

Federal Register Notice 87 FR 15274, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/03/17/2022-05683/request-for-information-on-federal-priorities-for-information-integrity-research-and-development>, May 15, 2022

Request for Information on Federal Priorities for Information Integrity Research and Development

Cliff B.

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From: CLIFFORD B.
To: IIRD-RFI
Subject: Request for Information on Federal Priorities for Information Integrity Research and Development
Date: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 4:30:05 PM
Attachments:

I am the author of numerous information technology books, including High-Assurance Design.

I have two recommendations:

1. Social media algorithms should be off by default.

Social media amplifies disinformation by prioritizing messages that incite emotion in those who receive them. That has the effect of creating bubbles and amplifying extreme messages over thoughtful ones.

The remedy is to require that such algorithms that “choose” what we see should be off or neutral by default; a user should have to request to see algorithmically slanted information, e.g., by clicking a button that says “Show me what YOU think I would like to see”. Users who do not click that should all see the same thing.

2. Trust framework for the Internet.

People on the Internet are anonymous. As a result, if a website wants to know who someone is, that person must create an account with the website. Instead, it should be possible for someone to establish their identity with an identity provider. Then, when visiting a website, the user can choose to reveal their identity. The identity provider validates the user as being the claimed person.

The protocols for this should be standard. Today there are services that do this, but they are commercially motivated. There need to be pure identity provider services. That would put users in control of when they reveal their identity, and the identity system would be robust.

Very best,

Cliff B.