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Media Center

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Fall 2007

## Editorial

New York Law School

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*EDITORIAL*

After years of talk, the promise of convergent media is finally fulfilling itself, enabled by new technologies and supported by consumer demand. Video-on-Demand (“VoD”) services will certainly have a special place in this new world, since they permit consumers to access audiovisual content whenever, wherever.

The technical preconditions required for the development of VoD services are already met; now it is up to the content industry to take advantage of this new window of opportunity. However, rights-holders will not offer their content on the Internet unless they are protected against unauthorized copying and distribution. To this effect, the content industry places its hopes on technologies, commonly known as Digital Rights Management Systems (“DRMs”). DRMs enable rights-holders to control access to and use of their content through technological measures. VoD providers can also use DRMs to offer new and attractive services to consumers. However, the practical application of these technologies may be problematic in some cases.

In 2007, the European Audiovisual Observatory intends to pay special attention to the development of the VoD market. As a starter, this article provides an overview on recent developments concerning DRMs in Europe, with the aim of bringing some clarity to the relevant legal issues.

Strasbourg, January 2007

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