

Computing Research Association

Conference at Snowbird 2000



Slides from a workshop
on the topic of

“Policy Forum:
Issues in Information Technology Policy”

presented by

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3:00 pm

<http://www.cra.org/Activities/snowbird/00/wk2-3.html>

USACM



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Mission

The ACM U.S. Public Policy Committee (USACM) serves as the focal point for ACM's interaction with U.S. government organizations, the computing community and the U.S. public in all matters of U.S. public policy related to information technology.

USACM responds to requests for information and technical expertise from U.S. government agencies and departments, seeks to influence relevant U.S. government policies on behalf of the computing community and the public, and provides information to ACM on relevant U.S. government activities. USACM also identifies potentially significant technical and public policy issues and brings them to the attention of ACM and the community.



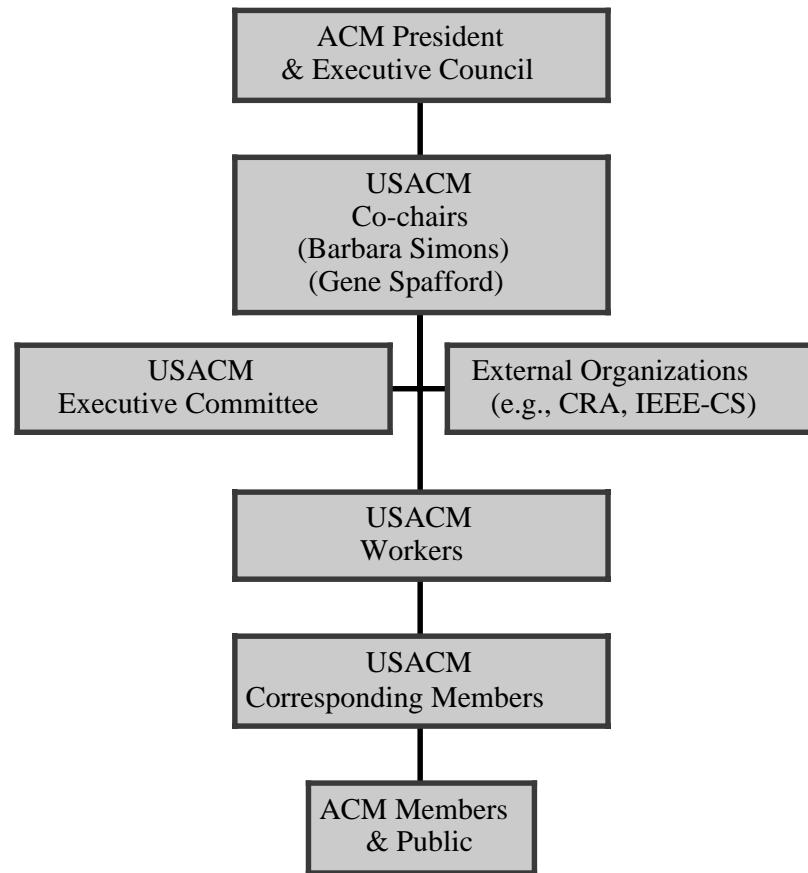
Mode of Operation

- White papers
- Letters of support/interest
- Community coordination
- Supplying experts to advise/testify

USACM educates and comments on issues.
We almost never advocate positions on
specific pieces of legislation.



Organization





Particular Areas of Concern

- Information Privacy
 - CALEA
 - S2448
- Security/Consumer Protection
 - UCITA
- Criminalizing technology
 - DMCA
 - Council of Europe convention



Other Interests

- Funding for education and research
- Intellectual property (loss of fair use)
- E-Commerce regulation
- Universal Usability
< <http://www.acm.org/sigchi/cuu> >
- Internet governance
- Some international issues are in scope, too.



A Specific Example: UCITA

- Alters balance of consumer rights
- Allows vendors to avoid all liability
- Can prevent critical analysis of software
- Allows “backdoors” and remote disabling
- Prevents reverse-engineering
- Widely criticized
- See
August “Inside Risks” in CACM
<<http://www.4cite.org>>



A Specific Example: CoE Treaty

- Criminalize the possession, development, or communication of widely-used technology based on vague notion of “intent”
- Make some URL linking a felony, without even requiring intent!
- May provide a “backdoor” for law enforcement to examine disk contents



New Directions

- Enhanced Washington DC office
 - Professional staff working for ACM
- Develop formalized international efforts
 - ACM is international
 - Many policy issues are transnational
- Better coordination with sister societies



Questions?

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