

AD-BLOCKING - THE DARK SIDE OF CONSUMER EMPOWERMENT: A NEW HOPE OR WILL THE EMPIRE STRIKE BACK?

ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the adoption of ad-blocking technology, its role as a catalyst for the move towards more 'integrative advertising' methods which rely on the mixing of commercial and non-commercial content, and the suitability of the current EU legislative framework to deal with such developments. In essence, the paper examines the 'identification' and 'transparency' principles in the context of online advertising. This critique allows for the drawing of conclusions vis-à-vis future policy initiatives and enforcement challenges in this regard. The paper states that for true advertising literacy mere identification of commercial communications is insufficient and that efforts need to be made in order to educate consumers (especially children) to allow for any possible continuing relevance and reliance on the notion of the average consumer.

KEYWORDS

Ad-blocking, Advertising, Consumer Protection, AVMS, e-Commerce, Data Protection.

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A full version of the draft paper presented at BILETA is available at
https://lirias.kuleuven.be/bitstream/123456789/538851/2/BILETA2016_D.Clifford_V.Verdoodt_Ad-blocking_25_04_2016.pdf.

The BILETA presentation is available at
https://prezi.com/eu2mdhjt3x0x/dcvv_paperpresentationb2016/.