

The inclusion of broadcast "flags" in new televisions is an abomination of the principles of free-trade and laissez-faire economics. Government has no business regulating one industry (technology) for the benefit of another industry (entertainment).

Further, the inclusion of broadcast flags will cause major upheaval in the consumer market decreasing the likelihood of adoption of the new technology. The U.S. Supreme Court already ruled that taping TV shows is FAIR USE. (Doesn't anyone remember the 1970s fiascos that caused the Audio Recording Act?) The FCC does not have the authority to overrule that case. Period. Granted, monied interests in the entertainment industry would have some believe otherwise, but destroying one market to enable a monopolistic behemoth such as AOL/Time Warner, Viacom, etc. to continue controlling content is simply bad public policy.

People, in general, are more than willing to pay for quality entertainment at a fair price. They will, however, become alienated by having their VCRs quit working when they buy a new TV. They will RETURN the TV thinking that it does not work and REFUSE to buy one. Thus destroying the consumer market that is the only thing holding our economy up.

The Piracy argument is a red herring. Pirates will continue to profit from ill-gotten gain.

The idiotic technological prevention methods that the industry would have you use will only cause the U.S. technology industry to lose to the Asians and Irish. This will have a cascade effect on the overall technology market by causing some fields of research to become fraught with political danger to seriously study. The technology markets in the U.S. will soon become overshadowed by everyone else. Already, many companies are moving their engineering to other countries because of stupid laws (think DMCA), does the FCC really want to contribute to the stupidity?

If you would like to destroy the tenuous threads that are holding up our shaky economy, this is a good rule. If you are interested in the public good - including economic health - this is a TERRIBLE RULE.

Regards,

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