

Recent ITIF report on digital piracy, presented by its author this Monday in Madrid

## Website blocking decreases digital piracy, encourages legal consumption, and "does not break the Internet"

- *The report focuses on a recent study into website blocking in the United Kingdom, which found that blocking 19 major piracy websites decreased piracy and increased use of legal content services t, which grew 10% in legal ad-supported sites and 6% in subscription sites*
- *The use of website blocking in the United Kingdom provides empirical evidence that illegal sites detract from legal sales: "This study shows website blocking, if done well, can change consumer use of illegal and legal content. Furthermore, the United Kingdom system has successfully targeted only those sites involved in large-scale copyright infringement without causing major issues or problems" highlights the report's author.*

**Madrid, 21 November.** - A recent report by the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (ITIF) report, a think tank based in Washington D.C., shows that the recent blocking of piracy websites in the United Kingdom have been very effective in the fight against piracy and that, in general **when applied broadly and quickly, have significantly reduced access to infringing content.** The author of the report, analyst Nigel Cory, presented the report this week in Madrid, today at the premises of the Coalition of Creators and Content Industries and tomorrow to different politic and institutional representatives, to whom he will show his main conclusions.

The report, based on a comparative analysis of Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) studies into website blocking in the United Kingdom, shows that, although **blocking websites will not solve online piracy problem ("No single instrument, law or practice will do solve it on their own")**, it very significantly reduces it and leads to consumers to access content from legal services.

**"When considering the different instruments in our tool box to fight digital piracy, website blocking has a role to play in tipping the balance back towards artists and creators of contents in helping them protect their intellectual property online".** "Besides –highlighted the Australian analyst–, while greater international cooperation on intellectual property enforcement would potentially make blocking unnecessary, until this point is reached, website blocking should be considered as an effective tool for countries to use to block access to infringing material, as demonstrated by its introduction and use in Italy, Portugal, and the United Kingdom and Australia.

According to the author, the report "empirically shows a previous intuition": **user shift to legal platforms if most popular pirate websites are blocked**. Besides, the British case in particular evidences that illegal sites are a great business above all: **"There has not been a single "unblocking" order for having committed a mistake"**.

## **HIGH AND MEASURABLE EFFICIENCY**

Results of the survey clearly showed that pirate website blocking in the United Kingdom modified consumers' behaviour:

- **They caused a 90% drop in visits to blocked sites** (from 86,735 to 10,474 visits), and also reduced the use of not blocked pirate sites. And blocking had a significant impact on piracy: **22% decrease in total**.
- They changed consumer's behaviour: **visits of users of ad-supported streaming legal sites grew by 10%**. They also caused an estimated **6% increase of visits to subscription sites**.
- Blocking caused that **intensive users of piracy reduced their access to pirate content by 28%**.
- **There was an increase of 48.1% access to ad-supported legal sites and of 36.9% to subscription sites, respectively**.