Digital Ownership

• For the past five years, you have been getting rid of all your books, CDs, video games and DVDs. You have replaced them with digital content.

• Last year, with the Digital Owners Empowerment Act, digital vendors have been allowed to reach into your device and remove any content that is not rightfully yours.

• Then starting February 15th you start hearing that friends are loosing their digital content.
  • You turn on your phone and all of your music has been removed.
  • You turn on your Kindle/iPad/Fire and everything is gone.
  • You turn on your computer and many things are missing.
  • The only hint of what has happened is emails from your various digital vendors telling to you that to return service of their media you must pay a monthly maintenance fee. This fee will initially be a reasonable (?) $7.99 a month, but rates could change.

• It seems there was a clause contained in your usage contract stating that distribution terms can be reviewed and modified on a yearly basis.
  • As of January 1st, the majority of the digital distribution companies retroactively modified these contracts to indicate that all digital content is still owned by the distributor and subject to a monthly usage and maintained fee.

• Once word gets out, the companies publically state that they have always owned the content and users were leasing it for an initial fee. Also, that it was their responsibility to maintain the quality of that media, which requires a nominal maintenance fee.

In this group assignment, determine the following as a group and prepare it on a large sheet of paper.

1. Determine the amount of money you would loose if the digital and physical media you bought in the last five years was taken away.
2. Under what right might these companies be able make the claim they are?
3. Under what right might you be able to make a counter claim?

Remember, just because a law is made does not mean it still cannot be contested in a court of law.