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COPYRIGHT LAWS AND DIGITAL PIRACY

INTRODUCTION

The owners and authors of original works, such as literary, artistic, musical, or other intellectual creations, are granted exclusive rights by copyright laws. These legal measures seek to uphold the rights of artists and grant them autonomy over their creations, enabling them to make money from them. The unapproved duplication, dissemination, or utilization of content protected by a copyright without the owner's consent is known as digital piracy. It frequently happens in the digital sphere, where it is simple to copy copyrighted works and distribute them online. Illegally downloading or sharing software, e-books, music, movies, and other digital content are examples of digital piracy. Although copyright laws differ from nation to nation, in general, they provide authors the only authority to replicate, distribute, exhibit, perform, and alter their works. When an original work is produced, creators immediately acquire these rights, which usually expire a certain amount of time after the creator's passing. Numerous nations have passed legislation to defend copyright holders and stop internet infringement in reaction to digital piracy. These laws frequently target websites or specific people involved in widespread acts of piracy. Furthermore, owners of copyrights may file a lawsuit against organizations or people violating their rights, requesting monetary compensation as well as injunctions to stop future violations. Digital rights management (DRM) systems, which are intended to prevent unauthorized copying and distribution of protected content, have also been implemented as a result of technological improvements. DRM comes in a variety of forms, including access control systems, watermarking, and encryption. It is significant to remember that although copyright laws are meant to safeguard artists' rights, there are continuous discussions concerning their efficacy and possible drawbacks. Some contend that unduly stringent copyright regulations can stifle free speech, prevent innovation, and restrict access to information and culture. Others stress how crucial it is to uphold the rights of creators and guarantee just recompense for their labor.

CASE LAW: Sony Corp of America v. Universal City Studios, Inc.

Facts of the case: Sony created the Betamax video cassette recording format in the 1970s. Members of the film industry, including Universal Studios and the Walt Disney Company, were cautious about this development. However, they also knew that Congress was in the final stages of revising U.S. copyright law and would probably be reluctant to enact any new protections for the industry. The companies decided to sue Sony and its distributors in the Central District of California U.S. District Court in 1976, claiming that since Sony was producing a device that might be used for copyright infringement, they were responsible for

any infringement that its buyers may commit. Two years later, the District Court decided in favor of Sony, holding that access to free public information is a First Amendment public interest served by this usage and that noncommercial home use recording was constituted fair use. The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, however, overturned this decision in part and found Sony accountable for contributory infringement. Additionally, the court determined that because the Betamax's primary function was copying, it was not a Sony Corp. of America v. Universal City Studios, Inc. (1984) staple piece. It continued by offering mandatory licensing, damages, and injunctive relief in place of other remedies.

JUDGEMENT OF THE CASE: The Court's 5-4 decision to overturn the Ninth Circuit's decision in favor of Sony rested on the potential that the contested technology had important non-infringing applications and that the plaintiffs were unable to demonstrate such. Regarding Sony's potential classification as "contributing" to copyright infringement, the Court made the following ruling: The Court said that there must be a balance struck between the rights of others to freely engage in substantially unrelated areas of commerce and the legitimate demand of copyright holders for effective protection of the statutory monopoly, rather than just symbolic protection. This was in reference to the question of whether Sony could be considered to be "contributing" to copyright infringement.

Therefore, if copying equipment is extensively utilized for acceptable, lawful purposes, then selling it, like selling other objects of trade, does not amount to contributing to infringement. In fact, it only needs to be allowed to be used for significant non-infringing purposes. Therefore, the question is whether the Betamax can be used for commercially important non-infringing uses. Private, non-commercial time-shifting in the house is one conceivable use of the Betamax that clearly fits this criteria, however it is understood. permission does thus for two reasons: (A) respondents have no legal authority to stop other copyright holders from granting permission for their programs, and (B) the factual findings of the District Court show that even the unapproved home time-shifting of respondents' programs is a valid form of fair use. Millions of VTR owners copy televised sports events, religious broadcasts, and educational programs, and if the owners of those programs approve of the practice, then the industry that supplies the technology that enables this copying shouldn't be suppressed just because some people use that technology to make unauthorized copies of respondents' works. The fact that the entire work is reproduced doesn't normally work against a finding of fair use when one considers the nature of a televised copyrighted audiovisual work and that time-shifting merely allows a viewer to see such a work which he had been invited to witness in its entirety free of charge.

He came to the conclusion that time-shifting constituted a fair use because of this as well as the fact that it was nonprofit and noncommercial.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, copyright laws are in place to safeguard artists' rights and grant them the exclusive right to their creative creations. On the other side, using, distributing, or copying copyrighted content without authorization is known as digital piracy. Many nations have passed laws and regulations that specifically target websites or individuals involved in infringement in an effort to curb digital piracy. Copyright holders have the option to sue infringers, requesting monetary compensation as well as injunctions to stop future infringement.

