

# Digital Fair Trade

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Whereas 'Fair Trade' coffee etc initiatives are well documented, there has been little evidence of 'Digital Fair Trade' (DFT) in the New Economy. A Digital Fair Trade initiative offers considerable PR opportunities as well as the chance to create sustainable livelihoods for poor communities.

Gradually we have come to realise that this type of approach could lend itself to the development of a coherent business as well as 'ethical' case. It is also a way to pre-select contractors to develop Open Source & Digital Commons solution. [see more>>](#)<sup>1</sup>

DFT contracts could range from basic (data entry and digitisation of records and legacy documents for public sector organisations and NGOs ), through intermediate (creating indigenous content for resale e.g. clip art, music files, e-greeting cards etc.) to advanced (web design, localisation, database development, help desks, call centres).

Once developed such an accreditation scheme might help with the creation of local new media assets and training material using techniques similar to those used by participatory video makers - where the local people document their experiences, local knowledge and local innovations [see more>>](#)<sup>2</sup>

Our aim is to identify grass-root local partners who wish to enter international trade by offering a combination of local knowledge, local know-how, local skills, local digital service and/or reusable digital objects.

We are of course, fully aware of previous fair trade initiatives based on commodities and physical products and expect to collaborate with such organisations wherever possible.

We are thinking of establishing a facility in Africa to undertake digital contract work sourced on Fair Trade terms from the UK. The aim would be to test the theoretical development of Digital Fair Trade (DFT) and the feasibility of such work being undertaken by people from poor backgrounds.

We would welcome informal discussions around the idea with like minded organisations.

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1. daisy:792 (Extract from DFID Study on E-Commerce Options for Third World Craft Producers)
  2. <http://tv.oneworld.net/article/view/108159/>