

## *IPAN issue brief - no. 3*

### **issue: can copyright survive the threat from the Internet?**

The internet provides marvellous opportunities for consumers, creators and producers. For example music, television and computer software can be downloaded globally at a click of a mouse.

Some would argue that such downloading should be "free". But most would accept that the flow of creative products will be greater if producers, individuals or companies, can achieve a market reward. Copyright remains the best legal mechanism for managing a fair system.

So the answer to our question is that, if we care about the quality of the products, and fairness to those who provide them, we have to ensure that copyright does survive in an internet-connected world.

To do this we need:

- enforceable rights against infringers worldwide
- consensus as to what amounts to wrongful infringement (as opposed to, for example, legitimate private use, research, criticism and review or news reporting)
- technical measures to assist in preventing unlawful activities and in tracking infringers
- co-operation from intermediaries, such as internet service providers and
- most important, understanding from consumers that this is in their interests and not just in the interest of the big producers.

Even large jurisdictions such as the United States are unable to solve the problems to which the Internet gives rise themselves, and support must be given to the initiatives of the World Intellectual Property Organisation and World Trade Organisation to solve these problems globally.

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#### **some suggested links for further reading:**

- [Gowers Review of Intellectual Property](#)