

Copyright in the digital age: attitudes, social perception and level of awareness

Simone Aliprandi

Abstract

This paper describes the preparation of an empirical research study conducted for a PhD thesis, and provides a summary of the results obtained.

The research is devoted to "Copyright in the digital age: attitudes, social perception and level of awareness" and was conducted through a web-survey which could be completed online between February and June 2011.

The paper will first explain the objectives of the research and present the questionnaire on which the survey is based. The main methodology issues encountered in preparing the research and the methods used for collecting and analyzing data will also be cited. Afterwards, the total number of useful responses collected and their distribution according to demographic variables (geographic area, age, education level, occupation, type of user) will be reported.

The core of the collected results will then be explored, dividing the findings into Study 1 for data collected in Italy, and Study 2 for data collected in the rest of the world. The review of the collected data (expressed in some cases with the help of bar charts) will be based on three main themes of research: behavior (i.e. how web users are used to acquiring creative content and software); opinions and perceptions (i.e. how web users relate to the problem of copyright, what are their opinions and perceptions with respect to the hottest topics in the field); level of awareness (i.e. what is the actual level of information and awareness of the workings of copyright by common web users, rather than "experts").