

CI 397 S Pilkington

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Q1:

The classification system currently performs two roles - to provide consumer advice and to restrict content. The first role of providing consumer advice currently works well. The second role of restricting content should be refined, particularly in the area of restricting content to adults. Importantly though, the current focus of the classification system - to classify everything available in the country is increasingly impractical without imposing unreasonable costs on often small independent content producers. Therefore the most effective way of continuing to provide consumer advice is to develop a new framework for classification primarily based on the content provider providing this advice according to government guidelines.

Q2:

The primary objective of a classification scheme should be to provide consumer advice - to provide to a consumer an indication of what is contained in the content and to allow them to make an informed decision whether the content is something they want to watch.

Q3:

Where possible the classification system should be consistent across platforms to ensure that the system is as simple as possible for consumers to understand - that a particular rating on one platform has equivalent content to the same rating on another platform.

Q4:

As mentioned in question 1, the most practical model for providing classification advice is for it to be produced by content providers. Review of that self classification by government should only occur if a complaint is received or if the relevant governmental body believes the classification to be inappropriate.

Q5:

Q6:

This issue only really needs to be considered if a classification system requires all content to be formally classified by government. This model is problematic due to the explosion of content online that is not being produced by well financed organisations and the costs of formal classification. However consumers of the content from these online sources are no less in need of consumer advice than consumers of content from more traditional sources. The most effective method of providing this advice to consumers while limiting the burden on content makers is to implement a classification system based primarily on the content provider's classification.

Q7:

Q8:

All content, include music and sound recording should provide consumer advice regarding their content. As mentioned above, this does not have to be formal classification by government.

Q9:

Q10:

There is an important need to provide restriction of content for unaccompanied minors in public. While at home oversight of such content can be performed by parents or another suitable adult, there is often no such supervision in public such as at cinemas. The current classification arrangements for restriction of content in public for unaccompanied minors should continue.

Q11:

Q12:

The complete restriction of content under a classification scheme should be limited to content that involves an illegal activity. An example of this is Child Pornography - it is impossible to produce Child Pornography without committing a crime and hence all Child Pornography is the product of a criminal offence. Investigation of this material is most effectively handled through existing law enforcement agencies separate to the classification system.

Q13:

The most effective method of controlling children's access to inappropriate content online is through computer or home based internet filters and education of parents. These filters are most likely not going to rely on an Australian classification system due to the large amount of content originating overseas.

Q14:

Q15:

Q16:

Q17:

It is impractical for a government to attempt to classify all content, particularly in rapidly changing platforms such as mobile applications and online user-generated content. It is also impractical to require the makers of this user generated content or an individual programmer who produces an app on the app store to undergo the expense of government classification. As mentioned in question 1, the most effective way of providing consumer advice across all platforms is a system primarily based on self classification by content providers.

Q18:

Q19:

Q20:

Q21:

The most obvious category is an equivalent R rating for games. As mentioned in question 25, the

Refused Classification category should not be used to limit the ability of an adult to choose whether they want to watch or view otherwise legal content. The current lack of an R rating for games has this effect.

Q22:

Q23:

Q24:

As mentioned in question 12, there is no need to completely restrict content outside otherwise illegal activities such as Child Pornography. Restriction of such content can be most effectively handled by law enforcement agencies as currently occurs. Attempts to limit this content technologically are most likely going to be ineffective - those people who still want to access this content will still manage to do so.

Q25:

In a free society, the decision whether or not an adult decides to watch/view a particular piece of content should, in the vast majority of cases, be up to that adult. The exception to this is in the cases of content which is the product of illegal activity such as Child Pornography. In all other cases, it should not be up to the government to tell an adult that something is too violent or has too much of the wrong kind sex in it or because of any other perceived moral judgement. The government should not be telling adults that they can't even decide whether they want to watch something. The Refused Classification category's role should be limited to material that is restricted under other criminal laws.

Q26:

Q27:

Q28:

Q29:

Other comments: