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Q1:

Improve the existing framework where possible; the fundamental design of the current framework serves its purpose.

Q2:

For demand-driven content (books, movies, games - anything where a consumer must seek out the content), to provide consumers of content with sufficient information to choose what content they wish to avail themselves of.

For supply-driven content (television, radio, where consumers may inadvertently see content without explicitly selecting it to be viewed), as above but with the proviso of keeping appropriately-classified material to socially-acceptable timeslots (no MA15+ TV shows on during the after-school time slot, for example), hence providing appropriate classifications to content to allow broadcasters to efficiently sort content by audience.

Q3:

Yes; I'm in favour of slightly harsher classification for interactive content in some cases, on the basis that some people may be affected more by taking action to cause (eg) violence in a game than they would be passively watching it in a movie or television show. As an example, I feel quite a few video games currently classified MA15+ would be better placed in a (theoretical) R18+ rating.

Q4:

Yes; particularly online content, due to the sheer volume out there. It'd (obviously) be fairly ridiculous to attempt to require all online video content to obtain classification before being accessible to Australians, for instance.

Q5:

I see no problem with offering obvious content classifications on content designed for children regardless of media as a sort of obvious 'green light' for parents that the content has been deemed appropriate for all children; parents who wish to review content themselves can feel free to treat the classification or lack thereof merely as a suggestion.

Q6:

No; thanks to the Internet, the potential mass market reach of basically any form of media is more or less equal to the majority of the planet in some form or other.

Q7:

No - my preferred approach for this would be, at most, a voluntary advisory from the exhibiting party warning consumers of potentially offensive content. I don't see the need for a full classification process, and artistic freedom is extremely important - many famous artworks were controversial in their time.

I realise that there will always be a very small minority of cases where someone may be attempting to

use the 'artwork' designation to allow them to produce content that would otherwise be deemed unacceptable, but it seems problematic to make assumptions about the intent of an artist in the vast majority of cases.

Q8:

Audiobooks should be equivalent to the physical (or electronic) book they're based upon - it's the same content.

For music, I feel the existing parental advisory system used by major labels is more than appropriate.

Q9:

This is broadly similar to Q6. Philosophically, no, but practically, yes - it makes more sense to forego classification on a small arthouse film being shown in a couple of cinemas than (an extreme example) a Hollywood blockbuster simply because of time constraints.

Q10:

Yes, to an extent; the vast majority of online content, for instance, will be accessed at home by people cognizant of the subject matter of the content in question; adults should be capable of seeking out content they wish to view, and don't need as much oversight from classification as children might (but then, in my opinion, children should not be using the Internet unsupervised and/or unmonitored by their parents unless they can be trusted to behave responsibly)

Q11:

Q12:

Well, there aren't any. Period. For any possible method of controlling access to content, there are a dozen workarounds, and while any given workaround may start off difficult, if there's demand for it (as there would inevitably be), there's always someone out there willing to package it up into an easy-to-use system. Don't forget that the original purpose of the Internet was to provide a fault-resistant network - arbitrary blocks on content are 'faults' in the context of the network as a whole, and one way or another they will be routed around.

For another example, look at the Great Firewall of China - billions upon billions of dollars spent by an oppressive regime dedicated to controlling everything their citizens do online, and there are still ways around and through the firewall that can simply be downloaded as an installable software package.

There are obvious downsides to this (truly illegal content is hard to block), and upsides (content that is unfairly or incorrectly blocked is easy enough to find elsewhere).

Q13:

At home, parents should take responsibility for their children's Internet usage; either educate them to the point where they can be trusted not to seek out inappropriate content, or supervise their Internet usage as you would (for example) a power tool or sharp knives. Technical restrictions will rarely stop a determined individual, including minors.

On mobile devices, there is currently no particularly good solution. Blacklist-based filtering will not work (see Question 12), and whitelist-based filtering requires huge effort to keep both up-to-date and

usable. Again, parental monitoring, supervision and education (ie, behavioural rather than technical solutions) will likely work the best.

Q14:

I'm not sure there is currently a problem with this. Shrinkwrapping content so that it cannot be browsed in-store (for non-age-controlled stores) is probably enough. Maybe having an adult-only section of the store.

Q15:

In physical stores, when there is a reasonable chance that minors will encounter content restricted to them. Online, there's no real way to enforce it so I wouldn't bother - most reputable online retailers will voluntarily display the rating anyway.

Q16:

Government agencies should set the guidelines with consultation with the general public, and provide standardised frameworks and groups for reviewing and labelling content in a transparent and fair manner.

Industry bodies should apply voluntary warnings and consumer advice to products where appropriate, and aid content producers in getting material classified where necessary.

Users should use the classification labels as a guide to their content consumption habits (or in the case of minors and children, as a restriction).

Q17:

Possibly. Oversight and accountability would be the major problem; the industry would generally be keen to push content to the largest possible audience, and this may lead to inappropriate classification.

A 'warning'-based system would perhaps be more workable; similar to parental advisory labels on existing music releases, but perhaps more detailed for movies or games to show potentially objectionable content.

Q18:

For video games, the majority of casual titles which are generally puzzle-based and contain more or less no objectionable content.

Books, because barring the handful of restricted titles out there dealing with sensitive or objectionable subject matter, books either need no rating at all or maybe voluntary ratings.

Q19:

Wherever it would be a reasonable financial burden on the content producers to have content classified, to the point where it would make distributing the content even to a small audience become financially unviable.

Q20:

By and large, yes. I personally feel the distinction between PG and M is a little blurry, and possibly even M and MA - it's always going to be an individual thing based on a person's maturity levels, which

can't really be codified. I feel it's more up to the parents to decide when it becomes appropriate for their children to consume 'soft' mature content.

Q21:

X18+/R18+ for video games, or equivalent. It's a glaring, inexcusable omission in the current classification system.

Q22:

Again, ensuring parity of classification categories across media formats would be a good start.

Q23:

Ideally, I'd like to see films and video games treated a bit more equally. Books, again, probably don't need as many classification categories.

Q24:

Child pornography, in particular. There's really no reason whatsoever for it to exist.

With that said, actually doing the blocking will be practically impossible, so I'm all for spending whatever money would be spent trying in vain to block it on actually tracking down the people responsible for creating it and prosecuting them instead.

Q25:

Yes (child pornography), and maybe (drug-related information, criminal information, etc).

For information that doesn't directly harm others simply by virtue of existing (ie, drug information, as opposed to child porn), I'm more of the opinion that it's a tool - using it inappropriately and illegally is bad, but the information itself is neither good nor bad. It's a personal responsibility thing - if you choose to do something illegal with it, that was your own choice.

Q26:

Yes - a uniform set of laws across all states is important. It makes little sense that you can obtain content in one state but not another under a national classification system.

Q27:

Q28:

Q29:

Even more transparency - for example, an oversight Web site containing the full reasoning of classification decisions for content for anyone interested in reviewing it. The website at <http://classification.gov.au> has a fairly obvious link to a list of decisions, but does not appear to list the reasoning behind each decision. This sort of public accountability information should be both easy to access and obvious to even a casual observer.

Other comments:

Firstly, please stop ignoring gamers - as seen in the recent debate over the R18+ rating when the public consultation had been deemed to be 'biased' by 'interested parties' - namely, the very gamers who the laws directly affected. It seems there's almost a feeling of helplessness growing when time and time again the government asks for public opinion, receives hundreds to tens of thousands of submissions, and then seems to arbitrarily decide to do something completely different based on the opinion of a handful of 'family groups'.

The debate about internet filtering is largely a moot point; trying to successfully filter the internet is more or less like trying to find a needle in a haystack whilst more hay bales are being shot at you out of a cannon. It simply cannot be done in any form that doesn't also involve dragging in thousands or tens of thousands of false positives, not to mention the colossal performance hit every single Internet user in the country would experience with ISP-level filtering attempting to classify the hundreds of gigabits of data flowing into and out of Australia every second.

It actually reeks of Prohibition in the USA; we all know how that turned out. If truly objectionable, illegal material is being produced (and, unfortunately, it is), it's almost certainly better to use the Internet as a tool to help track down and prosecute the producers.