to the censored pages. However, our primary goal is to alert people to these stories before it even gets to the censorship stage. Once the story is propagated, it will become to difficult for any government or corporation to stop. This is not a fight against rampant government censorship, although that has gotten out of control(2) , but simply taking a step towards re-empowering people to have more control over the truth, because as they always say "the truth will set you free".

Notations

(1) Google Transparency Report. Google. <http://www.google.com/transparencyreport/>

(2) List of Thirteen Internet Enemies. Reporters without Borders for press Freedom. <http://en.rsf.org/list-of-the-13-internet-enemies-07-11-2006,19603>