

**The threat to consumers' privacy:  
Digital Management Systems of Protection of Privacy and Personal  
Data**

**Dr. Victoria Banti-Markouti**

**victoriabanti@yahoo.com**

**Abstract**

*"On the internet nobody knows you are a dog"*

(The Economist, 31/5/1997)

In today's digital environment the citizens of the western world are being recorded not only by governmental but also by private mechanisms. Every internet research on travelling, newspaper reading, shopping via internet leaves traces in computers. Only a few of us are aware of the degree that our actions in the digital world leave tracks of our identity.

The future of protection of personal data is immediately connected to the future of application of intellectual property. In their effort to decrease the profits from non permitted copies of work of intellectual property and seeking to increase the profit via purchases of intellectual goods in the internet, the holders of intellectual rights and their technological collaborators create technological measures of protection (digital rights management (DRM) technologies) which allow perfect control in the access and use of digital files.

On the other hand, *"the answer to the machine is the machine"*. The same mechanisms that IP holders use to control the use of their works in the digital environment can also be used by the consumers for the protection of their personal data.

In the present article the interconnection of protection of private life and intellectual property in the internet will be assessed as well as the legal and technological security measures for data protection. In addition the violation of

personal data by the technological measures of protection of intellectual property will be examined and the solution of the technological measures for the protection of privacy (privacy rights management), methods of consumers' control of their personal data and Privacy Enhancing Technologies will be analysed.

**Key words:** data protection, protection of consumers' privacy, digital measures for data protection, intellectual property