

China and the censorship of information technology

Technology, Information Technology



The internet is one of the most powerful tools that can easily be accessed by any individual so as long as he has a modem, a telephone and a computer. It is the best instrument to educate and enlighten one's mind due to the many views and theories it has compiled in its infinite database.

Yet, this is not the reason why the Chinese Government is advocating the internet. According to Hermida (2002), China only sees two objectives for the internet—the first being for economic improvement. The second objective is to regulate public sentiments to share the same views as the government. It is because of the second primary objective that has made the Chinese Government ban or censor sites from being viewed by the general public.

What makes it worse is conglomerates, offering software and hardware, are in cohorts with China's policy. According to Jessup and Valacich (n. d.), Cisco, Microsoft and Google agreed to censor information that does not coincide with the government's communication plan. This becomes an ethical problem because of two things according to Jessup and Valacich (n. d.).

For one, this goes against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. The United Nations in Article 19 proclaims that all individuals have the right to freedom of speech—articulation of opinions and ideas, without having to face discrimination from any party. Second, the Chinese government does not have the right to ban sites and censor information because they do not own the information posted on the web.

The dissemination of knowledge should be allowed for all and not be curtailed by the government or any organization. Ethical standards dictate that knowledge and education should be free for all, whether rich or poor,

Chinese or American. Individuals have a right to know the truth by hearing and reading different views, which can be sourced from the internet. There must be external help outside of China to help rectify the situation. Cisco, Microsoft and Google should not adhere to China's instructions over a quick buck. They should submit to stand their ground and follow universal ethical norms.

REFERENCES

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