

CI 542 D Rosolen

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Q1:

The current framework doesn't need to be tossed out. There's only one part that needs to be added - an R18+ rating for video games.

Q2:

The primary objective should be to inform parents of potentially inappropriate media content for children in their care.

Q3:

Harsher treatment of one platform or technology used to access content over another is unacceptable. Treat all platforms (movies, publications, games, etc) the same way or don't bother at all.

Q4:

Downloadable independent games such as the ones found on various phone marketplaces (App Store, Android Market, etc) or as part of the Indie Games section in the US Xbox Live marketplace shouldn't need to be classified but can be submitted for review if complaints are made to the appropriate people.

Q5:

"Potential impact" is a very subjective term as what impacts heavily on some people might not impact at all on others. Content that is expressly geared towards children shouldn't need to be classified but, like the independent games mentioned above, can be called in to be rated if complaints are made to the appropriate people.

Q6:

As in question 4, independent games like the ones on smartphone app stores or on Xbox Live's Indie Games in the US shouldn't need to be classified as the costs involved in the classification process can actually stop such games being profitable for the developers who should only need to focus on making quality games that will make them some money on the back of their regular jobs (as this is something that they usually do in their spare time).

Q7:

Artworks shouldn't need to be classified. If the advertising for these exhibitions is descriptive enough, people will have a good idea of what to expect. Any restrictions should also be organised by the exhibition staff and should not be reliant on any specific classification decisions.

Q8:

This isn't necessary. There's already an industry-based voluntary classification system for music and

the labels applied are easy enough to understand. Audio books and other sound recordings can be controlled by the marketplaces that serve them.

Q9:

Content aimed at a very niche audience shouldn't need to be classified as the general population most likely couldn't care less about that content. If complaints warrant it, such content can still be brought in for classification.

Q10:

Content accessed via public exhibition (such as a cinema) can be restricted by the exhibition staff. Content accessed at home can be restricted at point of sale but afterwards, control of access to that content should be up to the parents.

Q11:

In most cases, classification itself is fine. Only very niche content, content expressly geared towards children and downloadable independent games shouldn't need classification by default. The checks and balances come in complaints made to the appropriate people that can call for content listed in those categories to be classified where necessary.

Q12:

It's up to parents to monitor their children's Internet use and to make sure they're not accessing inappropriate content. If necessary, net filters can be used (at ISP or PC level) but they should be completely optional (especially at ISP level). Any filters used should also have a clear means of whitelisting a certain site if parents find that it shouldn't be blocked (on the PC level) or a clear avenue to contest a site being blocked (at the ISP level)..

Q13:

As above, Internet filters (at either ISP or PC level) can be used to better control children's access to the Internet so that they don't access inappropriate content. However, there should be a certification system so that parents can know that a filter meets certain quality standards such as ease of use (especially in blocking sites that were missed by the system and whitelisting sites that were innocently caught by the system). On an ISP level, the filters should be made entirely opt-in (off by default and can be changed by either calling the ISP or using their online tools to modify the filter settings).

Q14:

Restricted content should only be restricted at the point of sale. After that, it's the parents' responsibility to make sure that children in their care don't access such content.

Q15:

I miss the days when videos displayed classification warnings before the start of movies and believe that era should be brought back for DVD and Blu-ray discs (must be before the main menu appears). Also, an explanatory video on classification markings that plays when a DVD or Blu-ray disc is inserted should be included before the warning itself appears.

Q16:

Government agencies should exist to classify content and, if necessary, enforce against businesses not complying with classification guidelines (not displaying markings properly, advertising restricted content in inappropriate places, not checking IDs for restricted content, etc). Industry bodies should encourage compliance by educating businesses involved on best practices around displaying classification markings, ID checking for restricted content, advertising restricted content and so on. Users (mainly parents) should use classification markings as an aid in making decisions on whether certain content is appropriate for themselves and/or children in their care.

Q17:

For most cases, government classification is fine. For the cases I've described earlier (downloadable independent games, content specifically geared towards children and very niche content), industry responsibility for classification is ideal with the government only acting as an advisory role in developing guidelines.

Q18:

The adult entertainment industry should classify content themselves as it's plainly obvious that it's going to be restricted to people 18 and over across the board.

Q19:

Locally developed (not published) content should have its classification subsidised by the government. At the moment, there isn't that much locally developed content out there and that's partly due to the classification costs. If those were subsidised by the government, we'd probably see more local content and it would most likely be cheaper to buy too. If the exemption for small independent games from classification doesn't go through, the developers of such games should be subsidised as well.

Q20:

It's a well known fact that M and MA15+ cause a lot of confusion. Unfortunately, I can't find a solution to this issue.

Q21:

There is definitely a need for an R18+ category for video games. There are way too many games that are rated 18+ in other countries being rated MA15+ here. Of course, the other scenario is that games get refused classification and have to be censored for release here - sometimes with disastrous results (see Left 4 Dead 2).

Q22:

There should be the same markings and guidelines across the board and each platform should be treated equally (no one platform gets harsher/fairer treatment than others).

Q23:

These should definitely be consolidated as it would remove unnecessary duplication which ends up

wasting time and money.

Q24:

The obvious stuff like child porn, bomb making instructions and sites giving instructions on criminal activities should be prohibited from being accessed online. However, this should not be accomplished by using an Internet filter but should be accomplished by the Australian Federal Police in cooperation with overseas police and Interpol.

Q25:

No it doesn't. There are numerous cases of people importing games that have been refused classification from overseas online stores. However, these same stores serve legitimate purposes such as getting content not readily available in Australia or getting content for cheaper than Australian stores (suck it Gerry Harvey).

Q26:

There needs to be consistency in state and territory classification laws. This can start with the legalisation of X18+ content Australia-wide.

Q27:

It doesn't need to be replaced but it should be noted that there's a classification board in South Australia that can sometimes override a national classification decision. This should be abolished ASAP (by force if necessary). There also needs to be action taken to legalise X18+ content Australia wide.

Q28:

There's too much duplication between states for a lot of things. Referring state powers to the Commonwealth would, in a small way, help remove some of that unnecessary duplication.

Q29:

Actually, the framework can be improved by removing the Refused Classification category altogether. People will just find other ways to get their hands on content that is currently in this category - 99% of which is actually legal in other countries. The other 1% is just illegal content that should be handled by the AFP in cooperation with overseas police and Interpol anyway.

Other comments:

Censorship is like alcohol. The less you have, the better off you are.

I also think that sometimes the christian right (especcially lobby groups like the Australian Christian Lobby) have too much influence in classification policy. If possible, their influence should be curtailed as much as possible.