Intellectual property and Cyber Security

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Introduction

The recent advancement and growth in technology has increased the need for enactment of intellectual property laws and policies that focus on the usage of the internet as a measure of intensifying information technology (IT) security. Compared to inventions in the traditional context, creators in the context of the internet face a myriad of challenges that put them at risk of running out of market or being unwilling to continue producing. Notably, production and distribution of copyright material costs money (Tosato, 2010). Even if creators are not motivated by financial gain, they need money to aid their later productions and distributions. However, this has been quite difficult following the ever rising cases of copyright infringement in the online platform. Duplicating and downloading of content from online platforms is now easy and quick more than ever. This has raised serious concerns from copyright creators, who have sought the help of intellectual property laws and policies to provide them with protection. Intellectual property theft has actually been described as a greater threat compared to cyber war and other malicious attacks, thereby intensifying the need to protect information through investing in stricter IT security policies and regulations.

The continued growth of the internet has resulted to even greater pressure on traditional intellectual property laws and policies, both locally and internationally. Notably, patents and copyrights as forms of IP are the ones that face the big risk of exploitation. Individuals can now easily copy information on the internet without consent of the owner (Fernandez, 2006). The cost and anonymity of copying has prompted a response from publishers who now seek to employ intellectual property rights to cover their content; this applies to any additional information they may add. Unfortunately, analysts have found that the response has not been appropriate as

expected, mostly when it comes to the internet following weak IT security measures or platforms. However, the features of the internet may make it difficult to apply IP laws and policies; keeping in mind that internet serves as a global community, which is both dynamic and highly interactive.

Notably, most of the software that surfaces the web is free. In this regard, as much as copyright violations have increased application of IP laws and policies in such an interactive and dynamic environment may cause more problems than benefits (Cullet, 2004). The suggestion here is that both individual publishers and the society can benefit from less strict intellectual property laws and protections in such a context. In this regard, policy-makers are advised to think critically and keenly when dealing with such an environment. The conventional assumption that stricter IP laws and policies improve innovation is merely based on an economic approach that has been found to be inappropriate in such a dynamic and highly interactive context.

Statistics demonstrate that intellectual property theft has been rampant in the past few years. As an example, Kuchler (2013) noted that the number of organizations, which suffered external cyber attacks meant to acquire commercial information illegal doubled between 2012 and 2013 when compared to the previous financial year. Additionally, theft of information has been regarded as the second most frequent form of fraudulent activity after physical or on-site physical theft of a company's assets. It is a fact that the internet provides a myriad of threats to copyright creators, it also provides as many benefits and opportunities, which are not experienced in the traditional context (Andrijcic, & Horowitz, 2006). This means that the rate of infringement cases between the traditional and online contexts is different. In the modern age,

infringement of copyright works in the internet has increased and copyright creators are growing weary.

In truth, intellectual property theft has been a major problem and continues to be following various infringements, which hinder intensifying cyber security. There are concerns that due to the highly interactive nature of the internet, copyright owners may accrue losses once strict IT security measures are developed (Mishra, 2005). Hence, regardless of the increased protective measures provided by copyright laws, there are still concerns of how strict intellectual property laws and policies should be; this is in regard to online platforms. Owing to the nature of both contexts, researchers find that intellectual property laws and policies should be stricter when it comes to the traditional context compared to the internet context. In this regard, the internet context is best when there are less strict intellectual property sanctions; the aim is to allow continuation and spread of innovation.

Conclusion

Safeguarding intellectual property can be achieved through intensifying cyber security measures. On one hand, this would lead to protection of copyright owners. The establishment of copyright laws and policies has, to some extent, helped improved theft of intellectual information. However, there is need to understand that through intensified IT security measures, copyright owners are likely to experience losses as has been mentioned. In this respect, a dilemma exists where copyright owners want to feel that their assets are safe and on the other hand they also want to accrue benefits. Nonetheless, making IT security stricter is the only way to safeguard companies from having delicate information stolen and used for malicious purposes.

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