CONFLICTS ABOUT THE REGULATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN INTERNET: COMPARING THE ISSUE NETWORKS IN UK AND SPAIN

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Abstract

Regulations and policy initiatives concerning the non-authorized use of copyright contents in the Internet have generated in multiple countries strong lobby processes which include a media campaign between the different agents who consider these regulations essential for its interests. The copyrights coalition (CRC) argues that “un-authorized” uses of contents are a risk for their business and because of that they lobby for strong policies to protect rights holders. The Internet Service Providers (ISP) do not want to assume the supervision cost of internet users’ behaviour although they would like to participate in the profits of the digital content business. Digital Rights Activists (DRA) believe that regulation proposals and policies threaten fundamental rights such as personal privacy, freedom of speech, free circulation of information and knowledge as well as the right of Internet access. In this paper we study the media visibility of different stakeholders who are part of this conflict; we analyze the cases of United Kingdom (Digital Economy Act) and Spain (Ley de Economía Sostenible). We suppose that the most visible agents have a greater chance of exerting influence in the issue in terms of spreading and legitimating their statements about the regulation and to influence policy maker’s decisions. We measure visibility in terms of the stakeholders’ saliency on the issue network, saliency that we calculate drawing upon a content analysis in multiple channels (news and blogs) and a network analysis considering the back-links between stakeholders’ web sites and its back-links according to Google and Alexa. We do this in order to identify and to compare the most visible agents in multiple channels. In this way we identify the visibility of the stakeholders and asses if there is a correlation between the agents’ visibilities on different channels. We identify and explain how depending on the contextual features and the agents’ attributes the visibility in different channels varies.

Author’s bio

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