

Dumping DRM: Why Security
Researchers Should Be Resisting
“Digital Content Locks”

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Defining the Problem: The Tech

- Digital Locks aka Digital Handcuffs
 - Access control
 - Copy controls
- *Benefits:* “Bump in the road”
- *Costs:*
 - Customers Hate It
 - Doesn’t work
 - Privacy and Security Risks

SIMCITY





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2648
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We are the SimCity dev team from Maxis. AMAA! (self.IAmA)

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↑ [-] somersetbingo 7256 points 1 year ago* ⭐ x5

↓ The SimCity Community on EA/Maxis' proposed DRM:

"Please just make it playable offline -___-" -PumpkinLatte

"This is why people make cracks and sales get barfed over to TPB." -secretchimp

"Being required to stay online to save a game is so stupid. There are many other consumer friendly DRM alternatives." -drylube

"Always-online DRM is a slap in the face of any franchise's fan. It's like putting a security guard to explicitly follow a customer..." -goldensox

"I would love good city builder but I refuse to support extreme DRM abuse." -Namell

"yeah i would 100% pay for this game if [...] it only had the gentle steam drm." -RatherDashing

"...this kind of DRM is completely unacceptable to gamers. I am a huge simcity fan.... but hearing this news is a completely turnoff. I refuse to be punished for purchasing a game..." -terrific happy

1. DRM will always be broken.
2. People will copy things.
3. People will be able to share (and some will want to).

Privacy and Security Risks

- Treats user as untrusted party
- If you can't break it, you can't secure it
- Rootkits
 - Sony Rootkit
 - Uplay
- Privacy (e.g. Warden; books)

Nineteen
Eighty-four

Compounding the Problem: the Law

DRM + DMCA

=

Unintended Consequences

Less Freedom to Tinker (make, break, fix,
reuse, recycle)

DMCA

Prohibits:

- (1) Act of circumvention of “technological measures” that control *access* to copyrighted works
 - excerpt eBook, rip DVDs, hack streaming content
 - (2) Tools that can circumvent technological access controls and *use* restriction controls
 - DeCSS to make back-up copy of DVD
 - Software to remove CD copy-protection
- 7 exceptions to access ban for public policy purposes.
 - Triennial rulemaking can grant 3 yr exemptions to access ban, but does not authorize devices

Anti-Competitive Misuse

- Blocked aftermarkets, product lock-in at monopoly prices:
 - printer cartridges (*Lexmark v. SCC*)
 - garage remote controls (*Chamberlain Group v. Skylink Technologies*)
 - computer maintenance service (*Storage Tek v. CHE*)
 - cell phone unlocking (*TracFone v. SOL Wireless*)
- Geographic market segmentation

Chilled Scientific Research

- Chilling effect on scientific researchers, journalists, publishers:
 - 2000 Music industry group threatened to sue Princeton Professor Felten and research team for publishing research paper on security vulnerabilities.
- Ongoing effect - computer security weakened:
 - 2005 Researcher discovered Sony BMG music CD “Rootkit” software security risk but consulted with lawyers for several weeks before raising alarm.

Lawful Use Restricted

- TPMs can prevent lawful non-infringing uses.
- U.S. copyright law's balanced set of rights replaced by “anti-circumvention” law:
 - new access right - protection beyond copyright
 - no right to circumvent to make fair use
 - device ban - downstream fair use no defense
 - U.S. statutory exceptions cumbersome and overridden
 - Exemption process ridiculous

Jailbreaking phone = OK (until 2015)

Unlocking phone \neq OK (after 1/26/13)

Jailbreaking tablet \neq OK

Jailbreaking game console \neq OK

Helping others fix their
car/refrigerator/phone/computer \neq OK

We can do better

iTunes:
DRM free music since 2009
(Music industry has not collapsed)



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["Piracy"] is people lending books. And you can't look on that as a lost sale.... What you're actually doing is advertising. You're reaching more people. You're raising awareness. And understanding that gave me a whole new idea of the shape of copyright and what the web was doing."

– Neil Gaiman

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Obscurity is a far greater threat to authors and creative artists than piracy.

– Tim O'Reilly

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