News Item

Journalists should be looking for undocumented APIs. Here's how to start. | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Leon Yin

March 22, 2023

> At [The Markup](#), we build our own datasets, *a lot*. It's one of the core tenets of our newsroom, and how we test our hypothesis-driven journalism.
>
> One way we do that is by finding and using undocumented APIs (or application program interfaces), which are hidden in plain sight. These APIs run behind the scenes on websites and do things that are so mundane that most people just take them for granted. Autocompleting search queries, scrolling infinitely, and filtering pages after you press a button in the user interface are all usually powered by undocumented APIs.
>
> Especially in circumstances when data is not accessible otherwise, finding an undocumented API can be the key to allowing us to do an investigation — by finding public access to the data.
>
> I designed a step-by-step tutorial on how to find and use undocumented APIs based on my experience doing it at The Markup: https://inspectelement.org/apis.html.
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> In addition to following the tutorial, let's talk about why these undocumented APIs matter and how I've used them in my reporting.

Source: [Journalists should be looking for undocumented APIs. Here's how to start. | Nieman Journalism Lab](#)