



Current Problems and Solutions

SAMANTHA YORKE
MAY 2011



Media consumption habits have changed....radically

- Traditionally, the media industry has been considered as distinct independent silos: TV, print, radio, film and our current regulatory regime presupposes this vertical market structure
- Today, we see the same piece of content being consumed across several of these silos on more of a horizontal spectrum → renders much of our existing regulation outmoded
- Australians are also no longer passive consumers of media content, they are media producers, distributors and regulators
- We need a new approach to content regulation which takes into account the way people currently create, access and regulate content
- Positive examples of ways in which user generated content is being self / community regulated today through ratings, thumbs up / down, reports of abuse
- Global networks promote Australian content around the world - so we need a new approach in Australia that promotes the continued creation of innovative content that can be consumed anywhere in the world.

Key policy drivers behind the review

- Framing paper sets out the following policy principles:
 - Diversity of voices, views and information
 - Need to foster innovation and competition
 - Access to Australian content
 - Access to locally relevant news and information
 - Media should be reflective of community views and standards
 - Access to a broad range of content and services
 - Transparency around Internet access and services
 - Maximise public benefit of spectrum usage
- A number of issues are not addressed in any detail in the framing paper:
 - Potential conflict between post-NBN environment (monopoly supplier & Govt owned) and the value of greater diversity for content and providers
 - Balancing public interest (undefined) with diversity, innovation and competition - with added dimension of censorship (& filtering)
 - How do you manage local content requirements across a diverse range of services including online? Would Australian user generated content qualify as local content??

Consumer choice and access to an open Internet

- Very supportive of the transparency measures included in the framing paper – very important in a country where Internet access is routinely capped and we have a history of advertising pushing the boundaries of (mis)representation around access speeds
- Open architecture and the end-to-end principle (once access is granted, consumers can visit anything online not just a sub-section of it) has been a key principle for the success of the Internet
- An open internet allows new services to access new audiences and users to have free choice of all (lawful) Internet content, applications and services so that they – internet users – choose the winners and losers of the future.
- Competition between ISPs will be compromised by bundling specific services in with their access packages or by restricting which services are available
- New entrants are the most important engine of growth in most sectors of the economy, but especially over the internet. New entrants must be able to reach large audiences on equal terms. In short, Australia's vision for economic growth in this sector *depends on the internet remaining open and being user-centric.*