



Global Communications Intellectual Property Rights Journalism



AMERICAN EMBASSY RESOURCE CENTER
OUTREACH SERVICE

June 2006

IN DEPTH...

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GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

THE STATE OF IPTV [INTERNET PROTOCOL TELEVISION] 2006: THE ADVENT OF PERSONALIZED PROGRAMMING

New Millennium Research Council

June 2006 – 20 pages

Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) is an all-encompassing term that covers many different forms of video programming and services. Because the underlying technologies are Internet-based, IPTV can be transmitted over broadband networks and accessed by consumers through a number of different devices. In general, IPTV allows consumers not only to customize their video programming experience, but also empowers organizations of all types to directly and more inexpensively access new and/or targeted global audiences often otherwise unavailable to them via traditional television.

This report finds that: "With the expansion of broadband access and the growth of computing and video production equipment, industry analysts believe IPTV is realizing its potential as a viable programming platform that can compete with cable, satellite and other traditional video mediums. IPTV is also seen by providers and industry watchers as a gateway for new content providers. . . IPTV is not simply offering traditional television programming through another device or connection. The low costs of creating content allows just about anyone to produce a 'television show'. IPTV providers are already offering content from sports leagues to home cooking shows and more. The video content is making the web experience more robust for consumers, presenting information in compelling formats that greatly interests existing and new audiences. . ."

THIRD ANNUAL BSA AND IDC GLOBAL SOFTWARE PIRACY STUDY

Business Software Association (BSA); IDC

May 23, 2006 – 21 pages

This is the third annual global software piracy study commissioned by the Business Software Alliance (BSA) and conducted by IDC. According to the study, thirty-five percent of the packaged software installed on personal computers (PC) worldwide in 2005 was illegal, amounting to \$34 billion in global losses due to software piracy. However, some improvements in a number of markets indicate education, enforcement and policy efforts are beginning to pay off in emerging economies such as China, Russia and India, and in Central/Eastern Europe and the Middle East & Africa.

Other findings of the study include the following points:

* The four countries with the largest percentage point drop in their piracy rate during the past year were China (4 points), Russia (4 points), Ukraine (6 points) and Morocco (4 points).

* The countries with the highest piracy rates were Vietnam (90 percent), Zimbabwe (90 percent), Indonesia (87 percent), China (86 percent) and Pakistan (86 percent).

* The countries with the lowest piracy rates were the United States (21 percent), New Zealand (23 percent), Austria (26 percent) and Finland (26 percent).

JOURNALISM

10 MOST CENSORED COUNTRIES

Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
May 2, 2006 – 7 pages

In this report prepared for World Press Day, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) deems North Korea as the world's "most censored" country, with not one independent journalist. Burma, Turkmenistan, Equatorial Guinea, and Libya round out the top five nations on CPJ's list. They are followed by Eritrea, Cuba, Uzbekistan, Syria and Belarus.

For each of the ten countries, CPJ provides a summary of the way in which the government maintains control over the media, and provides one or more examples of censorship in practice.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS 2006: A GLOBAL SURVEY OF MEDIA INDEPENDENCE

Freedom House
Web-posted April 27, 2006 – 190 pages

The Freedom of the Press survey, first launched in 1980, assesses the degree of print, broadcast, and Internet freedom in every country in the world. It assigns each country a numerical score from 0 to 100 that determines a category rating of Free, Partly Free, or Not Free. Ratings are determined by examining three broad categories: 1) the legal environment in which media operate, 2) political influences on reporting and access to information, 3) economic pressures on content and the dissemination of news. The survey, which analyzes events during the 2005 calendar year, bases its ratings not only on government actions and policies but also on the behavior of the press itself in testing boundaries, even in restrictive environments.

Out of the 194 countries and territories examined, 73 (38 percent) were rated Free, while 54 (28 percent) were rated Partly Free and 67 (34 percent) were rated Not Free. In terms of population, 17 percent of the world's inhabitants live in countries that enjoy a Free press, while 40 percent have a Partly Free press and 43 percent have a Not Free press. The numbers show a decline in the number of people living in Free media environments, but also a decline in those living in Not Free conditions, indicating that more countries are in the "grey zone" of partial media freedom.

In a key finding, the survey showed a pattern of continued decline in media freedom in Latin America and the Caribbean over the past fifteen years. The number of Free countries dropped from 23 in 1990 to 17 in 2005, the most significant decline for any region. Another region to undergo a notable decline was the former Soviet Union, which showed an increase of Not Free countries from 7 in 1995 to 10 in 2005.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

2006 SPECIAL 301 REPORT

Executive Office of the President. Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR)
April 28, 2006 – 47 pages

According to Section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended by the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 and the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (enacted in 1994), USTR must identify those countries that deny adequate and effective protection for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Placement of a trading partner on the Watch List indicates that particular problems exist in that country with respect to IPR protection, enforcement, or market access for persons relying on intellectual property. Countries placed on the Priority Watch List are the focus of increased focus concerning the problem areas. For each country, the USTR notes specific areas of IPR concern.

China and Russia continue to be on the Priority Watch List. The report notes some progress with both countries, but adds that "rampant counterfeiting and piracy problems continue to plague both China and Russia, indicating a critical need for stronger intellectual property protection in China and Russia." Also included on the Priority Watch List are: Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, Ukraine and Venezuela.

The Watch List comprises Bahamas, Belarus, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, European Union, Guatemala, Hungary, Italy, Jamaica, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

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U.S. INTERNET PROVIDERS AND THE "GREAT FIREWALL OF CHINA"

By Robert McMahon, Deputy Editor
Council of Foreign Relations
February 14, 2006

The operations of U.S. Internet companies in China is attracting concern in Congress after years of complaints from free speech and human rights advocates about these firms aiding Beijing's ability to censor content. Experts say China is assisted in its censorship efforts by hardware and software provided by many U.S. technology companies, including Cisco Systems, Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft.

SURVEY SHOWS SHOPPERS "LOVE" ONLINE SHOPPING

By Devin Comiskey
Ecommerce-guide.com
February 14, 2006

A survey just released by Questus, an interactive marketing and research firm, appears to show that Valentine's Day shoppers are "spreading the love" more this year because of the ability to shop online. Two out of three respondents said that they would buy more - and a greater variety of - gifts for their special someone this Valentine's Day due to online shopping.

The report was based on an Internet survey using Questus' proprietary panel, Big Look. The 1040 respondents were all employed U.S. residents over the age of 18. The sample audience was evenly split between men and women.

According to the survey, the vast majority of online shoppers, four out of five, report that they are not concerned that buying gifts online is less romantic than selecting a gift from a store. In fact, nearly half claim that shopping online has "saved" them at least once from someone getting angry with them for missing Valentine's Day. Two in five online Valentine's Day shoppers said they would miss giving gifts altogether if it weren't for online shopping.

ONLINE SHOPPING TO GROW — ARE YOU READY?

By Dan Muse
Ecommerce-guide.com
February 8, 2006

The good news for e-commerce businesses is that online retail sales are expected to grow from \$81 billion in 2005 to \$144 billion in 2010, according to a study released this week by JupiterResearch.

There's really no bad news, but the challenge for online merchants comes from the fact that after this year, the bulk of that growth will come from existing buyers rather new shoppers. And that means your customers are becoming more mature and more demanding when it comes to what they expect from online storefronts.

"Retailers can expect to be dealing with an increasingly experienced population of online shoppers," said JupiterResearch Analyst, Patti Freeman Evans. "The online retail environment is maturing, and online buyers have become more savvy about finding free shipping and deeper discounts," said Freeman Evans, author of "U.S. Online Retail Forecast, 2005 to 2010."

By 2010, 71 percent of online users will use the Internet to shop compared to 65 percent in 2005. However, the research states that online retailers will find it difficult to find new non-buyers to convert. Online retailers will rely more heavily on existing online shoppers to spend more than they have in previous years. That, of course, suggests that e-commerce operations with inefficient order processing and customer satisfaction could be in for some tough times.

ID THEFT AND INTERNET FRAUD DECLINING?

By Sean Michael Kerner
Ecommerce-guide.com
February 1, 2006

With all the media emphasis on Internet-related fraud and identity theft, one might think the Internet is a dangerous place for commerce.

As it turns out, though the Internet certainly has its risks, incidents of fraud and identity theft from other more traditional means outnumber those online.

If recent stats are to be trusted, incidents of fraud from Internet-based means may well be on the decline. According to a report set to be released tomorrow from Javelin Strategy and Research, in cases where the source of the identity theft was known, only 9 percent were reported to have come from hacking, viruses and phishing.

In contrast, a lost or stolen wallet or credit/debit card was the cause of 30 percent of the incidents. The study also found that fraudulent activity is mostly (over 70 percent) conducted offline via phone or mail.

THE STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA 2005

Project for Excellence in Journalism
Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism
January 2006

Funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, this report provides a comprehensive look at the state of American journalism, and the pressing issues facing the news media in 2005. The authors' goal is to put in one place as much original and aggregated data as possible about each of the major journalism sectors -- newspapers, magazines, network television, cable television, local television, the Internet, radio, ethnic and alternative media. For each of the media sectors, they examine six different areas - content, audience trends, economics, ownership, newsroom investment, and public attitudes.

Their methodology of looking at a set of questions across various media, differs from the conventional way in which American journalism is analyzed

-- one medium at a time. This enabled the authors to make comparisons and identify cross-media trends.

From their research, the authors' drew five main conclusions about the nature of the media landscape:

- 1) There are now several models of journalism, and the trajectory increasingly is toward those that are faster, looser, and cheaper.
- 2) The rise in partisanship of news consumption and the notion that people have retreated to their ideological corners for news has been widely exaggerated.
- 3) To adapt, journalism may have to move in the direction of making its work more transparent and more expert, and of widening the scope of its searchlight.
- 4) Despite the new demands, there is more evidence than ever that the mainstream media are investing only cautiously in building new audiences.
- 5) The three broadcast network news divisions face their most important moment of transition in decades.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

THE INTERNET IMPROVES AMERICANS' CAPACITY TO MAINTAIN THEIR SOCIAL NETWORKS AND GET HELP

By John Horrigan, Jeffrey Boase, Lee Rainie, Barry Wellman
Pew Internet and American Life Project Report
January 2006

Washington (January 25, 2006) – The internet and email expand and strengthen the social ties that people maintain in the offline world, according to a new report released today by the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

One major payoff comes when people use the internet to press their social networks into action as they face major challenges. People not only socialize online, but they also incorporate the internet into their quest for information and advice as they seek help and make decisions.

Disputing concerns that heavy use of the internet might diminish people's social relations, the report finds that the internet fits seamlessly with Americans' in-person and phone encounters. With the help of the internet, people are able to maintain active contact with sizable social networks, even though many of the people in those networks do not live close to them.

The report, "The Strength of Internet Ties," highlights how email supplements, rather than replaces, the communication people have with others in their network.

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EXPANDING THE FRONTIERS OF OUR DIGITAL FUTURE: REDUCING SOFTWARE PIRACY TO ACCELERATE GLOBAL IT BENEFITS

Business Software Alliance
December 2005, 32 pages

This paper is based upon findings from an analysis (conducted by IDC) of the Information Technology (IT) sector's economic impact in 70 countries, and the benefits that can accrue to countries that reduce software piracy. It finds that the IT sector's ability to create economic benefits cannot only continue, but accelerate. However, the continued growth, vitality and innovation of the global IT sector are increasingly dependent upon reducing software piracy worldwide.

The paper discusses five key findings:

- * Lower software piracy produces higher IT benefits.
- * Cutting software piracy globally can generate faster IT growth.
- * Faster IT growth can increase global economic output.
- * Countries with the highest piracy rates have the most to gain through reductions.
- * Every region benefits.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

RUSSIA AND THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION

D. J. Peterson
The RAND Corporation
December 2005, 140 pages

This report examines the sources, dynamics, and consequences of Russia's increasing reliance on information and communications technologies to strengthen the transparency and performance of its government institutions; reform industry and stimulate economic growth; and improve the information access and quality of life for Russian citizens.

Based on a study that was conducted between 1999 and 2005, it builds on a number of RAND Corporation studies about the impact of the Information Revolution around the world. This report seeks to bring to light emerging opportunities and challenges facing Russia's domestic development as well as its international posture. It should assist decision-makers in government, business, and nongovernmental institutions in Russia and internationally to make more-informed choices regarding technology investment, management, and policy in Russia.

A principal conclusion that emerges from this study is that while information technologies in Russia have had a big impact on the lives of many Russian citizens who have access to those technologies, an Information Revolution in Russia's government, economy, and society, such as many of its supporters have anticipated and hoped for, remains off in the distance.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

LONG-LIVED DIGITAL DATA COLLECTIONS: ENABLING RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

National Science Foundation; National Science Board
September 2005, 92 pages

In response to the growing importance of digital data collections for research and education, the National Science Foundation's increasing investment in their creation and maintenance, and their rapid multiplication, the National Science Board formed the Long-lived Data Collections Task Force. This report provides the findings and recommendations from the task force's analysis of digital data collection policy issues, and seeks to frame the issues and begin a broad discourse.

The Board anticipates that a broader dialog among other agencies in the U.S. and with international partners will be required.

The report recommends that the National Science Foundation:

- * Clarify its current investments in resource and reference digital data collections.
- * Develop an agency-wide umbrella strategy for supporting and advancing long-lived digital data collections.
- * Require that research proposals for activities that will generate digital data state such intentions in the proposal, so that peer reviewers can evaluate a proposed data management plan.
- * Ensure that education and training in the use of digital collections are available and effectively delivered to broaden participation in digitally enabled research.
- * Work in partnership with collection managers and the community at large to develop the career path for data scientists, and ensure that the research enterprise includes a sufficient number of high-quality data scientists.

SPAM ISSUES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Committee for Information, Computer and Communications Policy;
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
September 2005, 32 pages

Issued by the OECD's Task Force on Spam, this paper discusses the challenges faced by developing economies in fighting spam. Spam, the Task Force found, is a more serious issue in developing countries than in OECD countries, as spam heavily drains developing countries' more scarce and costly resources. The paper's main emphasis is on issues facing Internet Service Providers.

Following a review of the economic and technical aspects of spam, the paper suggests several technical and legislative solutions. It addresses the education and empowerment of users, including giving users access to secure computing resources and making them more sensitized to Internet abuse issues.

The paper also examines what developing economies can do to combat spam on their own, and the various ways in which developed economies can contribute their expertise and resources to help in these initiatives.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

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GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

SPYWARE: THE THREAT OF UNWANTED SOFTWARE PROGRAMS IS CHANGING THE WAY PEOPLE USE THE INTERNET

Susannah Fox. Pew Internet & American Life Project
July 2005, 23 pages

The Pew Internet & American Life Project set out to measure the impact of the recent wave of online activity related to spyware and adware. Spyware is software that is placed secretly on a computer in order to track a user's behavior and report back to a central source. Adware, on the other hand, is software that comes bundled as a package with programs that consumers download, and is used to serve up targeted advertising based on the user's online behavior.

The researchers wanted to know: Do average Internet users understand the basic concepts? How many are dealing with the problems commonly associated with unwanted software programs? And are they taking steps to prevent software intrusions? Survey questions were developed in consultation with consumer advocates, adware company executives, and security experts. Interviews with 1,336 Internet users were conducted May 4 - June 7, 2005.

The researchers found that the threat of unwanted software programs is making people more cautious online. Most Internet users think symptoms of spyware are serious problems rather than simply minor annoyances. Millions of Internet users have first-hand experience with computer problems related to software intrusions and while many express confidence and knowledge of the issues, most think more should be done to guard against spyware and to notify people about adware.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

JOURNALISM

ARAB MEDIA: TOOLS OF THE GOVERNMENTS; TOOLS FOR THE PEOPLE?

United States Institute of Peace
August 2005, 18 pages

Written for the Institute's Virtual Diplomacy Series and designed to complement U.S. public diplomacy efforts, this report examines how the Arab media is informing and shaping the hearts and minds of the Arab public.

Following its opening discussion of the United States' increasingly dangerous image problem in the Arab world, the report describes the Arab media milieu - its journalists, markets, content, impact, and reform. While the authors credit the region's new satellite channels as technical improvements, they fault their lack of objectivity and professionalism.

They conclude that despite their shortcomings, the new satellite stations should be encouraged, but also criticized if they broadcast lies and applauded when they merit credit.

INDEPENDENT MEDIA DEVELOPMENT ABROAD: CHALLENGES EXIST IN IMPLEMENTING U.S.

Efforts And Measuring Results [GAO-05-803]
United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)
July 29, 2005, 49 pages

Independent media development led by the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supports the national security goal of developing sustainable democracies around the world. Independent media institutions play a role in supporting commerce, improving public health efforts, reducing corruption, and providing civic education.

GAO was asked to examine:

- 1) U.S. government funding for independent media development overseas;
- 2) The extent to which U.S. agencies measure performance toward achieving results; and
- 3) The challenges the United States faces in achieving results.

The GAO found that the State Department and USAID obligated at least \$40 million in fiscal year 2004 for the development of independent media, including activities such as journalism and business management training, and support for legal and regulatory frameworks. The GAO determined that State and USAID face challenges in designing performance indicators and accurately measuring and reporting results directly tied to the performance of U.S. independent media efforts. The performance indicators most frequently used by State and USAID are useful for determining the status of the media in selected countries, but are of limited utility in measuring the specific contributions of U.S.-sponsored programs and activities toward developing independent media in countries, when used alone.

GAO identified several country-specific and programmatic challenges that can impede the implementation of media development efforts, including:

- A changing political condition, or a lack of adequate civic and legal institutions;
- The sustainability of local media outlets, and;
- The unstructured or informal coordination of activities between donors and providers.

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GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

INFORMATION SECURITY: FEDERAL AGENCIES NEED TO IMPROVE CONTROLS OVER WIRELESS NETWORKS [GAO-05-383]

United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)
May 17, 2005

The use of wireless networks is becoming increasingly popular. Wireless networks extend the range of traditional wired networks by using radio waves to transmit data to wireless-enabled devices such as laptops. They can offer federal agencies many potential benefits but they are difficult to secure. GAO was asked to study the security of wireless networks operating within federal facilities. This report (1) describes the benefits and challenges associated with securing wireless networks, (2) identifies the controls available to assist federal agencies in securing wireless networks, (3) analyzes the wireless security controls reported by each of the 24 agencies under the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990, and (4) assesses the security of wireless networks at the headquarters of six federal agencies in Washington, D.C.

GAO found that federal agencies have not fully implemented key controls such as policies, practices, and tools that would enable them to operate wireless networks securely. Further, GAO tests of the security of wireless networks at six federal agencies revealed unauthorized wireless activity and "signal leakage" -- wireless signals broadcasting beyond the perimeter of the building and thereby increasing the networks' susceptibility to attack. [Note: For security reasons, GAO does not identify those agencies in this report.] Without implementing key controls, agencies cannot adequately secure federal wireless networks and, as a result, their information may be at increased risk of unauthorized disclosure, modification, or destruction.

INTERNET FILTERING IN CHINA IN 2004-2005

OpenNet Initiative
April 15, 2005

[Note: The OpenNet Initiative is a collaborative partnership among three academic institutions: the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School; the Citizen Lab at the Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto; and the Advanced Network Research Group at the Cambridge Security Programme (Centre for International Studies) at the University of Cambridge.]

China operates the most extensive, technologically sophisticated, and broad-reaching system of Internet filtering in the world. China's intricate technical filtering regime is buttressed by an equally complex series of laws and regulations that control the access to and publication of material online.

The OpenNet Initiative (ONI) reached these conclusions after testing China's Internet filtering of web content, blog postings, and e-mail correspondences. Their testing found efforts to prevent access to a wide range of sensitive materials, from pornography to religious material to political dissent. Unlike the filtering systems in many other countries, China's filtering regime appears to be carried out at various control points and also to be changing over time. Much of the filtering occurs at the backbone, but individual Internet service providers sometimes deploy additional blocking. Cybercafes and operators of discussion boards also control content proactively under threat of penalties.

The OpenNet Initiative found that most major U.S. media sites, such as CNN, MSNBC, and ABC, are generally available in China, although articles related to China were frequently blocked. [The entire

BBC web site remains blocked]. Moreover, most sites ONI tested in its global list's human rights and anonymizer categories were accessible as well. Filtering tends to be triggered by the appearance of certain keywords, rather than a visit to a specific domain name or numeric Internet address. The keyword-based filters also allow blogs to keep people from completing posts containing banned topics.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

THE FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT AND COPYRIGHT ACT OF 2005

Robin Jeweler
American Law Division
May02, 2005

Intellectual property legislation that came close to enactment during the 108th Congress passed the Senate by unanimous consent early in the 109th Congress. Among the issues addressed are unauthorized distribution of pre-release commercial works, the marketing of devices for home use to edit objectionable content from DVDs, the preservation of the nation's film heritage, and use by libraries and archives of "orphan works." A companion bill has been introduced in the House. This report discusses the provisions of S. 167, 109th Cong., 1st Sess. (2005).

JOURNALISM

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS 2005: A GLOBAL SURVEY OF MEDIA INDEPENDENCE

Freedom House
April 27, 2005

This annual survey, first published in 1980, assesses the degree of print, broadcast, and Internet freedom in countries around the world. It assigns each country a numerical score from 0 to 100 that renders a category rating of "Free", "Partly Free", or "Not Free". Ratings are determined by examining three broad categories: the legal environment in which media operate, political influences on reporting and access to information, and economic pressures on content and the dissemination of news. The survey analyzes events during the 2004 calendar year. Out of the 194 countries and territories examined, 75 (39 percent) were rated Free, while 50 (26 percent) were rated Partly Free and 69 (35 percent) were rated Not Free.

According to the survey, five countries improved in category while two declined. In addition to Ukraine and Lebanon, Guatemala and Guinea-Bissau moved from Not Free to Partly Free, while Namibia moved from Partly Free to Free. Only two countries -- Pakistan and Kenya -- registered a negative category shift in 2004, moving from Partly Free to Not Free. The five worst rated countries in 2004 were Burma, Cuba, Libya, North Korea, and Turkmenistan. In these states, independent media are either nonexistent or barely able to operate, the role of the press is reduced to serving as a mouthpiece for the ruling regime, and citizens' access to unbiased information is severely limited. Press freedom conditions also remained dire in Belarus, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Sudan, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe, where authoritarian governments used legal pressure, imprisonment, and other forms of harassment to severely curtail the ability of independent media to report freely.

In terms of population, according to the report, 17 percent of the world's inhabitants live in countries that enjoy a Free press, while 38 percent have a Partly Free press and 45 percent have a Not Free press. This situation represents a decline over the past year, as the percentage of people who live in countries with a Not Free media environment has increased by 2 percent.

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INFORMATION SECURITY: SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NEEDS TO ADDRESS WEAK CONTROLS OVER FINANCIAL AND SENSITIVE DATA

United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)

March 23, 2005

Under the authority of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) enforces U.S. securities laws, regulates the securities markets, and protects investors. The SEC relies extensively on computerized systems to support its financial and mission-related operations. As part of the audit of SEC's fiscal year 2004 financial statements, GAO assessed the effectiveness of the Commission's information system controls in protecting the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of its financial and sensitive information.

In this report GAO concludes that SEC has not effectively implemented information system controls to protect the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of its financial and sensitive data. Specifically, the commission had not consistently implemented effective electronic access controls, including user accounts and passwords, access rights and permissions, network security, or audit and monitoring of security-relevant events to prevent, limit, and detect access to its critical financial and sensitive systems. In addition, weaknesses in other information system controls, including physical security, segregation of computer functions, application change controls, and service continuity, further increase risk to SEC's information systems. As a result, sensitive data—including payroll and financial transactions, personnel data, regulatory, and other mission-critical information—were at increased risk of unauthorized disclosure, modification, or loss, possibly without detection.

GAO recommends that the SEC Chairman direct the Chief Information Officer to take several actions to fully develop and implement an effective agency-wide information security program, with priority on the establish and implementation of comprehensive information security policies and procedures.

THE INTERNET AND CAMPAIGN 2004

Pew Internet & American Life Project and Pew Research Center for The People & The Press

March 6, 2005

The internet was a key force in politics last year as 75 million Americans used it to get news, discuss candidates in emails, and participate directly in the political process. The online political news consumer population grew dramatically from 18% of the U.S. population in 2000 to 29% in 2004. For campaign 2004, some of the overall figures related to uses of the internet for politics are these:

- * 52% of internet users, or about 63 million people, said they went online to get news or information about the 2004 elections.
- * 35% of internet users, or about 43 million people, said they used email to discuss politics, and one of the most popular email subjects was jokes about the candidates and the election.
- * 11% of internet users, or more than 13 million people, went online to engage directly in campaign activities such as donating money, volunteering, or learning about political events to attend.
- * 34 million people went online to research candidate positions on issues – a 42% increase from 2000.
- * 14 million people got information via the internet on where to vote – a 180% increase from 2000.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: GREATER INVOLVEMENT NEEDED BY FCC IN THE MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF THE E-RATE PROGRAM

**United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)
February 9, 2005**

Since 1998, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) E-rate program has committed more than \$13 billion to help schools and libraries acquire Internet and telecommunications services at affordable rates. Recently, however, there have been allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse by some E-rate program participants. GAO reviewed (1) the effect of the current structure of the E-rate program on FCC's management of the program, (2) FCC's development and use of E-rate performance goals and measures, and (3) the effectiveness of FCC's oversight mechanisms in managing the program.

Research for this report revealed that FCC has not developed useful performance goals and measures for assessing and managing the E-rate program. According to GAO, the goals established for fiscal years 2000 through 2002 focused on the percentage of public schools connected to the Internet, but the data used to measure performance did not isolate the impact of E-rate funding from other sources of funding, such as state and local government. A key unanswered question, therefore, is the extent to which increases in connectivity can be attributed to E-rate. GAO urges greater effort to determine actual impact.

However, GAO cautions that "schools and libraries across the country use E-rate funds for their purchases of telecommunications services. Any reassessment of the program must take the needs of the beneficiaries into account. It is particularly important that efforts to protect the program from fraud, waste, and abuse do not result in a program that is excessively burdensome on program participants."

THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET

**Susannah Fox, Janna Quitney Anderson and Lee Rainie
Pew Internet & American Life Project
January 9, 2005**

This wide-ranging survey of 1,286 technology leaders, scholars, industry officials, and analysts finds that most internet experts expect attacks on the network infrastructure in the coming decade as the internet becomes more embedded in everyday and commercial life. Two-thirds (66%) of the experts responding to a survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project and Elon University agreed with the following prediction: At least one devastating attack will occur in the next 10 years on the networked information infrastructure or the United States power grid.

There was also substantial agreement among the experts in this survey that in the next 10 years the internet will be more deeply integrated in our physical environments and high-speed connections will proliferate – with mixed results. They believe the dawning of the blog era will bring radical change to the news and publishing industry. At the same time, there were deep disagreements among experts about whether internet use would foment a rise in religious and political extremist groups, whether internet use would usher in more participation in civic organizations, and whether the widespread adoption of technology in the health system would ameliorate the most knotty problems in the system such as rising costs and medical errors.

THE STATE OF BLOGGING

**Pew Internet & American Life Project
January 2, 2005**

By the end of 2004 blogs had established themselves as a key part of online culture. Two surveys by the Pew Internet & American Life Project in November established new contours for the blogosphere: 8 million American adults say they have created blogs; blog readership jumped 58% in 2004 and now stands at 27% of internet users; 5% of internet users say they use RSS aggregators or XML readers to get the news and other information delivered from blogs and content-rich Web sites as it is posted online; and 12% of internet users have posted comments or other material on blogs. Still, 62% of internet users do not know what a blog is.

ARTISTS, MUSICIANS AND THE INTERNET

**Mary Madden
Pew Internet & American Life Project
December 5, 2004**

This report, which assesses the first large-scale surveys of the internet's impact on artists and musicians, reveal that they are embracing the Web as a tool to improve how they make, market, and sell their creative works. They eagerly welcome new opportunities that are provided by digital technology and the internet. At the same time, they believe that unauthorized online file sharing is

wrong and that current copyright laws are appropriate, though there are some major divisions among them about what constitutes appropriate copying and sharing of digital files. Their overall judgment is that unauthorized online file-sharing does not pose a major threat to creative industries: two-thirds of artists say peer-to-peer file sharing poses a minor threat or no threat at all to them. Across the board, among those who are successful and those who are struggling, the artists and musicians we surveyed are more likely to say that the internet has made it possible for them to make more money from their art than they are to say it has made it harder to protect their work from piracy or unlawful use.

JOURNALISM

STATE OF THE MEDIA 2005

Project for Excellence in Journalism March 14, 2005

In this second annual review of U.S. media, nine types of media are covered: network television, cable television, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, radio, local TV, ethnic media and the alternative press. For each area, the authors have produced original research and aggregated existing data into a comprehensive look at six different issues:

- * A sense of the editorial content
- * Audience trends
- * Economic trends
- * Ownership trends
- * Newsroom investment trends
- * Data on public attitudes about that sector

Some of the reports findings are sobering: "In 2005, the sense that the press's role in relation to the public is changing seems ever clearer. A generation ago, the press was effectively a lone institution communicating between the citizenry and the newsmakers, whether corporations selling goods or politicians selling agendas, who wanted to shape public opinion for their own purposes. Today, a host of new forms of communication offer a way for newsmakers to reach the public. There are talk-show hosts, cable interview shows, corporate Web sites, government Web sites, Web sites that purport to be citizen blogs but are really something else, and more. Journalism is a shrinking part of a growing world of media. And since journalists are trained to be skeptics and aspire at least, in the famous phrase, to speak truth to power, journalism is the one source those who want to manipulate the public are most prone to denounce. The atmosphere for journalism, in other words, has become, as the legendary editor John Siegenthaler recently put it, 'acidic.'" The authors warn that journalism must reclaim its position as a provider of something distinctive and valuable or risk slipping further in its impact on the public.

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2004: A DARK AND DEADLY YEAR FOR JOURNALISTS

International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) January 18, 2005

This latest annual report from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) notes that 129 journalists and media employees were killed last year, the worst 12-month toll on record. The report "reveals how journalists and media employees in every corner of the globe have been targeted, brutalized and done to death by the enemies of press freedom. Some have been deliberately sought out by crooks and hired assassins. Others have been gunned down as a result of nervous, unruly and ill-undisciplined soldiering."

The IFJ says that the unexplained killing of media staff and journalists in Iraq, involving 12 of the 69 violent deaths since the war began, illustrates that new international rules are needed to force independent investigations of media killings.

The report also carries a special focus on how the Asian tsunami disaster hit media in the affected areas.

Note: Contains copyrighted material

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