Curated News Whitepaper

This White Paper serves as a **Codebook** for our Curated Regions Database. It also serves to provide explanation and transparency.

Contents

Abstract

This White Paper outlines the Curated Regions Database. It contains information about the purpose and design of the Curated News service along with expressed written consent and terms of use should academics, journalists, and miscellaneous researchers like to explore and use our data for their own purposes and projects.

Introduction

Part of the misinformation landscape can be observed in the massive centralization of news into major media conglomerates. This idea is not new. When a business can control large scales of what we call "informational flow states," they can use it to gain an advantage in the marketplace by leveraging consumers and their pocketbooks. Ironically, aggregation and centralization have always been paired together. The designs are extremely similar from a systematic standpoint. However, you do not need centralization to gain the convenience or competitive edge that aggregation can provide. Our Curated Regions database is an attempt to prove aggregation can be both centralized but also decentralized simultaneously. It is also an attempt to catalog all regional and local news in the world so consumers can see the wealth of divergence on issues of importance to their communities at large.

Regional and local news is important for a number of reasons. For one, a centralized information provider can be manipulated if they over-monetize. We are seeing this with a number of technology companies in the industry. The 2016 U.S. National Elections were proof positive we need less centralization and more aggregation. Because advertising dollars were so lucrative, no one wanted to buck against a destructive system that could easily be abused by third-parties with enough resources to manipulate them (i.e. state actors). Regional and local news manipulation is not a cost effective strategy for actors engaging in informational trickery. If we are looking for strategies to solve problems of mis or disinformation, it is extremely important to solve the strange centralization issue that seems to be relegating our local communities to the backseat. Two, what we like to call "the neighborhood community matrix" has been declining steadily. There is a lot of research that showcases the importance of identity to communities. There is not much research that garners large audiences or reception discussing the foundation of identity outside intensely academic circles.

At Curated News, we believe identity is built from the ground up. If your local community is overridden by sense of national identity, it is unlikely you will be able to feed any sort of democratic national unity – patriotic or otherwise. If your local community is strong, your belief in others tends to be strong. Ironically, optimism feeds optimism in this framework and it has been called many names in

many fields but the one we are focusing on is The Matthew Effect. People who get likes tend to get all the likes. People who get money tend to get all the money. It is a momentum effect whereby people craft a reality but the initial underpinnings are very much rooted in the inertia that came before it.

Our Curated Regions database is very much a work in progress and will be updated constantly. We hope average consumers and even professional journalists will use this as a resource to see what is going on in the world outside their human contact lists – where we believe a ton of misinformation is spread into the human behavioral ether. Everyone repeats often: "Think globally, act locally." We think it is the reverse. People should start thinking locally so they can establish why a global community is important to them. We don't all need a common identity to make the world a better place. Sometimes, we just need to figure our own values, strengthening them, so we can base our imagined global community from the local world we thrive in with our neighbors.

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