

A unified regulatory model for pursuing content policy objectives on digital networks

Mots clés :

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Résumé du projet de recherche (Langue 1)

In the near future, most broadcasting services will migrate away from over-the-air broadcasting platforms toward Internet and/or managed IPTV platforms accessible via broadband networks (Noam et al. 2004). Broadcasting spectrum will lose its regulatory specificity, becoming part of a larger pool of "broadband" infrastructure. As the difference between broadcast spectrum and broadband spectrum disappears, so will the regulatory function attached to broadcasting spectrum. What will replace this regulatory function? The media policy objectives that gave rise to audiovisual regulation in the first place are likely to remain relevant in an Internet TV environment, and regulators will need to find new tools to address them. Regulating the broadcaster – ie. the editor of the content -- may not be sufficient in the future because the broadcaster can easily move outside national borders. Eli Noam predicts that TV regulation will "become" telecom regulation, ie. that a form of regulation over broadband access networks will emerge to address media policy concerns, and fill the gap left by the disappearance of media regulation via the licensing of broadcast spectrum (Noam 2006). Noam argues that in an Internet environment, the broadband access network is the only "thing" that will always be present within national borders and that will be subject to regulatory control. If lawmakers and regulators cannot reach a foreign broadcaster, they will try to achieve media policy objectives via regulation of the broadband conduit used by consumers in their country. This form of regulation already exists: Must-carry rules are an example of regulation of broadband access networks that is intended to achieve media policy objectives. Measures requiring ISP filtering of illegal gambling sites (the French ARJEL law) are another example. The tendency in the future will be to impose more rules of this kind on access network providers. The proposed thesis will attempt to test Eli Noam's theory and develop a methodology to apply it.

Résumé du projet de recherche (Langue 2)

Etablir les principes fondamentaux d'une régulation du secteur des TIC à l'ère de la convergence.