

Testimony of Mark Gorton  
Chairman, Lime Wire LLC  
before the  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
U.S. House of Representatives  
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I would like to thank the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for inviting me to speak today. My name is Mark Gorton, I am the founder and Chairman of Lime Wire LLC, the makers of the LimeWire file sharing program.

LimeWire takes the problem of inadvertent file-sharing seriously. We strive to make the LimeWire file sharing program clear and easy to understand. Warnings about inadvertent file sharing are displayed prominently on the LimeWire website.

The LimeWire program contains a number of features designed to prevent inadvertent file-sharing. In the Library tab, users can see which files are being shared and how many times each file has been uploaded. They can also turn off or on sharing on a file by file or folder by folder basis. The Monitor and logging tabs on the LimeWire client also show which files have been uploaded. Users are given warnings when they attempt to share folders which are likely to contain sensitive information such as the "My Documents" folder on Windows machines. A status bar is always present which shows how many files are being shared, the number of files currently being uploaded, and the current upload bandwidth being used.

At LimeWire we continue to be frustrated that despite our warnings and precautions, a small fraction of users override the safe default setting that come with the program and end up inadvertently publishing information that they would prefer to keep private.

However, despite all the work that we have done, inadvertent file sharing continues to be a problem, so LimeWire is working on a new generation of user interfaces and tools designed with neophyte users in mind. These interfaces will make it even easier for users to see which files they are sharing and to intuitively understand the controls that are available to them.

I have sent to this committee a document entitled, "Inadvertent Sharing Precautions in LimeWire", which provides a more comprehensive list of the measures that LimeWire takes to prevent accidental file sharing. I also invite you to go to our website and download the LimeWire client and see for yourself how easy it is to see which files are being shared with LimeWire.

In an addition to the problem of inadvertent file-sharing, P2P networks are plagued by child pornography and copyright infringement. The Internet is a technology which allows for many novel behaviors. Unfortunately, some of these new behaviors are detrimental to society. The regulatory framework that surrounds the Internet has not kept pace with technical advancements, and currently, no effective enforcement mechanisms exist to address illegal behavior on P2P networks.

Internet Service Providers, ISP's, are a unique point of control for every computer on the Internet. Universities frequently function as their own ISP's, and a handful of universities have implemented notice based warning systems that result in the disconnection of users engaged in illegal behavior who ignore multiple warnings. These universities have sharply reduced child pornography and copyright infringement on their campus networks.

Similar policies could be mandated for all ISP's in the United States. However, these policies are unpopular with the telecom and cable companies who would prefer not have an enforcement relationship with their paying customers. The telecom industry has objected vigorously to previous attempts to involve ISP's in the enforcement process and it continues to oppose policies that would allow for the establishment of moderate, yet effective enforcement mechanisms to combat illegal behavior on the Internet.

The only institution in the United States with the power to mandate the creation of an effective enforcement mechanism to police the Internet is the United States Congress. With the leadership of the US Congress, a proper policing mechanism for the Internet can be established and the problems of child pornography and copyright infringement can be greatly reduced.