[DE] Voluntary Self-Monitoring Body for Search Engine Providers

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Carmen Palzer
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

Various German search engine providers have launched a self-regulation initiative under the umbrella of the Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Multimediadienste-Anbieter (voluntary self-monitoring body for multimedia service providers - FSM). The founder members include FSM members Google, Lycos, MSN Deutschland, Yahoo, T-Online and T-Info. In addition to the FSM's general code of conduct, special rules have been developed for search engine providers. The aim of this self-regulatory system is to improve consumer protection and the protection of children and young people using search engines in Germany. Accordingly, users will be better informed about how search engines work; in particular, search engine entries that owe their position on the results list to commercial agreements will be identified as such. Complaints will be dealt with by the FSM complaints body in accordance with the FSM's general complaints procedure and special provisions for search engine providers. As far as youth protection is concerned, the search engine providers undertake to endeavour "as far as they are able, to take technical precautions suitable for fostering the protection of children and young people from content harmful to minors". In this connection, an FSM press release announced that a procedure has been developed in co-operation with the Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Medien (Federal monitoring body for media harmful to minors) to ensure that certain Internet addresses no longer appear in search engine results lists. Details such as how the system will be limited to Germany and what message users will receive if they search for a listed Internet site, still appear unresolved.

Verhaltenssubkodex der Suchmaschinenanbieter

http://www.fsm.de/?s=Subkodex+Suchmaschinenanbieter&PHPSESSID=b2baeec869f077b8b9f9f7e48c2c26be,

Code of conduct for search engine providers

Verfahrensordnung der Suchmaschinenanbieter

http://www.fsm.de/index.php?s=Verfahrensordnung+Suchmaschinenanbieter&PHPSESSID=463b17b338252c3ab0ef43a547460e35

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Procedure for search engine providers

Pressemitteilung der FSM vom 25. Februar 2005

http://www.fsm.de/?s=News&PHPSESSID=463b17b338252c3ab0ef43a547460e35&s=News&news_id=358&PHPSESSID=463b17b338252c3ab0ef43a547460e35

FSM press release, 25 February 2005

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