

Russian Intellectual Property Rights and Who Owns Them: Sources of Information

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The increasing demand for full text in electronic format obligates libraries to collect electronic resources and to legitimately use collections of other libraries. Scanning and creating electronic collections raises questions about copyrights and intellectual property. The main goal of this lecture is to link these questions of electronic technology with the problem of copyrights and intellectual property. In addition, the author will try to discuss how to reconcile the individual right to free access to information and the task of libraries to provide their patrons with all available resources on the one hand, and the rights of intellectual property on the other. His analysis of the current legal situation in Russia shows that a good foundation for copyright law already exists, and that might exist in Russia today a possibility to adhere to copyright law and meet the needs of patrons at the same time. The author gives several examples of how libraries deal with electronic resources on a daily basis and problems that occur in this process, and illustrates ways of resolving these problems as well.

The author's point of view is that libraries and archives should be authorized by law to transfer all materials (texts, images and other), whether they are under the copyrights law or not, to the electronic format. In this way these materials could be saved and preserved. There is a need for copyright law to be more detailed and precise in matters concerning copyright and the Web; furthermore, regulations should be created which would clarify the legal situation between the buyer and the owner of electronic information.

The newly created Russian Association of Electronic Libraries, organized by the Russian State Library and the Russian National Public Library for Science and Technology, as well as other Russian libraries, plays a great role in resolving these problems. Special "copyright" departments have been established at these libraries. Copyright agreements between libraries and authors, made directly or through special agencies, are becoming widely spread.

However, this problem is still open for discussion and needs the cooperation of government authorities and public and private companies in order to establish uniform procedures.

The author points out several questions which should be discussed and resolved by Russian government authorities, such as:

- The organization and further development of Russian electronic collections
- The roles of electronic collections in national education
- The role of government organizations in development, support of electronic collections and the provision of providing interested parties with legal defense
- The interaction of public libraries with electronic libraries

The author believes that Russia is making small but important steps towards the civic society based upon the principles of the law.