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Topic: Digital Rights Management: Whose Rights Are Being Managed Revisited?

The Information Technology Industry is Committed To Fighting Piracy, But Opposes Government Designed and Mandated Technology

The members of the Computer Systems Policy Project (CSPP) and the technology industry as a whole have a long and proud history of working collaboratively with the content industries to fight piracy both domestically and internationally. Our companies strongly support the protection of intellectual property, including digital content but we opposes efforts to make the government design and mandate copy-protection technologies. CSPP believes that the best ways to meet consumer expectations and fight piracy include market-driven efforts to educate consumers, the enforcement of existing laws, the development of new digital distribution strategies, and the continued creation of innovative technology.

Technology Companies Are Committed To Solutions

Technology companies have spent hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of engineering hours trying to find solutions to digital piracy. Over the past six years, our engineers have held more than 60 meetings with studios, working diligently to find solutions to a series of problems. We have made and continue to make excellent progress. For example, DVD is now thriving in the marketplace. Additionally, solutions have been developed and are being deployed to protect movie and television content exchanged between devices within the home and personal environment by digital networks and recordable media.

Progress within the private sector continues. Most recently, CSPP, the Business Software Alliance, and the Recording Industry Association of America agreed upon a core set of principles and began discussions to guide inter-industry activities regarding the distribution of digital content. This landmark agreement represents new and common ground for the industries, which have been working to address piracy concerns while also seeking to embrace the digital age and meet consumer expectations.

As this agreement recognizes, there is no single solution that will solve all threats of piracy in all circumstances. Any effective approach to stopping piracy must involve a combination of:

- Consumer education
- Legal and regulatory enforcement
- Development of new business models and digital distribution opportunities
- Targeted technical solutions

Government Regulation Is A Mistake

The information technology industry strongly opposes government interference into the marketplace progress on this issue. Technology, in order to work for and be accepted by consumers, develops most effectively in response to market forces. Government mandates would also freeze in place a particular technology, making it vulnerable to hackers and difficult to update it when it is hacked. Finally, government designed and mandated anti-copying technology would reduce the incentive to innovate and put U.S. IT companies at a competitive disadvantage.