

Censorship Privacy and Laws INTERNET

Introduction

- **Internet Definition:** A global network for resource sharing, enabling freedom of expression.
 - **Demographics:** Mostly used by males, youth, and North American/European populations.
 - **Benefits:** Aids communication, commerce, and resource access across professions and age groups.
 - **Growth Drivers:** Low-cost hardware, free software, and minimal central regulation.
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Internet Censorship

- **Definition:** Restriction on access or publishing of content, controlled by governments or private entities.
- **Key Areas:**
 - **Copyright:** Protects creators' rights to their work.
 - **Defamation:** Restricts statements damaging reputations.
 - **Harassment:** Prohibits offensive or threatening behavior.
 - **Obscenity:** Blocks morally or culturally offensive content.
- **Methods:**
 - *Non-Technical:* Licensing restrictions, legal actions, or equipment confiscation.
 - *Technical:* IP blocking, DNS filtering, URL filtering, packet inspection, and content filtering.
- **Tools Against Censorship:**
 - Parental supervision and filtering software (e.g., "Net Nanny").
 - Circumvention tools, though requiring technical expertise.

Organizations Fighting Internet Censorship

1. **OpenNet Initiative (ONI):**
 - Monitors and reports global internet filtering.
 - Classifications: Pervasive, Substantial, Selective, Suspected, or No Evidence.
2. **Reporters Without Borders (RWB):**
 - Defends press and information freedom.
 - Provides support to journalists in hostile environments.

Key Laws Related to Internet Censorship

1. **Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA):**
 - US law targeting copyright infringement.
 - Criticism: Broad enforcement powers with minimal court oversight.
2. **Protect IP Act (PIPA):**
 - Similar to SOPA but includes more judicial oversight.
 - Focuses on curbing counterfeit goods.
3. **Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA):**
 - Aims to combat cyber threats through data sharing.
 - Criticism: Enables government surveillance without liability.
4. **Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA):**
 - International effort to standardize anti-counterfeiting practices.
 - Covers cooperation, enforcement standards, and legal frameworks.
5. **Deep Packet Inspection (DPI):**
 - Allows detailed data packet analysis.
 - Criticism: Raises privacy concerns due to potential misuse.
6. **Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA):**

- US anti-hacking law.
- Criminalizes unauthorized computer access and related activities.

UAE Perspective on Internet Censorship

- **Policies:** Strict filtering using "SmartFilter" software targeting content like pornography, gambling, drugs, and hacking.
- **Regulation:** Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) enforces censorship rules.
- **Progress:** ICT Development Fund supports technology innovation and infrastructure.