

Check against delivery.

I would like to take us to a very different place right now. I want to talk about the world of the Internet and social media; I want to talk about activism and a public uprising.

We need to think about where people, young and old, are going to get their information. They are going to the Internet and, increasingly, to social media. We may argue about whether this is a good thing or a bad thing, given that it is an environment in which news is more often than not opinion, and opinion more often than not, news. But regardless of our qualms, if our focus is solely on mainstream media, we are making a big mistake.

To make matters worse, unfortunately it is in the social media environment where opponents of IP excel. Whether we're talking about blogs or Twitter or Facebook, those who seek to weaken respect for IP have dominated the environment and managed to convince many in government that they are at the head of vast armies of citizens...when in fact nothing could be further from the truth.

In Canada a famous example of this involves an anti-copyright Facebook group put together by a law professor. Boasting upwards of 85,000 supposed "friends," the existence of this group was used to attempt to persuade the government that pro-copyright initiatives contemplated by them were opposed by the majority of people. Yet when this group attempted to muster an actual political rally in Canada's largest city, something in the neighbourhood of 20 people showed up – and they had to be herded together by news cameras in an effort to make the protest look larger than it was.

Quite frankly, if we abandon this environment to our opponents, we get what we deserve.

But we don't have to. It is simply a question of radicalizing and activating our own base – the employees and designers and creators who rely for their livelihood on IP, together with their friends, neighbours and family. Let me give you a couple of examples. I regularly conduct "town hall" meetings at the record labels in Canada. We talk about the issues and challenges that we face. While this is a spectacular educational opportunity; it is actually more than that. Many of our employees feel powerless in the face of malicious misinformation. By creating opportunities for them to become activists, we empower them and give them a sense that they can

make a difference. Many seize this opportunity. They write letters to the editor, they post articles to their Facebook pages, and they engage their friends and family.

A well-run and well-organized Facebook page in particular, can be an incredible method to bring people together. It can act as a clearinghouse for ideas and stories. As an example, you can take very local stories, and blow them up so that they reach the attention of hundreds, if not thousands of people. This is about capturing “share of voice.”

If this starts to sound like a manifesto for a political campaign, that is because that’s exactly what it is. Proponents of IP can and should be as active in social media as anyone else; we just don’t, as yet, employ the types of strategies employed by our opponents.

We also have to think about what people are “learning” about IP in this environment. And here we are losing a war of rhetoric and nomenclature. Theft isn’t theft anymore; it is “sharing”. Rules attached to software delivered to consumers aren’t “rules” anymore; they are invidious digital “locks”. IP developers and patent owners become “knowledge hoarders”. IP becomes a barrier to or a drag on innovation. It is an impediment to collaboration. All of this is, of course, wrong. But repeated over and over and over again, and most importantly left unchallenged, it starts to assume the appearance of a great truth instead of the great lie that it is.

And this means that we need to challenge these statements whenever and wherever we find them. They need to be challenged on blogs, challenged in the comments sections of newspapers, challenged on Facebook pages. We need to initiate, moderate and generate dialogue. If some law professor produces a paper that asserts that so-called “Old IP” is dead and is nothing more than a system of “knowledge hoarding”; which baselessly asserts that innovation around the world is declining thanks to rigid rules protecting IP; well then we have to find someone to produce a paper that refutes this.

This becomes a war of ideas, a battle for the hearts and minds of a new generation, and we require as much ammunition as the opponents of IP. Paradoxically those who support IP are actually being out-spent in this crucial area of “knowledge generation”.

We also need to think carefully about whom we should be talking to and who should deliver our messages. Extensive research undertaken by CRIA in Canada has demonstrated that if our target is youth, then corporations, and even famous, beloved musicians or actors, are the worst possible communicators – they would simply not be believed or trusted.

If we want to change attitudes to IP, we have to remember that what we are really saying is that we want to change people’s social values. And people have a remarkably lackadaisical attitude to counterfeit goods and Internet piracy. In some

places there is an entrenched culture of piracy. People are aware that it is wrong; but they are going to do it anyway – the message seems to be: “I know it is wrong but I am going to keep doing this, so if you want to stop me...you better...well, stop me.”

Furthermore, if the problem is one of changing social values, we have to remember where most people develop their values -- in the home. Our research would therefore suggest that if we want to be talking to ANYONE about this, it is parents whom we should be talking to and in particular to mothers. We need to provide parents with the tools and understanding they need to create an environment in which IP is respected and valued. We can spend as much money as we want on education in the schools, but if children come home from school and see their parents engaging in the theft of content (under the guise of “sharing”) or in the possession of knock-off luxury items, our efforts will be wasted.

Now I am not saying that we should abandon more direct, mainstream methods. There are several strikingly valuable examples of superb educational tools being developed.

In November 2010 Childnet, a UK charity concerned with educating children about the internet partnered with IFPI, BPI and the Film Industry Trust to produce a groundbreaking consumer education project – “Music, Film, TV and the Internet”. This project is aimed at parents and teachers, to be adapted to multiple countries and languages. This is a short simple, jargon-free, need-to-know guide for the ordinary person. This was the third version of the Childnet Guide, but for the first time including TV and film. There was a terrific response to this. You can learn more about this project at www.childnet.com/downloading. In many respects the intent of this project is to help create an Internet environment that is safe and respectful for everyone. It aims to engender a safe Internet, or what President Sarkozy calls a “civilized internet”.

So, my message is that we need to take advantage of every tool at our disposal. But that in particular we need to pay attention to how people acquire information and knowledge today. And we need to get good at what our opponents are good at – no....we need to be better at it than they are. We need to take to social media with zeal. We need to give voice to the vox populi. We need to gain our fair share of the “voice”. We need to generate more “knowledge” than our opponents do. We need to challenge every misconception about who we are and about what we do immediately and comprehensively.