

From: [REDACTED]
To: FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty
Cc: info@copyrightalliance.org
Subject: Feedback for Joint Strategic Plan - Creators' Rights
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The Copyright Alliance has informed me of this welcome invitation from the Obama Administration to share thoughts on the rights of creators.

Our company, ImageRights International, was created for the primary purpose of protecting creator's rights. One of the founders, Ted VanCleave is a professional fine arts photographer. He depends on his website to market and sell his images. In fact, his site outsells galleries 10 to 1 for his work. This is par for the course for many photographers, artists, film-makers and content creators today: the Internet offers an unparalleled medium for global distribution and marketing of art and entertainment at a low cost.

But there's a dark side: piracy is rampant. Various studies indicate that the music and entertainment industry lose billions of dollars per year from piracy and copyright infringement. In the fine arts business, image theft surely accounts for hundreds of millions of lost revenue per year as well. Unfortunately, it's easy for anyone with a computer (or increasingly, mobile phone) to steal content-- but not so easy for the copyright owner to protect from this theft, monitor illegal usage, and remedy the unauthorized use – sometime a source of real income.

Ted partnered with a long time friend, Joe Naylor, who had a strong background in technology to try to use existing technology to support creator's rights. The actual scope of image theft is unknown, but the constant stories of lost work and slow or no recovery shared with other photographers was enough to get these guys off to a start. So, Joe and Ted launched ImageRights to employ image recognition software and crawlers to match creators' images and report back to them where they are found. While ImageRights does not proactively prevent or stop image theft, ImageRights provides a mechanism for monitoring and enforcement. We hope that ImageRights can be a part of the solution for creators.

We believe that the creator should choose how to use their rights in their work. If they want to share it for free or derive revenue from that work, it is their right to make this decision. This is the same right that a restaurant owner has when he treats his friends to a gratis meal or dessert, and alternatively when he charges his other customers for the meal he has prepared for them. Please provide the same protections to creators so that they can enjoy the fruits of their labor.

Maria Kessler - SVP, Business Development, Image Rights International, Inc.

[REDACTED]
New York, New York

Artist Type: Art Admirer, Advocate of creator's rights

Maria Kessler
SVP, Business Development
ImageRights International
www.imagerights.com