

Digital Rights and Responsibilities

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Abstract: Digital citizens are expected to practice safe and responsible use of information technologies. Digital rights and responsibilities address the best practices when using information online and the responsibilities that accompany technology use. They include privileges and freedoms extended to everyone in the digital society. This paper provides a brief introduction to fundamental digital rights and responsibilities.

Keywords: Digital Rights and Responsibilities, Digital Technologies.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is a huge computer network linking all computers around the world to share information and resources. It allows people to share music, photos, and movies. It has created a new form of society, known as the digital society. The enormous growth in Internet connectivity has led to the globalization of the society, recognizing no national boundaries and ownership of digital information contained in it. Although the Internet has contributed positively to the defense of human rights, it has also created new risks for those rights. Internet freedom contradicts government's effort to suppress the network users [1].

Digital Rights and Responsibilities are the privileges and the attendant responsibilities for all digital technology users. They refer to the rules and consequences accompanying use of digital technology and the behavioral expectations and etiquette for digital citizens. These include the best practices for technology use and the consequences for misuse. Our rights and responsibilities help us reconcile public access with private value. Everyone has the right to use any digital technology provided it is used in an appropriate and accountable manner.

Knowing your digital rights and responsibilities in the digital age can keep you away from trouble, but there is a constantly shifting landscape of laws about them. You can get into trouble if you get involved in online sexual harassment, character defamation or abuse. It is an infringement of the copyright law to copy songs and movies freely from the Internet. In most cases, you need to pay for copyrighted materials.

II. DIGITAL RIGHTS

As a digital citizen, your rights include the following [2,3]:

- Right to freedom of expression- this includes freedom to hold opinions and seek information through any media
- Right to privacy – protects individuals and punishes those who interfere personal privacy
- Right to credit for personal works - it is an infringement of the copyright law to copy songs and movies freely from the Internet
- Right to digital access – universal access to websites and services
- Right to our identity – the right to identity is an international fundamental human right
- Right to assemble – can join online communities and forums

Digital technologies allow making perfect copies of digital materials. The Internet has made it easy and effortless to distribute the copies around the world with virtually no cost. To prevent unauthorized use of digital content, Digital Rights Management (DRM) systems have become necessary. DRM technologies enforce policies that control access to digital contents such digital music, movies, audio, graphics, and animation [4].

III. DIGITAL RESPONSIBILITIES

With the above rights also come responsibilities [2,3]. We must discharge our digital responsibilities or duties as a way of earning digital rights.

- Responsibility to report bullying, harassing, sexting, or identity theft

- Responsibility to cite works used for resources and researching –be aware of copyright law and fair-use policy
- Responsibility to download music, videos, and other materials legally
- Responsibility to model and teach students expectations of technology use
- Responsibility to keep data/information safe from hackers
- Responsibility not to falsify our identity in any way
- Responsibility to comply with legislation, regulations, and codes of conduct and best practices

The global and ephemeral nature of digital technologies has problematized the copyright law and intellectual property of information. Digital preservation strategies usually involve copying and possibly changing digital information. For example, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) in the US allows authorized institutions to make up to three digital preservation copies of a copyrighted material [5]. Governments have maintained a balancing act between the rights of copyright owners and users. In patents, it is the application of information that is being controlled, while in copyright, it is the form of expression of the information that is being controlled [6].

IV. CONCLUSION

As good digital citizens of all ages, we need skills to behave safely and responsibly in the digital world. We apply those skills in using a computer, the Internet or a mobile phone. The question of digital rights and responsibilities on the Internet still remains a moving target. Digital rights should be sustained by comprehensive, global view of these rights. Problematic areas include the rights of women, minorities, and children.

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BIOGRAPHIES

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