

Comments on 17 USC Section 1201(a)(1), Digital Millennium Copyright Act

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Dear Copyright Office,

The Librarian of Congress should find that the enforcement of Section 1201(a)(1) will damage non-infringing uses of any kind of copyrighted work.

As a programmer and electrical engineer, I've come across too many situations where equipment that should communicate with other equipment doesn't. Old, "obsolete" (this doesn't take very long these days), equipment is famous for incompatibility problems.

Reverse-engineering in some form has traditionally been a solution of last resort. It's expensive and time-consuming, but, unfortunately, necessary on occasion. Outlawing reverse-engineering will be a horrible mistake.

The rise of technology has correlated with the increase in complexity of systems that can be reliably interconnected to function as a whole greater than the parts. The better, easier, and cheaper a media reader can connect to any other device, the more legitimate applications become feasible.

New applications are often just that - NEW and unforeseen. If media reading rights are restricted to only applications that the copyright holder could imagine at the time a work was created, then new applications will be significantly retarded. So will our economy.

I approve of copyright law as it has traditionally been practiced. Fair use for personal, educational, or scientific pursuits. If I purchase a media recording, I should be able to do pretty much anything I like with it except share copies of it wholesale with others. If I retain the original media, it should even be fair for me to copy the recording to another format for personal use. Only True Infringers -- those selling illegitimate copies -- should be punished, not the nation and world as a whole.

The copyright holding industries - music and movies, have been dragging their feet with every new consumer invention for decades. This slows economic growth, weakening our nation as a whole. They have rights - but so do others.