

Digital Copyright

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Two main additions to the copyright law have happened as a result of technological advances in the last 20 years.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) is quite restrictive and relates to copying digital material.

The DMCA

- makes it a crime to circumvent copy protection software
- clarifies that it is illegal for libraries to create copies in newer formats of items that are in outdated formats.
 - The only exception is if a technology is obsolete and if you can't purchase the work in a useable format. Eight Track tapes, Beta format video, laser disks are obsolete formats – new equipment to play these formats cannot be purchased. You could argue for slides since no one makes slide projectors. Audio cassette players and VHS video machines are getting that way. Film strips qualify. But who really wants to copy this old stuff? There must be better if there is not a more modern version available.

The Technology Education And Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) act is more permissive, helping to make distance education possible.

The TEACH act

- equalizes copyright laws as they apply to schools, whether on-line or face-to-face by allowing limited use of copyrighted materials In access controlled environments

Things are changing as fast as technology changes, but basic print copyright laws can be applied to new technologies – it is usually only details that need to be clarified. The Google digitization project is creating changes. Google may have the money and clout to make a difference.