Joining Arc90 + Readability

2011

2 min read • 430 words

I'm extremely happy to announce that I am joining the Arc90 team to work on Readability

> Arc90 was best known for creating Readability, one of the first successful reader mode services. The company pioneered the concept of clean, distraction-free reading experiences that would later be adopted by major browsers.

! Arc90 is a NYC-based software consultancy firm, R&D lab, and product incubator. The company is a design-driven group, built around skills rather than hierarchy. They strive to create the best software possible; passion and design pours out of everything they ship. I love that.

As a self-professed software aficionado, I couldn't have picked a more inspiring group of people to work with. I immediately accepted their offer without any hesitation.

Unfortunately, my previous employer and I have parted ways for various reasons, stemming from the standard major-corp intellectual property agreement (IPA). I couldn't agree to the new terms because of the restrictions it would impose on my passion — open source.

For those interested, I **highly recommend** Intellectual Property and Open Source by Van Lindberg. If you do any open source software development of any kind, you absolutely must read this book.

Readability

Readability is easily one of the highest quality web applications around. I use it every day.

Simply put, it is a beautiful application that allows you to curate a personal reading list of articles you find online.

Let's say, you encounter a thought-provoking article hosted on the typical ad-ridden website with terrible typography. Activate the Readability browser addon (or bookmarklet) and the page is transformed into a typographically elegant version of the page, containing only the article content. You can then happily read the content of the article or save for later enjoyment.

Users pay a self-set monthly subscription fee ($5+). 70% of your subscription is distributed amongst the creators of the content you have saved. The remaining 30% goes back to Readability

> This innovative revenue-sharing model was ahead of its time, attempting to create a sustainable ecosystem for online content creators while providing value to readers. It predated many modern subscription and creator economy models.

. Users receive an incredible reading experience, and the content creators get generously reimbursed for their hard work.

Beautiful.

Marco Arment, creator of Instapaper, loves what Readability is accomplishing:

> Trust me, these guys really know their stuff, and their heads are in the right place: there are no sinister motives or shady practices. It works exactly the way you'd expect, and is one of the most positive, constructive efforts I've seen in the online publishing world in a long time.

I couldn't be more excited.