

Talking about Bombs or Farming

- After bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995, the Senate's terrorism and technology subcommittee held hearings on
"The availability of Bomb Making Information on the Internet"
- A **bomb** is any of a range of explosive weapons that only rely on the exothermic reaction of an explosive material to provide an extremely sudden and violent release of energy (**an explosive device**).

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- Information about how to make bombs can be found in **books, bookstores and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*** that describes
- How to make an ***ammonium nitrate* and *fuel oil bomb***
- ***Information about ammonium nitrate and fuel oil bomb is available to the public in a booklet called the "Blaster's Handbook", which is published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.***
- ***Farmers use explosives to remove*** tree stumps

Talking about Bombs or Farming

- In 1999 Congress passed law:
- Mandating **20 years in prison** for anyone who distributes bomb-making information knowing or intending that it will be used to commit a crime
- No one has been prosecuted under this law, although there have been several incidents in which young people have built and used bombs made with information from the Internet.

Talking about Bombs or Farming

- It is too difficult to determine and prove what a person posting the information knows and intends about its uses
- Much of the information about bombs is posted by people who do not intend it to be used for a crime



Challenging Old Regulatory Paradigms and Special Interests

- **Quicken and Nolo Press:**
- Sell *self-help legal software*
- to assist people in writing **wills, marital and premarital agreements** and many other documents
- The software includes legal forms and instructions for filling them out.
- It is a typical example of *empowering ordinary people* and reducing our dependence on expensive experts



Challenging Old Regulatory Paradigms and Special Interests

- A group of backlash people who see threats to their income and influence
- Prosecuted against Quicken and Nolo Press
- A Texas judge banned Quicken legal software in 1999
- Texas authorities pursued a similar case against Nolo Press
- The judge decided to use software to the practicing of law without Texas license.

Challenging Old Regulatory Paradigms and Special Interests

- The Texas legislature later changed its law to exempt software publishers
- Several similar cases illustrate how the Web challenges existing interests by providing new options.
- The Web is a popular forum for discussing investments
- In 1997, publishers of *online newsletters and Web sites* about commodities and future investments discovered that they were violating 25-year-old regulations requiring government license



Challenging Old Regulatory Paradigms and Special Interests

- **License requirements include:**

- 1) fees,
 - 2) fingerprinting
 - 3) a background check and
 - 4) presenting a list of subscribers on demand to the ***Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC)***, the federal agency that administers the regulations
- Publishers who did not register with the CFTC could be fined up to \$ 500000 and jailed up to five years
 - The regulations were designed for traders who handle other people's money

Challenging Old Regulatory Paradigms and Special Interests

- **A federal judge ruled that**
 - The CFTC regulations were a prior restraint on speech and violated both for ***Internet publishers and for traditional newsletter publishers***
 - In 2000, the CFTC revised its rules:
 - to exempt
 - newsletter publishers
 - software developers and
 - Web site operators for the licensing requirements

Challenging Old Regulatory Paradigms and Special Interests

- By raising an issue of free speech on the Web, this case led to termination of unconstitutional restraints of free speech in traditional media
- The Web Provides the potential for reducing prices of many products by eliminating the middleman
- Small producers who cannot afford **expensive distributors or whole-sellers** can set up a Web site and sell directly to consumers nationwide



Spam

- Spam is considered as unsolicited mass e-mail
- Spam has infuriated users of the Internet since the mid-1990
- It invaded cellphones in 2001
- Spam is developed because e-mail is extremely cheap compared to printed direct-mail advertising



Spam

- Many businesses and organizations:
 - compile or
 - buy huge lists of e-mail addresses and
 - send their unsolicited messages
- To collect e-mail addresses, businesses and organizations use automated software that surfs the Web and collects:
 - e-mail addresses and
 - anything that looks like an e-mail addresses



Spam

- Spam angers people because of both the content and the way it is sent
- Contents of spam:
 - Commercial advertising
 - Political advertising (for candidates or issues)
 - Solicitations for funds from nonprofit organizations
 - Pornography and advertisements for it and
 - Fraudulent "get rich quick" schemes

Spam

- **What Is the Problem?**
- Is cheap to senders but may impose costs on the recipient's time and/or the recipient's online account.
- may contain objectionable content (political, commercial ads, solicitations for funds, pornography, etc.).
- may contain a disguised return address.
- may pass through filters.
- invades privacy.
- creates a financial and managerial burden on ISPs.



Spam

- **Anti Spam Laws:**

- Several anti-spam laws have been introduced in Congress.
- Provisions in proposed laws include the following:
 - Unsolicited commercial e-mail must be labeled so that it can easily be filtered out
 - ISPs must provide filters for their members to block spam



Spam

- Spam must identify the sender and include instructions for opting out
- Senders must honor opt-out request from recipients and send them no additional mail
- Spam must include a valid e-mail reply address
- False or misleading subject lines are prohibited
- All unsolicited commercial e-mail is banned



Spam

- **Solutions:**

- **Technology:** filters that screen out spam.
- **Market Pressure:** services that list spammers.
- **Business Policy:** at the discretion of the recipient, all email would be charged a microfee.
- **Law:** create restrictions that are consistent with existing laws
- **Vigilantism:** punish spammers by hacking into their phone or computer Systems.