

Modern technology has made it easier for individuals to download copyrighted music and books from the Internet for no charge.

To what extent is this a positive or negative development?

With the advent of novel technologies like the internet, access to ~~the~~ information all around the world has become much easier and more convenient. It is made possible to have access to the Internet at every corner of the globe by just having a single cell phone. Although the availability of the data is a positive development, there are some negative effects imposed on the media industry by those who are advocates of free access to all the media on the web. These individuals are sometimes referred to as pirates and the act is known as piracy in the Internet literature.

Having free access to information such as books and articles seems to be most favorable to both amateur readers and some research scientists looking for novel discoveries in their area of interest. However, there are certain laws, developed throughout many trials and errors, to protect the abstract achievements of the owner of these publications. The most obvious reason is to provide publishers with ~~the peace ease~~ of mind and assure them that the result of their, sometimes, lifetime endeavor is well protected. One example of such acts against piracy is the case against the website called "Gigapedia.com" which had been publishing the latest publications of some mogul publishers, for instance McGraw Hill and Elsevier, without legal consent. Eventually the site owners were sued and forced to pay ~~by paying~~ four million pounds and the site permanently shut down.

Moreover, such piracy is widely seen in the music industry wherein lots of aficionados wish to have instant access to the hit song or the new album of their favourite artist at no charge. Undoubtedly, this is the incontestable right of the musicians to publish their records at a certain price and the copyright law is there to protect their ownership. These acts will both benefit the artists and their fans, by motivating the former to contribute more and providing the latter with continuously produced material. Thus, it is obvious that piracy destroys this circle and many musicians, as well as their fans, will suffer from the consequences.

To summarize, despite the fact that free access to media is favourable to many users, the negative impacts of piracy on the industry cannot be neglected. As a result, laws like copyright are essential to protect the original productions and safeguard the achievements, or so called properties, of their publishers and owners.