CI 815 J Bunton

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Q1:

The existing classification framework is deficient in many ways and should be replaced by a new framework.

Q2:

Classification should be:
* purely classification, not censorship.
* voluntary and undertaken by the publishers in all content producing industries, film, TV, video games, mobile, web pages, etc
* use a common set of ratings and principles for determining those ratings across all media
* produced with the goal of enabling informed purchasing, NOT to affect the legality of sale or possession of a product

Additionally a complaints based mechanism could be set up to allow re-rating of certain media where feasible, eg TV, film. For some media such as web pages this is not practical.

Justifications:
The main reason for classification to exist should be to assist people with making informed choices about the entertainment products they enjoy. In the current environment web pages, mobile phones, video games, etc are all accessed at least as often, if not more so by many people, than the traditional media which is currently classified. It would be an impossible task to attempt classification of all this new media. It is questionable as to whether the existing classification done by the mandatory classification scheme is any better than what could be done by the industry themselves, saving time and money all around. If there were no legal restrictions based on the classification of a film or video game there would be no incentive for industry to try to 'cheat' the system by giving themselves a lower rating.

The current scheme mixes classification and censorship in a confusing manner. These two concerns should be clearly separated. Censorship is a matter of controlling information that is deemed to be illegal and should be handled by law enforcement as appropriate. Classification is for informing people about content. Illegal material should be very clearly and narrowly defined, perhaps limited to material where an existing law was broken by the production of said material.

Q3:

No. Classification is just as useful for content on any medium. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q4:

No. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q5:

No. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so. Parents can easily choose to only purchase classified content for their children.

Q6:

No, this would be unfair and make no sense.

Q7:

No, if people choose to view artworks in a gallery that provides no classification advice and they don't like what they see, then they can avoid that gallery in the future.

Q8:

Yes. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q9:

No. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q10:

No. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q11:

See how simple a voluntary classification scheme makes everything? =)
Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q12:

No classification scheme should involve itself in restricting access to content, that is censorship which should only be applied to illegal material and should be handled by law enforcement. If adults are concerned about themselves or their children accessing content online which offends them there are plenty of existing private solutions. There are ISPs and commercial software packages which adequately address this area without the government needing to involve itself.

Additionally it should be recognised that the internet is not like television or film. The internet is unique in that it is a mass media and private communications mechanism at the same time. It is a combination of television, film, mail, telephone and others all in one over many different protocols. Any talk of restricting usage of the internet must ensure that all of these aspects are addressed. Eg it is inappropriate to restrict private correspondence, or to require classification of such.

Q13:

The above-mentioned ISPs or commercial software packages could help. If usage of mobile devices is a concern for people then commercial solutions will develop to fill this niche. Already companies like Apple have parental controls on their mobile devices. Alternatively parents could simple contact the

mobile carrier to disable internet access on the phone until the child is old enough.

Finally, any consideration of controlling children's access to online content is incomplete unless it applies similar measures to other media. For example any discussion of mandatory filtering of all internet connections to produce a G-rated internet without having the same discussion about other media, newspapers, books, TV, telephone, mail, etc

Q14:

The existing measures are sufficient. It is likely that such material would have access voluntarily controlled by publishers and retailers under a voluntary classification system.

Q15:

Never. Content should only be classified if the producer of that content chooses to do so.

Q16:

Government agencies should decide on ratings and the principles and methods to determine the rating of content. These should be published in a freely accessible and clearly understandable document. Government should not restrict access to content based on classification. Only illegal content, which should be carefully defined as content which was produced by breaking the law, should be censored, and this should be handled by law enforcement not technical measures. Hiding access to illegal content with a filter does not make it go away.

Q17:

Yes, absolutely!

Q18:

All content should be voluntarily classified by industry.

Q19:

No. If independent films wish to classify their content they may do so, if not it will be unclassified. Buyer-beware will apply to unclassified content.

Q20:

Refused classification is often confused with illegal. This is because the current system confusingly mixes the jobs of classification with censorship.

Q21:

I think it would be nice for all categories to have an age rating in them at all times, this would make it easier to understand. The RC category should be removed.

Q22:

All media should be voluntarily classified using the same ratings and the same guidelines.

Q23:

All media should be voluntarily classified using the same ratings and the same guidelines.

Q24:

None. If any content is deemed illegal then law enforcement should work to bring it down. Hiding it behind a filter does no good for anybody. Anybody who wishes to access the content will easily bypass the filter, and typically nobody accidentally comes across illegal content as it is well hidden by perpetrators. If people are worried about viewing legal content they object to there are personal commercial filters they can use, or they can just be careful where they browse like in the physical world.

Q25:

No. Refused classification should be abolished as the classification scheme should not be linked to enforcement.

Q26:

Yes. All of Australia should use the same classification scheme for all media.

Q27:

Please see my answers above.

Q28:

Yes, for a voluntary system where industry classifies content for all media.

Q29:

See above answers.

Other comments: