Family Online Safety Institute

We are living in a Web 2.0 world – a post-convergence world of mash-ups, social networking sites, YouTube and Second Life. The net has gone mobile, always on. Anytime. Anywhere. Kids are walking around with the web in their pockets.

And therein lies the problem; we all believe in the value of the online world but we also know the dangers and the need to protect children, seniors, and other family members from the worst of the web. But how? Should governments censor certain types of content or mandate the use of an adult label? Or can the international internet industry rally round a comprehensive and cohesive set of policies, technologies and public education messages and demonstrate beyond any doubt, that it is capable of rising to the challenge of family protection? This is the critical question that we will respond to.

What is the Family Online Safety Institute?

The Institute is a new, international, non-profit organization whose mission is to identify and promote best practices, tools and methods of online safety while respecting the free expression rights of content providers. It incorporates the work and mission of ICRA, the Internet Content Rating Association which, since 1999, has operated the world's leading content labeling system on the Internet. We are an umbrella body where technology and policy thought leaders meet and innovate in the field of family online safety.

Why the Institute? Why now?

Our primary vision is to increase the safety, decrease the fear and expand the benefits of our digitally connected society, particularly for children. One of the greatest inhibitors to the growth of the Internet is parental fear of what their children will access and encounter online. We believe now is the time to act and to develop new tools, methods and public policies to address the issue of online safety – an issue that has wide-ranging and international implications.

What are the Institute's values and beliefs?

We will bring a balanced, non-partisan and pragmatic approach to the work of the Institute. We will provide a unique space for dialogue & exchange of information on freedom of expression and protection of children and families. And we believe in far greater parental involvement and empowerment; robust and comprehensive industry self-regulation, and; reasonable government oversight and support.

What will the Institute do?

There will be four pillars to the work of the Family Online Safety Institute:

1) **Technology** – continuing the ground-breaking work of ICRAlabels, ICRAplus filter, ICRAchecked and many other innovations in the online safety field.

2) **Events** – expanding our highly regarded international Roundtables to include larger seminars and conferences. We will have an annual, two-day, international conference, trade show and awards dinner to highlight the extraordinary work, products and services that exist today.

3) **Public Policy** – develop our thought leadership and take on the work of a think tank, producing high quality position papers, media appearances and editorial comment.

4) **Education** – bring together and highlight the best of the safety messages, tools and methods to reach parents, children and care givers. We will also continue and expand our efforts to educate and inform governments, regulators, the industry and the media around the world on a balanced approach to online safety.

When will the Institute be launched?

We plan to launch the Family Online Safety Institute at a high profile event at the Kaiser Family Foundation in Washington, DC on February 13th, 2007. We are inviting senior legislators, regulators, and other leading figures in the field of online safety.

Who are the current members?

The Founding Members of the Institute include: AOL, AT&T, British Telecom, Cisco, CompTIA, Digimarc, GSM Association, Kingston Communications, Microsoft, Rulespace, Solarsoft, Telmex, and Verizon.

What about the staff team?

Stephen Balkam, the current CEO of ICRA will lead the new Institute and Phil Archer will continue in his role as CTO. More program staff will be added in the new year.

How can I get involved?

The best way to get involved and support our mission is to join as a member. Membership is based on the size of your organization and the annual costs are:

Full Corporate Member (over 100 employees) $30,000

SME (Small to Medium Sized) Member (under 100 employees) $15,000

Non-profit Member (under 100 employees) $5,000

Supporting Member (any size) $7,500*

What are the benefits of membership?

- A demonstration of corporate social responsibility
- Networking opportunities with key industry players and policy-makers
- A seat on the Board of the Institute *(except Supporting Member)
- Participate in the development of the world's leading labeling system
- Participate and be featured in major national and international events
- Contribute to important public education messages and materials
- The promotion of industry self-regulation
- Regular Industry updates
- Helping to protect your customers and your brand
- Awards and sponsorship opportunities
- Your company logo on our website alongside a photo, bio and information about yourself and your company
- Free adjudication scheme through ICRAchecked

How do I contact the Institute?

For more information, please contact:

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