

I had very little knowledge before starting this topic on the rules and regulations of the digital media world. I am not a fan of piracy, and therefore have always purchased my music from iTunes, Amazon, CD's or now Google. Having begun my research on this topic, I felt as though I needed more understanding of what Digital Rights Management (DRM) and Copyright Issues were. I have known for some time about music and movies being pirated. I had also known that many people are never caught, and most law suits do not go to those who pirate but the websites that allow for the pirating. With that being said, I felt like I had a decent understanding of how pirating worked.

I of course went to Wikipedia to find more information:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_rights_management

The Digital Rights Management controversy is a deep one. Many believe that the DMCA, Digital Millennium Copyright Act, restrict people from doing what is perfectly legal and truly lawful. After having read several articles about this information, I am certainly on the fence about the subject. I do believe though, that if you purchase a basketball hoop, for instance, anyone is allowed to use that hoop, and I am not having to pay additional fees in order for someone other than myself to use it. I am certainly not allowing them to keep the hoop, but I do allow them to borrow the hoop or use it. The producers who created the hoop are not coming to me saying that I am stealing from them. Several people can use my purchased product, and no one seems to mind.

Now with that being said, I purchased the item. I did not steal it, which is what DRM is trying to avoid. I do understand that the concept is to block people from posting music, videos, images and books on the internet for anyone to download without purchase. I do believe the aspect of stealing copyrighted material is not only illegal, but unfair. I do become frustrated though with the idea that I cannot share my purchased items with friends.

Having grown up when books were in paper form only, my husband for many years was opposed to the idea of an e-reader. He was adamant about not wanting one, and thought that the paper books were just "better". He loved being able to go to the library and check out a book, read it, and return the book with only the cost of the gas to get him there. He has since, with in the last 3 months, relented and I purchased a Kindle™ for him. He loves the Kindle™ and I have a hard time getting it away from him at times. The frustration he possesses is that when he reads a book that he enjoyed, it only stays on his Kindle. He is not longer, able to loan it to a friend to read, or even donate the book to our local library. This is a frustration, because the DRM that is on the file, does not allow him to transfer the material. This also means, that several of the e-books available contain DRM's and therefore restrict the number of available books he has the opportunity to check out on his Kindle™. This has certainly increased our costs for books in our household.

<http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20120624/SUB/306249983>

Because of my increasing interest in the copyright issues that go along with e-books and e-readers, I began researching articles that went along with these ideas. I found that Amazon™ has the greatest sales for e-books and is considered the "monopoly" when it comes to e-book sales. The publishing company Macmillian's sci-fi and fantasy, Tor/Forge is in an attempt to "loosen the grip of Amazon" on the market for e-books. They have launched a website, Tor.com, which is selling e-books DRM-free. Several people believe this to be a serious issue and may allow the piracy of novels to grow, but they believe otherwise. By being DRM-free, they allow the e-books to be shared as well as remove the lock fo only being used on a Kindle™.

The retailer believes that they are trying to “foster a much more diverse retail economy for e-books”. They believe that Amazon, who has had the market for themselves for years, dictates the price as well as the devices that can use e-books. Amazon has been selling books for \$9.99, which is below the wholesale price for the copyright. The company believes that they can make a dent, because they have had great success with the Tor.com website, a sci-fi and fantasy website. They also believe that by going DRM-free, they hope that this will promote those who do not have Kindles™ to purchase books through them.

For more information about this DRM-free digital book store:

<http://paidcontent.org/2012/06/04/macmillans-torforge-will-launch-drm-free-digital-bookstore-this-summer/>

There are several Publishing companies considering doing the same as Macmillian:

<http://paidcontent.org/2012/06/05/ipg-announces-drm-free-option-for-client-publishers/>